

**Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010-2020**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background Context

The Government of The Gambia recognizes gender equality and women empowerment as a key factor for the attainment of social and economic development. As a result a number of measures were taken to mainstream women in the development process. Among such measures was the establishment of the National Women's Council and Bureau by the Council Act of 1980. The National Women's Council consists of women representatives from all Districts in the country with the Women's Bureau serving as its executive arm.

A National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women (NPAGW 1999-2009) was formulated and provided a legitimate point of reference for addressing gender inequalities at all levels of government and all stakeholders. A review of the NPAGW in 2006 however necessitated a policy shift from women's development perspective to gender and women empowerment orientation with a rights-based approach. The NPAGW had its limitations in terms of current national socio-economic discourses and priorities as well as the global development agenda. Among the recommendations resulting from the review was to develop a gender and women empowerment policy as a follow-up to the NPAGW in order to adequately address the limitations of the former policy and to ensure sustainability of the achievement of the NPAGW. The need to take on board issues of the Millennium Development Goals as well as other emerging development issues that have implications for gender equality, such as new aid modalities, sector-wide approach to planning, effective service delivery through decentralization, public private partnership and civil service reform also came out as recommendations.

In the Gambian society patriarchal system, male hegemony and other socio-cultural factors interplay to influence the interactions between the genders and social groups. These inequalities have resulted in some cases, the exclusion of women, girls, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups from actively participating in certain sectors and at certain levels of the development process of the country. The development of a gender and women empowerment and gender-related policies, as well as strengthening of national gender machineries to fully undertake the challenging mandates, are crucial actions particularly in addressing structural relationships of inequality between men and women.

The formulation of a Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010-2020 resulted following series of consultative processes at national, regional, district and community levels. It provides guidance for the achievement of gender equity and equality in the country and through its implementation Plan, sets indicators and a framework to assist sectoral departments, partners, and other stakeholders to mainstream gender from a rights-based approach in their planning and programming and implementation processes in order to achieve gender equity and equality as provided for in the Constitution of Gambia and other relevant International instruments that the country has ratified. The policy will create strategic synergies with various stakeholders to facilitate effective and efficient implementation of commitments that will make a difference in the lives of all people at all levels.

### 1.2 Legal Framework

This policy is guided by national, regional and international gender equality protocols as well as national legal instruments and development frameworks. The protocols include:

*National Legal Instruments:*

- The 1997 Constitution of Gambia<sup>1</sup>
- The Gambia Long-Term Development Framework Vision 2020
- The Gambia Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper( PRSP I) 2007 and PRSP II
- The National Women Council Act 1980
- The National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women (NPAGW)
- The National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework (NSF) for The Gambia 2009-2014
- [National Youth Policy 2010- 2020](#)
- [National Population Policy 2007 -2015](#)
- [National Nutrition Policy 2010 - 2020](#)
- [National Environment Policy](#)
- [Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy 2010 - 2015](#)
- [Agricultural Strategic Plan 2010- 2014](#)

- [National Education Policy 2004- 2015](#)
- [National Health Policy and Master Plan 2007 - 2020](#)
- [National Reproductive Health Policy 2010- 2014](#)
- [Any other sector policies](#)

International and Regional Gender Equality Protocols and Conventions

- The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- The United Nations Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)
- The Fourth World Conference on Women (WCW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
- Beijing Plus Five and Plus Ten Outcome Documents
- Commonwealth Plan of Action
- The Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
- The African Union Gender Policy of 2008
- ECOWAS Gender Policy and Strategic Plan

### 1.3 Gender Equality Efforts by the Government of The Gambia

Gender inequality impedes efforts towards the attainment of sustainable national development. Reducing gender inequality is critical for improving the social and economic situation of marginalized groups through among others, access to social services, wage employment and control over productive resources. In order to meet these challenges, a rights-based and gendered approach is necessary. A number of developments that have taken place at national, regional and district levels after the adoption of the NPAGW 1999 call for the formulation of a new strategic policy that allows the national gender and women empowerment mechanism to play a more visible and proactive role in promoting gender-responsive development at national and sectoral levels. Of equal importance for the formulation of the new policy is the commitment made by countries including The Gambia to the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness. These new partnerships and aid modalities are designed to align aid to nationally-determined development priorities, to pool diverse aid sources into direct support to the national budget or to particular sectors, and to ensure greater stability and predictability in aid flows as an effort to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The following are outstanding achievements towards gender equality efforts by the Government of The Gambia.

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

A Ministry for Women's Affairs responsible for providing policy guidance to Government and stakeholders on gender issues and women was created in 1996 under the Office of the Vice President, who is the Minister. Gender Focal Points have been established in all line Ministries and Departments, UN and International Agencies, NGOs and the private sector with the objective of ensuring effective mainstreaming of gender perspectives at all levels and all processes. The National Women's Policy (1999-2009) was formulated to serve as a point of reference for all stakeholders in addressing the needs of women and men in the Gambia in terms of participation, access and ownership (where applicable) for the attainment of sustainable development. The former National Policy on women and the Gender Mechanism have been reviewed and the recommendations for improvement are incorporated in the new policy. Gambia is yet to come out with 'Best Practices' in public sector reform or good governance efforts that fully integrate a gender equality perspective. So far capacity-building efforts in this regard tend to be limited to affirmative action measures to hire more women public servants, or gender training for staff in National Women's Machineries and gender focal points in other departments. There is need however, to explore new measures and to examine some emerging examples of better practice in this regard

**Gender Responsive Constitution:** Another significant development by Government is the 1997 Constitution, the supreme law of the land which seeks to promote equality between women and men. It specifically provides for the rights of women and equal treatment with men including equal opportunities in political, economic and social

activities, even though this provision is limited by subsection 5 of the Constitution regarding the protection of women under customary law with respect to adoption, marriage divorce, and inheritance.

**Domestication of Relevant International Protocols:** The ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1992, the enactment of the Children's and the Trafficking In Person Bills in 2005 and 2007 respectively are also major achievements by government in promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls. A Women's Bill has been drafted and will soon be brought to the National Assembly to be considered for enactment.

**Gender Sensitive National Development Frameworks:** National and Sectoral Development Strategies such as the Vision 2020, the PRSPs, and sector specific policies and all other strategies aimed at achieving the MDGs need to take into account gender differentials at all levels and at all times. The National Vision 2020 as articulated in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP II), identified five areas of interventions along the Millennium Development Goals, which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease, and discrimination against women. The national policy for the advancement of Gambian women which was adopted in 1999, provided guidance for mainstreaming gender in national and sector specific policies and programmes.

**National Gender Equality Structures in Place:** Government has undertaken numerous initiatives to promote women's development and to create an enabling environment for their participation in national development efforts. In 1980 the National Women's Council and Bureau was established by an Act of Parliament and operated under the auspices of the Office of the President. Under the regime of the Second Republic, the Ministry for Women's Affairs was created at the Office of the Vice President who is also the Minister responsible for Women's Affairs. A cabinet Sub-committee on Gender was established as well as a Select committee on Women and children at the National Assembly. These structures are significant to guide policy decisions on gender related issues.

The Gambia Women's Federation has recently been reactivated and will be strengthened to mobilize women and men to advocate for gender equality, equity, and women's advancement. The Federation will serve as a platform for Women to network, share experiences and rally around issues that affect their lives such as politics, governance, economic and social justice. Furthermore, with the setting up of Gender Focal Points (GFP) in sectoral Ministries, the Bureau formulated Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup> to provide GFPs with guidelines for engendering policies in their respective sectors, which include: facilitating the incorporation of gender concerns in their own plans and programmes; conducting in-house gender training for sectoral staff; encouraging the production of gender disaggregated data and submitting quarterly reports, among other tasks.

## 2. The Gambia National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy Development Process

The development of The Gambian Gender and Women Empowerment Policy involved a consultative process. It was informed by a series of consultations at national, provincial and district levels spearheaded by the National Women's Bureau. Studies were conducted to inform the content of the policy as well as the processes leading to its development. A Technical working group was formed and meetings were organized to determine the structure, presentation and content of the policy. The following are some of the stages undertaken in development of the policy.

- **A mid-term review of the implementation of the 1999-2009 National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women** was conducted in 2006. The findings and recommendations were significant in providing direction for the New policy
- **A committee of gender expert was set up in 2008.** This committee constituted all the sectoral gender focal points, representatives from NGOs, the Media, and gender programme officers from the UN Agencies and International Organizations. The various meetings held by the committee discussed the substantive issues with respect to the policy and made suggestions for the content of the policy based on the outcomes of the mid-term review as well as their respective experiences and lessons learned in implementing gender related programmes within the context of national development priorities

---

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Mid-Term Review of the Gender Policy

- **A gender profile study** was also conducted in 2008. This study provided invaluable information included disaggregated data on the situation of women and men, boys and girls in the country and how they are impacted upon by development programmes. The information was useful in the development of the Policy
- **Community Based Consultative Meetings and Rallies:** The Women's Bureau organized seven community-based consultative meetings and rallies throughout the country to ensure community participation in the policy formulation process. Participants included women leaders representing various interest groups, Village Heads (Alkalos), Religious leaders, representatives from district authorities and local governments, Chiefs, provincial governors and members of the district tribunals and youth groups. Involving a wide spectrum of the Gambian community in policy formulation process helped the National Women's Bureau to understand the people's aspirations, the issues as they affect the people and how these issues could be dealt with in the policy
- **At the national level,** consultative meetings were also held with various stakeholders, including National Assembly Members, Government Ministries and Departments, Judiciary, Security, Media, Private Sector, NGOs, Religious Leaders, Youths, and Tertiary Institutions.
- The **zero draft policy** was circulated to stakeholders and a pre validation exercise was conducted.
- **A consultant was assigned** to finalise the document and ensure all concerns and recommendations are incorporated
- **A Final national validation by key stakeholders was conducted.**

**The Gambia National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy Priority Areas:** This new Policy recognizes the twelve critical areas of concern defined in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action as very relevant to the situation of the Gambia and promotes the implementation of actions by sectoral agencies. Through a wide consultative process, The Gambia prioritized eight out of the twelve thematic areas that are expected to contribute towards the overall advancement of gender equality in The Gambia. The priority areas include:

- 1) Capacity Building for Gender Mainstreaming
- 2) Poverty Reduction, Economic Empowerment & Livelihoods Development
- 3) Gender and Education
- 4) Gender and Health and HIV/AIDS
- 5) Gender Human Rights
- 6) Gender and Governance
- 7) Gender and the Environment
- 8) Women's Empowerment

These eight thematic areas therefore form the basis for The Gambia National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy.

### **3. Mission, Vision, Goal and Objectives**

#### **Vision**

A Gambian Society that is characterised by peace and prosperity where women, men, boys and girls are equal partners and gender equality transcends in all sectors of development.

#### **Mission**

To accelerate gender equity, equality and women empowerment through advocacy, capacity building, socio-economic and political empowerment, consultative processes, as well as networking with Governmental and Civil Society Organizations, private sector, the Media, and development partners in order to achieve sustainable gender parity at all levels and in all spheres of life.

#### **Goal**

The overall goal of this policy is to mainstream gender in all national and sectoral policies, programmes, plans and budgets to achieve gender, equity, equality and women empowerment in the development process.

## Policy Objectives

- 1) To ensure that gender concerns are mainstreamed in macro, micro economic policies, national development frameworks such as PRSPs/PAGE and sectoral policies and programmes and that men and women participate as equal partners and beneficiaries in the economic development process for sustainable livelihood development.
- 2) To ensure equal access by girls and women, boys and men to quality formal and non formal education at all levels from early childhood development , basic and secondary education, to vocational and technical training, as well as the university.
- 3) To provide and make accessible to women, men and adolescents quality health care services including sexual and reproductive health, information and related services as well as the protection of the Gambian community from HIV infection and the prevention of the spread of the disease
- 4) Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in governance structures, leadership, and decision-making
- 5) Promote and protect the human rights of women, men, girls and boys through the effective /full implementation of all human rights national and international instruments.
- 6) To provide direction for development of effective programmes on awareness creation on the causes and consequences of Gender Based Violence and other human rights violation, and mechanisms geared at eliminating and managing cases of Gender Violence
- 7) To conserve positive and mitigate negative aspects of Gambian culture in order to promote equality of women and men, girls and boys and to sustain social stability and peaceful co-existence
- 8) To set guidelines and ensure the production of harmonized appropriate messages for public awareness creation and promotion of understanding of the link between gender equality and development through the media, community meetings etc.
- 9) To guide in the allocation of adequate resources and public expenditure through the institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting in all sectors at all levels.
- 10) Ensure effective mainstreaming of gender perspectives in emerging issues/ crises such as climate change, food, fuel and economic crises and effective gender related environmental and disaster management levels.

## 4. Broad Policy Strategies

**Competencies in Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming:** Capacity building for gender analysis and mainstreaming in all national and sectoral policies, plans, programmes and budgets and for all ministries, departments, National Assembly and the Judiciary will be enhanced in order to achieve gender equality in the development process. The capacities of development stakeholders (public, private, and civil society) to conduct gender analysis and mainstream gender in all aspects of their development work are a central trust of this policy.

**Gender and Governance:** The policy endeavors to strengthening women's meaningful participation in and ownership of national development processes through concerted investment in women's analytical capacity, and donors' support. Representation of women and girls in decision making structures and committees across all sectors of development work will be supported.

**Capacity Strengthening of Gender Machinery:** Strengthening the capacity and capability of the Ministry for Gender and Women's Empowerment and its executing arms to exercise effective leadership over the coordination of the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Gender and Women Empowerment Policy will be prioritized.

**Gender Budgeting:** Advocate for gender responsive budgeting and the allocation of adequate resources and public expenditure for all sectoral programmes, is critical for the achievement of the goal and objectives of the

policy. Gender-responsive budget (GRB) work is about ensuring that government budgets and the policies and programs that underlie them address the needs and interests of individuals that belong to different social groups. Thus GRB work looks at biases that can arise because a person is male or female, but at the same time considers disadvantage suffered as a result of ethnicity, caste, class or poverty status, location and age. The fact that GRB is intended to promote mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all policies, programmes, to achieve this, the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Industrial Development as well as the Ministry of Finance and National Assembly must champion the cause supported by the Ministry of Women affairs and Gender. Other line ministries have responsibilities in relation to their own planning and budgeting processes. The Ministry of Finance is especially necessary if the initiative is attempted across a number of different line ministries. However, smaller initiatives which focus on only one sector can sometimes advance without initial involvement of the Ministry of Finance.

**Advocacy:** Mobilization at all levels for social transformation on gender equality issues and for the implementation of the gender and women empowerment policy.

**Sensitization and Public Education on Gender and issues affecting Women:** using the media, meetings to create awareness on gender and women empowerment issues as well as on the causes and consequences of gender-based violence and other human rights violation, and mechanisms geared at eliminating and managing cases of gender based Violence. Also conduct gender sensitive human rights education and awareness creation on issues affecting women and men, boys and girls and ensure equity in the areas of marriage, divorce, devolution of property/inheritance and all other relevant areas of personal and customary laws, with particular focus on the Women's Act 2010.

**Awareness on New AID Modalities and Role of Gender Equality:** Creating public awareness on the new donor funding architectures such as the aid modalities and effectiveness and the sector-wide approaches (Swaps) and ensuring that gender is mainstreaming in all these processes is fundamental for the policy. Gambian women stand to benefit as much as any other social category from development assistance that supports a nationally-owned development policy and strategy, and accountability systems that can track progress. Predictable aid flows can work to advance gender equality, encouraging investment in activities that promote gender equality in the long term. Gender-sensitive institutional change, for instance, takes time, as do changing attitudes and building public awareness. However, women will only benefit from the new aid architecture if gender equality is recognized as a key component of poverty reduction and national development. In addition, women need to be fully represented in decision-making, and equally included in decision making and bureaucratic bodies. The Paris Declaration and related guidelines, indicators and action plans focus on the processes of building national ownership, harmonizing and aligning aid flows and assessing impact especially in relation to health and social issues. To support gender equality, the new aid architecture should include: Adequate financing for programs that respond to women's needs, Accountability systems for governments and donors to track and enhance their contributions to gender equality; and Gender-sensitive progress assessments, performance monitoring and indicators for aid effectiveness.

**Mainstreaming Elements of the Policy in Sectoral Work:** Advocating for the full integration of the Plan of Action of the Gender and Women Empowerment Policy in national and sectoral plans of actions is critical. Elements of The Gambia Gender and Women's Empowerment Policy should be mainstreamed in the respective sectoral work (policies, programmes and any other interventions)

**Gender Responsive Legislation:** The policy emphasises the importance of advocating for law reforms and the enactment of gender responsive legislation.

**Strategic Partnerships:** Strengthening partnerships with development partners, civil society organizations, private sector, the Media and community leaderships for gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women and girls' men and boys will be forged.

## 5. Situation Analysis and Policy Strategies for Priority Thematic Areas

The policy makes provision for advocacy for the development and implementation of gender-sensitive sectoral policies and strategies of all the critical areas identified by the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Millennium Development goals. These sectoral policies should identify national and sectoral benchmarks and clear verifiable indicators for monitoring of the implementation of the Gender and Women Empowerment Policy. The sectoral

priority areas and strategies selected in this document are meant to accelerate and add up to efforts to enhance equity and equality in all spheres of life.

### 5.1. Capacity Building in Gender Mainstreaming

Gender inequality is both a major cause of poverty and a major impediment to sustainable development. Reducing gender inequality means improving access to employment and control over productive resources such as land, credit by the marginalized groups. In order to achieve this effectively, poverty eradication strategies must address gender differentials access to and control over resources, and in opportunities. In addition, strategies should also consider existing gender relations, paying particular attention to the practical and strategic needs of women and men. For gender equality to be achieved in development programmes and by development organizations, and in the family, it is necessary to conduct gender analysis at every stage of a planning process to ensure that gender concerns are mainstreamed. Mainstreaming gender perspectives in policy is a subject of dialogue and cooperation among national and sectoral programmes, the civil society and development partners at different levels of the planning implementation, and monitoring processes. Together these institutions will reduce gender inequity and inequality by striving for equal access to different kinds of resources and opportunities including capacity building; equal participation in politics and decision-making positions and equal control over resources and benefits, in order to mainstream gender into development policies and programmes effectively.

Other development partners are also encouraged to support initiatives in enhancing programme staff competencies in gender analysis and mainstreaming. Previous efforts of ensuring effective gender mainstreaming were undermined by lack of adequate capacity in gender mainstreaming particularly in gender budgeting, analysis and monitoring and evaluation. Political will is achieved at the highest level but the same is needed at middle and lower levels. The attainment of gender equity and equality must be a project for all including religious leaders, traditional leaders and regional and local authorities, which remained a challenge despite the implementation of the 10 year women policy. Other encountered in this area includes lack of decision-making powers of Gender focal persons, financial and material resources for gender and women machinery, and effective monitoring system.

The Gambia is yet to come out with 'Best Practices' in public reform or good governance efforts that fully integrate a gender perspective. So far capacity-building efforts in this regard tend to be limited to affirmative action measures to hire more women public servants, or gender training for staff in national machineries and gender focal points in other departments. There is need however, to explore new measures and to examine some emerging examples for better practices in this regard.

**Thematic Policy Statement:** Government shall take measures to, build capacity of National Gender Machinery, public and private sectors institutions, Regional, district, Ward and Village development structures, institutionalize Gender Responsive Budgeting at all levels and the establish Gender Units in all Ministries and departments and allocate resources for effective gender mainstreaming.

#### Specific Gender Objectives

**Objective 1:** To strengthen the capacities and capabilities of all stakeholders to effectively mainstream gender perspectives in all policies, laws, programmes, projects and activities as well as new and emerging issues

#### Strategies for Objective 1

- Review of sector Policies, laws programmes and projects for gender sensitivity and where applicable recommend for amendment to ensure effective incorporation of gender perspective.
- Strengthen the collection, analysis and dissemination of disaggregated data, such as socio-demographic and health and data from various sources (census, demographic and health surveys, hospital records, etc.).
- Capacity building for the national gender machinery staff, policy makers, planners, programmers, statisticians from all sectors, national and at the decentralized levels including private and NGOs/CSOs, Youths the Media the legislature and the judiciary through short tailor-made and long term training in gender analysis, planning, gender responsive budgeting, initiative, and rights-based approach.



- Provide technical and institutional support for all gender mainstreaming initiatives as well as ensure effective coordination and monitoring of all gender related programmes and activities.
- Develop and disseminate to each beneficiary institution sector indicators and benchmarks, checklist/guidelines and training manuals for mainstreaming gender in planning and programming processes, as well as for making decisions or passing and offering justice on matters relating to gender-based violence through a constitutive process.
- Ensure the establishment and strengthening of Gender Units and institutionalization of Gender Responsive Budgeting in all sectoral Ministries and Departments, where applicable.
- Support Public sensitization and advocacy using the Gender and communication and Advocacy strategy on gender and women issues, laws, policies and international commitments.
- Review new and emerging issues that seeks to address and ensure the full and effective incorporation of gender perspective at all levels by all actors

## 5.2. Poverty Reduction and Economic Empowerment

The Gambia Government's commitment to the fight against poverty draws strength from the fact that it is one of the poorest countries in the World with a per capita of about US\$ 360 (Population Databank 2009 ) and a rating of 155 out of 175 countries (UNDP Human Development Index). It is estimated that 55 percent of households and 69 percent of population are poor (NHSR 1998) as compared to 37 percent and 51 percent respectively (1993 Household Economic Survey).

**Gender and Poverty** - the three poverty studies conducted in the Gambia in 1992, 1998 and 2003 indicated a rising poverty level from 31% in 1992 to 58% in 2003. These studies show a widening disparity between urban and rural populations and between men and women. Bureau of Statistics (GBOS) Poverty Assessment Report (2008) puts the poverty head count at 58%. This indicates that the target of reducing poverty by 2% annually has not been met. Women constitute the majority of the poor and extremely poor in the country and their status remains generally low, compared to men. The low status of women in Gambia is further entrenched by both negative customary and in effective implementation of personal laws especially those pertaining to marriage, divorce and inheritance and succession. The Gambia's Gender Development Index (GDI) value, 0.496 has been compared to its HDI value of 0.502. Its GDI value is 98.8% of its HDI value<sup>2</sup>.

Women's poverty is closely linked to their high illiteracy level, 73%, the absence of economic opportunities, inadequate access to *economic* resources, including credit, land ownership, inheritance, skills, and support services. Women own half as much properties (buildings) as men and much less agricultural equipment as men.<sup>3</sup> Unemployment among women in both the formal and informal sectors is high. Male per capita income is nearly four times higher than that of females.<sup>4</sup> This situation is exacerbated by labor migration mainly by men , changes in family structures and inequality in income and consumption, together with the unequal distribution and control of resources between and within families, which have left women disadvantaged and have prevented them from developing their full potential. Most Gambian women are rural-based and are engaged in agricultural production, particularly in horticulture and small-animal husbandry. Women are also engaged in fisheries especially in the processing sector, they have also become increasingly involved in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and, in the informal sector. Due to, inter alia, difficult economic situations and a lack of bargaining power resulting from gender inequality, many women have been forced to accept low pay and poor working conditions.

**Gender and Employment:** The Gambia's formal sector is very small, employing just over 20 percent of the labour force. Women constitute 21 per cent of the civil service labour force where the majority is in support rather than managerial position<sup>5</sup>. Employment opportunities particularly in the formal sectors are unfavourable to women due to their low level of education. In this sector, education is a prerequisite but the traditional gender roles and cultural norms have contributed to the general low level of education among Gambian women. According to the

<sup>2</sup> The Gambia Human Development Index-UNDP Human Development Report 2007-2008;

<sup>3</sup> Baseline Survey 2005/6 Women's Bureau

<sup>4</sup> 1993 Household Economic Survey

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

2006 Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), illiteracy level among women age 15-24 is 43%.<sup>6</sup> The high rates of female illiteracy entail that many women are effectively barred from taking advantage of government policies that promote wage employment opportunities where literacy is a prerequisite. There is an uneven gender distribution of the labor force in the public and private sector employment. According to the National Population and Housing Census of 2003, 45 percent of the 482,439 economically active populations are women. They occupy 9.4 percent of the skilled labour force and 61.9 percent of the unskilled labour category. Women representation in the Fisheries Sector is 16.40 percent, Manufacturing 22.07 percent, Hotels and Restaurants 41.33 percent, Financial Services 2.66 percent, Storage and Communication 6.95 percent, Commercial, Social and Personnel Services 39.97 percent and Wholesale and Retail 43.49 percent. According to 2003 Population and Housing Census 50.68% of men are employed as compared to 39.73% of women. In the public sector, women represent about 25 percent of the total Civil Servants. The Tourism sector employs a high proportion of Gambia women in urban and Peri-urban areas.

**Sustainable Livelihood:** The concept of livelihoods is not new in The Gambia, whose people have been pursuing multiple livelihood strategies for a very long time. Since the 1970s, analysts have increasingly appreciated the diversity and interdependence of these strategies, and the ways in which the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of life in The Gambia are linked. Nevertheless, the emerging paradigm of livelihoods as a framework for development understanding and action can usefully sharpen perspective on the challenges that Gambians face, especially women, and the ways in which development frameworks such as the Vision 2020, PRSPs, and the MDGs can help tackle those challenges.

**Gender and Agriculture:** Women comprise 78 percent of economically active population who work in agriculture compared to just 57 percent of men<sup>7</sup>. The majority of women farmers are unskilled agrarian wage earners and are responsible for about 40 per cent of the total agricultural production in the country.<sup>8</sup> Their massive contribution does not translate to the desired improved social status for women. Their productive activities are mainly subsistence -based and for home consumption. Women are also active in horticultural production which generates relative good income. However income gained from such activities is often ploughed back into maintenance of the household. Their limited capacity and skills to embark on viable agro-based and entrepreneurial activities, lack of ownership and control over resources such as land and modern agricultural equipment, coupled with the triple roles of women, impede all efforts for rural women to graduate into the mainstream livelihood economy.

**Gender and Nutrition:** Malnutrition continues to be a major public health problem<sup>9</sup>. Women face low nutritional status at household level compared to men, despite the fact that, they are the main producers and processors of food. Work by the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA) showed that one third of pregnant women had not eaten meat or dark green leafy vegetables (rich sources of iron) in the seven days prior to a survey, and a further 19 per cent had only consumed them on three or four days in the week.<sup>10</sup> 22% of children under 5 years are under weight, and only about 7 percent of household have iodized salt in their food<sup>11</sup>. Cultural practices militate against women control of cash income thereby contributing to household food insecurity. These practices also force women to deny themselves food in the right quantity and quality in favor of male adults and children. In most cases this seriously compromises their nutritional status.<sup>12</sup> Hunger is closely related with poverty in The Gambia. The highest levels of malnutrition are found in the Lower, Central and Upper River Regions, which closely correlate with the highest levels of extreme poverty. Poverty and hunger form a vicious cycle with poverty exacerbating hunger and constraining people's ability to escape poverty. Maternal malnutrition, caused by poverty, leads to low birth weight babies, which in turn are more likely to die in infancy, or before their fifth birthday. They are also more likely to suffer from under-nutrition, and ongoing chronic levels of under nutrition set up a cycle for delayed school enrolment, repeated illnesses, and school absenteeism, lower educational attainment and a cycle of poverty from one generation to another. Addressing the fundamental causes of malnutrition throughout the lifecycle is a foundation to securing sustainable reductions in poverty in The Gambia

---

<sup>6</sup> Multiple Indicators cluster Survey 2008 The Gambia

<sup>7</sup> National Household Poverty survey 1998

<sup>8</sup> National Data Bank 1993

<sup>9</sup> Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006 (MICS)

<sup>10</sup> National Nutrition Agency (NaNA 2005 unpublished figures. Banjul,

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Gender Profile 2008

**Thematic Policy Statement:** The Government shall take measures to reduce the incidence of poverty amongst the poor particularly women, youth and the differently able.

### 5.2.1 Employment

#### Specific Gender Objectives:

**Objectives 1:** To ensure equal employment opportunities and benefits for women, men and youth

#### Strategies for Objective 1.

- Advocate for the implementation of the National Employment Policy and Action Plan, first review it for gender sensitivity and make recommendation for incorporation of gaps, where it exists.
- 
- Review of conditions of service and labor laws to determine their gender responsiveness and ensure access to employment and appropriate working conditions for all.
- Advocate for the formulation of gender responsive policies, rules and regulations that support the development of the informal sector.
- Promote quality and advanced training in ICTs through the establishment and strengthening of skills training centers including counseling centers that are youth and women friendly.
- Advocate for, increase and effective participation of women in decision and policy-making in the public and private sector including the legislature.

### 5.2.2 Agriculture, Business and Industry

#### Specific Gender Objectives

**Objective 1:** To create an enabling environment for the elimination of gender disparities in access to training, credit, appropriate ICT technologies, value adding, labour saving devices, and markets for the expansion of agricultural production and productivity and Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

#### Strategies for Objective 1

- Undertake a review of the National Plan of Action on MSMEs to determine its gender sensitivity and advocate for its effective implementation
- Provide skills training in entrepreneurship, credit management and appropriate technologies to improve productivity for both men and women
- Promote women's and youth economic rights and independence through ensuring access to employment with appropriate working conditions, control over productive resources such as financing, land/property, information and services.
- Promote adult functional literacy for both women and men engaged in MSMEs

- Advocate for the enhancement of MSMEs capacity and competitiveness in regional and global trade.
- Ensure the dissemination and provision of trade and Investment information and backstopping services to women and men entrepreneurs
- Advocate for further establishment of linkages and network between the large-scale industry and MSMEs both within and abroad particularly women.
- Advocate for the increased access by women to agricultural extension services and to technologies for processing and marketing of agricultural produce
- Advocate for the expansion of skill centers, rural electrification, and capacity development for production, assembling and use of these appropriate technologies
- Intensify the provision of labor saving devices for use by households and for farming activities.
- Support capacity building for proper management and maintenance of such devices

### 5.2.3. Fisheries

#### *Specific Gender Objective*

**Objective 1:** To enhance the participation of indigenes, men, women and youths in fish farming, processing, marketing and post harvesting techniques.

#### **Strategies for Objective 1**

- Mobilize communities, particularly women to fish in both natural bodies of water and fishponds.
- Encourage women to venture into the fishing activity by owning fishing boats, and make available appropriate technologies for fishing and oyster harvesting, processing and storage
- Promote the training of more Gambian men, women and youths in fishing and oyster harvesting techniques, processing, marketing and business management.

### 5.2.4 Food and Nutrition Security

#### **Specific Gender Objectives**

**Objective 1:** To ensure increased production and intake of high quality food by men, women and children to reduce the major nutritional disorders prevalent in the country by 2015.

#### **Strategies for Objective 1**

- Advocate for effective implementation of national policy/strategy on Nutrition
- Promote the consumption of food rich in Iron, Vitamins and proteins among men and women particularly pregnant /lactating women.
- Create awareness on the importance and use of iodized salt.
- Ensure continued increase in food production and consumption, diversification of livestock and crop production so as to improve food sufficiency.
- Advocate for the development of food standards and guidelines for processing, preservation, storage, food hygiene, safety and sanitation

- Advocate for enforcement of quality assurance and safety standards in foods produced locally and imported foods
- Promote exclusive breastfeeding for first six months and continued breastfeeding for two years
- Promote appropriate nutrition education programmes at all levels.
- Lobby for the training of more nutritionists, food technologists, food scientists and dieticians.

#### 5.2.5 Community Participation and rural development

##### Specific Gender Objectives

**Objective 1:** To empower community members, especially women to actively participate and take ownership of development projects and programmes

##### Strategies for Objective 1

- Advocate for the improvement of the socio-economic status of vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth and the physically challenged particularly those in the rural areas.
- Promote the effective implementation of the Local Government Act.
- Advocate for expansion of rural electrification, improve access to transportation, water, ICT, housing, and market facilities at the rural areas.
- Advocate for the formulation of a gender sensitive rural development policy and its effective implementation.
- Train leaders at grassroots level to understand and overcome gender issues that hinder community development
- Promote community policing and other grass root mobilization initiatives
- Ensure full participation of religious and traditional leaders in gender advocacy
- Advocate for women's participation in all project/ programme cycle

#### 5.2.6. Women and Men in Special Circumstances

##### Specific Gender Objective

**Objective 1:** To provide assistance to differently able women and men , sex workers , drug addicts and refugees due to their vulnerability.

##### Strategy Objective 1

- Conduct research to determine the extent to which women and men are coerced into undesirable cash economy based on patterns of livelihood activities.
- Develop interventions in support of this group based on identified issues.
- Provide support to differently able men and women groups and individuals
- Advocate for the establishment, strengthening and formulation of social protection policies for the elderly and disadvantaged or vulnerable groups

- Develop and implement programmes for the rehabilitation of drug addicts and sex workers , ex convict mental retarded
- Advocate for the establishment of social protection and rehabilitation centers and effective implementation of the national disaster Management Policy.

### 5.3 Gender and Education

**Situation Analysis:** The 1997 Constitution of The Gambia guarantees both male and female the fundamental right to education. As a result the education policy makes provision for free education for all at the Lower Basic level to ensure that traditionally excluded groups such as girl children are enrolled in school. The trend in girl's education has been very encouraging and The Gambia has exceeded the planned target of 50 percent gender parity at Lower Basic level in 2006<sup>13</sup>. The achievements in the education sectors can also attributed to the personal intervention of H. E. the President of the Republic of the Gambia, who instituted a special scholarship scheme for girl's education and providing opportunities for more girls to get to the university level.

This impressive trend does not manifest itself at higher levels of the educational system. None fee paying The free primary school education comes with some additional costs for families, as households must still provide a variety of supplementary materials (books, uniforms, transport, etc.). The main challenge facing the education sector is quality of the services rendered to the students. The performance of boys and girls is often below the required standard particularly in the mathematics, sciences and technical areas.

Given the social and economic value placed on the boy child in some communities, the girl child often becomes victim of bad decisions and choices. School drop out for girls due to early marriage, teenage pregnancy and other socio-cultural beliefs are contributing factors to the high illiteracy rate among women. The female literacy rate amongst 15-24 year olds nationally stands at 37.1 percent compared to 58.4 per cent for male, with wider disparities at regional level. While in the non-formal education sector, opportunities have been created for women to become functionally literate. Women are less able than men to take advantage of such programmes due to heavy work load, lack of labour saving devices and negative attitude of men towards women's literacy<sup>14</sup>. A baseline survey<sup>15</sup> conducted by the Women's Bureau on levels of literacy showed that 54 percent of respondents are able to read in at least one language but only 47 percent were able to write.

There is however a significant difference between male and female; the proportion that is able to read is 70 percent for male and 42 percent for female, whilst the proportion that can write is 66 percent for male and only 33 percent for female.<sup>16</sup> These results are quite revealing given that the enrolment rates of male and female at Lower Basic level are the same in most part of the country. The consequences of low literacy levels are revealed in an assessment of formal sector employment disaggregated by gender. Women occupy 9.4 percent of the skilled labour force and 61.9 per cent of the unskilled labour category.<sup>17</sup> Since access to education and literacy is the bedrock of women's empowerment, these continuing disparities are of considerable concern to the government and other stakeholders.

**Thematic Policy Statement:** The Government shall provide equal opportunities for quality education for all boys and girls to complete the education system and also ensure that men and women have equal access to training opportunities

#### Specific Gender Objectives

**Objective I:** To ensure equal access to quality education for all school age children, and ensure 30 percent reduction in qualified teacher student ratio by 2015.

<sup>13</sup> The Gambia Common Country Assessment Report (CCA – 2005

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Baseline Survey 2005/6

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Gambia CCA 2005

### **Strategies for Objective 1**

- Ensure the full incorporation of gender perspective and implementation of the Education Policy 2004 – 2015 and availability of adequate teaching and learning materials.
- Advocate for Legislation for Compulsory Free Universal Basic Education for all.
- Advocate for increased enrolment and retention of girls and boys at all levels of the educational system.
- Encouraging girls and boys to study mathematics, science and technical subjects.
- Providing scholarship and career guidance in order to motivate girls and boys to take up non-traditional fields of learning.
- Advocate for the establishment of user-friendly educational structures and facilities to cater for the differently able and re-entry programmes for boys and girls at all levels to reduce the percentage of dropouts
- Awareness raising on the legal provision for the minimum age of marriage that is 18 years.
- Advocate for: the provision of adequate incentives for the retention of all teachers, equal opportunities for training and promotion of male and female teachers to managerial positions at all levels.

**Objective 2:** To ensure the strengthening and institutionalization of gender studies and life skills in all learning institutions by 2015.

### **Strategies for Objective 2**

- Support continued mainstreaming of gender in all life skills curricula
- Sensitise all teachers on gender issues and strengthening the gender units at all teacher training institutions.
- Capacity building for Cluster Monitors and Regional Education Heads in gender analysis, monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensure the availability and dissemination of sex disaggregated data on enrolment and performance of girls and boys at all levels of education
- Disseminate and sensitise communities of gender related education policies
- Review and integrate life skills in school curricula, monitoring changes in student's behavior and practice.
- Advocate for the introduction of moral education and strengthening of religious studies in all learning institutions.
- Promote enabling environment in learning institutions for students to report verbal abuse and sexual harassment.

**Objective 3:** To ensure that Madarassa education is expanded and strengthened: quality Non-Formal Education accessible to all non literate female and male adults by 2015

### **Strategies for objective 3**

- Support and strengthen the "Madarassa's" "Daara" adult female Islamic literacy programmes and quranic memorization schools across the Country
- Expand and strengthen the non-formal education programmes for male and female adults and out of school boys and girls to ensure quality assurance.

- Link and strengthen National Adult Literacy programmes to the formal education system to ensure complementarily.
- Mobilize and sensitize parents and communities on the importance of educating the girl child and ensuring that she completes her education at all levels.
- Mobilise and sensitise parents and communities on the importance of educating the girl child and ensuring that she completes her education at all levels

#### 5.4. Gender and Health, Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS

Over the years in the health sector, remarkable achievements have been registered in the area of infrastructural development, human resources development and improvement and expansion of services at all levels. Major hospitals have been built not only in grater Banjul but in the rural areas. The introduction of Cuban doctors, establishment of the school of medicine within the University of the Gambia and upgrading of the Royal Victoria Hospital to a teaching Hospital and improve quality training in the school of nursing greatly impact on improve health services. Medical fees waived for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children. The doctor to patient ratio stands at 1:170( population data Bank) while the distance from medical services from communities in 6 kilometers Several Polices and legislation have been formulated and implemented and this contributed to these achievements. Currently the Ministry of Health and its departments are implementing the Health Policy 2007-2020 the RH Policy and 2010-2014. However, quality service provision at all levels, reduction in maternal and child mortality and morbidity remain a major obstacle in the health sector.

**Maternal Mortality:** Some of the root causes of the high maternal mortality rate in the Gambia include: a high fertility rate of 5.9 (per woman of childbearing age), early age at first pregnancy which is 17years, too frequent pregnancies and inadequate maternal services and emergency obstetric care, inadequate referral systems, low female literacy level, low status of women in making decision with regards to their reproductive rights, and attitudinal barriers to health care services, shortage of essential drugs, and the non-functioning of some operating theatres in major health centres.<sup>18</sup> Other causes include delay in referral at the family and community level due to inappropriate decision-making; limited transportation in some communities and facilities ; low contraceptive prevalence rate which is estimated at only 13%; high unmet need for family planning; inadequate male involvement, knowledge and information on sexual and reproductive health issues among women and men.

**Adolescents Vulnerability to SRH Related Problems:** Addressing the issue of teenage girl's vulnerability to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) related problems further demonstrates the importance for promoting and supporting girl's empowerment initiatives in issues of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection(STI). Inter generational relations (young girls having sexual relationship with older men) can only exacerbate their vulnerability to STIs and HIV/AIDS. HIV prevalence is highest among female than male in the same age groups. Many adolescent pregnancies are unwanted and these contribute to the growing number of induced unsafe abortions. As a result of the conflict between societal values and people's behaviours, and the disapproving attitudes of parents and service providers, adolescents do not often have access to friendly SRH services. Many of the pregnancies and STIs among adolescents arise because of ignorance as well as lack of life skills to negotiate sexual behavior.

The girl-child has limited understanding of the basic physiology of the menstrual cycle, poor sexual relationship, and limited knowledge on the causes of pregnancy and that one act of sexual intercourse can lead to pregnancy.

This can be attributed to the fact that most adolescent and youth have very limited access to sexual and reproductive health information. This is because sexuality issues are shrouded in taboos and parents so not talk to their children about sex and sexuality issues as a result they get their information from their peers who are also not adequately informed. Adolescent fertility remains a problem with far reaching social and economic consequences. The 2000 adolescent youth Survey indicted that 41.5 % of youth aged 15-24 were sexually active with 15% of the sexually active females reporting the occurrence of at least one pregnancy.

Discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights results in less access to education, nutrition, physical and mental care, and girls enjoy fewer of their childhood and adolescence rights and opportunities compared to boys. They are often subjected to various forms of cultural, sexual, social, economic exploitation,

---

<sup>18</sup> EMOC Study 2004 Department of State for Health and Social Welfare



violence and harmful traditional practices, such as incest, early and marriage arranged, and complications of female genital cutting.

Adolescent male and the boy child face multitudes of challenges and are equally vulnerable in the context of SRH, HIV/AIDS and GBV. The plight and vulnerabilities of the boy child should be recognized as not much has been done in this respect. The socialization of the boy child is still predominantly traditional, and cultural perspectives of masculinity are in-built from a very early age. Socialization should be re-evaluated in terms of aggression, and dominance of the women.

**Gender and HIV/AIDS:** In the Gambia the HIV prevalence rate for 2007 were estimated at 1.4% for HIV-1 and 0.5 percent for HIV 2.<sup>19</sup> There is a higher percentage of female living with AIDS, 54 percent as compared with 46 percent males. Women's high vulnerability to HIV infection is due to a combination of biological and socio-cultural factors. Intergenerational sex is a common practice in many communities. Sexual activity among women in The Gambia sometimes commences in early adolescence, when they are biologically more susceptible to HIV infection. This early sexual activity is frequently due to early marriage, often to older men who may be already infected for instance 10% of women aged 15-49 and married or in union actually marry before their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday, whereas 49% of married women or in union aged 20-29 are married or in union before they reach 18 years.<sup>20</sup> Young girls are also susceptible to the exploit of older men due to their poverty situation, or gendered-power relations or mere ignorance of the implications of such relationship. Cultural practices such as female genital cutting, wife inheritance, and multiple concurrent partners such as polygamy make women even more susceptible to HIV infection.

The notion of masculinity and femininity makes it very difficult for both women and men to openly discuss sexual matters to practice safe sex, and to promote gender equitable relationships. The dimensions of sexuality and sexual behavior based on gender are critical for any meaningful actions to involve adult and adolescent males in SRH discourses and practices. For instance reproductive health policies, programming and service delivery need to take into account the consequences of each of the dimensions of sexuality and sexual behavior. Gender-based violence and sexual abuse are some of the drivers for the spread of the AIDS disease, and because women are economically less independent, they are often exposed to abuse and exploitation. Poor women tend to remain in abusive relationships. Women are likely to be more under-nourished, and malnourished people are more susceptible to HIV infection, develop AIDS faster and are less responsive to anti-retroviral drugs than well nourished people. The government is already taking measures to stabilise and reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and providing treatment, care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS in order to meet the MDG target for this pandemic. It has also taken measures to protect the rights of people and in particular the Constitution has extensive provision on Fundamental Human Rights which protects the rights of PLHIV.

**Thematic Policy Statement:** Government shall ensure the availability and accessibility of quality and functional health services and facilities including services for SRH and rights, the management of cases of GBV, and HIV/AIDS for women, men adolescent, children and people with disability and those living with HIV and Aids at all levels and prevention.

### **Specific Gender Objectives**

**Objective 1:** To ensure that the SRH policy and the Road Map for accelerating maternal mortality, neo-born morbidity and mortality reduction are implemented and monitored through a gender lens, and that adequate resources are allocated for their implementation by 2015.

#### **Strategies for Objective 1**

- Promote gender awareness among policy makers and health care providers at all levels on the need to engender processes for the implementation of all health policies and strategic plans.
- Review on a regular basis health protocols, norms and standards to ensure their gender sensitivity
- Capacity building for policy makers, planners, programmers and health professionals in health sector-gender analysis, and for mainstreaming gender concerns in planning and programming processes

---

<sup>19</sup> [The Gambia NSF 2009-2013](#),

<sup>20</sup> MICS 2005/6

- Expand maternal, child, and neonate care Services countrywide in accordance with the objectives of the health policy and plans.
- Improve measures for the motivation and retention of midwives, nurses public health officers, Village Health Workers and Traditional Birth Attendants
- Advocate for male friendly SRH services and the provision of services for cancer screening.

**Objectives 2:** To provide and make accessible to young male and female, culturally sensitive adolescent sexual and reproductive health friendly services including counseling and life skills.

#### **Strategies for Objective 2**

- Expand information, education and communication (IEC) services on reproductive health at national, district and community levels on SRH/HIV/AIDS/STIs, targeting in and out of school youths.
- Work with young people and ‘adult gatekeepers’ of traditional values and cultural norms to promote adolescents’ right to accurate information on reproductive health issues
- Mobilise young people and engage them in discussions and community actions on topical issues in relation to SRH, STI/HIV/AIDS, and gender-based violence

**Objective 3:** To reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality rate in accordance with the targets of the Road Map and the RH Policy

#### **Strategies for Objective 3**

- Advocate for the full implementation of the Road Map for accelerating maternal mortality, neo-born morbidity and mortality reduction and intensified provision of free Fistula and Hernia care service in all health care facilities
- Support and strengthen of Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) to prevent and reduce neonatal morbidity and mortality and the availability and accessibility of quality RH/FP services and EmOC, including blood testing and transfusion.
- Support and strengthen of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), Family Planning (FP) and Anti & Post-natal care services as infant and child mortality reduction strategies.
- Support and strengthen Assist for the integration of FP and the improvement of the overall referral system for (EmOC), including skilled attendance at birth to supervise a normal delivery and quickly recognise complications and refer appropriately
- Intensify awareness creation/ social mobilisation to ensure all women, their families and communities understand the need for delaying age at first pregnancy.
- Develop and support implementation of a programme of Action on Male Involvement in SRH and related issues
- Provide services for the management of cases of GBV and complications resulting from Female Circumcision

**Objective 4:** To lobby for the elimination of all forms of discriminatory and harmful sexual and cultural practices by 2015.

#### **Strategies for Objective 4**

- Raise awareness on the advantages of birth spacing, good practices in nutrition, elimination of harmful traditional practices such as Female Circumcision and other misconceptions that negatively impact on the health of women

- Provide treatment and counseling services for victims of domestic violence and rape

**Objective 5:** To empower women and men to protect and care for themselves, particularly in relation to, reproductive ill health, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.

**Strategies for Objective 5**

- Advocate to accelerate the implementation of the National Strategy on HIV/AIDS
- Advocate for the availability and accessibility of RH commodities including male and female condoms throughout the country
- Promote programmes for PMTS and the use of family planning methods including contraceptives for child spacing and for protection from STIs and HIV and AIDS (dual protection)
- Mobilise young people and engaging them in discussions and community actions on topical issues relating to STI/HIV/AIDS, and gender-based violence
- Promote healthy reproductive behaviors among men and women and the establishment of VCT friendly centers and making them easily accessible to women, men and young people throughout the country

**Objective 6:** To mainstream gender concerns in HIV/AIDS programmes

**Strategies for Objective 6**

- Strengthen capacity in mainstreaming gender perspectives in HIV/AIDS programmes Promote the PMTCT Strategy for the benefit of mothers, their spouses and children
- Further provide knowledge and information on HIV/AIDS prevention among women, girls, men and boys with males as partners in the fight against the pandemic.
- Mitigate against impacts of harmful cultural practices and violence against women and girls, especially those that predispose them to HIV/AIDS
- Empower girls and women through continued education and innovative approaches to enable them to take control over their own sexual and reproductive health life
- Improve and promote women's and girls' men and boy's access to HIV/AIDS care, treatment and other support services
- Conduct studies on HIV/AIDS prevalence and female vulnerability to the disease.
- Strengthen capacity of select stakeholders in knowledge of Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and risks of HIV transmission among women and girls
- Develop and strengthen female-friendly youth services based on Gambian best practices in different regions
- Support economic empowerment programme for male and female PLHIV
- Design programme interventions for women and girls that address socio-economic issues that make them vulnerable to HIV risks.

## **5.5 Gender and Human's Rights**

**Human's Rights:** Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings; their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of Governments and must therefore be considered as a

priority area of intervention. The Gambia has shown strong commitment through the ratification of international instruments pertaining to the rights of children and women, notably the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Its commitments to the protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women (ACHPRRWA), the AU Solemn Declaration on gender equality in Africa, further qualifies this commitment. While the former was harmonized with domestic law through the 2005 Children's Act, domestication of the CEDAW and the ACHPRRWA have recently been achieved through the enactment of the Women's Act 2010 on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010. Women's participation in the Security Services over the years has been improving. They hold positions ranging from Sergeant to Colonel. They also serve in peace keeping missions and this has further built their capacities improve capabilities.

In spite of the significant developments Women still face discrimination implicitly or explicitly in the economic, political, cultural and social sectors. The proportion of women employed in the wage sector is almost half that of men, the social and economic facilities such as credits, housing and other development assets are far less amenable to women than to their male counterparts. Evidence of these disparities are provided in the relevant paragraphs of this analysis. Rural women in The Gambia have inadequate knowledge of their basic human rights and as a result have been exposed to but silent about varying degrees of abuse and exploitation. The prevalence of three sometimes-conflicting courts (Constitutional, Traditional and Religious Courts) prevents many women from seeking legal support for fear of the system and community level stigma and discrimination. This has prevented many from accessing fair trial and representation through these courts on issues such as their sexual and reproductive health rights, right to education, and the right to own and have control over resources. The alternative dispute resolution system has been institutionalised to facilitate women's access to the justice system. Law reform initiatives targeting women's empowerment issues need to be undertaken with a view to making the Gambia conform to internationally accepted norms and standards that she is signatory to.

### **Gender Base Violence**

**Gender -based violence** arises from the notion of masculinity based on sexual and physical domination of women, in which the female is usually the victim. It is also derived from unequal power relationships between the sexes. While such acts of violence seriously violate the human rights of the female person and puts her at risk of HIV, it also exposes the perpetrator to the disease. Wife beating is still regarded as justifiable by 74% of respondent aged 15-24 in the MISCS 2005/2006. There are ethnic and regional disparities in the acceptance of wife beating. Educated women and wealthy women are least likely to approve of the practice. A major cause of women's poverty is embodied in unequal power relations between women and men. Poor women are more vulnerable to all forms of violence because they typically live in uncertain and dangerous environments. Too often violence is not acknowledged. This is because many communities overlook the occurrence of violence, as it is regarded a normal phenomenon especially in human relationships. Rape is not discussed and often goes unpunished. It is mostly committed by family members or persons known to the victim/survivor. The prevalence and magnitude of GBV in The Gambia is yet to be determined. The culture of silence makes it extremely difficult to get the required data though there are studies that indicate that the practice is prevalent. It is condoned and not reported thus resulting in impunity. It is a cause for concern and requires in-depth study and proper records keeping. Other issues include FGM/C, which is practice in the Gambia, early and forced marriage and wife inheritance are also detrimental to women's health and violate their individual rights.

**Thematic Policy Statement:** Government shall promote women's human rights through among other actions, the harmonization of customary laws and traditional belief systems and practices with modern laws, in order to eliminate the existing conflicts which undermine gender equality, and the enforcement of laws protecting people living with HIV and AIDS and differently able

### **Specific Gender Objectives**

**Objective 1:** To enact and enforce the Women's Bill by 2015 and all other gender related laws in order to promote and protect women's human rights

### **Strategies for Objective 1**

- Advocate for the effective implementation of the Women's Bill 2010,
- Lobby for the establishment of appropriate mechanism to monitor and report on the implementation of legal provisions in the Women's Bill 2010 and other gender responsive legislation.

- Mobilization of the general public, and targeted groups with a view to creating awareness and understanding of their human rights; enabling them to identify cases of violation and to seek redress
- Ensure that the poor and the disadvantage have access to legal services through the provision of legal aid
- Advocate for the incorporation of gender studies and human rights education in tertiary institutions.
- Ensure the review of all harmful customary practices perpetuated under the disguise of religion.
- Ensure the codification of customary and Shariah Laws and procedures applicable in the District Tribunal and Cadi Courts.
- Advocate for the translation and dissemination of the relevant laws of the Gambia that affect the lives of women and men.
- Ensure the enforcement and protection of the rights of women and girls as prescribe in the laws of The Gambia.

**Objective 2:** To advocate for the domestication of all International Conventions and Declarations addressing gender specific rights and human rights.

#### **Strategies for Objective 2**

- Advocacy for an in-depth review of the national laws so that they are in line with international and regional obligations of the Gambia
- Advocacy for the adoption and application of uniform procedures and laws in all district tribunals and Cadi courts.

**Objective 3:** To lobby for the elimination of all forms of gender discriminatory practices and the prohibition of all forms of gender based violence (GBV).

#### **Strategies for Objective 3**

- Conduct research on gender biases and gender-related violence to determine types, magnitude, pattern and nature, with a view to eliminate them.
- Provide technical and financial support to organisations that promote human rights education, prevention and management of cases of gender based violence.
- Conduct an intensive national sensitisation programme on the causes and effects of GBV
- Lobby for the enactment of specific laws prohibiting all forms of violence against women.
- Provide support for the development of a comprehensive national programme of action on the prevention of gender based violence and the management of cases of GBV
- Strengthen institution on GBV records management and training on prevention and management.
- Create and sustain an enabling and conducive environment through advocacy and sensitization to ensure continued political commitment for the elimination of gender base violence and other forms of social taboos.
- Advocate for the abandonment of all forms of harmful traditional practices.

**Objective 4:** To advance the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women Peace and Security with a focus on participation and conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peace building

#### **Strategies for Objective 4:**

- Advocate for 30% representation of women in United Nations peacekeeping missions
- Ensure the Implementation of activities to popularize UNSCR 1325
- Advocate for the development of a National Action Plan of UNSCR 1325
- Advocate for gender training for peacekeepers and civilian personnel in Peace Support Operations
- Develop gender-specific data and early warning indicators for early response
- Advocate for and support community peace building initiatives
- Advocate for women's increased and improved participation in the security services
- Ensure mainstreaming of gender perspectives all security training curriculum and mainstreaming of gender in all budgets and remuneration and promotion opportunities in the security service

#### **5.6. Gender and Governance**

**Situation Analysis:** Good governance aims at providing an environment in which individuals feel protected, civil societies are able to flourish and government carries out its responsibilities effectively and transparently with adequate institutional mechanisms to ensure transparency, accountability and participation. Respect for human rights and the rule of law are necessary components of any effort to make peace durable. These are cornerstones of good governance. By signaling its commitment to respecting human rights, a Government can demonstrate its commitment to building a society in which all can live freely. Good governance also requires the effective management of resources. Democratic governance helps to guarantee political rights, protect economic freedoms and foster an environment where peace and development can flourish.

*Positive developments:* The Gender Policy of the Africa Union highlights the importance of all member states to ensure that all good governance processes including electoral systems, current and future political dispensation instruments and other political structures adequately address equality and equity issues. The co-relation between economic and political governance, poverty reduction and sustainable development is well recognized in this policy. This is one of the reasons why the government addressed governance in the first, fourth and fifth Pillars of the current PRSP 11. <sup>21</sup> The government has made significant progress in ensuring women's involvement and participation in governance. Cabinet and the Judiciary have seen an increase in the number of women ministers and judges respectively.

Despite these efforts, fewer women hold senior positions of government, and other executive bodies, and have made little progress in attaining political power in legislative bodies. While women are very active in political mobilisation for voters' turnout during National Assembly, Local Government and Presidential elections, they fall very short of patronising women political aspirants to National Assembly and Area Councils. This is due partly to women and men's socialisation pattern that perpetuate discriminatory attitudes and practices and unequal power relations between women and men within the family and the community at large and in party structures. Current representation of women in the National Assembly is approximately 10%. The President of the Republic had taken affirmative measures to nominate and appoint more women as cabinet ministers to a percentage level of 33.3%.

At the district level however, there has been some remarkable advancement in the field of politics, as 20 women contested for the 2007 LGA elections and out of this (75%) won seats, thus out of 147 Area Councilors only 27 are women, and of the 1938 villages in the country only 5 are headed by women<sup>22</sup>. More efforts need to be made by

---

<sup>21</sup> UN CCA 2005

<sup>22</sup> 2003 National Population and Housing Census

government and the general community to have women appointed into Governors, CEO and other decision-making bodies.

**Thematic Policy Statement:** The Government of The Gambia shall promote democratic governance by ensuring the equitable representation and participation of women and men in all decision making positions and structures and ensure the provision of increased capacity for leadership particularly for women and people who are differentially able.

#### *Specific Gender Objectives*

**Objective 1:** To increase and improve women's participation in politics and decision-making positions at all levels

#### **Strategies for Objective 1**

- Create awareness among women to support and promote women in decision making positions at all levels.
- Advocate for representation of women and other marginalized groups in the National and decentralized power structures.
- Encourage women to play active roles and be proactive in decision making positions at all levels.
- Build women's capacities in management, leadership skills and other relevant areas of competencies to enable them participate effectively in decision making processes.
- Embark on empowerment interventions for potential women political aspirants in order to increase their numbers in National Assembly and the local councils.
- Advocate/lobby for the appointment of women to decision making positions in all sectors and at all levels.
- Strengthen women's capacity to participate effectively in the decision-making positions.
- Provide information, and leadership training to enable women, youth, differently able and other marginalized groups to participate in the political process.

**Objective 2:** To promote good governance and understanding among men, women, boys and girls on their roles and responsibilities as citizens

#### *Strategies for Objective 2*

- Create awareness on the roles and responsibilities of a good citizen as right bearers and duty holders. .
- Promote patriotism, and respect for positive cultural norms and values
- Promote ethical behaviors and respect of our positive cultural norms and values

## **5.7 Gender and Environment**

**Situation Analysis:** The increased occurrence of resource depletion, climatic change, degradation of natural systems and the dangers of environmental hazards are contributing factors to the fragile and degrading conditions of the ecosystems. The resultant effects include displacing communities, especially women, from productive activities and are an increasing threat to a safe and healthy environment. As the country's main food producers, women have a stake in environmentally sustainable development for sustainable livelihood. Land, water and energy resources form the basis of all farming systems, household chores, hygiene, sanitation, accessibility and affordability is crucial to sustained and improved food production, food security and economic empowerment. Also the connections between gender relations, environmental change and vulnerability have only begun to be understood. Gender differences are evident in livelihood strategies that are rooted in particular uses of environmental resources, in responsibilities for managing, owning, or stewarding these resources. These have implications for women's economic empowerment and sustainable livelihood development.

**Thematic policy statement** The Government of The Gambia shall promote participation and protection of the environment by ensuring equal participation of men and women in environment management, protection and mitigation of both natural and human disasters

**Objective 1:** To ensure women's participation in the management of and accessibility to environmental resources including portable water and disaster management and prevention.

**Strategies for Objective 1**

- Review the current national Environmental Policy/Strategy to ensure its gender responsiveness
- Advocate for total coverage of the population with access to potable water supply.
- Empower both women and men to explore and manage, and benefit from their environmental resources
- Advocate for women to be actively involved in and represented in natural resource management and water management decision-making bodies.
- Mobilise women, men, girls and boys in the planning, designing and management of water facilities, and their local natural resources.
- Ensure the provision of adequate and less labor intensive water supply technologies for horticultural farming
- Provide adequate protection for all users and managers of the ecosystem
- Ensure that women have adequate, current and quality information on the environment and its resources
- Create awareness on environmental resources, their availability, benefits, utilization; as well as women and men's equal rights to such resources
- Lobbying for Land Reform pertaining to land ownership and inheritance.
- Encourage agro-forestry by women and men for land conservation
- Promote sustainable utilization and conservation of the land resource.
- Advocate for the full implementation of the National Disaster Policy and Strategic Plan 2010-2014
- Encourage the full participation of women and men in the global fight against climate change and its effects.

**5.8 Women's Empowerment**

Apart from strategies targeted to attaining gender equity and equality, the policy also focuses key strategies on women empowerment with the objective to addressing specific women problems and to further bridge the existing gender gap between women and men, boys and girls in the economic, social, political and decision-making at all levels, due to persistent cultural barriers and gender gaps. Thus, special affirmative actions are required to bridge this gap. This, as already highlighted in the situational analysis of the policy priority areas would mean redoubling of efforts towards women empowerment for the timely attainment of gender equality.

The main part of the Policy, while dealing with gender mainstreaming focusing on capacity building for stakeholders (human, financial and material), advocacy, awareness creation, monitoring and research, this part of the policy provides for specific women empowerment strategies promoting economic, decision-making and political participation as well as access to housing, land/property, water and ICTs for women. Furthermore, one key area of focus is capacity building for women kafos/groups, associations. While women are trying to organize in groups with a view to advancing their status both socially and economically, there exists a huge capacity gap.

Most of these groups, are formed and registered but are not engaged in much meaningful activities. Access to credit for some still remains a challenge while networking and partnership, a much needed strategy, is limited



amongst them. Even the few that are better organized, lack the necessary capacity such as access to adequate financing and market infrastructure and opportunities as well as the acquisition of adequate skills and knowledge, particularly those in the informal sectors running micro and small enterprises and farmers. The pull down syndrome must also be address because this continues to undermine national efforts towards the advancement of women and the attainment of gender equity and equality.

The National Women Council advises government on all matters affecting women and on gender issues, established over thirty years, also lack adequate capacity to effectively execute their duties. Several capacity building initiatives were undertaken by the Women's Bureau through support from Government and some development partners but still a lot needs to be done. In this endeavor, a National federation of Women organizations will be established as well as intensification of efforts to further strengthened the National Women's Council. Capacity building initiatives will also be targeted to the Women's Bureau, to enable them better support the women through training, advocacy, awareness creation, research, monitoring and evaluation, coordination and provision of financing and credit to women.

**Thematic Policy Statement:** Government shall take special measures towards women empowerment by way of bridging the existing gender gap and creating an enabling environment for women and girls' effective participation in national development.

**Objective 1:** To build the capacity of women organizations, groups and associations by 2015

#### **Strategies for objective 1**

- Strengthen the National Women's Council and support the establishment of a national Federation of Gambian Women.
- Support institutional strengthening and capacity development for members of the federation and all other women and female youth groups and association through training, awareness creation, provision of material and financial support.
- Advocate and build capacity of women or women associations to operate macro and major enterprises and light industries and access to adequate financing, investment and market opportunities.
- Advocate and lobby for increased networking among women groups both within and abroad

**Objective 2:** To further improve women economic situation by 2015.

#### **Strategies for objective 2**

- Strengthen the capacities of women groups, associations and cooperatives engaged in entrepreneurship, farming (rice, horticulture), poultry, animal husbandry, fishing and oyster harvesting, processing, marketing and all other ventures in the formal and informal sectors.
- Review of the land tenure systems, and customary land laws to determine whether there are any factors that impede women's access, control, and ownership over land.
- Ensure the availability of adequate market infrastructures and opportunities to all categories of women entrepreneurs and farmers.
- Ensure women's effectively access to adequate financing, credit and grants under favorable terms and conditions and proper management.
- Advocate for favorable macro-economic policies towards import duties, interest rates, market opportunities, land as well as tax and investment incentives.
- Support career development opportunities for women and girls to improve their employable opportunities.
- Further support initiatives to ensure women effectively access to and use of water, information, ICTs, appropriate technology and labor saving devices.

- Ensure the availability and use of data and information on the socio-economic situation of women.

**Objective 3:** To further promote and protect the rights of women and girls and ensure representation in decision-making and politics by 2015.

#### **Strategies for objective 3**

- Advocate for the enactment and full implementation of the Women’s Bill.
- Advocate and build the capacity of women and female youths to take up leadership, political and decision-making position at all levels.
- Advocate for women in decision-making and politics both in the public and private sectors as well as at national and community levels.
- Create awareness on the social benefits of women in decision-making and politics.
- Build strong alliances and partnership among all stakeholders involve in women empowerment (Government, Private sectors, NGOs, political parties, Regional Authorities, Parliament, religious and traditional leaders, youth, women leaders , boys and girls) .
- Advocate for self reliance of women as a development strategy.
- Intensify public awareness creation and education towards social transformation of the situation women by way of eliminating all forms of cultural, traditional other social briars.

## **6. Institutional Arrangements for the Policy Implementation**

### **6.1. The National Gender Machinery**

This policy recognizes the original structure of the National women’s Machinery with slight modifications. The mechanism is now proposed as The National Women and Gender Machinery and constitutes: The Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Gender; The Women and Gender Bureau; the National Council for Gender and Women empowerment, and the Gender Focal Persons Network (GFPs), Cabinet Gender Subcommittee, National Assembly Select Committee on Women and Children, Women’s Federation and the Women’s Bill and gender Policy implementation committees. These institutions are mandated to spearhead the coordination of the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the gender policy. However, *individual stakeholders shall be responsible for the implementation of the component of the Gender Policy relevant to its institutional mandate*. It must be noted that, the Gender and Women Policy is not aimed at replacing institutional policies but to enhance and accelerate their implementation process and ensure that they are gender sensitive.

The National Gender and Women Machinery has the ultimate responsibility for the effective coordination, monitoring, networking and provision of technical support for the process of advancing gender equity and equality and Women Empowerment. Therefore Government shall ensure:-

- I. Adequate resource allocation for the gender and women Machinery including technical personnel, efficient communication technologies, improved transportation facilities, as well as the power-base to reach out to sectoral ministries and their various departments at national and decentralized levels, the legislature and the judiciary in order to influence policies, planning and programming processes.
- II. That the Gender and women machinery has the technical expertise in gender and gender mainstreaming to ensure an institutional culture of gender equity and equality, gender responsive practices and gender balance within the Gender and Women Machinery and in all its programmes as well as promote the same in all sectoral ministries and in their programming
- III. Support for regular updating of information on the state of gender equality, through working with relevant sectors to collect primary and secondary data and information on progress in gender mainstreaming based on sector-based reviews; production, dissemination and utilization of such information and data.

- IV. Collaboration and networking among institutions, national structures, civil society organizations and international agencies for effective participatory consultative processes.
- V. Availability of technical advisory services on gender-related issues to the national structures for gender mainstreaming as well as to sectors and institutions responsible for enhancing gender mainstreaming approaches and programmes at all levels.

Each stakeholder shall be responsible for the identification of gender focal persons and establish gender units in its organization. All the ministries shall be supported to establish functional Gender Units. The Gender Focal Persons network shall be responsible for advising Sectoral Ministries or institutions on gender and provide feedbacks for effective monitoring and evaluation. The network will also identify priority gender issues, plan for relevant interventions, assess and review progress in implementation of the policy. The National Gender and Women Machinery will assist with the training of the staff of the gender units on gender analysis; gender budgeting, advocacy and gender mainstreaming strategies.

A committee shall be set up comprising members of the gender focal persons in all Sectoral Ministries, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Parastatals and the Private Sector to supervise the implementation of the Gender and Women Policy by way of ensuring effective implementation and dissemination of information on the status of the implementation of the Gender and women Policy.

To enhance the decentralization of the policy implementation, the existing institutions at Regional, District and Ward levels shall be utilized. In addition the regional programme officers shall work closely with Multi Disciplinary Facilitation Team (MDFTs), Technical Advisory Committees (TAC), Population Task Forces (PTFs) and Regional Traditional and Religious Leaders in this area. Regional Gender networks/committee shall be set-up to work closely with the women and gender programme officers, members of whom are drawn from the above structures and other relevant structures.

The Gender and Women machinery shall utilize the comparative advantages of the structures identified above, and work closely with the Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) and other partners to carry out the following additional tasks in support of the implementation of the Gender and Women Empowerment Policy:-

- Review national and sectoral policies, and development frameworks and reports to determine their gender sensitivity and make public the outcomes of the reviews accordingly
- Provide technical advisory services to the national and sectoral structures for gender mainstreaming while ensuring that such services are secured and accessible.
- Promote the collection of gender disaggregated data, management of information systems and disseminate the data for national development planning.
- Establish and maintain a Gender Data base
- Identify key areas of research on gender issues, and ensure that the results of research are incorporated into national and sectoral development programmes.
- Coordinate advocacy efforts on gender and development issues;
- Mobilize resources for overall coordination and policy implementation;
- Establish linkages, partnerships and networks both internally and externally on gender and development issues;
- Strengthen institutional capacity for systematically and consistently taking gender concerns into account in institutional policies, programmes, budgets and plans;
- Monitor and evaluate the Gender and Women Empowerment Policy implementation;
- Evaluate the achievements of the Policy goals and objectives;
- Attend gender-related meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences at national, sub-regional, regional and international levels for purposes of updating on current and emerging discourses, sharing knowledge, information and skills in gender, and share outcomes of such meetings with colleagues and gender focal points.

**Table 1: Structure, Roles and Responsibility of the National Gender Machinery**

Institution	Roles and responsibilities
The Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender	<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 and Gender 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 for 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 guide lines and disseminate and monitor their operations</li> </ul>
National Council for Gender and Women's Empowerment	<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</li> </ul>

	<p>analysis , planning and provide budget lines for their operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>
--	---

**Table 2: Roles and Responsibility of Partners in Support of Gender Mainstreaming**

<b>Type of Partner</b>	<b>Role and Responsibility</b>
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 and Gender Focal Point Network on matters of gender mainstreaming</li> <li>• Establish mechanisms for ensuring gender responsiveness of development cooperation</li> <li>• Provide financial and technical support for towards the attainment of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in terms of 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 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 a 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> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>
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 NGWEP</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>
Gender Policy Implementation Committee/ Gender Focal Point Network	<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 in the monitoring of the implementation of the policy</li> </ul>

## 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy implementation requires an integrated and effective monitoring and evaluation system with appropriate and efficient feedback mechanisms. This requires undertaking monitoring and evaluation functions at all levels including gathering information at the macro, sectoral and grassroots levels. The Gender and Women Empowerment Bureau shall be responsible for coordinating M&E within the National Gender Monitoring Framework. Gender units at organizations or institutions shall provide quarterly reports of activities, which will be fed into a data base. The Gender and Women Empowerment Bureau and key institutions and at different levels will be strengthened in support of the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the policy. This will include:

- Enhanced the capacity of gender focal point unit to together with the women and gender bureau produce quarterly report and ensure they are published and informed planning, policy, legislation, programme, projects and action points formulation.
- Ensure that quarterly monitoring visit/treks are under taken by the women and gender focal point network members.
- Evaluate relevant programmes, projects and legislation form a gender perspective.
- Enhancement of gender planning and gender analysis skills, and in gender responsive budgeting
- Enhancement and strengthening of key development practioners in gender sensitive policy analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation skills.
  - Equip key actors with skills to enable them determine and formulate gender sensitive monitoring indicators at planning stages of national development frameworks such as the, PRSPs, MDG Reporting, and sectoral plans, programmes and activities.
- Develop requisite gender sensitive indicators to measure achievement of national policy goals. Success in implementation of policy goals will be determined by, amongst others, measurement of:
- Number of sectors that have undergone gender audit
- Number of sectors that have trained key policy makers, planners, programmers and data analysts in gender analysis and gender mainstreaming
- Number of sectors that have adopted gender responsive budgeting
- Number of functional gender units in line Ministries
- Number of gender sensitive policies programmes and projects
- Gender indicators as per the MDGs
- Sectoral gender-related indicators
- Maternal Health Indicators

- Proportion of the population below poverty line by sex of household head
- Proportion of women in decision making positions
- Proportion of population accessing justices by sex
- Maternal mortality ratio
- Infant mortality ratio
- Contraceptive prevalence rate
- Proportion of women representative in National Assembly and decentralized legislative structures
- Proportion of girls and boys completing formal education by level
- Incidences of gender base violence report by region
- Proportion of the population accessing and utilizing credit by sex and industry
- Adult literacy rates by sex and location
- Gross Domestic Products GDP
- Proportion of business registered by type ,sex of owners and turnover
- Percentage of population accessing public and private services by sex , sector and location

#### **International Indicator**

- Human Development Index (HDI)
- Gender Development Index (GDI)
- Women’s participation in political decision-making;
- Women’s access to professional opportunities;
- Woman’s earning power and participation in the economy.

**Selected References** (please complete)

## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1: Glossary of Terms**

#### **GLOSSARY**

**CONDITION:** Immediate material circumstances in which people live (the kind of work they do, where they live, the needs they perceive for themselves and their children etc)

**EMPOWERMENT:** Process by which individuals, groups and/or communities organize to influence change on the basis of their access to knowledge, to political processes and to financial, social and natural resources. Women’s empowerment: process by which unequal power relations are transformed and women gain greater equality with men. Includes 1) at the government level the extension of all fundamental social, economic and political rights to women; and 2) at the individual level processes by which women gain inner power to express and defend their rights and gain greater self-esteem and control over their own lives and personal and social relationships.

**GENDER:** The assigning of “male” and “female” labels to social roles and attributes, as if they arise from sexual differences, although these attributes are acquired by a process of socialization. The economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female.

**GENDER AWARENESS:** Ability to identify problems arising from gender inequality and discrimination, even if they are not obvious.

**GENDER BIAS:** Tendency to make decisions or take actions based on gender.

**GENDER DISCRIMINATION:** Differential/Prejudicial treatment of an individual based on a gender stereotype

**GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR:** Roles, responsibilities and activities assigned to women and men based on gender

**GENDER EQUALITY:** The enjoyment by women and men of the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life, and an equal sharing in the distribution of power, resources and opportunity.

**GENDER EQUITY:** The quality of being fair and right. A stage in the process of achieving gender equality. Fairness and justice in the distribution between women and men of benefits and responsibilities, access to resources and opportunities to exercise control.

**GENDER ISSUES:** Specific consequences of the inequality of women and men. Arise when an instance of gender inequality is recognized as undesirable or unjust.

**GENDER MAINSTREAMING:** A strategy for integrating gender concerns in the analysis, formulation and monitoring of policies, programs and projects in order to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in population and development activities.

**GENDER RELATIONS:** Ways in which a culture or society defines rights, responsibilities, and identities of men and women in relation to one another.

**GENDER ROLES:** Socially constructed roles and responsibilities assigned to women and men in a given culture as though these roles arise from sexual differences. The socially constructed roles that men and women play and the expectations placed upon them. Gender roles are learned, vary from society to society and change over time.

**GENDER STEREOTYPES:** Beliefs about women's and men's roles which arise when gender roles are considered to be based on biological differences (thereby characterizing them as "normal" and "natural") rather than upon socially constructed expectations.

**GENDER SENSITIVE:** Being aware of the differences between women's and men's needs, roles, responsibilities and constraints.

**PATRIARCHY:** System of male domination and female subordination in economy, society and culture. Male domination of ownership and control, at all levels of society, which maintains and operates the system of gender discrimination

**POSITION:** People's social and economic standing relative to others, for example women's position in society in relation to men's. It involves power, status, and control over decisions and resources.

**POWER-OVER:** A simple duality in which when one individual or group gets more, the others get less based on an assumption that power is a limited quantity. It is a relationship of domination/ subordination generally defined by level of seniority, sex, ethnicity, age, professional authority, control of funds, position in a hierarchy etc.

**POWER-TO:** Individual aspect of empowerment characterized by the individual's ability or capacity to achieve her/his goals.

**POWER-WITH:** Collective or shared power of people united by a common purpose or understanding.

**POWER-WITHIN:** Internal power based on self-acceptance and self-respect, which contributes to acceptance and respect for others as equals.

**PRACTICAL GENDER NEEDS:** Needs which are in response to immediate perceived necessity, practical in nature, often concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment.

**SEX:** Biological differences between women from men which are universal, obvious and generally permanent

**SEX ROLES:** Functions of women, and of men, for which the necessary qualification is the sex of the individual.

**STRATEGIC GENDER NEEDS:** Needs of women or men to improve their positions relative to each other, with regard to such factors as gender division of labor, power and control



**TRIPLE ROLE OF WOMEN:** Reproductive work, productive work and community work

- Access programme for maths and science for girls at the university in the past and free fees for science and technology
- Early childhood development
- Re-entry programme