1. The School Project

1.1 Our context

The Gambia is an African country that is geographically delimited with Senegal and with the Atlantic Ocean, being the smallest continental country of all Africa, having 11,300 km2 of surface. It has a population that almost exceeds two million inhabitants. This small African country has a birth rate of 39.99 ‰ and a fertility rate of 5.49; which reveals information about the future of its population, which will grow substantially as years go by. The life expectancy was 55.9 years old in 2008 and the average of children per woman is 5.20. Among other indicators, the infant mortality rate - 76.1 of every 1,000 babies born live in 2008 - remains considerably high compared to countries such as Senegal and Ghana, which have the lowest rates in West Africa.

Regarding to their languages, English is the official languages for its colonial past, although there are languages associated with diverse ethnic groups, that are usually most used in their daily life. The ethnic languages in ascending order of speakers are Mandinka, Wolof, Fula and Jola. It is also estimated that 94% of Gambians profess the Muslim faith, with Islam being the official religion of the country, compared to 4% of Christians and the remaining 2% of different beliefs.

Our location is called Basori. It is located near the southern border with Senegal and near Brikama, a large city situated a few kilometres from the town. Basori has approximately 670,000 square meters and a length of 1 kilometre. The population has 5,000 inhabitants, of which around 3,000 are children. Most of them belong to the Mandinka ethnic group, which leads to the unfamiliarity of the English language.

According to education, the constitutions gives free access to Primary Education, but only 40% of the population is not illiterate. Considering the statistics handled by the Gambian Ministry of Education, the drop-out rate in the country is very high and especially affects girls. Girls represent 40% of primary school students, although the rate is much lower in the rural setting and where poverty does not allow their access to school. In relation to the same source, the main cause of this premature departure from the school is due to the inability of parents to pay school fees as well as the uniforms and books.

In the last years, the government of Banjul, together with the World Bank and other international institutions, has been working to improve the level of schooling in the country, having as a goal a universal schooling for all children at the primary level. This measure, however, does not include books or other school supplies such as the uniform, that is usually mandatory in most schools. The government has asked the parents to take care of these expenses.

Focusing on Basori, this small town has never had a nursery school, being Playing´s School and Valentín's School the firsts ones in the town. Regarding to Primary Education, the town has a Primary School and a Madrassa.

1.2 Our philosophy

1. **Community school**

Our mission is to involve the entire Educational Community in the creation of a Nursey Schoolfor the community, making them feel part of the school as well as the Teaching-Learning process of the generations to come. A reflexive process will be raised in families, students and teachers to develop a common vision of the School.

1. **School of respect**

Playing School is a school based on respect for diversity, gender and all the ideologies, beliefs and opinions that conform our social reality. What make us different is that all these ideas are transmitted by Sports.

1. **School of freedom**

We want to create free and critical citizens that participate actively in the construction and development of their own society.

1. **Teaching quality**

An individualized and quality education is going to be ensured so that the need of every student is attended. Thus, a good relationship with the Educative Community based on respect and confidence is needed.

1. **School out of class**

The use of alternative spaces, local traditions and festivities are tools that make possible the transmission of knowledge in a significative way. We truly believe in the environmental part of the School.

1. **Green school**

Becoming aware that we share our planet with different human beings and living things is an important task in education. Therefore, Playing School aim is to develop a sustainable School in which knowledge, caring and respect for the nature are taught.

1.3 Our aims

* To offer a quality education for children between 4 and 8 years old, covering all the objectives established by the Gambian curriculum to the Early Childhood and Lower Basic School.
* To educate our pupils so that they are able to fully develop their abilities and competences, which will allow them to face their next school years successfully.
* To respect and follow the Gambian curriculum as a teaching guide.
* To offer personalized attention and promote a comprehensive development of every child by making use of an active, positive and innovative methodology.
* To use sport as a fundamental part of our education and turn the sport practice into a resource to acquire values such as solidarity, collaboration, dialogue, tolerance, non-discrimination and gender equality.
* To guarantee an effective learning of the English language and thus facilitating the pupils’ transition to Primary Education.