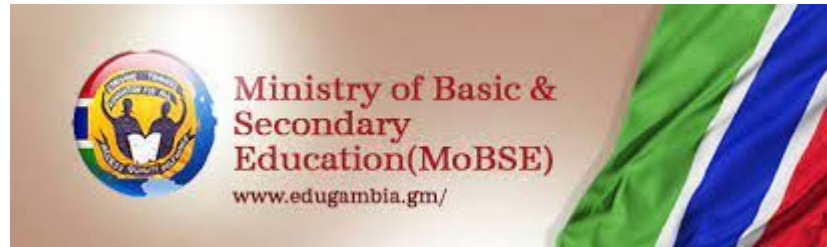


Think Equal

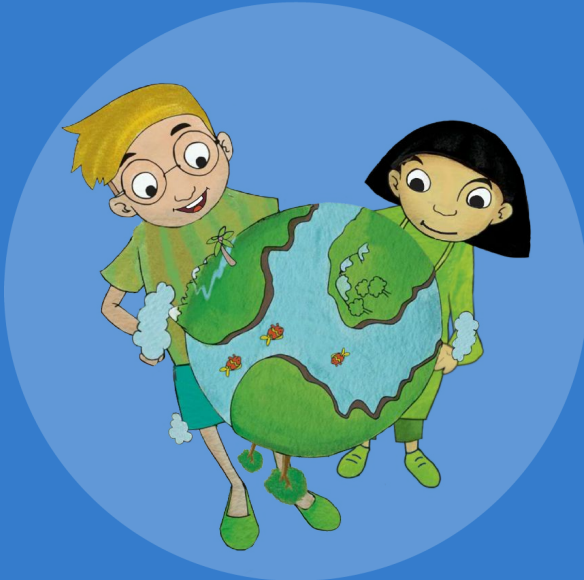
The Gambia

August 2024



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The Gambia 2024



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Background: Think Equal

- Social and emotional learning programme rooted in social justice and mental health for 3–6 year olds.
- Designed by global experts in the fields of education, neuroscience, psychology and human rights.
- 30 week programme, 3 lessons a week, with 24 narrative picture books, 90 lesson plans and 50+ best practice resources plus training (digital or in-person).
- Think Equal covers 25 skills and competencies (as seen in the heart graphic on the right).
- Think Equal is in 30 countries and has reached over 360,000+ children.
- Not only a preventative programme also a direct Covid-response to support children with mental health and wellbeing, social justice and psychosocial skills.
- Evidence based, cost-effective, replicable and scalable.



Background: The Gambia

- ❑ The Gambia has a high Gender Based Prevalence Rate. One in three women in The Gambia experience sexual or physical violence in their lifetime. As stated in the [2019/20 Demographic and Health Survey](#), 9% of women between ages 15 to 49 have experienced sexual violence, 40% of ever-married women have been subjected to either physical, sexual, or emotional violence by their current or most recent partners, and 51% of women and 35% of men in The Gambia agree that wife beating is acceptable.
- ❑ It has been estimated that about [120 000 of the population are affected by mental illness](#), but 90% of these people do not access mental health services for their conditions.
- ❑ The Think Equal program assists in tackling GBV and mental health challenges by promoting gender equality, empathy, and emotional intelligence from a young age. By challenging harmful stereotypes, empowering girls, and fostering healthy relationships and communication skills, Think Equal equips children with the tools to recognize and prevent GBV while promoting positive mental health. The program creates a supportive environment for addressing these issues comprehensively and promoting holistic well-being among children and communities.



Project Overview

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| GOAL | Transform the The Gambia by investing in children foundationally at ECD Level 2 |
| OBJECTIVE | <p>Reach a total of 1040 ECD Level 2 in Public and Private classrooms across the Gambia by the end of August 2025.</p> <p>Phase 1 (pilot) will reach 300 ECD Level Public and Private classrooms in Region 2 from September 2023 to August 2024.</p> <p>Phase 2 (roll out) will reach the remaining 740 ECD Level 2 Private classrooms across the country from September 2024.</p> |
| ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Scoping and training of teachers.○ Distribution of Think Equal materials.○ Monitoring of participating teachers○ Evaluation of Think Equal impact.○ Reporting. |



Partnership with the Ministry



- ❑ The Think Equal program has received full endorsement from the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education in The Gambia.
- ❑ MoBSE has played a vital role in facilitating the successful rollout and implementation of the pilot project. They provided us with a list of ECD classrooms across the country, assisted in sourcing translators to translate and review our materials into Mandinka and Wolof, and encouraged the participation of teachers and schools in the program by sharing a signed endorsement letter from the Former Permanent Secretary Ebrima Sisawo and Director of ECD, Anna Nancy Mendy.
- ❑ As we prepare to expand the project into the rest of the country, we are currently formalizing our partnership through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and eagerly anticipate the continued support and endorsement from MoBSE.



Implementing Partner: Future in Our Hands, The Gambia (FIOHTG)



- ❑ Think Equal has partnered with Future In Our Hands, The Gambia to ensure the effective implementation of the programme.
- ❑ FIOHTG is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that has been dedicated to rights-based rural development through education and capacity building in The Gambia since 1979.
- ❑ FIOHTG focuses on various areas of intervention, including education, women empowerment, community development, advocacy, and other important global issues such as climate change, gender equality, health, and literacy.
- ❑ **To ensure the effective implementation of the Think Equal programme, FIOHTG has employed a Full-time Programme Manager 3 Pedagogical Advisors and 3 Assistant Pedagogical Advisors.**
- ❑ This team has been trained and equipped by Think Equal with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide teacher training, support program implementation, and monitor and evaluate its impact effectively.



Language Approach

- ❑ Gambia is a multilingual nation which has identified 7 local languages as their main languages.
- ❑ Although Think Equal is a standardised programme, it is critical that children are able to understand the key concepts and are able to use the language in the programme to help with their ability to express themselves
- ❑ It is for this reason **we have translated the Think Equal Materials into Mandinka and Wolof and have incorporated these languages into book alongside the English.**
- ❑ We will be translating the remaining languages in printed format and in form of voice recordings which can be shared via whatsapp and stored on flash drives additionally a video recording will be made available for children who communicate through sign language. This is to ensure that we accommodate all the children of Gambia and will be completed ahead of further expansion from 2025 onwards.
- ❑ At present a total of 4 languages have been translated: Mandika, Olof, Jola and Fula.

Hooray for me, hooray for you,
I am marvellous, and you are too!

Hooray ngir man, hooray ngir yaw,
maa doo waar ak yow miil

Kontaanoo be n ye, kontaanekuwo be i fanaa ye,
nte mu dinkendoo le ti, adug i fanaa mu wo le ti!



Example of Think Equal book in the Gambia: English, Wolof and Mandinka

Project Summary: Overview

| | REACH | TARGET |
|------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Number of Classrooms | 300 | 300 |
| Number of Children (approx*) | 9864 | 9864 |

| | REACH | TARGET | % |
|----------|-------|--------|------|
| Region 2 | 300 | 300 | 100% |

*Approximation of children reached based on average national class size being 33 per class

Project Summary: Timeline

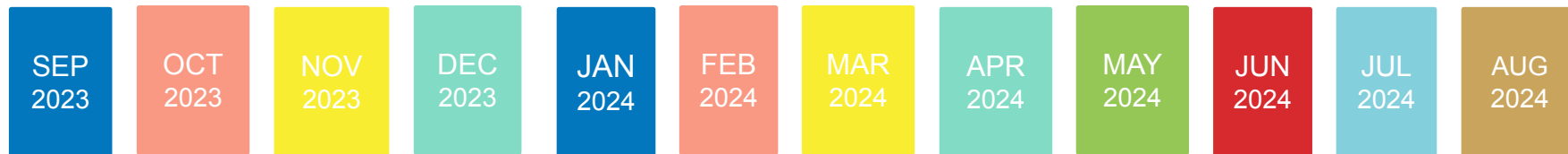


**SCHOOL
YEAR
STARTS**

**SCHOOL
YEAR
ENDS**

**Teacher Training
Distribution of
Materials**

**Refresher Teacher
Training
Focus group**



**Gather list of Classrooms
Data Collection exercise
Print materials
Schedule training sessions.**

**Implementation of
30 weeks begins!
Baseline Child
Assessment**

**End of Year Teacher
Questionnaire
Endline Child
Assessments**

Think Equal Implementation 30 weeks

- **Check-ins (via whatsapp).**
- **Sample of site visits**

Teacher Training

- ❑ Teacher training took place from November 18, 2023, to December 9, 2023. During this period, 258 teachers were trained, leaving 42 teachers untrained.
- ❑ An additional teacher training session was arranged to meet the target of 300 teachers. A total of 32 teachers attended this supplementary training.
- ❑ The remaining 9 teachers who couldn't attend the second session received one-on-one training from PAs and APA in their respective schools.
- ❑ Teacher trainings were conducted on weekends per the recommendation of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education to minimize classroom teaching time loss.
- ❑ Overall, the teacher training was successful and received positive feedback from the participating teachers.

| Date of Training | Number of Teachers Attended Training |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 18 November 2023 | 33 |
| 19 November 2023 | 41 |
| 25 November 2023 | 49 |
| 26 November 2023 | 39 |
| 2nd December 2023 | 46 |
| 3rd December 2023 | 19 |
| 9th December 2023 | 32 |
| January 2024(one-on-one) | 9 |
| Total | 300 |



"THINK EQUAL is here for us especially with the use of narrative picture books, it's very simple to show the children and as a deaf child it easier to understand with the use of narrative books, When I go back to my school, I will implement all that I have learnt at the training."

Abi expressed her gratitude to the Think Equal team for the training ,she added that the lesson plan are ready-made for teacher which, makes teaching and learning more effective.



Abi Jammah.
A teacher from Gadhooh
Nursey School for the
Deaf , with her translator.

Monitoring of the Project

The PAs and APAs began their monitoring activities on January 6, 2024, each overseeing 50 classrooms across Region 2. They played a crucial role in monitoring 25 to 30 schools monthly, ensuring that teachers receive the necessary guidance and support to effectively implement Think Equal.

In addition to the PA and APA monitoring, the Think Equal Africa Programme Coordinator observed four Think Equal classes during her visit to The Gambia. Midway through the project, the Country Director at FIOHTG, accompanied by the Think Equal Project Manager, conducted a monitoring visit, observing six Think Equal classes. A separate weeklong monitoring exercise was also carried out by FIOHTG's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning Officer as well.

This extensive monitoring effort ensured robust support for teachers, leading to effective project implementation. Over the course of the project, a total of **423 site visits** were recorded by the PAs and APAs.



Picture 1: PA instructing the teacher on how to fill in caregiver assessment form

Picture 2: PA providing teachers with feedback after site observation

Site Visit Observations

Positive Observations:

- ❑ **Classroom Management:** 95.5% of teachers maintained classroom control with respect and warmth.
- ❑ **Gender Equality:** 91.5% of teachers treated boys and girls equally in the classroom.
- ❑ **Positive Communication:** 93.4% of teachers avoided making any critical or negative remarks about the children.
- ❑ **Teacher-Learner Relationship:** In 423 site visits, 295 classrooms rated the teacher-learner relationship as 8 or higher out of 10.
- ❑ **Contribution to Literacy:** 72.6% of teachers actively taught vocabulary words, contributing positively to literacy.
- ❑ **Appreciation of Children's Ideas:** 77.5% of teachers mostly or completely genuinely appreciated children's comments and ideas.
- ❑ **Understanding of Lesson Content:** 88.1% of children demonstrated a general understanding of the lesson content.
- ❑ **Engagement in Lessons:** In 192 classrooms, children were mostly engaged with the lesson content.
- ❑ **Attention and Focus:** 72.3% of children rarely lost attention or became distracted when not actively involved.
- ❑ **Overall Lesson Rating:** Out of 423 classrooms observed, 269 received a rating of 7 or higher for the overall Think Equal lesson.
- ❑ When asked about the quality of materials and translation teachers responded: *"the materials are good, the books are big the children engage better, translations is very good"*

Areas of improvement:

- **Use of Positive Language:** Only 27% of teachers consistently used positive language, with 23.2% using it sometimes.
- **Lesson Competencies and Outcomes:** Only 16.3% of teachers fully adhered to lesson competencies and outcomes, with 27.4% somewhat adhering.
- **Use of Think Equal Activities:** In 149 classrooms, there was no evidence of the use of Think Equal activities.
- **Use of Stereotyped Language:** 64.3% of teachers addressed children using stereotyped language.
- **Teacher Preparation:** Only 15.6% of teachers were fully prepared before teaching the Think Equal lesson.
- **Appropriate Use of Lesson Materials:** Only 23.8% of teachers mostly used the lesson materials appropriately.
- **Following the Lesson Plan:** Only 105 teachers completely followed the lesson plan instructions.



Site Visits



Teacher Feedback

"Think Equal has come at a time where the Gambia really needs it. Considering the violence, we experience every day. I was amazed after my first lesson with the kids, when a child tells me aunty Fatou, I will never talk back at my sister again. This really shows the important of Think Equal to the kids"

Feedback from Fatoumata Jallow of Omega nursery school,

"My children love the stories and since I have started teaching Think Equal, I have seen so many positive impacts for my students"

Feedback from Adam Muhammed from King Kid Academy(Lamin Village)

"I feel so much joy having to teach Think Equal in my class. This is my first time teaching it using Marvelous Me and am so excited. The children loved it, it has ignited kids emotionally. Their participation is just wonderful and lovely."

Feedback from Fatou Laye from Kingston Nursery School

"The Think Equal project is timely because the syllabus alone is enough to train our children, children are deviating from cultural norms, leading to violent behavior. However, with the intervention of Think Equal, the children—who are the future leaders and lawmakers—will be exposed to positive attitudes, fostering the development of peaceful communities."

Feedback from Aminata from Lybert Preparatory School

Refresher Training Sessions

On April 20th and 21st, 2024, FIOH, in collaboration with MoBSE, conducted refresher training sessions for teachers in Region Two. This training was organized to address specific challenges identified during the implementation of the Think Equal Pilot project in The Gambia.

During the project's implementation, it was observed that many teachers lacked confidence in delivering Think Equal lessons. Challenges included the lengthy nature of the lessons, difficulties in adhering to the step-by-step methodology outlined in the lesson plans, and confusion surrounding certain activities. These factors led to inconsistencies in the program's implementation.

To tackle these issues, PAs and APAs closely monitored the progress of Think Equal in classrooms across Region Two, providing one-on-one guidance to teachers. To date, they had supported 179 teachers; however, 121 teachers still require additional support as they were in remote locations. . Consequently, refresher training sessions were organized to specifically address the needs of these remaining teachers, ensuring a more consistent and effective implementation of the Think Equal program.

The training sessions were led by PAs and APAs, who served as trainers in their respective zones. Each zone was allocated up to two days for training, depending on the number of teachers needing support. Representatives from the MoBSE also participated, offering valuable support for the Think Equal program's classroom implementation.

The training was highly interactive and facilitative, with trainers encouraging discussions in participants' native languages and providing ample opportunities for feedback and questions. These sessions successfully equipped teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to create supportive and inclusive environments for young children, thereby fostering their emotional and social development.



Evaluation of the Project

To assess the impact of the Think Equal programme on children and teachers, Baseline and Endline assessments, along with an End of Programme Review Questionnaire, were conducted by the local implementing partner. The Baseline was completed in January, and the Endline in June, involving 391 children for the Baseline and 392 for the Endline, across 300 pilot classrooms. Due to delays, the maximum recorded implementation was 23 weeks, with the majority of classrooms implementing between 10 and 15 weeks.

Teacher feedback was collected from **41 teachers** through the End of Programme Review Questionnaire. The assessments required consistency in evaluating the same children at both Baseline and Endline stages. However, discrepancies necessitated a data cleaning process, ensuring that each child's data was accurate and complete. Criteria for validation included matching details like the child's name, sex, school, and caregiver's name. Non-matching data was excluded, except for minor errors like spelling mistakes or expected changes such as age.

After cleaning, **119 children** were assessed using the Caregiver Form and **96 children** through the Direct Child Assessment. Data analysis was conducted using Excel and Python.



Caregiver Form Results

Positive Observations

- ❑ **Confidence Levels:** Significant increase in children's confidence, with 49.6% very frequently displaying confidence by the end of the programme, up from 35% at the baseline.
- ❑ **Perseverance:** Notable improvements, with the number of children who very frequently demonstrated perseverance doubling by the endline assessment.
- ❑ **Problem-Solving Abilities:** Increased problem-solving skills, with 50.4% of children very frequently demonstrating these abilities by the endline, compared to 31.9% at baseline.
- ❑ **Interest in Learning:** Enhanced interest in learning, with 52.9% of children very frequently showing interest, a significant increase from 35.3% at the baseline.
- ❑ **Helping Others:** Improvement in children's helpfulness, with 64.7% being very often helpful, up from 54% at the baseline.
- ❑ **Recognizing and Discussing Others' Feelings:** Increased ability to recognize and talk about others' feelings, with 53 children very often demonstrating this ability, compared to 46 at the baseline.
- ❑ **Playing Well with Others:** Better peer interaction, with 73.9% of children very often playing well with others, up from 61.3% at the baseline.
- ❑ **Sharing:** Increased sharing behavior, with 53.8% of children almost always sharing by the endline, up from 44.5% at the baseline.
- ❑ **Communication:** Improved clarity in communication, with a 20% increase in children almost always communicating clearly by the endline.
- ❑ **Behavior:** Reduced violent behavior, with 52.1% of children never hitting others, an improvement from 42% at the baseline.
- ❑ **Congratulating and Complimenting:** Significant improvement in children's ability to congratulate and compliment each other, with 68.9% almost always doing so by the endline.
- ❑ **Views on Gender Equality:** Improved perception of gender equality, with a significant increase in children frequently viewing boys and girls as equals.

Areas for Improvement:

- **Problem-Solving Abilities:** While problem-solving improved, there was an increase in the number of children who rarely demonstrated problem-solving abilities at the endline.
- **Views on Gender Equality:** Despite improvements, only 32.8% of children very frequently viewed boys and girls as equals by the endline, indicating room for further enhancement in promoting gender equality

Direct Child Assessment Results

Positive Observations:

- ❑ **Identifying Emotions:** The ability of children to identify emotions improved. By the endline, 22.9% of children could name more than one thing that made them sad, up from 7.3% at the baseline. Additionally, the number of children who failed to respond decreased from 20.8% to 9.4%.
- ❑ **Self-Regulation Techniques:** There was an increase in children naming more than one self-regulation strategy, from 2.1% at baseline to 13.4% at endline. Children also began mentioning specific techniques like deep breathing, indicating familiarity with Think Equal self-regulation strategies.
- ❑ **Empathy and Compassion:** Significant improvement in empathy, with 81.3% of children able to name at least one way to help someone in distress, up from 69.8% at baseline. The responses became more thoughtful and action-oriented, showing increased empathy.
- ❑ **Views on Gender Equality:** The percentage of children who believed both boys and girls are equally good at numbers increased significantly from 21.9% to 41.7%. The belief that both genders could be good teachers increased from 19 to 42 children by the endline. The number of children who believed both genders could be good police officers rose from 15 to 37 by the endline.
- ❑ **Views on the Environment:** A significant increase in children providing multiple correct responses about the importance of trees, from 7.3% at baseline to 33.3% at endline. The recognition of the negative impact of plastic on the environment increased, with 78.1% of children acknowledging this by the endline, up from 69.8%.
- ❑ **Ability to Observe and Articulate Differences:** Improved ability to articulate differences, with more nuanced and specific observations about physical and cultural differences by the endline.

Areas for Improvement:

- **Views on Gender Equality:** The belief that only girls can cook remained high at 80.2% by the endline, showing little change from 84.4% at baseline. Despite some improvement, a large proportion (40%) still believed boys are more likely to fly to space, with only a modest increase in those who believed both genders could do so (from 10.4% to 25%). While there was some progress, the belief that girls are better at caring for the sick remained relatively high at 37 children, indicating persistent gender stereotypes.

End of Programme Review Survey Results

Positive Observations

- ❑ **Programme Engagement:** All teachers were actively monitored by Programme Assistants, with 63.4% participating in the WhatsApp group and 12.2% attending refresher training sessions.
- ❑ **Overall Teaching Experience:** Most teachers rated their experience teaching Think Equal highly, with 11 giving it a perfect score of 10/10. Teachers appreciated the programme's impact on motivating students and improving communication skills.
- ❑ **Impact Beyond the Classroom:** 90.2% of teachers observed that the effects of Think Equal extended beyond the classroom, with students showing improved behavior during breaks and at home.
- ❑ **Teacher Adoption of Think Equal Strategies:** 90.2% of teachers successfully integrated Think Equal strategies into other areas of their teaching, enhancing students' critical thinking and engagement.
- ❑ **Teacher Awareness and Classroom Dynamics:** 80% of teachers rated their awareness of children's emotions between 4 and 5, and 90% teachers reported improved relationships with students, positively impacting classroom atmosphere.
- ❑ **Children's Enjoyment and Learning:** 92% of teachers strongly agreed that children enjoyed the Think Equal programme, with 82.9% of teachers noting a positive impact on children's overall learning, particularly in physical well-being, communication, and social relationships.
- ❑ **Willingness to Teach Again:** An overwhelming 97.6% of teachers expressed their willingness to teach Think Equal again, indicating high satisfaction.
- ❑ **General Feedback on Programme Value:** Teachers emphasized the programme's role in teaching love, kindness, and unity, suggesting it could lead to a remarkable transformation in The Gambia if sustained.

Areas for Improvement:

- **Translation and Material Challenges:** Teachers mentioned difficulties with the translation of materials, particularly into Mandinka, and suggested improving the translation for better understanding.
- **Support and Resources:** There were requests for more support with teaching materials and additional workshops, ideally at the end of each term, to better equip teachers and integrate the programme into the school's timetable.
- **Suggestions for Programme Improvement:** Teachers recommended including sign language materials, inviting more teachers to workshops, and encouraging school leaders to prioritize Think Equal, indicating areas where the programme could expand and improve its reach.

I have witnessed significant progress within the Think Equal program, with both teachers and children actively engaging in and enjoying the lessons. During my observations of teachers in their classrooms, I encountered a heartwarming moment where a teacher inquired about a child's mood. The child expressed feeling "red" due to not having money for school. The teacher, showing empathy and compassion, promised to provide the child with some money during break time to uplift her spirits before the lessons commenced. I was truly impressed by the child's ability to articulate her emotions at such a young age.

This encounter prompted me to advocate for the decentralization of the Think Equal program across all levels of the school. I discussed the significance of the program with my superiors, and we collectively decided to organize a step-down training session for all teachers in the Nursery sector. Since the implementation of these changes, I have observed a noticeable transformation in the school environment. The impact of the Think Equal program is evident, and I am grateful for the positive outcomes it has brought about. Thank you,



Teacher Testimonial
-Jankey Sonko Senior Teacher
Henriette



Challenges

| Challenge Identified | Challenge Handled | Lessons Learned |
|--|---|--|
| List of schools from MOBSE (Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education) is often outdated and incorrect. | Call the schools to confirm if the information shared by the Ministry and update when need be. In most cases when you can not get hold of the school, physically visit the school and request for updated information | Begin collecting the list of schools from MOBSE a months before the schools close for the holiday. |
| Delay Printing of Materials in the Gambia: Printer was not obliging to the contract. He only printed first 8 books plus the lesson plans and resource booklet. | Remaining books were printed through our Ukraine printers. The first 300 sets were shipped by air, the remaining 700 have been delivered by sea. All 1,000 sets were printed to lower per set cost | Do not relay on one printer and it is best to do a cost comparison analysis. |
| Clearance of Think Equal Material at Gambia entry port. | With the assistance of the PS we were able to get a duty waiver to clear our materials however we still had to pay taxes. | Requested support of the Director of Services Office to assist with the clearing of materials. |

Challenges

| Challenge Identified | Challenge Handled | Lessons Learned |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Limited time for teacher training and Poor attendance of teacher training</p> | <p>MOBSE only allows for teacher training to take place during the weekend. Therefore we planned trainings back to back Saturday and Sunday to ensure all teachers were trained. Additional training was offered for teachers who could not attend the trainings as well as one-on-one training by the PAs and APAs.</p> | <p>Have the teacher training towards the end of the school holiday and/or the first 2 weeks of the school year during the stabilisation period.</p> <p>Invite cluster monitors to the training as well to ensure project buy-in and participation from schools.</p> |
| <p>The implementation of Think Equal in classrooms has been delayed, with teachers lacking confidence to execute the program as intended. Additionally, Think Equal is not being implemented three times a week as initially planned.</p> | <p>PAs and APAs provided support to teacher during their monitoring visits, they have a debriefing session with the teachers to provide them with feedback on the session and pointers on what needs to improve.</p> | <p>Request for teachers to bring in their timetable to the teacher training. Have a 30 mins session where APAs and PAs assist teachers in fitting the TE lesson into their timetable to ensure it is implemented 3 times a week.</p> <p>Have a refresher training which focuses on the practical implementation of Think Equal in the classroom.</p> |

Challenges

| Challenge Identified | Challenge Handled | Lessons Learned |
|---|--|---|
| Limited use of the Resource Booklet due to unavailability of copying machines at schools. | The teachers, PAs and APAs were creative enough to duplicate pictures in the Resource Booklet and draw the activities needed using the available teaching aid. | Provide a Resource Pack for the teachers which include: paper, cardboards, markers and crayons. This is being implemented for these 300 teachers and for the next phase teachers. |
| Difficult to keep in consistent communication with the teachers via whatsapp. | APAs and PAs visit schools on a regularly to check in on the teachers. | Outside of using whatsapp provide alternative communication channels such as calling the teachers directly. Use the assistance of the cluster monitors to check in on the teachers as well. |

Achievements: Milestones

| Main Activities | Status | Details |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--|
| Scoping | Complete | With the support of MoBSE we were able to get the list of all the ECD Level 2 schools in Region 2 |
| Training of teachers | Complete | Achieved 100% target, ensuring all 300 teachers were trained. |
| Distribution of Think Equal Materials | Complete | This was completed during the in-person trainings. The remaining materials were hand delivered by FIOH to the schools. |
| Monitoring of participating teachers | Complete | A total of 423 site visits throughout the project year, meaning every school was visited at least once. Refresher training sessions were held to support teachers with implementation challenges in the classroom |
| Evaluation of Think Equal impact. | Complete | A total of 119 children were assessed for caregiver form, 96 children for the direct child assessment and 41 Teachers completed the end of programme review survey. All data has been recorded and categorized into positive observations and areas of improvement. |
| Reporting | Complete | Final Project Monitoring and Evaluation Report and Final Project Report have been compiled |

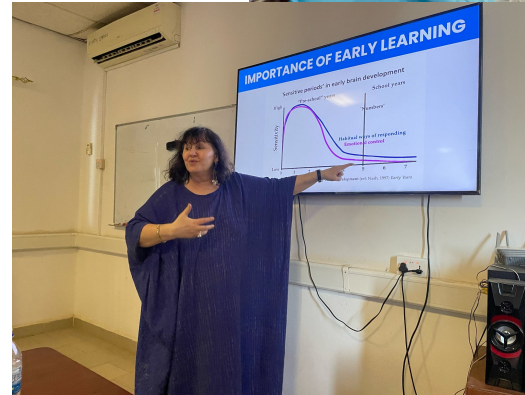
Achievements: Overview

- ❑ Achieving the target of 300 classrooms in Region 2.
- ❑ The Overwhelming interest among the schools of deaf, as they described Think Equal program as an all-inclusive approach to early child education.
- ❑ The Think Equal Team and Funder of the Project David Suddens visited the Gambia to see implementation of Think Equal in the Classroom and engage with Key stakeholders
- ❑ The distribution of the remaining Think Equal materials to the Teachers.
- ❑ The Launch of Think Equal in Partnership with the Gambia Teacher Prize Award



Project Highlight

- ❑ During Leslee Udwin's visit to The Gambia in February 2024, she conducted Master Trainings for key stakeholders to support the effective implementation of the program.
- ❑ On Wednesday, February 14, 2024, Leslee conducted a refresher Master Training for our APAs and PAs, who directly work with teachers and are responsible for implementation.
- ❑ On Saturday, February 17, 2024, Leslee conducted a Master Training for the 17 Cluster Monitors in Region 2, joined by 3 ECD Department Focal Points. The purpose of this training was to furnish these key stakeholders with knowledge about Think Equal, enabling them to offer support to teachers, oversee implementation, and uphold the sustainability of the program.
- ❑ These trainings were highly successful, enabling key stakeholders to understand the origins of Think Equal, its vision, mission, and the importance of teaching social and emotional skills from a young age, as presented by the founder of this remarkable organization.





Conclusion

In conclusion, the Think Equal programme's implementation in The Gambia has proven to be a resounding success, receiving enthusiastic support from key stakeholders, including Ministry officials, Implementing Partners, and participating teachers. The programme arrived at a critical time, addressing the urgent needs of Gambian children and demonstrating substantial positive impacts within a shortened implementation period of 10-15 weeks.

Throughout its pilot phase, Think Equal has significantly influenced both teachers and students, with 90.2% of educators successfully integrating its strategies into their teaching practices. This has resulted in enhanced classroom dynamics, improved critical thinking, communication, and social skills among students, and stronger teacher-student relationships. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from educators, with 97.6% expressing their eagerness to continue teaching the programme, further underscores its value.

While challenges were encountered, they have provided valuable insights that will guide the future expansion of Think Equal into other regions and ECD levels across The Gambia. The success of the pilot phase bodes well for the programme's ongoing implementation, promising to foster empathy, kindness, and social cohesion among Gambian children. As we look forward to the next phase beginning in September 2025, we are excited to witness the continued positive impact of Think Equal on the children of The Gambia and the transformative change it will bring to schools and communities across the country.





EMPOWERING CHANGE THROUGH EDUCATION

Project Coordinator Tिनotenda Chigeza:
tinotenda.chigeza@thinkequal.org