



ANNUAL REPORT

2020



Acknowledgements

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- INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE- WEST AFRICA
- ANPAS – ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE PUBBLICHE ASSISTENZE
- COOPI
- CROSSROAD SHIPMENT
- OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
- UNICEF-THE GAMBIA
- FABRRADER FUR AFRIKA V.
- CONSORTIUM FOR STREET CHILDREN

TECHNICAL PARTNERS

- **Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Welfare**
- **Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education**
- **Child Welfare Unit- Gambia Immigration Department**
- **Child welfare Unit- Gambia Police**

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1. ACRONYMS

ANPAS	Associazione Nazionale Pubbliche Assistenze
CEDAG	Child and Environmental Development Association- The Gambia
CCPCs	Community Child Protection Committees
CSC	Consortium for Street Children
CWCY	Coordination of Working Children and Youths
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CPA	Child Protection Alliance
ICSCATS	International Centre for Street Children and trafficking Studies
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
ISS-WA	International Social Service- West Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
GID	Gambia Immigration Department
GPF	Gambia Police Force
PAO	Programme for West Africa
TANGO	The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
WAN	West Africa Network for the protection of children

2 Statement by the Board Chairman—OMAR SEY

I am delighted to present our 2020 Annual Report, which shows how we've significantly advanced the execution of our strategic plan for 2020. We are proud of being successful, using our various policies to promote our activities and protecting the population that we serve, reaching out to wider communities, engaging more partners which really showcased the important contributions we make in the life of children and their families.

At a time of global uncertainty when there were a lot of questions and doubt, our organisation played an important role with the help of our partners and other stakeholders to seek solutions and give hope to the children and their families, that hope is possible. We achieved this by growing and sustaining financial assistance and support within the difficult period guided by a clear purpose, we made a positive and significant impact not just to children and their families alone, but help communities in finding solutions and supporting them to address it.

We believe the strategies we adopted in both our policies and activities implementation is proving to be correct. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the value of our solutions that help to reintegrate CoM and other street related children with their families. At the same time, the importance of grassroots groups, virtual networks has never been more effective and well-coordinated during this trial period.

I am excited and proud of the lives CEDAG is changing and undertaking to address urgent issues affecting vulnerable children and their families. Clearly, an important example is CEDAG's current contribution in two key areas of facilitating the reintegration of children from Senegal during the COVID-19 crisis and facilitating the cash transfer to their families in order to mitigate the impact of the crisis.

I am confident that CEDAG has the capacity to meet the challenges of 2021 and generating sustainable long-term impacts and the networking with relevant stakeholders. We will continue to develop and advocate for policies to protect vulnerable children and their families, ensuring that CEDAG executes its strategies with financial discipline and with integrity.

3. Statement by the National Coordinator Morris Ikechukwu O Anyim

As the National Coordinator of the organization, it is truly a pleasure to share this Annual Report of 2020 with you. It is the one time in the year when we get to share with you the real impact your support has made, both in the lives of children and their communities within the seven regions of the Gambia. It's difficult to quantify or even capture in words the impact of the changes that CEDAG has been through in the year 2020.

During the year in review, CEDAG effectively share the quiet confidence and renewed passion within the organisation, post the completion of a particularly difficult program restructuring. Confidence that comes from knowing that in order to stay true to our mission for children we can and will transform ourselves however painful the process is, while keeping alive the spirit that built and continues to inspire CEDAG, the confidence that comes from the strong support of our partners and friends, who trusted us to make the right choices even if it meant a temporary cutback in financial support as in the case of our development partners. The confidence that was reinforced when our own financial partners and donors actually increased their donations despite the adverse economic condition.

Every step was possible because it was fueled by the simple conviction that this change would transform the depth, breadth and width of our work with vulnerable children in the Gambia. Perhaps the most precious aspect of the year 2020 was that despite all the pressures and unusual struggle of COVID-19 crisis the impact of our work with children grew both in coverage and depth and despite the challenges of the COVID we still ensure that children grow and live a life with dignity which has been an inspiration for us.

As you read this report, I hope it will reinforce your faith in the sheer power of individual and collective action. For an organisation which started with a small team has today become a pillar in the field of child protection and community development. As we enter our 19th year, our dreams are built on experience and conviction, because we have seen the impossible made possible, we have known ordinary individuals who've brought about extraordinary change and we've seen children when given a sliver of hope, light up families and entire communities.

We go forward with a tremendous sense of responsibility and hope. The faith and trust reposed in us over these years makes it incumbent on us to ensure that we continue to uphold the highest standards of transparency and accountability. And our hope lies in knowing that together we can and will make a difference in the lives of all our children.

4 Major activities/Achievements

4.1 Children on the move and street related children

CEDAG with the assistance from its partners such as UNICEF, COOPI and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights intensified its effort in identification and support to CoM and other street related children in The Gambia. During this year 2020, 194 CoM were identified and reunited with their families using the ECOWAS standard for the support of children on the move and young migrants



UNICEF supported the organization for the provision of emergency kits to 125 children, provision of cash transfer to families and follow up visits, whilst OHCHR supported CEDAG with additional 50 Emergency kits for children who were returned from Senegal during the COVID-19 crises.



With the establishment of the Child Friendly Space in Farafenni under the partnership of COOPI and CEDAG through donor support, CoM now have a safe haven of were to report their abuse cases and receive psychosocial support by trained social workers. Under the partnership of CEDAG and COOPI, children who are identified and equally receive emergency support and temporary placement are reintegrated with their families both within and neighboring countries through our WAN partners



CSC further provided CEDAG with financial support in which 15 sessions of sensitization on social distancing and personal hygiene for protection from COVID-19 pandemic was conducted during this period and a total of 89 street and street related children were reached. The ages range from 7 to 16 years in which 80% were boys and 20% were girls. The sessions were conducted at different locations; Shelter for children in Bakoteh, Serekunda and Birikama motor garage.



During the sensitization sessions mask and sanitizer/hand gel were distributed to the children after demonstrating to them on how to use them.



As the COVID-19 affected their way of daily survival which is through street begging or doing road side work for people in exchange of food, CEDAG provided food and other sanitary items such as toothpaste and toothbrushes to 120 street and street related children. The food was provided for the children at the shelter for children in Bakoteh with the help of the cooks and clearances of the Directorate for Children's Affairs under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social welfare.

Referral and reunification support: 32 street children who voluntarily agreed to return back to their families were reunited with their families through CEDAG Family Reunification Program and were supported with emergency kits.



In support to government efforts in providing food to the children during the COVID-19, CEDAG donated food and non-food items to the Ministry of Gender, children and Social Welfare which were received by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare of the Gambia.

Follow up visits

The children who were reunited with their families were visited by our social workers and focal persons within their communities, and they were provided with psychosocial support. During the visiting our social worker were satisfied with the relationship between the children and other family members.



4.2 Sponsorship Program

The academic year of 2019/2020 started very well with a lot of expectation that more of the children will sit for their grade nine and grade 12 examinations respectively. 26 among them were registered for extra classes to enable them get good results. During the two months of their preparation, the issue of COVID-19 started to heat up and State of emergency was declared in the Gambia leading to the closure of schools across the country.

However, the sponsorship Officer was able to reach the children and make sure that they received awareness of the pandemic regarding personal hygiene and keeping of distance. And finally, the 26 children who were expected to sit for the grade 9 examination were able to do that and the ones who will sit for their grade 12 are preparing to do that too.

The sponsorship officer was able to follow up with the class teachers of the different schools because the class teacher prepares lessons for the children to follow to ensure

that they meet up with their school curriculum. The lessons are collected from the teacher once in a week and submitted the following week.

Within the month of May this year more 28 children received bicycles. These are children who walk up to 4km to and from school. But with the help provided for them they will be able to cover the kilometer in just few minutes and this will also increase and improve their school performances.



Mariama Saho have been one of the children who started with us on the sponsorship program and today she has sat for her grade 9 examination waiting to be enrolled into senior secondary school by the next academic year. She has shown a lot of interest with her educational studies and has grown up speaking English which is one of the achievements she

can be proud of. According to her, if she did not have the opportunity for this support, she could have not be able to go to school and there could have been not opportunity to get admission in future into higher educational school such as to the university.

One good part of it is that she is now helping her siblings with their lessons at home and have been an impression to other girls within her village to understand that education is the best for a girl child which enable her to know her rights and protect herself from domestic violence and other kind of abuse.

This type of success and achievement have inspired and motivated CEDAG staff and volunteers to work tirelessly to ensure that the children received the required support for their basic education including working with more partners who share our vision.



Binta Sanyang have successfully completed her grade 9 examination, she looks forward to be enrolled into one of the senior secondary school where she has to spend another 3 years in order to complete her secondary education.

There is no doubt that she will like to further her education after completing her secondary education because of the ambition in her to reach a good educational qualification which will enable her to get a good job. She always wants to help her sibling and the her parent.



Should any child be so proud to have the opportunity to go to modern school, please name Alieu O Joof as one of them.

Alieu has always show that it has been a great opportunity to go to school. His performances have been outstanding.

Conclusion

In conclusion it is important to note that the objective of this annual report is to communicate timely, reliable and relevant information, inform and announce the achievements and performance for the year 2020.

It is important for our financial and technical partners to know that the last 19 years of our existence has established itself as an organization committed towards the welfare and empowerment of Vulnerable children especially CoM and street related children. The organization has worked with multiple stakeholders: governmental bodies, media, private sector, international and national NGOs and multilateral organizations to create a platform and an understanding towards this marginalized and voiceless section of the society.

All these activities made it possible for CEDAG to highlight a few issues at the national level in the Gambia. Issues of CoM and street connect children have now been taken up for action by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare

CEDAG with your support is aspired to achieve a child-friendly society where every child attains Rights to Survival, Protection, Development and Participation.