



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FOR BASIC & SECONDARY EDUCATION

EDUCATION SECTOR
MEDIUM TERM PLAN
2008-2011

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Abbreviations

AFDB	African Development Bank
ANFE	Adult and Non-Formal Education
BEd	Bachelor in Education
BADEA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
BCC	Behavioural Change Communication
BESPOR	Basic Education Support for Poverty Reduction
BEAP	Basic Education in Africa Programme
BSED	Basic and Secondary Education Directorate
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCF	Christian Children's Fund
CCM	Coordinating Committee Meeting
CDDP	Community Driven Development Project
CFIS	Child Friendly Initiative School
CONFINTEA	Conference International pour l'Education des Adultes
CPA	Child Protection Alliance
CREDIT	Curriculum and In-service Training Directorate
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSIP	Community Skills Improvement Project
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
DOSBSE	Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education
DOSFEA	Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs
DOSCIT	Department of State for Communication, Information & Information

	Technology
DOSHERST	Department of State for Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology
DOSHSW	Department of State for Health and Social Welfare
EBS	Education Broadcasting Services
EC	European Commission
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDF	European Development Funding
EFA	Education For All
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFE	Food For Education
FIOH	Future in Our Hands
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GABECE	Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination
GC	Gambia College
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GFIS	Girl Friendly Initiative School
GOTG	Government of The Gambia
GRTS	Gambia Radio and television Services
GSQF	Gambia Skills Qualifications Framework
GTTI	Gambia Technical Training Institute
GTU	Gambia Teachers' Union
HARK	Hearing Assessment and Research Centre

HEO	Higher Education Observatory
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HRD	Human Resource Directorate
HRE	Human Right Education
HTC	Higher Teachers' Certificate
HSS	HIV Sentinel Survey
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDA	International Development Agency
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IEC	Information Education Communication
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management System
INSET	In-Service Training
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JFA	Joint Financing Agreement
LBS	Lower Basic School
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
LSE	Life Skills Education
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDI	Management Development Institute
MLA	Monitoring and Learning Achievement
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MSWG	Multi Sectoral Working Group

MTP	Medium Term Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NTA	National Training Authority
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
PCU	Projects Coordination Unit
PER	Public Expenditure Review
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey
PHRD	Programme for Human Resources Development
PLWHA	People Living with HIV AIDS
PPABD	Planning, Policy Analysis & Budget Directorate
PPTCT	Prevention of Parent-to-Child Transmission
PMS	Performance Management System
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PTC	Primary Teachers' Certificate
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
QACE	Quality Assurance Council for Education
REDs	Regional Education Directorates
RIFT	Remedial Initiative for Female Teachers
RIT	Remedial Initiative for Teachers
SCS	Save the Children Sweden
SESP	Support to Education Sector Programme
SLA	Service Level Agreement

SMT	Senior Management Team
SNE	Special Needs Education
SOS	Secretary of State
SPA II	Strategy for Poverty Alleviation II
SQAD	Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSI	Sight Savers International
STE	Science and Technology Education
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UBS	Upper Basic School
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UTG	University of The Gambia
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination
WPP	Work Place Policy

Foreword

The Gambia is a small, low-income country which, like other developing countries, is grappling with a multitude of challenges. Among these are low literacy rates, low life expectancy, infant mortality, malnutrition, poverty and other developmental issues and trends associated with the economies and socio-political lives of people living in low-income countries. Whilst these are being jointly addressed from various fronts and through national and international frameworks and targets, the role of education in bringing about the pace of progress so desperately needed is so evident that education in The Gambia is provided not only for its intrinsic value but also the potential inherent in it in positively changing the circumstances of people for the better. No doubt, the guiding philosophy for the development of the current education policy is ***“Rethinking Education for Poverty Reduction”***.

Like the preceding policy (1988-2003), the current education policy (2004-2015) seeks to complement national development efforts by giving education the direction and prominence it deserves as the hub around which equal opportunities for all and sustainable development can be fulfilled. Accordingly, over the years, such crucial areas as expansion of access to quality basic and secondary education, girls’ education, early childhood development, science and technology, sector management, among other areas, have featured prominently within the education sector and shaped the preparation of the 2004-2015 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP).

Whilst the ESSP has been instrumental in the provision of educational services in the country, it has recently been acknowledged that it is worth reviewing; and given the developments that have tended to undermine some of the strategies in it, it was deemed imperative to develop a realistic medium term plan - hence the preparation of this document. This medium term plan is, therefore, derived from the current strategic plan and reflects the aspirations, values and vision of the Gambian people, as well as the mission statement and mandate of the education sector together with its associated stakeholders in particular. The plan articulates the priorities, challenges, lessons, strategies and expected outputs for the various education programmes outlined in it.

The budgetary implications of the options adopted, within the realities of the global economic environment, coupled with other socio-political considerations have been discussed perceptively to guide the strategies devised. The mobilisation of sufficient resources and their judicious utilisation for the attainment of the targets and goals set, to a considerable extent, determine the level of success in the implementation of the plan. The envisaged government contribution to education has to be necessarily complemented by support from our donor and development partners. This makes it vital to access another round of FTI funding. Indeed, with sincere appreciation, it must be recorded that the first round of FTI funding contributed significantly to the successes registered within the education sector so far.

In light of the encouraging developments within the education sector, I extend sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the in-country development partners and stakeholders who contributed to the success of this very participatory process leading to the production of this plan. In particular, I thank the UNICEF Country Representative and her staff for acting as the lead agency and for their invaluable support and endorsement of this plan. Similarly, I thank the Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, the core team that

spearheaded the process and the entire staff for relentlessly striving to make the document the success it is.

I wish to enjoin our partners and stakeholders to continue to support and collaborate with the sector as it braces itself to the challenges ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Faye', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Hon. Fatou Lamin Faye
Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education

Introduction

The Education Sector Strategic Plan (2006-2015) has been a significant guiding document for the provision and management of education in The Gambia. Derived from the National Education Policy 2004-2015, it spells out the education sector's priorities, goals, achievements and, further, outlines the strategies and activities that should be implemented to achieve the overall objectives of the education sector. The plan also identifies indicators and tracking mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the six programme areas; namely, basic education, secondary education, quality assurance, higher education, technical vocational education and training and sector management.

A key feature of the development of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) was the participatory nature that marked the process. Relevant stakeholders and partners, including representatives of government institutions, the private sector, non-governmental and community-based organizations, international agencies and the general public participated in the entire process and contributed substantially to determining the final output. Thus, relevant stakeholders and partners in education can identify with the plan, and have been contributing to its implementation. However, this has not stopped the sensitization of the general public on the key elements of the plan through the media, especially on national television and radio.

Goals

The ESSP (2006-2015), from which this medium term plan has been developed, is tied to The Gambia's VISION 2020, that is:

“to transform The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading, export-oriented, agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well-educated, trained, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population, and guaranteeing a well-balanced eco-system and a decent standard of living for one and all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry.”

Thus, the ESSP is grounded in the overall goal of ensuring that ‘by 2015 universal access to relevant and high quality education has been achieved.’ Another guiding precept is the Mission Statement of the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (DOSBSE), which seeks to:

- Provide access to relevant and high quality basic education for all
- Provide high quality education services
- Ensure gender equity in education
- Provide relevant life skills
- Promote the principle of lifelong learning.

To situate education within the national context, the major goals pursued by the basic and secondary education sector are closely linked to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP); hence, education provision in The Gambia aims at reducing poverty. It is understandable, therefore, that the sector is guided by the following motto: *“Provision of Responsive, Relevant and Quality Education for All Gambians for Poverty Reduction.”*

While the legal basis for education service delivery responds to upholding the right of everybody to quality basic education, as contained in the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia, the Education for All (EFA) Goals and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) continue to mark such service delivery. Therefore, these instruments have been fed into the current National Education Policy (2004-2015), which clearly articulates the basic aims and objectives of education.

Priorities

In pursuance of the education sector's goals, aims and objectives, several key areas have been prioritised in the ESSP. These include access; quality education; teacher education, deployment and utilization; technical and vocational education and training; higher education and sector management. During the implementation phase of the MTP, within these components, the major areas of focus of DOSBSE are highlighted below.

While expansion of the upper segment of the basic and secondary levels will be pursued, the challenges associated with low intake rates will be addressed. This is intended to specifically prioritize lower basic education. This notwithstanding, increasing **equitable access and outcomes**, in respect of gender, at both the basic and senior secondary levels, will be paid due attention; hence, the pursuit of establishing and maintaining gender equity at all levels of the school system will result in appropriately targeted strategies. The official¹ **madrassa institutions** will complement the conventional schools on equal terms.

Convinced of the significant contribution of **early childhood education (ECD)** to the enhancement of access to education and to completion rates, focused efforts will be made to facilitate access to ECD centres in underprivileged communities. In particular, the annexation of centres to lower basic schools will be strengthened. Parallel to this will be **adult and non-formal education** programmes that particularly target under-served regions, girls, out-of-school youth, unlettered adults and other disadvantaged groups of the population. Key among these disadvantaged groups will be persons with disabilities. Therefore, the development of training programmes and instructional materials for **special needs education (SNE)** teachers and extending specially-designed facilities for SNE into the rural areas will be maintained during the next three years. This will be contained in the **construction and rehabilitation programme of classrooms and facilities** Linked to this, genuine strategies will be implemented to scale up the mainstreaming of pupils with disabilities.

The provision of **quality education** is essentially the main thrust of the mandate of DOSBSE. Therefore, in acknowledging the urgency of bettering student performance, the **improvement of learning outcomes** will continue to be prioritized through a combination of strategies that include:

- stepping up the **training and supply of teachers**
- **curriculum review and reform**
- introduction of a **national language programme**
- provision of relevant instructional materials
- better-suited assessment and examination procedures
- an integrated approach to ECD
- computer literacy and ICT education

¹ These are *madrassas* that use the synchronized syllabus and are recognized by DOSBSE.

- use of open and distance learning (ODL) strategies
- educational broadcasting

Furthermore, tagged to the curriculum will be the intensification of life skills education, which embodies HIV/AIDS prevention, gender-related violence, peace building, tolerance, patriotism, environmental issues, etc. ICT education and other related areas will be grounded in a broader **science and technology** programme aimed at responding to national as well as learner needs.

Finally, **capacity building**, instituting a **performance management system** and establishing an effective monitoring and evaluation strategy will characterize strategies geared towards strengthening **sector management** and the **governance of education**.

The implementation of all of these requires the review of resourcing procedures and processes within the context of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Coordination as well as the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) of the sector. Given that access to quality education is a right and that the provision of education should centre around the learner, strategies and programmes will be designed to reflect such rights.

Achievements

Based on both normative and summative evaluations of various interventions conducted with support from the Education for All/Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI) and other bilateral and multilateral donors, there is evidence to indicate that significant successes have been registered within the sector. These include expanded access to education across all levels of the school system, particularly by girls in the rural areas, where, in some instances, interventions led to the unintended decline of boys' enrolment.

Whereas, for instance, the GER in 1998 was 85%, it rose to 92% in 2007. Concurrently, the GER at the upper basic level, which stood at 29% in 1998, has risen by over 30% to 65%. These achievements have ultimately contributed to the attainment of gender parity at the basic level (i.e., from Grades 1 to 9). Similarly, the GER at the senior secondary school level doubled from 15% in 1998 to 32% in 2007.

Generally, resources are more equitably distributed and better utilized for programme implementation. The reviews and updates of the curriculum have also resulted in a more relevant and, therefore, more responsive curriculum to stakeholder needs.² The acute shortage of instructional materials for effective learning that was lamented in the past has been reversed through substantial investments in various items, including core textbooks and teachers' guides, supplementary learning materials, especially of books written by Gambian authors. Added to these, the sector has registered the following achievements:

- The expanded vision of basic education, which comprises early childhood education, adult and non-formal education and formal schooling of nine years (i.e., from Grades 1 to 9) is now being implemented in full and stands out as a successful model in Africa.
- The partnership between DOSBSE and the *madrassa* proprietors, through the General Secretariat for Islamic/Arabic Education, continues to enhance access, whilst improving

² This is in accordance with the study commissioned by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) for the 2008 Biennale.

the quality of education provided. The teaching of the English language in the *madrassas* that are being granted-aided by DOSBSE and the harmonization of the various syllabuses of the *madrassas* and their synchronization with the curriculum of the conventional schools have contributed to this success.

- There is a more equitable distribution of qualified teachers, as shown by the impact reports from the REDs on the ‘hardship allowances’ currently paid to teachers.
- The textbook rental scheme has been abolished, and the student-textbook ratio is 1:1 for the core subjects at the lower basic level; that is, from Grades 1 to 6.
- While the transition from the lower basic (primary) level to the upper basic level increased from 72% in 1998 to 88%³ in 2005 as a result of phasing out the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination, the transition rate from the basic level (Grade 9) to the senior secondary level (Grade 10) has exceeded the 50% target.
- The Primary Teachers’ Certificate (PTC) Extension Programme for unqualified teachers, being piloted in Region 5, promises to contribute to addressing teacher requirements in the school system, particularly with regard to the training of female teachers (The 2007 Gender Education Unit Evaluation Report).
- Interest and public involvement in education is broadening and deepening, as evidenced by participation in the weekly televised (Education Forum), and radio, programmes as well as other discussions on education. DOSBSE continues to hold monthly *bantabas* (town hall meetings) to discuss pertinent issues with stakeholders. ECD is no longer considered a luxury but an integral part of the basic education programme.
- As evidenced by the 2006 and 2007 results of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and The Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination (GABECE) respectively, the performance of students is steadily improving (Analyses of Examination Results by the Planning Directorate, DOSBSE, 2006 and 2007).
- Through the cluster monitors, a more effective and decentralized monitoring mechanism has been established with effect from 2007.
- The process has begun for instituting a performance management system (PMS). Thus, operational unit and individual plans have now been developed, leading to the profiling of the sector personnel for appraisal purposes.

Challenges

In spite of the achievements made over the years, critical challenges still remain with the sector. These embody matters of access, quality, resources and management.

- The disparity between boys and girls in enrolment, retention and performance.
- The three broad issues of providing quality education, training and retaining qualified teachers and other personnel
- Mobilizing sufficient resources for both recurrent and development purposes is an issue that remains doggedly challenging.
- Within the framework of the ESSP, ‘quality’ is examined from three perspectives – teacher training and support, pedagogy and teaching/learning materials and leadership and school management including parental and community participation.

³ This is a result of children repeating and dropping out at the end of Grade 6.

- The curriculum gaps and shortcomings, especially of dovetailing the syllabuses to form a continuum from one segment of the school system to the other, also constitute another challenge that has to be addressed.
- At the upper basic level the pupil - textbook ratio is unacceptably high (3:1)
- From the recently conducted Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and the National Assessment Test (NAT), the number of children able to read and acquire cognitive skills is disappointingly low.
- Weak capacity in collecting and analysing data as well as the timely reporting from schools and REDs on issues such as attendance/absenteeism, instructional time, etc.
- Absence of clearly defined functions linked to specific job titles and directorates.

The Medium Term Plan

This Medium Term Plan (MTP) is the outcome of a critical and objective review of past and present policies and plans with a view to crafting a more realistic framework which takes into account all relevant factors and elements that have a bearing on programme implementation within the education sector. An important consequence of the review is a deeper understanding and appreciation of the sector programmes and their inherent challenges.

Consideration of the cost implications of various policy options has been instrumental in determining what choices are best in given scenarios. In this direction, the issues, activities and strategies contained here have been revised from the ESSP. The priority areas have been refocused as discussed in detail in the sections that follow. An indicative framework of both recurrent and capital costs and a financial framework have been developed to guide the implementation of the MTP. Issues around aid effectiveness and donor coordination have also been rethought and presented in a more pragmatic manner.

Lessons Learnt

The lessons learnt over the years vary in significance, ranging from the consequences experienced in attempting to implement ambitious sector plans that result in unaccomplished programme activities to failing to attain set targets. Salient among these lessons is the necessity of acknowledging that the development of a practical sector plan requires that relevant key factors that influence implementation be considered in depth and exhaustively.

This was not done during the development of the current National Education Policy (2004-2015); hence, for example, as regards teacher supply, the annual target of graduating 300 students of the Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) and 300 students with the Higher Teachers' Certificate has not been achieved over the years due to higher than expected student attrition as well as the inability of the Gambia College to recruit and retain competent staff. Also, the policy shift leading to a keener focus on quality at the college, which was not quite evident during the planning phase, contributed to undermining some of these targets.

Notwithstanding this fact, teacher training has now taken a new dimension with the introduction of the PTC extension programme which involves all the unqualified teachers in a given region. Aside from these, it has been realized during the development of the MTP that the significant expansion of the upper level of the basic cycle (Grades 7-9) in recent years was done while inadvertently failing to give the lower basic (primary) level the priority it deserves.

It must also be mentioned that nurturing high expectations for other stakeholders and partners has not proven to be a viable option in some instances. The expectation, for example, that the local area councils would build senior secondary schools in their various areas of jurisdiction has not been met, implying that the distribution of such schools is still uneven within the regions. Therefore, working on dependable pointers, indicators and evidence for planning purposes are more realistic.

It has been noted, further, that strategies identified should not have adverse unintended consequences, such as the drop in the boys' GER which followed the investments made to take girls' education to scale. Without doubt, in addition to these issues, macro-economic factors (for example, national fiduciary policies, currency fluctuations and inflation) have crucially affected the implementation of some planned activities. This also underscores the need to build sector plans on relevant assumptions. In view of these lessons, it has now been acknowledged that the ESSP was an ambitious plan that needed to be made more realistic.

1

Achieving Universal Completion of Quality Basic Education

The Gambia remains highly committed to developing its human resource base with priority given to free basic education for all. It is for this reason that this medium term plan will be used as a roadmap for the attainment of policy targets set within the period 2008 – 2011. Hence, during the planned period, access to lower basic education of good quality (Grades 1-6) will be universalized, whilst there will be increased access and equitable resource allocation to upper basic education, early childhood development and literacy programmes with specific emphasis on under-served regions, gender and other disadvantaged groups of the population.

In keeping with the above, the expanded vision of basic education being implemented in The Gambia, which is an important tenet of the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA), comprises the following sub-programmes:

- Early childhood development
- Basic education (Grades 1-9)
- Adult and non-formal education

Table 1: Key Sector Indicators (Baseline Vs Targets)

Indicators	Baseline (Female)	2006	Target (Female)	2011
Access & Completion				
1. Intake Rates				
ECD	39.4 %		45 %	
LBS	101 % (51%)		125 % (51%)	
UBS	88 % (51%)		90 % (55%)	
2. Gross Enrolment Ratio				
ECD	26%		42%	
LBS	91.4% (93%)		101.9% (103%)	
UBS	60% (58%)		69% (71%)	
3. Net Enrolment Ratio				
ECD				
LBS	75% (77%)		85% (87%)	
UBS	38% (37%)		48% (47%)	
4. Gender Parity				
ECD				
LBS	1.03		1.03	
UBS	0.91		1.0	
5. Completion Rate				
LBS	65% (67%)		80% (80%)	
UBS	56% (52%)		63% (63%)	
6. Literacy Rate				
	42.55% (30.6%)		50% (43%)	
Education Quality and Efficiency				
1. Pupil-Teacher Ratio				
LBS	1:39		1:45	

UBS	1:22	1:45
2. % Qualified Teachers (LBS)	70% (27%)	80% (37%)
3. Annual Instruction Hours	866 hrs	880 hrs
4. Pupil: Textbooks/Instructional materials Ratio	1:4	1:1
LBS	1:1	1:1
UBS	3:1	1:1

Source: DOSBSE EMIS

1.1 Early Childhood Development

The National Education Policy (2004 – 2015) acknowledges the importance of early childhood development and, as a result, DOSBSE has developed linkages with other government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local authorities for the promotion of an integrated approach to ECD.

To this end, a multi-sectoral working group has been established in conjunction with the local authorities, civil society organizations (CSOs) and international agencies to sensitize on ECD issues and to initiate and maintain ECD centres. These partners and providers provide the necessary inputs, including programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to complement government efforts.

Challenges

Since ECD is largely provided by the private sector, affordability becomes an issue and poses a major constraint for poorer households, particularly in the rural areas where poverty is more acute and where the traditional practice of leaving them in the care of siblings or grandparents, or having them accompany their mothers to the farms or other workplaces still remains the dominant practice for early childhood care.

In spite of these difficulties, the sector has witnessed marked development in the area of programming and programme implementation, which has resulted in growth in terms of gross enrolment rates in all the regions, as can be seen in Table 1. However, there are regional disparities between urban and rural areas, which indicates greater participation in ECD provision in the urban than rural regions. Evidence of this can be traced to the fact that the GER for Region 1 increased from 26.8% to 42% whilst the GER for Region 6 increased from 6.1% to 9%.

Table 2: ECD GER⁴ by Region (1999/2000 – 2006/2007)

Region	1999/2000	2006/2007
Region 1	26.8%	42%
Region 2	30.5%	34%
Region 3	11.3%	17%
Region 4	18.1%	19%
Region 5	8.5%	14%

⁴ GER is equal to ECD enrolment as a proportion of the population of 3-6-year olds

Region 6	6.1%	9%
Gambia	18.6%	26%

Source: DOSBSE EMIS

Objectives

In view of the foregoing, the following targets will be pursued during the period of the MTP:

- Increase overall GER from 26% to 42%
- Increase the number of model centres from 10 to 60 (10 per region)
- Increase the admission rate from 39.4% to 45%
- Maintain the rate of promotion at 100%.

Strategies

Under the medium term plan, the strategy for providing ECD service will continue to be anchored in two approaches, one of which is the participation of the private sector in the provision of such service in the urban and peri-urban areas, while the other is the attachment of ECD centres to existing lower basic schools in the rural communities. Both approaches are expected to focus on the integrated model of ECD, which underscores the need for complementarities of other social services such as nutrition, health care, water and sanitation, protection and early stimulation for learning.

The integrated ECD model for community and centre-based ECD provision, which will be piloted in Regions 2 and 6, will be gradually scaled up focusing on the deprived communities during the planned period. This will, however, be determined by the outcome of the impact evaluation of the pilot. Notwithstanding the focus of the pilot on the two levels (community and centre-based provision for the same age cohort – 3-6 years), there will be efforts aimed at the promotion of comprehensive child care and development for children under 3 years.

To this end, guidelines outlining the minimum requirements for the operation of ECD centres will be developed and enforced as a frame of reference for the provision of a comprehensive ECD programme. In addition, developmental standards with learning targets at all levels of ECD will be developed in order to inform the delivery of a well-balanced curriculum.

The Gambia College will continue to provide training to facilitators who are engaged by private ECD centres mainly located in urban settings, whilst the centres attached to lower basic schools in the rural area will benefit from PTC graduates whose programme at the college will include modules on ECD. Through the Multi-Sectoral Working Group (MSWG), as an instrumentality, the provision of these services will be efficiently coordinated both at the policy and implementation levels. The interventions of the MSWG will, therefore, focus on forging linkages with clear-cut responsibilities among key sectors in order to bring about the holistic development of the child. The broad components from which operational strategies will be drawn will include the following:

- Capacity building
- Advocacy
- Empowerment

Under capacity building, the following areas will be focused on:

- Development and implementation of a professional development plan for facilitators and selected PTC teachers who will serve as ECD facilitators in their schools
- Parenting education
- Development and delivery of a balanced curriculum
- Annexation of ECD centres to existing lower basic schools
- Development and enforcement of operational guidelines
- Development and implementation of developmental standards

Under the advocacy component, a comprehensive communication strategy will be developed in order to put in place necessary mechanisms that will facilitate resource mobilization and change of behaviour towards the various levels of ECD provision.

The empowerment component will target the provision of literacy skills to illiterate parents which will help generate sustainable income to support ECD provision at the levels of the home, community and centre. The entry point for this component will be the Child Friendly School Initiative (CFSI) which is currently being implemented in all regions. In addition linkages and alliances will be forged to enhance participation of the private sector in the provision of ECD.

The impact of the above strategies is expected to raise the admission rate of 39.4% of three-year-olds, which represented 40,124 children in 2006, to 45% by 2011. The enrolment output of this will be 91,076, as can be discerned in Table 2.

Table 3: ECD Enrolment Projections (2008 – 2011)

ECD Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
1	19,864	21,450	22,969	24,596
2	18,395	19,864	21,450	22,969
3	17,035	18,395	19,864	21,450
4	11,770	17,190	18,593	20,050
Total	69,072	78,908	84,886	91,076

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

1.2 Achieving Universal Completion of Quality Basic Education

The National Education Policy (2004 – 2015) provides for a unified basic education system, covering years 1-9, with no transition examination at the end of the lower basic school. Thus, there is a rapid expansion taking place at the upper basic level, and a policy of integrating basic education facilities through the creation of basic cycle schools⁵ and standalone upper basic schools.

Realising that expansion of Grades 1-6 implies expansion of Grades 7-9, a balance was struck between the provision of primary and upper basic facilities by embarking on a substantial expansion of the upper basic level; hence transforming the structure from six years of lower basic education, three years of upper basic education, three years of senior secondary education

⁵ These are schools that combine within the same structures the lower and upper basic components (Grades 1 -9) and administered by a single head teacher.

and four years of higher education (6-3-3-4) to nine years of uninterrupted basic education, three years of senior secondary education and 4 years of tertiary education (9-3-4).

Also, in practice, it is difficult to draw a line between the lower and the upper basic cycles. The description of the achievements, however, looks at the two levels of basic education, principally for ease of reference and to see the performance of each level. It should, therefore, not be seen as an attempt to separate primary education from basic education as a standalone concept.

1.2.1 Lower Basic Education

At the lower basic level, enrolments for the period 2001/2002 – 2006/2007 increased from **157,544** to **220,423** registering a GER increase from **82%** to **92%**, taking into account the *madrassa* enrolment⁶ which formed **10%** and **15%** of the total enrolment in 2001/2002 and 2006/2007 respectively. During the same period, the GER for boys showed a decrease from **85%** in 2001/2002 to **82%** in 2004/2005 but a slight increase to **92%** in 2006/2007, while the GER for girls registered an appreciable increase from **80%** to **95%**.

The *madrassa* support programme consists of providing English teachers, instructional materials and participation in the school feeding programme to registered *madrassas* that synchronize their programmes with the national curriculum. This programme has been highly successful. About 149 registered *madrassas* participate in the programme, double the number initially planned. Between 2004 and 2006/07, *madrassas* accounted for 65% of the enrolment increase in lower basic schools, and the *madrassas* now account for an estimated 16% of lower basic school enrolment, up from 10% a decade earlier, and the majority of this increase is in *madrassas* that have synchronized with the national curriculum.

The *madrassa* programme has made a particularly significant impact in Regions 5 and 6 where, between 2000 and 2006, the *madrassas* boosted the lower basic GER from 66% to 87% in Region 5 and from 47% to 73% in Region 6. However the programme was not without hitches. Many English teachers posted to the *madrassas* were confronted with an unfamiliar environment and were concerned about mobility.

To address this problem, DOSBSE switched from directly posting teachers to providing the financial resources to the *madrassas* to recruit their own teachers.⁷ As a result of this programme, some *madrassas* are sponsoring their untrained (Koranic) teachers to enrol in the Gambia College's teacher certification programme, thereby facilitating horizontal and upward mobility.

Given the important role the *madrassas* play in providing education, this medium term plan will aim to harmonize grant-in-aid policies and strengthen support and supervision. In addition, EGRA and NAT will also be introduced in the *madrassas*. Grades 9 and 12 examinations will be standardized and administered by WAEC. The core textbooks of mathematics, science and social and environmental studies will be translated in to Arabic and will be provided together with English textbooks to all officially recognized *madrassas*.

⁶ This includes only the officially recognized *madrassa*.

⁷ Some of the teachers of English in the *madrassas* are paid by the *madrassas* and not from the resources provided by DOSBSE.

Efficiency Measures

In terms of rates of completion, repetition and dropout, the sector has witnessed relatively high progression and completion rates and low repetition. According to the 2005 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) there is an estimate of 96% of an entering cohort reaching Grade 5 whilst the net lower basic completion rate averages 80%.

In an attempt to attain the access goals within resource constraints, the sector targeted an increase in the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) from 30:1 to 45:1 through the expansion of double-shifting and multi-grade teaching. The results of these interventions have indicated success in raising the PTR to 38:1 as a result of expanding the double-shift coverage in a number of schools and increasing multi-grade teaching as a strategy in more than 50 schools, particularly in the rural areas.

Objectives

In order to sustain the gains registered thus far and remain on track to universalize lower basic education by 2015, the following targets have been set during the period of the MTP:

- Increase the admission rate from 101% to 125%
- Increase the LBS GER (including *madrassas*) from 91.4% to 101.9%
- Reduce the repetition rate in LBS from 5.8% to 3.6%
- Reduce the dropout rate in LBS from 4.1% to 2.8%
- Increase the transition rate (from Grades 6 to 7) from 88% to 90%
- Increase the share of enrolment for boys in LBS from 49% to 50%
- Increase the achievement scores for girls at all levels to catch up with boys (NAT, EGRA, etc.)
- Focus on reading as a key foundation competency
- Introduce national languages to ensure early literacy of children

1.2.2 Expanding Access to Basic Education

In upper basic education, there has been rapid expansion between 2001/2002 and 2006/2007 with enrolments increasing from **42,094** to **66,025**, translating into a GER growing from **43%** to **65%**. This growth in enrolment represents an average annual growth rate of **15%**, which exceeds the target of **12.7%**. However, the period 2005/2006 – 2006/2007 witnessed a drop in GER for boys from **62%** to **60%** whilst that of girls slightly increased from **56%** to **57%**.

Challenges

While it is acknowledged that there has been considerable access to basic education, it should be noted that such expansion has been in favour of girls due to the worrisome drops in enrolment for boys. In addition, the school-age population is growing at a rapid rate in the nation, and the greatest demand now for school places is in urban and peri-urban areas.

However, as remote villages in the rural areas still show significant increases in the school-age population, any expansion of access during the period of the MTP will have to address the needs of these two distinct populations. Hence, additional places in both lower and upper basic schools will have to be created at an accelerated pace, as dictated by the enrolment projections in Tables 3 & 4.

Table 4: LBS Enrolment Projections (2008 – 2011)

LBS Grade Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Grade 1	52,216	55,283	58,575	62,109
Grade 2	44,854	47,731	50,845	54,243
Grade 3	39,733	42,523	45,348	48,410
Grade 4	35,308	38,025	41,017	44,106
Grade 5	33,148	33,554	36,326	39,464
Grade 6	31,483	31,478	32,136	35,046
Total	236,743	248,594	264,247	283,378

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

Table 5: UBS Enrolment Projections (2008 – 2011)

UBS Grade Level	2008	2009	2010	2011
Grade 7	31,140	31,685	31,621	32,185
Grade 8	28,434	30,568	31,086	30,972
Grade 9	22,447	27,240	29,316	29,807
Total	82,021	89,493	92,023	92,965

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

Target Objectives

In addition to the UBS enrolment projections, the following targets have been set under the MTP:

- Increase UBS GER (including official *madrassa*) from 60% to 69%
- Reduce the repetition rate in UBS from 4.7% to 3.0%
- Maintain the dropout rate in UBS at 2.0%

It must be noted that the targets set under both levels have been carefully guided by the principles of realism and the following key results are expected to be delivered during the period of implementing the ESSP.

In order to deliver the above targets, the following strategies have been identified for implementation under the MTP:

- School environment conducive for teaching and learning
 - Fencing of schools
 - Provision of clean and safe drinking water
 - Provision of separate toilet facilities for boys and girls
- Improved quality of teaching
 - Training and retention of teachers in the system
 - Training of teachers on special needs education
 - Training of official *madrassa* teachers
 - Training of teachers on local teaching aid production

- Cluster-based monitoring
 - Monitoring and supervision of teaching and learning in schools
- Increased learning opportunities in basic education
 - Rehabilitation of classrooms
 - Provision of furniture
 - Provision of school lunches through the Food for Education (FFE) Initiative
 - Provision of customized donkey/horse carts for the transportation of students from satellite villages with very low school-age population
 - Creation of feeder schools in satellite villages with a sizeable school-age population
- Adequate quality and quantity of teaching and learning materials
 - Providing schools with well-equipped and functioning libraries
 - Provision of teaching and learning materials
- Relevant and up-to-date curriculum for basic education
 - Curriculum improvement for all grades in basic education
- Improved management of schools
 - Community participation
 - Improvement of pedagogic leadership

1.3 Adult and Non-Formal Education

According to the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS) Census Report, 2003, cited in The Gambia CONFINTEA⁸ VI Report 2008, the literacy rate in The Gambia for the population aged 10 years and over is estimated at 52.1%, 40% for females and 64% for males.

On the literacy levels for the official age cohorts for adult literacy in The Gambia, the 15-24 year cohort is 63% whilst the 15 year+ cohort is estimated at 42.5%, with 30.6% for females and 55.1% for males (The Gambia CONFINTEA VI, 2008). Although these literacy rates have fallen below the average for sub-Saharan Africa (77%), there have been appreciable levels of improvements from the 1998 levels of the 15-24 age categories for men and women which stood at 48.5% and 25% respectively.

It is for this reason that the National Education Policy 2004 – 2015 aims, among other things, to reduce the rate of illiteracy by 50% by 2015, which is in consonance with the Dakar Framework for Action, which promotes the creation of a literate society sufficient to contribute to socio-economic advancement of populations.

Objectives

To this end, the MTP will pursue the following objectives during the period 2008 - 2011:

- Reduce the national illiteracy rate from 57.5% to about 50%
- Reduce the national female illiteracy rate from 69.4% to 57%
- Reduce the national male illiteracy rate from 44.9% to 42 %

⁸ Conference International sur l'Education des Adultes

In pursuance of the above targets, a comprehensive non-formal education programme will be drawn up and implemented across the country for the age cohort 15+ years in order to provide functional literacy for illiterate adults and out-of-school youth, especially women.

Public/Private Partnership Approach

In terms of education service delivery for this sub-sector, there is a major shift in focus from the traditional approach, of providing literacy by the public sector to a public/private partnership approach, which empowers NGOs and CBOs in the provision of literacy. Hence, the focus on partnerships and linkages will be crucial in the implementation of literacy programmes.

Partnership with NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders through a public/private partnership approach will therefore be an ongoing process building on trust and confidence, leading to a win-win situation. Partners will be supported through the provision of funds, mobilization of resources, capacity building in implementation strategies, monitoring and evaluation and other forms of participation. The partnership will be based on the Procedure Manual that clearly spells out the role and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

Within the framework of the ESSP (2006 – 2015) from which the MTP is drawn, the education sector is committed to ensuring that partnership is based on outsourcing to key players in the sub-sector. This will include identifying and selecting NGOs, CSOs and other providers who will in turn consult directly with communities driven by the need for literacy. The providers will be given support in the area of training, material production, monitoring and other resources that will ensure a sustainable approach to adult literacy nationwide during the implementation of the MTP. The quality of this approach will be subjected to periodic reviews, sharing of information and best practices.

Quality and Relevance

Under quality and relevance, programme will be developed in accordance with the social and ecological characteristics concerns and will provide a core curriculum with electives to individual needs and motivations.

At the neo-literate level, the national languages will be the languages of instruction and at the post- literacy level, English may be offered upon request. Given that the 1992 national curriculum on functional literacy has been reviewed and updated with support from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), teaching and learning materials will be developed through operational workshops and the learning content will be graded into units and modules to allow individual learning.

Strategies

Taking into account the current capacity constraints of the ANFEU and current and potential providers of functional literacy coupled with the pedagogical phases of functional literacy, namely literacy and post-literacy components, the MTP will focus on the following strategies:

- Build and strengthen the human resource capacity of ANFEU and NGOs/CBOs in the coordination and delivery of ANFE
- Develop and implement a delivery structure based on public- private partnerships, which enables NGOs and CBOs to participate in the delivery of functional literacy
- Design and implement a participatory monitoring and evaluation system for ANFE
- Ensure the availability and use of essential tools for efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of functional literacy
- Ensure the use of the national and regional conferences to generate information for a strategic partnership and mass participation
- Expand the basic literacy programme to increase access, relevance and opportunities for illiterate adults
- Ensure the availability of a participatory *monitoring and evaluation manual* for use by all providers
- Establish rural libraries with material written in the indigenous languages and promote the involvement of post-CSIP⁹ class participants in meaningful post-literacy activities
- Institutionalize the use of various instruments for a coherent and integrated approach to literacy service delivery.

⁹ Community Skills Improvement Project funded by the African Development Bank

Meeting Human Resource Needs Through Post-basic Education

In The Gambia secondary education continues to be a major problem for the education sector as most of the schools at this level are privately operated, thereby rendering access quite difficult for children from poor families, particularly those in the peri-urban areas. Notwithstanding the fact that the majority of the secondary schools are located in the urban areas (Regions 1 and 2), provincial children are not left out and have experienced an upsurge of secondary schools, which have resulted in an increase in enrolment of children in secondary schools in these regions.

Secondly, although not as bad as it used to be in the past, girls still continue to lag behind at this level in terms of numbers (boys-18,661; girls-14,330). Tuition fees and other costs (uniforms, textbooks, transportation, private tuition/classes etc) of secondary education, including considerable opportunity costs, represent severe barriers to access for children from poor families.

The quality of secondary education, as reflected by the performance of students at WASSCE leaves a lot to be desired. In 2007 **90.93%**, **66.65%** and **63.82%**, of candidates failed mathematics, English and science respectively. On average, more than half of the candidates failed all the courses. Thus the desire to achieve post basic education (secondary education) will continue to be an important activity for the sector. These daunting problems warranted the sector to have the following targets and objectives set in the MTP.

2.1 Secondary Education

The function of education and human capital in promoting the growth of economies and improvements in human beings is well accepted in the economics literature and routinely reflected in the political discourse in developed and developing countries, Hence, the overall aims of the Government's education policy including secondary education, encompass the following:

- Mainstreaming of gender in the creation of opportunities for all
- Development of physical and mental skills, which will contribute to nation-building – economically, socially and culturally, in a sustainable environment
- Encouragement of creativity and the development of a critical and analytical mind
- Furthering an understanding and appreciation of the contribution of science and technology to development
- Cultivating sound moral and ethical values in the development of life skills
- Orientation in skills development to reflect labour market needs

In view of the above points, the following objectives will be pursued:

Access

- Maintain the transition rate from basic to secondary education at 52%
- Increase the GER from 33% to 38%

- Decrease the repetition rate from 4.2% to 2.7%
- Achieve gender parity of students by 2011

Staffing

In order to attain the desired enrolment targets set to increased access to senior secondary education by 52% by 2011 and the enhancement of quality education required, there will be a proportionate increase in the number of graduate teachers. This can be achieved in the following ways:

- Increase the number of teachers from 1034 to 1531
- Increase the number of Gambian teachers to 50% by 2011
- Train at least 115 Gambian teachers each year to degree level and increase the proportion of female teachers in this group
- Establish gender-balanced board of governors in accordance with the Education Act.

2.2 Technical Vocational Education and Training

The Operating Environment

TVET must build on the foundation of skills and knowledge that students have acquired by the time they leave or drop out of different levels of formal schooling. In The Gambia, TVET must face the reality of the low levels of achievement of dropouts and leavers from basic and secondary education. In lower basic education (the primary grades), few students achieve the required standards in English and mathematics. Because of this, most students experience difficulty at the secondary level. Both school leavers and dropouts from basic education enter the job market with low skills; this is a major challenge to the design of TVET programmes. The MTP gives the highest priority to the improvement of quality. The profile of *madrassa* dropouts and leavers is not known at present.

Other countries face the same difficulties subsequent to the rapid expansion of basic education. Uganda (2008) has decided to concentrate all its efforts and resources on primary education improvement, developing lower and upper secondary at the pace of market demand.

The Gambia's secondary school leavers have been handicapped by the low quality of their earlier schooling. They perform poorly in English and mathematics in the WASSCE. The lack of qualified secondary teachers also contributes to failure. Most qualified secondary school teachers are foreigners.

Such is the "raw material" with which TVET must work. It must tailor its programmes to accommodate the current low standards achieved by basic education and secondary leavers. TVET may have to look to DOSBSE to provide remedial "night" classes in key subjects in order to facilitate training. For secondary leavers, the provision of further education through cooperative programmes linked to the job market is desirable. Programmes would also "pre-

qualify” students for higher education (a second chance at WASSCE, for example) as well as placing them on the job market.¹⁰

Current TVET Programmes

The training sub-sector comprises public training, training by private sector enterprises, by NGOs and community organizations and the traditional apprenticeship system. At the apex of the system is the National Training Authority (NTA) which sets policy and is working to develop a skills qualification framework. The NTA sets and levies contributions from enterprises, destined to finance the definition of standards, quality control of training programmes and the provision of advisory services to its clientele.

Perhaps because it is at an early stage of providing such support, large enterprises resisted the first levy proposal. A second attempt to “mean-test” contributions on the basis of company earnings has also been resisted by medium and small scale enterprises. In order to stabilize its financing by the private sector, the NTA will have to deliver quality services to its clientele, proving value for money.

The Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) is at the forefront of the public sector. With 70 per cent of its revenues raised from fees and services to the private sector and government, this successful training institute recruits at the post-secondary level and offers accredited, formal certificate and diploma courses. The GTTI plans to work with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to design and finance training initiatives addressing the private sector.

The **Gambia College** provides training in agriculture but lacks operational linkages to the sector and has yet to train for the development of farming enterprises in fields such as horticulture aimed at the hotel industry – a natural outlet for fresh market produce.

There is also a **Hotel School** which would benefit from greater integration with the tourism sector (**Box 1**), as broadly recommended by the March 2008 sector study. **Spain**, a new donor in the sector, has financed two new vocational schools, designed to train youth for the local job market – a pro-active response to the increase in informal migration to its shores.

Private sector providers typically offer business-related training in accounting, advertising and computer applications. They are licensed by the state. However, at present the NTA has yet to develop quality control capacity, with standards for private providers which go beyond basic safety and sanitation.

NGO and CO training is highly specific to their own ongoing activities, frequently financed by international NGOs (such as CRS and FIOH) or by the donors. Programmes design, execution

¹⁰ Fifty per cent of all United States undergraduates are in community colleges, transferring to traditional colleges and universities typically after two years. The community college often provides remedial high school instruction as well as grounding in degree courses to be pursued later.

and evaluation is generally “in-house”. The cost-effectiveness of these training programmes is not known. The **apprenticeship system** is floundering. It has failed to keep up with market demand and even basic technologies. The most sought-after electricians, plumbers and carpenters are often foreign-trained.

There is a lack of labour market information. With regard to labour market information, a preliminary employment survey under way (financed under the WB–assisted CDD project) will likely provide useful baseline data. However, unless a permanent mechanism for monitoring the labour market and tracking schools – such as a labour market “observatory” – is established, future updating will continue to depend on external technical assistance, with little local value-added. The new observatory could be developed at the University of The Gambia’s Department of Social Sciences, in collaboration with the NTA. The Department could provide the expertise in economics, sociology and anthropology, the disciplines required to implement regular surveys and longitudinal studies with due attention being given to both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The Department would benefit from hands-on field training for its undergraduate students. Institutionalization of labour market studies and the strengthening of analytical capacity in the country would also pay off in the improvement of ongoing poverty analysis under the PRSP.

Training Priorities and Challenges

The priorities are training to support social investment (education, health and water supply – Pillar II of the PRSP) and the economic investment (Pillar III) required to grow the economy. Training for the **education sector** is an integral part of the MTP and a robust programme has been developed under the Second and Third Phases of the Education Sector Support Programme, financed by the WB, the AFDB and other donors.

Water supply is successfully addressing its own needs, too. In contrast, **health** faces a never-ending task in training, as health personnel continue to migrate in large numbers because of low civil service pay and uncertain career opportunities. Between 2003 and 2005, the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital alone lost 250 nurses. New agreements with destination countries are probably a prerequisite for resolving this problem. In this regard, the WHO (August 2008) called on the United Kingdom to tighten up the regulations governing its public sector recruitment of African health workers.

TVET therefore focuses squarely on economic growth. The Gambia’s economy depends primarily on tourism and related construction and services (60 per cent of government revenues); on agriculture (historically more than a third of GDP); on commerce, transport and the facilitation of cross-border trade. The economy’s lack of diversification is unlikely to change in the short term.

Training “know-how” already resides within these productive and service sectors. With assistance in programme design and adult pedagogy, they can meet the challenge.

A case in point is the tourism sector. The apparent “downturn” in demand provides a chance to catch up on the backlog of training required to improve the quality of service. The Gambia lags behind other countries in the sub-region in the area of quality. These countries compete in the same European market. The TVET context suggests that a cooperative, sector-based training programme, managed and largely financed by the sector, would be successful. The specificity and complexity of hotel and tourism services means that the comparative advantage in training resides in the sector. Few, if any, government training bodies worldwide have successfully trained for the sector. The industry recognizes this and tends to resist anything less than complete ownership for training. Training is fundamental to the quality of services and, therefore, to the financial “bottom line”.

Box I. Training for the Tourism Sector. A Model Approach

Under the direction of a Board comprising the senior management of leading hotels, a senior manager would be selected to direct the programme. “Seconded” technical staff from participating hotels (“front office”, billing and accounting, restaurant/culinary and housekeeping) would provide the “theory” and supervise “hands-on “practice in selected hotels. Employers would have a direct “stake” in training, with the assurance that they alone determine training objectives and standards. Several of the larger hotel chains represented in The Gambia have corporate training departments and/or access to experienced overseas hotel/tourism training schools. They could contribute technical assistance from these sources. An incentive to do so is that the success of tourism in The Gambia depends on the overall quality of service, not just the levels achieved by individual hotels.

In agriculture, the provision of agricultural extension training is woefully inadequate, impacting negatively on subsistence farming. This was highlighted by the recent “food crisis” mission (FAO, World Bank and World Food Programme). The key to increased small farm productivity is not only providing inputs in timely fashion but also in improving skills, including functional literacy, for women – pre-eminent in agricultural production – and men.

The success of the proposed 2009 Public Sector Reform Project (Joint AFDB/WB Grant) effort to improve production and quality in the groundnut sub-sector will also depend on farm-level extension and training services, so too will any initiatives seeking to diversify the sector towards export crops. An important step will be to re-vitalize the existing agricultural and extension service to ensure long-term support to the sector. The programmes at the Gambia College will also be reviewed to see how they can better back-stop the sector.

Information technology is likely to underpin the development of all sectors. While phone companies and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) handle their own training, consumers, in government (where education and health are evident priorities) and the private sector, lack access to training. Most available training – provided by mainly small entrepreneurs - is limited to standard business “applications” rather than to system design. For example, there is no

comprehensive training on networking (hardware and software) in The Gambia. The few qualified personnel have been trained abroad. This presents the GTTI with an opportunity.

Gender and youth also present formidable challenges to TVET

The “youth bulge” is a challenge recently apprehended and not yet fully quantified. Overall population growth is 2.8 per cent per annum, with the total fertility rate past the “tipping point” of five children per woman. Growth will be difficult to slow down, even though family planning is now accepted. Given The Gambia’s topography, the pressures on public services and on land will be great.

If the experience of other counties in sub-Saharan African (SSA) is an indicator¹¹, then high urban population growth will exacerbate these problems, creating an urgent need for **youth support programmes** including “survival skills” (health, sex and anti-smoking education, non-formal education and skill training) to reduce the likely destabilizing impact of high unemployment, as more primary and then lower secondary school students drop out of or decide to leave their studies¹². The school health programme, including sex education, is the first step towards “survival skills”, from the middle grades of basic education onward. Secondary education should include other survival skills such as averting “risky behaviour”, parenting, handling money and entrepreneurialism (clubs for youth entrepreneurs).

Establishing an array of specific youth training opportunities is essential but their identification will be difficult without more sector knowledge. Given the rapid urban growth rate and consequent rapidly changing social patterns, a more comprehensive knowledge base must be built by:

- getting “street level” information on youth and adult perceptions of the difficulties faced by urban youth
- developing profiles of youth expectations about training and employment
- assessing the prevalence of high-risk behaviour.

Accomplishing these tasks will require creation of a multidisciplinary team of economists, sociologists and anthropologists. One well-identified obstacle is the late enrolment of urban youth in basic education, due to over-crowding of schools, in turn attributable to the lack of lots on which to build. Resolving this problem is the first priority.

Programmes to Empower Women

A comprehensive gender sector study is needed. Recent IFC country studies on gender and economic empowerment provide a good model. Diagnostic assessments of women’s needs for

¹¹ Urban population growth rates (2006): Bamako 5.1 per cent p.a.; Ouagadougou 5.3; Niamey 5.9; Bujumbura 7.6; and Kigali 10.7 (*Economist World Survey* 2008).

¹² See the recent operational manual (English) on model youth programme developed in the face of the “youth bulge” in Middle Income Countries, *Human Development*, World Bank 2008.

literacy and education, their status under the law (family protection; inheritance of real property), access to credit and business advice and their political representation provide the basis for the participatory design of action programmes.¹³

International Support

The Gambia plans to explore IFC financing and technical assistance for TVET programme design by the NTA and the key public sector training establishments. The IFC may also assist private sector training providers' association in its efforts to improve the relevance and quality of programme offerings. The ILO can provide assistance on the design of labour market surveys and workplace policies and practices (WPP) relative to HIV/AIDS expected to be an integral component of all training.

2.6 Higher Education

Overview

In The Gambia, higher education refers to all post-secondary education, including universities, colleges, teacher training institutions, professional institutes and other post-secondary technical training. During the National Education Policy the GOTG will ensure that the higher education sub-sector provides a flexible and dynamic system of education and training that will address the demands of access and equity on the one hand, and the need for quality and standards (excellence), on the other.

The primary challenges in this regard include inadequate physical and human resources to address the needs of the sub-sector. Currently, tertiary institutions depend largely on government support for funding and on foreign expertise for lecturers and other academic functions. These affect both access and quality of delivery of education.

There is, therefore, a need for interventions to strengthen and expand the provision of higher education to give more opportunities for quality programmes to more Gambians through an integrated system of higher education.

There are, at present, four main public higher education institutions in The Gambia that together provide a variety of programmes at the post-secondary level: the Gambia College (education, agriculture, nursing and public health), the GTTI (technical and vocational education) and the MDI (management studies) provide trained and skilled human resources at the middle level of services and industry.

The programmes provided by these three institutions are below the Bachelor's degree level. It was not until 1995 that a University Extension Programme linked to St Mary's University in Halifax, Canada, which offered a Bachelor of Arts degree programme, was established in the

¹³ See in particular, *IFC Private Sector Development* 2008, "Gender and Economic Growth in Kenya: Unleashing the Power of Women", World Bank Group.

country. The Extension Programme subsequently led to the establishment of the fourth higher education institution, the University of The Gambia, in 1999.

For now, the country depends heavily on non-Gambian lecturers from the sub-region. More than 50% of the full-time lecturers at these institutions are expatriates. Many Gambian lecturers mainly serve as part-time lecturers, which makes it difficult for them to participate fully in the academic functions of the university. The UTG provides programmes leading to only the Bachelor's degree in the basic sciences, agriculture, humanities and medicine.

Together, these four institutions serve only about 5,000 students. This number needs to increase sharply to help achieve the plan to increase Gambian teachers at senior secondary schools by 100% and for 90% of school managers to acquire relevant expertise in school management, among other major objectives. Each of the four institutions is autonomous with its own Governing Council/Board and academic structures. Although all four institutions rely on government support, students also contribute towards their own education through tuition fees.

Each institution has its own way of ascertaining quality but a coherent system of quality assurance with set standards and benchmarks and an effective monitoring system similar to that of the NTA for TVET programmes is completely absent for higher education programmes. This, invariably, impacts negatively on the quality of higher education.

Therefore, there is a need to establish and make the Higher Education Observatory (HEO) functional. The main implementation agencies will be the Department of State for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DOSHERST) and the higher education institutions.

University Education

It is recognized that the most important constraint on the UTG is the lack of physical and intellectual resources. The UTG will be required to seek to share with other agencies the provision of essential physical infrastructure and intellectual resources.

The main policy components will be to:

- Encourage the integrated UTG to offer, beginning on a limited scale, graduate programmes within the existing faculties and in cooperation with foreign universities
- Reduce dependency on expatriate teaching staff
- Encourage the integrated UTG to collaborate with other universities in programmes relevant to The Gambia
- Enable the integrated UTG to take up a strategic position within the national development programme
- Finalize the Higher Education Observatory Act.
- Establish the HEO as the body charged with accrediting and validating qualifications in order to reduce the dependency on external bodies

Research

The GOTG takes the view that well-developed and equipped research facilities are essential to attract and retain academic talent. Thus, the GOTG will promote research in the fields of development relevant to the country. The proposed HEO and the Quality Assurance Council for Education (QACE) represent two instruments to ensure that investments in higher education give priority to improving the quality of teaching and research.

Objectives

Under the MTP the higher education programme aims at providing expanded and quality programmes for Gambians through an integrated system of higher education that will train more citizens in academic and professional disciplines. Consistent with the National Education Policy (2004-2015) and reflecting the complex and varied nature of higher education, The Gambia will ensure that its higher education programmes are characterized by:

- Improved access to relevant quality education in tertiary institutions
- Improved management in all tertiary institutions
- Improved regular maintenance of structures and resources for improved access to quality higher education

Strategies

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives and targets, The Gambia aims at improving access to quality higher education by:

- Promoting staff development
- Recruiting and retaining staff in specialized areas, i.e. mathematics, science and pedagogy
- Developing and implementing a quality assurance and accreditation system
- Improving library services
- Updating and/or modernizing the curriculum
- Encouraging private sector participation
- Improving resource mobilization and financial management
- Ensuring affordable cost of higher education through effective cost sharing mechanisms
- Promoting research.

3

Cross-cutting Interventions

Under the basic education programme, the following cross-cutting interventions will be key in the realization of the provision of nine years of uninterrupted basic education of good quality:

- Quality
- Classroom construction
- Gender mainstreaming
- Education sector response to HIV/AIDS
- Life skills education
- Special needs education
- Child protection
- Teacher education
- Science and technology

3.1 Quality

The Gambia's Basic Education Policy objectives are based on the assumption that improvements in the quality and relevance of schooling will increase the demand of basic education for both parents and employers while at the same time influencing the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire education system. Higher student achievement, stronger language skills, higher completion rates and lower rates of repetition and dropout are all immediate outcomes of the National Education Policy (2004-2015).

The quality of education constitutes the biggest challenge in the sector. By all measures, quality education remains a challenge, with low mastery of both mathematics and English as observed in the school leaving examinations, in the UNESCO/MLA tests and the Gambia National Assessment Test (NAT). NAT shows that in all core subjects including mathematics, English, and science, a maximum of 10% of Grades 3 and 5 students reached the mastery level of 73%. Results from UNESCO's Monitoring Learning Achievements (MLA, 2000) demonstrate that 46% of students reached the passing minimum mark (40%) in the core subjects. GABECE, which is taken at the end of the Grade 9, yields similar outcomes.

Although there are questions about the validity of some of the instruments used to ascertain the extent of the problem, there is no doubt that quality is disappointingly low in public education. In addition, there are critical issues that have a direct impact on instruction, including:

- Insufficient number of contact hours provided
- Teacher and student absenteeism
- Low content knowledge by teacher-trainees entering teacher training
- Poor or outdated pedagogical knowledge and skills of teachers
- Few or no professional development opportunities for teachers both before and during their teaching service

- Limited or non-existent pedagogic support to teachers at the school level and in the classroom
- Lack of updated curricula and teaching syllabuses; and flawed assessment instruments for measuring student achievement
- The absence of a national qualifications framework, standards and benchmarks, which makes it difficult to monitor and assure quality improvements on a continuous and coherent basis

Objectives

Under the MTP, the following objectives under the quality component will be vigorously pursued based on intensive strategies that will be able to deliver the intended outcomes. Annually NAT will be conducted in Grades 3 and 5 whilst EGRA will be institutionalized at cluster and school levels:

- Increase grade level competence (mastery) in the core subjects from 10% to 15%;
- Increase grade level competence (minimum) in the core subjects from 46% to 60%
- Maintain the pupil-textbook ratio in LBS at 1:1
- Decrease the pupil-textbook ratio in UBS from 3:1 to 1:1
- Decrease the pupil-supplementary reader ratio in LBS from 2:1 to 1:1
- Decrease the pupil-supplementary reader ratio in UBS from 4:1 to 1:1
- Increase hours of instruction to 866¹⁴
- Increase frequency of school-level pedagogic support visits from once monthly to once a week by cluster monitors
- Introduce the national languages as a media of instruction in the early grades i.e. Grades 1-3 while English will be taught as a subject
- Improve reading in the early grades, with 80% of children reading at Grade Level

Strategies

In order to achieve effective and efficient school management by 2015, DOSBSE intends to undertake the following activities:

- Develop and implement a Standard School Management Manual
- Implement and operationalize Participatory Performance Monitoring (PPM) in all schools
- Ensure effective monitoring and supervision at the Regional Education Directorate (RED) level
- Establish effective and efficient monitoring in schools
- Develop and implement an integrated quality assurance framework
- Develop and implement a cluster-based monitoring framework
- Develop and use model classrooms for the learner-centred approach to assist in the development of capacity in the approach
- Conduct relevant longitudinal researches and surveys at all levels, including annual testing at Grades 3 and 5, to establish progress in learning achievements
- Review continuous assessment approaches
- Conduct curriculum research and develop curricular items

¹⁴ This is based on the flexible school calendars of the six educational regions.

- Integrate human rights education in the curriculum

In addition to the above strategies, DOSBSE is engaged in the following initiatives:

A: National Languages

Provisions have been made for the national languages to serve as medium of instruction in the early grades since the last education policy 1988 – 2003. Primers have been developed, distributed and piloted in some schools in Regions 2 to 6. However the report on the piloting could not provide sufficient data to show the situation on the ground. This was due to constraints in terms of both the organization of the curriculum directorate and the availability of resources.

Based on research findings concerning the importance of the mother tongue to the development of a child's second language, the National Education Policy (2004 – 2015) re-echoes the need for area languages to serve as the media of instruction from Grades 1 to 3 and as subjects from Grade 4 onwards.

As part of implementing the policy DOSBSE through the Curriculum Directorate has embarked on the following:

- Development and validation of training manuals on the orthographies of Mandinka, Wollof, Pulaar, Jola and Sarahule
- Training of trainers in the use of the manuals
- Establishment of a national technical advisory committee on national languages.

The way forward for implementing the national language policy includes:

- Printing of manuals for Grades 1 -3
- Training of teachers and monitors in the use of the manuals for Grades 1-3
- Development of syllabuses and instructional materials for Grades 1- 3
- Distribution of materials and further teacher orientation and monitoring for Grades 1-3
- Language mapping with the support and involvements of REDs and PTAs
- Development and validation of training manuals for Grades 4 - 9
- Printing of manuals for Grades 4 -9
- Training of teachers and monitors in the use of the manuals for Grades 4 -9
- Development of syllabuses uses and instructional materials for Grades 4- 9
- Distribution of materials and further teacher orientation and monitoring

B: Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)

DOSBSE is cognizant of the fact that many pupils in the early grades are unable to read with understanding. This fact was revealed by a national assessment in the reading abilities of 1200 pupils in Grades 1, 2 and 3 in 40 sampled schools across the country.

This made DOSBSE embark on immediate interventions to remedy the situation. These interventions included a documentary review in which both the school and Gambia College

curricula were reviewed and gaps identified for reading inabilities. Consequently, a handbook on teaching reading was developed to guide teachers in the teaching of English in general and the teaching of letter sounds, word recognition and reading comprehension in particular.

In August and September 2007, about 3000 personnel including teachers of Grades 1 to 3, head teachers, deputy heads and cluster monitors were successfully trained in the use of the handbook. As a follow-up and reinforcement of the training, about 200 more teachers were trained in Jolly Phonics methods in March/April 2008. Out of this number 34 were upgraded to trainer's level; they are expected to serve as trainers in their respective regions and schools.

The way forward for the development of reading abilities include:

- Review and update of the EGRA assessment tools
- Conduct of impact assessment on the use of the EGRA handbook
- Further improvement of the handbook and its integration into the English language instructional materials
- Training of teachers in the EGRA assessment tools and methods
- Further training of teachers and the relevant education sector personnel in EGRA
- Monitoring and evaluation of EGRA in schools

C: An expanded teaching of French at all levels and wide dissemination of the language

In view of The Gambia's socio-cultural reality and geopolitical and economic context, the status of French at school is very far from what it is expected of it. French is considered a communication tool that encourages exchanges with neighboring countries, the command of which is required in the exercise of professional activities or the pursuit of academic studies.

The Gambia's objective is to secure a Francophone environment conducive to developing bilingualism, which is regarded as necessary to further open up the country to the outside world. French is becoming indispensable in exchanges with neighbouring countries. The Gambia is involved in many sub- regional, regional and pan-African organizations where the French language is often the communication tool.

In line with the above, The Gambia, in collaboration with the French government, initiated a project aimed at contributing to disseminate the command and use of the French language in The Gambia, a country bordered by Francophone states with which it conducts most of its exchanges.

This initiative aims to support, both inside and outside the school context, a Francophone environment encouraging the use of French as a language of communication and a tool for acquiring knowledge and expertise. This is sequel to the commitment made in the National Education Policy (2004-2015) but also in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of universal education and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD.) It covers all levels of education ranging from lower basic to higher education.

Objectives and Indicators

Principal objective: to promote the Francophone environment in The Gambia.

Verifiable Result Indicators

For the principal objective:

- Emergence of bilingualism at school, university and in the working environment.

Indicators

French as a working language:

- Number of teachers trained in French for special purposes (*français sur objectifs spécifiques - FOS*) and the existence of operational tools
- Increasing and improving contacts in the Francophone working world
- Creation of suitable university courses such as undergraduate and postgraduate language courses (*Langues Etrangères Appliquées (LEA)*, law programmes, etc.)

French as the actor of bilingualism:

- Existence of bilingual programmes in pilot schools
- Verified increase in the number of schools with French as a principal teaching language
- Dynamism of French clubs in schools
- Increasing the number of French language courses taught at university
- Increased use of French in the media.

Strategies

In order to achieve the set objectives during the MTP, the following strategies will be considered:

- Train more French teachers
- Train teachers in specialist French
- Enhance the quality of training and the status of future French teachers
- Encourage the extension of bilingualism to primary education so as to strengthen the project's coherence
- Set up partnerships with French universities actively involved in the teaching of French for special purposes
- Create structures to facilitate access to information and individual training through multimedia tools

3.2 Classroom Construction

Table 6: Access Summary Indicators, Grades 1-6

Table 6: ACCESS SUMMARY INDICATORS GRADES 1-6				
GRADES 1-6	2008	2009	2010	2011
ENROLMENT				
Intake Rate	1.1	1.15	1.2	1.2
TOTAL	238,469	252,750	271,386	294,120
GER (Total, including official madrassa)	101%	107%	113%	120%
ADDITIONAL PLACES REQUIRED ANNUALLY				
Total	10,197	14,281	18,636	22,734
Government	7,815	10,833	14,068	17,135
Grant Aided	693	971	1267	1546
Private	479	671	876	1068
Official Madrassa	1,209	1,806	2,424	2,985
CLASSROOMS				
<i>Government Schools</i>				
NEW ADDITIONS	157	219	286	349
TOTAL CONSTRUCTIONS a/	212	275	341	404
TOTAL STOCK PERMANENT	3,650	3,869	4,155	4,504
<i>Private & Grant Aided</i>				
NEW ADDITIONS	23	31	39	45
TOTAL STOCK PERMANENT	268	299	338	383

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

a/ Includes replacement of temporary classrooms

One of the most important determinants of school expansion is the size of enrolment which, in turn, is determined by the annual growth rate of the school-age population, currently estimated at the lower basic level at 2.8% per annum. Over the period the enrolment is projected to increase from 238,469 in 2008 to 294,120 in 2011. The number of additional places at this level is estimated at 22,734 thus representing an additional need of 1,149 classrooms, or an annual average of 287, leading to a gross enrolment rate of 120%. The projections depict a shift in the

double-shifting policy from the original target of 25%, requiring 3000 additional classrooms, to 50% of the classroom and thus reducing the classrooms needs to a much manageable size.

Access Table 7: Summary Indicators, Grades 7-9

GRADES 7-9	2008	2009	2010	2011
ENROLMENT	74,255	79,823	83,481	86,138
GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (AGES 13-15)				
Government & Grant Aided	54%	57%	58%	58%
Total, including private	62%	64%	66%	66%
ADDITIONAL PLACES REQUIRED ANNUALLY				
Total	4,708	5,568	3,658	2,657
Government	3,497	4,136	2,718	1,974
Private	571	675	444	322
CLASSROOMS				
<i>Government Schools</i>				
New Additions	65	77	53	40
Total Stock	968	1,045	1,098	1,138
<i>Private & Grant Aided</i>				
NEW ADDITIONS	11	13	8	6
TOTAL STOCK PERMANENT	173	186	194	200

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

Enrolment at the upper basic level is estimated to increase from the current 74,255 to 86,238, while the additional places will decrease from 4,708 (2008) to only 2,657 (2011) because the current capacity at the upper basic level will be able to accommodate the potential increase in enrolment over this period as well as the efficiency measures being put in place to reduce repetition and dropout rates. This takes into account the variations of the intake of students across grade levels and rates of repetition and drop outs. Thus the annual classroom requirement will vary from 76 classrooms in 2008 to 46 classrooms in 2011 while the GER at this level will fluctuate between 62% and 66%.

At the secondary level, in order to cater for the increasing demand and thus expand access accordingly, the policy option of building at least one additional senior secondary school in each administrative region (Regions 2- 6) through government funds will be strongly pursued. Meanwhile the dilapidated classrooms will be rehabilitated through a sustainable maintenance system.

Strategies

In response to the growing demand for additional places in the basic cycle, DOSBSE will, in collaboration with its development partners, continue to construct normal type additional classrooms in urban and fast-growth centres where the demand is on the rise while multi-grade types of classrooms will be piloted or built in remote and under populated areas. The proposed

expansion programmed the will assess the level of under-utilization in schools and how much growth can be absorbed through better utilization of existing structures, prior to any new construction or rehabilitation.

Under the MTP, the construction of classrooms across the country will be intensified to respond to the growing demand in order to meet the policy target of universal basic education. The construction works will be executed through a framework agreement to be signed with NGOs and CBOs specialized in civil works. DOSBSE will also promote private sector participation in the delivery of education services at the basic level.

Education policies are based on the assumption that schooling must be affordable and that it must be conducted in safe, modestly comfortable and hygienic facilities. To achieve the outcome and targets of equitably expanding basic education, the following strategies will be adopted:

- Provide an adequate number of schools and classrooms
- Maintain school facilities
- Increase awareness and participation

3.3 Gender Mainstreaming

Before the advent of the current education policy, the sector developed and implemented a comprehensive girls' education programme whose main objective was to bridge the gaps in enrolment, retention and performance between boys and girls in basic and secondary education. However greater prominence was given to basic education.

In translating the above thrust into operational action, equal opportunities for access had been created for girls and women from an early stage and some of the following strategies implemented were aimed at creating an enabling environment for girls and women to compete equally with boys and men:

- The provision of full scholarships to girls in upper basic and senior secondary schools in Regions 3, 4, 5 and 6
- The creation of a safe and supportive learning environment through the provision of separate toilet facilities for girls
- A rigorous and vigorous community sensitization programme aimed at increasing the levels of enrolment and retention of girls
- The introduction and implementation of the Girl-Friendly School Initiative (GSFI)¹⁵ in Regions 4, 5 and 6
- Increasing the proportion of qualified female teachers through the Remedial Initiative for Female Teachers (RIFT) at the Gambia College.

As shown in Table 8, the resultant effect of the above strategies gave rise to a substantial increase in the enrolment of girls during the period 1992/93 - 2002/2003. The evidence of this success was the registration of an appreciable level of an annual average growth rate of 4.6% at the lower basic level whilst the upper basic schools witnessed an annual average growth rate of

¹⁵ This is a strategy of providing support to the school and community in order to improve the rates of access, retention and performance of girls by improving on the teaching/ learning environment and creating mothers' clubs as well as providing labor saving devices, among other things.

10.3%. Translating this into LBS GER for girls means an increase from 48% in 1992/93 to 77% in 2002/2003 whilst the UBS GER for the same sex increased from 27% to 44% during the same period.

Table 8: Gross Enrolment Ratio & Share of Girls at the LBS and UBS

	1992/93	2002/03	2006/07
LBS			
GER	48%	77%	92%
Girls' Share of Enrolment	41%	48%	51%
UBS			
GER	27%	44%	57%
Girls' Share of Enrolment	36%	42%	48%
SSS			
GER	7%	18%	32%
Girls' Share of Enrolment	26%	34%	42%

Source: DOSBSE EMIS

Expansion in access beyond 2003 continued, with gains for girls across all cycles but worrisome drops for boys in lower basic education. This is manifested in the share of enrolment for girls shooting up from 48% in 2002/2003 to 51% in 2006/2007.

Given the worrisome drops in enrolment for boys, particularly at the lower basic, the sector has now shifted focus from exclusive interventions biased towards girls to the mainstreaming of gender concerns at every stage of the education process for the realization of the EFA gender parity and equity goals by the end of the policy period.

Hence under the MTP, focus of the gender education programme will be guided by the following policy priorities:

- Creating equal opportunities for all
- Reduction of illiteracy rates, especially for females
- Attaining gender equity in education by 2005 and sustaining it
- Equitable supply of quality teachers of both sexes
- Reduction of gender disparities in teacher recruitment, training, promotion and posting
- Establishing high retention, performance and completion rates, especially of girls
- Improved performance and participation in all subjects, particularly in mathematics and science.

In view of the above policy priorities on gender mainstreaming in education, the implementation of the MTP will take account of the following strategies:

Strategies

- Implement a Child-friendly School Initiative (CSFI) to include the boys instead of the GFSI
- Continue to provide financial assistance that will cover school fees, examination fees and books to all the girls in the upper basic and senior secondary levels
- To address the insensitivity of the school environment to the needs of girls, separate toilet facilities for girls will continue to be constructed and sanitary facilities provided to help

them during their menstrual period to cut down on the loss of valuable instructional and contact time during this period. Furthermore, to make the environment (both in and out of school) safe for the child, a sexual harassment policy will continue to be implemented

- In order to improve the performance of both boys and girls, the Curriculum, Research, Evaluation and Development Directorate (CREDIT) will continue to take account of eliminating gender imbalances across the curriculum
- Introduce a Remedial Initiative for Teachers (RIT) along the same lines as the RIFT
- Increase the supply of female teachers in order to attain gender parity and equity in teacher supply and distribution
- As part of the development of a comprehensive communication strategy for strong advocacy to increase the rates of enrolment, retention and performance for both boys and girls across basic and secondary education, IEC/BCC messages will be developed and disseminated.

3.4 Education Sector Response to HIV/AIDS

According to The Gambia's National Policy Guidelines on HIV/AIDS (2006-2010), there is an estimate of 16,800 people in The Gambia infected with HIV-1 and 500 people die annually of AIDS. Based on data obtained from the 2005 HIV Sentinel Survey (HSS), the prevalence of HIV-1 rose from 0.7 per cent to 1.5 per cent whilst HIV-2 was relatively stable at 0.9 per cent after declining slightly from 1.1 per cent. The predominant mode of HIV transmission is heterosexual contact with 54 per cent of people living with AIDS (PLWA) being women.

It is quite evident that HIV/AIDS is more of a development problem than an exclusive health issue and, consequently, children, youth and teachers are part of the vulnerable groups in this country. Furthermore, the menace of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a real threat to the attainment of the EFA targets and the education-related MDGs to which the GOTG is very much committed.

Given that DOSBSE acknowledges the seriousness of the pandemic based on empirical evidence, both local and international, coupled with the commitment of the sector to minimize the social, economic and developmental consequences of HIV/AIDS on the education system, a comprehensive education sector response to HIV/AIDS premised on the mandate and comparative advantage of the sector has been developed through an operational sector policy on HIV/AIDS.

The response clearly sets out the agenda through the following interventions:

- Prevention
- Care and support
- Non-discrimination

Prevention

Under prevention, DOSBSE will undertake the core responsibility of addressing HIV/AIDS through education by developing skills, values and attitudes to promote positive behaviour that will prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS. This will focus on the following areas:

- Safe school and institution environment
- Prevention of transmission through play and sports
- Provision of information
- Provision of HIV/AIDS preventive services

Safe School and Institution Environment

Institutions of the education sector will effectively implement universal precautions to eliminate the risk of transmission of all blood-borne pathogens including HIV in the educational institution environment.

Prevention of Transmission Through Play and Sports

The risk of HIV transmission through contact play and contact sports is generally insignificant. However it is important for educational institutions to note that the risk increases where learners and education personnel are exposed to infected blood.

Thus education personnel and learners acting as sports administrators who have special opportunities for meaningful education of sports participants will encourage sports participants to seek medical and other counselling services where appropriate.

Provision of Information

All learners and education personnel will be entitled to have access to information on HIV/AIDS that is current, accurate, complete, appropriate and scientifically factual. In addition, DOSBSE will provide professional training of counsellors on guidance and counselling to be handled by voluntary counselling and testing (VCT). HIV/AIDS as a psychosocial skill will form part of the Life Skills Education Programme (LSEP) and the programme will be integrated into in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes.

Provision of HIV/AIDS Preventive Services

The education sector will promote the principles of abstinence, fidelity and the use of condoms. However, condom promotion shall take due consideration of age appropriateness, culture and parental guidance and HIV status of the individuals at all times.

Hence DOSBSE will facilitate access to HIV/AIDS services, with emphasis on the specific needs of women and girls, orphans, people with special needs and other vulnerable groups. In particular, DOSBSE will facilitate access to preventive services including prevention of parent - to- child transmission (PPTCT) and VCT services.

Care and Support

Focusing on care and support will require people living with HIV/AIDS in the education sector to be provided with the requisite support at all stages of the disease. Therefore, meeting the immediate food and nutrition, psychosocial, spiritual and physical support is essential if HIV/AIDS-affected and infected staff and learners are to live with dignity and security.

This is based on the proposition that good nutrition cannot cure AIDS or prevent HIV infection but can help maintain and improve the nutritional status of a person with HIV/AIDS and delay the progression from HIV to AIDS-related diseases. Promoting and providing care and support during the MTP will be employed as an effective strategy in the mitigation of the effects of HIV/AIDS.

Non-Discrimination

According to UNAIDS, “ discrimination occurs when a distinction made against a person results in him or her being treated unfairly and unjustly on the basis of their belonging or being

perceived to belong to a particular group. Any action directed at eliminating stigma and discrimination is therefore considered the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedom.”

Disclosures and Confidentiality

Persons infected or affected by HIV/AIDS are part of society and should not be discriminated against on the basis of a real or perceived HIV/AIDS status. To this end, the education sector will focus on creating the enabling environment, which encourages staff and learners within the sector to disclose their HIV/AIDS status to the relevant authorities under strict confidentiality through VCT.

Attendance at School

- With respect to attendance at school or the workplace, no learner or education sector personnel will be denied admission to or continued attendance at an institution on account of their HIV/AIDS status or perceived HIV/AIDS status once they meet the required acceptance criteria. In the same vein, no member of staff will be discriminated against in promotion or any other entitlement as a result of their HIV/AIDS status.

Strategies

All these will be pursued through the following strategies:

- Developing a training manual on nutritional care and support for PLWHA including recipes
- Training extension workers including teachers, health facility staff and community representatives in HIV/AIDS, care and support, including home-based care and nutrition support
- Developing IEC/BCC materials on care and support
- Empowering educators to be able to care for and support learners and personnel of the education sector infected or affected by HIV/AIDS
- Including life-skills HIV/AIDS education in the school curriculum
- Providing educational support and skills training for orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs)
- Providing psycho-social and spiritual support to PLWHAs and their families
- Establishing and strengthening counselling centres in schools and institutions within the education sector
- Promoting VCT among learners and personnel of the education sector
- Advocating HIV/AIDS treatment (including ART and OI treatments) for educators and learners who need them.

3.5 Life Skills Education

Reaping the full benefit of any country's youth will be dependent on, inter alia, the need to provide them with both livelihood and life skills. This will no doubt build individual capacities for meaningful participation in the national economy for both present and future generations. However, our youth are vulnerable to all forms of threats and discrimination that halt their learning process and challenge education system.

Hence the youth should be provided with information skills and services that will enable them to make informed choices and decisions to take full control of their lives. It is against this background that the National Education Policy puts emphasis on the need to provide our in and out of school youth psychosocial skills through the delivery of an LSE programme.

The main focus of LSE includes population and family life education, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender responsiveness and perspectives, peace building and tolerance, patriotism, guidance and counselling, which is a service that supports the programmes. Life skills education will not only help learners acquire knowledge, the development of values, attitudes and skills but also behaviour relevant for adaptation to changes over a lifetime.

The anticipated key results after the implementation process will be:

- An improved curriculum including human rights education integrating life skills for schools
- 30 per cent of in-school adolescents 10-19 years old nationwide having correct information and relevant skills and services to reduce HIV and other related risks and vulnerability.

Goal: To develop responsible behaviour in children and adolescents, in view of their well-being and positive participation in society.

HIV/AIDS Prevention and Management

As mentioned in the HIV/AIDS education sector response programme, HIV/AIDS prevention and management are key to achieving success in the education system. It is more of a development problem than an exclusive health issue. Children, youth, teachers and education sector personnel (vulnerable groups) will continue to receive information that will help them protect themselves and their families from the pandemic.

Population and Family Life Education

Population and family life education is aimed at helping learners to develop knowledge and understanding of the population situation of The Gambia and develop rational attitudes and behaviour towards this situation. Within the framework of the LSE, POP/FLE will help learners acquire desirable skills and attitudes that will help them make rational and responsible decisions on issues of adolescent reproductive health, integrated reproductive health and advocacy.

Gender Responsiveness and Perspectives

The main objective of this component is to empower girls and women, especially the disadvantaged, to participate fully in decisions that affect their lives. Thus schools will be used as centres of knowledge and skills development for this group, particularly about issues relating to their sex and sexuality. The dissemination of the sexual harassment policy will be given priority in the LSE Programme.

Peace Building and Tolerance

LSE will equally focus on the promotion of peace education, conflict resolution and tolerance. It will critically look at factors militating against peace and peaceful coexistence (eg xenophobia, religious intolerance and ethnicity); and then build on strategies to make a positive impact at the interpersonal, community and national levels.

To deliver on the expectations of this component, learners will be exposed to skills in conflict resolutions and management (grievance handling, negotiations, arbitration). Schools will be encouraged to establish clubs and societies through which such skills can be practised and promoted or integrate the programme within the existing ones.

Human Rights Education

Quality education can be perceived to embody both cognitive and emotional domains to ensure that pupils acquire not only relevant and sufficient knowledge for adulthood but also practical experience and expertise in citizenship and human rights through the promotion of a culture of peace, democratic principles and the development of creativity and affectivity.

From this perspective, human rights education (HRE) will be integrated into the school curriculum and given due prominence in the life skills programme in accordance with the recommendations of a recent study on human rights education.¹⁶ Human rights education is conceived from social, legal, educational, economic and political perspectives; therefore, the HRE programme will reflect these various strands. However, while recognizing pertinent universal precepts and values, human rights and citizenship will be linked to the context or socio-political realities of The Gambia.

Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling (GC) has continued to be one of the support services to education programmes and the delivery of quality education in The Gambia. There is enough evidence of GC contribution to the enhancement of access, retention and performance of both boys and girls in the upper basic and senior secondary school where such services are provided. GC will be expanded and extended to the lower basic schools where counsellors are also being trained and equipped with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to effectively provide the required services.

It is for this reason that GC will be used as a service necessary for all the components of LSE.

Patriotism

The objective of this component within the LSE is to prepare learners for integration into society as responsible, creative and active citizens. Academic outcomes specific to the acquisition, development and application of knowledge, skills and competencies will be given due recognition as affective outcomes that contribute to good citizenship.

¹⁶ Study commissioned by UNESCO-BREDA in collaboration with DOSBSE, November 2007.

An awareness of patriotism in all learners will be introduced and developed for the creation of a united nation bound by a 'unity of purpose complemented by a sense of duty and loyalty to the nation. Attitudes and values guided by patriotism and democratic principles and practice, as well as elements that foster societal cohesion, will feature conspicuously on the curriculum.

LSE will be implemented using the following strategies:

Strategy 1: To support the implementation of the LSE programme in schools and *madrassa* through the following major activities.

- Disseminate the LSE programme
- Update the already existing Pop/FLE curriculum to include HIV/AIDS education and the other psycho-social issues of LSE
- Train teachers in LSE at Gambia College and UTG
- Provide support in the form of teaching and learning materials
- Provide continuous in-service training for teachers in LSE
- Support the establishment and continued training of peer counsellors/health educators in schools
- Provide continuous training and support to teacher counsellors to effectively deliver the required services
- Conduct IEC at the community level

Strategy 2: To scale up LSE in collaboration with other development partners such as UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP.

3.6 Special Needs Education

In its bid to ensure that the EFA targets and the education-related MDGs are met by 2015, DOSBSE will continue to focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable groups given that part of the remaining cohort of children out of school may be with special needs.

This is based on the results of the 1998 National Disability Survey, which indicates that two in every three disabled children aged 4-18 years were neither in conventional schools nor in *madrassas*. The survey further revealed that 51.7% of disabled students were in conventional schools, 2.4% in specialized schools, 5.0% in *madrassas*, 39.3% in the *daras* and 0.2% in nursery schools.

The survey also outlined attributes for non-participation of disabled children in education being, inter alia, societal negative attitudes, distance from schools, inadequate infrastructure and inadequate number of trained personnel.

Priorities

As a matter of priority for special needs education focusing on the two general strategies, namely mainstreaming children with mild or moderate disabilities in regular schools and creating places for children with severe and profound disabilities in specialized institutions for the deaf, blind and learning difficulties, the education sector focuses on the following priorities as key to the provision of support to such children:

- Adaptation of existing educational practices, curriculum and classroom structures to meet the needs of all learners

- Strengthening regional education centres with adequate resources and trained teachers in mainstream schools
- Teacher training in special needs education
- Itinerant teacher training and supply
- Early identification and assessment of children
- Support for the provision of technical vocational education and training
- Provision of school buses to enhance access and school attendance
- Provision of braille machines for individual blind and low vision students
- Provision of braille printing facility for the transcription of core textbooks and supplementary readers into braille for use by low vision and blind children

Strategies

Taking into account the current special needs education initiatives being supported under the Integrated Education Programme (IEP) funded by Sight Savers International (SSI), the Hearing Assessment and Research Centre (HARK) co-funded by the Royal Society for the Deaf, DOSBSE and the Department of State for Health and Social Welfare (DOSHSW) and the development of a policy framework for special needs to be funded by Save The Children Sweden (SCS), the following strategies will be implemented during the MTP:

- Initial assessment of children in ECD centres and *madrassas* to determine special needs, intervention strategies, referral and placements
- Training of teachers in ECD centres to handle children with special needs for early intervention
- Training of teachers for specialization in handling children in all areas of disability (expertise can be sought from countries such as Ghana to train as many identified teachers as possible)
- Remuneration of teachers specially trained to handle all categories of children with special needs (including education)
- Professional training in special education for teachers in special schools
- Development and implementation of an itinerant teaching programme to cater for the needs of all categories of children in mainstream schools
- Development of an assessment tool to determine the impact of the programme and students benefiting from the programme
- Setting up of resource centres in all regions of the country to cater for the needs of children with special needs
- Procurement of equipment and teaching and learning materials to cater for the needs of children with special needs
- Training of parents and care givers in non-formal institutions in management of children with special needs
- Development of a reader-friendly manual for all teachers to equip them with information on handling children with special needs
- Financing and monitoring of policy framework on special needs and inclusion
- Advocacy for support for special needs education as part of the comprehensive communication strategy to be developed for basic and secondary education
- Training in sign language for students, teachers and parents of children with hearing disability

3.7 Child Protection

It is an established fact that children who are attending school are less vulnerable to child labour, child trafficking and recover more quickly from traumatic effects of abuse, violence and exploitation. It is also an established fact that children who are protected from abuse, violence and exploitation are eager to attend school and become better learners. Thus there is a nexus between education and child protection, each reinforcing the other. However enrolling children in school is not a panacea for all child protection issues.

Studies have shown that even while in school, children continue to be vulnerable to abuse, violence and exploitation including corporal punishment, sexual abuse and exploitation sometimes at the hands of the very teachers entrusted with their care.

In a recent study by CPA, 68% of students said they are beaten sometimes (J.Tang, 2005). The same study found that 40% of children reported to have skipped school for fear of being beaten by a teacher and 46.7% say they know of someone who left school because of corporal punishment or fear of a teacher. Also 49.8% of teachers reported that corporal punishment was used in their schools, whilst 57.9% said they would wish to use corporal punishment on their students.

These findings clearly show that corporal punishment is an acceptable method of student discipline in schools and it also shows that there is some connection between corporal punishment and school dropout or truancy.

While there is much under-reporting of sexual harassment in the school context, the 2000 Early Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy Report (UNICEF, 2000) concluded that sexual harassment of children especially girls takes place in schools. The study into sexual abuse and exploitation of children also confirmed that sexual abuse of children in schools takes place, sometimes by teachers.

Violence, abuse and exploitation can keep children, in particular girls, out of school. Consequently, achieving universal access to primary education as part of the MDGs cannot be achieved without efforts to eliminate the barriers that keep children out of school such as gender discriminations and child labour. Ensuring that schools represent a protective environment free of violence, exploitation and abuse for children, and in particular for girls, is an important step for achieving the MDG on education.

In recognition of this, DOSBSE introduced a Sexual Harassment Policy which seeks to address the sexual abuse of children, especially girls. Working with UNICEF, DOSBSE has translated the policy into a user-friendly guideline for schools and has used it to orient teachers, pupils and PTA members on the sexual harassment policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented. An alternative to corporal punishment handbook has also been developed with support from UNICEF and teachers have been trained in the use of the handbook.

In recognition of the linkages between child protection and the attainment of education for all, DOSBSE within the context of the MTP and the Strategic Plan will implement the following strategies:

- Print the revised version of the sexual harassment guidelines and ensure that every teacher has a copy of the guidelines and that all teachers have received orientation on the guidelines
- Print a copy of the Alternative Discipline Handbook and ensure that every teacher has a copy of the handbook and that all teachers have received orientation on the handbook
- Ensure that all cluster monitors are trained in both the Sexual Harassment Guidelines and the Alternative Discipline Methods
- Update the job description of cluster monitors to include sexual harassment, corporal punishment and other child protection issues
- Develop and enforce a code of conduct for teachers which will include sexual harassment issues
- Introduce child rights education into the teacher training programmes at Gambia College School of Education.¹⁷
- Put in place a system to collect data on cases of sexual abuse and exploitation from schools, which will be used to inform policy level discussions and programming.

3.8 Teacher Education

Although no longer falls under the purview of DOSBSE, teacher education and training still continues to be the responsibility and interest of the sector. Thus the training mechanism and supply remains to influence our drive towards attaining access and quality education as we endeavour to achieve the MDGs and EFA targets.

The schooling system in The Gambia is projected to grow significantly during the period covered by this policy. It follows that a corresponding growth in the availability of trained teachers will be ensured to meet the objectives of this policy.

In addition to meeting the demands of the expansion for new teachers through pre-service training programmes, the continuing need for upgrading the knowledge and skills of serving teachers will be equally essential. Through sustained efforts during the past few years, it has been possible to address the critical issue of shortage of trained and qualified teachers in the country at the upper basic level. Nonetheless, the need for continuing education for serving teachers at both the lower and senior secondary levels will receive greater attention.

The programmes of training of teachers for the lower level (PTC) will continue to use a mix of one year face-to-face (college-based training, two years of apprenticeship with a combined ODL following which qualifying examinations will be written for certificate requirement. Alongside this programme the Gambia College is conducting a pilot extension programme (PTC Extension) for unqualified teachers in one of the education regions using the school holidays for face-to-face sessions while allowing the trainees to apply the acquired skills in the classroom during school sessions.

Along with pedagogic training, efforts will be made to launch programmes of training in such areas as curriculum planning and design, instructional design, learning materials preparation, school management and other relevant areas of significance for improving the overall efficiency of the school system and teacher effectiveness.

¹⁷ Curriculum review and orientation of lecturers

The sector will equally introduce the HTC (Primary) programme for lower basic school teachers to curb the continuous loss of these teachers to the upper basic level as a result of them undergoing the HTC programme meant for upper basic teachers. Likewise, more emphasis will be placed on the training of mathematics and science teachers using incentives like allowances and training opportunities to attract people into these disciplines.

The current HTC programme for upper basic teachers will continue, using the same training mode which provides two years of college-based training and one year's apprenticeship in schools combined with ODL followed by written examinations for certification.

With the increasing applications of ICT in education, the role of the teacher is undergoing a fundamental change. At the core of this change is the fact that the teacher is no more the only source of knowledge. Knowledge can be accessed, assimilated and used from a variety of sources, and the teacher has increasingly to adapt himself/herself to the role of a facilitator of knowledge acquisition and assimilation.

In order to perform this role effectively, teachers will be made acquainted with the use of these technologies in education. The teacher training programmes will have to take this aspect into consideration.

The problem of an adequate supply of teachers, who have the requisite qualifications and training to teach at the senior secondary level, is a matter of concern. The solution to this problem lies in the availability of an adequate number of graduates in the relevant subject areas and who also have the necessary pedagogic training within The Gambia.

With the establishment of the UTG, this problem can be addressed to some extent using an approach where students undergo a four-year academic programme with educational modules fused in it to provide them with the pedagogic skills to teach.

In our drive to achieve these targets, government will adopt the following strategies:

- Introduce an HTC programme for lower basic teachers
- Introduce remedial classes for weak students before the start of their training
- Establish decentralized teacher training centres
- In the long run phase out the PTC programme
- Train more teachers of mathematics and science as a priority area
- Develop and introduce bridging gap programmes for the UTG, thus increasing the intakes and supply of graduate teachers for the senior secondary level
- Roll out teacher assessments/tests as an input into the in-service training programme targets

The targets in the realization of these strategies will include the following:

- Train 100 mathematics and science teachers every year using the bridging gap approach
- Provide maths and science students with a bigger stipend at the Gambia College, after testing achievement levels as a requirement
- Pay 50% of basic salary to all science and mathematics teachers in upper basic and senior secondary schools, after testing content knowledge and pedagogy as a requirement
- Train 50 Grade 12 students to be lab technicians and assistants
- Provide in-service training for 100 mathematics and science teachers every year
- Provide training for 25 ICT teachers every year

- Train 100 mathematics and science teachers in ICT every year

3.9 Science and Technology Education

Because of its small size in both population and area, The Gambia is still faced with a problem of qualified scientists, particularly in the areas of medicine and engineering. These problems together with the skills gaps in the key sectors such as trade, banking and financial services, statistics, tourism, agribusiness and management necessitate the need for the development of science and technology in the Gambia if we are to reap the full benefit from these sectors.

Such an ambitious vision needs to be matched with an education system that can ameliorate both the economic conditions and the skills of the populace. It is therefore a truism that scientific and technological development is the way for forward for The Gambia.

It is generally agreed that science and technology is crucial in resolving major economic, social and environmental problems globally as well as within each nation. However, The Gambia (like many developing countries the world over) faces many challenges in this respect, including the following:

- Inadequate supply of trained science, mathematics and technology teachers as well as a high attrition rate of this cohort of teachers
- Lack of students interest and motivation in science, mathematics and technology coupled with low teacher quality and inadequate science teaching materials
- Low number of girls pursuing science, mathematics and technology
- Inadequate laboratory apparatus and equipment in upper basic and senior secondary schools
- Lack of trained laboratory technicians and assistants in schools
- Non-existence of laboratories in lower basic schools
- Lack of continuous learning and professional development of existing teachers
- Non-availability of trained ICT teachers in schools
- Limited science and technology infrastructure, resources and capacity
- Lack of critical mass of scientifically literate policy-makers or decision-makers who appreciate the link between science and technology and the socio-economic and socio-political issues to a level where they can commit costly and long-term investment as a matter of priority
- Lack of a critical mass of trained and motivated personnel, policies or appropriate incentives to retain the few that exist within the system
- Lack of proper incentives and partnerships with the private sector to engage in a more strategic and long-term development of the human resource base
- Lack of development of supportive or complementary infrastructure (roads, markets, storage, rural electricity or telecommunication needed to enhance the impact of science and technology).

The constraints highlighted above (together with the interest and commitment shown by the government to develop science and technology in general and ICT in particular, and their adoption as the sustainable tools for national development) call for the revitalization of students' interest and investment into science and technology. This commitment is demonstrated by the creation of the Directorate of Science, Communication, Information and Technology Education (2001) at DOSBSE, the Department of State for Communication, Infrastructure and Technology

(2001) and, most recently the Department of State for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (2007).

Science and Technology Education (STE)

During the MTP, science and technology education will be given prominence, pursued to ensure that there is development of a strong science and technology commencing at the basic level to the development of in-country-based research scientists and engineers at the tertiary education level.

In order to realise the above vision, these objectives will be carried out:

- Raising the status of STE through:
 - the motivation of students' interest in mathematics, science and technology by the provision of scholarship packages, including improvement in the teaching of science
 - Establishment and promotion of science and technology clubs and activities in schools
 - Celebration of the National Science and Technology Week
 - Extramural classes for mathematics and science students in secondary schools
 - Annual girls' science and mathematics clinics and camps
- Provision of adequate and appropriate laboratory apparatus and other teaching/learning materials for science
 - Refurbishment of science labs in schools
 - Construction of labs for LBS
 - Procurement of chemical reagents and distribution to schools
 - Provision of micro-science kits to LBS
 - Development of improvised prototypes of laboratory apparatus and equipment for secondary schools
- Capacity building for STE providers, administrators and policy-makers
- Training and retraining of science teachers in the light of new demands, including training of UTG and other higher education staff
- Provision of special incentives and allowances to this cohort of teachers
- Integration of ICT in the training of science teachers, in subject teaching/learning, in management/administration of the education sector
- Use of ICT and distance learning methods and technology to improve access, equity and quality of STE and other subject areas as appropriate
- Introduction of Educational Broadcasting Service (EBS) (radio, TV and online where possible) to support teaching/learning processes both in and out of the school setting
- Greater involvement of girls and women in STE
- Greater involvement of the private sector as well as the local community in STE

Targets

The targets in the realization of these strategies may include the following:

- Provide scholarships for 50 students nationwide at secondary level
- Provide seed money to establish 50 science and technology clubs in schools
- Annual celebration involving all schools in the host region

- Provide 300 students with extramural classes every rainy season holiday in mathematics and science
- Organize mathematics and science clinics for 50 girls per region annually
- Refurbish and procure chemical reagents for 5% of labs per region annually
- Provide 40% of lab apparatus and equipment prototype
- Create three labs for three LBS per region
- Provide scholarships to mathematics and science students at the UTG

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The importance of ICT is recognized as an essential tool to better facilitate effective and efficient management of the sector. This policy will ensure, through the use of ICT, that quality education is accessible to all and sundry.

An integrated ICT strategy, within a sound ICT infrastructure, vital for the successful achievement of DOSBSE's main priorities, will be developed. The key elements of the strategy will:

- provide an integrated system to meet the needs of the employees of the sector
- promote computer and information literacy within the sector personnel
- create and nurture an ICT culture within the sector personnel
- provide the necessary ICT resources (hardware, software) to ensure efficient and effective administration of the sector

Educational Broadcasting Services

EBS will be provided to support teaching /learning processes both in and out of the school setting. The Educational Broadcasting Unit (EBU) will therefore be strengthened and schools broadcasting of the overall EBS will be reactivated in order to design and develop educational programmes for transmission to the schools and communities.

These programmes will be based on the school curriculum, not only to complement instruction provided by teachers but also to improve on teacher effectiveness. The broadcasts will be used, in tandem, for advocacy and sensitisation of the wider community on educational and relevant topical issues.

In this drive, DOSBSE will collaborate with the GRTS, NGOs, international agencies and other partners to produce and broadcast documentaries and other education-related programmes for children and adults

Closer cooperation and collaboration will be established to better produce the forum devoted to educational issues on GRTS: Education Forum.

Improved Sector Management

The Department of State for Education, which had always been responsible for the management and coordination of education programmes and services in The Gambia was, with effect from 2007, divided into two Departments of State, namely the Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (DOSBSE) and the Department of State for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DOSHERST).

Under the new arrangement, DOSBSE will continue to be responsible for policy development, management and coordination in the basic and secondary education sub-sector. In spite of the separation, DOSBSE is still the largest employer of civil servants, numbering 7,689, which represents 39.8% of the civil service.¹⁸

In an attempt to improve the management of the sector, six directorates have been established at headquarters and six directorates at regional level, each headed by a director. While the headquarters directorates monitor and evaluate policy implementation across the system, the regional directorates are responsible for programme implementation at the regional level.

At another level of monitoring, two separate structures, namely the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Coordination Committee, have been established to formulate policy and monitor policy implementation respectively on the ground. Both committees comprise all the directors and are chaired by the Permanent Secretary with the Secretary of State serving as a member of the SMT only. In addition to the directors and the two deputy permanent secretaries, the Coordinating Committee is composed of key stakeholders in the education sector. These stakeholders include NGOs operating in the education sector, the GTU, WAEC, and the Gambia College.

In spite of the creation of these structures, the basic and secondary education sub-sector continues to be faced with challenges of managing its human and material resources to improve its performance. As indicated in the ESSP (2006 – 2015), the sector has a staff attrition rate of 3.86%, which is relatively low compared to other sectors and experiences undue delay in filling vacancies. It is also affected by weak capacity in collecting and analysing data as well as clearly defined functions linked to specific job titles and directorates.

The roles and functions of the different directorates have been defined quite generally and the division of responsibilities between the central and regional directorates is not sufficiently clear to avoid overlaps and to hold directorates accountable for their operations. One of the consequences of this is a situation where many managers find themselves implementing activities rather than managing or leading the process.

From a recently conducted review of DOSBSE's organization structure, the following has emerged:

¹⁸ July 2007 IFMIS payroll and quoted in the study "The Gambia Improving Civil Service Performance", February 2008. It must also be noted that the figure does not include staff in subvented institutions.

- Some of the functions that have been placed in the organization structure are not clearly defined.
- Some key functions and services do not have designated and dedicated organizational homes.
- The grouping of functions into directorates does not make sense for some of the functions
- The training functions in the department which should have one organizational home are currently being undertaken by several directorates.

In order to address these institutional weaknesses with a view to improving and optimizing the management of the sector, the process of introducing a performance management system (PMS) has been initiated and will be fully operational during the plan period. Job profiling software has been procured as part of the initial stages of the PMS.

A series of activities ranging from the development of the directorates to individual staff work plans have been carried out, all geared towards preparing the ground prior to the profiling exercise which has now been completed. In this regard, service level agreements will be signed. The system will not only clarify roles and responsibilities between directorates and hold them accountable for their operations, but will also have a system of rewarding good performance and sanctioning poor performance.

Objectives and Targets

The main objective of improving the management of the sector is to ensure effective and efficient delivery of education services. As part of the performance management system therefore, service level agreements (SLA) will be signed between the permanent secretary and the directors whilst each director will sign with each of the staff under him or her. These service level agreements will be based on the individual and directorate's work plan.

The specific objectives during the period therefore are to ensure that at least 75% of the sectoral objectives are achieved in time and within available resources and that there is at least 75% delivery against service level agreements for individuals and directorates.

Strategies (Including Targets at the Level of Implementation)

During the period of this plan, clearly defined functions for both regional and headquarters directorates will be established and, based on these clearly defined roles and responsibilities, each directorate will formulate annual work plans which will be further broken down into individual work plans for each of the directorate's staff.

The role of the office of the permanent secretary as well as the Projects Coordination Unit will also be clearly defined each with its own annual and individual work plans. Each of the work plans will have clearly defined targets and key performance indicators for all the activities in order to enhance performance monitoring.

While implementing these strategies to achieving the objectives and targets for improving the management of the sector, a result oriented sector performance monitoring and pro-poor financial planning and management will be given priority.

Results Oriented Sector Performance Monitoring/Review

To monitor the management performance of the sector, key results will be used and pursued, namely:

- A comprehensive policy agenda and framework developed and implemented
- Effective planning and management of the education sector
- Effective financial planning and management ensured
- Effective education, information and knowledge management system developed and implemented
- Effective planning, development and management of human resources ensured
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the education policy and strategic plan ensured

Pro-Poor Financial Planning and Management

Cognizance of the theme of the National Education Policy (2004 – 2015) which is ‘Rethinking Education for Poverty Reduction’, pro-poor financial planning and management will be the guiding principle in the sector in the utilization of the resources. To render the financial, planning and management of the pro-poor sector, a medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) for the education sector has been developed and is being implemented. The MTEF gives priority to budget expenditures that are pro-poor. Relevant financial management capacity will be built; an effective IFMIS will also be developed and implemented.

5

Indicative ESSP Framework (Recurrent and Capital Costs)

Basic Education

The GOTG is committed to upholding the right of every person to basic education, regardless of gender, age, religion or disability. Accordingly, basic education will be open to all. Learning at this level will be geared towards the holistic development of the individual for the positive realization of every person's full potential and aspirations.

ECD has become part of the basic education cycle, given the importance of the early years of development for children. The National Education Policy (2004 – 2015) acknowledges the importance of these early years, and DOSBSE has developed linkages with other government departments, NGOs, local government authorities and local committees to promote an integrated approach to ECD. The GOTG will support the expansion of the ECD system through the training of ECD facilitators and by facilitating the attachment of ECD facilities to lower basic schools. The objective is to increase access to ECD from 24% in 2007 to 43% in 2011.

After a successful synchronization of the official curriculum for the *madrassas*, after which those who accepted to teach it, were included in the official sector statistics, DOSBSE will continue to supply teachers of English to those *madrassas* using the synchronized curriculum.

The provision of adult literacy courses will continue to be outsourced according to stated policy. The capacity of the ANFEU will be built to facilitate monitoring and supervision of the literacy programme. The implementing CBOs and NGOs will also be built to enhance effective implementation.

More than 200 classrooms will be built annually whilst more than 2000 teachers will be trained at various levels to cater for the envisaged expansion at the basic level.

As low quality of education continues to be a challenge, the provision of a set of core textbooks on the basis of one to one which has already been achieved will be maintained. Selected supplementary readers will also be supplied, as well as library corner books for each classroom.

Secondary Education

New schools will be built especially in under-served areas. The policy is that every region should have at least two senior secondary schools. The number of science labs in existing and new schools will be increased.

One of the main issues in secondary education in The Gambia is the lack of a teaching syllabus. Thus teaching at this level has always been dictated by the examination syllabus. The teaching syllabus will be developed together with relevant textbooks.

In 2004 all government schools were provided with computer labs. Private schools were also encouraged to introduce computer education. In this programme the schools will be appropriate simulation packages and other relevant computer-assisted technologies. Computer education will also be part of the curriculum.

The scholarship programme for girls will be continued in order to help attain gender parity at the secondary level. Currently foreign teachers form more than 70% at this level. The aim is to train more than 300 Gambians to teach at this level. More incentives will be introduced to help retain mathematics and science teachers. The proportion of Gambian teachers will be increased, with particular emphasis on female teachers.

Higher Education

The main outcome in higher education is the integration of the tertiary institutions into the University of the Gambia. With the UTG offering all degree programmes in The Gambia, the MDI, GTTI and Gambia College will continue to offer certificate level programmes. After the completion of the design of the University campus, construction of the core buildings will most likely commence during this period. The UTG will continue to use both part-time and expatriate staff.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

During the policy period, the GOTG will institutionalize accredited post-basic training programmes such as apprenticeship and on-the-job vocational and technical training. The existing vocational/skills centres at the district/regional levels and those in the rural areas will be further developed to deliver such skills development programmes.

The Gambia Skills Qualification Framework with its registered and employer-driven qualifications and standards, to be delivered by registered and accredited training providers, will contribute greatly to improved quality in TVET. Priorities in training will be determined by the outcomes of labour market research, as presently developed by the National Training Authority.

Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance Programme aims at improving the learning outcomes in Grades 1 – 12 through the improvement of school management, the establishment of an effective integrated quality assurance system based on a National Qualifications Framework (NQF), curriculum development, adequate supply of teaching and learning materials and the establishment of an efficient and effective quality monitoring system at all levels of the sector.

The National Assessment Test (NAT) will be institutionalized starting in 2008. All students in Grades 3 and 5 will be required to take the test in English, mathematics and integrated studies. According to the latest NAT, the following results (in percentages) have been recorded:

Table 9: 2008 National Assessment Test Results

Subjects	Grade 3				Grade 5			
	Mastery		Pass		Mastery		Pass	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
English	2.83	3.34	19.69	20.63	6.45	5.86	31.7	27.32
Mathematics	0.78	0.75	18.06	17.96	0.49	0.51	12.94	10.95
Integrated Studies ¹⁹	2.32	2.14	14.84	14.65				
Social and Environmental Studies (SES)					2.94	1.93	31.19	25.49
Science					0.91	0.63	19.4	16.11

Source: National Assessment Test Results – WAEC, 2008

A quality assurance framework will be developed. This will include school level monitoring, monitoring at the cluster and national levels.

Sector Management

Led by the Planning, Policy Analysis and Budgeting Directorate, a committee will be set up to develop and review policies. The development of sub-sector policies will also be institutionalized. The SWAp will be developed to ensure predictability of funding and avoid duplication or overlapping of donor interventions. The SMT and CCM will continue to monitor both the policy and implementation of the sector programmes.

An institutional assessment will be carried out with a view to implementing a functional organogram that is aligned to objectives. A system of operational planning will be developed and implemented at all levels, from headquarters to the schools.

DOSBSE's management information system (EMIS) will be linked to IFMIS being implemented at DOSFEA. The link will improve the management of the payroll system which will enhance efficiency. The management of budgets will also be decentralised from the office of the permanent secretary.

With the national decentralization process, the capacity of local authorities will be developed to facilitate better financial management of public resources. EMIS will be strengthened to improve access to relevant and timely data for decision-making. Information technology solutions will be

¹⁹ Combines the science and SES syllabuses into one subject as part of the revised curriculum.

sought to improve communication and information sharing among decision-makers. Strategies will include the maintenance of Internet and Intranet solutions.

A system of proper management of resources will be developed and maintained. An identification and indexing system will be developed and movements recorded accordingly. The human resources of the sector will be enhanced through the development of an HR policy. With the development of a staff appraisal system, incentives will be created to motivate staff to perform at a consistently high level.

Government policy is to shift from the monitoring of compliance towards supporting schools and teachers. A new monitoring and evaluation system will be developed, tested and reviewed before being submitted to sector management for approval, followed by a roll-out throughout the system.

6

Financial Framework for the ESSP (Cost Projections and Funding)

The financial framework for the medium term ESSP is based on cost projections from the financial model and the investment programme, both developed by the sector team with technical assistance from the World Bank.

As highlighted under the sector management section, the education sector is divided into two departments of state, one for basic and secondary education and the other for higher education. Whereas the financial model captures all public expenditures in both departments of state as reflected in the budget, the financial framework of the investment programme is limited to basic and secondary education and only includes those activities undertaken by the higher education institutions that have a direct bearing on basic and secondary education.

It should be stated that the ESSP (2006 – 2015) captured activities for the tertiary sub-sector including vocational and technical education, However, the new department of state has received approval from Cabinet to revise or carve out its sub-sector policy and it is assumed that its strategic or medium-term activities would have to be predicated on the dictates of the new policy; hence its exclusion from this plan.

Country Context

The Gambia has an average per capita income of US\$420 (2007). It ranks 155 out of the 177 countries in the 2007 Human Development Index. The poverty “head count” is 58 per cent, with higher pockets of poverty in the rural communities. The economy has a small internal market and lacks diversification. Tourism is the motor of the economy, earning most of the foreign exchange. Agriculture accounts for a third of GDP and 70 per cent of employment. Groundnuts are the main crop historically but the production is hampered by a weak extension service, logistical difficulties and the absence of adequate quality control, which limits exports to Europe, their main destination. The Gambia’s liberal trade policies and its good working port make it a growing sub-regional re-export hub, serving mainly Mali, Guinea Conakry and Guinea Bissau.

In the last five years, substantial gains have been achieved in education and health service delivery, two key “pillars” of the PRSP. In education, the MDGs are within reach. The main challenge is to improve the quality of instruction and major initiatives are under way, which FTI is supporting government efforts.

In recent years, the economy has grown steadily due to the stable macroeconomic environment, averaging 5 per cent real GDP per annum.²⁰ Tourism, related construction and communications have been the main drivers of growth, supported by strong Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Average inflation has declined for a high 17 per cent in 2003 to 2.6 per cent in 2006, the result of fiscal discipline and reduced government domestic borrowing.

However, world economic conditions have impacted the cost of imports, notably food, and inflation rose to 5.6 per cent in 2007 and 2008. Tight monetary policy, a robust flow of remittances and lower debt service have all worked to constrain inflationary pressures. With regard to food, government progressively reduced the sales tax on rice to zero in early 2008.

Tight fiscal policy has kept the fiscal balance at an average of 5.7 per cent of GDP over the last four years, down from a high 7.6 per cent to a modest surplus in 2008. Domestic debt has also been controlled. With HIPIC completion point approval in late 2007, external obligations have fallen from 133 per cent of GDP to 50 per cent and annual payments have declined to less than one per cent (December 2008).

These achievements in macroeconomic management have been backstopped by reforms in public finance management and Central Bank operations, notably the legal framework and information systems for financial management and procurement, together with measures to improve revenue collection. Domestic revenue performance is expected to reach 21 per cent of GDP, one of the best performances worldwide.

Government expenditures have been reined in but there is recognition that low salaries and pensions are weakening motivation in the public service. Government is taking urgent measures, assisted by the AFDB and the World Bank, to introduce efficiency measures in the civil service while increasing salaries, linked to performance. Government also recognizes that operations and maintenance expenditures, notably inputs to education service delivery, must be increased as part of the effort to raise quality.

The economy still faces risks. These include: failure to maintain macroeconomic stability in the face of declining world economic conditions, decline in tourism due to constrained discretionary spending in Europe and to the price of fuel and continuing food price pressures.

Governance

DOSBSE has taken a positive stance on governance. In the light of the job satisfaction survey (2006) which assessed governance issues, DOSBSE has implemented an array of measures designed to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of service delivery. These include:

- Reviewing the human resource data base, linked to pay-roll and embedded in the Secretary of State for Finance and Economic Affairs' *Integrated Financial Management System* (IFMIS).

²⁰ IMF figures estimate 6.5% growth rate

- Designing a new performance-based career advancement system (implemented in 2008 for over 400 senior staff)
- Rolling out a cadre of “cluster monitors” assigned to monitor school operations, including teacher attendance
- Involving local communities in the oversight of their schools, with regard to service delivery and security

DOSBSE also plans to conduct a public expenditure review in 2010 which is expected to lead to the institutionalization of regular public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS). Financial management and procurement, significantly strengthened under IDA-financed sector-wide projects, get “good marks” and have led to efficient implementation, with a resulting high disbursement rate. Audits of external aid to the sector have been fully satisfactory, including the audit of the first FTI allocation. DOSBSE’s strong absorptive capacity with regard to external aid stands out as a model for other sectors. Finally, the proposed public sector reform grant by IDA (projected 2009) recognizes and aims to build on DOSBSE’s progress.

Macro-economic Assumptions

The framework is predicated on some macro-economic assumptions based on available data as shown in Table 10. An average real GDP growth rate of 5% is expected, of which total government expenditure would average 25.4% over the period. Meanwhile, population growth is projected to remain constant at 3% annually. Capital expenditure as a percentage of GDP is projected to grow at an annual average of 9.7%.

Table 10: Macro-economic Data Assumptions /Projections

(000 Dalasi)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Assumptions	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Projected Nominal GDP (000s)	14,248,000	16,007,000	17,900,000	20,017,000	22,226,000	24,620,000
Real Growth Rate of GDP (IMF Data)	6.5%	7.0%	6.5%	6.5%	6.0%	6.0%
Population Growth Rate		3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Total Government Expenditure as % of GDP	27.8%	27.2%	27.7%	23.2%	23.2%	23.2%
Capital Expenditure as % of GDP	8.9%	11.9%	9.7%	9.2%	9.2%	9.2%
TOTAL CURRENT EXPENDITURE AS % OF GDP	18.9%	15.3%	18.0%	14.1%	14.1%	14.1%

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

Education Financial Model

The financial model is derived/linked to the flow model in which the various indicators and their targets thereof have been determined by the sector based on modest acceptance of the quantum of resources that the sector can mobilize and indeed the broad policy objectives.

Table 11 shows some selected indicators by level over the period. Enrolment growth at the lower basic is expected to double over the period, while admission should increase from 90% in 2007

to 120% by 2011. Thus GER is projected to increase from 85% to 101% over the same period. Repetition and dropout rates are projected to average 5% over the medium term.

The flow model also assumes the classroom requirements based on set policy targets and indicators. The pupil per class, pupil per classroom and the percentage of double shifting by level are the indicators against which classroom requirements are determined. Average annual new classroom requirements are projected at 311 (including *madrassa* classroom needs); increasing from 222 in 2008 to 389 by 2011.

In terms of teacher requirements over the period, the flow model uses pupil per classroom, teacher per classroom and the attrition rates for both qualified and unqualified teachers as indicators/determinants. Repetition and promotion rates are estimated at 5% and 92% for PTC and 2.5% and 95% for HTC respectively at the Gambia College while attrition is assumed at 6% per annum for the public, *madrassas* and private schools over the period.

Against the backdrop of these targets and indicators in the flow model, the financial model establishes the cost of the policy options based on the unit cost of individual activities.

Table 11: Summary Indicators (Access & Flow) by Level

Lower Basic	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Enrolment	220,421	228,272	238,469	252,750	271,386	294,120
Annual Growth Rate		3.6%	4.5%	6.0%	7.4%	8.4%
Enrolment Government and Grant-Aided (%)	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Gross Admission Rate	90%	95%	101%	107%	113%	120%
Gross Enrolment Rate	85%	86%	88%	91%	95%	101%
Repetition Rate	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Dropout rate	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Dropout rate	10%	10%	9%	8%	8%	7%
Completion rate	70%	73%	72%	70%	70%	75%
Upper Basic	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Enrolment	66,956	69,547	74,255	79,823	83,481	86,138
Annual growth rate		3.9%	6.8%	7.5%	4.6%	3.2%
Enrolment Government and Grant-Aided (%)	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%
Transition Rate from Grade 6		90%	91%	91%	92%	92%
Gross Enrolment Rate	59%	60%	62%	64%	66%	66%
Gross Admission Rate	58%	63%	66%	66%	65%	65%
Repetition Rate	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Completion rate	56%	55%	53%	58%	62%	63%
Senior Secondary	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Enrolment	32,991	35,278	35,671	35,682	36,853	39,243
Annual growth rate		6.9%	1.1%	0.0%	3.3%	6.5%
Enrolment Government and Grant-Aided (%)	44%	44%	45%	45%	46%	46%
Transition Rate from Grade 9		52%	53%	54%	48%	44%
Gross Enrolment Rate	32%	33%	33%	31%	32%	33%
Repetition Rate	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Completion rate (=non-repeaters in s6/population aged 18 yrs)	27%	31%	31%	31%	30%	29%

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

Recurrent Expenditures

The National Education Policy (2004 – 2015) calls for private participation in the delivery of educational services. The model therefore projects private participation by level and function over the period based on the projected targets from the flow model.

Table 12: Total Recurrent Expenditure on Education by Share (Govt & Private)

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Recurrent Expenditure on Education	768,497	874,711	940,405	1,016,844
Government	303,534	322,467	342,897	366,787
Private	464,963	552,243	597,508	650,057
% Share				
Government	39.5%	36.9%	36.5%	36.1%
Private	60.5%	63.1%	63.5%	63.9%

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

There is a deliberate policy stride to involve private-sector participation in the delivery of educational services. Table 12 shows that private financing of recurrent expenditures in education exceeds public financing. Notwithstanding this, the huge share of private financing of recurrent education, the share of private enrolment is estimated at 20% and 12% for lower and upper basic schools respectively and 42% for the senior secondary level. This brings to bear the cost of education in the private and public schools to households, i.e. the cost burden of education on households. Private education at all levels (lower, upper and senior secondary) is more expensive than public cost.

Over the period, average share of government accounts for 37.2% of total recurrent expenditure on education, with the private sector expected to finance the remaining 62.8%. Appendix 1 shows the detailed breakdown by level and/or function and the proportion share of public and private financing. For all the three levels (lower basic, upper basic and senior secondary), government financing is less than private financing. Private share is highest at the lower basic level where it accounts for an average of 70.9%. It should, however, be noted that teacher training at Gambia College and administration (sector management) are fully financed from government (public) resources.

ESSP Investment Costs

The investment programme of the ESSP 2006 – 2015 and the MTP were developed using a World Bank package (Costab). Like the financial model, it assumes an inflation rate of 5.4% over the period and established unit costs and rates for various activities. The investments herein reflect the activities for the investment programme covering the medium term period for basic and secondary education, and include only those activities at the higher education sub-component with a direct bearing on basic and secondary education. The activities are in two broad categories, namely investment costs²¹ and recurrent costs.²²

²¹ Includes all capital items (civil works, goods and services) and training (workshops, long and short-term training)

²² Includes operational expenses (operations and maintenance) and scholarships

The investment programme is divided into five components (Table 13) with each component having a couple of result areas (Appendix 2). The basic education component accounts for 73.36% of total investments followed by secondary education with 15.05%. Quality assurance and sector management account for 1.41% and 8.86% respectively.

It should be stated that the quality assurance component does not include expenditures on quality inputs which are spread in the various other components such as basic education. Within the quality assurance component, the bulk of the investments are dedicated to “improved quality of teaching and learning” while sector management devotes 53.1% of its projected investment resources to “effective planning and management of the education sector” (Appendix 2).

Table 13: Share of Investment Programme by Component

Component	% Share
Basic Education	73.36
Lower Basic	74.23
Upper Basic	24.74
Adult Literacy	1.03
Secondary Education	15.05
Higher Education	1.32
Quality Assurance	1.41
Sector Management	8.86

Source: DOSBSE Simulation Model 2008

The flow model projects an average annual construction of 311 classrooms over the period to cater for the required expansion and meet the additional 10,555 places in the public school system. Consequently, civil works including rehabilitation/ maintenance of existing facilities and furniture account for 45.8% of investments, of which 70% is on new classroom construction (Appendix 3). 5.7% of investments are targeted towards maintenance and rehabilitation of existing facilities. A maintenance manual has been developed and communities are being trained in minor maintenance works, supported with ‘seed money’ for these activities sequel to their training.

The total investment programme comprises capital investments (80.6%) and associated recurrent expenditures (19.4%). The recurrent expenses for the investment programme are for operational costs, grants to schools and scholarship awards.

Financing of Investment Programme

The Gambian economy has witnessed the appreciation of its local currency against major foreign currencies over the last two years. Between April 2006 and April 2008, the dalasi has appreciated by 31.7% against the US dollar (from D28.4 to D19.4). This has had a severe impact on the dalasi equivalent of local currency expenditures for goods and services resulting in either scaling down of scope or postponement of some activities.

Against this background, and with no definitive indications of any further depreciation of the dalasi, the financial framework of the investment programme is structured to maintain the same level of activities without any expansion or increase in their nominal dalasi values thereby reflecting an increase in the foreign currency equivalent (in US \$) to cater for the appreciation.

Government commitment to the sector continues to be unwaveringly strong. However, due to economic constraints and external pressures, budgetary allocations to the sector have suffered significant drops in proportionate share over the past years.

DOSFEA has expressed its commitment to restoring the sector's share to a minimum of 20% by the end of the medium term. This has already been demonstrated in the allocations to the sector in the 2009 round of bilateral budget discussions, in which allocations to the education subsector increased from 14.4% (11.3% for basic and secondary education) in 2008 to 19.1% (16.2% for basic and secondary education) in 2009. This has been possible sequel to receipt of government's attainment of HIPC completion point and subsequent receipt of MDRI support. There is, therefore, a strong basis that this increase will be sustained over the medium term.

Table 14 shows the level of financing for the investment programme. It would be observed that government is funding 17.3% (14.3% and 3.0% for investments and recurrent costs respectively) whilst the donor partners are financing 31.4% and 10.3% respectively. The catalytic funding is projected at 15.4% of the overall programme cost (11.5% and 3.8% of investments and recurrent costs respectively). The funding gap thereof stands at 34.9% of investments and 6.2% of recurrent expenses, an overall funding gap of 41.1% of the programme cost.

Whereas the sector continues to feature prominently as a priority for government, its traditional partners notably the ADB and EC/EU, are shifting support to the infrastructure subsector over the medium term. The EC-funded project closed in December 2007 whilst the ADB project closes in June 2009. The DFID-funded BESPOR project was extended to 2010 but without additional resources.

Other donors with ongoing projects in the sector include IDB, BADEA, the French Cooperation, UNFPA, WFP and UNICEF. The sector, therefore, is undoubtedly becoming a donor orphan and this explains the heavy reliance of the sector on the catalytic fund resources over the past three years and its projected share of financing over the medium term.

Table 14: Financing of Investment Programme by Financier and % Share

(US\$ '000)	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total	% share	Overall % share
I. Investment Costs							
Government	889.0	13,180.1	7,414.5	7,730.9	29,214.4	17.7%	14.3%
PHRD Co-financing	953.4	2,711.1	698.9	472.8	4,836.2	2.9%	2.4%
IDA	338.9	5,539.7	2,632.5	1,284.3	9,795.5	5.9%	4.8%
FTI	1,325.2	7,905.5	6,949.3	7,438.6	23,618.6	14.3%	11.5%
Other Donors	9,627.9	11,936.7	2,231.1	2,222.5	6,018.2	15.8%	12.7%
FUNDING GAP	474.7	20,836.2	20,203.4	29,983.9	71,498.3	43.3%	34.9%
Total Investment Costs	13,609.2	62,109.4	40,129.7	49,133.0	164,981.3	80.6%	80.6%
II. Recurrent Costs							
Government	638.2	1,721.9	1,820.2	1,918.5	6,098.9	15.4%	3.0%
IDA	512.1	1,036.9	1,092.9	1,164.2	3,806.3	9.6%	1.9%
FTI	1,285.1	1,990.5	2,190.5	2,350.9	7,817.0	19.7%	3.8%
Other Donors	970.9	2,677.4	2,788.8	2,939.3	9,376.5	23.6%	4.6%
FUNDING GAP	1,739.4	2,977.1	3,814.6	4,067.6	12,598.8	31.7%	6.2%

Total Recurrent Costs	5,145.7	10,403.9	11,707.1	12,440.6	39,697.4	19.4%	19.4%
Overall Programme Costs	18,754.9	72,513.3	51,836.8	61,573.7	204,678.7		

Source: DOSBSE Financial Model and Investment Programme

Financial Model and ESSP Investment Programme

The combined expenditure projections from the financial model and the investment programme are shown in Table 15 by recurrent and investment expenditure over the period.

Whereas figures for 2008 in Table 15 are budget estimates, the other years are projects from the model and the investment programme. As stated earlier, the increase in government budgetary allocations to the sector in the 2009 budget estimates, the additional resources to government resulting from the HIPIC and MDRI funds account for the increase from 2008 to 2009 and beyond.

Table 15: Total Government Recurrent and Investment Expenditure by Function and share ('000GMD)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Average	% Share
Govt Recurrent Expenditure	303,534	322,467	342,897	366,787	333,921	65.4%
Lower Basic	130,653	138,978	150,399	164,384	146,103	28.6%
Upper Basic	88,223	93,790	96,881	98,611	94,376	18.5%
Senior Secondary	28,727	29,236	30,633	33,055	30,413	6.0%
Teacher Training	8,130	8,173	9,567	11,669	9,385	1.8%
Higher Education	5,400	7,200	7,200	7,200	6,750	1.3%
Administration/Sector Management	42,401	45,090	48,218	51,868	46,894	9.2%
Govt Investment Expenditure	30,543	298,040	184,694	192,988	176,566	34.6%
Investment Costs	17,780	263,601	148,290	154,618	146,072	28.6%
Recurrent Costs	12,763	34,439	36,405	38,371	30,494	6.0%
Total Govt Expenditure on Education	334,077	620,508	527,591	559,776	510,488	

Source: DOSBSE Financial Model and Investment

It would be observed (Table 15) that government spends 65.4% and 34.6% on recurrent and investment expenditures respectively.

Sector Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is essential in tracking the progress of the agreed set of targets to verify whether they have been achieved according to an established time frame. In order to ensure that an M&E system is fully functional, DOSBSE will ensure that monitoring and tracking reports are produced and circulated on time to all concerned parties for possible action. It is expected that as follow-ups to the reports, amendments or re-evaluations of the situation would be considered while targets, objectives and time frames would be redefined to address the realities on the ground.

7.1 Key Performance Indicators

The following indicators and targets will be monitored on a regular basis. The indicators vary from access and completion, education quality and student performance, teacher requirements to service delivery and resource mobilization. The indicators will enable the sector to monitor progress towards achieving the set targets. Selected performance targets are defined in the sector performance matrix showing key milestones over the period 1998-2007 (*See Appendix 4*)

7.2 Organization

The monitoring process of this MTP term is designed to strengthen linkages with broader governance and accountability strategy. Therefore DOSBSE will provide a range of more specific reports to various stakeholders. The organization of the ESP monitoring system will be based on the following levels of responsibility:

Senior Management Team: Chaired by the SOS and comprising the directors, the Permanent Secretary and the two Deputy Permanent Secretaries, the Project Manager and the Principal Accountant. The SMT will meet monthly.

Coordinating Committee Team: Chaired by the Permanent Secretary and comprising all the directors, Principal Education Officers, Managers/Deputy Managers and Deputy Permanent Secretaries. The CCM will meet bimonthly on a rotational basis.

Sector Implementation Monitoring: Cluster monitors at the Regional Education Directorates, School Management Committee and the Regional Teacher Unions and EFA Committees and other management structures at the school levels.

Programme Progress Monitoring: Regional Education Directorates, Headquarters Directorates, the PCU and the specialized units of the Basic and Secondary Education Directorate.

Sector Performance Monitoring: Planning Directorate; In-Country Donor Meeting and the Joint Donor Missions.

Programme Impact Monitoring: Planning Directorate and PCU in collaboration with individual units and other sector supported projects.

System Performance Management: Human Resources and Development Directorate and the Planning Directorate.

DOSBSE is responsible for policy development, management and coordination of basic and secondary education in The Gambia. The department will guide the development of the education sector during the implementation period of this MTP and beyond.

The Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education is responsible for leadership in the sector and for policy oversight. The Permanent Secretary is the chief executive and adviser to the SOS and provides oversight for strategic plan activities. There are two Deputy Permanent Secretaries, one of whom assists the Permanent Secretary in administrative and financial management functions, whilst the other assists in the coordination of policy implementation.

DOSBSE will maintain professional directorates, each headed by a director who will advise the Permanent Secretary on technical and professional matters relating to their area of expertise and responsibility. These directorates are:

1. Planning
2. Human Resources
3. Basic and Secondary Education
4. Standards and Quality Assurance
5. Curriculum Research, Evaluation and Development
6. Science and Technology Education

In addition there are six regional directorates, each headed by a regional director. The regional directorates, in the interim, are answerable to the Permanent Secretary pending the handover of the education service to the municipal/area councils. They will continue to be engaged in education policy dialogue and take full responsibility for the planning and implementation of educational programmes in the regions.

7.3 Management

The SMT has the overall policy directive and responsibility for ensuring the effective development, execution and achievement of the set objectives, including:

- Monitoring progress and achievement
- Overseeing the implementation of programmes/activities
- Coordinating inputs from external partners and the use of external financing
- Identifying financing gaps in programmes and implementation
- Reviewing progress and financial reports

The SMT will delegate the implementation activities of the strategic plan to the relevant directorates, including the PCU, based on individual mandates prescribed in the programme area logical frameworks and professional competence. The directorates will, on the basis of the service level agreements drawn up and signed with the Permanent Secretary, be tasked with

implementation activities based on agreed work plans and budgetary allocation. The annual plans will form the basis of the service level agreements.

Development projects agreed with financial institutions will continue to be delegated to the PCU for fiduciary responsibilities, including procurement and financial management, as well as construction supervision, whereas sub-activities under these projects shall be implemented by line directorates and units with the relevant competency, as detailed in the various programme area activities.

To successfully create and sustain a vibrant education sector for the delivery of improved access to, and quality of, education, it will be necessary to harmonize all projects and activities within the implementation of the strategic plan. It will be essential to establish the commitment of all the major donors to the coordination, cooperation and harmonization of their inputs and working arrangements among themselves and with the GOTG, to the fullest extent possible, in the true spirit of a SWAp.

The duplication of donor activities and the continuation of separate and uncoordinated reporting requirements and missions place considerable stress on the system. Therefore the creation of a donor coordinator position at the PCU during the implementation period will help bring about a better and more focused donor coordination mechanism.

7.4 Information Systems

DOSBSE has already established an effective and functional EMIS and regularly organizes annual training in data collection and analysis for relevant staff at the various levels. The training in data collection is decentralized at the regional level and is included in the cluster monitors' official TOR and mandates. A further step in the decentralization of the data collection process is the establishment of the regional planners' positions with the overall mandate of coordinating planning and policy issues at the regional levels.

As part of their functions they are expected to coordinate the data collection exercises, collate, analyse and disseminate education statistics reports as well as provide feedback to both schools and regional administrators. Data will be collected on education provision, access, gender issues, education quality and learning outcomes as well as on the overall progress towards set goals and targets. As part of the information system monthly TV and radio phone-in programmes are institutionalized to enable the general public to interact with policy-makers and programme implementers.

Information sharing will not be limited to just the implementers but will include the public at large. In this regard DOSBSE will ensure that its web page www.edugambia.gm is regularly updated to ensure timely dissemination of accurate data. This process will ensure that accurate and comprehensive information can freely pass up and down the chains of communication on a much more timely and reliable way.

DOSBSE's EMIS will be linked to the IFMIS being implemented at DOSFEA. The link will improve the management of the payroll system which will enhance efficiency. Management of budgets will also be decentralized from the office of the Permanent Secretary. With the national decentralization process, the capacity of local authorities will be developed to facilitate better financial management of public resources.

EMIS will be strengthened to improve access to relevant and timely data for decision-making. Information technology solutions will be sought to improve communication and information sharing among decision-makers. Strategies will include the maintenance of Internet and Intranet solutions.

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Recurrent Expenditures on Education by Function & Source of Financing

	Nominal Share					% Share				
	2008	2009	2010	2011		2008	2009	2010	2011	Ave
Lower Basic	415,548	486,249	528,649	581,146		54.1%	55.6%	56.2%	57.2%	55.9%
Public	130,653	138,978	150,399	164,384		31.4%	28.6%	28.4%	28.3%	29.1%
Private	284,895	347,271	378,251	416,762		68.6%	71.4%	71.6%	71.7%	70.9%
Upper Basic	215,478	244,605	256,848	265,389		28.0%	28.0%	27.3%	26.1%	27.3%
Public	88,223	93,790	96,881	98,611		40.9%	38.3%	37.7%	37.2%	38.4%
Private	127,255	150,815	159,967	166,778		59.1%	61.7%	62.3%	62.8%	61.6%
Senior Secondary	81,540	83,394	89,923	99,572		10.6%	9.5%	9.6%	9.8%	9.8%
Public	28,727	29,236	30,633	33,055		35.2%	35.1%	34.1%	33.2%	34.3%
Private	52,813	54,157	59,291	66,516		64.8%	64.9%	65.9%	66.8%	65.7%
Teacher Training	8,130	8,173	9,567	11,669		1.1%	0.9%	1.0%	1.1%	1.0%
Public	8,130	8,173	9,567	11,669		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Private	-	-	-	-		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Higher Education	5,400	7,200	7,200	7,200		0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Public	5,400	7,200	7,200	7,200		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Private	-	-	-	-		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Administration/Sector Management	42,401	45,090	48,218	51,868		5.5%	5.2%	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%
Public	42,401	45,090	48,218	51,868		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Private	-	-	-	-		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total Education Recurrent Expenditure	768,497	874,711	940,405	1,016,844						
Public	303,534	322,467	342,897	366,787		39.5%	36.9%	36.5%	36.1%	37.1%
Private	464,963	552,243	597,508	650,057		60.5%	63.1%	63.5%	63.9%	62.9%

Appendix 2: Investment Programme by Component, Result Area and Share (\$'000 & %)

	Cost (US\$ '000)	% of Total
A. Basic Education		
1. School environment conducive for teaching and learning	11,653.6	5.69%
2. Improved quality of teaching	11,163.2	5.45%
3. Increased learning opportunities in basic education	77,641.6	37.93%
4. Adequate quality and quantity of teaching and learning materials	23,872.1	11.66%
5. Relevant and up to date curriculum for BE available	6,598.1	3.22%
6. Children adequately prepared for teaching and learning	15,497.7	7.57%
7. Improved management of schools	2,184.2	1.07%
8. Access to adults and non-formal education	1,549.3	0.76%
Subtotal - Basic Education	150,159.7	73.36%
B. Secondary Education		
1. Improved availability and quality of teaching and learning materials and facilities	5,834.9	2.85%
2. Gender parity achieved in senior secondary schools	8,218.1	4.02%
3. Improved access to secondary education	15,311.9	7.48%
4. Improved quality of teaching and learning in senior secondary schools	830.2	0.41%
5. Improved management of secondary schools	236.5	0.12%
6. Improved conditions of service for teachers in senior secondary schools	371.0	0.18%
Subtotal - Secondary Education	30,802.7	15.05%
C. Higher Education		
1. Adherence to standards of professionalism	75.5	0.04%
2. Improved management in higher education institutions	140.0	0.07%
3. Highly qualified and motivated staff	1,114.7	0.54%
4. Improved higher education facilities	176.2	0.09%
5. Effective financial planning and management	146.3	0.07%
6. Improved relevant quality education in higher education institutions	801.6	0.39%
7. Improved access to higher education institutions	239.8	0.12%
Subtotal - Higher Education	2,694.1	1.32%
E. Quality Assurance		
1. Effective and efficient school management	326.3	0.16%
2. Improved quality of teaching and learning	1,860.9	0.91%
3. Availability of adequate relevant teaching and learning materials	428.9	0.21%
4. Improved quality and quantity infrastructure in all schools	63.5	0.03%
5. Access to quality schooling of all levels in all regions ensured	212.7	0.10%
Subtotal - Quality Assurance	2,892.2	1.41%
F. Sector Management		
1. Effective planning and management of the education sector	9,061.5	4.43%
2. Effective financial planning and management ensured	444.9	0.22%
3. A comprehensive policy agenda and framework developed and implemented	158.4	0.08%

4. Effective education information and knowledge management system developed and implemented	1,621.3	0.79%
5. Effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation	1,862.5	0.91%
6. Effective application and use of resources ensured	1,780.0	0.87%
7. Effective planning, development and management of human resources ensured	3,201.2	1.56%
Subtotal - Sector Management	18,129.9	8.86%
Total PROGRAMME COSTS	204,678.7	100.00%

Appendix 3: Investment by Expenditure Type and Share

		Cost (\$'000)	% Share
I. Investment Costs			
A. Civil Works			
	1. New construction	82,082.4	40.1%
	2. Rehabilitation	11,748.6	5.7%
Subtotal - Civil Works		93,830.9	45.8%
B. Goods			
	1. Equipment		
	Classroom furniture	8,700.1	4.3%
	Vehicles	150.6	0.1%
	Other equipment	6,622.5	3.2%
	Subtotal – Equipment	15,473.2	7.6%
	3. Instructional materials	30,214.3	14.8%
Subtotal – Goods		45,687.5	22.3%
C. Services			
	1. Consultancy Services		
	International consultancy services	4,292.3	2.1%
	National consultancy services	4,581.7	2.2%
	Subtotal -Consultancy Services	8,874.1	4.3%
	2. Training	10,216.8	5.0%
	3. Workshops and meetings	5,052.1	2.5%
	4. Support to literacy	1,020.1	0.5%
Subtotal – Services		25,163.1	12.3%
D. Higher education research fund grant		299.7	0.1%
Total - Investment Costs		164,981.3	80.6%
II. Recurrent Costs			
A. Operating costs		16,909.3	8.3%
B. School grants		17,288.0	8.4%
C. Scholarships		5,500.1	2.7%
Total -Recurrent Costs		39,697.4	19.4%
Total - Investment Costs		204,678.7	

Appendix 4: Summary Indicators (Baseline and Projections)

Lower Basic	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Enrolment	220,421	228,272	238,469	252,750	271,386	294,120
Annual Growth Rate		3.6%	4.5%	6.0%	7.4%	8.4%
Enrolment Government and Grant-Aided (%)	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
Gross Admission Rate (new entrants/population aged 7 yrs)	90%	95%	101%	107%	113%	120%
Gross Enrolment Rate (=total primary enrolment/population aged 7-12yrs)	85%	86%	88%	91%	95%	101%
Repetition Rate (=total repeaters year t /total enrolment year t-1)	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Dropout rate (grade 1-5) (=total dropouts year t /total enrolment year t-1)	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Dropout rate (grade 6) (=total dropouts year t /total enrolment year t-1)	10%	10%	9%	8%	8%	7%
Completion rate (=p6 non-repeaters/population aged 12yrs)	70%	73%	72%	70%	70%	75%
Upper Basic						
Total Enrolment	66,956	69,547	74,255	79,823	83,481	86,138
Annual growth rate		3.9%	6.8%	7.5%	4.6%	3.2%
Enrolment Government and Grant-Aided (%)	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%
Transition Rate from Grade 6 (=new entrants grade 7 year t+1 /p6 non repeaters year t)		90%	91%	91%	92%	92%
Transition Rate from Grade 6 (=new entrants grade 7 year t+1/p6 enrollment year t)		88%	88%	89%	89%	90%
Gross Enrolment Rate (=total enrolment /population aged 13-15 yrs)	59%	60%	62%	64%	66%	66%
Gross Admission Rate (=new entrants in grade 7/population aged 13 yrs)	58%	63%	66%	66%	65%	65%
Repetition Rate (=total repeaters year t /total enrolment year t-1)	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Completion rate (=non-repeaters in grade 9/population aged 15 yrs)	56%	55%	53%	58%	62%	63%
Senior Secondary						
Total Enrolment	32,991	35,278	35,671	35,682	36,853	39,243
Annual growth rate		6.9%	1.1%	0.0%	3.3%	6.5%
Enrolment Government and Grant-Aided (%)	44%	44%	45%	45%	46%	46%
Transition Rate from Grade 9 (=new entrants grade 10 year t+1 /g9 non repeaters year t)		52%	53%	54%	48%	44%
Transition Rate from Grade 9 (=new entrants grade 10 year t+1/g9 enrollment year t)		50%	52%	53%	47%	43%
Gross Enrolment Rate (=total enrolment in/population aged 16-18 yrs)	32%	33%	33%	31%	32%	33%
Gross Admission Rate (=new entrants in grade10/population aged 16 yrs)	33%	32%	31%	30%	33%	35%
Repetition Rate (=total repeaters year t /total enrolment year t-1)	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Completion rate (=non-repeaters in grade 12/population aged 18 yrs)	27%	31%	31%	31%	30%	29%

Appendix 5: Sector SWOT Analysis

Priorities	Key issues	Threats	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -increase ECD GER, number of model centres and admission rate and maintain promotion rate -Increase Transition Rate from LBS to UBS and Maintaining it at the Secondary level-Lower basic – increasing NER, -Upper Basic Senior secondary -Increasing demand for education - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -increase in poverty levels and regional disparities -High population growth -Domestic chores and other family/social activities overriding educational initiatives - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programming and implementation of ECD policy -Sexual Harassment Policy -ECD training programme for ECD facilitators -Partnership and collaboration among relevant sectors (e.g., through Multi-sectoral Working Group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Absence of reliable data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expanded Vision of Basic Education to cover ECD and Non Formal -Impetus accorded to ECD -Partnership with proprietors of madrassas and private schools -media programmes (e.g., the televised forum on education) - Existence of a Framework agreement with a reputable NGO on Classroom/school construction
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Regional disparities -Safe environment -Equitable supply of teachers across regions -Increasing female qualified teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Low participation of regional administrations in education investment -Staff attrition -Stalling the hardship allowance for teachers -Low enrolment of female student-teachers at GC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child-friendly school initiative -Incentive and motivation packages for teachers -Hardship allowance for teachers -Support for female students in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -inequitable economic base across Local Administrative Authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Local Government Act -Strategies to attract teachers to underserved areas (Hardship Allowances & Staff quarters) -Bonding procedures

Priorities	Key issues	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Meeting teacher supply requirements -Improved quality of teaching and learning approaches -Instituting a functional quality assurance system - Poor Performance of Students in the EGRA and NAT - Increase Instructional Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cluster monitoring system -Management manual for schools -Quality Assurance Framework -Procurement policy of supplementary readers -Whole School Development initiative - Provision of free textbooks to grades 1-9 students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Criteria for entry to the Gambia College (GC) -Inability to attract qualified lecturers for GC - Absence of the implementation of the flexible school calendar at the school level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -National coverage of the National Assessment Test for Grades 3 and 5 -Whole School Development initiative - Use of the EGRA and NAT results to improve teaching and learning - The existence of the PTC Extension Program - Introduction and use of the flexible school calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Quality of teacher education programmes -Disposition of teachers vis-à-vis level of motivation, commitment, etc. -Social instability
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reforming the curriculum respond to national and stakeholder needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Policy of procuring supplementary material by Gambian writers -Curriculum audit and review conducted Recent surge in provision of instructional materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inadequate institutional capacity at the Curriculum, Research and Evaluation and Development Directorate -Lack of articulation between levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Proposed intervention through the Basic Education for Africa Programme (BEAP) -Proposed curriculum reform -Proposed development of syllabuses for senior secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ineffective delivery and non-coverage of syllabuses -Low institutional capacity for curriculum development -Absence of research for curriculum reviews -Regular feedback system on curriculum

Priorities	Key issues	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Efficiency	-Increasing completion rates -Judicious use of resources	-Double-shift and multi-grade systems -NAT and policy on repetition	Untrained school managers	Certificate programme on school management for Heads of school at the University of The Gambia -Introduction of the Performance Management System	-Repetition and dropout Waste
Resourcing	-Donor coordination -Strengthening partnerships -Increasing government budget allocation to education	-Increased allocation government budget FTI interventions	-Withdrawal of key partners from supporting education programmes in The Gambia - e.g., ADB -non-implementation of the MTEF	-Political will -Sustained support from committed partners (e.g., IDA, UNICEF, WFP, DFID, UNFPA, French Cooperation)	-Negative economic trends globally (recession) -Criteria used for proportioning support to countries -Cumbersome financial management system/procedures
Management and Governance of Education	-Empowerment of educational management and governance structures	-Political will	Absence of effective Boards of Governors for schools	-Instituting the PMS The BOARDS of -Governors -The Act Local Government Act on decentralization -Capacity building activities undertaken by the DoSBSE -Propose civil service reform	-Attrition at the middle-level management cadre