



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY: 2007-2011

APPROVED COPY

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|--|
| AATG | Action Aid The Gambia |
| ACT | Artemisinin Combination Therapy |
| ADB | African Development Bank |
| ADR | Alternative Dispute Resolution |
| BI | Bamako Initiative |
| BWIs | Bretton Woods Institutions |
| CBOs | Community Base Organizations |
| CBEMP | Capacity Building for Economic Management Project |
| CBG | Central Bank of the Gambia |
| CFAA | Country Financial Accountability Assessment |
| CET | Communication External Traffic |
| CHN | Community Health Nurse |
| CRS | Catholic Relief Services |
| CSD | Central Statistics Department |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DOSE | Department of State for Education |
| DOSFEA | Department of State for Finance & Economic Affairs |
| DFID | Department of International Development |
| ECO | Early Childhood Development |
| EMPU | Economic Management and Planning Unit |
| ERP | Economic Recovery Program |
| ESAF | Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility |
| FDI | Foreign Domestic Project |
| GAWFA | Gambia Women Financial Association |
| GBA | Greater Banjul Area |
| GBOS | Gambia Bureau of Statistics |
| GDA | Gambia Divestiture Agency |
| GER | Gross Enrolment Ratio |
| GDDS | General Data Dissemination System |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GIPFZA | Gambia Investment and Free Zone Agency |
| GPA | Gambia Ports Authority |
| GPPA | Gambia Public Procurement Agency |
| GoTG | Government of The Gambia |
| GGC | Gambia Groundnut Company |
| GTA | Gambia Tourisms Authority |
| HIPC | High Indebted Poor Countries |
| HILEC | High Level Economic Committee |
| HMIS | Health Management Information System |
| HPS | Household Poverty Survey |
| IBAS | Indigenous Business Advisory Services |
| ICT | Information & Communications Association |
| IDA | International Development Association |
| IEC | Information Education and Communication |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IMSE | Informal Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises |
| IDG | International Development Goals |
| IDRC | International Development Research Centre |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| LADEP | Low land Agricultural Development Project |

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|--------|--|
| LGA | Local Government Authority |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| MDFT | Multi-Disciplinary Facilitation Team |
| MFIs | Micro Finance Institutions |
| MPGP | Mainstreaming Poverty and Gender Project |
| MTEF | Medium Team Expenditure Framework |
| MTP | Medium Team Plan |
| MSA | Maintenance Service Authority |
| NaNA | National Nutrition Agency |
| NACCUG | National Association of Cooperative Credit Union |
| NARI | National Agricultural Research Institute |
| NAWEC | National Water and Electricity Company |
| NDT | National Dialogue Team |
| NEA | National Environment Agency |
| NGO | National Governmental Organisation |
| NHA | National Health Account |
| NPAP | National Poverty Alleviation Program |
| NPC | National Planning Committee |
| NSC | National Steering Committee |
| PER | Public Expenditure Review |
| PMS | Poverty Monitoring System |
| PIP | Public Investment Programme |
| PHC | Primary Health Care |
| PPA | Participatory Monitoring System |
| PRGP | Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper |
| PROPAG | Pro-poor advocacy group |
| PSD | Program for Sustained Development |
| PURA | Public Utility Regulatory Authority |
| SAP | Structural Adjustment Programm |
| SDA | Social Dimensions of Adjustment |
| SDF | Social Development Fund |
| SEN | State Enrolled Nurse |
| SMP | Staff Monitor Programme |
| SPA | Strategy for Poverty Alleviation |
| SPACO | Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Coordinating Office |
| SPP | Strategy Planning Process |
| SRN | State Registered Nurse |
| SWAS | Sector wide Approach |
| TCAP | Technical Co-operation Action Plan |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| VDC | Ward Development Committee |
| VISCAS | Village Savings and Credit Association |
| WB | World Bank |
| WB | Women's Bureau |

FOREWORD

Second Poverty Reduction and Strategy Paper (PRSP II) covering an implementation period of 5 years (2007 – 2011), outlines our overall policy framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction. It also shows key priority areas, and builds on the long – term development objectives for attaining the MDGs and Vision 2020. The PRSP II is the main framework that defines the overall government development planning and budget process for achieving meaningful progress, prosperity, sustainable development, and poverty reduction. The priorities articulated are to be implemented through sector plans, and financed through allocations from the annual budget, and complemented by donor contribution. The annual PRSP II budget also integrates the MDGs into the current planning processes. The PRSP II document should be used along with the supportive documents, such as the Action Plan and MDG Needs Assessment Report.

I am delighted to note that the document has brought to the fore the daunting task of transforming policy ideas into actions, particularly during the period when the country is embarking on a PRGF with the IMF and is faced with the need to steer growth and invest in people.

The document is intended to act as a trigger on the road to HIPC completion point, and to further strengthened our concerted efforts towards macro-economic stability, debt sustainability, and investment in growth and poverty reduction programmes. It is hope that the document will help both Government and partners to become more responsive, and focus on required actions on the PRSP II Priority Areas. The information in this document is of paramount importance, will guide our budgetary allocations and pro-poor expenditures on key areas in fighting poverty, and making PRSP II a reality.

This second PRSP focuses on the needs to eradicate poverty in The Gambia, and I profoundly hope that it will be used as main reference document for policy and programme design by the public, private sector, and our development partners. The document should also be used by the researchers, students and practitioners in national development planning.

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Honourable Mousa Bala Gaye
Secretary of State for Finance and Economic Affairs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Reducing the rising levels of poverty continues to be a major challenge for the government and people of the The Gambia. Based on per capita consumption, the head count index (i.e. the percentage of poor people) in the country estimated at 58% according to the 2003 National Household Poverty Survey (NHPS). The poverty gap is calculated at 25.1% whilst the poverty severity accounts for about 13.9%. Comparing this latest information on poverty with previous data, it is observed that poverty levels have been fluctuating; 60% in 1992, 63% in 1998 and 58% in 2003. The fluctuation aside, the poverty level in The Gambia is high with 68% of the population in rural areas and 40% of the population in urban areas living in poverty. Although poverty in The Gambia has been described as rural phenomenon, urban poverty is high and on the rise. About 53% of the population of The Gambia resides in urban areas.
2. Poverty reduction needs for urban areas differ significantly from those of rural areas. In rural areas, raising incomes of the poor would entail significant investment in agriculture including supportive infrastructure, agricultural inputs, and agriculture extension. Health takes the second position in order of priorities for rural areas. In third position is education, followed by employment and infrastructure. Employment creation on the other hand tops priorities for urban areas. It is followed by health and then energy. PRSP II proposes to address the priorities identified both for rural and urban areas.
3. PRSP II has five pillars or areas of intervention namely,
 - i. Create an Enabling Policy Environment to promote Growth and Poverty Reduction.
 - ii. Enhance the capacity and output of productive sectors: Agriculture, Fisheries, Industry, Trade and Tourism, with emphasis on productive capacities of the poor and vulnerable populations.
 - iii. Improve Coverage of the basic social services and social protection needs of the Poor and Vulnerable.
 - iv. Enhance governance systems and build the capacity of local communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to play an active role in economic growth and poverty reduction
 - v. Mainstreaming poverty related cross-cutting issues into poverty reduction
4. The five areas enumerated above are developed along the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Pillar one focuses on actions that will stabilise the economy including good economic and public sector management. Pillar 2 focuses on the productive sectors especially agriculture and tourism with a view to creating employment and reducing poverty (MDG 1). Government will pay special attention to infrastructure that is supportive of poverty reduction. Energy will be a critical area for intervention in his regard. The third pillar focuses on delivery of social services particularly health (MDG 4, 5, and 6) and education (MDG2). The non-availability of medicine in health units was identified as a major challenge in health and the PRSP II will pay special attention to the matter. The fourth looks at local governance and decentralisation. This is based on the premise that strengthening local governance systems and processes will improve delivery of social services, especially to the poor. The PRSP II identifies crosscutting issues and proposes to mainstream them in all development programmes. Key ones include gender (MDG3), environment (MDG7) and HIV/AIDS (MDG6). One of the must outstanding program area dealt with in pillar 1 & 2 which commands fight against poverty for government is infrastructure and energy. This is so because it is a cross-cutting issue and has great importance on all our poverty reducing efforts.

5. Government is committed to implementation of the PRSP II. All Departments of State were involved in the preparation of the PRSP II. Cabinet was also involved and will formally approve it for implementation. The existence of robust and effective structures in the form of steering and taskforce committees comprising of government sectors, NGOs, the private sectors and donor representative characterises the importance and total commitment of all stakeholders towards PRSP II. DOSFEA will continue to play a leadership role in PRSP II implementation.
6. PRSP II builds on the long-term development vision 2020 of The Gambia. It also takes cognisance of the fact that implementation of PRSP I suffered from revenue short falls as the IMF suspended its programme with The Gambia. Consequently, PRSP II attempts to include interventions that were planned for PRSP I. PRSP II contains interventions and actions that have been well synchronized to ensure complementarity and the institutional and operational structures will also be streamlined to avoid duplication. PRSP II also integrates the MDGs into the current planning processes as seen in the Public Expenditure Reviews (PER) on the social sectors of health and education.
7. During various rounds of consultations with stakeholders, issues pertinent to success factors in poverty reduction were constantly debated and the lessons learnt from the dialogue process were determinants in the identification of the priority programmes of PRSP II. The need for an appropriate, countrywide, participatory pro-poor growth strategy and poverty-reduction framework for long-term sustainable efforts at poverty reduction cannot be overemphasised, as it lays the foundations for sustainable poverty reduction through the improvement of the enabling environment for growth and poverty reduction. Participatory mechanisms were adopted for both the design as well as the development of the implementation framework and outcome monitoring strategies. Furthermore, specific institutional arrangements are proposed for ensuring that participation goes beyond ad hoc consultations to real stakeholder engagements and feedback throughout implementation. This concern was the driving forces behind the identification and implementation of the Decentralisation and Local Government Reforms Program as a cornerstone of PRSP I, which will further be implemented in PRSP II. Though implementation was slowed during PRSP I, the strategy will be vigorously pursued during implementation of PRSP II.
8. The involvement of the CSOs and local government authorities in poverty reduction in the past has not been extensive, particularly their roles in implementation. Non-State actors have established a pro-poor advocacy group (ProPAG) to play a pivotal role in championing PRSP II implementation & monitoring. PRSP II will see further strengthening of the role of non-state actors and the local government authorities that should take a proactive role in ensuring effective & efficient delivery of services to the poor. Their role in ensuring effective and popular participation during the consultations is well recognized and they will therefore continue to take a lead in participatory monitoring of the programmes and actions being undertaken. It is worthy to note that some of the LGAs have already developed localized versions of the PRSP, which is in tandem with the National Strategy.
9. During the last PRSP implementation period, none of the macroeconomic indicators in the projected framework were realised over the three-year period. In effect, the achievement of the targets was jeopardised by the failure to reach HIPC completion point, and to some extent the suspension of the IMFPRGF programme which, along with its ensuing flow of donor finance, was the main axis around which the PRSP macroeconomic framework was built. This development, coupled with the fiscal expansion and its destabilising impact on the macro-economy at the start of the PRSP implementation, resulted in not only in unachieved medium-term targets, but new challenges arose making it more difficult to register success in terms of the government's economic policy management efforts. Prominent of these challenges are, the increasingly poor public sector capacity to implement policies, the unsustainable public debt situation, rising global oil prices, downward trend in Aid flow and inadequate levels of private sector investment.

10. Over the past year there has been considerable improvement towards attaining both the structural and quantitative targets agreed with the IMF and progress is also being made in negotiations for a PRGF. In this regard, the medium term fiscal policy objective is more about a stable macroeconomic environment as well as encouraging participation in other sectors of the economy essential for supporting the attainment of a stable fiscal position and, sustaining it thereafter. The Government has formulated a medium term macroeconomic framework that has as key objective, market-based incentives that are conducive to robust private sector activity and poverty alleviation.
11. PRSP II is a 5-year planning framework to assist The Gambia in its efforts to achieve the MDGs and the goals in the Vision 2020. The long term goal is to eradicate poverty by significantly increasing national income through sustained economic growth and reducing income and non-income inequalities through specific poverty reduction priority interventions.
12. The Second PRSP continues to be a commitment of the Government and people of the Gambia to eradicate poverty in the long term. The primary means to achieve this are continued macro-economic reforms to facilitate private sector growth; improved public sector management; and an increased priority for human development. While an economic growth strategy is essential, poverty eradication will also require a social development program aimed at removing inequities in access to sources of economic empowerment and enhancing participation in the development process.
13. A broad scope of policies and programmes to spur economic growth and reduce poverty has been adopted within a policy matrix linking identified poverty issues to policy responses. A thorough reflection on program delivery instruments has been helpful in identifying the necessary capacity-building requirements to support PRSP II. The need for effective public expenditure management implies greater efforts at budgetary reforms and improved sector investment programs. Thus structural budgetary reforms aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability and equity whilst empowering non-state organisations to share in defining budgetary priorities, (started under PRSP I) need to continue.
14. PRSP II will be implemented through Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). As of now, the MTEF in The Gambia is still in the process of being developed and is yet to emerge as an effective planning and budgeting tool. To the extent possible, the MTEF will translate PRSP objectives into concrete budget allocations and reduce fluctuations of budgetary allocations to PRSP programmes.
15. PRSP II will explore possibilities of increasing budget resources to PRSP programmes and improve efficiency in the utilisation of resources mobilized for poverty reduction.
16. The implementation of an aid co-ordination policy that brings together development partners into the planning and budgeting process will be an important step in the search for greater coordination of resource flow and more efficient utilisation of these resources. The overall cost of the programme is estimated at US\$754 million of which Government could commit up to 30% of US\$335, which amounts to US\$ 100.5 million based on revenue projections after debt service (see table 18). Donor commitments for PRSP II (2007 – 2011) *so far*, amount to US\$ 174 million. The Gambia will therefore need up to US\$479.9 million to fill the financing gap. With availability of HIPC resources estimated at US\$170 million over the five-year period, the finance gap now will be US\$ 310 million for the entire period of the PRSP II. On average the financing gap is about US\$ 62 million per year.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Government of The Gambia prepared its first Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA I) in 1994 with a view to reducing poverty that impacted on an estimated 58% of the population. However, many of the interventions proposed in SPA I were project oriented without firm links to pro-poor growth and macro economic processes. Furthermore, the change of Government in 1994 could not permit effective implementation of SPA I because of a severe shortfall in donor financing for the planned projects. Although SPA I was implemented from 1995 to 1999, due in large part to the factors identified above, the results were less than expected.

The Gambia renewed its commitment to poverty reduction in 1996 through the preparation of Vision 20/20. The goal for Vision 20/20 was *“to transform The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading export oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well educated, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population, guaranteeing a well balanced ecosystem and a descent standard of living for all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry”*. The Gambia planned to realize these goals through a series of five-year development plans. The Gambia’s commitments to poverty reduction notwithstanding, the Medium Term Plans (MTP) were not well linked to the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) that are prerequisites to sustainable economic growth and reduction of poverty.

The advent of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in 1999 as a requirement by the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) to get The Gambia onto a programme with the IMF necessitated preparation of the second Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA II), which was the country’s first PRSP. SPA II, which was the country’s first PRSP (PRSP I) was implemented between 2003 and 2005, with less than satisfactory results mainly on account of IMF suspending its programme with The Gambia in 2003. “Misreporting” or lack of transparency particularly on government borrowing from the central bank was the reason cited by the IMF for suspension of its programme with The Gambia in 2003. The Gambia has successfully addressed concerns that were raised and had an effective IMF Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) that run from October 2005 to March 2006. Plans are underway to negotiate a new Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) in October 2006.

1.1.1 Review of PRSP 1: 2003-2005

The Gambia implemented its Second strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA II) or PRSP I for a three year period - 2003 and 2005. The Long Term Goal of PRSP I was to eradicate poverty by significantly increasing National Income through stable economic growth and reducing income and non-income inequalities through specific poverty reduction priority interventions. In order to achieve this, five main objectives were identified and pursued during the period. These were:

1. Create an enabling policy environment to promote economic growth and poverty reduction.
2. Enhance the productive capacity and social protection of the poor and vulnerable.
3. Improve coverage of the basic social service needs of the poor and vulnerable.
4. Build the capacity of local communities and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to play an active role in the process of poverty reduction.

5. Mainstream poverty-related cross-cutting issues into SPA II.

Implementation was coordinated by the Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Coordination Office, SPACO, and a unit within the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs. At the start of the PRSP period in January 2003, macroeconomic stability was slowly returning, following the instability caused by the exchange rate depreciations in 2001-2, and more important, there was a realistic opportunity to introduce a single fund for donor finance of poverty reducing programmes based on budget support.

However, as PRSP implementation progressed, the situation took a turn for the worse, as slippages in financial governance, mainly the misreporting by the Central Bank on their operations, led to the suspension of the PRGF. Measures to check against the reoccurrence of this, including the conduct of regular independent audits of the Central Bank operations have since been instituted and are now operational. However, on the side of the agreed level of budgetary financing of priority PRSP sectors, this was less than satisfactory as government revenue contracted and The Gambia's debt burden began to seriously undermine budgetary expenditure on these sectors. This was further worsened by the unsustainable domestic debt burden. Even though there was improved macroeconomic performance since 2003, the adverse effect of debt financing set the stage for a challenging medium-term follow-up period for macroeconomic management. Thus, it remains a huge challenge to ring fence spending earmarked for priority PSRP sectors in the budget in the face of dwindling budget resources.

Although a number of donors made pledges at the Roundtable resource mobilization conference (held in Geneva in September 2002) in support of SPAIL/PRSP I, many of the pledges were not honoured due to suspension of the IMF programme with The Gambia. As a result, the bulk of programmes and projects under the first PRSP could not be implemented as planned. However, most of the policy objectives and programmes identified in that programme remain valid and relevant.

Debt burden

Following the external debt sustainability analysis conducted in 2000, it was found out that Gambia's external debt was unsustainable. Because of her unsustainable debt, The Gambia became eligible to seek debt relief under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. The Gambia reached HIPC decision point in December 2000 and benefited from interim debt relief for poverty reduction. The Gambia prepared and completed in 2002 its first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) I. The PRSP I clearly articulated poverty reduction strategies and set out macroeconomic targets that needed to be achieved if meaningful inroads in poverty reduction were to be made. The Gambia, under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) program was expected to reach HIPC completion point in June 2003, by which time it would have supposedly fulfilled all the conditions for debt relief.

The Gambia is still unable to reach HIPC completion point because of its failure to observe and consistently pursue the structural reform agenda and address slippages on macroeconomic stabilising policies as per the PRGF program. As pointed out already, The Gambia re-engaged the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through a six-month Staff Monitored Program (SMP) in 2004. The program ended prematurely because of non-attainment of the targets and inconsistent pursuance of the agreed reform agenda. The IMF, in September 2005, entered into another SMP (October 05 – March 06) with the authorities with the view to get a fresh PRGF.

Public Financial Management Reforms

During implementation of PRSP I, the government prepared the Revenue Authority Act with a view to improving revenue collection. The act essentially transferred the task of public revenue management to an independent national Revenue Authority thus subsuming the functions of the Central Revenue and the Custom and Excise Departments. The income and sales tax law was amended to provide for the changes. The National Assembly of The Gambia enacted both laws in August of 2004. In addition to the establishment of a Revenue Authority, there are several ongoing capacity building reforms of tax administration. The overall objective of establishing the Revenue Authority was to create credible government commitment to taxpayers that tax administration will be more competent, effective, and fair.

A Commissioner General designate was appointed and has since been helping in setting up the Authority. The position of Commissioner General was advertised and filled. The process of preparing a comprehensive implementation work plan (including the organizational chart, staffing rules and operational procedures of the Revenue Authority) was completed during 2006. The Authority is expected to be fully functional by January 2007.

The Gambia government budget management and accountability Act was adopted in 2004 and the government Financial Instructions guideline (1978) revised. The GBMAL is to strengthen transparency, comprehensiveness and accountability in government budgetary process. The Act calls for, among other things, integration of the development and recurrent budget. The separate recurrent and development budgets which were separated have now been fully integrated. A Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) was developed for the preparation of the 2006 budget. MTEF provides summary of actual expenditures data and budget forecasts necessary for poverty expenditures analysis. New PRSP codes have been finalized and integrated into the budget. However, there are some data discrepancies and inconsistencies in actual expenditure data. Staff of Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA) and National Directorate of Treasury (NDT) is working with the MTEF advisor to resolve the discrepancies so as to produce consistent figures. This exercise is expected to be completed by the end-February 2006. The first draft of MTEF was produced in May 2005 and refined in April 2006. Following the completion of the Country Financial Accountability Assessment (CFAA) study in June, 2003, Government developed, in February 2004, an action plan with the view to implement the recommendations of the CFAA. The action plan, however, was barely implemented, unfortunately again, reflecting the overall poor implementation of PRSP I key reforms.

Public Expenditure Reviews (PER)

PERs were conducted in Education, Health, Agriculture and Works, Construction and Infrastructure sectors. Plans are underway to extend PER to Tourism and Local Government, and subsequently, to all other sectors. The Government, in collaboration with the World Bank carried out general multi-sector PERs on the economy in 2004 and 2005. So far, progress in conducting PERs and updating them annually, as well as implementing recommendations has been uneven. In the education sector for example, PER has been conducted and regularly updated. But for other sectors, progress is moderate, mainly due to inadequate capacities at sectoral levels and lack of funding. Agriculture had its last PER in 2002 and it is updating it in 2006. The draft report of the Agriculture PER update 2006, is expected to be ready in April 2006. Department of State for Health for example, conducted a PER in 2001 which was an update of the one done in 1998. Since 2001, there was no update of the Health PER. Currently, the Department of State for Health is mobilising resources to prepare a National Health Account (NHA 2003). *The Health PER will be updated to culminate into the formulation of a health financing policy and strategic framework. Department of State for

Education has adopted a new Education policy 2004 – 2015 based on Vision 2020 and the PRSP, aimed at improving human capital and enhance quality of Education.

Public Procurement Reforms

A new public procurement law was enacted in 2001 and implementation started in 2003. This legislative framework and the new procurement code, seeks to improve public procurement, which hitherto, was handled by centralized tender boards (major and minor tender boards) under the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs. Public procurement is now decentralized to the level of the spending agencies which through contract committees procure goods and services in an open and competitive process according to new procurement guidelines. The Gambia Public Procurement Agency (GPPA) was established with the responsibility for supervising and facilitating the new procurement procedures. In addition, GPPA also carries out a final review of procurements over a pre-set threshold. Procurement and disposal by all central government agencies, local government units, and public enterprises are covered by the new law.

Local Government Reform and Decentralization

The legislative frameworks, i.e. Local Government Act 2002 and Local Government Finance and Audit Act 2004 have been enacted for the operationalisation of Local Government reform and decentralization programme. Following the adoption of the local government Act, election of all local government councils have been held. In all local government areas, structures such as Village Development Committees (VDC), Ward Development Committees (WDC) and Multi-Disciplinary Facilitation Teams (MDFTs) have also been established to facilitate the decentralization process. Studies have been conducted to assess the state of preparedness of both the central and local government for the decentralization of selected services i.e. Agriculture, Health, and Education from the centre to the periphery. The findings of most of the studies indicated inadequate state of preparedness of both the central and the local governments. The major constraint identified was capacity problem, ranging from manpower, institutional, processes and logistics. The decentralization program is further derailed due to lack of a consolidated and well coordinated strategy.

Privatization and Divestiture

A number of possible divestiture of public capital were initiated but not completed during the PRSP period. They include the process to dispose of the majority of Government's stake in GAMCOT, where the negotiation process with the majority shareholder, DAGRIS, is expected to be finalised in early 2007. In collaboration with The Gambia Investment and Free Zones Agency (GIPFZA), and The Gambia Ports Authority (GPA), 80 per cent of GPA's shareholding in Banjul Shipyard has been disposed-off to a Malaysian Company in 2005. The value of the investment for the 80 per cent ownership will be utilized in the Shipyard for capital equipment, refurbishment, and modernization of the shipyard assets.

Negotiations were held between Gambia Divestiture Agency (GDA) and Banjul Breweries Ltd on the disposal of Government's shareholding in the Brewery. Unfortunately, due to the low offer for Government's shareholding, the transaction could not be concluded. The GDA will resume discussions with Banjul Breweries and conclude the transaction in 2006. Following the completion of the Technical and Financial Assessment of the Maintenance Services Agency (MSA), and submission of the recommendations for the way forward, Government will soon deliberate on the recommendations, and the divestiture of Maintenance Service Agency (MSA) will be concluded in 2006.

The Study of Options for the Divestiture of the Social Security and Housing Finance Corporation is ongoing. A revised Draft has been received from the Consultants and is being reviewed for eventual submission to cabinet. A key transaction that The Gambia Divestiture Agency (GDA) embarked on in 2005 was the disposal of Government's 50 per cent shareholding in Senegambia Beach Hotel. The hotel is currently being operated by the new owners.

Public Utilities Regulatory Agency (PURA)

PURA was established by Act of parliament in 2001. It was gazetted in 2003 and the Director General appointed in 2004. The board of Directors have been appointed and the Directors of the various sections within the Agency. The mandate of the Agency is to regulate utilities in the telecommunication, energy and transport sectors. For the first two years of implementing the plan, the Agency will focus on the regulation of electricity, water and telecommunication sectors.

Governance of the Central Bank of The Gambia

The Central Bank Bill 2005 was enacted. The Act guarantees the operational independence of the Central Bank. It addresses the institutional organization of the Bank with the view to effectively respond to the mandate of the Bank. The local auditors have duly audited the Central Bank financial accounts for 2001 through 2003 and the reports submitted to the National Assembly. To further strengthen internal controls, the Bank has started the practice of considering the possibility of conducting quarterly audits on selected accounts (i.e. those underlying (Net International Reserve (NIR) and Net Domestic Assets (NDA)) beginning in the fourth quarter of 2005.

Auditing of Government Accounts

The backlog of un-audited Government accounts covering the period 1991 through 1999 have been closed, audited and the report submitted to the National Assembly. The National Assembly has commenced deliberations on the 1991-1999 audited accounts. Government accounts for the year 2000 have been submitted to National Audit Office. Financial statements for 2001 are being prepared and will be completed by end-March 2006. Work is in progress for completing the accounts for 2002 and 2003.

Judicial Reform

Judicial reform focused on four broad areas namely, i) The legal sector reform strategy, ii) Registries restructuring strategy, iii) implementing an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) system, and iv) a court case management system. The preparation of the legal sector reform strategy is in progress and expected to be finalised and launched in 2006. On the restructuring of court registries, the contract for the consultancy was signed and will be implemented from April through August 2006. The ADR Act was passed in June 2005. The regulations and operational manual were also drafted. The ADR system is now in operation. Despite this progress in implementing ADR system, it has suffered some setback. This is because the Act limited the ADR to the high courts and commercial cases. Efforts are underway to amend the ADR Act so that ADR cases can be heard in magistrate courts and accommodate non-commercial cases. The ADR amendment Bill will be submitted to the National Assembly for ratification by end-February 2006. The first impact assessment of the ADR program will be conducted in August 2006.

Progress in programme implementation (Priority sectors: Education, Health and Agriculture)

During PRSP I implementation period, sector programmes and priority actions were implemented with varying degrees of success. In the education sector, a new policy (2004 – 2015) was developed with focus on quality basic education for all. Five areas were identified as priority in the PRSP as key to the Department's contribution to poverty reduction and attempts have been made by government to focus the allocation of government budget and other sources of funding to these priority areas which are Access to basic education, Quality of teaching and learning, Teaching and learning materials, Non-formal education, and Skills training/appropriate technology. Also, the department has developed and is implementing a SWAP for the sector and the Public Expenditure review (PER) carried out in 2002 is being updated. The PER will inform the ten-year education master plan being currently developed and also help the department better target resources to priority areas.

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the Lower Basic Cycle remained stagnant at 91% over the period 2003 -2005 with the madrassa contributing 15%. Enrolment rates at the primary and secondary levels, especially for girls in rural areas have risen considerably since 1998. This is especially true in regions 4, 5, and 6. Many initiatives have also been embarked upon to increase the retention and attainment of girls in school (Girl Friendly Schools, Mothers' clubs etc...). However, despite the increase in enrolment over the period 2001-2005 and the expansion in classrooms and schools, the population grew at a much faster rate than the enrolment at the basic level.

In the Health sector, implementation of the health policy, *Changing for Good* continued during the period with support from the various development partners. Some good progress was made in the health indicators but indications are that further efforts are needed if the country is to meet the MDG health targets especially in the area of maternal mortality. The focus of the policy is access to quality health services for all citizens with the delivery of a minimum health care package to all. Considerable achievements have been made with regards to availability of drugs in facilities as about 95% of all the essential drugs are available in all the major/minor health facilities throughout the country. Immunization coverage continues to be one of the highest in the sub-region and statistics indicate that mortality rates; infant, under five, and maternal mortality are all on the decline

However, most health facilities lack basic essential equipments like delivery kits in labour ward at major health facilities. There is high attrition rate especially among nurses mainly on account of low remuneration and unfavourable working conditions. A Human Resources Unit has been created to look into human resource planning and capacity building especially training.

In the Agriculture sector, Government effort to achieve the PRSP I/SPAI objectives was through a public and private strategic partnership framework, with the latter assuming a lead role in the provision of enterprise investment resources and entrepreneurial management facilitated by public sector catalytic roles. The broad priority activities of the sector are: ensuring water control and management; sustainably improve natural resource management including soil fertility maintenance and biodiversity; revamping pro-poor agricultural research and extension development; and ensuring the affordability and accessibility of Rural Finance/Micro-finance opportunities/facilities.

Achievements in agriculture during the PRSP I period include Government's reforms to fully privatize the groundnut trade, expansion of irrigation schemes, promotion of private provision of inputs - mainly groundnuts seed and fertilizer, and disaster management especially dealing with the locust invasion in late 2003. The sector has a lot of potential which still remain unexploited. Consequently, improving output and productivity in the agricultural sector, a key component of the country's poverty strategy will remain a priority during the second PRSP period.

Major constraints/challenges and lessons learnt

Though Government committed itself in the PRSP I to utilising 25% of its budgeted GLF revenue to reduce poverty, actual expenditure fell short of the target set in the PRSP, attributed mainly to the high cost of servicing government rising debt stock which continues to consume more than half of government resources. However, reforms are being undertaken in the budget process to ensure focus of spending on poverty reduction priority sectors.

Availability of resources to fund poverty reduction programmes is critical in the realisation of poverty reduction. At the Geneva roundtable in 2002 donors made pledges of financial assistance to The Gambia that they did not honour. Consequently, the development objectives of PRSP I could not be realised due to serious shortfalls in revenue targets, among other things.

Also, the development of the institutional frameworks within which PRSP I programs were to be implemented suffered. There was lack of ownership of the sector programs by Departments of State, and misunderstandings on the priorities that were to be pursued in the immediate aftermath of the Geneva Round Table Conference. However, progress is being made towards the setting up of a Unified Funding Framework (UFF) for poverty reduction as envisaged in the PRSP. Also an Aid Co-ordination Unit and a Central Projects Management Unit have been set up within the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs.

Another major constraint faced in implementation of The Gambia's PRSP I was human resource scarcity. The high attrition rate and turn over of staff in the civil service led to major capacity constraints and declining absorptive capacities. Scarce technical and financial resources needed to address the critical implementation bottlenecks faced in implementation aggravated the situation. Serious human resource constraints across all the sectors resulted to sector investment programmes being undeveloped, non-existence of linkages between the sector policy and their budgets, and non finalization of the provisional costing of the PRSP I programme.

1.1.2 Focus of PRSP II: 2007-2011

Accordingly, this second PRSP builds on the previous one, but strengthens its focus on the MDGs. PRSP II incorporates well defined, costed, and time bound interventions for each MDG and proposed policies so as to avoid implementation delays that characterised the first PRSP.

The Gambia's PRSP II national development strategy

The second PRSP is a strategy for the nation as a whole, aimed at improving the welfare of all Gambians as well as eradicating poverty. Poverty eradication will depend on economic growth and participation of all economic agents in the growth process. A special feature of the second PRSP is its focus on the MDGs. In September 2000, at the U.N. Millennium Summit, World leaders agreed to a set of time-bound and measurable goals and targets for combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women. Two years later, leaders from developed and developing countries reached agreement on their various roles towards implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This agreement was reaffirmed at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in August 2002. In developing countries, the MDGs are proving their potential to bring together a wide range of decision and opinion-makers in support of a common development agenda.

In this regard, the Government of The Gambia renews its commitment, made at the September 2005 World Summit to prepare and implement national development strategies to achieve the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The MDGs, which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease, discrimination against women and environmental degradation as well as requisite global partnerships in support of such efforts, are simply operationalising the objectives of sustainable human development

The second PRSP will be implemented through Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs) and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) with strong focus on attaining MDG targets. The Gambia embarked on preparation of the MTEF in 2005 and will ensure that the MTEF translates PRSP priorities into concrete budget allocations. PRSP II gives highlights of planned sector interventions in pursuance of the MDGs. The majority of sectors have detailed plans that will guide interventions in their sectors for realisation of related MDG targets. Sectors that have not yet prepared detailed sector plans will develop them and ensure consistency with this PRSP.

The goals and targets of each column in Table 1 correspond approximately with the MDGs, although they do not match exactly. According to The Gambia's first National Millennium Development Goals Report, produced in 2003, Goals 2 and 5 have already been met or are likely to be, while Goals 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 are unlikely to be met (given the current trends). Goal 7 on environmental health has not been monitored closely due to data limitations and should be treated as off-track until the situation is known. These are the areas where The Gambia needs to catch up so as to achieve the aspirations of Vision 2020 in general and the PRSP II in particular. Improvements to maternal health and child nutrition, strengthening secondary education and eliminating gender disparities in school, general poverty reduction and environmental preservation are among the areas emphasized in this PRSP.

Attainment of PRSP II objectives will heavily depend on real GDP growth. Accordingly, The Gambia will pursue policies that will be supportive of private sector investment (both domestic and foreign direct investment). The following are key issues The Gambia will pay special attention to with a view to optimising economic growth:

- Macroeconomic stability and better implementation of PRSP II
- Increasing Government Revenue through enhanced revenue collection
- Significant reductions in the domestic public debt portfolio
- Attainment of the HIPC completion point by early 2007
- Successful privatization of the PE's in Track I & II of the divestiture program
- Acceleration of tourism growth rate averaging 6% pa with parallel forward and backward linkages e.g. with the horticulture and livestock sub sectors
- Expansion of groundnut production and marketing
- Dynamic and favourable investment climate resulting from improved governance at all level of Government
- Substantial increase in FDI
- Successfully established Free Trade Zone (Business Park)
- Continuous political stability

Effective implementation of PRSP II would have a significant effect on poverty reduction, with the number of people living under US\$1 a day falling from 61% today to less than 40% in 2011. At the end of this decade The Gambia would be on track to reach the MDG and Vision 2020 objectives of reducing poverty by half in 2015 and most of the other MDG goals as a result of improved delivery of basic services, including those located in rural areas.

Table 1: The Relation between Vision 2020, SPA II (PRSP I) and PRSP II

| Vision 2020 Strategic Development Areas | SPA II (PRSP I) Pillars | PRSP II pillars |
|---|---|--|
| Accelerate private sector development | Create the enabling policy environment for economic growth and poverty reduction. | Create the enabling policy environment for economic growth and poverty reduction. Develop further an open rule based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (MDGs 1& 8). |
| Restructure economic management | Enhance the productive capacity and social protection of the poor and vulnerable. | Enhance the capacity and output of productive sectors; Agriculture, Fisheries, Industry, Trade and Tourism, with emphasis on productive capacities of the poor and vulnerable populations (MDG 1) |
| Develop the human capital base | Improve coverage of the basic social needs of the poor and vulnerable. | Improve coverage of the basic social service and social protection needs of the poor and vulnerable. MDG 2: Achieve Universal primary education by 2015. MDG 4, 5 and 6; reduce infant mortality by two thirds by 2015; improve maternal health and reduce maternal mortality by three quarters; reduce infection rates of communicable diseases such as Malaria and TB. MDG3: Eliminate gender disparity in education and economic participation by 2015. |
| Institutionalize decentralized and democratic participatory government structures, processes and systems. | Build the capacity of local communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to play an active role in the process of poverty reduction | Enhance governance systems and build the capacity of local communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to play an active role in economic growth and poverty reduction (MDG 8 on building partnerships). Ensure good and democratic governance. Ensure transparency and accountability in public finance management |
| | Mainstream poverty-related crosscutting issues, such as gender, environment, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, population, and governance into the PRSP. | Mainstreaming crosscutting issues; Gender, Youths, Population, HIV/AIDS, Nutrition and Environment into the development process. Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS (MDG 6); MDG7: Ensure environmental sustainability – incorporate environmental concerns in all economic activities; halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by the year 2015; improve livelihoods of slum dwellers. |

Objectives and priorities of PRSP II

The Second PRSP continues to be a commitment of the Government and people of The Gambia to eradicate poverty in the long term. The primary means to achieve this are continued macro-economic reforms to facilitate private sector growth; improved public sector management; and an increased priority for human development. To strengthen implementation of the poverty reduction programme, the government of The Gambia will pursue a social development program aimed at removing inequities in access to sources of economic empowerment and enhancing participation in the development process.

A broad scope of policies and programmes to spur economic growth and reduce poverty has been adopted within a policy matrix linking identified poverty issues to policy responses, planning targets and delivery strategies. Following a long process of consultation described further in chapter 2, five pillars were identified as priority areas for growth and poverty reduction in The Gambia. The five pillars are:

1. Improving the Enabling Policy Environment to Promote Growth and Poverty Reduction.
2. Enhancing the capacity and output of productive sectors: Agriculture, Fisheries, Industry, Trade, Tourism and Infrastructure, with emphasis on productive capacities of the poor and vulnerable populations.
3. Improve coverage of the basic social services and social protection needs of the poor and vulnerable
4. Enhance governance systems and build the capacity of local communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to play an active role in economic growth and poverty reduction
5. Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues; Gender, Youths, Population, HIV/AIDS, Nutrition and Environment into the development process

Pillar 1 will include all aspects relating to economic management including macroeconomic stability, public finance management, public debt management, divestiture, and civil service reforms. Pillar 2 on productive sectors includes private sector investment particularly addressing constraints to investment in the production of goods and services. It will focus mainly on agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. To the extent that the pillar looks at private sector investment, it is primarily concerned with the contribution of the private sector to employment creation.

Pillar 3 focuses on publicly provided social services particularly health and education with special concern on access to and quality of, publicly provided social services are the main concerns under pillar 3. Pillar 4 looks at the effective implementation of local governance and decentralisation processes. Key issues in this regard are fiscal as well as political decentralisation. This pillar is related to pillar 3 on delivery of social services. One added aspect is empowerment of local communities and their involvement in decision making that affect their lives. Pillar 5 captures crosscutting issues, particularly gender, HIV/AIDS, and environment.

Subsequent chapters look at the pillars in slightly more detail. Details of interventions are contained in sector plans that are contained in the Action Plan and needs assessment for achieving the MDGs.

A comprehensive and fully costed programme and strategies to enable The Gambia to progress towards attainment of the MDGs, form the basis of this PRSP. PRSP II priorities are focused on sustaining a moderate level of economic growth (with a special focus on the critical areas of private sector development, agriculture, natural resources, tourism, trade and industry, energy and infrastructure including ICT and Housing), with interim targets for 2011 leading to the attainment of the MDGs in 2015.

The low rates of progress in attaining the MDGs so far, signals the need for more effort in the design, implementation and monitoring of development policies, particularly as they relate to poverty reduction in the medium and long term. Thus there is a need to strengthen and expand MDG related interventions, especially in areas where performance is poor.

This two-pronged process will be supported by policies and programs for a broad-based, export-oriented growth strategy, led by the private sector and supported by government and development partners. Government support will be particularly critical in terms of the fiscal and monetary policies adopted during the medium term, underpinned by favourable, pro-poor agreements with the International Monetary Fund. Comprehensive public sector reforms will also be essential to ensure

that the state sector is able to create and maintain an enabling environment for long-term economic growth and poverty reduction.

The implementation of an aid co-ordination policy that brings together development partners into the planning and budgeting process will be an important step in the search for greater coordination of resource flows and more efficient utilisation of these resources. However, the success of this policy will depend on more commitment by government to improve transparency in public finances.

Clear targets within the critical social sectors have been made explicit within PRSP II and will be rigorously pursued during implementation. Multi-sectoral investment programs, formulated through Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs) and the comprehensive MDG needs assessment and costing exercise have been developed. Program and project interventions by donors will be coordinated under a Poverty Reduction Fund; the Fund will undertake to provide financing of direct interventions in critical areas that complement actions by line ministries. This will enhance the comprehensiveness of government's social and human development efforts, and facilitate donor coordination to achieve greater impact on poverty reduction.

Participatory identification of development priorities

Identification of the priority programmes of PRSP II was done through a consultative process with stakeholders, including civil society, donors, and the private sector. Participation lays a strong foundation for sustainable poverty reduction through improvement of the enabling environment for growth and poverty reduction. Participatory approaches will include developing the implementation framework and outcome monitoring strategies to assess interventions in both the social and productive sectors. Furthermore, specific institutional arrangements are proposed for ensuring that participation goes beyond ad hoc consultations to real stakeholder engagements and feedback throughout implementation. This concern was the driving force behind the identification and implementation of the Decentralisation and Local Government Reforms Program as a cornerstone of PRSP I. Though implementation lagged during PRSP I, implementation of the strategy will be accelerated during PRSP II.

A poverty profile that covers political, demographic, economic, social and cultural aspects of development has been developed and extensively discussed in PRSP II. The emerging national dimensions of poverty and inequality will inform interventions at the level of sectors with the view of dealing with poverty and inequality in a comprehensive manner.

The involvement of the CSOs and local government authorities in poverty reduction in the past has not been very successful, particularly their roles in implementation. A Pro-Poor Advocacy Group (ProPAG) was established by formal Non-State actors to play a pivotal role in championing PRSP I implementation & monitoring. PRSP II will see further strengthening of the role of non-state actors and the local government authorities, which should take a proactive role in ensuring effective & efficient delivery of services to the poor. Their role in ensuring effective and popular participation during the consultations is well recognized and they will therefore continue to take a lead in participatory monitoring of the programmes and action being undertaken. It is worthy to note that some of the LGAs have already developed localized PRSPs, which is in tandem with the poverty reduction strategy developed at the national level.

Institutional Arrangements and Linkages

Thorough reflections on program delivery instruments during PRSP I have been helpful in identifying the necessary operational measures to support PRSP II. Structural budgetary reforms that were planned and partially implemented during PRSP I to enhance transparency, accountability and equity will continue. This will include empowering non-state organisations to share in defining budgetary priorities, and in monitoring and evaluation of PSRP II implementation.

A National Planning Commission (NPC) and Secretariat is being set up to coordinate planning and implementation of PRSP II. In the interim, the role of the Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Coordinating Office (SPACO) has been somewhat broadened and mainstreamed into the DOSFEA. Until the NPC has been established, specialized units of DOSFEA such as SPACO and the Economic Management and Planning Unit (EMPU) will lead the process of coordinating the implementation of PRSP II. The NPC will coordinate resources and programmes as well as monitor the process of implementing PRSP II reforms, promote institutionalising public expenditure monitoring, monitoring of the program delivery process and progress monitoring of poverty reduction targets. A Public Investment Programme (PIP) implementation mechanism coordinated by the NPC will come into effect with the preparation of the 2007 budget. The NPC will also shoulder responsibility for ensuring strong linkages between PRSP II objectives, the MTEF, annual national budgets, and the sector plans. Under the leadership of the NPC, the established partnership between, DOSFEA, the Central Statistics Department and development partners will be continued in order to build capacities for Poverty Policy Analysis and Development Programming. Co-ordination will also focus on mobilising and managing utilisation of financial resources and technical assistance within a vigorous Aid Co-ordination and programme management Policy.

1.2 Political Commitment.

The Government of the Gambia is strongly committed to poverty reduction in general and the attainment of the MDGs in particular. The Cabinet has participated in the preparation of PRSP II and will continue to support its implementation. The existence of robust and effective structures in the form of steering and taskforce committees comprising of government sectors, NGOs, the private sectors and donor representative characterises the importance and total commitments of all stakeholders towards this national development strategy.

PRSP II objectives will be mainstreamed into all macro level processes and mentioned in all National Speeches of the President, Cabinet Members, and Civil Society leaders. Thus the PRSP II will become a household word in all national undertakings. This prevailing commitment and concern will be transferred into right action during the implementation of PRSP II in order to make marked progress in reducing poverty in the country.

Much effort has gone into defining a package to be delivered as a priority public action to spur economic growth and reduce poverty. The combined economic growth and poverty reduction package are part of this PRSP and will receive Cabinet and Parliamentary approval and a resolution respectively to guarantee and protect social service allocations from budgetary revisions that may occur from time to time.

1.3 Structure of the PRSP II

The PRSP II gives policy framework and poverty strategy for The Gambia. Annex 1 of PRSP II contains sector action plans for PRSP II implementation. The needs assessment that gives justification for interventions at the sector level is an important aspect of the PRSP II that is contained in a separate volume.

The second chapter of PRSP II expands on the overall goals outlined in section 1.1.2. It examines their interrelationships and the importance to view poverty as a multi-dimensional problem. In other words, achievement of the goals is more than just “increasing incomes”. There is also a review of the principles behind public sector involvement vis-à-vis the private sector role. The role of the public sector in attainment of MDGs is particularly important.

Chapter 2 gives an assessment of the Poverty situation in the Gambia – the causes and possible cure for poverty. Thereafter, the PRSP follows the pillars that have been identified starting with an enabling environment for sustainable economic growth in chapter 3. Chapter 4 looks at the productive sector including agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and private sector development for employment creation. Chapter 5 is addressing the critical issue of service delivery particularly in health and education. Chapter 6 looks at decentralisation. Chapter 7 looks at mainstreaming crosscutting issues in The Gambia development process. Gender, youth, population, HIV/AIDS, nutrition and environment (MDG 3 on gender, MDG 6 on HIV/AIDS, and MDG 7 on environment, are the cross-cutting issues that are incorporated into PRSP II. Annex 1 contains sector action plans that give the development targets, interventions, needs, and costs for each sector.

2 POVERTY IN THE GAMBIA: Situation, Causes and Cure

2.1 *Poverty Situation in The Gambia*

The Gambia is among the poorest countries in the World; ranked 155 out of 177 in 2004 compared to 149th (out of 161) in the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2001. Though the country has implemented programmes aimed at addressing poverty since 1994 when The Gambia launched its first Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA I), poverty reduction continues to be evasive with the proportion of people living in poverty rising. Also poverty studies conducted in 1998 and 2003 indicate that in addition to increase in the prevalence and severity of poverty, inequality is also on the increase.

2.1.1 Poverty Definition and Understanding in The Gambia

As a follow up to the Program for Sustained Development (PSD), which initiated a process of national reflection on poverty issues and participatory approaches, a number of household surveys were conducted in The Gambia. These included surveys undertaken by the ILO in 1992, by the CSD-SDA in 1993; by the CSD-SPACO 1998; and the 2003 Integrated Household Survey. In spite of this research, the understanding of poverty over time and space remains a problem. This is due to the fact that methodological approach of these instruments had not been factored in the different measurement and analytical approaches used in the design of these surveys.

However, the recent undertakings in the area of poverty measurement and analysis recognised this constraint, and addressed the shortcomings in addition to updating poverty indicators. Thus, the 2003/04 Integrated Household Survey (which is a two-pronged survey) updated Gambia's poverty indicators as well as further addressing the problem in methodological differences. The survey, in addition to updating poverty indicators, also helped in:

- a) Updating CPI consumption basket, and re-constructed weights and re-base the base year.
- b) Updating the National Accounts benchmark data.

Within the framework of Poverty Monitoring System, there are plans to have in place a Permanent Household Survey programme that will help in the regular measurement and analysis of poverty as well as provide periodic updates of the key social indicators.

2.1.2 Quantitative Definition of Poverty

Poverty measurements in The Gambia generally collected information on expenditure, which serves as a proxy for income levels. Income information is derived from expenditure and consumption data. Own produce items imputed in the estimates of expenditure include rent for owner occupied dwelling and collected firewood for rural households. Poverty measurement uses the physiological deprivation model to assess lack of access to economic resources (income) to satisfy basic material needs. A person (or household) is considered poor if the person's (or the household's) income cannot acquire the basket of goods and services. The value of this basket is the poverty line. The population of poor households and individuals is then derived through the head count index.

There has previously been very little work to assess the evolution of poverty in The Gambia over time. However, the 2003/04 Integrated Household Survey addressed this aspect and the 1992 and 1998 datasets have been standardized, in terms of methodological differences.

The Integrated Household Survey analyses the poverty situation using three indices: the head count, poverty gap and poverty severity. The **Head count** corresponds to the percentage of the population that are poor, the **poverty gap** index shows the share in total value of the resources that could be equally distributed to bring the poor out of the poverty loop, whilst **severity** measures how far the poor are below the poverty line using weights. In other words this is a measure of extreme poverty. Thus the Head count corresponds to the percentage of the households or people that are poor, the Poverty gap index shows the share in total value of the living standards that could be perfectly reallocated to eliminate poverty, and the Poverty severity index, which provide less intuitive statistics accounts for the severity of poverty i.e. how far below the poverty line are the poor.

2.1.3 Participatory qualitative definitions of Poverty

As evidenced in SPACO-IDRC assisted Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs) conducted in the Gambia between 1999 and 2002 and the World Bank supported sector-specific and multi-sectoral PPAs conducted between 2003 and 2005; poverty is perceived by the poor as inadequacy of basic needs such as: shelter, food and clothing. Access to basic social services such as clean and safe drinking water, education and health care, as well as inability to work, and lack of productive resources was all identified as inhibiting factors responsible for the persistence and continuous prevalence of poverty.

However, there are variations between the urban and the rural areas. The perception of poverty in the urban areas is more focused on unemployment, access to credit, unhygienic living conditions, security, energy and access to social services whilst rural poverty on the other hand, is more of production related; inadequate access to productive resources and information services. Poverty is perceived differently at the community, household and individual levels based on how they are affected in various ways.

2.1.4 Income Poverty

Income poverty, as the name implies, refers to those poor whose income or consumption falls below the poverty line i.e. access to economic resources is insufficient to acquire enough goods and services to meet basic material needs at any given point in time. The 2003 Integrated household Survey determined poverty lines that were subjected to the application of geographical and inter-temporal price differences. Using an approach where food has been the emphasis in determining the poverty line, lower and upper poverty lines were determined based on the lower and upper bounds of the non-food component. To arrive at the initial computation of the food poverty line ten food products were first determined to represent the major food groupings to obtain calorific energy intake (i.e. the minimum caloric requirement). The resultant lower and upper poverty lines were then computed in a model to obtain the Dalasis equivalent poverty lines.

Using the upper poverty line, based on per capita consumption, the head count index (i.e. the percentage of poor people) is calculated at 58% (IHS – CSD 2003). The poverty gap is calculated at 25.1% whilst the poverty severity accounts for about 13.9%. As table 2 below shows, between 1992 and 2003, overall poverty has been on the increase in both rural and urban areas with the exception of Banjul, the capital.

Table 2: Percentage of population below poverty lines 1989, 1992, 1998 and 2003

| | Food poverty line | | | Overall poverty line | | |
|-------|-------------------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| | Banjul | Urban | Rural | Banjul | Urban | Rural |
| 1989 | | 33 | 44 | | 64 | 76 |
| 1992 | 5 | 9 | 23 | 17 | 40 | 41 |
| 1998* | 7 | 22 | 45 | 21 | 48 | 61 |
| 2003 | n.a | n.a | n.a | 10.6 | 57 | 63 |

Source: Reports on the 1989 and 1993-94, 1998 & 2003/04 Household Surveys.

*Estimated for comparative purposes using a CPI based inflation of the 1992 poverty lines

Income inequality as measured by the gini coefficient has worsened. The gini coefficient at the household level that was 0.466 in 1998 rose to 0.483 in 2003.

2.1.5 Demography

Population Growth and Distribution

The Gambia's total population in 2003 stood at 1.3 million people compared to 1.03 million in 1993. This represents a growth rate of 2.8% between 1993 and 2003 compared to a growth rate of 4.2% in the previous decade. The decline in population growth rate could be on account of (i) the outward movement of refugees from neighbouring countries that have now attained peace and stability i.e. Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea Bissau and the Casamance region of Senegal; and (ii) the unfavourable economic climate in The Gambia resulting to the outward movement of economic migrants. Nonetheless, the population density continued to move up, from 97 persons per square kilometre in 1993 to 128 persons per square kilometre in 2003. This population density is one of the highest in Africa.

The age distribution of the population continued to skew towards the younger age bands. Those aged 0-15 years comprise about 44% of the total population and this has a lot of implications in the provision of social services and distribution of resources in the economy. The age sex distribution of the population according to the 2003 Population and Housing Census is shown in table 3 below

Table 3: Population distribution by area, gender and sex

| Age group | Gambia | | Urban | | Rural | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| | Both Sex | Female | Both Sex | Female | Both Sex | Female |
| 0-4 | 193,921 | 96,341 | 88,910 | 44,061 | 105,011 | 52,280 |
| 5-9 | 206,204 | 102,108 | 89,274 | 44,913 | 116,930 | 57,195 |
| 10-19 | 329,505 | 167,091 | 162,668 | 84,661 | 166,837 | 82,430 |
| 20-39 | 403,454 | 213,284 | 235,605 | 114,890 | 167,849 | 98,394 |
| 40-59 | 146,578 | 71,440 | 74,522 | 32,984 | 72,056 | 38,456 |
| 60+ | 81,019 | 39,576 | 35,111 | 17,042 | 45,908 | 22,534 |
| Total | 1,360,681 | 689,840 | 686,090 | 338,551 | 674,591 | 351,289 |

Source: CSD, 2003 Preliminary Census estimates

2.1.6 Youth Dimension of Poverty

Paucity of data notwithstanding, The Gambia has a problem of youth unemployment especially those that have limited skills. Consequently, a big proportion of the youth are part of the people categorised as poor in The Gambia. PRSP II will focus on the problem of youth unemployment through various approaches including supporting private sector investment that creates jobs for the youth, increasing access to productive assets particularly credit by the youth, and retooling and training the youth to increase their employability.

2.1.7 Household size and dependency ratios

Household size continues to be a determinant factor in the analysis of household poverty. Average household size dropped from 8.95 persons per household in 1993 to 8.61 persons in 2003 though with significant regional variations. The LGAs with large household size are URD, CRD North and South constituting 14.7, 11.05 and 10.43 respectively. These LGAs also happened to be the poorest regions in the country.

The 2003 poverty survey exhibits remarkable variation in poverty levels for different household sizes, with steep increases in poverty levels for households with 5 or more persons. More than 50% of households with sizes between 7 and 9 persons are poor whilst 73% of households with 10 persons and above are poor. Likewise the poverty gap and severity rapidly increase with household size.

Table 4: Household size by Local Government Area

| LGA | 1993 | 2003 |
|--------------|-------|-------|
| Banjul | 6.02 | 5.16 |
| Kanifing | 7.26 | 6.50 |
| Brikama | 9.16 | 8.66 |
| Mansakonko | 7.92 | 8.56 |
| Kerewan | 9.37 | 9.36 |
| Kuntaur | 10.05 | 11.05 |
| Janjangbureh | 9.99 | 10.43 |
| Basse | 13.61 | 14.70 |
| The Gambia | 8.95 | 8.61 |

Source: CSD, 2003 Preliminary Census estimates

Table 5: Poverty by household size

| Household size | Head count | Poverty gap | Poverty severity |
|----------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1-3 | 18.9 | 6.1 | 3.0 |
| 4-6 | 39.9 | 13.3 | 6.1 |
| 7-9 | 53.9 | 20.1 | 10.0 |
| 10+ | 73.4 | 33.3 | 19.2 |

Note: Based on the upper line, Source: 2003 Integrated Household Survey Results, CSD, The Gambia.

2.1.8 Urbanisation and poverty

The urban population in The Gambia stood at 53% of the total population in 2003. Increasing urbanisation is causing stress on social services provided in urban areas with consequences of rising urban poverty. The Greater Banjul Area has the worst-case scenario - Banjul and its surroundings, the Kombos, constitute about 51% of the total population of the country. This high concentration of the population in this area has implications on poverty particularly the growing incidence of urban poverty.

The distribution of poverty by area shows that poverty averaged 57.2% in urban areas and 63.3% in rural areas. The poverty picture becomes clearer when looked at from a regional perspective. Kuntaur LGA has the highest head-count poverty rate of 92.3% followed by Janjangbureh, 71.7%, and then Kerewan and Basse with 68.4% and 64.3% respectively. Mansakonko, Kanifing and Brikama have head-count poverty rates of 61.1%, 59.3% and 54.3% respectively. Banjul, the capital has the least proportion of poor people, about 10.6%.

Table 6: Poverty, population growth rate and % change by Local Govt. Area

| Local Government Area | Annual Growth | | % Change | | Density | |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1983-1993 | 1993-2003 | 1983-1993 | 1993-2003 | 1983-1993 | 1993-2003 |
| <i>Banjul</i> | (0.4) | (1.93) | (4.2) | (17.71) | 3,461 | 2,848 |
| <i>Kanifing</i> | 8.4 | 3.52 | 124.0 | 41.28 | 3,021 | 4,268 |
| <i>Brikama</i> | 5.5 | 5.28 | 71.2 | 67.29 | 133 | 223 |
| <i>Mansakonko</i> | 1.7 | 1.08 | 17.9 | 11.36 | 40 | 45 |
| <i>Kerewan</i> | 3.4 | 1.00 | 39.4 | 10.45 | 69 | 77 |
| <i>Kuntaur</i> | 1.6 | 1.56 | 17.7 | 16.71 | 46 | 54 |
| <i>Janjanbureh</i> | 2.6 | 1.93 | 30.0 | 21.02 | 62 | 75 |
| <i>Basse</i> | 3.4 | 1.67 | 39.2 | 18.04 | 75 | 88 |

Source: 2003 Population and Housing Census Preliminary Estimates, CSD.
 Figures in brackets indicate a net loss of population due to migration.

Table 7: Poverty and per capita living standard by LGA

| | Poverty (Head count) | | Poverty Gap (2003) | Poverty Severity (2003) | Mean/capita living standards (2003) |
|-------------|----------------------|------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | 1998 | 2003 | | | |
| Banjul | | 10.6 | 4.3 | 2.1 | 22,096 |
| Kanifing | | 59.3 | 24.8 | 13.8 | 11,115 |
| Brikama | | 54.3 | 22.4 | 12.5 | 8,075 |
| Mansakonko | | 61.1 | 19.8 | 9.3 | 10,246 |
| Kerewan | | 68.4 | 33.2 | 20.0 | 6,569 |
| Kuntaur | | 92.3 | 47.3 | 27.1 | 3,623 |
| Janjanbureh | | 71.7 | 25.6 | 12.3 | 5,589 |
| Basse | | 64.3 | 25.9 | 13.1 | 6,924 |

2.1.9 Poverty and economic activity

Analysis on economic activity of the Gambian population in relation to the poverty head count shows that peasant agricultural workers and unskilled workers are the poorest whilst sales and service workers are the most better off. Similar trends are observed in poverty gap and severity in the various occupations. However mean per capita living standards are highest among highly qualified professionals followed by service and sales workers, and lowest among peasant agricultural workers.

Table 8: Poverty by occupation of the household head

| Occupation | Head count | Poverty Gap | Poverty Severity | Mean/capita living standard |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Highly qualified white collared | 51.5 | 21.1 | 11.9 | 11,397 |
| Median qualified white collared | 55.4 | 22.5 | 13.1 | 9,546 |
| Service and sales worker | 47.5 | 16.8 | 8.5 | 10,873 |
| Peasant agric. Worker | 71.9 | 32.0 | 17.4 | 7,115 |
| Craft & related trade worker | 62.1 | 28.6 | 16.2 | 8,144 |
| Unqualified worker | 65.5 | 28.5 | 15.8 | 7,676 |
| Unemployed | 61.2 | 24.2 | 12.5 | 7,979 |
| Inactive | 57.0 | 23.0 | 13.1 | 9,660 |
| Not stated | 56.4 | 24.5 | 14.2 | 9,657 |

Note: Based on the upper line, Source: 2003 Integrated Household Survey Results, CSD, The Gambia.

The distribution by industry shows a similar trend; poverty is highest among those in the agriculture and fishing industry and lowest among social and personal service workers, public and private financial services, and trade hotels and restaurants which group also has the highest mean per capita living standards. Details are shown in table 9 below

Table 9: Poverty by working industry of the household head

| Industry | Head count | Poverty Gap | Poverty Severity | Mean/capita living standard |
|---|------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Agriculture and fishing | 73.4 | 31.4 | 17.0 | 6,369 |
| Manufacturing and energy | 54.4 | 26.9 | 16.7 | 8,843 |
| Construction | 67.5 | 33.7 | 20.0 | 6,723 |
| Trade, hotels and restaurants | 55.3 | 21.4 | 10.9 | 10,123 |
| Transport and communication | 60.3 | 27.9 | 16.7 | 7,959 |
| Private and public financial administration | 56.7 | 27.0 | 15.8 | 12,348 |
| Social and personal service | 52.5 | 21.5 | 12.7 | 9,749 |
| Not stated | 57.5 | 23.1 | 12.3 | 9,106 |

Note: Based on the upper line; Source: 2003 Integrated Household Survey Results, CSD, The Gambia.

2.1.10 Gender Dimensions of Poverty in The Gambia

Gender is a cross cutting development concern and as such needs to be addressed using a cross-sectoral approach. The realization of gender equality and basic human rights requires all sectors and actors in development process to address this issue in their respective areas of mandate and capacities. There is sufficient evidence to show that due to systematic socio-cultural practices of discrimination against women, there is an intrinsic tendency for some sectoral development interventions to not promote gender equity in delivery of, or access to key services. However, experience from the previous PRSP interventions shows that despite the numerous efforts to

mainstream gender into the national development process, the overall level of gender responsiveness still remains low.

This is largely due to inadequate capacity among sector and local government planners and implementers to apply gender analysis skills to the policy making process; limited gender awareness among the communities; bureaucratic resistance to gender mainstreaming among decision makers; and weak support, advocacy, sensitization, coordination and monitoring among other stakeholders.

Gender Participation & Voice

Gender participation and voice is a critical component of social justice as well as good economies to ensure development effectiveness. Therefore, investing in women ensuring their legal and property rights, participation in the socioeconomic development with a strong voice to all sectors of the society will go a long way in the poverty reduction process since men and women experience poverty differently.

Female-headed households

Poverty in The Gambia has a significant gender dimension. As can be seen from table 10 below, 63% of female-headed households fall below the poverty line compared to 48.2% for male-headed households. The higher incidence and severity of poverty among women as compared to men leads to a relationship between gender and poverty commonly referred to as the ‘feminisation of poverty’. Generally standards of living are lower in female-headed households compared to male-headed households.

Table 10: Poverty by gender of the household head

| Gender | Head count | Poverty Gap | Poverty severity | Mean/capita living standard |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Male | 48.2 | 17.2 | 8.5 | 14,312 |
| Female | 63.0 | 27.1 | 15.1 | 11,303 |

Note: Based on the upper line; Source: 2003 Integrated Household Survey Results, CSD, The Gambia.

Female economic activities

Preliminary findings from the 2005 Economic Census, covering all establishments in the Gambia, shows that men form 52% of total employment. In Mansakonko, the proportion (68%) of women is highest compared to other LGAs and lowest (about 26%) in Banjul. The percentage of women in total employment is about the same for Kanifing and Basse at 31% and 32% respectively.

There is no empirical evidence in the Gambia to show that a man earns more than a woman in the same position. However, some jobs are gender-specific, and depending on the nature of the job may determine the earning scale.

2.2 Causes of Poverty in The Gambia

2.2.1 Causes at the level of households

From the foregoing and information from research in The Gambia, poverty is related to several household characteristics, type of economic activity, and low ownership of physical and human assets. Households are more likely to be poor if they:

- live in a rural area
- have little education
- are in a polygamous marriage relationship
- are female headed
- are headed by a widow
- have poor access to markets
- experience low and decreasing productivity in agriculture
- live outside Banjul and its immediate environs
- are large in size - 7+
- are headed by people of advanced age - 50+
- have sick family members

The PRSP II attempts to address each of these causes at the household level through improving the environment in which poor people live. Public action will include providing more rural infrastructure; focussing on education and health services; focussing on decentralisation to improve service delivery; paying special attention to rural feeder roads to improve market access; assisting households to increase productivity in agriculture; and taking measures to address special needs of marginalised groups including women the aged, and children. These issues, among others, are further elaborated upon under the five pillars of the PRSP and the sector strategies.

2.2.2 Causes of poverty at the level of society and public action

Public action usually cannot intervene directly within the household, but it can affect the environment in which the household operates. So, the analysis of actions to reduce poverty must start by examining the environment in which the household finds itself and the ways in which the environment affects poverty. The main findings of poverty analysis in The Gambia are as follows:

Macroeconomic instability

Macroeconomic stability is fundamental particularly with regard to investment, employment creation, and economic growth. Fiscal and monetary policies should be geared towards the maintenance of macroeconomic stability.

Access to Markets

Access to markets enables economic agents to participate in the economic growth process through production and marketing of their outputs. The Gambia has liberalised the economy and thereby permitted participation of all economic agents in the economic growth process.

Participation in markets also depends on infrastructure that link producers in rural areas to markets. There are several aspects of infrastructure that The Gambia will focus on with a view to improving transport and consequently access to markets.

Investment

Despite liberalisation, investment in The Gambia is low. Several factors discourage investment. Key ones include poor infrastructure and inadequate electricity supply. Domestic investors face similar constraints in addition to low investment capital. To improve the investment climate, The Gambia plans to make significant investment in electricity generation by working closely with the private sector. The Gambia will pay special attention to infrastructure development.

Labour market

Most employment in The Gambia is self-employment, especially in agriculture. Like many African countries, The Gambia faces the problem of graduate unemployment, although the country still has some vacancies in the public service. However, salaries in the civil service are low. The Gambia will need to take measures to increase civil service salaries and plan for the absorption of graduates from its University. In the near future, the public sector will not be able to absorb all graduates from the university. A long-term and sustainable solution lies in supporting growth of private sector investment. PRSP II emphasises private sector investment in the productive sectors.

Public services

The poor are not in position to afford privately provided health and education services. While cognisant of the role the private sector is playing in the provision of health and education services, it is important that the public sector provides these services especially to the poor.

Effective access to public services depends on the cost of the service, the quality of the service, and physical distance. The Gambia will continue to focus on delivery of quality social services with a view to meeting the MDG targets most of which have a bearing on publicly provided social services.

Epidemic and endemic diseases

Epidemics and endemic diseases do cause poverty. The high prevalence of malaria in The Gambia needs special attention to avoid morbidity that reduces productivity. Although the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS is only 3%, the future trend remains unclear as high levels of poverty and unemployment threaten to exacerbate infection rates. The Gambia has taken measures to contain the spread of HIV/AIDS through awareness programmes and increasing use of condoms. The Gambia will continue to strengthen these measures during PRSP period

Environmental change

While some environmental factors are determined by household activities such as poor soil management, other environmental factors are determined by society-wide actions beyond the control of households and individuals. Examples include deforestation and associated climatic change; wetland degradation and associated reduction in water quality and quantity; overstocking of some grazing lands; soil erosion; and depletion of wetlands that play an important role in The Gambia's economy. Environmental issues are crosscutting. The Gambia will streamline environmental issues in all its interventions and focus on specific interventions to ensure environmental health.

2.3 Participatory framework of priority areas for public action

2.3.1 The Process

The participatory process is to build on the participatory tradition in The Gambia and in particular to bring the voice of the stakeholders especially the poor more meaningfully into the realms of policy and decision-making. This can only be effectively done in a number of ways; crucial among which, is institutionalising participation and participatory processes to be responsible for facilitating the national dialogue process on PRSP II. Secondly to develop the national communication strategy as a policy instrument to guide the national dialogue process in the implementation of the

programme among others is also essential. The objectives of participation under PRSP II are underpinned by the following considerations:

- To promote consultation and debate between government, civil society, and donor community on PRSP issues;
- To improve transparency and accountability in planning, designing and implementation of the PRSP programme by facilitating citizen engagement in the process and public resource management;
- To promote a wider understanding of the links between decision-making and resource availability;
- To help manage and sequence a fair and just process for policy considerations by Cabinet and the National Assembly;
- To empower local communities and women to influence and share control over priority setting, resource allocation and implementation towards achieving the PRSP goals and objectives;
- To identify policy framework, institutional and other relevant issues that needs to be addressed to enhance the performance of the PRSP; and
- To ensure national dialogue process reflects on the most important activities undertaken or being undertaken by government decentralised institutions, development partners, NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs), on the impact and weaknesses of the programme and actions required to improve the performance. This is expected to yield the following results
 - Partnership between various stakeholders consolidated;
 - Community mobilisation enhanced;
 - Efficient public resources management strengthened and community institutions organised;
 - Ownership of development programmes/projects established;
 - Awareness on poverty and development related issues improved; and
 - Sector targets, indicators and costing of priority programmes established.
 - MDGs mainstreamed in sector priorities

Implementation Arrangements for participation

The need for setting up and institutional framework to ensure effective participation and participatory processes for the implementation of the PRSP is critical. In view of this four thematic groups were constituted namely: Monitoring and Evaluation, Aid Coordination, Participation and Participatory Processes and Programme Coordination to facilitate the implementation process. To ensure a better implementation arrangement, the institutional framework will provide a facilitative and coordinative role in the participation and participatory processes as well as monitoring and evaluation. The process also could be facilitated through focal point networks established in the various implementing agencies such as: sectors, communities, NGOs, CSOs, private sector and decentralised institutions. This arrangement will enable the agencies to mainstream participatory and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms into their sector implementation activities with funding in their budgetary allocations, while the coordinating institution will coordinate and monitor the rate and level of participation at all levels in the country as well as creating an enabling environment for the process.

As evident during the validation of the programme, the consultative process used have been instrumental in serving as good experiences for an appropriate and quality policy making process. This makes the formulation evidence-based with evidence provided by the various stakeholders participated in the process.

2.3.2 Capacity needs for widened participation

To ensure effective implementation of participation and participatory processes, there is need to build the capacity of both the institutions and focal persons in advocacy skills, community and resource mobilisation, participatory planning, public expenditure reviews, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, public expenditure management and participatory monitoring and evaluation

PRSP II went through a long consultative process at different tiers/levels with a committee constituted comprising Permanent Secretaries of the various line ministries to oversee the formulation of the programme. The document provides a framework upon which to build on the participatory tradition in The Gambia and to bring the perspectives of the stakeholders, in particular, the poor more meaningfully into the realms of policy making. In developing this document, a drafting team comprising consultants, Department of State for Finance and economic Affairs, and other relevant sectors worked with the Government of The Gambia (GOTG), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), private sector and other stakeholders through a consultative, participatory, and inclusive processes to identify priority areas for PRSP II.

At the National level, stakeholder consultative workshops were held to identify key areas and the process to follow in the operation of programme formulation and implementation issues. Therefore, sectors, civil society organisations (CSOs), private sector, donors and other relevant stakeholders were consulted in addition to holding retreats with the objective of incorporating sector priorities emanated from the SPP and CSC processes. Further to the consultative processes, validation workshop on the document was conducted and was attended by Permanent secretaries, government technicians, policy makers, civil society organisations' representatives, private sector, the Secretary General as the head of the Civil Service, some Secretaries of State and donor community to review and validate the document. The outcome of the validation was basically meant to build consensus on the key strategies and priorities outlined in the programme within a medium term framework from 2007 to 2011 to gauge how realistic the programme is and the feasibility of its implementation given the resource constraint.

The key areas identified were:

- General Overview – Macro and Sectoral Targets and implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Productive and services sectors cluster (Agriculture, Livestock and Food Security, Fishing and Marine Resources Development Industry, Trade and Tourism).
- Social Sector Cluster (Health, Population and Social Welfare Development, Education and Human Resource Development & Utilization)
- Crosscutting Issues/Enabling Environment cluster (Governance & Gender-in-Development, PRSP and PRGF; Physical infrastructure services and Environment and Natural Resources).

During the process consultants were recruited to assist the sectors in the identification of their strengths, weaknesses, gaps and plans for the way forward. Sector groups were then formed to monitor/guide the work of the consultants. The chairpersons of the sectors were the permanent secretaries, while those represented were key technical personnel in these sectors, the civil society and donors in that particular area.

Upon submission of initial draft reports by the consultants, a one-day retreat was held to critically review each paper in each cluster. The main objectives of the retreats were:

- to assess whether the papers had done justice in the areas of coverage
- to ensure that the sectoral reports produced by the consultants were thoroughly reviewed by a panel of technical experts in the government, donor community and the private sector as well as other relevant stakeholders of the civil society in order to
 - Ensure conformance to the terms of reference of the various studies;
 - Certify the contents of the reports as reflecting the true status of the Gambian Economy; and
 - Arrive at a consensus on the validity of the reports.

Following the sectoral retreats, comments were again incorporated and validation sessions further organized for the documents. At the various validation sessions, the sectors again took the lead, with the participation of stakeholders from all works of life. At the end of the sessions, the consultants were further requested to submit comments, and submit their final reports to the Permanent Secretaries of the relevant sectors.

This led to eleven sectoral reports, which were used as inputs to produce the zero draft PRSP II. A stakeholder consultation was organized for this draft; following which comments were incorporated to produce the final draft. The final draft was again subjected to a two-day validation workshop to agree with all stakeholders on the contents prior to finalization.

Concurrently, Strategy Planning Process (SPP) was conducted nationwide as an initial step toward identifying the national priorities as the focus of consideration in the update of the programme document. At the LGA levels, the Local Government Area specific priorities were identified as well as national priorities to facilitate the programme development in addition to the results of the PPAs and community scorecard process conducted for the update of the PRSP. During these processes, information was collected through participatory approach involving cross section of the population in five communities each in all eight Local Government Areas in The Gambia.

Table 11: Consultations with Stakeholders in the formulation of PRSP II

| Stakeholder Group | Form of Consultation | Outcomes |
|--|--|---|
| Ordinary Citizens | Extended focus group discussions, participatory poverty assessments and community scorecard. | Enhanced awareness on Poverty Programs, the HIPC process, and medium term plans for poverty reduction. Prioritized public actions. |
| Civil Society NGOs, CBOs, Unions, Religious leaders, Community leaders, Youths and Women Groups, Private Sector | Focus group discussions Workshops and seminars Sharing of draft documents and facilitating meetings with donor and government agencies. | Enhanced awareness of the PRSP process, prioritized public actions, set up of a Pro-poor Advocacy Group. |
| National Assembly Members | Policy sensitization seminar on role of Parliament in PRSP process. Working session on draft full PRSP, after the Stakeholder Validation Workshop | Enhanced awareness of role as an organ for good governance and accountability. Enhanced awareness of PRSP process and ranking of final priority actions. |
| Government Departments | Working sessions on sector contributions to achievement of priority targets. | Establishment of Sector Targets, Indicators and costing of priority programs. |
| Development Partners | Workshops, Seminars, Formal and Informal Discussions, Joint Reviews of successive drafts. | Tacit agreements on principles, procedures, roles and resource envelopes. |

Rooted in the “national dialogue”, the participatory framework for the formulation of the PRSP II represents a substantial improvement over previous approaches. The programme has so far engaged a broader range of development stakeholders and gone beyond the level of mere information sharing to consensus building under the stewardship of a consultant and the Drafting team for the update of the PRSP II. The drafting team of the PRSP II comprised representatives from the public, NGOs and civil society organisations. The same stakeholders will play an active role in monitoring and evaluation of PRSP II implementation.

PRSP II preparation has harnessed much more dynamic partnerships among development stakeholders. The Drafting Team brought together NGOs, donors, government departments, the Chamber of Commerce, Private sector and representatives of other civil society organizations to guide the formulation of both the PRSP II. These stakeholders were also engaged independently and to varying levels of intensity. SPACO led the participatory assessment of needs identification for PRSP II. The assessment was effected countrywide through divisional focus group discussions on the outputs of PRSP II and the processes adopted for its implementation. In collaboration with other sectors conducted workshops in each of the country’s eight Local Government Administrative Areas in 2005. Using the PRA and CSC methodologies, focus group discussions were held in all the divisions, with participants drawn from neighbouring wards and villages. They focused on assessing the strengths and weaknesses of PRSP I, and discussed how PRSP II might better serve the needs of poor communities.

In addition to participation through the National PRSP II Drafting Team, participation of government departments and units included formal working sessions to discuss PRSP II objectives, priorities and programs within the context of the Millennium Development Goals and targets. In the course of successive meetings, and based on available data on poverty a Draft Final was prepared and served as an important starting point for continuous dialogue on poverty issues.

The multi-lateral and bilateral donors have made invaluable contributions to PRSP II through consultative meetings, working sessions with key sectoral ministries, closer discussions with SPACO and meetings at various local and international fora.

2.3.3 The Strategic Planning Process (SPP)

As part of the process of preparation of PSRP II, in 2005 Strategic Planning Process (SPP) and Community Scorecard processes were used to facilitate stakeholder participation in the formulation of the document with funding provided by the CBEMP and EMCBP projects of the World Bank and UNDP respectively. These processes used structured focus group discussions to engage citizens in dialogue about development priorities and strategies. Forty focus group discussions were conducted by 24 facilitators, largely from a cross section of agencies involved in development trained on both methodologies across the eight LGAs in The Gambia. These focus group discussions engaged citizens at all levels of the Gambian society, and generated feedback to inform and influence policy formulation. This activity brought together participants comprising of community leaders, religious leaders, the physically challenged, workers, representatives of civil society and community based organizations, local government authorities, civil servants and parliamentarians.

The SPP methodology follows a four-phase sequential process in a focus group discussion, where participants brainstormed on key questions: Where The Gambia is now in terms of development. This allowed participants to assess the current situation with regards to their poverty status; where do we want The Gambia to go in terms of development? This helped the participants to formulate a vision where they would want to see themselves in terms of reducing poverty; how will the Gambia get there? The participants brainstormed and came up with strategies and prioritized actions to

address their poverty issues; and how do we know we are getting there? This involved identifying specific monitoring and evaluation indicators.

Similarly, the Community Scorecard process was done in a focus group discussion with different focus groups of the community to refine findings of the focus group discussions. The only difference between the two was the fact that the latter empowered the participants to assess the effectiveness of the policies and programmes designed on their behalf to address poverty and also help them to monitor the implementation process. Importantly, SPP and CSC processes will be applied in the monitoring and evaluation of PRSP II.

2.3.4 Analysis of SPP Budget Game Results

Results of the focus group discussions related to the main priority areas, (that is, representing analysis of the first round of the Budget Game - How do we get there?), are presented later in this Chapter. The results were aggregated for each LGA, with further aggregation for the national level. They portray diverse sectoral priority preference patterns across the country, with a clear difference between urban and rural constituencies.

At the national level, not surprisingly, agriculture received the most votes; about 31% as the main priority followed by Health with 29.3% and Education 17.2% of the votes. Employment and infrastructure accounted for 12.6% and 10.3% respectively. The top five main priority areas at the national level were: Agriculture, Health, Education, Employment and Infrastructure. Other issues discussed include Energy, high price of farm inputs, and adequate supply of drugs, provision of adequate qualified teachers, market outlets and communication network.

Looking at specific priorities to reduce poverty, reduction in price and access to farm inputs were the top issues in Agriculture. The need to address the frequent and acute shortage of drugs topped considerations for the Health Sector, whilst availability of adequate qualified teachers; skill training centres and functional Literacy were the main specific priorities in Education.

Rural and urban participants identified different priorities as follows: from Urban centres of Greater Banjul, they regarded Employment, health and energy as their main priorities, citing specific priorities relating to income generating activities, and provision of marketing outlets provides employment opportunities for the youths. Health and Education follow with the same considerations registered at the national level. The observed national pattern of Agriculture, Health and Education being the dominant main priorities is observed mainly in the rural areas, that is, excluding Banjul, Kanifing except for the Western Division.

These preferences (Agriculture, Health, Education, Infrastructure and Employment) have been carefully reflected in the PRSP II and priority actions of the programme. However, although agriculture tops the list of priorities in the judgment of the poor, there is recognition of the constraints imposed by energy. A content analysis of the discussions held with participants in Banjul and Kanifing Municipal Area raised concern for increase in energy supply and reduction in electricity tariff.

However, crosscutting issues scored very poorly, in general this trend should be attributed to inadequate comprehension of the impact of these issues in development. Inadequate understanding of issues such as Gender and the Environment imply a poor performance of the Information, Education and Communications processes adopted for these programs.

2.3.6 Institutionalizing Participation

One of the major targets of strategy is expanding and strengthening participation of stakeholders in all major dimensions of the poverty reduction programme. Participation in public resource management will be strengthened at both the national and local level in order to promote ownership, accountability and transparency of poverty reduction actions. This is described in greater detail in chapter 3 and in the log frame on Aid Coordination Policy in chapter 8. It will be implemented through reforms designed to enhance public sector good governance, whilst building the capacities of local communities to take part in the development process.

At the national level, there was a focus on developing processes and instruments for facilitating the participation of civil society in the identification of budgetary priorities, tracking of budget spending to the key sectors, and monitoring the quality of public services. The public expenditure reviews serve as a suitable entry point, and will be followed up by a series of training programs on budgetary analysis for CSOs. The Pro-Poor Advocacy Group (ProPAG) has conducted a number of trainings and will continue with the training and capacity building effort.

At the divisional level participation in public resource management will take place in the context of the processes of decentralization as encompassed in the Decentralization and Local Government Act. Within the Act provisions have been made for a gradual devolution of resources and responsibilities to Local Government Authorities (LGAs). In order to empower communities to play an active role in the implementation of development programs, SPACO will organise in-country training and capacity building programs to enhance the capacities of LGAs and local communities in participatory planning and monitoring, with specific focus on monitoring public expenditure. Community scorecard on service delivery monitoring was piloted in the health and education sectors in 2004 across all the LGAs in the country with assistance from the World Bank.

Another distinctive feature of PRSP II is the plan to operationalise participatory monitoring and evaluation. It is a critical aspect of the effort to institutionalize participation in poverty reduction. Participatory monitoring will be based on a set of indicators, and will be underpinned by: an institutional framework that provides for active ownership by stakeholders; effective coordination mechanisms; and capacity building of stakeholders including local communities.

Scaling up of stakeholder participation to encompass sector planning is regarded as necessary for the improvement of the programme outcomes. As sector planning evolves towards activity/program based planning, PER teams will introduce a participatory dimension to their work in order to draw more systematically from the perspectives of communities, and on intra-sectoral prioritising exercises. The SPP and CSC methodologies have the potential to contribute effectively to Expenditure Reviews, and enable these processes to deepen communities' input at the sector level beyond general poverty consultations. *Consistent with the principles of the document, government will need to establish mechanisms for institutionalised participation in the preparation of PERs.*

Civil society organizations in The Gambia have highlighted the importance of institutionalized dialogue among stakeholders on poverty issues. The programme provides an important context in which this can be initiated. In this regard the NPC will collaborate with the Stakeholders Monitoring Committee in the creation of a "Poverty Reduction Dialogue Forum" (PRDF), which will consist of periodical multi-stakeholder discussions of key policy and program issues affecting poverty reduction in the country. Facilitators will be invited from both within and outside the country, to discuss and moderate thematic discussions on topical issues, which can then be compiled for consideration by Government institutions and Agencies.

Finally an enabling legal and policy environment is essential to the effectiveness of NGOs and other civil society organizations and their contribution to development policies, strategies and projects at all levels. The NPC will initiate discussions through the NGO Agency and civil society organizations to conduct a review and analysis of the existing legal and policy framework as it affects the non-profit sector. The objective is to identify constraints to the realization of the sector's full potential in development, and to make recommendations to government for appropriate policy reforms and rules of engagement. This endeavour has already commenced through an on-going study on the historical relationship between Government and Civil Society in the Gambia.

Table 12: National-Level Budget Game Results - SPP, 2005

| Rank | Main Priority Area | National Aggregate Priority Patterns ¹ | Top-Scoring Specific Priority Areas |
|------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Agriculture ² | 30.6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack/inadequate farm implements <input type="checkbox"/> Lack/inadequate of farm inputs <input type="checkbox"/> High cost of farm inputs <input type="checkbox"/> Poor access to rice fields <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate water supply (vegetable garden/livestock) |
| 2 | Health | 29.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate supply of essential drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of health facility <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate qualified nurses / doctors <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of basic services in health facility |
| 3 | Education | 17.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> High cost of education / fees <input type="checkbox"/> Low quality education <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate skill training centres <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of schools |
| 4 | Employment ³ | 12.6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of employment opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Low income levels of workers <input type="checkbox"/> Poor marketing for agricultural products <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of credit facilities <input type="checkbox"/> High/increase cost of basic commodities/consumer goods <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty on the increase |
| 5 | Infrastructure | 10.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor road network <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate dwelling houses <input type="checkbox"/> Lack/Inadequate storage facilities |

From the foregoing and from the division level budget game results (table 13) priority areas of focus for poverty eradication in The Gambia include the following:

- Enabling environment for sustainable growth and poverty reduction
- Agriculture
- Health
- Education
- Employment
- Infrastructure

Clearly, these priorities are in line with those identified in section 1.1.2

¹ Percentage of voters allocated to the five main priorities

² Includes Water and Sanitation, Environment, food and nutrition

³ Includes Economic Management; Trade, Industry and Employment

Table 13: Divisional Level Budget Game Results

| LGA | Main Priority Area | Aggregate Priorities | Top Scoring Specific Priority Areas |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|
| Banjul | Employment | 43.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide income generating activities, increase salaries and wages |
| | Health | 18.7% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, provide trained personnel in health facility |
| | Energy | 16.7% | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase energy supply and reduce electricity tariff |
| | Education | 15.7% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide qualified teachers, provide basic cycle school |
| | Infrastructure | 5.7% | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure road maintenance, construction/rehabilitation of road culverts |
| Kanifing | Health | 27.2% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide adequate supply of drugs, and trained personnel in health facilities |
| | Employment | 23.6% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide market outlets |
| | Energy | 17.8% | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase new generators and provide adequate fuel/lubricants |
| | Infrastructure | 16.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction of tarmac road network |
| | Education | 15.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide qualified teachers and skills training centres |
| Brikama | Agriculture | 41.4% | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase rice fields, advocate for the use of farm manure, provide adequate drinking water, provide pump for vegetable garden and good drainage system |
| | Health | 28.2% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, provide trained personnel in health facility, upgrade/expand health facility |
| | Education | 13.5% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide Arabic school, provide functional literacy programmes |
| | Infrastructure | 10.0% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Employment | 6.9% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mansakonko | Agriculture | 41.9% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide labour saving devices, increase fields, establish sheep fattening |
| | Health | 25.4% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, reduce the cost of drugs, provide trained personnel in health facility, provide better ambulance services |
| | Education | 18.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide qualified teachers, provide basic cycle school |
| | Infrastructure | 7.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction of tarmac road network |
| | Employment | 7.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce price of basic commodities, provide microfinance institutions |
| Kerewan | Agriculture | 28.5% | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase rice fields, provide adequate drinking water, provide hand pump wells |
| | Health | 24.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, provide trained personnel in health facility |
| | Employment | 20.8% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide market outlets |
| | Education | 17.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide qualified teachers, introduce civic education |
| | Infrastructure | 9.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure road maintenance |
| Kuntaur | Health | 43.5% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, reduce cost of drugs, provide trained personnel in health facility |
| | Agriculture | 41.2% | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase rice fields, provide adequate drinking water, control of Hippos |
| | Education | 15.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide qualified teachers, provide skills training centres |
| Janjanbureh | Agriculture | 45.0% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide good bridge and cause ways to rice fields |
| | Health | 26.4% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, improve health services |
| | Education | 14.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction of extra classrooms |
| | Employment | 8.2% | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Infrastructure | 6.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> Solicit donor support for funding to improve the status |
| Basse | Health | 34.0% | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supply of drugs, reduce the cost of drugs, provide more health staff |
| | Agriculture | 22.8% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide labour saving devices, provide adequate drinking water |
| | Education | 18.3% | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction of extra classrooms, provide skills training centres |
| | Infrastructure | 13.6% | <input type="checkbox"/> Solicit donor support for funding to improve the status, construction of tarmac road network |
| | Employment | 11.2% | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide income generating activities, increase salaries and wages, reduce the price of basic commodities, provide ready market for groundnut produce |

3 CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR RAPID AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

3.1 Introduction

At the start of the last PRSP period in January 2003, The Gambia was on a PRGF program with the IMF and had accessed \$62 million from the multilateral donors through the HIPC decision point window. At that point, the prospects for the future looked promisingly bright, with \$135m expected at HIPC completion point, macroeconomic stability was slowly returning, and more important, there was a realistic opportunity to introduce a single fund for donor finance of poverty reducing programmes based on budget support.

However, as PRSP implementation progressed, the situation took a turn for the worse. Slippages in financial governance mainly the misreporting by the Central Bank on their operations, led to the suspension of the PRGF. Consequently, donor commitments could not be realised causing severe revenue shortfalls. Implementation of 2003-2005 PRSP was less than satisfactory - government revenue contracted and government borrowing from the central bank exceeded targets. Even though there was improved macroeconomic performance since 2003, the adverse effect of debt financing set the stage for a challenging medium-term follow-up period for macroeconomic management.

Financing for priority PSRP sectors in the medium term could suffer because of the heavy domestic debt burden that government will continue to service. In 2005, debt service (interest and amortisation) accounted for 40% of the national budget.

3.2 Macroeconomic Performance Review: 2001-2005

3.2.1 Fiscal Policy Performance

After a relatively strong macroeconomic performance in the late 1990s through 2000 characterised by steady real GDP growth averaging 3% per annum and a low inflation macroeconomic environment, a large (and unbudgeted) fiscal expansion in 2001 destabilised the macro economy. Subsequently, central government fiscal deficit, including grants, widened by 13% to 14.4% of GDP, driven by both lower domestic revenues (lower by 3.4% of GDP) mainly because of weaknesses in the collection of customs duties and a very large increase in expenditures (higher by 9.5% of GDP), including extra budgetary expenditures funded by the Central Bank and on-lending to a parastatal utility for the purchase of capital equipment. The drought in the following year 2002, which led to a 23% fall in agricultural output and a 3.2% fall in real GDP, further exacerbated macroeconomic instability.

The fiscal expansion and exchange rate crisis that followed the drought was eventually brought under control in the fourth quarter of 2003, as the monthly inflation rate and the exchange rate both stabilized. The stability was further enhanced by a bumper harvest in the groundnut season for the 2003/2004 season, thereby boosting gross domestic product (GDP).

Overall, the economic performance in 2004 was very positive as tight fiscal and monetary policies prevailed throughout the year, helped by a remarkable revenue mobilization effort. The overall fiscal deficit as a percent of GDP (including grants) was 4.5% in 2004 from 4.7% in 2003. Annual inflation (end period) rate fell sharply to 8% in December 2004 from 18% a year earlier, mainly as a result of the tight monetary policy implemented, which also led to a substantial fall in interest rates.

Average inflation remained slightly high at 14.2% compared to 17.0 % in 2003. The primary balance as a percentage of GDP rose by 5.9% from its 2003 level to a 9.5% surplus in 2004 aided by the combined effect of a tight fiscal stance and an improvement in revenue collection.

The impressive fiscal performance in 2004 however could not be repeated during 2005, as revenue receipts fell significantly below target by D70m, mainly due to border closure problems during the third quarter, which adversely affected international trade tax revenue. Hence domestic revenue as a percentage of GDP dropped to 19.7% in 2005 from 20.2% in the previous year. The high level of extra-budgetary expenditure of close to D200m in the first half of 2005 largely contributed to the sharp rise in annual current expenditure, to 18.4% of GDP from the 16.2% during 2004. Thus the overall fiscal deficit (including grants) worsened to 5.7% of GDP in 2005 from 4.7 %.

The improved coordination between fiscal and monetary during 2005, as evidenced by the creation of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) that is composed of DoSFEA and CBG staff, helped to ensure that an appropriately tighter monetary policy stance curbed the inflationary pressures of the increased public expenditure in the first half of 2005. By the end of 2005, the average annual inflation further declined from 8% in 2004 to 4% in 2005, while the treasury bill rate significantly fell to 12% from 27% a year earlier, as a more accommodating monetary policy objective was pursued with a bid to boost private sector credit.

It is evident, therefore, that after the instability of 2001-2003, fiscal and monetary policies have been very effective in stabilizing the macro economy. Output from the non-traded goods sector of the economy recorded contractions in their growth, whilst manufacturing and hotels and restaurants, coupled with Agriculture, boosted overall GDP with strong real growth that culminated in successive annual real GDP growth of 5% in both 2004 and 2005.

Table 14: Macroeconomic Indicators 2000-2005

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005* |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Real GDP growth (market prices) | 5.5% | 5.8% | -3.2% | 6.7% | 5.1% | 5.0% |
| Inflation (period average) | 0.2% | 8.1% | 13% | 17.6% | 8.0% | 4.0% |
| Overall Fiscal Deficit (% of GDP) | 1.4% | 14.4% | 4.8% | 4.7% | 4.1% | 5.7% |
| Government NDF (% of GDP) | 2.7% | 15.3% | 2.5% | 3.1% | 0.4% | 3.1 |
| Broad Money Growth | 34.8% | 19.5% | 35.2% | 43.4% | 18.3% | 9.4 |
| Gross Official Reserves (months of import cover) | 5.8 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.5 |
| Debt Stock (% of GDP) | 31.5 | 38.6 | 37.1 | 27.3 | 32.0 | 34.0 |

* - Projection; Sources: DOSFEA, CBG

3.2.2 Monetary Policy Performance

Monetary policy over the 2001 to 2003 period has been accommodating. Almost all the increase in the fiscal deficit was financed with domestic borrowing, which as a percentage of GDP rose from 2.5% in 2002 to 5.5% in 2003. Of this more than 75% was funded from the Central Bank by drawing down its external reserves which stood at US\$107 million in 2000 to US\$39 million by the end of 2003. This resulted in very high broad money growth of 35% in 2002 and 43% in 2003, triggering a sharp exchange rate depreciation and rapid inflation, over the period.

The recovery started to take hold by the end of 2003, as revenue collections increased significantly. By end 2004, the inflation rate was on a downward trend towards single digit, reaching 8% at the

beginning of 2005 and decreasing further to around 2% at end 2005 as the macroeconomic stability continued. To maintain the macroeconomic recovery that started at end 2003, monetary policy was much tighter in 2004 than in 2003. Year on year broad money growth slowed to 18% in 2004 from 43% in the previous year. The deceleration in broad money growth was driven by a sharp reduction in growth of reserve money, the CBG's operating target, which fell from 63% in 2003 to 11% in 2004. During 2005, the monetary policy stance was gradually "ease", reflecting the sustained stability, and it lead to a 15% increase in reserve money from 2004.

The CBG's net foreign assets (NFA) increased by D 1,286 million in 2004 with usable foreign reserves rising to \$81 million by the end of December 2004. The BOP data indicate that the c.i.f. value of merchandise imports, including imports for re-export, was \$197 million in 2004 and the NFA of the Monetary Authorities exceeded the D2 billion mark by end 2005: hence usable foreign reserves amounted to 4.5 months of imports by the end of 2005.

The total net issuance of TBs during 2004 amounted to D 1,103 million, of which D 570 million were purchased by commercial banks and D 640 million by the non bank sector (the CBG's holdings of TBs fell by D 107 million). However the issuance rate fell slightly in 2005, amounting to D 804million.

Although outstanding government domestic debt rose sharply in 2004, (mainly comprising of TBs), as total cost value rose from D 2807 million at the end of 2003 to D 3990 million at the end of 2004, a slight reduction in the domestic debt was programmed for in the 2005 fiscal budget with a government domestic borrowing requirement set at D271m. The unprogrammed expansion in expenditure meant that the domestic borrowing requirement level was exceeded by D150 million, thereby causing further unplanned increase in the domestic debt burden. As a share of GDP, government domestic debt rose from 27.3% at the end of 2003 to 32% at the end of 2004 and stands at 34% at end 2005. The net issuance of TBs was larger than Government's domestic borrowing requirement in 2005 because of the need to sterilise monetary impact of foreign reserves accumulation and the redemption of maturing development stocks and discount notes. Interest rates remained very high during 2004 with the tightened policy stance, but have gradually declined during 2005 as monetary policy was eased, thereby boosting private sector credit.

Table 15: Performance on PRSP key macroeconomic objectives

| Indicator | 2003 | | 2004 | | 2005 | |
|--|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| | PRSP Targets | Outturn | PRSP Targets | Outturn | PRSP Targets | Outturn |
| Real GDP growth (%) | 6 | 6.9 | 6 | 5.1 | 6.2 | 5.0 |
| Fiscal Deficit (excluding grants) as % of GDP | 2.7 | -7.2 | 2.3 | -10.2 | 1.9 | -5.1 |
| Export Growth (SDR, assuming exchange rate of D21.3) | 8.2 | - | 5.3 | - | 3.5 | - |
| Current Account Deficit (excluding grants) as % of GDP | 12.3 | -13.6 | 11.6 | -21.6 | 10.3 | -25.3 |
| Current Account Deficit (including grants) as % of GDP | 5 | -5.1 | 5.8 | -11.8 | 2.7 | -20.2 |
| Gross Official reserves as months of imports, c.i.f | 5.2 | 4.6 | 5.4 | 4.3 | 5.5 | 4.5 |
| Broad Money Growth | 9.9 | 43.4 | 9.6 | 18.3 | 9.6 | 13.1 |
| Inflation | 4 | 17.6 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 3.2 |

Source: DOSFEA & Fund Staff Estimates, October 2005

The macroeconomic performance in 2005 was not enough to overturn the dismal performance in terms of achieving PRSP targets. None of the key indicators targets were met during the 3-year period. In fact, the only target that has been met is the 6% real GDP growth projected for 2003. Even that performance only resulted because The Gambia was coming from a low growth base in 2002. The single biggest contributor to the poor macroeconomic performance relative to the 2003-2005 PRSP objectives can be attributed to the high public expenditure outturn from 2002. This translated into the drastic increase in money growth and its resulting inflationary effects. It brought a new constraint for public expenditure management in the sense that the heavy domestic debt burden seriously eroded needed poverty reducing expenditure whilst at the same time further subjecting the budget to increased domestic borrowing requirement.

3.2.3 Poverty Focus of Public Expenditure

The government of The Gambia made a commitment to spend at least 30% of the government budget on PRSP programmes. Budget allocation to PRSP programmes for 2003, 2004 and 2005 excluding debt service payments were 22.6%, 29.1% and 28.1% respectively of total Gambia Local Fund (GLF). Performance in this regard was accordingly less than satisfactory. However, when all funds are considered, there is significant improvement with respect to the target. With all funds and still excluding debt service payment, 40.8%, 44.1% and 34.0% were allocated to PRSP programmes in 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively. See table 16 below:

The public undertaking to fight poverty through the budget is strong; it is however constrained by the challenge of debt service. Considering debt service obligations, the share of PRSP allocations dropped to 13% in both years. The decline in allocations was sharper in 2004 (i.e. from 29% to 13%) than in 2003 (i.e. from 22% to 13%) due to the huge debt obligations of 2004. Improved fiscal management will be critical for the attainment of PRSP II objectives to avoid debt service reducing resources for PRSP programmes.

Table 16: Spending on PRSP initiatives 2003-2005

| Excluding Debt Service (Dalasi '000s) | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|--------|------------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| | 2003 Prov | | 2004 Bud | | 2005 Bud | |
| Government (GLF Only) | 885,917 | | 1,303,934 | | 1,688,950 | |
| Statutory | 30,199 | 3.41% | 42,763 | 3.28% | 43,033 | 2.55% |
| PRSP | 200,480 | 22.63% | 379,711 | 29.12% | 474,617 | 28.10% |
| Discretionary | 655,238 | 73.96% | 881,460 | 67.60% | 1,171,300 | 69.35% |
| All Funds | 1,782,739 | | 2,891,276 | | 2,803,312 | |
| Statutory | 30,199 | 1.69% | 42,763 | 1.48% | 43,033 | 1.54% |
| PRSP | 726,727 | 40.76% | 1,275,508 | 44.12% | 952,721 | 33.99% |
| Discretionary | 1,025,813 | 57.54% | 1,573,005 | 54.41% | 1,807,558 | 64.48% |
| Including Debt Service (Dalasi '000s) | | | | | | |
| | 2003 Prov | | 2004 Bud | | 2005 Bud | |
| Government (GLF Only) | 1,948,304 | | 2,876,960 | | 3,155,167 | |
| Statutory | 1,092,586 | 56.08% | 1,615,789 | 56.16% | 1,509,250 | 47.83% |
| PRSP | 200,480 | 10.29% | 379,711 | 13.20% | 474,617 | 15.04% |
| Discretionary | 655,238 | 33.63% | 881,460 | 30.64% | 1,171,300 | 37.12% |
| All Funds | 2,845,126 | | 4,464,302 | | 4,269,529 | |
| Statutory | 1,092,586 | 38.40% | 1,615,789 | 36.19% | 1,509,250 | 35.35% |
| PRSP | 726,727 | 25.54% | 1,275,508 | 28.57% | 952,721 | 22.31% |
| Discretionary | 1,025,813 | 36.06% | 1,573,005 | 35.24% | 1,807,558 | 42.34% |

3.3 Macro-Economic Framework for 2007 to 2011

During the PRSP I implementation period, none of the macroeconomic indicators in the projected framework were realised over the three year period. In effect, the achievement of the targets was jeopardised by the failure to reach HIPC completion point, which, along with its ensuing reduced or completely stopped flow of donor finance, was the main axis around which the PRSP I macroeconomic framework was built. This development, coupled with the fiscal expansion and its destabilising impact on the macro economy at the start of the PRSP implementation, meant that not only were the medium-term targets unachieved, but new challenges arose as clear constraints that made it more difficult to register success in terms of the government's economic policy management efforts. Prominent of these challenges are, the increasingly poor public capacity to implement policies, the unsustainable public debt situation, rising global oil prices, and fragile governance environment that tends to undermine private sector investment. Thus policies for the next five years within the main sectors, must be drawn up in a coordinated manner, and factoring in the need to restore confidence in public sector management and financial governance. This will increase the likelihood of achieving the new targets and reduce the chance of compounding the economic problems The Gambia experienced during the PRSP I period.

3.3.1 The Fiscal Framework

Although a lot of improvement has been made on the fiscal side, there were some extra-budgetary expenditure that destabilized quarterly allocations; the structural issues revolving around financial management and governance remain the biggest obstacle to negotiating a new PRGF and the final goal of qualifying for HIPC grants. In this regard, the medium term objective of fiscal policy is as much about a stable macroeconomic environment as about encouraging participation in those other sectors of the economy that are essential for supporting first the attainment of a stable fiscal position and, sustaining it thereafter.

The Government has formulated a medium term macroeconomic framework that has as key objective, market-based incentives that are conducive to robust private sector activity and poverty alleviation. To this end, the focus will be on:

- a) The achievement of macroeconomic stability by effective fiscal and monetary policy coordination built on the pillars of consistent fiscal discipline and well-informed, timely monetary policy decision-making. The ultimate objectives are to:
 - Further improve revenue collection by strengthening the institutional capacity and procedures at the revenue departments.
 - Make the public expenditure process more transparent and reflective of government priorities.
 - Gradually reduce the domestic debt burden (by maintaining a minimum primary balance surplus of 3%) to sustainable levels eventually releasing funds for priority PRS sectors
 - Slow down and reduce external indebtedness by rationalising borrowing; and
 - Enhance the availability of credit in the financial system by reducing government's domestic borrowing requirements and promoting deepening of the financial system.
- b) The achievement of a growth rate that is sufficient to support the objectives outlined in PRSP II; identify the sectors that will drive the growth process; and the implementation of appropriate public policies measures that are necessary to ensure this drive.
- c) Reaching HIPC completion-point through implementation of the HIPC triggers. As pointed out already, The Gambia had a six-month IMF Staff Monitored Program (SMP) from

October 2005 to March 2006 with satisfactory performance. Successful implementation of the SMP laid the ground for a new PRGF program by end 2006.

- d) Reform the system of taxation, tax administration and business regulation to remove distortions in the markets and enhance private sector led growth. This has to be tied with structural reforms in key sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure (energy, transport, ICTs, etc) including a fast-tracked divestiture program that will create the enabling environment for investment.
- e) Meaningful civil service reform to ensure the availability of the necessary manpower for the effective implementation of the policies outlined in PRSP II. Although it commands high priority, insufficient funding has been a major constraint.

3.3.2 Monetary Policy

The priority of fiscal policy to curtail government's domestic borrowing requirement ties in well with the monetary policy objective of controlling money supply growth. This is because with reduced government's domestic borrowing requirement, the Central Bank would control the growth of the money supply without having to resort to very high interest rates and the crowding out of private sector from the credit markets. Controlling the growth of the money supply is essential to achieve low inflation rates. In addition, strong growth in private sector borrowing from the banking system is needed to boost private sector led economic growth which is the only sustainable way to boost incomes and create employment.

Curbing government's domestic borrowing requirement will also enable government's domestic debt stock to fall as a share of GDP. A reduction of the domestic debt to GDP ratio will stimulate a fall in domestic interest rates, because there will be less competition for resources in the domestic financial system.

The Central Bank of The Gambia will continue to pursue its objective of maintaining a low inflation macroeconomic environment, improved money market operations and a sound and flexible financial system. The objectives will be pursued in line with the right exchange rate policy that will accommodate the holding of foreign reserves consistent with the needs of the external sector.

The macroeconomic targets that will guide fiscal and monetary policy over the period 2007 - 2011, are as summarised in tables 17, a and b, below. Table 17a represents the baseline scenario, which guided the revenue projections and other policy objectives for PRSP II. Table 17b, an alternative scenario is more optimistic in nature and it underlines the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) for 2007-2009.

Table 17A: Projection of key Macroeconomic indicators - 2006-2011

| Indicator | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Aver. |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Real GDP growth (%) | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Fiscal deficit (including grants) as % GDP | 3.2 | 2.5 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.0 |
| Export growth (%) | 6.3 | 5.3 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.9 |
| Current Account deficit (excluding grants) as % GDP | 17.9 | 18.4 | 17.5 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 16.5 |
| Current Account deficit (including grants) as % GDP | 11.8 | 6.8 | 6.7 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 6.7 |
| Gross official reserves as months of imports (including transit trade) c.i.f. | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.8 |
| Broad money growth | 10.0 | 12.0 | 10.6 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 12.5 |
| Inflation (period average) | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.8 |
| Domestic Debt Stock (% of GDP) | 30.5 | 28.5 | 26.5 | 24.5 | 22.5 | 20.5 | 22.2 |

Table 17B: Projection of key Macroeconomic indicators - 2006-2011 (Alternative Scenario)

| Indicator | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Aver. |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Real GDP growth (%) | 6.5 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.3 |
| Fiscal deficit (including grants) as % GDP | 4.7 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.0 | +0.4 | +1.2 | 0.6 |
| Export growth (%) | 17.1 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 3.3 | 4.3 | 4.9 | 5.1 |
| Current Account deficit (excluding grants) as % GDP | 18.0 | 22.9 | 21.4 | 18.4 | 16.1 | 15.1 | 18.7 |
| Current Account deficit (including grants) as % GDP | 14.1 | 12.3 | 9.5 | 9.0 | 8.8 | 8.6 | 10.4 |
| Gross official reserves as months of imports (including transit trade) c.i.f. | 4.2 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Broad money growth | 15.6 | 11.4 | 10.0 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 11.0 |
| Inflation (period average) | 1.5 | 1.7 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.5 |
| Domestic Debt Stock (% of GDP) (Post HIPC & MDRI relief) | 32.1 | 30.2 | 26.1 | 23.6 | 20.9 | 17.8 | 25.1 |

3.3.3 The Real sector

The problem of marketing of the main cash crop – groundnuts, must be resolved. There is need to put in place investment incentives with a view to creating employment in the private sector. Evidence shows that granting of waivers based on the GIPFZA act has not resulted in positive gains for the industrial sector; rather, the net impact has been a comparatively substantial decline in international trade not match by growth in the industrial sector.

To guard against the repeat of the woes of the last three years in terms of real sector policies, a review mechanism must be put in place during policy implementation in the important sectors of agriculture, tourism, trade and agro industries sub-sectors. Thus when policy implementation is deviating from the desired objective, a timely remedy can be effected to enable the achievement of the set GDP growth rate that is spurred by growth in the key sectors. There is also an urgent need to provide the resources that are essential for the desired performance of these sectors. These should include measures to induce the financial sector to lend towards productive investment.

3.3.4 The External Sector

The current account deficit is expected to drop gradually, as private sector export activity improves. The development of Free Economic Zones under the Trade Gateway project could also generate new exports, while transit trade stands to benefit from the streamlined tariff regime and improvement in intra-regional trade. Tourism should also generate more important amounts of foreign exchange, especially through supplier agreements with the local economy.

The prospects for important private investment flows are limited in the near term, but can only improve with the credibility that The Gambia gains as it maintains a stable and attractive private sector environment, along with better contract enforcement mechanisms.

Transit trade has rebounded from past impediments, although it is still straddled with border closure threats. A reform in the tariff regime has allowed for a streamlining in the number of tariff bands (3 bands), and a lower maximum rate (20%). Banjul remains one of the more rapid import processing points in West Africa, despite competition from neighbouring countries. However in the light of ECOWAS Common External Tariff competition will be stiffer and will require that The Gambia strengthens the other areas where she has competitive advantages.

Exchange rate movements are an important dimension of the traders' business environment, thus emphasizing the need for monetary and price stability. It is envisaged that export and re-export competitiveness are likely to benefit substantially from the Trade Gateway Initiative, once it becomes fully operational. The new challenge for the Agency (GIPFZA) charged with developing free export zones and the facilitation of transport services through the main modes such as the Sea and Airports would be to attract relevant investors to make use of the established infrastructure.

3.4 Financial governance and public sector reform

3.4.1 Public Financial Management Reforms (IFMIS, MTEF,)

Phase I of the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS) implementation, involving training of users of IFMIS started on the 6th of February 2006 and will continue for 12 months. Pilot Departments included in Phase I implementation are: DOSFEA, Directorate of National Treasury, Central Revenue Department, Customs and Excise Department and Department of State for Education.

In a bid to further improve public expenditure management, Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA) in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has, as a first step, developed a comprehensive framework for budget execution through a Commitment Control System (CCS). The Government will institute a program to estimate cash inflows and outflows to enable it to formulate its borrowing and expenditure plans. The objects of CCS are:

- To contain expenditure within limits in a systematic fashion and on regular basis.
- To replace the existing cash rationing with cash planning based on expenditure plans drawn up by departments subject to cash availability

- To set realistic periodic cash ceilings
- To avoid excessive build-up of arrears and sustainable domestic debt management
- To instil fiscal discipline, ensure strategic resource allocation and use, efficiency and effectiveness of programs and service delivery.

3.4.2 Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS)

The Central Statistics Bill was enacted in December 2005. This was preceded by the development and completion of the “Central Statistics Master Plan”, and Communication and Dissemination Policy. Government renews its commitment to CSD by increasing budgetary allocation to the Agency and operationalisation of the national statistical strategy will commence in 2007.

3.4.3 Privatization and Divestiture

The divestiture program has stalled largely due to a number of set backs ranging from lack of adequate funding to differences in opinion between the World Bank and the Government during the 2005 mid-term review the aforementioned reasons. The potential risks the divestiture programme faces need to be addressed. The major long-standing issue in the structural benchmark for reaching HIPC completion point is to bring Gambia Groundnut Corporation (GGC) to the point of sale. The Gambia Divestiture Agency (GDA) is now working on the divestiture of GGC. Invitations for Expressions of Interest to be pre-qualified as a strategic investor for 51% shareholding, and as institutional investors for 29 per cent shareholding, were announced, and Expressions of Interest received. The completion of privatisation of GGC is now slated for June 2006.

Notwithstanding the moderate progress registered on the divestiture front, a multi-sector utility regulatory agency (PURA) has recently been set up to regulate tariffs, competition issues and other related matters in the in the electricity and telecommunications sub –sector. The activities of the Agency will be extended to other sectors in due course. The pace of implementation has suffered serious delays due to frequent sackings of the Director General.

3.4.4 GLF Budget Resource Envelope

Adding together projections of tax and non-tax revenues, repayments of debt by public enterprises, domestic borrowing and budget support grants, gives projections of GLF budget resource envelope. Scheduled external amortisation payments have been deducted from the resource envelope. In addition, domestic and external interest payments have been projected and deducted from the budget resource envelope – this leaves the amount of resources, which can be allocated, to GLF non-interest expenditure. Table 18 below sets out the components of the budget resource envelope:

Table 18: GLF Budget Resource Envelope: Dalasi Millions

| Dalasi (millions) | Outturn 2004 | Budget 2005 | Outturn 2005 | Projections | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| Tax Revenue | 2245 | 2409 | 2263 | 2769 | 2906 | 3352 | 3676 | 4032 | 3949 |
| Non Tax Revenue | 273 | 369 | 340 | 367 | 416 | 434 | 422 | 447 | 474 |
| Capital Revenue | 0 | 41 | | 40 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Loan Repayment by PEs | 24 | 66 | 30 | 18 | 18 | 17 | - | - | - |
| Budget Support Grants | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| Budget Support Loans | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| Net Domestic Financing | 58 | 271 | 420 | 200 | 200 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| External Amortisation | -431 | -517 | -410 | -647 | -588 | -667 | -700 | -697 | -669 |
| Revenue Contingency | 0 | 0 | 0 | -30 | -46 | -50 | -50 | -50 | -50 |
| Total GLF Resources | 2169 | 2639 | 2643 | 2717 | 2926 | 3486 | 3748 | 4132 | 4104 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| (sum of all above) | | | | | | | | | |
| Interest Payments | 868 | 650 | 1131 | 955 | 846 | 798 | 700 | 691 | 686 |
| Resources available for non interest expenditure | 1301 | 1989 | 1512 | 1762 | 2080 | 2688 | 3048 | 3441 | 3418 |
| Potential HIPC Debt Relief | 150 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 340 | 382 | 382 | 378 | 346 |

Tax revenues comprise the largest single component of domestic resources. However The Gambian tax system lacks buoyancy and so without new tax policy measures tax revenue will grow more slowly than GDP, which will squeeze the budgetary resources available to fund GLF expenditures. If government is to maintain sound public finances, at a minimum it is essential to prevent any decline in the tax/GDP ratio below 20%. Government will as in the previous PRSP commit 25% of the estimated GLF resources to financing poverty-reducing activities.

3.5 PRSP II Targets in Relation to Poor Performance in First PRSP

The macroeconomic targets set out in PRSP II are achievable only if prudent macroeconomic policies and key structural reforms identified in the PRSP II are implemented. This is to stress that the problems in the first PRSP were caused by implementation failure and not on the part of poorly designed objectives and strategies. The major implementation failures included:

Lack of fiscal discipline leading to macroeconomic instability

Misreporting of financial data leading to the suspension of the PRGF program

the slow progress registered with the local government decentralization process as well as the larger governance programme

Inability to meet other HIPC triggers such as the privatization of GGC

Persistent problems associated with groundnut marketing

Slow process of aligning PRSP programmes in budget lines

Failure by sectors to priorities programmes in their budgets

Low implementation of PRSP programmes by sectors due to institutional capacity

Underlying these implementation failures were human resources constraint in the public sector, ineffective commitment to, and coordination of PRSP policies.

Thus the way forward must address the factors that impeded the successful implementation of PRSP I. In summary, the objectives and strategies defined in the first PRSP are still relevant and should be implemented in PRSP II along with the need to develop the basic infrastructure of the country.

3.6 Judicial Reform

Over the past few years, the Judiciary with assistance from donors - World Bank (CBEMP), DFID, UNICEF and government embarked on several development initiatives with the objective of strengthening the Judicial system and expediting courts and legal processes through the following:

- The development of an electronic case management system in the high court for the efficient management of court case information and the automation of key court and registry processes
- The introduction of a computer aided transcription system in the High Court to facilitate timely recording, transcription and production of court proceedings

- The development of an ICT Strategy to guide the proper use of ICT in support of the judiciary
- Introduction of an alternative dispute resolution to provide an avenue for the decongestion of courts and the quick settlement of otherwise non-contentious cases
- Establishment of the Children's Court to focus on all matters relating to children and their rights under the Child Rights Convention
- Gradual introduction of self-accounting system to facilitate the effective and efficient management of judicial resources
- Development of an IT Network infrastructure linking all superior courts, judges and officials to facilitate internal communication and research and support further IT development
- Revision of rules of the High Court and the Magistrates Court to strike the right balance between the rule of law and efficiency
- Various human capacity building activities in the form of seminars, workshops, management training and other training activities for the benefit of all levels of personnel

These development initiatives are being undertaken to strengthen the judicial system and the administration of justice in the country, to expedite court cases and proceedings, to reduce delays and the backlog of pending cases. The cumulative effect of all these development will impact tremendously on the performance of the court system. An enhanced judicial system will create a conducive environment for peace and stability. It will attract foreign investment and facilitate the creation of jobs, economic growth, development and the reduction of poverty.

3.6.1 Constraints/Challenges

The 1997 Constitution outlines the framework for the administration of the courts of which provides that the Judicature shall be self-accounting and monies appropriated to the Judicature shall be paid to the accounting officer for the Judicature. The financial and administrative autonomy granted to the Judiciary to strengthen its independence has not yet been implemented. This has undermined judicial independence and has contributed to the inability of the Judiciary to address its problems effectively, and is also a major source of its weaknesses.

The management structure for the courts is over-centralized in Banjul. There is no administrative structure under the Judicial Secretary (JS). The JS relies on the registry staff for the discharge of administrative functions in addition to their technical functions. The financial resources continue to be under the control of the Accountant General who provides the accounting staff. Secretarial support is also under the control of the Personnel Management Office. All support services – execution, process servers, registry, and court clerks – are managed by the JS or Master of the High Court in Banjul. There are no structures for these services. The necessary legal framework for establishing financial and administrative autonomy for the Judicature with attendant operational tools and instruments has to be put in place and the capacity to manage its financial and human resources effectively and efficiently developed. It is also essential that internal structures are developed and properly aligned for improved productivity, and management is decentralised.

3.6.2 Legal Sector Policy Goals

For the legal sector to contribute effectively to the attainment of Vision 2020 requires an effective legal system that is very clear in its overall strategic intent. Consequently, the legal sector's major policy goals are predicated as follows:

- To create a free, fair and speedy legal/justice system and to stimulate a positive change in the attitude of all stakeholders;
- To provide required infrastructure, technological and material resources to support the delivery of an efficient justice system;
- To create an enabling regulatory environment for good governance;
- To ensure access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged;
- To develop, grow, and motivate a well trained cadre of judicial/legal officers and support staff that are committed to delivering quality services;
- To enhance the status of the judiciary and improve the understanding of the role of the judiciary in society;
- To support the development of national proficient learning institutions in the area of law;
- To deliver value and satisfaction to all litigants;
- To develop non adversarial mechanisms for dispute resolution; and
- To promote the growth of a vibrant, capable, and developed civil society.

3.6.3 Strategic Objectives

The emergence of a “middle income country” as envisaged by Vision 2020 must be underpinned by an efficient and effective legal service and justice-delivery system. This is also a prerequisite to a vibrant private sector that is liberalized and market oriented. This strategy is being formulated in response to the identified need for reform and to make administration of justice more responsive to a continuous change in the environment. The key success factors towards the attainment of the vision lie in the following strategic objective:

- Strengthen Judicial independence, financial and administrative autonomy
- Improve financial capacity and sustainability of all departments.
- Restructure the court system to deliver justice expeditiously and efficiently and respond more effectively to the needs of the people
- Integrate adjudicatory authorities into the administration of justice system
- Establish legal aid to improve access to justice by the poor and under privileged
- Continuous professional development of Judges
- Retention of young and qualified persons within the public legal service

3.6.4 Priority interventions

- Develop and enact legislative framework for Judicial autonomy
- Design structures and systems to manage financial resources; establish department of finance with revenue unit and monitoring mechanisms for financial systems
- Establish decentralised administrative structures and systems and create a management and administration cadre
- Increase budgetary allocation to the Judiciary
- Appraise revenue generation capacity of the Judiciary and establish system for revenue retention
- Review and revise qualification of presiding judges, venue of criminal divisions of the High court, and structure of the ADR mechanism
- Review and reorganise magistrate courts to implement action plans and create specialised divisions
- Develop and standardize rules of procedures and develop manuals for tribunals
- Develop training programmes and provide training to all judicial personnel and tribunals

3.7 CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS

The study on civil service attrition has been finalized. Following the completion of the study on the nature and the causes of high attrition in the civil service, the findings of the study together with the recommendations were submitted to Secretary General's office for review and comments. Approval is yet to be given for the implementation of the recommendations of the study. Implementation strategy for the operationalisation of the recommendations of the study is yet to be formulated.

Cognizant of the need to provide efficient and effective public services capable of meeting the development challenges of the country, the Government undertook to design and implement a reform programme directed at public service management as part of an overall six component National Governance Programme. This programme is complimentary to the PRSP/SPA. The intention is to consolidate and deepen the achievements of the administrative reform and the programme for sustained Development of 1985-94. Side by side with development and implementation of an administrative reform framework, will be a strategy for institutional capacity building. This component aims at improving on a sustainable basis, the professionalism and efficiency and of the civil service.

Thus the attainment of the goals of vision 2020 and Medium Term Plan/PRSP depend to a large extent on public sector institutions playing their central role in the delivery of support to infrastructural and social services and the creation of the enabling environment for the private sector to realize its full potentials. Public sector institutional performance is a critical factor, in the design and implementation of development programme as well as in the effective realization of policy goals and development targets set out in the MTP. Therefore reform of civil service structures and processes is inevitable. The cardinal challenge for the Government is to implement these national policies at the Marco and sectoral levels in a sustainable manner while developing and sustaining the necessary human and institutional capacity to do so. The public service will be required to provide the vital human and institutional capacity that are required as well as create and sustain the environment for these policies to be implemented successfully.

High on the PMO's agenda is Public Sector Management and Administrative Reform having in mind the need to encourage a spirit of management as opposed to mere administration. Although the Personnel Management Office is the lead department for such reforms, it does not have adequate resources or expertise to undertake these nor is the expertise readily available elsewhere in the civil service. If necessary financial resources are available or if sponsorship can be obtained, it would be necessary to commission consultants experienced in Civil Service Reform preferably in Africa. They would undertake a preliminary study in order to provide an independent and objective assessment of the current status of Administrative Reform in the Civil Service in The Gambia and to advice on the measures that now need to be taken to take this process forward. Detailed information would also be needed about the resource requirements, time scales and costs involved in implementing the activities and programmes identified.

The information generated by a study of this kind would provide an indication of the scope and scale of the work necessary to complete the successful implementation of Administrative Reform in the Civil Service in The Gambia, which could be a catalyst in the realization of our development objectives. We would also be much better placed to judge what activities are feasible and desirable to implement within the resources available as well as determine the critical priorities.

3.7.1 Constraints

The major problems faced by the civil service in serving as a catalyst for economic development and growth are the following:

- Insufficient political will to institute wholesale reform.
- High attrition in the Civil Service.
- Poor remuneration
- Inability to motivate and retain skilled personnel to allow for career development and security of tenure.
- Lack of an effective and comprehensive training policy and plan.
- Ineffective utilization of expatriate staff to ensure skills transfer and continuity through effective counterpart arrangements.
- Inadequate capacity to formulate, implement and evaluate public policies.
- Inadequate human and material resources for effective service delivery.
- Obsolete rules and regulations governing performance and conduct in the Civil Service.

3.7.2 Priority strategies and actions

The following strategies will be implemented to forge ahead with the implementation of the well thought out plan for reform as articulated in the national governance programme.

1. To garner political will and support for civil service reforms.
2. To improve the civil service remuneration package so as to retain highly trained and professional staff within the civil service.
3. To enhance the Capacity of PMO in human resource management, strategic management and coordination.
4. To design and formulate an overall training policy and plan for the civil service.
5. To develop and implement a training master plan for civil service employees.
6. To promote Strategic management in training programmes of civil servants.
7. To review and disseminate, public service regulations, code of conduct and other civil service rule books.

3.7.3 Human Resource Development and Utilisation

There is the need to upgrade the status of the National Training Authority not only to monitor training at the vocational and technical education level but actually to advise and determine investment levels in vocational and technical education and training. In this regard there is a large scope for private/public sector partnership and private sector participation in the delivery of vocational and technical education. Current schemes to improve quality such as teacher hardship allowances, school library initiatives and other reading materials supply measures will be continued through the plan period.

Human Resource Utilisation in the Public Service

The development issues faced by the Gambia must be seen within the context of a variety of human resources and other resource constraints affecting the public sector. A recent study on Civil Service

attrition in the Gambia found out that there is need for a retention strategy to ensure that the Civil Service does not lose quality personnel. Other problems affecting the Civil Service include:

- Poor working conditions and conditions of service
- Lack of specific training plans for the sector
- Security of tenure
- No clear Human Resource Policy
- Brain drain

Priorities of Human Resources Development in the Public Service

The main priorities for Human Resource Development and Utilisation are the launching of a major public sector reform with a view to enhancing service delivery by public sector institutions. Such reforms should amongst others address the issues of:

- H R Policy and Plan of Action
- Comprehensive training plan for sector
- Attractive working conditions and conditions of service
- Security of tenure
- Generally creating an environment of a highly motivated public service personnel

4. PRODUCTIVE SECTOR ISSUES – Agriculture, Tourism, Fisheries, Trade and Industry, and Infrastructure

The productive sector was identified as one of the areas of focus for PRSP II. The key objective in this regard is to increase incomes of the people engaged in the productive sectors. The main sectors identified include agriculture, fisheries, tourism, trade, industry, energy and infrastructure. The issue of private sector development cuts across all these sectors. The role of the public sector will be limited to providing the requisite infrastructure and regulatory framework to facilitate private investment in these and related sectors. Power and transport infrastructure, particularly roads are the major infrastructure needs facing The Gambia.

Private sector investment will drive job creation across all sectors in the medium term. Provision of employment especially in urban areas and to the youth was identified as a key solution to poverty in urban areas. Although there are still some vacancies in the civil service, the public sector will not be able to provide jobs to all people in search of jobs, in urban areas in the medium term. The Gambia therefore plans to prioritise and support private sector development as one of the pillars for employment creation.

The Gambia has already taken measures to make the country attractive to foreign investment as well as domestic investment. However, poor transport infrastructure (roads, water, and air), unreliable electric power supply, and high cost of utilities discourage some investors and thereby adversely affect the country's investment growth and consequently job creation.

4.1 Agriculture

The agricultural sector employs 68 percent of the labour force, and accounts for 33 percent of GDP of The Gambia, the second largest sector in the economy. It employs 75 percent of the labour force and is also the sole means of income generation for the majority of rural households below the poverty line. About 91 percent of the extremely poor and 72 percent of the poor in The Gambia are in the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector is the prime sector for investments to raise income, improve food security and reduce poverty and, therefore, meet the Vision 2020 objectives and the MDG “to halve the proportion of poor and those who suffer from hunger.” There is need to transform Agriculture from subsistence to a commercially-oriented agriculture. However, this is constrained by:

- inappropriate macroeconomic and sectoral policy framework;
- insufficient human and social capital development;
- limited capacity and inefficiency of extension services
- weak research; farmer – extension linkages
- poor agricultural practices
- declining soil fertility and soil erosion
- low farmer productivity and depletion of natural resources from steadily
- rising urban populations;
- inefficient agricultural marketing systems, especially for groundnuts and food products;
- lack of access to short and long term financial capital for agricultural investment
- inappropriate land tenure arrangement that does not give women full rights, especially considering the fact women form the majority of the agriculture workforce and
- inadequate rural infrastructure development.

4.1.1 Policy Objectives for the Agriculture Sector

The agriculture sector has potential to become a pathway to achieve long-term development goals, especially reducing poverty for a large segment of the population, Gambian farmers in rural and Peri-urban areas. Public and private investment in farming can bring about significantly higher returns.

The priority objectives for the agriculture sector under Vision 2020 are to:

- increase Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) output to ensure food security and generate earnings of foreign exchange;
- reduce disparities between rural and urban incomes and between men and women, curb rural-urban drift and accelerate the pace of development of the rural sector;
- provide effective linkages between ANR and other sectors of the economy;
- create a sustainable and balanced mix between rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, thus ensuring optimal use of natural resources of surface and groundwater, animal, aqua-culture and crop production as well as between chemical and organic inputs and the use of agricultural by-products.

4.1.2 Priorities and Strategies for the Agricultural Sector

1. Undertake Institutional Reform in Agriculture to ensure that limited resources are utilized with maximum impact.
2. improve mobility, organization and program management of the extension system to be able to provide and sustain a flow of technological and technical information relevant to the production problems of the farmers;
3. Strengthen research on farmer – extension linkages through intensive training of extension agents and farmers to improve skills and the technical content of extension messages and increase the capacity of farmers to participate effectively in the management of agricultural institutions and on-farm research; based on the NARI Medium Term Research Plan.
4. Establish a seed policy to ensure that high quality, tolerant and virile seeds are available for the main crops.
5. Integrate Water Resources Management to increase agricultural productivity.
6. Improve soil fertility maintenance and soil conservation.
7. Improve input supply, mainly through increased credit availability, possibly including the establishment of an Agricultural Credit Bank for Agricultural Investment Financing.
8. Encourage private sector participation in all aspects of agriculture particularly in the area of investment and commercial support service for finance and marketing.
9. Improve the agriculture information system so that farmers know, among other things, prices of product and inputs on a timely basis.
10. Conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of a Food Technology Institute based on Public – Private Partnership.
11. Increase government support to post-harvest and storage facilities with a focus on value added on local products.
12. Strengthen regional cooperation in agricultural services
13. Begin sensitisation process to ensure equality of land tenure for women who comprise the majority of the agricultural labour force.

4.1.3 Public Expenditure on agriculture

The shares of budget allocations for the Department of State for Agriculture (DOSA) have been substantially smaller than the other two priority sectors, education and health. In recent years, DOSA received on average 2.7 percent of the total budget allocations for recurrent expenditures, compared to 11.0 percent for Education and 9.4 percent for Health. Although, the country's agricultural expenditure shares are reasonably close to the SSA average, with considerable variation among these countries, the country compares more unfavourably with its neighbouring countries in West Africa where the average share is 3.5 percent.

Recurrent expenditures of DOSA by line departments indicate that the share of expenditures for extension services decreased from 73.8 percent in 2001 to 30.3 percent in the 2006 budget, while the share for general administration increased from 16.2 percent to 57.7 percent. Traditionally, the share of expenditures for the Department of Agricultural Services, responsible for crop extensions, was by far the largest and at times more than half of DOSA's expenditures. Now it appears that the share for the Department of Administration is the largest. These trends raise concerns that extension services are under-funded. A more detailed analysis of extension services corroborates these concerns.

Personnel costs are the largest component of DOSA's recurrent expenditures. However, its share sharply declined from 62.2 percent in 2001 to 30.0 percent in the 2006 budget. By contrast, the share of subventions to local and international organizations increased from 6.3 percent in 2001 to 28.8 percent in 2005, making it the second largest component in DOSA recurrent expenditures. The share of inputs, including fertilizers, reached 31.1 percent in the 2006 budget, the largest share in the budget. It indicates government's increasing involvement in the supply of inputs. Responsibilities for such activities could be transferred to the private sector, thus allowing DOSA to concentrate on providing public goods and services.

Development expenditures have been on a downward slide in the very recent years. As a percentage of total expenditures, preliminary data on budget outturn indicate that development expenditures in agriculture declined from 2.1 percent in 2001 to 0.7 percent of total expenditures in 2005. One reason the development expenditures are small is the low budget execution rate. In the previous five years, the execution rate averaged only 43.2 percent. In addition, it has fluctuated considerably, reaching as low as 10.6 percent in 2002.

The 2006 development budget allocates approximately half of the total to projects on extension services, particularly livestock, horticulture, and rice related projects. The composition indicates the dual nature of the sector's strategy. The heavy emphasis on horticulture supports a sector, which has long been touted for its export potential. By contrast, the emphasis on rice cultivation and livestock supports policies to strengthen food security through import substitution.

4.1.4 Sector Strategy

In 2001 government made a Public Expenditure Review (PER) of agriculture, which it reviewed in 2006. At present, government is in the process of preparing a new sector strategy. Inputs into the PRSP II are therefore built around the PER as government awaits completion of a new sector strategy.

In its current form, overall objective of agriculture is to promote pro-poor growth and employment in the rural sector through private sector development. Specific policies and initiatives will be broadly based on a mixture of import substitution to ensure food security, and export promotion through private sector development. The authorities will promote domestic production of rice and

other key food crops in order to reduce reliance on imports. At the same time, it will promote cash crops, such as cotton and horticulture, deemed to have potential to diversity agricultural exports. Promotion of groundnuts, the country's main agricultural export, will remain an important part of the government's support to the sector. The specific initiatives will support the expansion of both large-scale commercial producers as well as smaller producers through farmer cooperatives and associations.

4.1.5 The crop sub-sector

The performance of the field crop sector during the review period 1992/93 to 2002/2003 has been mixed, with cultivated area, production and productivity (yields) fluctuating. Out of a total arable area in The Gambia of 558,000 ha, an average of 200,000 ha are cultivated annually, thus accounting for some 37 percent of total area. Cereals as a group constitute the largest area and account for some 56 percent of total area followed by groundnuts. However, groundnuts command the largest area under production.

Given the low yields obtained, most increases in output can be largely attributed to area expansion, with variable rainfall, changes in the crop mix, a rise in the cost of production (particularly for fertilizers) accounting for fluctuations. Other important structural changes include the wider adoption of animal traction, the diversification into sesame production, and the availability of short-cycled varieties of rice New Rice Initiative for Africa (NERICA), groundnut and millet. Clearly, agriculture policy needs to target the problem of low yields, which calls for improved inputs and extension.

TABLE 19: Yields of Major Crops (MT/ha)

| Year | Groundnuts | Early Millet | Late Millet | Maize | Sorghum | Rice Swamp |
|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------|---------|------------|
| 1999/00 | 1.75 | 1.15 | 0.95 | 1.60 | 1.11 | 1.75 |
| 2000/01 | 1.96 | 1.09 | 1.15 | 1.61 | 1.26 | 1.77 |
| 2001/02 | 1.52 | 1.10 | 0.92 | 1.69 | 1.28 | 1.34 |
| 2003/2004 | 0.920 | 1.121 | 0.917 | 1.585 | 1.221 | 1.235 |
| 2004/2005 | 1.166 | 1.072 | 1.104 | 1.207 | 1.113 | 1.098 |
| 2005/2006 | 0.990 | 0.993 | 0.935 | 1.005 | 1.240 | 1.055 |

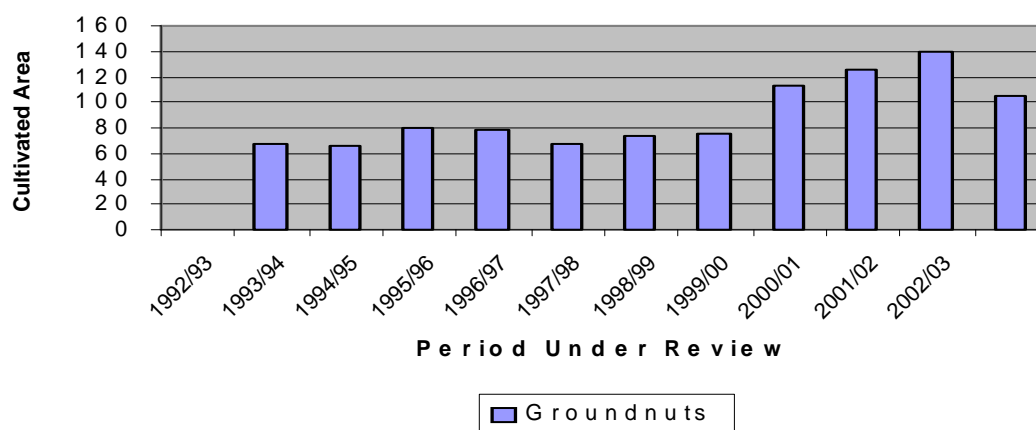
Source: National Agricultural Sample Survey/Department of Planning/Department of State for Agriculture (NASS/DOP/DOSA)

TABLE 20: Evolution of the Production of Major Crops (000 MT)

| Year | Groundnuts | Early Millet | Late Millet | Maize | Sorghum | Rice | Total crop |
|---------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------|---------|-------|------------|
| 1996/97 | 45.82 | 49.50 | 11.99 | 10.02 | 13.72 | 18.19 | 149.00 |
| 1997/98 | 78.10 | 54.37 | 11.72 | 8.47 | 12.93 | 13.05 | 224.66 |
| 1998/99 | 73.46 | 55.60 | 8.07 | 13.01 | 9.87 | 26.64 | 224.66 |
| 1999/00 | 122.86 | 72.62 | 8.34 | 20.42 | 17.97 | 31.65 | 151.73 |
| 2000/01 | 138.03 | 78.47 | 16.11 | 21.99 | 24.88 | 34.08 | 176.04 |
| 2001/02 | 151.07 | 89.02 | 15.95 | 28.99 | 33.42 | 19.20 | 337.65 |
| 2002/03 | 71.53 | 77.34 | 7.28 | 18.58 | 15.21 | 20.33 | 212.0 |

Source: National Agricultural Sample Survey/Department of Planning

Figure 1: Groundnuts Cultivated Area in (000 ha), 1992-2002



Groundnuts

Groundnuts have a significant impact on the economy of the country, contributing approximately 6 percent of GDP and providing an important source of protein and income to an estimated 57,000 farm households throughout the country, or over 80 percent of the agricultural households. However, groundnut farmers are among the poorest members of Gambian society, constituting over half the poor.

Groundnut production is highly sensitive to rainfall, seed availability, fertiliser use, pests, pricing policy etc. Production levels have only recently recovered from the 50 percent drop in 2002 due to low rainfall. Yields have stagnated at approximately 1.1 tons per hectare, which compares unfavourably to international competitors but favourably in the Sahelian region.

Up to 40 percent of the marketable groundnut crop is sold in the domestic market. Most of the trading occurs at the local “lumo” markets that are frequently situated around towns. The remaining 60 percent of the marketable crop is exported primarily to the European Union market.

The formal markets are regulated through a Framework of Agreement (FOA) concluded in 1999 between the authorities and stakeholders. Under the FOA, producer prices are determined by the government based on inputs from an association of industry stakeholders. The operations of the FOA were effectively modified in the 2004/5 season by the introduction of a government managed licensing scheme for operators.

The government has been providing significant support to the sector through a number of mechanisms. The main objectives of government policies are:

- Guaranteed producer price for farmers that provides an adequate livelihood
- Farmers paid cash on sale
- Producers and operators remunerated equitably
- Maximized value addition

In order to meet these objectives, the authorities currently rely on multiple instruments: (i) pan-territorial producer price support; (ii) direct investment and operation of processing facilities; (iii)

direct supply of subsidized fertilizers; and (iv) targeted support to enterprises through loan guarantees.

Strategies for Crops

1. Select and promote crop varieties with short duration of maturity, and improved and stable yields with tolerance to stresses such as drought, pests, diseases and soil toxicities;
2. Emphasize on-farm research as most effective form of research because it leverages off farmer participation;
3. Implement a reliable private sector-managed seed production program producing seeds that are affordable by small farmers and creation of adequate credit facilities to improve access to essential inputs;
4. Improve soil fertility, soil conservation and water management through farmer education, investments in low-input structures, agro forestry initiatives and incentives to national grower associations and community producer associations.
5. Diversify the ANR base to facilitate the production of a wider range of food and export produce in order to reduce the fluctuations and uncertainties associated with rural household incomes and export earnings (the Government and Catholic Relief Services, for example, have been promoting sesame for years with some success. In particular, focus on investments in irrigated rice in order to reduce the import bill.
6. Improve nutrient supply through the application of manure and inorganic fertilizers and moisture holding capacity of sandy soils with manure of organic matter such as compost
7. Improve land preparation through the use of ox drawn equipment to achieve timely planting at the beginning of the rainy season.

4.1.6 Horticulture

The Horticulture Sector is rapidly emerging as one of the key sectors and growth areas of the Gambian economy. The sector currently contributes about 4% to GDP on average, employs over 65% of the agricultural labour force and its development is favoured for socio-economic development of the country. Horticultural production, mainly fruits and vegetables, is an important source of rural income, employment and food, thus ensuring food security and poverty alleviation. It offers great potential for the export trade and generates foreign exchange earnings for the Gambia. The Horticulture Sector also contributes to import substitution with strong linkages to other sectors notably, the tourism industry. Over the last fifteen years tremendous improvement in horticultural production in the Gambia has been realised. A wide variety of high value tropical and off season fresh fruits and vegetables are now grown in the Gambia for both the domestic/tourist and export markets. Most of this growth was due to greater private sector involvement and investment as well as organised communal village based women vegetable growing schemes. The later was encouraged by donor assistance to cater for the local market boosted by a thriving tourism industry.

Export Performance

In 1997/98 export of horticultural produce rose both in volume and value by 25% but dropped by 15% during the 1998/99 and 30% in 2002 season due to high airfreight cost and mounting competition.

TABLE 21: Exports and Imports of Fruit and Vegetables (1996-2002)

| Year | CIF Value (D'000) | Quantity (M-tones) | CIF Values (D'000) | Quantity (M-tones) |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1996 | 15,477 | 1,733 | 30,784 | 14,306 |
| 1997 | 11,489 | 1,193 | 18,310 | 18,572 |
| 1998 | 22,341 | 2,203 | 26,830 | 12,561 |
| 1999 | 19,961 | 2,556 | 23,535 | 10,937 |
| 2000 | 13,795 | 2,048 | 39,923 | 23,420 |

| | | | | |
|------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 2001 | 15,271 | 1,573 | 23,777 | 95,596 |
| 2002 | 7,790 | 1,344 | 28,859 | 18,511 |

Source: Department of Central Statistics, 2003

Potentials and Challenges

The potential for horticultural development in the Gambia through export of the fresh produce is enormous. There is increasing demand for tropical and off-season fresh fruits and vegetables in the lucrative European Markets. Local markets for horticultural produce remain under-exploited in the Gambia. Tourist hotels and restaurants offer mainly imported canned vegetables and fruits, canned fruit juices and conserves.

Supply and Marketing Constraints

- i. Cultivation of horticultural produce is mainly limited to dry season production due to scarcity of suitable rainy season cultivars and harsh weather and pests problems.
- ii. Since irrigation is a must for horticultural produce for nine months of the year (dry season) producers face great costs in water supply development and distribution. The potential of the River Gambia is yet to be exploited for horticultural production.
- iii. An efficient research and extension service is necessary to assist farmers improve their cultural practices in order to obtain higher yields of good quality produce.
- iv. Soils in the Gambia are generally poor in organic matter as well as chemical fertility requiring high input of manure and fertiliser to increase yield and quality.
- v. The control of pests – weeds, insects, diseases in horticultural crops is of paramount importance in order to produce very good quality, high yielding and profitable crops.
- vi. Difficulties in the availability and accessibility of production inputs such as seeds fertiliser, pesticides contributes to low yields and poor quality produce.
- vii. Lack of adequate air cargo space during peak horticultural season and high cost of airfreight are the biggest constraints limiting the export of Gambian horticultural produce.
- viii. All levels of the horticulture industry lack market information and promotion.
- ix. Packaging materials for export of horticultural produce is lacking as there is no carton manufacturing in the Gambia. All cartons are imported at very high costs.
- x. The availability and high costs of local transport as well as poor roads in rural areas impact negatively on local marketing of horticultural produce.
- xi. Most growers do not have suitable storage facilities for the highly perishable horticultural produce grown.

There is practically very little institutional support for horticultural exporters. Export promotion which should be handled by Government Institutions does not exist.

4.1.7 Livestock

Livestock contributes 5% of GDP which is far below its potential. The sub-sector's development is constrained by various problems. These include the lack of improved breeds; poor processing facilities; poor and under developed marketing; poor linkages with other tertiary sectors including tourism insufficient mechanism to control animal diseases; and sub-standard animal husbandry practices and shortage of pasture and water especially during the dry season.

Besides, the competing demand for land use between agriculturists and livestock herders create social conflicts. However with the increasing demand from the hotel industry and urban consumers, there is significant potential for commercialisation of livestock enterprises to fill this market

Priority measures and Strategies in the Livestock sub-sector will include:

1. Improve animal health care delivery services by strengthening laboratory diagnostic capability; strengthening disease reporting, surveillance and monitoring systems; and implementing mass vaccination campaigns.
2. Reorganize the livestock extension delivery system by putting in place well-trained technical advisory officers that will advise farmers on disease control and animal health as well as improve animal husbandry and management systems. Partnership between public extension services, livestock owners associations and NGOs are needed to promote client-led technology adaptation and dissemination.
3. Promote the production of short cycle species of livestock (e.g. small ruminants, poultry).
4. Support financial, technical and organizational capacities of input delivery providers. These include providers of artificial insemination services, day old chicks; feed concentrates for commercial dairy and poultry farms.
5. Fodder production should accompany the intensification process. Adapted fodder species should be tested and spread widely in The Gambia to increase the supply of good quality feed.
6. In low-input systems, better integration between crop and livestock activities is needed. The vast majority of farmers in The Gambia are mixed crop-livestock farmers. Improved and expanded use of equines and oxen for cultivation and transport should be promoted. In this regard, despite the increasing number of horses and donkeys in The Gambia over the years, there are no interventions designed to support farmers keeping equines that are subjected to a host of diseases.
7. Establishment of high-standard slaughterhouses with adequate management mechanisms (private public partnership). Watering facilities such as boreholes with troughs or water catchments ponds and cattle tracks need to be provided.

4.1.8 Research (National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI))

Currently, NARI's research programs cover cereals and grains, horticulture, livestock, and agro forestry. Compared to the institute's Long Term Plan, the current research program places a relatively greater emphasis on horticulture, whereas research on livestock, fisheries, and business channels, marketing and land tenure are relatively neglected.

In 2005, total funding for NARI equalled 0.1 percent of Agricultural GDP and 0.1 percent of total actual government expenditures. NARI's subvention equalled 4.2 percent of DOSA's actual recurrent expenditures. These funding shares compare poorly with other SSA countries. Subventions are mostly used for salaries and wages, and therefore NARI has to rely on external funding for its basic operating costs as well as its research activities. One problem is excessive personnel costs. Salaries, wages and allowances account for 72.1 percent of its recurrent budget allocations, and approximately 61.4 percent of total expenditures. This is high compared to the 36 percent for Ethiopia, 40 percent for Tanzania, and 30 percent for Cote D'Ivoire, although low compared to the 76 percent in Kenya

4.1.9 Extension Services.

This analysis indicates that the level of staffing is adequate but the level of funding is inadequate. Currently, the ratio of farming households to extension workers is 231. This ratio increases to 336 for only crop extension workers and 740 for only livestock extension workers. Typically, a ratio between 500 and 800 would be considered adequate. Hence, it appears that there are adequate numbers of extension workers, particularly crop extension workers.

By contrast, budget allocations do not meet the minimum required to maintain adequate levels of services. Based on unit cost calculations, the 2006 budget allocations cover only 17.9 percent of crop extension's minimum requirement for operating expenditures, and 18.8 percent for livestock extension. The funding requirement covers expenses for travel, transportation, materials, training and supervision.

Given this apparent under-funding and the general adequacy of staffing, one option to consider is to consolidate the two crop and livestock extension service departments into a single department based on polyvalent extension services. This consolidation has been proposed for many years, but progress has been slow. Institutional rigidities remain in which extension services for crops and livestock remain largely separated into the two line departments headed by two national directors. This duplication is costly to DOSA, which must support village extension workers for both crops and livestock, including logistics and facilities.

4.1.10 Inputs (Fertilizers)

The government directly supplies most of fertilizers in the country. The price of fertilizer is subsidized by between 30 and 35 percent, according to industry estimates. Instead of outsourcing to the private sector, the authorities directly source and distribute the fertilizers. Such heavy government interventions have undermined the ability of the private sector to develop private distribution networks and sell inputs on flexible terms, for example on the basis of informal credit arrangements or in exchange for crop. Many countries in West Africa no longer subsidize fertilizers.

The recommendation is for the authorities to prepare and implement a roadmap for gradually withdrawing from directly supplying fertilizers. A gradual and transparent process of withdrawal would allow the private sector to develop its capacity to supply the market. The first step that can be taken immediately is for the government to subcontract private firms to import and distribute fertilizers.

4.1.11 Agricultural Credit (Microfinance).

Credit to the agriculture sector is heavily dependent on commercial banks, which provide approximately two-thirds of the total credit to the sector. However, commercial banks mostly limit their exposure to large, short-term loans for groundnut trading.

Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) provide the remaining third of the formal credit to the rural sector. Most of their clients are the rural poor, and 70 percent of the clients are women. Most of the funds, exceeding 90 percent, are lent to small enterprises. This explains the preponderance of female clients, as they are heavily involved in such enterprises. The repayment rates for microfinance loans have been in the range of 80 to 90 percent, indicating that loans to small borrowers with little collateral assets can still be successfully managed with the right institutional setting.

Approximately only 30 percent of the rural population receives credit, and it is estimated that the rural credit supply would have to increase by up to 60 percent to cover unmet demand. MFIs are expected to play a significant role in meeting this demand. However, at present no MFIs are operationally and financially self-sufficient and most rely heavily on outside funding or charge unsustainable interest rates. MFIs associated with the Gambia Women's Finance Association (GAWFA), National Association of Cooperative Credit Unions (NACCUG) and Village Savings and Credit Associations (VISACAs) are presently the most efficient MFIs. They have the best potential to become self-sufficient in the future. The continuation of strong donor support will be crucial in establishing sustainable MFIs through capacity building, regulatory improvements, and strengthening of MFI inter-linkages.

4.2 Tourism

4.2.1 Situational analysis

The tourist industry in the Gambia although small in international terms is at present a major contributor to the national economy contributing 16 % of GDP, supporting over 10,000 direct and indirect jobs, earning \$ 39 million in foreign exchange, using agricultural produce and generating taxes for the national budget. It also helps to provide the necessary air cargo infrastructure to support the development of some of the Gambia's other airfreight seafood sector such as shellfish, horticulture and other international business activities.

The United Kingdom is the largest source of tourists to The Gambia accounting for 41% of arrivals followed by Holland, Spain, Scandinavia. Germany became the second biggest market in 1997 but lost its standing after the withdrawal of the tour operator FTI.

These four market areas account for a total of 87% of all arrivals with 65% coming from two of them. Such over-concentration on a limited number of source markets could however lead to problems. Seventy percent of arrivals are in six months - November to April, a pattern that has remained fairly constant over the years.

The industry is currently dominated by price point package tourism and controlled by a number of international tourism companies. The industry is badly in need of investment in hotel bed capacity, product development and in marketing. There is minimal marketing by the state or the industry to brand the Gambian tourism and thus the only marketing being done is by the international companies. The quality of the tourism product must be improved if the sector is to continue to

contribute to the economy. The weakness and constraints facing the industry include product, dependence on seasonality, hotel bed capacity bottleneck (limited high quality hotels) low income for local tourism, limited linkages with the rest of the economy and negative social issues – (“bumster” problem).

However, tourism reduces poverty through increased earnings, employment and productivity, and in a sustainable manner as long as, the natural and social environment are safeguarded. The Gambian Tourism Authority (GTA) became operational in January 2002 and declared the goal to make The Gambia “A World Class Tourist Destination and Business Centre.” The GTA has submitted its Master Plan for the tourism industry. The strategy has four pillars, consistent with the Authority’s mandate as follows:

1. To increase visitor arrivals by promoting The Gambia as an attractive tourist destination;
2. To establish and maintain quality standards for the industry;
3. To develop the human resource base of the industry
4. To promote both foreign and local investment in the sector

Achieving these goals will require proper spatial planning, product diversification, capacity building, institutional strengthening, improving skills, intensive international promotion and establishing backward linkages with other sectors, particularly agriculture and a current policy shift from Sun, Sand and Sea to the following Target Products:

1. Conference tourism.
2. Eco-tourism
3. Culture and heritage tourism
4. River cruising.
5. Sports and health tourism.

4.2.2 Tourism Policy Objectives

Government’s long and medium term development policy for the tourism sector aims at consolidating and transforming the Gambia into up market tourist paradise and a major destination particularly for visitors from European and USA markets. The tourism master plan, a blue print for the development of tourism to the year 2020, maps out the direction Gambian tourism is going to follow to ensure its growth and development.

The master plan focuses on the growth, development and marketing of the Gambia as an interesting, attractive and exciting tourism destination offering an excellent climate and a new and diversified product. Currently the main focus of tourism in the Gambia is on package tours, constituting low spending tourist. Both government and private operators in the industry have come to realise that as long as the tourism industry continues to focus on the expansion of mass tourism, there can hardly be any complementary development within the sector. It is now recognised that higher spending tourists should be the focus of marketing activities in the future.

As part of the new policy strategy for the sector, government will continue to ensure that adequate infrastructural facilities (water, sewage disposal, electricity and access roads) are provided in designated tourist development areas.

Short /medium term goals:

1. To improve quality of tourism product through investment and diversification e.g. eco-tourism, sports tourism, cultural and heritage tourism.
2. To attain year round tourism.
3. To increase tourist arrivals by 25%.
4. To increase revenue from tourism by 25%, and net foreign exchange earnings by 25%
5. To increase total (direct and indirect) tourism related jobs by 25%.
6. To strengthen linkages between tourism and other productive sectors like horticulture, fisheries, agriculture
7. To put in place regulations governing the conduct of all tourism establishments in order to improve standards.
8. To classify all tourism establishments in order to improve standards.
9. To substantially increase local entrepreneurs' participation in the industry, develop additional business.
10. To increase tourism contribution to GDP by 20%.
11. To consolidate gains on traditional markets at the same time diversify to other markets.
12. To upgrade and expand the Gambia hotel school into a hotel training institute to enable it meet the manpower needs of the industry.

4.2.3 Challenges in the Tourism Industry

Marketing

The Gambia has a good, basic product, but without intensive promotion and constant improvement, the product will not bring any significant results. Whereas if the current product is aggressively promoted, it will lead to more business, which will in turn create more investment. New investors will also come to further develop the product, such as up river facilities, which will then lead to a self-perpetuating improvement and development of the tourist industry.

The Gambia can learn from other successful tourism countries. Jamaica, for instance, while very different from the Gambia, could offer insights on how to organize and promote the sector. The Gambia, in the next five years, will embark on a major marketing drive aimed at doubling current tourist arrival figures of about 90,000.

Product Development

The second most important issue is product development. With this, it should examine what The Gambia is at the moment and what it could be developed into.

Presently, The Gambia offers a number of products including a reliable winter sun, an un-spoilt destination, good value for money, excellent sandy beaches, a reasonable range and quality of hotels and friendly smiles. These are the main attributes, which attract the vast majority of our tourists. However, the Gambia's product, as a winter destination, needs rejuvenation. The present products could be developed further to include bird watching, fishing, up-river cruising and yachting, inland exploration, business and conferences and cultural tourism.

4.2.4 Development of The Gambia River for Eco-tourism

The River Gambia provides a natural tourist attraction for birds and other animals. An effective investment and tourism promotion strategy must be developed to attract private sector investments in the provision of passenger boats and for the construction of tourist accommodations up country. With the opportunities for cruising, canoeing, fishing and bird watching the River Gambia can do better than the River Nile in attracting adventure tourists and nature lovers.

River transport will enhance the eco-tourism sub-sector in areas such as Mangrove scenery, Wetland migratory bird species, fishing along the way and Eco-lodging along the river. With the policy of promoting “responsible tourism” and encouraging “community based initiative support”, communities along the river could be sensitised to protect their econ-system along the river by establishing landing site and camping lodges.

4.2.5 Tourism Master Plan:

The Marketing and Promotion Report of the Tourism Master Plan study provides the basis for improvement and orderly expansion of tourism in order to increase employment and economic benefit derived from the sector. The report highlights the marketing and promotion issues related to the Tourism Development Master Plan.

The key findings of this study include:

- The Gambian product is obsolete and in need of rejuvenation.
- Market appeal is relatively narrow, and the target markets need to be broadened and new products for those markets developed.
- Market share of choice is low and requires an injection of public/private sector collaborative and cost effective promotion, importantly to include the electronic media.
- Destination awareness in the market place is weak – a plan to develop and implement a complete re-branding of “The Gambia” needs to be undertaken.
- Lack of awareness, poor infrastructure and lack of investment and product quality have been identified by Tour Operators as the main constraints to growth for Tourism in the Gambia.
- Low level of consumer awareness of the Gambia and a lack of product knowledge amongst the travel trade.
- On the positive side, the perceptions of Tour Operators and tourists were that the Gambia is fairly safe in comparison with other African destinations.
- Air access to the Gambia is very limited

In response to some of these constraints, the Market Planning report makes the following recommendations that we will pursue:

- Encouraging a longer length of stay (e.g. by developing attractions);
- Encouraging a higher level of expenditure (e.g. by raising accommodation and service standards, identifying markets that yield the highest net benefits),
- Enhancing and diversifying the established product;
- Improving the profitability of individual business enterprises; and,
- Increasing the proportion of the revenue from tourism that remains in The Gambia.

Promotion to international markets will be proactive, co-operative, focused, and embraces the enhancement of IT skills. The implementation will be through the GTA and focus on partnership and public / private sector integration in both the originating markets and in The Gambia. Planning will be financially prudent and cost effective, while being robust and market intelligence led, with a balanced mix of consumer and trade activity. Mechanisms to achieve this include:

4.2.6 Marketing Strategy - Core Components

GTA has a key role to play in developing and implementing the destination marketing strategy for The Gambia. Working in partnership with the private sector, the GTA has adopted the following core themes, which combine to underpin the marketing strategy:

- Branding: Establish a strong and sustainable brand positioning providing optimal yield and seasonality spread;
- Target Markets: Focus on and aim to increase penetration of the core established markets in the short term (UK, Benelux and Scandinavia) and simultaneously address the issues of re-building a strong presence in the German speaking markets. In the medium term consider further actions to penetrate the growing Spanish market and explore opportunities to develop both the Eastern European and the North American market. Extend into other international markets in the longer term through emphasis on market-specific web sites, trade and PR;
- Distribution: Effectively exploit the benefits of new media communication and distribution systems to improve the speed, timeliness, depth and breadth of The Gambia's destination information.
- Promotion: Develop a portfolio of evocative promotional materials that communicates to the target audience a clear message that consistently enhances and capitalizes on The Gambia's qualities and advantages;
- Partnerships: Provide strong leadership to The Gambian travel trade and develop valuable strategic relationships with stakeholders and relevant non-tourism organizations to harness the collective resource and expertise;
- Organization: Build a focused organizational structure and culture to increase sector efficiency and effectiveness and increase the quality and delivery of customer research and market intelligence to the travel trade.

During the plan period the sector will embark on a major marketing drive based on the strategies recommended above and we shall aim at doubling the current tourist arrivals figures of about 90,000 over the next five years.

4.2.7 Strategies for the Tourism Industry

The proposed strategic direction for the sector as per the ongoing *tourism master plan* study can be summarised as follows:

- Diversify and improve the quality of the tourism product and move into a new niche market especially in the area of eco-tourism cultural tourism, sport tourism and conference tourism.

- Segmentation of the markets, establish priorities and a plan developed to focus appropriately on the different segments.
- Create a tourism industry as a means of revitalising, upgrading and expanding the industry.
- Encourage major investment in high quality hotels through attractive development incentive packages.
- GTA and the industry to embark on a focused and aggressive niche market strategy and other source markets.
- Strengthen linkages with the rest of the economy i.e. agriculture and fisheries.
- Improve Gambian handicraft and its marketing through training.
- Build the capacity of small and large professional associations in the industry to enable them to provide higher quality service to the industry.
- The Hotel Training school should be up graded to hotel training and management institute to enable it cater to the total manpower needs of the industry.
- Classification of tourism establishments to promote high standards.
- Government to improve the incentive packages to encourage more investment in quality hotels and the industry in general.
- Fostering public/private partnership for the development of the sector.
- Improve access to investment finance through the establishment of an investment bank.
- Improve the infrastructure and utilities at the TDA and the airport.
- Encourage responsible tourism through awareness building and education programme as a means of addressing the “bumster problem” and also building awareness among the Gambian population.
- Strengthen the financial and manpower capacity of GTA.

Fisheries and Marine resources

The fisheries sector has the potential to generate significant employment and income for Gambian nationals, provide affordable animal protein to Gambian households for improved nutrition, and generate significant foreign exchange earnings for the country. The development objectives of the fisheries sector are in line with Vision 2020.

The Gambia has a continental shelf area of approximately 4000 sq. km and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 200 nautical miles with a total area of 10,500 sq. km. The Continental shelf located within the eastern central Atlantic Ocean, an area classified as one of the richest fishing zones of the World. FAO/NORAD surveys have estimated a standing biomass of about 168,000 metric tonnes for the small pelagic species. Estimated maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is between 15,000 and 17,500 metric tonnes for Demersal fish species, 1,000 metric tones for Crustacea and 1,000 metric tonnes for cephalopods (mainly cuttlefish).

There are two fisheries sub-sectors in the industry, in the Gambia, Artisanal and Industrial. The Artisanal sub-sector supplies almost all fish consumed locally and is also the major supplier of raw high value fish and shrimps to processing plants.

The majority of the local industrial fishing companies lack fishing vessels to harvest the resources, managerial and technical skills and adequate financial resources to operate a fully-fledged industrial establishment. The main products being marketed by the industrial fisheries sub-sector are in fresh and bulk frozen (frozen crustaceans, finfish and cephalopods. These are exported mainly to the European Union and United States of America.

The Government has been making an effort to create the enabling environment for the development and growth of the industrial fisheries sub-sector. This effort has included the introduction of an incentive package that includes: duty free imports of equipment and materials, duty free exports of fish and fish products if transactions are effected through the banking system, and the issuing of development certificates to deserving industrial fish business establishments. Fisheries infrastructure has been established in all the coastal fishing villages and the fishing centres are generating their own revenue under community management. However, several constraints have impeded the sustainable development and growth of the sub-sector.

4.3.1 Constraints

Constraints facing fisheries resources of the Gambia can be classified under four headings namely, infrastructure, technical, financial and institutional:

Infrastructure constraints

- Absence of a fishing harbour and lack of sufficient Gambian registered coastal trawlers and purse seiners to harvest the resources.
- Lack of adequate infrastructure with appropriate fish handling and storage facilities for the artisanal sub-sector.
- Lack of sufficient fish distribution and marketing centres, refrigerated vehicles and ice plants to cater for the artisanal sub-sector and reduce post harvest losses.
- Fishing companies lack the appropriate equipment and machinery and are reluctant to invest and engage in pelagic fishing and processing.
- Inadequate number of pre-mixed fuel (oil and gasoline) stations at artisanal fish landing sites compelling fishermen to obtain fuel from other sources outside the country.
- Fisheries sector remains dominated by foreign nationals. The majority of licensed industrial fishing vessels and fish factories are owned and operated by foreigners.
- Most artisanal fishermen and shrimp farmers are foreigners and migrate seasonally thereby hindering supplies to factories and creating quality and price inconsistencies of raw materials.
- An intractable difficulty in recruiting and training nationals in artisanal fishing is still an important constraint.
- Paucity of efficient patrol boats and other means of effective monitoring, control and surveillance of the country's territorial waters.
- Irregular supply and high cost of energy resulting in a problematic electrical transmission and distribution network.
- Packaging materials and manufacturing plants are non-existent.

Technical Constraints

- Lack of local personnel with technical competence to man fishing vessels as skippers and engineers.
- Unavailability of sufficient qualified tradesmen coupled with inadequate repair and maintenance facilities for the artisanal fishing crafts, machines and ancillaries.
- A shortcoming in quality control practices and lack of knowledge in quality assurance
- Complete absence of basic training programmes from industrial establishments and artisanal fishing communities on issues relating to preservation, quality, sanitation and proper manufacturing practices etc.
- Lack of market information globally.
- Inadequate knowledge of the biology, population dynamics and annual sustainable yield of the inland (riverine) stocks, especially species of high economic importance.

- Need for effective sensitisation and recruitment schemes for nationals operating as part-time fishermen in the inland fishery
- Use of the information generated to begin operating full-time and realize the benefits of commercial fishing

Financial Constraints

- Access to micro-finance facilities for artisanal operators is constrained by high interest rates of loans.
- The industrial sub-sector is constrained by the lack of access to both working capital and term lending. Prevailing high interest rates at the commercial banks are unfavourably affecting the development of the sector in general.
- Existing industrial companies are reluctant or unable to form joint-ventures among themselves, invest and initiate projects or offer equity to other entrepreneurs and adopt more effective financial management measures

Institutional Constraints

- Inadequate budgetary provisions limit capacity to carry out research and provide statistics extensively; advance product development and quality control; and mobilize extension staff for monitoring, control and surveillance of artisanal fishing villages and landing sites.
- Insufficient number of trained personnel
- Weak Administrative structures, programmes and functions of the Associations of Artisanal fishermen and seafood dealers, and Industrial fishing companies.

4.3.2 Prospects

In terms of the biological opportunity, the demersal fish, as stated, are apparently being over-exploited. They require more rigorous management to limit the levels extracted particularly by industrial vessels and allow the artisanal fisheries sub-sector to sustain and increase its contribution to the economy. The potential of the pelagic fish resources remain very important as additional quantities of Bonga fish (*Ethmalosa*) can be exploited and *Sardinella* alone offers a virtually untouched maximum sustainable yield (MSY) of 80,000 metric tons per year and other pelagic fish species still offer additional quantities for harvesting.

The commercial opportunities lie in the domestic and export markets both of which have room to absorb additional quantities/volumes. Per capita fish consumption can increase with increased access to fish by people everywhere in the country guaranteed by the appropriate facilities and services such as insulated/refrigerated vehicles for fish distribution and marketing and cold storage facilities to preserve fish and reduce spoilage and these investments will occur only if investors see a positive return.

The fishing communities have registered concern over the observed declining state of fish resources and catches. This is ascribed to increases in fishing intensity and irresponsible fishing practices by the fishing trawlers and foreign artisanal fishermen. PRSP II will focus particular attention to sound monitoring, control and surveillance system to safeguard the fisheries and marine resources. Training of Gambian fishermen will also be intensified to adopt responsible fishing practices.

4.3.3 Strategic Priorities

- Increase Gambian participation in artisanal fisheries through training and provision of fishing gears; to improve fishing techniques;
- Develop on-land preservation and storage facilities for increase production and reduce post harvest losses;
- Engage bi-lateral and multi-lateral protocols and other existing arrangements to facilitate the acquisition of moderate size coastal trawlers and purse seiners to harvest the resources;
- Operate in Senegalese waters through the maritime fishing agreement existing between the two countries;
- Review the licensing regulation and process with the participation of stakeholders (fisher folk and fishing companies)
- Systematically reduce the number of licensed foreign trawlers to avoid over exploitation of the dermesal resources.
- The use of indiscriminate fishing methods and practices in coastal and inland waters to be strictly prohibited by enforcing the law.
- Extend the artisanal fishing zone from the current 7 nautical mile limit to 12 nautical miles.
- Fast track the implementation of the fishing harbour project to ensure that all licensed vessels land their catches in the country.
- Construct a centralized fish market for use by artisanal fisher folk to facilitate the efficient handling, distribution and marketing of fish and fish products locally.
- Provide better incentive packages for industrial fishing companies.
- Create opportunities and promote aquaculture by assisting in the establishment of fish ponds on tidal rice fields along the river;
- Institutionalise a comprehensive training programme for the artisanal and industrial sub-sectors covering areas in financial management, marketing, innumeracy and literacy, fish technology and quality control, sanitation and environment and other related issues.
- Establish a fish training school at secondary level.
- Train Fisheries staff in fish biology and technology, Fisheries management, Fisheries Statistics and Stock management to improve the capacity to adequately handle the development challenges with regard to export and trade.
- Encourage commercial banks and micro finance institutions to provide favourable investment finance to the industrial and artisanal fisheries sub-sectors
- Establish strong links between seafood exporters and the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry to access relevant international market information and initiate business transactions where possible.
- Government should more effectively intervene in areas retarding the productive private sector growth, progress and competitiveness—namely, energy and water supply, road network and transportation, etc.
- Further improve the fuel-efficiency of smoking areas and promote community forestry and agro-forestry schemes in the Coastal Areas.
- Strengthen the capacity of the Fisheries Department to enable it manage, monitor and coordinate the fishing industry.

4.4 INDUSTRY

4.4.1 Industry

The Gambia's manufacturing sector is small and it is not very diverse or interlinked, with larger enterprises based either on the few available resources or almost entirely on imported inputs. Small-scale manufacturing firms are mainly in the informal sector. The primary objective of the National Industrial Policy is to establish conditions required by the private sector to maximise

gainful employment at ever increasing levels of productivity within the framework of a sustainable environment, social justice and equity.

Electricity supply continues to be the most pressing need of the industrial sector. There is considerable loss of productivity due to frequent and unpredictable power outages. Prospects for the industrial sector are promising in light of recent developments in the energy sector, which provided additional generating sets for NAWEC. The Rural Electrification Project currently underway by NAWEC provides some comfort towards fulfilling power supplies in the rural areas. Efforts should be intensified to enhance the generating capacity for electricity supply for the Greater Banjul Area.

There is scope for manufacturing in a few key areas especially in the agro-based manufacturing. However investment in the sector is constrained by the following: -

- Small local market to absorb the production from a plant of an efficient scale
- Lack of access to medium and long term finances
- Lack of core skills needed for the manufacturing industry
- In-conducive elements of enabling environment to both domestic and foreign investment such as unreliable and high cost of electricity, high nominal corporate tax rate (35%), Poor functioning of the commercial courts, other administrative barriers to investment), and limited development incentive

4.4.2 PRSP II Priorities and Strategies for the Industrial Sector

- Provision of reliable electricity through Public-Private partnership
 - Review regulatory and legal framework focusing on existing specific sector legislation that inhibit private sector activities.
 - Minimise artificial administrative barriers to investment through the strengthening of the one-stop shop at GIPFZA.
 - Improve small-scale industries extension programmes with emphasis on finance, product development and business information.
 - Implement the national export promotion strategy for fisheries, horticulture and tourism
 - Train people in a way that will give them core skills: technical and managerial, they need for both services and industry – emphasis on improved teaching quality and incentives
 - Promote air access through incentives and cheaper air freights to make Gambian products more competitive in the International markets
 - A rigorous performance based investment appraisal system and processes.
 - Establish forward and backward linkages with tourism and agriculture
 - Improve the environment for export orientation (private-public partnership, economic infrastructure improvements, trade policy, etc)
 - Addressing the scarcity of labour at all skill levels (re-examine the Alien Tax).
 - Stronger role for the Divestiture Agency and the divestiture of NAWEC.
 - Harmonise and improve consistency of the GIPFZA Act with the tax code under the finance and Audit Act.
 - Enforce bankruptcy law and train judges in commercial case law.
 - Review tax and duty system in order to propose an incentive framework consistent with the new strategies for industrial development.
-
- Utilisation of the Business Park at the Banjul International Airport should be accelerated. Private sector initiatives towards the development of an economic zone should also be encouraged. However, there is need to establish an effective control and monitoring system in

order to avoid leakages and spill-over from the economic zones into the domestic market. The effect of such a spill over will cause further distortion in the domestic market, which is subject to payment of import duties and sales tax.

- Encourage Commercial banks to open an export window with credit facilities to industries. This will require a comprehensive overview of current mortgage arrangements and the Mortgage Act.
- Landing fees and handling charges at the Banjul International Airport are not competitive to attract airline operations in the country. These charges must be reduced in order to attract other airlines to operate in the country. This will give further impetus to expanded cargo traffic operations in the country.
- Expansion of the apron and the main terminal building to cater for growth in passenger traffic and export trade should be an immediate priority for the Government.
- Department of State for Education in consultation with the National council for Technical and Vocational Training develop a policy to integrate technical and applied science training in primary and secondary schools based on a market analysis of the types of skills the Gambian labour force will need particularly those required for industrial development.
- Department of State for Education should develop and implement an effective computer-training program at all levels and types of education.
- Establish a technical assistance program with UNIDO to provide industrial fellowship for employees and employers for training in similar business enterprises outside The Gambia.
- The Government will continue to assist the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) in its technical training program to cater for skilled labour force in industries. The Institute to undertake a survey of skill labour requirement by industries and develop appropriate training programs.
- Equip the foundry at GTTI with the necessary materials to manufacture farming implements and other industrial equipment.
- Organise a donor's conference to seek financing for the infrastructure requirements of Vision 2020.
- Formation of a national consultative committee to review the Action Plan and make necessary adjustments to the Plan and the Vision itself to ensure continued relevance.
- The Government through the Department of State for Trade, Industry & Employment must pursue the use of ILO/UNIDO resources to develop and promote SMEs. DOSTIE must use UNIDO/ILO to import strategies and know-how on SME promotion and development.

4.5 Trade

Through its liberal trade regime, the Government has over the years established and consolidated its trade links with the EU, USA, Asian Countries and the ECOWAS sub-region. The Gambia, having already decided to negotiate with the EU on trade as part of the ECOWAS bloc, will seek to adopt the implementation of the economic partnership agreement (EPA) as a strategy to expand its link with the EU, while finding ways and means to mitigate the negative impact of the EPA.

As a small country that by nature must trade to meet its needs, The Gambia needs to pursue an export-oriented strategy. There is also a need to improve trade related services in order to complement this development strategy. Reforms should be directed at ensuring uniformity in nominal rates and reducing average rates. Tariff concessions based on different end-uses should also be phased out to reduce tariff dispersion and the bias implied by current tariff rates, which range from 0 percent (duty free) to 18 percent for “luxury goods”.

The recommendations provided below are intended to enhance development and diversification of trade related services in The Gambia and to develop links to other sectors of the economy.

- Finalise the formulation of a comprehensive national trade policy, which will help integrate trade into the national development planning.
- Improve the efficiency of tax administration and collection and streamline taxes at the central government and municipal levels. A plethora of taxes, especially at the municipal levels, has been a disincentive to investment. Different Departments also collect a variety of taxes with complex administrative and legal links to the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs.
- Uniform import tariff system. Little domestic production takes place and tariffs are low on most items. However, this has to be carefully designed so as not to protect inefficient domestic production.
- “Tariffication” of non-tariff barriers (NTBs, i.e., substituting exemptions from imports duties with non-prohibitive tariffs; or replacing the ban on imports, with equivalent tariffs). The scope for this is, however, restricted as there are currently very few (discretionary) exemptions from tariffs apart from those conforming to diplomatic treaties.
- The improvement of the infrastructure network is crucial to sustain trade development. Although the port and telecommunications infrastructure is considered excellent by African standards, further expansion and technological improvements are required to consolidate and enhance the efficiency gains.
- The Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) regulations administered by the Department of Livestock Services for meat imports and the Department of Health for food imports need to be revised and updated in order to conform to the Uruguay Round on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement. Government should ensure smooth and effective functioning of the Standards Board in order to conform to the Uruguay Round Agreement on sanitary and phytosanitary regulation.
- Aircraft landing fees are very expensive in The Gambia. The country could benefit more with reduced landing fees, as this will encourage air transport.
- The Government should consider reviving and liberalizing the river transport system in the country. This will reduce the heavy burden placed on the road networks and also enhance expanded tourism up country as well as movement of people and goods within the country.
- IBAS should be reorganized and made semi-autonomous. The institution’s funding role should be evaluated for its effectiveness to determine whether additional credit lines are justified for this institution.
- The Department of State for Trade, Industry & Employment must continue to publish quarterly reports on trade statistics and provide annual publication. This will be useful for the purpose of planning and monitoring especially the level of importation of essential commodities in order to avoid shortages.
- The Government must continue to link The Gambia with the sub-region through encouraging and facilitating establishment of shipping companies. This will enhance export trade and also competitive imports.

- Promoting regional trade for an enlarged ECOWAS market. Studies are needed to establish how and to what extent the Common External Tariff (CET) will affect The Gambia's trade performance.
- Encourage integration with Multilateral Trading System
- There is need to establish effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure implementation and the plan of action for Vision 2020. In this regard, it is recommended that the High Level Economic Committee be charged with this responsibility to ensure various departments are assisted towards the realization of their respective tasks under the Vision.

4.6 Energy

One of the key determinants of socio-economic development is the availability of reliable supply of affordable sources of energy that impacts directly on poverty. Past experiences suggest a close relationship between energy use and poverty reduction through sustainable economic growth. A review of the Gambia's energy sector reveals that the energy resource base of the country is limited and the energy supply unreliable and unsustainable. The major source of energy for the whole country, according to the Energy Data (1990 – 2004), is fuel wood, which is extracted from the country's forest resources, followed by petroleum products, electricity and renewable energy. Total energy consumed in 2004 was 467 thousand Ton Oil Equivalent (TOE).

Fuel wood consumption account for 374.89 thousand TOE, representing about 82% of all energy consumed in the country. The over-reliance of the city and major urban centres on fuel wood (firewood and charcoal) is destroying the country's forest resources and natural vegetation cover at an alarming rate, causing general environmental degradation. While these forest resources are fetched from the rural areas, the participation of the rural people in the business of fuel wood are limited (according to Lahmeyer International Reports) and therefore impacting negatively on the poor. In addition, the use of fuel wood has serious negative health implication on women. The depletion of the forest cover leading to desertification, would impact negatively on food production, which could lead to increased hunger and poverty.

Petroleum Products including Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is the second most important source of energy in The Gambia. Its consumption in the energy balance accounts for 83.12 thousand TOE representing 16% of the total energy consumed. All petroleum products consumed in the country are imported. Again the country relies exclusively on imports to meet her petroleum fuel requirements, which is prone to the slightest external shocks and impacts directly on the poor. In the rural and some peri-urban areas, the availability of these resources are not regular and very expensive, hence impacting on its access and the productive capacity of people in terms of access to water, transportation and modern cooking means.

Electricity

The electricity subsector has, over the past twenty years, been grossly inadequate, inefficient, erratic and extremely unreliable, negatively impacting on investment and production. Electricity is available mostly in the urban and provincial centres of rural areas with coverage of less than 25%. Available generation capacity is 28 MW (April 2006) as opposed to an estimated suppressed demand of about 80 MW. Electricity consumption, which accounts for 7.17 thousand TOE, representing under 3% of the total energy consumed, according to the Energy Data 1990 – 2005, is produced using imported fuels. This has compounded the problems of security, reliability and affordability experienced over the years. Lack of reliable, adequate and efficient electricity has impacted adversely on the socio-economic development.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy resources identified are limited to solar, wind and biomass (other than fuel wood). Solar energy seems the most promising with an average solar radiation of 5 - 7 KWh/M² a day. Wind regimes are strongest along the coast and during the dry harmattan season. The highest recorded surface wind speed does not exceeded 4 m/s. The biomass resources (other than fuel wood) have been confined to agricultural waste such as cow dung for biogas production, groundnut shell briquette for briquettes and sawdust. However, there is currently a study being implemented by Lahmeyer International (LI) and funded by AfDB/Gambia Government, to assess the renewable energy potential of the country and develop a 20 year master plan.

To provide an adequate, reliable, affordable and efficient supply of energy essential to support the country's continued socio-economic growth and development, Government formulated a comprehensive National Energy Policy intended to address the key issues in the Energy Sector and provide the framework for efficient utilisation and management of these resources, by avoiding over-dependence and depletion of the nation's finite energy resources. Diversifying energy sources and improving energy efficiency are essential to minimise the economic impact of fossil fuel imports, particularly given current high world prices for these resources.

Policy Objectives of the energy sector

The long-term aim of the Energy Policy is to maximise the efficient development and utilisation of scarce energy resources to support economic development in an environment-friendly way. Government's overall objectives for the Sector are to:

- 1) Improve and expand existing energy supply systems through private sector partnership with the public sector;
- 2) Promote a domestic fuel sub-sector, which clearly focuses on sustainable management of forest resources;
- 3) Widen the population's access to modern forms of energy so as to stimulate development and reduce poverty;
- 4) Strengthen institutional and human resource capacity and enhance Research and Development (R&D) in energy development;
- 5) Provide adequate security of energy supply.

4.6.1 Priority Interventions in the energy sector

A central priority for successfully implementing Government energy priorities will be to strengthen human capacity for policy making and implementation, including within the Department of Energy. Specific priorities are:

- **Electricity:** Improve the reliability and efficient management of the existing grid electricity grid system, and its expansion, through the attraction of private investment and management, and by divesting the existing Government assets. Increase access to electricity in rural areas by completing the rural electrification project, and investigating the feasibility for a Rural Energy Agency and Fund;
- **Petroleum Products, including LPG:** Ensure efficiency, safety and security of supply for petroleum products at competitive prices, by implementing new regulations and encouraging investment in storage and distribution. Use fiscal and other instruments to improve efficiency and encourage diversification to alternative fuels;

- **Renewable energy:** Promote utilisation of new and renewable energy technologies, particularly for rural areas, including through public education and awareness programmes, fiscal and other incentives, and a strengthened capacity for adaptive R&D;
- **Fuel wood:** Ensure sustainable and efficient use of fuel wood resources, by increasing use of efficient stoves, improving forest management practices, and encouraging a switch to alternative fuels (e.g. LPG, ethanol etc);
- **Legal and Regulatory Framework:** Institute the Electricity Law and strengthen and fully implement the newly created Public Utilities Regulatory Authority. Ensure policies and strategies are in place (on cost-reflective tariffs, market entry rules and procedures etc) to encourage investment, as well as efficient and cost-effective operations. Provide appropriate tax concessions and other fiscal incentives to achieve policy objectives, including diversification to renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency;
- **Institutional framework:** Harmonise and strengthen the institutional framework for effective policy implementation and co-ordination of the energy sector in the different institutions, including the creation of a national energy commission;
- **Regional initiatives:** Ensure Government's continued participation in regional initiatives, including West African Power Pool (WAPP), West African Gas Pipeline, and OMVG hydro-power activities.

4.7 Transport infrastructure

4.7.1 Road Transport

The National Road Network (NRN) of The Gambia comprises 1,559 kms of classified roads of which 495 kms are paved and 1,064 kms are unpaved. There are also approximately 1,300 kms of unclassified earth roads giving access to rural settlements as well as residential areas in some urban settlements.

The administrative responsibility for the classified road network lies with the Department of State for Works, Construction and Infrastructure (DSWCI). The unclassified earth roads fall under the respective local authorities but are in effect maintained by the DSWCI.

The road network in and around the capital city, Banjul is much better developed than those in other parts of the country. Traffic volume on some of the trunk roads in Greater Banjul area is in excess of 10,000 vehicles per day; while outside Banjul, traffic volume is generally quite low varying between 150 and 1,600 vehicles per day on the trunk network.

The road conditions in The Gambia are generally poor, resulting from under-investment in routine and periodic maintenance. A national road condition survey, which was carried out in 1998, revealed that 6% of the total road network was in excellent condition, 15% in good condition, 33% in fair condition, with the remaining 46% being in bad condition. The high percentage of bad sections underscores the need for major road investments as well as the necessity to take action for improving performance in road maintenance.

In 1997, the Government of The Gambia prepared a National Transport Plan (NTP) focusing on the maintenance and development of transport infrastructure. Subsequently, a National Transport Policy (1998-2006) was formulated with the objective to support the long-term expansion of the production capacity of the economy and to assist in the improvement of the living standards of the population. To this end, the Government upon recommendations made from a Consultant's study, established an autonomous Roads Authority (the Gambian Roads Authority – GRA) for the planning, programming and implementation of road maintenance in particular, and for all other road investments in general. The GRA is responsible for the formulation of a maintenance strategy and

for assuring that priority is given to the maintenance of existing assets over investments in new infrastructure. In tandem with the GRA, a Road Fund (RF) has also been established and is administered by an independent Board of Directors consisting of representatives of relevant government ministries and private stakeholders.

Constraints and challenges facing road transport

a) Inadequacy of Revenue Base

The GRA is supposed to use the Roads Fund, which is expected to finance all other road construction and maintenance works delegated to any local authority by the GRTSA. The Roads Fund is expected to derive revenue from road user taxes levied on road users, vehicle licensing fees, vehicle registration fees and grants, donations and endowments.

A recently completed Public Expenditure Review conducted by the DSWCI indicated that the funds generated by the sources of revenue for the Road Fund proposed in the GRA bill is largely insufficient to finance even the sections of the network that need immediate maintenance. Consequently, the amount of subvention, which is the only other revenue source of the Road Fund, apart from grants and endowments, will have to be large enough to be able to cater for the shortfall, if grants are not available.

A more realistic revenue base for the Road Fund must be considered if the GRA is to fulfil its immediate maintenance requirements, and intervene in the sections of the road network that require intervention in the short and medium term (i.e. those sections that are in a fair state or good state). The Act gives the GRA authority to determine the level of road user charges. This should therefore be done, bearing in mind the level of resources required to make the authority functional and to carry out its mandate.

b) Inadequate Technical Capacity

The GRA is in the process of staff recruitment. However, given the limited number of highly trained road engineers in the country, it may struggle to employ the calibre of staff required to effectively function. The high attrition rate in the civil service has resulted in the Department of Works losing many of its senior engineers who were expected to fill some of the key positions of the GRA. The ability to build the required technical and human resource capacity is a challenge for the GRA.

c) Absence of a Road Database

The starting point of any road management process is to establish the size and scope of the road network. The absence of a road database presents a serious constraint to the GRA and implies that an objective analysis for treatment selection and prioritisation cannot be carried out. Furthermore, the use of a computer-based decision support system, widely regarded as an element of best practice cannot be achieved.

Road sector policy and strategy

Provision of road transport infrastructure must be demand-driven and not supply-led. A fundamental consideration is the appropriate size and quality of the infrastructure: how much road infrastructure does the country need and of what type and quality. A sustainable approach requires a clear long-term strategy and integrated infrastructure planning, consistent with the needs of the

country. For this purpose, Government has prepared, and is implementing the integrated National Transport Policy and National Transport Plan for The Gambia.

The road transport policy statement reads;

‘To develop and maintain the road infrastructure network in support of the long-run expansion of the productive capacity of the economy and the improvement of the living standards of the Gambian population’

To realise this mission, the National Road Transport Plan is set out to achieve the following key objectives;

- 1) Maintain and develop the road infrastructure network on an economically sustainable basis.
- 2) Achieve an optimal balance between the maintenance of existing network and the construction of new road infrastructure.
- 3) Establish and maintain sound maintenance planning and budgeting systems and procedures.
- 4) Provide new road infrastructure to remove bottlenecks and to improve the overall quality of the road system and to facilitate economic and social development potentials, within the overall objective of sound economic justification, which will include evaluation of the ability to secure sufficient funds for maintenance of the new infrastructure.
- 5) Provide a sound and stable financial basis to maintain the road infrastructure in adequate condition.
- 6) Clarify responsibilities by clearly establishing who is responsible for what.
- 7) Strengthen management of roads by provision of a proper institutional framework, effective systems and procedures, and strengthening managerial accountability.
- 8) Creation of ownership by involving road users in management of roads to win public support for more road funding, to control potential monopoly power, and to constrain road spending to what is affordable.
- 9) Increase the role of the private sector in road maintenance, and develop the capacity of small-sized local contractors to perform road construction and road maintenance works.
- 10) Encourage the use of appropriate labour-intensive technologies in road construction and maintenance.

A key ingredient for the attainment of the above objectives is the effective and efficient functioning of the Gambia Roads Authority. This institution, which is still in its infancy, will carry out the following strategic actions for the attainment of the above objectives.

1. To maintain and update a Maintenance Management System for planning, organizing, directing and controlling routine and periodic maintenance.
2. To maintain and update a database of the road network for the country.
3. To undertake engineering or traffic studies and surveys necessary to monitor the condition of the national road network and its usage.
4. To tender, let and administer contracts for road maintenance and construction projects.
5. To carry out, through independent contractors, all necessary routine, periodic and emergency road maintenance activities.
6. To keep adequate cost records, and operate a management information system.
7. To undertake a programme of staff training and build up institutional capacity within the country through the training of private contractors.
8. To encourage and support the use of labour based maintenance techniques.

Priority interventions and programmes in road transport

Limited availability of resources, both financial and human resources, require that clear priorities be set with regard to interventions on the road network. According to the National Transport Policy

(1998-2006), government is committed to prioritise maintenance of existing assets over investment in upgrading or new infrastructure.

To this end, the major interventions carried out in recent years have been in the form of rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing sections of the country's two main trunk roads (North Bank Trunk Road and South Bank Trunk Road). This is in line with Strategy Option 1 outlined in the Road Transport Policy which prioritizes the primary network based on the geography and size of the country. Consequently the bulk of the road investment made over the past decade has been on the primary network as illustrated in the table below.

Table 22: Status of road projects as of 2006

| ROAD SECTION | LENGTH (km) | ROAD CLASSIFICATION | STATUS |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Essau - Kerewan | 52 | Primary | Completed |
| Kerewan - Farafenni | 57 | Primary | On-going |
| Farafenni - Laminkoto | 115 | Primary | On-going |
| Serrekunda - MandinaBa | 26 | Primary | On-going |
| MandinaBa - Soma | 141 | Primary | On-going |
| Banjul Streets | 37 | Urban | Completed |
| Kombo Costal Roads | 112 | Urban | Completed |
| EC-Funded Feeder Road in URD | 80 | Feeder | Completed |
| Western Division Feeder Roads | 57 | Feeder | On-going |

There is however, growing realization both in the Government and its development partners of the need to place a greater emphasis on the provision and upkeep of feeder roads which provide vital access to the more remote areas of the country. These include access to public health facilities and schools. Feeder roads are also crucial for the linkage of farms to agricultural processing centres. In this regard, they represent a crucial component in the quest to provide access to the rural population where the bulk of the poor live.

There are a number of planned interventions on the road network in the medium term. These include the rehabilitation of the remaining sections of the North and South Bank Trunk Roads. The table 5 below details the estimated programme for interventions in the medium term (2007-2011).

Table 23: Planned interventions for medium term

| ROAD | LENGTH (km) | CLASSIFICATION | ESTIMATED COST (US\$) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Laminkoto - Passimus | 120 | Primary | 40,000,000 |
| Basse – Fatoto - Koina | 50 | Primary | 15,000,000 |
| Brikama - Darsilami | 26 | Urban | 7,000,000 |
| Soma - Basse | 192 | Primary | 22,000,000 |
| TransGambia | 24 | Primary | 12,000,000 |
| Barra - Amdallai | 20 | Primary | 9,000,000 |
| MandinaBA - Seleti | 12 | Primary | 7,000,000 |
| Feeder Roads in Western Division | 113 | Feeder | 17,000,000 |
| Other Roads | 100 | | 15,000,000 |
| Routine and Periodic Maintenance | | | 25,000,000 |
| TOTAL | | | US\$169,000,000 |

4.7.2 Maritime transport

Situational Analysis

In the maritime sub-sector, the Gambia ports authority (GPA) has made a number of interventions towards its objective of developing Banjul Port into leading maritime centre for trade, logistics and distribution, and achieving the status of a regional hub for the Europe-West Africa trade. The Port of Banjul is the main seaport that serves The Gambia's sea-borne trade, and constitutes almost 90% of the total volume of the country's foreign trade. Its contribution to poverty reduction, economic and social development is marked by its ability to provide cargo handling facilities and services to enable the smooth facilitation of economic interactions in the economy. The Port is in the process of attracting new businesses by promoting coastal shipping as an alternative to road transport.

The Authority's performance in cargo handling for the past five years has shown significant achievement. Cargo through the Port reached 983,511 metric tonnes in 2005 compared to 830,869 metric tonnes in 2001, of which about 91% were imported goods. The import traffic was dominated by traditional commodities such as: rice, sugar, flour, cement, break-bulk general cargo and petroleum products constituting 14%, 6%, 2%, 18%, 12% and 1% respectively. Containerised cargo comprising manufactured goods, textiles and foodstuffs made up the remaining 48% of the total imports.

Overall, the Port strives to improve performance in cargo handling operations and services to ships. In spite of increases in the average load per vessel call, ship turnaround time and cargo handling productivity have improved.

The Port has well-developed facilities for handling all types of cargo using modern equipment and techniques. This infrastructure, combined with a competitive tariff, comprehensive use of information technology and dedicated workforce ensures the provision of quality service to facilitate trade. Some of these services include pilotage, navigational services, cargo handling operations and other conservancy functions on a commercial basis. The new Port tariff discounted by 10 percent in 2004 ensures that charges are affordable so that it is translated into cheaper prices of goods and services in the economy.

In achieving the development objectives of the Port of Banjul in the medium term, a comprehensive study to update the GPA master plan has been completed in 2002. It is envisaged that the planned interventions would meet development needs of the Port and the maritime sub sector by the year 2020.

Constraints and Challenges

1. Lack of funds to fund GPA operation and infrastructural development projects.
2. Inadequate ground space for future expansion
3. Administrative weaknesses because of delays to establish a Maritime Administration as a regulatory, monitoring and safety enforcing body overseeing all matters relating to the Laws of the Sea, Shipping and other maritime matters. When established, it shall be the implementing and enforcing Agency of both Municipal maritime law and policies, and international maritime conventions and subsequent protocols to which The Gambia is a state party would be a grate challenge.

Port Master Plan

The proposed Port Master Plan covers the period 2003 to 2020. It contains the development plans and objectives of the Port of Banjul and road map to achieve it by 2020. The plan is based on the basic traffic forecast, estimating an average increase of 3.9 percent per annum. This traffic increase will result in bottlenecks in the yard and at the jetties of the Port. The GPA shall embark on implementation of infrastructure development projects aimed at making the port more competitive.

Priorities and Strategies for maritime transport

1. The role of Information Technology (IT) in the Authority is to supply and develop the technology architecture that would enable the Authority to meet its business and management information systems needs.
2. Ensure the provision of adequate cargo handling gear and equipment in order to maintain and improve cargo handling productivity.
3. With the projected increase in traffic through the port, the Authority can utilize Information Technology and its strategic opportunities to gain competitive advantage, improve productivity and performance and to develop new working practices
4. The operational strategy is to introduction of new packaging types with resultant changes in cargo handling technology, increase in vessels size and design as well as changes in maritime transport regulations.
5. Authority maintains and will continuously utilize modern investment appraisal techniques in appraising viability of projects
6. The GPA's financial strategy is to maintain the Authority as an independent, financial, viable, corporate body, whose charges accurately reflect the costs of the individual services, provided by self-sustained revenue cost centres. The Authority will also ensure that port charges remain at affordable rates and are comparable within the sub-region.

Projects / Interventions

1. Rehabilitation of North and South Terminal

The rehabilitation of the existing areas is primarily focussed on elevating the yard above the High Water Spring Level. To avoid future flooding, the surface level of the North and South Terminal will be increased by at least 0.6 meters as it has the potential to cause heavy losses to importers due to damage of cargo by seawater. Total cost is estimated at 13.50 million Euros.

2. Basic Yard Extension

Phase I:

There is an urgent need to create more space for storage of both containers and general cargo. In a bid to solve this problem, GPA has commenced the process of acquiring some properties in the neighbourhood of port premises. To this end, a Multi-Sectoral Task Force was set up in June 2004 to assist the GPA with the acquisition of the earmarked properties. The said Task Force has already appointed a Consultant who has already carried out a Detailed Survey and Valuation of each of the properties. The Consultant has submitted the Final Report and the actual acquisition process shall commence soon.

The end result of the acquisition process shall be the addition of a total open storage area of approximately 9,600 square meters to the existing North and South Terminals.

Phase II:

This phase of the yard extension comprises the re-designation of the Navy Yard and conversion of the area and a small strip of land measuring 1, 600m² north of it. It is required to connect the second access bridge to the Port and to gain some additional storage area for containers. Total cost of phase I & II is estimated at 12.00 million Euros.

3. Basic Jetty Extension

Phase I:

The existing New Jetty will be extended by 60 meters southward and 140m northward. This leads to a total jetty length of 500 m (300m existing + 200m extension). The northern part is a simple extension of the jetty without additional access facilities while the existing Ro/Ro ramp will be levelled with the rest of the jetty.

Phase II:

In order to provide sufficient quay length over the whole planning period, further extension of the jetty by 200 m northwards is necessary around 2017. This leads to a total quay length of 700 m. The extension will be complimented by the construction of an additional access bridge to cope with the expected traffic increase. Total cost of phase I & II is estimated at 36.50 million Euros.

4. Dredging of Entrance Channel:

As a complementary measure to increase the competitiveness of the Port of Banjul, the Entrance Channel shall be dredged to 10.5 below chart Datum to allow larger vessels access the Port. Dredging works shall follow the existing natural channel. The dredged channel shall be 18 kilometres long and 120 meters wide. Total cost is estimated at 6.70 million Euros.

5. Purchase of Tugboat:

To accommodate the anticipated increase in the number of vessels calling at the Port it will be necessary to purchase one Tug boat to compliment the existing one. Total cost is estimated at 3.5 million Euros.

Ferry Services

River transport is used primarily for movement of groundnuts and ferrying goods and passengers across the banks of the river Gambia. However, river transport is grossly under-utilised. It has the potential to be a viable alternative to road transport both for the movement of goods and passengers. Therefore, initiatives will be encouraged to make more use of the river. This will include investments in the construction of associated infrastructure, such as harbours and jetties along the river. River transport is an area where public- private partnerships will be explored.

Ferry transport plays a significant role in the socio economic development of the country. It serves as a critical component of the transport network by providing access and support to the social and economic interactions in The Gambia and to the neighbouring countries.

Ferry transport services have existed over six decades in The Gambia. Due to the need for improved managerial, technical, and operational efficiency, the Management of the ferries was transferred back to the Gambia Ports Authority on the 1st of July 2001. Since then, the management and operations of the ferries have undergone significant structural and operational development with a view to improve efficiency. The GPA has procured and commissioned 4 new ferries, overhauled some of the ferry engines, and introduced motorised engines to some of the provincial ferries. Significant investments have been made to upgrade the standards of the Banjul and Barra Terminals has recently commissioned the construction of a new administrative building and waiting lounge at the Banjul terminal. The GPA ferries operate at Banjul/Barra and 9 provincial stations, and provide significant importance in facilitating commercial and economic activities.

Ferries Projects and Medium term Plans:

Projects for the medium term include the following:

1. Building of new terminal building Trans-Gambia.
2. Operating a 24hrs ferry service with the acquisition of the three (3) new ferries from Ukraine.
3. Training of certificated Quartermasters from RMA to man all ferries countrywide as required by the new regulations.
4. Upgrading of provincial landing facilities
5. Rehabilitation and re-construction of Bamba Tenda and Yelli Tenda Ramps
6. Provision of two bollards at either end
7. Provision of breasting dolphin at each new ramp
8. Provision of lay-by berth at Bamba Tenda
9. Construction of Scour protection works for western bank of Bamba Tenda.

4.7.3 Air Transport

Transforming Banjul International Airport into a hub of regional and trans-oceanic air transport network is one of the fundamental visions of the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority. Considering the demographic size of the Gambia – a population of approximately 1.3 million people – the success of air transportation and viability of airlines depend a great deal on tapping the potential the West African region has to offer. Essentially the ‘hub and spoke’ will be configured in such a way that Banjul will become both a collection and distribution point for passengers and cargo moving between Africa, Europe and North America.

The realization of the hub and spoke depends on the introduction and development of key infrastructure particularly at Banjul International Airport and also improving regulatory capabilities especially in the area of safety oversight. Works relating to the expansion of the facilities at Banjul

International Airport (BIA) are ongoing. These include amongst other things the Airport Improvement Project (AIP), development of a Cargo terminal, upgrading the security facilities as well as building aircraft maintenance hangers to provide a range of services for aircraft maintenance and repairs.

It is projected that by December 2007, BIA will qualify for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Category I and also achieve full compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards and recommended practices and technical annexes. This will enable flights leaving BIA as their last point of departure to fly everywhere unrestricted. The baseline audit for the FAA has already been conducted while the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) comprehensive systems approach audit was completed by the close of 2005. Implementation of recommendations based on audit findings is on going.

Once the Category I status is achieved, other targets to develop a major regional carrier to be based at BIA connecting Banjul to all major cities in the West African sub-region will be established. Considering that The Gambia does not have the market to make this fully operational, sub-regional carrier will serve as feeders and distributors of passengers for the major and long haul carriers.

It is also planned that aircraft maintenance hangers will be built in accordance with Banjul International Airport master plan. The hangers will facilitate the provision of a range of services in aircraft maintenance and repairs. It should be noted that such facilities are very few on the continent and their existence plays a major role in the decision of major carriers in flying a particular route sector. The facilities will also come in handy for airlines within the sub-region for maintenance of their aircraft for which they are now using facilities as far away as Ethiopia, South Africa and beyond the continent.

With the construction of the free zone and July 22 Business Park, it is envisaged that cargo traffic through Banjul International Airport will increase greatly. BIA, therefore, plans to build a cargo terminal to cater for export processing and handling of cargo traffic.

The BIA improvement project could not have come at a better time in ensuring that all the stated objectives and targets are met. The overlay of the runway is currently under way and work is expected to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2007. This will be followed by the expansion of the aircraft parking apron, refurbishment and expansion of current terminal facilities.

5. DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SERVICES – Health and Education

Publicly provided social services play a significant role in poverty reduction, especially in rural areas where privately provided social services are rare because the poor can hardly afford the costs involved. Government will continue to deliver social services particularly health, education and water and sanitation services.

The Gambia is doing reasonably well in education services as the review in section 5.2 shows. However, education quality in primary schools is still a matter of concern. In health, the major challenge is availability of drugs in health facilities, in light of the high incidence of malaria. Regarding access to safe drinking water and sanitation, The Gambia has made significant achievements but there are serious challenges that threaten reversing what has been achieved already. For example, the functionality rate of boreholes and other water sources in rural areas is reported to be on a decline thus reversing the achievements the Government has already made.

Health

Available statistics indicate improvements in infant mortality rate from 137 per 1,000 live births in 1993 to 75 per 1,000 live births in 2005. Under-five mortality rate also decreased from 137 live births in 1993 to 99 per 1,000 live births in 2005. The improvement was mainly on account of significant achievements that have been registered with regard to immunisation services. DPT3 coverage was almost 90% in 2005. The country was declared polio-free in 2005. Malaria, diarrhoea, and respiratory infection are the major causes of infant mortality. Malnutrition is reported to contribute to infant and under-five mortality.

Malaria and Tuberculosis are still endemic and major killer diseases in the Gambia. Malaria is the leading cause of mortality particularly among children under the age of 5 years. Nationally, malaria causes about 4% of deaths in infants and 25% of deaths in children. Malaria is a major threat to pregnant women and children under five years old, while HIV/AIDS heightens the health challenge through opportunistic diseases.

In rural areas, malaria accounts for 105 deaths per 1,000 live births. 20% of all antenatal consultations and 40% of under-five visits to Maternal and Child Health clinics are due to malaria. Under the Abuja Declaration on the need to *Control/Rollback Malaria* in Africa, significant progress has been made in the fight against malaria including the mass treatment and re-treatment of mosquito nets with insecticide. A study carried out by the national Impregnated Bed Net Programme has shown that bed nets reduce malaria cases by about 63% when coverage is over 80%.

Since July 2001, Government has institutionalised environmental sanitation to encourage communities to clean their environment to eliminate mosquito-breeding sites. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and Social Mobilisation activities have also been intensified to create greater public awareness of malaria signs and symptoms and to seek prompt treatment as well as preventive measures to reduce malaria-related morbidity and mortality. Laboratory attendants and assistants have been trained and re-trained on accurate malaria diagnostic tests for improved delivery of curative services especially in major and minor health centres.

The overall access of the population to basic health services is generally good. However, there are some areas with comparatively low access. The detail statistics for the Gambia are shown in Table 19 below:

Table 23: Demographic and Health Indicators

| | 1973 | 1983 | 1993 | Latest |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Population size | 493,499 | 687,817 | 1,038,145 | 1,384,145 (2000) |
| Annual growth rate (%) | 3.4 | 3.4 | 4.2 | 3.5 |
| Urban population (%) | 15 | 18 | 26 | |
| Life expectancy (years) | | | | |
| Total: | 33 | 42 | 53 | 58 (1999) |
| Male | 32 | 40 | 52 | 58 (1999) |
| Female | 35 | 44 | 54 | 59 (1999) |
| Total Fertility rate | 6.1 | 6.4 | 6.1 | 5.1 (1999) |
| Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population) | 49 | 51 | 46 | N/A |
| Crude death rate (per 1,000 population) | 30 | 21.2 | 19 | N/A |
| Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) | 217 | 167 | 137 | 75 (1999) |
| Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000) | 320 | 260 | 137 | 75 (1999) |
| Population access to safe water (%) | N/A | 23 | 50 | 80 (2000) |
| Adult literacy (%) | N/A | 23 | 37 | 65 |

Source: DoSH, Public Expenditure Review, Health Sector Policy Analysis

5.1.1 Major Constraints

The major problems confronting the health sector include:

- Shortage of motivated and qualified personnel; there is a high attrition rate for qualified nursing personnel.
- Inequitable distribution and efficient utilisation of existing human resources.
- Limited financial resources to provide the much-needed drugs, other medical supplies, equipment, transport and fuel.
- Shortage of essential pharmaceuticals and vaccines.
- Inadequate capacity at the level of health sector.
- Inadequate managerial capacity to manage the health delivery system.
- The cost of meeting basic health care delivery services
- Problems of transportation which affects referral and service delivery

5.1.2 Challenges

- High incidence of malaria and tuberculosis; There is evidence that the malaria parasite is developing resistance to the first line of chloroquine based drugs.
- Containing the spread of HIV/AIDS prevalence. The overall goal is to stabilise and reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and provide treatment, care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS.
- High budgetary implications of ACT introduction as first line treatment. This requires more financial resources at a sustained level shortages are to be avoided.
- Inadequate facilities and services at the tertiary care level against the background of severe human resources shortages and dwindling essential drug supplies, coupled with increasing population and poverty levels, led to bottlenecks in managing the sector and its related budgetary problems.
- Sustainability of Health Management Information System (HMIS).
- High cost of operating the Reproductive and Child Health Programmes
- Training of the Artisans for Sanitary Facilities

5.1.3 Vision for the health sector

The long-term objective of the health sector in Vision 2020 is to provide adequate, effective and affordable health care for all Gambians. The objectives are to improve the administration and management of health services, provide better infrastructure for referral hospitals and health facilities and extend the primary healthcare (PHC) services to all communities.

The achievement of these objectives requires the availability of a well trained and motivated health personnel; establishment of efficient supply and logistics system to ensure effective and efficient health services for all; and improvement in ancillary services for the management of health data and enhancement of research into paramedical services such as traditional healing methods.

Similarly, the management of Basic Health Services will be strengthened with emphasis on the regulatory function of Department of State for Health and Social Welfare (DoSH & SW) with a view to improving the mechanism for effective governance of the health sector. Community supported health interventions such as the Bamako Initiative will be scaled up and extended to achieve a national coverage while others will be reviewed to make them more relevant. Priority will also be given to the recruitment of and training of additional health professionals particularly nurses, and allied health professionals.

5.1.4 Strategies and Priorities for the Health Sector

- Improving access to services, particularly for the poorly served areas;
- Improving access to and delivery of the Essential Care Package;
- Providing basic equipment for all levels of the health delivery system
- Ensuring an effective and efficient Referral System; and
- Putting in place a system of Standards and Norms for Health Facilities.
- Incorporating traditional medicine into the health service delivery system
- Ensuring an efficient and sustainable HMIS (Health Management Information System)
- Strengthening and upgrading the Health Education Unit (HEU)
- Changing from chloroquine-based malaria treatment to an Artemisinin Combination Therapy (ACT)
- Maintaining an effective disease surveillance system
- Maintaining the high levels of vaccination rates
- Formulation of a health financing policy
- Improving emergency obstetrics care (EOC)
- Involving men in reproductive health matters
- Formulating an emergency preparedness and response plan for the health sector

However, access is not the only priority. The quality of the services are equally or even more, important than actual access to the service. During the PRSP II period, Basic Health services will be managed in line with the Bamako Initiative (BI). The BI is an active partnership between the Government and communities, which are sensitised and motivated to change from passive recipients of services to active partners in their socio-economic development. They will also be empowered to take ownership of their health services (National Health Policy Framework: Changing for Good, 2001). Along with the BI is an increased emphasis on cost recovery to improve quality and sustainability of services.

- Availability of a well trained and motivated health personnel. The priority areas of the 2004 – 2008 Human Resources for Health (HRH) Strategic Plan will be implemented with focus on training, posting and transfer policies.

- Staff standards will be reviewed on the basis of essential health care packages and workload assessments.
- Long-term and comprehensive training plan developed and implemented to meet HRH requirements.
- The HRH database will be regularly maintained and updated.
- Establishment of efficient supply and logistics system to ensure effective and efficient health services to all

Health delivery system will be strengthened to support the HRH process:

- Improved management and operational capacity of the HRH Unit in the DPI.
- Improved managerial skills at Central divisional and health facility levels and coordination mechanism established.
- Maintain close links with Local Government Structures within the framework of the on-going decentralisation process with support provided to key staff (core team members) in each DHT in the areas of planning and training.
- HRH studies and health-related system research will be supported to obtain relevant data for evidence-based planning.
- Efforts will also be made to meet 50% of the required human resources for health needs by 2009 by providing support to education, training and skills development in line with national health priorities.
- Equitable distribution and efficient utilisation of existing human resources will be promoted through a number of interventions including:
 - The development of staff movement policies and guidelines
 - Emphasising gender balance in training and recruitment of health personnel.
 - Reorganisation of the administrative support services to ensure that health professionals are no longer deployed as administrators.
- Basic Health Services will be managed in line with the 'Bamako Initiative'. Along with the Bamako Initiative approach, there will be increased emphasis on cost recovery to improve quality and sustainability of services.
- Intensification in the fight against malaria by giving priority and emphasis to preventive and curative approaches. Environmental sanitation will also continue to be given emphasis through information, education and communication and social mobilisation activities.
- The on-going multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic including the Accelerated Results implementation strategy will be pursued vigorously and such a strategy will be incorporated into the primary health care delivery system.

5.2 Education

5.2.1 Overview

Over the years, the Government of The Gambia (GOTG) has adopted various policies that provide the main direction for the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) 2006 – 2015. In addition to the country's Vision 2020, The Millennium Development Goals; The EFA Action Plan; and The National Education Policy 2004 -2015 guide these policy decisions. The basic aims of the Education Policy are to:

5.2.2 Education Policy Framework

Overall, as outlined in the National Education Policy 2004-2015, the Gambian education system is premised on non-discriminatory and all-inclusive provision of education, underlining, in particular, gender equity and targeting the poor and the disadvantaged groups. It is grounded in the respect for the rights of the individual, cultural diversity, indigenous languages and knowledge; promotion of ethical norms and values and a culture of peace; and development of science and technology competencies for the desired quantum leap.⁴

The basic aims of the education policy are to:

- Promote a broad-based education at the basic level for life long learning and training
- Mainstream gender in the creation of opportunities for all to acquire literacy, livelihood skills and the utilization of these skills in order to earn a living and become economically self-reliant members of the community
- Develop the physical and mental skills which will contribute to nation building – economically, socially and culturally in a sustainable environment
- Encourage creativity and the development of a critical and analytical mind
- Further an understanding and appreciation of the contribution of science and technology to development
- Cultivate sound moral and ethical values in the development of life skills
- Develop a healthy body and an appreciation of the value of a healthy mind in response to life threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis
- Create an awareness of the importance of peace, democracy and human rights, duties and responsibilities of the individual in fostering these qualities
- Foster an appreciation of and respect for the cultural heritage of The Gambia
- Promote a sense of patriotism: service, loyalty, integrity and dedication to the nation and humanity.⁵

In view of vision 20/20, the Department of State for Education aims at:

- Providing access to relevant and high quality basic education for all
- Providing high quality education services
- Ensuring gender equity in education
- Providing relevant life skills
- Promoting the principle of life long learning.

5.2.3 Situational Analysis

Over the years, particularly from 1995 to date, The Gambia made tremendous success in expanding access to education. Significant gains were made across all levels of the school system. However, enrolment dropped in some areas for boys at the lower basic school level (Grades 1-6) as focus was

⁴ The Education Policy 2004 -2015, p 13

⁵ Ibid p 13

put mainly on girls' education. Access to upper basic education (i.e. grades 7-9) has also improved during the period, with an increase of about 25 points in the overall GER. Gender parity has been attained at the basic cycle level (i.e., Grades 1-9). At the senior secondary level, the overall GER has almost doubled, but the gender gap at that level is still significant.

Three major challenges facing the education sector include the following:

1. Provision of Quality Education
2. Retention of teachers and other personnel
3. Inadequate funding - both recurrent and development expenditure

5.2.4 Education Quality

Education quality problems revolve around three issues:

- Teacher training and support
- Pedagogy and teaching/learning materials in schools
- Leadership and management in schools including the participation of parents and the community.

Teacher training and support

- a) Low performance levels attained by the intake into Gambia College (GC), especially in mathematics and English.
- b) PTC (Primary Teacher Certificate) and HTC (Higher Teacher Certificate) programme content not aligned to the school curriculum.
- c) Inadequate teaching and learning materials, including library and research items, in Gambia College through which to encourage more effective teaching and of learning.
- d) Under staffing of the School of Education, thus undermining management effectiveness.
- e) Difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified academic staff at GC, partly related to low salaries, benefits and prospects but also attributable to insufficient training resources and capacity building opportunities
- f) Inadequate/ineffective supervision and support for student teachers on teaching practice
- g) Overcrowded classrooms rendering the learning environment at GC not conducive enough
- h) Under-staffed and underpowered In-Service Training (INSET) unit at GC.
- i) Absence of an effective system for regular upgrading and refreshment of teachers through INSET and support.

Pedagogy and inadequate teaching and learning materials in schools

Teaching of reading is inadequate. In Lower Basic Schools, insufficient supply of basic textbooks and supplementary readers, ill-equipped classroom environment, and a pedagogy that is based on rote learning adversely affect the ability of the learners to become literate.

Schools management and community participation

Overall, training and support for head teachers is not clearly defined and systematic, and this is compounded by a limited concept of school management, thereby inhibiting the effectiveness of schools.

Retention of teachers and other personnel

The labour market in the urban areas is such that salaries and benefits for teachers, staff of Tertiary Institutions' (TIs) and education managers are not attractive. Therefore, attrition is high. In rural

areas, inaccessibility to basic modern amenities including power and communications makes many schools and regional headquarters considered as areas of hardship to which many either refuse to go on postings or stay briefly. However, following the introduction of the hardship allowance in 2005, some teachers have applied for postings in hardship areas, thus reversing the trend.

5.2.4 Intervention Priority Areas

To facilitate effective implementation of the sector strategic plan six programme areas have been identified for which specific outputs and indicators have been developed. These are: Basic Education, Secondary Education, Tertiary Education, Technical and Vocational, Education and Training, Quality Assurance, and Sector Management.

Basic Education

The Basic Education programme area comprises three sub-programmes, namely:

- Early Childhood Development (ECD)
- Basic Education proper (grade 1-9)
- Adult and Non-formal Education (ANFE)

These three programmes are geared towards impacting the following indicators as follows:

- ECD GER increased by 50%;
- Increase by a minimum of 50% the number of LBS with ECD centres attached;
- More than 80% of students achieve grade level competence in all subjects;
- More than 20% of students achieve mastery level competence in all subjects;
- NER > 80%;
- GER > 100%;
- Completion rate > 95%;
- Double shift classes 32%;
- PTR 45: 1;
- Increase enrolment to Adult and Non-Formal Education (ANFE) by 50%; and
- Decrease the adult illiteracy rate by 50%.

At the basic education level, PRSP II will focus on ensuring:

- A school environment conducive for teaching and learning
- Improved quality of teaching
- Increased learning opportunities in Basic Education
- Adequate quality and quantity of teaching and learning materials
- Relevant and up to date curriculum available
- Children adequately prepared for teaching and learning
- Improved management of schools
- Access to Adult and non-formal education

Secondary education

The main objective of tertiary education is improved access to and delivery of relevant secondary education. Under PRSP II a completion rate target of 95% has been set. The following are planned interventions for tertiary education:

- Improved availability and quality of teaching and learning materials and facilities
- Gender parity achieved in Secondary education
- Improved access to secondary education

- Improved quality of teaching and learning in secondary education
- Improved management of secondary schools
- Improved conditions of service for teachers in secondary schools

Tertiary education

The interventions planned for tertiary education are aimed at providing expanded and quality programmes for Gambians through an integrated system of tertiary education that will train more Gambians in more academic and professional disciplines. The following are key targets for the tertiary education sub-sector:

- 10,000 additional Gambian teachers by 2015 , comprising 6297 Primary Teacher Certificate holders, 2095 Higher Teacher Certificate graduates, 616 B.Ed., and 992 holders of academic degrees;
- Gender parity in enrolment and completion across all programmes;
- Certificate-, diploma- and degree-level programmes offered at tertiary institutions;
- Degree programmes offered at GTTI, MDI, GC and UTG campuses under the integrated system accredited by the proposed Higher Education Observatory.

To achieve the above targets, the following interventions are planned for tertiary education:

- Adherence to standards of professionalism by both staff and students
- Improved management in all tertiary institutions
- Highly qualified and motivated academic staff
- Improved Tertiary education facilities
- Effective financial planning and management
- Improved relevant quality education in Tertiary Institutions
- Improved access to tertiary education

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

The purpose of the TVET programme is to improve access to, and quality of, Technical and Vocational Education and Training in The Gambia. PRSP II targets for TVET are as follows:

- TVET institutions increased by 50%;
- Number of skills development centres in rural areas increased (target of >2 centres);
- System of Prior Learning accreditation approved;
- LMIS established;
- Mechanical & engineering laboratories established;
- Approved syllabi established;
- TVET affordable to 90% of all eligible trainees;
- 50% increase in the number of differently abled people in TVET;
- 75% retention rate in TVET system;
- Gender parity achieved in TVET;
- At least 75% of the total expected levy is collected; and
- Functional Gambia National Vocational Qualification framework established.

To achieve the above targets in TVET, the following interventions will be undertaken

- Improve access to TVET
- Increase relevance of TVET
- Improve quality of TVET
- Improved sector management in TVET

- Predictable and Adequate Funding of TVET
- Prepare Functional Policy and Strategic Framework

Education quality assurance and Sector Mngement

The interventions planned under the education quality assurance programme area aim at achieving improved learning outcomes such that by 2015 more than 90% of students in basic and secondary schools achieve grade level competence. The following interventions are planned to make that possible:

- Effective and efficient school management
- Improved quality of teaching and learning
- Availability of adequate, relevant teaching and learning materials in all schools.
- Improved quality and quantity infrastructure in all schools
- Access to quality schooling of all levels in all regions ensured

5.3 Water and Sanitation

Access to safe water and adequate sanitation is critical for basic survival. The UNDP HDR documents indicate that 62 percent of households in The Gambia have sustainable access to an improved water source although access to sanitation is much lower. Water supply in the Greater Banjul Area has declined compared to demand, and the water demand/recharge ratio is projected to surpass the 1.1 threshold by year 2020. There is a need for major public investment in the water supply and sanitation infrastructure in the Greater Banjul Area and in growth centres such as Farafenni, in order to increase access, satisfy demand and improve quality.

5.3.1 Water

Main Objectives

The main objective of the PRSP II as it relates to water resources sub-sector is to meet national, regional and international development targets and indicative global water security targets through the provision of adequate and good quality water for domestic and industrial uses and for agricultural and livestock production purposes. During the plan period about 100% of the Greater Banjul population and 90% of the population of the peri-urban, growth centres and rural areas of the country should have convenient access to safe water.

Investment in irrigation using groundwater resources should be promoted, encouraged and exploited. This will help produce and ensure access to more food, and create more sustainable livelihoods for the population per unit of water used.

Through the appropriate intervention in water resources under PRSP II it will be possible to empower communities, particularly women and children to decide on the level of access to safe water and hygienic living conditions. Their skills will also be developed to manage human water use and conserve the quantity and quality of fresh water.

Sector priorities

The strategic approach in the Water Resources sector as indicated in PRSP II will be action oriented and will stress on meeting the urgent needs of water, strengthening the technical, institutional and financial base of the sector and strengthening governance of water resources. The following are important to this broad strategic approach.

- The National Water Resources Policy, Strategy and Act should be fully operational to ensure integrated water resources management and also meet national and international targets in the water resources sector;
- The Water Resources sector should be elevated as a high priority sector in PRSP II
- With the operationalisation of the Decentralization Policy most of the current mandate of the Department of Water Resources should be taken over by the Local Government Authorities..
- The financial, human resources and infrastructure capacities of the Department of Water Resources, NAWEC, the Local Government Authorities, PURA and the Private Sector institutions involved in the water sector should be built to effectively and efficiently perform their respective mandates and roles without undue conflict and duplication.
- The management capacity of the Water Committees of the communities would be enhanced to ensure responsible, effective and efficient management of the water facilities.
- NAWEC in collaboration with other national and international partners should expand coverage of water-supply and sanitation services in the peri-urban, urban areas and the growth centres through the development of water supply infrastructures and enhancing management of the services by:
 - Initiating gradual transition from current NAWEC system of water bills paid by area councils to consumption based payment by consumers.
 - Increasing household connections and decreasing street taps or public standpipes
 - Institutionalising and effective and efficient monitoring and response system
- Improve aquifer recharge through larger water catchments, crop vegetation to slow down rainfall run-off and artificial dams to capture rainwater en route to the sea to allow precipitation.
- Enhance the implementation rate of existing projects and programmes and those in the pipeline;
- Formulate National Water legislation and Master Plan.

5.3.2 Sanitation

Infrastructure for solid waste management is also inadequate. Through the Poverty Alleviation & Capacity Building Project implemented by GAMWORKS, Bakoteh Dumpsite will be re-engineered into a more environmentally friendly landfill site. However, there is need for investment in the heavy equipment necessary for the management of the dumpsite. Furthermore, Bakoteh is a short-term solution, as it is supposed to be closed in 3 years time. Work on a new landfill site needs to be started as soon as possible. In this regard, the Louis Berger Report on Waste Management in the Greater Banjul Area, which includes the feasibility studies on a landfill site at Tambana, is relevant.

6. LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALISATION

6.1 *Situational of Local Governance in the Gambia*

The Gambia adopted a policy on the decentralization of the local government system in response to sections 193 and 194 of the constitution of the Republic of the Gambia (1997). The constitution provides for local government spheres, running along side the central government. Section 193 (1) says: Local Government Administration in the Gambia shall be based on a system of democratically elected councils with a high degree of local autonomy. Section 194(1) empowers the National Assembly to define functions, powers and duties of local government authorities. The constitution prescribes organic roles and functions for local government authorities in accordance with the rule of law, and it provides directives for the identification, devolution and implementation of competences from central to local government territories. Further more section 214 (3) dealing with the directive of principles of state policy: The state shall be guided by the principle of decentralisation and devolution of government functions and powers to the people at appropriate levels of control to facilitate democratic governance.

With the constitutional provisions above, the directives provided in Vision 2020, the promulgation of the Local Government Act in April 2002, local government elections which were held in the same month, and the reconstitution of democratic local government authorities, The Gambia has now established a common arrangement for the viability of decentralization. The Local Government Act 2002 establishes a new local government system based on decentralization. This provides the legal framework for the regulation and implementation of the new local government system, the main frame for good local governance, and the enabling environment for poverty alleviation in the Gambia.

Current local government legislation in the Gambia provides for the self-administration of local governments by elected councils. The Local Government Act 2002 prescribes that local governments are responsible for the economic, social, and cultural development of the population and territories they administer. The constitution defines the distribution of competences and resources between central and local governments integrating local governments effectively into the system of governance. As a result of decentralization the responsibilities of local government authorities have become important, diversified and complex. The councils are expected to fulfil the government mission of continuity, presence and proximity and are also expected to handle the consolidation of the necessary spatial and institutional environment for the actions of economic operators. The councils are responsible for equal rights to health and sanitation, education, and other basic services. In their organization and operation, councils are representatives of the people of the Gambia and they represent a concrete expression to the wholesomeness of democratic institutions.

The Local Government Act 2002 prescribes general competence for councils and the roles they shall play in their territories in economic and social matters but it is the departments of state that set up the sector based policies, including the levels of allocation of resources and competences. In concrete terms, the elaboration of these public sector policies and the allocation of the required competences need to take into account the already granted or acknowledged competences of the councils in the same fields according to law. This is an overlap between the maps of competences in the areas of sector-based policies between the local level and the de-concentrated structures of line departments of state. In health, education and agriculture, water resources, road infrastructure, and forestry for instance, the powers of councils do not seem to be acknowledged and they exert little or no influence in the definition of policy in these areas.

For the implementation of decentralization, arrangements have been made to establish/strengthen Multi Disciplinary Facilitation Teams (MDFTs) as field extension resources to set-up Divisional Development Fund, Local Government Pension scheme, Local Government Service Commissions, Local Government Service Scheme, and develop Local Government Communication Strategy. Transfer of competences from central government to local governments has occurred in Education, Agriculture, Health, Water Resources, Roads, Decentralised Planning, Fiscal Decentralisation, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

6.1.1 Current constraints/ challenges

Translating broad policy and the enabling legislation into practical results on the ground is a major challenge now facing the decentralization process. An important legislation, the Local Government Finance and Audit Act (F&A Act 2004) prescribes the financial powers and responsibilities of councils but the implication of the prescribed authority for the transfer of financial affairs to the councils from central government is not fully understood. To help the transition proceed smoothly, much of the enabling legislation needs to be converted from general principles into more precise guidelines that are understood by all stakeholders. As a first step, the administrative procedures for the implementation of the provisions of the Finance and Audit Act (e.g., budget approval, government subventions, personnel management and pensions) will need to be clarified and defined.

Some of the legislative policies and institutional arrangements prescribed in LG Act 2002 and the Local Government Finance and Audit Act 2004 as outlined above, still remain to be fully defined, established and operational. In the context of the provisions on Planning and Development, Multi-disciplinary Facilitation Teams (MDFTs) were proposed as an out reach strategy for mobilizing and guiding extension resources at Ward and Village levels. They have been given an important role in the training of the Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Ward Development Committees (WDCs) in the participatory planning and development process. The MDFT policy however needs to be consistent with the human and financial resources base of councils. Presently, without a firm decision on the transfer of competences it is not clear how the required funding for the implementation of the MDFT Policy would be realized. There is a need to have developmental plans at both councils and Ward/Village which is jeopardised by the absence of Planning Department in some of the LGAs. The establishment of such institution at the respective LGAs will guide planning processes.

The Personnel Management Office manages government personnel centrally. But the Act provides for each LGA to constitute its own Service Commission to recruit staff and set its own pay scales. Pensions will also now pass to the LGAs. Again, under the current government scheme, these are managed centrally and paid out of the current budget (rather than from a pension fund). But the LGAs will be autonomous, and therefore responsible for the pensions of its own staff. Several concrete issues such as how this will cater for staff mobility (as people move between councils)? Whether an LGA can realistically be expected to manage a pension fund as proposed in the subsidiary legislation will most certainly emerge. The draft Service Scheme for the council staff needs to be adopted and clarification provided on Staff Status.

Secondly, the hand over of authority to local governments is being implemented in an environment characterized by low levels of human and financial resources (the LGAs are already facing huge budget deficits) and with little experience to guide decision makers. The loss of revenue and inefficient revenue collections and management at the council level has emerged as concerns that need to be addressed.

In particular the transfer of full responsibility for financial management is going to strain local capacity, and they need to be prepared. The Country Financial Accountability Assessment has highlighted management problems at LGA level: unrealistic budgeting, cash based transactions, delays in the preparation of accounts etc. For the Councils to be able to achieve an acceptable level of accountability and transparency, they will have to tackle these issues. However, in conformity with its statutory role as the supervisor, the DoSLG&L will have to assist by establishing the accounting policies and procedures to guide the LGAs.

An accounting manual has been developed, but the CFAA indicates that it will need revisiting to make it conform to accepted international standards. Also in addition, a more comprehensive set of guidelines, setting out the accounting policy and establishing and explaining the various legal and procedural steps would serve to guide the Councils and ensure some degree of conformity across the different LGAs. This will facilitate the DOSLG&L in its supervisory role, as well as improve operational efficiency and effectiveness at the periphery.

The transfer of financial control also implies the handing over of assets and liabilities. This will require a verifiable statement of accounts to be produced for each Council at a given date. As a first step it will be necessary to draw up an inventory of fixed assets.

The Act sets out a Financial Advisory Body to regulate and oversee the LGAs. This is located in DOSLGL, but to date no progress has been made in its constitution or defining the precise nature and form of its responsibilities.

The Act prescribes the councils as the Planning and Development Authorities in their jurisdiction establishment of local government framework for poverty reduction, there are 114 wards in total and out of these 90 are found in the rural areas. Wards in the urban areas are facilitated unlike those in the rural areas. There is a need to provide rural wards the necessary infrastructures and service centres such as feeder roads, markets schools and health centres, electricity, water to name a few. The councils are also faced with communication barriers within themselves due to lack of certain amenities like good roads, electricity, and water and transport facilities.

The Department of Community Development (DCD) has a long history as a leading government agency in integrated rural development and it has in the years spearheaded several local development strategies and approaches. Based on its accumulated capacity and experience, the potential role of this department in decentralized planning and development cannot be neglected. As a matter of urgency, a strategy needs to be developed for the restructuring of this department, involving a decision on its new role in a decentralized context (e.g. policy, research, training and oversight) and the transfer of divisional staff (and projects) to Area Council management. A management consultant with experience in institutional development and exposure is required to undertake this task.

The Directorate of governance the focal point for decentralization in the Gambia needs strengthening and upgrading into a fully-fledged Decentralisation Secretariat to enable it respond adequately to the role assigned to it. Institutional and Human Resources Capacity Building are greatly needed. The Secretariat will continue the work of the Directorate in representing the Department of State in its role in decentralization. Specifically, it will implement the decentralization project: Supervise, Monitor and Coordinate the process at the national level, the recruitment of consultants, Analysis of the various studies, the Administration, Procurement, Accounting and Reporting of subprojects.

The following strategies have been proposed in response to the challenges mentioned above: The establishment/adoption of a local government policy based on decentralization, establishment of a decentralization Secretariat, programs on Local Growth Centre Development, Local Government Capacity Building, Local Government Sensitization and Public Engagement, Local Government Research and Development, Gender and Local Governance, Local Government Planning and

Development, Transfer of Competences to Local Government Authorities, Fiscal decentralization and Local Government Financial Management.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

Decentralisation is a gradual and on-going process. Therefore the decentralized local government structure needs to be adopted in the immediate and short term to allow for the gradual growth of a fundamental change of perception, which is required for the successful implementation of the whole process. It should also afford the local authorities the time to build capabilities at district, ward and village levels so that they would serve as real partners in development. Such an approach should have a less radical and potentially less unpredictable impact. Objectives for the next five years are:

- ❑ To consolidate and reinforce constitutional democracy by strengthening institutional capacity for protecting and implementing constitutional provisions and creating greater public awareness of constitutional rights and responsibilities.
- ❑ To strengthen capacity for election administration
- ❑ To create conducive working environment (basic infrastructure)
- ❑ To finalize/adopt service scheme for LGAs
- ❑ To finalize/adopt draft pension bill
- ❑ To finalize the constitution of Local Government Service Commission
- ❑ To establish planning departments in all the LGAs
- ❑ Policy for sustenance of VDC /WDC / MDFTs (Multidisciplinary Facilitation Team)
- ❑ Capacity building in Financial Management, Admin Procedures, IT support, personnel and proper accounting systems
- ❑ Human Resource Development
- ❑ Create focal points for DLGRs in sectoral Departments of State

Strategies

- ❑ To adopt a policy document on decentralisation
- ❑ Decentralized Planning to be operational in all LGAs
- ❑ Creation of Civil Society Network (platform) for people at grass root level to be fully engaged in the implementation of their local development plans.
- ❑ The draft pensions scheme for LGAs to be adopted
- ❑ Creation of focal points for DLGR in sectoral Departments of State
- ❑ Creation and finalization of the recommendations of the composition of the Local Government Service Commission
- ❑ Creation of Local Government Growth Centers

Considering the fast growing population of the country, a rapid and effective physical and human development process can immensely stimulate production. Due to the deficiency in facilities and services coupled with insufficient employment opportunities, Rural-Urban Drift has become so intense that it has resulted in the loss of about 65% of the productive capacity of the rural population to the urban areas. Major and Minor public works, design and supervision of basic facilities in health, education, water supply and sanitation including boreholes, solar pumps and electrification, public health facilities, waste management systems, animal drinking points, feeder roads, drainages systems, secondary bridges, income generating facilities, council buildings, skills development centers, Provision of essential services at village, Ward and Council levels are prerequisites for sustainable development.

The physical structures will be adequately planned and well constructed not only to enhance the quality of the built environment but also to address the economic and socio-cultural aspirations of the population. In order to boost the image of these areas and create more dynamism, centers will be

created within the wards to incorporate facilities and services. The access roads to these centers should allow for a fluid circulation and easy identification of the different areas.

- ❑ Creation of a documentation center within the DDLG, DOSLG- will enhance the storage and management of data on decentralisation in The Gambia
- ❑ Need for more community sensitization on the Local Government Act 2002 and the Finance & Audit 2004
- ❑ Decentralized Planning offers a mechanism for linking integrated locally formulated plans with the national PIP/PEP. It does not replace the latter. Rather it is considered as a strategic consultative forum, leading to the formation of economic management instruments and goals. It links national planning processes with the maximum participation local communities and stakeholders, vetted by Multi Disciplinary Facilitation Teams and approved by the relevant committees after being reviewed by the TAC and endorsed by council. This process would allow government to harness and direct council activities and development efforts without becoming involved in the day-to-day decision-making processes. It would empower Area Councils and reenergize the Area Administrators Offices effectively. It would sanction local authorities to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their own development trajectories. In this process the capacities of the VDCs, WDCs, CBOs, Councils, the Directorate of Governance at the Department of State for local government and Lands and other planning and implementing institutions will be strengthened for wider participation

PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. Preparation and adoption of a Policy Document on decentralisation
2. Adoption / creation of The Local Government Service Commission
3. Resource Mobilization for the Directorate of Local Governance for coordination of the decentralisation process in The Gambia
4. Establishment of Growth Centers in each local government area (ward)
5. To take account of gender disparities in the decentralisation process in all the structures within the current governance of The Gambia
6. Draft Pension Scheme for each LGA to be adopted
7. Creation of Focal Points for DLGRs in the sectoral Departments of State
8. Resource Mobilization for the LGAs to enable them to sustain the challenges of the decentralized system of local governments.
9. Capacity Building at both the Directorate of Local Governance (center) and the Local Government Authorities
10. Felt need for basic equipment for both the Center (D-DLG) and LGAs
11. Adequate funding for sensitization of Councillors/Mayors on both the Local Government Act 2002 and The Finance & Audit Act 2004.

7. CROSS CUTTING ISSUES – GENDER; HIV/AIDS; AND ENVIRONMENT

7.1 Gender

Situation

The realization of gender equality requires empowerment of the most affected (women and girls) and mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all sectors by all actors in the development process. However gender inequalities amongst women and men are still high in the Gambia despite many interventions. This persistent gap between men and women is largely due to inadequate capacity amongst sector Policy makers and planners, local government authorities, NGOs and women leaders to conduct gender analysis as well as coordinate effective advocacy, sensitization, monitoring and evaluation of interventions. Furthermore it requires commitment by all to eliminate systematic socio-cultural and discriminatory practices against women and girls.

7.1.1 Institutional framework and mechanism

The Women's Bureau and National Women's Council (NWC) was established in 1980 by an Act of Parliament in the Gambia after the 1975 conference on women. The Bureau serves as the secretariat to the NWC and is the national assembly for women and advises government on all matters concerning women and gender. The Bureau, serves as the support base to the NWC and Gender Focal Points and is mandated to gather and disseminate information, and ensure that gender is mainstreamed and institutionalized at all levels by way of training, sensitization and advocacy.

A Department of State for Women's Affairs responsible for providing policy guidance to Government and stakeholders on gender issues and women was created in 1996, under the Office of the Vice President, who is the Secretary of State.

Gender Focal Points have been established in all line Departments of State, key Funding Agents, NGOs and the private sector with the objective of ensuring effective mainstreaming of gender perspectives at all levels and all processes.

The National Women's Policy (1999-2009) was formulated to serve as a point of reference for all stakeholders in addressing the needs of women and men in the Gambia in terms of participation, access and ownership (where applicable) for the attainment of sustainable development.

7.1.2 Mainstream Gender in sector policies, programmes and projects

Policy Framework

The National Women's Policy although not a gender policy, incorporates gender perspective. As part of the Mid-term review of the Women's Policy funded by UNDP and the ADB Community Skills Improvement Project consultation is being made with stakeholder on formulation of a Gender Policy.

In 2003 a strategic plan was developed by the Women's Bureau with stakeholder yet still proper funding remains a challenge. Sector strategic plans and indicators to guide implementation were not properly developed and monitored. Most of the Gender Focal Points do not have adequate decision

making capacity and those with decision-making powers lack the necessary skills to mainstreaming gender perspective in to their daily activities. Regular reporting and meetings are not held properly due to lack of financial capacity and effective monitoring and evaluation framework with the Women's Bureau.

The implementation of the National Women's Policy so far has been through partner funding of specific activities although the Policy was not widely disseminated thus it suffers from lack of ownership by stakeholders. The major funding of the implementation of this policy was from DFID, who funded a (mainstreaming of Gender and Poverty Project). The project was a three-year pilot project and supported the establishment of a documentation centre at the Women's Bureau, formation of the gender Focal Points networks and Build their capacities through training and study. A work plan was developed but funding became a problem.

Apart from this funding gap the policy is outdated; for example, enrolment of boys and girls currently exceeds the set target in the policy. Furthermore, the Policy is silent on HIV/AIDS despite the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS. Governance and ICT are emerging concepts and tools that accelerate development yet still strategies optimizing their use by women and men are not clearly defined in the policy.

Unavailability of comprehensive sex disaggregated data that is properly maintained and published is a challenge to effective mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all policies and programmes. Very few statisticians have capacity to include gender perspectives in national surveys and census. The Women's Bureau research unit has no qualified staff for the past five years. As a result a national study on Gender and Women Empowerment is on going funded by UNFPA. The data analysis of which will be completed this year and it is planned that other relevant data relating to all sectors of the PRSP will be compiled by 2007 and an information management system develop and maintained well for use by all stakeholders.

In summary effective implementation is challenged by lack of adequate capacity (financial, human and material) within the Women's Bureau (national and divisional), National Women's Council and amongst major stakeholders.

7.1.3 Women empowerment

Situational analysis

As stated previously in the document, poverty is much higher among female-headed households where over 60% of them are poor. Likewise per capita living standards are lower in female-headed households. Investing in women economic empowerment, ensuring their legal and property rights protection and participation in the socioeconomic development with a strong voice in all sectors of society would contribute immensely to poverty reduction.

Illiteracy is higher amongst women. Girl's education and training of women has received much intervention in the past 10 years yet still a lot needs to be done. Women access to health services is still limited, early marriage and gender based violence further challenge the advancement of women and girls. Although opportunities for women in political decision making processes have improved in recent years, women continue to be severely under represented at all levels. The Women in Development Project (financed by the World Bank) contributed to the elimination of socio-cultural and traditional barriers to women and girls advancement through the information education and communication and advocacy. Information dissemination was facilitated through the establishment of village video halls and community radio stations. The other components of the project included

skills improvement, Adult Literacy and agricultural development. Although the shortcoming of the project was that the approach was women in development and not gender and development.

Lack of adequate gender disaggregated data in all sectors prevents development planners from adequately addressing the needs of women. The PRSP documents have been limited by the absence of adequate data (particularly gender disaggregated data). Availability and use of statistical data is limited amongst major stakeholders.

Thus women lack skills, capital, access to markets opportunities and ownership of land due to deeply inherent socio-cultural and traditional barriers. The consequence of these constraints (education, health income, voice and adequate legal rights) is to prevent the effective participation of women in national development.

Education and training

Over the year's enrolment, retention and quality education for girls and boys has improved a lot although more needs to be done. Gender parity targets for secondary and tertiary levels are yet to be achieved. Quality education for girls remains a challenge due to many factors key among which are heavy workload and early marriage within some communities. Literacy for women in the Gambia is only 37% compared to 60% for men and 46% nationally.

Women participation in politics

Although women were 55% of the 2001 electorate, they occupied only 10% of the National Assembly. This fell far short of the UN recommended figure of 50 %. The present figure also falls far behind the recommended 30% as the next level in accordance with International Standards. In a Cabinet of 15 (excluding the President), there were four women Secretaries of State as of 2006. In Local Government administration, all eight Administrative Areas are headed by men, and of the 147 Area Councillors in the Local Government Areas (LGAs), only 14 are women. There are no women district chiefs and of the 1,873 villages in the country, only 4 have women Alkalos, thus women are not adequately represented in decision making at both local and national levels. The few women who find themselves in either national or local decision making processes (ward and village development committees) find it difficult to effectively contribute and influence decision making in a male dominated system, mainly due to illiteracy and cultural and traditional barriers.

Women's rights, peace and security

The majority of Gambian women are not familiar with the Constitution and other Laws nor do they know how to access legal aid. Most Law enforcement agents do not have the necessary capacity to handle gender-based violence; instead they further subject the victims to more harassment resulting in women not reporting cases. Data on these issues are also not adequately kept and shared among stakeholders for necessary interventions. Some of the current laws do not adequately address women issues and concerns. To fill the gaps, there is need review the laws with a view to formulating a women's bill.

The majority of Gambian women face Gender based violence both at the work place and in the home. A Women's Peace Building Network does exist at national level and mediation centres are built in three divisions all of whom needs capacity building to effectively functioning in resolving conflict and participation in peace negotiations.

Although the Gambia has enjoyed peace and stability, many women refugees fleeing conflicts in neighbouring states are currently living in the Gambia. Many are not employed and are therefore

vulnerable to poverty. In recent years, natural disasters such as floods, droughts and fire, have also contributed to insecurity. Although both men and women are affected, women and children tend to suffer the most. For example household work routinely conducted by females becomes much more tedious due to the loss of many tools and materials. Many children do not go to school and important items such as money, food, clothing, and books are lost with little chance of their being replaced.

7.1.4 Planned Interventions

The objective of the planned interventions is to mainstream gender in all policies, programmes, projects, and activities at all levels and ensure empowerment of women. From the perspective of gender mainstreaming, PRSP II will focus on:

1. Creating an enabling Policy framework including proper gender analysis and provision of adequate gender statistics and budgets.
2. Building the capacity of stakeholder to effectively mainstream gender (training, material and human resources).
3. Creating awareness on challenges to gender equality and its impact to both men and women.
4. Advocating for the formulation of favourable gender policies and development of gender sensitive strategies and provision of adequate budget and human capital.

Regarding women empowerment, PRSP II will focus on:

1. Improving women and girls employable skills and opportunities through education by ensuring parity at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
 - a. Promote increase enrolment, quality and survival at all levels of education and training (primary, secondary, and tertiary).
 - b. Improve on the adult literacy intervention and reduce women's drudgery to relieve of from the work enabling them quality time for training and learning.
2. Improving women and girls entrepreneurial skills and opportunities in all productive sectors by
 - a. Providing livelihood, entrepreneurial and leadership skills to all categories of women including refugee women.
 - b. Promoting access and provide capital to micro, small and medium scale business women.
 - c. Providing an enabling environment for increase agricultural and fisheries production and productivity.
 - d. Providing community market outlets, preservation and storage
 - e. Providing women with labour saving devices, support to land development and rehabilitation of community vegetable gardens.
 - f. Advocating and sensitize policy maker in agriculture for women access to and use of extension services, ownership of land as well build their capacity for commercial production and marketing.
 - g. Supporting women participation in national and international trade fairs and conferences related to trade and industrial development.
3. Providing laws that will effectively protect women's rights through:

- a. Promoting peace and security as well as building the capacity of the law enforcement agents to properly manage and prevent gender based violence and administer women related cases properly.
 - b. Promoting women health and access to health services and control over their reproductive rights.
 - c. Advocating and sensitizing all stakeholders to effective of high maternal and child mortality as well as the effects of malnutrition and HIV/AIDS amongst women, girls and children.
 - d. Ensuring that policies on gender and HIV/AIDS are adequate for the protection of women. Ensuring adequate budgets for prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS.
 - e. Removal of all forms of Stigma, discrimination and denial amongst all stakeholders.
 - f. Effective implementation of international commitment to women and HIV/AIDS. These continue to pose some challenges in spite of the relatively good knowledge about HIV/AIDS.
4. Mobilize resources for gender and women empowerment interventions.
 5. Proper coordination and monitoring and evaluation of the women and gender related programmes.

7.2 HIV/AIDS

The Gambia has a relatively low HIV sero-prevalence rate, with the HIV-1 infection rate estimated at 1.1% in 2004 compared to 0.6% in 1993/95. From all indications, the prevalence rate seems to be decreasing. However, this does not give much room for complacency. There is still the need for continued aggressive preventive and curative programmes to maintain a desirable level. The control and reversal of the HIV/AIDS in The Gambia is quite important as the reverse has serious implications for a country with an estimated total population of 1.4 million of which 50% are between the ages of 15 and 49.

The overall goal is to stabilise and reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and provide treatment, care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS. The growth in the pandemic suggests that if the trends continue, The Gambia is likely to miss the MDG target on HIV/AIDS, which is to stop and reverse the spread of the disease. However, The Gambia has already taken measures on which PRSP II will build. There is an on-going HIV/AIDS awareness campaign, and increased use of condoms.

Being partly a medical matter, the fight against HIV/AIDS faces the broader challenges facing the health sector particularly availability of drugs and retention of health workers. PRSP II will to the extent possible focus on addressing those concerns.

Major Challenges

- Co-ordination: Weak coordination between stakeholders, including donors, and duplication of efforts without consultation with the relevant coordinating authority
- Capacity: According to a situation analysis report on human resources for health, there is inadequate human resource capacity due to the high attrition rate of mainly nurses and other professional health personnel.
- Limited data on specific groups: Unavailability of data on behavioural and biological characteristics of high-risk groups such as sex workers, uniformed personnel, long distance truck drivers and fisher folks.

Priority Actions

- Legalise the existence of NAS by an act endorsed by the Parliament to give it a more official recognition as the coordinating body for the National Response against HIV/AIDS;
- Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into all poverty reduction and other national developmental programs and strategies;
- Cross border issues on HIV/AIDS to be addressed through sub-regional initiatives (Health for Peace Initiatives)
- Promote accelerated training of nurses and doctors; create a conducive working environment and incentive package.
- Improve on data availability through research and continuous updates
- Sustaining the national response: In order to continue and sustain the fight against HIV/AIDS in The Gambia, there is the need for the creation of a budget line for the NAS by the government and to ensure adequate funding for the secretariat to implement its plans and programs.
- Access to services: Lack of access to HIV/AIDS programs and services, e.g. VCT especially in rural areas can hinder the national scaling up efforts.
- Closing the gap between knowledge and behaviour
- Stigma, discrimination and denial: These continue to pose some challenges in spite of the relatively good knowledge on HIV/AIDS
- Technical assistance on research, data collection, analysis and reporting
- Acquiring data on behavioural and biological indicators among most-at-risk groups
- Assistance in the area of human resource development and retention

Environment

Increased economic growth will require further exploitation of the country's natural resources. The mission statement of the National Vision 2020 seeks to guarantee a well-balanced ecosystem and a decent standard of living for one and all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry. The related long-term objective is to conserve and promote the rational use of the nation's natural resources consistent with the overall goal of sustainable development. This will be achieved within the context of the Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP) designed with an inter-sectoral institutional and legal framework and a holistic approach. Action will be led by the NEA and directed by the National Environment Management Council (NEMC) but subject to continuous review and improvement. This is to ensure that GEAP action is consistent with the expected increase in investment and exploitation of natural resources and incorporation of environmentally benign technologies to generate accelerated economic growth. The elaboration of an inter-sectoral and community based disaster preparedness plan is also one of the principal challenges identified in the National Vision 2020.

GEAP I was implemented between 1993 and 1998 with a view to restoring and maintaining ecological processes resulting from degradation. Prior to the formulation of the GEAP, the Government took decisive but piecemeal action to protect the environment such as the Banjul Declaration of 1977, the creation of the Environment Unit in 1981 and the formulation of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) in 1987. GEAP I established the legal and regulatory framework for environmental management. The Action Plan aims to strengthen national capacity to enforce the provisions of the Conventions on Desertification Control, Climate Change, Biodiversity, the Basel and Bamako Convention on Hazardous Waste, the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer.

7.3.1 Weaknesses in Environmental Protection

Despite some modest successes, there are a number of serious weaknesses in the environmental protection regime. There is scanty data on the different aspects of environment and natural resources management that limits planning and implementation of intervention of sector interventions. This also makes community sensitization and information dissemination to the public problematic. The inadequacy of information and its management culminates in limited awareness and even results in low sensitization and poor public attitudes towards protection of the environment and management of natural resources, in a sustainable matter.

A number of agencies including the Department of Parks and Wildlife, the National Environment Agency, The Department of Forestry, Agricultural and Livestock all have mandates related to the environment and natural resources management. This sometimes results in difficulties in the coordination of interventions. The inadequate legal framework on management and utilization of the fauna and floral resources contributes to the confusion in terms of mandate and delineation of responsibilities.

Implementation of the policy, regulatory, legal, and institutional reforms necessary to improve the existing environmental management climate in The Gambia will principally involve the National Environment Agency, the Departments of State for: Finance and Economic Affairs; Fisheries and Water Resources, Environment Forestry and Parks and Wildlife; Agriculture; Justice; Trade, Industry & Employment; Local Government, Lands and Religious Affairs; and Health and Social Welfare, the Private Sector, non-governmental organisations and Civil Society at large.

Implementation of institutional level assistance to the private sector and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) will principally involve representatives of NEA and other actors in the natural resource sector. NEA and Natural Resources Management personnel will continue to maintain close working relations with a range of representatives of the Gambian community through the numerous Working Groups and Task Forces.

There is need for closer collaboration between the institutions that are charged with implementing the three different Conventions (on desertification, Biological Diversity and Climate Change). Under PRSP II capacities will be built/strengthened at various levels of the national and local institutions for effective (further) development and implementation of GEAP Phase II, in the context of the various National Action Programs, which contribute active ingredients to sustainable natural resources and environmental management.

At the central government level, the capacity for policy analysis will be enhanced at the various Departments of State and their sectoral departments to ensure that informed choices are made in development programming. Furthermore, the scope of the State of the Environment Report will be expanded to include analyses of trends and provide decision-makers in government various scenarios of possible environmental impact from different patterns of development.

At the divisional level, the Area Environment Committees (including the Provincial Area Environment Committees, the Kanifing Municipal Area Environment Committee, and the Banjul Environment Committee) will be formalized as provided for in the NEMA 1994 and the Local Government Act 1991. The committees will be provided with technical assistance and training to assist them in their main functions including: (i) integrating environmental considerations into all plans, projects, and strategies of the Area, the Municipal or the City Council, as the case may be; and (ii) co-ordinating the activities relating to the management of the environment and natural resources within their jurisdiction. Specifically, they will also be assisted to prepare, implement and monitor the respective local environment plans.

At the village level, the Village Environment Committees and the Ward Environment Committees will be assisted to develop mechanisms to execute their functions, including: (i) carrying out public education campaigns and encouraging the public to participate in making decisions about the environment; and (ii) mobilizing the people within their jurisdiction on the basis of voluntary self-help to identify and restore degraded resources, as they may be specified with the LEAP and other National Action Programs.

Therefore, as the environment and natural resources supports the productive base of the country, and particularly of rural Gambia, it is essential that conservation and management approaches fully involve stakeholders. In the long run the success and sustainability of interventions in conservation and sustainable use of the environment and natural resources will depend heavily on the active involvement of local people. A first step in this direction often takes the form of help in community organization directed towards self-reliance and self-management, including committee formation; conflict management and resolution; marketing of products; eco-tourism guides; and, management training.

To enable communities located near resource base to find new sources of products they can use to generate income without damaging the resources, vegetable gardening, bee keeping, agro-forestry and sustainable harvesting of resources such as thatch grasses and firewood are promoted.

7.3.2 The Gaps and Challenges in Environmental Protection

The achievements of GEAP Phase I notwithstanding, the rapid rate of environmental destruction is still evident in The Gambia. While the implementation of major development projects over the last five years has had an impact on the environment and natural resources management, environmental and natural resources management considerations have been only slowly incorporated into the decision-making process. For substantial improvements in the quality of life of all Gambians to materialize, through improved economic performance in a sustainable way, the pace of inclusion of environmental and natural resources management considerations in major economic decision-making processes must be substantially accelerated.

Furthermore, for such growth to be equitable, it will have to be based on renewable resources and on economic activities that are suitable to the participation of the majority of Gambians. At present Gambian livelihoods are largely agriculturally based, but urban populations are growing twice as fast as the national average. Therefore, a broad-based, decentralized approach to the problem is necessary.

7.3.3 Priorities for the Environment

The goal of the national environmental Program (GEAP II) is to ensure sustainable development. To accomplish this goal, there is the need to develop an effective and financially self-sustaining environmental management system for The Gambia. While increased action is needed in all sectors of the economy, environmental program efforts will be geared primarily towards a broad base sustainable natural resource management, energy and environmental health.

- Improved and strengthened institutional framework for environmental management in place at all levels
- Environmental considerations included in policy and planning processes at all levels
- Strengthened regulatory framework and enforcement of the regulatory codes, and environmental regulations fully enforceable and respected by all sectors
- Functioning institutional and legal framework in place for sustainable management and protection of the coastal zone and its resources

- Strengthened advocacy and sensitisation for sustainable development
- Private sector and parastatals engaged in dialogue for sustainable resource use.
- Support for Decentralisation and Local Government Reform for Community based Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development Planning
- Improving the Performance of Implementing Institutions in Environmental Quality Monitoring and Enforcement and in Solid Waste Management

7.4 Nutrition

Nutrition is a Millennium Development Goal that has largely already been met as measured by children's weight. There are however still some nutritional problems.

Malnutrition continues to be a major public health problem in the Gambia, exacerbated by poverty, food deficit, rural-urban migration, environmental degradation, poor dietary habits, low literacy level, poor sanitation, infections, and a high population growth rate.

The seasonal agricultural pattern also contributes to acute food shortages in the rainy season often referred to as the "hungry season", as households exhaust their food supply before the harvest period. The low purchasing power of poor urban and rural households also has serious nutrition and health implications.

The most vulnerable groups are women and children under – five years of age. There is evidence that the majority of Gambian women who live in rural areas are in a constant energy – deficient state caused by poor dietary intake, heavy workload and a high infection rate. This is reflected in the high prevalence of low birth weight babies especially in the rainy season. Anaemia, due to iron deficiency, is also very common among women, especially during pregnancy, and is a major contributory factor to the high maternal morbidity and mortality rates.

Children under five are vulnerable due to poor feeding practices, inadequate care and increasing exposure to infections with poor environmental sanitation being a major contributory factor. Although breastfeeding is a universal practice in the Gambia, exclusive breastfeeding is practiced by only 17.4% of mothers and the weaning diet is nutritionally inadequate, as well as unsafe, due to the high level of bacterial contamination. Protein Energy Malnutrition (PEM), specifically marasmus, is more prevalent among children under five years of age. A 1998 national anthropometric study of children fewer than five conducted in the dry season indicated 16.8% stunting, 6.8% wasting and 17.1% underweight. Rainy season figures would have been much higher including the elderly and adolescents, especially female and the urban poor. However, very little data is available on their situation.

The first national survey on the micronutrient status of children indicated a high prevalence of sub-clinical Vitamin A deficiency and anaemia. Iodine deficiency was also found among school-aged children with The Gambia classified as mild to moderate according to WHO classifications. The same study also indicated that only 9 percent of households were consuming iodised salt. Deficiencies in these micronutrients have an effect on morbidity, growth, cognitive development and performance and eventually mortality. Micronutrient deficiencies, therefore, have a significant impact on national development.

The first nationwide anthropometric survey that assessed the nutritional status of 900 primary school children aged 6 to 15 years in The Gambia was conducted in 2001. Stunting was found to be more prevalent among school children in the Western and Lower River Divisions with more girls than boys stunted as well as more stunted rural children. Stunting was less common in schools that have a school-feeding program compared to those without. Wasting was also higher among the

rural school children and in schools without school feeding programs, however more boys than girls were found to be wasted.

The nutritional status of Gambian women is severely compromised due to their heavy workload, insufficient food intake, and early, frequent and insufficiently spaced pregnancies. Malnutrition during pregnancy has serious health implications both for the mother and unborn child. Poor maternal nutrition is closely related to miscarriages, stillbirths and low birth weights. Iron Deficiency Anaemia (IDA) is also known to affect a large proportion of women, especially the pregnant and lactating mothers, and contributes to both ante and postnatal mortality. A recent maternal mortality study identified anaemia as one of the leading causes of maternal mortality in The Gambia. Other micronutrient deficiencies may also contribute to the poor health status of women and their children.

Low birth weight (<2.5 kg), which is a proxy indicator of maternal nutritional status both before and during pregnancy, is also a concern. It is estimated that 17 percent of births in the Gambia are less than 2.5 kg. This has implications for the survival and development of such infants.

The Government of the Gambia recognizes nutrition as a development issue and in 2000 established a Nutrition Unit under the Ministry of Health and later transformed it through an Act of Parliament into a National Nutrition Agency under the Vice President's Office with a legal mandate and responsibility to coordinate nutrition in the Gambia.

7.4.1 Challenges:

- Nutrition is influenced by several factors and requires sustained efforts from various sectors to achieve maximum impact on the population
- Sustaining inter-sectoral collaboration and the inclusion of nutrition objectives into sectoral plans
- National coverage with nutrition interventions including reaching the most vulnerable groups in the population
- Sustained and adequate resources both financial and human are a prerequisite for effective service delivery

7.4.2 Priorities for Nutrition

- Build on the gains realised so far by scaling up interventions which have proven to be successful, sustainable and cost effective.
- Achieve universal coverage with proven preventive nutrition interventions
- Strengthen partnerships with the private sector and civil society
- Improve nutrition service delivery through the health system and communities
- Strengthen communities to plan, implement and manage nutrition interventions
- Maintain current efforts to incorporate nutrition objectives in all development policies of the Gambia
- Strengthen advocacy efforts targeted at policy makers, communities and other stakeholders

7.5 Population

The need for addressing population and development issues was first recognised in 1979 through a cabinet paper entitled "*Framework for the Development of a Population Policy*". This led to the formulation of the first National Population Policy in 1992 and later revised in 1996 and 2003. The revision of this policy therefore is a reaffirmation of Gambia

Government's commitment in managing the population resource in order to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development and ultimately improve the quality of life of Gambians.

The Population and human development situation in The Gambia shows that major population issues are to be dealt with as part of the numerous development programmes and strategies.

The rapid population growth of 2.8% characterized mainly by high levels of fertility act as a serious impediment to the country's drive towards sustained economic growth within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. It has contributed to a hike in the level of poverty in the Gambia, making it more difficult for poverty alleviation efforts to have the desired impact on the quality of life of the people. The country's high fertility level of 6.01 children per women exacerbates poverty both at the household and national levels. Larger households as shown by the Household Poverty studies tend to be poorer than small households; hence the need to promote the small family size through family planning.

The Gambia has demonstrated its commitment to address population matters in order to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development and ultimately improves the quality of life and raise the standard of living of all Gambians by adopting the Kilimanjaro Plan of Action (1984), the Dakar/Ngor Declarations on Population and Sustainable Development (1992), and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action 1994. Hence the formulation of a National Population Policy in 1992 and revised in 1996 and 2003 in line with the ICPD Programme of Action and Vision –2020 Incorporated and the MDGs.

7.5.1 Constraints/Challenges

Key challenges that are faced in meeting the targets of the national population policy and programme are as follows:

Population Policy and Development Strategies

Limited institutional capacity to integrate population issues, coupled with inadequate sensitization of the planners on the need for integration of demographic variables into development planning continues to be major constraints. .

Persistent socio-cultural barriers present obstacles to the advancement of women and also the high proportion of youth in the population with the attendant dependency issues and other related problems require special programmes

Reproductive Health, Sexual Health and Family Planning

With a limited nationwide coverage rate, RCH services have not been very successful in effectively tackling the challenge of high mortality rates among women and children. This can be traced to the poor utilization of the services offered particularly in such key areas as family planning, safe deliveries, post-natal care, management of high risk pregnancies and post-abortion complications.

The low level of service utilization is associated with poor quality of care due to manpower shortage, periodic stock outs of essential drugs and contraceptives at the intermediate and peripheral levels, inadequate logistics and referral systems, also ineffective monitoring and supervision, as well as the attitudes of service providers.

Information, Education and Communication/Advocacy

In general, the following problems have limited the progress made in the IEC/BCC and Advocacy domain. The overall low literacy rate and embedded traditional pro-natalist values and misconceptions about family planning and modern methods provide major obstacles to IEC efforts. Inadequate coordinating mechanism and institutional framework, vertical operation of IEC programming which accentuates coordination difficulties, duplication and waste of resources, as well as conflicting approaches which are not conducive to social mobilization produced less impact of IEC/BCC and Advocacy efforts.

7.5.2 Priorities

Population Policy

- Integrate demographic variables into the process of development planning.
- Strengthen agencies in charge of the development, implementation and evaluation of population policies and programmes.
- Establish the framework required for the follow-up and evaluation of population policies.

Migration and Urbanization

- To improve living conditions in rural areas and secondary towns to attain balanced population distribution and better management of large urban areas.
- To intensify research programmes on migration in order to increase understanding on this phenomenon. Such research should take into consideration the different forms of migration, including rural-urban, urban-urban, rural-rural, temporary and nomadic.

Research and Training in Population

- To strengthen population research capabilities through the training of demographers and other specialists and through the creation or strengthening of units in charge of population research and training.
- To improve the skills of demographic data users through short-term training courses.
- To extend the coverage of Vital Registration System and ensure their completeness.

Population Information

- To use all available means to ensure broad dissemination for information on population issues in order to educate Gambians and engage them in discussion of these issues.
- To train and recruit specialists in the dissemination of population information, and provide them with all necessary support.

8. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY, MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

8.1 Overview of the strategy for implementation of PRSP II

This section provides details on the implementation of the PRSP II. Basically, the PRSP will be overseen by a National Planning Commission (NPC). This document will serve as the strategy and blueprint that the NPC will implement. No one agency implements the Five Year Strategy. However, all plans come together at the budget which is the domain of the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs as directed by the parliament. With a finite supply of financial and human resources, all programs in every sector are, in a way, interdependent, even if they are not strategically linked.

The PRSP II is a framework that defines principles for Government planning and budget execution for achieving meaningful poverty reduction. The priorities articulated are then implemented through sector plans and financed through the annual budget. The implementation of PRSP II is therefore not a separate exercise but primarily operates through the actions of each sector and the annual budgeting exercise. Sector wide approach will therefore be the mechanism for PRSP II implementation. The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which is beginning to be implemented in The Gambia, will be a budgeting instrument through which sector plans and strategies will be translated into concrete budget allocations.

Regarding institutional arrangements, the High-Level Economic Committee, under the chairmanship of the Vice President shall continue to provide overall guidance for the implementation of the strategy until the National Planning Commission is established. The planned National Planning Commission in collaboration with SPACO, now a Directorate under the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs, shall coordinate the PRSP II programme. A network of focal points from participating agencies will be revitalized with a view to maintaining a permanent dialogue with various stakeholders.

The implementation process will continue with the existing structures that were constituted to oversee the implementation of PRSP I. Members of the thematic groups will continue to meet on implementation issues relevant to their respective mandates. The Inter-Departmental Steering Committee (IDSC), comprising of Permanent Secretaries of key Department of States will be strengthened with representation of NGOs and Civil Society Organisation. Their main responsibilities will be to ensure adequate flow of information between government departments and other stakeholders on key issues emanating from the implementation process to enhance effective and timely decision-making at policy level. There will also be extensive consultations with partners to further familiarise them with the PRSP II and also allow for an update of issues not detailed out in the document, particularly the cross-cutting issues and how these will be mainstreamed.

Consultations to be undertaken will include:

- ❑ National stakeholder meetings to demystify PRSP II
- ❑ Sensitisation and advocacy for National Assembly members to familiarize them with PRSP II
- ❑ Sensitisation workshops at LGA levels for smooth implementation at LGA levels
- ❑ Training of sectors/Planning Units on the PRSP monitoring and reporting

These consultations will result to greater awareness and ownership of the PRSP II at all levels. Through a participatory process all sectors identified priority areas of interventions, the needs in terms of human and non- human resources and annual costing for financing the interventions with a view to realising well-defined development outcomes. The outcomes are in line with the Millennium development goals. Each sector produced an implementation action plan. The action plans (which indicate annual costing for the 2007-2011 period) form part 2 of PRSP II.

8.2 Sector wide Approach (SWA) For the Social Sectors

A first step in the promotion of new Aid Co-ordination mechanism has been the collective identification of key poverty priorities within the social sectors. This has been achieved during PRSP II preparation mainly through information sharing with stakeholders. The next critical step of committing resources to address the poverty issues identified will be based on consultations on the present document, envisaged during the Round Table Conference scheduled for later this year.

In general, it is observed that sector-wide reviews generate improved analysis and debate that will help sharpen focus on the overriding human poverty issues within the social sectors. Government's resolve to adequately address human poverty in The Gambia will therefore take the form of a sector-wide arrangement with Donors, based on collectively determined objectives, strategies and targets. The Health and Education sectors have developed, through their respective Public Expenditure Reviews, structured approaches relating outcome targets to specific outputs, inputs and necessary institutional adjustments.

8.3 The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)

Notwithstanding the existence of Planning Directorates within the large sectors, sector budgeting is essentially based on past expenditure patterns. Prioritizing policies and translating priorities into budgetary inputs is weak. Moreover, the quality information available at the sector level to improve this situation is inadequate. The Public Expenditure Review processes are intended to address these weaknesses. The PER process has already had a positive influence in terms of rational and prioritized allocation of resources within some sectors. However, the exercises are still mainly focused on recurrent expenditures.

The existing line item budgeting system is based on a short-term approach to public expenditure management, and in certain cases, paves the way for a micro-management of budget implementation. Furthermore, the line item system builds expenditure on an incremental basis, without adequate reflection of changing policy priorities or increased workloads, and fails to provide an appropriate costing of proposals, benefit-incidence analysis of programs or adequate negotiation opportunities between ministries.

The Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DOSFEA) has introduced a Public Invest Programme (PIP) process with the preparation of the 2007 budget. It is a significant commitment to move away from the present line item budgeting approach, and is envisaged to take place within the medium-term (2007-2009). The objectives for budgetary reforms include the search for better matching of spending with overall resource availability in the medium term, hence the adoption of an MTEF approach. This will improve budget execution by the inclusion of capital expenditures and output based sector allocations to better reflect Government priorities and improved sector planning and management of these allocations. The strategic approach to budgetary

reforms is based on the perceived need to strengthen the inter-face between NPC, DOSFEA, LGA Planning Units and the Sectors.

The Medium Term Expenditure Framework should move beyond a budget-monitoring tool to a budgeting instrument that translates PRSP aspirations and sector plans into concrete budget allocations. The budget allocations to sectors shall reflect PRSP aspirations and be widely debated among all stakeholders including donors, civil society, and Departments of state. Cabinet shall approve the MTEF taking into consideration concerns raised by various stakeholders, including Parliament.

Public accountability, government transparency, responsiveness, efficiency and participatory working relations are important concerns emphasised by the Private Sector, Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society at large. The present budgeting system has certain limitations that affect overall transparency and accountability as a result of inadequate reporting, reconciliation and audit systems. It is not expected that the MTEF and the PIP will be immediately effective in its budget impact, especially in light of recent experience of slow reform in public finance reforms. However a lot of progress has been made in this area and reforms will continue during implementation of PRSP II.

8.4 PRSP II Implementation and Monitoring

Monitoring of PRSP implementation will be based on development outcomes as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the targets set at sector level in this respect. Two things are critical in this regard. First is data availability and second is capacity to analyse the data and write periodic progress reports on attainment of sector targets. Until the National Planning Commission is established, with a Poverty Monitoring Unit, a strengthened coordination between GBoS and SPACO, along with the presence of a strong poverty analysis unit, is necessary for the analysis of poverty trends and budget commitments to poverty reduction programmes.

Participatory Approach in PRSP II Implementation and monitoring

At the national level, there will be a focus on developing processes and instruments for facilitating the participation of civil society in the identification of budgetary priorities, tracking of budget spending to the key sectors, and monitoring the quality of public services. The public expenditure reviews will serve as a suitable entry point, and will be followed up by a series of training programs on budgetary analysis for CSOs. The Pro-Poor Advocacy Group has conducted a number of trainings and will continue with the nationwide training and capacity building effort with the aid of SPACO and potential funding from the World Bank's Social Development Department.

At the divisional level participation in public resource management will take place in the context of the processes of decentralization as encompassed in the Decentralization and Local Government Act. Within the Act provisions have been made for a gradual devolution of resources and responsibilities to Local Government Authorities (LGAs). In order to empower communities to play an active role in the implementation of development programs, SPACO will organise in-country training and capacity building programs to enhance the capacities of LGAs and local communities in participatory planning and monitoring, with specific focus on monitoring public expenditure. Community scorecard on service delivery monitoring, piloted in the health and education sectors in 2004 across all the LGAs in the country, will be extended to the other key sector during PRSP II (put in Action Plan).

In addition to the coordination mechanism embedded in the Inter-Departmental Monitoring Committee and focal point network to facilitate participation, The Planning Commission (and

SPACO) will institute a process of bi-annual participatory operational reviews of the programme activities and initiatives involving key sectoral planning units and other government departments, aided if necessary by relevant technical assistance from national or international consultants. This would ensure that progress towards the programme goals, objectives and targets are being tracked over time.

Civil society organizations in The Gambia have highlighted the importance of institutionalized dialogue among stakeholders on poverty issues. The programme provides an important context in which this can be initiated. In this regard the Planning Commission / SPACO will collaborate with the Stakeholders Monitoring Committee in the creation of a “Poverty Reduction Dialogue Forum” (PRDF), which will consist of periodical multi-stakeholder discussions of key policy and program issues affecting poverty reduction in the country. Facilitators will be invited from both within and outside the country, to discuss and moderate thematic discussions on topical issues, which can then be compiled for consideration by Government institutions and Agencies.

Finally an enabling legal and policy environment is essential to the effectiveness of NGOs and other civil society organizations and their contribution to development policies, strategies and projects at all levels. The Planning Commission will initiate discussions through the NGO Agency and civil society organizations to conduct a review and analysis of the existing legal and policy framework as it affects the non-profit sector. The objective is to identify constraints to the realization of the sector’s full potential in development, and to make recommendations to government for appropriate policy reforms and rules of engagement. This endeavour has already commenced through an ongoing study on the historical relationship between Government and Civil Society in the Gambia.

Aid Coordination

The Gambia’s main official development assistance comes in the form of Free Standing Technical Cooperation, Program /Budgetary Aid/ Balance of Payment Support, Investment Related Technical Support, Investment Project Finance, Food Aid and Emergency Assistance. Relations with this group of donors are stable, with regular consultations held and a regular presence of the group at Round Tables held in the past. From the period of reform to date, there has been little disturbance of this relationship. With the exception of relations with UN agencies, which are co-ordinated by the Office of the President, the key Department of State responsible for relations with multilateral institutions is the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs. All international financial institutions work closely with DOSFEA, even where interventions are sector-based.

8.5.1 Aid Co-ordination Policy Framework

Sectoral interventions will be coordinated by the DOSFEA, through the Central Projects Management and Aid Co-ordination Unit, in collaboration with the sector concerned; however, in some cases, sectors may deal directly with bilateral donors, as these constitute a substantial percentage of resource inflows. The remaining share of assistance emanates from NGOs, coordinated by the NGO Agency under the Department of State for Local Government and Lands. Basically an administrative organ of Government, the Agency works alongside TANGO in coordinating assistance from a number of NGOs operating in the country. NGO activities are predominantly rural-based, focused on grass-roots economic and social development. The NGO community is an invaluable asset for information relating to the development aspirations of local communities. The co-ordination of all these aid flows will however be under the ambit of DOSFEA during the strategy period.

8.5.2 The Poverty Reduction Social Fund

The Gambia has initiated a poverty reduction social fund that will be a Unified Funding Framework (UFF) for coordinating Program and Project support towards Direct Interventions for the Poorest. The initiative, which has been approved by Cabinet in 2006, will aim to protect expenditures earmarked for poverty reduction programmes, by ensuring the financing of PRSP II programmes are not subjected to discretionary budget cuts.

During implementation of PRSP I, a study commissioned by SPACO and funded by SDF in 2003 to develop an operational strategy for the proposed UFF for community driven projects and programmes, also developed a protocol for the re-alignment of multi donor interventions with the programmes in the PRSP as well as a plan of action for operationalising the strategy. The UFF seeks to

1. Create consensus on a country portfolio for funding direct interventions to alleviate poverty among the most affected regions and categories of the population.
2. Re-align on-going and planned country programs to the priorities expressed in the PRSP II.
3. Streamline procedures and operations for a multi-donor, approach to delivering direct support to the poorest.
4. Co-ordinate the operations of the Poverty Reduction Fund through protocol agreements on grant aid for this target population.

In order to operationalise the UFF, Approval was sought from cabinet for the setting up of the fund and in particular to undertake the following:

- a. The convening of the multi-stakeholder forum to agree on harmonized procedures for disbursement, procurement, reporting, audit etc of projects and modalities for a coordinated project financing mechanism for existing projects
- b. Operationalisation of the UFF secretariat within the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs and identification of affiliate bodies within Departments of State, in the interim, to co-ordinate linkages between projects located in respective Departments of State with the UFF Secretariat.
- c. Identification of existing institutions to serve as focal institutions for the four components of the UFF, pending the finalization of the centralized structure.
- d. Authorisation for the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs to place all upcoming projects with the Framework of the UFF with the most cost effective and efficient management structures.
- e. Establishment of UFF coordinating units within the existing local government structures as part of the on-going decentralization and Local Government reform process

During the PRSP II period, the UFF will become operational with the setting up of structures and systems at both national and local government levels. At the national level, the UFF secretariat will become operational with links to the Aid Coordination and Central projects management units, as well as project co-ordination Units in various Departments of State. At the Local Government level, UFF co-ordination units will operate with the respective planning units. Also the Divisional Development Funds proposed within the decentralisation and Local Government reform process will become operational to help coordinate programme interventions at LGA level.

Consultation with stakeholders on implementing the harmonised procedures for project management including auditing and reporting will be on-going. New projects and programmes interventions at grassroots level will be mainstreamed into one of the four components of the UFF whilst existing projects will be gradually integrated where feasible and where this is not the case, subsequent phases will be designed to fit within the UFF framework.

The implementation process ensures that all funding for poverty reduction supports the national strategy under Government leadership. Stakeholders in the process of reducing poverty adopt a common approach across all sectors and gradually progress towards relying on strengthened government procedures to disburse and account for funds. Resources will be channelled increasingly through the Social Fund in the form of program and budgetary support. Common disbursement, accounting, reporting, auditing and procurement systems are to be developed to make the Aid Co-ordination Policy (and in particular the CFM) effective and accountable.

8.6 Financing gap

The second volume of the PRSP II is the Action Plan which contains the sectors implementation plans for PRSP II, with indicative costing and time frame. The costing for each sector is based on programme interventions that will be undertaken during the PRSP II period. The total cost of implementing the programme is estimated to be US\$ 754 million. The Gambia would be in position to meet from its own domestic resources 30% of US\$335 million , based on revenue projections after debt service (see table 18), which amounts to US\$100.5 million. Donor commitments for PRSP II (2007 – 2011), amount to US\$ 174 million. This leaves a funding gap of US\$ 479.9million that would need to be filled. However, availability of HIPC funds estimated at US\$170 million for the PRSP period would reduce the funding gap from \$479.9 million to US\$ 310 million for the five-year period. If The Gambia is to meet the programmed development targets or MDG targets set in this PSRP II, then development partners should commit themselves to fill the funding gap of US\$ 310 million or US\$ 62 million per annum.

Monitoring And Evaluation Framework

Figure 1: Proposed M & E Framework – National Level

