

OUR MANIFESTO

THE ROAD TO 2021



**UNITED
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**JUSTICE, PEACE
PROGRESS**



FOREWARD

As we forge ahead to the "Road to 2021", we must remember that the forthcoming elections will be a referendum on a President who dashed the great hope reposed in him only to turn around and replace their trust and confidence with greed, incompetence and avarice. This election is also about fundamental choices between contrasting visions of what our people want and deserve on the one hand and an unrelenting effort by a failed president to regenerate the very system, practices and orientation that Gambians rejected in 2016.

The choice before us as a nation at a crossroads and our task is to offer a solid, clear and comprehensive road map that marks a discernible departure from the current lethargy and failure we have been saddled with for the last four years.

To this end, I am very pleased to unveil a long list of high priority areas that forms the basis of our manifesto – an ambitious agenda for moving The Gambia forward from 2022 – 2026.

These critical areas are essential for the kind of economic and social safety nets that can uplift our people while at the same time consolidating democracy.

Our party's manifesto is also designed to prepare our very youthful population for future that is full of opportunities and a nation that is free, democratic and at peace with itself. Learn about our very clear vision for positively transforming The Gambia and Gambians. We hope to earn or win your support for the United Democratic Party.

Thank you. God bless you. God Bless The Gambia



Ousainu A.N.M Darboe
Secretary General & Party Leader



THE ROAD TO 2021

SECTOR POLICIES

1. Youth Employment and Empowerment.
2. Education and Skills Training.
3. Nutrition, Agriculture and Food Security.
4. Public Health Security and Social Protection.
5. Energy and Digital Infrastructure.
6. Information and Communications Technology.
7. Extractive Industries.
8. Rule of Law, Justice and Democratic Government.
9. Environment, Fisheries and Forestry.
10. Foreign Policy.
11. National Security Services.
12. Finance and the Economy.
13. Tourism and the Culture.
14. Civil Service and State-Owned Enterprises Reforms .
15. Devolution of Powers and Decentralisation.
16. Gender and Women's Affairs.

We represent all segments of the Gambian Society and operate an open-door policy on membership.

The UDP has chapters across the globe including in the United Kingdom, Mainland Europe, the Middle East, across Africa, and the United States of America

UNITED
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PARTY

The UDP believes that our youth are our hope. To enhance rapid economic growth in this county, our youth must be empowered and capacitated actively and meaningfully to participate in the economy and labour market. Our labour market will be expanded through Self-employment. Agricultural and ICT-led growth has the capacity to create jobs, raise productivity and open opportunities for increased trade and better living conditions. Our country should be a productive and self-sustaining economy with value addition to agriculture, affording jobs and dignified lives. Our youth are a vulnerable population now. Government should create various opportunities for them to develop. Economic empowerment and capacity building initiatives (including entrepreneurship skills training) must be provided targeting youths wanting to have vocational and other skills for self-employment and for stimulating economic growth.-

The UDP aims to overturn the current situation. The development of our youth will be a central pillar of a UDP led Government. It will be a cross cutting theme across all sectors of society.

Our Commitment

We shall:

- Create a conducive environment; setting the right framework and facilitating collaboration with the private sector to ensure our youth obtain the right skills leading to their increased employability.
- Establish specialised skills centers through skills enhancement zones and provide facilities for trainers to enhance skills in technology, sports and entrepreneurship.
- Establish youth entrepreneurship funds and develop local commercial and business entities and establish Trade and Commerce Associations and treaties with partners and create trading posts for commodities in the country (Trade Hubs)
- Establish a policy of awarding 25% or more of government contracts and projects to youths and youth enterprises.



“The development of our youth will be a central pillar of a UDP led Government.”

- Establish Mandatory Youth Service Schemes after high school • Promote and protect local enterprises and industries and ensure government purchases locally produced materials to promote job growth. • Provide investments in agriculture, manufacturing and tourism and establish reforms aimed at empowering youth participation in them • Provide opportunities for women to engage in meaningful employment, with their employment rights fully protected under the law
- Create an enabling environment to ensure a culture of self-employment in which people in self-employment will be provided with support through business policies and the tax system



“The development of our youth will be a central pillar of a UDP led Government.”

- Support sports development as a medium of youth employment and empowerment.
- Provision of standard sports infrastructure throughout the country with adequate financing for all sports.
- Encourage Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in sports financing, creation and consolidation of strong national sporting bodies.
- Encourage transparency, accountability and probity in sports management with clearly defined institutional and legal frameworks.
- Encourage mass participation in sports as part of national health and wellness.
- Create an efficient and effective structure(s) to coordinate the implementation of sports policies and programs.

The Challenge

Education is essential to develop the human resources required to meet the desired needs of society. Standards at pre-primary, basic and secondary education continues to fall unabated and Gambian children are increasingly becoming ill-equipped to compete on a Global Level. The condition of physical facilities is deteriorating while classroom sizes continue to grow disproportionately. The polytechnics are characterized by ineffective training policies, disparities in training standards and disproportionate production of personnel without relevant and adequate skills. The University of the Gambia is yet to live up to its full potential.

The Potential

Every child needs quality basic education as a foundation. The existing centres can be reformed to ensure best experience. Series of youth training institutions in skills development shall be established across the country. Restructuring the curriculum offered as well as partnering with other stakeholders in the education sector, including organs of the national government and local communities, would improve standards across all levels.



The best way for job creation and better livelihoods is through skills development. Those skills are in AI and technology. We would ensure that every Gambian born after 2010 should be computer literate by 2026. Training will be modern and relevant to the National Plan. A UDP government will implement a two-pronged approach to revitalize the sector: a focus on creating a generation of job creators and training to deliver employable skills to match our needs and close the gap.

The Gambia's peaceful environment coupled with high levels of expertise available in the diaspora means that our higher education sector is untapped. A UDP government will seek to establish an education hub in the sub region for all major disciplines. Our graduates shall be available to the global job market.

Our Position

UDP believes that education is a right for every child, youth or adult. It further believes that access to quality relevant education and training will catalyze the realization of several other human rights and the transformation of human lives and livelihoods. The Party will therefore pursue a life-long education and training agenda that will be based on the needs of all sectors of Gambian society and the economy. Continuing education and training will be the foundation for the UDP's socio economic transformation and development agenda. The Party's analysis of the Education Sector reveals fundamental weaknesses. Many children and adolescents such as children with disabilities, children from low-income households, children from deprived rural and urban locations, and adolescent girls and boys are often excluded from access to quality education. UDP will implement an education equalization programme which will maximize opportunities for marginalized and vulnerable children, adolescents and youth to access education and training.



UDP believes that The Gambia's inexhaustible resource is its human capital. This resource is maximally utilized if it is highly educated, skilled, disciplined, motivated and results-oriented. The Party will therefore encourage and support the nation's male and female young talents to pursue careers in world class fields in science, mathematics, medicine, technology, robotics, biometrics, construction, engineering, natural resource management and many others. This will continuously provide the country with the cadre of needed experts for its development agenda and benchmarked on regional and international standards.

Our Commitment

The UDP will lead The Gambia to achieve this vision through the development of the following policies and adherence to a related set of key programmatic commitments:

- The improvements to be affected in the education sector will be framed within a bold and responsive reform agenda, which will be underpinned by a thorough situational analysis of shortcomings, weaknesses, opportunities and potentials within the grasp of the country.
- At least one year of Early Childhood Education, 9 years of Basic Education and 3 years of Secondary Education will be compulsory for every child and free for all children in public schools. A UDP Government will embark on a massive expansion and improvement of educational facilities for the realization of this policy goal. All education facilities will be developed to minimum acceptable operational standards. UDP believes that an education system cannot be better than its teachers. A UDP Government will prioritize teacher professional education and welfare. UDP will work with Teacher Unions, Subject Associations and education service providers to formulate decent welfare and benefits systems for all teachers. To this end teachers will be required to be accountable to their students.
- A comprehensive revamping of the national Basic and Secondary Education curricula will be undertaken. This will include, at the level of educational content and practice, the promotion of the use of local intellectual property, research and development of innovative pedagogical practices, the review of assessment and examination systems.
- Current literacy rates, especially for adults, will need to be significantly improved if the generality of the population is to functionally benefit from the advantages of common technological resources and tools, as well as the acquisition of critical life skills. Such improvements will also be expected to positively impact civic awareness. In the same vein, UDP government will revitalize non-formal education by integrating it with maternal and child health services and community development interventions. Partnership with Civil Society Organizations and community-based organization will be the delivery platform for this policy agenda.

- From the COVID-19 pandemic, the UDP has learnt that there is no perfect replacement for face-to-face delivery of the education and training. A UDP Government will meaningfully invest in alternative delivery modes of the curriculum at all levels of education and training. These will include radio, television, online and offline internet platforms. This will be accompanied with massive retraining and re-orientation of teachers and trainers to be proficient in the use of new technologies for teaching and learning.
- UDP is aware that the cost of education is a major barrier for many children, adolescents and youth. A UDP Government will commission a comprehensive study of barriers to education and training to look into what responsive policies and measures can be instituted, including needs based and merit-based considerations, and the use of endowment funds, bursaries, scholarships and other sponsorship schemes. UDP as a Party and Government is committed to creating equal educational opportunities for all children, adolescents, youths and adults. To this end, a UDP Government will ensure that all learning structures, facilities and teachers/lecturers are responsive to the learning needs and welfare of all learners especially those with special learning needs, those in need of assisted devices, and those vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. A UDP Government will use an affirmative policy in dealing with the school dropout relating to child marriage and early pregnancy.
- UDP believes that middle-level human capacity in skill areas such as fabrication, construction, arts, horticulture, fisheries, animal husbandry, and so on, are key to creating employment and stimulating economic growth. A UDP Government will invest in coaching, mentoring, training and apprenticeship programmes to create second chance opportunities for adolescents and youth who are not able to access formal skills training.
- A UDP Government will prioritise management efficiency and responsiveness in all sectors of public service. To this end, a comprehensive review of the management and financing of the education sector at national and regional levels will be conducted. A review of the national budget to establish resources allocation priorities will be conducted so that the education sector's budget allocation can be significantly revised upwards based on resource availability. The Regional Education Directorates will be strengthened and will have increased accountability for improving learning outcomes, responding to teacher welfare and providing accurate and timely data.

- UDP believes that for The Gambia to build an education system that is relevant and responsive to the 21st Century agenda, the Government should partner with the private sector, Civil Society Organizations and Faith-based Organizations. A UDP Government will partner with stakeholders based on their comparative advantage; and will create an enabling environment for non-state actors to meaningfully contribute to the national education development agenda. This will enhance delivery of cross-sectoral services such as school health, school meals and community engagement.
- Fundamental to UDP's commitment to deliver a transformative education program is to increase the national education budget allocation to internationally established/accepted minimum budget allocations with accountability thresholds in order to reduce all forms of inefficiency and wastage, and consistently apply value for money principles.
- Provide Universal access to primary and secondary education.
- A comprehensive revamp of the basic education curriculum and review of skills development to ensure the system is fit for national purposes; raise teaching and learning standards in schools; learner centred and early childhood technology training.
- A special focus will be on teacher education, skills augmentation and the enhanced use of technology in our schools to improve on quality.
- Establish strong coaching and mentorship programmes for the youth to benefit for solid mentorship and guidance.
- Entrepreneurial skills in classroom curriculum for youth to be employment creators.
- Establish endowment kitty including scholarships and bursaries to bright and needy students to ensure success for all our brightest minds.
- Establish at least 10 specialized skills training centers across the country dedicated to the solid development of skills.
- Review and improve the pay and working conditions of teachers to attract bright Gambians to the profession and to build the capacity of existing ones.
- Establish a school's inspectorate system to monitor and evaluate educational quality.

- Improve and increase school infrastructure to reduce classroom sizes and improve quality of learning through a teacher-student ratio which allows for individual attention.
- Ensure the integration of Madrassas into the formal education system and structures.
- Ensure that education officers and teachers are effectively trained to integrate the Madrassas into the formal education system and structures.



The Challenge

For The Gambia to improve the quality of life of its people, it must guarantee the whole population food security and highest nutritional standards for every individual, especially the children. This desirable national goal will not be sustainably attained if it is not driven by sound agricultural policy and investment plan. Notwithstanding the billions of Dalasis worth of investments since independence, the Agricultural sector of The Gambia has been left to waste and ruin due to successive grossly inefficient managements and the perennial corrupt practices of officials in charge of those investments. It is sad to know that the Agriculture sector grew by 2.5 per cent between 2007 to 2016, well below the population growth of 3.3 per cent during the same period. This would naturally result in heightened food insecurity and deteriorating nutritional status for the population. Consequently, vital foreign reserves were used for the importation of food and supplementary food items to address the unacceptably high level of malnutrition in children. We have seen this in the increased volume of rice importation as the country is only able to produce about 40 percent of our national consumption needs.

The challenges confronting the Agriculture sector as a platform to attain food security and high standard of nutrition for all ages are multi-faceted. It therefore, requires bold decisions to depart from the current practices and business models. The Gambia has abundant fresh river water, underground water and land resources that can feed the whole country year-round. Livestock, fisheries, forestry and poultry are high yielding sectors, yet they are grossly neglected as evident in the colossal amount of money spent on importing these products. The land resource is so badly managed that urban agriculture is a far fetch dream for any enthusiast. The failure of successive governments to address the land crisis has turned land into a driver of conflict instead of a driver of wealth. The agriculture value chain has not been given any serious attention to the extent that thousands of tonnes of seasonal fruits and vegetables perish due to lack of storage and processing facilities. The agriculture sector has failed to attract young people even when they are provided with seed money to start their own businesses. For far too long, the Gambia seems to be locked into mundane rain-fed agriculture and use of manual or animal drawn implements.

To compound it all, the irony and paradox of this sector is that it has the largest number of graduates at Masters and PhD levels, yet the performance demonstrated is undesirable. The challenges of the sector would require in depth review and analysis complemented with a reform investment plan to address the development needs of the population. The Agriculture sectors should re-establish itself as the lead productive sector and driver of the whole economy.

The Potential

The Gambia is endowed with a population nearly half of which are within the productive age bracket. This youth dividend has never been adequately tapped into. The level of motivation of the young people (male and female) is evident in the numbers who took the maximum risk to travel to Europe in search of better lives for themselves and their families. The young people of The Gambia is a great and formidable force to be trusted if the Gambia is to re-emerge from current dysfunctional governance and management status, which results in food insecurity and poor nutritional standards.

Beyond the human capital, The Gambia has a river with abundance of fresh water year-round. Our territorial waters and access to the Atlantic Ocean guarantee us all types of fishing ventures. The land and weather can support all forms of horticulture, floriculture, fruit trees, livestock, forestry and poultry.

Given the huge potential and opportunities in the agriculture sector for increased contribution to the national economy, greater employment creation, increased incomes, greater export earnings, enhanced food security and overall rise in the socio-economic welfare of the population, a UDP led government will commit itself to transforming the sector from its present state to a more commercially vibrant and sustainable one, thereby paving the way for overall national development and improving the standard of living of the population. An agricultural development empowerment facility will be created to support the sector, create vertical and horizontal linkages with agro-processing initiatives for attaining food security at the household level, while at the same time creating jobs and enhancing income generation.



Our Position

The UDP believes that the standard and quality of life of our people, to a large extent, depend on their food security and the nutritional value of the food intake. The most reliable way of delivering this fundamental human right is to meaningfully invest in agriculture. The UDP in Government will opt for a departure from the current business model in agriculture characterized by rain-fed agriculture, dominance of single cash crop and subsistence farming. We will explore and invest in high yielding sub-sectors such as horticulture, livestock, fisheries, forestry and poultry. The goal will be to drastically reduce importation of food items and transforming The Gambia into a net exporter of agricultural products in all these areas.

With a population growth rate of 3.3 per cent, the population of The Gambia is expected to double in 21 years (Demographic Health Survey, GBoS, 2013). Within the context of increasing national food insecurity and the adverse effect of climate change and variability threats, food production systems must undergo significant transformation to address national development needs. UDP's approach to agricultural development is premised on transforming the sector from a subsistence to a more sustainable, commercially oriented, and market driven agriculture through increased production and improved value chain system. The approach is holistic and will target strengthening and supporting all segments and actors (direct and indirect) in the value chain.

The UDP believes that The Gambia has huge untapped potentials in the agricultural sector which can improve the lives of the people, increase their food security, improve the nutritional standards for all ages, create employment for both rural and urban populations, and drives the national economy through linkages to other sectors.



Our Commitment

The UDP believes that agriculture is the backbone of the socio-economic development of the country. Not because it employs more than 70 percent of the workforce, but also is the leader in the productive sector of the economy. The UDP is fully committed to the transformation and growth of the nutrition, agriculture and food security sectors of The Gambia's socio-economic development. We will pursue this development agenda through the following strategic policy options:

- A comprehensive agriculture sector management review and revitalization will be conducted, and the results implemented. The objective of this exercise is to rid the sector of its perennial inefficiencies, wastage and potentials for corrupt practices and ultimately develop a responsive sector. This review will include management of land, water and agriculture practices in all areas.
- Hitherto, the agriculture sector is reliant on rain-fed, dominated by a single cash crop (groundnuts) and predominance of small-scale subsistence farming practices. The UDP is committed to a new business model in agriculture which will be characterized by transformative investments in the high-yielding sub sectors such as horticulture, livestock, fisheries, forestry and poultry.
- Despite agriculture having high potential to provide diverse employment opportunities and currently providing employment for more than 70 per cent of the workforce, the majority of people working in the sector are poor and under-employed. It has failed to attract young people who have the energy and talent. The UDP is committed to implementing a range of incentive packages that would attract young people (male and female) in all locations (rural and urban) to get engaged in agricultural production and agri-business initiatives.
- We are committed to agriculture providing maximum benefits to all actors in the sector. UDP understands that most stakeholders experience substantial loss in their produce due to poor or even lack of infrastructure and facilities for transportation, storage, processing and marketing. The Party is committed to developing the agriculture production and value chain infrastructure, facilities and services to maximize returns and reduce post-harvest loss.
- Without a strong agriculture sector that can meet the supply and demand needs of the service sector (e.g., hotel, restaurants, entertainment resorts and local ceremonies) most of the foreign exchange earnings of the country will be spent on importation of food products. UDP is committed to inter-sectoral linkages between agriculture and other sectors to enable the re-orientation of agricultural production to meet the demands of the service sector in the short-term thereby reducing importation and becoming a net exporter in the long-term.

Our Commitment

- UDP believes that a country with malnourished children, an underfed and sick population and an uneducated workforce will never attain a desirable quality of life for its people. The UDP's nutrition, agriculture, and food security policy agenda is based on our firm commitment to eradicate child malnutrition, guarantee food security for the entire population, thus creating a strong workforce that will drive growth and prosperity across the other sectors of the economy.





The UDP salutes the commitment and dedication of the health care workers of this country especially at these very difficult moments of the COVID-19. The Party is aware of the plethora of government strategy and policy positions with overarching objectives of:

“the provision of adequate, effective and affordable health care for all Gambians; reduce inequalities in health care services and improve in health-related outcome indicators; and to improve the administration and management of health services, provide better infrastructure for Referral Hospitals and health facilities and the revitalization and extension of Primary Health Care services to all communities and having a well-motivated and trained staff and establishment of efficient procurement arrangements in order to ensure effective and efficient health services for all1.”

However, due to multifaceted factors including

- an inadequate quality and quantity of appropriate healthcare workforce.
- non-existent or at best ineffective and inefficient management and control systems, services, and organisational structural deficiencies,
- poor infrastructures; and
- inadequate / poor financing, there continues to be deplorable and chronic delivery of healthcare.

Our current system continues to produce suboptimal results in almost all major health indicators. If the above challenges are not tackled, the gains made in reducing neonatal, infant and maternal mortality; improvements in life expectancy, primary healthcare (including community healthcare); a strong secondary healthcare and healthcare workforce; improvements in the overall population will be diminished. We are all aware of the horror stories of healthy pregnant women who die due to preventable and avoidable causes.

Amidst the above deteriorating population health and healthcare situation, ensuring efficient and effective Universal Health Coverage (UHC) across the whole country and to all sections of the population will be the core principle of the UDP's health agenda. This UHC agenda will be critical to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals particularly those directly relating to good healthcare and wellbeing.

The Gambia has a population of 2.4 million in 2020 with a growth rate of about 4.4% per annum^{2,3}. The life expectancy at birth is about 63.5 years for both sexes (61.2 and 65.9 years for males and females respectively) ⁴. 42% of the population is said to be below the age of 24 years. The majority (≈ 60%) of the population live in urban areas. There is wide disparity in poverty and literacy levels between the urban areas and the rural regions. Literacy rate is low (50.78%, 2015) with a high poverty rate (51%). Nearly 5% of the population is over 60 years old in 2013 (census) who suffer a huge burden of age-related illnesses on the healthcare system. There are no geriatric specialists, therefore leaving the senior citizens largely marginalised and neglected, by the healthcare system.

The country's disease burden indicates a growing challenge of non-communicable diseases even though communicable diseases are still significant. The 2016 figures for professional healthcare workers show the major burden in this area. There were 0.11 physicians per 10,000 population and 0.87 nurses and midwives per 10,000 population⁵. These are well below the internationally recommended levels of 4.5 doctors, nurses and midwives per 1000 population. Human resources recruitment, retention and management will be at the core of a revitalized healthcare sector. The disparities between the general services and specialist care in the sector will be addressed through targeted investments in attracting and retaining the best brains available to work in healthcare facilities based on international standards and best practice.

The introduction of WHO's initiated Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) in The Gambia sometime in May 1979, served as the turning point in the improvements of primary care, maternal and childhood mortality and morbidity. Currently, the programme covers all the relevant diseases with an impressive coverage of up to 99.8% for some antigens and regions. This programme should be continued and expanded especially in view of the increases in the population of the country.



Maternal mortality continues to be a serious challenge. We are too often shocked with stories of young women losing their lives at birth. Even though there has been a constant decline over the years, in 2017 the country's levels of 597 per 100,000 live births is higher compared to 542 per 100,000 live births average for the Sub-Saharan Africa region. This is a serious social, gender health issue that requires a strong focused national response. A UDP government will invest appropriately in preventive healthcare measures, in drugs and healthcare facilities and personnel in a bid to drastically reduce maternal mortality.

Under five child mortality has also been declining. It currently stands at 57 per 1000 live births compared to the 78 per 1000 live births average for the Sub-Saharan Africa region. The SDG targets for maternal and under 5 mortality rates are 70 per 100,000 and 25 per 1000 live births by 2030, respectively. The current trends are that these SDG targets will not be met unless radical measures are taken.

There are high rates of chronic and acute malnutrition. The prevalence of stunting among children for under 5 years is 24.6 %. The prevalence of wasting in children under 5 years is 11%. The country's public health sector is largely financed through general taxation. In 2017 (while UDP members were in Government) the country's per capita health expenditure was \$23 US rising from \$15 US in 2003. In the Budget Estimates for 2019, health was allocated D1.162 billion out of a total budget of D28.73 billion. This allocation is woefully inadequate when compared to the allocations to the Office of the

President. Despite these allocations, the preponderance of poor facilities, and shortages of medicines, inadequate equipment and medical devices means that the healthcare sector requires special attention in any government.

Mental health and mental healthcare facilities are rudimentary, with little or no counseling and specialized mental health treatment at the existing facility. A UDP government will invest in creating adequate mental health facilities and counseling services bearing in mind that as development increases, so does incomes and vices such as alcohol and drug abuse. Adequate facilities are needed to address these vices. The idea is to mainstream mental health into the healthcare system.

There exists user fees/charges paid at point of contact in addition to various payments for prescriptions, diagnosis and inpatient hospital charges. Out-of-pocket expenditures as a percentage of total health expenditures is quite high for the average Gambian. Considering the national poverty rate of above 55%, there are concerns for access to healthcare, equity and inequalities in health and healthcare.



The number of health facilities both at the public and private levels are increasing gradually. What is clear is the disproportionate increase in favour of the urban areas. The UDP government sees health care as a human right and as such we shall ensure that wherever one lives in the country, they have ready access to quality healthcare mainly through the public health facilities. The situation of all hospitals in the country shall be reviewed to ensure that quality is improved significantly.

There is a growing level of competency both in the country and in the diaspora which the government must harness for the benefit of the greater population. With a small population, and a highly educated healthcare specialists and generalists both in the country and in the diaspora, it is conceivable that The Gambia's healthcare facilities can be developed in ways which could designate the country as a health tourism destination in the long-term.

UDP will prepare a Pandemic Containment Strategy/Plan in order to lay the foundation for managing and containing future pandemics/epidemics with state-of-the-art health facilities and laboratories supported by a comprehensive social protection framework in a bid to providing essential health, social protection and social services to citizens during a future pandemic and/or epidemic.

Our Commitment

A UDP government will initiate policies and programmes to improve the health sector by focusing on the following:

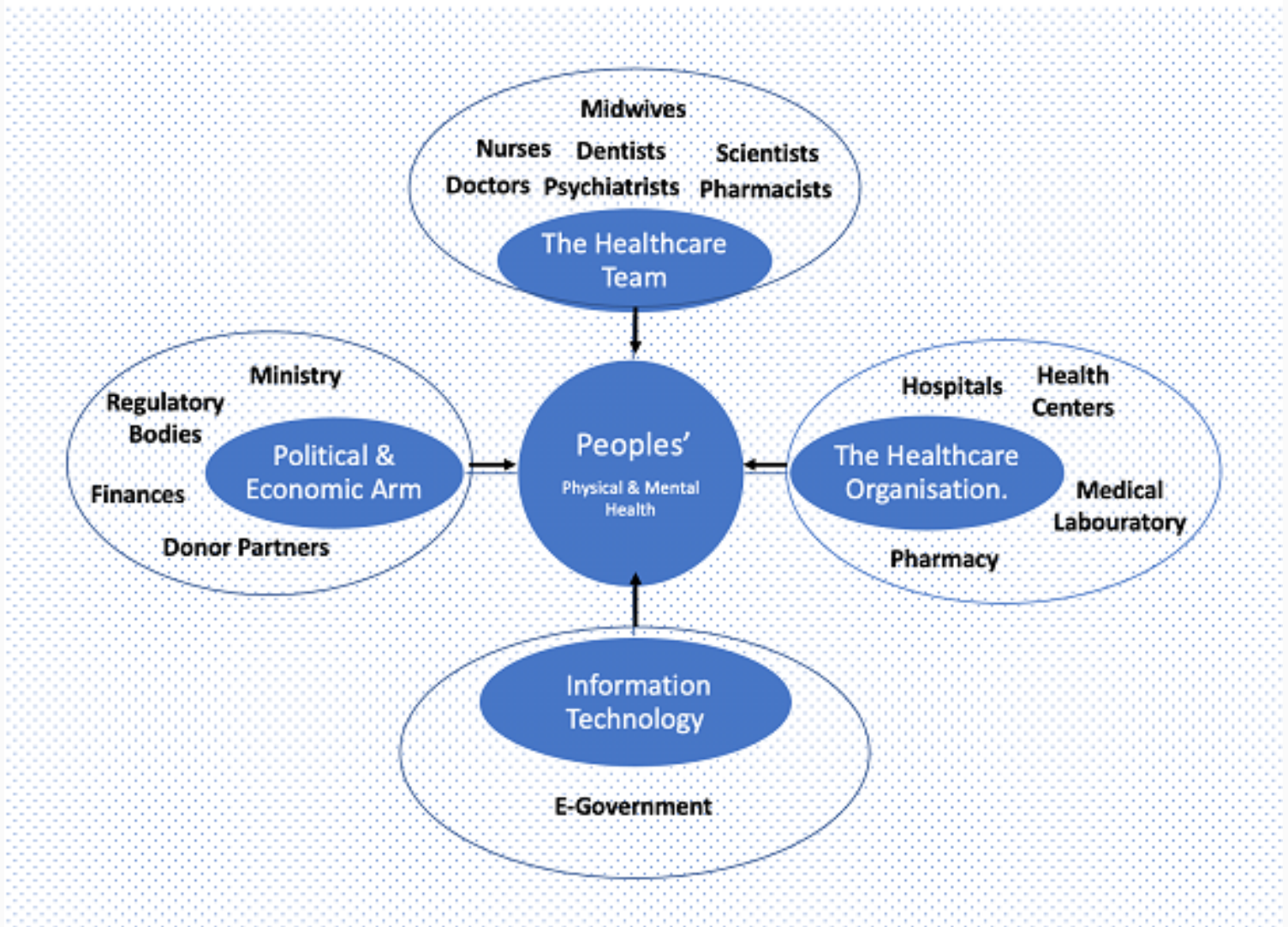
- Creation and development of a qualified and responsive Health care workforce.
- Provision of essential services and resources including equipment and drugs to health facilities.
- Establish sustainable financing structure for health care.
- Ensure equity and accessibility of the population to health care.
- Build a strong partnership with the private sector for the provision of Health care services • Establishment of a functioning health information management system. This shall be conducted within the purview of the E-government platform or on its own as needed. It is essential that duplication, non-availability of data is removed from the healthcare system.

- Provision of adequate drugs and supplies to health facilities – The UDP believes that without adequate information, our planners always find it difficult to order and distribute the right number of drugs and supplies to the health facilities. This shall be a priority of the UDP government to ensure that this situation is remedied, and no one shall be made to go out of the hospital to buy basic supplies.
- Provision of adequate equipment and their upkeep and maintenance – We shall establish a review of the basic and supplemental equipment needs of our health care system. We shall also ensure that our equipment is managed properly by the establishment of an Agency responsible for bio medical equipment. This shall be responsible for procurement and management of all biomedical equipment.
- A UDP government will prioritize educational programmes aimed at increasing multidisciplinary service delivery teams which will involve doctors, nurses, community health workers, public health personnel and health managers at all levels of our health care service. We shall invest heavily in training, capacity development, increase and retention of health care personnel.
- A comprehensive review of the conditions of service shall be conducted within the first six months of a UDP government. This shall update information on such parameters as gaps in staffing and skill levels, specialist training needed, facility support required and the disparities between rural and urban facilities for equity. We are aware of the costs and the length of time associated with certain specializations training. For such special skills, there would be needs for their service to be shared between facilities. In that purview, mechanisms and strategies will be put in place to facilitate their mobility amongst areas of need.
- Partnerships with local partners such as bodies such as the Medical and Dental Council of The Gambia(MDCG), Nurses and Midwifery Council and the Public Health Council as well as international collaborations such as the technical assistance program with Cuba, Nigeria, Ghana etc. shall be reviewed to ensure that whilst on the one hand they provide much need capacity gaps, but they also support the development of national capacity for sustainability.
- We will ensure that x10% of the national budget is spent on health in line with the Abuja declaration for health. In the first year of our government, we shall draw up a Health Financing Plan, shortfalls for which funding we shall seek from the international donor community.
- The UDP government shall review the User fee structure currently established with a view to establishing a suitable system including a National Health Insurance Scheme to reduce the burden of health care on the population.

- We shall ensure a regular movement of specialists too hard to reach areas to ensure that people have access to relatively similar levels of care across the country.
- We shall be promoting public/private health care schemes that will harness this great potential for the benefit of the population.
- Our collaborative work with research institutions shall be enhanced through the promotion of genuine Gambia based research.



In accordance with the Party's core beliefs, values and principles, that every human being deserves to live in dignity, and in line with the United Nations sustainable development goals, the UDP shall create a master plan for a comprehensive healthcare reform with the aim of creating a more accessible, quality and affordable healthcare system for all Gambians.



- A comprehensive review of the conditions of all services within the healthcare sector will be conducted within the first 365 Days of a UDP government. The UDP will update information on such parameters as gaps in staffing and skill levels, specialist training needed, facility support required and the disparities between rural and urban facilities for equity.

- A UDP will make the healthcare delivery system accessible to all Gambians regardless where in the country they live. In light of this, the party will invest in primary healthcare services to be more effective in-patient care and outreach activities. The party will also endeavour to build, where needed, hospitals or health centres in new areas of the country and will build a major referral hospital in the populous West Coast Region that will also double as a teaching hospital for the creation of healthcare workforce of diverse discipline and speciality.
- A UDP government will endeavour to significantly improve the quality of healthcare services for our people. The party will invest to improve healthcare infrastructure such as hospitals, clinics, medical centres and medical laboratories that will be equipped with all standard equipment for accurate diagnosis, treatment and provision of palliative care. Furthermore, the party will invest in providing adequate remuneration, training, capacity development, and retention of health care personnel.
- A UDP government will introduce a digital healthcare infrastructure such as E-Government for a robust healthcare management system that will enable record keeping, generation of data and statistics for informed policy making and review.
- A UDP government will ensure affordable healthcare services provided for a competent, dedicated and compassionate professionals. In this light, the party will commit to the “Abuja Declaration” to invest in the National budget in the provision of safe, efficacious medications and other essential resources to every patient. The party will also consider constituting a public health insurance scheme for health financing.
- A UDP will create policies and programs for the protection, promotion and the welfare of our most vulnerable people such as women, children, people living with disabilities (physical and cognitive) and the elderly.
- A UDP government will promote accountability and transparency within the healthcare delivery system to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. We will create an integrated framework for all relevant stakeholders such as the regulatory bodies, the private sector, staff, ministries, finances, and our international partners for an optimal patient care delivery.
- A UDP government will create a medical research facility and partner with others such as Medical Research Council (MRC) to understand all medical related issues prevalent in the country and seek better ways for diagnoses, treatment and prevention.



The Challenge

Most Gambian roads especially the feeder roads are impassable during the rainy seasons hence curtailing movements. The poor state of the roads in most parts of the country has hindered investors from exploiting the investment potential. Poor market accessibility has resulted in farmers incurring huge post-harvest losses due to perishability of farm produce.

Power supply remains a major constraint to our development efforts. We need power for our industries, hotels and households. Yet, access to power grid is either limited or not available in most parts of our country, and where it is available, it is either irregular or expensive.

The Potential

Our economy is based on agriculture and a good roads infrastructure network and ICT backbone are prerequisites for economic development, agricultural growth and poverty reduction. The development and maintenance of an efficient and functional road network should be a major consideration in resource allocation decisions in the prioritization of development programs. There should be a high-quality road network linking all corners of the country to enhance economic development.

The UDP believes that there is need for a comprehensive national energy plan which will rationalize NAWEC. In a bid to making it effective and efficient in the provision of water and electricity, PPPs and IPPs will be encouraged for partnerships in the sector including access to the oil and gas sectors of the energy industry. These initiatives will be supported by capacity building and institution strengthening of the energy and digital infrastructure sectors so that services can be reliably provided as a driver of socio-economic development.

The digital and energy infrastructure agenda will work towards the development and maintenance of an efficient network that will provide access to power and connect The Gambia to the rest of the world.

An acute electricity crisis arises from the inability of the sector to meet domestic demand or for economic activities. There should be a national infrastructure development plan to improve the roads, energy, digital infrastructure and ports networks.

Gamtel/Gamcel to be modernized and improved as part of our national strategic assets. Review the cost of telecommunications in the country with a view to making costs affordable to ordinary Gambians as a catalyst for growth in our digital economy.

A national infrastructure maintenance plan will be developed so that the culture of maintenance of national infrastructure is introduced in the country.

Our Commitment

- Construction of a world-class infrastructure to spur growth and economic development.
- Establishment of industrial zones across the 7 administrative areas for agro and other - processing zones, This will allow for decentralization of development through spatial planning throughout the country. Also, through this, capacity building and skills training, employment creation and market access will be provided in areas within reach of those who need it or want it.
- Continued development and expansion of road network.
- Develop use of The River Gambia for communication and transportation to and from the hinterland.
- As part of the national infrastructure development and maintenance plan, start government housing schemes for low-income households and for civil servants in all 7 Regions of the country.
- Development and modernization of Gamtel / Gamcel. Port expansion and faster delivery.
- Construction of bridges and facilities along the river.

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- Improvement of government facilities at Denton Bridge, Banjul, Yundum, Jenoi, Sapu, YBK, Kaur, Kuntaur and Basse as part of the decentralization of services around the country.
- Development of a comprehensive situational analysis of the entire public sector and initiate comprehensive public sector reforms; develop effective governance structures and management of country resources.
- Increase the generating capacity of NAWEC and expand the supply of electricity in the country;
- Improve the quality of service in power distribution and management;
- Rationalize the high cost of electricity and telecommunications services charged to nascent industries and companies to enhance their business potentials, efficiency and competitiveness;
- Explore alternative energy sources to diversify our energy supply chain and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.
- Revisit the bridge barrel project to determine its feasibility and viability.
- Prepare a new National Development Plan;

- Develop a comprehensive roadmap for regenerating all aspects of the economy;
- Initiate an emergency revitalization of the energy and water sectors;
- Map out the water needs of all households
- Establish 24hr disaster management response centers
- Initiate measures to recover all stolen assets and funds.
- Continued development and expansion of roads network
- Develop use of river for communication and transportation
- Start government housing scheme for civil servants
- Development and modernization of Gamtel/Gamcel
- Port expansion and faster turnaround time for delivery of goods and services at the Port.
- Continue building of bridges and facilities along the river.
- Improve government facilities.
- Develop a National energy plan.
- Rationalize NAWEC in a bid to making it more efficient and effective in the generation, distribution and management of electricity.
- Use of clean/renewable energy to significantly reduce the national dependence on fossil fuels.
- Exploration in gas and oil as potential streams
- Adequate capacity building and institution strengthening in the energy, gas, oil and mining sectors.
- Open the country to business by developing our road networks and making the doing of business process simple and short for attracting direct foreign investments (FDI) in the country.

- Upgrade the Radio, Television and telecommunication services and provide greater autonomy in programming and operations;
- Accord and enabling policy environment for private participation in Radio, TV and telecommunications services.
- Ensure high priority to Information Technology development to ensure acquisition of IT knowledge by our people in this connected global sphere;
- Develop and expand the Banjul International Airport and Seaport to enhance The Gambia's Gateway concept.



The Challenge

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) constitute a vital framework for the attainment of equitable and sustainable development. The development and exploitation of ICTs both as a business sector and as an enabler of other sectors must be the centerpiece of public policy before The Gambia can be transformed into an information society. The ICT sector has experienced tremendous growth in the last three decades, particularly as indicated by access to mobile telephony and internet services. However, due attention has not been paid to the adoption and implementation of public policies for technology education, skills training, job creation, increasing women's participation in ICT, and bridging the rural urban digital divide. Despite the creation of regulatory bodies to protect end-users or consumers, the costs of telecommunication and internet services in The Gambia also continue to be much higher than in neighboring countries. Access to the ACE submarine cable and the subsequent deployment of fiber optic cables across The Gambia have so far failed to translate into better and affordable services for the country.

Internet penetration in The Gambia is quite low, and government inaction in creating incentives for operators to extend services to other wireless profitable but underserved communities has aggravated the situation. Public service delivery continues to be outmoded, with relatively little reliance on the effective use of ICTs, which could cut costs, enhance quality of services, and promote transparency. In the absence of greater spending on technology education, particularly focusing on youths and women, the objective of creating an information society with a digital economy will also remain a pipe dream. Another key area of contention that will require serious foresight and attention is fighting cybercrime and cyberwarfare.

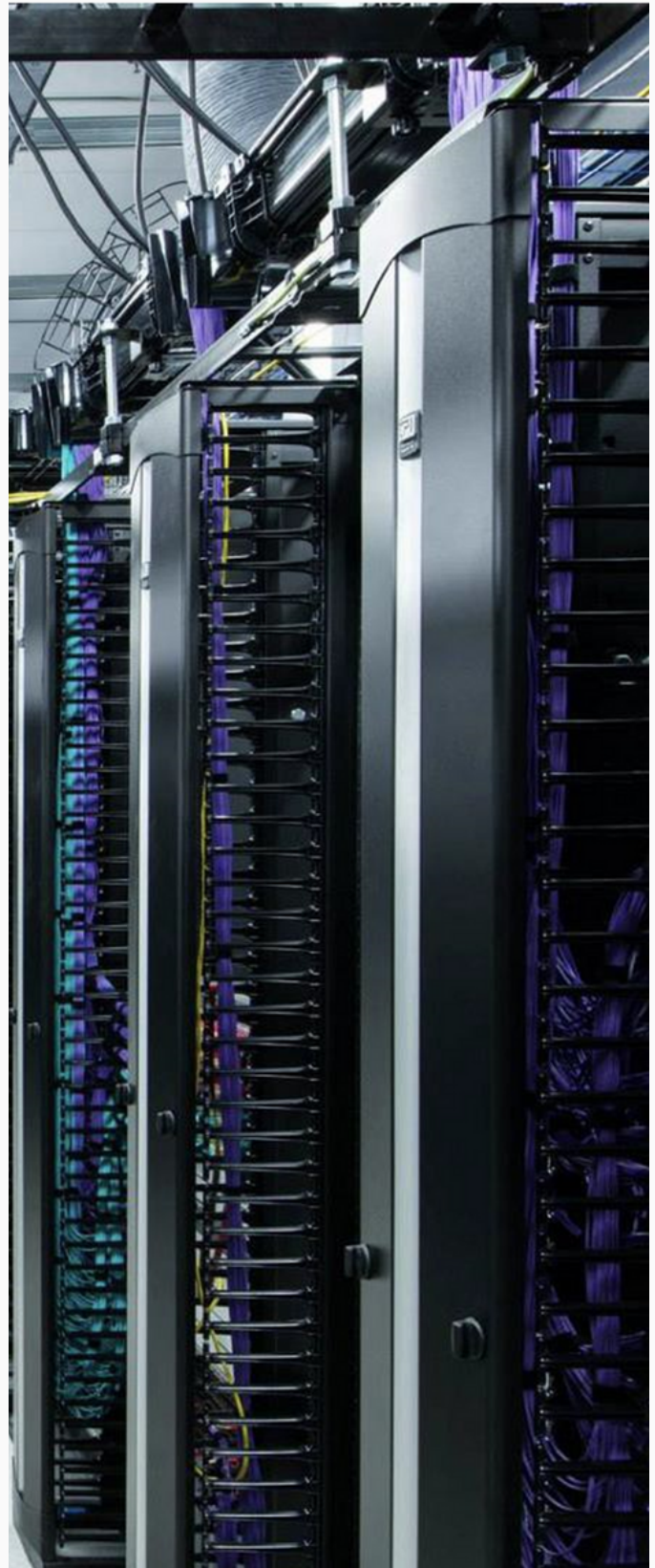
UDP will strengthen and capacitate the regulatory institution for it to perform its mandate effectively and efficiently.

The Potentials

A serious e-Government program combined with the full exploitation of ICTs as an enabler of other sectors (health, education, employment, trade, finance, etc.) will increase the chances of the government meeting its ultimate objective of developing The Gambia in a sustainable way. The use of these technologies has far-reaching benefits for job creation, revenue generation, cost reduction, improved efficiencies, increased tax collection, as well as innovation and productivity in government, private enterprise and even agricultural production. ICTs offer opportunities for the government to institute programs designed to spark innovation through major technology expansion and security projects.

Our Commitment

- Utilize ICTs to promote sustainable development in an all-inclusive information society.
- Adopt an effective e-Government strategy.
- Prioritize ICT education and training in our schools by making it a crucial part of academic curriculums.
- Devise means to lower tariffs in the mobile telephony and internet service markets in order to enable more people to have affordable access to these services.
- Promote the deployment, adoption, and use of broadband internet at affordable prices by ISPs and telecommunications operators in underserved areas of the country through incentives.
- Establish standards and principles for The Gambia's critical information and communication technologies.
- Utilize mobile money transfer and other contactless payment technologies to increase commerce and reduce the propensity for cash related transactions and the negative effects that has on our currency notes.
- Implement legal frameworks to safeguard all interactions in the ICT sector, while setting up a body for robust detection and response to cybercrime.





- Construct community information centers to provide free broadband services throughout the country. These will facilitate citizen government interactions, commerce, training, and so on, particularly in remote parts of the country.
- Incentivize Gambians in the diaspora with the requisite skills to return home and contribute towards the country's development into an information society.





PETROLEUM AND ENERGY

Energy Situational Analysis/Context Current Electricity and Energy Context:

- The Gambia has one of the most expensive with the lowest availability to demand ratio of energy in the sub-region.
- More than 55% of The Gambian population have no access to electricity.
- Those with access endure frequent power interruption due to poor availability (less than 40%).
- The Gambia has less than 70MW of available capacity with a high degree of obsolescence, versus population demand of more than 200MW.
- The Power generators are fuelled by HFO (Heavy Fuel Oil) which is expensive, damaging to the generators and harmful to the environment.
- This leads to very high OPEX (Operating Expenditure), poor availability and failure to deliver affordable and accessible energy to all Gambians.
- Fossil fuel Consumption = 0.1Mtoe, equivalent to 2000 boepd (barrels of oil equivalent per day).

Petroleum Industry Context:

- Summary of The Gambian Petroleum offshore blocks history:
 - Only 2 Wells drilled so far (both dry):
 - ♦ 1979: Jamah-01 drilled by CHEVRON
 - ♦ 2018: Samo-01 (blockA2) drilled by FAR/Petronas consortium.
 - Offshore BlocksA1 and A4 previously licensed to African Petroleum Gambia Limited and Buried Hill Gambia B.V. as partners –Licenses terminated.
 - Offshore blocks A2 & A5 granted to FAR Ltd as operatorship in 2017
 - Offshore blocks A2 & A5 granted to a new JOA, including FAR, Petronas & Erin
 - Offshore Block A1 granted to BP & GNPC in 2019.
- There is currently no coherent, concrete and tangible National Energy Plan • No transparency as to participation of Government in granting of petroleum acreage • there is very little transparency as to how the exploration contracts and licenses are granted • No coherent drilling and appraisal strategy.
- No National Content Policy.
No coherent regulatory, legal and responsible governance framework in place and there is no guarantee that average Gambians will benefit from this in-situ natural resource when exploited.

The Challenges and Opportunities

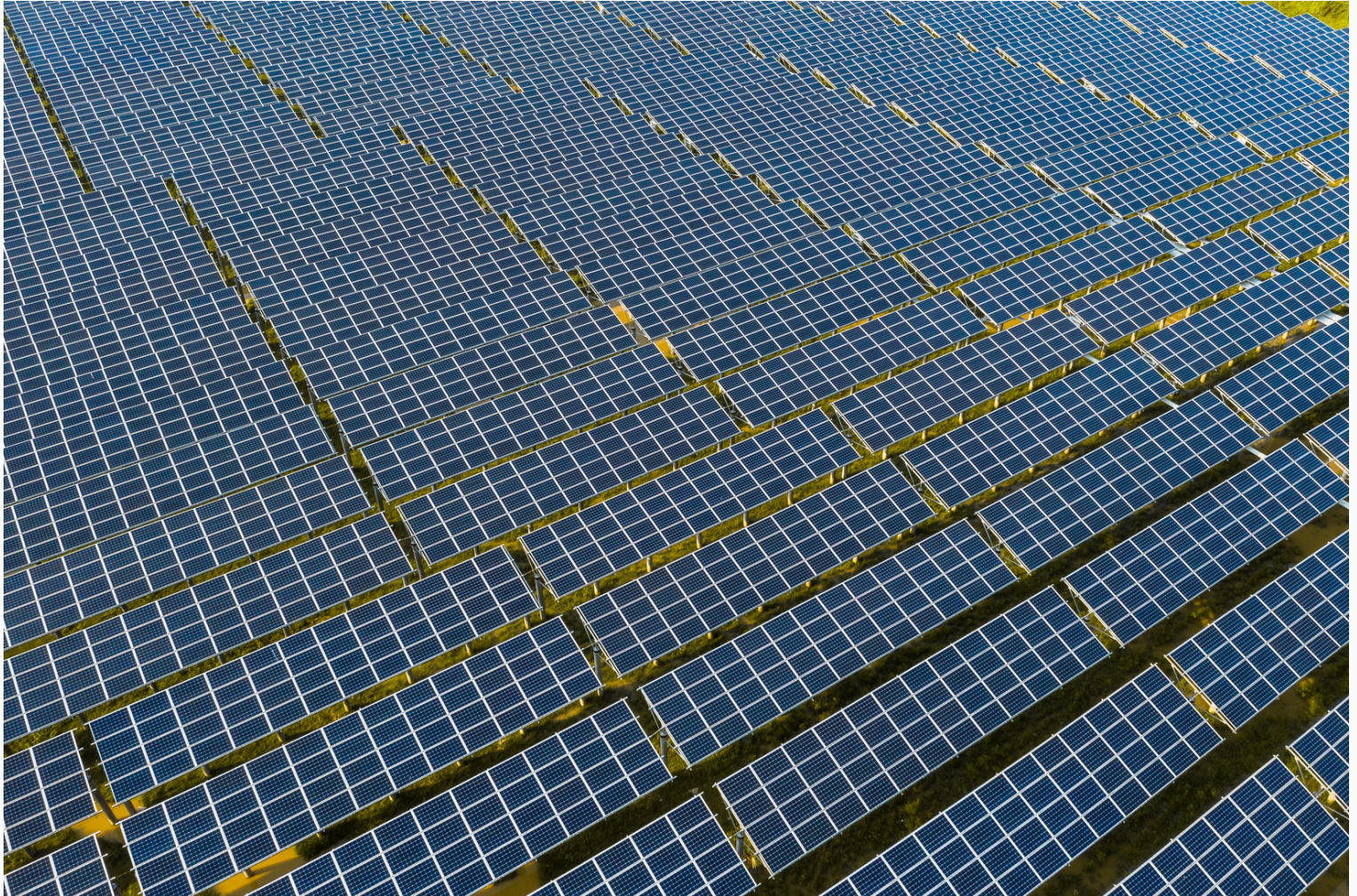
- Energy dependency: The Gambia is dependent on expensive petroleum products imported & biomass energy mix to meet the country's demand.
- Growing demand for energy: In the coming years Gambia will face an extremely sharp increase in demand, as access to electricity progresses
- Game changing opportunity: 1 billion-barrel potentially identified following 3D seismic surveys on offshore blocks A1, A2, A4, and A5. Potential inflow of \$ revenues, socio economic development employment if managed responsibly.

- Drilling campaigns: To confirm the 2P reserves for most promising blocks (i.e., A1, A2 & A5), the fiscal and legal framework must encourage exploration & appraisal drilling campaigns ASAP.
- Need to accelerate first Oil: Given the current context it is prudent to provide concrete framework and incentives to accelerate to first Oil If 2P reserves are confirmed.
- Many elements to put in place: To be able to maximize in-country value for Gambia, a number of structural as well as strategic elements must be in place to ensure responsible and transparent management of the Energy mix.

Our Commitment - ACE 2025

- Affordable, Clean and Accessible Energy for All by 2025
- National Energy Plan with sharp, transparent contracting and measurable, accurate and realistic targets (SMART KPIs).
- Restructure of NAWEC into two independent entities to separate electricity production from transmission and distribution.
- Responsible and Independent Management of NAWEC to ensure it delivers 24 hours of affordable and accessible electricity to all homes ,households, small and medium size enterprises by 2025.
- Responsible and transparent socio-economic programs with the whole population as stakeholders, benefiting from petroleum proceeds.
- Confirm 2P reserves for most promising blocks (i.e., A1, A2 & A5) and ensure the fiscal and legal framework are in place to accelerate exploration & appraisal drilling campaigns.
- To put in place responsible governance structure for management of Petroleum Industry o Independent National Content Policy Entity (NCPE) o Independent department of Petroleum Regulation (DPR) o Transparent National Investment Body for Petroleum Proceeds (NAIPP) o Capacity Building and technology Transfer - Training and development of nationals (GPI).
- Management of proceeds from energy exploration and exploitation are transparent and beneficial to society so that our extractive industries do not become curses (as in other countries) but blessings to society.
- Economic Divestment: Petroleum proceeds invested into other sectors for sustainable socio-economic development.

- Environmentally responsible: Invest in and promote renewable energy.
- Eliminate dependence on expensive imported petroleum products by achieving energy independence.



Law and Justice are the foundation upon which democracy is built and thrives. Our democratic foundations have been substantially and systematically eroded and undermined in the past 26 years, first by 22 years of abuse and impunity and a subsequent four years under a Government that has shown little understanding or interest in restoring our democratic beginnings.



The Barrow Government has jettisoned, abandoned and sacrificed its promises contained in the Coalition Government crafted Gambia National Development Plan “to restore good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law...” on the altar of a single-minded ambition to retain the presidency for 15 years or more.

The aborted Draft Constitution bears eloquent testimony to the desire to maintain the status quo in the form of an “Imperial Presidency” and a “constitutional dictatorship”. Contrary to its stated objective of transitioning to democratic governance, the Barrow Government is seeking to perpetuate itself against the wishes of the Gambian people by:

- Resisting and thwarting efforts aimed at dismantling the constitutional and; legal framework that supported the self-perpetuating design of the Jammeh dictatorship.
- Reinstating impunity;
- Abuse of executive power;
- Misuse of state resources for private agenda and gain;
- Unchecked and corrupt exploitation of our land, fishing and forest resources in total disregard of environmental concerns, subsisting and /or customary rights of the Gambian people; and
- Palpable and apparent disregard of the principles of democratic governance, accountability and transparency.

A UDP GOVERNMENT will be founded on the restoration of constitutional democracy, justice for all citizens according to their inalienable rights, progressive laws that will ensure the security of person and property, support the sustainable growth of a vibrant economy, reinstate transparent and accountable government, and underpin the equitable management of our resources on behalf, and for the benefit, of all Gambians.

IF ELECTED A UDP GOVERNMENT WILL

CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY will be restored by reinvigorating the stalled constitutional review and reform process and ensuring that the aspirations and will of the Gambian people will prevail over all partisan interest founded on:

1. Restoration of the sovereignty of the citizens.
2. Ensuring meaningful devolution of power from central to local government with more autonomy and increased resources to deliver more and better essential social services.
3. Restoring accountability of the Executive to the Legislative and Judicial branches.
4. Restoring land equity and respecting the rights of communities to their ancestral lands and review the structure of institutions allocating Government and community lands for housing, agriculture and tourism purposes. The accent will be fairness, equity and transparency in land allocations.
5. Creating a Citizens Charter with special emphasis on gender and youth empowerment.
6. Adhere to all of the Gambia's international commitments and obligations; respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our neighbours (Guinea-Bissau, Guinea Conakry and Senegal); support multilateralism, regional and sub-regional diplomacy and institutions and practice good neighbourliness
7. Respect for private property and ownership rights as an attractor of direct foreign investments (FDI)

JUSTICE TO VICTIMS of the Yahya Jammeh regime will be assured by the full implementation of the findings and recommendations of the TRRC with a view to bringing to justice those bearing the greatest responsibility for the crimes committed against Gambians including former President Yahya Jammeh, and the completion of the transitional justice reform programme.

STOLEN ASSETS will be pursued and recovered, and the Barrow Government will be held to account for all assets said to have been recovered from the Yahya Jammeh Government for which no account has been given including all land that was recommended to be seized and returned to the State by the Janneh Commission.



A review and transparent implementation of the report of the Janneh Commission on the Activities of former President Jammeh and his associates.

RULE OF LAW will be restored and strengthened by:

- Reinforcing the independence, capacity and competence of the Judiciary to dispense justice speedily, fairly, accountably and transparently.
- Embarking on a rigorous reform of existing law to ensure that the body of laws in place protect the public interest and are administered for the public good by all government agencies without fear or partisan interest, under the supervision of an independent Attorney General, independent judiciary with the support of powerful, independent and autonomous Law Commissions.
- Robust laws that enable the growth of a deregulated and vibrant economy

CRIMINAL JUSTICE will be given priority by realigning the security institutions into a more coherent, highly trained and agile force, enhancing the capacity of the security forces to maintain law and order, upgrading the criminal justice infrastructure and capability of our security forces to investigate crime, apprehend offenders and together with an effective independent directorate of public prosecutions service bring them to justice. A key element will be reforming the prisons system, decongesting and upgrading prisons, in accordance with Gambia's international commitments, decentralizing access to legal due process to all the regions for citizens to readily access.

CORRUPTION free government will be the foundation of a UDP administration. The Gambia Anti-Corruption Commission will be constituted and the law, passed since 2012 but ignored by both the Jammeh and Barrow Governments, fully implemented. The Ombudsman will be strengthened and institutionally aligned to the National Human Rights Commission and its independent oversight over the public service reinforced through a hybrid institution.

International law and our obligations therein will be respected and informed by the need to protect and preserve the environmental basis of development in the interests of current and future generations of Gambians. The environment and environmental considerations will be an essential feature of development planning in a UDP government.

THIS REFORM AGENDA WILL BE DELIVERED AND DRIVEN BY strong and independent institutions under a competent, transparent and accountable law office.





The Gambia is challenged with various anthropogenic and natural environmental issues, notably: unsustainable depletion of the forest covers due to unregulated logging (deforestation and rosewood trade), land use/cover change, atmospheric emission, poor solid-waste and effluent management, and loss of the country's biodiversity species and our flora and fauna. In addition, fisheries exploitation in the form of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is a longstanding socio-economic and ecological problem in The Gambia, coupled with overfishing in Gambian territorial waters. The impacts of climate change on our agricultural system such as coastal erosion, erratic rainfall, and salination of our wetland ecosystems also exacerbates poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment among the growing youthful population of the country. Finally, the seemingly unregulated establishment of industries dealing with potentially dangerous toxic substances in dense residential areas and along the coastline in Southern Kombo is a recipe for ecological disaster.

The current population of the Greater Banjul Area is about 300,000 and growing at a rate of 8.1% per annum. The large amount of waste especially household waste and other non-biodegradable substances in this area calls for an improved collection as well as a workable disposal system that would ensure that no hazard threatens the lives of our people and the environment. The various rural water supply programs of the past, particularly the one relating to the provision of hand pump fitted concrete-lined covered wells, have indeed improved clean water supply in the rural areas. However, the programs came to a halt after the 1994 military take-over. Currently, approximately 50% of the rural population are still without safe drinking water in spite of the previous good work undertaken in this area.

Our country faces serious environmental problems ranging from land degradation to household waste management issues and sanitation in the urban and semi-urban areas. Erosion, especially along the riverbanks and the marine coastline, pose a serious threat to infrastructure and human settlements. The UDP views these environmental hazards as serious and requiring urgent attention.

Potentials of Sound Environmental and Ecological Governance:

Environmental and ecological issues are cross-cutting; thus, devising and implementing a robust policy intervention is central to promoting natural resource-based economic growth, food security, livelihoods diversification, and effective realization of sustainable development goals in The Gambia. The country has a continental shelf area of approximately 4000 sq. km and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 200 nautical miles, an area classified as one of the richest fishing zones of the World. This means that sound environmental and ecological resource governance is a prerequisite for sustainable national development, poverty reduction, food security, attracting foreign exchange earnings for the country, and improving the nutrition of Gambian households. Besides, The Gambia will be able to promote employment opportunities for young people in various environment-related livelihood programs such as in the fisheries sector, ecotourism, agroforestry, livestock husbandry, apiculture, forestry, climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives as well as in the area of national parks service. These will invariably aid efforts to revitalize and boost the tourism industry.

There is a need to continue to maintain existing laws and enacting new ones to protect the environment and enforcement. The fisheries sector is an integral part of the socio-economic development of The Gambia. People need to be trained in fisheries management, production, processing storage and marketing.

Waste and its management have to be utilized as a renewable resource. More trees have to be planted to minimize environmental degradation.

Climate change and sea level rise are an existential threat to the Gambia as a low lying coastal country. Therefore, mitigation and adaptation measures are the best guarantees to the long-term survival of the country.

Our Commitment

- Clean Water Act – Set new parameters of what percentage of pollutants can be present or discharged into the ocean, river, (surface water) and groundwater water systems.
- Clean Air Act – Set new standards for what kinds of air pollutants can be released into the “ambient air” from factories and vehicles.
- •Revise and update National Environment Management Act 1994, Fisheries Act 2007, and the Fisheries Regulation 2008 – to fit the current environmental concerns and fisheries issues that The Gambia is experiencing.

- Upgrade and expand the already existing fisheries infrastructure in all the coastal fishing villages in The Gambia.
- Increase Gambians' participation in artisanal and industrial fisheries activities through training in the relevant technical areas and management, coupled with provision of fishing gears, incentive packages, and certification programs.
- Establish bilateral cooperation accords to acquire coastal fishing trawlers and seiner boats to harvest the fish resources of The Gambia for export as well as to protect our special economic zone from illegal fishing by foreign trawlers.
- Construct a centralized fish market for use by artisanal and industrial fishermen to facilitate the efficient handling, distribution and marketing of fish and fish products both locally and internationally. Decentralize these facilities in strategic locations in the regions so that fish as a source of protein is readily available in the rural areas.
- Improve national budget allocation for natural resources capacity building, institution strengthening, fisheries product development and quality control as well as monitoring, control, and surveillance of The Gambia's territorial waters against illegal fishing vessels.
- Reinvigorate The Gambia's national parks while at the same time boosting tourism by introducing wildlife species that are adaptable to the climate and ecosystem of the country.
- Establish a proper zoning, waste management and waste disposal strategy in close collaboration with regional and local authorities.
- Setup an environment action plan.
- Maintain ban on plastic bags and encourage establishment of waste recycling facilities by the private sector or through PPPs.
- Enforce environmental laws, enact more protection of forests and flora and fauna.
- Review existing fisheries treaties.
- Start garbage management programs and utilize garbage as a renewable resource.
- Protection of ocean and setting up of fisheries training centers

- Establish fisheries processing zones.
- Establish designated forest areas and management of forest resources.
- Improve the vegetation cover of The Gambia through reforestation.
- Reinstate and encourage annual tree-planting exercise.
- Revisit our forestry laws and review the capacity of the Forestry Department to ensure that they are adequate enough to protect our forest cover from undue exploitation.
- Review and adopt appropriate measures to provide access to reliable.
- Clean water in rural Gambia.
- Promote a policy of improving waste management both in the urban and rural areas as well as sanitation.



The Challenges

From Independence in 1965, The Gambia adopted a non-aligned stance in its foreign policy and within the realm of international relations. During the first phase of The Gambia's foreign policy, the country was hailed as a beacon of human rights and an instrumental actor amongst nation-states. The emergence of the Second Republic in 1994 sparked a paradigm shift from a period of diplomatic engagement to isolation due to the erratic, dictatorial and repressive character of the Jammeh regime's 22 years in power. The post-dictatorship phase(2017 to date) began with a sense of optimism but has so far not effectively tackled the challenges of ensuring that our foreign policy objectives are responsive to 21st century diplomacy and The Gambia's development blueprint



Opportunities

In-order for a UDP-led government to implement its robust and ambitious foreign policy objectives, it will have to regain the primary role The Gambia once played in the ECOWAS sub-region, African Union, the UN and within the arena of maintaining global peace and security. Prior to 1994, The Gambia had championed democracy, values of human rights, peace and reconciliation. Such reverence that was associated with The Gambia dissipated post 1994 until its revival in 2017.

A future UDP Government will rise to the challenge and play a more meaningful role in the ECOWAS sub region, on the continent, and on the global stage. A UDP government will invest immensely in the human resources of its Diplomatic and Consular personnel to ensure the high level of quality output and competence required to actualize such an ambitious foreign policy.

Our Commitments

- Playing a leading role in conflict prevention management, resolution and peacekeeping, peace-building, and post-conflict reconstruction.
- Supporting regional integration policies especially within the ECOWAS and African Union frameworks, while promoting South-South Cooperation and Senegalo-Gambian relations.
- Adhering to the rules-based international order.
- adhering to international norms, values and standards which promote human rights; and upholding The Gambia's commitment to global peace and security.
- Creating a conducive environment for mutually beneficial Foreign Direct Investment opportunities, especially investments into key sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and trade.
- Establishing a Diplomatic Centre of Excellence in-order to build the capacities of existing Foreign Service officials and conduct refresher courses for recruits on Diplomacy and International Relations.
- Re-evaluating The Gambia's Diplomatic footprint in order to maximize policy outcomes.
- Ensuring there is effective coordination, policy coherence, and synergies in The Gambia's bilateral and multilateral interactions.
- Investing in Digital Diplomacy initiatives that will enhance our overall Foreign Service, particularly the Information Technology infrastructure at the Ministry and diplomatic missions.
- Maintaining strong contacts with Gambians abroad and the global African Diaspora to promote projects of mutual benefit.
- Supporting efforts of the Gambian private sector and Public Enterprises in marketing their products and services overseas.



The Gambia's overarching national interests lie in the security, prosperity and wellbeing of her peoples and the socio-economic transformation of the country. A UDP government will exude a posture that accentuates that our national security interest is contingent on our guaranteed national sovereignty and territorial integrity. This posture is consistent with our national values and principles of peace and tolerance; and our desire for effective participation in the promotion of global peace, security, stability and integration.

While we hold true the critical need to own up and collectively recognise our painful security challenges and past, a UDP government will equally continue to be proud of and celebrate, as a shining light, the Armed and Security Services' achievements in domestic, international missions and duties.

A UDP government, motivated by the foregoing, coupled with her vision of inspiring hope, stability, justice, peace and prosperity, to which the armed and security services will play a critical role, intends to drive an enabling, complete and committed reforms/rebuilding of a Gambia Armed and Security Services that is sustainable, a defender of the Constitution, territorial integrity of the Republic and its citizens. We aspire to have an armed and security services

that is professional, lean, disciplined, well trained and equipped with a clear mandate whose doctrine will be Service, Honour and Pride.

To achieve this, the UDP intends to utilize and leverage the quantum of quality national human resource of civil and service personnel, within and outside of the country, currently serving or retired, respectively.

Our Commitment

We shall:

- Deliver a new and or restructured instruments of authority/mandate that is clear and enabling for entrenched service to the Gambian people and constitution; for a service of pride, honour to self and country;
- Deliver committed reforms and rebuilding of a lean, disciplined and professional Armed and Security Services on a new Scheme of Service;
- Deliver a comprehensive Security Service Human Resource Capacity and Career Development; and Services' Welfare Scheme covering welfare and wellbeing of service personnel during and after service.

Country Situation

The Gambia has emerged from a very difficult economic situation and a political crisis created by a dictator's refusal of democratic processes. The economy was stalled with no IMF program, failed rainy season and a completely flopped tourist season. The impact of these economic shocks is put at USD 31 million or 3 percent of GDP. Foreign reserves declined to a low of 1.6 months of import cover and standing at \$60 million.

The Coalition government found serious economic mismanagement and massive embezzlement of public funds by the previous regime resulting in further fiscal shocks estimated at 4 percent of GDP per year since mid-2014. Over \$50 million of Gateway revenues from Gamtel, D139.312 million from sand mining revenues were embezzled from the country's meagre financial resources.

The running down of the Gambia's economy resulted in massive domestic and foreign borrowings amounting to D48 billion (USD 1 billion) or 120 percent of GDP. Because of this, debt servicing consumes a huge amount of government revenue, leaving very limited fiscal space for financing critical infrastructure and human capital development needs. This is also denying our private sector access to finance and credit, vital for its growth and expansion. The Country continues to face serious power cuts due to the weak distribution network and the huge gap between power generation and demand. The shortage of water and electricity continues to affect growth in economic and social activities in the country.

The country's agricultural sector has not been provided with the investment that would significantly contribute to poverty reduction as 91% of the rural active labour are engaged in rain fed farming. The sector continues to be relatively undiversified with groundnuts still a major cash crop with no value chain support.

Gambia's trade has been marred by poor and stagnant domestic exports that does not march the ever- increasing growth in imports over the past two to three decades. This puts so much pressure on the limited foreign exchange reserves.

The Education sector has witnessed the establishment of new schools and classroom blocks that has led to the rapid increases in school enrolment rates and girls' education at the primary level. However, the increase in school enrolment has not been matched by improvements in quality and relevance of the curriculum and learning materials continues to be a source of serious concern.

The Gambia's strong primary healthcare (PHC), which was a model in the Sub region has deteriorated over the past years and is no longer able to serve the population adequately. Serious shortages of drugs and medical equipment have affected the main referral hospitals and health centers across the country. Health care is a serious concern for the Gambia that need urgent and focused efforts to address the weaknesses and shortcomings in the entire system.

Covid-19 Impact on the Economy

Grappling with the above enlisted challenges, which is not exhaustive, posed to The Gambia an immense development constraint for the people and government. With the Covid-19 pandemic came an even more monstrous burden and challenges on the economic, cultural and social lives of Gambians.

The pandemic has impacted the following key sectors of the economy:

1. Tourism ground to a halt, causing serious loss of business in the industry to hotels, suppliers, support industries like bars and restaurants, arts and craft businesses, tourist taxis and tour guides as well as trickling to the ordinary citizen. Tourism has been contributing about 20% of GDP and the failure of the industry translates to a huge loss of D XX billion to the country.
2. Trade and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) have been seriously hit by the pandemic as lock-downs affect small and medium scale businesses, women and market vendors, "loomos" retail and trade businesses amongst the long list affected in loss of income and revenues as well employment.
3. The self-employed trade-men and women employees have seen a drastic decline in their personal income which affect their families and children's welfare, especially those in the tourism and travel sectors. Some businesses may shut down and others on the brink of bankruptcy.
4. The Financial sector-increased fiscal debt, high non-performing loans and lower profitability of banks due to low economic activity of banks as banks remain cautious to lend. The Non-performing loans currently at 6.5%, desperate the CBG's with provision and loan repayments. Domestic debt is expanding to fund the current Government's political infrastructure projects. Lending rates remains at an average of 18.46%.

This situation requires a robust and timely government intervention both on public health response and to deploy massive fiscal stimulus to reignite the economy. These will enable people and firms to maintain cash flow and help with the settlement of bills, until some semblance of normality returns. The Gambia, unfortunately, does not have a credible public-health response to contain the pandemic and there is serious lack of transparency in the disbursement of billions of dalasi provided by donors for Covid-19 pandemic efforts.

The party's economic, fiscal and monetary policies will ensure that The Gambia is fully transformed from a corrupt ridden financial system to a more prudent and transparent economic hub in the sub region.

Economic and Fiscal Program Objectives:

- Supporting the restoration of good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law, empowering citizens through decentralization and local governance
- Stabilizing our economy, stimulating growth, and transforming the economy
- To embed a fiscal transparency and discipline culture in the civil service.

The UDP recognizes that good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law are critical requirements and a foundation for the stabilising and transforming the economy for progressive growth and prosperity of the citizens. The overall objective of economic development policy is to achieve transformational development results for citizens.

To transform the economy, post Covid-19 for the benefit of average Gambians, there is a need for policy reforms that will dismantle the dysfunctional institutional setups and failed systems of the former dictator.

- Key aspects of our reforms would include institutional strengthening, capacity building, and systems development to ensure transparency and accountability in the interest of good governance and fiscal management. Key components will include:
- Completing the new Constitution through the National Assembly to a referendum giving Gambians the choice of constitutional governance covering all human and fundamental rights, rule of law and the rights of women, disable, children, seniors and marginalised groups;
- Revitalise the civil service through a comprehensive Civil Service Reform Program to strengthen institutions, systems and establish professional career development paths that totally ensures the independence of the service from politics;
- Implementing the Security Services Reform Program in a pragmatic and progressive manner that will serve the needs and security requirements of the country
- Local Government Decentralisation to give a realistic value to the citizens and municipalities. The Local Area Councils will be empowered with institutional development, human and fiscal resources. Municipal and Local Area Councils will be empowered to implement progressive development programs for their respective areas.
- Set up a pandemic fund under the disaster management program- to support response efforts to the crisis and provide funding for short-time work allowances, granting credit assistance, tax deferrals for distressed businesses, and building food services.

- To support the above reforms, the party will create a conducive environment for a transformative economic programme through fiscal discipline and transparency to put the economy on the path of growth and development for the prosperity and progress of the citizenry. This will reduce inflation, ensure fiscal discipline, manage, control the public debt and implement transformative growth programs, including the following:
- Investing in Public Health Infrastructure, which is key priority with the aim of providing primary health for all in collaboration with the local authorities.
- Significant investments in the agricultural sector to create productive agro-businesses for both the local and export markets. Production through irrigation and mechanisation, establishment of storage, processing plants, packaging and bagging facilities (Value Chain support).
- Investing in the Port Expansion and Modernisation Programme to cater for the growing business sector, especially the trading and re-export sectors, with a modernised container terminal fully equipped with modern and efficient handling and transportation equipment. The container terminal will be expanded and modernised as well as a transportation depot for heavy vehicles engaged in the transportation of containers.
- Investing in river transportation, wharfs rehabilitation and a deep-water port in Basse to open and create huge opportunities for businesses, both in the Gambia and the Sub-region. This will also support our program in reversing rural-urban migration and illegal back-way migration.
- Expand the economic-base from taxation-based economy to production-based economy taking advantage of the country's regional competencies and comparative advantages to support the country's food security program.
- Revenue generation through tax reforms, broadening the tax base, increase in compliance, introducing an e-procurement and e-government platforms.
- Central Government relationships will be based on good governance transparent and accountable management practices with performance contracts signed with State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to ensure effective service delivery and value creation.
- Introduce a Fiscal Responsibility Act to institutionalize fiscal discipline and strengthen fiscal prudence; establish a real time balance sheet management to capture all local and international assets.

- Improve the business environment by cutting the red-tape and simplifying and digitizing government processes in business registration, land allocations, mortgage approvals for commercial ventures, access to power supply and other utilities, improve labour laws to encourage the required investments for growth.
- Investment parks and free economic zones will be supported effectively, and all administrative blocks, red tape and obstacles will be eliminated.
- Financial Sector Reform that will support financial inclusion of the unbanked population, through a regulated and secured payments interoperability system.
- Review of the Governance structure of the Central Bank to ensure autonomy and non-interference in the monetary policy management.





The Challenge

The Gambia has a very rich and diverse culture and cultural heritage; an excellent weather condition; a unique geographical location within six hours of direct flight from European tourist markets; a beautiful fauna and flora punctuated with navigable water bodies, variety of bird species, animals and forest cover; and a warm, friendly and welcoming people that can provide unparalleled hospitality to first time and frequent visitors alike.

Unfortunately, successive Gambia Governments have failed to use the cultural richness of the country to drive the tourism industry.

Instead, the industry is fraught with poor standards of facilities and services; the industry being synonymous with indecent practices such as pedophilia and sex tourism; poor business models that resulted in the lion shares of the returns remaining overseas; and the lack of strategy thinking and planning to expand the markets and services for a year-round tourism. Beyond an economic earner, The Gambia Tourism industry should stimulate growth in horticulture, fisheries, livestock, poultry, handicraft, floriculture, and culture exchanges. Sadly, inefficiencies in the sector have led to importation of even basic supplies such as eggs and vegetables which the country has abundant capacity to fully meet the demands of the tourism industry. The sector has therefore not been able to create the employment opportunities which it has capacity to do so if developed and managed wisely.

The Potential

It is estimated that 16 – 20 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of The Gambia is derived from Tourism. A UDP Government will commission a comprehensive review and revitalization of the Tourism Industry with the view to understanding how drivers of tourism could be harnessed to make the sector responsive. The following are the key drivers – our culture and cultural heritage; our excellent weather condition; our unique geographical location with



proximity to European tourist markets; our beautiful fauna and flora punctuated with navigable water bodies, variety of bird species, animals and forest cover; and our warm, friendly and welcoming people.

The Gambia's reputation as a peaceful country and having lower income level compared with most of our West African neighbours, is great potential for the country to attract and host South-South Tourism to complement the existing North-South Tourism. In-Country tourism offering weekend and holiday packages into the hinterland of The Gambia is non-existent generally due to lack of or poor electricity and internet connectivity in rural Gambia. This package could generally target urban-based executives,

expatriate community and professionals to explore the richness in rural The Gambia. A UDP Government will promote and mobilize local resources and talents to develop the rural services and facilities that would make in-country tourism a key driver for rural and community development.

Our Position

The UDP believes that Tourism will continue to be a significant source of revenue for The Gambia. However, for the country to maximally benefit from this rich and highly competitive industry, The Gambia has to invest in developing new, unique and attractive products that entice first timers and retain the frequent visitors. The UDP's analysis of the tourism industry shows that our reliance on a primary single source tourist destination heightens the vulnerability of the industry. One incident from that source destination can collapse The Gambia Tourism sector for a whole year. A UDP Government in collaboration with Tourism sector stakeholders will sell The Gambia as a destination of choice to other markets world-wide.

UDP believes that The Gambia's rich ethnic diversity has not been maximally developed and tapped into to create a strong tourism industry. We as a Party, believe that each of the ethnic groups has something unique to offer that can put The Gambia on the World cultural map. A UDP Government will be committed to the development of culture and cultural heritages to help us rediscover who we are as a people and a nation; and using the culture and the unique cultural artifacts of the diverse ethnic group to bluster the Tourism industry.

During the UDP's 24th Anniversary, the Party renewed its position and commitment to protecting the fauna and flora; responding positively to the deteriorating natural environment; and joining forces with the international community to combat the climate change effect. It is the Party's position that if The Gambia better manages and improves the abundant water bodies, forest cover and birds' habitats, these can be both sources of livelihood for the population and driver for the tourism industry.

The Party's review of the sector shows that under successive Government, the sector has not been developed and managed effectively to provide employment opportunities for the population, especially those operating private small businesses and self-employment ventures. It is the UDP's position that the Tourism and Culture sector has capacity to avail thousands of Gambians, in urban and rural locations, improved livelihood through products and services that they can provide from their respective communities.

Our Commitment

Bearing the significant contribution that the Tourism Industry is making to the GDP of the country, a UDP led Government will be committed to a Tourism and Culture sector development and revitalization programme which will be premised on the following policies framework and adherence to a related set of key programmatic commitments:

- The current business model in the Tourism sector is not working. Many times, a small crisis in Europe will completely paralyze or cripple the sector. UDP is committed to a comprehensive review and revitalization of the sector to enable it to play its role as a key GDP earner for the country.
- Regardless of whether it is a formal or informal sector, UDP believes that the quality of services and products cannot get better if the personnel in the industry have not got the desirable skills and attitudes. The UDP in Government will invest in developing and delivering customized training programmes for tourism sector personnel. The training institutions will be supported to review and improve their training programmes. The objective of this is to improve the standards and quality of services at all levels.

- UDP is aware of the linguistic diversity in The Gambia and the unique cultural artifact each group is able to offer to add to the beauty of The Gambia. A UDP Government is committed to the development and promotion of culture and cultural heritages as a means of creating a national identity and building a strong social cohesion.
- The Gambia has a rich habitat for birds and monkeys; a navigable river with an abundance of creeks and islands; dozens of parks that provide exciting moments for nature lovers; and a warm and smiling people if one is an anthropologist. UDP is committed to developing eco- tourism services to satisfy the needs for tourists who would like to explore the inner and natural beauty of The Gambia away from the services offered in five-star hotels.
- Sustainable Tourism cannot be realized if it is not premised on home-grown services and products. While we continue to strengthen our hold on our traditional European markets, a UDP Government will be committed to the development and promotion of South-South and in-country Tourism. We will work with stakeholders to develop innovative packages that will target African and Asian markets and also targeting urban-based executives, expatriate communities and professionals for the in-country tourism packages.
- The Gambia Tourism sector has a dented reputation of being a safe-haven for pedophilias and sex tourists. UDP as a Party and a Government is highly committed to a clean and decent tourism sector and will exercise zero-tolerance towards staff of the sector and tourists who are found to be engaged in inflicting indecent behaviours on children, adolescents and vulnerable persons.
- The current practice of most hotels and tourist resorts relying on imported food and beverage products is undesirable and not enhancing the local economy and for creating employment opportunities. UDP is committed to revitalizing the tourism supply services through improving production and market chains for horticulture, fisheries, livestock, poultry, handicraft, floriculture, and many others. Through this initiative the much-needed foreign exchange from the sector will be protected and many families will realize improvement in their livelihood.
- Tourism sector development is closely linked to aviation travel. A UDP Government will commission the review of the aviation services and facilities with the view to making Banjul International Airport as an international transit hub, with increased direct flight to and from Banjul. This is expected to enhance access to our new markets.

The Challenge

At independence in 1965, the Gambia inherited a robust and efficient colonial civil service which was built on professionalism and merit. The First Republic built on this and created one of the most efficient and effective civil services in English-speaking Africa. However, the quality of the civil service started diminishing with the infusion of politics, regionalism, and tribalism in civil service recruitments, deployments and promotions. Progressively, a professional civil service became politicized even though the General Orders (GO) prohibits civil servants from openly engaging in political activities. The creation of the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) or Parastatals also saw a robust profit-making SOEs which not only mobilized financial resources but were also instrumental in introducing new technologies and innovations while at the same time, creating employment opportunities for Gambians. These SOEs/Parastatals have also been politicized, with their mobilized resources being used for the personal gain of a few individuals as was revealed by the “Janneh Commission”. This is the challenge of the current context of the state of the civil service and the SOEs/Parastatals in The Gambia.

The 1994 coup d’etat by junior army officers was ostensibly staged because of allegations of inefficiencies, ineffectiveness in service delivery, lack of transparency and accountability and corruption. However, the Second Republic quickly ushered in the most blatant politicization and tribalization of the civil service. A rapid transformation of the civil service into a partisan, tribal organization doing the bidding of an entrenched dictatorship. Appointments, deployments and promotions were not made based on qualification, experience and merit. As a result, service delivery and transparency in doing business declined leading to endemic systemic corruption as was revealed by the “Janneh Commission”. The State became incapable of looking after the welfare of the citizens. The delivery of social services (education, health, water, sanitation, electricity and infrastructure) became impossible. The “Capable State” declined into the “Incapable State”.

The challenge, therefore, is what makes government effective; how do you embed culture, capabilities and change in the civil service of The Gambia for it to deliver services effectively, transparently and accountably to Gambians? In effect, how do you transform The Gambia into a “Capable State”?

The Potential

CONTINUED

Reforming the civil service and SOEs/Parastatals into a capable, transparent and accountable public service and SOEs is a prerequisite for the creation of a “Capable State” which could deliver effective, efficient and accountable public services to its citizens by improving good governance, performance, accountability, probity and transparency of public services delivery systems.

Singapore and Rwanda provide good case studies with which to examine the concept of the “Capable State” and implement it in The Gambia. Decisions in both countries usually get made on the merits, not because of corruption, ideology or self-aggrandizement. This is because the capable state requires strong political leadership coupled with institutions which are self-critical in assessing their performance in delivering services through systems and processes that are based on institutional cultures and norms.

Reforming the civil service and SOEs/Parastatals of The Gambia will therefore require strong political leadership, institutional arrangements and alignments which augur well for efficient, effective, transparent and accountable service delivery with self-critical institutions capable of conceptualizing and delivering those services.

Our Commitment

Our commitment is to create a “Capable State” which can deliver transformational development results required for improving the standard of living of Gambians. A State driven and managed by a capable, professional, transparent and accountable civil service which is fit for purpose, and which will deliver the social services the country needs.

Our commitment is to also create an oversight entity which will set, track, measure and report on transformational development results. This entity will be a Delivery Unit reporting directly to the President of the Republic with sub-delivery units in all Ministries which will be digitized and linked to an oversight website which the President can use to monitor the performance of each Ministry through Ministry links to the website. The staffing of the Delivery Unit will be that of 2-3 professionals who will report directly to the President through the Unit Head. The UK, Australia, New Zealand and the USA both had very effective Delivery Units.

The role and remit of the unit will be determined at its inception stages but will essentially be to monitor, track and implement, monitor and report on the transformational development policy priorities and results of the President and Vice President with the aim of achieving

transformational development results. The aim is to transform the Gambia into a “Capable State” with every Gambian benefitting from the gains of development so that income disparities, poverty and inequality can be significantly reduced across the country.

In all the reforms to be undertaken, a UDP government will apply performance contracts across the government, SOEs, and local government authorities

The Challenge

The Gambia has had various forms of decentralization policies and strategies since independence. The First Republic created most of the existing State-Owned Enterprises/Parastatals (SOEs) as well as local government authorities, while the Second Republic created additional SOEs/Parastatals mainly as regulatory institutions over public and private operators.



ROHEY MALICK LOWE
MAYOR OF BANJUL



TALID AHMED BENSOUDA
MAYOR OF KMC

In the main, the intention of the Government in creating these SOEs/Parastatals was to transfer responsibility for the planning, financing and management of certain public functions from the central government and its agencies to field units of government agencies, subordinate units or levels of government, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, or area-wide regional or functional authorities.

While the creation of these SOEs/Parastatals at the time was considered as new and innovative ways of public administration, they were mainly politically decentralized entities minus the need for administrative, fiscal and market decentralization. These decentralization efforts negated the fact that the purpose of a decentralization policy is to deepen, sustain grassroots-based democratic governance and promote equitable local development by the enhancement of citizen participation and strengthening the local government system, while maintaining effective functional and mutually accountable linkages between the central and local government entities.

In effect, decentralization when effective and efficient, should result in inclusive development and citizen empowerment at the local level for the management of their own affairs. In practical development terms, this is what is meant by leaving no one behind and ensuring that everyone benefits from the results of development.

The challenge shows that for devolution and decentralization of powers to be effective and efficient, there has to be a comprehensive approach to addressing all three forms of administrative decentralization: deconcentration, delegation, and devolution. However, an appropriate balance has to be created between these three forms of decentralization for them to be mutually inclusive and reinforced through statutory and/or legislative promulgation.

In addition to deconcentration, delegation and devolution, a bold political leadership would extend devolution of powers and decentralization to include (a) administrative decentralization; (b) political decentralization; (c) fiscal decentralization; and (d) economic or market decentralization. Local empowerment requires all aspects of decentralization to be implemented even if it is done in phases.

From a government perspective, the most complete forms of decentralization are privatization and deregulation because they shift responsibility for functions from the public to the private sector or to PPP entities. Privatization and deregulation are usually, but not always accompanied, by economic liberalization and market development policies.

Under appropriate conditions, all these forms of decentralization can play important roles in broadening participation in political, economic, and social activities because decentralization can help government ministries reach larger numbers of local areas with services; allow greater political representation for diverse political, ethnic and socio-cultural groups in decision making.

Decentralization is not a panacea, and it does have potential disadvantages. Decentralization may not always be efficient and if not properly implemented, may create new country-wide economic leakages at the local level since the potential for local elites to hijack decentralization is great and pervasive. Therefore, before embarking on decentralization, thorough and comprehensive local-level assessments must be conducted to put in place the enabling environment, ways of minimizing economic leakages, and providing adequate financial resources for service delivery. This has to be supported by clear and unambiguous anti-corruption measures intended to protect against corruption at the central and local government levels.

Our Commitment

Our commitment is to review the current decentralization frameworks in place and use the results of the review to plan and implement a phased strategic decentralization program which will include administrative, political, fiscal, and economic or market decentralization. The contours of the decentralization policy and program will be anchored on deconcentration, delegation and devolution of powers from the central to local governments and from local governments to local-level entities.

Regarding economic or market decentralization, we will be mindful of the pitfalls of privatization

wherein, key national assets were privatized under both the First, Second and Third Republics. Some of these key national assets will be revived as a way of creating rural growth centers wherein rural unemployment, income inequalities and disparities could be addressed through the implementation of well-thought-out public policy and program measures. A secondary aim is to create the enabling environment for stemming the rural-to-urban migration phenomenon and encouraging urban-to-rural migration through the provision of vital social services and amenities to be used as an incentive structure for addressing migration to urban areas and irregular migration through youth economic empowerment.

Before developing elaborate plans for decentralization, we will assess the lowest organizational level of government at which functions can be carried out efficiently and effectively and for functions that do not have to be provided by the government. These assessments will be the basis of any privatization which we may have to embark on. If entities must be privatized, key aspects of the entity to be privatized will remain to be controlled by the Government as national assets.

However, to the extent feasible, key national assets will not be privatized while we will revive some of the key national assets already privatized over the years such as the NTC, GCDB (Gambia Commercial & Development Bank), The Agricultural Development Bank (expanding it to include an Industrial Development Division), Cooperative Union, the former GPMB and Gambia Airways.

We realize that the success of decentralization frequently depends heavily on training for both national and local officials in decentralized administration. Technical assistance is often required for local governments, private enterprises and local non-governmental groups in the planning, financing and management of decentralized functions.

The overarching intention of our decentralization framework is to ensure that transformational development results are achieved so that the lives and living conditions of average Gambians can be improved to acceptable global and regional human development standards



Mariama Secka
Deputy Party Leader



Yamundow Yarboe
National President



Oley Dibba-Wadda
Deputy Senior Admin
Secretary



Hon. Ya Kumba Jaiteh

Current Situation

The role of women in The Gambia pre- and post-independence has been key. Women currently comprise 51% of the population in The Gambia and have been actively involved in the social and economic development of The Gambia as farmers, as caregivers, and as custodians of the social fabric and they place great emphasis on the values of social cohesion across societies in The Gambia, yet they are marginalised on several fronts.

In the Gambia, women face low nutritional status at household level compared to men, despite the fact that, they are the main producers and processors of food. Cultural practices militate against women control of cash income thereby contributing to household food insecurity. These practices also force women to deny themselves food in the right quantity and quality in favour of male adults and children. In most cases this seriously compromises their nutritional status. The Gambia has a relatively high Maternal Mortality Ratio 556/100, 000 live births, with Infant Mortality Rate 75/1,000. Access to health facilities. Malnutrition continues to be a major public health problem as indicated by MICS 2006, stunting 19 percent, wasting 6.8 percent and 17 percent underweight. The maternal mortality ratio is estimated at 556/100,000 live births, majority of which are due to haemorrhage and eclampsia.

The illiteracy rate of women in girls in The Gambia is equally higher than that of the boys because when families are forced to make a decision on whom to prioritise to send to school, they will inevitably send their sons to schools instead. Yet women are the largest actors in the informal trade sectors. Provisions for adult education is limited. Access to collateral is next to impossible as most of them do not own lands.

The increase in rape and violence against women (both physical, psychological and emotional violence is on the rise and even were women. Come forward to report these cases, they are shunned. Their role in political leadership is limited to “yai compin” and as cheer-leaders yet they play and instrumental role in building up male

political leaders in The Gambia. As a token, their role is limited to a mere percentage of 30% in parliament and in leadership roles amongst political parties and are often nominated into these roles. Their limited and or lack of education also hinders their participation and contribution in these important positions as second in command as deputies or Vice President.

These and many other issues affect women's bargaining powers to allow them opportunities to make significant contributions in the

Opportunities

Yet, despite all these challenges, they remain the backbone of the informal sector particularly in the SMEs and MSMEs. Today, most girls who remain and continue their higher and tertiary education outperform boys. One would imagine the impact of the social and economic status of The Gambia if women were afforded similar access and opportunities as men in The Gambia.

Within the UDP, The National Women's wing is a bedrock of the Party. This brings together all the women's structures of the Party. They are an active mobilisation forum engaging in politics as well as development initiatives at the local and community levels. The Women's wing was particularly active in 2016 in the fight against dictatorship. They established the "Kalamar Revolution" a symbol demonstrating their role as custodians and caretakers of the social fabric of this country. This peaceful demonstration method was quite effective and became a galvanising strategy for the UDP struggle.

UDP's Commitment

- Unapologetically target improving the welfare and quality of life of women and addressing the high cost of living that affects women's lives and livelihoods and that of their families.
- Affirmative action and a minimum of 30% of women in the UDP government top decision-making structures
- A strong stance and zero tolerance on violence of any form against women and girls;
- A priority on women's reproductive health and rights especially on maternal mortality and the implications of post COVID-19 side effects;
- Emphasis on women's entrepreneurial skills and funding for women's enterprises especially in the informal sector;



- Strong financial support to women farmers;
- Mechanisms to encourage women's political participation and decision making;
- Zero tolerance on non-conformity to the education of girls.
- Enhancement on the improvement of the lives and livelihoods of women.
- Operationalisation of gender units in stakeholder institutions to ensure effective gender mainstreaming in all sectoral policies, programmes and projects design and implementation .
- Achievement of 30% of women representation in decision making bodies at all levels.
- Ensure law enforcement agencies are consistent and adequately equipped with the implementation of gender related laws.
- Consistent harmonisation of operation mechanisms including the domestication and implementation of international conventions on gender.

- Equitable investment of resources in public programs to male and female entrepreneurs in both formal and informal sectors.
- Ensure infant morbidity and mortality rate are significantly reduced.
- Ensure gender parity at all levels and equitable access to equality education and appropriate livelihood skills for women and men, girls and boys.
- Ensure the attainment of equal employment opportunities for women and men and full operationalisation of the National Employment Policy and Action Plan
- Ensure equal access to productive resources (land, capital, farming implements and skill and inputs).
- Ensure the reduction of national poverty level and ensure equitable distribution of national resources between male and female.
- Ensure community members, especially women are fully empowered to participate and take ownership of development projects and programmes.



- Support women and men to understand human rights issues and to identify cases of violation, demand, access, seek redress and enjoy a dignified life.
- Ensure harmonization and domestication and implementation of international protocols and conventions with national laws.
- Enact laws that will prohibit all forms of gender-based violence.
- Ensure the full enforcement of the constitutional provisions that guarantee equality between women and men.
- Provide all actors in national development such as policy makers, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and donors, reference guidelines for recognizing and addressing gender concerns
- Make informed development policy decisions and ensure that gender perspectives are mainstreamed in all policies and programmes to benefit both women and men, girls and boys equitably.
- Ensure the Strengthening of national institutions capacities to promote women's participation in national development.
- Promote collective sharing and use of gender disaggregated data in planning and implementation of development programmes.
- Ensure equitable distribution of resource and capacity building for women and men in all sectors and institutions.
- Promote positive image of women in the media.
- Encourage increased enrolment and retention of girls and boys at all levels.
- Advocate for more classroom space to cater for the increased numbers of students.
- Create awareness on the legal provision for the minimum of marriage, 18 years.
- Advocate for the re-entry programmes for girls and at all levels to allow more girls who dropout to come back to school.

- Encourage the provision of facilities in teacher training institutions for equal enrolment of female and male students.
- Advocate for equal opportunities for training and promoting women and men teachers for managerial positions at all levels.
- Encourage the continued mainstreaming of gender in all curricula.
- Promote gender sensitization of all teachers and strengthen the gender units at all teacher training institutions.
- Advocate for the Strengthening of the Gender Unit at the Department of State for Education.
- Advocate for strengthening, training of Cluster Monitors and Regional Education Heads in gender analysis, monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensure the availability of sex disaggregated data on enrolment and performance of girls and boys at all levels of education.
- Encourage the dissemination and training of gender related education policies to the communities at all levels.
- Advocate for the provision of counselling services including family planning to female and male students.
- Sensitize students to report cases of sexual, verbal abuse and harassment.
- Ensure an enabling environment in learning institutions for students to report sexual, verbal abuse and harassment.
- Encourage girls and boys to study science subjects.
- Encourage the provision of scholarships and career guidance talks in schools to encourage girls and boys to join non-traditional fields.
- Link and strengthen the National Adult Literacy programme to the formal education system.
- Ensure the elimination of all forms of harmful ritual and cultural practices that hinder girls and boy's participation in education

- Promote the creation of gender awareness among policy makers and health care providers at all levels.
- Ensure the establishment and strengthening of a Gender Unit at the Ministry of Health.
- Expand maternal, child, and neonate care Services countrywide.
- Improve staff motivation and retention among midwives, nurse's public health officers
- Promote healthy reproductive behaviours among men and women.
- Encourage intensified information, education and communication (IEC) services on reproductive health at community level.
- Promote IEC and counselling on adolescent health, fertility, STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- Advocate for the abandonment of all forms of harmful traditional practices and reduction of high prevalence of unsafe abortions.
- Create opportunities for the improvement of the nutritional status of vulnerable groups, particularly, pregnant and lactating women, girls and boys.
- Empower women and girls educationally, socially and economically to enhance their self – esteem and equity in gender relations
- Establish and strengthen existing post-abortion care and counselling to the youth.
- Advocate for the Provision free Fistula and Hernia care service in all health care facilities.
- Advocate for the introduction of laws in the provision of safe abortion services for medically at-risk mothers and victims of rape.
- Create and sustain an enabling and conducive environment through advocacy and sensitization to ensure continued political commitment for the elimination of gender-based violence and other forms of social taboos.
- Advocate for the abandonment of all forms of harmful traditional practices.
- Provide treatment and counselling services for victims of domestic violence and rape.