

National Review Report on The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action-Beijing Plus 20

(The Republic of The Gambia)

Final Report

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## 1 Acknowledgements

In the process of preparing this report, contents were derived from a wide range of national, regional and international sources, with the aim of assessing the country's implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) for the period 2009 to 2014.

The following acknowledgment and appreciations go out to the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Vice President and Minister of Women's Affairs and his staff, Director and Staff of the National Women's Bureau, the Technical Committee constituted by the Gender Focal Persons and CSO's, the various agencies and individuals that made documents available for the review, the participants at the validation workshop, UNDP and the Consultants: Janet Sallah Njie and Dominic Mendy for their contributions in the preparation of this National Review Report for Beijing Plus 20.

## 2 Introduction

This report gives an assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action for the Period 2009 to 2014. It highlights the Republic of The Gambia's efforts in promoting gender equality and enhancing the status of women. It examines the strategies adopted in dealing with the critical areas of concern, the progress, legislative changes, programs and projects, gaps and challenges that The Gambia has undergone during this period, and the way forward with the aim of meeting the BPFA, the MDG targets and other international commitments. The review is based on the BPFA and highlights the progress made in each of the sectors relevant to the twelve critical areas of concern. It provides an assessment of the current development situation, identifies gaps and challenges, and also focuses on emerging priority areas of intervention for The Gambia in line with the objectives of the BPFA.

The Gambia is a small State in West Africa with a land area of 10,698 square kilometers, varying in width between 42 kilometers near the mouth of the river to 24 kilometers further upstream, and stretching about 480 kilometers in length. The country is divided into two halves by the River Gambia, which runs the entire length of the country from the Futa Jallon Highlands in the Republic of Guinea. It is bounded on the North, South and East by Senegal and to the West by the Atlantic Ocean. It has a population of 1,882,450 with a 5.6 per cent increase over the projected 2013 population of 1,783,424. On average The Gambia has had population growth of 3.3 per cent per annum. The results from the 2013 population census revealed that there are more females than males in the country. According to the results, 50.5 per cent of the population counted is females, compared to 49.5 per cent males.<sup>1</sup>

The Gambia became independent in 1965 and practices multi-party democracy. It has a parliamentary system of Government. The second Republic came into being in 1997 following a two -year transition from military rule in 1994 -1996.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, three-quarters of the population depends on the agricultural sector for its livelihood and the sector provides for about one-quarter of GDP. The agricultural sector has untapped potential - less than half of arable land is cultivated. It however, took a hit in 2011 and 2012 due to unfavorable weather patterns.

The Gambia's natural beauty and proximity to Europe has made it one of the larger markets for tourism in West Africa, boosted by government and private sector investments in eco-tourism and upscale facilities. In 2012, however, sluggish tourism led to a decline in GDP. Tourism brings in about one-fifth of GDP.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.gbos.gov.gm/uploads/census/TheGambiaPopulationandHousingCensus2013ProvisionalReport.pdf>

The Gambia's re-export trade accounts for almost 80% of goods exports. Unemployment and underemployment rates remain high. Economic progress depends on sustained bilateral and multilateral aid, on responsible government economic management, and on continued technical assistance from multilateral and bilateral donors.

### **3 Methodology of the review**

1. Inception meeting with the Permanent Secretary and other Senior officials of the Office of the Vice President and Ministry responsible for Women's Affairs, the Executive Director National Women's Bureau and other relevant officials of the Bureau, and Senior officials of the UNDP, to agree the approach to the assignment;
2. It was agreed that the Review would follow a very consultative process with the Gender Focal Persons at the Sectoral Ministries and Departments taking the lead role in providing relevant information, and updating data and vital statistics on progress made post 2009;
3. Review of relevant national reports including the AGDI report, the MDG reports, SDGEA reports, national sectoral policies and strategies, the Beijing Plus 15 National Report;
4. Development of a data collection instrument(questionnaire) and its dissemination to all the gender focal persons;
5. Collection and compilation of the questionnaire responses;
6. Analysis of progress with regards the attainment of the goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and other national policies and programmes, and generation of the national review report for review by the Technical Committee constituted by representatives from all sectoral ministries, CSO's and National Development partners;
7. Incorporation from comments from the Technical Committee, prior to subjecting the Draft Report to a national validation workshop of all relevant stakeholders; and
8. Incorporation of feedback generated from the national validation workshop prior to submission of the final Report.





## Section 4: Overview of the Achievements and Challenges in Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Since 1995

### 4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The main national reference documents for addressing The Gambia's commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) are the National Policy for The Advancement of Gambian Women (*NPAGW*) 1999-2009, the Gender and Women's Empowerment Policy 2010-2020, the national development blue print enshrined in Vision 2020, the Programme of Accelerated Growth and Employment, 2012-2015(PAGE), and all the sectoral policies relevant to the critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. It is also premised on the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia, under Section 33, subsection (4), which clearly prohibits all forms of discrimination based on gender, the Women's Act 2010, the Domestic Violence Act 2013, the Sexual Offences Act 2013, and several other pieces of Legislation addressing women's human rights.
- 4.1.2 The Gambia is also signatory to and has committed herself to the implementation of the following International Conventions, agreements and declarations which are directly relevant to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration, namely, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, The Solemn Declaration On Gender Equity in Africa, and several other human rights instruments.
- 4.1.3 Soon after the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration, The Gambia embarked on a national consultative process for the realisation of the critical areas of concern that culminated in the promulgation of the National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women (NPAGW) in 1999. The policy sought to address the critical areas of the Beijing declaration, and provided a legitimate point of reference for addressing gender inequalities at all levels of government and by all stakeholders. The major achievements of the policy included among others, increased awareness on gender as a development concern, increased enrolment and retention of girls in schools, improved healthcare delivery, increased women participation in decision making, and reduction in gender stereotyping and discrimination.
- 4.1.4 The NPAGW policy was reviewed and replaced by the Gender Policy 2010 - 2020. The current policy is designed to address the gaps in the 1999 policy, and to consolidate the progress made so far, and expressly ensure that a gender perspective is incorporated at all levels of planning, resource allocation and implementation of development projects. The priority areas for the 2010-2020 Policy are not only in consonance with the critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action, but they also incorporate the national development standards as follows:
1. Gender and Education,
  2. Gender and Health,

3. Gender and Sustainable Livelihoods Development,
4. Gender and Governance,
5. Gender and Human Rights, and
6. Poverty Reduction and Economic Empowerment<sup>2</sup>.

**4.1.5** In July 2010, The Gambia took the initiative to enact a Women’s Act to deal with areas of persistent discrimination that are not addressed in the 1997 Constitution, which include reproductive rights, marriage, divorce, inheritance, employment, domestic violence, exploitation and trafficking, parental authority, and ownership of property.<sup>3</sup>The Long Title of the Act provides that, it is: ***An Act to implement the legal provisions of the National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women and Girls, and to incorporate and enforce the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.***<sup>4</sup>

4.1.6 This innovative piece of legislation is the first of its kind in the African continent, and it seeks to translate into legally binding norms and obligations all the critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform For Action, other relevant legal instruments upholding the human rights and dignity of women and the girl child, and other national policies and developmental strategies addressing women’s rights and welfare. This Act is indeed the Bill of Rights for Women in The Gambia and its full implementation and realisation will alleviate the suffering of women in The Gambia. The process of formulation of this innovative piece of legislation was participatory and consultative, ensuring that the views of all relevant stakeholders were taken on board and catered for.

4.1.7 Following the enactment several test cases have been filed in court to protect women’s property and maternity rights, especially the implementation of the Section 43 of the Act relating to equitable distribution of matrimonial property upon dissolution of marriage or separation. These cases have generally yielded positive results for women. These successes are largely attributed to the collaborative efforts of several CSO’s including FLAG and AAITG.

4.1.8 To reinforce the legislative gains in the enactment of the Women’s Act 2010, the National Assembly of The Gambia enacted the Sexual Offences Act 2013 and Domestic Violence Act 2013. These two pieces of legislation seek to address the menace of GBV in line with The Gambia’s international obligations and to implement The Gambia National Plan of Action (NPOA) on GBV 2013-2017.

4.1.9 The Gambia’s commitment to the attainment of the MDGs is exemplified by the preparation of MDG Assessment reports since 2003 (2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2010). The Government of The Gambia has since 2002 integrated the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into the national development policy frameworks. However, overall, The Gambia is conspicuously lagging behind in attaining MDG goals 1 and 5. Despite the slow progress registered for goals

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<sup>2</sup> Gambia National Gender Policy 2010-2020

<sup>3</sup> ICPD report

<sup>4</sup> WOMEN’S ACT 2010

4 and 5 (childhood and maternal mortality in particular), appreciative improvements have been registered in other targets, particularly on the proportion of households with improved sanitary facilities (85.8 percent), the proportion of children under 1 immunized against measles, the overall poverty levels, access to water (target already achieved), access to primary education and gender parity in primary education. PRSPI and II succeeded by the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) covering the period 2012 -2015 and other sectoral policies are serving as the building blocks for achieving the international development goals and those related to the home grown Vision 2020 objectives.<sup>5</sup>

4.1.10 The Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) 2013-2015 is the National Development Plan successor to PRSP II. It is the Medium-term development policy framework for The Gambia for 2012-2015 that forms the basis for dialogue with development partners.

The focus of the PAGE is mainly to improve the following:

- I. improve Employment levels;
- II. improve Per Capita Income;
- III. improve Human Development;
- IV. improve Gender Equity; and
- V. improve Country Competitiveness.

4.1.11 Fulfilling its vision to turn The Gambia into a middle income country calls for a harmonized development and social cohesion approach, and the government from 2012 to 2015 intends to strengthen its efforts in eight areas: social protection, child protection and disability; food security, gender equality and women empowerment, environment, disaster risk reduction and climate change, nutrition, population, HIV AND AIDS, and building a national volunteering infrastructure.

4.1.12 The PAGE recognizes that gender is a cross-cutting development concern and for that reason needs to be addressed using a cross-sector approach. This is in recognition of the fact that to ensure gender equality, all sectors and actors in development need to address the issue in their areas of activity. The Gambia's blueprint serves to ensure gender equality measures and empower women, through the continuing creation of an enabling policy framework, based on a proper gender analysis and the provision of adequate gender statistics and budgets. In addition, it focuses on the improvement of women's and girls' employable skills and job opportunities by ensuring parity in primary, secondary and tertiary education, improve women's and girls' entrepreneurial skills and opportunities in all productive sectors, mobilize resources for gender equality and women's empowerment interventions, and ensure the proper coordination, monitoring and evaluation of women and gender-related programmes.

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<sup>5</sup> MDG Status report 2012

## 4.2 Dialogue with CSOs

TANGO is the National Umbrella body for all NGOs and CSOs in The Gambia. TANGO's strategic plan of 2012-2017 has an objective of incorporating gender equality and women empowerment in all its programmes as well as throughout its membership. All projects factor gender mainstreaming, targeting women in politics and raising awareness on laws and policies addressing women's human rights.

## 4.3 National Sectoral Policy initiatives addressing the BPFA

Quite apart from the Policies earlier highlighted in the Report, The Government of The Gambia in collaboration with its development partners and CSOs has formulated and adopted several sectoral policies, plans of Action and strategies geared towards mainstreaming gender in development as follows.

1. The National Health Policy. "Health is Wealth" and the Health Master Plan 2008-2020;
2. The National Education Policy 2004 to 2015: "Rethinking Education for Poverty Reduction" and the education Strategic plan 2006-2015;
3. Gambia Education Policy 2004 – 2015;
4. HIV AND AIDS Strategic Framework, June 2009- June 2014;
5. Programme of Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE), 2012-2015;
6. National Employment Strategic and Policy 2010 – 2014;
7. Nation Nutrition Policy 2010 – 2020;
8. National Plan of Action for Accelerated Abandonment/ Cutting of FGM in The Gambia;
9. The Gambia's development Strategy and Investment Programme for 2012 to 2015
10. National Policy on Non-Formal Education 2010 – 2015;
11. National Population Policy 2007-2015;
12. Social Welfare Policy 2009 – 2013;
13. The National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010 – 2020;
14. The Gender Mainstreaming and Women Empowerment Strategic Plan, 2010 – 2015; and
15. The Gender Empowerment Plan, 2007-2011.
16. National Plan of Action Against GBV 2013 – 2017;

## 4.4 Challenges

- 4.4.1 The Gambia is a patriarchal society characterized by male hegemony and other socio-cultural factors that interplay to influence the interactions between the genders and social groups.

These inequalities have resulted, in some cases, in the exclusion of women and girls, from actively participating in the development process of the country. Overall, gender responsiveness in The Gambia is low. This is largely due to the inadequate capacity at both national and sector levels to mainstream gender and apply gender analysis skills to policy-making. It is also due to limited awareness of gender issues; and weak support, advocacy, awareness raising, coordination and monitoring on the part of other stakeholders.<sup>6</sup>

- 4.4.2 Even though significant progress has been made in enacting laws, formulating and adopting policies, Plans of Actions and strategies addressing women's human rights and welfare and developmental needs, the reality is far apart from these stated intentions. Cultural patterns, traditional roles, religious beliefs, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes continue to prevent women from exercising the rights contained in these guarantees.
- 4.4.3 The HIV epidemic in The Gambia is characterised by low prevalence with concentrated areas of infection<sup>7</sup>. Trends in HIV prevalence have generally been uneven, showing sharp fluctuations during this period. There is a need to conduct further research to establish recent trends.
- 4.4.4 Inadequacy of resources and lack of ownership of the GWEP by some sectors has resulted in different levels of implementation. Institutions reflect the wider society in which they operate. The women's agenda is seeking structural reforms, which many people are not willing to accept. For them the women's place is in the home and in the informal spaces and taking them out of these spaces into the formal spaces has resulted in tensions and conflicts which are still unresolved and if not addressed will threaten the effective implementation of the Gender Policy.
- 4.4.5 Despite the considerable progress made, The Gambia is yet to attain the requisite 30% representation at all levels. The Target has been attained at the level of cabinet, but the representation at the National Assembly and Local Government remains below the minimum required. As at 2010, in the National Assembly, only 2 out of the 48 elected members are women plus 3 nominated members, making a total of 5 out of 53 members. Therefore, the percentage of elected women members of Parliament is 4.2% and the total percentage of women in Parliament is 10.4%. These figures are far below The Gambia's commitment to attaining gender equality in this field. There is need to encourage more women to assume top managerial positions and other decision-making roles in the interest of empowering them.
- 4.4.6 The trend of excluding females from decision-making positions is a reflection of the low status of women and other groups in Gambian society. There is need for the promotion of girls' and women's participation in politics so that they come forward in their numbers to vie for political office.

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<sup>6</sup> ICPD report 2012

<sup>7</sup>UNAIDS, 2008

## Section 5: Progress in Implementing Critical Areas of the BPFA & Further Initiatives & Actions Identified in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the General Assembly

### 5.1 Women and Poverty

#### 5.1.1 Achievements

- 5.1.1 Whilst poverty continues to be illusive, various efforts have been made and gains achieved in the endeavour to end or at least reduce it significantly and ensure that the greater majority of Gambians are assured of a decent livelihood. These efforts come from various well thought-out programmatic poverty investments both by government, the donor and private sector communities. The poverty level dropped to a low of 48% by 2012<sup>8</sup>.
- 5.1.2 The policy framework at the national level that ensured a structured means of ending poverty include reforms such as the Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper II (PRSP), the review of which revealed significant progress in all its five pillars. Its successor the PAGE sought to take advantage of the national scope and capacity built through previous programmes and to ensure employment related development over the period 2012 – 2015.
- 5.1.3 In spite of a relatively high level of domestic inflation, the macro-economic situation is generally stable; the policy framework to enable a more effective productive sector is in place and private investment has begun to gain significance in the economy with opportunities for employment expansion, and significant payoffs resulting from major public investments in education and health. Education at all levels account for 23% of the national consolidated expenditure budget whilst health accounts for 7.1%<sup>9</sup>.
- 5.1.4 Enhancing governance systems and building capacity at local levels of communities and civil society organizations has registered less success due to the delay in the decentralization process. However, the cross-cutting issues of gender, environment, population, youth and nutrition have been significantly achieved.
- 5.1.5 All of the above and the development and implementation of the National Employment Policy and Strategy 2010-2014, and significant improvements in the public finance management brought about by the PFM Strategy has enabled more judicious use of public resources with significant impacts on poverty. The joint strategic use of public resources and a more improved policy framework that enabled private sector expansion has contributed to improved<sup>10</sup> job opportunities and poverty reduction among the youth and women. The CDDP programmes through locally based and bottom-up demand-driven development requests for support and investment thereof, such as in gardening, small ruminants, threshing and milling machine projects among others.

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<sup>8</sup> PAGE

<sup>9</sup> Approved National Budget 2014

<sup>10</sup> IMF Country Report, The Gambia, 2011

## 6

### 6.1.1

#### 5.1.1 Credit schemes for Women

- 5.1.2.1 The Gambia has several policy instruments to create opportunities for small scale or micro investments, a sector to which most of the Gambian poor including women belong. These include The National Strategic Framework for the Development of Micro-finance in The Gambia, the National Policy of MSMEs in The Gambia, The National Export Strategy 2013 – 2017 and the National MSME Marketing Strategy, 2014 – 2018, all of which have taken due strategic steps to end poverty in all its forms.
- 5.1.2.2 What remains to be achieved is a stable and growing macro economy with a structure that will provide scope by which it is possible to exploit the policy environment.

#### 5.1.2 Challenges

The PRSP II has ended and is succeeded by the PAGE, which is in its midterm of implementation. However, the challenges faced by the PAGE seem to be similar if not the same challenges that were faced by the PRSP II. The major challenges are in respect more of the lack of the wherewithal to successfully implement these generally appropriate policy instruments.

These challenges include:

- I. Lack of adequate gender disaggregated data in some of the sectors limits effective gender mainstreaming in the PAGE documents.
- II. Low literacy levels, lack of skills, capital, and access to market opportunities and ownership of land due mainly to inherent socio-cultural and traditional barriers continue to impede women getting out of the poverty.
- III. High interest rates ranging from 8% to 35% in the formal sector and up to as high as 50% in the micro finance industry does not allow wealth creating investment borrowing by women.
- IV. Whilst attitudes have significantly improved, for which reasons significant empowering laws and policies have been formulated, male dominant attitudes still impede the harnessing of the existing legal and policy instruments
- V. For the reasons above, micro credit schemes are unable to provide upward mobility for women. In the words of one chief: “micro credit is like slippers. It protects the feet but it does not lift your height.”<sup>11</sup>
- VI. Efforts at mainstreaming employment is taken in the PAGE, but success is still to be achieved in bringing about mainstreaming that will result to economic growth that has the potency of greater and useful employment so that the national income is more suitably distributed, especially to the poor and women.

#### 5.1.3 Recommendations

To harness the gains made amidst the elaborated challenges, the following are recommended:

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<sup>11</sup> Consultations for PRSP 11, 2003, Omar Baturu Ceesay



- I. Take a tighter look at the structure of the national economy with a view to enable appreciation and better orientation towards effective poverty reduction especially as it affects women; and ensuring sustained growth and stability to continuously reduce gendered poverty.
- II. Fully implement the Gambia Women's Federation economic empowerment programme and take policy and actual steps to increase women in the developing middle class.
- III. Work with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MOFEA) to include gender budgeting as a core aspect of the public finance management system, especially budgeting and its implementation outcome reporting.
- IV. Together with the Central Bank of The Gambia, review the structure of the microfinance industry and its operational modalities to enable throughput of cheaper financing to women led investment programmes and provide low interest credit facilities/grants to women to enable business start-ups or for expansion purposes.
- V. Review the current communal land tenure system to make it easier for women to own land and other economic resources.
- VI. Initiate a national programme of advocacy to change attitudes that will enable effective implementation of existing legal and policy frameworks on eradicating continuing discrimination against women in various aspects in spite of the existence of laws and policies against these behaviours.
- VII. Undertake sensitization on the existing laws and/or legal frameworks and policies (such as the PAGE) and make women beware of their rights and entitlements under these laws and policies and as well make the society as a whole aware of their duties and obligations under the same laws and policies.

## 5.2 Education and Training of Women

### 5.2.1 Achievements

5.2.1.1 The 1997 Constitution of The Gambia commits the government to providing basic education for all of its citizens. Within the expanded vision of basic education are early childhood development, (ECD), Grades 1-9 of the formal school system and adult and non-formal education. The values outlined in the National Education Policy, 2004-2015 are grounded on a non-discriminatory and all-inclusive provision of education, underlining in particular, gender equity and targeting the poor and the disadvantaged.<sup>12</sup>

5.2.1.2 The National Education Policy 2004-2015 provides for the provision of education that is non-discriminatory and takes cognisance of gender equity. The Education Policy further lays special emphasis on gender and increased equitable access to basic, senior secondary, tertiary and higher education. It also focuses on enhancement of access to early childhood development centres and literacy programmes, with specific emphasis on girls in under-served regions and other disadvantaged groups in the population.

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<sup>12</sup> Beijing +15 report

- 5.2.1.3 Emphasis is also laid on equity in the geographical distribution of schools and community needs with the focus on the elimination of gender disparities. It prescribes that government should mainstream gender concerns at every stage of the education process towards the realization of the EFA gender parity and equity goals within the policy period.
- 5.2.1.4 In addition, the Education Sector Strategic Plan as well as the Medium Term Plan all focus on ensuring the right to quality education and complement both the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals.
- 5.2.1.5 Through affirmative action, girls' education is tuition-free in the public schools up to Grade 9. Further support through scholarship packages is provided through the Girls' Scholarship Trust Fund, President's Empowerment of Girls Education Project (PEGEP).
- 5.2.1.6 Despite all of these policies, retention at some levels of education is still low. Lack of access to higher education for most women for reasons such as funding, marriage and child bearing and to some extent lower levels of qualifying scores at the WASSSCE compared to their male counterparts continue to bedevil female participation at this level and thwart effective women empowerment.

## 5.2.2 Achievements and Progress Made since 2010

- 5.2.2.1 The significant progress made in education in terms of enrolment and retention of girls in schools since the last report has been sustained and improved upon. At the ECD level Girls' GER was 42.1% in 2014, 2% higher than that of boys in the same year. At the lower basic cycle, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for girls increased from 89.1% in 2010 to 98.7% in 2014 (an annual growth rate of 2.25%) and that of boys is 95.4%. By 2014, it would be seen that girls' enrolment surpassed that of boys by 3.3% taking into account the Madrassa enrolment<sup>13</sup>. In the upper basic cycle the GER for girls increased from 65.6% in 2010 to 68% in 2014 compared to that of boys in the same period of 66.9% to 68.2%. That of the boys is slightly higher by 0.2%. In the same period NER for girls at the LBE increased from 75.6% to 80.6%, compared to that of boys from 73.7% to 75.6%. Girls NER is higher than that of boys by 5%, showing that more girls than boys stay on in schools at the LBE level on entry, to its end in grade 6. Completion rates at the Upper Basic Level for girls was 56.3% in 2010 and 63.3% in 2014, compared with 62.7% in 2010 and 66.0% in 2014 for boys; with boys surpassing girls by 2.7% in the period of reference. However, the girls achieved 12% growth in completion rates over the same period. At the senior secondary level the GER for girls increased from 30.6% in 2010 to 39.2% in 2014 (an overall period growth rate of 8.6%), whilst that of boys was 37.4% in 2010 and 43.2% in 2014. Boys at this level as in the upper basic level continue to outperform girls. However, girls GER registered a positive achievement of 8.6% in the same period. Completion rates at the senior secondary level for girls was 25.2% in 2010 and 32.4% in 2014, whilst that of boys 31.4% in 2010 and 37.0% in 2014, still surpassing that of girls, in

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<sup>13</sup>Education Statistic 2013/2014

spite of the positive growth rates or improvements in the girls completion rates of 7.2% for the same period. The gender parity indexes in 2014 at various levels: ECD (0.96), LBE (0.96), UBE (0.98) and SSS (1.05), all show an interesting trend. The positive impact of huge public investment in education has resulted in significant improvements in gender parity across all levels. The trend improvements across levels also show positive consistent transition from level to level of girls of from 0.96 in the ECD and LBE levels to as high as 0.95 at the SSS level; where in the past most girls would have already left school for various reasons. Tertiary education enrollment as shown in Figure 1 (in annex) shows a trend of enrollment of men at a high of 69% in 2007 and steadily dropping to 62% in 2010, and by default the female enrollment rose equally steadily from 31% in 2007 to 38% in 2010. As in the Basic education level, females have made significant achievements in tertiary education enrollment growth than men even though men's enrollment is still significantly higher than that of females in absolute terms.

**5.2.2.2 The Education Policy (2004-2015) “Rethinking Education for Poverty Reduction”** and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2006-2015 address critical areas such as expansion of access to quality basic and secondary education, girl's education, early childhood development, (ECD) science and technology, sector management, among other areas. These policies seek to increase access to basic education<sup>14</sup>, improve quality of teaching and learning in lower basic schools, and strengthen education systems.

**5.2.2.3 Minimising the costs of schooling: Girls education is tuition free in the public schools** up to Grade 9. The Scholarship Trust Fund from Grades 7-12 in Regions 3-6 and the President's Empowerment of Girls Education Project (PEGEP) promotes girls education. However, these funds are supplemented by regional initiatives and incentives of various types, including special scholarship packages that cover a wide range of costs including: fees, uniforms and books. The recently launched READ project's objective of increasing access to basic education, improved quality of teaching and learning in lower basic schools and strengthening of education system is a significant attempt at ensuring that quality education is accessible to all especially the girls. The project made significant attempts at meeting through schools all costs relating to accessing quality education from ECD to SSS levels and across the whole country.

**5.2.2.4 The Child Friendly School Initiative** supported by UNICEF promotes inclusion and continues to respond to diversity by promoting gender equality in enrolment and achievement and eliminating gender stereotypes. It provides a healthy and protective environment for children through the provision of adequate water and sanitation facilities. It discourages corporal punishment and harassment and creates positive experiences for children. The initiative is based on child-centred learning and encourages family and community-based local partnership in education.

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<sup>14</sup> Basic education in The Gambia encompasses ECD, lower basic and upper basic education

**5.2.2.5 Equal gender participation in school management** continues to be promoted. The SMC brings on board people who know much about the learners and their educational needs, as well as about local values and realities and is the route to more responsive systems. It provides the space for community participation and is more equitable as poor households have a stronger and more effective voice in local community institutions in which they play a role in framing

**5.2.2.6 Equal gender participation in school management** is being promoted through the School Management Committees (formerly PTAs). The SMC ensures the incorporation of local values and realities to make education more responsive systems. Local community institutions play a major role in formulating priorities and in holding school education providers accountable. The “Gender Education Unit’ previously the Girl’s Education Unit has been further strengthened to better coordinate, document and monitor programmes for effectiveness and efficiency.

**5.2.2.7 Access to Education:** Tremendous success has been gained in expanding access to education across all levels. Schools have been brought nearer to homes, that is, within 3km-5km from the community. Building schools closer to the homes of the students contributes to provide safety and security for them, especially the girls as they have to walk shorter distances to and from the school. In addition they do not have to leave their homes and communities with all the attendant risks. Under the Third Education Sector Project Phase 1, (1998-2006) and Phase 2, (2006-2011) the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education was able to build classrooms throughout the country supported by different donors to improve access to quality education for all Gambians. The current READ project takes advantage of these successes and aims to improve on the infrastructure whilst providing access through cost support and quality through institutional and teacher strengthening.

#### **5.2.2.8 School Attendance**

- 1 There has been significant reduction in the proportion of the cohorts of boys and girls not attending school from 64.7% to 38.0%.
- 2 Also there is a reduction of ethnic and gender disparities in the educational attainments that were prompted by the introduction of western-type of education in The Gambia.

#### **5.2.2.9 Enrolment**

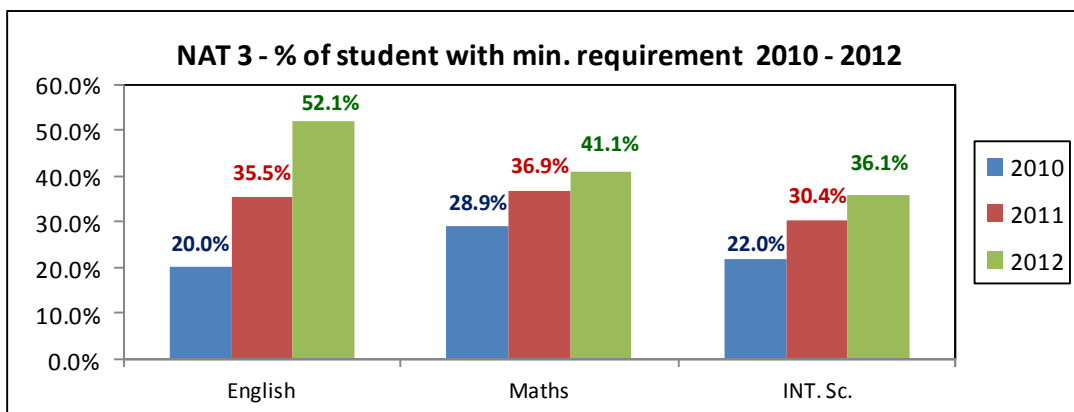
1. General improvements in the enrolment rates especially at the lower basic level at the national and LGA levels have been achieved.
2. Progress towards the attainment of gender parity at the Lower Basic Level was attained, over the period, but gender disparity at secondary level exists at national and LGA levels, as well as in the urban as opposed to the rural communities.

#### **5.2.2.10 Literacy**

1. Overall marginal improvements in literacy rates by LGA, residence and national level compared to the sub-Saharan standard.

2. Increased proportion of people literate in Roman Script relative to Arabic Script at rural/urban and national level.
3. Females constitute a greater proportion of literate population in Roman Script whereas males form majority among those literate in the Arabic Script.
4. Improved literacy levels among all age groups from 10 years and over, by sex and by rural/urban category over the period.

Figure I shows the learning achievements of students from 2010 to 2012.



- 5.2.2.11 **A National Policy on Non-Formal Education 2010-2015** is adopted by Government. The envisaged vision of the policy is “A society in which the majority can read and write using all possible forms of scripts and indigenous languages as well as for social transformation and economic growth”.
- 5.2.2.12 The Adult and Non Formal Education Unit of the Directorate of Basic and Secondary Education, at the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, is responsible for the overall coordination of Adult Learning Education programmes in The Gambia. The Community Skills Improvement Project (CSIP) sponsored by the African Development Bank continues to deliver training for women and out of school youths with the view to enhancing self employment ventures and entrepreneurship development. The project targeted 40,000 women and youth in 250 communities but was able to reach 32,377 (80.94%). The total number of participants who are now classified as literacy graduates is 12,678 representing 32% of the target.<sup>15</sup>
- 5.2.2.13 The Integrated Functional Literacy Project sponsored by the Islamic Development Bank has designed a curriculum for 400 contact hours for 2,000 young men and women and produced didactic materials; the national languages in thirteen subject areas including agriculture, literacy, numeracy, health, nutrition, environment, forestry, live skills, livelihood skills, gender, governance, peace, security and human rights. Facilitators have been trained in the use of these materials and it is expected that the service providers will use them in their functional literacy classes.

<sup>15</sup> CSIP Contribution to the BPFA Report

- 5.2.2.14 **Tertiary level:** The gender and development diploma course run by the Management Development Institute (MDI) contributes to the availability of a core of people with knowledge and skills in project writing; thus facilitating gender programming and monitoring in the various sectors.
- 5.2.2.15 In the area of access to higher education, the University of The Gambia had a student enrolment of 3550 in 2010-2011 academic year, of which girls constituted 29%. Science and technology constitute 37% of the overall student population as compared to 10%, when the university was first established. Of the overall female population, only 35% are in the sciences compared to 37 percent of the male population. Outputs from the newly established International American University and the Mahatma Ghandi University is yet to be available, but when so, it should add to the various opportunities and improvements in access to higher education for females. In fact professional education in accountancy (ACCA and ICMA) undertaken by the MDI and a few private training institutes are areas of higher education in which anecdotally girls are becoming increasingly the main participants.
- 5.2.2.16 In the same year, Gambia College had an enrolment of 4,098 students, of which 28% are female. Of the male population, 9% are in science and technology compared to 14 % of the females. Overall enrolment at GTTI stands at 2,687 students, of which the females constitute 22%. At the MDI the overall enrolment was 1,464 students, of which 48 % were male.<sup>16</sup>
- 5.2.2.17 There has been a prohibition of girls to be withdrawn from school for early marriage and a policy were pregnant girls are allowed to return to school after they deliver.

### 5.2.3 Civil society contribution

- 5.2.3.1 Non-governmental organizations have formed partnerships with the government to significantly influence growth through non-formal education programmes that target Women who form the majority of non-literates. The MOBSE has expanded the space for CSO participation in education at all levels, ranging from policy formulation, implementation, service delivery, infrastructure development, monitoring and evaluation. This has increased public interest and involvement in education leading to a broadening and deepening of participation at all levels by key players. These include: the Education for All Campaign Network (EFANet), Child Fund, Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Peace Corps, Future in Our Hands (FIOH), GAMCOTRAP, SIMMA, Association for the Promotion of Women's and Girls Advancement (APWGA), Foundation for Research on Women and the Environment (BAFROW), Women in Service and Development (WISDOM), Forum for African Women Educationalist-Gambia (FAWE-GAM), National Women's Framers Association (NAWFA), Pro-poor Advocacy Group (Pro-PAG),

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<sup>16</sup>See Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (2012 -2015) 81-82.

Gambia Teacher's Union (GTU), Girls Guide Association, Gambia Home Economics Association and Faith-based organizations.

5.2.3.2 **Mother's Clubs:** The FAWE-GAM Mother's Clubs play a role in closing the gap between boys and girls in schools by generating income to cover the indirect cost of school fees, give guidance and counselling to families and girls to promote the retention of girls in school and engaging in environmental cleaning of the school.

5.2.3.3 **Partnership between the MOBSE and the Madrassa proprietors:** The partnership with the General Secretariat for Islamic/Arabic Education and the MOBSE has contributed to boosting enrolments and enhanced access particularly for Muslim girls. It has broken the misconception that Muslim girls should not go to school as the Secretariat is not only advocating for girls education, but is actually making provision for them within their educational system.

5.2.3.4 Generally, the interventions and activities geared towards mainstreaming gender has resulted in a steady increase over the years in enrolment, retention and performance of learners especially girls across all levels of education. In addition, non literates are given a second chance. These interventions have been geared towards the creation of the enabling environment for girls to compete with boys and men with women with the ultimate aim of eradicating poverty and developing the nation.

## 5.2.4 Challenges

5.2.4.1 The Retention of girls at the upper basic, senior secondary and tertiary levels still remains a challenge due to a number of factors including early and forced marriages, teenage pregnancy, poverty, and preference for continued education of boys at the higher level.

5.2.4.2 On early and child marriages where the constitution stipulates that a child under the age of 18 cannot contract a marriage, this is contradicted by sharia law which states that a girl who has reached puberty is eligible to get married regardless the age.

5.2.4.3 Adult education programmes remain donor driven and funded, and once projects come to an end, sustainability becomes a problem. This situation depicts ineffective non-formal and literacy programmes.

5.2.4.4 Inadequate funding impedes chances of rapid and full implementation of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education's gender mainstreaming programme activities. The minimal funding possibilities that are inherent in the micro-funding capacity of the Girls' Trust Fund or the President's Education for Girls' Empowerment Project are not robust enough to accommodate the holistic interventions that are implicit in the Policy's gender mainstreaming objectives and strategies. An internal integrated institutionalized gender budgeting approach, to imbue financial data generation with greater gender focus and assurance when the existing external sources dry up, is therefore necessary within the MOBSE's budgeting culture and structure.

5.2.4.5 Quality of education is a problem. Results of an Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and the National Assessment Test (NAT) conducted in 2008 and 2009 suggest that the

number of children at the lower basic level who are able to read and are acquiring cognitive skills is low.<sup>17</sup> Curriculum gaps and shortcomings need to be identified and addressed.

5.2.4.6 The school age population is growing at a rapid rate in the country, and the demand for school places is greatest in urban and peri-urban areas. Therefore, additional places at both the lower and upper basic levels will have to be created at an accelerated pace.

5.2.4.7 Negative gender stereotyping in the education culture prevents girls from accessing places in higher education and employment in the scientific and technological fields. Due to gender stereotyping by predominantly male high school teachers concerning new science subjects and more advanced work in mathematics, regarded as difficult 'boys' subjects', girls opt for 'safer' Arts subjects.

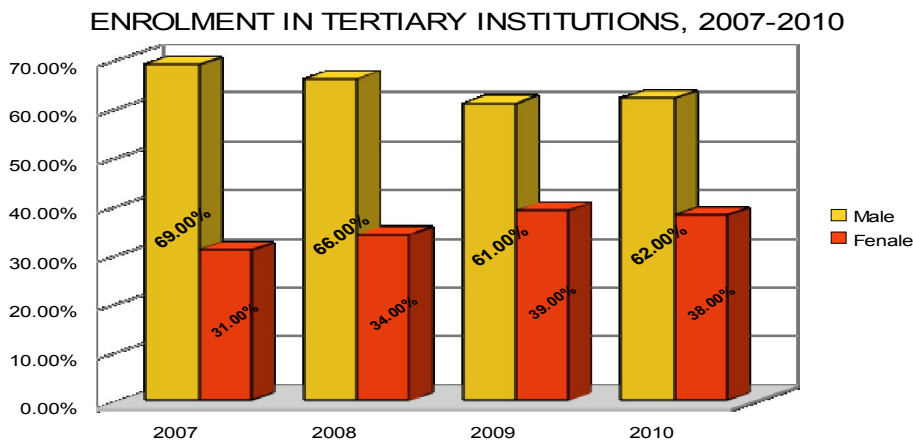
5.2.4.8 Fewer qualified female teachers. 31.5%, 17.7% and 8.7% at the LBE, UBE and SSS levels respectively.

5.2.4.9 Although there was a significant increase in the number of SS schools in the country, the following districts don't have a senior secondary school as of May 2014: Jarra Central, Sabach Sanjal, Kiang Central, Niamina Dankuku, Niamina West, Nianija, Upper Saloum, Tumana and Wuli East.

5.2.4.10 Although the completion rates for girls increased from 25.2% in 2010 to 27.9% in 2014, it is still lower by 3 percentage points when compared to boys in the same period

5.2.4.11 Low level of girls being admitted in technical training and vocational education.

**Figure II: Enrolment in Tertiary Institutions (2007-2010)**



Except for 2000 and 2010, the percentage of males at the tertiary level doubled that of females. However, this gap has narrowed significantly in the last two years. This is an indication that strategies at the national level to ensure gender parity at all levels are being realised. The challenge of a low female participation at this level remains significant.

<sup>17</sup> See Universal Periodic Report 'Report of Gambia National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) of the Annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1' (2010).



### 5.2.5 Recommendations

6.2.6.1 Although the gross enrolment rates at the lower basic and upper basic education levels for females are higher than for males, this is not the case at the senior secondary and tertiary levels. In addition, the ratio of females opting for Mathematics and the Sciences is also very low compared to their male counterparts. The following steps should therefore be taken to ensure that gender equality in education is achieved:

- I. Advocate for greater financial support for girls education to maintain and sustain high enrolment and transition rates through all levels of schools, from basic to tertiary.
- II. Engage donors for the provision of more scholarships/sponsorships to outstanding and needy female students, especially in mathematics and the sciences.
- III. Increase access through building new schools especially SSS in districts that do not currently have them.
- IV. Increase quality of teaching and learning in the Sciences at the tertiary level by providing well equipped laboratories and other learning materials.

### 5.3 Women and Health

The present 2007-2020 National Health Policy Framework (NHPF) seeks to 'promote equity (both gender and territorial) in access and affordability of quality health services, maintain ethics and standards, promote health system reforms and improve staff retention and client satisfaction. Other health sector policies currently being implemented include the National Reproductive Health Policy, National HIV AND AIDS Policy, the National Nutrition Policy and the National Population Policy and Plan of Action.

These health policies and programmes have made significant impact evident in the tremendous increase in government hospitals, effective, accessible and affordable reproductive health services, low prevalence rate of HIV as well as the decline of infant mortality rate.

#### 5.3.1 Actions Implemented, Progress Achieved since 2010:

**5.3.1.1 Government-** Policies and programmes have been developed and implemented in collaboration with other development partners like UNAIDS.

**5.3.1.2 The National Health Policy Framework (NHPR) (2007-2020)-T** Even though this policy was formulated in 2007 it continues to be implemented. The Policy addresses and ensures equity in access and affordability of quality health services. The NHPF has targeted twelve major achievement indicators, including the following, which have gendered significance and are in conformity with MDG targets:

- I. Reduce the maternal mortality ratio from 730 per 100,000 births to 150 per 100,000 by 2015;
- II. Increase life expectancy for women from 65 years to 70 years by 2015;
- III. Increase life expectancy of men from 62.4 years to 68 years by 2015;

- IV. reduce HIV AND AIDS prevalence rates: HIV 1 from 1.1% to 0.5% and HIV 2 from 0.7% to 0.2% by 2015;
- V. reduce the total fertility rate from 5.4 to 4.6 by 2015,
- VI. 2002 - D256,081; and
- VII. 2003 - D1,571,239

5.3.1.3 The achievement of the indicators is hampered by high attrition of senior and trained staffs, who are lured away by the more lucrative incentives in local private sector and international health facilities.

5.3.1.4 To redress these staff attrition trends, especially of female health personnel brain-drain, the PHPNP dedicated a sizeable amount of funding (\$1,883,000 or 9.4% of Project finances) and the largest chunk of programme activities to RCH, out of which training was well catered for, in order to build the capacity of the health staff. The World Bank continues to provide funding for the health human resources development strategies under the Global Fund, to support malaria, HIV AND AIDS and tuberculosis prevention and care. These are three major areas from which both Gambian women (the main victims) and men could continue to benefit directly, today, while they resonate into future gains.<sup>18</sup>

#### 5.3.1.5 Revised National Population Policy

With support from UNFPA, the National Population Policy was revised. This was as a result of a consultative process addressing the current population trends and dynamics in relation to sustainable socioeconomic and environmental development. The population policy is a document that takes account and provides guidance to the country's programme on reproductive health issues. The National Population Commission Secretariat (NPCS) oversees its implementation.

#### 5.3.1.6 The National Nutrition Policy 2010-2020

The NNP 2010-2020 has been adopted and is aimed at providing a holistic approach to mainstreaming nutrition through a life-long nutrition programme cycle, beginning from the pre-natal stage and takes cognizance of emerging nutrition-related non-communicable diseases. . The National Nutrition Agency (NaNA) is responsible for the implementation of the policy.

5.3.1.7 The policy also addresses issues such as reducing malnutrition, morbidity and mortality among the general population, especially the most vulnerable groups: pregnant and lactating women and children under five years of age, thereby contributing to the productivity of the population of The Gambia and the socio-economic development of the country. Research conducted by NaNA and the Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA) have shown that malnutrition continues to be a major public health problem in

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<sup>18</sup>Country Report on The Gambia 'African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012' 27.

The Gambia. It is said to be exacerbated by poverty, low incomes to purchase food, food deficits, rural-urban migration, environmental degradation, poor dietary habits, low literacy levels, a high population growth rate and the erratic seasonal rain fall pattern, which contributes to acute food shortages during the rainy season.

- 5.3.1.8 NaNA over the years has been implementing community based nutritional programmes to protect, promote and improve the nutritional status of the people. This programme targeted the promotion of salt iodization, vitamin A supplementation and included the baby friendly hospital initiative, integrated anemia pilot programme, and the baby friendly community initiative.
- 5.3.1.9 Government has also developed The Gambia Nutrition Surveillance Program. The aim of the program is to determine the prevalence and distribution pattern of malnutrition (wasting) for all the under-five children living in primary health care villages.
- 5.3.1.10 Health services obtained by government-funded health institutions are complemented by services provided by the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- 5.3.1.11 Increased budgetary allocation to address the resource needs of the MoH&SW with particularly attention to the reproductive health services funding.
- 5.3.1.12 Decentralisation of authority for the provision of social services: the development of the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) Policy highlights decentralization as one of the major areas for intervention to enhance autonomy of the local governments and to make them more responsible for the provision and financing of basic social services.

## 5.3.2 HIV

- 5.3.2.1 According to the most recent National Sentinel Surveillance (NSS) study conducted among 6120 antenatal women in 12 health facilities (3 hospitals and 9 health centres) in 2011, the prevalence of HIV-1 is estimated at 1.67% and HIV-2 at 0.07%.<sup>19</sup>
- 5.3.2.2 Measures are being taken to address the gender aspects of HIV AND AIDS. A comprehensive **National HIV AND AIDS Strategic Framework (NSF) 2009-2013** has been adopted to guide the national response to HIV AND AIDS. The NSF aims at reducing the percentage of women and men aged 15-49 who are HIV positive from 2.8% in 2006 to 1% by 2014; decrease mortality among PLHIV from 23% in 2004 to at least 10% by 2014; and improve quality of life for OVC, PLHIV and their families and other vulnerable groups by 2014.
- 5.3.2.3 **Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT), Anti-retroviral therapy (ART)**, services for prevention of parent to child (PPTCT), and treatment for infections are offered free of charge. As of 2012, the number of HIV counseling and testing has increased to 48 and 32

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<sup>19</sup> National Aids Secretariat, *Country Progress Report: The Gambia(Reporting Period 2010-2011)* (2012) 6.

PMTCT sites have been established. 69,533 people tested and all received their results in 2012 and 62% of HIV positive pregnant women received ARV prophylaxis for PMTCT by 2011. In addition, there has been a scaling up of the ART centers from 6 in 2007 to 10 in 2011 established at least one in each Health Region to increase access.

- 5.3.2.4 High survival rate among PLHIV 12 months after treatment increased from 82% in 2010 to 86% in 2012.
- 5.3.2.5 NAS supported the UTG, to established the Health Technician Training Programme, with 180 Graduates from Nurse Training Institutions & 80 from UTG. Support is also provided to Health Training Institutions (refurbishment, furniture, ICT equipment & teaching aids).
- 5.3.2.6 The GWEP has mainstreamed HIV as an issue to be addressed.
- 5.3.2.7 The framework on Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality and HIV has been launched and is currently been implemented.
- 5.3.2.8 Violence against women has been recognised as both a cause and consequence of HIV. NASS recently trained security officers at the TDA areas on GBV, HIV and human rights.

### **5.3.3 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) complement and supplement Governments efforts in the health sector:**

- 5.3.3.1 Both the Gambia Family Planning Association (GFPA) and BAFROW run the MCH and the Well Woman Clinic respectively. The Gambia National Association of AIDS Support Societies (GAMNASS), the umbrella body organization gives support to people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHIV).
- 5.3.3.2 Home based care services continues to be provided by CSOs such as Hands on Care, GRCS and organisations of PLWHA such as Santa Yalla, Nyanaiyikiling and Mutapola (a network of women and girls living with HIV AND AIDS). HIV AND AIDS prevention activities are carried out by), Nova Scotia Gambia Association (NSGA), TANGO, Lend A Hand Society (LAHS), Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS), The Trust Agency for Rural Development (TARUD), NASSO, Soul Talk and Concern Universal.
- 5.3.3.3 Action Aid International The Gambia (AAITG) as a principal recipient of the Global Fund HIV AND AIDS project provided nutritional and educational support to 5,467 and 712 Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) respectively. A total of 1500 PLHIVs were also provided with Home Based Care (HBC) services.
- 5.3.3.4 Peer Education activities continues to be implemented by NGOs such as the Nova Scotia Gambia Association [NSGA], GAMCOTRAP, BAFROW, The Gambia Girl's Guides Association, among others.

### 5.3.4 Tuberculosis (TB)

- 5.3.4.1 Tuberculosis continues to affect the productive age groups (15 – 45 yrs) with majority of detected patients being male. The TB epidemic is more concentrated in the densely populated area of the Gambia called the GBA, which has a total notification of 1536 cases with 912 new smear-positive cases (approximately 68% of all notified cases and 41% of new smear-positive cases in the country).
- 5.3.4.2 There have been considerable changes in the epidemiological situation of tuberculosis in the Gambia for the past years in relation to tuberculosis case detection. The reported prevalence of all forms of TB has been increasing significantly since 2006.
- 5.3.4.3 In the Global Fund grant Medical Research Council –The Gambia is currently conducting an Enhanced TB Case Finding (ECF) study within the GBA. The objectives of this study are to test the effectiveness of ECF strategy to increase TB case notifications and to assess whether a sustained ECF strategy can contribute in reserving the TB epidemiology in terms of the annual notification.
- 5.3.4.4 In line with the DOTS Strategy for tuberculosis control, there is a strong political commitment and leadership in the national response to TB in the Gambia. A national TB control programme has been established as well as the National TB Control Strategic Plan (2009-2012), which have been developed to serve as a guide for TB control and prevention.

### 5.3.5 Malaria

- 5.3.5.1 The Gambia's interventions against malaria adopts a holistic and participatory approach, which includes efforts of the government, the Medical Research Council (MRC), Centre for Innovation Against Malaria (CIAM) and other CSOs with funding from the Global Fund.
- 5.3.5.2 Data from the National Malaria Sentinel Surveillance (NMSS) Report (2011) illustrates a shift of vulnerability from children under five to children 5-14 years. This could be attributed to the high focus of malaria prevention and control interventions on children below the age of five and pregnant women who, hitherto, are defined as the vulnerable groups.
- 5.3.5.3 CIAM works towards reducing the burden of malaria and improving the health and well being of Gambians. The key areas of interest for CIAM are research and behaviour change communication. CIAM trained National Assembly members with the aim of building the skills and knowledge to enable parliamentarians to feel more confident about using evidence to review health related public policies after they have been designed and when they are being implemented. Journalists also received training, which aimed at pushing for evidence to be used in scrutinising health related public policies.
- 5.3.5.4 In 2011, the Global Fund through its Single Stream Funding grant to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare continued to fund the National Malaria Sentinel Surveillance System

(NMSSS), which was established under CIAM in 2008. The NMSSS provides data and monitors the changes in the epidemiological profile of malaria in The Gambia and their implications for decisions about malaria prevention and control.

5.3.5.5 According to the IV MICS Report, the use of bed nets was highest in children under 5 years of age and then declined with increasing age. In The Gambia, 41.1 per cent of under-5 children slept under a bed net. The free provision of insecticides-treated nets (ITNs) to children under 5 and pregnant women has greatly contributed to a reduction of the disease.

5.3.5.6 Through the National Population Policy, the government aims to improve the health status of women through the following objectives:

- I. reduce the proportion of girls who marry before 18 years (by 30% by 2009 and by 80% by 2015);
- II. reduce the number of girls below 20 years, who become pregnant by 2010 and to 80% by 2015;
- III. increase the proportion of deliveries attended by birth attendants to 60 % by 2010;
- IV. reduce the HIV 1 prevalence rate among pregnant women aged 15-49 from 1.1 % in 2005, to less than 1 % by 2015;
- V. reduce the maternal mortality rate from 730 per 100,000 live births in 2003 to 56 per 100, 000 by 2015; and
- VI. reduce the total fertility rate from 5.4 in 2003 to 4.5 by 2015.

5.3.5.7 The above interventions have also contributed to the following health achievements as indicated by the MICS 2010, 2011 Sentinel Surveillance, UNICEF at Glance 2012 and DHS 2013:

1. Infant mortality rate reduced from 75/1,000 in 2003 to 34/1000 in 2013;
2. Maternal mortality reduced to 433/100000 in 2013 from 730/100,000 in 2001;
3. Vitamin A supplementation (children under age 5) increased to 72.8 percent;
4. Pregnant women sleeping under insecticide-treated nets reached 36.2% in 2010;
5. Contraceptive prevalence rate increased to 13.3% in 2010;
6. Antenatal care coverage at least once by skilled personnel was 98.1% in 2010;
7. Presence of skilled attendant at delivery increased from 66.4% in 2003 to 84% in 2013;
8. Antenatal attendance from 90.7% in 2000 to 99% in 2010;
9. Women who knew where to be tested for, received counselling and tested for HIV during antenatal care increased to 73.2%, 62.8% and 45.5% in 2010 respectively;
10. Total fertility rate reduced from 6.1 in 1990 to 5.6 in 2013 indicating an annual reduction rate of 0.3%;
11. Under-5 mortality rate reduced from 116 in 2000 to 73 in 2012 representing an annual reduction rate of 3.9%;
12. Neonatal mortality rate reduced to 28 in 2012;

13. Vaccinations for Tuberculosis, Polio, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (DPT), Measles Hepatitis B, Yellow fever are all above 95% as of 2012;
14. 85% of pregnant women knew their HIV status in 2012;
15. HIV prevalence among pregnant women 1.67% 2011; and
16. HIV positive pregnant women receiving ARV for PMTCT 2011 62%.

### 5.3.6 Challenges

5.3.6.1 Health service related factors that impede progress in the attainment of improved maternal health include:

- a) Inadequate functional basic laboratory services (e.g. haemoglobin test, blood film; venereal disease reference laboratory and urine analysis);
- b) Unmet need for emergency obstetric care services due mainly to inadequate basic reproductive health equipments and supplies;
- c) Weak referral system especially from the community to health facility levels;
- d) Inadequate financial resources for scaling up health services;
- e) Acute shortage of skilled health professionals especially in the rural health facilities;
- f) Inadequate funding for the retention of trained health workers; and
- g) Availability of essential medicine and other medical supplies: access to generic drugs- especially for the poor, is further constrained by the patents rules of WTO.

5.3.6.2 Non-health related factors that impede the attainment of commitments:

- I. **Funding challenge:** The new NSF 2009-2014 has been costed. Whilst the GFATM is the major source of funding there are gaps that constrain the government's efforts towards financing vital activities that enhance development results. The counterpart funding provided by government and the other development partners was below the level required.
- II. Socio-cultural beliefs continue to prevent people especially women from making use of available health facilities.
- III. **Support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC):** The GFATM HIV program provides nutritional support to 62% (5070 OVC), out of a total of 8147 registered OVC. A maximum of 4 children per PLHIV family receive support. There is a big funding gap to cater for all eligible children per PLHIV family. There is an additional 500 children being supported under UNICEF at CaDO in Basse.
- IV. The high level of internal mobility, migrant labourers and poverty continue to constrain efforts in further reduction of HIV AND AIDS.
- V. Most programmes addressing girls vulnerabilities are heavily concentrated in the Greater Banjul Area, there is thus need to ensure scaling up for geographical coverage.

- VI. The provision of adolescent-friendly clinical services is limited and considered a major challenge. There is need to ensure accessibility and affordability of quality services at the point of demand, particularly for adolescent.
- VII. Early marriage, teenage pregnancy, sexual abuse and exploitations are equally major threats that can further increase the vulnerability of women to HIV infection
- VIII. **Attitude and Behaviour Change:** Stigma and discrimination against PLHIV have **negative** consequences on the intervention. HIV related stigma and discrimination has been manifested in many settings with long-term negative impacts on women living with HIV. Disclosure of their HIV status has resulted in blame, abuse and divorce.
- IX. A key outcome of the Abuja Declaration is that Heads of State pledge to set aside at least 15 per cent of their national budget to the improvement of the health sector. According to the 2012 National budget, health was allocated 12.7%. This is indeed a significant allocation. However, The Gambia is still unable to fulfill this obligation.

### 5.3.7 Recommendations

- I. Intensify efforts to mobilize resources for the full implementation of the Health policy;
- II. Through an appropriate health education programme, increase women's awareness of sexual reproductive health;
- III. Provision of STIs drugs and supplies in all facilities with a view to increase access;
- IV. Train health care workers on the syndromic treatment and management of HIV AND AIDS and other sexual transmitted disease with a view to provide proper treatment;
- V. Set up well equipped laboratories in all major health centres and hospitals;
- VI. Establish HIV AND AIDS clinics targeted specifically for most at risk populations
- VII. Provision and distribution of condoms to MARPs; and
- VIII. Monitoring and supervision of HIV AND AIDS services.

## 5.4 Violence against Women

### 5.4.1 Achievements

Several studies have been conducted on the phenomena of gender based violence.<sup>20</sup> The Gambia has enacted two innovative pieces of legislation to combat the menace of Domestic and Sexual violence against women and Children. These are the Sexual Offences Act 2013 and the Domestic Violence Act 2013. These legislation were premised on a study commissioned by the Women's Bureau on Gender

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<sup>20</sup>See Study on the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children in the Gambia (2003); Gambia ...the Smiling Coast," A Study of Child Sex Tourism and the Involvement of Dutch Tourists (January 2003); Violence against Women in The Gambia and its Intersection to HIV AND AIDS (2006); Baseline Survey on Gender-based Violence and Women's Land Rights in DA 9, Upper Niumi District, North Bank Region (2007); Violence against Women in The Gambia (2007); Raising Her Voice Baseline Survey on the Level of Awareness of Laws on Women Rights (2010); The Gambia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) reports; Desk Review of Gender Based Violence in The Gambia (2010); Situational Analysis of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in The Gambia (September 2010)



Based Violence (GBV).<sup>21</sup> Furthermore prior to the enactment of these legislations, The Constitution and other relevant laws of The Gambia have specific provisions addressing GBV.

#### **5.4.2 Constitutional Provisions**

The Constitution of The Gambia specifically provides for women to be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men as well as having the right to equal treatment with men, including equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities. (Section 28 (1) & (2)). Sections 20 and 21 generally provide for the protection from slavery and forced labour and protection from inhumane treatment respectively. The definition of “Discrimination” under the Constitution includes discrimination based on “gender” (Section 33.) Section 27 of The Constitution provides for the Right to Marry, and specifically states that, “men and women of full age and capacity” shall have the right to marry and found a family. This provision may have the effect of prohibiting child and early marriage.

#### **5.4.3 Criminal Code**

The Criminal Code provides for traditional offences relating to sexual violence against women, like; Rape, section 121. The maximum punishment in section 122 is life imprisonment. For attempted rape the punishment is 7 years section 124. Other non specific laws include murder, manslaughter, and common assault.

#### **5.4.4 The Women’s Act**

The Women’s Act provides an innovative and comprehensive provision for the protection of women from violence. Section 6(1) of the Act provides for a protection not hitherto provided for in the 1997 Constitution or any other law in The Gambia. It reads:

- (1) Every woman shall be protected against any form of physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm, suffering, or violence whether occurring in public or private life.
- (2) Any form of violence against women is hereby prohibited.
- (3) All Government Departments, agencies, organs, public or private institutions shall take appropriate measures to promote and protect women’s rights and their legal status from any form of abuse by any person, enterprise, organization or institution

5.4.4.1 Thus, the Act obliges government departments, agencies, organs, public or private institutions shall take appropriate measures to promote and protect women’s rights and their legal status from any form of abuse by any person, enterprise, organization or institution. It is pertinent to observe that the obligation to protect women from violence is imposed on Government and public institutions, organs and agencies and also private enterprises.

#### **5.4.5 The Children’s Act**

5.4.5.1 This Act provides for matters relating to the rights and responsibilities of children and amongst other things, provides for a criminal justice system for children. The Act protects children from all forms of violence and abuse, economic and sexual exploitation, trafficking and sale, including ensuring that they do not fall prey to prostitution networks

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<sup>21</sup>See JR Sallah ‘Desk review of the national laws, international conventions, treaties and best practices, relating to Gender based violence (GBV)’ 2011 commissioned by the Women’s Bureau.

or are engaged in hazardous work. It also prohibits child prostitution, harmful publications, child marriage and betrothals and harmful traditional practices.

5.4.5.2 It further provides for various protection measures on sexual offences against children in particular the girl child contained in Part IV of the Act 2005as follows:

- I. exportation and importation of children for prostitution (section 26)
- II. procurement of children for sex or prostitution (sections 30 and 34)
- III. kidnapping and abduction of children (section 35),
- IV. trafficking in children (section 39)
- V. Section 32 of the Children’s Act also criminalizes foreign travel, which promotes or encourages child prostitution.

5.4.5.3 The Act under section 19 expressly prohibits and eliminates all harmful traditional practices as applicable to children under the age of eighteen. However, it fails to define or emphasise particular practices.

#### **5.4.6 Domestic Violence Act 2013**

The National Assembly enacted this innovative piece of legislation on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013. It is aimed at combating domestic violence; provide protection for the victims of domestic violence; particularly women and children and for other related matters.

The Act is in line with international best practices for combating Domestic Violence and in particular the UN guidelines on legislation for GBV. Domestic violence under section 3 is given a broad definition to include physical abuse as well as sexual and economic abuse, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse. Section 4, provides for the definition of ‘domestic relationships’, which extends the frontiers of Domestic relationship beyond marital and family relationship to include several other intimate and close relationship. Section 6 reinforces that the consent of the victim is not a defense to a charge of domestic violence.

#### **5.4.7 Sexual Offences Act 2013**

This piece of legislation amends the law and procedure relating to the trial of rape and other sexual offences. The Act addresses some of the barriers that had in the past impeded the Trial of rape and other sexual offences. This widens the definition of Sexual act and coercive circumstances to include circumstances where the victim is induced into the sexual act and incorporates perpetrators who would hitherto have escaped punishment. The following new provisions are therefore contained in the Act;

- Incapacity of boy under fourteen
- Abolition of cautionary rule
- Evidence of previous consistent statements

- Evidence of period delay
- Evidence of psychological effects of rape
- Special duties of prosecutor
- Special duties of police in respect of bail application
- Rights of Complainant in bail application
- Prohibition of contact with complainant
- Exclusion of the public
- Prohibition of publication
- Evidence of similar offences by accused
- Evidence of sexual conduct or experience of complainant of rape or offence of an indecent nature
- Modification of existing law

From the above it is clear that this new legislation incorporates all the recent innovations for the trial of sexual offences and its enactment would greatly alleviate the suffering of women victims of sexual offences.

#### **5.4.8 Achievements and Progress made since 2010**

**5.4.8.1 Government's efforts-** The **Gambia National Plan of Action (NPOA)** on GBV 2013-2017 which was supported under the UNICEF/UNFPA Joint programme has been adopted. The overall objective of the NPOA is to “reduce the number of women who accept Gender Based Violence from 75.5% to 30%.” The formulation and implementation of Gambia's National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence, is part of efforts for the harmonization and coordination of interventions of both state and non-state actors in sensitization and discussions on traditional and cultural issues that affect the health and wellbeing of women and girls. The partnership for the implementation of the National Action Plan with civil society, religious leaders, community leaders and faith-based organizations is essential in enhancing local level commitment to the eradication of violence against women and girls.

**5.4.8.2 National Steering Committee on Gender Based Violence** was established in 2012 to coordinate interventions that address gender based violence in the country.

**5.4.8.3 National Plan of Action for Accelerated Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in The Gambia:** The Ministry of Women's Affairs and Women's Bureau, with support from UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme and Trust Fund developed a National Plan of Action for Accelerated Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in The Gambia. The purpose of the National Plan of Action is to serve as a tool in addressing gender inequality, reproductive rights and protecting the rights of women and the girls child, so as to promote an enabling socio-cultural environment that is conducive to male participation and the Elimination of harmful practices.

- 5.4.8.4 The Women's Act contains provisions that prohibit all forms of gender based violence, including harmful traditional practices against women and young girls.
- 5.4.8.5 Domestic Violence Act 2013 and Sexual Offences Act 2013 prohibit all forms Domestic and Sexual Violence against women adopted and integration approach to addressing the menace including; protection, prevention, punishment and rehabilitation of Offenders and Counseling and Integration of Victims.
- 5.4.8.6 Government, through the Department of Social Welfare and the law enforcement authorities, has continued efforts to support victims, enforce the existing laws and actively involve traditional institutions in the fight against all forms of violence.
- 5.4.8.7 Ministry of health has incorporated FGM/Cutting in the curriculum of the nursing school in 2010
- 5.4.8.8 In 2012 a data collection tool was developed to collect data on FGM/Cutting
- 5.4.8.9 There has been an in service training for health professionals on the management of FGM/Cutting also community sensitization on the abandonment of FGM/Cutting
- 5.4.8.10 Civil society contribution**
- 5.4.8.10.1 At the level of civil society, efforts by NGOs such as the Foundation for Research on Women's Reproductive Health Productivity and Environment (BAFROW) and Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices (GAMCOTRAP), in collaboration with Government, have developed programmes to address FGM and other harmful traditional practices. These efforts have recently been complemented by TOSTAN which is a joint initiative of Government and UNICEF, and Wassu/Gambia Kafo.
- 5.4.8.10.2 In 2012, the Government in partnership with UNFPA, SaveThe Children-International, and UNWomen have supported GAMCOTRAP as part of its efforts to accelerate the abandonment of FGM in The Gambia and promote gender equality. Activities included trainings of community based facilitators, community and religious leaders, women leaders, young people, as well as capacity building on Alternative Employment Opportunity for 22 circumcisers from Central River Region (CRR) North.
- 5.4.8.10.3 The **integration of issues regarding Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the school curriculum** has begun with the involvement of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. Three schools have been identified to pilot the teaching process.
- 5.4.8.10.4 **One-Stop Centre:** NGBV in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (Gender Education Unit), Attorney General's Chambers and Ministry of Justice, Women's Bureau, The Gambia Police Force (Police Child Welfare and Crime Units), Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital, Serrekunda

Hospital, FLAG, and AAITG are currently setting up the ‘One-Stop Center.’ It would ensure appropriate prevention of and response to GBV through a multi-sectoral approach that is well coordinated, less bureaucratic, sensitive and friendly. It will ensure the availability of all the necessary services ‘under one roof’ and provide a high standard of comprehensive care to victims and survivors of gender based violence in a confidential environment.

- 5.4.8.10.5 FLAG is implementing legal empowerment initiatives that enable women to be active participants in using the law. These interventions include the provision of legal services, such as legal aid and paralegals, capacity building and human rights awareness trainings. FLAG has recently trained rural women as paralegals as well as conduct sensitisation workshop for National Assembly Members on the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Bills. Other target groups include religious leaders, community and traditional leaders, journalists, women and girls.

#### 5.4.9 Challenges

- 5.4.9.1 Forms of abuse and violence that continue to hamper the growth, health and development of women and children in The Gambia are domestic and sexual violence, early marriage, forced marriage, and Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. The MICS IV Report 2010 indicated that 8.6 per cent of women married before they were 15 years, while 46.5 per cent were married before 18 years. It is not uncommon to hear of stories of young girls being taken out of school and forced into marriage by their family. . In the Gambia, the prevalence of FGM still remains as high as 78.3% although recent MICS study indicate a reduction with a new prevalence of 64 percent.<sup>22</sup>
- 5.4.9.2 In 2012, the Department of Social Welfare recorded a total of 1505 child protection related cases that were reported to it. Of these cases, 12 were rape involving children and 19 were cases of early/forced marriage cases. From January to March 2013, DWS has received 33 cases involving violence against the mother and child.<sup>23</sup>
- 5.4.9.3 Despite the enactment of The Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Act the capacity of the relevant institution to enforce these innovative legislations remains a challenge
- 5.4.9.4 The Constitutional provision sanctioning the application of customary laws continues to provide justification for proponents and practitioners of harmful traditional practices.
- 5.4.9.5 In spite of all the sensitization activities, FGM prevalence is still reported to be high with a new prevalence of 64 percent. Socio cultural perception of violence need to be addressed.
- 5.4.9.6 Reporting mechanisms for abuse and exploitation outside of the Greater Banjul Area are lacking, and regulatory guidelines and monitoring mechanisms on women and children protection issues are nonexistent at many levels. There is need to put in place such mechanisms.

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<sup>22</sup> The Gambia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 4) 2010; See Situational Analysis of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in The Gambia (September 2010)

<sup>23</sup> Department of Social Welfare.

5.4.9.7 Systems, procedures and practices must be established and entrenched for the effective protection of children through trainings, sensitization, lobby and advocacy in all levels and for stakeholders in child rights and child protection.

#### 5.4.10 Trafficking In Women and Children

##### 5.4.10.1 Achievements and Progress Made from 2010

- 5.4.10.2 The Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 is being enforced. This is a comprehensive piece of legislation that addresses, amongst other things, the menace of trafficking in women and children. The main purpose of the Act is to prevent, suppress, and punish those engaged in trafficking in persons, and to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of trafficking.
- 5.4.10.3 A **National Agency against trafficking** is also established to ensure the implementation of the Act. NATIP organized a march on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2014 followed by a sensitization campaign in the regions and the border posts and a lot of emphasis was made on trafficking of women and young girls.
- 5.4.10.4 The police in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies, and the Judiciary have adopted a vigilant and zero tolerance stance towards the detection, prosecution and punishment of offenders.
- 5.4.10.5 The Department of Social Welfare has been very vigilant in the securitization of adoption applicant, especially where children are to be taken overseas. All adoptions are finalised by the Children's Court.

##### 5.4.11 Challenges

5.4.11.1.1 The major challenges to curbing trafficking in women and children in the Gambia are:

- I. High tourist influx coupled with acute poverty, which makes young girls and women more vulnerable.
- II. The culture of silence acts as a stumbling block for the prosecution and punishment of offenders.
- III. The need to raise awareness on the challenges and the ordeals that young girls and women face when they are taken overseas by offenders who pretend to be sponsors and benefactors for a better life overseas.

5.4.11.2 The Children's Act 2005 provides for various protection measures on sexual offences against children in particular the girl child contained in Part IV of the Act 2005 as follows:

1. Section 26 prohibits exportation and importation of children for prostitution
2. sections 30 and 34 deals with procurement of children for sex or prostitution
3. section 35, kidnapping and abduction of children
4. section 39, trafficking in children
5. Section 32 of the Children's Act also criminalizes foreign travel, which promotes or encourages child prostitution.

5.4.11.3 The Act under section 19 expressly prohibits and eliminates all harmful traditional practices as applicable to children under the age of eighteen. However, it fails to define or emphasize particular practices.

5.4.11.4 In 2012, the Government in partnership with UNFPA, SaveThe Children-International, and UN Women have supported GAMCOTRAP as part of its efforts to accelerate the abandonment of FGM in The Gambia and promote gender equality. Activities included trainings of community based facilitators, community and religious leaders, women leaders, young people, as well as capacity building on Alternative Employment Opportunity for 22 circumcisers from Central River Region (CRR) North.

#### 5.4.12 Challenges

- I. The Constitutional provision sanctioning the application of customary laws continues to provide justification for proponents and practitioners of harmful traditional practices.
- II. In spite of all the sensitization activities, FGM prevalence is still reported to be high with a new prevalence of 64 percent. Socio cultural perception of violence need to be addressed.
- III. Reporting mechanisms for abuse and exploitation outside of the Greater Banjul Area are lacking, and regulatory guidelines and monitoring mechanisms on women and children protection issues are nonexistent at many levels. There is need to put in place such mechanisms.
- IV. Systems, procedures and practices must be established and entrenched for the effective protection of children through trainings, sensitization, lobby and advocacy in all levels and for stakeholders in child rights and child protection.
- V. Inadequate monitoring and effective implementing and enforcement of the domestic violence Act 2013 and Sexual Offences Act 2013
- VI. Lack of training and capacity building for law enforcement agencies
- VII. LACK OF PROPER SUPPORT SERVICES Provision of psychosocial and other support services is very crucial in assisting victims of GBV. However, this is also a major challenge. There is no Shelter dedicated exclusively to GBV victims. Thus DSW is constrained in providing the necessary temporary shelter when the need arises because the only available shelter caters for other persons in need of protection. Access is also a problem especially for victims without the GBA.
- VIII. Majority of victims of GBV are women and children and one of the main causes of GBV perpetrated against them is lack of empowerment. Most of the women particularly in the rural areas are not educated or gainfully employed. They are mostly in polygamous relationships and rely heavily on their spouses and family for sustenance. In most cases, the spouse cannot or refuses to provide for the family and that responsibility falls on them. These difficult situations especially where there are children, sometimes turn abusive and

traumatic for the women but because they have limited no other source of income except the husband's land. Therefore they continue to stay in these abusive relationships for fear of losing the right to till on the land as well as saving their marriage for the future of their children. If women are adequately empowered through education, livelihood skills, employment opportunities and micro finance through the PRSP II and other initiatives, it will greatly reduce the prevalence of GBV.

## **5.5 Women and Armed Conflict**

### **5.5.1 Achievements**

- 5.5.1.1 In any country where there are armed conflicts women and children are the most vulnerable. The constitution of the Gambia provides that the primary and principal functions of the Gambia Armed forces are to preserve and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of The Gambia, to aid civil authorities during emergencies and national disasters; to engage in productive activities such as Agriculture, engineering, Health and Education for the development of The Gambia The UNSCR 1325 provides that gender perspective be provided for during the peacekeeping
- 5.5.1.2 Recognising the adverse effects of conflict in nearby countries the Government of The Gambia has brokered peace talks in countries in conflict.
- 5.5.1.3 The Gambia is a party to UNSCR 1325 which calls on peace keeping operations to incorporate a gender perspective in all their work and the maintenance of gender equality at all levels of the entire mission. In line with this obligation, Gambian women security personnel have participated in a number of peace-keeping missions both in and outside the region.
- 5.5.1.4 In an effort to tap this natural potential of women, The Government of The Gambia has instituted several programmes and initiatives aimed at ensuring the full participation and representation of women in peace processes; including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post conflict reconstruction.

### **5.5.2 Achievements And Progress Made since 2010**

#### **5.5.2.1 Government's efforts include:**

- 5.5.2.2 The Gambia National Action Plan (GNAP) on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was formulated and adopted in 2012. The GNAP focuses on three main pillars: Prevention, Protection, and Participation. Under each of these pillars, strategic issues have been developed for the realization of each relevant article under the UNSCR 1325 as it affects the national context of The Gambia.
- 5.5.2.3 Efforts are being made towards attaining the UN Secretary General's target for 50% female representation at managerial and decision making levels of peace support operations. Security institutions in the country such as the Gambia Police Force have several women at or above the Superintendent rank. The Immigration Department has had at least three high ranking women officers while the Prisons sector also boasts of two senior women Officers, including a female officer who ascended to the apex rank of Commissioner. The



Gambia National Army also has demonstrated gender sensitivity in the senior command echelons.<sup>24</sup>

### **Civil Society Contribution**

**5.5.2.4** The West African Network for Peace Building (WANEP)– Gambia Chapter which was established in 2003 continues to be instrumental in conflict prevention initiatives for sustainable peace and development. It has a membership of 30 civil society organizations and maintains focal points in each of the 5 regions. It provides tailor-made training programmes for government stakeholders, security forces, civil society including grassroots communities. WANEP-The Gambia has been providing capacity on peace education, early warning and early response and peacebuilding monitoring and evaluation.

**5.5.2.5** WANEP leads the consortium of Civil Society Organisations on election monitoring. This consortium has monitored the 2012 and 2013 Local Authority, National Assembly and Presidential elections countrywide and has presented their reports to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The monitoring enhanced civil society participation and contributes to ensuring free and fair elections.

**5.5.2.6** The office of the Chief of Defence Staff coordinates The Gambian Armed Forces HIV AND AIDS Preventive Programme. (The Gambia Armed Forces has a Child Welfare Unit (GAF CWU) which was established by The Save Children Sweden and monitored by Child Fund The Gambia.

### **5.5.3 Challenges**

1. There is need to increase the number of women in top decision-making positions in the security services.
2. Despite the increased participation of women in peacekeeping missions abroad, The Gambia is yet to attain the 50% level required by the United Nations Resolution.
3. The Gambia is still yet to ratify the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

## **5.6 Women and the Economy**

### **5.6.1 Achievements**

#### **5.6.1.1 Policies and Programmes**

**5.6.1.2** The Gambia's framework for poverty reduction, food security and growth was outlined in the [Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment 2012-2015](#) (the successor document to previous poverty reduction strategy papers). The programme builds upon the

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<sup>24</sup> According to the Gambia National Action Plan (GNAP) on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2012).

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the PRSPs and the objectives of Vision 2020 and defines the overall government strategy for achieving sustainable growth and development in the medium term from 2012 - 2015. It recognizes that poverty reduction in rural areas requires priority investment in the agriculture, health and education sectors, taking an employment relevant public investment perspective.

5.6.1.3 Another key document, the Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy (ANRP) 2009-2015, was approved and launched at The Gambia's first-ever national farmers' conference. This policy is part of the government's commitment to transforming agriculture into a robust, market-oriented sector that makes an important contribution to poverty reduction and economic growth – and to meeting the country's MDGs.

5.6.1.4 The four strategic objectives that ANRP sets out for 2015 are:

- I. Improved and sustainable levels of food and nutrition security throughout the country, particularly among vulnerable populations (Women and children);
- II. A commercialized agricultural sector, ensuring competitive, efficient value chains and market linkages;
- III. Stronger public and private institutions to provide services and help reduce vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity; and
- IV. Sustainable and effective management of natural resources.

5.6.1.5 The country's most important blueprint for agricultural development is The Gambia National Agricultural Investment Programme (GNAIP) 2011-2015. Fully aligned with the goals of Vision 2020, the plan guides pro-poor investments. As the main pathway to sustainable development, it looks towards changing the orientation of the agricultural and natural resource sector from subsistence to commercial production, with a focus on smallholders. GNAIP thus serves as a basis for all donors in the sector to match their future interventions with government plans and priorities.

The estimated investment required to achieve full implementation of GNAIP is more than US\$200 million for the programme's six main components:

- I. Improvement of agricultural land and water management;
- II. Improved management of other shared resources;
- III. Development of agricultural value chains and market promotion;
- IV. National food and nutrition security;
- V. Sustainable farm development; and
- VI. GNAIP coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

5.6.1.6 The Government of The Gambia has also made strides in developing other sectoral policies: the Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010-2020, [National Youth Policy 2009-2018](#), the Employment Policy of The Gambia 2010 – 2014, the National Strategic Framework for the Development of Microfinance in The Gambia, The Gambia Trade Policy 2011, National Export Strategy, 2013 – 2017 and the National MSME Marketing Strategy 2014 – 2018, all of which have been anchored on MSMEs with women forming the main cohort of concern.. In future years, the full implementation of these policies will complement and sustain the country's broader socio-economic growth and sustainable development.

5.6.1.7 Although The Gambia is a party to the [Maputo Declaration](#), which obliges governments to allocate at least 10 per cent of their annual national budgets to agriculture, its annual budget allocation to the agriculture sector is around 7 per cent. However, the government is adopting a public-private partnership approach to fill critical investment and service gaps in the agriculture and rural development sectors. The private sector is expected to assume a lead role in providing enterprise investment resources and entrepreneurial management, while the public sector serves as a facilitator and catalyst. Public-private investments in the production and expansion of field crops, and in livestock and horticulture, will be especially advantageous.<sup>25</sup>

5.6.1.8 Employment of women in the non-agriculture sector has witnessed great improvement. The share of women in the non-agricultural sector is showing an upward trend. Out of total of 25,280 employees in the Civil Service Integrated Pay Scale (January to December 2011), females comprise 20.82 per cent (Africa Gender & Development Index Study in The Gambia 2011). The gender equality and parity in education and other actions overcoming social norms led to increase in the number of women employed in the vital areas of the economy. The female representation at the National Parliament has improved slightly from 6.5 per cent in 2006 to 7.5% in 2014. Thus, the proportion of female parliamentarians is well below the 2015 goal of 33%. There are 4 women of which 2 are elected and 2 nominated by the President. Although women's opportunities to partake in political decision-making have improved in recent years, women continue to be under-represented at all political level. The Gambia is very unlikely to achieve the set target for female representation in parliament as the next elections is 2017.<sup>26</sup>

5.6.1.9 The Peri Urban Small Scale Improvement Project covers small holder production credit schemes for mixed farming systems with low input for fattening of small ruminants, poultry and rabbits and egg and diary production. The Banjulding Women's Garden in the Western Region practices intensive breeding of exotic cattle in peri-urban areas. The scheme was promoted by the ITC under the PROCODEL Project.

5.6.1.10 The tourism industry in The Gambia contributes 16% of the GDP supporting over 10,000 direct and indirect jobs<sup>27</sup>. The absence of gender dis-aggregated data makes it difficult to assess the number of women working in the sector. The Tourism Master Plan (2005) provides the basis for improvement and orderly expansion of tourism in order to increase employment and economic benefit derived from the sector and proposes strategies some of which have a direct bearing on women. These include:

- I. Improving Gambian handicraft and its marketing through training;
  - II. Building the capacity of small and large professional associations in the industry to enable them to provide higher quality service to the industry;
  - III. Fostering public/private partnership for the development of the sector;
  - IV. Improving access to investment finance through the establishment of an investment bank;
  - V. Encourage responsible tourism through awareness building and education programme;
- and

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/en/country/approaches/tags/gambia>

<sup>26</sup> MDG STATUS REPORT GAMBIA 2012

<sup>27</sup> PRSP 11 page 66

VI. Improving the infrastructure and utilities at the TDA and the airport.

- 5.6.1.11 Some of the successes within the tourism sector in relation to the strategy include:
1. The training and other capacity building activities under taken during the FASE 11 and the CSIP have led to the production of an improved quality of products
  2. Partnerships between women and the sector are also felt in the provision of accommodation, transportation and cleansing services of high profile businesswomen who own and manage a hotel, tour operator businesses and travel agencies.
  3. A number of women also run their SMEs in and outside the *bengdula* such as hairdressing salons, juice pressing, tailoring, manicure and pedicure businesses that cater to a wide range of tourist needs and interests.
  4. Some women have senior level jobs such as managers, *sous* chefs, and accountants in the industry. The Minister of Tourism is also a woman.
- 5.6.1.12 GAMJOBS through UNDP is supporting a project on micro finance, training on food production and processing; and enterprise development for women. Among its key measures are training programmes of young entrepreneurs and vocational training for employment in agriculture, tourism, infrastructure and trade, establishing micro-finance fund to promote equal access to financial resources, and reinforcing labour market intermediation. Labour-intensive public work programmes in solid waste management and disposal and in small service jobs will create employment opportunities. To improve policy implementation, national labour market information system and poverty monitoring to generate more reliable data for formulation of policies and programmes will be upgraded. Macroeconomic, sector and social policies and programmes will be reoriented towards employment creation, and the capacity of Department of State for Trade Industry and Employment and National Employment Commission will be enhanced.
- 5.6.1.13 The NEPAD Spanish African Women Empowerment Project (NEPAD SPAWEP) implemented by the Women's Bureau seeks to enhance the capacity of the Bureau to give support to 25 women gardens all over the country, provide 40 labour saving devices as well as building of a storage and processing plant, training and IEC. The aim of the project is to eradicate poverty amongst women (target 100,000) by supporting them to improve and increase production capacity both in terms of quantity and quality, and to enable them by time saved through using labour savings devices to participate in self development and other social and economic activities.
- 5.6.1.14 The trade fairs organised by the EU National Authorising Office and The Gambia Chamber of Commerce provide a platform not only for the private sector and CSOs to showcase their work but also a market for them to sell their produce and to network and build partnerships with people in a similar trade or with similar interests. In addition to participating in the local trade fairs some individuals/organisations also participate at the regional and international levels.
- 5.6.1.15 At the community level, international and national NGOs and CBOs are involved in various aspects of agricultural production and overall willingness to go back to the land.

AAITG and VSO have spear headed the campaign on the food crisis in 2008 and have continued to engaged the Gambia.

- 5.6.1.16 Government to develop an action plan to mitigate the adverse consequences of the food crisis. Concern Universal through its Small Holder Irrigation for Livelihood Enhancement (SMILE) and TheGambia is Good (GIG) projects have greatly increased women's access to low cost technologies for drawing water and markets. Umbrella organisations such as NAWFA and the Women's Nako Organisation play a key role in advocating for women's access, ownership and control of productive resources including land. The Gambian Horticultural Producers and Exporters Association (GAMHOPE) and the Kotu Fruit Sellers Society are examples of initiatives that promote women's participation in the horticultural sector. The Association of Food Processors (AFP) adds value to Gambian products by processing or preserving them into a variety of cereals and preservatives for adult consumption and for complimentary feeds for infants. The products are now sold at in supermarkets and shops and are packaged and labelled to monitor their shelf life.
- 5.6.1.17 The Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) 2012-2015 is the successor to the Gambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II and its main thrust is to improve – inter alia- employment levels, per capita income, social services, gender equity and The Gambia's economic competitiveness. In recognition of gender equality and women's empowerment as key to the attainment of social and economic development, the Government has taken concrete actions to mainstream women into the development process in the past two decades. It has enacted the Women's Act of 2010 in which Government Departments and other public institutions are obliged to implement measures, policies and strategies to eliminate employment discrimination or segregation, and to include periodic training of personnel on gender and human rights, and the mainstreaming of gender perspective in planning and programming of all activities and initiatives.<sup>28</sup>

## 5.6.2 Challenges

1. Inefficient national coordinating and monitoring mechanisms;
2. Insufficient funding for job creation;
3. Preference for white colour jobs to blue collar jobs;
4. Insufficient information and advocacy for jobseekers;
5. Inadequate mainstreaming of employment issues into macroeconomic and sector Policies;
6. High illiteracy rate among the women population;
7. Lack of effective implementation and enforcement of the laws which provides for equal job and training opportunity among men and women;
8. Inadequate capacity building and training in the management of resources especially among the rural women;

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<sup>28</sup> PAGE 2012-2015

9. A number of special projects have been implemented for women. Yet women still form the majority of the poor. This could be attributed to their limited decision making even on resources that they own;
10. The seasonal nature of tourism and its vulnerability to exogenous shocks such as the world economic crisis translates into periods of unemployment and low level of wages of non-professional staff and low skilled hotel workers;
11. There is a need for continuous research and monitoring on the instruments related to child sex and responsible tourism to ascertain the extent to which the problem is being addressed; and
12. Inadequate labour saving devices and technology in the agricultural sector which is dominated by women.

### **5.6.3 Recommendations**

1. Review the current land tenure system to enable more communal ownership of land by women for both agricultural and other economic purposes.
2. Support the establishment of food preservation, processing, storage and distribution as well as improve divisional transportation networks for wider market access for women products.
3. Advocate for the establishment of a financial intermediation system that caters to the financing needs to investment programmes undertaken by women.
4. Ensure robust national economic with macroeconomic stability to enable effective investment planning and execution.
5. Advocate for rural communication infrastructural development, which affect women's work (access roads, telecommunication, electrification etc).
6. Institutional capacity building for women's groups and co-operatives and increase women access to finance and economic opportunities.
7. Support the National Women's Federation to serve as a platform for the effective participation of all women in national programmes.
8. Provide seed and cereal banks and support the development of women's co-operative banking, central marketing and consumer distribution outlets.
9. Support to value-addition to primary products and agro-businesses to raise farm and crop production to enhance women productivity and increased income levels.

## **5.7 Women in Power and Decision Making**

### **5.7.1 Achievements**

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- 5.7.1.1 Section 26 of The 1997 Constitution recognizes the right of women to participate in the political and public life. Similarly, policy decisions are also geared towards effective gender representation in all Government institutions and agencies as well as the private sector.

This has registered more women who are actively participating in politics as elected and nominated candidates. More women are also in key decision-making positions.

5.7.1.2 In addition, section 214(4) states that “in the composition of Government, women shall be fairly represented”. This section is under the chapter relating to the directive principles of state policy which only serves as policy guidelines and is not enforceable.

5.7.1.3 The Women’s Act under section 15 as highlighted earlier provides for temporary special measures to be adopted. This section imposes an obligation on every organ, body, public institution, authority or private enterprise aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women. This section becomes more relevant in the political arena and decision-making at all levels, where women are not legally barred from participating effectively on an equal footing with men, but may not be able to do so due to cultural bias in favour of men, and stereotypical perception of the role of women.

5.7.1.4 Gambian Women constitute 58% of the electorates (2003 Integrated Housing Survey Result), but only 10% of representation in the National Assembly are found to be women. There are 5 women of which 2 are elected and 2 nominated by the President. Thus, the proportion of female parliamentarians is well below the 30% goal.

**Table 3: Representation at the National Assembly by Sex, 2014**

Component	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes	Remarks
		Female	Male		
<b>Public Sector</b>	Members of National Assembly (elected)	2	46	48	
	Members of National Assembly (nominated)	3	2	5	
	Speaker of the National Assembly	-	1	1	
	Deputy speaker of the National Assembly	1	-	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	

Source: Country Report on The Gambia ‘African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012

In line with the principle of affirmative action by the top leadership has resulted in a cabinet with 33% female representation. The number of females holding ministerial appointments and management

positions in the public institutions has improved from 5 to 7 from 2007 to 2013. The Vice President and Minister of Women’s Affairs, Minister of Basic Education, Minister of Tourism, Minister of Environment, Parks and Wildlife, Minister of Energy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Attorney General and Minister of Justice. For the period under review, quite an impressive number of women are in the top decision-making positions. Table 4 below shows the current trend. The number of female Permanent Secretaries, increased from 3 (2010) to 5 (2011) and the number remain the same in 2011. For the female Deputy Permanent Secretaries, the number also increased. Several women held the position of Principal Assistant Secretaries and Technical Directors.

**Table 4: Decision Making Positions held in Government by Sex, 2011**

Public Sector	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes	Remarks
		Female	Male		
	Ministers <sup>29</sup>	6	9	15	Including a female deputy minister
	Secretary general	0	1	1	
	Permanent Secretaries	5	26	31	
	Deputy PS	15	27	42	
	Principal Asst .Secretaries	14	15	29	
	Senior Asst. Secretaries	6	17	23	
	Assistant Secretaries	13	16	29	
	Cadet Administrative Officers	13	11	24	
	Ambassadors and High Commissioners	5	25	30	
	Directors	9	45	54	
	Deputy Directors	2	21	23	
	Project managers	4	NA	4	
	Public Service Commission members	1	3	4	
<b>Total</b>		<b>93</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>309</b>	

<sup>29</sup>Please note that the number of female Ministers have increased to 7 as of June 2013.



Source:Country Report on The Gambia ‘African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012’

5.7.1.5 All the eight local government administrations (Area Councils and Municipalities) are headed by men. There is no female regional governor, but out of the five deputy governor one is a female. There are **39** District Chiefs and 1 paramount chief none of whom is a female; and of the 1873 villages in the country, there are only 5 female Village Heads (*Alkalolu*) a notable change in traditional decision-making structure.<sup>30</sup>

5.7.1.6 During the recent nominations for the Local Government Elections, of the **164** nominated candidates, only **13** (11 of the women were nominated by the APRC, 1 by NRP and 1 independent) were women. Of the 114 Wards, women candidates were unopposed in 5 wards. The women candidates were elected or won in 6 of the Wards contested.<sup>31</sup>

**Table 5: Local Top Positions by Sex**

Public Sector	Sex		Both Sexes	Remarks
	Female	Male		
Governors	1	4	5	
Deputy Governors	1	4	5	
Chairpersons of Councils	-	5	5	
Mayors	-	2	2	
Chiefs	-	48	48	
Ward Councilors (elected) <sup>32</sup>	15	104	119	
Alikalos	4	1869	1873	
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2036</b>	<b>2057</b>	

Source:Country Report on The Gambia ‘African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012’

5.7.1.7 Likewise, the Judiciary has in recent years witnessed a marked increase in the number of female judges with three females in the Court of Appeal,<sup>33</sup> while the female High Court Judges stands at 4. There are 7 female Magistrates, two female lawyers under the drafting

<sup>30</sup> AGDI (n 3 above) 32.

<sup>31</sup> Independent Electoral Commission.

<sup>32</sup> As of the Local Government Elections of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013, the number of elected women councillors has decreased from 15 to 11.

<sup>33</sup> Honourable Justice Amie Joof, Judge of the Court of Appeal was recently appointed as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

department, 1 Female Deputy Registrar of Companies; Bar Council President is a woman and also the Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

**Table 6: Judiciary Officers by Sex**

Public Sector	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes
		Female	Male	
	Solicitor General	-	1	1
	Deputy Solicitor General	1	-	1
	High Court Judges	4	7	11
	Court of Appeal Judges	3	1	4
	Magistrates	1	9	10
	Supreme Court Judges	1	6	7
	Lawyers at the Civil Division	3	3	6
	Lawyers at the drafting division	-	3	3
	Lawyers at the legal department under the Criminal Department	5	6	11
	Registrar of companies	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>55</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice 2011

5.7.1.8 Government has made major strides in realizing this right but more still needs to be done because women are still in the minority in parliament and other public offices and need to be encouraged. The proposal in the Draft Women's Bill that recommended a 30% representation of women in political and decision-making position was not incorporated when the Act was enacted. The 30% target is yet to be obtained.

## 5.7.2 Achievements

- 5.7.2.1 There is an increased number of women at top decision making levels. The Vice President and Minister for Women's Affairs, the Deputy speaker of the National assembly, Minister of Tourism and culture, Minister of Secondary and Basic Education and The Attorney General and Minister of Justice are all women. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>rd</sup> highest positions in the state are held by women: i.e. portfolios of Vice President and Deputy Speaker.
- 5.7.2.2 A conducive legal and legislative environment for the participation of women at all levels of decision making through the enactment of the Women's Act.
- 5.7.2.3 Women continue to contest for elected positions in both the National Assembly and at the local Government levels.

## 5.7.3 Challenges

- 5.7.3.1 Despite the considerable progress made The Gambia is yet to attain the requisite 30% representation at all levels. The Target has been attained at the level of cabinet, but the representation at the National Assembly and Local Government remains below the minimum required. As at 2010, in the National Assembly only 2 out of the 48 elected members are women plus 3 nominated members, making a total of 5 out of 53 members. Therefore the percentage of elected women members of Parliament is 4.2% and the total percentage of women in Parliament 10.4%. These figures are far below the Gambia's commitment to attaining gender equality in this field. There is need to encourage more women to assume top managerial positions and other decision-making roles in the interest of empowering them.
- 5.7.3.2 Socio-cultural beliefs and practices, like patriarchy continue to hinder the full acceptance of women and their participation in leadership positions. Cultural phenomena have created the stereotype 'impression that men are superior and women are inferior' and a 'socialization process [that] has also led men and women to perceive men as leaders and women as supporters.' These perceptions are alleged to "put women in the *private* sphere as wives, mothers and daughters and men in the **public** domain of decision-making", as well as the economic and political arena.<sup>34</sup>
- 5.7.3.3 The Women's Act did not adequately address this problem as meeting the target was not included as a legislative requirement.
- 5.7.3.4 The trend of excluding females from decision making positions is a reflection of the low status of women and other groups in Gambian society. There is need for the promotion of girls' and women's participation in politics so that they come forward in their numbers to vie for political office.

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<sup>34</sup>Fofana, Mariama, *Report on A Capacity Assessment of Women in Decision-making Positions* (2008) Women's Bureau 30.

## 5.8 The National Gender Machinery

- 5.8.1 The Minister responsible for women’s affairs is the Vice President of the Republic. The National Women’s Council and Women’s Bureau are the main Government gender machinery for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, and other Government laws and policies for the advancement of women.
- 5.8.2 The Women’s Act, 2010 under section 57 provides for the establishment and composition of the National Women’s Council. Section 66 of the Act gives a detailed list of functions of the Council all geared towards ensuring gender equality and the full and effective participation of women in all aspects of socio- economic development. Section 66 (1)(a) provides that the Council “develop methods for the integration and implementation of gender and women’s rights initiatives in all areas of Government activities” while Section 66 (1) (h) (iii) provides that the Council will advise the Government "on proper measures to be taken in mobilizing and integrating women as equal partners in the economic, social and cultural development of The Gambia."
- 5.8.3 The National Women’s Bureau is the executive or administrative arm of the council and is charged with its day-to-day administration, and the implementation of policy decision made by the Council. The Bureau is established under the Office of the Vice President as provided under section 70 of the Act.
- 5.8.4 The Council and Bureau, with the support of, and in collaboration with related institutional structures and civil society organization strive to create an enabling environment for the full realization of women’s rights.
- 5.8.5 The institutional set up of the national gender machinery is clearly set out in Figure 1 below.

**Table 2: National Gender Machinery**<sup>35</sup>

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Roles and responsibilities</i>
The Ministry of Women’s Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsible for the overall coordination and harmonization of efforts by all stakeholders.</li><li>• Establish appropriate mechanism for coordinating Gender Mainstreaming at all levels.</li><li>• Lobby, advocate and mobilize resource for the implementation</li></ul>

<sup>35</sup>Adapted from the National Gender Policy and the Women Empowerment 2010-2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of the Gender policy</li> <li>• Provide support to gender units and focal points</li> </ul>
Women's Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical support on gender mainstreaming to ministries, institutions, organizations, local governments bodies, civil society organizations and private sector.</li> <li>• Coordinate , Monitor and Evaluate the implementation process of the Gender Policy</li> <li>• Provide back stopping support in critical areas</li> <li>• Lobby, advocate and coordinate the sensitization process of all stakeholders on gender</li> <li>• Act as the Secretariat for the National Council for Gender and Women's Empowerment</li> <li>• Set standards, develop guidelines and disseminate and monitor their operations</li> </ul>
National Women's Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise Government on Gender Issues</li> <li>• Oversee the implementation of the Gender Policy at Decentralized level</li> <li>• Lobby and advocate for policy reviews and enactment of laws.</li> <li>• Sensitize and advocate on gender issues at grassroots level</li> </ul>
Government Ministries and Parastatals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate the National Gender Policy (NGP) into institutional specific policies, strategies and programmes.</li> <li>• Assess the needs of their respective ministries in the field of gender responsive planning, programming, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation and make appropriate recommendations for capacity building</li> <li>• Support the gender units and focal persons by building their capacity in gender analysis , planning and provide budget lines for their operations</li> <li>• Monitor, evaluate and provide disaggregate data on sector programmes and their impact on gender equity</li> <li>• Institute and implement affirmative action on short term basis to bridge the existing gender gaps</li> <li>• Partner with the Ministry of Women's affairs and Gender and the Gender Bureau on matters of Gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>• Mobilize , allocate and release resources for gender mainstreaming</li> <li>• Ensure institutional policies and programmes are gender sensitive and benefit women and men.</li> </ul>
CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate the National Gender Policy (NGP) into institutional specific policies, strategies and programmes</li> <li>• Develop and implement programmes that address key NGP intervention areas</li> <li>• Participate in the implementation committee</li> <li>• Monitor the implementation of NGP</li> <li>• Share information of institutional programmes with Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender through the Women and Gender Focal Point Network</li> </ul>
Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize and use The Gambia Gender Policy in development cooperation partnerships</li> <li>• Collaborate with Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender, Gender Bureau and National Women's Council on matters of gender mainstreaming</li> <li>• Establish mechanisms for ensuring gender responsiveness of</li> </ul>

		<p>development cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide financial and technical support for promoting Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in Development Cooperation.</li> <li>• Develop/ set-up capacity building incentives for promoting gender equity and women's empowerment in development cooperation</li> </ul>
The Gambia's Women's Federation	<p>2 Mobilizing women and men to advocate for and promote gender equality and women empowerment</p> <p>3 Serve as platform for networking and sharing of information among women and female youth</p> <p>4 Advocate for the effective implementation of adequate women empowerment projects/programmes for the advancement of women and girls</p> <p>5 Implement key economic empowerment project and support capacity enhancement of women organizations, groups and associations (particularly in training, provision of credit and financing, appropriate technology for labour saving, value adding, storage and preservation; market opportunities and infrastructure, housing, land and property, water facilities</p> <p>6 Support women in decision-making</p> <p>7 Lobbying and advocating for the ratification, domestication and implementation of international instruments related to gender equality, women and children's rights</p> <p>8 Sensitizing, educating and training civil society on human and legal rights, particularly women's rights, in order to address and change gender stereotypes</p>	
Gender Policy Implementation Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify priority gender issues</li> <li>• Plan for relevant sector interventions</li> <li>• Review progress in implementation of the policy</li> <li>• Advise national machineries on key issues and strategies to attain Policy objectives</li> <li>• Support of the monitoring and implementation of the policy</li> </ul>

## 5.9 NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY

5.9.1.1 The National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women 1999-2009 is replaced by the National Gender Policy and Women Empowerment (NGPWE) 2010-2020. The new policy framework serves as a comprehensive guide to the attainment of gender equity and equality through its Implementation Plan. It sets indicators to assist in gender mainstreaming from a human rights-based approach in planning, programming and implementation processes by sectoral departments, partners and other stakeholders. Its goal is to mainstream gender in all national and sectoral policies, programmes, plans and budgets to achieve gender equity and equality and women's empowerment in the development process.

5.9.1.2 The National Gender Policy has 8 key priority areas, namely:

- I. Capacity building for gender mainstreaming
- II. Poverty reduction, economic empowerment and livelihoods development
- III. Gender and education
- IV. Gender and health and HIV AND AIDS
- V. Gender human rights
- VI. Gender and governance
- VII. Gender and the environment
- VIII. Women's empowerment

5.9.1.3 Government has formulated and enacted the Women's Act of 2010 on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2010. The passage of this Act is quite historic and commendable for The Gambia as a nation. The Women's Act incorporated and domesticated both the CEDAW and the Protocol and also provides the legal basis for the realisation of the critical areas of concerned identified in the Beijing Platform for Action.

5.9.1.4 The Long Title of the Act provides that, it is:

‘An Act to implement the legal provisions of the National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women and Girls, and to incorporate and enforce the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa .’

5.9.1.5 The passage of the Act went through a very wide and comprehensive consultative process that involved all stakeholders including the legal profession, the judiciary, parliamentarians, senior government officials and policy makers, religious and traditional leaders, grass roots women, community leaders, and civil society organizations.

The Act is comprehensive and innovative and it signals The Gambia's fulfilment of its legal and legislative commitments enshrined in the Solemn Declaration. It recognises and gives legal effect and force to The Gambia's international legal obligations and commitments made towards upholding the legal status of Women.

## 5.9.2 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

### 5.9.3 1997 Constitution of the Gambia

5.9.3.1 The 1997 Constitution is the basic law of the land. The Preamble states that "the fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in this constitution will ensure for all time respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to ethnic consideration, gender, language or religion.....". Section 33(1) provides for the equality of all persons before the law and that no person shall be discriminated based on different grounds including gender. |

5.9.3.2 In spite of this Constitutional provision, Section 33(5) (c) and (d) provide exceptions for the non application of the non-discriminatory clause in matters of personal law as it relates to adoption, marriage, divorce, burial and devolution of property on death or other matters as well as customary law in respect of any matter for persons to whom personal and customary law are applicable in so far as it relates to discrimination.

5.9.3.3 Section 28 states that women shall *be accorded full and equal dignity of person with men* and shall be treated equally with men including *equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities*. This constitutional provision recognises the equality of men and women and the right to equal opportunities in all spheres. It is also in line with the CEDAW, the African Protocol, and the Declaration, as it seeks to eliminate discrimination against women. Due to the patriarchal nature of the society, women are not treated equally with men in all areas of their lives. A lot of efforts have been made on trainings and advocacy by the National Gender Machinery and various civil society organisations.

5.9.3.4 Section 26 states that every Gambian citizen of full age and capacity has the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to vote and be voted for in public office and to have equal access to public service without unreasonable restrictions. Though the phrase "unreasonable restrictions" have not been defined by the Constitution, it should be construed in such a way that will be discriminatory and discouraging to women.

5.9.3.5 A person who alleges that any of these provisions has been, is being, or is likely to be contravened in relation to himself or herself by any person, he or she may apply to the High Court for redress.



A directive principle under section 214(4) states “in the composition of Government, women shall be fairly represented”. This section is under the chapter relating to the directive principles of state policy which only serves as policy guidelines and is not enforceable. Government has made some strides in realising this provision by appointing women to the positions of Vice President, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Minister for Education, Minister for Tourism and Culture, Minister of Justice and Attorney General; Minister of Environment amongst others. However, more needs to be done considering the low number of women in Cabinet, Parliament, Local Government and other public offices.

#### **5.9.4 The Women’s Act 2010**

The Women’s Act, 2010 is the most comprehensive legislation on the rights of women which is also applicable to the girl child. The Act requires review of government policy on women with a view to bringing it in line with international best practices relating to the protection and enhancement of the rights of women. It also requires all public and private institutions to be guided by the national gender policies, in the formulation and implementation of any policies, initiatives and programmes within their institutions or bodies.

#### **5.9.5 Access to justice and equal protection before the law**

Section 7 of the Act provides that every woman is entitled to equality and justice before the law and to equal protection of the law. Government is obligated to provide legal aid support; ensure law enforcement organs are equipped to effectively interpret and enforce gender equality rights; ensure that women are equitably represented in the judiciary; and take adequate steps for reform discriminatory laws.

#### **5.9.6 Elimination all forms of discrimination**

Section 14 of the Act obligates government to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. The provision is quite comprehensive and calls on Government Departments and other public institutions to implement measures, policies and strategies to eliminate discrimination, including periodic training of personnel on gender and human rights, and mainstreaming gender perspective in planning and programming of all activities and initiatives.

#### **5.9.7 Temporary special measures in favour of women**

Section 15 deals with temporary special measures to be adopted by every organ, body, public institution, authority or private enterprise aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women. Under this section a distinction is made between *de facto* and *de jure* discrimination. Considering the social and cultural set up of The Gambia, there may be instances where even though the law does not create or cause any impediment for women, the social and cultural environment may not be conducive for the achievement of equality. In such an instance, Government and all private institutions are called upon to take positive steps to achieve genuine *de facto* equality.

### 5.9.8 Challenges

- I. Deep rooted cultural practices that continue to affect women's ability to make key decisions even those that directly affect them.
- II. Other challenges include among others human resource, logistical, financial and communication constraints.
- III. Religious justification of male dominance.
- IV. Low educational levels and high poverty among women.

### 5.9.9 Recommendations

- I. Through traditional and religious leaders, sensitized the public on the need to engage women at all level of decision making.
- II. Advocate for the appointment of more women in key decision making positions in both the public and private sector.

### 5.9.10 Human Rights of Women

5.9.10.1 It is provided for under Section 17(2) of the Constitution of the Gambia that “every person in the Gambia what so ever is his or hers race, colour, gender, language, religion, political, or other opinion national, or social origin property birth, or other status shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of individual. The Gambia has ratified all the major International and Regional Instruments Addressing the human rights of women. Both the National Women's policy-1999 to 2009 and the National Gender Policy and Women Empowerment 2010-2020 were based on the principles enshrined in CEDAW, the Beijing Platform of Action, the African Protocol on the Rights of Women and Declaration.

5.9.10.2 The Women's Act 2010 is aimed at promoting and ensuring the full realization of the rights of women, which also includes the girl child. Part II of the Act effectively incorporates obligations under international instruments for women's human rights protection. These provisions include:

- I. Section 4- Right to Dignity
- II. Section 5- Right to life and security of the person
- III. Section 6- Protection from Violence
- IV. Section 7- Access to Justice and Equal protection before the law
- V. Section 8- Right to Freedom of Expression
- VI. Section 9- Right to Freedom from Discrimination.
- VII. Section 10- Prohibition of Discrimination
- VIII. Section 11- Right to movable and immovable Property
- IX. Section 12 & 13 Matters relating to Enforcement of Rights and Jurisdiction

- 5.9.10.3 These provisions incorporate the Constitutional provisions, relating to protection of Fundamental Human Rights, but making them more specifically applicable to Women. Section 6 as highlighted earlier on protection from violence, is however innovative, as it provides for a protection not hitherto provided for in the Constitution or any other law in The Gambia.
- 5.9.10.4 Section 15 deals with temporary special measures to be adopted by every organ, body, public institution, authority or private enterprise aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women. Under this section a distinction is made between de facto and de jure discrimination. Considering the social and cultural set up of The Gambia, there may be instances where even though the law does not create or cause any impediment for women, the social and cultural environment may not be conducive for the achievement of equality. Here, government and all private institutions are called upon to take positive steps to achieve genuine de facto equality.
- 5.9.10.5 The innovative provisions are still limited by the constitutional provision relating to the observance and enforcement of personal law in the area of marriage, divorce, and devolution of property at death. These cover matters relating to customary and religious law that affect the lives of over 90% of women in The Gambia. Despite several awareness campaigns by the national gender machinery and other civil society organization, the problem still persist.
- 5.9.10.6 Further protection for the human rights of girls is provided in the Children's Act, 2005.

#### **5.9.11 Achievements**

- I. Currently, there are ongoing efforts for the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission.
- II. The Fundamental Human Rights Provisions of The Constitution of The Republic of The Gambia 1997 is linked with best practices for the protection of such rights.
- III. The Constitution expressly recognizes and protects the Human rights of Women and expressly prohibits discrimination based on Gender.
- IV. The Women's Act, 2010 serves as the comprehensive legislation on the rights of women.

#### **5.9.12 Civil society contribution**

- 5.9.12.1 FLAG has assisted in the drafting of the Women's Act 2010, Sexual Offences Act and Domestic Violence Act 2013. They have developed a draft strategic plan, which is yet to be approved, but their activities are based on the strategic plan. This includes a series of training and sensitizations on the legislations mentioned above in most of the regions within the country, aiming to reach those at the grassroots level, the litigation of thematic issues within our jurisdiction on the provisions of the Women's Act including women's rights to an equitable share in jointly developed matrimonial

properties, right to divorce and inheritance subject to their personal laws, and maternity leave permissions, in which they have gotten judgments in their favour. A number of publications have been made, such as the Simplification of the Children's Act, Paralegal Training Manuals, Gender Based. ACDHR and the Foundation for Legal Aid and Research have contributed immensely to the realization of women's human rights.

- 5.9.12.1 Other important documents worthy of note is the Violence Training Manual, Sharia (Personal Laws) Training Manual and Bi-Annual Newsletters all centred towards achieving equitable rights for women.

### 5.9.13 Challenges

- I. The limitations in the Constitution act as a stumbling block in the realization of the full enjoyment of human rights for women.
- II. A sustained sensitization and awareness raising campaign is needed to ensure a change in behavior and attitude of both men and women to ensure that women enjoy their full fundamental human rights and freedoms.
- III. There should be a comprehensive review of all the laws and policies of the Gambia to ensure compliance with all international and regional instruments that guarantee the full enjoyment and protection of the human rights of women.<sup>36</sup>
- IV. Only a minority of the women are familiar with the human rights instruments. These need to be disseminated as widely as possible so that women know when their rights are being violated and what to do under such circumstances.
- V. Women would rather use informal forms of mediation so the Alternate Dispute Mechanisms and the Office of the Ombudsman are institutions that improve women's access to justice.
- VI. The Constitutional provision sanctioning the application of customary laws continues to provide justification for proponents and practitioners of harmful traditional practices.
- VII. Inadequate resources for implementation of the Women Act 2010 and other relevant legislations addressing women's human rights.

### 5.9.14 Recommendations

- I. The government should intensify and focus on implementation of relevant acts.
- II. Through civic education and other mechanisms, sensitise women on all the relevant acts.
- III. Through donors, provide adequate resources for the full implementation of the all the relevant acts.

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<sup>36</sup> SDG 2013

### 5.9.15 Personal law and Property Rights

- 5.9.15.1 The inheritance rights of a woman are determined by her personal law, as in The Gambia, inheritance is a matter for personal and customary law. The Sharia Law is applicable for Muslims, statutory law for Christians and customary law for persons who are traditionalist. This means that apart from a few mandatory exceptions contained in laws like the Women's Act, 2010 and the Children's Act, 2005, the applicable family law to the people of The Gambia is dependent on one's personal law.<sup>37</sup>
- 5.9.15.2 The 1997 Constitution does not have a specific provision with regards to women's ownership of land. However, section 22 deals with the protection from deprivation of property. This section can invariably protect land ownership.
- 5.9.15.3 The Women's Act contains several provisions in relating to ownership to land, namely:
- I. Section 41 states that a woman has the right to acquire her own property and administer and manage it freely.
  - II. Section 43 guarantees women's equitable rights as men in case of separation, divorce or annulment of marriage.
  - III. Section 33(4) goes on further to ensure equitable sharing of the joint property derived from the marriage.
  - IV. Section 44 protects widow's rights and provides that a widow has the right to an equitable share in the inheritance of the property of her husband.
  - V. Government is obligated under section 52(2) to take all appropriate measures to promote women's access to, and control over, productive resources such as land, and guarantee their right to property.
- 5.9.15.4 However, sections 43 and 44 dealing with widow's rights and right to inheritance are subject to personal law. These two provisions have the effect of maintaining the status quo and reflecting the position of the law prior to the enactment of the Women's Act. An innovation is found in section 43 which is not subject to personal law.
- 5.9.15.5 In The Gambia, there are two main types of land tenure systems namely the State Land and Customary land. The formal land tenure system comprises of leaseholds and freehold tenures. The State Land's Act 1991, provides for granting of leases over state lands. Under this legislation women are equally as eligible as men for such a grant. However, the Act does not address the special needs of women.
- 5.9.15.6 The acquisition of customary land under the informal system remains a complex issue for women. According to a study commissioned by AAITG, it found that 73% of Gambian women don't own land.<sup>38</sup> It was also found that in all the communities studied, land is

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<sup>37</sup> See sec 7 of the Constitution.

<sup>38</sup> AAITG 'Women's Access and Ownership' 2012.

communally owned but controlled by men. Traditionally, women have full access to the lowlands where rice is grown while men dominate the upland. This situation is found in most parts of the country particularly in areas where rice cultivation is heavily practiced such as LRR, NBR, CRR-North and South, and URR north. In addition, women's access to land is limited because they can only have access to it, as long as they live in their family home or husband's wife.

- 5.9.15.7 In terms of the right to housing, it is not provided for under fundamental rights but rather as a directive principle of state policy. This means that, the particular right is not justiciable. There is limited constitutional protection and enforcement of socio-economic rights in The Gambia. The Women's Act under section 49 provides for the rights to adequate housing.
- 5.9.15.8 Although there are schemes and programmes implemented by both Government and other bodies aimed at eradicating poverty, the resulting constraints in education, health, income, and legal rights prevent women from participating effectively in national development.

## **5.9.16 Achievements And Progress Made since 2010**

### **5.9.16.1 Government**

- 5.9.16.1.1 The Women's Act has comprehensive provisions relating to the inheritance rights of women and seeks to ensure that women are granted these rights on an equitable basis.
- 5.9.16.1.2 The Judiciary has embarked on intensive training programmes for Cadi's (Islamic Judges), and other practitioners in the Islamic courts to ensure that they are adequately equipped to interpret the applicable law consistently and equitably.
- 5.9.16.1.3 The importance Government of the Gambia attaches to poverty alleviation is manifested in the existence of many policies. The PAGE seeks to deliver and sustain a 10 per cent GDP growth with emphasis on employment creation and income generation, particularly in the productive sector of agriculture where most of the poor earn their livelihoods. Tackling youth employment is also a central strategy of the PAGE. Other policies put in place by government to reduce poverty have been articulated in Vision 2020, PRSP I & II, Trade and employment policies and programmes, National Agricultural Investment Programme, Public Expenditure Reviews of the PRSP sectors of Education, Health, Agriculture, the National Strategy for Food Security and the National Nutrition Policy.

### **5.9.17 Civil Society**

- 5.9.17.1 Several civil society organizations such as AAITG, NAWFA, ADWAC, and ACTIVISTA are advocating for adequate land and other productive resources for women.

5.9.17.2 The FLAG employs a dynamic approach to women's rights advocacy aimed at securing gender equality in The Gambia and ensuring access to justice for women and girls whose rights are violated. In two recent unprecedented landmark decisions relating to the enforcement of the Women's Act, the High Court in *Matty Faye v Dawda Jawara*<sup>39</sup> and *Karla Keita v Mustapha Dampha*<sup>40</sup> declared equitable share of the joint property in accordance with section 43 of the Women's Act which is a replica of article 7 of the African Women's Protocol on equitable distribution of matrimonial property. In both cases, the High Court held that the plaintiffs (women) had beneficial interest in the property resulting to equitable shares in matrimonial property based on monies that they contributed in the development of the property. These cases clearly illustrate that the Women's Act 2010 can be instrumental in ensuring that women enjoy their rights (e.g. property rights) in case of separation, divorce or annulment of marriage. It also ensures that divorced women will no longer be disadvantaged where they have contributed substantially on acquisition and development of matrimonial properties, irrespective of whether the property is registered in their names or the names of their spouses.

### 5.9.18 Constraints

5.9.18.1 Law reform and legislation relating to customary and religious laws has always been a very difficult and mammoth task, and have always been received with great resistance by all stakeholders including men and women. There is need to solicit women's input into necessary changes in legislation relating to personal laws as well as involve men.

5.9.18.2 Lack of knowledge of personal law and qualified personnel to preside over sharia cases remains a challenge. FLAG in addressing the problem of inadequate legal practitioners to represent women in the Cadi Courts, recently trained 11 members on Sharia law who were certificated to appear before the Cadi Court, thus, ensuring that legal services are provided in order to ensure that their rights are enforced.

5.9.18.3 Inheritance in The Gambia is a matter of personal and customary law. Inheritance rights of a woman are therefore governed by her personal law which could be Sharia Law for Muslims or customary law for traditionalists. Even in light of the Women's Act, many women continue to face discrimination in the area of inheritance.

5.9.18.4 Widows' rights to the use and control of land need to be established as a priority policy issue.

### 5.9.19 Women and the Media

#### 5.9.19.1 Achievements

##### Policies and Laws

5.9.19.2 A central consideration within the mandate of MOICI is to create and sustain the enabling environment within which a professional and committed press will inform, educate and

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<sup>39</sup> HC 427/11/MF/059/F1; Matty Faye was represented by FLAG (Mrs Janet Sallh-Njie, former President and Ms. Neneh Cham, current President).

<sup>40</sup> Karla Kieta was represented by a male lawyer, Mr. Edirissa Mansajang Sisohor who worked closely with FLAG.

entertain the people of The Gambia and the world with factual, truthful and developmental attitudes underlining their work both as news gatherers and as watchdogs for good governance<sup>41</sup>.

- 5.9.19.3 The 1.8 million people in The Gambia are currently being served by Gambian Media that boasts 7 newspapers (dailies, bi-weeklies, and weeklies), nearly a dozen specialized periodic newsheets or magazines), and 23 broadcast stations (national and community radios). Most of these outfits are being run and managed by people with minimal exposure or none at all in their chosen fields of work. This leaves a media fraternity operating in a milieu that is fraught with dangers, considering that they are working in a field controlled by traditional ethics and conditions of law that cannot be violated either by error or intent.
- 5.9.19.4 In the absence of a professional intermediary body between Press and Government, contraventions of press law and ethics have had to receive the direct scrutiny of Government. This necessity has encouraged the adverse scrutiny of local and international press bodies as to what the parameters of government should be in policing of aberrations in the press. In recent times the outcry has been taken up by voices outside the jurisdiction of The Gambia on the Internet with even more divisive consequences.
- 5.9.19.5 In view of the above a national ICT Policy has been formulated and the government development blue print aims at making the country into a silicon valley by 2020. The Information and Communications Act, 2009 provides the policy framework for the restructuring, development, and regulation of the information and communications sectors in The Gambia and for connected matters. It covers the technical aspects of broadcasting such as allocation of frequency and issuing of licenses.
- 5.9.19.6 Sections 25, 207, 208 and 211 of the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia has the following provisions which are pertinent to the BPFA. These provisions guarantee freedom of speech and expression of the individual, the press and other media. freedom and independence of the press; and, instructs state authorities to take positive measures to promote diversity in the state owned media and to afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.
- 5.9.19.7 With the exception of state owned media, all newspapers, journals, magazines, radio station and broadcasting stations are required to be registered in order to operate.

#### 5.9.20 CSOs in the Media

- 5.9.20.1 GAMCOTRAP, GFPA, have media programmes targeting women and youth. GAMCOTRAP's and APGWA have been conducting intensive and sustained training for Traditional women Communicators. This has empowered the women to develop

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MOICI Strategic Plan 2014 - 2018<sup>41</sup>



messages on FGM/C, early marriage, violence against women, etc. GFPA have media units that produce video documentaries on important issues affecting women's lives.

- 5.9.20.2 A number of media associations and networks exist that provide an entry point for mainstreaming gender in the media. The Gambia Press union continues to build capacity of its members through short-term training activities on gender reporting. The Network of Traditional Communicators, an umbrella organisation of traditional media practitioners is a member of the population and development task force and the capacity of its members is constantly being built to deliver specific development messages. Associations such as the Association of Health Journalists also play a role in and creating awareness on women issues and the girl child.
- 5.9.20.3 The young people in the Media are a dynamic and growing organisation of child advocates whose voices are heard not only on the national scene but some of its female members have participated in the UN Forums for children and in the UN Summit on the MDGs. They organise National Child Friendly Awards to recognise the work of adults who promote and protect the rights and welfare of children and young people in The Gambia.

**5.9.21 ICTS for Development-** The Government promotes women in ICT through the provision of an enabling environment for the private sector development. The period under review has witnessed the emergence of a wide range of the new communication technologies such as Internet and the GSM companies. Women form a significant number in this area and are employed in senior management positions.

#### 5.9.22 Challenges

- I. Most of the private media outfits (print and electronic) are owned and managed by men.
- II. Both the public and private media do not provide space for divergent and alternative viewpoints due to the self-censorship that operates. Generally the stereotypes of wider society are maintained in the way women and women's issues are portrayed.
- III. There is no female editor in chief in any of the present newspapers.
- IV. Commercialization of public media has threatened women's adequate access to the electronic media as they cannot afford the costs of production.
- V. The high license fee acts as a deterrent for any female who would want to start a newspaper or a radio station.
- VI. The new ICTs have opened a new world for women and girls in terms of access to information on a timely basis and the ability to communicate. However, they also make them vulnerable to abuse and sexual exploitation. The free phone calls offered by the GSM companies throughout the night acts as a source of distraction to young girls. Incentives to customers should not be detrimental.

#### 5.9.23 Recommendations

1. Establish a mechanism of dialogue between the government and the media to enable a smoother working relationship than what currently obtains.
2. Commence the proposed journalism programme at the University of The Gambia and ensure that it meets international standards.

3. Establish a national standard for media houses and self regulating infrastructure.

#### 5.9.24 Women and the Environment

#### 5.9.25 Achievements

##### Policies and Programmes

- 5.9.25.1 Following nearly two decades of severe environmental degradation, the Government of The Gambia undertook the implementation of a programme of environmental and natural resource management entitled Gambia Environmental Action Plan (GEAP).The GEAP provides the framework under which women's role and participation in environmental management can be built.
- 5.9.25.2 Under the leadership of the Office of the Vice President, a National Disaster Management Policy, Act and Action Plan were developed. Regional Disaster Management Committees (DMC) were formed under the various LGAs to coordinate and manage disaster relief in their regions among other things.
- 5.9.25.3 The government of The Gambia through the Ministry of Agriculture has constructed dykes in many communities aimed at reducing the impact of salt intrusion in rice fields.
- 5.9.25.4 The national *set setal* days (Clean the nation exercise) have created awareness and served as a vehicle for social mobilization to encourage people to take ownership of cleaning their environment. This strategy has contributed to reducing the incidents of malaria and other diseases by controlling the breeding of mosquitoes and other vectors. Women's groups participate proactively in the national cleaning days and need to be supported in their endeavours.

#### 5.9.26 Challenges

- I. The concept of carbon emissions and climate change is generally out of the scope of many women and capacity building activities need to be put in place to address environmental issues.
- II. Women bear the brunt of natural disasters as they still have to carry out their reproductive roles under very harsh conditions. They need to be supported during such trying times.

#### 5.9.27 Recommendation

1. Involve women in the assessment of environmental impact of all projects and programmes that affect them directly.

#### 5.9.28 The Girl-Child

#### 5.9.29 Achievements

- 5.9.29.1 As a State Party to both the CRC and the ACRWC, The Gambia commits to taking appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation, including sexual abuse.
- 5.9.29.2 The state in fulfilling its obligations, have enacted legal instruments and formulated policies for the protection of children in The Gambia including the Children's Act of

2005.<sup>42</sup>The Act was promulgated to ensure the effective enforcement of the CRC and the ACRWC through the incorporation of their provisions into national law, so that it can create legally enforceable obligations in which government can be held accountable. The Act is the most comprehensive piece of child rights legislation that contains all laws relating to the rights, welfare and care of children in The Gambia. It harmonizes all the laws that previously existed in the country in relation to children. It also filled in the gap in the Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia which lacked detailed provision on child rights and the issues of children.

- 5.9.29.3 The Children's Act protects children from all forms of violence and abuse, economic and sexual exploitation, trafficking and sale, including ensuring that they do not fall prey to prostitution networks or are engaged in hazardous work. Section 59 (1) prohibits the recruitment of children into **"any of the branches of the armed forces of The Gambia or other security agencies"** while **Section 59 (2) obliges the Government or any other relevant agency or body to "ensure that no child is directly involved in any military operations or hostilities."**
- 5.9.29.4 Section 27 of the 1997 Constitution states that "men and women of full age and capacity shall have the right to marry and found a family" and such a marriage shall be based on the "free and full consent of the intended parties."
- 5.9.29.5 Section 24 of the Children's Act prohibits child marriage even though this is subject to the provisions of any applicable personal law. Section 25 of the Act prohibits parents, guardians or any other person to 'betroth a child to any person; make a child the subject of a dowry transaction; or give out a child in marriage.'" Section 28 of the Women's Act prohibits parents and guardians from withdrawing girls from school for the purpose of marriage.

### 5.9.30 Achievements and Progress Made since 2010

#### Government

- 5.9.30.1 The enforcement of the Children's Act prevent and protect children from curb the menace of abuse of girls.
- 5.9.30.2 **Decentralization of the Children's Court:** There are 2 additional Children's Court in Brikama and Basse respectively to provide a criminal justice system for Children.
- 5.9.30.3 The establishment of a Child Welfare Unit at the Police Headquarters and Child Welfare Officers in all Police stations to handle matters relating to young offenders and victims.
- 5.9.30.4 There has been an increase in the number of Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) - 64 in all regions of The Gambia, 5 adolescent neighborhood watch groups (ANWG's) in the tourism industry areas, with the support of UNICEF.

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<sup>42</sup> Other laws enacted include: Tourism Offences Act of 2003, and the Trafficking in Persons Act of 2007.

- 5.9.30.5 24 Hour Hotline:** The Department of Social Welfare is running a 24-hour toll free hotline that both children and adults can call and report violence and abuse cases or seek assistance and guidance.
- 5.9.30.6 Shelter:** DSW has established a Shelter for abused Children,
- 5.9.30.7 DSW has decentralized in 3 regions, West Coast Region, Upper River Region and Lower River Region.

### **5.9.31 Civil Society contribution**

- 5.9.31.1 Several Civil society organization including CPA, Nova Scotia Gambia Association, GAMCOTRAP and other youth advocates are collaborating closely with Government departments on issues relating to child protection.
- 5.9.31.2 **National Child and Youth Advisory Board:** With support from Save The Children-Sweden and technical support of CPA, a National Child and Youth Advisory Board was recently established tasked with the responsibility of facilitating exchanges of skills and information among children and how they can be better involved in the fight against violence against children and the monitoring of the implementation of the global study recommendations on ending violence in all settings.

### **5.9.32 Challenges**

- 5.9.32.1 There are only three Children's Court situated in The Greater Banjul Area and 2 in regions. This serves as a barrier to access to the Courts. Financial resources are needed for the full decentralization of the structure of the Children's Court.
- 5.9.32.2 Insufficient numbers of trained professionals in the area of child protection service delivery in the Gambia. There is need to strengthen the capacities of child rights protectors and professionals to better provide protection for children. More training should be conducted for law enforcement agencies on handling children's issues; lawyers and judicial officers on how to make the judicial system more child-friendly; and health workers on how to deal with child abuse cases according to minimum standards.
- 5.9.32.3 The Child Protection Units need to be adequately trained and resourced to enable active engagement of the unit in community outreach programmes.
- 5.9.32.4 The lack of popularization of the hotline means that many people do not know the hotline especially in the rural areas, therefore making it irrelevant to the people that need it.
- 5.9.32.5 There are inadequate child protection services for victims of abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation and children without primary care-givers. These services must also be provided in addition to information and knowledge and other preventive strategies. Government should provide funds for a comprehensive range of services such as psycho-

social and recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration services for victims of abuse and exploitation. There is need for more equipped safe houses and one stop center to be established around all regions of The Gambia.

- 5.9.32.6 Young girls are vulnerable to abuses related to high tourist presence in the country. The GT Board in collaboration with the police has engaged in several initiatives to curb the menace of abuse of young girls in the tourism industry. However, sustained and concerted effort of all stakeholders within the sector would be required to address this problem.
- 5.9.32.7 Better coordination between child protection organisations and government departments to ensure that a multi-disciplinary approach is taken which is vital to child rights promotion and protection.
- 5.9.32.8 Inadequate proper procedures and guidelines on child protection issues remains a problem in translating the laws into realities. There is need for development of implementing guidelines and the provision of timely and effective redress mechanisms where children's rights are violated. For example, guidelines on child protection must be prepared to ensure minimum standards which are applicable by both government and NGOs in dealing with issues of children's rights.

## Section 6: Data & Statistics

- I. The national framework for the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of gender disaggregated data include the National Statistics System and The Gambia Bureau of Statistics and the Gender Focal Points established in all government institutions and some NGOs.
- II. Currently all national reports particularly census data is disaggregated by gender. This is also true for most government institutions particularly the MoBSE. This is because MoBSE has a Gender Unit unlike most other government institutions, which depend on their focal persons for gender disaggregation of sector statistics.
- III. The disaggregation of data by gender has enabled the government and the national gender machinery to monitor the implementation of the BPFA, CEDAW and other policies and acts that are geared towards promoting women empowerment and gender equality.

### 6.1 Achievements

- I. The existence of data collection and analytical platforms in the form of the National Statistical System and supported by GBOS;
- II. Disaggregation of data in such as MOBSE by gender and the existence of strong gender unit as an infrastructure to support sustain gendered analysis; and
- III. The existence of gender focal points in many government institutions.

### 6.2 Challenges

- I. Gender is not a core requirement in all aspects data analysis by the national statistical system; and
- II. Gender focal points are not institutionalized in a manner that they have structures and capacities to collect and analyze gender data for various requirements. In fact they were unable to respond to the statistical data requirements of the issued questionnaire in this assignment and there was no database of report(s) where such statistics could be obtained.

### 6.3 Recommendation

- I. For future ability to realistically measure the outcomes or impacts of the various gender programmatic interventions, policies and laws, it is important to build the capacities of the various gender focal points; and
- II. They should be established as units and not one person responsibilities. These units should be equipped and staffed adequately to be able in collaboration with the national statistical system to establish a national statistical platform for gender data analysis so that studies of impacts of gender programmatic interventions, policies and laws may be studied and measured accurately to inform progress in the gender agenda.

## Section 7: Emerging Priorities

### 7.1 Women, the economy and Poverty

- I. Develop programmes that will ensure significant reduction of poverty among Gambian women
- II. Provision of livelihood skills to women through vocational training.
- III. Provision of low interest credit facilities/grants for business start-ups and improvement purposes.
- IV. Provide training on the management of these business ventures.
- V. Eradicate cultural and traditional barriers including land tenure systems that prevent women from owning land and other economic resources.

### 7.2 Education and Training of Women

- I. Ensure equal educational opportunities for men and women.
- II. Through affirmative actions such as the reduction of school fees or extension of free education up to Grade 12.
- III. Review the current curriculum to ensure that it caters for the employment and development needs of women.

### 7.3 Women and Health

- I. Put in place measures that will enable the attainment of the goals of the national health and population policies.
- II. Provide adequate health facilities and services that are requisite for the attainment of the National Health Policy.
- III. Increase the affordability of health services for women.
- IV. Advocate for male participation in reproductive health services.
- V. Increase family planning uptake.
- VI. Improve indicators in line with the national health policy

### 7.4 Prevention of gender-based violence, legal and administrative protection, and support with services for victims of violence, in order to ensure their re- integration.

- I. Prevention of domestic violence; improving the mentality against violence by raising awareness and education in every chain of the society through: education in schools, raising awareness of the population through the Media and public education programs; organization of campaigns and different activities; involvement of men and boys, as important partners in these efforts, to make violence socially unacceptable; publication and dissemination of awareness raising materials against violence etc.
- II. Implement the enacted legislation with zero tolerance against gender-based domestic violence;

- III. Protection and support for victims of gender-based violence by delivering services tailored for the victims; introduction of a national counseling line, and regional green lines of counseling for girls and women victims of violence/abuse; establishment of shelters for victims of domestic violence throughout The Gambia; introduction of the system for the collection of data, and monitoring of gender based violence. Special attention should be paid to women/girls with disabilities.
- IV. Train the police forces, justice, health, social services, education, media etc., who are responsible for the prevention and fight against domestic violence on women and girls.

#### **7.5 Women in Power and Decision Making**

- I. Increase the participation of women in decision making and conflict resolution.
- II. Put in place transparent process that will ensure non discrimination based on gender.
- III. Raise public through traditional and religious leaders on the need to involve women in the decision making process.

#### **7.6 Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women**

- I. Strengthen the national gender machinery.
- II. Lobby for and increase budgetary allocations to women issues.
- III. Improve the capacity of the Gender Focal Points to enable effective mainstreaming of gender into their institutional policies and generation and dissemination of gender disaggregated data.

#### **7.7 Women and the Media**

- I. To facilitate an atmosphere of professionalism within a self-regulated environment will ensure a dynamic and responsible press, geared towards nation building.
- II. To achieve this, the goals must therefore centre on a well trained press cadre and this will be further realized through the full implementation of the proposed journalism programme at the University of The Gambia.
- III. Streamline the ownership of media houses particularly TV broadcasting for women.

#### **7.8 The Girl-child**

- I. Measures to prevent discrimination and eradicate harmful traditional practices against the Girl-child.
- II. Fully implement the Children's act through mobilization of adequate resources and training of enforces especially the police and judiciary.

#### **7.9 Establishment of a functional national gender statistical system**

- I. To facilitate the systematic collection and analysis of gender statistics on a sustained basis; and



- II. Enable the study and/or measurement of the outcomes/impacts of the gender programmatic, policy and legal interventions or endeavours to support further planning and evolution of the national gender agenda.

### Section 8: Annexes

Figure II: Enrolment in Tertiary Institutions (2007-2010)

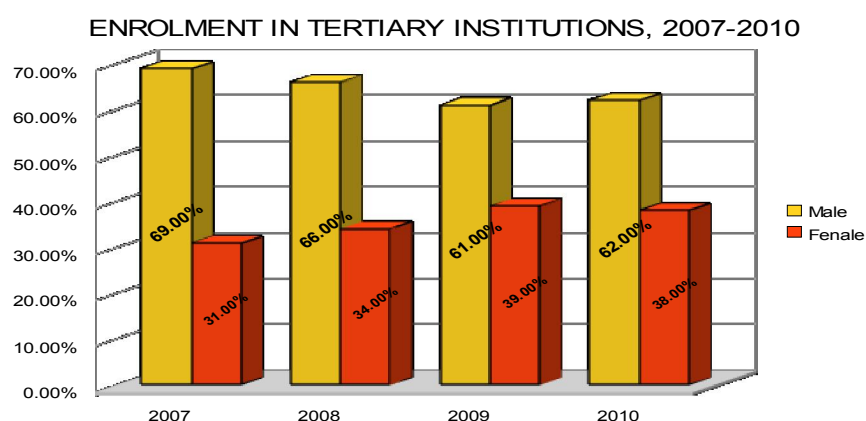
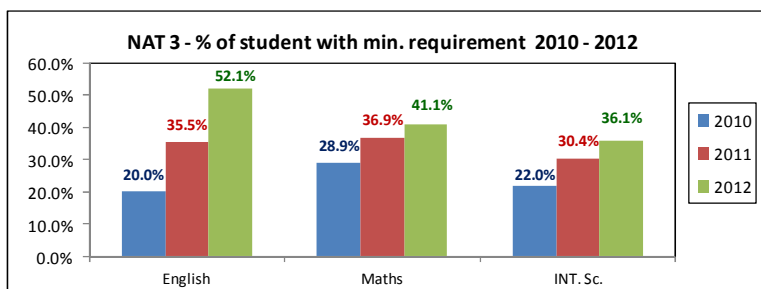


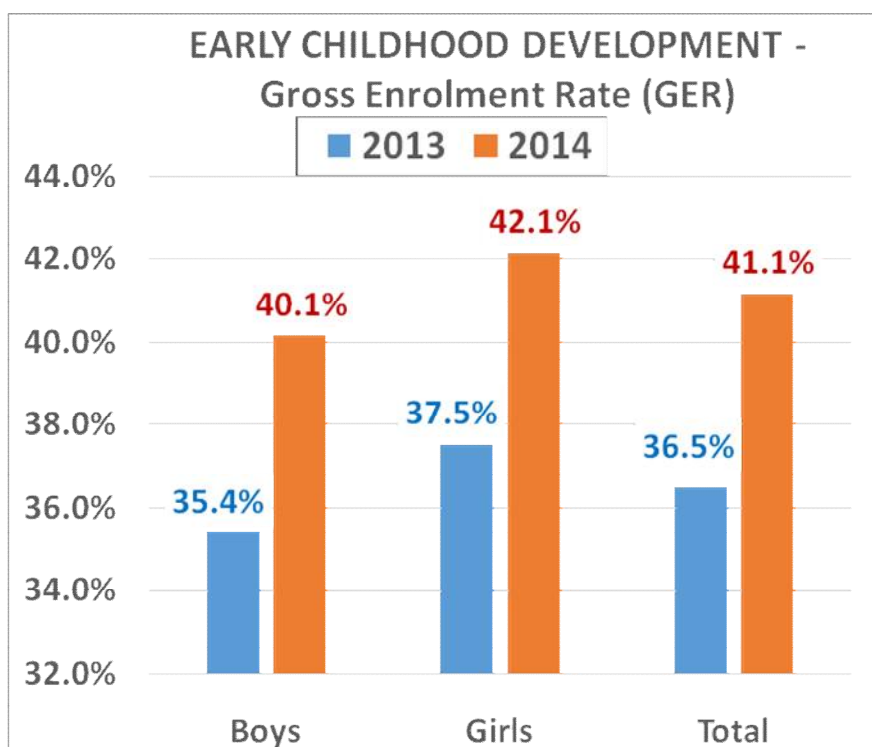
Figure III: shows the learning achievements of students from 2010 to 2012.



Source: 2012 Status Report for Gambia

### DAY CARE CENTER - Centre Figures Trend

Year	Total DCC Centres	Children Boys	Children Girls	Children Total	Carers Male	Carers Female	Carers Total
<b>2013</b>	29	345	384	729	6	49	55
<b>2014</b>	57	914	940	1,854	17	78	95
<b>Evolution (%)</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>165%</b>	<b>145%</b>	<b>154%</b>	<b>183%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>73%</b>



### Gross Enrolment Rate - Lower Basic Education

Gender	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
M	87.5%	85.6%	89.1%	91.4%	95.4%
F	89.1%	87.3%	91.4%	93.7%	98.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>88.3%</b>	<b>86.5%</b>	<b>90.2%</b>	<b>92.5%</b>	<b>97.1%</b>

### Gross Enrolment Rate - Upper Basic Education

Gender	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
M	66.9%	65.5%	66.8%	68.9%	68.2%
F	65.6%	66.2%	66.7%	67.3%	68.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>65.8%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>68.10%</b>	<b>68.12%</b>

### Gross Enrolment Rate - Senior Secondary Education

Gender	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
M	37.4%	37.7%	39.1%	41.3%	43.2%
F	30.6%	32.2%	33.5%	36.9%	39.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.9%</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>39.1%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>

**Table I: Representation at the National Assembly by Sex, 2011**

Component	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes	Remarks
		Female	Male		
<b>Public Sector</b>	Members of National Assembly (elected)	2	46	48	
	Members of National Assembly (nominated)	3	2	5	
	Speaker of the National Assembly	-	1	1	
	Deputy speaker of the National Assembly	1	-	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	

Source:Country Report on The Gambia 'African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012'

**Table II: Decision Making Positions held in Government by Sex, 2011**

Component	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes	Remarks
		Female	Male		
<b>Public Sector</b>	Ministers <sup>43</sup>	6	9	15	Including a female deputy minister
	Secretary general	0	1	1	
	Permanent Secretaries	5	26	31	
	Deputy PS	15	27	42	
	Principal Asst .Secretaries	14	15	29	
	Senior Asst. Secretaries	6	17	23	
	Assistant Secretaries	13	16	29	

<sup>43</sup>Please note that the number of female Ministers have increased to 7 as of June 2013.

	Cadet Administrative Officers	13	11	24	
	Ambassadors and High Commissioners	5	25	30	
	Directors	9	45	54	
	Deputy Directors	2	21	23	
	Project managers	4	NA	4	
	Public Service Commission members	1	3	4	
<b>Total</b>		<b>93</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>309</b>	

Source:Country Report on The Gambia ‘African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012’

**Table III: Local Government by sex**

Public Sector	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes	Remarks
		Female	Male		
	Governors	-	5	5	
	Deputy Governors	1	4	5	
	Chairpersons of Councils	-	5	5	
	Mayors	-	2	2	
	Chiefs	-	48	48	
	Ward Councilors (elected) <sup>44</sup>	15	104	119	
	Alikalos	4	1869	1873	
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>2037</b>	<b>2057</b>	

Source: Country Report on The Gambia ‘African Gender and Development Index Survey 2000-2012’

<sup>44</sup> As of the Local Government Elections of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013, the number of elected women councillors has decreased from 15 to 11.

**Table 6 : Judiciary Officers by Sex**

Public Sector	Indicators	Sex		Both Sexes
		Female	Male	
	Solicitor General	-	1	1
	Deputy Solicitor General	1	-	1
	High Court Judges	4	7	11
	Court of Appeal Judges	3	1	4
	Magistrates	1	9	10
	Supreme Court Judges	1	6	7
	Lawyers at the Civil Division	3	3	6
	Lawyers at the drafting division	-	3	3
	Lawyers at the legal department under the Criminal Department	5	6	11
	Registrar of companies	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>55</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice 2011

**Table 7: National Gender Machinery<sup>45</sup>**

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Roles and responsibilities</i>
The Ministry of Women's Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for the overall coordination and harmonization of efforts by all stakeholders.</li> <li>• Establish appropriate mechanism for coordinating Gender Mainstreaming at all levels.</li> <li>• Lobby, advocate and mobilize resource for the implementation of the Gender policy</li> <li>• Provide support to gender units and focal points</li> </ul>
Women's Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical support on gender mainstreaming to ministries, institutions, organizations, local governments bodies, civil society organizations and private sector.</li> <li>• Coordinate , Monitor and Evaluate the implementation process of the Gender Policy</li> <li>• Provide back stopping support in critical areas</li> <li>• Lobby, advocate and coordinate the sensitization process of all stakeholders on gender</li> </ul>

<sup>45</sup>Adapted from the National Gender Policy and the Women Empowerment 2010-2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as the Secretariat for the National Council for Gender and Women's Empowerment</li> <li>• Set standards, develop guidelines and disseminate and monitor their operations</li> </ul>
National Women's Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise Government on Gender Issues</li> <li>• Oversee the implementation of the Gender Policy at Decentralized level</li> <li>• Lobby and advocate for policy reviews and enactment of laws.</li> <li>• Sensitize and advocate on gender issues at grassroots level</li> </ul>
Government Ministries and Parastatals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate the National Gender Policy (NGP) into institutional specific policies, strategies and programmes.</li> <li>• Assess the needs of their respective ministries in the field of gender responsive planning, programming, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation and make appropriate recommendations for capacity building</li> <li>• Support the gender units and focal persons by building their capacity in gender analysis , planning and provide budget lines for their operations</li> <li>• Monitor, evaluate and provide disaggregate data on sector programmes and their impact on gender equity</li> <li>• Institute and implement affirmative action on short term basis to bridge the existing gender gaps</li> <li>• Partner with the Ministry of Women's affairs and Gender and the Gender Bureau on matters of Gender mainstreaming.</li> <li>• Mobilize , allocate and release resources for gender mainstreaming</li> <li>• Ensure institutional policies and programmes are gender sensitive and benefit women and men.</li> </ul>
CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate the National Gender Policy (NGP) into institutional specific policies, strategies and programmes</li> <li>• Develop and implement programmes that address key NGP intervention areas</li> <li>• Participate in the implementation committee</li> <li>• Monitor the implementation of NGP</li> <li>• Share information of institutional programmes with Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender through the Women and Gender Focal Point Network</li> </ul>
Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize and use The Gambia Gender Policy in development cooperation partnerships</li> <li>• Collaborate with Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender, Gender Bureau and National Women's Council on matters of gender mainstreaming</li> <li>• Establish mechanisms for ensuring gender responsiveness of development cooperation</li> <li>• Provide financial and technical support for promoting Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in Development Cooperation.</li> <li>• Develop/ set-up capacity building incentives for promoting gender equity and women's empowerment in development cooperation</li> </ul>
The Gambia's Women's Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilizing women and men to advocate for and promote gender equality and women empowerment</li> <li>• Serve as platform for networking and sharing of information among women and female youth</li> <li>• Advocate for the effective implementation of adequate women empowerment projects/programmes for the advancement of women and girls</li> <li>• Implement key economic empowerment project and support capacity enhancement of women organizations, groups and associations (particularly in training, provision of credit and financing, appropriate technology for labour saving, value adding, storage and preservation; market opportunities and infrastructure, housing, land and property, water facilities</li> <li>• Support women in decision-making</li> <li>• Lobbying and advocating for the ratification, domestication and implementation of international instruments related to gender equality, women and children's rights</li> <li>• Sensitizing, educating and training civil society on human and legal rights, particularly women's rights, in order to address and change gender stereotypes</li> </ul>
Gender Policy Implementation Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify priority gender issues</li> <li>• Plan for relevant sector interventions</li> <li>• Review progress in implementation of the policy</li> <li>• Advise national machineries on key issues and strategies to attain Policy objectives</li> <li>• Support of the monitoring and implementation of the policy</li> </ul>

## 8.1 Graphs & tables

Figure 1: Enrolment in Tertiary Institutions (2007-2010)

Figure 2: Leadership Positions by Gender

Figure 3: Share of women who are paid employees, own-account workers and employers in total employment (%)

Table 1: Decision Making Positions held in Government by Sex, 2011

Table 3: Judiciary Officers by Sex

## 8.2 List of Acronyms and abbreviations

CRR	-	Central River Region
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
FIOH	-	Future in Our Hands
GFPA	-	Gambia Family Planning Association
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organisation
PAGE	-	Programme for Accelerated Growth & Employment
PEGEP	-	President's Empowerment of Girls Education Project
AAITG	-	Action Aid International The Gambia
ACDHR	-	African Commission for Democracy and Human Rights
AGDI	-	African Gender Development Index
ANRP	-	Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy
ARV	-	Antiretroviral
APWGA	-	Association for the Promotion of Women's and Girls' Advancement
AFP	-	Association of Food Processors
BPFA	-	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	-	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIAM	-	Centre for Innovation Against Malaria
CSIP	-	Community Skills Improvement Project
CU	-	Concern Universal
CRC	-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
DMC	-	Disaster Management Committees

DSW	-	Department of Social Welfare
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EFANet	-	Education for All Campaign Network
ESSP	-	Education Sector Strategic Plan
EFA	-	Education For All
ECF	-	Enhanced TB Case Finding
EU	-	European Union
FGM	-	Female Genital Mutilation
FLAG	-	Female Lawyers Association The Gambia
FAWE-GAM	-	Forum for African Women Educationalist-Gambia
BAFROW	-	Foundation for Research on Women and the Environment
GEAP	-	Gambia Environmental Action Plan
GAFNA	-	Gambia Food and Nutrition Association
GNAP	-	Gambia National Action Plan
GAMNASS	-	Gambia National Association of AIDS Support Societies
GTU	-	Gambia Teacher's Union
GAMHOPE	-	Gambian Horticultural Producers and Exporters Association
GAMCOTRAP-		
GBA	-	Greater Banjul Area
GBV	-	Gender Based Violence
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Rate
GTTI	-	Gambia Technical Training Institute
HIV AND AIDS	-	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HBC	-	Home Based Care
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
IEC	-	Independent Electoral Commission
ITNs	-	Insecticides-Treated Nets
ICPD	-	International Conference on Population and Development
LBS	-	Lower Basic School
LGA	-	Local Government Area
MCH	-	Maternal Child Health
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goal
MRC	-	Medical Research Council



MICS	-	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MOBSE	-	Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education
MoH&SW	-	Ministry of Health & Social Welfare
NAS	-	National Aids Secretariat
NHPF	-	National Health Policy Framework
NSF	-	National HIV AND AIDS Strategic Framework
NMSS	-	National Malaria Sentinel Surveillance
NaNA	-	National Nutrition Agency
NPOA	-	National Plan of Action
<i>NPAGW</i>	-	National Policy for The Advancement of Gambian Women
NPCS	-	National Population Commission Secretariat
NNP	-	National Nutrition Policy
NSGA	-	Nova Scotia Gambia Association
TANGO	-	The Association of Non Governmental Organisations
LAHS	-	Lend A Hand Society
GRCS)	-	Gambia Red Cross Society
TARUD	-	The Trust Agency for Rural Development
OVC	-	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PRSP	-	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	-	Parent Teacher Association
SMILE	-	Small Holder Irrigation for Livelihood Enhancement
SMC	-	School Management Committee
SME	-	Small and Medium Enterprise
SSS	-	Senior Secondary School
TB	-	Tuberculosis
TDA	-	Tourism Development Area
MDI	-	Management Development Institute
GIG	-	The Gambia is Good
TV	-	Television
UBE	-	Upper Basic School
UN	-	United Nations
UNAIDS	-	United Nations AIDS
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	-	United Nations Fund for Population Affairs

UNICEF	-	United Nations Children Educational Fund
UNSCR	-	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UTG	-	University of The Gambia
VCT	-	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
ART	-	Anti-retroviral therapy
PPTCT	-	Prevention of Parent to Child
VSO	-	Voluntary Services Overseas
WANEP	-	West African Peace Building Network
WTO	-	World Trade Organisation

### 8.3 References & links

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21. <http://www.countdown2015mnch.org/documents/2010/2010-Gambia.pdf>

#### 8.4 Persons Consulted

Name	Institution
1. Mr. Malang Darboe/Baturu Camara	Ministry of Trade Industry and Employment
2. Mr. Abdoulie K.M Jallow/ Ann Marie Sarr	Ministry of Regional Administration, Lands & Traditional Rulers
3. Mrs. Fatou Kinneh	MOFEN
4. Mrs. Fanta Jatta – Sowe/Almamo Barrow	Action Aid International The Gambia
5. Ms. Sohna Ceesay/Juldeh Ceesay	Ministry of Finance Economic Affairs
6. Mrs. Ajie Binta Kinteh 7. Miss. Aji Awa Kaira	National Environment Agency
8. Ms. Tida Jatta/	Gender Education Unit
9. Mrs. Margret Gomez	Ministry of Health & Social Welfare
10. Mrs. Awa Sagnia	National Aids Secretarial
11. Mrs Binta Jammeh Sidibeh	Executive Director National Women's Bureau
12. Mrs. Isatou Graham	Attorney General Chambers
13. Ms. Fatoumata Touray	Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices (GAMCOTRAP)
14. Ms. Amie Fabureh	Ministry of Agriculture (Horticulture Technical Services)
15. Mrs. Binta ceesay	Police Child Welfare Unit
16. Ms. Tabo Sarr	TANGO

17. Jundu Drammeh	Child Protection Alliance
18. Mrs. Isatou Jammeh/ Harriet Bass	Dept. of social welfare
19. Mrs. Binta Jabang	Office of The Vice President
20. Nenneh Cham/Mam Amie jobe	Female Lawyers Association Gambia (FLAG)
21. Jainaba sowe	Ministry of Interior
22. Gen. RDK Sanneh/ Mai Touray	Ministry of Defence
23. Ms. Ana Jones	WANEP
24. Hon Fatou Mbye	National Assembly
25. Mrs. Anna Mbenga	Department of Fisheries & Water Resource
26. Mrs. Fatou Camara	MOH/RCH
27. Mrs. Haddy Mboge Barrow	Network of Gender Based Violence
28. UN Agencies	UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, WHO
29. Ndey Marie Njie	Ministry of Youth and Sport
30. Mr. Ansu Kanyi	Gambia Beuro of Statistics
31. Therese Cardos	Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry

32. Sulayman Fatty	Ministry of Tourism and Culture
33. Paul .T. Mendy	National Population and Commission Secretarial
34. Dr. Mariana John Baye	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
35. Hawawu Barry	Ministry of Agriculture
36. Amadou Bah	The Voice
37. Yerro N. Jallow	News & Report
38. Sira Bah	Gambia Family Planning Association
39. Sheikh Omar Fye	Management Development Institute
40. Elizabeth Mendy	Gambia Technical Training Institute
41. Ndey Fatou Jobe	Women's Bureau

## 8.5 Questionnaire

### **Beijing Plus 20 National Report Data Collection Questionnaire**

Name of Respondent:

Institution:

Position: Coordinator

Sector:

Tel:

Email:

#### **Section I: Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment since 2009.**

No	Question	Response <sup>46</sup>
1	What are the major achievements in your sector on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in The Gambia since 1995 (e.g. policies, acts, bills, etc)	
2	Was a strategy or plan of action developed in your sector to support the implementation of the achievements mentioned and described in (1) above (e.g. programmes/projects, institutions, etc) of the above?	
3	What mechanisms were established for monitoring and how are different actors held accountable for its implementation?	
4	Is there a national coordination mechanism at the highest level to ensure that the policy is implemented in all sector areas?	
5	What impact does the major achievements identified in (1) above have on the promotion of gender equality?	
6	How is implementation of the policies, acts, etc identified in (1) progressing?	
7	To what extent have gender perspectives and the concerns of women been taken into account in preparation of <i>development plans</i> and <i>budgets</i> at national, regional and local levels?	
9	Has this resulted in increased resources for gender equality?	

<sup>46</sup> The responses should focus more on the achievements/developments realized from 2009 to date. This applies to the other sections.

10	Describe efforts to increase and national development plans and track budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women.	
11	What are the effects of gender-responsive budgeting procedures on gender equality?	
12	To what extent are the <b>Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)</b> utilized as the national framework for development and facilitated the achievement of the Beijing Declaration and platform for action?	
13	What attention is given to Goal 3 on gender equality? Is national-level data available to effectively monitor the achievement of the targets under MDG3?	
14	Are gender perspectives and the concerns of women considered in all other MDG goals?	
15	Provide information on major <b>government policy discussions and/or parliamentary debates</b> where gender perspectives and the concerns of women have been taken systematically into account and resulted in policy and/or programmatic changes.	
16	What are the major challenges facing the achievements/reforms identified in (1)? This should include any policies, regulations, etc that are having adverse effects on the attainment of gender equality.	
17	Identify key steps being taken at the national level to address these challenges.	
18	How has <b>globalization</b> (for example, the use of ICT, market liberalization, changes in trading patterns, etc) affected the empowerment of women and girls and the promotion of gender equality?	
19	What types of significant <b>partnerships</b> have been established with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, as well as the private sector and other stakeholders, in support of different aspects of national efforts on gender equality and empowerment of women – through for example, advocacy, participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes and service delivery?	
20	What efforts have been made to actively engage <b>men and boys</b> in the promotion of gender equality, including for example in eliminating violence against women and combating HIV and AIDS? What successes have been achieved and what constraints have been identified?	
21	What is the impact of <b>climate change</b> and <b>food and energy crises</b> on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and what steps have been taken to reduce it?	
23	What is the impact of the financial crisis on the promotion of gender equality and what measures have been put in place to mitigate it?	



## National Report-Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action (2014)

### Section II: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Questions	Critical Area <sup>47</sup>	Response	
<p>1. Provide Examples of policies, legislative change and programmes and projects that have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples including relevant data.</p> <p>2. Describe measures taken to address challenges in implementing the Beijing declaration and platform for action prior to 2009.</p> <p>3. Identify and describe the <b>obstacles, gaps and challenges</b> encountered in implementation of the achievements in (1) above and other key issues identified.</p> <p>4. Provide information on the <b>main lessons learned</b> in implementation in relation to each of the above in (3).</p> <p>5. Examples of policies, legislative change and programmes and projects that have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples including relevant data.</p>	<p>Women and Poverty (<i>macroeconomic policies, development strategies, access to savings &amp; credit and economic resources, poverty alleviation among women</i>)</p>	1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
	<p>3. Identify and describe the <b>obstacles, gaps and challenges</b> encountered in implementation of the achievements in (1) above and other key issues identified.</p>	<p>Education and Training of Women (<i>access to education, literacy rates, resources for monitoring the implementation of educational reforms</i>)</p>	1
			2
			3
			4
			5
	<p>4. Provide information on the <b>main lessons learned</b> in implementation in relation to each of the above in (3).</p>	<p>Women and Health (<i>access health services, preventive measures, addressing sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive health issues, research and health information dissemination, resources and monitoring of women's health</i>)</p>	1
			2
			3
			4
			5
	<p>5. Examples of policies, legislative change and programmes and projects that have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples including relevant data.</p>	<p>Violence against Women (<i>measures to eliminate underlying causes of violence against women, effectiveness of preventive measures, eliminating trafficking of women</i>)</p>	1
			2
			3
			4
			5
<p>5. Examples of policies, legislative change and programmes and projects that have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples including relevant data.</p>	<p>Women and Armed Conflict (<i>participation of women in conflict resolution, providing protection to in conflict affect areas, reducing human rights abuse, assistance and training of refugee women</i>)</p>	1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
<p>5. Examples of policies, legislative change and programmes and projects that have been taken by the Government or other actors (NGOs, civil society, the private sector) to achieve these objectives. Please provide concrete examples including relevant data.</p>	<p>Women and the Economy (<i>access to economic resources, eliminating occupational segregation, promoting economic rights, etc</i>)</p>	1	
		2	
		3	

<sup>47</sup> Using the questions above, provide responses to the critical area/s that are most relevant to your work.

## National Report-Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action (2014)

		4
		5
	Women in Power and Decision Making( <i>level of access, capacity and participation in decision making, etc</i> )	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
	Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women ( <i>national gender machinery, gender disaggregate-data</i> )	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
	Human Rights of Women( <i>eliminating all forms of discrimination against women</i> )	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
	Women and the Media( <i>access to ICT and non stereotyping of women in the media</i> )	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
	Women and the Environment( <i>level of involvement in environmental decision making, mitigating environmental effects on women</i> )	1
		2
		3
4		
5		
The Girl-child( <i>eliminating all forms of discrimination against the girl child</i> )	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	

## National Report-Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action (2014)

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### Section III: Data and Statistics

No	Question	Response
1	Has a core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality been established? If so please provide the indicators.	
2	Where is responsibility for collecting the data located?	
3	If national indicators have not been established , what are the reasons?	
4	Has data collection and compilation on the minimum set of gender indicators began, which was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013?	
5	If so what is the status of data collection and compilation?	
6	Please describe plans to improve gender related data collection and compilation at the national level that have been developed	
7	If not, are there any plans at the national level to begin work based on the minimum set. Please describe briefly.	
8	Has data collection and compilation on the nine indicators on violence against women as agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013 begun?	
9	If so what is the status of data collection and compilation? Please describe plans that have been developed to produce these indicators at the national level.	
10	If not, are there any plans at the national level to begin work based on these indicators? Please describe briefly?	
11	What processes have been undertaken to collect data on the situation of particular groups of women, such as rural women, older women, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women living with HIV&AIDs or other groups?	

## National Report-Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action (2014)

### Section IV: Emerging Priorities

Question	Critical Area <sup>48</sup>	Response
1. What are the key priorities for action over the next three to five years for accelerating implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23 <sup>rd</sup> Special Sessions of the General Assembly and subsequent inter governmental agreements for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national level	Women and Poverty ( <i>macroeconomic policies, development strategies, access to savings &amp; credit and economic resources, poverty alleviation among women</i> )	1.
		2.
	Education and Training of Women ( <i>access to education, literacy rates, resources for monitoring the implementation of educational reforms</i> )	1
		2
	Women and Health( <i>access health services, preventive measures, addressing sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive health issues, research and health information dissemination, resources and monitoring of women's health</i> )	1
		2
2. What are your priorities and recommendations to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women in the current discussions on sustainable development goals and the post 2015 development agenda	Violence against Women( <i>measures to eliminate studying causes of violence against women, effectiveness of preventive measures, eliminating trafficking of women</i> )	1
		2
	Women and Armed Conflict( <i>participation of women in conflict resolution, proving protection to in conflict affect areas, reducing human rights abuse, assistance and training of refugee women</i> )	1
		2
	Women and the Economy( <i>access to economic resources, eliminating occupational segregation, promoting economic rights, etc</i> )	1
		2
	Women in Power and Decision Making( <i>level of access, capacity and participation in decision making, etc</i> )	1
		2
	Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women ( <i>national gender machinery, gender disaggregate-data</i> )	1
		2
	Human Rights of Women( <i>eliminating all forms of discrimination against women</i> )	1
		2
	Women and the Media( <i>access to ICT and non stereotyping of women in the media</i> )	1
		2
	Women and the Environment( <i>level of involvement in environmental decision making, mitigating environmental effects on women</i> )	1
		2
	The Girl-child( <i>eliminating all forms of discrimination against the girl child</i> )	1
		2

<sup>48</sup> Using the questions above, provide responses to the critical area/s that are most relevant to your work.

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