



UNITED NATIONS
THE GAMBIA



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UNITED NATIONS
ANNUAL REPORT
THE GAMBIA

2024

Our Systems Approach to
Transforming Every Dollar into
Lasting Community Change

www.gambia.un.org

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FOREWORD



Our 2024 Annual Results Report showcases how UN Gambia’s systems approach transformed lives nationwide. Working with local partners, we brought justice closer to rural communities, supported new entrepreneurs, and helped villages protect their coastlines, turning individual successes into lasting community improvements.

When different parts of community life work together, positive change grows stronger. We have seen this repeatedly: as UNDP and OHCHR make courts more accessible and IOM makes border crossings safer, women feel confident starting businesses. Their increased earnings flow into children’s education and healthcare. These stronger, healthier communities then protect their environment and create new opportunities for others.

Our investments deliver powerful results. UNDP, FAO, WFP, and UNICEF collaboration ensures that the farmers we help turn each dollar into \$16 of agricultural production. Our \$137,500 mangrove project has strengthened coastal protection by 15% while creating opportunities for 2,170 entrepreneurs. A \$77,000 investment in water systems now provides 28,000 extra litres daily, helping 75 families start productive gardens.

We never work alone. The Government of The Gambia’s vision guides our work, while local organisations and communities bring our plans and their dreams to life. Our heroes are our development partners who give us essential funding to do our work.

We are seeing real change happen—in courtrooms, maternity wards, and at border crossings. Each success builds on the next, creating lasting improvements in people’s lives.

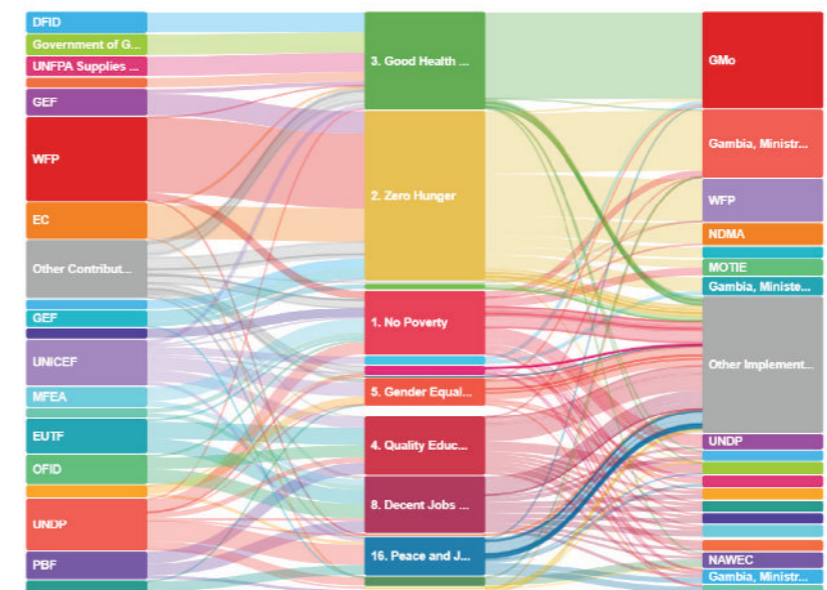
Please help us expand these proven solutions to reach more communities across The Gambia.

Karl Frederick Paul
UN Resident Coordinator
The Gambia

UNITED NATIONS IN THE GAMBIA



OUR DONORS



Key Development Partners of the UN Development System in the Country



Women celebrate the launch of a new project, marking a milestone in their collective journey toward progress and empowerment.

CHAPTER 1: THE GAMBIA'S CONTEXT AND HOW WE WORK



COUNTRY CONTEXT: TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

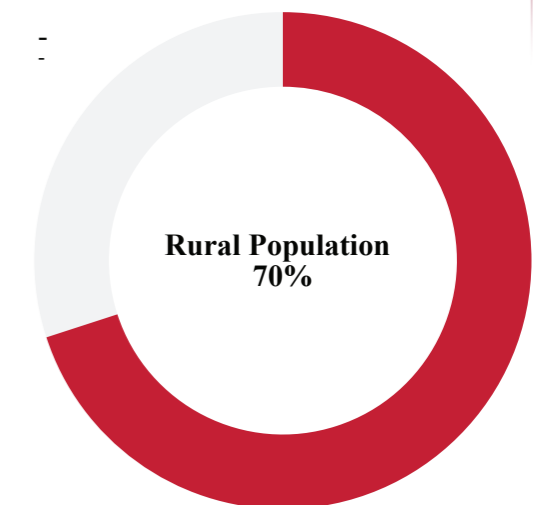
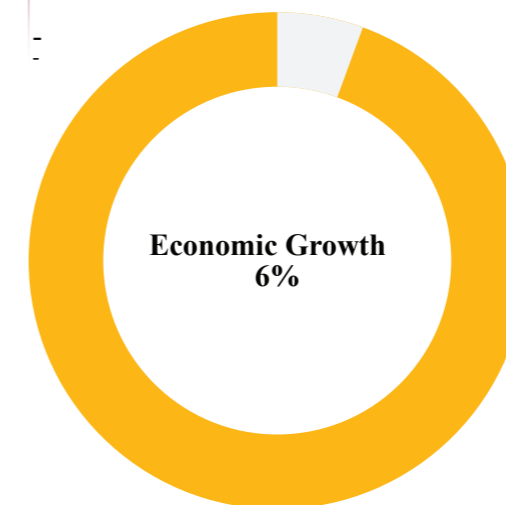
The Gambia is on a development pathway. Private businesses are emerging as engines of progress, while improved governance is giving Gambians a greater voice in their future. This positive change shows in the numbers: economic activity is set to grow by 5.6% through 2026, creating new opportunities for Gambian families and communities.

Infrastructure improvements are changing daily life. More homes and businesses now have electricity. Digital technology connects entrepreneurs to markets. Better roads link communities to opportunities. These advances particularly benefit rural areas, where most Gambians live and work.

Yet significant challenges remain. Seven out of ten Gambians depend on farming for their livelihood, making them vulnerable to changing weather patterns. Many families rely on money from relatives abroad or tourism income to make ends meet. While food and fuel costs are expected to decrease in 2024, high prices continue to strain household budgets.

The government leads this transformation by strengthening public services and encouraging private sector growth. New policies help struggling state companies become more efficient. Improved systems make it easier for citizens to engage with their government. These reforms and growing citizen participation create a foundation for lasting progress.

Development Pathway of The Gambia





OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: BUILDING PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

Our work in The Gambia flows from understanding how different challenges connect in people’s lives. The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2024-2028) guides us in creating three interlinked paths to progress.

First, we help create lasting opportunities. This means standing with farmers as they learn to grow more food while protecting the environment. It means supporting entrepreneurs who turn ideas into businesses that create jobs. It means ensuring women and young people can build secure livelihoods that weather setbacks because communities can only invest in their future when they have reliable ways to earn a living.

Second, we strengthen the systems that serve people. This work takes many forms - from making healthcare more accessible to bringing courts closer to communities. It includes helping government offices work more efficiently and ensuring services reach remote areas. When

institutions work better, citizens can participate more fully in their country’s development.

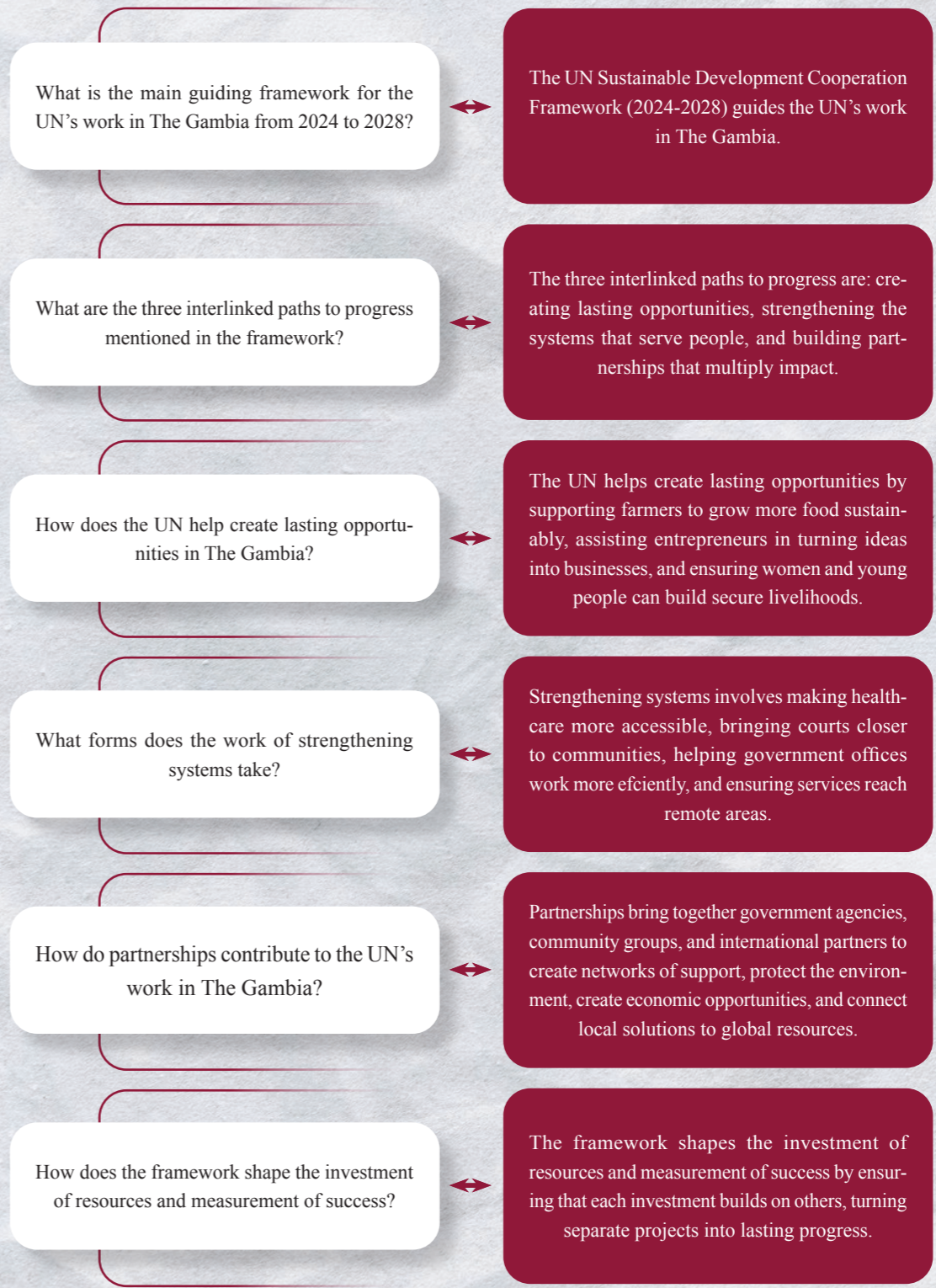
Third, we build partnerships that multiply impact. By bringing together government agencies, community groups, and international partners, we create networks of support that make change possible. We help protect the environment while creating economic opportunities. We connect local solutions to global resources. These partnerships ensure that progress in one area strengthens advances in others.

This framework shapes both how we invest resources and measure success. When we help women access legal services, we also connect them to business training. We link farmers to school feeding programs that create reliable markets when we support climate-smart agriculture. As our report shows, each investment builds on others, turning separate projects into lasting progress.



Ayesha Harun Jammeh leading a 'Call for Justice' march, demanding accountability for her father's murder during former President Yahya Jammeh's regime.

The UN's Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2024-2028)





A returnee supported by IOM Gambia kisses the ground as he returns home.

CHAPTER 2:

EMPOWERING EVERY PERSON (HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PEOPLE-CENTRED GOVERNANCE)



JUSTICE AND GOVERNANCE TRANSFORMATION

The morning sun streams through the ancient baobab's branches as Faye Drammeh reviews case files in Sutima village. She remembers the challenges women faced just two years ago. 'When I first joined the tribunal, many questioned whether a woman could lead,' she says, sorting through documents detailing domestic disputes, land rights cases, and gender-based violence reports. 'Women would wait months for their cases to be heard if they dared to seek justice.'

Her transformation began when she was selected for specialised training through OHCHR and UNDP's \$533,000 investment in justice reform program. As one of the first women chosen to lead a local tribunal, she faced initial scepticism. 'Now they see how our understanding of women's experiences strengthens the justice system,' she explains.

Digital innovation marked the next phase of progress. Through UNDP and OHCHR's support, Darbonding mastered new case management systems that revolutionised her work. Processing times dropped by 60%, but the real breakthrough came when she started using WhatsApp groups to coordinate mobile courts. 'We bring justice directly to remote communities now,' she says. 'Women don't have to choose between their daily responsibilities and seeking legal protection.'

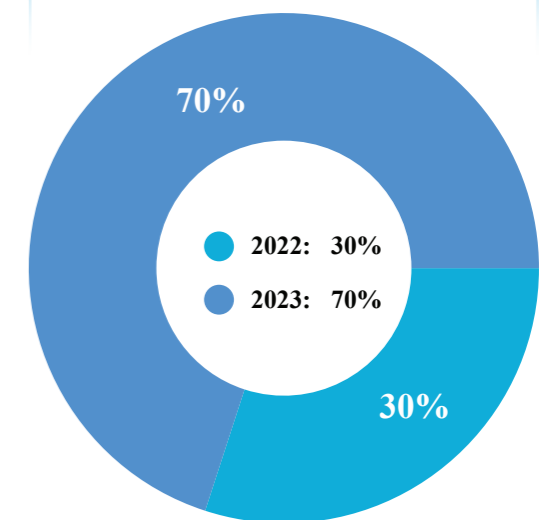
The impact shows in both numbers and faces. Today, tribunals like hers resolve 70% of gender-based violence cases, up from 30% in 2022.

The transformation manifests in everyday moments. In a small office in Banjul, a domestic violence survivor receives prompt support, no longer facing months of delays. At a village meeting, young

women speak up about inheritance rights, their voices carrying the weight of legal protection. In district courts, trained mediators help families find resolutions honouring justice and reconciliation.

The impact of stronger justice systems extends far beyond the courtroom. Women start businesses more confidently when they know their rights will be protected. In Faye's district, OHCHR and UNDP support for increasing access to justice for women through mobile courts has been accompanied by a 45 per cent increase in women's business registration. These entrepreneurs create jobs, support education through earnings, and contribute to community development. Justice reform thus becomes a catalyst for broader economic and social transformation.

Impact of Justice Reform on Gender - Based Violence Case Resolution





ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND YOUTH INNOVATION

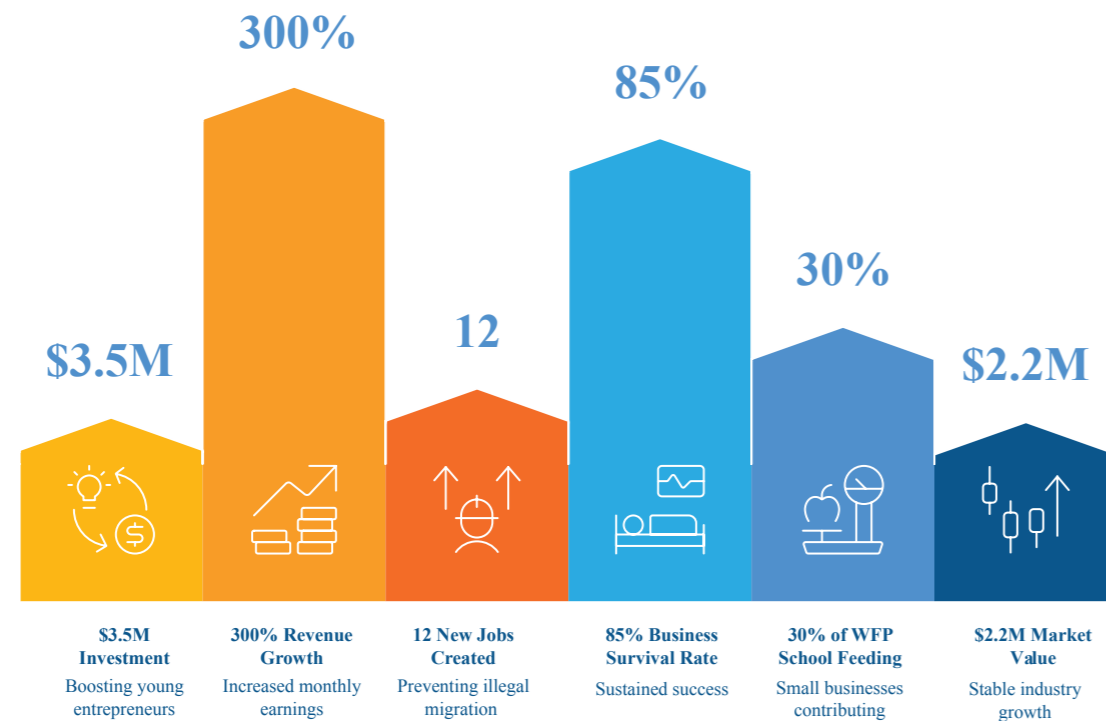


Ya Fatou holding samples of processed food items from her business

The rhythmic hum of machinery fills Ya Fatou's workshop, where equipment provided for her helps run her business where she provides meals

and sells processed food additives. Because of the IOM's \$3.5 million investment in young entrepreneurs, she has increased her monthly revenue by 300%. Additionally, she now employs three people who had been contemplating migrating illegally. Her success exemplifies the return on investment in youth enterprise—eighty-five per cent of the 150 youth-led enterprises launched through this initiative continue to thrive after their first year.

In her quality control lab, Ya Fatou demonstrates the rigorous standards that have made her business a trusted supplier for a lot of families. "Each batch of food represents our ability to turn challenges into opportunities," she says. Small businesses like hers now supply 30% of WFP's school feeding program, creating a stable market worth over \$2.2 million annually.



SAVING LIVES THROUGH BETTER HEALTHCARE



Senior Midwife Ida Cham begins her morning rounds at Bansang Hospital, pacing around the maternity ward checking on admitted women as usual. "When I started here," "we tracked everything on paper. Sometimes, critical patient information wouldn't reach us really late."

Her transformation began when she joined WHO's comprehensive maternal health initiative, which was implemented with UNFPA and UNICEF. As one of twenty-five midwives selected for advanced training, she learned to use new early warning systems that help identify high-risk pregnancies before complications arise. Digital health systems have become the stethoscope of our time especially as a midwife working in rural Gambia. We're not just responding to emergencies anymore, we're preventing them".

The impact of this new approach is shown in the numbers displayed on her screen: antenatal visits have doubled from four to eight per pregnancy. Each mother she checks represents part of the remarkable ninety-two per cent skilled birth attendance rate achieved this year, translating to 31,975 safer deliveries.

But Aminata's influence extends beyond individual patient care. She supports a network of five hundred and forty trained health personnel, 78 per cent women, who share information and support through the digital health system. "This morning alone," she says, reviewing the latest updates, "I've monitored fifteen expectant mothers through our early warning system. When I spot potential complications, I can immediately connect with community health workers to ensure mothers get care before problems become serious."

The transformation reaches into the smallest villages. Aminata mentors community health workers like Mariama Baldeh through the digital network, who bring prenatal care directly to women's homes. "Before, some women never saw a health-care provider until delivery," Ida explains. "Now we can track every pregnancy from the beginning, ensuring mothers get the right care at the right time."

Back in her office, Aminata points to a wall chart tracking the ward's progress: zero maternal deaths in the past six months, a 95% vaccination rate for newborns, and complications detected and managed before they become emergencies. "Each number represents a mother who went home healthy, a baby who got a strong start in life," she says. "But what makes me proudest is seeing young women in our community now dreaming of becoming healthcare providers. They see us saving lives and know they can do the same."

EDUCATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



Our integrated approach is most effective for keeping children in school. At Misera Lower Basic School, 14-year-old Halimatou Ceesay is happy to be back in school together with her peers. She is one of 15,000 students who gained access to digital learning tools. UNICEF's Zero Out of Schools Programme has transformed education across the region. "I had to drop out of school after moving around a few times with my family. Upon returning, I was just at home helping with the chores. Through this project, I am happy to be back in school learning with my mates and working hard to ensure I become an independent woman that supports her family in the future".

UNICEF's \$1.129 million investment in education services has transformed learning across the region, keeping 34,346 children in school, 52 per cent of whom are girls. This strategic investment, combining \$242,562 in education policy strengthening and \$197,816 in institutional capacity development, has achieved a 45 per cent improvement in student engagement.

This digital metamorphosis emerges from carefully coordinated UN support. To create comprehensive change, UNICEF's educational initiatives combine UNAIDS' advocacy programmes, WHO's school health programs, and UNFPA's adolescent development work.

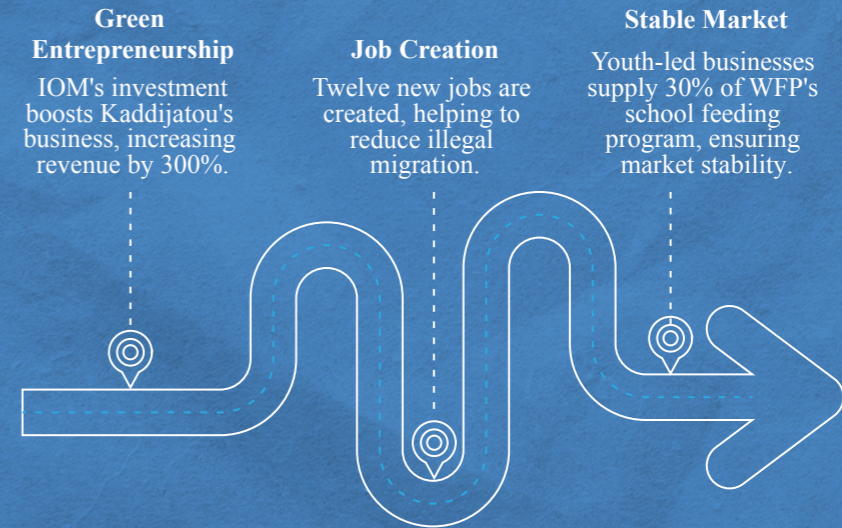
In Janjanbureh, where the local school meets the community health centre, 45-year-old Mariama Suso witnesses this integration daily. "When UNAIDS and WHO trained our health workers in disease surveillance," she explains, watching students file into the new digital learning centre, "it meant fewer sick days, better attendance, stronger performance." The numbers validate her observation: across 42 districts, school feeding programs now reach 75,000 vulnerable children, and health monitoring has reduced illness-related absenteeism by 35%. Each of our investments builds upon the others, like lines of code creating a robust program for success.

As The Gambia moves forward, these digital foundations promise to compile into a future where every child can program their path to success.

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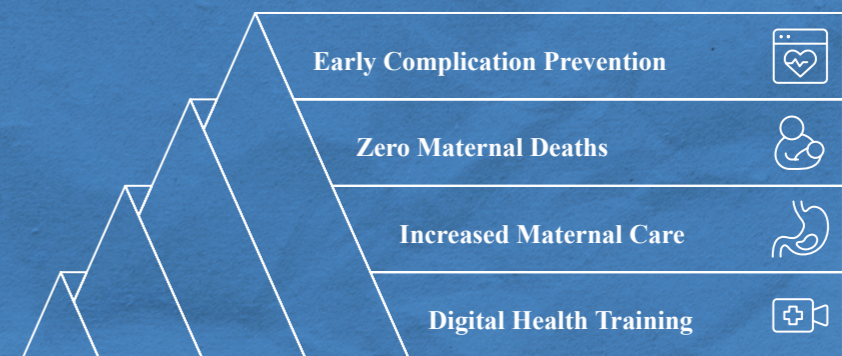
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Achieving Economic Empowerment



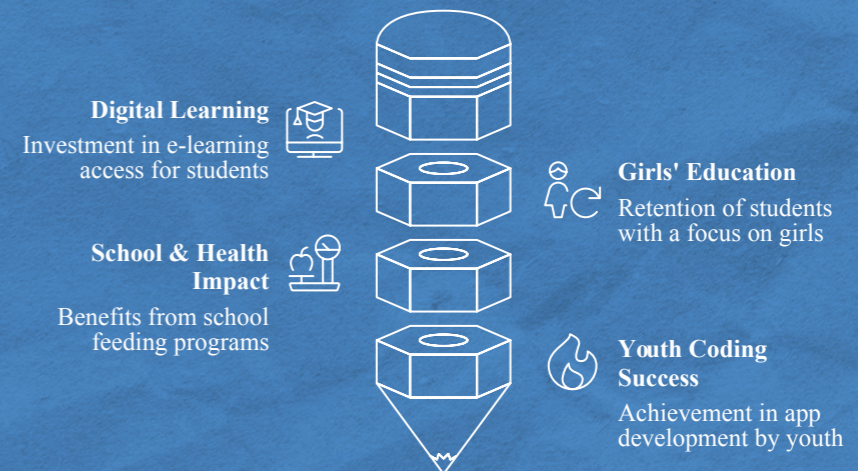
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Achieving Safer Healthcare Outcomes



03

UNICEF's Educational Initiatives Overview





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When communities are empowered with the right support, they don't just grow—they grow green. Sustainable practices, restored ecosystems, and climate-smart solutions turn challenges into thriving, resilient futures.



A farmer reaps ripe rice stalks, continuing a tradition passed through generations.

CHAPTER 3: GROWING GREEN FUTURES (BUILDING GREEN, RESILIENT, AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES)



HOW INTEGRATED SUPPORT TRANSFORMED A COMMUNITY

In Misera, Sohna’s thriving nurseries proves what coordinated support can achieve. But her path to success began with a simple change at the border. “I used to leave home at 4 AM to trade across the border,” Sohna recalls. “Life has been much better since we were trained and provided with support to venture into agriculture and have our own community garden as women. We were mainly engaged in petty trading like selling detergents. With what we harvest, we are able to cook for our families a good meal based on the produce here and support our families.

Then came the first breakthrough: improved IOM support for improved border management and reduced crossing times to 30 minutes. With seven more hours in her day, Sohna could explore new opportunities. FAO-supported agricultural experts then stepped in, teaching her the science of sustainable cultivation. This training merged perfectly with her trading experience.

The learning curve was steep, but the results proved worth it. “The training helped me understand how different crops serve different purposes,” she explains. By applying these lessons, she increased seedling survival rates by 40%. Today, her nursery earns her very good money annually while protecting vital coastlines. Each mangrove seedling serves multiple roles: preventing shore erosion, creating fish breeding grounds, and generating income for local families.

Sohna’s impact now extends far beyond her nursery. She supplies seedlings to restoration projects across borders through her established trading networks. The community garden local women who once lost

hours at border crossings with a renewed sense of economic stability. She also trains young people in sustainable cultivation techniques, passing on her knowledge to the next generation.

This story shows how coordinated support creates lasting change. Better border management created time for new opportunities. Agricultural training turned that time into business success. School feeding programs provided reliable markets. Each step is built on the last, creating change that touches entire communities.

Gambian Border crossing has been made easier



Better border management gave me time. Agricultural training turned that time into success.

MusuKebba Jarju



STREAMS OF CHANGE: USING WATER TO TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES



A young girl drinking fresh water from a borehole tap

In Sinchu Barra, Wally Bah’s community exemplifies how improved water access transforms daily life. Through IOM’s \$77,000 Community Borehole Expansion project, his village evolved from water scarcity to abundance, showing how targeted infrastructure investment multiplies development impact.

The installation of the expanded borehole system marked the beginning of a transformation. Our community truly understands the value of water because we used to travel kilometres to access it. Through this training, we’ve learned more than just how to maintain our borehole. We’ve learned how to work together. Our newly formed management committee ensures every repair is timely, and every community member has a voice in protecting our most critical resource”.

Today, the system provides an additional 28,000 litres of water daily, increasing storage capacity from 4,000 to 7,000 litres. But the real impact is shown in the lives of those who have changed. School attendance has increased by 30%, particularly among girls. Seventy-five new household gardens flourish where dry earth once cracked in the sun. Women who once spent hours carrying water now run small businesses.

‘Three years ago, girls would walk to Senegal for water, missing school and business opportunities.’ Wally explains that the flourishing vegetable gardens have doubled since IOM’s \$77,000 Community Borehole Expansion project was implemented with FAO and UNICEF support. ‘Now our children spend that time in school instead.’



HARVESTING HOPE: NURTURING SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS



With climate-smart techniques, I now grow for my family and nourish children in my community.

patterns meant our old ways weren’t enough. Some days, I worried I couldn’t grow enough to feed my family, let alone sell at market.’

Today, her garden tells a different story. Mariama has transformed her small plot into a thriving enterprise as one of 875 women mastering climate-smart techniques through WFP’s \$800,000 investment in local agriculture. ‘- I’ve learned that farming isn’t just about growing crops it’s about nurturing our precious resources. Before, I watched helplessly as my plants withered during dry spells. Now, I carefully manage water for my onions, tomatoes, bell peppers, and cucumbers using sustainable irrigation techniques. My income has grown significantly, but more importantly, I understand how to balance what we take from the earth with what we give back.

Naba’s success extends beyond her field. She and other farmers now have reliable buyers thanks to the school feeding programme. WFP sources produce from 910 local farmers like Mariama to supply nutritious meals for schools. ‘Before, I struggled to find buyers,’ she says. ‘Now I know exactly how much to grow and when because the school program guarantees a fair price for my vegetables. And knowing I’m helping feed children in my community makes the work even more meaningful.’



Gardener Naba poses with produce from her garden

In the fertile fields of Nyakoi, Naba Jabbie kneels beside her vegetable garden, remembering the challenges she faced just two years ago. ‘I used traditional farming methods passed down through generations,’ she explains, ‘but changing weather

The guaranteed market means Naba can confidently plan her production and income. This model improves her livelihood and improves nutrition for thousands of schoolchildren, creating a win-win for farmers and families.



GUARDIANS OF THE COAST: PROTECTING NATURE’S BOUNTY

On the coastline at Warf Njago, Marie Sambou steers her boat through mangrove-lined waterways, checking rows of oyster spat collectors (structures that help oyster larvae grow) bobbing in the water. These simple devices are responsible for the 300% increase in oyster production that her women’s cooperative has achieved. “Before, every harvest was risky,” she says, remembering how overharvesting and unstable mangroves made the work dangerous and unsustainable.

Now, things have changed. She points to newly restored mangrove areas: fish spawning grounds have expanded by 310 hectares, and coastal erosion has reduced by 40%. Marie is one of 1,400 women trained in ecosystem restoration and sustainable resource management through FAO’s \$7.5 million climate adaptation program. With new techniques, their cooperatives now produce 4,000

fifty-kilogram bags of oysters annually— roughly 200 tons – without destroying the mangroves that nurture them. This sustainable approach led to a 15% increase in mangrove coverage, creating new habitats that support biodiversity and bolster livelihoods.

The restoration of mangrove ecosystems shows how environmental protection strengthens other development gains. Healthy mangroves protect coastal roads and communities, making cross-border trade routes more reliable. They support fisheries and improve family nutrition and income. And when women earn more from sustainable oyster harvesting, they invest in their children’s education and healthcare.

In short, protecting nature has become a foundation for broader community resilience.



COAST OF THE GAMBIA



BUILDING BRIDGES: INFRASTRUCTURE THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

Not all challenges are natural; some come with development itself. In Jarra Central, the construction of a new bridge disrupted traditional river ferry livelihoods for many locals. But we turned this challenge into an opportunity. The ITC, working with local authorities, established hospitality training centres and entrepreneurship hubs to help affected community members find new paths to prosperity.

These centres have trained 105 youth and women in hospitality and food processing skills and supported 64 local businesses in improving their productivity. Approximately 75% of those benefiting are women.

Thanks to this initiative, what could have been an economic crisis became a story of adaptation. Former ferry operators have opened small restaurants and guesthouses using the new bridge to serve travellers. Others have started food processing businesses, turning local produce into marketable goods.

This experience shows how practical skills, business development, and women’s inclusion in infrastructure projects can turn challenges into opportunities.

Like water navigating rocky terrain, our support is turning challenges into growth opportunities.

COAST OF THE GAMBIA





Fishermen push off from shore readying to go to sea.

CHAPTER 4:

HEROES HELPING US MAKE DREAMS POSSIBLE IN THE GAMBIA



Emergency Response

Building and enhancing emergency response capabilities



Disease Prevention

Efforts to prevent diseases like polio



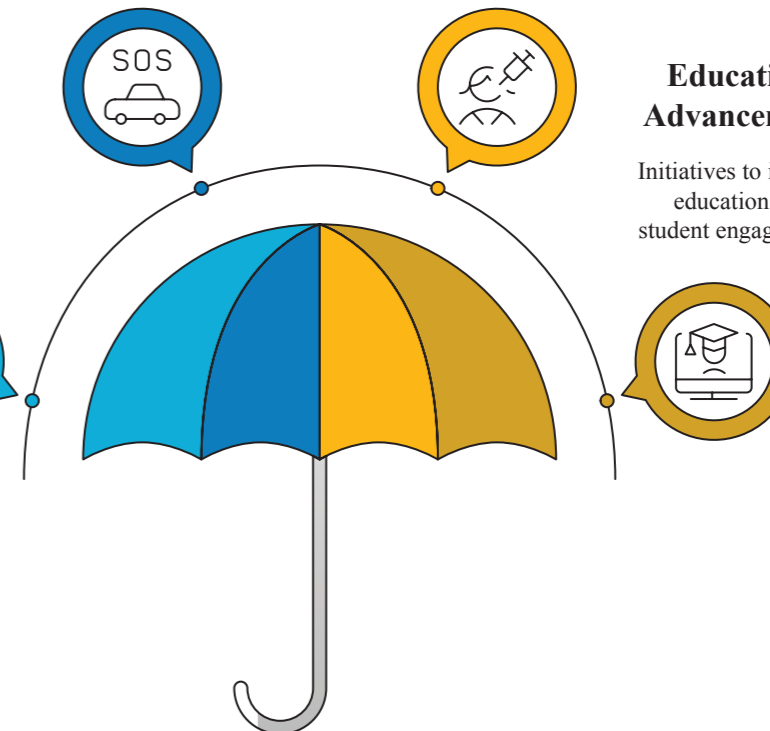
Healthcare Improvements

Contributions to safe deliveries and healthcare system strengthening



Educational Advancements

Initiatives to improve education and student engagement



Every morning across The Gambia, thousands of lives are improving because of heroes who believe in our work. They spark hope and opportunity and help us transform the communities we serve.

When a mother safely delivers her baby at Bansang Hospital, she might not know that Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and their partners invested \$800,000 through UNICEF to make that moment possible. But she feels their impact in the confident hands of her skilled birth attendant, in the well-

equipped delivery room, in the healthy first cry of her newborn. These partners helped us achieve over 31,000 such moments of joy this year.

But ensuring safe births requires more than just delivery rooms. CDC USA, Global Affairs Canada, and INTPA understood this, contributing \$600,000 through WHO to build our emergency response capabilities. When the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands, Gavi, and DFATD added \$3.5 million for emergency response, they helped strengthen the healthcare system.


Disease prevention champions were found in Rotary International, NORAD, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Germany, whose \$700,000 contribution keeps polio at bay. The Sasakawa Health Foundation, Bernard van Leer Foundation, and Saudi Arabia added their support. At the same time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden and Germany invested \$700,000 in making WHO's programs more effective. Together, these partners have helped save countless lives.

When young Fatou learns coding in her digital classroom, she's building her future through the vision of UNICEF-Qatar, the Belgian Committee for UNICEF, and Global Education partners who contributed \$1.5 million to transform education. Their belief in our children's potential helped bring 34,000 students back to learning, each carrying dreams that can now become reality.

The United States Fund for UNICEF, Global Education, United Nations Multi-Partner Trust, and the Government of Japan ensured these programs reached more children with their \$50,000 contribution. When the German Committee for UNICEF, UNFPA/USA FGM, United Nations MultiPartner Trust, Italy, and USAID added \$1.4 million for child protection, they helped create safe spaces where children, including Fatou, can learn and dream bigger.

Heroes come in many forms. The Global Environment Facility demonstrated extraordinary foresight by investing \$6 million through FAO in climate-smart agriculture. The Green Climate Fund's remarkable \$17 million contribution protects our coastlines and creates opportunities for communities like Marie's, where sustainable oyster harvesting now supports hundreds of families. These partners saw the possibility of turning environmental challenges into economic opportunities.

Justice and equality found champions in the UN Peacebuilding Fund, whose \$3.5 million investment through UNDP and OHCHR helped women like Darbonding take their rightful places as community leaders. The European Union's transformative \$10 million contribution strengthened the institutions that protect everyone's rights. Through their support, twenty-three women now serve as tribunal leaders, each a testament to what becomes possible when partners believe in positive change.


 **UNICEF and Education**
Ensured educational programs reached more children

 **Child Protection**
Created safe spaces for children

 **Women's Empowerment**
Supported women as community leaders

 **Migrant Support**
Helped returning migrants build new lives

 **Youth Empowerment**
Supported youth-led businesses

 **Water Access**
Provided clean water access

Some heroes work quietly. Through IOM, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation invested \$900,000 in helping returning migrants build new lives. The African Development Bank contributed \$500,000 to engage the diaspora in development. The Government of Japan's vital

\$2.2 million investment in border management has transformed cross-border trade from a daily struggle into an opportunity for growth.

The Joint FGM Programme emerged as a champion for women's rights, providing \$700,000 through UNFPA for gender equality initiatives. The Italian Cooperation's contribution of \$700,000 protects women from violence and ensures access to essential healthcare. Because of this support, every woman who now speaks confidently in community meetings, every girl who stays in school, and every mother who builds a business stands taller.

When young entrepreneurs like Ndey Awa succeed, they build on foundations the European Union and GIZ laid through ITC's youth empowerment initiatives. Every one of the 150 youth-led businesses that survived and thrived this year represents a young person who found an opportunity at home because partners believed in their potential. With the support I received from ITC, I was able to scale up my business significantly. I bought equipment from it which includes solar powered equipment to boost my business. I income has increased to more than 70% as a result of the investment.

Even the most basic needs become opportunities for transformation. When Global WASH partners and the Government of Japan helped communities like Ida's access clean water, they didn't just provide 28,000 litres daily - they gave women time to build businesses, children time to study, and communities the chance to grow stronger together.

Together, these partners have helped write countless stories of transformation.

We sincerely thank our heroes - the partners who believe in our work.

Looking ahead, we know these heroes will continue standing with us as we:





The GBV and Entrepreneurship One Stop Centre in Farafenni

CHAPTER 5:

HOW WE USED THE MONEY



Funding Allocation for 2024 Activities

This is how we have used it:

01 CHANNEL ONE: HELPING PEOPLE AND NATURE WORK TOGETHER (\$8.2M INVESTED)

Let's start with Naba's story. She's a farmer who used to struggle to grow enough food for her family. We invested \$64 to help 1,570 farmers like her learn new farming techniques and get better equipment. Now, her farm produces 40% more food while using 30% less water. But here's the clever part - Mariama doesn't just feed her family; she sells nutritious vegetables to local schools, earning \$1,013 annually. Every dollar we invested in these farmers created \$16 in new agricultural production. That's like planting one seed and getting sixteen fruits in return.

02 CHANNEL TWO: MAKING SYSTEMS WORK BETTER FOR EVERYONE (\$2.3M INVESTED)

Let's look at our investment in Faye Drammeh, who helps people get justice in her community. Before, people had to wait months for their cases to be heard. We invested in digital tools that cut this waiting time by 60%. It now costs just \$14 to help someone resolve their legal problems - less than one-third of what it used to cost (\$36).

03 CHANNEL THREE: INVESTING IN PEOPLE'S FUTURE (\$3.15 MILLION INVESTED)

This brings us to healthcare and education. We've made childbirth five times safer by investing \$15 per birth in better care. That's less than the cost of a basic medical kit, but it saves lives. We spend \$75 per student in schools to give 34,346 children access to digital learning tools. When these children succeed in school, they help their whole family move forward.

Our \$782,000 investment in maternal health streamlined care delivery by cutting wait times, boosting skilled birth attendance, reducing mortality rates, and enhancing overall community health.

Our demonstrated impact has attracted major partners. The European Union has invested \$553,000 in justice reform, while the FAO contributed \$4 million for climate programs. Even modest investments show remarkable returns—our \$137,500 mangrove restoration initiative has increased coastal protection by 15% while creating opportunities for 2,170 entrepreneurs.

We seek \$7.7 million to expand our proven approaches across The Gambia. Our track record speaks through numbers: we cut service costs by 60%, reach 16 people with every dollar invested, and maintain an 85% implementation rate. Join us in turning these proven solutions into national transformation, creating a stronger Gambia where more communities can thrive.



Dominic Badjie, an horticultural farmer in Karbekel, West Coast Region poses with his produce.



Binta carefully removes weeds from her garden in Misera, ensuring her vegetables receive optimal nutrients and sunlight.

CHAPTER 6:

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT MAKING CHANGE THAT LASTS



Our work in the Gambia has revealed crucial insights into fostering lasting change. It emphasises the importance of observing successful strategies and understanding their underlying principles.

Investment Efficiency

Optimizing resource use for maximum impact

Local Ownership

Ensuring community-led sustainability of initiatives

Women's Leadership

Empowering women to drive community transformation

Connected Support

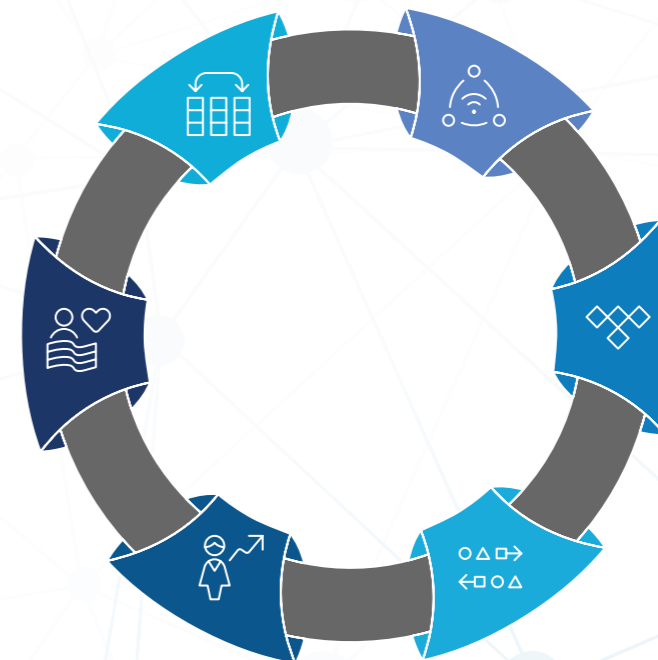
Strengthening links between interventions for holistic impact

Local Wisdom

Integrating traditional knowledge with modern techniques

System Strengthening

Building robust systems to support individual successes



BUILDING ON LOCAL WISDOM

We also learned a lot from observing how communities adapt and enhance our interventions. When we introduced improved agricultural techniques, local farmers didn't just apply them – they combined them with traditional knowledge to create even better methods. In Misera, for instance, Sohna's integrated modern drip irrigation with conventional crop rotation practices, achieving results that surpassed our initial projections. This showed us that lasting change happens when we respect and build upon local wisdom rather than trying to replace it.



THE IMPORTANCE OF STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS

Furthermore, we learned that individual success stories, while inspiring, only lead to lasting change when they help strengthen the systems around them. Consider how our maternal health initiative worked: we helped create a comprehensive healthcare network. Aminata Ceesay's success as a midwife became sustainable because improved record-keeping systems, better emergency response protocols, and stronger connections between rural clinics and urban hospitals supported it. This taught us that lasting change requires strengthening the entire ecosystem that supports individual achievements.



THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

We have seen compelling evidence that supporting women's leadership creates powerful ripple effects through communities. For example, Faye's evolution from community advocate to justice leader exemplifies how supporting women's leadership creates lasting change. Her success inspired other women to seek tribunal positions, leading to today's network of twenty-three women leaders. More importantly, her work has shifted community perspectives. Women who received justice through her tribunal have gone on to start businesses, enrol their daughters in school, and speak up at community meetings. She explains, 'When women see justice work, they find courage to pursue other dreams.' This ripple effect demonstrates how strengthening justice systems can catalyse broader social and economic transformation.



THE VITAL ROLE OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Another crucial insight came from observing how communities sustain positive changes. Programs that succeeded over the long term invariably had strong local ownership. The school feeding program flourished because local farmers like Naba took pride in supplying nutritious food to their community's children. The water management system in Sinchu Barra remained well-maintained because the community felt genuine ownership of the project. This showed us that lasting change requires communities to see themselves not as beneficiaries but as active creators of their progress.



LEARNING FROM CHALLENGES

Our understanding also deepened through facing challenges. When some early business initiatives struggled, we learned the importance of combining technical training with ongoing mentorship. When specific agricultural programs showed mixed results, we discovered the need to better account for local climate patterns. These experiences taught us that setbacks, when adequately understood, help us design more effective interventions.



THE POWER OF CONNECTED SUPPORT

Our most significant learning is that lasting change comes from understanding and strengthening the connections between different development interventions. We also enhance economic participation by supporting women's leadership in justice systems. When we invest in environmental protection, we create new business opportunities. When we improve healthcare access, we enable greater community participation in development activities.

This understanding shapes how we design and implement programs. Rather than treating challenges in isolation, we look for opportunities to create reinforcing cycles of positive change. Each intervention becomes more effective when it builds upon and strengthens others.



THE IMPORTANCE OF INVESTMENT EFFICIENCY

Our \$13.6 million in strategic investments demonstrate clear patterns of success. The \$200,000 investment in digital case management shows exceptional value for money, reducing processing times by 60% while enabling the handling of over 900 GBV cases annually. Similarly, the \$137,500 mangrove restoration initiative exemplifies efficient resource use, increasing mangrove coverage by 15% while creating livelihoods for 2,170 entrepreneurs for \$63 per direct beneficiary.