



**The Gambia:
June 14th – 26th 2014**

Itinerary

Day 1:
Travelling to The Gambia

Day 2:
Visit to Serrekunda Market and the beach

Day 3:
Visit from British Deputy High Commissioner, museum visit, Kachikally Crocodile Pool and Manduar village

Day 4:
Manduar village

Day 5:
Placements

Day 6:
Placements

Day 7:
Free morning and book launch

Day 8:
GAMCOTRAP and visit to Sandele

Day 9:
Practically building the Development Hub at Manduar

Day 10:
Visit to Fort Bullen and Kunta Kinteh Island

Day 11:
Free morning and seminar by the University of The Gambia

Day 12:
Graduation Ceremony & depart from The Gambia



Introduction

From the 14th to the 26th June in 2014, #DMUglobal and Global Hands arranged a trip of a lifetime to The Gambia, for 42 participants. The participants consisted of mainly DMU students from all backgrounds and areas of study, DMU staff and Global Hands staff.

#DMUglobal supported the trip as part of De Montfort University's (DMU) initiative to give 50% of all students an international experience. This trip follows a greatly successful trip to The Gambia in January 2014, and offers students the chance to broaden their horizons, learn about different cultures and be more aware of global issues.

Before the trip, staff and students organised a fundraising event where money was raised towards building the Development Hub in Manduar village in The Gambia. The Development Hub is for young people and will focus on training and development, hoping to enhance lives for the better. Over £5000 was raised which will be spent on materials and equipment for the Hub, this was through a sponsored walk around a national trust park in Leicester. Another £5000 was also donated to the Hub by DMU's Pro Vice Chancellor Andy Downton.

During the trip, all participants were split up into 'Reflection Groups' with staff being responsible for each group. The team consisted of the following:

Momodou Sallah



DMU - Senior Lecturer,
Global Hands - board of Directors

Ayolah Hanley



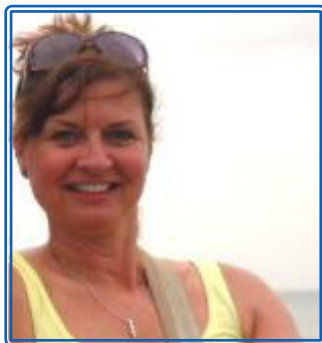
G.H Director of International Development
& Development School coordinator 2014

Aysha Ghanchi



Global Hands -
Director of Youth Involvement

Louise Southall



DMU - Security Officer

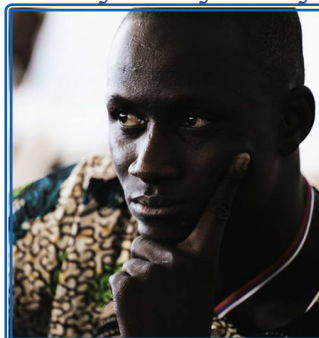
Amy White



DMU - Square Mile Projects
& Outreach Co-Ordinator

Participants were also chaperoned by Global Hands
Gambia staff throughout the trip:

Jimmy Henry Nzally



Global Hands Gambia - President

Student Participants

Ms Aisha Howson	International Business and Globalisation
Miss Aqueela Sheikh	Global Hands Volunteer
Amani Samah Ali Milligan	Psychology
Ms Beatrice Kadie Love Koroma	Accounting and Finance
Miss Bethany Lauren Varnam	Psychology
Mr Calvin Wayne Tooby	LLB Law
Ms Cecilia Asong	Youth & Community Development
Mr Daniel John Sturrock	Architecture BA
Miss Elisavet Andreou	PhD FINE ART (PRACTICE)
Ms Elizabeth Oluwafisayo Manisola Olaniyi	Psychology
Miss Erica Zelesco	Health Studies
Ms Fehmida Cassim	Youth and Community Development
Ms Georgina Jarrett	Marketing and Advertising Communications
Miss Golda Georgina Morgan	Psychology with Criminology
Mrs Hannah May Street	Accounting and Business Management
Ms Hollie Copas	Media and Communication
Miss Jade Olubusola Tokunbo Kupoluyi	Economics and Government
Mr James Phadraig Adam Qadir	English
Ms Jennifer Helen Masters	Creative Writing and English
Miss Jingling Wei	Business and Marketing
Miss Kate Marie Smith	Criminology and Criminal Justice
Miss Keesha Alexandra Carpenter	Fine Art
Miss Kehinde Adeeyo	Business Management and Enterprise
Ms Laura Thorburn	Marketing and Media Communications
Ms Letisha Youmans	Social Work
Mr Muhammad Mahir Darvesh	Economics and Politics
Miss Mhari Grant	Sociology
Ms Muna Mohamed Hussein	Accounting and Finance
Miss Nuala Carolan Flannigan	Architecture BA
Miss Olubunmi Adefunke Bisola Obisesan	Law and Criminal Justice
Miss Rachel Louise Davenport	Human Communication: Speech and Language Therapy
Ms Rute Liliana Da Silva Magalhaes	Business Management and Enterprise
Miss Sara Denise Ferrao Jafar	Psychology
Ms Saida Salah	Global Hands Volunteer
Miss Zainab Rafik Bera	Photography and Video
Zamu Bamweyana	Psychology with Criminology
Ms Gina Ceri Thompson	Youth Community Development

The Report

This report will summarise the daily activities that took place from the 14th – 26th June 2014 in The Gambia. It is based on daily summaries of the trip by groups of five/six students. Objectives for the day will be given, along with reflections from participants. Almost every day, the group took part in reflection sessions named '42 minutes to go', which gave each participant one minute to share their thoughts on the previous day.

#DMUglobal The Gambia 2014 Objectives

- That participants will encounter life changing experiences that will impact on the way they perceive and interact with the world
- That participants will gain an understanding of the impact of globalisation, politically, culturally, environmentally, technologically and economically
- That the participants will learn physically about cultural differences and different constructions of reality.
- That participants will engage in sustainable development and capacity building initiatives
- That the participants will explore development issues from a Southern perspective; challenging orthodoxy configurations of ways of knowing and being
- That participants will further develop critical literacy and global literacy



Day 1: Travelling to The Gambia

Objectives:

- Arrive safely in The Gambia
- Make sure everyone settles in well and are familiar with each other

Forty-two participants, including DMU staff, students and Global Hands staff travelled to The Gambia on the 14th June 2014. Most left De Montfort University (DMU) campus at 3.30am via coach, and a number of students met the rest of the group at Gatwick Airport a few hours later. Despite it being very early in the morning, everyone was extremely excited about the journey ahead.

The total travel time was around 24 hours, with a transit at Barcelona before heading to Banjul in The Gambia. We arrived at the hotel in Kololi by bus, where the hotel staff and Global Hands Gambia staff welcomed us. The bus was kindly loaned to us for our entire trip by the University of The Gambia.

“I cannot wait to arrive in The Gambia and start experiencing the culture!”

“Everyone was so excited, even though most of us had no idea what we were getting ourselves into.”

“It was a huge culture shock when I arrived.”

“The lengthy journey was worth it when we arrived to the smiling faces of The Gambia.”



Day 2: Visit to Serakunda Market & the beach

Objectives:

- To understand the concept of globalisation and its impact on the communities in The Gambia (politically, culturally, environmentally, technologically and economically)
- To understand how issues are linked between the personal, local, national and global
- To reflect on Globalization within Serrekunda Market

The morning started with the first '42 minutes to go' session, where students reflected on the journey and their first impressions. Many students seemed overwhelmed at first but had settled in overnight.

Participants then headed to Serrekunda Market, along with Global Hands (GH) Gambia staff; each reflection group was guided by a GH member through the market. Whilst at the market, participants were to look for signs of globalisation to discuss later in the day. The aim of the market trip was for participants to get an insight into daily Gambian life and get involved.

After visiting Serrekunda Market, all participants headed to the beach to enjoy the sunshine and reflect on what was seen at the market. Participants shared their observational analysis and we reflected on how globalisation affects us at the personal, local, national and global levels. Everyone enjoyed lunch on the beach, which was prepared by the hotel, and got to know each other a little more. Later on, we were greeted by local Gambians with their handmade instruments, where we danced along to traditional music.

“The beach was amazing, beautiful golden sand and clear blue sea.”

“We got a lot of attention on the beach and I was surprised to hear that the Gambian people were banned from the beach in peak season from 9-5, this I thought was wrong.”

“Serrekunda Market was very overwhelming and was quite a culture shock as it was so different to the way of life back home.”

“It was an eye opener to see the way people here tried to make a living.”



Day 3: Visit from British Deputy High Commissioner, National Museum visit, Kachikally Crocodile Pool & Manduar

Objectives:

- To explore and understand the role of the British Embassy in The Gambia
- Understand the impact of colonialism and imperialism in shaping the British Empire
- To familiarise participants with the Development Hub
- Engage with the locals of Manduar and appreciate difference in culture, through a cultural festival
- To learn about the culture and participate in the traditional dancing

The morning started off with a 42-minute reflection session and a visit from the British Deputy High Commissioner in The Gambia. He was able to share with the group his role and responsibilities whilst working in The Gambia, and we got a real insight into the influence the British have on Gambian society.

The Journey over to The National Museum of The Gambia was made, where we were given an introductory talk, in which the importance of the River that runs through The Gambia was explained. The group was then free to explore the museum, with help from the employees of the museum.

Later, all participants went to Kachikally Crocodile Pool where everyone got the opportunity to touch a crocodile! It is believed that the pool and the crocodiles have supernatural powers and can help people who have fertility problems.

After lunch we made our way to Manduar, on our arrival a huge crowd of people welcomed us, which was quite overwhelming and emotional. Participants were able to chat to the locals, before being escorted to the Development Hub to see the progress of development. After visiting the Hub we were escorted to the area where the cultural festival was to take place. During the festival we were treated to tradition singing and dancing, drama performances and football tricks. Global Hands staff and DMU staff then presented the Manduar Football team with their very own kit, and Leicester City FC kit kindly donated by the club. After the cultural festival, some participants stayed with families in the village, whilst others went back to the hotel.

“As a group we were all very taken aback and emotional.

“Everyone felt quite apprehensive as there were just so many people!

“The cultural festival was amazing; you could see how much effort was put into the event.”

“The amount of people surrounded us and the number of children that wanted to hold my hand was so overwhelming, the children however were so lovely.”

“After a hot, sweaty, bumpy journey we arrived to a very overwhelming welcome, it was amazing to see how many people had come out to welcome us and was so happy to see us.”



Day 4: Manduar Village

Objectives:

- To fully immerse into Gambian life, have a feel of rural areas with the families and spend the whole day there

Thirty-four of the 42 participants stayed overnight in the village – and the others headed back to Manduar in the morning to be paired up with a local family. A varied day was had by all which all depended on their families working lives and roles. Participants helped cook the family meal, go shopping in the market, look after the children, and harvest cashew nuts.

At the end of the day, everyone was picked up from their family's home to return to the hotel for a relaxing evening. That evening, some participants headed over to West Coast Radio, to be interviewed live about the trip to The Gambia, the partnership between Global Hands and DMU and the upcoming book launch. Placements for the next few days were also announced to the participants. Participants selected their area of interest back home before the trip, which Global Hands then arranged with various organisations in The Gambia.

“Staying with a family in the village made me feel so blessed and at peace, their lifestyles are completely at the other end of the spectrum compared to ours, which was so refreshing. I fully immersed myself in their culture by collecting water from the water pump, going to the market with the women to purchase food and cooking with them. I also had to clean myself by using a bucket of water whilst being naked outside. This was an experience that was second to none as it made me appreciate the basic utilities we take for granted back home such as a hot electric shower.”

“This time has made me look at my life and realise how lucky I am, and how not everything revolves around your wealth, but your happiness and value in your family and friends.”

“Spending the day with Gambian natives made me grow as an individual, they helped me to realise what is important in life. Gambians value family and spend most part of the day together. Simple gestures such as taking mango from the tree reassesses how we can easily become happy - the family is always content with what they have.”

“My favorite part of the experience was giving the family their presents and teaching them how to play snap. The adults loved it and kept asking us to play and also showed us other card games that they play. One was called Crazy 8 which is basically Uno but using a standard pack of cards.”



Day 5: Placements

Objectives:

- For participants to understand the fields they are interested in from their Southern counterparts

The bus left early where it was to drop off participants at their placement. They all went in groups to various organisations around the local area. The organisations participants went to are as follows:

- American Corner
- Gambia Press
- National Museum
- Starfish
- Martin Signs and Designs
- Family Planning Centre
- The University of The Gambia

Reflection in the evening was very interesting as participants all had different days, and different experiences to compare:

“We interacted with the people and listened to their stories as well as engaged in political debates with an intern at the Corner. That said, the children enjoyed being read stories and enjoyed our company. This was a rewarding experience as it opened our eyes to the realities of the Gambian people. It was also interesting to find out about the link the Gambia has with the U.S in providing opportunities to apply for scholarships to study in the U.S. This highlighted the determination, hard work and ambition that students in The Gambia strive for in order to better their lives.”

- Students who went to American Corner

“We were shown the lecture rooms, computer rooms and the archives of newspapers. Due to the students having exams that day we were limited to what we wanted to achieve. Instead the head teacher organised a small activity for us and asked if we could help create a leaflet for the two year photojournalist course starting in 2015.”

- Zainab Bera, who did a placement at Gambia Press

“A few of us went to the regional health centre and after having a brief meeting with the regional health management team, including the regional director, nutritional officer, nurse and midwife who was vocal on the primary care and the administrator of the regional hospital. We learnt about the three levels of care within the health centre; primary, secondary and tertiary. Following this we separated into different departments according to our areas of interest, including maternity, psychiatry and dentistry.”

- Students who went to The Regional Health Centre

“I spoke in detail with a staff member regarding the colonial period relative to The Gambia. I was asked for advice regarding the cosmetics of the museum as staff members wanted to make the National Museum more appealing to EU tourists. I felt that this experience was extremely informative and educational for my personal interests and felt successful in the chosen specifics I undertook.”

- Calvin Tooby, who did a placement at the National Museum

Day 6: Placements

Objectives:

- To continue in learning about a chosen field from our Southern counterparts

Today participants were given the option to continue with their placement or have a free day. Many placements were suitable for just one day unfortunately, for example the visit to schools and universities as exams were taking place - meaning normally scheduled lessons were cancelled. Many participants went to Manduar to work on the Hub for the day, whilst others returned to their placements from the previous day or went to a new one which was set up through a new contact – at an organisation called Child Fund, which works at an international level to secure sponsorship from around the world for children who are in need.

Most of the participants later met at the beach to relax after placements. Once back at the hotel, most participants watched the England vs Uruguay World Cup game, which we sadly lost!



Day 7: Free Morning & Book Launch

Objectives:

- To appreciate Gambian literature
- To gain an understanding of publishing counter orthodoxy perspectives

All participants enjoyed a free morning, before our planned activity in the afternoon. Participants went to the local monkey park, beach, and market; some were lucky enough to get the chance to visit the local Mosque for prayers or some simply relaxed in the hotel.

In the afternoon, around 3pm the group made their way over to the University of The Gambia for a book launch. The book is called 'A Harvest of Gambian Lines', which is a poetry book written by young local Gambians published by Global Hands Publishing. It started with everyone sitting in the audience listening to an array of tunes, before the host of the evening, Ayolah, introduced the special guests. We were treated to readings of the poems by their passionate authors, drama performances from local students and a musical performance by a local band.

After the book launch, everyone returned to the hotel for dinner.

“Having a free morning allowed me to interact with the local people and see their way of life without the hassle of being in a big group, and enabled me to embrace the African culture.”

“In the afternoon we ventured to the book launch at The Gambia University; it was an amazing experience after having a free morning”

“The event gave us an educational insight into the literature taught at The Gambia University.”



Day 8: GAMCOTRAP & Visit to SANDELE

Objectives:

- To explore the gender dimension of globalisation and the local activities of a national organisation to address inequality
- To practically experience examples of local action to promote social justice
- To explore the environmental dimension of globalisation and sustainable development, responsible tourism and to relax and reflect in a social space

On day 8, all participants visited The Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (GAMCOTRAP). They are a women's rights organisation who fight tirelessly in the area of sexual health and rights. Special emphasis is given to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to raise awareness of the harmful traditional practice around the world. It was an early start, due to it being National Cleaning day, which means no cars are allowed on the roads between 9am and 1pm.

We were all welcomed by the directors and volunteers of GAMCOTRAP, who then went on to tell us about their journey and their fight against FGM, followed by a presentation on FGM. The presentation is the same one that the organisation uses to educate Gambians across the country. We learnt about the different types of FGM, the health consequences, the reasoning behind it and the work that GAMCOTRAP does to raise awareness of the harmful effects of this tradition.

Whilst visiting the organisation, Amy White, DMU Square Mile Project Officer, got the chance to see how the computers that were donated by DMU Square Mile on the previous trip in January were being used. They have been vital pieces of equipment in aiding GAMCOTRAP's fight against FGM. They have been able to use social media to its full potential in raising awareness.

After lunch was delivered and eaten, we headed over to Sandele Eco-Retreat, which took around an hour on the bus. Sandele is a sustainable development hotel, promoting responsible tourism. The two British nationals, Jenny and Moris, who developed the resort, buy their produce locally and 70% of their staff is from the local village.

Whilst at Sandele, the participants enjoyed some time on the beach and in the very warm sea, before heading for dinner prepared by the hotel. Shortly after dinner, we were given a short talk from Jenny and Moris, who shared with us their story of getting to where they are today.

“We met some very inspirational women who spoke about their previous experiences about going through FGM and fighting for the right to stop Female Genital Mutilation.”

“Today I have learnt a lot about FGM in The Gambia, before I visited GAMCOTRAP I had no idea how big the issue was and was shocked at the figures!”

“I found the whole presentation very emotional and it has made me more aware of this issue, not only in The Gambia but worldwide and I feel determined to help stop this.”



Day 9: Practically building the Development Hub at Manduar

- Understand the concept behind the Hub as an instrument to combat global inequality and underdevelopment
- Offer hands-on service towards the development of the Hub
- Reflect on how participants can support the development of the Hub

Today the participants all returned to Manduar to practically work on the Community Hub. We were given a short talk from the architect who designed the refurbishment of the Hub. The building had previously been damaged by a fire. He gave everyone a health and safety briefing, as well as informing us of the plan for the day and the future plans for the hub. Everyone worked as a team to complete work which needed to be done on the hub itself and the surrounding land. Participants were removing old bricks from the main site using wheelbarrows and by hand, digging foundations and knocking down walls.

The hard work under the sun was rewarded with a meal cooked by the local women, which was served in one of the family compounds. After lunch, everyone returned to the hotel for a free evening.



“Today was such hard work, and with the temperature over 35 degrees I think we all did very well at coping with the heat. I certainly will not be complaining about the English weather again!”

“I was lucky enough to visit the family which I had stayed with earlier in the week and I was given a beautiful Gambian dress which was hand made by the locals and was made from their traditional patterned materials.”

“I am excited about the prospect of the hub being self-sufficient, as we were informed that once complete, solar panels will be fitted which will absorb energy from the sun throughout the day, and will provide electricity for the hub.”

“I feel like I have helped out this community and offered my service to help develop the hub and I cannot wait until it is completed and is being used to combat global inequality!”

Day 10: Visit to Fort Bullen and Kunta Kinteh Island

- To explore and learn about the historical process of slavery in The Gambia and worldwide and its legacy
- To gain an understanding of the triangular slave trade

Today we headed to Kunta Kinteh Island, also known as St James' Island. We used the local river boats to take us across the river to the north side of the bank. We had to be carried from the bank on the Gambian men's shoulders, to the boat. When we arrived at the other side of the river, we headed to Fort Bullen. Here the guide gave us a tour of the museum and a small talk.

After this we took a short bus journey further up the river to Kunta Kinteh Island and were welcomed by the tour guides and locals. They also had a museum which taught us all the process of the slave trade and how innocent individuals were taken and sold in America. After a walk around the museum, we headed to a small canopy where we were entertained by music. After this we walked to the dining area where a massive buffet was served for us. After lunch we all headed down to the boats which took us out to the small island.

“The boat ride was an amazing experience but I was petrified of getting on the man's shoulders to get us off and on to the boat.”

“Travelling over to Kunta Kinteh Island by boat across the water was definitely one of the highlights of the entire trip! The view was beautiful and the sun was warm and I really enjoyed all the boat trips we made, even though I'm usually scared of the sea!”

“At Kunta Kinteh Island, a lot of the things I had learnt in the day at the museums became much more imaginable and emotional. Seeing the tiny areas in which people were kept, and told of how they were treated - on an Island with no easy escape route, it was much easier for us all to see what happened from another perspective.”

“The day we all went over to St James Island was by far one of the longest days out we had, and I was really happy with how much we managed to see and do! I felt like I learnt a lot about the history of the slave trade in The Gambia.”

“St James Island was such an amazing experience; you could really feel the history all around it. The guides gave an in-depth account of how many people would be forced into a small cell in order to weaken them. Reading about the history of the slave trade can never really prepare you for its realities in the same way as being there and seeing it first-hand.”



Day 11: Seminar at The Gambia University

Objective:

- To Gain a glimpse of the education system in The Gambia
- To enrich our knowledge and learn about Globalization within The Gambia

During our trip to the Gambia we had the opportunity to attend a seminar based on Globalisation at the University of Gambia. We discussed ideas and interchanged views based on how people can develop international influence and operate on an international scale, as well as raised issues on how to widen and deepen our global interconnection. Furthermore, we got to learn about the major factors which affect the globalising processes; economic, social and cultural independence, work organisation and the natural environment.

Later that evening we celebrated Abdoulie's 40th Birthday. Chairs and tables and a humongous buffet were placed around the pool and it really gave us the chance to relax and have fun as a group. The evening gave us the chance to celebrate our achievements whilst being in The Gambia and really get to socialise with the Global Hands Gambia group. We danced the night away and ended up in the clubs in the centre of Serrekunda.

“The seminar has been one of the most influential and powerful moments of the trip not only for the Gambian students but also for us, the ‘lucky ones’. As Dr Momodou Sallah said, ‘No one can define who you are, you are the only one who can do that.’”

“The seminar was very interesting and built upon my knowledge of globalisation around the world and how third world countries rely so much on development and their links for the trade industry.”

“It was all very interesting but I was really taken back by the passion expressed by both the lecturers and students standing to ask questions. There were also some cultural activities that took place in between which as always were impressive!”



Day 12: Graduation Ceremony at The Gambia College and farewell party

- To Gain a glimpse of the education system in The Gambia
- To reflect on the whole study trip
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the study visit
- To celebrate the new friendships and the success of the trip

For the last day of the trip, most of the students attended a graduation ceremony at the Hermann Gmiener Technical High School during the morning. Once we arrived, we were greeted by the principal of the school, Mr Ousianou Drammeh. He welcomed us and we shook hands. Once seated at the ceremony, it was so heart-warming to see how many students, parents and members of the school were there to embrace and witness everyone's success and achievements. The ceremony began with important individuals and guest speakers such as Dr Momodou Sallah, communicating inspirational messages, particularly directed at the students. As well as speeches, it was great to see some of the students performing drama pieces, it was clear to see how talented and passionate they were. The Gambian students who performed the best in certain subjects were called to the front and were presented with prizes. Some of the DMU students were given the opportunity to present some of the prizes to the students.

Once the ceremony ended, we were given some lunch and then we headed back to the hotel. After this the students were given some free time to do what they wanted as well as to pack their suitcase. Some students decided to go back to the craft market. When it was time to go and leave for the airport, it was sad to see everyone go, as we had all formed a lot of friendships.

“Witnessing all of this, allowed me to reflect and remember when I left school, and how I felt. The ceremony brought back some emotional memories and it made me realise how lucky I am to be studying at university, and how much my parents have helped me to get to where I am today. Overall, this experience has provided me with more insight into the life of a student at a Gambian college.”

“I personally felt that everyone was so close and this ceremony brought everyone together as one.”

“I was lucky enough to be able to present a prize to one of the students which was a great honour to witness. Especially to see how proud the Gambian students' parents were when their child was presented with the prize- I was extremely touched by this.”

“Momodou spoke about the challenges he has faced to be where he is today, and how he overcame them providing the students with hope, strength, motivation and something to aspire to. Video cameras captured every moment throughout the ceremony, giving us all something to keep and cherish from a memorable day.”

