

Genieri Collections – Christmas 2016 – Report and Appeal for the Children

2016, what a momentous year for the kiddies at the Day Care Centre!



January - Jimmy and I visited Genieri in the Gambia and left about 6 months' worth of lunch food – to see them up to the summer holidays, thanks to your generosity last Christmas

- *5 good lunches a week during term time*

March – request from Foday the school master – could we stretch to breakfast on Saturdays and Sundays? Yes! We found some extra money, and now there is peanut rice porridge at weekends

- *7 hot meals a week during term time*



May – Foday's wife Jainaba had been cooking 80 meals a day on a voluntary basis, but now she was working 7 days a week, she wondered whether she could have a wage? This seemed entirely reasonable, she is indispensable, so now she has a salary of £12 monthly

June – our application to the Scottish Charities Commission was successful, collecting boxes in the local shops are now legal, Paypal commissions are lower, and Thomas Cook will give extra luggage allowance for goods for the children

July – school ends for the summer, the start of their 'hungry season' before the crops are ready. Can we help? Gulp, more commitment! Some phone calls made, some family and friends agreed to make small regular donations – so yes, we helped

- *7 hot meals a week, 52 weeks a year – thank goodness Jainaba is getting paid!*

The upshot of all of this is that ALL children of relevant age are enjoying early education, and from sight of them they really enjoy being at school. Indeed some of them at the door from 06:30, just waiting to get in.

We're really pleased with the achievement of this year so far, and look forward to seeing how we can make it better in 2017.

August onward – started sending Foday **regular** monthly funds for food and firewood, and realised that we were committing to providing over 29,000 hot meals for the children! About 75% of the money needed each month has been pledged as monthly donations, which takes a lot of pressure off Jimmy and me. Many, many thanks to all of you who are helping so generously!



October & November – tensions and anxieties rise as the Gambia prepares for the General Election and opposition parties combine to try and oust the unpopular tyrannical president, Yahya Jammeh.

December 1st – the opposition leader Adama Barrow is elected by a narrow margin, to widespread rejoicing, but there is a 60 day handover period. Will Jammeh leave the country without a struggle and bloodshed? Very worrying indeed!

What next in 2017? – we are likely to be visiting our friends in the Gambia in January, provided the political scene is sufficiently stable by then, and will go up country. Once we're assured that there are adequate funds to cover feeding the day care kiddies, we will be looking to see whether we can help, perhaps even with more sustainable projects. Alternatively we could consider either an improvement in their diet with a little protein, or we could improve the quality of their education via the provision of more stationery. Right now we need about another £40 per month to be able to **guarantee** feeding money for 365 days pa, and this to provide them with a simple but wholesome meal of just rice, half a small potato, all cooked with onion and some stock. It all seems so humble, but they are overjoyed to be able to eat every day, thanks to yourselves. Each hot meal costs about £0.085, so even small donations make a vast difference.



So, here is our plea for Christmas 2016 – as times are more than ever uncertain – would you be able to help by giving some money to the feeding program? Any amount, however humble, will be very gratefully received, and well over 90% of it will arrive in the Village.

See our website for ways to donate at <http://www.geniercollections.co.uk> and either click on the orange 'Ways to Donate' button at the top of the screen or click on the yellow 'Donate' button at the bottom of the screen, or if you prefer send a cheque payable to **Genieri Collections** to us. Many grateful thanks to those who are already so generously helping us to feed the hungry children in Genieri's day care centre.

Christmas Greetings, Sophie & Jimmy