

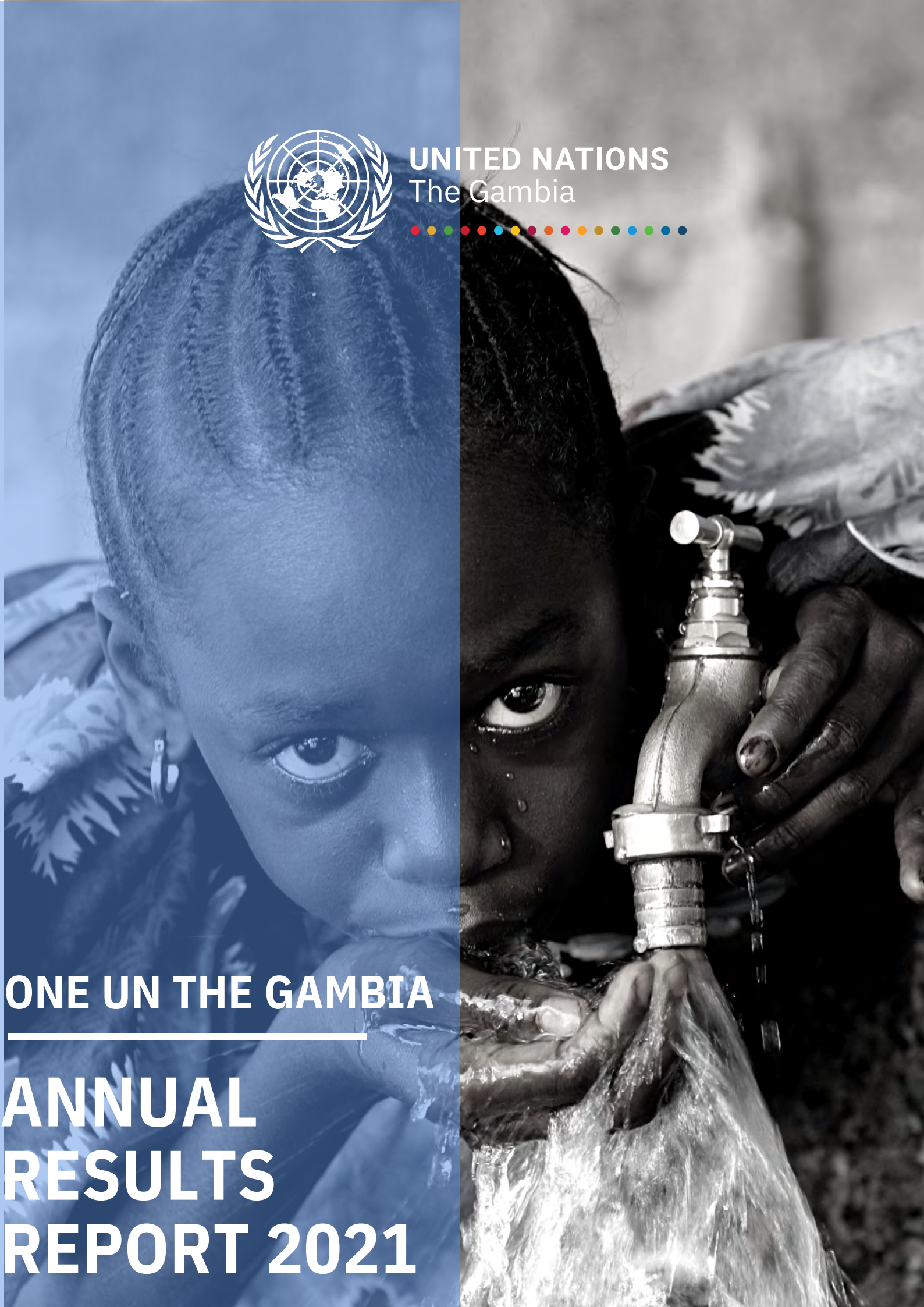


UNITED NATIONS  
The Gambia



ONE UN THE GAMBIA

ANNUAL  
RESULTS  
REPORT 2021



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# FOREWORD

On behalf of the UN Country Team (UNCT) in The Gambia, I am pleased to present the 2021 One UN Annual Results Report. The report details how the UN collaborated with the Gambian government and development partners, working together to fulfil the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, at national level as well as integrating the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) at the regional level. Notably, it demonstrates how we have concentrated our efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable populations.

The UN-The Gambia focused most of its efforts on providing curative assistance to improve the country's development by assisting communities, strengthening resilience, and ensuring security, peace, and social cohesion. Additionally, we supported development transformation by promoting good governance, investing in instruments for resolving land and natural resource disputes, and promoting sustainable farming techniques. We also contributed to sustaining development by promoting the rule of law, access to justice, and human rights.

One noted accomplishment in peacebuilding is the capacity building support provided through the transitional justice process which was Gambian led and created a space for victims, witnesses, and perpetrators to freely express their voices on reconciliation, reparation, and justice from the human rights violations of the 22 years of dictatorship in a transparent manner that resulted in the submission of the Truth Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TRRC) report.

Moreover, sustaining peace in 2021 was paramount to the country's first democratically held elections in over the last two decades. Our civic and voter education

activities with national partners and civil society organizations increased voter registration from 886,578 voters in 2016 to 962,157 voters (57 percent women, and 43 percent men, of which 57.7 percent were youth). Under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for West Africa (SRSG), we advanced the Secretary General's (SG) strategy on combatting hate speech by bringing together political parties to agree on a code of conduct for peaceful elections.

UN humanitarian response continued in 2021 with its life saving efforts to curb the COVID-19 pandemic in support of strengthening health systems, provision of health services, including support to the national vaccination campaign which resulted to more than 20% of the most vulnerable population being vaccinated. The Gambia was one of the first five countries in Africa to receive the COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX facility. In addition, the UN made significant efforts to modernize the country's cold chain system, especially through the acquisition of state-of-the-art ultra-cold chain equipment. Moreover, amid the pandemic, UN The Gambia provided humanitarian and emergency aid to the most vulnerable affected by windstorm disaster with over 42,750 households benefitting from food, non-food items and cash transfers.

Furthermore, the UN has been enhancing the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) through strengthening migration data, building resilience of migrant communities against COVID-19 and strengthening migrants' mental health service delivery.

The UN leadership in systems thinking galvanized action across multisectoral partners breaking the traditional silos through the food systems summit and adopted pathways for The Gambia focusing on ending hunger and poverty, building resilience and an equitable and sustainable food systems. In the area of climate change, with the UN technical and financial support, The Gambia's Nationally Determined Contribution 1 (NDC) received a positive distinction of being considered 1.5 degrees Celsius Paris Agreement compatible in 2021. Besides, approximately 218,000 people benefited indirectly from climate-relevant adaptation projects, 45,878 directly, and 3086 temporary jobs (of which 26 percent were filled by adult women and 76 percent by youth) were created through our climate investment projects to promote sustainable and integrated natural resource and environmental management.

The development gains in human capital in 2021 include ensuring children stayed in school amid the pandemic that was forcing many families to keep their children at home. The UN assistance in the form of policy review, the development of an assessment system, and capacity development of early childhood education (ECE) service providers, as well as direct assistance to beneficiaries, such as ensuring children have access to daily meals in school, increased the proportion of children in first grade to 70 percent in 2021, up from 68 percent in 2020.

Additionally, the UN work in collaboration with the Government on raising awareness about the negative effects of child marriage, FGM, and early pregnancy among youth and women, as well as community structures, produced positive results. Over 500 adolescent girls and boys in 20 communities had their awareness of harmful practices raised. As a result, 20 communities openly said that FGM was over, and 27 women who were circumcising girls dropped the knife and now fight against FGM in three Upper River Region districts.

These achievements underscore two critical facets of UN reform and exemplify how seriously the UNCT, and the Gambia's government take the UN Secretary-General's conflict prevention and peacebuilding vision.

Lastly, this report marks a significant step forward in the UNCT's implementation of the UN reform agenda. The 2021 annual report is the first report to primarily rely on UNINFO, the online tool for planning, monitoring, and reporting on UN activities. As a result, I want to thank all members of my UNCT and their staff for their tremendous work in bringing UNINFO to life and the programming triumphs they've achieved.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope this annual progress report enhances your understanding of how the UNCT in The Gambia is carrying out its work and contributing to the vision of a peaceful, inclusive, developed, and resilient Gambia and the Sahel region.



Signed:

**Ms. Seraphine Wakana,**  
UN Resident Coordinator  
The Gambia

# UN Entities in The Gambia

## Resident UN Agencies



## UN Agencies with Project Offices



## Non-Resident UN Agencies

# Key Government Partners in The Gambia

Office of the President

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad

Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare

Ministry of Agriculture

Minister of Fisheries and Water Resources

Ministry of the Interior

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Youth and Sports

Ministry of Ministry of Lands, Regional Government and Religious Affairs

Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

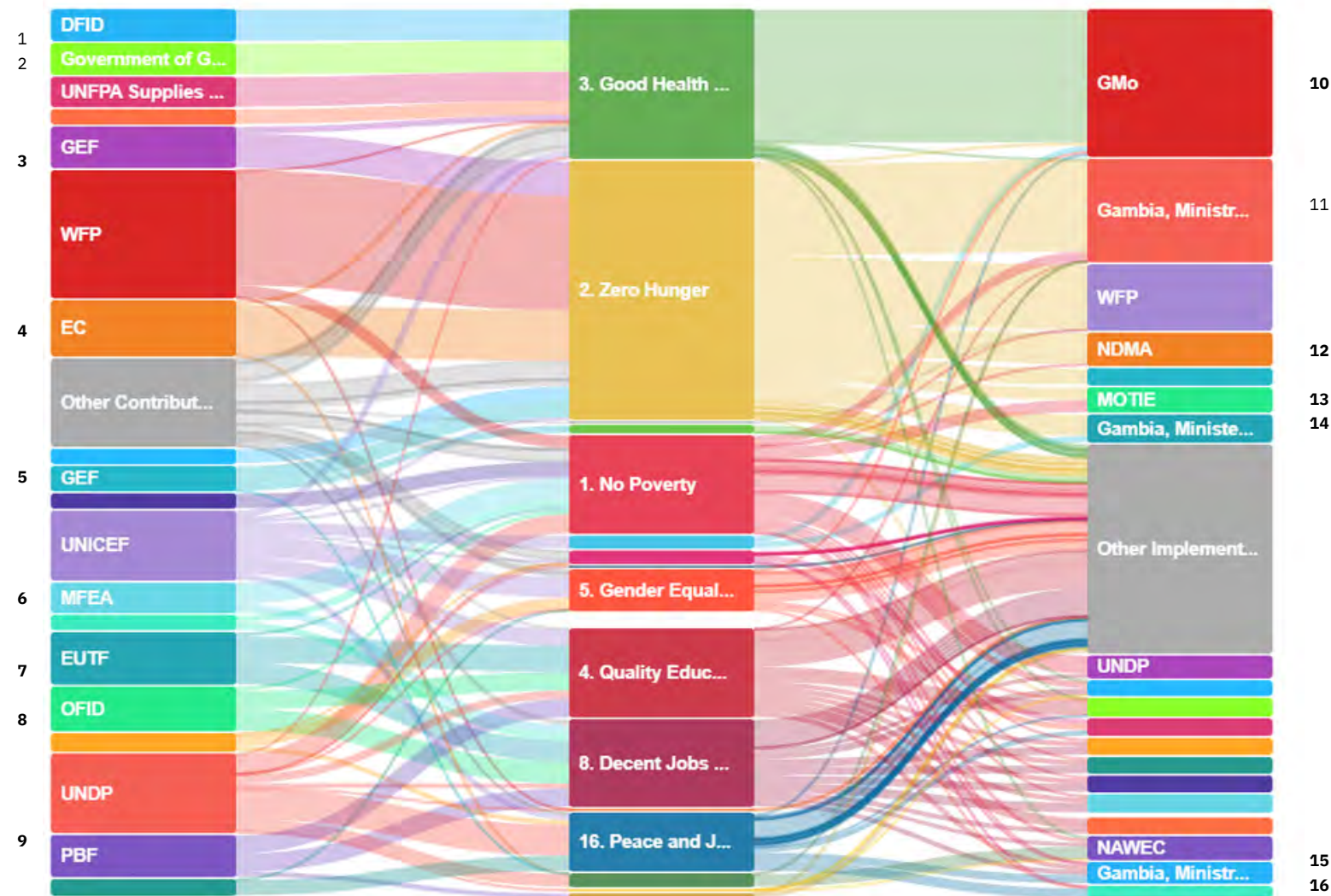
Ministry of Tourism and Culture

Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure

Minister of Transport, Works and Infrastructure

Ministry of Defense

# Key Development Partners of the UN Development System in the Country



The above chart displays the top 20 Contributing Partners by financial contribution and top 20 Implementing Partners by total budget of associated Sub-Outputs. All additional partners are grouped under 'Other Contributing Partners' or 'Other Implementing Partners', respectively.

- Legend**
- 1 Department for International Development
  - 2 Government of Germany
  - 3 The Global Environment Fund
  - 4 European Commission
  - 5 The Global Environment Fund
  - 6 The Gambia, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
  - 7 EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
  - 8 OPEC Fund for International Development
  - 9 Peacebuilding Fund
  - 10 The Gambia Ministry of Health
  - 11 The Gambia Ministry of Agriculture
  - 12 National Disaster Management Authority
  - 13 The Gambia Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment
  - 14 The Gambia Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources
  - 15 Gambia National Water & Electric Company
  - 16 The Gambia Ministry of Interior

The findings in this report would not have been possible without the help of the many partners who contributed to our efforts during the COVID-19 response in 2021.

Our sincere appreciation goes out in particular to the many generous partners who provided financial and in-kind support for UN initiatives in 2021, as well as to our committed implementation partners who led field activities on the ground during the unprecedented COVID-19 crises.

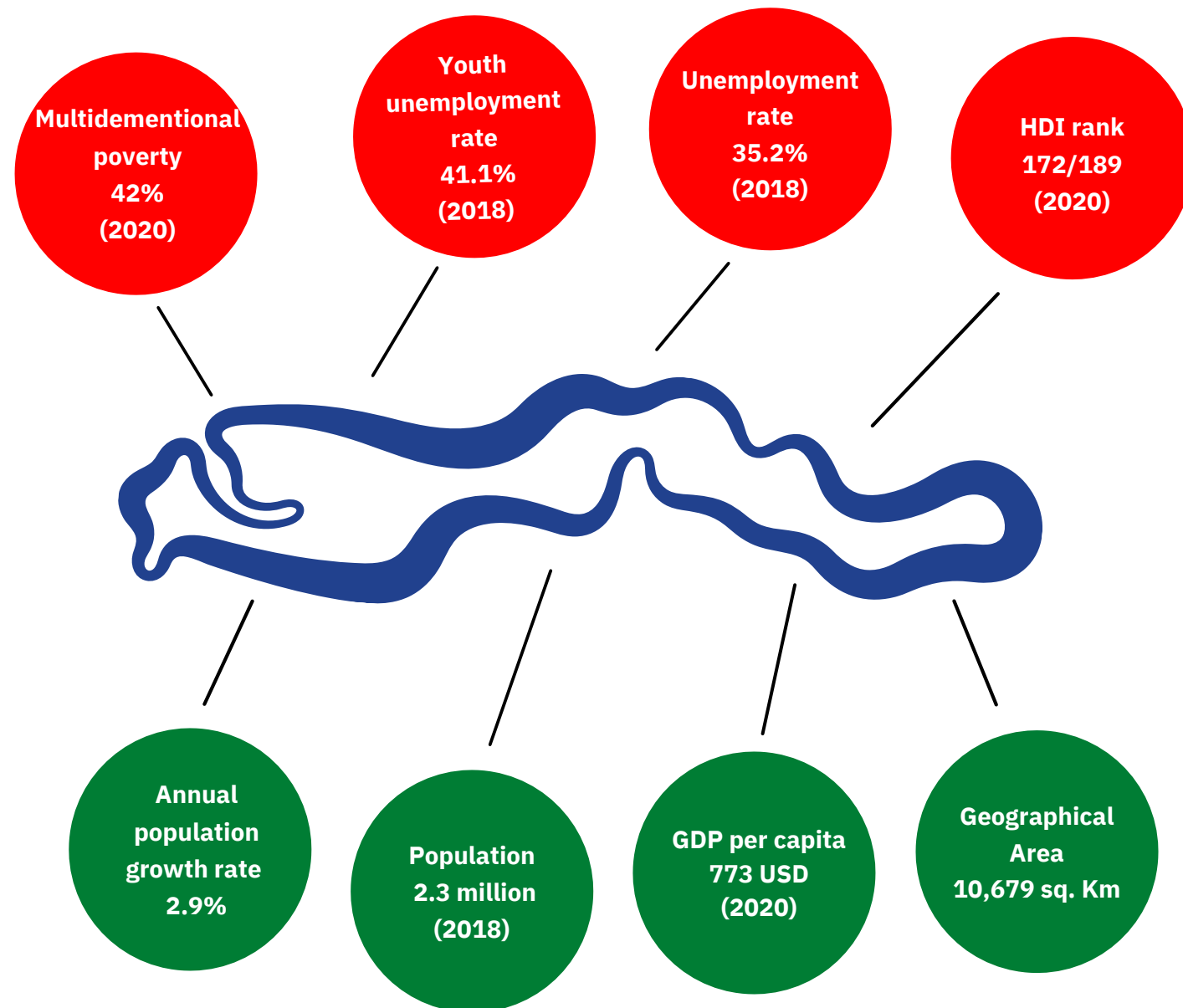


1

**KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE  
COUNTRY AND REGIONAL  
CONTEXT**



# Overall Context



**Sources**

World Bank  
 UNDP HDI  
 Gambia Labour Force Survey, GLFS, 2018  
 Gambia Demographic and health survey, 2019

**72%**

*of households have an improved toilet facility that they can use*

**66%**

*of households have electricity*

**95%**

*of households have improved source of drinking water*

The Gambia is the smallest country in continental Africa, smaller than the metropolitan area of New York. However, the country's population growth rate is in the top ten on the continent. The Gambia is a young country, with 61% of the population under 25.

While the country has made socio-economic strides in the last decade, pervasive poverty persists. Overall, 49 per cent of the population is impoverished, with a significant disparity between urban and rural areas (32 per cent and 70 per cent, respectively).

The Gambia ranks 172nd out of 189 countries in terms of human development. However, the HDI score decreases by 33% when inequality is considered. Gender and spatial human development inequalities abound. For example, 29 per cent of people in metropolitan areas are in the highest wealth quintile, compared to less than 1per cent in rural areas. Similarly, while 76 per cent of males are employed, only 51 per cent of females are employed. According to the 2021 Global Hunger Index, The Gambia – ranked 72 out of 116 countries, is characterized by endemic moderate hunger. The country is also highly indebted. According to the IMF, The Gambia's total public debt to GDP in 2021 stood at 74 per cent.

The Gambian economy showed signs of recovery in 2021, growing 5 per cent after having shrunk by 0.2 percent in 2020. Beyond 2021, the most significant downside to the economy is the unpredictable evolution of the pandemic.

Two events dominated the Gambia's political landscape in 2021. First was the 2021 Presidential election won by President Adama Barrow. The second was the finalization of the TRRC on 24 December 2021. Both events reaffirm the country's progress on the democratic path, which should positively impact the country's socio-economic development.

# 2

## UN THE GAMBIA SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES





# Overview of Cooperation Framework

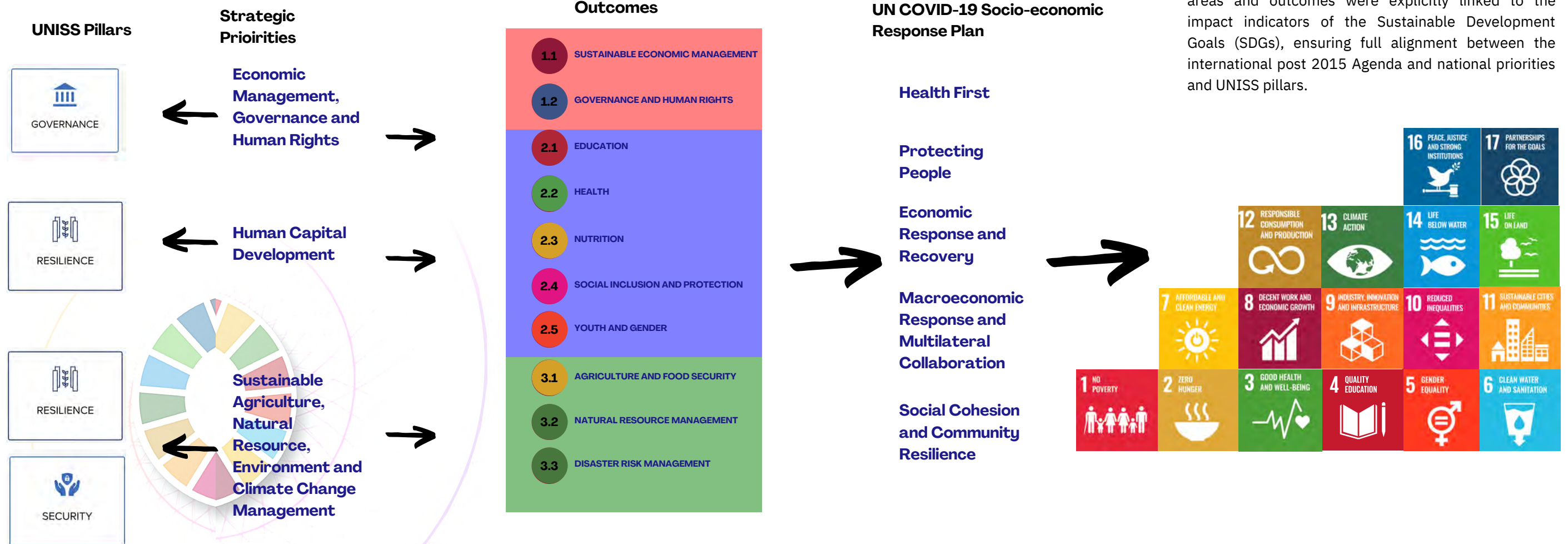
The Gambian United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2022 is a five-year strategic partnership framework between the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and the Government of The Gambia (GoTG). It was developed in an inclusive manner, led by GoTG and UNCT, with the participation of line ministries, regional governors, National Assembly members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other development partners, including international financial institutions and bilateral donors.

The UNDAF is consistent with the Gambian Vision 2020 document, The Gambia National Development Plan 2018–2021 (NDP), the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) II, and several social sector plans and policies and other international declarations such as the 2015 Paris Climate Conference (CoP 21), Africa Agenda 2063, as well as the vision of the Agenda for Sustainable Development and the entrenching of the Sahel Agenda focusing on Security, Governance, and Resilience.

Additionally, it defines the priority areas of intervention identified in collaboration with the government of The Gambia to support the Government's national development initiatives in line with the central goal of poverty reduction and inclusive growth, while ensuring the core programming principles of "leaving no one behind" and "sustainable development and resilience." It also emphasized resilience building for government institutions that provide basic services as well as for communities emerging from crisis.

Recognizing the governance and economic challenges of The Gambia and the region, the UNDAF considers the urgent need to position The Gambia on a path to achieve sustainable socioeconomic development, while also enshrining the Sahel Agenda through its strategic priorities.

The UNDAF elaborated on ten outcomes with specific indicators within the three identified national priority areas to respond to The Gambia's development priorities, as shown in the table below. The priority areas and outcomes were explicitly linked to the impact indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring full alignment between the international post 2015 Agenda and national priorities and UNISS pillars.



# UN GAMBIA RESPONSE TO COVID-19

## A THREE-PRONGED RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

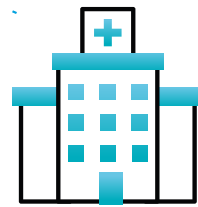
The COVID-19 socioeconomic response of the UN in The Gambia has continued to lessen the effects of the pandemic in the country and among the most vulnerable people.

The vice president chairs the national covid-19 crisis response. The response has three pillars. The pillars are (a) health, (b) humanitarian assistance, and (c) socio-economic assistance. The health ministry is in charge of health response coordination, while the national disaster management agency (NDMA) is in charge of humanitarian and socio-economic response coordination. The UN response has three pillars just like the government's. The pillars are: (a) health, (b) social services, and (c) economic response and recovery.

In 2021, the UN focused on helping the government save lives and safeguard the economy. We did this because the pandemic has had a detrimental effect on everyone's health and socio-economic status in The Gambia, as it has in most African countries.



### Health



**3**  
ADDITIONAL COVID CENTRES PROVIDED



**20%**  
OF THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION VACCINATED



**757,220**  
COVID-19 VACCINES MOBILIZED



**1 MILLION +**  
PEOPLE REACHED WITH COVID-19 MESSAGES



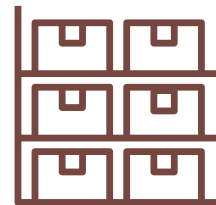
FIRST EVER OXYGEN PRODUCTION PLANT TO SAVE LIVES



STATE-OF-THE-ART ULTRA-COLD CHAIN EQUIPMENT FOR STORAGE OF COVID-19 VACCINES



**300+**  
HANDWASHING STATIONS INSTALLED



INCREASED STORAGE FACILITIES FOR EFFICIENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE

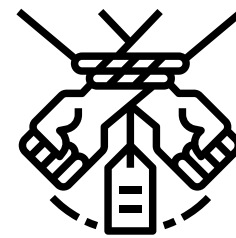


### Social Services

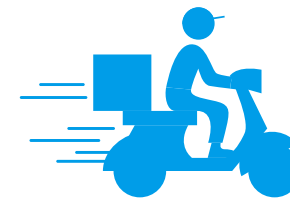
FIRST EVER **GBV** HELPLINE



VULNERABLE GROUPS BENEFITTED FROM PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT



30 trafficking victims supported with hygiene kits & reintegration support



10 motorbikes provided to respond to testing & social support



Over 200 teachers trained on safe school opening



### Economic Recovery

**255**

SUPPORTED YOUTH OWNED BUSINESSES MSMEs

**330,000+**

HOUSEHOLDS PROVIDED WITH FOOD SUPPLIES

**6,425+**

TOURISM & HOTEL WORKERS SUPPORTED WITH CASH TRANSFERS

Accelerate inclusive and sustainable economic growth to reduce poverty and inequality



1.1 SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT



816 MSMEs DEMONSTRATE IMPROVED BUSINESS PRACTICES  
 3140 WOMEN AND YOUTH BENEFITTED FROM EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES  
 9 GENDER SENSITIVE POLICIES DEVELOPED

The United Nations system in The Gambia collaborated with the government to overcome the challenges posed by the covid-19 pandemic without jeopardizing the country's ability to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

In total, 3140 people (60 per cent of whom were women), including 110 returnees, benefited from UN employment and entrepreneurial skills training and support services to increase the capacity and competitiveness of the private sector for inclusive growth. In addition to the training, 1,200 primarily female producers from 27 villages sold 173.6 tons of produce worth 4.4 million GMD by connecting them with buyers in the Greater Banjul Area (GBA) (approximately 86,000 USD). Furthermore, due to training (entrepreneurship, packaging, and quality), market connections, mentorship, and access to finance activities, 816 MSMEs improved their business practices (e.g., sales/production volumes, etc.).

Furthermore, the UN promoted inclusive economic planning and management by supporting the mid-term reviews of all regional local government strategic plans. The UN also supported the Integrated Household Poverty Survey, Labor Force Survey, and Public Service Perception Survey. To promote gender equality, the UN supported the development of nine gender-sensitive policies to create and strengthen employment and livelihoods for women. For example, the National Financial Inclusion Strategy and the Reliance Product Strategy to roll out a women-focused smartphone financing product. Over 1000 cash-for-work beneficiaries benefited from inclusive financial services supported by the UN and partners.

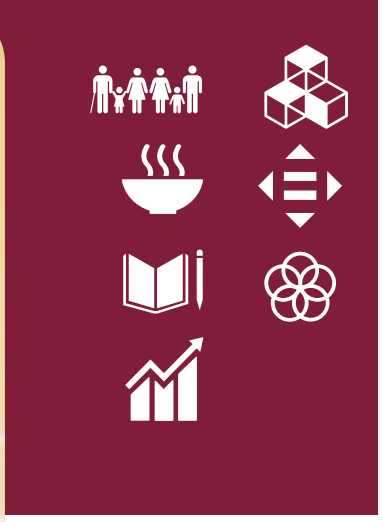
Besides, the UN support to national and subnational government planning directorates has enabled Gambians to benefit from a more efficient public service. Through building the capacity of 70 planners to mainstream migration in local development plans and deployment 24 university graduates to the Government Ministries and rural local governments, these institutions improved their planning, budgeting, and monitoring systems. This support enhanced the technical capacity of the government institutions to better serve the population of the Gambia without leaving anyone behind.

Addi Nyass Jarju  
 "I currently have two people I am working with and three others that I am training in my shop"

I left The Gambia in 2016 because, like many other young people, I believed that Europe was the only place I could make it. It took me four months before I reached Libya. I had to do odd jobs for my survival and to fund the crossing to Europe. I was imprisoned a couple of times but managed to escape when the prison was attacked.

When I came home in 2017, I was sick. It took me two months to recover from the illness and the traumatizing experiences I underwent on my journey. Thankfully, my family welcomed and encouraged me to move on with my life, reminding me that these are trials and tribulations one encounters. My dad was very supportive through my hard times; he motivated me to start doing my tailoring work again. His words of encouragement made me strong and committed to achieve and accomplish my goals.

" When I settled in, I received support from the UN in the form of a sewing machine, fabrics, and other necessary materials for a tailoring shop, because I wanted to pursue the skill that I have, which is tailoring. I have always had a passion for tailoring. It is the only thing I was engaged in before I left for the backway. I currently work with two people, and I train three others at my shop. I can't be more grateful for all that my life has turned out to be. All hopes weren't lost."



**Institutional reforms implemented to ensure rule of law and guarantee people their human rights, such as access to justice, gender equality, basic social services, and democratic participation in decision-making processes**



The Women's Branch of the Inter-Party Committee (WOBIPC) was established on 16 October 2021 to increase women's participation and representation in national and local politics. As co-chairs, our focus is to sensitize and encourage women to get involved in politics and to vote for their counterparts irrespective of our political differences. We also encourage men to vote for women. Since independence, women are often used as mobilizers, cooking and cheering during political engagements. However, since the establishment of the WOBIPC, we have seen some progress towards the inclusion of women in strategic spaces such as political debates and in decision making, a transformation we intend to keep promoting. The Gambia has a total of 962,157 voters, including 545,318 women (56.68%) and 416,839 men (43.32%). The percentage of young (18-35) voters stands at 57.71% (555,220), highlighting the importance of these two demographic groups in deciding the outcome of the presidential election.

Before the The Gambia 2022 National Assembly elections, we went on a nation-wide tour to sensitize and encourage citizens to vote for women, inform them of its importance and highlighting that women are key actors for development. An increased representation of women in Parliament will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Moving forward and in collaboration with the IPC and partners, we intend to continue the advocacy during elections and beyond for people to understand the seriousness and value of women leadership. Key decision-making positions in political parties are usually given to men but we are calling out on all party leaders and members as well as CSOs leaders, community leaders and influencers to consider women and give them key leadership positions. We believe that when this is done, there will be transformative change, and this will encourage more women to participate in politics.



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## 1.2 GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The UN Country Team in Gambia is focused on making institutional reform processes more responsive to the needs of citizens, especially the poor and marginalized groups, while promoting human rights and gender equality. Among the key UN interventions in 2021, the UNCT promoted an **inclusive democratic system to enable free and fair elections** and capacity of 4 parliamentary committees to provide effective oversight of progress towards the SDGs. The UN support to democratic accountability allowed more citizens to exercise their democratic rights in the 2021 presidential election. The civic and voter education activities in collaboration with national partners and civil society organizations contributed to an increase in registered voters from **886,578 voters in 2016 to 962,157 voters (57 percent women, and 43 percent men)**.

The UN enhanced the institutional capacity of the justice and security systems to protect human rights and deliver accessible, efficient, and accountable justice and security to all, especially women and vulnerable groups. The submission of the final Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparation Commission (TRRC) report to the president in November 2021 represented a significant achievement for the UN in promoting Transitional Justice and human rights in The Gambia. **The report, which is the culmination of extensive UN technical, financial, and advisory support since 2017, was derived from 2,599 statements of human rights violations and abuses committed between July 1994 and January 2017, as well as testimonies from 393 people (mostly witnesses) over 871 days of public hearings.** The report contains 427 findings and 218 recommendations that, if implemented in an inclusive and comprehensive manner, would consolidate peacebuilding gains made since the transition to democratic governance. Similarly, the UN commitment to various aspects of the reform agenda has been strong, resulting in the TRRC presenting an award to the UN in July 2021.

Moreover, through its efforts to increase justice for all in The Gambia, **383 justice and security actors' (124 female and 259 male) capacity was upscaled by the support of the UN to facilitate improved, responsive, quality service delivery of justice, border security and management, without leaving anyone behind in accordance with international conventions and instruments.** In addition, the UN support improved access to justice. **361 people (207 males, 115 females, and 39 children), benefitted from free legal, mediation, and social services through UN-supported Mobile Legal Aid Clinics (MLACs) and Prison Legal Aid Desks.** Also, 36 percent of women accessed legal, mediation, and social services through the MLACs, compared to less than 20 percent in 2020. Moreover, since the provision of equipment for the courts to hold virtual hearings, 218 cases (190 civil, 28 criminal) have been heard virtually, decongesting the prison facilities, particularly the remand wing on criminal issues.

The UN assistance in The Gambia further led to the **formulation, revision, and enactment of 10 legislative bills, including a gender responsive security sector reform policy to advance security, social protection, transparency, and accountability.** Besides, we also continue to support the Security Sector Reform (SSR) process through strengthening the capacity of the Office of National Security (ONS). Our key success in this area in 2021 has been the continuous coordination of a coherent SSR process by the government. Through UN support and leadership of Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Justice's National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (NAATIP), the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) was validated and launched. The NRM is a referral mechanism for the protection of vulnerable migrants, including victims of trafficking.

Furthermore, Gambia's national development will benefit from an additional **4 open platforms and a network** established in 2021 with the support of the UN. These platforms and networks, including the Civil Society Organizations such as Coalition on Elections, Fact-Space Gambia fact-checking platform, the Association of Victim-led Organizations, and the Never Again Network will promote accountability, transparency, and effective engagement of civil society.

**Increased access to inclusive and equitable quality and relevant education for all with special focus on the most vulnerable**



The closure of schools and the subsequent decision to launch remote learning programmes came at a time when details about the Coronavirus were still sketchy – there was a lot to be learned and discovered about the virus. But what was also uncertain was how would lessons be delivered via radio and TV – the infrastructure was not there to reach every child everywhere in the country.

“The general purpose of the radio and TV lessons was to keep children learning and also keep them home to protect them from infection,” Nuha said. “What children would lose in terms of school-based services such as meals, health and social interactions with peers and teachers were not part of the discourse, and these are equally important elements of an education.”

After days of planning and consultations, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education launched the national distance learning programme. With support from The UN and other partners, the lessons were broadcast to students across the country over several radio and TV stations. In homes and across streets, radio and TV sets all had the same broadcasts during lesson times.

To ensure not all was lost in the school meals services, the government through the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education with support from the UN organized and delivered take home rations containing rations for the family and handed over to children through their parents. A series of trainings were conducted for teachers and school management committees after plans to resume school were finalized.



©UNICEF-The Gambia



**2.1**

**EDUCATION**

**5%**

INCREASE IN COMPLETION RATE AT BASIC & SECONDARY LEVELS

**2%**

INCREASE OF CHILDREN IN FIRST GRADE

Despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, as schools attempted to recover lost learning due to school closures, the UN in the Gambia maintained its efforts to increase access to inclusive and equitable quality and relevant education for all, particularly the most vulnerable. Policy development and improvement, institutional capacity building, and help for beneficiaries were some of the things that the UN helped The Gambia within its efforts to improve education.

The UN focused its efforts on ensuring that all children aged 4–6 years benefit from formal and informal quality early learning opportunities for improved school readiness. UN assistance in the form of policy review, the development of an assessment system, and capacity development of ECE service providers, as well as direct assistance to beneficiaries, such as ensuring children have access to daily meals in school, increased the proportion of children in first grade to 70 percent in 2021 (25,294 male and 24,479 female) up from 68 percent in 2020.

Furthermore, UN efforts to promote inclusive education in The Gambia resulted in an increase in the completion rates of children who were previously excluded from quality basic and secondary education in 2021 compared to 2020. The overall completion rate at the upper basic level rose from 60.6 percent in 2020 to 65.1 percent in 2021. Similarly, completion in secondary school increased from 44.0 percent (2020) to 46.2 percent (2021). These gains are attributed to long-term investments in girls' education, improving learning outcomes, enhancing teacher capacity, the strengthening and scaling up of community engagements to raise awareness about the importance of finishing secondary school, the removal of cost barriers through the government's School Improvement Grant (SIG) and UN supply of basic learning materials. Besides policy advocacy to make education programs and investment more relevant to the needs of the communities also attributed to educational gains.

To address learning loss in the system, the UN supported the engagement of mothers' clubs and school management committees. Capacity building was intensified for teachers on inclusive pedagogical skills, life-skills training, and support to children with disabilities.

## Increase equitable access to quality health for all including the most vulnerable



"Sometimes, we will sit for two days without a drop of water in our taps." Said Olimatou Badjie, Officer in Charge at Kaur Minor Health Center. Mrs Badjie, working for the facility for just eight months, described how difficult it used to be, especially in the labour ward. "Sometimes, we will not have water to wash our equipment or hands before or after attending to a patient. We will have to leave the dirty equipment till morning before we can wash them." Said Mrs. Badjie.

Water scarcity at Kaur Minor made it difficult for the pregnant women and their escorts to use the toilets, wash their hands and feet for prayers or maintain proper hygiene during their visit. The lack of water in the toilets created an unsanitary environment and a challenge to use. "At first, I was not impressed with the facility because of the water problem. It was hard for me to settle here; I couldn't wait to go home where I can use water for basic things."

Through the WASH project, The UN supported Kaur health facility with an extra tank to the facility, added a borehole and fixed all the toilets. The availability of water in the facility allows pregnant women and their escorts to have unlimited access to water. Patients and visitors can also access the toilets comfortably. "Now, even the patient can use the bathroom and feel more comfortable. Water is life; we have two tanks that are working very well now."



## 2.2

## HEALTH

Through the provision of technical support and policy dialogue engagements across various levels of government, the UNCT put forward policy options on leaving no one behind for consideration by the Ministry of Health. This informed the finalization of the National Health Policy (2021–2030), which was validated in December 2021 demonstrating a key partnership for SDGs achievement. The new policy will have renewed focus on public health care (PHC), financial risk reduction, epidemic prevention, detection, and control, and an expanded access to a more standardized essential health package that would target vulnerable groups in a bid to achieve progress towards Universal Health Care (UHC).

In addition, the UN support to the government led the development of a **National Strategic Framework for assisting migrants with mental health needs**, a corresponding training curriculum for mental health service providers as well as the construction and refurbishment of the country's sole psychiatric facility. This will result in an increased bed capacity of the facility from 100 to 150 and ensure that patients, including vulnerable returnees, have a dignified space to recover more effectively.

The United Nations maintained its efforts to ensure that maternal, emergency obstetric, neonatal, and childcare services were available to all Gambians, particularly the most vulnerable. **The UNCT worked to establish and expand the institutional capacity of facilities that provide Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and New-born Care (CEMONC)**, as well as to increase the number of births attended by skilled birth attendants (SBAs). As a result of UN efforts to make sure that mothers and babies had access to high-quality health care in 2021, the country now has 10 CEMONC facilities providing services to the population. **SBAs attended approximately 83.3 percent of total births in the country as of 2021.**

Moreover, the UN enhanced accountability and transparency in monitoring maternal deaths and mitigation actions, through strengthening Maternal Death Surveillance and Response. This helped to identify key causes of maternal and perinatal deaths and review corrective action. Also, the UN contributed to improvement in quality of care in the country by updating various quality standards and guidelines. These include Reproductive, Maternal and Child health guidelines; Malaria-in-Pregnancy Guidelines, Drug-resistance TB treatment guidelines; non-communicable diseases control strategy; Suicide Prevention Strategy and Neglected Tropical Disease Masterplan.

To address the impact of COVID-19 on routine immunization services, the UN provided support to ensure a first round of a national polio immunization campaign in November 2021 (followed by a second round in March 2022). **Significant efforts were made to modernize the country's cold chain system, especially through the acquisition of state-of-the-art ultra-cold chain equipment.**

In terms of promoting sexual and reproductive health in The Gambia, the UN increased the availability and use of integrated sexual and reproductive health information and services, including family planning, through the policy development of a rights-based family planning policy. This resulted in the development and approval of the National Family Planning Policy 2019–2026, which aimed to increase the visibility of family planning as a strategy for national development and to provide the country with the necessary guidance on family planning issues. As a result, The Gambia's modern contraceptive **prevalence rate increased from 9 percent in 2014 to 18.9 percent in 2021.** In addition, in 2021, **61,347 couple-years of protection were generated, 16,099 unintended pregnancies and 72 maternal deaths were averted.** The UN, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conducted a study to estimate the status of the HIV epidemic in The Gambia and develop a report for 2020 HIV indicators to set targets to measure progress towards meeting national targets.

As a result of UNCT's support to targeted pro-poor interventions by making treatment of Neglected Tropical Diseases available to affected communities, **150,000 children in high-risk communities were reached with treatment of Schistosomiasis.**

Furthermore, the UN strengthened The Gambia's national capacity for preparedness, operational readiness, and response to public health emergencies nationwide in 2021 including at border communities and points of entries by providing direct services and support to beneficiaries. For example, following the outbreak of vaccine-derived poliovirus 2 in August 2021, the UN led the development of an outbreak response plan as well as a vaccination plan that covered **382,908 children under 5 years of age in 42 districts in all 7 regions.** As a result, 89 percent of children under the age of five in the country are vaccinated and protected from the poliovirus' effects.

The UN ensured that communities and institutions have equitable access to WASH services, including during humanitarian situations, by equipping border communities, health centers, and schools with WASH facilities. As a result, **86 percent of lower basic (primary) schools have safe drinking water and 83 percent have toilets. 90 percent of upper basic schools have safe drinking water and 85 percent have toilets.** In consequence of UN efforts, **116,310 people (59,319 females and 56,991 males) now have access to safe water**, and 500 water points have been chlorinated. Furthermore, **over 20,000 people (10,939 females and 9,061 males) benefitted from education on the importance of having toilets and the negative effects of open defecation on health through caravans, social media, and electronic media.**

Increase equitable and quality access to nutrition specific and sensitive services, including the most vulnerable



Adama is the third wife of her husband. She has four children and lives in a family of 29 members. Her husband is a farmer with no other skills to generate income to sustain the family. Adama has adopted five children of her deceased co-wife. She lives in a village called Checken which is 10 kilometers from the provincial town of Farafenni, in the North Bank Region of the country.

Adama explains her frustration of feeding her sick child when the other children go hungry because they have nothing to eat. Some even cry and “I have nowhere to hide”, she says. Adama also explained that one of her sons had suffered from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) when he was younger. Her family situation coupled with potential food insecurity within her household are some of the key drivers of acute malnutrition in the family.

Nonetheless, she benefitted from the Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) project, as she was trained alongside other mothers in her community through a programme supported by The UN to identify children with acute malnutrition in her community. She joins her fellow mothers for frequent screening and counseling sessions for mothers on optimal infant and young child feeding.

After going through the training, she decided to assess her daughter, Fatou, and found her to be severely acutely malnourished. Fatou is 17 months old, she looks sick, drowsy, and is barely interested in anything around her. Adama’s MUAC screening skills, saw the quick enrollment of Fatou into the Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) treatment programme.

“The therapeutic food is good, and I can see some improvement since Fatou started taking it”, she says. Fatou is being monitored frequently by the health worker who checks on Adama and counsels her on the types of food to feed her daughter. Her recovery from the sickness is slow, but Adama is very hopeful.



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## 2.3 NUTRITION

The UN supported The Gambia's efforts to provide more equitable and high-quality nutrition-specific services to children, women, and other vulnerable groups. The UN intervention ensured that children, women, and other vulnerable groups had access to nutritious foods to promote healthy development. The UN continued to influence the necessary government policy commitments for the advancement of nutrition program implementation in the country. Ahead of the heads of government and donor partners summit on nutrition for the growth of world children in Tokyo, Japan, the UN support to the government technical working group resulted in a **commitment paper that covers impact, policy, strategic programme implementation and public financing** for nutrition for The Gambia.

The UN also increased the capacity of partners and institutions to implement and coordinate nutrition services, such as the prevention and treatment of malnutrition in vulnerable groups. In consequence, **130 nurses** benefitted from outpatient and inpatient management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) trainings. 25 medical doctors benefitted from trainings to be trainers for the integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) protocol. Of the total of **3,840 children admitted** to the Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) program, **90 percent were successfully cured by the end of the year.**

In addition, **7,017 Moderate Acute Malnourished (MAM)** children aged 6–59 months, 9612 Pregnant and Lactating Women, and 1123 People Living with HIV (PLHIV) benefited from monthly food rations of specialized nutritious foods (CSB++). Alongside the SAM program, the UN also supported the supplementation of children with essential micronutrients. **153,499 children aged 6–59 months** were supplemented with high-dose vitamin A across the country, and 476 children aged 6–23 months were supplemented with multiple micronutrient powders for the prevention of micronutrient deficiencies in Central River Region (CRR)-North. **107,859 children aged 12–59 months** were treated with deworming tablets. This assistance has helped in treating and preventing of malnutrition especially amongst children and breastfeeding mothers.

In targeted regions such as the West Coast Region (WCR), Lower River Region (LRR), CRR, and North Bank Region (NBR), **over 1,875 people** from village support groups, traditional communicators, farmer field schools, mothers' clubs, and other community structures benefitted from trainings on Social Behavioral Change Communications (SBCC). The trainings enhanced the beneficiaries' knowledge and skills in interpersonal communication networks for effective implementation of SBCC at household and community level. With the training, the UN aimed to increase communities' knowledge and skills in nutritional practices.

Furthermore, the Nutrition Network Group of the UN organized a national nutrition week celebration to highlight UN partnership with government counterparts and joint program implementation for program effectiveness and better use of scarce resources. The celebration entailed a comprehensive media campaign which included radio and TV panel discussions on optimal infant feeding using locally produced foods aimed at supporting local farmers and minimize the dependency on exports. **More than 70,000 received messages** on the consumption of fortified foods for increased dietary diversity.

Access to integrated, inclusive and sustainable social protection services for vulnerable groups increased



2.4 SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PROTECTION

Fatoumatta Fatty, 31 is a person living with disability and one of 15 women currently trained to produce reusable sanitary pads at the production Centre under the Women Empowerment and Peacebuilding Initiative (WEPBI). Coming from a community where most women rely on farming to earn a living and feed their families, Fatoumatta is unable to participant in communal farming activities to support her family based on her physical challenges. However, with the establishment of the pad production center in her region, she now has a stable source of income and can promote the realization of menstrual health for all women and girls in her community.

“Every morning I am excited to arrive at the Centre and start working because I believe every minute spent doing this job enables me to contribute towards the health and wellbeing of women and girls in my community” a passion Fatoumatta shares with us.

Prior to benefiting from this initiative, Fatoumatta resorted to selling recharge cards and mobile credit to sustain herself. The income was minimal and could barely sustain her personal needs including being able to afford sanitary pads for herself and for the girls in her family. Today, combined with the pad production, Fatoumatta earns enough to support her family while also being a voice for the promotion of safe and dignified menstruation in her family and community.

“I do not have daughters but the girls in my extended family and community will no longer face difficulties in access sanitary pads while on their periods. I am thrilled that I am able to provide such a solution for them through my training and engagement at the pad production center” she said.



The UN efforts in The Gambia ensure that Gambians, particularly vulnerable groups, and communities, have a functional and appropriate national social protection program. The establishment of the national social protection program and a secretariat strengthened and facilitated the coordination of social protection programs through policy reviews and the development of legislative frameworks, as well as the organization of national social protection forums where social protection actors can dialogue, share information, experiences, and challenges, and recommend actions for progress.

The National Social Protection forum, which took place in October, presented a "call-to-action" with thirteen identified priority areas to the government of The Gambia. The call-to-action included coverage of social protection activities for shocks and disasters, financing, social registry, policy, and legislation. In addition, the UN provides the National Social Protection Secretariat staff with on-the-job training with a focus on the basics of the social protection system as well as first-hand coordination support. The UN support in these areas contributed to strengthening the team’s capacity towards operationalizing the social protection implementation plan. The secretariat was able to facilitate all coordination activities with UN assistance, including developing the terms of reference for the National Social Protection Steering Committee and facilitating the National Cash Working Group to discuss social protection strategic and technical issues.

As a result of the UN support to the national protection program through the social protection program, around 909 severely acute malnourished children and 9,639 moderately acute malnourished children benefited directly. These children were able to improve their nutritional status so that they could survive, grow, and develop in preparation for early stimulation and learning. Furthermore, 6,412 malnourished pregnant women, lactating mothers, girls, and 1,128 people living with HIV, identified through reproductive and child health clinics and anti-retroviral treatment sites, benefitted from specialized nutritious foods for the treatment of malnutrition.

In 2021, communities living around four protected forest areas and three eco-tourism destinations benefitted from UN initiated community-led social protection support to compensate for livelihood shocks and income lost due to long-term climate impacts and due to decreased tourism in relation to COVID-19, respectively.

The UN in The Gambia continued to ensure that protection systems for women and children are in place. In this case, UN efforts led to the development and implementation of the case management system and the Child Protection Information Management System to increase children's access to integrated, inclusive, and long-term social protection services for vulnerable groups. The Child Protection Case Management system has been set up in two regions, and multi-sectoral regional protection coordination has been set up in two other regions as well.



**Women and youth empowerment promoted to reduce gender disparities, gender-based violence and ensure effective participation in national development**



**226**

PEOPLE BENEFITED FROM ONE-STOP CENTRES AND GBV SHELTER



DECLARED IN 20 COMMUNITIES

**1,850**

YOUTHS EQUIPPED TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

The national capacity to advocate for and deliver evidence-based programs targeting women and girls at risk of gender-based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), and child marriage increased in 2021. With the assistance of the United Nations, district authorities benefited from multi-sector protection systems that provide preventive and response services to women and children. As a result, 226 people were helped by the region's five one-stop centers and one gender-based violence (GBV) shelter, which were set up to help people with immediate needs like medical, safety, and psychosocial support.

Furthermore, the UN work in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Welfare on raising awareness about the negative effects of child marriage, FGM, and early pregnancy among youth and women, as well as community structures, produced positive results. 531 adolescent girls and boys, as well as 20 communities, increased their awareness on harmful practices. As a result, 20 communities openly said that FGM was over, and 27 women who were circumcising girls dropped the knife and now fight against FGM in three Upper River Region districts.

**1,030**

NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEADERS ACKNOWLEDGED AND SUPPORT YOUTH AND WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING

Furthermore, continuous awareness-raising and advocacy training in the communities resulted in 1,850 youths being equipped and supported to participate in decision-making processes, and 755 local leaders and 275 national leaders accepting and supporting the importance of youth and women's participation in decision-making processes.

The UN in The Gambia continues to collaborate with stakeholders to promote women's and youth empowerment to reduce gender-based violence in the country and ensure that they are adequately prepared to participate in national development.

**2.5**

**YOUTH AND GENDER**

Harmful practices which undermine the health, dignity and bodily integrity of women and girls are often fuelled by deep-seated gender inequalities in the communities they are practiced. In The Gambia, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a highly prevalent and deeply rooted culture. According to the Gambia 2019-2020 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 73 percent of women aged 15-49 years in the country have been subjected to FGM. Key among the strategies used to accelerate the eradication of the practice is the 'dropping of the knife' initiative, an effort that engages circumcisers and custodians of FGM in their families and communities to enhance their understanding of the negative implications of the practice thus influencing voluntary abandonment. Since the start of the initiative, over 1000 circumcisers in communities across the country have dropped their knives and are now championing community efforts to accelerate the eradication of FGM in The Gambia.

In October 2021, the 6th dropping of the knife ceremony was held for 27 circumcisers from 25 communities in the Upper River Region. The ceremony was held in Taibatou, a community about 386 kilometers from Banjul. Sarjo Trawally of Bajaha Kunda, Tai Jambang of Samba Gawdo and Satang Touray of Bantunding are part of the 27 ex-circumcisers who took the oath to stop practicing FGM and ensure that women and girls in their communities live in health and dignity and are protected from harmful practices. According to Sarjo Touray, the practice of FGM was seen as a rite of passage for girls in her village and served as a means of ensuring purity. Before engaging in UN supported activities that influenced her decision to abandon the practice, Sarjo believed that FGM was a way of empowering girls and protecting their wellbeing. Today, she knows better and has made the informed decision to say no to the practice. "I did not know that through upholding this tradition I was contributing towards holding women and girls back and promoting their suffering" she mentioned.

The 'Dropping of the Knife' initiative is part of a larger investment to empower ex-circumcisers to lead efforts to address Gender-Based Violence and harmful practices in their communities and support them through economic empowerment efforts in order to create an alternative source of income for them.



**Sustainable Agricultural Production and Productivity increased for enhanced food security, nutrition, and income generation in rural and urban areas**



**382,000**

PEOPLE BENEFITTED FROM COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

**4,574**

VULNERABLE FARMER HOUSEHOLDS BENEFITTED FROM AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

The UN in The Gambia continued to play a key role in increasing agricultural production and productivity in The Gambia to improve food security, nutrition, and income generation in rural and urban areas in close collaboration with the government. For example, the UN supported the National Food Systems Dialogue (FSSD) process, which resulted in the Strategic National Pathway Document, a major step toward the 2021 Global UN Food Systems Summit held in New York in September 2021. In the Strategic National Pathway Document, GoTG highlighted specific and deliberate policy decisions to sustainably develop The Gambia's national food systems that will contribute to the COVID-19 recovery process and put The Gambia back on track to achieve the SDGs.

**5,223**

WOMEN FARMERS HAVE ENHANCED FOOD PRODUCTION AND SECURITY

To safeguard food security by improving crop and livestock production and productivity, UN initiatives built the capacity of 645 farmers (90 percent of whom were women) in 2021. As a result, increasing farmer awareness of good agricultural practices would increase food production in The Gambia. In addition, 5,932 farmers (709 men and 5,223 women) from targeted populations under pressure benefited from community gardens set up by the UN, various agricultural inputs, including shelling machines, animal vaccine supplements, seeds, fertilizers etc. that contributed to better food production and security. Furthermore, the UN collaborated with GoTG to provide a lifeline to food-insecure and vulnerable households through humanitarian assistance during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

42,750 households across the country received emergency food assistance, resulting in over 382,000 people benefiting from the UN and GoTG COVID-19 emergency food assistance programme. Furthermore, to strengthen the capacity of community organizations on production, post-harvest handling, processing, and marketing of fish, 1023 fish mongers benefited from training on production, post-harvest handling, processing, and marketing of fish, as well as received equipment including cooler boxes to enhance preservation and reduce fish post-harvest losses, thus increasing incomes for both fish mongers and their families.

With UN assistance, knowledge products such as The Gambia Cadre Harmonisé Framework provided evidence that 111,976 people (4.6 percent of the population) were in one of three critical food insecurity situations from October to December 2021: crisis, emergency, or famine. These findings highlight that The Gambia needs help with food security right away, or the situation will get worse and 206,712 people will be affected.

**3.1**

**AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**

“Our daily experience in this community as farmers cannot be expressed in words. During the rainy seasons, our lives are altered due to climate hazards and our agricultural produce is greatly affected...” These were the words of Kebba Tob, the Alkalo of Basik- a remote community found in the North Bank Region. This puts into perspective the daily experience of a number of communities and thousands of people heavily sustained by agriculture in The Gambia. Over the years, the country has seen numerous disputes over land issues in various communities that have caused massive disruption and unrest in addition to the hazards caused by climate change.

Following a consultation with communities, members, and government officials in various settlements to foster peaceful co-existence and strengthen market linkages, the International Trade Center through the UN Peacebuilding Fund handed over 6 tricycles to 6 communities in North Bank Region, Central River Region and Upper River Region from the 1st to the 3rd of December 2020.

This handing over under the “Climate Conflict: Strengthening Community Coping Mechanisms to Mitigate Risks of Conflicts and Reduce Climate-Related Tensions in The Gambia” project is part of our efforts to enhance social cohesion between communities in conflict, ease transportation challenges faced by the community and support market linkages to improve their socio-economic development.

In the North Bank Region, where tricycles were handed over to Basik and Tambakoto, the members with broad smiles and visible hope expressed their enormous delight and aspirations for the future with these tricycles. Omar Sabally a farmer from Tambakoto speaking at the handing over said “these tricycles are a blessing to us. The problems it will deliver us, our women, and children from is gratifying. When we harvest our produce every year, we experience great loss because we cannot transport them to the main markets for sale”.



**Sustainable inclusive and integrated natural resource and environment management enhanced for food security and income generation**



**3.2**

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**218,000** → **76%**

PEOPLE BENEFITTED FROM CLIMATE-RELEVANT ADAPTATION PROJECTS

OF WHOM WERE YOUTH

“As fires continue to be the main cause of forest destruction in The Gambia, the project decided to reactivate the fire management award scheme, which was introduced in CRR by a German forestry project back in 2000. The scheme aims to motivate the local population, particularly those involved in community forestry and Joint Forest Park Management to safeguard their forests against fires, thereby promoting community participation in the regional forest fire management.

At the end of every fire season, the Department of Forestry in partnership with stakeholders conduct an assessment to take note of those communities who were able to protect their forests against fires in the previous seasons. These communities are then awarded prizes ranging from firefighting materials such as knapsack sprayers, bicycles, cutlasses, rakes, milling machines, and large cooking pots, among others. In 2021, the project in collaboration with the Department of Forestry awarded several communities with various prizes for showing commitment to protecting their forest against fires. Four communities were awarded milling machines which now benefit over 1,000 women in the project intervention areas.

“We are thankful to FAO and the Department of Forest for taking this extremely important and life-saving initiative,”



The UN Country Team continued to provide support to stakeholders in sustainable resource management in the context of promoting sustainable and integrated natural resource and environmental management for improved food security and income generation. About 218,000 individuals have indirectly benefited from climate-relevant adaptation projects implemented by the UN. 45,878 directly, and 3,086 temporary jobs (of which 26 percent were filled by adult women and 76 percent by youth) were created. Another 1,190 people from 70 communities directly benefited from sustainable resource management because of trainings, sensitizations, and plantations of 49,005 seedlings on 254.8 ha of degraded land. In addition, 20 communities were recommended to be awarded by the Community Forest Management Agreement (CFMA) due to having improved their natural resource management practices.

Over 200 people benefited directly from a solar-powered multi-functional platform (SPMFP) capable of producing 400 kilograms of ice per day at the Kartong fish landing site. The facility enabled vendors to develop a value chain that would allow them to increase their income and livelihoods while also accessing energy sustainably in accordance with the country's NDCs.

To strengthen frameworks for land and natural resources (LNR) governance and conflict resolution, the UNCT used its expertise to support and inform the evaluation of the adequacy of legal and policy frameworks for effective land tenure governance and dispute resolution mechanisms in the Gambia as well as the empirical evaluation of grievance mechanisms for Land and Natural Resources Related Disputes in The Gambia. Further initiatives by the UN strengthened the capacity of national and local institutions to enforce inclusive LNR governance and conflict resolution mechanisms. 199 officials from both local and national institutions benefitted from trainings to further enforce inclusive LNR governance and conflict resolution mechanisms.

The UN has been adamant about strengthening rural communities' capacity to prevent conflicts and LNR disputes. With the assistance of the UN, 17 communities benefited from 26 kilometers of demarcated cattle tracks as well as 220 demarcation poles erected to facilitate cattle movement and reduce encounters with farmers. Conflicts and LNR disputes were reduced or avoided in those communities as a result.

The support for policy frameworks was followed by the creation of awareness about sustainable resource management. By sensitizing over 750 people on dispute resolution mechanisms and the importance of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, the UN ensured that authorities and communities were more aware of revised legal frameworks and policies. These efforts resulted in at least 25 people in different communities having sound knowledge of the different LNR frameworks.

**Effective national Disaster Risk Management system is in place to strengthen vulnerable communities resilient to adverse shocks**



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that efficient national disaster risk management systems are required to increase the resilience of vulnerable areas to severe shocks in the future. In response to a request from the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), the UN updated the national contingency plans for Banjul and Kanifing Municipality. The two councils participated in simulation exercises where the UN provided training to **30 stakeholders on contingency preparation**. In close coordination with NDMA, another **158 stakeholders (23 females and 135 males)** from Banjul, Kanifing, the West Coast Region, the Lower River Region, and the Upper River Region profited from trainings on disaster risk reduction.

Furthermore, the UN supported NDMA to update regional contingency plans in the Upper River Region and Lower River Region as well as the National Hazard Profile. These efforts involved active engagement with various national and regional stakeholders, such as community leaders, law enforcement, regional government representatives, and NGOs. This consultative approach to updating these documents enhanced the capacity of regional actors to manage potential disasters and shocks and environmental risks.

The UN climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, which included coordinating the update of NDC, technical and financial assistance to the government, have been successful in aiding The Gambia meet its NDC goals and reduce emissions in line with the Paris Agreement. As a result, **The Gambia's NDC 1 received the positive distinction of being considered 1.5 degrees Celsius Paris Agreement compatible in 2021**. Continued implementation of adaptation plans will strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate change and related disasters.

The UN was instrumental in the overall coordination of the COVID-19 pandemic alongside the Government through co-chairing and participating in the National Health Emergency Committee (NHEC) weekly coordination meetings. Such meetings helped to provide strategic direction that guided COVID-19 response. Moreover, the UN support led to the development of all COVID-19 response documents and protocols including such as response plans, standard operating procedures (SOP) and guidelines.

The protracted nature of COVID-19 outbreak in The Gambia necessitated the UN to organize Intra-Action Review (IAR) whereby the response activities were evaluated to identify the best practices and enabling factors; challenges, documented and applied lessons learned to strengthen the health systems; and proffered useful recommendations that reinforced the best practices and limited the challenges in COVID-19 response including vaccination. **As a result, the COVID-19 vaccine uptake increased by 57 percent as of 31st December 2021.**

Regarding COVID-19 outbreak response, the UN support to the Ministry of Health in terms skilled human resource experts enhanced the response sub-committees' activities in coordination, laboratory, infection prevention and control (IPC), risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), data management and surveillance. The National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) was enabled to conduct polymerase chain reaction (PCR) procedures that is the gold standard for COVID-19 test. UN support also led to the establishment of the **first Oxygen plant in the public sector** which will greatly reduce dependence on commercial supply.

**3.3**

**DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT**



**158**

**30**

REGIONAL CONTINGENCY PLANS & THE NATIONAL HAZARD PROFILE UPDATED

STAKEHOLDERS HAVE GAINED SKILLS ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

STAKEHOLDERS HAVE ENHANCED SKILLS IN CONTINGENCY PREPARATIONS

"I still remember the sound of the heavy winds that night in September," shudders Binta. "I quickly moved my family to a neighbor's house who had a much stronger building as mine was built from mud while it was still raining." Then it started raining a lot more and there was a windstorm. His house was flooded and eventually fell, leaving him and his family homeless. To assist vulnerable families like his, the UN provided emergency food aid in early September. About 31,000 people (approximately 3,875 households) received 50 kg of rice and 1,350 Gambian Dalasi's (around USD 26.5) per household per month for three months. This hybrid ration will allow families to access a diversified and balanced diet especially during the prolonged lean season from May-September when traditionally food stocks run low followed by cash assistance. In their moment of need, this support was all that stood between her family and hunger, homelessness, and despair. " The support came at a time when I was desperate, and it did help me get back on my feet gradually".



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# Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

The UNCT in The Gambia formed new alliances and continued to build on existing ones with civil society organizations, development partners, the private sector, faith-based organizations, and the government. The United Nations in The Gambia continued to accelerate the impact of the SDGs by catalyzing SDG multistakeholder partnerships, financing investments, and innovations.

In 2021, the UN Resident Coordinator and the UK High Commissioner co-chaired the Development Partners' Group (DPG), the country's main development partners' coordination forum. The DPG served as a critical forum for the international community to discuss strategic issues important to the Gambia, such as the response to COVID-19 and the subsequent recovery.

Similarly, the UN continued to lead the COVID-19 Vaccine response, with The Gambia being among the first five countries on the continent to receive the COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX facility. The innovative partnership with the World Bank, UK, US, EU, supported the Ministry of Health to ensure lifesaving vaccines were made available for the most vulnerable people in the country. Partner support enabled the financing and procurement of ultra-cold chain storage of COVID-19 vaccines which will significantly modernize the health care system in the country.

Finance is one of the vital means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development along with capacity building, technology, trade, partnership, and policy and institutional coherence.

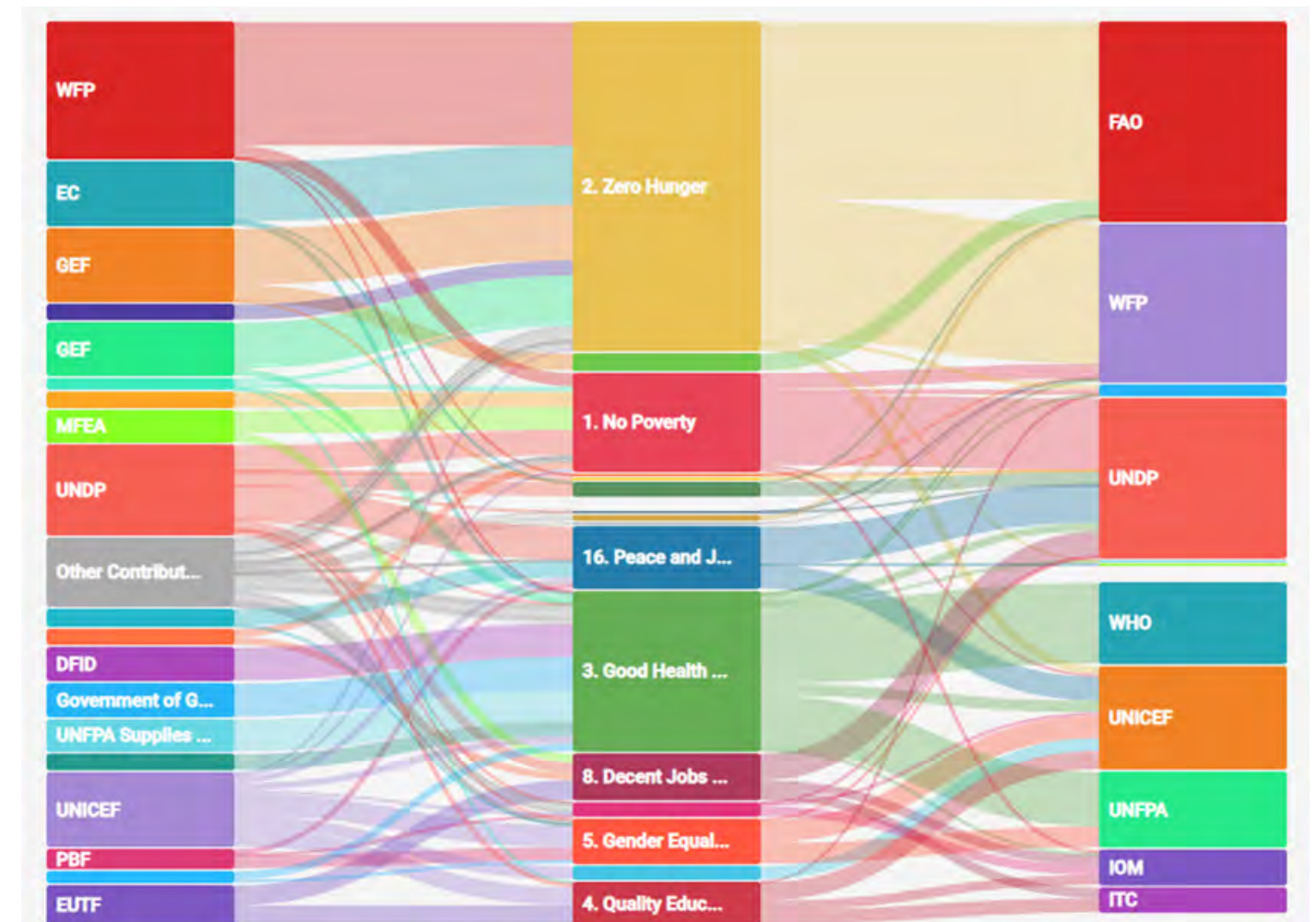
One of The Gambia's key strengths has been collaboration among UNCT members. The UN in The Gambia Joint programs have been able to secure funding to promote the UN agenda. A total of US\$8.3 million was acquired for joint programming through the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the Peace Building Fund in 2021. The funds will be used (a) to address the drivers and causes of migration-related vulnerabilities among border communities along the Trans-Gambia transport corridor (US\$2.35 million), (b) to support the implementation and monitoring of the TRRC recommendations (US\$3.5 million), and (c) to support cross-border cooperation in The Gambia and Senegal for increased community resilience and social cohesion (US\$3.8 million, of which The Gambia is allocated US\$2.4 million).

In addition, US\$699,832 was mobilized from the UN Partnership to promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Donor Trust Fund (UNPRPD MDTF) to advance the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly women and children with disabilities in The Gambia by creating and strengthening necessary structures, processes and tools for effective protection and inclusive service delivery.

This financing also ensured the first Situational Analysis to be conducted on persons with disabilities to promote evidence-based policy development in The Gambia. Also, US\$44,473 was mobilized from Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs extra-budgetary (DPPA XB) Fund to respond to the Government call for early warning system to be put in place before the December poll. Hate speech was identified as a main violence-trigger, and underscored combating hate speech as priority to curb misinformation, reduce tension, and avoid violence. The Funds were therefore secured to address Hate Speech and holding of a National Stakeholder Forum.

Building forward better within the context of the socioeconomic and financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic requires, the adoption of an integrated approach to financing. The United Nations created a knowledge-sharing and learning space for Gambian stakeholders on the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to facilitate the achievement of the SDGs and the aspirations, goals, and targets of Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The UN will continue to support The Gambia's INFF process in 2022, as it develops its new national development plan and financing frameworks.

Figure 1: Linking Investments, Partners and the Sustainable Development Goals in Gambia



This graphic shows how investments are contributing to the work of different agencies and partners to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. The width of the lines represents the relative number of resources being contributed.

# Results of the UN working more and better together: UN coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency



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Given that The Gambia's current UNDAF 2017-2021 was extended to 2022 to ensure alignment of the UN cycles and the government's national development planning. The UNCT continued to implement and monitor the UNDAF results through the three Results Groups (RGs), ensuring effective coordination of country-level activities to deliver on the agreed-upon strategic results and to support both the UN and government's vision of leaving no one behind.

**UN coherence and collaboration has increased efficiency and effectiveness** in project delivery, reducing duplication of efforts, and increasing synergies among agencies while mutually reinforcing development results towards achieving the SDGs for the UN. Delivering as one for the people of The Gambia is key to the work of the UN. Last year, working together and 'delivering as one' helped us adapt to the dynamics posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This enabled us to provide the needed technical and financial support to the people of The Gambia during an exceedingly challenging time.

With the update of the CCA, the development of a new CF was launched, marking a key milestone for the UNCT in strengthening convening to deliver SDG policy and financing solutions. The Inter-agency Program Coordination Group (PCG), which includes technical experts from the UNCT and the RCO, oversaw the analytical work for updating the CCA. Furthermore, the PCG established strong partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, including national and local governments, development partners, the private sector, academia, and civil society, to deepen cooperation around the CCA in preparation for the CF's further development in 2022.

Besides, technical experts in the various UNCT thematic groups led by the RCO and the PCG strengthened their collaboration to ensure that the development of the CF is a success. The development of the CF will involve extensive consultations organized in close collaboration with national and regional authorities to ensure a careful representation of people's key challenges and aspirations.

The UNCT also maintained commitments to improve interagency coordination to streamline program planning and monitoring using UNINFO. UNCT members are given monthly updates to show their appreciation for the progress that has been made. As a result, UNINFO is now the primary tool of the UN for collaborative work planning, program monitoring, and reporting in The Gambia.

Moreover, the UNCT used all the power of integrated mandates, including bringing in regional assets such as regional DCO to provide trainings to the UNCT and partners on the development of the CF, as well as UNECA and UNDESA on assessments, analysis, and partnerships, to provide more support to both local and national governments in identifying and prioritizing the achievement of SDGs to build forward and better. Besides, one of UNCT The Gambia's key strengths has been collaboration among UNCT members. Joint programs have been able to secure funding to promote the UN agenda in The Gambia as highlighted in the previous section on partnership and financing in addition to close cooperation with international financial institutions (IFIs).

**The UNCT in The Gambia strengthened its collaboration with IFIs, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.** Both the IMF and the World Bank are active participants of the UNCT in The Gambia. This has allowed for a more seamless exchange of information between the IFIs and the UN. The UN provided details on how to ensure that the 2030 Agenda is integrated into the IMF assistance program, and vice versa, when the UN was conducting the CCA, the IMF led private-sector consultations.

Additionally, to assist the government in achieving key points of the recently approved World Bank Turnaround Strategy, it was agreed that the UN will provide support in monitoring progress and data on the three strategic objectives of the Technical Assistance Administration (TAA) where the UN can provide the most value-added (security & political stability, governance & transitional justice, and land management, environment & climate change) over the next 18 months. Furthermore, the UN/WB will conduct four joint studies to align our strategic outlook on the country, particularly relating to the root causes of fragility, conflict, and violence.

**In terms of business operations,** the UNCT remained committed to advocating for a more focused implementation of the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) and the Common Premises strategy to increase efficiency and demonstrate that the UN in The Gambia can collaborate and generate greater efficiencies. As a result of this, the UNCT implemented a business operating strategy that was in line with the efficiency agenda, and the UN in The Gambia successfully migrated to the BOS online platform.

**Regarding efficiency,** the UNCT adopted a unified approach for tax refunds and exemptions, which will shorten the time it takes for agencies to receive their tax refunds. A lead agency approach was used to establish five joint LTAs in fuel, security, printing services, video and photography, and office supply and stationery. In addition, the UNCT met with Gambian authorities to discuss the establishment of a common UN premise. While the government acknowledged that it lacked the capacity to provide a fully funded Facility, it has agreed to collaborate with the UN to find a suitable solution.



**As for communicating and advocating as one,** the UNCT through its UN Communication Group (UNCG) has increased its capacity for communications and outreach on the SDGs, UN response to COVID-19 and mobilizing for recovery, countering misinformation, harmful language, and hate speech, supporting the SDGs during the decade of action, and facilitating a better understanding of UN reforms while promoting UN norms and gender equality.

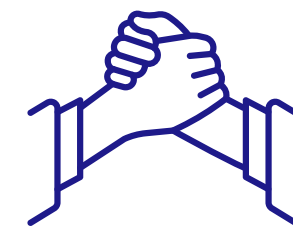
Besides, the UNCG's strong collaboration with agencies resulted in the successful development of a communication strategy that promoted joint amplification of one UN message throughout the year, particularly on days such as International Women's Day, 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, World Education Day, World AIDS Day, International Human Rights Day, and International Migrants Day, among others. For instance, to highlight a One UN Approach to migration governance and management, UNCT participated in a digital campaign launched on the commemoration of the International Migrants Day (IMD), a perfect opportunity for the UN system to strengthen its advocacy for the protection of migrant rights.

**The UNCT has been at the forefront of normative global campaigns and system-wide action plans on issues such as peace, gender, and human rights.**

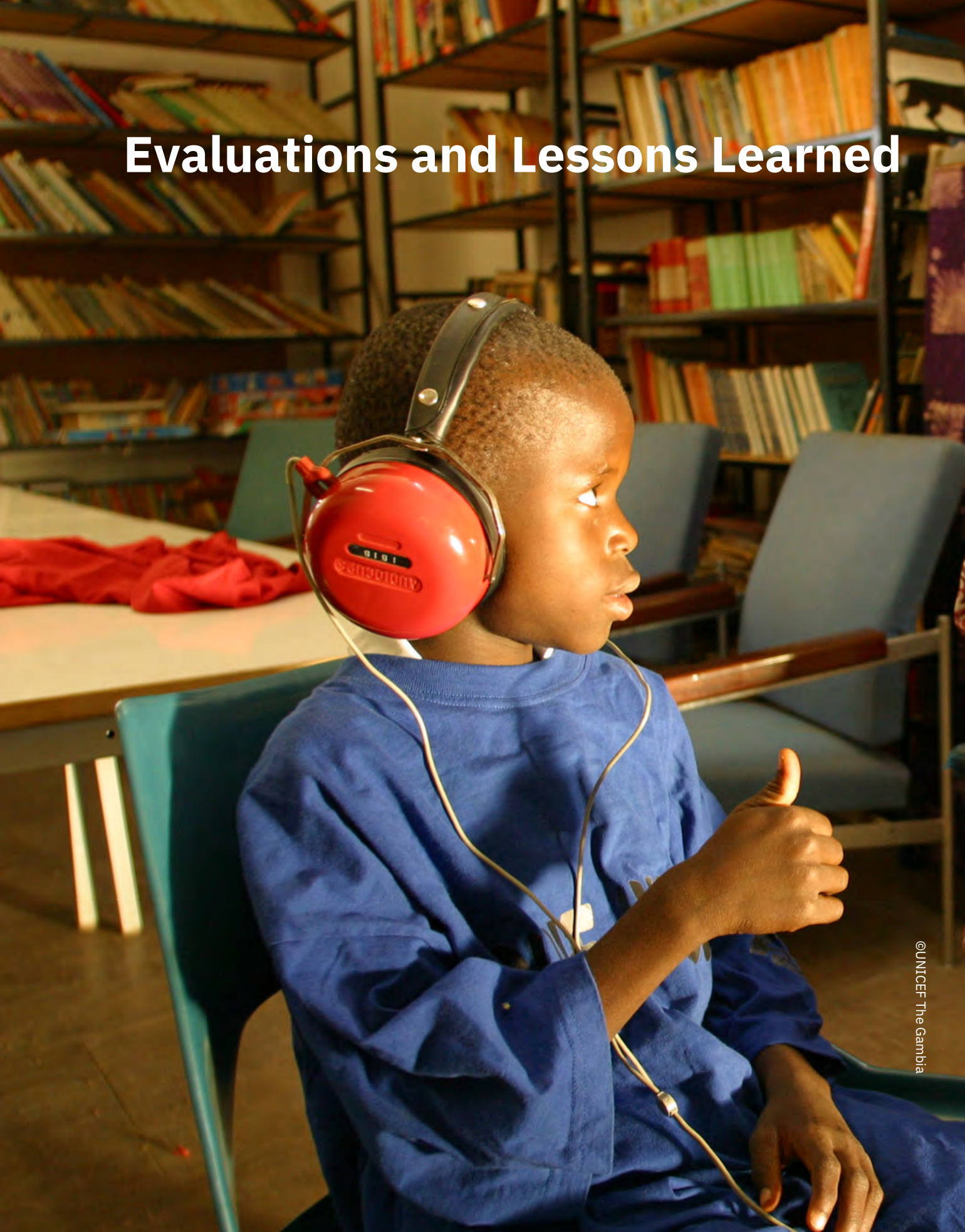
During the 2021 presidential elections, for example, the UNCT joined forces to advocate for peaceful elections and strengthened the capacity of media practitioners with the goal of countering misinformation and reducing incendiary language and hate speech. In addition, to provide the Government of The Gambia with a UN system-wide support in implementing GCM, the UN jointly supported

the Government in compiling a national voluntary review report assessing its progress-to-date in implementing GCM, to enable the Government's participation in the Africa Regional and ECOWAS Sub-Regional Review Meetings, held in September and October 2021, respectively.

To celebrate The UN day, a roundtable panel discussion was organized to highlight the ongoing efforts of the UN to support the development process of The Gambia. The panel comprised of The UN Resident Coordinator, Chair of the development partners group (UK High Commissioner), the Speaker of the Children's Assembly, National Youth Council Executive Director & West Africa Network for Peacebuilding representative (WANEP). The local UN 76 campaign slogan "Road to lasting peace" was chosen to engage all Gambians to reflect on what are their priorities for maintaining peace during the presidential elections held in December 2021. The discussion aired on Kerr Fatou and QTV shed light on the numerous strides undertaken by the UN to support the development process of the country and leaving no one behind as well as strengthening the country's transition to a fully-fledged democracy.



# Evaluations and Lessons Learned



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An independent evaluation of the 2017-2021 UNDAF is currently ongoing. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be used to inform the development of the new CF.

Despite the challenges, The UNCT had a fruitful year in 2021. If there is one crucial takeaway, it is the significance of continuing to develop the capacities of young people, who account for more than 60 percent of the population. This is critical not only for preparing them for the future, but also for giving them a voice to discuss issues that affect them at the local, regional, and national levels.

The UN reform aided collaborative efforts to support the Government's vision of leaving no one behind. Coordinated support increased project delivery efficiency and effectiveness by reducing duplication of efforts and increasing synergies among agencies while mutually reinforcing development results toward achieving the SDGs. Robust resource mobilization strategies should be employed to increase funds for continuous implementation of SDGs and the national development plan of the government.

The use of UNINFO as the central planning, monitoring, and reporting tool is critical for the UN to show transparency and accountability to all including Gambians, the Government, and development partners.

To support the GoTG and implement the necessary reforms to improve governance and human rights, the UN must pursue sustained advocacy and engagement with National Assembly Members during the bill-drafting process. This has proven to be significant, leading to the passage of the Acts.

Furthermore, in 2021, we saw how critical it was to prioritize critical legal reforms, such as amendments to the Constitution and Electoral Laws, to allow for more credible electoral processes. Implementing the TRRC recommendations would also necessitate the passage of critical legislation, such as an amended Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, as well as the International Crimes Bill and the Torture Bill.

Capacity building and technology transfer can help ensure the long-term viability of project outcomes. Furthermore, the complementarity and combination of skills training and entrepreneurship support has been shown to be effective in generating desired employment benefits, as many graduates who benefit from skills training will enter the labor market as freelancers or self-employed workers. Similarly, when graduates have access to start-up kits, the skills trainings have a greater impact.

Investments in both Technical Vocational Education and Trainings (TVETs) and Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS) continue to be critical in improving the relevance, quality, and accessibility of services. Investments at the ecosystem level are equally important. For example, the "Andandorr" program (Wolof for "together") has helped to strengthen institutions while also facilitating complementarities among ecosystem players by providing diversified and more specific services based on client maturity, sector, and geographic location. The method has assisted in avoiding duplications and inefficiencies.



# Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

Figure 2: How much we needed; how much we had; and how much we have spent

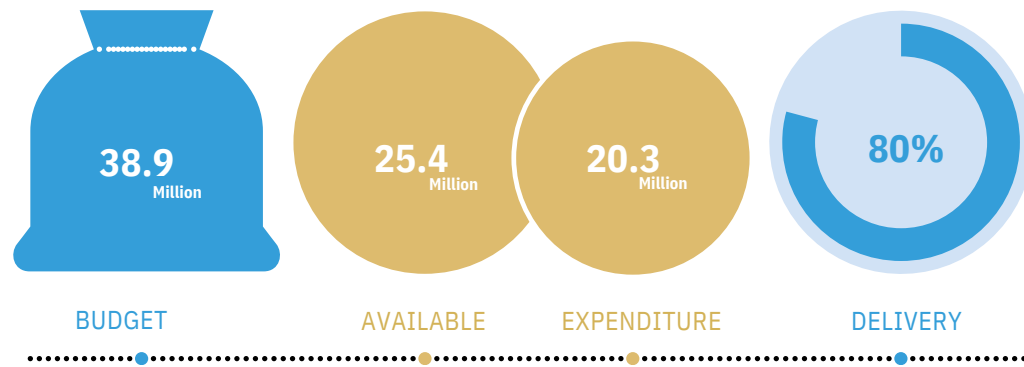


Figure 3: Allocation of available resources across each of the Sustainable Development Goals

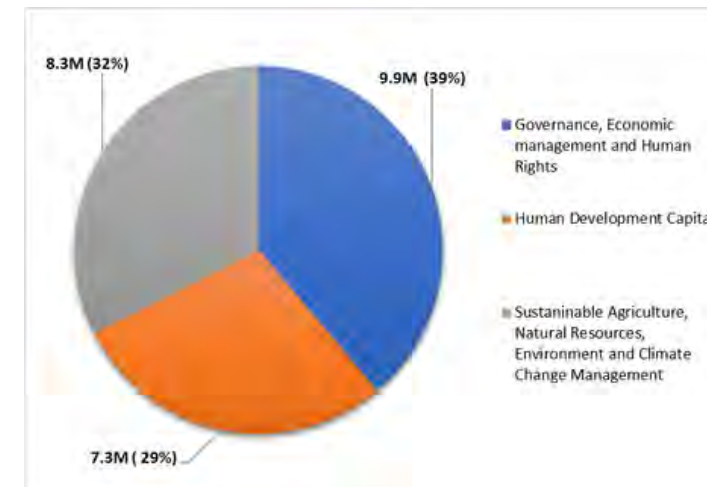
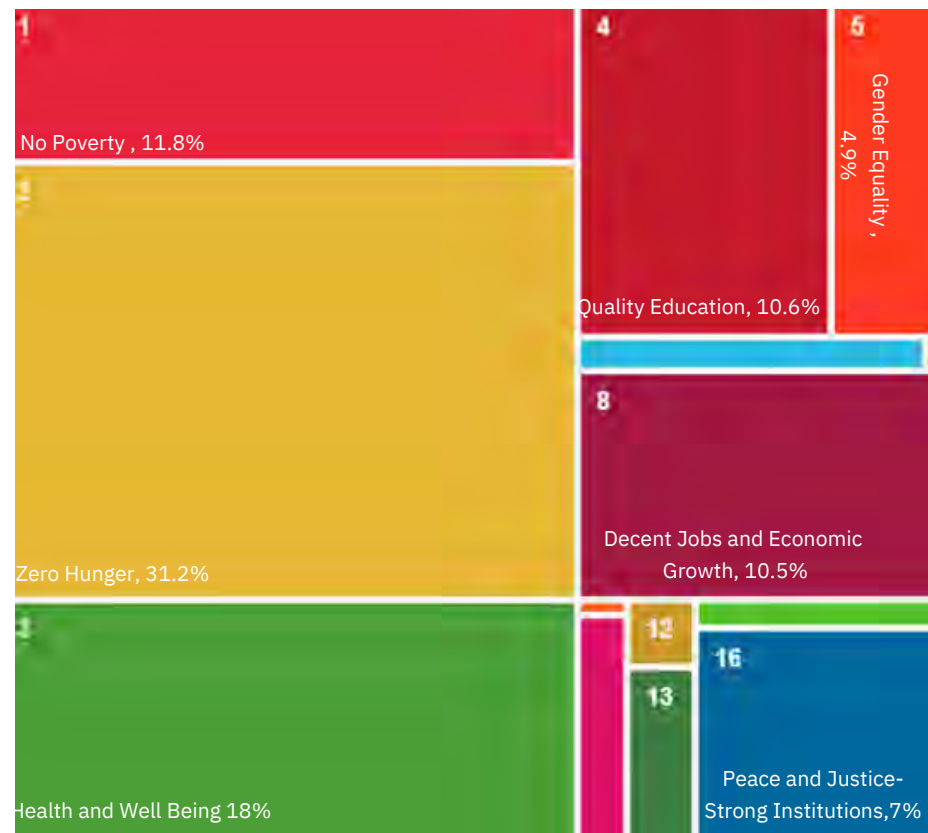


Figure 4: Total Available Resources by Priority Area

The UN has been working in The Gambia to strengthen accountability to the government and partners. As a result, accountability and transparency have been promoted as One UN, with UNINFO serving as the UNCT's primary reporting tool.

The UN required budget in 2021 was USD 38.9 million. A total of USD 25.4 million was obtained, resulting in a funding gap of USD 13.5 million. Total expenditure in The Gambia was USD 20.3 million, indicating a strong 80 percent delivery rate across all UNDAF strategic priorities.

In 2021, resource mobilization efforts were focused on COVID-19 response as well as mitigating the economic hardship caused by the pandemic in 2020, promoting transitional justice, human rights, social cohesion, and increased sustainable agriculture and food security for the most vulnerable.

As a matter of fact, resources mobilized accounted for 54% of the total available funds in The Gambia.

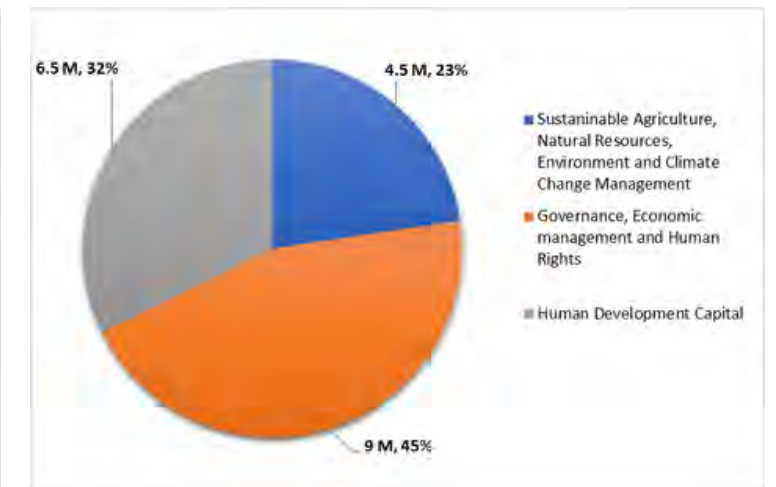


Figure 5: Total Expenditure by Priority Area

In terms of delivery, the UN prioritized alleviating poverty and boosting economic activity among the most vulnerable people as a result of the pandemic, as well as improving food security and mitigating the effects of climate change. Besides, a significant amount of resources was directed toward reducing the spread and devastation of the pandemic by supporting the vaccination campaign. Furthermore, because of the election year and the ongoing transitional justice process, the UN invested in promoting peace, human rights, and social cohesion.

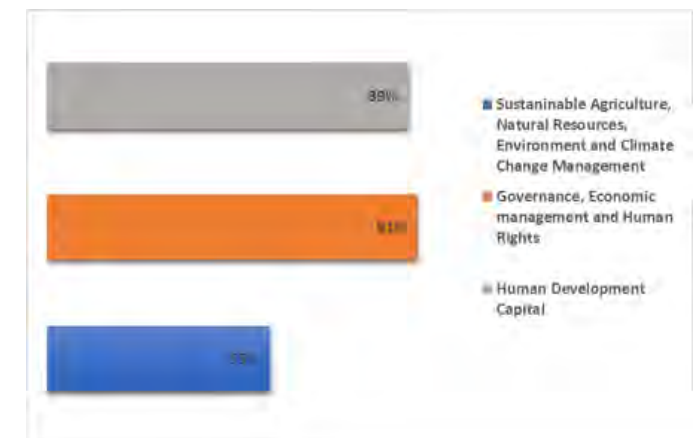


Figure 6: Delivery Rate by Strategic Area

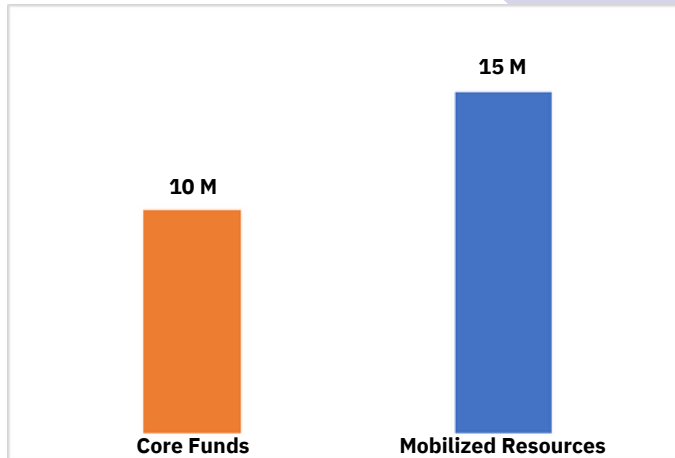


Figure 7: Core vs Mobilized Resources

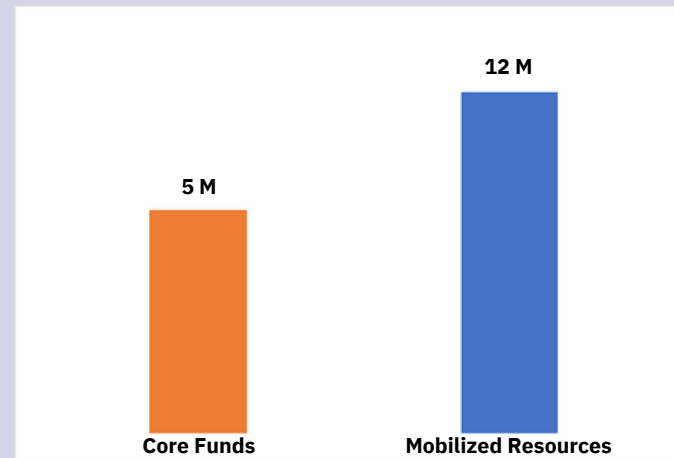


Figure 8: Expenditure by Type of Funds

Table 1: Financial overview by outcome

Outcome	Required Resources (US\$)	Available Resources (US\$)	Expenditure (US\$)	% Delivery (a/e)
Economic Management	10,769,740	7,781,051	7,314,059	94%
Governance & Human Rights	4,077,615	2,097,159	1,693,416	81%
Education	717,000	517,000	318,994	62%
Health	7,767,421	4,428,987	5,023,882	113%
Nutrition	4,245,533	875,621	609,924	70%
Social Protection	1,166,311	1,051,286	315,176	30%
Youth & Gender	416,209	402,500	197,405	49%
Agriculture & Food Security	7,976,384	6,856,397	3,207,321	47%
Natural Resources & Environment Management	1,449,393	1,233,902	1,224,498	99%
Disaster Risk Management	308,044	173,044	97,359	56%

Table 2: UN Agencies Budget and Delivery (USD)

Agency	Required Resources (US\$)	Available Resources (US\$)	Expenditure (US\$)
 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	3,974,499	3,965,779	3,167,855
 IFAD	299,500	299,500	301,534
 International Labour Organization	52,000	52,000	47,000
 IOM UN MIGRATION	478,808	478,808	450,123
 International Trade Centre	5,009,419	4,174,419	4,093,419
 UNAIDS	0	0	Non-monetary
 UNDP	8,822,256	4,649,928	4,317,192
 UNFPA	2,142,066	2,142,066	1,645,459
 unicef for every child	3,713,853	2,732,415	1,845,353
 WFP World Food Programme	9,297,040	4,470,985	1,193,132
 World Health Organization	5,235,209	2,438,367	3,322,213

\*Financial information captured in this section represents activities that are aligned to the UNDAF 2017-2021 as at March , 2022



3

UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR 2022

# UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic has made SDG implementation both more difficult and more urgent. Other risks, such as climate change, slow economic recovery, food insecurity, irregular migration, and the compounding fragile peace-development-humanitarian situation, pose a challenge to The Gambia's sustained progress toward SDG achievement. Therefore, UNCT The Gambia's primary focus for the coming year will be as follows:

## **Programming and SDG implementation**

THE GLOBAL GOALS

The key priorities of the UN in The Gambia in implementing the final year of the UNDAF will focus recovery efforts related to COVID-19 including focusing on inclusive economic and democratic governance, enhancing resilient food and nutrition security as well as promoting youth and women empowerment, employability, and entrepreneurship.

The new CF 2023-2028 which is currently being developed will be finalized and signed jointly with the government in 2022. As we develop the CF, we will support the national government in formulating a Green Recovery-focused National Development Plan (2023- 2027) and a Long-Term Development Vision (Vision 2050) (RF-NDP and LTDV). The RF-NDP which is as a successor to the NDP will serve as the vehicle through which the short- and medium-term needs of the country will be comprehensively addressed while the LTDV will chart the long-term trajectory of the country's development and transformation.

The alignment of the CF and the national development plans of the government will not only spur socio-economic development but will foster strong cooperation between the UN and the government in achievement of SDGs.

The UN will also focus on facilitating the implementation the Secretary General's call for the decade of action by supporting the Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and Voluntary National Review (VNR) to assess the progress of SDGs in The Gambia. The voluntary reviews will allow the government to identify which SDGs they have made progress on and which SDGs the country is lagging on, allowing them to identify needs and ways to improve in order to achieve the SDGs.

## **Covid-19 response**

The UN in Gambia will assess the effectiveness of the socioeconomic response plan and readjust to focus on the recovery of The Gambia. The recovery strategy will be founded on the goal of promoting inclusive economic growth while focusing on the most vulnerable groups and people at risk of falling behind. The UN will continue to collaborate with the government and development partners to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines are available to all, and that The Gambia's vaccination rate rises.

## **Strategic Financing and Partnerships**

Finance is a critical means of putting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into action. Given that the UN is currently developing the CF, the new CF will be accompanied by a robust resource mobilization and communication strategy. The UNCT will be guided by the resource mobilization strategy in forging strong partnerships and mobilizing resources to finance the country's achievement of the SDGs. Furthermore, the United Nations will continue to support The Gambia's INFF process as it develops its new national development plan and financing frameworks in 2022.

The communication strategy, on the other hand, will articulate the UN support for the government's response to and recovery from COVID-19, with a focus on inclusive green economic growth, and will position the UN as a leader in three areas: mobilize for the planet, fight inequality, and combat misinformation.

## **Leaving No One behind, Human Rights and Gender Equality**

The UN will continue to assist the government in strengthening capacities to deliver quality services while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Gender equality, prevention, social inclusion, and a human rights-based approach will continue to be mainstreamed in all UN programs to ensure that the

UN programming principles are enshrined in all our activities. The UN will continue to advocate for increased accountability and equity. We will continue to assist those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in their socioeconomic recovery, while also strengthening health and disaster preparedness systems through the development of effective systems.

In addition, we will continue to collaborate with the government and other partners, such as development actors, the private sector, academia, the media, and civil society, to strengthen the capacities of the most vulnerable to boost their competitiveness.

As we move forward, we will prioritize training and mentorship opportunities for youth, women, and people with disabilities, access to digital technologies, gender responsive public procurement, cross-border trade and mobility, export development, and green growth. The UN will ensure that the most vulnerable people are empowered as change agents to innovate and build a better future.

## **Business Innovation**

In accordance with the UN efficiency agenda, the inter-agency Operations Management Team (OMT) will continue to implement initiatives aimed at harmonizing common business operations (BOS). The UN will also continue to coordinate and align its activities as one to provide more efficient and effective service delivery, reduce transaction costs, and improve operational efficiency.



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