



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

**MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

STRATEGIC PLAN - 2021 – 2025

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FOREWORD

At a time when knowledge and innovations in technology are increasingly driving the world economy, developing countries like The Gambia need to invest more in building their human capital base with the requisite skills to ensure they transform their economies and enhance the livelihood of the citizenry, to adequately fit in the future workforce.

The Government, through the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST), is committed to developing its human capital by identifying priority programmes under its tertiary and higher education transformation agenda. This transformation will result in reforms geared towards addressing the challenges of quality and standards, relevance and, at the same time, the unemployment of mainly youth and women in the country.

While these reforms are envisaged to ensure the provision of high-quality education and training, thus, producing competent and skilled graduates, they will also provide the efficient and effective utilisation of resources within the tertiary and higher education sector.

It is, therefore, my personal, as well as the Ministry's conviction and firm belief that the successful implementation of these transformation programmes will contribute positively towards achieving our national development aspirations of creating employment, reducing poverty, and ensuring sustained socio-economic growth and development.

Hon. Badara A. Joof

Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology (MoHERST)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MoHERST was established in February 2007 and began operations in March 2007. It is responsible for policy development and the management and coordination of programmes and activities relating to higher education, research, science, and technology.

The Ministry, hitherto, has been implementing the joint education sector strategic plans, ESSP (2012-2015) and later ESSP, 2017–2030, developed from the education policies. Consequently, the Ministry embarked on the development of a sector-specific strategy for tertiary and higher education, research, science and technology, with a strong bearing on the transformation agenda outlined in the National Development Plan, 2018-2021 and the Education Sector Policy, 2016-2030; and adopts a programmatic approach that is responsive, more, to the reforms in the sector.

The Strategy is anchored on the vision of “playing a central role in the transformation of the Gambia into a knowledge-based economy”; and identifies missions which intend: (1) to “establish a tertiary and higher education system of reputable (world-class) institutions and centres of excellence that will produce well-educated and skilled citizens with the requisite competencies to lead fulfilled lives and compete nationally and globally; and (2) to “establish coordinated scientific research and technological development skills system for advanced socio-economic development”.

This HERST Strategic Plan is a culmination of a series of consultations and inclusive participation processes involving a wide range of actors and partners both within and outside the sector. The consultations first started with the staff of the Ministry and its line institutions in a sector-wide retreat convened on brainstorming reform of the Gambia tertiary and higher education system. Subsequently, more consultations were held with the wider stakeholders, including donor partners, in several meetings and retreats, as well as through desk reviews, to solicit opinions and views, including best practices around tertiary and higher education, research, science and technology. The consultations also involved other line ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), and the private sector, which unreservedly participated in the development process.

This strategic plan’s main thrust is the Institutional Transformation, which is the strategic programme spanning over the four main priority programme areas namely, (1) Equitable Access to Tertiary and Higher Education; (2) Institutional Quality and Relevance; (3) Scientific Research and Technology Development; and (4) MoHERST Sector Management. The document introduces the institutional transformation as a way of transforming the three tertiary institutions into higher education institutions and building relevance and quality in the higher education programmes of the University of The Gambia, and the activities involved in this process could be spotted within the four main programme areas.

The main objective of **Access and Equity** is to increase access to inclusive and equitable tertiary and higher education in the country – especially in the subvented institution. To this end, this strategic plan sets out strategic activities geared toward making tertiary and higher education accessible and affordable in The Gambia by focussing on TVET expansion through decentralisation, infrastructural expansion, and scholarship awards, among other activities. The transformation agenda in access and equity hinges on the establishment of USET and related activities; the integration of the three schools (Agriculture, Nursing and Public Health) of the Gambia College into the Schools of Agriculture and Medicine and Allied Health Sciences of the University of The Gambia while the School of Education will be transformed into an Education University; and the transformation of Management Development Institute to a degree awarding institute.

Programme area two, being the institutional transformation of **Quality and Relevance** of tertiary and higher education, aims at improving the quality and relevance of tertiary and higher education to produce skilled graduates with the requisite labour market competencies. The programme area focuses on the human capital formation of the institutions, including the staff of MoHERST and NAQAA, and the delivery of quality and relevant instruction, which includes an array of strategic activities. The transformation agenda in the quality and relevance hinges on training and related activities to UTG, USET, GC and MDI transformation.

The transformation agenda on **Research and Technology Development** aims at improving the culture of research and technology development, first, in the tertiary and higher education institutions. This involves the establishment of appropriate administrative, coordination and regulatory frameworks and structures in the tertiary and higher education sector. It is premised on the objective of transforming The Gambia into a knowledge-based economy, central to which is the development of innovations and commercialisation through research and development initiatives. The transformation agenda in the quality and relevance hinges on the training and related activities to UTG, USET, GC and MDI transformation.

The fourth programme area – **Sector Management** – of the institutional transformation aims to provide an appropriate environment for effective and efficient tertiary and higher education, research, science and technology service delivery for sustained socio-economic growth. Important areas of concentration are the management information system, partnerships, resources mobilisation and project implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

As part of the strategy document of the financing framework, which adapts the EPSSim model to monetise both the quantitative and qualitative parameters to provide a more reliable cost scenario.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE	Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence
AU	African Union
B.Ed.	Bachelor's Degree in Education
BA.Ed.	Bachelor of Arts in Education
BSc.Ed.	Bachelor of Science in Education
DMU	De Montfort University
EPSSim	Education Policy and Strategy Simulation
ESP	Education Sector Policy
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
GIPAM	Gambia Institute of Public Administration and Management
GTTI	Gambia Technical Training Institute
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
LRR	Lower River Region
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDI	Management Development Institute
MIS	Management Information System
MoFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MoHERST	Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
MOTIE	Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment
MOTWI	Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure
NAQAA	National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PCU	Project Coordinating Unit
PPP	Public Private Partnership
R&D	Research and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
SoNA	State of the Nation's Address
STEE	Science, Technology and Engineering for Entrepreneurship
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TVET	Technical/Vocational Education and Training
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
URR	Upper River Region

USET	University of Science, Engineering and Technology
UTG	University of The Gambia
WCR	West Coast Region

1 INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan identifies programmes specific to MoHERST as a sector and serves as an update to the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2017-2030, developed from the Education Sector Policy (ESP) 2016-2030. It takes into account the experience of the implementation of the ESSP, 2017-2030, and the country's National Development Plan (NDP), 2018-2021. The strategy incorporates the new thinking of the country's policymakers, which has been spelt out in a transformation agenda of the entire Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology Sector.

1.1 THE GAMBIA HERST STRATEGIC PLAN, 2021-2025

The Gambia higher education, research, science and technology (HERST) Strategic Plan is anchored on the Vision of playing a central role in the transformation of The Gambia into a knowledge-based economy, with identified missions of establishing a tertiary and higher education system of reputable (world-class) institutions and centres of excellence that will produce well-educated and skilled citizens with the requisite competencies to lead fulfilled lives and compete nationally and globally; and establishing a coordinated scientific research and technological development skills system for advanced socio-economic development.

The plan sets an educational transformation agenda for five years (2021-2025) with a programmatic approach that is responsive to the education reform outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP), 2018-2021. The strategic plan unpacks the investment approaches/mechanisms for the transformation programmes of the sector and identifies issues which apply exclusively to MoHERST-related activities. This is deemed necessary to ensure that the operational plans were drawn for the individual directorates and units of MoHERST, as well as its line institutions, and are implemented and monitored by the dictates of the relevant sections of the Plan. Thus, the key areas/components of the Plan are *Institutional Transformation* on:

1. Equitable Access
2. Quality and Relevance
3. Research & Technology Development
4. Sector Management

1.2 INDICATORS

There are indicators under each programme area showing the baseline values for 2019 or thereabout and the targets for 2025, the results of which can contribute to the attainment of the objectives of this Plan.

1.3 IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The Plan will be implemented over five years. The various directorates, units, project focal persons, and other stakeholders will be required to develop and implement operational plans per the abovementioned issues. This approach to implementation will

not only expedite the operationalisation of the Plan. Still, it will also clearly provide a system of accountability linked to performance management and create an annual feedback and update process.

1.4 COUNTRY PROFILE

The Gambia is bordered to the north, east and south by Senegal. It has a land area of 10,690 km² and extends inland for about 400 kilometres along the bank of the River Gambia, which divides the country into two parts, north and south, with widths varying from 24 to 28 kilometres. The government has a culturally diverse society with a high degree of ethnic, racial, and religious tolerance. The recent trends in population growth (in terms of structure and numbers) have implications for youth employment and its potential effect on economic advancement and development. The Integrated Household Survey (IHS), 2015/16 of The Gambia, shows that poverty has moved insignificantly from 48.4 per cent in 2010 to 48.65 per cent in 2015, which in absolute terms indicates a rise of over 150,000 in the period.

The Gambian economy is limited to a small, undiversified market with tourism and agriculture as the main drivers. Agriculture contributes 20-30 per cent of the nation's GDP and employs most of the country's poor, and the poor performance of the sector has deepened rural poverty and stalled GDP growth. A United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2012-15 report indicates youth unemployment of 40 per cent and that 70 per cent of women were engaged in low productivity subsistence agriculture.

In the 2020 State of the Nation's Address (SoNA) of the His Excellency, the President of the Republic of The Gambia, it was revealed that the 2020 GDP growth rates could decline from 6 per cent to 2 per cent and that this would impact the import duties and other tax revenues at a tune of 2.3 billion Gambian Dalasi (about 2.4% of GDP), leading to an estimated loss of 20 per cent of expected revenue. Accordingly, this would widen the fiscal deficit from 1.5 per cent to 2.1 per cent of GDP.

To sustain macro-economic stability and reduce poverty, even in the face of the pandemic, policies must give prominence to the development of The Gambia's women and youth, especially in applied science, technology, engineering education, and entrepreneurship.

1.5 THE MoHERST SECTOR

MoHERST was established in 2007 to oversee post-secondary education, including TVET, national research, and science, technology and innovation.

Generally, the Gambia's education system has two broad levels, each under a separate ministry. Basic and secondary education, as well as adult education, is the responsibility of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE). There are three sub-levels: early childhood education of four years, basic education of nine years, and senior

secondary education of three years, taking a child up to their 18th year from birth. The post-secondary education also has two levels tertiary and higher education. The tertiary can be further divided into post-secondary non-tertiary and post-secondary tertiary for the convenience of data entry and policy formulation. The mandate of post-secondary education has been coupled with research, science, technology and innovation and includes TVET. This is illustrated in the figure below as depicted in the education sector policy 2016-2030.

Table 1: The Structure of the Gambia's Education System

TYPES OF SCHOOLS	LEVEL		LEGAL AGE
Nursery (Public, Private, Community Based)	Early Childhood Development		3 4 5 6
	↓		
Lower Basic Schools & Basic Cycle Schools (Government, Grant Aided and Madrassa)	Lower Basic Education		7 8 9 10 11 12
	↓		
Upper Basic Schools and Basic Cycle Schools (Government, Grant Aided)	Upper Basic Education		13 14 15
	↓	↓	
Senior Secondary Schools (Government, Grant Aided and Madrassa)	Senior Secondary Education	Secondary Technical Vocational Education and Training	16 17 18
	↓	↓	
Tertiary & Higher Education Schools and Training Centres (Public & Private)	General Tertiary & Higher Education	Technical Vocational Tertiary & Higher Education & Training	19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Source: The Gambia Education Sector Policy, 2016-2030

The vast number of senior secondary schools of about 184, including Madrassas, the feeders of the few tertiary and higher education institutions, exposes the dilemma confronting the tertiary and higher education sector. Access to programmes beyond level 4 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is limited. Higher education institutions (universities) constitute only 5.5 per cent; tertiary institutions represent 7.3 per cent; and post-secondary non-tertiary education¹ constitutes 87.2

¹ Institutions offering certificate and diploma programmes that could not provide progression into degree programmes.

per cent. It is evident that the capacity to absorb the transiting students in terms of more lecture rooms, equipment, etc., is limited.

Also, given the concentration of post-secondary institutions in the urban areas (regions one and two) of the country (86.2%), access to post-secondary education for students in the rural regions is a major concern. An insignificant number of tertiary and higher education institutions are located beyond these two regions, indicating equity challenges in the post-secondary sector, which does not commensurate with its feeder senior secondary schools.

Also, 35.2 per cent of programmes offered in post-secondary institutions are science and technology-related, and 74.1 per cent of these programmes are offered by the post-secondary non-tertiary – exclusively at diploma and certificate levels. Consequently, post-secondary institutions do not offer the desired opportunities for higher learning in the sciences. Furthermore, there are quality issues for both higher and tertiary education and training.

However, on access and equity, it is evident that the sector has relevant policies in place and continues to establish additional TVET institutions across the country, including those addressing both quality and relevance, as well as equity. There is limited staff capacity to operationalise these policies, and the sector is also marred by weak and inadequate infrastructure – the equipment is mostly obsolete, and the distribution of TVET institutions is skewed towards the urban areas leaving the poor rural population with no choice but to enliven the rural-urban migration. There is also the disparaging social injustice in the near absence of affirmative actions in the distribution of scholarships and places in degree awarding institutions.

There are good-will partners who enabled the sector to secure projects on science and technology, but that notwithstanding, the sector is threatened with donor fatigue, apathy toward girl education, and rising poverty, especially in the rural areas.

On the issue of quality assurance, the sector has such strengths as putting in place a viable accreditation and quality assurance authority, with an inspection panel to monitor compliance to requirements, and it is training quality assurance personnel. Also, the national TVET Committee will continue to steer the affairs of TVET. The Ministry places premium on capacity development of staff of post-secondary, NAQAA and the Ministry.

However, the delay in the implementation of a national qualification framework has created a void in operationalisation of quality standards. Public institutions that have been established by Acts of Parliament have not been compliant and continue to provide low education standards with limited enforced supervision. It is also evident that there is limited collaboration between education and training institutions and the industry, leading to low industry standard diffusion in the training curricula. The policy frameworks on TVET, apprenticeship, quality assurance, and competency are not adequate for lecturers in post-secondary institutions. This is characterised by the prevalence of unskilled trainers, disharmonised curricula, and limited number of

assessors and verifiers, thus institutions delivering unaccredited courses. The physical and learning material infrastructure is inadequate and obsolete, and yet there are limited funding mechanisms in the sector to address these issues. In this regard, technical assistance would be sought from partner countries, including the Commonwealth, in key skills areas to address this challenge.

There are opportunities, however, which, in the forms of projects such as Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence, Impact for Development (ACE Impact), and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) TVET for Youth Empowerment projects, could be utilised maximally to spur quality delivery of both education and scientific research and technology development programmes. Of late, the sector has witnessed private sector involvement, as well as collaborative programmes with other universities that harbour centres of excellence to help in the education service delivery. With the bilateral cooperation, in terms of overseas scholarships, the sector can engineer these to develop its own capacity in education, scientific research and technology development. And there is a strong political will.

The structures of quality and relevance are threatened by impending brain drain, apathy and misconception towards TVET, donor fatigue, poor results from feeder institutions and insufficient placement opportunities for learners in a small industry, and lack of additional infrastructure.

While undertaking the demand-side interventions by building market-relevant skills training, it is observed that poverty in The Gambia remains deep and endemic, more so in the rural areas of the country, and unemployment (and underemployment) continue to remain a major concern for youth and women (The United Nations Systems, The Gambia. 2011), which is hypothetically the cause of the dangerous and perilous journey Gambian youth take to Europe. This is blamed squarely on the unresponsive national education system and the low absorption of research, innovation and development. Consequently, challenges of education-industry mismatch continue to be a push factor of the youth from avenues of gainful and decent employment. The Labour Force Survey (2012, as cited by MoFEA, 2017) reports youth unemployment at 38 per cent and proposes a synergy of stakeholders to reduce this by 9 percentage points in 2021. Again, a report from MoHERST on 86 sampled TVET related employers, mainly from the Kanifing Municipality, Banjul and Brikama Local Government Area, shows that 72 out of 86 TVET related institutions have total employment of less than 50 people, and a staggering 72.1 per cent are domestically owned, and 25.6 per cent have foreign ownership, revealing that most SMEs are owned by local entrepreneurs, hence, the need for more pro-SME support for sustainable economic development, however, these institutions have little absorption of science and technology. Hotels and restaurants (17) account for most of the entities, followed education (14), then mining and quarrying (12), and wholesale and retail (10). As it is, the inequitable distribution of TVET institutions and low learning outcomes limit effective preparation of youth for the job market, thus

“... three in 100 completed post-secondary education; and one in ten of the labour-force (15-64 years) has benefited from some form of vocational training”.

It is against this backdrop that the Ministry’s transformation agenda focuses on promoting STEM education and training to develop skills that match the job market needs. This reform will address the issue of inadequate skills by providing skilled education and training through sustained entrepreneurship, innovation, and skilful employment, as well as mitigate migration through the provision of skills and jobs for the youth.

The human resource base of the country with regards to specialised training is inadequate, especially in the areas of STEM, health, agriculture and education. The education sector is challenged with inadequate and poor infrastructure, an inadequate number of institutions offering STEM, health, agriculture and education, and inadequate teaching and learning materials, among others.

It is in this context that the government of The Gambia, through MoHERST is in the process of strengthening the post-secondary institutions through capacity development and infrastructural upgrading. Hence, it is recognised that the promotion of STEM requires a sustained, coordinated multi-sectoral approach that will support the attainment of the national priorities as enshrined in the Tertiary and Higher Education Policy 2015 – 2024, National Development Plan (NDP 2018 – 2021) and the AU Agenda, 2063.

It is an open secret that The Gambia lacks technological innovation, which is a major challenge to the national industrialisation process, and as such, policy is directed towards giving priority to “technology transfer, the encouragement of adaptive research in production and process technologies, ...,” and “to enable expert qualified Gambians (and non-Gambians) to temporally come and share their knowledge as a way to contribute to the development of the R&D sectors”.

With the absence of a national research policy and limited human, financial and material resources, it has proven difficult to link research outcomes to industry applications. This is compounded by the presence of weak research infrastructure and culture in our tertiary and higher education institutions. There is also limited accountability of researchers and research work due to the absence of a coordinated national database on research, which makes it difficult to mainstream research.

There is an ethics committee, which though principally associated to health, has been instrumental in directing the affairs of research in the health sector. Other opportunities are the availability of national, regional and international networks on research which place premium on funding and collaborative research for socio-economic development.

The management of research is, however, threatened by low collaborative interest of stakeholders, uncoordinated dissemination of research findings spurred by low recognition and appreciation of research and development. The absence/negligence of

intellectual property rights and the unsophisticated nature of the private sector leading to low contribution in research and development also threaten the survival of a viable research culture in The Gambia. That notwithstanding, there is evidence of the private sector's contribution to research and development. However, the academic curricula in the tertiary and higher education institutions place little emphasis on research, and this, coupled with inadequate national research expenditure, does not lay a good foundation for research, innovation and development in The Gambia.

There is a high youthful population whose interest could be built towards science and technology, and with the well-articulated policy frameworks and a well-structured education system, the strategies for the 65 per cent turnaround in STEM education is quite possible. The interested youth have strong and experienced potentials in technology, viz, robotics, material science and artificial intelligence. There is committed leadership, and the sector has a national policy and an existing ecosystem.

However, there is a weak financing muscle for scientific research and technology development, and this is evident in the number of competent science and technology human and material resources. Thus, the teaching methodologies remain outmoded, with limited internship programmes to compensate for the lack of relevant resources. There is limited or absence of enabling environments such as tech hubs and science parks and limited highly skilled experts leading to an underdeveloped industrial sector. This is partly due to the limited funding that can incentivise the players in the science and technology sector. There are weak governance frameworks and linkages among institutions.

There is already political support, thus, besides the government's support to engage partners in funding ACE Impact and KOICA TVET projects, MoHERST is also in talks with the Commonwealth team and other donors to mobilise resources. Also, The Gambia had favourable economic growth prospects (6.5%) until the outbreak of Covid-19, which, if properly managed, can spur development through scientific research and technology development. science and technology, specifically ICT, has been a growing and competitive sector with a high internet penetration rate. Also, science and technology funding prospects are high, and there are strategic policy directions such as the National Broad Band and the Africa Coast to Europe programmes.

Given the country's low absorption and application of scientific research and technologies, there has been growing scepticism in terms of investment, thus a low prospect of financing. Scientific research and technology development has, over the years, not been properly coordinated, and students, especially girls, have apathy toward pursuing STEM-related careers. There are not enough venture capitalists and necessary legislation to promote research and technology development. MoHERST, as a sector, has comparative strengths in programme implementation. There is a functional budget and contract committees. Also, the Ministry is equipped with a functional management information system (MIS) and a scholarship structure that can be harnessed to increase access and equity.

However, implementing sector programmes faces major challenges, such as the financing of UTG Faraba Banta Campus. That notwithstanding, the partnership opportunities prevail, more so in public-private partnership (PPP), as well as budget support by donors for programmes relating to staff development and implementation of sensitive programmes.

The sector is threatened by consistent low disbursement of funds and low absorptive capacity, which may lead to lower service delivery in subsequent years. Hitherto, the monitoring and evaluation capabilities of the Ministry have been weak, which has led to limited accountability of MoHERST programmes.

1.6 CHALLENGES

Substantial progress has been made in further developing higher learning, research and technology development over the last few decades, but many challenges remain. Educational attainment, as well as research, innovation and technology development, absorption and utilisation, have continued to rise. In addition to raising the levels of education of the population, the skills mix in the economy needs to be better aligned to service the needs of the industry through research and technology development and to better position the country to attract much greater inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI). Many of these challenges are attributable to the under-financing of the sector. The current budgetary allocation of the sector needs to be reviewed for any successful implementation of the sector's planned programmes in the short- to medium-term. The pronouncement in the NDP that higher education is a priority is not matched with adequate budgetary allocations, and this needs urgent revisiting. The transformative agenda that this policy is calling for would require substantial budgetary allocations and other resources to fund the different programmes and projects envisaged therein. Much greater efficiency gains, therefore, need to be made to maximise the use of available resources. Unless these challenges are overcome, the sector's contribution to moving The Gambia to a middle-income country in the medium-term would be severely constrained.

As such, the following remain challenges of the sector in the delivery of accessible and equitable quality and relevant education, research, science and technology development services:

- Limited capacity in terms of qualified personnel.
- Inadequate facilities and infrastructure to support programme delivery.
- Inadequate financial resources.
- Mismatch between educational outcome and industry, as well as the near absence of linkages between the industry and research and development institutions.
- Inadequate coordinated quality assurance system for education and training, as well as relevant regulatory frameworks for research and technology development.
- Limited prominence given to pre-TVET curricula at the lower levels of education, which acts as a feeder to the tertiary and higher education.

2 POLICY PRIORITIES

2.1 PROGRAMME AREA 1: EQUITABLE ACCESS

Strategic Objective: To increase access to equitable tertiary and higher education.

In line with government policy, the issue of access and equity has been a major priority in enhancing the delivery of educational services to the Gambian citizenry. This has, however, been constrained by numerous factors that affect equitable access to tertiary and higher education. As such, the needed financial resources to enhance the implementation of sectoral policies and programmes are inadequate and require the intervention of both government and partners in the business of education.

In working towards achieving SDG 4 with regards to inclusive and quality education for all, emphasis is placed on the importance of access as a priority pillar in the National Development Plan 2018-21, as stated in the quote, “improved access and quality learning and relevant life and livelihood skills for all graduates ...”. This is a great commitment from government to make education accessible to many Gambians. To address these issues, a concerted effort is required from all, most especially in advocating for the citizenry to nurture peace and social cohesion, which is threatening the social fabric of the country. Cognisant of the above challenges, the tertiary and higher education sector will work towards implementing the strategic objective through the following sub-programmes:

I. Infrastructural Development

Specific objective: to increase equitable access to tertiary and higher education, including TVET, to reduce youth migration.

To reinforce the institutional transformation initiated by the Ministry, and alongside its decentralisation objective, the Ministry intends to expand the GTTI/USET outreach programmes in all the administrative regions of the country. During the period, two more centres will be established based on regional needs. Existing institutions under GTTI/USET such as Ndemban, Kanilai Skills Centres in West Coast Region (WCR), Mansakonko Skills Centre in Lower River Region (LRR) and Julangel Skills Centre in Upper River Region (URR) will be rehabilitated to increase the access, which leaves out the Central River Region (CRR) with no GTTI/USET annexe.

In the higher education expansion sub-programme, the Ministry will build new structures in its bid to establish the University of Applied Science, Engineering and Technology. During this period, six departments will be launched in the areas of (1) Electrical/Electronic Engineering, (2) Civil Engineering, (3) Mechanical Engineering, (4) Chemical Engineering, (5) Computer Science, and (6) Architecture and Fine Arts. This will also include administrative and other structures. The ACE Impact Project will fund the construction of the first three engineering departments during the period under review.

Under the same expansion programme, Management Development Institute (MDI) will build more structures to address the space requirement for (a) the collaboration with *Sup De Cor* of Senegal to run degree programmes; and (b) the collaboration with the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) to run degree programmes. These will be programmes in business and public administration.

The Gambia College (GC) has four schools, namely, Education, Agriculture, Nursing and Midwifery, and Public Health. Apart from the School of Education, all other schools will be merged into respective schools at the University of The Gambia. These are the Schools of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences and Medicine and Allied Health Sciences. The School of Education will be transformed into a University of Education. As such new structures will be built to meet university standards at the Brikama Campus. The Basse Campus will be strengthened and expanded to provide education programmes to Gambians in that part of the country.

The current civil works – Phase One – of the new UTG Faraba Banta Campus will be completed, and more funds will be mobilised to launch Phase Two of the project. In the UTG decentralisation programme, the Farafenni Campus running the West Africa Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Use (WASCAL) will be rehabilitated to enrol and house more students from The Gambia and the sub-region.

II. Financial Assistance to Needy and Meritorious Students

Specific objective: To increase equitable access to relevant tertiary and higher education through scholarship awards and loan schemes.

For the tertiary and higher education system, more resources will be mobilised to award scholarships and create loan schemes to pay tuition fees and seed money for students. Studies will be conducted before introducing a loan scheme to map out best practices for the initiative to ensure sustainability.

Table 2.1: Key Equitable Access Indicators (Baseline Vs Targets)

Equitable Access Indicators	Baseline 2021	Target 2025
No. of Dept Blocks Built (H. Education)	6.00	14.33
No. of Dept Blocks Built (T. Education)	0.00	2.67
No. of Classrooms Renovated (H. Education)	0.00	17.43
No. of Classrooms Renovated (T. Education)	0.00	33.54
No. of Laboratories (Separate from Others)	0.00	6.24
No. of Libraries (Separate from Others)	0.00	7.31
² No. of Students on Scholarships and Loan Scheme		

Source: MoHERST & NAQAA Databases

² Budgeted under the sector management of the Plan

2.2 PROGRAMME AREA 2: QUALITY AND RELEVANCE

Strategic objective: *To improve the quality and relevance of tertiary and higher education.*

In its current higher education reform, as enshrined in the NDP, 2018-2021, MoHERST has been repositioning public tertiary and higher education institutions in the country to provide relevant and quality programmes needed in the achievement of our national development priorities, particularly in the areas of applied sciences, engineering and technology.

To this end, particular emphasis has also been placed on quality content and professional training, as well as instructional material provisions for the delivery of STEM and other related programmes. Also, the Ministry will continue its infrastructural expansion to broaden the participation of meritorious students in related disciplines.

I. Training and Development

Specific objective: *To improve the individual capacities of staff and the institutional capacities of the tertiary and higher education institutions to deliver relevant tertiary and higher education programmes.*

In the transformation process of the subvented tertiary and higher education institutions, namely, GTTI, UTG, GC and MDI, there is the need to have more qualified academic and administrative staff in the institutions. In the process of transformation, it is required also that the staff of the Ministry and NAQAA are trained to meet the standard requirements to supervise the transformation process.

As a prelude to the reform process, The Gambia is harnessing the gains of the Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence (ACE I) Project and the opportunities accorded by the World Bank in the second ACE, Impact for Development Project, to establish the Emerging Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology and Engineering for Entrepreneurship (STEE) at the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI). This Emerging Centre will deliver degree programmes and will serve as the first phase of the GTTI transformation into USET.

It is envisaged that more staff will be trained for the delivery of both administrative and academic services during the ACE Impact Project. In this regard, both KNUST and De Montfort University (DMU) of the United Kingdom (UK) have been contracted to deliver the engineering and entrepreneurship curricula in USET for a project period of five years. As part of the contract, the staff of USET will undergo mentorship by KNUST and DMU. During the proposed mentorship period, curricula and academic staff from these universities will train students in the new university, while some faculty and administrative staff of USET will undertake PhD and MSc programmes to later become the core academic and administrative staff after the mentorship. As part of the

transformation, there will be training and oversight in quality assurance and entrepreneurship by the mentoring universities.

Upon establishment, USET is expected to address the challenges of youth empowerment and unemployment by providing life-long technical skills to prepare them for the labour market.

The argument is that USET will create opportunities to address the high level skills gaps within the Gambian workforce and enable the graduates to work gainfully or provide gainful employment for a greater number of youth and women in the country. The institution will retain the current mandate of GTTI, and improve the quality and relevance of the its certificate and diploma programmes, thus strengthening them while providing pathways to acquire degree qualifications in the same disciplines.

UTG, MDI and GC will continue to train more academic and administrative staff during the period of transformation. Recently, both UTG and MDI introduced advanced degree programmes. MDI, through Sup De Co Institute, is running programmes at bachelor's and master's levels, while UTG has introduced more master's and doctoral programmes. This would require the training of more academic staff to meet the student population under the current standards and regulations. GC is expected to run degree programmes and should brace up for the training of more lecturers at master's and doctoral levels. UTG will implement twinning programmes, including faculty and student exchanges, and MDI and GC will undergo mentorship programmes from Ghana and Sierra Leone, respectively.

Furthermore, the transformation of GC, especially for the School of Education, will provide career path opportunities leading to degree programmes in education (B.Ed. for education planners and administrators, B.A.Ed. and BSc. Ed. with two teaching subjects for teachers of arts and science). Besides enhancing graduate employability, this transformation strategy will also position our teacher education quality on the same footing as high-performing education systems worldwide.

The 5-year transition period to be designed and implemented by a task force comprising all the key stakeholders will prioritise the training and development of Gambia College staff to be able to function effectively in a university setup. Part of this training and development has been ongoing under the ACE Project and will continue under the Additional Financing of the Education Sector Support Project (ESSP).

The government of The Gambia has plans to roll out entrepreneurship in the tertiary and higher education institutions, and these institutions will work with relevant partners such as MOTWI, MOTIE and others to implement compulsory internship and industrial placement, especially in the award of government contracts and civil works in the country.

Along these lines, curricula review and development will be implemented. Specifically, a comprehensive programme, which will include the development of a curriculum and its implementation arrangements, will be developed under USET as a Centre of Excellence on Science, Technology and Engineering for Entrepreneurship (STEE).

II. Provision of Instructional Materials and Laboratory Equipment

Specific objective: To improve quality assurance standards of tertiary and higher education institutions.

The transformation agenda has outlined providing state-of-the-art instructional materials and laboratory equipment for the tertiary and higher education institutions. In the case of the new programme at USET under the ACE Impact Project, the entrepreneurship programme will be built into the engineering programme. This would require the installation of a disruptive laboratory, and students, through project-based learning modules, will be finding solutions through various activities in both the labs.

The plan is to institute e-learning facilities in the main subvented tertiary and higher education institutions to ensure business continuity even during periods of pandemics such as Covid-19. Also, digital library facilities will be instituted, requiring institutions to subscribe to e-libraries/journals, which will accord scores of peer-reviewed journals and books to students and staff in these institutions. Also, the new UTG campus will have state-of-the-art laboratories equipment and auditoria for teaching and learning.

Table 2.2: Key Institutional Transformation Indicators (Baseline Vs Targets)

Quality & Relevance Indicators	Baseline 2021	Target 2025
No. of Aca. Staff Trained - PhD	0	98
No. of Aca. Staff Trained - Master's	0	153
No. of Aca. Staff Trained Anually - Short-Term	126	415
No. of Journal Subscriptions	0	3
No. of Computers	0	3303
No. of Annual Peer-Reviewed Publications	0	73
No. of Publications (Policies & Regulations)	0	12
Internet Bandwidth in Gabytes	0.00	0.16
No. of Specialised Programmes	0	12
No. of Annual Conferences (National)	0	5
No. of Annual Conferences (International)	0	5
No. of Annual Board / Council Meetings	0	26

Source: MoHERST & NAQAA Databases

2.3 PROGRAMME AREA 3: RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Objective: To improve the application of research, innovation and technology to enhance sustainable socio-economic advancement.

Scientific research follows certain guiding principles to ensure inclusiveness, rigour, independence, strategic significance, and focus, with an underlying value for professionalism and sound ethical conduct that promotes innovation and development. The importance of research has been elaborated in several regional as well as national development blueprints such as AU Agenda 2063, which emphasises the need to ‘...promote collaborative policy between public and private sectors for the funding of research ...’. In the same vein, the AU Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation for Africa underscores the importance of scientific research, and challenges African countries to commit at least one per cent of their GDPs to the advancement of science and technology through research.

In The Gambia, the current National Development Plan (2018 – 2021) emphasises the importance of research and technology development in two of its strategic enablers, viz; (a) making The Gambia a Digital Nation and creating a modern information society (Strategic enabler 5); and (b) promoting research and development in the country by strengthening evidence-based policy, planning and decision-making (Strategic enabler 7).

Thus, the role of MOHERST within the NDP suggests playing “...an active role in the transformation of The Gambia into a skills-based economy and knowledge society”. This strengthens MoHERST’s mission in emphasising The Gambia’s aspiration to become a knowledge-based economy/society. Therefore, the development of a knowledge-based society emphasises the development of innovative technologies and commercialisation through scientific research, thus the need to develop basic and applied research and innovation eco-systems.

Technology development, innovation and scientific research are essential tools for realising economic growth and development, poverty alleviation, food self-sufficiency and sustainable development. The research and technology development programmes of the Ministry are aimed at harnessing the sectoral potentials in the realisation of the national development plan (NDP) goal of “... revitalised and transformed economy for the wellbeing of all Gambians”. To ensure the full development of our national research and technology development capacity and capabilities and ascertain their optimum utilisation, the necessary funding and available human capital must be always assured.

I. Coordination of Research, Innovation and Technology Development

Specific objective: To improve adherence to rules and regulations governing research and technology development.

A sound governance and regulatory framework is central to an effective and well-functioning national research and innovation systems. Government’s role is relevant to

creating an environment under which research, science and technology flourish through incentives and regulatory measures. Proper governance structures are essential to steer the national research and technology development agenda and will facilitate the effective implementation of its policies and programmes. In the medium-term, government will establish a sound administrative, coordination and regulatory frameworks to ensure sustained commitment by government, industry, academia and stakeholders in facilitating effective policy implementation; improving transparency and accountability; promoting entrepreneurship; and ensuring safe and appropriate utilisation of research findings and appropriate technologies, with ethics at the centre of its affairs. Establishing a National Research and Innovation Fund is equally important to provide adequate funding to support research and innovation activities and to develop and implement regulatory frameworks to ensure adherence to standards.

II. Promotion of Research, Innovation and Technology Development

Specific objective: To increase the absorption of research, innovation and technology development culture through mainstreaming in institutions of higher learning, government ministries, and research agencies.

In striving to build a robust research and innovation culture, the promotion of research and technology development are second to none. A well-developed research and development culture paves the way for informed decision-making of government policies, programmes and activities, which ensures that development is targeted and not gambled. A grounded research and development culture boost university ranking, research production, and a responsive education system. These are essential ingredients for the international competitiveness of institutions of higher learning and national development. Promotion of research and technology development also entails building partnerships and creating networks for cooperation. Also, to guarantee the attainment of the right depth of absorption, it is imperative that the requisite infrastructure is in place. Thus, the Ministry has placed emphasis on the building of science and technology parks, and innovation hubs, among others. The private sector will be encouraged to participate through PPP to complement the government's efforts in providing the much-needed infrastructure. These initiatives will continue to occupy top priorities in government.

During the period, the government will increase and encourage the use of ICTs and innovation as means to enhance service delivery and spur economic growth and competitiveness. The pursuit of excellence through effective and efficient utilisation of research, innovation and technology development for the rapid transformation of the Gambian economy will be emphasised. To achieve this, efforts will be made to provide the necessary environment and required infrastructure and facilities coupled with relevant capacity and the right incentives. Greater emphasis will be placed on building capacity and critical human capital at the highest level across all fields. The business continuity will be operationalised to ensure service continuity in the event of eventualities such as the current Covid-19 global pandemic.

Additionally, while digital skills education and training have continually evolved during the past decades, the quality and effectiveness of its provision remain somewhat inconsistent. Pronounced inequalities and disparities exist regarding individuals' digital skills and competencies within communities, countries, and regions. Reconciling these gaps will require more than technology and access to mobile and smartphones alone. Holistic approaches encompassing policy, implementation, funding, and partnerships are required to ensure that all learners have opportunities to cultivate relevant digital skills. Key actions proposed by MoHERST have been highlighted in the operational intervention.

The level of digitisation is low in the tertiary and higher education institutions, and a transformer for these institutions will offer a new frontier in knowledge management. It is in this regard that tertiary and higher education institutions will be digitally enabled to offer not only relevant instructions to students but also provide seamless administrative experience to the entire HERST sector. This infrastructure is designed to continually deliver the most desired academic and non-academic outcomes; and digitally enhance capabilities to gain insight quicker, address customer needs sooner, and invent new ways to create value.

Table 3.1: Key Research and Technology Development Indicators (Baseline Vs Targets)

Research and Tech. Dev. Indicators	Baseline 2021	Target 2025
No. of Computers	0	40
Internet Bandwidth in Ggabytes	0.001	0.021
No. of Digital Transformation Units	0.000	2.667
% of RID Park Completed	0.00%	44.44%
Amount of RID Allocated Annually (Millions)	0.000	23.056

Source: MoHERST and NAQAA Databases

2.4 PROGRAMME AREA 4: SECTOR MANAGEMENT

Strategic Objective: To provide an appropriate environment for effective and efficient MoHERST sector service delivery.

I. Management Information System (MIS)

Specific Objective: To improve the use of empirical evidence in decision-making within the sector to ensure increased efficiency and effectiveness.

MoHERST has put in place a management information system (MIS), which is currently being populated and cleaned. Institutions in the sector with defined rights will be able to access their data and suggest changes and additions to the MIS team at MoHERST. To do this, MoHERST is building a database for the entire sector and connecting it to the labour market information system (LMIS). Staff at MoHERST and the institutional focal persons will be continually capacitated to manage the system. This MIS will later incorporate research, science and technology indicators, including scholarship data. A student identity numbering system will be introduced to help track students in the tertiary and higher education institutions. This can also be used, among many other things, to manage instructors' profile data and related information within the sector.

Also, the Ministry plans to build a database on research, science, technology and innovation. This will focus on research and development outputs and the human capital in the research and development sectors.

II. Partnerships and Financial Resource Mobilisation

Specific objective: To increase equitable access to quality and relevant HERST services by providing more resources for implementing programmes.

To ensure the proper functioning of the HERST sector in the country, the Ministry will embark on a sectoral approach to institute a robust funding mechanism to ascertain the availability of the needed funds to implement development programmes, including award of scholarships, research and innovation grants, and physical and governance infrastructures. In awarding bilateral scholarships, the Ministry will work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to engage partner countries to provide more scholarships. In this regard, a framework for resource mobilisation will be developed to guide the management of all funds.

In addition to the allocated domestic resources, public-private partnerships will be reinforced to create an opportunity to improve quality and relevant service provision in the areas of education, research, science and technology. Equally, more partnerships will be established with the international communities. Several external resource mobilisation efforts are being made through our bilateral and multilateral partners to mobilise the necessary resources in transforming key tertiary and higher education institutions in The Gambia.

Accordingly, additional endeavours will be made to source funding by developing bankable project proposals. This should be guided by creating mechanisms for equipping personnel with the requisite project proposal development skills.

III. Project Implementation, Coordination and Monitoring and Evaluation

Specific Objective: To improve compliance with project implementation guidelines.

Given the need to measure tangible achievements in the short, medium and long-term outcomes of sector policies and programmes that will be shared with stakeholders within the accountability framework, MoHERST has created an M&E unit under its purview. It is also important to note that, in addition to the need for an M&E unit within MoHERST, there is an urgent need to strengthen the operation and management of the sector's Project Coordinating Unit (PCU).

Table 4.1: Key Sector Management Indicators (Baseline Vs Targets)

Sector Mgt. Indicators	Baseline 2021	Target 2025
% of Office Complex Completed	0.00%	44.44%
No. Staff & Non-Staff Trained - PhD	0	104
No. Staff & Non-Staff Trained - Master's	0	484
No. Staff & Non-Staff Trained - Bachelor's	0	104
No. Staff & Non-Staff Trained - Short-Term	0	47
No. of Specialised Programmes	0	2
No. of Publications (policies & Regulations)	0	7
No. of Conferences (Nat. & International)	0	1
No. of Annual Board / Council Meetings	0	2
No. of Student on Scholarship (Master's)	45	242
No. of Student on Scholarship (Bachelor's)	1500	7769
No. of Student on Scholarship (Cert/Diploma)	250	376

Source: MoHERST & NAQAA Databases

3 OPERATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

3.1 EQUITABLE ACCESS

3.1.1 *Result Area 1: Infrastructural Development*

- Construction of USET Campus
- Rehabilitation works at GTTI Jeshwang Campus
- Completion of Ndemban Campus
- Completion of Kanilai Campus
- Establishment of two TVET centres
- Completion of UTG Faraba Campus – Phases 1 and 2
- Rehabilitation works at WASCAL Farafenni Campus
- Upgrading of MDI Campus
- Construction of University of Education (Gambia College)
- Rehabilitation works at Gambia College Campus

3.1.2 *Result Area 2: Financial Assistance to Needy and Meritorious Students*

- Development and review of regulations (publications)
- Provision of scholarships to tertiary and higher education students in The Gambia and Abroad
- Provision of loans to students in The Gambia

3.2 QUALITY AND RELEVANCE

3.2.1 *Result Area 1: Training and Development*

- Training of administrative and academic staff
- Development and review of curricula, policies and regulations (publications)
- Provision of engineering and technology equipment (laboratories)
- Establishment of mentorship, internship, quality assurance, alumni, and industry relations (specialised offices)
- Implementation of conference/seminar activities

3.2.2 *Result Area 2: Provision of Instructional Materials and Laboratory Equipment*

- Provision of instructional materials and laboratory equipment (Laboratories)
- Provision of computers, e-libraries/e-journals and internet connectivity

3.3 RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

3.3.1 *Result Area 1: Coordination of Research, Innovation and Technology Development*

- Development and review of policies and regulations (publications)
- Establishment of boards and councils (National Research Board/Council, STI Board/Council/excellence centres – specialised programmes)
- Development of a documentation centre/unit on research, innovation and development (MoHERST)

3.3.2 Result Area 2: Promotion of Research, Innovation and Technology Development

- Implementation of HERST digital transformation programme (MoHERST only)
- Implementation of conference/seminar activities
- Establishment of national research and innovation funds (MoHERST only)
- Establishment of a research, innovation and technology development park

3.4 SECTOR MANAGEMENT

3.4.1 Result Area 1: Management Information System

- Development of a comprehensive Management Information System – Specialised Programme
- Short-term training of focal persons to manage their databases
- Development of statistical yearbooks - Publication

3.4.2 Result Area 2: Financial Resource Mobilisation

- Short-term training of staff on bankable project proposals - Training
- Development/Publication of a resource mobilisation strategy
- Organisation of donor roundtable - Conference

3.4.3 Result Area 3: Project Coordination, Implementation, and M&E

- Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework
- Implementation of sector retreat programmes
- Construction of Office Complex

4 FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The financial framework for the Strategic Plan is based on cost projections from the financial model and the investment programme. This tool has been adapted from the EPSSim model of the UNESCO International Institute of Education Planning (IIEP). It takes account of some macro-economic assumptions, such as the expected GDP growth and the shares of the national budget, education budget and MoHERST, respectively. Specifically, higher education enrolments relate to the age-group population or transition from senior secondary education into the tertiary and higher education system.

The financial model is derived/linked to the flow model in which the various indicators and their targets have been determined by the sector based on the lessons learnt from the implementation of the last development plan (2018-2021). The challenges experienced thereof, coupled with the fact that the education sector has a limited number of donors.

4.1 STRATEGIC PLAN INVESTMENT COSTS

The investment programme of the Strategic Plan was developed using the financial modelling of the Simulation Model. It assumes an inflation rate of 6 per cent over the period and establishes unit costs and rates for various activities. The investments herein reflect the activities for the investment programme covering the long-term post-secondary education on the one hand and the research, innovation and development management on the other.

The investment programme is structured into four components (institutional transformation on equitable access; institutional transformation on quality and relevant tertiary and higher education; research and technology development; and sector management. Tables 4.1 to 4.4 below show the proportion of resources for each component.

Table 4.1: Equitable Access Activities Costs, 2021 – 2025

Equitable Access Activity Cost (GMD 000,000)	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Remunerations of Staff	259.03	248.63	245.56	247.19	1,000.41
Civil Works	792.52	776.74	773.95	773.97	3,117.18
Total	1,051.55	1,025.36	1,019.51	1,021.16	4,117.59

Source: MoHERST Simulation Model, 2021

Table 4.2: Quality and Relevance Activities Costs, 2021 – 2025

Quality & Relevance Activity Cost (GMD 000,000)	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Training	59.98	71.24	76.59	83.64	291.45
Journal Subscription	7.88	7.88	7.88	7.88	31.52
Computers	33.03	33.03	33.03	33.03	132.11
Pubs (P-Reviewed, Policies & Regs)	37.85	39.68	39.01	40.90	157.45
Internet Connectivity	0.06	0.10	0.14	0.19	0.48
specialised Programmes	14.51	14.51	14.51	14.51	58.02
Conferences (Nat. & International)	12.50	13.00	13.00	13.00	51.50
Annual Board / Council Meetings	2.50	2.63	2.63	2.63	10.38
Total	168.30	182.06	186.78	195.77	732.92

Source: MoHERST Simulation Model, 2021

Table 4.3: Research & Technology Development Activities Costs, 2021 – 2025

Research & Technology Development Cost (GMD 000,000)	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Computers	0.40	0.91	0.91	0.91	3.12
Internet Connectivity	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02
Digital Transformation	33.33	33.37	33.37	33.37	133.43
RID Fund	5.56	11.39	17.22	23.06	57.22
RID Park	13.89	13.89	13.89	13.89	55.57
Total	53.19	59.56	65.40	71.23	249.37

Source: MoHERST Simulation Model, 2021

Table 4.4: Sector Management Activities Costs, 2021 – 2025

Sector Mgt. Cost (GMD 000,000)	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Office Complex	55.56	55.83	55.83	55.83	223.04
Training	719.87	719.87	719.87	719.87	2,879.47
Specialised Programmes	2.78	2.81	2.81	2.81	11.19
Policies / Regulations	1.67	1.75	1.75	1.75	6.92
Conferences (Nat. & Int'l)	0.33	0.68	1.03	1.38	3.43
Scholarships	157.53	236.61	317.14	399.13	1,110.42
Board/Council Meeting (yrly)	0.06	0.14	0.22	0.31	0.72
Total	937.79	1,017.69	1,098.65	1,181.07	4,235.20

Source: MoHERST Simulation Model, 2021

Table 4.5: Overall Budget. 2021 – 2025

OVERALL (GMD 000,000)	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Equitable Access	1,051.55	1,025.36	1,019.51	1,021.16	4,117.59
Institutional Transformation	168.30	182.06	186.78	195.77	732.92
Research & Tech. Development	53.19	59.56	65.40	71.23	249.37
Sector Management	937.79	1,017.69	1,098.65	1,181.07	4,235.20
Total Cost (GMD)	2,210.83	2,284.67	2,370.34	2,469.24	9,335.08
Total Cost (USD)	43.35	44.80	46.48	48.42	183.04
Total Income (GMD)	828.17	845.96	863.89	882.33	3,420.36
Total Income (USD)	16.24	16.59	16.94	17.30	67.07
Funding Gap (GMD)	(1,382.65)	(1,438.71)	(1,506.45)	(1,586.91)	(5,914.72)
Funding Gap (USD)	(27.11)	(28.21)	(29.54)	(31.12)	(115.97)

Source: MoHERST Simulation Model, 2021

Table 4.6: Share of Investment Programme by Components of Institutional Transformation

Component	Percentage Share
1. Equitable Access	44.11%
2. Quality and Relevance	7.85%
3. Research and Technology Development	2.67%
4. Sector Management	45.37%

Source: MoHERST Simulation Model, 2021

The flow model projects an average annual establishment of three (3) new higher education institutions which are to construct eight (8) new department blocks; two (2) new tertiary institutions, under which only three (3) department blocks could be built over the period; four (4) currently existing campuses will undergo refurbishment, seventeen (17) classrooms under higher education and thirty-four (34) under the tertiary education. Six (6) separate laboratories and seven (7) libraries will be built; one research and technology development park and a documentation centre will also be built over the strategic plan period to cater for the required expansion. Consequently, infrastructural development in all the components of institutional transformation, including the cost of instructional materials, laboratory equipment, and other quality-related tangible infrastructure, will account for 44.11 per cent of the investment. Training of the entire HERST sector constitutes 33.97 per cent of the investment. It must be noted that with this in place, the system will be moving closer to a sufficient proportion of qualified lecturers and a human capital stock that will increase productivity in the country.

4.2 FINANCING OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

MoHERST currently benefits from resources from in-country and external partners to support the delivery of quality education, research, science and technology services. In addition, the Ministry has several projects that will support the implementation of the Plan; however, it should be noted that domestic resources will continue to be mobilised; but it is worth noting that the budget allocation to higher education, research, science and technology sector could not be maintained at the current percentage value of the GDP.

The funding gap for implementing the strategic plan for the sector is 63.36 per cent of the total required resource envelope for development and other charges. The total cost for the strategic plan from 2022 to 2025 is GMD 9.335 billion, an equivalent of US\$ 183.04 million, including a total funding gap of GMD 5.915 billion, an equivalent of US\$ 118.3 million.

5 SECTOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The MoHERST Strategic Plan will guide the formulation of the annual operational work plans and serve as a framework for monitoring and assessing achievements within the period 2021-2025. Its purpose is to describe the Gambia government's vision through policy objectives. These objectives are realised through outlined key activities within broad budget indications.

The specific objectives of M&E are:

- To review and modify the MoHERST indicators for monitoring programmes.
- To identify necessary data sources, provide indicator values and translate those values to information.
- To describe the information outputs and their dissemination, i.e., where all key stakeholders will access information needed for a particular indicator.
- To follow up implementation against set targets.
- To improve decision-making at all levels by ensuring that relevant data are collected using the appropriate indicator values, analysed and given feedback or recommendations.

5.1 MANAGEMENT OF SECTOR PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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

- Monitoring progress and achievement
- Overseeing the implementation of programmes/activities
- Reviewing progress and financial reports

The SMT will delegate the implementation activities in the Strategic Plan to the relevant directorates based on individual mandates prescribed in the programme area logical frameworks and professional competence. The directorates will be tasked with implementation activities based on agreed work plans and budgetary allocations.

The Directorate of Planning coordinates sector performance monitoring based on the results frameworks and the results chains as guides drawing on outcomes and progress reports of the various programmes, reports on specific donor programmes/initiatives, and other sources of information. This Directorate works with other directorates to conduct specific impact surveys as and when required.

The responsible directorates will develop one-year rolling implementation plans for each programme area detailing activities, timelines, resource requirements and budgets. In addition, a consolidated annual procurement plan of the various programmes will be provided by the Procurement Unit.

Each directorate or unit head will produce quarterly and annual reports detailing progress against its annual plan and a financial report which will be compiled into quarterly and annual reports for the Ministry. Planning Directorate consolidates the semi-annual, and annual progress reports through a specialised unit in charge of monitoring and evaluation. The Unit carries out this function in collaboration with other Directorates/Committees.

The monitoring process of this Strategic Plan is designed to strengthen linkages with broader governance and accountability strategy. Therefore, the Ministry will provide a range of more specific reports to various stakeholders.

The following supervision reporting lines have been identified:

a. Senior Management Team Level

This body comprises the Honourable Minister as Chair, Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretaries, Directors, and Unit Heads, including the Accounts and Records Units. This team meets monthly to review the status of the implementation of policies and programmes.

b. Donor Community Level

The Planning Directorate, through the M&E Unit, collects data and information on monitoring and evaluation findings for donor community meetings and reports. The directorates responsible for the programmes will assist the Planning Directorate by developing implementation status reports of programmes under their purview.

c. National Level

Various directorates will report on the implementation of the respective programmes and have this collated for Cabinet and inclusion in other national reports.

d. Institutional Level

Institutional and project focal persons will develop reports on the activities, and the directorates will collect these reports for the compilation of their reports for national and donor committee levels.

Everyone in The Gambia is a stakeholder in the education, research, science and technology sector and thus, has an interest in the industry and its activities. It is, therefore, essential to keep all these parties fully informed about the sector's developments and to ensure that public perception is managed. This will help the sector translate its vision and achieve its overall objectives. During the implementation of this Strategic Plan, MoHERST will (a)engage with all stakeholders and ensure there is a clear understanding of what the sector does; (b)demonstrate the successes of the sector; and (c) manage perceptions and attitudes towards the education, research, science and technology systems in The Gambia.

These strategies will be achieved through different formal and informal platforms such as meetings, publications, conferences, symposia, press releases, radio and television and social and print media.

The strategy is devised and intended to be implemented in two tiers:

1. An internal communication strategy emerged from and is guided by a clear need within the HERST sector for information to flow at all levels and constantly.
2. An external communication strategy specifically tailored and targeted at external stakeholders, including other government ministries and agencies, development partners, and the public, who also have a vested interest in the successes and strides made by the sector, and thus need to be adequately informed.

To be effective, all MoHERST communication must be targeted carefully to suit the two tiers, and it must be an ongoing, consistent and frequent process throughout the implementation lifecycle. During the currency of the implementation of the communication, these relationships will be constantly reviewed to determine whether priorities remain the same or whether it might require changes to new communications techniques or tools to reach out to the audiences.

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