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## ACRONYMS

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)	Gambia Diaspora Experts Initiative (GDEI)
African Diaspora Finance Corporation (ADFC)	Gambia Immigration Department (GID)
African Union (AU)	Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA)
Alternatives to Detention (ATDs)	Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS)
Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI)	Gambia Press Union (GPU)
Automated Clearing House (ACH)	Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI)
Balance of Payment Manual (BPM)	Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI)
Bilateral Labour Agreements (BLAs)	German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)
Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG)	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)
Central River Region (CRR)	Government of The Gambia (GoTG)
Child and Environment Development Association-Gambia (CEDAG)	Green Recovery-focused National Development Plan (GRF-NDP)
Child Friendly Space (CFS)	Health, Border and Mobility Management (HBMM)
Children and Youth in Mobility (CYM)	Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs)
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)
Common Country Analysis (CCA)	Information Communication Technology (ITC)
Common Operational Partnership (COP)	International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Department of Information Services (DOIS)	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Department of Social Welfare (DSW)	International Health Regulation (IHR)
Diaspora Direct Investment (DDI)	International Migration Review Forum (IMRF)
Diaspora Development Fund (DDF)	International Trade Center (ITC)
Diaspora Investment Incentives Scheme (DIIS)	Lower River Region (LRR)
Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)	Long-Term Development Vision (LTDV)
Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS)	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)
Flow Monitoring Points (FMPs)	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR)	Migrants as Messengers (MaM)
Flow Monitoring Survey (FMS)	Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA)	Micro-Finance Institutions (MFI)
Gambia Immigration Department (GID)	
Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA)	
Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS)	
Gambia Commission for Refugees (GCR)	
Gambia Diaspora and Migration Directorate (GDMD)	

Ministry of Foreign Affairs International  
Cooperation and Gambians Abroad  
(MoFA)  
Ministry of Finance and Economic  
Affairs (MOFEA)  
Ministry of Health (MoH)  
Ministry of Higher Education, Research,  
Science and Technology (MOHERST)  
Ministry of Interior (MoI)  
Migration Information and Data  
Analysis System (MIDAS)  
Ministry of Information, and  
Communication Infrastructure (MoICI)  
Migration Information Centers (MICs)  
Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional  
Integration and Employment (MoTIE),  
Migration and Sustainable Development  
in The Gambia project (MSDG)  
Micro, Small and Medium-Sized  
Enterprises (MSME)  
Money Transfer Operations (MTOs)  
National Agency Against Trafficking In  
Persons (NAATIP)  
National Accreditation and Quality  
Assurance Authority (NAQAA)  
National Coordination Mechanism on  
Migration (NCM)  
National Development Plan (NDP)  
National Employment Policy and Action  
Plan (NEAP)  
National Financial Inclusion Strategy  
(NFIS)  
National Migration Policy (NMP)  
National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

## I. Introduction and Methodology

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) is an effort, led by UN Member States, to set out a range of principles, commitments and understanding among Member States regarding the governance of migration in all its dimensions. It elaborates a comprehensive international cooperation framework on migrants and human mobility, grounded in the existing normative framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs). The Government of The Gambia (GoTG) was among 164 Member States that adopted the GCM at the United Nations General Assembly on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

This report presents the Government of The Gambia's first national review of the GCM in April 2021 as well as updating of the same; the reference point also being the adoption of Agenda 2030. The review process of the status of implementation of the GCM objectives is based on renewed interest by the GoTG, specifically the Office of Vice President (OVP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad, which have assumed the leading role to coordinate the process of updating the national voluntary review report on the status of implementation of the GCM. This review builds on the deliberations during the GCM regional review process in 2021 and further serves as an input to the International Migration

consisting of seven UN Agencies namely, (IOM, ITC, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP) to support the GoTG on this process.

Aligned with the vision and the overall goal of the National Development Plan of The Gambia (2018-2021, which has been extended until 2022) in restoring good governance, respect for human rights, and rule of law, the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM) was established on 6 November 2019 under the leadership of the Office of the Vice President (OVP). With the establishment of the NCM and technical support from IOM, the Government of The Gambia has put in place a coordination structure to ensure a whole-of government approach on migration governance. The NCM launch also included a GCM prioritization exercise where the Government selected fifteen (15) out of the twenty-three (23) objectives of the GCM as priority objectives to address in short- to mid-term.

Under the overall guidance of the OVP as the lead for the NCM, the first national voluntary review was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad (MOFA), with technical assistance from IOM, The Gambia. The national review process to engage all stakeholders working on migration issues was launched on 26 November 2020. The following Government institutions who are actively taking part in the NCM provided valuable inputs that formed the basis for the first national review report which was finalized in April 2021: Office of the President (OP), Office of the Vice President (OVP), Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS), Gambia Commission for Refugees (GCR), Gambia Immigration Department (GID), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Affairs and Gambians Abroad (MOFA), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Information, and Communication Infrastructure (MoICI), Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MoTIE), National Agency Against Trafficking In Persons (NAATIP) and National Youth Council (NYC).

By the time IMRF is convened in May 2022, another year would have passed since the submission of the initial national review report on GCM implementation in April 2021. H

## II. Policy and Enabling Environment

Since the launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), The Gambia has embarked on effectively aligning the SDGs with its medium-term National Development Plan (NDP 2018-2021, which has now been extended until the end of 2022). Importantly, the Government has expressed its willingness and commitment to the mid-term and annual review and implementation of the NDP, coupled with ensuring proper assessment of the significant steps taken in the attainment of the SDGs. The NDP has been noted as the first among a series of plans that will help domesticate the implementation of the SDGs in The Gambia.

Critical both to the SDGs and NDP is the issue of migration. The Government of The Gambia is committed to ensuring that migrants enjoy their fundamental human, social and economic rights and leveraging diaspora remittances and investments thereby contribu

19 (Create conditions for migrants and diaspora to fully contribute to sustainable development) and 20 (Promote faster, safer, and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants). Although the NDP (2018-2021 does not capture migration as a cross-cutting theme, it however highlights the need for enhancing the role of Gambian diaspora in national development. Moreover, consultations are ongoing within the structures of the government as well as the UN system to reflect migration more comprehensively in the next iteration of the

rights of Gambian and non-Gambian migrants in The Gambia; addressing internal migration, encouraging engagement of Gambian diasporas; developing inclusive mechanisms for return and reintegration and facilitating migration in the context of climate change adaptation.

The policy also promotes national-level coordination and calls for necessary revisions of migration-





Objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants; and

Objective 23: Strengthen international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration.<sup>4</sup>

During the initial GCM implementation review process that began in November 2020, the review examined only some GCM objectives which were considered key at the time of the review, and not specifically the 15 prioritized objectives. It was observed that data was limited and, where available, it focused more on administrative data. It was equally observed that since the adoption of the GCM and prioritization of the objectives, relatively limited activities were carried out, although critical mechanisms were put in place for coordination and engagement. Therefore, the main objective of this review exercise is not only to update the earlier report to capture all 15 prioritized objectives, but also to look into the remaining eight non-prioritized objectives to ascertain whether any progress has been registered in their implementation since the April 2021 review.

**GCM Objective 1: Collect and Utilize accurate and disaggregated data as basis for**

Flow Monitoring System (FMS) and the Migration Data Analysis System (MDAS) (UNDP) and the  
Briefing Note on the Migration Data Analysis System (MDAS) (UNDP) and the  
activities of the Migration Data Analysis System (MDAS) (UNDP) and the  
participating organizations in the Migration Data Analysis System (MDAS) (UNDP) and the  
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monitoring and reporting activities in the Migration Data Analysis System (MDAS) (UNDP) and the  
with the Migration Data Analysis System (MDAS) (UNDP) and the  
international migration data. Since the launch in December 2020 to April 2022, seven (7) Flow  
Monitoring and Reporting (FMR) reports have been published<sup>6</sup>. Data collection commenced in June  
2022 with monthly reports published at DTM Reports/Flow monitoring  
(<https://www.dtm.int/node/17>). Moreover, The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS) has  
integrated migration modules in some of its periodic surveys and is committed to  
collecting migration data and have recommended for the formulation of indicators to track  
migration. GBoS is preparing to include migration related modules for the upcoming  
national census to be conducted in 2023.

In addition, the Ministry of Interior in close coordination with the Gambia Immigration  
Department has launched Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) at four (4)  
(PoEs) with real time data exchange capability with the Immigration  
headquarters. This system will enable the Government of The Gambia to monitor more effectively  
the flow of migration and provide a basis for  
migration data analysis in the  
country. This system will  
further enhance the system through its  
state-of-the-art technology and its  
national security.

## **GCM Objective 2: Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country**

The Gambia is committed to this objective and has taken various initiatives with a view to reducing youth unemployment through improved skills training. Under the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MOHERST) a National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Roadmap was launched to improve relevance, quality and access of skills training for young Gambians and the National TVET Committee was established with technical support from ITC. The Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) in Mansa Konko has been renovated and is now providing skills training opportunities for young people especially those from the rural areas. The TVET offering at GTTI Annex in Julangal, URR, has also been diversified and expanded and construction is under way to open the training centre in Ndemban, LRR. The Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI) has opened several rural annexes and introduced new foundation programs. Other private training institutions such as Gaye Njorro or Insight Training Centre have also significantly increased their regional footprint. The decentralization of the skills training offering and investment in the TVET quality has been supported by Government flagship programs like the EU-funded Youth Empowerment Project and the Tekki Fii Make it In the Gambia Program, that are implemented in partnership with ITC, GIZ, Enabel and IMVF.

MOHERST, the National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA), in partnership with ITC, have introduced a formalized apprenticeship framework which is based on a competency model developed with the support of Sector Skills Council. The apprenticeship framework has been rolled out with employers and relevant private sector associations in three pilot sectors including agribusiness, construction and ICT.

Youth and Trade Roadmaps have been developed and launched by the Government through MOTIE, MOICI, MOTC related to agribusiness, ICT, tourism and creative industries, respectively. The roadmaps provide a blueprint to tap job opportunities for young Gambians by driving value addition in key sectors. More than 5000 young entrepreneurs have been supported under the Tekki Fii Program including through 1000 grants and start up packages. A mini-grant facility and revolving mini-loan scheme were launched to facilitate access to finance for young entrepreneurs. This activity was conducted from 2019 to date.

The Gambia College has opened a new campus in Basse URR in 2020 for Teacher training and various government partners are now providing trainings for young people in their own localities. Cash for work opportunities for returned migrants and those at risk of migrating is being provided. IOM in close collaboration with NEDI and GIEPA also provides entrepreneurship training to returnees.

Committing to this objective, the Ministry of Trade has launched the National Employment Policy 2021 with the aim of providing employment for at least 150,000 young people and the National Employment Policy and Action Plan (2022-2026) have been finalized and approved by the Cabinet and implementation has started.

The Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS) through different projects together with partners like the WFP, UNDP, Spanish Red Cross, and National Youth Council of The Gambia has contributed to addressing the adverse drivers of migration in communities affected by climate change. These includes livelihood project for women and household members, climate change mitigation/adaptation measures, peace building initiatives to prevent inter-communal conflict which is also an adverse factor compelling people to move, and support to migrants to withstand the economic impact of COVID-19. These initiatives have witnessed the engagement of more than 4500 people with 128,500 trees planted in 40 communities in NBR, CRR and URR. More than 1530 participants have received training on drought resilience crops management; and 65 women also received capacity building on eco-stove production to minimize the impact of climate change. Gender mainstreaming was observed in all programme and activity implementations.

The UNDP has provided livelihood support in various modalities, addressing lack of livelihood and employment opportunities as a driver of migration. Over 120 beneficiaries have been provided with business development services, 86 youths have been trained in agro-business at the Gambia Songhai Centre, 320 women entrepreneurs have been supported to participate in trade fairs, 200 women have been trained in e-commerce, and 270 women have been supported for improved access to finance. To counteract the adverse effects on livelihoods affected by Covid-19 impacts, the UNDP has also supported communities previously involved in eco-tourism, by social protection assistance and capacity development for alternative livelihoods. UNDP has also supported the Programme for Accelerated Community Development (PACD), through which 79 communities have seen improved infrastructure (water and electricity) and provided with some agricultural equipment and training.



There are four (4) Migration Information Centres (MICs) established as a result of the partnership between National Youth Council (NYC) and the IOM. Since inception, the centers have provided many services to the youth, potential migrants, migrant returnees and others. The MICs are situated in four regions in the Gambia, Basse URR, Pakalinding LRR, Brikama WCR, and Barra NBR. The MICs serve as a safe space for the youth. They serve as information hubs where youths could get valuable information on migration as well as available opportunities in The Gambia.





Gambian students to undergo undergraduate, Masters and PhD training programs in all the sectors of the economy.

As part of scheduling the service commitments under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), MOTIE has set up a Standing Committee on Services to facilitate public private dialogue and identify opportunities for the private to tap regional market opportunities in priority integration sectors, namely professional services, finance, transport and logistics, tourism and ICT.

**GCM Objective 6: Facilitate Fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work**

The Gambia through the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE) in partnership with IOM has developed a validated Ethical Recruitment Guide and a Pre-Departure Training Manual.

Subsequent to the establishment and opening of the job center at the Department of Labour with assistance from IOM and ITC, another Job Center has been opened in Basse. Through the cooperation with the National Youth Council and ITC, the Youth Centres in Soma, Bundung and Janjanbureh have been revitalized and supported to provide information services to young Gambians related to job opportunities and migration. A youth service directory ([www.yzd.gm](http://www.yzd.gm)) and a tollfree line have been established to provide more information about available opportunities in The Gambia.

Development, MOTIE has also signed an MOU with the German Development Agency to establish a migrant advisory center in all the regions.

The Labour Bill 2022, has also been finalized and approved by the Cabinet and it is currently at the Ministry of Justice for onward transmission to the National Assembly for enactment. This Bill, when enacted, will provide a mandate to the Department to regulate

assistance, including family tracing, for children who have returned to The Gambia. The Gambia Red Cross is well positioned and continues to provide relevant humanitarian assistance and protection to vulnerable migrants irrespective of their status - including those in transit. Access to basic essential services provided to migrants includes the healthcare, food, shelter, Non-Food Items (NFI) (clothing, hygiene/dignity kits), psychosocial support, legal support, family reunification, first aid, information, etc. Moreover, the Gambia Immigration Department referred vulnerable migrants to IOM to support with feeding, accommodation, and return to their respective countries in West Africa.

To strengthen mental health and psychosocial support for migrants and Gambian returnees, IOM and WHO supported the Ministry of Health in the development of a national Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) strategic framework and MHPSS Curriculum in line with WHO

psychosocial support services for the successful and sustainable reintegration of migrants and Gambian returnees. The curriculum is being used in training health institutions to train students and health care professionals to strengthen the capacity in the country.

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare through the support of UNICEF has developed the National Strategic Communication Plan on Children on the Move. It has been designed to address issues of protection needs for children on the move in The Gambia. The Strategy will particularly target children, women, young people, parents and guardians, men, first line officers, and law enforcement officers, with information to raise awareness and understanding of the risks along migratory routes and how these risks can be minimised.

### **GCM Objective 8: Save lives and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants**

IOM The Gambia in collaboration with Gambian authorities mainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad and the Ministry of Interior; provides support to stranded migrants in The Gambia and contributes with information sharing mechanisms for missing migrants under the framework of the international Missing Migrants project.

Committing to this objective, the Gambia Red Cross Society as an auxiliary institution to the Government of The Gambia has worked with communities, volunteers and partners to ensure preparation and response to humanitarian needs of migrants and this includes restoration of family link services which focuses on preventing separations, restoring and maintaining contact. When families are separated as a result of conflict, violence, migration or natural and man-made disasters, the Red Cross and Red Crescent network, helps to search for missing loved ones and relatives with the aim of restoring and maintaining family contact. This also includes missing migrants.

With a focus on promoting cross-border consultations for enhanced protection and assistance services to children, Save the Children in 2020 set up a Cross-border Taskforce to coordinate the return of Gambian, Senegalese, Guinean and Malian children identified in various places within Senegal. This taskforce was coordinated at Regional Office level and was most instrumental at the peak of the Covid pandemic. The taskforce included UNICEF, Child and Environment Development Association-Gambia (CEDAG) and other institutions in The Gambia. To further operationalize this cross-border cooperation, the Protejem Project intends on providing hybrid training for Gambian, Senegalese, Guinean and Malian border post officials.

### **GCM Objective 9: Strengthen the transnational response to smuggling of migrants**

The Gambia is a party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and all its three protocols including the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. The Gambia

country

Combat Trafficking in Persons Report. However, there have been efforts made by NAATIP and

Inter-Agency Border Coordination Committee meetings are usually reported and discussed at the NCM Border Management TWG meetings.

The Gambia Immigration Department has also facilitated the rehabilitation of three (3) border posts and the construction of two (2) border posts. The rehabilitation and construction of border posts lead to a more conducive working environment. New infrastructure, donation of equipment





#### **GCM Objective 14: Enhance Consular protection, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad has designated First Secretaries or Counselors in diplomatic missions abroad as diaspora and migration liaisons or focal points. Additionally, the Government of The Gambia organized a consular mission to Libya in March 2018 and to Niger in January 2021 to discuss the feasibility of opening a consular presence in Tripoli and Niamey, among other topics. In August 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with other stakeholders embarked on a European Tour to Gambian migrant destination countries to collect firsthand information on ways to engage them in nation building and to ensure they have consular protection within the EU.

#### **GCM Objective 15: Provide access to basic services for migrants**

In ensuring migrants have access to health services, regardless of their status, IOM through the



migration routes serving the purpose of HSPs, and with the commitment to further establish more in other transit areas. There are MoUs signed between the Gambia Red Cross and relevant stakeholders like the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare on behalf of DSW, major health facilities under the Ministry of Health, The Gambia Immigration Department (GID), and the National Youth Council of The Gambia (NYC), to strengthen the protection system for people on the move- while ensuring their access to healthcare and other humanitarian services.

In a similar vein, Save the Children International continues to provide the needed protection and assistance services to Children and Youth in Mobility (CYM) upon identification. This includes the provision of emergency kits, food, health care services, psychosocial support, legal support and family reintegration through a service provider - CEDAG. In terms of accommodation and access to recreational facilities, Save the Children International works in partnership with COOPI, an Italian NGO operating a Child Friendly Space in Farafenni in the North Bank Region. The Child Friendly Space (CFS) is used by the project as a Transit Point where more in depth assessment of the needs of CYMs is conducted and accommodation provided while family tracing efforts are going on. Save the Children has also worked closely with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (with which an MoU was signed in June, 2020), in the identification of host families in Soma and Farafenni, through their respective Community Child Protection Committees. The identified families underwent police background and community reference checks, before being finally cleared by the Ministry to provide temporary placement services to CYMs. Since inception of this project to date, over 70 CYMs were placed in the host families in both project zones.

Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA) with funding from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been providing support to vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers through cash vouchers to enable them meet some of their pressing needs such as rent, medical, educational cost and feeding of their families.

#### **Objective 16: Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion**

The Government of The Gambia has established the Women Enterprise Fund as part of efforts to promote gender equality by building on the achievements registered in the implementation of the National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy 2010-2020 through the new Gender Policy being developed. The Gambia Women Enterprise Fund is established to ensure that women owned MSMEs will have access to micro-credit services and training. Priority is given to women migrant returnees that are willing to take up entrepreneurship as a livelihood venture and are provided training before any fund disbursement.

With support of the UN Peacebuilding Fund, MOTIE, OVP, NYC, DCD and returnee associations in partnership with ITC and IOM have facilitated a number of community-based reintegration projects that provide economic opportunities for returnees and host communities

alike. For instance, this includes a bakery in Basse and Brikama, a banana plantation in Kaur, apoultry house in Pakalinding and e-tricycle initiative in Banjul.

The Gambia Red Cross in partnership with the WFP through the peacebuilding project, continues to promote peacebuilding initiatives to sustain peace and social cohesion in communities affected by climate-related migration/displacement due to conflict. Peace and conflict resolution activities with women have been conducted to ensure inclusion and non-discrimination of migrants including returnees and their host communities/communities of origin. This includes capacity building initiatives on peacebuilding and conflict resolution which have reunited communities affected by tensions. In collaboration with the NYC, communication and information activities have been conducted to shape perceptions and change narratives on migration.

Gambia Food and Nutrition Association (GAFNA) with funding from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been supporting co-existence projects such as community vegetable gardens, community water points, and labor-saving devices in refugee host communities in the Fonis of the West Coast Region. These projects have helped to enhance inclusion and social cohesion of refugees and asylum seekers in The Gambia.

#### **Objective 17: Eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions**

In collaboration with partners including UNESCO-KOICA project and the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MOHERST) is embarking on extensive nation-wide sensitization and awareness creation by developing communication campaigns to change the negative perceptions on TVET, conducting Radio and Television Talk shows, and designing billboards in all the administrative regions of the country.

IOM, MOICI and the Gambia Press Union (GPU) provide various capacity building trainings and sensitization programs to the media, government and civil society officials to improve reporting on migration issues, combatting misinformation around migration and promoting use of accurate terminology to support a more comprehensive and positive discourse on migration. To address stigma and discrimination of returnees in The Gambia, IOM has organized a series of awareness raising campaigns in migrant communities of return including establishing the Migrants as Messengers network. A group of 69 returnees who are engaging communities through community led initiatives including radio talk shows, community sensitizations, training of migrants on ways to combat stigma and promote social inclusion, and focus group discussions between migrants and communities, among others. These activities have supported migrants in the following ways: viewing themselves more positively and their contributions to national development, achieving more cohesion among themselves, sharing their stories with each other and their communities, and expanding their roles in de-escalating stigma and discrimination in their communities of return. The Gambia Red Cross also continues to raise awareness and fight

against xenophobia and discrimination through outreach activities in communities, transit areas and bus stations in order to foster social inclusion of all categories of migrants.

The Tekki Fii Program in collaboration with MOTIE and other national stakeholders implemented awareness raising campaign related to irregular migration and opportunities for socio-economic development in The Gambia. The national campaign includes radio shows, TV broadcast, community outreach, school-based orientations, sport activities and other platforms.

**Objective 18: Invest in Skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competence**

The Gambia Songhai Initiative has currently improved on its curriculum to include education on entrepreneurship for its students. This provides them an entrepreneurial mindset that will be useful upon completion of their programme. The UNDP has also supported the expansion of the programme to now have a capacity to enroll 120 students per annum from its initial capacity of 60 per annum.

The Gambia Government is helping to improve capacity at the level of the Presidents International Awards (PIA) and National Youth Service Scheme (NYSS) to expand their services beyond the Greater Banjul Area. The PIA has opened a new Center in Kerewan, North Bank Region and investments are being intensified at the NYSS Centers Nyani Berry and Sappo. The Crab Island Upper Basic is now renovated and elevated to a TVET Center. Due to lack of resources and capacity, the NYSS is unable to implement the compulsory voluntary Services and the PIA is only able to open two (2) centres instead of having presence in all regions.

National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) has developed Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) programs for migrants/returnees. The RPL programs are used to test

on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASSCAL), the Ministry is providing trainings to both youths and migrants/returnees on solar installation.

In partnership with the Ministry of Trade, the UNDP through the Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development Project has supported over 120 beneficiaries to be provided with entrepreneurship training through business development services. 200 women have



as launched in 2018,

*Gambian diaspora in*  
*for the implementation,*  
Directorate became fully  
Directorate (GDMD),  
civil servants. It works  
M. On 22 December  
portal ([diaspora.gm](http://diaspora.gm)). In  
consultative process  
sion, to align with the

ated Diaspora Direct  
(DDF). Partly due to  
chieved by the end of  
Roundtables (TR) on  
develop frameworks,

parliament, and this  
y, in partnership with  
issuance in 2022/23;  
etting up a dedicated  
MSDG implemented  
projects, which in turn  
upported projects were  
g from the COVID19  
be implemented as a  
tment and financial  
ment partners such as

**f. Accessible Information:**

[diaspora.gm](http://diaspora.gm)) shall be developed further as a main hub for the Gambian diaspora to access databases, links, guidance, briefings, policies

#### **h. Flexible Modalities:**

The 1997 Constitution of The Gambia allowed dual citizenships for Gambians, having lifted the prohibition previously imposed by the 1972 Constitution. The Gambian embassies and missions have the capacity to issue Consular Cards to members of the diaspora at a minimal fee. With the introduction of biometric passports, applicants need to be physically present in order to have their passports renewed. In partnership with MSDG, options are being studied and explored about how the Gambia Immigration Department (GID) can simplify renewal and issuance of passports and Identity Cards to Gambians resident abroad. The solutions may involve use of process passport and ID card applications, for migrants as well as second generation Gambians.

Regarding investment modalities, the Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency



#### **j. Skills Mapping:**

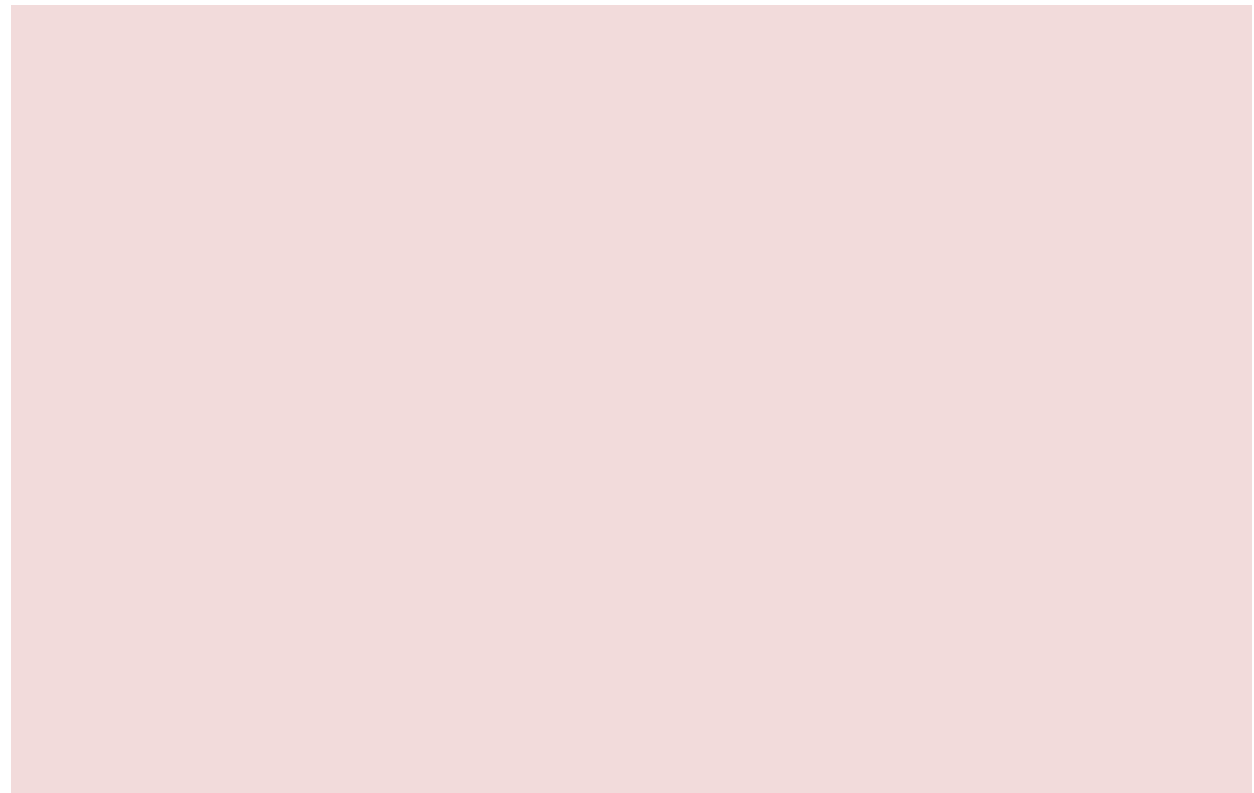
GDMD is working on a National Diaspora Database to document and profile highly-skilled and facilitate technical assignments, skills transfer, institutional cooperation and other forms of practical collaborations for community and national development, and to actualise brain-gain. GDMD will continue collaboration with other organisations and institutions working on skills mapping and knowledge transfer, including the Gambia Diaspora Experts Initiative (GDEI), IOM and the Personnel Management Office (PMO).

#### **Objective 20: Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances and foster financial inclusion of migrants**

Migrant and diaspora remittances constitute one of the most important sources of hard currency and forms of development finance in The Gambia. Consequently, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MOFEA), Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG) and the Migration and Sustainable Development in The Gambia Project (MSDG) Project team have been convening regular Technical Roundtables (TR) for stakeholders since January 2018. These roundtables discuss, analyse and implement improvements in policy and practice relating to remittances and diaspora finance.

#### **a. Significance of Remittances to The Gambia:**

At the Seventh TR on 1 February 2022, the CBG announced that the updated and verified remittance inflow to The Gambia through formal channels for 2021 was \$776.67 million, being about 62% of national GDP. In 2020, remittances to The Gambia increased by an unprecedented 79%, to the sum of \$589.81, from \$329.79 million in 2019. This is one of the highest annual rates of increase in the world. Although a previous upward trend was recorded since 2017, the dramatic increase in 2020 was a direct result of the COVID19 pandemic. With restrictions in international travel, and lockdowns which reduced cash transactions, Gambians in the diaspora who previously used informal channels for remittances were forced to use formal channels. The unprecedented increase in remittance inflow to The Gambia was one of the subjects of the Fifth TR held online on 3 February 2021, convened by CBG and MSDG, and reported by Bloomberg<sup>14</sup>. Participants included the Ministry of Finance, the IMF Resident Representative, the World Bank Lead Economist on Remittances, and the Co- and Diaspora committee.



The further 32% increase in remittances in 2021 from \$589.81 million to \$776.67 million indicates that those who transferred from informal channels are continuing to use the regulated online, digital and formal remittance channels. The data also reveals that in The Gambia in the short-term, remittances are highly resilient and countercyclical. The Gambia is a signatory to the 2020 [Global Compact on Migration](#), led by Switzerland, United Kingdom and the World Bank. The Central Bank of The Gambia was one of





caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Second Technical Roundtable convened by MOFEA, CBG and MSDG on 6 March 2019 explored frameworks for the issuance of a Gambian Diaspora Bonds. In 2022, MOFEA accelerated its collaboration with MSDG, and has taken a decision in principle to issue the first Gambian Diaspora Bond in 2022/23, using the fixed-rate Government

In response to the COVID-19

The Gambia Red Cross equally continues to address the vulnerabilities of migrants especially those returning by providing first aid and family reunification services through phone calls during receptions for migrants to contact their families and loved ones, and to maintain their dignity at all stages of their migratory journey including during returns.

The Government of The Gambia has also under the framework of the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM) set up a Thematic Working Group on Return and Reintegration which is headed by the Ministry of Interior that provides technical advice in collaboration with key stakeholders through technical or thematic working group meetings.

commitment to initiate contacts with potential partners to identify practical measures to support The Gambia in ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration.

The Ministry of Foreign affairs led a technical delegation from 31<sup>st</sup> July to 13<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to EU Members States to mobilize resources for the smooth reintegration of Gambian returnees and to explore opportunities for bilateral labour agreements. This was aimed to assist Gambians to travel legally to Europe and at the same time acquire skills as well as earn income to support their families in The Gambia. The mission also sought partnerships in supporting MSME development. The visit provided an opportunity for the Gambia to interact with related support institutions and in the process articulated local support for long-term sustainability in efforts geared towards a comprehensive migration management program.

The



timely delivery of required information as well as support in the implementation of GCM objectives in their various departments and agencies to ensure their effective implementation and monitoring.

Additionally, all 23 objectives of the GCM have been distributed and are being addressed by the eight (8) Thematic Working Groups set up under the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM) (see **Annex A**). The Government of The Gambia under the leadership of the Office of the Vice President will continue to engage the NCM TWGs to monitor implementation progress of each targeted GCM objective.

## V. Perspectives (Next steps)

The two rounds of voluntary review processes at the national level in 2021 and 2022 have given The Gambia an opportunity to engage and involve various stakeholders on the state of GCM implementation, articulate government positions on migration and also identify the challenges affecting the successful implementation of the GCM. The Gambia has come a long way in the implementation of the GCM since its adoption, such as the launch of a National Migration Policy (NMP) 2020- 2030 as well as setting up pivotal mechanisms such as the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM) to support the coordination of migration and migration-related policies and frameworks, including building synergy and complementarity among stakeholders.

From the review, it is evident that to successfully ensure that migration is conducted in a safe, orderly and regular fashion, it is important to strengthen existing institutions and mechanisms, through mainstreaming migration across all relevant policy domains as migration is a crosscutting topic.

In addition, the upcoming Green Recovery-Focused National Development Plan (NDP) as well as the Long - Term Development Vision (Vision 2050) should look into comprehensively covering issues surrounding migration by taking into account the development potential that migration holds for The Gambia. Generally, the NDP which will end in 2022 sets out a

however, it only highlighted the importance of diaspora engagement in national development by listing it as one of the seven critical enablers of the NDP, and lightly touched on the importance of protection of vulnerable migrants and facilitation of regular pathways. However it has been flagged in many forum for the inclusion of migration as priority in the next NDP and consultation have started to that effect.

It is also recommended that the migration data collection move away from the current approach by various institutions to include studies that will help track and monitor the implementation of key migration indicators and not be limited to the day-to-day internal data available. This

requires improving migration data collection as well as ensuring that all migration data collection efforts are well coordinated and properly disseminated among the various stakeholders and the public. One suggested strategy for timely data collection was the need to mainstream migration data into various periodic surveys that are conducted by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS). Moreover, mainstreaming of migration into the upcoming G

# Annex A

