



Hattingen/Germany, June 2020

Dear friends and supporters of Projekthilfe Gambia e.V. (Project Aid The Gambia),

our fundraiser "**Masks for The Gambia**" was a great success. After the publication of our last newsletter on 04.04.2020 and the call for donations "A letter from Gambia" on 20.04.2020, donations of **21,778.00 euros** have been received in our bank account to date. Via Facebook we received another **2,673.70 euros** in donations for the campaign - a total of **24,671.70 euros**.



We thank you wholeheartedly for the many small and large donations. 20,000 euros were transferred to Project Aid The Gambia in late April. **30,000 masks** have already been produced there - and production continues...

The first masks were delivered in early April: 1,000 pieces to **Jahaly Health Centre** and 500 pieces to the **Health Center Buniadu**, which we run on behalf of **Riverboat Doctors International e.V.**



In Jahaly and Buniadu, patients receive a mask, which they return after their visit. The cotton masks are then soaked in hot water with detergent overnight and washed out and dried the next day before being handed out again. The two health centers were **the first and only** health facilities in The Gambia to have masks for staff and patients. You can watch a short video on Facebook [here \(just click here\)](#).

In **Jahaly** we now are also selling personal masks to patients and their escorts for a small fee (20 Dalasi, approx. 35 cents). After the initial reluctance of the villagers, we have now sold over 330 masks to them. Many people, especially in rural Gambia, do not believe that the virus exists. Where should they find out about it - without access to newspapers, radio, TV or social media? We have sold several thousand masks to companies in the coastal region or other NGOs in the country, e.g. to the **Children's Village Bottrop in The Gambia**. The Serekunda Hospital, the largest city in The Gambia, has received 400 masks from us for free. Our masks can also be purchased in some pharmacies. All proceeds go to the production of further masks. With each mask, buyers and users receive a **DIN A5 leaflet**, which explains the hygienically correct use of the masks in text and images. We had several **tens of thousands** of copies of this leaflet printed.



**Matthias Ketteler**, chairman of Project Aid The Gambia, initiated and organized the mask campaign on site in The Gambia before returning to Germany with his family in early May.

The Corona situation in The Gambia itself is somewhat confusing. Officially, the government has the situation under control - but to us the authorities seem overwhelmed. It took weeks

of effort for Matthias Ketteler to obtain approval from the Gambian Ministry of Health to provide masks to state run health centers free of charge. There are neither medical masks nor simple mouth-nose masks available.

On Thursday (June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020) we finally got a list with **23 health centers** and local health posts in the Central River region, CRR, around Jahaly, to which we distributed a total of **8,000 masks** at the beginning of this week, 500 and 250 each. We also made

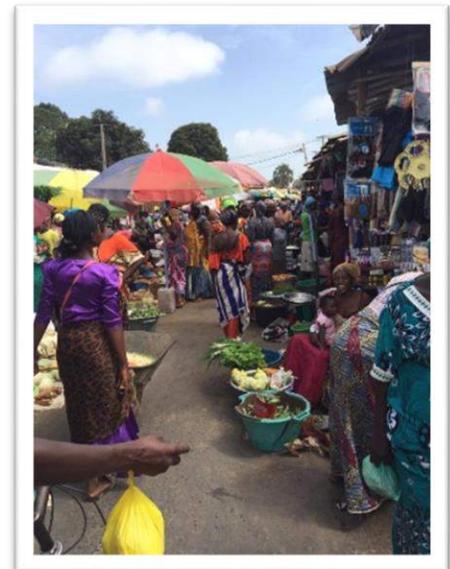


our **project truck** available free of charge to volunteers, who across the country distributed rice, sugar and oil to families in need, due to the lockdown.

There have been officially **28 Corona cases** (as of June 10<sup>th</sup>) in The Gambia, five of which are active. 22 patients have recovered, one patient has died. A high number of unreported cases must be assumed, since there are only insufficient test capacities available. So far, just under 2,000 tests have been carried out and 800 contacts followed. 130 suspected cases are in quarantine. The **state of emergency** in the country was again extended by 21 days on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The markets that are vital for the population, but also mosques and churches, are



reopened under certain conditions. We do not know whether our kindergarten can open again before the summer holidays begin in mid-July. The biggest problem, however, is that **“social distancing”** doesn't work in The Gambia. The government strongly recommends wearing masks in public. On the big markets and on the ferries, however, we observe that nobody adheres to it.



The health system is poorly equipped: only 20 transpirators and eight intensive care bed units are available for a population of 2.3 million. **Boergel GmbH**, a German company, has provided us with 12 used transpirators for The Gambia. Inquiries from other companies are ongoing. Unfortunately, for weeks we have also been waiting for an urgently needed official request from the Gambian government. Together with donated hospital beds from the German hospital **Ruhrlandklinik**, the relief supplies are to be shipped to The Gambia at the end of June. We thank you very much for all these donations.

The health system is poorly equipped: only 20 transpirators and eight intensive care bed units are available for a population of 2.3 million. **Boergel GmbH**, a German company, has provided us with 12 used transpirators for The Gambia. Inquiries from other companies are ongoing. Unfortunately, for weeks we have also been waiting for an urgently needed official request from the Gambian government. Together with donated hospital beds from the German hospital **Ruhrlandklinik**, the relief supplies are to be shipped to The Gambia at the end of June. We thank you very much for all these donations.

## What else has happened since the release of our last newsletter?

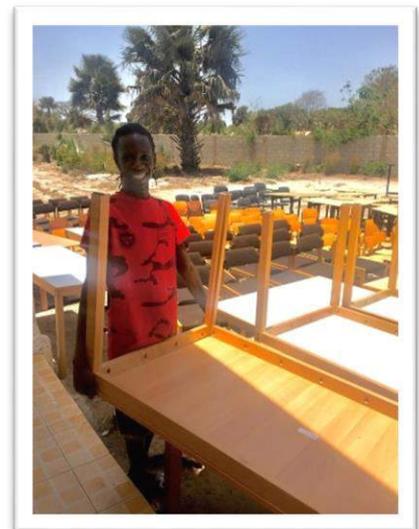
The humanitarian aid convoy from Germany to The Gambia of our **Regional Group North**, scheduled for October 2020, has also been canceled due to the corona pandemic and has been **postponed to 2021**. The travel warning for The Gambia and the North African countries that the aid convoy would cross has just been extended to the end of August. In addition, the airline has already canceled the convoy drivers' return flights. The group had already collected **7,800 euros** in donations for the tour and purchased two vehicles. In January 2017 the previous aid convoy of the group had to be canceled at short notice, when the political situation surrounding the outgoing of ex-President Jammeh came to a heat. In December 2017 the donations collected for the then tour (25,000 euros) were officially handed over in Jahaly during a project visit. We promise that the donations will reach their goal again this time. Because: **postponed is not canceled**.



The contents of the **two relief containers**, which had been loaded by **Project Aid** and **Riverboat Doctors International e.V.** in January and had arrived in The Gambia in March, have now been distributed. The Gambian Ministry of Health picked up the medical equipment.



Office and school furniture went to "**The Gambia Academy of Music and Culture**", a great non-profit school project by the Gambian Kora player **Sona Jobarteh**. The academy is currently being expanded to also accommodate students of higher grades in the upcoming academic



year. The new classrooms can now be equipped with tables and chairs also.

The **guest house** on our project site in Manjai Kunda has been expanded by two double rooms. Now it is not that packed full, when interns leave and new interns and volunteers arrive at the same time. Because of COVID-19 we don't have any interns at the moment. The last two volunteers had left The Gambia at the end of March. The board of Project Aid has decided to **cancel** all internships and volunteer work already agreed for this year until further notice. It wasn't an easy decision for us, but health and safety are our number one priorities.



In April our project team completed further **construction works** in the **Health Center Buniadu** of Riverboat Doctors International e.V. The workers built a watchman house and bricked and tiled benches for the patients in the waiting area. Finally we got rid of these



cheap plastic chairs that have never lasted very long. The entrance from the gate and the employees' lounge area were also concreted and tiled with broken tiles.



At the end of May we received two sad messages in quick succession. **Muhammed Keita**, who has served as night watchmen of our kindergarten in Jahaly for many years, died after



a short illness. Little **Fatima**, who we brought to a special clinic in Dakar/Senegal in January to examine her eye tumor, also died. Since returning from Dakar, she had been waiting for an appointment for radiation therapy. Unfortunately, this never happened. Fatima was only 1 year and 5 months old. The health system in The Gambia urgently needs to improve. We mourn with the families of Muhammed and Fatima.



At the end we ask you as always: Find out more about our work for the people of The Gambia. Please also ask friends and relatives to become sponsors for Project Aid The Gambia e.V. and ask them to support our work with a one-time or regular donation or by sponsoring one of our kindergarten places.

There will soon be an additional option available to also donate to us by using **PayPal**.



**By the way:** You can also do something for us when you shop at Amazon. If you use **AmazonSmile** for this purpose, we will receive 0.5% of the purchase value of – almost – each of your purchases, as a donation from Amazon. There are no additional costs for you. Simply visit [this link \(click here\)](#) or click on the image on the left.

We promise: Your donations will arrive in our projects with a minimal deduction.

We thank you very much again for your support.

Yours **Project Aid The Gambia / Projekthilfe Gambia e.V.**

The Board

Matthias Ketteler

Ulfert Engelkes

Frank Heuer

Juergen Heuer

Dieter Lieken



Projekthilfe Gambia e.V.

Website: [www.buschlinik.de/en](http://www.buschlinik.de/en)

Latest Information on the work of Project Aid The Gambia: [www.buschlinik.de/en/blog-2](http://www.buschlinik.de/en/blog-2)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BuschlinikGambia](https://www.facebook.com/BuschlinikGambia)

English Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA8601150BD4F4AED>

Subscribe to our Newsletter here: [www.buschlinik.de/en/newsletter-2](http://www.buschlinik.de/en/newsletter-2)

**Projekthilfe Gambia e.V.**

**Project Aid The Gambia**

Im Poth 26

45529 Hattingen

Germany

Phone: +49 234 94183 22

Email: [info@buschlinik.de](mailto:info@buschlinik.de)

Registered at German local court Amtsgericht Essen / Registration number VR 30455

**German bank accounts for donations:**

Sparkasse Hattingen	IBAN	DE20 4305 1040 0000 0509 63
Geno Bank Essen e.G.	IBAN	DE57 3606 0488 0200 9009 00
Commerzbank AG	IBAN	DE69 4308 0083 0841 9991 00
Oldenburgische Landesbank	IBAN	DE41 2802 0050 1742 5430