



Republic of The Gambia
Zero Hunger Strategic Review
2018

A National Guide to Achieving Sustainable Development
Goal 2 by 2030



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1. Foreword

In September 2015, the Government of the Republic of The Gambia along with the rest of the world united and made history when world leaders pledged themselves to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through its 17 Global Goals. The new goals within the broader sustainability agenda, address the interconnected root causes of poverty and the universal need for sustainable development that leaves no one behind. Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) which is the focus of this Zero Hunger Initiative calls upon member States to “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture” by 2030.

In line with this universal call to action and the requirement for all Governments to take ownership and establish national frameworks for the implementation and achievement of the 17 Goals, the Government of The Gambia with technical and financial support from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), undertook a Strategic Review of SDG2. The Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR) which was independently led by a lead convener, Mr. Musa Mbenga and a research team, adopted a cross country participatory approach aimed at analysing the situation of hunger, food and nutrition security and agriculture in the country and the extent to which current policies and programmes address the challenges being faced, the factors contributing to these challenges and the changes/reforms required to meet the global SDG 2 targets.

Since coming into power in 2017, His Excellency Adama Barrow and Government have been committed to the development priorities of the “New Gambia” clearly outlined in its National Development Plan 2018 – 2021 (NDP). Efforts have been made to align the NDP with the SDGs demonstrating Government’s commitment to the realization of the goals and targets enshrined in the Agenda 2030. Therefore, the recommendations and road map from this Zero Hunger Report will be integrated into the country’s development plan of action.

Furthermore, ending hunger in The Gambia by 2030 will undoubtedly require the active participation of the youth population who are the future of this nation. In a country where a disproportionate number of young people risk their lives to cross the Mediterranean in search for a better life, addressing the issue of migration cannot be overemphasized. The youth population played a crucial role in the choice of a peaceful path away from authoritarian rule a year ago.

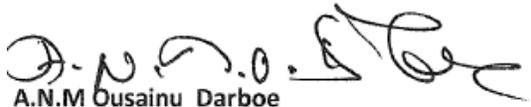
The Agenda 2030 and the SDGs also offers an opportunity for ground-breaking reforms in gender equality and women’s empowerment and addressing the challenges faced by women and girls. The SDGs cannot be achieved if the tangible and intangible challenges faced by so many women around the world are not addressed. Keeping gender equality and women’s empowerment at the forefront of development efforts is therefore crucial towards the sustainable development path.

I am therefore, pleased to present this report which provides Gambia’s status on the above and demonstrates its readiness and commitment to localize the Agenda 2030. The government acknowledges the priority actions identified and welcomes the useful recommendations of this strategic review.

I want to seize this opportunity to thank all Government departments, development partners, academia, civil society and the private sector whose participation in this initiative was highly appreciated. I look forward to strengthened collaboration and partnerships as we move from this planning phase towards full implementation.

Specifically, I would like to appreciate the United Nations World Food Programme for its generous technical, strategic and financial support throughout the review process, and in the production of this report.

I, as chair of the ZHSR Advisory Board, call upon you all, to embrace the recommendations highlighted in this report and support the Gambia towards the realization of Zero Hunger by 2030.



A.N.M Ousainu Darboe

Vice President & Minister for Women's Affairs
The Republic of The Gambia

2. Acknowledgement

I would like to express my most sincere thanks to Her Excellency Fatoumatta Jallow Tambajang, Vice President and Minister of Women's Affairs for her leadership during the Zero Hunger Strategic Review. Without her devotion and dedication to the process, we would not have achieved the objectives. Her leadership helped the research team to have access to a wide range of information while receiving acceptance among ministries and the development sector. The Directorate of Development Planning at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs also provided tremendous support during this process.

Our gratitude and appreciation go to members of the Advisory Board who, despite their busy schedules, found time to support the Vice President in her capacity as the Chair of the Strategic Review, and to provide constructive observations and feedback on the findings of the Review. In particular, we would like to mention the Ambassadors of the United States and the Emirate of Qatar, the Vice Chancellor of the University of the Gambia, the Country Directors of international Civil Societies, and the President of the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry

This review would not have been possible without the financial and operational support that we received from the World Food Programme, and for the guidance we received from the organization throughout the process. The UN Resident Coordinator demonstrated leadership and commitment throughout the review, and she backed this up by enabling her staff to provide valuable technical support each step of the way, including information and documentation relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals, in general, and SDG 2 specifically. We are grateful for this assistance, and for the active participation of UN staff in all the instances of the review process. Finally, our appreciation also goes to the Country Directors/Representatives of WFP, FAO, UNICEF and UNDP for contributing valuable time and resources to the review.

Mr. Musa Saihou Mbenga.
Lead Convener of the Zero Hunger Strategic Review

Executive Summary

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure global citizens enjoy peace and prosperity. SDG 2 aims to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, making sure all people have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round and promote sustainable agriculture. In this effort, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), FAO, UNICEF and UNDP prioritized support to the Gambia Government through the National Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR). This is an initial step aimed at identifying actions needed to achieve the SDG 2 targets.

The main objective of the review is to identify the challenges required to achieve the "zero hunger" goal in The Gambia by 2030. More specifically, it:

- Provides a comprehensive understanding of the programmes and policies that impact food security, nutrition, social protection and gender in The Gambia.
- Identifies actions and gaps in relation to food security and nutrition in The Gambia;
- Proposes actionable recommendations for government and development partners and provide a National Zero Hunger Roadmap to help the country meet its goals by 2030.

The review was undertaken from April to December 2017 by a team of researchers in the fields of gender, agriculture, food security, nutrition, social protection and macroeconomic policy framework and was led by Mr. Musa Saihou Mbenga, the lead Convener. The methodology involved a desk review of literature, country-wide consultations with a diverse set of stakeholders, including public institutions/ministries, NGOs and UN agencies.

While there have been reviews conducted in the country on the thematic areas, this review is the first of its kind to focus on assessing how the country can reach the targets under the new global framework. It encompasses a cross-dimensional analysis of the relevant thematic areas, ranging from food security, nutrition and social protection, to gender equality. The review also develops a Zero Hunger Roadmap that highlights key targets to be achieved in priority sectors; recommends the establishment of a National Zero Hunger Committee which will monitor and evaluate progress in achieving the specific targets; and highlights the importance of mainstreaming gender in all national policies and strategies.

What has been the progress to date within food security and nutrition indicators?

With its commitment to reducing food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty levels, amongst others, under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), The Gambia made great strides in reducing child mortality rate and maternal mortality ratios, improving access to rural water supply and gender parity at primary and secondary education levels by 2015.¹

What are some relevant SDG 2 concerns?

Levels of food insecurity vary within the regions, with areas in Central River North showing levels as high as 23 percent.² About one tenth of the people are food insecure and almost one in three

1 Infant mortality: 93 per 1000 births in 2005 to 34 per 1000 in 2014 (exceeded target - 43). Maternal mortality ratio: 730 per 100,000 births in 2001 to 433 in 2013 (target of 263 not achieved). percent improved drinking water Source: 69percent in 1990 to 91percent in 2013 (exceed target of 85percent). Source: MDG Status Report, 2014, Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs.

2 2013 Demographic Health Survey (GDHS+)

Gambians are vulnerable to food insecurity. The Gambia is only able to meet half of the population's food needs and depends largely on food imports. The agricultural sector is predominantly labour intensive, rain-fed with limited access to quality inputs and financial resources. ³According to the SMART Survey (2015), The Gambia has a high stunting prevalence among children under five years, estimated at 22.9 percent. The prevalence of acute malnutrition, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) levels estimated at 10.3 percent.⁴ Nationally, micronutrient deficiencies are also highly prevalent in children and women. Similarly, 17.7 percent of non-pregnant women of child bearing ages were underweight, while 14.9 percent and 9.2 percent were overweight and obese respectively (SMART, 2015). This is an indication that The Gambia is facing the double burden of malnutrition with both, undernutrition and over-nutrition.

What are the overall policy gaps?

The Gambia has designed a wide range of policies and programmes, with a focus on addressing the challenges of the food and nutrition situation, which in many instances have led to effective outcomes.⁵ However, some policies, whilst well-written and articulated, have not adequately addressed the issues underpinning the root causes of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition in the country.

The major gaps include poor alignment of policies to national strategic plans for poverty reduction, most notably to the National Development Plan (NDP), which provides a comprehensive blueprint. The more specific sector policy gaps include the absence of a stand-alone food and nutrition security policy, insufficient targeting of women by the National Social Protection Policy (NSSP) and alignment to policies of the Women's Bureau, and the limited cross-sectoral ownership of the School Meals Programme (SMP).

Effective Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanisms for policies and implementation strategies also play a critical role in improving and sustaining zero hunger.

Recommendations

The Gambia is committed to achieving the SDG 2 target of ensuring food and nutrition security by 2030. It is therefore crucial to align efforts and resources towards key drivers of growth in the economy in collaboration with development partners and the private sector. The proposed policy recommendations and actionable options highlight key reforms and interventions to be undertaken in programmes and policies.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

³ CFSME, 2015

⁴ According to 2013 Demographic Health Survey (GDHS+), almost 30 percent of children under five are stunted.

⁵ Key ongoing projects include the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development (Nema), Food and Agriculture Sector Development (FASDEP), Gambia Commercial Agriculture and Value Chain Management Project (GCAV) and the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVCDP), among others. The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is also active in the agricultural sector. They have a flagship Rice Initiative Project (RIP) in URR and CRR to help minimize the impact of the global food crisis. The UK-based non-governmental organization, United Purpose, is promoting the production and consumption of orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP), African leafy vegetables (ALV) and Pearl Millet Bio-Fortification (PMBF).

- *Macro-level environment to promote smallholder farmers through revision of taxes and tariffs;*
- *Macro-level environment to become conducive to attract investors within the food supply chain;*
- *The decentralization policy should be revisited and operationalized to meet the local context;*
- *Efforts for gender parity to be strengthened;*
- *Strengthen the provision of social protection support to the poor and vulnerable groups, such as women and youth;*
- *Support youth employment and reduction of illegal migration;*

SDG 2 Target 1: Access to adequate food and healthy diets, for all people, all year round - recommendation

- *Continuation and expansion of school feeding Programme*

SDG 2 Target 2: ending malnutrition in all its forms – recommendations

Relevant Recommendations to achieve SDG Target 2.4 by 2030:

As the recently validated National Nutrition Policy⁶ (2018-2025) states, nutrition should be mainstreamed into the national and decentralised development policies, legislations and programmes

- *Nutrition-specific and nutrition sensitive interventions within social safety nets to be expanded as per the NSPP, and empower groups to monitor nutrition progress (to be aligned with SDG target 2.1).*
- *Build regular and detailed assessment on food insecurity and malnutrition levels*
- *Promotion of improved water, hygiene and sanitation practices country-wide and enhanced communities' capacity to keep their environment safe.*

SDG 2 Target 3: increasing food productions and diversification - recommendations

Relevant Recommendations to achieve SDG Target 2.4 by 2030:

- *Strengthen collection and dissemination of market information*
- *Support research efforts on developing improved crop varieties and animal breeds to increase production and micronutrient rich foods*
- *Increased investment in physical rural agricultural infrastructure*
- *Increased investment in post-harvest rural agricultural infrastructure and services.*
- *Increased investment in the fisheries sector to enhance employment and contribute to diverse diets*
- *Develop an e-wallet Programme for rural smallholder farmers to access improved inputs.*
- *Support to women farmers to access matching grants.*

⁶ NaNA, 2018-2025

- *Review current value chain financing mechanisms for small holder farmers.*
- *Introduce a warehouse receipt system to stabilize prices and provide collateral to small holder farmers.*

SDG 2 Target 4: sustainable food systems - recommendations

Relevant Recommendations to achieve SDG Target 2.4 by 2030:

- *Strengthened assessment of climate related risks and develop models for rapid emergency response*
- *Strengthened Early Warning Food Security Information Systems including potential price shocks*
- *Efforts to improve the degraded state of land.*

Introduction

Food security and nutrition are the basic rights of every citizen of the world. For governments, ensuring access to food and sustainable food systems that meet basic needs for all is fundamental to a healthy and productive population with sustainable economic growth.

This led the Government of the Republic of The Gambia along with world leaders to commit themselves to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that leaves no one behind. Achieving the 2030 Agenda, requires significant focus on ending hunger and malnutrition in all its forms which is part of SDG 2 – Zero Hunger.

The Gambia Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR) was undertaken from April to December 2017, as an independent national process to identify and analyze the current food security and malnutrition status of the country and the extent to which existing policies and programmes address these challenges. The review seeks to provide specific recommendations for the government and development partners, on key reforms required to accelerate progress towards meeting SDG 2 targets by 2030.

It has the potential to contribute to national development planning and serve as a baseline for all stakeholders to better align their assistance to The Gambia's development priorities.

The Zero Hunger Strategic Review

The Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR) is an independent consultative process that aims to unearth some of the main drivers of hunger in The Gambia. As the review will highlight, the root causes of hunger are multifaceted and stem from current gaps within government policies, the dynamics within the food supply chain and other cross-cutting themes, such as gender parity and social protection mechanisms. The review is structured along four main targets under SDG 2 - access to food; malnutrition; agricultural productivity and sustainable food systems.

The ZHSR was undertaken by a team of researchers in the fields of gender, agriculture, nutrition and macroeconomic policy framework and was led by Musa Saihou Mbenga. The methodology adopted was participatory, involving consultations with a diverse set of stakeholders from all regions, NGOs, UN agencies and ministries. At the regional level, stakeholders comprised farmer's organizations, civil society, local authorities and the private sector. For a more in-depth understanding of the methodology and tools please refer to Annex 1.

The main objectives of the review are:

- Provide a comprehensive understanding of the programmes and policies that impact food security, nutrition, social protection and gender in The Gambia.
- Identify the policy and programmatic gaps that may hinder the achievement of the SDG 2 targets.
- Propose actionable recommendations for government and development partners and provide a National Zero Hunger Roadmap to help the country meet its goals by 2030.

Methodology

The review process was led by the lead convener and his research team, in collaboration with the Office of the President. The methodology adopted for the Zero Hunger Strategic Review consisted of:

Desk Review

The documents reviewed included key national policies such as the agriculture and natural resources policy, the national nutrition policy, the national social protection policy, the education policy, the health policy, the women empowerment policy, and the Demographic Health Survey. These policies together cover issues of poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, natural resources management and social exclusion.

Data Collection

Data was collected using quantitative and qualitative tools that included consultations, literature review and key informant interviews. Consultations were done at national and regional levels. The data was synthesized, analyzed and the findings were utilized in developing a situational analysis that provided the bases for the recommendations. These were utilized to develop a roadmap to attain Zero Hunger in The Gambia by 2030.

Consultations

The consultations took place at national and regional levels working with the GoTG, MDAs, Regional Governments, relevant UN agencies, private sector and civil society stakeholders. The process strengthened national ownership and collaboration for future programming, budgeting, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of actions aimed at ending hunger.

Initial findings and various drafts of the report were presented to the Technical committee and Advisory Board for review, validation and adoption.

Facilitation

The process was supported by an advisory board chaired by Her Excellency Fatoumatta Jallow Tambajang, the Vice President and Minister for Women's Affairs. The board comprised of key decision makers including Government ministers, development partners, the donor community and the civil society. The board discussed and validated the methodology, research findings and recommendations presented by the research team.

The technical committee was made up of focal persons from different government institutions and partners. The committee contributed to the desk review, analysis of existing data and key research findings, which were presented to the advisory board.

The review process was supported by a Strategic Review Team (SRT) (secretariat) that provided operational guidance, including a comprehensive collection of relevant documentation and lessons learned. The SRT was comprised mainly of WFP and other UN focal persons.

3. Context Analysis

Home to 1.8 million people⁷, The Gambia is the smallest country in mainland Africa. The annual growth rate is 3.3 percent⁸ and over 70 percent of the population is below 30 years of age⁹. The main drivers of growth are tourism and agriculture, both of which remain vulnerable to external shocks, such as the drought in 2011, which reduced agriculture production by 24.2 percent from the previous year, ¹⁰and the regional spillover of the Ebola crisis in 2014, that greatly reduced the number of tourists.

Over the past decade (2007-2016), the country has maintained an average GDP growth rate of 3.6 percent.¹¹ Growth in 2016 was 2.1 percent, largely due to the political reforms that took place impacting private investment and tourism, in addition to an average agricultural season. The outlook for growth rates for 2017 and 2018 is projected to be 3.0 percent and 3.5 percent¹² respectively, with the key drivers being agriculture, services (including tourism), manufacturing and industry sectors.

The Gambia currently has a heavy debt burden at 105 percent of GDP in 2015¹³ due to high domestic borrowing that has leads to high interest rates, hence crowding out private sector investments. Consequently, the amount of money banks lend to the private sector has also decreased, currently at almost 15 percent of the GDP¹⁴ - well below the regional average of almost 59 percent¹⁵. This has resulted in sectors such as industry, tourism, and agriculture being adversely affected without the necessary funding to expand their businesses.

The poor performance of growth drivers, persistent large fiscal deficits, high inflation and public debt, consistent current account deficit and dwindling international reserves put the country in a vulnerable position to battle challenges such as food insecurity and malnutrition. The ability of the country to purchase food on the international market depends on the balance of payments and the exchange rate. A problematic balance of payments therefore restricts the borrowing capacity of the country, which in turn may limit the ability to import food.¹⁶ As the country has increased imports and exports decreased significantly, the local currency is undervalued, which overtime rendered exports cheaper and imports more expensive.

Local production is characterized by traditional modes of farming, dependency on rainfall and inadequate access to financial and agricultural resources. Women farmers tend to be more vulnerable, as they have limited access to land and productive capital which reduces their ability to secure financial services.

In terms of public expenditure, the Government's spending is heavily skewed towards the recurrent, with 78 percent of the overall budget in 2015 being recurrent (mainly the

7 The Gambia 2013 Population and Housing Census Preliminary Results, Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2013

8 Ibid 14

9 Ibid 14

10 Gambia Bureau of Statistics web site: www.gbos.gov.gm/uploads/naccounts/2012

11 National development Plan 2018-2021, The Gambia

12 Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Gambia in consultation with IMF, 2016

13 Ibid 19

14 The Gambia Common Country Assessment, September 2015

15 Ibid 21

16 The State of Food and Agriculture: climate change, agriculture and food security. FAO, Rome, 2016.

wage bill and interest payments), with financing for development accounting for only 22 percent.

Therefore, it is not surprising, that investment in key sectors (health, social protection, water and sanitation, and agriculture) is below international agreements¹⁷. Education is the only social sector where the international target of 20 percent (which includes the recurrent cost of local employees) is achieved, as set by the Education for All Fast Track Initiative benchmark.¹⁸ In 2015, government spending for health was almost 8 percent, far below the Abuja commitment of 15 percent.¹⁹ Likewise, despite the government’s commitment to prioritize investments in agriculture, current allocation (7 percent in 2015) is below the target of 10 percent as per the 2003 Maputo Declaration, reaffirmed in Malabo in 2014.²⁰

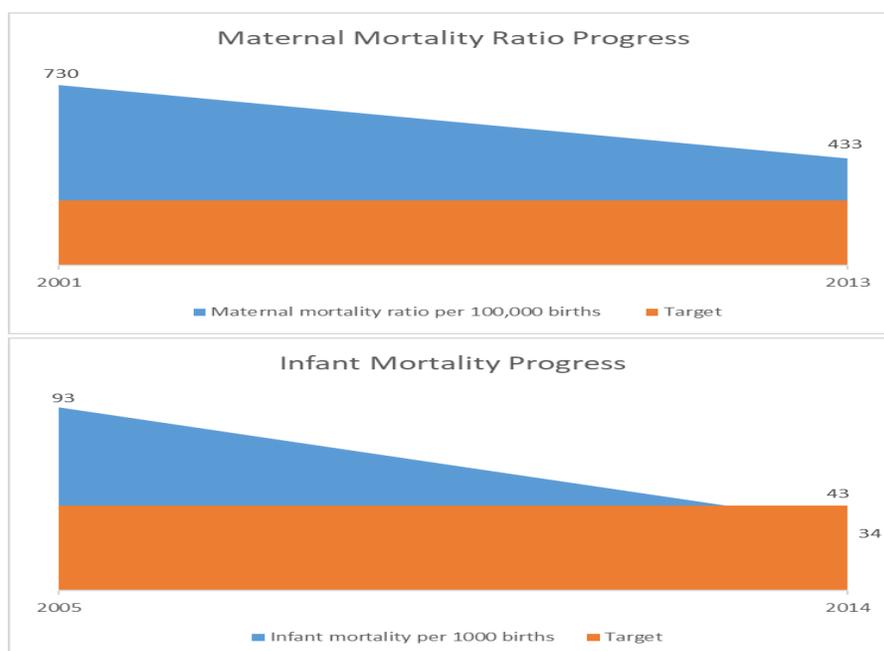


Figure 1- Progress of Maternal/Infant Mortality Ratio

Source: Open Data for Africa, FAO

However, the government has agreed to allocate 50 percent of Gambia Local Fund (GLF) funds (excluding debt servicing) on activities that have the aim of reducing poverty, in line with the Common Country Assessment (CCA) which feeds into the United Nations

17 African Union: Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihood, June 2014.

"Governments to allocate 10 percent of expenditure to Agriculture. First Initiated 2003 African Union Maputo Declaration and Reaffirmed in Malabo, July, 2014"

18 The Education for All Fast-track Initiative (FTI) is a program for accelerating progress towards the goal that all the world’s children would complete at least primary schooling, which is one of the Millennium Development Goals for 2015. website: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology_education-all-fast-track-initiative-fti-ec-guide-200403_en_2.pdf

19 Abuja Declaration: In April 2001, heads of state of African Union countries met in Abuja, Nigeria and pledged to set a target of allocating at least 15percent of their annual budget to improve the health sector. Source: www.who.int/healthsystems/publication/Abuja_10.pdf

20 Maputo Declaration and Reaffirmed in Malabo, July, 2014

Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).²¹ The priority areas in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) for spending in 2018-2021 includes agriculture, education, and health. The government is further considering unlocking the potentials associated with Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and remittances, as well as private sector finance streams – including innovative financing.

Progress to Date

In view of the global drive towards poverty reduction, The Gambia committed to reducing food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty levels, amongst other goals, under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from 2000. By 2015, the country had taken great strides in reducing infant mortality rates, maternal mortality ratios, improving access to rural water supply and gender parity in primary and secondary education.²²

Commitments under SDG 2

Based on the progress, The Gambia has committed to closing the remaining gaps under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which amongst other targets aims to tackle hunger, committing to reduce food insecurity, malnutrition and promote sustainable agriculture and stronger food systems by 2030 (SDG 2). An estimated 148,458 Gambians are currently food insecure (8 percent), and a further 540,000 (29 percent) are vulnerable to food insecurity.²³ Food insecurity and particularly chronic malnutrition can have detrimental short and long-term impacts on health, education and productivity, affecting the country's socio and economic development.²⁴

The Government of The Gambia, through the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 - 2021, is committed to strengthening the productive sectors, provide the enabling environment, prioritize the private sector's role, promote green development, and ensure optimal nutrition for its population and food self-sufficiency in the country. In line with the above, and specifically relevant to SDG 2, The Gambia has committed to the following four targets by 2030:

1. **End hunger and ensure access by all people**, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including women and children under 5, to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round;
2. **End all forms of malnutrition**, including achieving by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons;
3. **Increase agricultural productivity** and incomes of small-scale food producers, women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, and

21 As per the Budget Framework Paper, 2015-2017 cited in The Gambia Common Country Assessment (CCA) 2015

22 Infant mortality: 93 per 1000 births in 2005 to 34 per 1000 in 2014 (exceeded target of 43). Maternal mortality ratio: 730 per 100,000 births in 2001 to 433 in 2013 (target of 263 not achieved). Proportion of Population Using an Improved Drinking Water Source: 69percent in 1990 to 91percent in 2013 (exceed target of 85percent). Source: MDG Status Report, 2014, Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs.

23 CFSME, 2015

24 UNICEF: https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/gambia_statistics.html

fishermen, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment;

4. **Ensure sustainable food production systems** and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

Key Thematic Findings

Target 1: Access to food

About one tenth of The Gambia's population is food insecure, and almost one in three Gambians are vulnerable to food insecurity.²⁵ It is estimated that more than half the population (55 percent) cannot meet the daily-required minimum of 2400 Kilo Calories (Kcal) per day per person.²⁶ The levels of food insecurity differ by region, with areas like Brikama in West Coast region accounting for close to half of the food insecure population.²⁷

Access to food is analyzed in The Gambia using the three main determinants: price, income level and resilience to natural hazards.²⁸

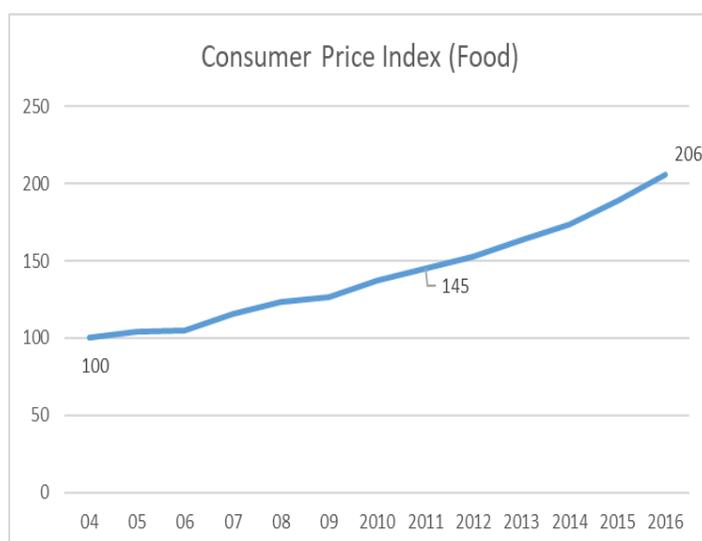


Figure 2- Consumer price Index

- **Prices:** The 2016 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis reveal that 52 percent of household expenditure²⁹ is dedicated to food. This means that price fluctuations can impact household vulnerability significantly. Around 16 percent of the households cited high food prices as a major challenge to food security during the past two years. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food increased from 100 to 206 between 2004 and 2016 – meaning that the same food basket costs double the price 12 years ago.³⁰ Such increases are largely due to the country's dependency on imports which meets 50 percent of local consumption needs, while exports have stagnated, leading to the depreciation of the Gambian.
- **Income and poverty:** poverty levels, measured through incomes, remain high despite a decline in the last decade, counterbalanced by population growth and poor

²⁵ CFSVA, 2016

²⁶ IHS 2015/16

²⁷ Other areas with high food insecurity levels include Basse, Janjanbureh, and Mansakonko.

²⁸ CFSVA, 2016

²⁹ CFSVA, 2016

³⁰ Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS, 2017)

macroeconomic performance. 48.6 percent of The Gambia's population live on less than \$1.25 a day.³¹

Poverty is becoming more and more a rural phenomenon. Estimates suggest that the two largest urban areas of Banjul and Kanifing experienced a reduction in poverty by 4.7 percent, while poverty in the rural areas increased by 5.3 percent both in depth and severity. Although the rural population accounts for less than 50 percent of the total country's population, the rural poor make up more than 60 percent of the total poor. Kuntaur is the poorest area, with 72.4 percent of the population living below the poverty line, followed by Janjanbureh and Mansa Konko with 71 and 60 percent of poor individuals, respectively.³²

- **Resilience to natural disasters:** In The Gambia, agriculture accounts for about 20 percent of the GDP, employing 46 percent of the working population. In rural areas, the agricultural sector employs over 80 percent of the workforce.³³ However, agricultural production has declined over the years, mainly due to loss of biodiversity and climate change with extreme weather events and rising sea levels driving down already unpredictable output. This undermines the resilience of vulnerable populations.

Target 2: End all forms of malnutrition

Malnutrition is a major public health problem in The Gambia, especially amongst women and children. Majority of Gambian women, especially those living in rural areas are constantly energy deficient due to poor dietary habits, heavy workload and frequent infections. According to the SMART Survey (2015), 17.7 percent of non-pregnant women within the child bearing age are underweight, while 14.9 percent and 9.2 percent are overweight and obese respectively.³⁴

Infants and young children, on the other hand have high nutritional requirements because of their rapid growth and development. According to the 2015 SMART survey, the prevalence of stunting among children under five is 22.9 percent, Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) was measured at 10.3 percent while Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) is 2.2 percent. These results are higher than those reported by the 2012 SMART survey and show a pattern of boys being more affected than girls.

High levels of stunting are also directly related to anemia and other micronutrient deficiencies, such as iron, zinc and vitamin A. Recent studies show that around 64 percent of children under five are Vitamin A deficient, and over 73 percent of children and women suffer from some form of anemia.³⁵

Although the 2013 DHS showed an increase in the proportion of children 0-6 months who are exclusively breastfed (48 percent) compared to 34 percent in 2010 (MICS 2010), the feeding practices were inadequate for children 6-23 months with only 8 percent of them fed in accordance with the core Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices.³⁶

31 IHS, 2010 and 2015

32 IHS, 2010 and 2015

33 IHS, 2010 and 2015

34 The Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2013, Bureau of Statistics

35 The Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2013, Bureau of Statistics

36 The Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2013, Bureau of Statistics

There are clear regional dimensions to maternal and child malnutrition, with areas such as Basse, Kuntaur, Kerewan and Janjanbureh (North Bank, Central and Upper River Regions) showing higher prevalence. The long-term impact of such forms of malnutrition can be detrimental to the population and the economy.

“Undernutrition weakens the immune system, stunts physical growth and cognitive development and can have a lifelong and intergenerational effect on educational attainment and economic potential for individuals, families and nations. It has been estimated that co-exposure to a range of related factors which have under nutrition as their underlying cause (including a weakened immune system and susceptibility to infectious diseases such as malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia) combined with the effects of growth restriction, micronutrient deficiencies, and sub-optimum breastfeeding account for 45 percent of all child death”³⁷

The double burden of malnutrition (undernutrition and overnutrition, including overweight and obesity and related chronic diseases, co-exists in the Gambia. Overnutrition is largely due to widespread consumption of cheaper staples – which are high in calories and low in nutritional value. In addition, poor maternal child care and feeding practices, poor sanitation, access to primary health care services, potable water, increasing exposure to infections, as well as poor nutrition education are contributing factors.

Target 3: Increasing productivity and diversity of food through smallholder support

This section looks at factors that contribute to the availability of food, which depends on local production, imports and reducing post-harvest losses.

The Gambian economy is primarily agrarian. Yet agricultural growth during the last decade (2005-2015) has experienced a decline due to poor crop performances. This resulted in the underachievement of the growth targets of the National Agricultural Investment Plan (GNAIP 2011-2015). Agricultural growth averaged at 4 percent, well below the 8 percent annual target set in the investment plan.³⁸ The low performance of the sector has been attributed to dependence on rain-fed agriculture, limited access to quality inputs and low investment in irrigation and farm machinery for mechanization. Smallholder farmers are generally characterized by their small fragmented holdings, utilization of inadequate external inputs. Consequently, they are trapped in the vicious cycle of low investment/low input and low output. Other factors highlighted during regional and thematic group consultations include weak extension and research service delivery, low levels of soil fertility, high post-harvest losses, limited adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), poor access to markets and degraded status of the natural resources.

National production meets only half of local food consumption requirements. A review of the National Cereal Balance Sheets from 2000 to 2016 and presented in Figure 7, reveal that net cereal production has been consistently below consumption needs. Further analysis reveals that only 19 percent of the staple rice demand is met from local production and that commercial imports, particularly of rice have been on the rise and averages over 110,000 MT in the last seven years. The main crops grown in the country include groundnuts, rice, millet and horticultural products.

Profile of smallholders in the country:

³⁷ Black et al. 2013, The Gambia National Nutrition Survey using SMART methods, 2015, NaNA

³⁸ Review of the GNAIP, 2016

- Most farmers in The Gambia are small-scale producers who manage areas of land less than 3 hectares per farm family. They rely on rain for agriculture with limited access to inputs and financial capital. They are characterized by heavy reliance on household or family labour using traditional farming techniques. A significant part of the produce is used for family consumption. The rest is used for income generation.
- Smallholder farmers face various challenges which slows down their growth and ability to effectively remain food secure. Highlights from the Zero Hunger national consultations in September 2017 indicated that many of these farmers have limited production resources, such as quality land, water and capital assets, fertilizers, seeds, and access to credit to enhance production. They are illiterate, with poor technological and marketing skills. Most smallholder farmers receive low prices by selling them at their farm gate or to local markets. However, these smallholder farmers could receive much higher prices by selling to farmer cooperatives or using other innovative mechanisms.
- According the stakeholders in Kanifing Municipal Council (KMC) during the ZHSR consultations, the last four decades have witnessed rapid external migration and urbanization in the Greater Banjul Area. The reduction in agricultural productivity and income generation in the regions is a major cause of the rural urban drift in the search for better earnings in the construction, tourism and manufacturing industries. The high demand for land for housing and urban expansion has placed a significant pressure on the environment and natural resources. This has resulted in mass conversion of land from agriculture to residential usage and has a major impact on agricultural production activities, such as vegetable gardening and rice cultivation.

Analysis of Specific Agricultural Subsectors

Agriculture in The Gambia comprises of different subsectors. These are mainly field crops, horticulture, livestock, forestry and fisheries. This section looks in detail to each of these areas.

Figure 3-Agriculture and Natural Resources Sectors'



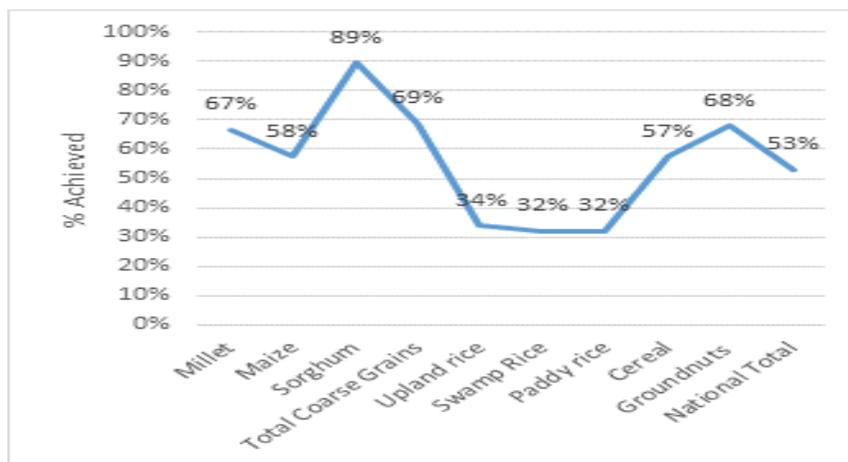
Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBO) 2015

- **Field Crops:** Annual field crops have predominantly registered negative contributions to GDP. Largely due to dependency on rain-fed agriculture, which has become unstable in recent years. Clear trends are visible as years with relatively good rainfall correlate

with both high production (Mt) and productivity (Mt/ha), while years of low rainfall culminate in severe declines in production and productivity.³⁹

During the consultations under this review, farmers reported that the inputs that are available to them are of poor quality and expensive. Other important determinants include persistent pest and disease outbreaks, poor marketing, unfavorable pricing policies and low industrialization culminating in limited value addition.

Figure 4 - percent Crops Yields



Source: NASS Report, PSU

In general, crop yields in the Gambia in the last two decades have been observed to be either declining or stagnating around less than 1Mt/ha. These yield levels are both below the potential and regional averages. Figure 3 presents yields achieved regarding the targets set for the GNAIP. It reveals that attainments have been below the targets set for all crops, ranging from a low of 32 percent for swamp rice to 89 percent for sorghum.

- **Groundnut production:** groundnut growers face several bottlenecks, including low level of mechanization and poor marketing schemes. The marketing constraint is exacerbated by the high aflatoxin⁴⁰ levels impacting the quality and price. Improved quality seeds are inadequate and fertilizer distribution is usually late. The harvest of groundnut has also been poor, resulting from low and erratic rainfall. The sector requires revitalization of effective marketing, promotion of chemical control (aflasave) that can reduce levels of aflatoxin, good agricultural practices, and the use of resistant groundnut seed varieties.
- **Rice production:** The main constraints limiting the potential of smallholder farmers to increase production and productivity of rice is the difficulty of access to developed irrigation perimeters, land preparation, post-harvest handling (harvesting, threshing, drying and milling) and marketing. The absence of a strong rice grower's organizations/cooperatives also pose a challenge.

³⁹ Analysis of National Annual Sample Survey (NASS, 1995-2015).

⁴⁰ Toxin produced by a fungus *Aspergillus flavus* found in grains high levels of which can be carcinogenic

- **Horticultural production** of seasonable vegetables and fruits take place throughout the country. Three main typologies of producers exist⁴¹, of which the small-scale growers include both communal and non-communal village gardens schemes, which cover 70 percent of the cultivated area. Both these groups are mostly women (90 percent).

Limiting factors within horticultural production include inadequate water supply, drudgery related to water lifting and distribution, lack of proper fencing, lack of quality seeds, gluts attributed to poor planning and marketing arrangements, pest and disease outbreaks and high post-harvest losses due to the absence of cold storage facilities. In addition, the absence of vegetable cooperatives to link to major markets was a major challenge that arose during consultations.

- **Livestock** contributes 7 percent to national GDP and 25-30 percent of agricultural GDP, with majority of the farmers being smallholder farmers (as opposed to commercial). Livestock is utilized for meat, milk, manure, traction force and as savings. Women possess most of the small ruminants (67 percent goats and 52 percent sheep) and traditional poultry.⁴² The growth of the sub-sector is mixed, with population of goats and sheep increasing, those for poultry for example declining between 2012 and 2014.⁴³

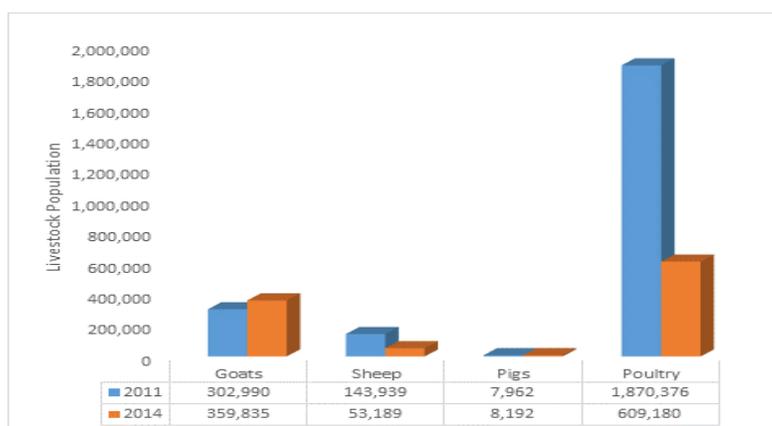


Figure 5 -Livestock Population

Findings reveal that the factors hampering the development of the sub-sector to its full capacity include: small ownership of ruminants (usually less than six), inadequate access to quality feed, low performance of breeds, vulnerability due to fragile habitats with natural grazing being a key feature, poor husbandry practices, lack of viable markets, high morbidity and mortality rates. Local consultations also highlighted other constraints, including inadequacy of water/drinking facilities, encroachment into cattle routes, inadequate access to drugs and veterinary services, poor housing and poor husbandry practices as the principal inhibitors to productivity.

It should be noted that livestock are critical for household resilience, food security and gender equity. Constraints must be addressed through increased investment in infrastructure (water, marketing, housing), capacity building in animal husbandry, strengthened disease surveillance, regular conduct of mass vaccinations (village poultry,

41 Large-scale growers (commercial farms) with 20-100 ha; Medium-scale grower (commercial farms of 6-20ha); and; small-scale growers of 5ha and less comprising communal and non-communal village schemes and backyard growers

42 Agricultural Census (2011/2012) and the NASS data for 2014

43 Agricultural Census (2011/2012) and the NASS data for 2014

small ruminants, pigs and cattle), investment in feed plants and hatcheries for poultry, enhanced access to drugs and veterinary services.

- **Fisheries:** The subsector comprises of two types in The Gambia, namely small scale (artisanal) and large scale (industrial). The artisanal is characterized by small scale production, dispersed operators, low capital investment and intensive labor. The artisanal is more dominant in The Gambia and provides employment, income and is the principal source of cheap protein. An estimated 200,000 people are directly and indirectly dependent on artisanal fisheries and related activities. There is a further categorization of artisanal fisheries per location: coastal and inland. See Figure 6, which shows an increasing trend for both types of fish.

Productivity in artisanal fisheries is inhibited by poor governance and management, inadequate scientific information on the marine resources, inadequate infrastructure, poor quality management, inadequate manpower/skills of operators, and low level of development for aquaculture, high losses and lack of investment resources. Interventions addressing the inhibitions include infrastructure for handling, storage especially in the rehabilitation of the community fisheries centers; market information; capacity building of operators; access to finance within the value chain and improved aquaculture.

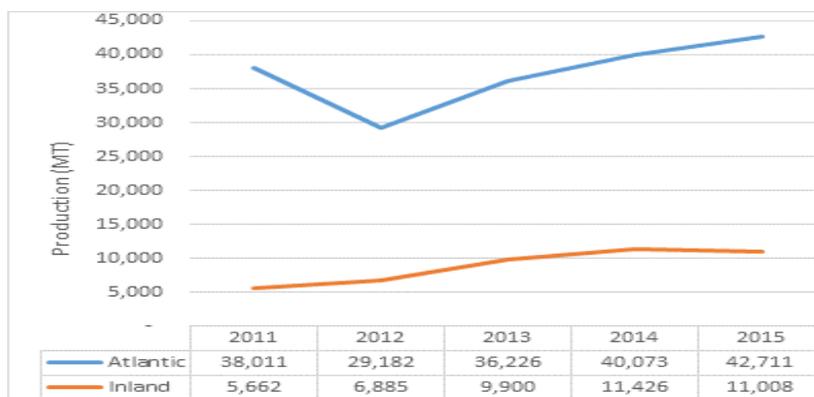


Figure 6-Atlantic and Inland Fishery Catches 2011-2015

Target 4: Ensure sustainable food systems

Food systems in The Gambia are weak due to the factors highlighted in the section above.

The key challenges within this area can be attributed to huge reliance on rice and livestock imports, low and volatile cereal grain production, the declining groundnut sector (principal cash crop and source of income), underdeveloped and threatened livestock production systems, lack of storage facilities at household or national levels, absence of a food reserve system at the regional or national level, inadequate marketing networks/arrangements, high poverty levels, and vulnerability to external shocks.

A food system gathers all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and activities

The Gambia has experienced significant degradation, particularly in the quality of its vegetative cover. Some 425,000 ha or 43 percent of the total land mass is under natural vegetative cover, and almost 100,000 ha have been lost during the last decade.⁴⁴ Key factors for the loss in forest cover can be categorized into human and natural causes. Human causes include recurrent bush fires, encroachment for agricultural purposes, settlements, uncontrolled logging, and poor forest fruit harvesting practices. Natural causes include drought, soil degradation due to erosion, wave activities, salinization and other factors such as rising temperature. The degradation of the forest cover has also been linked to declining rainfall and other climate change phenomena culminating in deteriorating food production and productivity in The Gambia.

Blessed with a wide variety of fauna, The Gambia has 111 mammal and 554 bird species from 75 families, 67 reptiles and 30 amphibian species. However, with the current rate of ecosystem and habitat destruction, these numbers will rapidly decline. In this regard, efforts need to be made to conserve the biodiversity through mangrove regeneration and control of hunting.

Food loss and food waste refers to the unintentional discard of food fit for human consumption. It occurs at the production, post-harvest and processing stages.

Enhancing the preservation of food and reducing food waste has drawn regional and national concern in the food value chain. Although Gambia does not produce enough food for its consumption, there is evidence of high food loss/waste at the level of production and retail. For the smallholder farmers, food is also lost or wasted at the various stages of the agricultural production as some grains are destroyed by animals and birds in the farms, lack of appropriate harvesting tools, drying facilities, appropriate processing equipment, good packaging and storage facilities.

Early Warning systems: Early warning information is provided by several agencies in the public sector. However, these are fragmented, uncoordinated and specific to their technical mandates and not comprehensive enough for decision-making. Furthermore, timeliness and depth of the information available is not adequate to facilitate timely response to disasters or natural hazards. Given the increased frequency of climatic and weather-related shocks, a well-coordinated and functional early warning information system is critical to enabling effective response and recovery, resilience building.

4. Policy and Programme Review

Eradicating hunger and achieving food security will require the design and implementation of relevant policies and programmes; these programmes will mitigate the challenges of vulnerable communities by reducing poverty and enhancing income generation. The Gambia has existing policies that are relevant to SDG 2 targets. However, there are gaps in these policies as well as the accompanying implementation strategies which impedes successful outcomes of long term goals. Some of the key gaps and challenges identified in the review are detailed below.

Cross-cutting Gaps

⁴⁴ National Forest Assessment 2008-2010, The Gambia

Relevant policies include:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy
- Nutrition Policy
- Health Policy
- Education Policy
- Social Protection Policy
- Employment Policy
- Trade Policy
- Labour policy
- Environment Policy
- Aid Co-ordination Policy
- Investment Policy
- MSME Policy and private sector strategy
- Land Policy
- Microfinance policy
- Macroeconomic Policy

Some significant gaps that inhibit optimal production and productivity of the agricultural value chains and the ultimate achievement of Zero Hunger include:

1. Ineffectiveness of coordination mechanisms of programmes to ensure efficient resource utilization.
2. Inadequacy of infrastructure (production, processing, storage and transportation) at both public and private sector levels for adequate value addition and increased output.
3. Minimal investment resources, particularly at smallholder level.
4. Limited literacy levels in addition to technical, management and entrepreneurial capacities of youth and women, to make use of opportunities in the various agricultural value chains.
5. Insufficient energy resources for agricultural production, cold storage, processing and other value added activities for agricultural value chain actors.
6. Inadequate M&E mechanisms employed by projects to provide timely feedback to management/beneficiaries and donors to effect corrective actions.

Alignment with National Development Plan (NDP)

The NDP is an umbrella document which covers the Sustainable Development Goals in The Gambia context quite significantly. It includes key elements relevant to the achievement of zero hunger in The Gambia. In this regard, the plan prioritizes modernization of agriculture for sustained economics growth and food and nutrition security, while promoting the role of the private sector and green development. Despite this, the present review found that the cross-cutting aspects of the NDP are not mirrored by the sector level policy demonstrating weak cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination leading to overlaps in assistance and inefficiencies. This chapter will discuss in depth the specific policies this point refers to.

Social Protection Policy

The policy aims “to establish, by 2025, an inclusive, integrated and comprehensive social protection system that will effectively provide protective, preventative, promotive and transformative measures to safeguard the lives of all poor and vulnerable groups in The Gambia and contribute to broader human development, greater economic productivity and inclusive growth” - Social Protection Policy (2015-2025)⁴⁵

The importance of integrating social protection within overarching legal frameworks, to promote visible and effective actions is frequently mentioned by the government. However, technical details, especially baselines on gender, social protection and socio-economic issues such as access to productive resources, health, education, nutrition, utilities housing and their attendant policies are limited. Specifically, the policy was found to have the following key gaps:

1. **Low coverage and quality:** Findings reveal challenges related to coverage (which is short term, sporadic, inadequate, emergency oriented), weak programme delivery, coordination (fragmented and duplicative), weak and inadequate M&E and programme capacity as well as inadequate financing. Additionally, the policy is

45 The policy is designed around the following five priority areas 1) Protect poorest and most vulnerable populations from shocks. 2) Safeguard the most vulnerable. 3) Promote livelihoods and incomes. 3) Reduce exposure to social risks and vulnerabilities. 4) Strengthen social protection system for better service delivery. Define further in The National Social Protection Implementation Plan 2015 -2020, which is a separate document accompanying the NSP.

necessitated by the varied and mutually reinforcing risks brought about by environmental elements such as droughts, floods, deforestation and economic factors caused by unemployment and underemployment. Although the policy is gaining high level support among policy makers, it is yet to be properly understood and requires champions to advance its cause. The Zero Hunger process therefore provides an opportunity to strengthen the operationalization of the policy including the adoption of best practices under south–south partnerships.

- 2. Challenges related to Food Assistance:** Amongst the wide ranging social protection possibilities, that is, social safety nets, insurance mechanisms, social assistance policies and inclusion programs for the economic and social integration of the most vulnerable,⁴⁶ food assistance continues to be a common mode of coping with nutrition and food supply shocks in the short term. In-kind food assistance should always be accompanied by a thorough market research to avoid any negative and unintended side effects on the price stability and local availability of food in the longer term.
- 3. Insufficient targeting of women:** Although not prevalent in the country, social protection interventions that target women generally have a larger impact on household food security, since women are often the caregivers in the household and responsible for the production, processing and preparation of food.⁴⁷ So a lack of/inadequate support to women can result in missed opportunities to ensure food and nutrition security for the household or the community.

Gender Policy

The main role of the Women's Bureau and National Women's Council is to advise government on issues that affect health and wellbeing of women and girls. The current policy, The National Gender and Women Empowerment 2010-2020⁴⁸, is aimed at ensuring a society that is characterized by peace and prosperity where women, men, boys and girls are equal and gender equality and equity prevails in all spheres of development, which is in line with the NDP vision of creating a decent society for all Gambians.

The overall goal is to mainstream gender in all national and sectoral policies, programmes, plans and budgets to achieve gender equality, and women's empowerment in the development process.⁴⁹

The major challenges affecting women are reproductive health, limited economic empowerment, mainstreaming of gender perspectives in policies, programmes by all stakeholders through the network of Gender Focal Points, National Women's Council and

⁴⁶ HLPE Committee of World Food Security 2012),

⁴⁷ HLPE Committee of World Food Security 2012a cited in CFS 2016

⁴⁸ The Strategic Action Plan seek to address the 8 priority areas 1) Capacity Building for Gender Mainstreaming. 2) Poverty Reduction, Economic Empowerment and Livelihoods Development. 3) Gender and Education. 4) Gender and Health. 5) Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS. 6) Gender and Human Rights. 7) Gender and Governance. 8) Gender and the Environment and Women's Empowerment.

⁴⁹ Current sector projects include: 1) Institutional Support Governance Project, beneficiaries include the Women's Bureau and the Gender Machinery towards socio-economic development and Public Finance Management. Such as Bureau's staff, the National Assembly Members, Budget Officers and the GFP. It is funded by the AfDB. 2) AGDI Project targets Data Managers, Planners, Researchers and Statisticians. It is funded by the UNDP and the ECA. 3) Rural Women Empowerment Agricultural Project targets women in poultry production and feed processing. It is funded by FAO and the ASTF. 4) Gambia Women Empowerment Programme is funded by the UN Joint Programme

Federation and strengthening of structures for coordination, management, monitoring and evaluation of interventions in the priority thematic areas.

The realization of gender equality requires sectors and actors in the development process to factor gender issues in their respective areas. Evidence shows that, due to systematic socio-cultural practices of discrimination against women, there is an intrinsic tendency for some development interventions not to equitably reach or benefit men and women in the same way.⁵⁰

There are quite a few other sectoral policies with the potential to better enhance gender parity and contribute to achieving the policy objectives of the National Women Policy. For example, the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Policy seeks to reduce the disparities between rural and urban incomes, between men and women, curb rural-urban drift and accelerate the pace of development for the rural sector. The National Environment Policy looks at sustainable livelihoods: an area of poverty alleviation for rural woman. Access to agricultural loans is becoming a reality for women as credit unions, micro-credit institutions and even some commercial banks court women, especially rural women as a matter of policy.

Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy

The Gambia has a validated agriculture and natural resources (ANR) policy (2017-2026) which seeks a modern market-oriented commercial agricultural sector with well-integrated value chains and a viable private sector-led agro-processing industry to increase incomes of agricultural value chain actors (including farmers, input suppliers, processors, traders and exporters). It could be further noted that the ANR policy also takes cue from relevant global and regional initiatives, including the SDGs. Some key gaps highlighted by this review include:

- 1. Lack of coordination:** the various sub-sectors within this policy space continue to execute within their respective “silo” policies. The resolution of this initiative will therefore have positive implications for the achievement of zero hunger in The Gambia.
- 2. Inadequate financing and resources:** The fragmented financing and poor technical support, combined with weak institutions, further undermine the policy goals. Productivity is driven by the food-producing households’ access to resources such as fields, grassland and water.⁵¹ The lack of these resources, especially among women in The Gambia is important for consideration while assessing the sector’s production strategies. Other direct drivers of production/food supply include natural resources, labour markets, market structure, access to credit and technology⁵²; the stability of natural resource inputs within the production cycle, all of which are dependent on management practices and climate change.
- 3. Lack of skilled labour:** The labour market is characterized by a high prevalence of unskilled workforce on low incomes. It also experiences high movement of labour

50 Gender: Its knowledge, Sources, Transmission, Interpretation, Application and Resistance in the Gambia – AfriConsult – Feb 2005, The Gambia Country Programme Evaluation, IFAD, October 2016 Please reference.

51 UN Millennium Project 2005, cited in CFS 2016

52 Pieters H, Guariso, A., and Vander Plas, A. 2013, Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of the determinants of food and nutrition security, FOOD- SECURE Working Paper 13.

from agriculture to low productivity services. Economic growth will therefore benefit the poorest households the most, if demand for unskilled labour can be stimulated in the immediate term, while Technical Vocational Training (TVET) education is gradually strengthened in the medium to long term to encourage skill-intensive agro-industries and other sectors. Similarly, effective markets are required to enable producing households to benefit from affordable agricultural inputs on one hand, and from trade in commodities on the other. This contribute to curbing rural-urban migration.

- 4. Low level of investment in market and rural infrastructure:** The low level of investments in infrastructure is a major constraint in the effort to enhance agricultural productivity. There is low utilization of science technology and innovation (STI) which is another critical driver of production and hence food security; there is also limited participation from the private sector and little or no contribution of public research. The utilization of genetic resources, now and in future will dictate the impact of STI on agriculture, including reduction of post-harvest losses.

Agriculture and Food Security Programmes

Several ongoing public sector projects are being funded by various organizations aimed at reducing poverty, improving food and nutrition security, cultivating productivity and strengthening resilience. Table 2 presents a summary highlighting the title, objective, duration, cost and donor of ongoing projects. A number of issues were raised concerning targeting, timeliness, partnerships, quality of infrastructure and the sustainability of interventions. Issues were also raised concerning the difficulties of accessing matching grants (National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project -*Nema*, Gambia Commercial Agriculture and value Chain Management Project - GCAV and Food and Agriculture Sector Development Project - FASDEP) citing proposal writing and counterpart funding as key inhibitors.

Access to financial support is provided mainly by projects such as *Nema*, FASDEP, AVCDP and GCAV and, to a larger extent, the Social Development Fund. These projects provide support to farmers in agriculture, horticulture and livestock, among others. However, smallholder farmer beneficiaries in Upper River Region (URR), Lower River Region (LRR), and North Bank Region (NBR) expressed major difficulties in accessing financial support from aforementioned projects. A key challenge identified was the requirement for applicants to contribute 40 percent of the total project cost as equity participation in the matching grants programme. This pre-condition for financial support makes it difficult for the majority of smallholder farmers, most of whom are women, to qualify for support. Other conditions include the provision of project proposals (business plans) which cost between 5,000 and 40,000 Dalasis. However, such restrictive conditions could have been addressed if the design processes were more inclusive and gender sensitive.

Table 1: Ongoing Public Sector Projects

| | Objective | Duration | Donor |
|---|---|-----------------|------------------------|
| National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project- Nema ^{53 A} | Reduced poverty of rural women and youth. Increased incomes from improved productivity based on sustainable land and water management practices | 2013 – 2019 | IFAD / AfDB / GLF/IsDB |
| Food and Agriculture Sector Development Project FASDEP | To enhance household food security status of the poor through increased production, preservation and marketing | 2013 – 2018 | GAFFSP / AfDB |
| Gambia Agricultural Commercialization and Value Chain Management Project GCAV | To improve productivity and access to market of targeted agricultural commodities for smallholders in the Project Area | 2014 – 2019 | WB |
| Agricultural value Chain Development Project AVCDP | To contribute to food and nutrition security and create shared wealth and employment | 2016-2020 | AfDB |
| Gambia Maternal and child Nutrition and Health Results project | To improve health and nutrition outcomes among women and children by focusing on the least served regions | 2014-2019 | WB |
| Strengthening Climate services and Early warning systems in The Gambia for climate resilient development and adaptation to climate change-2 nd phase | To strengthen the climate monitoring capabilities, early warning systems and available information for responding to climate shocks and planning adaptation to climate change in The Gambia | 2015-2019 | UNDP/UNEP /GEF |
| Adapting Agriculture to Climate change | To promote sustainable and diversified livelihood strategies for reducing the impact of climate change variability and change in agriculture and livestock sectors | 2016-2020 | GEF/FAO |
| Community- based Dry land Forest Management | To improve community based management of dry land forests in The Gambia to reduce forest degradation and improve local livelihoods | 2016-2020 | GEF/LDCP/S CCF/FAO |
| Action Against Desertification(AAD)- Great Green Wall –Sahel Initiative- GGWSSI | To contribute to poverty reduction, ending hunger and improving resilience to climate change using landscape Id approaches | 2016-2019 | EU |

Source: Ministry of Agriculture: (including Projects to meet GNAIP Funding Gap) and NEA.

⁵³ Nema includes P2RS funded by AfDB and Building to Recurring Food Insecurity in The Gambia funded by the IsDB

Food and Nutrition Policies

The review of policies, implementation coverage, stakeholders, coordination and monitoring and evaluation showed that food and nutrition policies were often developed and implemented based on separate sector mandates, priorities, and key functions, without clear co-ordination and national policy guidance. The analyses further indicate low implementation coverage and the need to scale up some nutrition interventions. Gaps identified in the food and nutrition programming that need to be addressed include:

- Insufficient financial resources and limited investments to improve the underlying determinants of food and nutrition for higher impact and outcome.
- Limited scope and coverage of proven food and nutrition interventions to vulnerable population groups such as women, children and girls.
- Food and nutrition interventions are mainly donor-driven, and fail to survive after donor support is exhausted.
- Inadequate human resources.
- Inadequate coordination.
- Lack of an overarching policy.

There are individual policies geared towards promoting food and nutrition security as core pillars, however, there is poor alignment and coordination among sectors. In addition, the impact of science, technology and innovation on food security and nutrition requires careful reflection, especially given the potential for increased productivity.

The National Nutrition Policy (NNP) 2010–2020 recognizes food and nutrition security as complex issues which must be addressed by collaborative and coherent action across multiple sectors. Nutrition-sensitive interventions related to food security, poverty reduction, hygiene and sanitation, social protection, and health and nutrition education are being implemented by various line ministries and development partners. Not all interventions have nationwide coverage and this has limited their impact on vulnerable communities, including smallholder farmers, women and children.

The NNP mid-term progress and performance review was carried out in September 2017. The review provided an assessment of the current nutrition architecture to address the nutrition problems in the country. Interventions under the revised NNP cover multiple micronutrient supplementation, management of moderate acute malnutrition in children and Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition. It is critical for all to understand the gaps in the effectiveness of the implementation of policies and programmes so that they can provide interventions towards achieving zero malnutrition.

The New Government of The Gambia's recognition and acknowledgement of the crucial and central role nutrition plays in a nation's socio-economic growth and development has recently formulated/updated a comprehensive National Nutrition Policy (NNP) covering the period 2018-2025 which capture advances and new challenges that emerged in the preceding years in respond to the needs of the most vulnerable population, and it's aligned with SDG2 aiming to end all forms of malnutrition. The NNP objective is to improve The Gambia population's nutritional status especially that of the most vulnerable groups, render the country malnutrition-free, and assure healthy and sustainable living for all people living in the country. It is complemented by a costed Strategic and Business Plans to enable its implementation over the designated period, and should assure significant improvements in

the nutritional status of The Gambia's population, and contribute to the national development within the SDGs framework.

The new NNP's focus will be on the following priority areas:

- Improving maternal nutrition;
- Promoting optimal infant and young child feeding;
- Improving food and nutrition security at the national, community and household levels;
- Improving food standards, quality and safety;
- Nutrition and infectious diseases;
- Preventing and managing micronutrient malnutrition;
- Preventing and managing diet-related Non-Communicable Diseases;
- Caring for the socio-economically deprived and nutritionally vulnerable;
- Nutrition and HIV/AIDS;
- Nutrition in emergencies;
- Nutrition surveillance; and
- Human Nutrition Research.

The implementation of these priority areas will be through:

- Community Nutrition Programming;
- Mainstreaming nutrition into development policies, legislations, strategies and programmes;
- Policy Implementation Framework;
- Nutrition Education; and
- Resource Mobilisation.

Education Policy

To effectively and efficiently promote its core business, the Education sector formulated The Gambia Education Sector Strategic Plan 2014 -2022, which recognizes the reinforcing relationship between education and nutrition. Under the Access and Equity component of the plan, The Gambia, in collaboration with the WFP and other development partners, is to implement a transitional nationally-led school feeding program under the guidance of the theme: every child must eat a nutritious school meal. This theme is deemed appropriate to ensure that no child must be denied a nutritious school meal-based on his or her inability to contribute in kind or cash.

If properly managed, the home-grown dimension of the school feeding programme can, in the short to medium term, offer opportunities for income generation for vulnerable persons under social protection schemes, while having similar positive implications for employment and increase market access for Gambian farmers.

The gaps revealed to the review include a lack of national coverage for the implementation of a school feeding programme.

Environment Policy

The negative impact of climate change continues to affect all sectors of the country. The vulnerabilities felt in the productive sectors of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, livestock, transportation, ICT, and energy as a result of climate change induced conditions such as drought, floods, erratic rains, sea level rise, salinity, and storms are prominent. It is estimated that each year, property damage from climate change induced windstorm, floods, and loss of

crop yield amount to tens of millions of Gambian Dalasi and is hard felt especially in the Greater Banjul Area, and in the unregulated housing settlements in Banjul, Bakau, Ebo Town, Jeshwang, Tallinding Kunjang and Fajikunda.

The Gambia also developed and piloted a range of effective coping mechanisms to reduce the impact of climate change induced coastal erosion in vulnerable areas, mainly in the area of animal habitats. Other notable areas dealt with by policy include better environmental management of tourism activities in coastal areas, strengthening of Climate Change Early Warning Systems, mainstreaming energy and environment concerns into national, regional, and local policies; strategies, programmes and plans to reverse the current trend of natural resources degradation; identifying and addressing problems in disaster hotspots, and enhancing resilience of coastal and vulnerable communities. Given the very lucid policy stance on sustainably managing our resources, it appears that the emphasis must now be on implementation and coordination, which of course assumes that adequate resources are mobilized to that effect.

The Gaps in the Environment policy include: inadequate resource mobilised to protect from coastal erosion and land degradation, weak climate change early warning systems and the lack of coordination in identifying and implementing disaster risk reduction strategies.

Trade Policy

The Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE) is the institution responsible for formulating and coordinating the country's trade policy. The Gambia's Trade Policy drafted in 2011 aims at maintaining an open and liberal trading environment and to better integrate The Gambia into the global economy. It also aims at providing direction for trade activities as well as to ensure trade mainstreaming in the productive sectors to make its contribution to the attainment of national goals of growth, development, and poverty reduction. It is designed to improve and maintain a competitive trading environment that can protect domestic production from excessive and cheaper imports, improving export performance and harnessing The Gambia's comparative advantage in the services sector including transit trade.

This review found that the trade sector suffers from a fragmented policy making process, because government ministries and institutions sometimes develop policies concerning international trade without necessary consultations with the MOTIE. This makes it difficult to create a coherent growth inducing trade policy for poverty reduction. Moreover, poor coordination and isolated sectoral policy design and implementation have great impact on economic growth and development.

The Gaps in the Trade policy include: lack of coordination between the government and public institutions in the development of new policies impacting on trade for economic growth and poverty reduction.

Other Complementary Policies

Given the multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral nature of food security and nutrition, there are several other related policies/frameworks that are indispensable to a comprehensive review of the Zero Hunger agenda of The Gambia. Prominent among these are:

- National Export Strategy (NES) formulated to provide a national framework for export development and promotion;

- Food Safety and Quality Act (2011) focusing on international quality standards, particularly sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements, which is key for accessing markets;
- National Quality Policy which governs the quality infrastructure of the Gambia with strong linkages to overcoming the supply side constraints associated with the productive sectors.

5. Recommendations

The Gambia is committed to achieving the Zero Hunger objectives in ensuring food and nutrition security by 2030. It is therefore imperative that Efforts and resources be focused on key enablers of growth and poverty reduction in the economy in collaboration with development partners. In this regard, the policy recommendations and actionable options are proposed to guide reforms and interventions in policies and programmes.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

1. Macro-level environment to promote small-holder farmers through revision of taxes and tariffs.

There are too many unregulated municipal and local taxes impacting small-business owners, especially those in the informal sector. Women business owners such as vendors and petty traders tend to be impacted by these taxes significantly. Levels of illiteracy makes these business owners even more vulnerable.

In addition, due to imports being cheaper for some sub-sectors, local producers cannot compete with these products in the market. This is predominantly due to these imports being grown under subsidized schemes within their countries. Similar protection measures are required to protect Gambian producers, especially small-holder farmers, through fully exploiting the provisions under the ECOWAS Common External Tariffs.

Contributions by the government to agriculture have been below the commitments made under the Maputo Declaration. Despite the commitment of allocating 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture, it has remained below 6 percent for the last 15 years.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Local, municipal, and government taxes to be harmonized to enhance the growth of small businesses in both formal and informal sector.
- b) Provisions in the ECOWAS Common External Tariffs to be fully exploited to give small holder farmers an advantage in the market during certain periods of the year with specific produce/sectors such as poultry, onions, Irish potatoes, milk, etc.
- c) The Maputo Declaration of 2013, which was reaffirmed in 2014, to be adhered to by allocating 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture.
- d) Lastly, the government to make efforts to reduce domestic debt.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Finance and Economics Affairs

2. Macro-level environment to become conducive to attract investors within the food supply chain.

The Commercial Bank lending rate is above 25 percent which renders access to credit impossible to potential investors within the food value chain. These rates are well above the rates that are realistic in a low-income country like Gambia.

The current investment code for potential investors within the food supply chain are few and inaccessible. To enjoy tax breaks or tax holidays an investor must commit a lot of money which most actors cannot afford.

Recently the Central bank of The Gambia increased the minimum deposit amount of micro finance institutions from 5 million dalasi to 20 million dalasi. This change is not over drastic but also extremely high making it impossible for MFI's to give loans to small holders.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The discount rate by the central bank to be lowered below 10 percent to incentivize investors and make business viable.
- b) The new investment code to be lowered in line with regional best practices, such as that of Senegal, where investors do not pay any taxes for the introductory years.
- c) The minimum bank deposit for MFIs needs to be revisited and lowered to ensure MFIs can provide much-needed financial resources to their members.
- d) MOFEA to enact a public private partnership (PPP) law to complement the PPP policy in order to encourage the private sector to invest in key sectors, including agriculture.
- e) Lastly, the government to consider developing a capital market through mechanisms such as bonds to mobilize investment resources in the food supply chain. In addition, the Government should reconsider the establishment of an agricultural bank.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment, Investment Export Promotion Agency and Ministry of Finance and Economics Affairs

3. *The decentralization policy to be re-visited and operationalized to meet the local context.*

The decentralization policy in its formative years was comprehensive and locally relevant, however, it has been revised multiple times and has become politicized making the implementation ineffective.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The policy to be revisited to decentralize power and budgets to regional offices.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Lands and Regional Government

4. *Efforts for gender parity to be increased.*

Women are more likely to be food insecure, malnourished, and illiterate. While the national woman's policy was developed with high hopes, the implementation of it has not met expectations. As is evidenced by the fact that The Gambia was not able to meet the gender parity targets set out under the MDGs.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The National Women's Policy to be revised, with an increased focus on women's access to agricultural inputs, education (both for girls and adults) and stronger enforcement of the Domestic Violence Act and the Women's Act.
- b) In addition, efforts to increase land ownership to women and vulnerable groups to be addressed urgently; it is recommended that these efforts be led by the Women's Bureau.

- c) Undertake adult literacy programmes and strengthen implementation of girls' education programs.

Lead Institution: Women's Bureau and Ministry of Women's Affairs.

5. *Strengthen the provision social protection support to poor and vulnerable groups such as women and youth*

The National Social Protection and Programme (NSPP) is a relatively new policy and it provides a comprehensive cover of the needs of the vulnerable. One of the key pillars within the policy calls for the need to provide regular and predictable social safety nets to poor and vulnerable people. This aspect has multiple benefits along the SDG theme from boosting inclusive growth, reducing food insecurity and malnutrition, increasing demand for education and health services and helping households better manage risk and shocks. The quality of the implementation of the policy is yet to be determined as it is a relatively new area.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The NSPP and its accompanying Implementation Plan must be fully implemented.
- b) The Social Protection Minimum package to identify priority interventions for the elderly, women, children under 5 years, and persons with disabilities.
- c) A programme or a funding mechanism to be formulated to start a minimum wage initiative, especially for the almost 40 percent of the population who are vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition.
- d) The Government to implement a nationwide Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) for vulnerable families through microfinance loan schemes by building on local models, while also coordinating with public systems such as the non-banking financial policy of the Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG), to increase scale and efficiency. Activities by the Gambia Women's Finance Association (GAWFA), National Women's Farmers Association (NAWFA) and National Association of Cooperative and Credit Unions of Gambia (NACCUG) should be encouraged.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment.

6. *Migration and youth employment support*

The poor performance of the key drivers of the economy (namely agriculture and tourism) in the last decade largely due to climatic shocks and the Ebola outbreak, has led to the migration of rural youths to urban centers and overland to Europe. This has contributed to the reduction in the labour supply particularly in the agriculture sector. The Food and Agriculture Sector Development Programme (FASDEP) base line study suggests the lack of interest of youth in rural agriculture stems from limited access to farm machinery. It can be assumed that the push factors from rural areas is rooted in aspects beyond just farm machinery and are broader stemming from low productivity of the agriculture sector and hence income earning opportunities. Recommendations highlighted under target 3 will address some of these gaps. However, to curb migration trends, opportunities for employment and income generation must be created for the youth.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Publicly supported programmes, such as EMPRETEC and the Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP), must be strengthened and expanded to enable the youth to acquire entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE), the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS), Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Gambia Songhai Initiative (SGI) and MyFarm.

SDG 2: Target 1: Access to food

7. Continuation and expansion of school feeding Programme in view of handover to the Government

The school feeding programme has been ongoing since the 1960s implemented by MOBSE and WFP. It serves as a critical safety net for primary school children to have access to nutritious meals. The programme has had tremendous success in impacting enrollment rates, however, retention rates, especially of girls, are lower than boy especially in rural areas. In addition, the programme does not have national reach, which means children in some areas do not benefit from it.

Food access is defined as both economic and physical access for the entire population. Data shows more than half the country's population is unable to meet their daily minimum requirement of 2400 Kilo Calories (KCal).⁵⁴ This correlates to almost half the population currently being classified below the poverty line (US\$1.25 a day).⁵⁵ Lack of economic access marks the largest and most prominent component contributing to food insecurity and malnutrition. These trends reveal ineffective social safety nets.

Education indicators are over 60 percent for primary school children (net enrollment) with the enrollment of girls being higher than that of boys (71 and 68 percent, respectively)⁵⁶. Youth literacy rate (15-24 years) also remains above 60 percent, with male literacy rates being higher at 72 percent compared to women (63 percent).⁵⁷ This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that women are married off at a young age, and consequently drop out of school. Education programmes for adults are not as easily available, as evidenced by the finding that only 1.6 percent of adults were found to have attended an adult literacy programme.⁵⁸

Women are particularly disadvantaged in the workforce, due largely to legal regulations that restrict their access to and control over assets. When producers are unable to make the necessary investments, or cannot bear additional risk by using productive assets as collateral, they are forced to miss out on opportunities to boost their productivity or increase their income.⁵⁹

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The programme to be expanded to cover all primary schools, specifically those with Early Childhood Development (ECD) component, and a focus on special needs.
- b) An operational plan for a nationally-owned home-grown school feeding program should be developed and implemented, premised on sound analysis with an emphasis on food procurement, processing and fortification and community participation. The plan should include well-targeted and well-designed programs.
- c) A multi-sectoral coordination mechanism must be set up.
- d) A focus on nutrition education that will help learners acquire not only knowledge and skills but change their behaviors towards better eating.

⁵⁴ IHS 2015/16

⁵⁵ Ibid 1

⁵⁶ UNICEF, 2008-2002 data

⁵⁷ Ibid 4

⁵⁸ Integrated Household Survey (IHS), Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2015-2016

⁵⁹ Besley, 1995; Boucher et al., 2008, and; World Bank 2008a.

- e) A clear plan on the transition to national ownership and management of the school feeding programme.
- f) Advocacy measures for the approach to be mainstreamed into the national curriculum.
- g) The apprenticeship and labour monitoring of the child labour schemes must be strengthened while the “Second Chance Program” for education must be strengthened and the Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) is recommended to be rolled out completely.
- h) A safety net program with the objective of reducing dropout rates, with a specific emphasis on girls, should be considered.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, WFP and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment

SDG 2: Target 2: Ending malnutrition in all its forms

8. *A combined food and nutrition security policy to be formulated and integrated within the agricultural policy*

Malnutrition has remained a persistent issue in The Gambia over the years. Despite a steady decline in the prevalence of stunting since the 1990s, the numbers of stunted children have not lessened, due to population growth. Currently, stunting rates remain at 23 percent and wasting at 10 percent. Malnutrition, like food insecurity, has clear regional divergences, with areas such as rural LGAs of Kuntaur, Janjanbureh, Kerewan, and Basse being the worst affected.

Such high levels of malnutrition have been consistent over the decades and point to a much deeper problem within the country. The issue of access to food being the most dominant, as highlighted above, followed by low intake of quality and nutritious foods, which is critical for growing children. Even if a child eats the right type of food, frequent infections caused by unclean water or poor sanitation & hygiene practices means that the nutrients are not “utilized” effectively within the body. Even if the current decline trend is maintained, over 90,000 children are expected to be stunted in 2025 (factoring in population growth). This is double the target under the SDG 2, hence efforts need to be increased sufficiently to combat this issue.

Underlying factors contributing to levels of malnutrition in the country extend beyond just the access to the right food. Poor mother and newborn child practices, such as high prevalence of mothers not exclusively breastfeeding the child for the first six months, can also exacerbate the problem. High levels of anemia amongst pregnant women and girls can lead to their giving birth to undernourished children. Poor access to health care, water and sanitation services also remains key factors.

There is an absence of a stand-alone food and nutrition security policy which means policy and programmes on the SDG2 are not looking at these two core issues as one. The national agriculture and nutrition policies are also fragmented, while they cover many over-lapping elements, with the former being better funded and more operational.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Given that a new Nutrition Policy has been recently formulated, it is recommended to ensure a clear alignment between food and nutrition security; Nutrition should be mainstreamed within other development policies
- b) Food and nutrition security considerations to be mainstreamed into the country’s broader agenda (NDP, UNDAF, etc.) and nutrition objectives to be incorporated into the mandates of the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education and other sectors that influence the country’s food and nutrition situation.

- c) The ANR policy specifically to be revised to better integrate food and nutrition dynamics.
- d) Government staff at the regional level to receive training on how to manage agriculture and nutrition services and nutrition to be mainstreamed in agricultural annual work plans.
- e) Joint plans for nutrition care and linkages to social protection and nutrition strategies to be supported.
- f) Innovative ways to combat malnutrition should be explored, such as biofortification, food fortification and home fortification interventions to increase micronutrient access and intake in selected target areas.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Health and the National Nutrition Agency.

9. ***Nutrition-specific social safety nets to be expanded as per the NSPP and empower groups to monitor nutrition progress*** (to be aligned with under target 1).

Malnutrition rates particularly for under fives are high. The underlying factors include poor mother and newborn child practices, such as mothers not exclusively breastfeeding the child for the first six months. High levels of anemia amongst pregnant women and girls can lead to their giving birth of undernourished children. Poor access to health care, water and sanitation services also remains a key factor.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) An essential package of Basic Nutrition Services (preventive interventions and curative nutrition services) should be adopted, piloted and rolled out, linked to health (WASH and livelihoods programming).
- b) Maternal and child nutrition interventions should be developed focusing on the first 1000 most critical days, with a specific focus on diversifying the diet of pregnant women and girls and the provision of iron and folic acid supplements.
- c) The Baby Friendly Community Initiative should be expanded.
- d) The Breast-feeding Promotion and Regulation (2006) should be revised and enforced.
- e) Small ruminants and poultry to be provided to vulnerable families for breeding purposes to increase dietary diversity, nutritional intake, and income-generation; nutrition education to be incorporated in all interventions.
- f) Community groups to be empowered by enhancing their capacity to conduct regular community-based growth monitoring, promotion and counselling and the identification and referral of children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) to social support networks.

Lead Institution: National Nutrition Agency and the Ministry of Health.

10. ***Build regular and detailed assessment on food insecurity and malnutrition levels:*** it is imperative that regular analysis of the food insecurity and malnutrition levels are studied and mapped to measure any progress made and more importantly to inform selected targeting to those most in need.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Detailed assessments and monitoring exercises to be established to map the prevalence of food insecurity and malnutrition for different groups and regions within the country, disaggregated by gender and considering the differences between rural and urban areas.

Lead Institution: National Nutrition Agency

11. ***Development of water and sanitation facilities country-wide and enhanced capacity of local authorities to oversee these services.***

Evidences have shown that proper sanitation and hygiene and safe drinking water can reduce undernutrition and stunting in children by preventing diarrhoeal and parasitic diseases, and damage to intestinal development (environmental enteropathy). According to the World Health Organization(WHO), roughly 50 percent of all malnutrition is associated with repeated diarrhoea or intestinal worm infections as a direct result of inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Water and sanitation services should be constructed or rehabilitated within all public institutions countrywide, particularly for rural households and including schools, where nutrition education is to be incorporated.
- b) It is imperative that these services are complemented with trainings to local authorities on how to effectively plan and oversee these services.
- c) Food hygiene and safety good practices should be promoted.
- d) Efforts to be made to ensure rural households have access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities to prevent diseases and malnutrition.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Health and Social Services.

SDG 2: Target 3: Increasing agricultural productivity for small holders

Agriculture accounted for 20 percent of the GDP in The Gambia in 2016, employing almost half the active labor force in urban areas and 80 percent in rural areas.⁶⁰ Gambian farmers tend to be small-scale, growing subsistence food on less than 3 hectares of land. Agriculture is largely rain-fed, and is thus vulnerable to climatic changes. Farming practices remain basic, with households largely dependent on manual labour, which means children as young as seven are at risk of being pulled out of school to work in the fields.

The agricultural sector has contracted in the recent years, reducing by 8.4 percent between 2013/14. In a country that only grows half of its local food needs, such reductions meant that the vulnerable people had less food to eat. Poor crop performance was a result of inadequate rainfall distribution, which can be attributed climate change and inadequate availability of quality inputs including fertilizers.

The forest and biodiversity resources of The Gambia have also experienced significant degradation over the last decade. It is estimated that there has been a vegetative cover loss of over 100,000 hectares to date. Key factors for the loss include recurrent bush fires, unregulated logging, poor harvesting practices, and encroachment for agriculture. Similarly, the fauna has also suffered losses due principally to habitat destruction.

Horticultural production activities are seasonal and dominated by women in communal and non-communal schemes, who cultivate 70 percent of the area under vegetables. Several public-sector projects and NGOs have undertaken interventions which have expanded the area under vegetable production. However, problems linked with access to water, storage, limited value-addition, especially within horticulture and marketing, persist limiting the benefits.

⁶⁰ Includes children aged seven years and above.

12. *Strengthen collection and dissemination of market information*

There is a need for farmers to be better informed on prices and stock levels of basic food commodities and for governments to make informed decisions.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) A centralized mechanism to be created to collect and disseminate market information on the prices and stock levels of basic food commodities from different markets, as well as regularly conduct cost of production and CIF price comparisons of imported food commodities to advise government on pricing. MOTIE and importers must be constantly and harmoniously in consultation.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Trade, Industry and Regional Integration.

13. *Support research efforts on developing improved crop varieties and animal breeds.*

To support smallholder farmers to increase productivity, there should be efforts at the central level to conduct more research on crop and animal breed varieties that to be disseminated to small holders.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) to be supported and strengthened for the provision of adaptable high-yielding seeds, as well as multiplication of micronutrient rich varieties.
- b) The coverage of the Agricultural Inputs Dealership network to be enhanced by the private sector to fill the gap between the current and required production (such as animal growers, fatteners, and butchery).

Lead Institution: National Agricultural Research Institute.

14. *Increased investment in physical rural agricultural infrastructure.*

One of the key obstacles found in enhancing productivity is lack of agriculture infrastructure such as irrigation systems.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The construction of water control and retention structures to be increased, including anti-salt dykes across the River Gambia for tidal irrigation in suitable ecologies in CRR and URR.
- b) Boreholes, water storage and distribution networks to be constructed for vegetable schemes managed by communities.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture.

15. *Increased investment in post-harvest rural agricultural infrastructure and services.*

One way to increasing productivity is to reduce post-harvest losses, which due to weak infrastructure remains prevalent in the country.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The provision of access roads to markets and market fairs should be supported and market prices from the Planning Services Unit to be disseminated.
- b) The provision of basic infrastructure for processing, storage, marketing and market access to be supported.
- c) Smallholder producers/processors to be trained on GAP and entrepreneurship and their access to affordable financing should be facilitated

- d) The Matching Grant activities of NEMA, FASDEP, GCAV and AVCDP to be reviewed and simplified.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture.

16. Increased investment in the fisheries sector to enhance employment and contribute to diverse diets.

The fisheries sector has the potential of contributing to the Gambian economy. While the government has acknowledged this, there are key gaps that need attention to help the sector grow, contribute towards employment and provide diverse and cheaper, locally grown foods to a population that demonstrates high levels of micronutrient deficiencies. The following actions are recommended, as per the constraints are identified for development of the sector to enhance realization of its potentials:

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The Fisheries Policy to be reviewed to determine the nature and scope of current national priorities and the role of the Fisheries Sector to meet these priorities.
- b) Potable water and sanitation facilities and power supply to be constructed to fish landing and processing sites for improved hygiene, product quality, and safety of fisheries (also relevant under recommendation 13 above).
- c) Adequate facilities and technical knowledge to be provided to the smallholders within the sector, enabling the reduction of post-harvest losses and improvement in fish productivity and quality, resulting in high value added and increased income for fishers and other value chain actors.
- d) The capacities of fisher folk organizations to be strengthened, as the staff of the fisheries administration are vital to effective resource management for sustained development and utilization of fisheries resources
- e) Aquaculture Development and Promotion to be supported; as fisheries resources dwindle in supply due to increased fishing pressure and changes in the resource base, there is need to diversify supply sources through aquaculture development. This will provide increased food supply, employment and income generation for Gambian women and youth.
- f) With aquaculture development identified as a priority area to promote food security, fish pond culture systems must be propagated around the country, mainly targeting the less-advantaged regions in terms of fish supply.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Water Resources and Fisheries (MOWRF), Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Gambia Ports Authority (GPA) Fishing Port and the Atlantic Seafood Company Ltd.

17. Develop an e-wallet programme for rural small holder farmers to access improved inputs.

Small holder farmers do not have adequate access to inputs and capital, impacting how much they can grow. To support these farmers, a comprehensive service delivery system is required, learning from regional best practices.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The government to provide timely cash or vouchers through mobile technology, enabling farmers to directly procure mechanization equipment, improved seeds, and fertilizers; such programmes discourage cumbersome debt acquired during the lean season.
- b) The government to encourage women entrepreneurs to set up Agricultural Inputs Dealerships throughout the country, and provide trainings on the use and safety of production-enhancing technologies.

- c) Successful projects such as Empretec-Gambia and the Incubator programme under AMCHAM to be encouraged to cover beneficiaries of the e-wallet programme, through provisions of complementary services, business management and skills training.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

18. Support to women farmers to access matching grants.

Findings reveal women farmers are disadvantaged because they cannot access NEMA, FASDEP, GCAV and AVCDP matching grants as they lack the collateral and equity. This is further exacerbated by the fact that women rarely have household productive assets especially land in their names, making it even harder for them to access financial services through MFIs or banks.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The criteria under these grants to be reviewed to enable more women to access them.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

19. Review current value chain financing mechanisms for small holder farmers.

For most of the smallholder farmers who practice subsistence farming with limited agricultural produce, access to financial inputs is a major limitation. Even the success of skills training for entrepreneurs and farmers in sustaining their business and creating value addition, such as processing, is challenged by the limited access to financing to support their programmes and markets to sell their products. These gaps could be turned into opportunities by bringing new and innovative ideas to support initiatives geared towards enhancing access to food all year round.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The current value chain financing mechanisms in The Gambia and similar economies to be reviewed and optimal models to be proposed to enhance access to financing for smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs in agricultural production, agribusiness and other related enterprises for greater food production and value addition.
- b) Innovative financing mechanisms to be promoted, including the private banks, insurance companies and MFIs.

Lead Institution: Central Bank of The Gambia, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

20. Introduce a warehouse receipt system to stabilize prices and provide collateral to small holder farmers.

During harvest, prices are very low and farmers who do not have adequate storage facilities and need cash tend to sell off their produce at a low price. A warehouse system will help them store their produce and wait for prices to go up. They will be issued with a receipt which can be utilized as a collateral at the bank or micro finance institution.

A warehouse system will contribute to stabilization of food supplies, provide a stable ready market for smallholder farmers and a minimum floor price system and it will allow smallholders to access financial credit by using their products as collateral.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) A new structure to be created with the responsibility to oversee the warehouse receipt system, pass a minimum price policy for key commodities and get the banks and MFIs to buy-in.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

SDG 2: Target 4: Strengthening food systems

21. *Strengthened assessment of climate related risks and develop models for rapid emergency response*

The Gambia, in view of its location in the Sahel, is vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters with incidences of extreme climatic events such as droughts becoming more and more frequent. In recent years, the impact of the extreme climatic events has culminated in a decline in agricultural outputs and national growth and increased food insecurity. There is marked absence of innovative market-led instruments to manage and mitigate climate risks such as crop Insurance.

The Gambia is considered a Low-Income Food Deficit Country (LIFDC) that regularly faces temporary food insecurity issues. The main bottleneck within the food systems in The Gambia is the fact that the country can only grow half of its food needs. Agriculture is largely dependent on rain-fed irrigation, making it vulnerable to climatic changes. For the remaining 50 percent of the food needs, the country is heavily reliant on rice and livestock imports, which makes it susceptible to regional and global price shocks.

Production in the country is characterized by low and volatile cereal grain production, the declining groundnut sector (principal cash crop and source of livelihood) underdeveloped and threatened livestock production systems, lack of storage facilities at household or national levels, absence of a food reserve system at national level, inadequate marketing networks and arrangements, and high poverty levels.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) The government to work towards entering a Memorandum of Understanding with Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) to facilitate the conduct of assessment of climate related risks and develop models for rapid emergency response to natural hazards, including crop insurance schemes.
- b) Natural resources to be managed for improved productivity, resilience to shocks, adaptation to climate change, and increased equitable access to resources through soil, water, and biodiversity conservation.
- c) Enhanced access to Agricultural Risk Insurance for resilience building should be explored.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and Gambia National Insurance Company Ltd. Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA).

22. *Strengthened Early Warning Food Security Information Systems including potential pricks shocks*

To ensure vulnerable populations are supported to become more resilient, the early warning system in the country needs to be functioning and able to disseminate information rapidly.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Capacity and financial support to be provided to the multi-sectorial committee housed at the Department of Water Resources (MOF and WR) and NDMA in coordinating response to national disasters.
- b) Capacity and financial support to be provided to the multi-sectorial committee housed at the Department of Water Resources (MOF and WR) and NDMA in coordinating response to national disasters.

- c) In line with the action under 15a) above, market prices from the Planning Services Unit to be disseminated to smallholder farmers and communities.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, National Disaster Management Agency, Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel and Ministry of Agriculture.

23. *Efforts to improve the degraded state of land.*

Due to overuse of land over the years, the quality of the soil has been impacted making it vulnerable to erosion. To optimize the use of soil for agriculture, there is a need to increase fertility and stabilize soil quality to prevent erosion and make intensification possible.

The following actions are recommended:

- a) Conservation Agriculture to be promoted through zero tillage practices, construction of soil and water conservation structures in both lowland and upland and capacity strengthening of Soil and Water Management Unit to implement conservation agriculture promotion.

Lead Institution: Ministry of Agriculture.

Conclusion

This review, which sought to provide a baseline for The Gambia to meet the SDG 2 targets in the next 15 years, has highlighted that achieving Zero Hunger goes beyond the provision of food to all. The problems are systematic, stemming from subsistence agricultural practices and vulnerability to external climatic or regional price shocks, low socio-economic and health levels, policy gaps and limited coordination. The achievement of Zero Hunger is largely dependent on strong Government leadership, well-coordinated partnerships in food and nutrition security, a functional social protection system, gender sensitive and inclusive programming and private sector investment in the agricultural value chain.

In addition, ending hunger in The Gambia by 2030 will undoubtedly require the involvement and participation of the youth who form almost half the population (40 percent). This also necessitates critical attention to the proportion of young Gambians who risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean. In line with the NDP, creation of employment opportunities and entrepreneurial programs through investment in technical and youth services is fundamental to maximize the potential of the youth population.

To effectively implement this road map laid out by the Zero Hunger Review, ***it is recommended that the government convene a Zero Hunger committee*** tasked with establishing standards and quality assurance of the existing and new policies related to food security in addition to monitoring the actions validated by the advisory board.

8. Zero Hunger Road Map 2018-2030

The Zero Hunger roadmap (2018-2030) will support stakeholders working together to improve the lives of all Gambians to put an end to food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. The table below provides a summary of the key actions and indicators that should be monitored over the years.

| Key Issues | Objectives by 2030 | Actions to be Implemented | Timeframe: Years | | | Lead Institution and Key Partners |
|---|--|---|------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | 2018 - 2021 | 2018 - 2025 | 2018 - 2030 | |
| Recommendations: Cross-cutting | | | | | | |
| <p>1. Macro-level environment to promote small-holder farmers through revision of taxes and tariffs that disadvantage local growers:</p> <p>There are too many unregulated municipal and local taxes impacting small-business owners, especially those in the informal sector. Women business owners such as vendors and petty traders tend to be impacted by these taxes significantly. Levels of illiteracy makes these business owners even more vulnerable. Furthermore, government allocation is lower than international agreements.</p> | <p>Enhance the growth of small businesses in both formal and informal sector.</p> <p>Give local growers an advantage in the market</p> <p>Harmonize the local, municipal and government taxes to enhance the growth of small businesses in both formal and informal sector</p> | <p>a) Local, municipal and government taxes should be harmonized and "nuisance" taxes eliminated.</p> <p>b) Provisions in the ECOWAS Common External Tariffs to be fully exploited to give local growers an advantage in the market potentially for a certain time of the year and specific sectors such as poultry, onions, Irish potatoes, milk etc.</p> <p>c) The Maputo Declaration 2013 which was reaffirmed in Malabo in 2014 to be respected by allocating 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture.</p> <p>d) Lastly, the government should make efforts to reduce domestic debt.</p> | X | X | | MoFEA |
| <p>2. Macro-level environment to</p> | <p>New Investment code that makes financing</p> | <p>a) The discount rate by the central bank to be</p> | X | X | | MoTIE |

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| <p>become conducive to attract investors within the food supply chain:</p> <p>The Commercial Bank lending rate is above 25 percent which renders access to credit impossible to potential investors within the food value chain. This is not feasible for The Gambia as it is a low-income country.</p> <p>The current investment code within the food supply chain are few and inaccessible to potential investors. To enjoy tax breaks or holidays an investor has to commit a lot money which most actors cannot meet.</p> | <p>accessible to MSMEs</p> | <p>lowered to below 10 percent incentivize investors and make business viable.</p> <p>b) The new investment code to be lowered in line with regional best practices such as Senegal where investors don't pay any taxes for the initial years.</p> <p>c) The minimum bank deposit for MFIs needs to be revisited and lowered to ensure MFIs can provide much-needed finance to their members.</p> <p>d) MOFEA to enact a public private partnership (PPP) law to complement the PPP policy, to encourage the private sector to invest in key sectors including agriculture.</p> <p>e) Lastly, the government should consider developing a capital market through mechanism's such as bonds to mobilize investment resources in the food supply chain. In addition, the Government should re-consider the establishment of an agricultural bank.</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>Investment Export Promotion Agency</p> <p>MoFEA</p> |
| <p>3. The decentralization policy should be re-visited and operationalized to meet the local context:</p> <p>The policy in its</p> | <p>Strengthened regional offices and decentralize more powers and oversight of budgets to the regional authorities.</p> | <p>a) The policy should be re-visited to decentralize power and budgets to regional offices.</p> | <p>X</p> | | | <p>Ministry of Lands and Regional Government</p> |

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| <p>formative years was comprehensive and locally relevant, however, it has been revised multiple times which has politicized the policy and has made the implementation ineffective.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>4. Efforts for gender parity to be increased:</p> <p>Women are impacted by food insecurity, malnutrition, and illiteracy to a larger degree than men. While the national woman's policy was developed with high hopes, the implementation of it has not met expectations. As is evidenced by the fact that The Gambia was not able to meet the gender parity targets set out under the MDGs. The division of labour at household level is not recognized for women.</p> | <p>Revise the National Women's Policy by 2020</p> <p>Increase Women access to land</p> <p>Strengthen adult literacy and girls education programmes</p> | <p>a) The national woman's policy should be revised, with an increased focus on women's access to agricultural inputs, education (both for girls and adults) and stronger enforcements of the Domestic Violence Act and the Women's act.</p> <p>b) In addition, efforts to increase land ownership to women and vulnerable groups should be addressed urgently. It is recommended that these efforts be led by the Women's Bureau.</p> <p>c) Undertake adult literacy programmes and strengthen implementation of girl's education programs.</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>Women's Bureau and Ministry of Women's Affairs.</p> |
| <p>5. Strengthen the provision social protection support to poor and vulnerable groups such as women and youth:</p> <p>The National Social Protection and Programme (NSPP) is a relatively new policy and it provides</p> | <p>The NSPP and its accompanying Implementation Plan implemented by 2025</p> <p>Social Minimum Package and Social Protection for vulnerable groups mainstream in ANR policy</p> | <p>a) The NSPP and its accompanying Implementation Plan must be fully implemented.</p> <p>b) The Social Protection Minimum package and the ANR should identify priority interventions for the elderly, women, children and persons with disabilities.</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) and Ministry of Finance (MoF) and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment (MoTIE).</p> |

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| <p>a comprehensive cover of the needs of the vulnerable. One of the key aspects of this policy relates to regular and predictable social safety nets to poor and vulnerable people. This aspect has multiple benefits along the SDG theme from boosting inclusive growth, reducing food insecurity and malnutrition, increasing demand for education and health services and helping households to better manage risk and shocks.</p> | <p>formulate a programme or a funding mechanism for a minimum wage programme</p> <p>implement a nation-wide Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) for vulnerable families through micro finance loan schemes by building on local models</p> | <p>c) There is need to formulate a programme or a funding mechanism to start a minimum wage programme, especially for the almost 40 percent of the population who are vulnerable to hunger.</p> <p>d) There is need for the government to implement a nation-wide Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) for vulnerable families through micro finance loan schemes by building on local models, while also coordinating with public systems such as the non-banking financial policy of the Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG), to increase scale and efficiency. Encourage activities by Gambia Women's Finance Association (GAWFA), National Women's Farmers Association (NAWFA) and National Association of Cooperative and Credit Unions of Gambia (NACCUG).</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | | |
| <p>6. Migration and youth employment support</p> <p>The poor performance of the key drivers of the economy-notably agriculture and tourism in the last decade due to climatic shocks and the outbreak of Ebola respectively, has led to the migration of rural</p> | <p>Undertake entrepreneurship and skills development in priority sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, ICT, including the formation of youth-led commodity cooperatives.</p> | <p>b) Public supported programmes such as EMPRETEC and Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) must be strengthened and expanded to enable youth to acquire entrepreneurial skills for self-employment.</p> | <p>X</p> | | | <p>MoTIE</p> |

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| <p>youths to urban centers and overland to Europe. This has contributed to the reduction in the labour supply particularly to agriculture. The FASDEP base line study suggests the lack of interest of youth in rural agriculture stems from limited access to farm machinery. It can be assumed that the push factors from rural areas is rooted in the low productivity of the agriculture sector and hence income earning opportunities. Recommendations highlighted under target 3 will address some of these gaps. However, to curb migration trends opportunities for employment and income generation must be created for the youth.</p> | <p>Establish and operationalize a national youth development fund</p> <p>Reduced youth unemployment (15-35yrs) from 35.3percent to 25percent</p> <p>Strengthen institutional and technical capacity of youth services agencies such as NYSS, NEDI, NYC, and PIA.</p> <p>Strengthen existing youth employment and entrepreneurship programmes</p> <p>Formulate and implement advocacy programmes and policy dialogue platforms on youth employment and entrepreneurship</p> | | | | | |
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Recommendations SDG 2 Target 1 “End hunger and ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round”

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| <p>7. Continuation and expansion of school feeding programme in view of handover to the Government:</p> <p>The school feeding programme has been ongoing since the 1960s implemented by MOBSE and WFP. It serves a critical safety net for primary</p> | <p>Increase the coverage and roll out the school feeding programme in all schools, especially those with (Early Childhood Development) ECD component and special need schools.</p> <p>Apprentiship and labour monitoring of child labour schemes strenthened</p> | <p>a) The programme should be expanded to cover all primary schools especially those with Early Childhood Development (ECD) component and a focus on special needs.</p> <p>b) The programme should be expanded to cover all primary schools especially those with Early Childhood</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>MoBSE, WFP & MOTIE</p> |
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| <p>school children to have access to nutritious meals. The programme has had tremendous success in impacting enrollment rates, however, retention rates especially of girls are lower than boy especially in rural areas. However, the programme does not have national reach, which means children in some areas do not benefit from it.</p> | <p>The “Second Chance Program” for education must be strengthened</p> <p>Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) rolled out under MOTIE</p> <p>Implement safety net programs to keep girls in school;</p> | <p>Development (ECD) component and a focus on special needs.</p> <p>c) An operational plan for a nationally-owned home-grown school feeding program should be developed and implemented, premised on sound analysis with an emphasis on food procurement, processing and fortification and community participation. The plan should include well-targeted and well-designed programs.</p> <p>d) A multi-sectoral coordination mechanism must be set up.</p> <p>e) A focus on nutrition education that will help learners acquire not only knowledge and skills but change their behaviors towards better eating.</p> <p>f) A clear plan on the transition to national ownership and management of the school feeding programme.</p> <p>g) Advocacy measures for the approach to be mainstreamed into the national curriculum.</p> <p>h) The apprenticeship and labour monitoring of the child labour schemes must be strengthened while the “Second Chance Program” for education must be strengthened and the Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) under is</p> | | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> |
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| | | recommended to be rolled out completely. | | | | |
| | | i) A safety net programs with the objective of reducing dropout rates especially of girls should be considered. | | | | |
| Recommendations SDG 2 Target 2 “End all forms of malnutrition” | | | | | | |
| <p>8. A combined food and nutrition security policy to be formulated and integrated within the agricultural policy:</p> <p>There is an absence of a stand-alone food and nutrition security policy which means policy and programmes on the SDG2 are not looking at these two core issues as one pillar. The national agriculture and nutrition policies are also fragmented, while they cover many over-lapping elements, with the former being better funded and more operational.</p> | <p>Formulate a stand-alone food and nutrition security policy</p> <p>Mainstream food and nutrition issues into country’s broader agenda and sector mandates</p> <p>To revise ANR policy integrating food and nutrition dynamics</p> <p>Train government staff at regional level on the management and mainstreaming of food and nutrition services</p> <p>To support joint plans and programmes linking social protection and nutrition</p> <p>To support innovative ways to combat nutrition</p> | <p>a) A stand-alone food and nutrition security policy should be formulated.</p> <p>b) Mainstream food and nutrition security considerations into the country’s broader agenda (NDP, UNDAFs, etc.) and incorporate nutrition objectives into the mandate of the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education and other sectors that influence a country’s food and nutrition situation.</p> <p>c) The ANR specifically should be revised to better integrate food and nutrition dynamics.</p> <p>d) Government staff at the regional level should receive training on how to manage agriculture and nutrition services and nutrition to be mainstreamed in agricultural annual work plans.</p> <p>e) Support joint plans and nutrition care and support programmes linkages to social protection and nutrition strategies.</p> <p>f) Innovative ways to combat malnutrition</p> | X | X | | Ministry of Agriculture and Health and the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA). |
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| | | growth monitoring, promotion and counselling and the identification and referral of children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) to social support networks. | | | | |
| <p>10. Build regular and detailed assessment on food insecurity and malnutrition levels:</p> <p>It is imperative that regular analysis of the food insecurity and malnutrition levels are studied and mapped to measure any progress made and more importantly to inform selected targeting to those most in need.</p> | <p>to map the prevalence of food insecurity for different groups and regions within the country</p> | <p>a) Detailed assessments and monitoring exercises should be established to map the prevalence of food insecurity for different groups and regions within the country, considering the differences that exist between rural and urban areas.</p> | X | | | NaNA, FAO, UNICEF, and WFP. |
| <p>11. Development of water and sanitation facilities country-wide and enhanced capacity of local authorities to oversee these services:</p> <p>One of the main causes of malnutrition is the utilization of food, which can be undermined through lack of access to safe water and sanitation facilities especially in</p> | <p>To increase access to water and sanitation facilities</p> <p>To train local government authorities on planning and overseeing WASH services</p> | <p>a) Water and sanitation services are constructed or rehabilitated within all public institutions country-wide, including schools, where nutrition education should also be incorporated.</p> <p>b) It is imperative that these services are complemented with trainings to local authorities on how to effectively plan and oversee these services.</p> <p>c) Promote food hygiene and safety good practices</p> <p>a) Promote food hygiene and safety good practices.</p> | X | X | | MoHSW |

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| rural areas in the country. | | b) Efforts should also be made to ensure rural households have access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities to prevent diseases and malnutrition. | | | | |
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Recommendations SDG 2 Target 3 “Double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers”

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| <p>12. Strengthen collection and dissemination of market information:</p> <p>There is a need for farmers to be better informed on prices and stock levels of basic food commodities and for governments to make informed decisions.</p> | <p>To create/strengthen a centralized mechanism to collect and disseminate market information on prices and stocks levels for essential commodities</p> | <p>a) A centralized mechanism to be created to collect and disseminate market information on the prices and stock levels of basic food commodities from different markets as well as regularly conduct cost of production and CIF price comparisons of imported food commodities to advise government on pricing. MOTIE and importers must be constantly and harmoniously in consultation.</p> | X | | | MOTIE |
| <p>13. Support research efforts on developing improved crop varieties and animal breeds:</p> <p>To support smallholder farmers to increase productivity, there should be efforts at the central level to conduct more research on crop and animal breed varieties that should be disseminated to small holders.</p> | <p>To support NARI in the provision of adoptable high yielding seeds</p> <p>To support the agricultural input dealers network for countrywide coverage</p> | <p>a) Strengthen and support the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) for the provision of adaptable high yielding seeds.</p> <p>b) While also enhancing the coverage of the Agricultural Inputs Dealership network by the private sector to fill the gap between the current and required production (such as animal growers, fatteners and butchery).</p> | X | X | | NARI |

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| <p>14. Increased investment in physical rural agricultural infrastructure:</p> <p>One of the key obstacles found in enhancing productivity is lack of agriculture infrastructure such as irrigation systems, impacting small holder farmers.</p> | <p>To increase rural infrastructure for water control and retention including an anti-salt dykes across the River Gambia for tidal irrigation</p> <p>Increase infrastructure such as boreholes, water storage and distribution networks for vegetable schemes</p> | <p>a) Increase construction of water control and retention structures including an anti-salt dykes across the River Gambia for tidal irrigation in suitable ecologies in CRR and URR.</p> <p>b) In addition to the construction of boreholes, water storage and distribution networks for vegetable schemes managed by communities.</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | | <p>MoA</p> |
| <p>15. Increased investment in post-harvest rural agricultural infrastructure and services:</p> <p>One way to increasing productivity is to reduce post-harvest losses, which due to weak infrastructure remains prevalent in the country.</p> | <p>Increase access to markets and marketing information</p> <p>Increase access to basic infrastructure for processing, storage and marketing</p> <p>To train value chain actors on GAP and entrepreneurship and facilitate their access to affordable financing.</p> <p>Increase access to matching funds from agricultural projects</p> | <p>a) Support the provision of access roads to markets, support market fairs and disseminate market prices from the Planning Services Unit.</p> <p>b) Support the provision of basic infrastructure for processing, storage, marketing and market access.</p> <p>c) Train smallholder producers/processors on GAP and entrepreneurship and facilitate their access to affordable financing.</p> <p>d) Review and simplify the Matching Grant activities of NEMA, FASDEP, GCAV and AVCDP.</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | | <p>MoA</p> |
| <p>16. Increased investment in the fisheries sector to enhance employment and contribute to diverse diets.</p> | | <p>a) Review of the Fisheries Policy with a view to determining the nature and scope of current national priorities; the role and contribution of the Fisheries Sector to</p> | <p>XXX</p> | | | <p>Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment</p> |

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| <p>The fisheries sector has the potential of contributing to the Gambian economy. While the government has acknowledged this, there are key gaps that need attention to help the sector grow, contribute towards employment and provide diverse and cheaper, locally grown foods to a population that demonstrates high levels of micronutrient deficiencies. The following actions are recommended, as per the constraints are identified for development of the sector to enhance realization of its potentials.</p> | | <p>meet these priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Construction/provision of potable water sanitation facilities and power supply to fish landing and processing sites for improved hygiene, product quality and safety of fisheries (also relevant under recommendation 13 above). c) Provision of adequate facilities and technical know-how to the smallholders within the sector, enabling the reduction of post-harvest losses and improvement in fish productive and quality resulting in high value added and increased income for fishers and other fisheries value chain actors. d) Strengthening and building capacities of fisher folk organizations and staff of the fisheries administration are vital to effective resource management for sustained development and utilization of fisheries resources e) Support to Aquaculture Development and Promotion: As fisheries resources dwindle in supply due to increased fishing pressure and changes in the resource base, there is need to diversify supply sources through aquaculture development. This will provide increased food supply, employment and income generation for | | | | <p>Minister of Forestry, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources</p> <p>Minister of Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters</p> |
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| | | <p>Gambian women and youth.</p> <p>f) With aquaculture development identified as a priority area in the food security quest, fish pond culture must be propagated around the country, mainly targeting the less advantaged regions in terms of fish supply.</p> | | | | |
| <p>17. Develop an e-wallet programme for rural smallholder farmers to access improved inputs:</p> <p>Smallholder farmers do not have adequate access to inputs and capital, impacting how much they can grow. To support these farmers, a comprehensive service delivery system is required, learning from regional best practices.</p> | <p>To increase access to inputs and services for smallholder farmers</p> <p>To setup Agricultural Inputs Dealerships run by women entrepreneurs throughout the country</p> <p>To replicate Enpretec-Gambia and similar projects to cover beneficiaries of e-wallet programmes</p> | <p>a) The government to provide timely cash or vouchers through mobile technology, enabling farmers to directly procure mechanization equipment, improved seeds and fertilizers. Such programmes discourage cumbersome debt acquired during the lean season.</p> <p>b) It is recommended that the government encourage women entrepreneurs to set up Agricultural Inputs Dealerships throughout the country and provide trainings on the use and safety of production-enhancing technologies.</p> <p>c) In addition, successful projects such as Empretec-Gambia should be encouraged to cover beneficiaries of the e-wallet programme, through provisions of complementary services business managements and skills training.</p> | X | X | | MoA and MoF. |
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| <p>18. Support to women farmers to access matching grants:</p> <p>Findings reveal women farmers are disadvantaged because they cannot access <i>Nema</i>, FASDEP, GCAV and AVCDP matching grants as they lack the collateral and equity.</p> | <p>To increase access to matching grants of MoA projects</p> | <p>a) It is recommended that the MoA review the criteria under these grants to enable more women to access them.</p> | <p>X</p> | | | <p>MOA and MOFEA</p> |
| <p>19. Review current value chain financing mechanisms for small holder farmers:</p> <p>For most of the smallholder farmers who practice subsistence farming with limited agricultural produce, access to financial inputs is a major limitation. Even the success of skills training for entrepreneurs and famers in sustaining their business and creating value addition, such as, processing is challenged by the limited access to financing to support their programmes and markets to sell their products. These gaps could be turned into opportunities by bringing in new and innovative ideas to support initiatives geared towards enhancing access to food all year round.</p> | <p>To increase access to financind to smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs in the agricultural value chain</p> <p>To promote access to investment through innovative financing mechanisms</p> | <p>a) Review current value chain financing mechanisms in The Gambia and similar economies and propose optimal models that can enhance access to financing for smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs in agricultural production, agribusiness and other related enterprises for greater food production and value addition.</p> <p>b) Promote innovative financing mechanisms including the private banks, insurance companies and MFIs.</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> <p>X</p> | | <p>MOA and MOFEA</p> |

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| <p>20. Introduce a warehouse receipt system to stabilize prices and provide collateral to small holder farmers:</p> <p>During harvest prices are very low and farmers who do not have adequate storage facilities and need cash, they sell off their produce at a low price. A warehouse system will help them store their produce and wait for prices to go up. They will be issued with a receipt which can be utilized as a collateral at the bank or micro finance institution.</p> | <p>To pilot the warehouse receipt system for grain marketing</p> | <p>a) Create a new structure with the responsibility to oversee the warehouse receipt system; pass a minimum price policy for key commodities; get the banks and MFIs to buy-in.</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | | <p>MoA, MoFEA</p> |
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Recommendations SDG 2 Target 4 “Ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices”

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| <p>21. Enhanced access to Agricultural Risk Insurance for resilience building:</p> <p>The Gambia, in view of its location in the Sahel, is vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters with incidence of extreme climatic events such as droughts becoming frequent. In recent years, the impact of the extreme climatic events has culminated in a decline in agricultural output and GDP growth at national level and</p> | <p>To establish agricultural risk insurance for smallholder farmers</p> | <p>a) The government should work towards entering a Memorandum of Understanding with Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) to facilitate the conduct of assessment of climate related risks and develop models for rapid emergency response to natural disasters including crop insurance schemes.</p> <p>b) Manage natural resources for improved productivity, resilience to shocks, and adaptation to climate change, increased equitable access to resources through soil, water, and biodiversity</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | | <p>Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and Gambia National Insurance Company Ltd. Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA).</p> |
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| <p>increased food insecurity at household level. There is marked absence of innovative market-led instruments to manage and mitigate climate risks such as crop Insurance.</p> | | <p>conservation.</p> <p>c) Enhanced access to Agricultural Risk Insurance for resilience building should be explored.</p> | | | | |
| <p>22. Strengthened Early Warning Food Security Information Systems:</p> <p>To ensure vulnerable populations are supported to become more resilient, the early warning system in the country needs to be regularly functioning and able to disseminate information rapidly.</p> | <p>Strengthened early warning and disaster response mechanisms</p> | <p>a) Capacity and financial support should be provided to the multi-sectorial committee housed at the Department of Water Resources (MOF and WR) and NDMA in coordinating response to national disasters.</p> <p>b) In line with the action under 15a) above, market prices from the Planning Services Unit should be disseminated to smallholder farmers and communities.</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | | <p>Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, National Disaster Management Agency, Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel and Ministry of Agriculture</p> |
| <p>23. Efforts to improve the degraded state of land:</p> <p>Over the years, due to overuse the quality of the soil has been impacted making it vulnerable to erosion. To optimize the use of soil for agriculture, there is a need to increase the fertility and stabilize the soil quality to prevent erosion and make intensification possible.</p> | <p>To promote conservation agriculture and strengthen the capacity of Soil and Water Management Unit of DoA</p> | <p>a) Promote Conservation Agriculture through zero tillage practices, construction of soil and water conservation structures in both lowland and upland and capacity strengthening of Soil and Water Management Unit to implement conservation agriculture promotion.</p> | <p>X</p> | <p>X</p> | | <p>MoA</p> |

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