

## **George Cooper, Medical student at King's College University in London, Marlborough Gunjur Link**

George is doing an intercalated BSc in global health before commencing his clinical years at medical school. He first went to The Gambia two years ago as part of the Marlborough / Gunjur link and built a skills training centre with a group of other 6<sup>th</sup> form students. It was his first experience of Africa and the developing world. He applied to do a BSc in Global Health as a result of the visit to Gunjur. It also inspired him to travel out again last summer alongside another summer group and split his time between two projects. One was Starfish (malaria project) co-run by Marlborough Brandt Group and TARUD (partner NGO) and gave out bed nets (200 over the summer) to 5 different micro communities within Gunjur and raised awareness in the village of causes of malaria, life cycle of the mosquito and importance of using bed nets. He also worked in a local clinic alongside the health workers and gaining an insight into health care in a rural African setting in comparison to the NHS hospitals he is used to. It gave him an insight into a different world of medicine, one in which improvisation is key. It was an invaluable experience that has aided his medical training and will influence his future career. George is very keen to return to Gunjur as he has made lifelong friends with his host-family and other members of the community but also intends to see more of Africa and the developing world throughout his professional career.

The skill centre is still in the process of development but will be available to young people from a wider community than just Gunjur.