

# A mission to Africa

## Rachel returns to help children

IT was meant to be a relaxing, dream holiday.

But Rachel Moon, of Newsome, came back with more than souvenirs from her first trip to Gambia.

She came back with a determination to help the terribly poor youngsters she met in a village and is now heading back into Africa on a vital mission.

She and a friend, Tara O'Neill, will fly out next month to continue their battle to improve school facilities for children in a tiny village.

Rachel, 24, head of marketing at Huddersfield-based business broker, Redwoods Dowling Kerr, is heading back to Tanji and is desperate to complete her mission to help local children get a decent education.

She says: "A few years ago I wanted to get away and booked a flight to the Gambian capital Banjul.

"I stayed in a hostel in Tanji where my friends and I met the locals living in the village. It soon became apparent that many of the local children could not go to school as their parents could not afford the tuition fees nor had money to buy books, pens and pencils.

"My friends and I decided to help and hit on the idea of getting sponsors to help these kids get a decent education."

For the past three years Rachel has

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sponsored a child called Hassan, who also has a 14-year-old twin brother Hussain.

Tara has raised money at her school to support his twin brother while Rachel pays for his school fees, books, school uniform, lunches and any other materials he needs for his schooling.

In addition, Rachel and Tara have sponsored another young man called Ansumana for the past two years who was unfortunate enough to have lost his mother and could not afford his schooling, which costs £180 a year alone in tuition fees.

Rachel says: "Ansumana is 19, but after his mother died his father couldn't afford to send him to school and he'd missed a number of years.

"He couldn't get a job because of his lack of education.

"While he is in a class of 16-year-olds, Ansumana will now finish his education which will enable him to find a job."

Rachel and Tara have found sponsorship, which starts at £35 a year, to send 12 children to school.

They have also raised hundreds of pounds to buy books, equipment and even football kits for the kids.

Rachel added: "It is extremely rewarding to know that as little as £35 a year can change a child's life".



■ **CALL FOR HELP:** Children in Tanji, Gambia, and below, in a local school (5)

