REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

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Executive Summary

Preparing this Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024 was under taken through a participatory process involving consultations and discussions with all relevant stakeholders at both local and national levels. This plan marks a turning point in our work by providing us with a framework clearly defining how we, in collaboration with our partners intend to comprehensively engage women, children, persons with disability and other vulnerable groups in poverty reduction and national development. It demonstrates commitment of the government of The Gambia to recognize the contribution made by, and harness the potentials of women, children, people with disability and other vulnerable groups through relevant policy frameworks, mainstream programs and processes and capacity buiding The strategy is structured in three parts: PART I presents the detailed contextual analyses that underpin the plan priorities; and part II covers the institutional assessment of the Ministry; while part III outlines the plan framework, which includes the vision and goal of the plan, its strategic pillars, priorities and enablers, as well as the accountability framework and broad cost allocations of its programs..

The strategy plan underpins the Ministry's organizational transformation and transition towards new programme methodologies and growth. It underscores systems approach to gender and women empowerment; child protection and development; and longer-term engagement on inclusive integrated and comprehensive social protection system. The plan suggests restructuring for effective programming. The organic roles and functions in programming will thus remain professional and effective. The strategy presents opportunities for improved learning, especially at programme level; and outlines the direction through which the Ministry shall assume key roles of promoting such learning, mobilise resources and coordinate best practices of positive change.

The strategy underscores strong government leadership and coordination (at both national and regional levels) in all gender and women empowerment, child and social protection programming. Partnership engagement and alliances of various forms will become an increasing feature of programming in our complex and challenging context. The Ministry aims to usher in a modern social protection system and will thus, be able to offer more predictable, reliable and sustainable support to assist local communities in coping with shocks, while building long-term resilience to risks and contributing to poverty reduction.

Resource mobilisation shall be the Ministry's noble priority to maintain both the momentum and fulfill the existing programme needs, as well as provide space for new initiatives and innovations. Within this re-adjustment of the overall organisational balance, there is an opportunity for an enhanced growth and expansion.

The Ministry has also developed a financing strategy for the plan. This strategy spells out the resource requirements and the potential sources (e.g. government budget, development partners, and private sector) for programming and capacity building. Ultimately, the success of this strategy plan will entail making hard choices and taking deliberate and bold steps to ensure that resources are directed towards priority areas and

interventions. Aid resources are particularly important in this regard, since the financing of the plan will rely heavily on funding from development partners. It is expected that aid flows to support plan implementation will be consistent with the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda for Action and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States.

In the absence of a coherent and clear framework for policy enforcement and programming, the ministry commissioned the preparation of this five-year strategic plan (2020 – 2024) as its first roadmap of operation. As part of this assignment, an institutional assessment of the Ministry was conducted as a baseline to inform its capacity strengthening; and the overall strategic direction of the Ministry. The primary aim of this plan is to provide a strategic framework for programming, learning and resource allocation. It articulates precise goals and objectives and corresponding interventions in child and social protection; as well as programmes to empower women ~ taking them closer toward their structural economic transformation, prosperity and inclusive growth.

The strategy plan was formulated through an extensive consultative process with the populations and service providers; and with thorough reviews of relevant legislations, policies, programmes and recent major sector reports; and is aligned to key regional and international instruments (CRC, CEDAW, SDGs, etc.).

Foreword

This document highlights the strategic direction of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare for the period, 2020 to 2024. It provides milestones in defining the strategic direction of the Ministry for the next five years. The strategic plan recognizes the important role played by women, children and people with disabilities. The plan is in line with the national development priorities as stipulated in the National Development Plan (2018-2021) and further aims towards achieving SDG's, African Union Agenda 2063, international and regional conventions & protocols. The process for the development of the strategic plan went through an Institutional Assessment (IA) of existing capacity of the Ministry and its line departments against its demand to effectively address issues of women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Following the establishment of the Ministry of Women, Children & Social Welfare, we unveiled what could be called our first roadmap of operation, a strategy that reflects a boldness and ambition envisioned by the government. This boldness is rooted in a renewed clarity of our purpose, and the unity of national and international efforts that it inspires. Our ambition is grounded in an expanded view of the potentials of women and children – potentials not only to survive and improve their own lives, but to thrive as leaders of positive change in The Gambia.

This Strategy is truly ours home grown by all of us. This roadmap for our future reflects the inputs of citizens from all of The Gambia, from a market woman in Farafenne to technocrats in government, Ministers, from women and men, boys and girls, members of VDCs, women's groups, every age group, every tribe, and every sector. The process of developing the strategy is a sign of how far Gambians can work together. The strategic pillars and actions emerged from an unprecedented series of consultations with children's assembly, youth groups, women councilors, District Authorities, Regional MDFTs and at the validation workshop, truly listening to the people of our great nation.

The process has been open, collaborative, and peaceful, proving that we Gambians can work together in partnership to launch an integrated challenge on poverty and social injustice. The Ministry will deepen the quality and intensity of its engagement in society, while facilitating sustainable child protection and social service delivery in the country. We shall be instrumental in enforcing our child and social protection policies, influencing government's commitments towards gender-sensitive budgeting, child and social protection budgetary allocations. The Ministry will emphasize this drive, and move into new forms of partnership to ensure that government obligations and donor commitments are translated into action, while ensuring accountability to the local populations.

In this way, our strategy, which will guide us for many years to come, as well as our plan for the next five years, is focused on quality. The Strategy lays the groundwork for making sure that children's parents are capable of catering for them, and women can participate in a local government that is vested with increasing responsibility and resources. Child and social protection is not something this government can do alone. It is something we all must do. Our partners to augment our program resources; the CSOs to agree on healthy partnership; and media houses will continue to serve as watchdogs. The

Legislature will continue to pass good legislations to build our reform efforts into the bedrock of our institutions.

I am confident that this Strategy - representing as it does the hard work and input of all Gambians - will be a framework that will guide us toward rapid, inclusive, and sustainable development. On my part, I pledge to perform my duties with due diligence guided by the principles of partnership, inclusivity, openness and patriotic altruism.

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Fatou Kinteh
Hon. Minister of Women, Children and Social Welfare

List of Acronyms/Abbreviations

BReST	Building Resilience Through Social Transfer
CBOs	Community-Based Organisations
CEDAW)	The Convention on The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEPA	Communication, Education And Public Awareness
CFSVA	2016 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis
CPA	Child Protection Alliance
CRC	Committee on The Rights of The Child
DPs	Development Partners
DSW	Directorate of Social Protection
ECCD	Early Childhood Care And Development
ECDs	Early Childhood Development, Care
EU	European Union
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FR	Results Framework
GAPD	Gambia Association Of The Physically Disabled
GBA	Greater Banjul Area
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GLFS	Gambia Labour Force Survey
GMIS	Gender Management Information Sytems
GOTG	Government Of The Gambia
GOVI	Gambia Organization Of The Visually Impaired
HRD	Human Resource Development
IA	Institutional Assessment
IEC	Information, Education, And Communication
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys,
MoBSE	Ministry of Basic And Secondary Education
MoWCSW	Ministry For Women, Children And Social Welfare
MSMES	Micro- Small And Medium Enterprises
NaNA	National Nutrition Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NPAGW	National Policy for The Advancement of Gambian Women
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy 2015-2025
NSPSC	National Social Protection Steering Committee
OD	Organizational Development
PLHIV	People Living With HIV
PME	Performance Monitoring And Evaluation
PWD	People Living With Disability
SDGS	Sustainable Development Goals
SMT	Senior Management Teams
SP	Strategy Plan
STEM	Science Technology, Engineering And Mathematics
TB	Tuberculosis
WASH	Water, Sanitation And Hygiene Services

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PART 1: BACKGROUND OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Chapter I: Introduction

Since 2017, The Gambia has enjoyed peace with its newly found democratic dispensation after two decades of repressive governance. During the last three years, the Government of The Gambia (GoTG) and its Development Partners (DPs) remained committed to institutional strengthening and economic transformation, and transfer of the benefits of good governance to ordinary Gambians. Several short- and medium-term development plans and programmes are being implemented. The 2018 - 2021 Gambia National Development Plan (NDP) provided the first glimmer of hope for Gambians that the newly democratically elected Government would protect basic rights and restore vital social services.

For many years, women, children and social protection issues were under two different ministries; the Ministry of Women's Affairs was under the Office of the Vice President, while the the Department of Social Welfare, which is responsible for the welfare of children and people with disability was under the Ministry of Health. In January 2019, the Government of The Gambia created the first ever Ministry for Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW). The National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women (NPAGW) and National Social Protection Policy 2015-2025 (NSPP) provided the point of reference for strategic development and programming. While NPAGW provided the roadmap for addressing gender inequalities, the NSPP defined a comprehensive and crosscutting social protection agenda and proposed a set of priority actions to guide the gradual establishment of an integrated and equity-focused approach social protection system in The Gambia.

1.1 Country Overview of Gender, Children and Social Protection

The National Development Plan (2018-2021) puts women empowerment at the centre of the growth of The Gambian economy. It considers women empowerment as one of the seven critical enablers complimenting its strategic priorities. By this, all sectors are expected to integrate relevant gender issues into their plans as an integral part of their work. They are expected to identify the gender issues in their sectors and define mechanisms for integrating them into policies, plans, programmes and actions programmed for implementation.

The National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy and National Social Protection Policy were adopted to respectively empower women to obtain dignified living and protect the rights of children and all vulnerable people. Relevant institutions are empowering the vulnerable groups to participate fully in society through a cohesive social service delivery system. At the centre of both policy and practice is the orientation towards equalization of opportunities, preventing discrimination, and promoting inclusion. Both the Women's Bureau and Department of Social Welfare further seek to ensure access to sustainable and quality social services by responding to the diverse needs of those marginalised and at-risk populations. The existence of the National Social Protection Steering Committee (NSPSC) and National Social Protection Forum are steps towards the right direction. However, it will be more useful to relocate both platforms to the MoGCSW.

Children in The Gambia are protected by several legislations including Children's Act 2005 and amendment Act 2016, Sexual Offense Act, Criminal Code, Tourism Offense Act and Women Act 2010. There are also institutions set up to implement the legislations including Department of Social Welfare, Police, Immigration Department, Justice and Judiciary, Health and Education. In addition to legislations, children issues are also mainstreamed into other sector policy including Health For All Policy, Basic and Secondary Education Policy, Nutrition Policy, Climate change

policy to name a few. However, there is a draft children policy that needs to be reviewed to consider emerging development issues affecting children.

The integrated approach to policy has diversity in service delivery for children and adolescent in The Gambia. Over the years, these services have greatly improved the lives of children. In health, Under-5 mortality rate has declined from 109 /1000(MICS 2010) to 57/1000 live births in 2018. Infant mortality rate has reduced from 81/1000(MICS 2010) to 41/1000(MICS 2018). In Nutrition, the prevalence of stunting for children 0-59 months stands at 19.0 percent while wasting reduced from 9.5 percent to 6.2 percent (MICS 2018). Access to safe drinking water, 84.8 percent households have access to basic drinking water sources (MICS 2018). While 90.4 percent of the population are using improved source of drinking water. The rural-urban rural -urban disparities revealed that 90.3 percent of urban population and 73.4 percent rural households have access to basic drinking water source.

In education, 78.1 percent of children of primary school age are attending school. While, 18.4 percent (MICS 2018), of primary school age children are out of school. The situation is slightly worse for boys with 20.5 percent being out of school as compared to 16.4 percent girls (MICS 2018). There is also a steep decline in completion rates from primary (65.5%) to lower secondary (45.8%) and upper secondary level (29.2%). This drastic decline needs to be addressed.

In addition, 57.9 percent of children have their births registered and 89.2 percent of children aged 1-14 years experienced some form of violent discipline (MICS 2018). While 34.2 percent of women (20-49 years old) being married before the age of 18. Additionally, 50.6 percent of girls (0-14 years old) and 27.3 percent of girls (0-4 years old) have undergone FGM/C. Economic exploitation of children continues with 24.7 percent (5-17 years old) with 24.3 percent being boys and 25.0 percent girls (MICS 2018).

The National Social Protection Policy (2015-2025) presented the country's long-term vision for social protection, which seeks "inclusive integrated and comprehensive social protection system that provides preventive, protective and transformative measures to safeguard the lives of all poor and vulnerable groups; and contribute to broader human development, greater economic productivity and growth". However, the slow pace of developing the child and social protection systems, and fiscal constraints within the country are issues of concern for more adaptive, comprehensive and inclusive systems.

Presently the institutional framework for gender mainstreaming involves a number of players. The establishment and use of multiple mechanisms is an important development because it spreads the work of promoting gender equality and women's rights across several institutions. Different mechanisms advocate, influence, make, implement, monitor and evaluate the gender policy. This framework, if systematized and harmonized, holds the promise of spreading tasks, even if there are overlaps in the mandates of the different mechanisms. The Gambia's social protection systems are grossly under-developed and weak to support the vulnerable groups with their basic needs and rights.

Even though, the legal frameworks and social protection policy reforms underway have been encouraging including the ratification and adoption of international and regional instruments such as CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2030, African Union Agenda 2063, and Maputo Protocol, United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security among others., there are several other factors that characterize the conditions of vulnerable and at-risk groups in the country. These include, but are not limited to: gender equality and gender rights challenges characterized by social exclusion of women and girls across

the political, economic and social spheres; increased feminization of poverty; limited economic empowerment of women and girls; limited participation by women in politics and decision making processes; increased exposure to and experiences of Sexual and Gender Based Violence by women and girls; exposure to harmful cultural practices; unpaid care work by women and girls; among other forms of gender injustices, severe and pervasive destitution, and accompanying weak family systems, poor access to quality education and health for the poorer members and middle class populations, poor access to quality social services, and poor child well-being indicators. In addition, conditions of 50,600 elderly people (2.3% of estimated population ~ above) includes isolation and poverty, making them vulnerable to declining psychosocial profile. Looming HIV/AIDS crisis, homelessness for children from poorer families, social exclusion and discrimination against persons with disabilities are key issues of concern.

The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare has partnered with the United Nations (UN) agencies in The Gambia for institutional capacity and systems strengthening. It is expected that the partnership could narrow existing gaps such as the absence of a coherent and clear framework for accountability as well as measuring the responsiveness of line ministries and local governments to children's and social protection laws and policies, and in the appropriation of public resources as per Gambia's NDP (2018-2021) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the need for it to provide strategic leadership for effective delivery on policies, and coordination of the implementation of programmes that bring about visible change in the lives of women, girls and children. The Government, through the newly created Ministry and with support of the UN partners, commissioned the preparation of this   first five – year Strategy Plan. A Situation Analysis of Women, Children and Vulnerable Groups as well as an institutional assessment of the Ministry was conducted as a baseline to inform capacity strengthening of the institution and the overall strategic direction of the Ministry.

1.2 Purpose of the Strategy

The primary purpose of the Strategic Plan is to determine the Ministry's strategic directions during the next five years (2020 - 2025). It also aims to provide a strategic framework for programming, learning and resource allocation. The Plan further defines the Ministry's scope and institutional capacity; defines its area of excellence and professional approach to programming, and reflects the new ministry's commitment to respond to the outrage of marginalization, vulnerability and social injustice in the country.

Thus, with partners and supporters, the Ministry will discharge its mandate to the fullest, and respond to the outrage of gender inequality and vulnerability at the local level. The strategy further defines the Ministry's core programmes (of highest possible standards) targeting women, children and vulnerable people, including the differently able people in greatest need. It brings with it new and distinct momentum in the Ministry's development process in terms of facilitating change in the lives of poor and marginalized communities.

Moreover, the Plan is deeply rooted in the country's national development frameworks, including the Government of The Gambia's National Development Plan (2017 – 2021), Gambia's Vision 2020, Children's Act, and Gender and Social Protection Policies. It is in sync with the Sustainable Development Goal 3 *(ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages),* Goal 5 *(achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls)* and Goal 16 *(promoting peaceful societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable institutions at all levels)*, the Beijing Declaration and its follow up protocols.

1.3 Rationale for the Strategic Plan

The rationale for the development of the Plan to systematically define the role of the new Ministry and align its strategies to both the global and national the operating contexts which have undergone substantial changes in the last few years. At the national level, the most significant change has been the shift from a centralized to democratic system of governance, which signaled the beginning of sustainable human development and socio-economic transformation in the country. This has led to a redefinition of the role of both the state and markets, and consequently to a rethinking of the role of public institutions, hence the compelling pressures from the rapidly changing operating environment for this strategic planning.

There are equally important internal pressures that serve as rational for the development of the Strategic Plan including the desire of the new Ministry to transition away from project by project approach towards a systems approach to gender, child and social protection, and longer-term engagement on inclusive integrated and comprehensive social protection system. This will require the Ministry to re-organize its operational and programming structures for effective programming. The organic roles and functions in programming will thus remain professional and effective. Improved learning within the Ministry will become priority, especially at the programme level. In the new strategy direction, the Ministry will have a key role to promote such learning, mobilise resources and coordinate best practices for local level policy advocacy and influencing.

In order to maintain both the momentum and fulfill the existing programme needs, as well as provide space for new initiatives and innovations, resource mobilization shall be the Ministry's top priority. Within this re-adjustment of the overall organisational balance, there is an opportunity for an enhanced growth and expansion. Strong government leadership and coordination institutions (at both national and regional levels) shall drive implementation of gender, child and social protection programmes. Partnership engagement and alliances of various forms will become an increasing feature of programming in our complex and challenging context. The Ministry aims to usher in a modern social protection system and will thus, be able to offer more predictable, reliable and sustainable support to assist local communities in coping with shocks, while contributing to poverty reduction and building long-term resilience to risks.

1.4 Strategic Plan Stake Holders

The plan is meant for both internal and external stakeholders as it provides the rationale for the Ministry's work. For the internal stakeholders (including staff), it helps build a shared understanding of the Ministry's mandate, and its priorities. More importantly, it will help instill a sense of ownership among the staff, in shaping the future course of their work in the country. For all external stakeholders, the plan presents a comprehensive picture of the Ministry's commitment to its mandate and willingness to enforce existing national instruments including children's act, gender and social protection policies, as well as international and regional instruments including the CRC and CEDAW as a way of fulfilling Gambia's international and regional obligations. The Plan also defines the objectives and functions of gender equality and social and child protection agenda, including choice of interventions, governance and institutional arrangements, and financing and monitoring mechanisms. It will further allow: i) a joint and harmonized vision on gender equality and women's empowerment programming, child and social protection among the key stakeholders at central, regional and local levels; and ii) collaboration with relevant actors in identifying common goals and ensuring that women empowerment, gender equality, social and child protection are entrenched in their strategic plans. The Plan shall be an entry point for consultations with donors regarding the adoption of a multi-donor pool for financing around these issues.

1.5 The Strategic Plan Perspectives: Vision 2025 and beyond

The social, economic, and political conditions in The Gambia are changing rapidly. The Plan will therefore evolve over time, keeping pace with the changing needs of the population. It shall establish the basis and framework for action to protect the rights and address the needs and aspirations of children, women and other vulnerable people – implementing long-term social protection and inclusion programmes that would spur sustainable social development and build the social capital. There shall be programmes for women's empowerment, systems approach to child protection, and the overall social protection sector that will contribute not only to building a systemic response to the needs and rights of vulnerable people, but also the cultivation of gender equality with democratic ideals and values. The Plan seeks for active citizen engagement and partnership with both national and international players in the advancement of women, children and poor families to enable them cater for their basic needs and rights.

The Plan envisions the Ministry as a reference institution for engendering the national development process as a means of empowering women and children, and ensuring broad-based participation, dissemination of issues affecting the human rights of women and children through information, education, and communication (IEC) strategies. The Ministry shall also be providing child welfare services, including a decentralized intervention system with 'foot-soldier' staff populating the regions and local communities for service delivery. There shall be a well-structured gender machinery, with clear structures and defined responsibilities providing clear frameworks for mainstreaming gender. Owing to the fact that gender is a development issue, the Ministry shall be advocating for a significant percentage of the national budget for its programmes of gender machinery, children and social protection, and capacity building.

1.6 Process of Preparation of the Strategic Plan

The entire strategy planning was carried out by a team of consultants, comprising of a team of consultants and specialists in social protection and child protection specialist with intimate knowledge of social development, the team was led by Gender Expert with extensive international experience. The strategy planning process involved eight stages that served as to guide the team. Some of the steps had happened simultaneously and repetitively; employing different strategic planning methods and tools to support the analysis that informed the strategic choices. The process began with an institutional assessment of the Ministry to define its strategic position as the government mandated institution for gender and women's empowerment, children and social protection. The organisational assessment report informed this strategy plan. To a large extent, this strategy was informed by the contextual data gathered during the meetings with the Minister and Senior Management Team of the Ministry, desk reviews, and key stakeholder consultations. The process involved a cross-section of stakeholder consultations that stimulated discussions on the various strategic directions. Their comments and concerns were found useful in shaping this strategy document.

Chapter 2: The Contextual Overview

2.1 Social and Cultural Contexts

2.1.1 The Social and Cultural Conditions
The Gambia is a multi-ethnic and multi-racial society, exhibiting a high degree of ethnic and religious tolerance. Albeit, there exist a certain degree of diversity in cultural beliefs and practices among ethnic groups, similar overarching traditions which contribute to strong social cohesion. This has significant bearing on informal and community-based child and social protection, which is a main source of support for poor and vulnerable populations. Majority of communities are made-up of patriarchal societies, comprising several clans with family ties that sustain the existing social and economic safety-nets for households, at the same time covering up for matters of domestic violence that take place, thereby justifying female subordination. They cherish extended family systems, but the traditional family structures and values are no longer the same as in the past; as people struggle to improve their earnings by diversifying income sources to change their way of life. The Gambia has made significant progress towards child and social development in the last decade, becoming one of the top four African countries progressing toward the MDGs related to hunger, primary schooling, and child immunization. Despite these achievements, the country's demographic, economic and social indicators remain disturbing.

2.1.2 The Demographic Features:
According to The Gambia Labour Force Survey (2018) the population of The Gambia stands at 2,335,507; with females constituting 51.2% of the total population. Although the majority of the population resides in the urban areas (54%), females constitute the majority of the rural population. About 59.6% of the population lived in urban cities and secondary towns in 2015, which was a substantial increase from the 28.4 per cent recorded in 1980 (Economic Commission for Africa, 2017). The annual rate of urbanization is 3.7 per cent[1], and with this pace, if unabated, 71.5% of the population will be city and town dwellers by 2025. The demographic changes are enormous, and it is estimated that by 2020 there will be significant increase in population. Also, about 45% shall be youth (15 to 30 years old) that will be living in the Greater Banjul Area (GBA) and secondary urban centers. This will naturally change policy focus and developmental efforts towards urban programming in The Gambia. It will also create new poverty and welfare challenges, widening gender inequality gaps including growing demands on reproductive care in both urban and rural localities and pressure on basic service in urban areas. Consequently, these issues have important implications for social protection policy and programming; and the Ministry should be geared to match-up.

2.2 Political, Legal and Economic profile

2.2.1 Political and legal context:
The Gambia's constitution of 1997 provides for participatory democracy, separation of powers, judicial independence and fundamental human rights. The country has a unicameral legislature with the National Assembly (Parliament) consisting of 58 members for a five-year term. The Gambia's laws include Acts of the National Assembly and subsidiary legislation made under said Acts, the common law and principles of equity, Customary law so far as concerns members of the communities to which it applies, the Sharia (which is applicable to over 95% of the population) as regards matters of marriage, divorce and inheritance among members of the communities to which it applies. The practice of Sharia in matters of inheritance among male and female siblings (and matters of marriages) are issues of concern, and not in sync with the principles of equity.

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[1] MoFEA, 2011

The Ministry must recognise and operate within the trajectories of these legislations with caution to mitigate the negative aspects of culture in order to promote equality of women and men, girls and boys to sustain stability and co-existence. The Gambian legal system is modelled on the English Legal system as it incorporates the Common Law, doctrines of equity and statute of General Application.

2.2.2 The Economic Profile and Employment

a) Brief Economic Situation
The Gambia is among the Low-Income, Food Deficit Countries (LIFDC) of the world, and has a Human Development Index (HDI) estimated at 0.466 ranking the country 174 out of 189 countries in 2018. Gambia's value of the HDI is below the average of 0.507 for countries in the low human development group and below the average of 0.541 for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at current prices is at GMD 49.2 billion[2] equivalent to slightly above US$1 billion (with exchange rate at GMD48.50 per US$). The main drivers of growth are services, contributing 58 percent to 61 percent of the GDP from 2013 to 2017 respectively; followed by the Agriculture Sector, which is the main source of livelihood for the majority of the population[3] contributing 24 to 27 percent to GDP within the same period; but predominantly subsistence with rice being the main staple food and groundnuts being the main cash crop. The tourism sector has contributed approximately 20 percent of GDP in 2016, and has been the largest foreign exchange earner. However, over the years remittances and international aid have played an important role in sustaining the economy. The main features of the economy are its small size and narrow market; and is little diversified relying mainly on agriculture, tourism, re-export trade. The country has a small export base, with groundnuts, cashew and fish as the main export commodities.

b) Employment
The number of smallholder farmers in The Gambia is estimated to comprise 43.1% of the population and 22.6% of the economy.[4] Smallholders in rural regions lack suitable access and integration to (local) markets making them vulnerable to recurring shocks, especially during lean seasons. Total employment in the agriculture sector is predicted to grow at a rate of 12.67% per annum by measured of structural adjustment in the sector through expansion of agro-based industrial development and appropriate mechanization of crop production to enable industrial development to absorb larger portion of available youthful labour force[5].

The number of unemployed people in The Gambia is 234,725 (35.2 %) 129,792 females (57.1 %) and 104,933 males (42.9 %). More unemployed persons are living in the rural areas (76.6%) compared to the urban areas (23.4 %). There are 377,326 youth who are actively participating in the labour force, of which 54.4 per cent are males and 45.6 per cent females. Youth unemployment rate is 41.5 per cent (GLFS, 2018); and irregular migration to Europe is an undesirable phenomenon that The Gambia is grappling with. According to the European Union (EU), at least 14,735[6] Gambians in 2016 have sought asylum in EU member countries, with 75% classified as economic migrants.

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[2] Rebasing and compilation of Gross Domestic Product – 2013 base year, GBoS, June 2018.
[3] 2016 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis.
[4] Vision 2016, Government of The Gambia.
[5] Draft Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy, 2017
[6] Eurostat: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/news/themes-in-the-spotlight/asylum2016

2.3 Poverty, Vulnerability and Inequality

2.3.1 Brief Poverty Profile
Poverty levels remain quite high in The Gambia. It is estimated that 48% of the Gambian population live in poverty, that is the percentage of households living below the poverty line of $US1.25 /day (WFP, 2018). An important feature of poverty in The Gambia is the female face that it wears as women constitute the majority of the poor and extremely poor, exacerbated by the fact they occupy a low socio-economic status. Poverty differentials among men and women are largely the result of women's limited access to productive assets such as land including credit and other support services. In the absence of laws or policies that explicitly redress these, women find themselves at a great disadvantage and will continue in a cycle of poverty.

2.3.2 Vulnerability
Forty per cent of people in The Gambia are considered 'working poor', meaning that their earning capacity and standard of living is inadequate even for meeting basic needs. Literature showed that rural poverty is on the rise; and about 60% of the rural population were considered poor in 2003. This increased to 62.1% in 2010[7] and 69% in 2016 (IHS report 2017); while 17.6 per cent were vulnerable to multiple deprivations in education, health, and broader standard of living (HDI 2013). Food insecurity disproportionately affects households residing in rural areas. Central River Region (CRR) is one of the regions found to have the highest number of food-insecure households in the country. The 2016 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) report recorded 12 – 18% food insecure households in this region**.**

2.3.3 Inequality:
Inequality is a prominent feature in Gambia's poverty profile. A measure of inequality within a country is calculated by the Gini index. The Gambia's assessment in 2015 showed a Gini coefficient of 35.9 points[8], indicating a prevalence of income inequality. It further revealed that a greater proportion of the national income is eluding the poor. The poverty gap in The Gambia is widening, and a greater proportion of the nation's wealth is being concentrated in the hands of few. There is noticeable income inequality, which can be attributed to levels of education, employment and overseas remittances. Many households heavily rely on remittances from workers overseas. About 25 per cent of children between 5 and 17 years (mainly from poorer families) are involved in Child Labour[9].

The country as a patriarchal society is characterized by gender inequality. Though slowly changing, gender inequality is still pervasive: The Gambia has a GII[10] value of 0.594, ranking it 128 out of 148 countries in the 2012 index (HDI, 2013). The widespread inequality prompted the Government to focus more attention on women's empowerment through the gender policy and Women's Act, 2010. Although women play an active role in agriculture and the overall socio-economic development, their access to land and productive assets remains very limited due to discriminatory gender practices. Women and youth do access family lands for agricultural production, but they often do not own land. However, the government is highly committed to promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, among its development goals. Gender-responsive budgeting was introduced as a tool for strengthening gender equality in development financing in The Gambia. A number of development partners, including the UN agencies are supporting these efforts.

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[7] MDG Accelerated Framework MAF, 2010
[8] GNAIP, 2019 to 2026
[9] 2018 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Report
[10] The Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects gender-based inequalities in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity.

2.4 Gender and Situational Analysis of Women

The Government of the Gambia recognizes that sustainable economic and social development of the country requires full participation of women, men, girls and boys. However, in gender comparison, women continue to be economically marginalised as they are over-represented in the informal sector, are involved in unpaid care work and under-represented in economic decision making positions, are mainly employed in the informal sector; have limited or no access to productive resources such as land, credit, technology and information. They are also, subjected to sexual and gender based violence, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation/excision (FGM), forced and early marriages that mostly go unreported; occupy only 10.3 percent of the parliamentary seats, are not represented among chiefs, constitute only 5.9% of elected councilors, and 21% of cabinet Ministers; and have lower literacy levels[11]. Women and girls continue to be disadvantaged due to socio-cultural norms and practices, as well as by discriminatory provisions in customary law. Girls aged 15-19 years are most at risk of practices such as early marriage (23.8 %). Although since 2015 a ban on FGM is in place, its incidence remains high (76 % of female aged over 15), generating adverse effects on women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health[12], among others. Cultural practices militate against women control of cash income, thereby exacerbating household food insecurity.

With traditionally gender roles, women are generally involved in tasks that require dexterity and attention to detail as well as those closely associated with household responsibilities such as food preparation, cleaning and sorting, household water collection, use and management, sanitation and hygiene services (WASH), processing and storage, taking care of children of all ages, the sick and elderly, while men are involved in tasks that require physical strength. Social exclusion resulting to inequitable access to quality WASH is a concern, and affecting the lives of women and children (especially girls in learning institutions) and communities in hard-to-reach areas; and denying the populations of their rights to quality WASH. It is women's responsibility to process the local staple, which is a labour intensive process lasting for hours, in the absence of milling machines. Men primarily grow upland crops (cereals and legumes), while women predominate in growing low-land rice and vegetables.

For all value chains, women provide most of the labour needed such as planting, weeding, harvesting and post-harvest handling although they do not own the productive assets used and do not have decision making powers over the produce. Although some value chain activities are considered as men's or women's because of tradition, there is blurring of such roles owing to labour migration. Due to labour migration, women have assumed certain tasks that were traditionally considered to be men's. In male headed households, both men and women have access productive resources but men control certain resources, particularly those belonging to them. Men in general are regarded highly as heads of households and they are traditionally considered as the breadwinners. As heads of households and as bread winners, men own high value assets such as land and cattle. Females are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts in terms of land ownership, access to equipment, markets and credit because of their social position. The position of females is aggravated as they increasingly become heads of households.

Women's participation in public decision making is limited. They are not represented among chiefs, all 44 of whom are men.Out of the total of 118 elected councilors, oonly 7 are women, constituting 5.9%. At the National Assembly level, the total number of elected representatives is

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[11] The Gambia National Gender policy 2010 to 2020
[12] The Gambia National Gender Policy 2010 to 2020

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53, out of which 3 are female representing 6%. In cabinet, out of the 19 members, only 4 are women including the Vice President.

Out of a total number of 20 judges in the superior courts, 10 are women and 22 out of the 42 magistrates in the subordinate courts are women (Women's Bureau 2019).

Similarly, 6 out of the 11 Commissioners of the Constitutional Review Commission are women including the Vice President; and 2 out of the 5 Commissioners of the National Human Rights Commission are women including the Vice President and 4 out of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission are women including the Vice President.

2.5 Living Conditions of Children and Child Protection

The Gambian traditional family structures and systems that included extended family units are typically taking responsibility of their children. The idea builds on the notion of kinship and importance of community support to raise children as members of the family. The practice is still widely held with 56.7%[13] of children living with both parents. The best place for a child is in the immediate family.

However, widespread poverty has crippled family cohesiveness and children are often left to fend for themselves and/or put in compromising positions where they are exploited and abused. Though families still feel that sending a child to another member of their family will provide children a better life, children in such care point out grave differences, are often citing exploitation by caregivers, sexual abuse, and not attending school.

The institutional assessment (IA), MoWCSW (December 2019) found poverty contributing to child deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability, weakening the capacity of families to care for their children. Family violence has become widespread in addition to teenage pregnancy and parenting. Community-based safety net sectors ~ traditional and cultural familial structures particularly extended family, kinship care, community and family fostering are being undermined. Communal values that sustained the family system, particularly intergenerational dialogue have diminished due to declining productivity of family members. The practice of 'Extended Guardianship', with family members as a traditional childcare method, has been undermined and replaced with new coping strategies such as offering and placing children in institutionalized care. As children became more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, some organizations opened orphanages to care for children. These were children whom were considered to have lost their parents.

Children living in care arrangements outside their biological parents (ie, foster care, living on the street, cared for by a step-parent, or living in an orphanage) occasionally experience various forms of discrimination such as a) denial of school fees or opportunities to go to school; b) taking on the bulk of household chores compared to other children living in the household; and c) always considered second priority in terms of decisions based on education, health, money, food, clothing, shelter and love.

The institutional assessment informing this Strategy Plan did not assess the number of children living and working on the street, but these children faced many more protection risks compared to other categories of children. Therefore, further assessment to determine the scale of children living on the street is recommended. However, it is likely that the risks associated with children ending up living and working on the street are linked to many vulnerability factors. Also, some girls found living and working on the street are forced into commercial sexual (prostitution); and sexual harassment are common among such adolescent girls.

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[13] UNICEF MICS, 2018

Although children's participation in matters that concerns them is their basic right, their involvement in decision-making and in programmes affecting them is limited. Research findings (UNICEF's Child Protection System Mapping and Assessment, 2014 cited children's limited access relevant information that enables them express their views, and be involved in decisions affecting them. Child participation is not about a few children representing other children at a few special child participation events. This strategy recognises that children have the right to participate in the family, in school, in community, and at national level events.

Birth registration and certification is fundamental right of every child. In The Gambia, birth registration and certification for children under five is governed by the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1996. MICS 2018 reported that only 57.9% of children under age ~ 5 years were registered. Positive parenting practices provides children self-control and acceptable behaviour as an integral part of their future live. Too often however, children are raised using punitive methods that rely on the use of physical force or verbal intimidation to obtain desired behaviours. MICS, 2018 reported that 71.7% of children 1 – 14 years experienced physical punishments, 89.2% of this category of children experienced a combination of violent discipline methods, and 12.8% of children are subjected excessive child labour. Government adequately articulated in all its macro policy frameworks that Gambia is committed to eliminating child poverty in the country.
However, improving the situation of children in The Gambia requires more than just improvements in poverty indicators. With 16% of children under five malnourished, child mortality at 17 per 1000 live births, infant mortality at 41 per 1000 and under-five mortality at 57 per 1000 live births[14], much more is desired for children.

The Government of The Gambia has made significant strides in promoting quality inclusive education. The target of gender parity in enrolments has been surpassed in lower basic education with a Gender Parity Index of 1.04 while the upper basic registers a GPI of 1.00 and secondary education 0.91 (UNESCO, 2018). In 2018, the primary school net enrolment for females was 80.6% and for males 73.6%; in secondary schools, the net enrolment for females was 49.07% and for males, 51.8%. These achievements are as a result of a number of efforts by the government of The Gambia including special measures such as Second Chance to Education (formal and informal), improving quality learning with special emphasis on Science, Technology and Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), provision of sanitary pads as well as the scholarship of excellence for girls in science and Technical and Vocational fields.

While the primary school enrolment gap has disappeared, primary school completion and transition to secondary school level is a different picture. For every 100 boys that complete their basic education, 74 girls do the same owing to a number of factors that include poverty and the culture of son preference, child marriages and teenage pregnancies among others. The situation is worse at tertiary institutions especially in STEM disciplines.

Gambia children, especially girls are exposed to harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) with a prevalent rate of 75.7%[15] nationally with regional and ethnic differences. Since November 2015, FGM/C was criminalized through legislation. Early forced marriages are also high with 34.2% of girls being married off before the age of 18 years. Early forced marriage is more acute in the rural areas involving 46.8% of girls (UNICEF MICS, 2018). As of June 2016 Child Marriage was also criminalized through legislation.

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[14] UNICEF MICS, 2018
[15] MICS, 2018

Children are also largely excluded from participating in decision making processes at family, community and national levels even on matters that concern their welfare and well-being. Children with disabilities are much more vulnerable to rights violations especially in regards access to basic social services such as health, education and public facilities and spaces. These indicators are of critical concern, requiring improvements in the protection of children's rights that must be prioritized in child-focused development strategies.

2.6 Conditions of vulnerable and at-risk groups

Several other factors that characterize the conditions of vulnerable and at-risk groups in The Gambia include, but are not limited to: severe and pervasive destitution, and accompanying weak family systems, poor access to quality education and health for people living with disabilities (PLWD), and poor access to quality social services for elderly and PLWD. Taking 15 percent global estimation of persons with disabilities, there will be 330,000 of them are at risk of social exclusion and discrimination. Looming HIV/AIDS crisis, homelessness for children from poorer families, social exclusion and discrimination against persons with disabilities are key issues of concern.

Although older persons are typically cared for by family members and the broader community in traditional Gambian society, some elderly persons (especially those living urban slums) are systematically vulnerable to a number of risks, owing to their economic and physical conditions. They are generally subjected to neglect, facing risk of social exclusion with very little social protection support; thus making them susceptible to personal shocks. For many elderly persons, income poverty lured them into risk of hunger and higher susceptibility to ill health. In addition, conditions of 50,600 elderly people (2.3% of estimated population) includes isolation and poverty making them vulnerable to declining psychosocial profile.

The DSW made significant efforts in increasing awareness on the social protection instruments in the country. It is making efforts to positively influence relevant duty bearers to mainstream and enforce the prescribed laws protecting the rights of vulnerable people, particularly women and children. Government policy and legislative support for social protection is also crucial, and active public sector involvement in service provision can have fundamental impact on the protection of women's and children's rights. Regulatory frameworks can offer incentives for increasing access to social protection services, and provide the means of achieving the desired results. However, key stakeholders suggested that primary blockages to social protection in The Gambia are related to poor policy implementation and enforcement including dissemination and monitoring of people's rights, inadequate resource mobilization and government capacity particularly at the regional level.

2.7 Access to Social Protection Services and Resources

Although, there are lots of passion for social protection at all levels, support mechanisms in The Gambia are still under-developed. The DSW is unable to influence comprehensive mainstreaming of social protection issues in relevant policies and practices. Readiness of government to scale-up interventions in social and cultural life of children, their families and communities is blurred. State institutions that are responsible for provision of social protection services have limited capacity and resources to meet the demand for protection needs. Social services are often under-budgeted, and citizens are largely not holding the government accountable for its actions. The formal structures are still notable of their weaknesses to discharge their responsibilities; hence access to quality social protection services is negligible in the country. There is need to build their capacities and enable them address critical social protection needs.

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2.7.1 Key service providers of social protection

The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare will be the primary duty-bearer for the welfare of every vulnerable person everywhere in the country. Generally, populations in any country do depend on the construction of capacious social protection mechanisms for their very existence. These safety-nets are expected to be deeply rooted within the social governance of the country, but the social protection systems in The Gambia are seldom adequate to cope with the demand of the population they are designed to assist. Inadequate state resources is arguably the reason, and people living in poverty are unable to access welfare assistance and services. However, there is evidence that the government has all the intentions to play an important role in social protection. While relying heavily on international donors for financing, the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) is the technical arm of the National Social Protection Steering Committee (NSPSC) steering the overall social protection programming in the country since presently social protection programming is dispersed across many different governmental agencies, with a broad range of actors, each pursuing its social protection agenda in their respective sectoral domains.

Service providers (including CSOs) in The Gambia are many and varied, and social protection services are to a large extent fragmented. Consequently, roles and responsibilities of social protection that are shared among several ministries are not clearly defined; and there is virtually no integration of social protection planning and budgeting processes of the recurrent and development budgets. There are well-intended strategies for government to leverage the inherent complementarities that exist between the various flagship programmes (and service providers with their social protection interventions.

2.7.2 Other Service Providers

The CSO partners are: a) Child Protection Alliance (CPA) strengthening capacities of its members to effectively develop and implement programs that promote the rights of children and are able to effectively monitor the implementation of child related laws and policies; b) The Gambia Organization of the Visually Impaired (GOVI) running pre-school and lower basic school and skill trainings for its members; and c) The Gambia Association of the Physically Disabled (GAPD) is engaged in advocacy for the rights and welfare of persons with physical disabilities.
Other partner CSOs are ActionAid on child rights policy advocacy and influencing, sector strengthening and capacity development of child protection agencies; ChildFund The Gambia on direct service delivery in child protection and development, and development of youth agencies; and United Purpose (formally Concern Universal), which implemented Cash-transfers to People Living with HIV (PLHIV).

2.7.3 Challenges of Social Service Providers

Despite notable capacity gaps, DSW is considered by many to have had a leading mandate on social protection in the country for many years. However, this assessment found that social service delivery in The Gambia is hampered by the paucity of data to serve as the basis for evidence-based decision making. Other challenges include: limited programmes, very low coverage and

fragmented and ad-hoc implementation among existing initiatives, and limited fiscal space – all of which have led to ineffective delivery of social protection measures and measures to promote gender equality and women empowerment. Moreover, local knowledge and understanding of the social protection system is still in a fledgling state and characteristics of the system are yet to be systematically assessed[16]. Lack of coordination and cooperation between stakeholders working in social protection, child protection as well as the national gender machinery has been cited as a challenge in a number of reports. The Department of Social Welfare has been the primary coordinating body responsible for child protection in The Gambia, while the Women's Bureau has been responsible for coordinating gender mainstreaming initiatives in the country.

2.8 Governance: Policies, Priorities and Programmes

Despite the significant efforts and well-intended policies, laws and strategies (e.g. the Children's Act, Women's Act), Child Protection and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment services remain under prioritized for public funding[17]. Poor policy implementation and dissemination, inadequate child rights and women empowerment monitoring and poor service delivery, limited resourcing and low capacity of enforcement agencies and child protection and gender equality structures at community level are among the key challenges reported in the Gambia. There is need for Government to provide significant budgetary support and improvement in the absorptive capacity of core child protection and gender equality and women's empowerment actors to roll-out the Children's Act and the Women's Act in the country.

The Gambia is also committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030) which among other priorities, puts gender equality and women empowerment at the top of the development agenda, through Goal 5. Several laws were enacted to ensure the protection and promotion of women's rights and empowerment. In 1999, the Women and Girls Advancement Policy (1999-2009) was developed, which was followed by the Gender Policy (2010-2020). The two policies set the overall national agenda for achieving gender equality, which has subsequently provided a basis for a series of legal reforms, namely, the Women's Act passed through Parliament in 2010 (amended in 2016), the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Acts (2013).

 However, the challenge has been implementation of the progressive provisions of these laws, particularly on issues of marriage, widow inheritance, polygamy, divorce, child custody at divorce and women's rights to inheritance. The study established high levels of lack of awareness of the legal provisions of the Acts and other provisions in favor of women, particularly in rural areas. Legal literacy needs to be increased in order for progressive provisions to have a bigger impact.

Building a social service delivery system to address the needs of and protect the rights of the vulnerable at-risk, the needs and rights of underserved people must rank very high in the scale of government social development priorities.

PART 2: THE PLAN: AN AGENDA FOR TRANSFORMATION
Chapter 3: Our Evolving Ministry

3.1 Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare: Organisational Highlights
The National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy and Gambia National Social Protection Policy provided the prominence to protect the rights and address the needs and aspirations of

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[16] The Analysis of Social Protection Systems in The Gambia, GoTG, 2013
[17] UNICEF MICS IV Report 2010, the Gambia Child Protection System Mapping, Situational Analysis of Women and Children Report 2010 and Assessment Report 2014

women, children and other vulnerable people; as well as fulfil her regional and international obligations in sync with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Pan-African policy on social protection, which has been affirmed by the African Union's 'Social Policy Framework for Africa' and the 'Khartoum Declaration on Social Policy (2010), and Action towards Social Inclusion' (EC, 2012). The Government of The Gambia has signed all these high-level policy agreements, which provides it a significant leverage to advance gender and social protection agenda in the country ~ hence the creation of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare.

3.1.1 Legal and Policy Justifications:

The Gambia has committed herself to the international instruments aimed at promoting and supporting gender equality and women's empowerment. The Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (particularly Goal 5), and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) are among the key international instruments. The Government committed itself to the implementation of the Gender Policy 2010 – 2020, the Women's Act of 2010 and the Domestic Violence Act of 2013 to fulfil its international obligations to gender equality and women's empowerment. These frameworks informed the priorities for achieving the Government's development agenda, Vision 2020. Similarly, the National Development Plan (NDP - 2018-2021) ~ Gambia's development blue print, puts women at the centre of growth in The Gambian economy. It considers women's empowerment as one of the seven critical enablers complimenting the strategic priorities of the plan.

The Government of The Gambia (GoTG) has developed keen interest in child protection by domesticating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other international and regional legal instruments including the Children's (Amendment) Act (2016) and many other national legislations[18]. These legislations bring together a couple of laws relating to children, sets out the rights and responsibilities of children and provides for their care, protection and maintenance. Government showed in the NDP a "strong commitment to reducing and laying the groundwork for eliminating child poverty as a key feature of its development efforts".

The above legal and policy frameworks justified the creation of the new Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare to address the gaps in coverage and align programmes more effectively in order to meet the varied needs of the population; and provide guidance to increase coordination of interventions through the adoption of a systematic and harmonised mechanism of actualizing Gambia's development goals. The establishment of the Ministry of Women combining issues of children and social protection is therefore, a laudable development decision for The Gambia. This ministry will deal with challenges related to influencing other ministries on gender issues as well as resistance from sectoral administrations that are not amenable to cross-cutting mechanisms.

3.1.2 Institutional functions of the ministry:

The mandates of the ministry shall be to:

- Advise government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women, children and other vulnerable groups, as well as matters referred to it by the Government of The Republic of Gambia;
- Coordinate effectively the Government-wide gender mainstreaming efforts to ensure that the perspectives of both men and women are central to policy formulation, legislation, resource allocation, planning and outcomes of policies and programmes, focusing on

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[18] Tourism Offences Act (2003), Women's Act 2005, Trafficking in Persons Act (2007), Women's Act (2010), the Sexual offenses Act (2013) and the Domestic Violence Act (2013).

gender equality, the empowerment of women, protection and development of children, and social protection of all vulnerable groups;

- Monitor and report on the impact of national policies and programmes on women, children and other vulnerable groups, as well as recommend appropriate measures to be taken in mobilizing and integrating women as equal partners to men in the economic, social, political, and cultural development of the country; and
- Undertake periodic and comprehensive gender in development situational analysis and functional researches, and specialized studies, focusing on concerns of women, children and other vulnerable groups, to facilitate the formulation and updating of national gender profiles, gender policy frameworks, social protection framework, and relevant gender plans of action.

The Ministry's institutional frameworks should also serve as references for engendering the national development process as a means of empowering women and children, transforming gender power relations and norms, facilitating women's articulation of their own voice and agendas across all sectors, and providing social protection services to the most vulnerable groups while ensuring inclusivity, broad-based participation, dissemination of issues affecting the human rights of women, children and other vulnerable groups through information, education, and communication (IEC) strategies. The Ministry should also provide child welfare services, including a decentralized intervention system with 'foot-soldier' staff populating the regions and local communities for service delivery.

This Strategic Plan builds on the successes of the Women's Bureau and existing programmes of the Department of Social Welfare, and lays the foundation for the journey to achieving sustainable future for women and men, boys and girls, and all other vulnerable groups in the country. However, there are currently insufficient mechanisms for coordination between Women's Bureau and Department of Social Welfare currently, which could have enabled them grow in self-confidence and develop on their own accord as entities of the same ministry. Therefore, the new ministry will have to deal with the change management and position itself nationally, with four broad-based functioning directorates of Gender and Women's Empowerment, Children's Welfare, Social Welfare, Policy Project Management, Administration and Finance Units for the ministry.

Considering the stage of women and children's development, the effectiveness of social protection systems and fiscal constraints in the country, the Ministry shall transition towards a more integrated and inclusive programming by moving towards a more comprehensive systems of gender and social development. The initial focus for the reform shall include improvements in the policy framework, governance and enforcement of policies and relevant instruments, and administrative arrangements, which would constitute important building blocks of the Ministry's future improvements in the design, coordination and integration of various programmes, as well as progressive expansion of coverage.

3.2 Institutional challenges of Gender Programming: The Women's Bureau

Although, there is a demonstrable political commitment from the highest offices in the country, this must be matched with resources for the Ministry to fulfill its mandate. An effective gender machinery relies on adequacy of funding to provide the required services. Currently, there are serious budget limitations, making it difficult for the national gender machinery to put into actions its gender equality plans.

Programmes dependent on donor funding have been the main drivers of progress in the gender sector. Experience showed that donor dependence heightens the risk of programming which fits in more with donor priorities and agendas than with national interests and increases limitations of sustainability in programming.

It often compromises programmatic autonomy, consistency and sustainability of institutional mechanisms due to donors' neglect of policy work, their inability to recruit and retain high caliber staff, and the homogenization of their agenda and priorities. The Ministry must solicit high level government commitment ~ the political will and resources go hand-in-hand to enable it fulfil its mandates and perform its functions. It must ensure national ownership of its programmes.

The effectiveness of the national gender machinery largely depends on the technical capacity of the responsible actors to mainstream gender. Where technical capacity is lacking, effectiveness of gender machinery weakens as key players might not be aware of key steps towards gender mainstreaming. There are concerns on lacked technical capacity to mainstream gender as well as well-defined tools for executing the process; and there exist capacity gaps on gender analysis and project-cycle management. The ministry will be obliged to strengthen the structures of the Department of Gender for it to sufficiently deliver priority programmes and pursue the national gender equality targets. It is readily apparent that the current practice of working with partners on a one-on-one basis is not conducive to harmonization, ownership of the gender agenda, and accountability in terms of results.

Lack of Capacity and Tools: As a custodian of gender equality and women's empowerment issues, the department must demonstrate gender responsiveness. All programmes must show evidence of systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men and the potential impact of the programme on their rights of access to opportunities and outcomes in a particular sector. This should be supported by clear and measurable indicators of progress.

The unavailability of gender mainstreaming manuals, brochures and flyers for use by various internal and external stakeholders in their gender mainstreaming activities are undermining performance in the gender sector. Two manuals are of importance: the Training Manual on Gender- based violence and Violence against Women for The Gambia Police Force developed by the Women's Bureau with support from UNFPA, and the Women and Youth in Local Government manual. There is therefore need to *invest in gender toolkits, targeting both internal and external stakeholders including gender focal persons.* Sets of tools to facilitate the gender mainstreaming process should be available to guide respective departments.

3.3 The Directorate of Gender and Women's Empowerment [*New programme direction*]
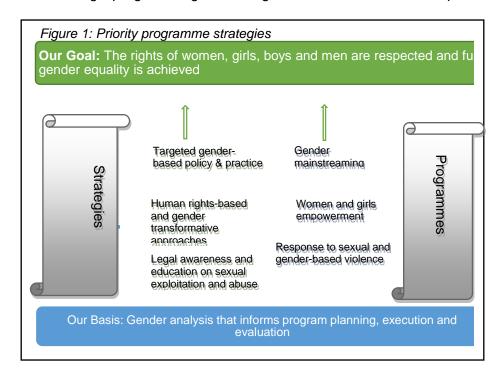
The Gambia recognises gender equality and women's empowerment as a key factor for attaining social and economic development. The Government made significant strides with respect empowerment of women. Notable in education is the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for girls, Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) for girls; and protection of women against violence, ban on FGM, female representation at the National Assembly ~ including the current Speaker of the National Assembly, and successfully litigated cases by the female lawyers' association that resulted in two landmark decisions on the enforcement of the Women's Act's provision on the equitable sharing of joint property (CCA 2015).

This Directorate shall be established with a well-organised gender machinery, with clear structures and defined responsibilities that provides clear frameworks for mainstreaming gender, and entities that are essential vehicles for gender programming. In the past, a number of measures were taken to mainstream women in national development, amongst which was the establishment of the

National Women's Council and Bureau by the Council Act of 1980. Today, Women Councilors are representing women in all districts of the country, with the Women's Bureau serving as the executive arm. Also, several other gender and women empowerment initiatives were implemented with the rights-based approach.

However, there are no well-defined frameworks for the coordination and harmonization of gender and women's empowerment, social and child protection domains in the country. To a large extent, development partners have, to date, provided support on project-basis rather than within a strategic sector framework that spells out the inputs, outputs and expected outcomes, taking into account the bigger picture. Many of the activities implemented by the players: government and their development partners including NGOs have little synergy and at times overlap. It is difficult to find a source that provides information on all the activities that are ongoing or completed. A well-functioning coordination mechanism should bring together relevant national activities. At another level, the new gender policy mandates the Ministry of Women's Affairs to consider a specific modality for the harmonization of resource mobilization, dialogue with its partners and setting mutually agreed benchmarks for achieving results.

The Ministry will strengthen its rights-based programming with a nexus approach. By virtue of the multidimensionality of sustainable development, the Ministry shall ensure that all gender programmes are indivisibly connected to each other. This strategy shall provide the relevant nexuses across the gender and women's empowerment programmes, facilitating the identification of priorities, as well as comprehensive plans and institutional arrangements in national gender programming. Taking into account that complex development nexuses reduces the risks of sectoral approaches undermining each other, while helping analyse trade-offs and synergies between expected results. Ultimately, this will enhance programming methods, while delivering the expected strategic outcomes with improved efficiency. The following figure presents a new set of our priorities for strategic programming and linkages with the National Development Plan.

Figure 1: Priority programme strategies

Our Goal: The rights of women, girls, boys and men are respected and fu gender equality is achieved

Strategies

Targeted gender-based policy & practice

Gender mainstreaming

Human rights-based and gender transformative approaches

Women and girls empowerment

Legal awareness and education on sexual exploitation and abuse

Response to sexual and gender-based violence

Programmes

Our Basis: Gender analysis that informs program planning, execution and evaluation

3.4. The Department of Social Welfare (DSW)

3.4.1 Brief Programme Description

The key government agency designated for social protection and welfare services is the Department of Social Welfare. The Department runs most of the social assistance schemes in The Gambia, including social protection support for the vulnerable groups. The Department operates the following programmes/units:

a) *Child Care Unit* with "adoption and child placement", and "child support, maintenance and juvenile justice" responsibilities working closely with the residential child care institution. Considering the shift towards non-residential care, this unit could have broader scope of responsibility. The Unit provides temporal shelter for children at risk, including abandoned babies, as well as women (GBV victims) at risk and in difficult circumstances; child drop-in centres and life skills training facilities.

b) *Disability Care Unit:* provides specialized services for persons with disability; support with technical aids prosthetics, provide rehabilitation services (i.e. physiotherapy vocational advice) and counselling services to disabled persons, and coordinates technical support to Disabled Person's Organizations.

c) *Adult and Elderly Care Unit* providing support to adults and the Elderly in challenging circumstances, and those at risk. The unit's main responsibilities are residential care for elderly, counseling and relief assistance for families, prisoner aftercare and care assistance, counselling and support services to people living with HIV/AIDS, response services to domestic violence, support services for persons with mental ill-health, mediation services, unconditional cash transfers (NAFA Project) under the Office of the Vice President (OVP), and Family Strengthening Programme – a conditional cash transfer aiming at poor and vulnerable families.

Other relevant actors include the Policy Analysis Unit of the Office of the President which coordinates the NSPSC and the reform agenda; the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) running several social assistance schemes to ensure access to schooling among poor and excluded children; and the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), under the Office of the Vice President of The Gambia which campaigns for food and nutritional security in the country,

The Department of Social Welfare also works in partnership with the following service providers: a) health facilities joins efforts in treatment of patients, particularly of the most destitute; b) The Gambia Police Force, particularly on serious offenses of human and child rights violations relating to women and children; c) the Children's Court determines criminal charges against children, and deals with all civil matters concerning children ~ such as maintenance, custody, access, adoption and other application relating to child care and protection; d) The Juvenile Wing of the prison service was created to incarcerate children in conflict with the law, and provides opportunities for rehabilitation and development; e) Mile Two Central prison ~ a rehabilitation centre for adult convicts, where DSW addresses the welfare of adult prisoners and provide welfare services to their families; and f) the "Tanka-Tanka" Mental Hospital which provides psychosocial support.

3.4.2 Institutional challenges of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW)

Although, there is enormous interest for social protection at all levels, support mechanisms in the country are still under-developed. For instance, The DSW is unable to influence comprehensive mainstreaming of social protection issues into relevant policies, programmes and practices. Government readiness to scale-up interventions in social and cultural life of children, their families

and communities, is blurred. Moreover state institutions that are responsible for provision of social protection services have limited capacity and resources to meet the demand for protection needs.

The DSW is considered by many to have had a leading mandate on social protection in the country for many years. But the administrative and technical capacities of the department to design integrated social protection programs are under-developed. The primary blockages to its programming are related to poor policy implementation and enforcement including dissemination and monitoring of people's rights, inadequate resource mobilization and low capacity – particularly at the regional level. Other challenges include: limited programmes, very low coverage and fragmented and ad-hoc implementation among existing initiatives, inadequate social registry and civil registration to provide vital statistics, and limited fiscal space – all of which have led to ineffective delivery of social protection measures and measures to promote gender equality and women empowerment. Moreover, local knowledge and understanding of the social protection system is still in a fledgling state and characteristics of the system are yet to be systematically assessed. There are evidences of the following major institutional challenges to the further development of an integrated social protection system in The Gambia.

a) Fragmentation
The Gambia's social welfare sector has a fragmented service delivery system. It is distributed across a wide spectrum, involving government and non-governmental institutions. Programming is characterized by a multitude of schemes with small coverage. Part of the problem also lies in a high degree of fragmentation between various programmes, and the absence of effective mechanisms to coordinate different types of initiatives and streamline the activities of various actors working in isolation in the social protection field. It appears that schemes are often designed to address specific issues from a sectoral perspective, rather than as part of an integrated system. This frequently results in programmes targeting overlapping population groups.

b) Strained Institutional Capacity
One of the major problems that underlie the challenges in the Department of Social Welfare is limited availability of resources. Moreover, the lack of concerted focus on the department has eroded capacity and caused a myriad of attendant problems. Furthermore, dissatisfaction with the quality of service as well as the cost of delays arising from fragmentation and bureaucratic red tape are among the barriers. Services are mired by the lack of capacity ~ constrained by poor quality of staff and the absence of institutional capacity to facilitate fulfilment of functions. Protection facilities are largely non-existent and where available, they face resource and staffing challenges. Political override and other bottlenecks have produced many inappropriate adoptions, and resulted in an adoption crisis. Finally, capacity is also lacking at a more rudimentary level, as staff lacks basic resources for work, including transport, fuel, office spaces and equipment.

c) Human Resource Gaps
There is a gross shortfall in trained helping professionals in DSW, including social workers, psychologists, vocational counsellors, psychosocial counsellors, marriage and family therapists, rehabilitation specialists, etc. There is also inadequate knowledge and absence of best practices, and new social technologies, which affects the prevention, early diagnosis, and early management of socioeconomic factors that contribute to vulnerability. Especially apparent is the gross shortage of professionals with training in many fields relevant to care for PWDs: physiotherapists, orthopedic technicians, forensic scientists, and occupational therapists. Instead, the sector is dominated by para-professionals, some with limited or no formal training in the professions.

There is also acute shortage of staff (e.g. Social Workers) at regional level; and there is limited awareness and understanding of transformative social protection frameworks, as social protection is typically seen through a sectoral lens. High staff turnover of the limited number of specialized

professionals in DSW compounded the capacity gap. This interrupts continuity of programmes, aggravates loss of institutional memory, and prevents the capacity to consolidate longer-term learning that can benefit the process of policymaking.

d) Limited recognition of DSW as Central Coordinating Institution
Over the years, DSW has worked in relative isolation from the institutional context, and this has placed it in a poor position to steer the overall national social protection programmes in response to the changing needs of the macro dynamic. Therefore, effective collaboration is hampered by other actor's inability to recognize it as central coordinating institution for social protection. Currently, DSW almost lost its mandate as the government institution responsible to coordinate the overall analysis and stakeholder participation within a multi-sectoral theme of social protection. DSW's institutional role in relation to social protection is unclear, and its capacity to streamline and synchronize an integrated agenda on social protection became weak.

e) Poor Coordination among Stakeholders
Like at national level, stronger coordination will be required at regional levels and in the communities ~ both in government projects and NGO fora.
There is poor coordination even among actors working in the same areas, as there are no viable mechanisms to track and sustain collaboration and exchange information and knowledge. Even where such structures and mechanisms are present, coordination processes are not as effective as they should be.

f) Inadequate Knowledge Management and Information System
The functions of monitoring and evaluation is under-developed in DSW to produce necessary performance information. There is lack of performance and quality measures, and an overall management information system which incorporates these and addresses intervention, organisational policy, strategic performance and impact of their work. This means that the Department has little or no means of making itself accountable in terms of developmental concerns and no means of steering their programmes in response to the changing context.

h) Inadequate Sector Financing
Low sector financing with insignificant budgetary allocations limits the DSW's ability to finance social protection programmes, and strengthen its organizational structure and processes. Insufficient budget allocations are aggravated by multiple demands for funding, which means that meager resources are often over-stretched, despite a growing community demand for support. DSW suffers from financial shortfalls: with average annual allocation of 1.3 per cent of the MoH budget since 2012, and the average annual disbursement of money is always less (0.8 per cent). Moreover, late and untimely allocation of financial resources affects programme implementation.

3.4.3 Transformation, Transition and Growth

To overcome the above challenges, the Ministry must transform itself into a more professional government institution to meet the increasing needs of women, children and social protection, and management of donor obligations. The organic roles and functions of programming will change, shifting away from ad-hoc programming to rights based approach, which is a more integrated, holistic and inclusive development strategy.

Our programming method would involve an equity-focused approach targeting the poorest and most marginalized families and areas in the country. This means placing children, women and other vulnerable groups, rather than inputs at the center of our programmes. It will involve significant changes in our intervention systems, way of working with partners and the communities, and organizational change management; while linking social protection to longer term development. Programme diversity will remain a strong feature for us. The Women's Bureau and

DSW have been opportunistic in their fundraising, implementing donor grants, some of which may not have directly impacted on the lives of women and children. After many decades of operation in the country, the time has come for these institutions to take a hard look at their roles and responsibilities representing the interest of vulnerable groups in light of the changing national realities. Keeping pace with the changing processes in our context, the new ministry will reposition itself in discharging its mandate.

3.4.4 Directorate of Social Welfare

i) Our New Strategic Alignment
Over the last three years, much has been achieved for women, children and youth. The on-going institutional reforms began to pay dividend ~ as the physical and social landscape was being transformed. Most indicators for child survival, and access to basic services including education, health and nutrition interventions, safe water and sanitation have radically improved. However, reinforcing and sustaining these gains remains a challenge, independently of the need to embrace neglected areas and marginalised groups among whom progress has barely begun. Many policies and plans still need to be turned into real gains for the local populations, particularly women and girls who continue to suffer from deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability.

Responding to the multidimensional nature of vulnerability faced by Gambians, this strategy proposes an inclusive human capital development, social cohesion and the attainment of basic human rights for all. The strategy is aligned to the social protection policy, National Development Plan, Sustainable Development Goals, CRC, CEDAW, and all other related instruments. In line with the national social protection policy, the strategy underscore programmes that shall contribute to the following positive economic and social impacts:

a) Greater Equity, Pro-poor Growth and Social Cohesion
The strategy shall address the economic and social barriers that prevent access to services while placing special emphasis on the poorest and most vulnerable – thereby contributing to a fairer distribution of resources and benefits. The redistributive potential of social protection programmes shall help reduce growing inequality in societies, and create economic opportunities for the poor.

b) Food and Nutritional Security and Access to Basic Services
Our social protection programmes shall promote the progressive realisation of human rights, as articulated in The Gambia's Constitution. We believe that introducing predictable and long-term social assistance measures targeted at extremely poor households and vulnerable individuals will support them in meeting their daily food requirements and essential needs. By reducing barriers to social services among poor households, social protection measures (e.g. cash transfers, school feeding programmes, health fee waivers) the directorate will also contribute to improvements in human development outcomes.

c) Inclusive Economic and Social Development
The strategy advocates for more investment in social protection in order to trigger improved productivity and employability. Well-designed social protection schemes will enable families to invest in their own income sources; and subsequent security for them and their families: payment of medical bills, send children to school and take risks of investing in future production enterprises. The strategy further underline policy enforcement and active public sector involvement in service provision fundamental for the protection of women's and children's rights. The department will scale-up policy enforcement to increase access to social protection services, monitor and provide the means of achieving the desired results.

The directorate shall scale-up its capacity building efforts in raising awareness of Gambia's social protection instruments and promote initiatives that will influence many other duty bearers and service providers ~ especially, those at regional level to mainstream and enforce prescribed laws protecting the rights of vulnerable people, particularly women and children. We will roll-out capacity building efforts involving relevant state institutions to address critical social protection needs. Building a strong social service delivery system to attend the needs of, and protect the rights of the vulnerable at-risk, and underserved people will rank high among our social development priorities.

ii) Our Strategic Orientation
With the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the groundwork for gender mainstreaming, women and children's advancement, child and social protection and gradual spread of child justice and rights have been laid. Hence, a renewed vision is being made for women and children in the country. The challenge now is to consolidate and move the process forward in line The Gambia's social and economic development priorities. If today's children are not receiving an adequate preparation for future citizenship, and a productive and successful family role, then prospects of transforming Gambia into middle-income country are compromised.

The Department will design programmes drawing on the forgoing institutional assessment of the Ministry, many of which shall reinforce and continue programmes already underway in social development and protection. However, these programmes will add-on the emerging issues identified from the assessment; and the intention of the ministry is to see greater inclusion of all Gambians, especially women and girls, in the social, economic and political lives of The Gambia. This strategy aspires for more inclusive and achievable programmes to create decent and productive jobs that generate decent incomes for women and youth. Its main thrust is an integrated and people-centred approach to social development and protection. It sets out to bring into focus the multi-faceted needs of children, youth and women at different ages and stages of life.

The National Social Protection Policy aims to protect the rights of people living with disabilities (PLWD), and empower them to obtain dignified living and participate fully in society through a cohesive social service delivery system. At the centre of this strategy is the orientation towards equal opportunities, preventing discrimination, and promoting inclusion. The strategy further seeks to ensure access to sustainable and quality social protection services by responding to the diverse needs of those, whose marginalization, exclusion, and deprivation make them vulnerable to socioeconomic stressors and shocks and ultimately put them at-risk of destitution.

Under the guidance of the National Social Protection Steering Committee (NSPSC) and National Social Protection Forum (and the patronage of the Policy Analysis Unit of Office of The President), the Department will be the executive arm of the Ministry ~ networking and coordinating the harmonization of social protection programming in the country. The DSW shall manage the on-going multi-stakeholder partnership in social protection and development, reflecting high levels of passion and interest in the reform agenda, as well as working jointly with relevant stakeholders to strengthen the social protection system.

iii) Our Strategic Approach
This strategy is pro-poor, and establishes a clear ministerial position on governing Gambia's social development and protection. It sets out and defines certain principles to inform decisions, and provide the basis for accountability with consistent benchmarks against which to monitor and assess practice. The DSW will pursue intersectoral partnerships and coordination, institutional capacity development, simulation of private sector investment and sustainable employment creation, and enhancing research and development. The strategy underpins partnerships and networking in order to strengthen the national child and social protection systems. Therefore, the

Directorate of Social Protection will be engaged on a combination of service delivery methods: mobilization approach, capacity building approach, organizational and sustainable systems development (developing local structures) in social protection programming. The Strategy emphasizes measures to address the challenges of social development imperatives. Sustainable social development is a long-term process, and can only be achieved through investments in the future. Therefore, the Strategy requires a long-term approach in governing our social development programmes aiming at enlarging our economic prospects and ensuring social equity as an integral part of government's agenda for transformation. Therefore, the operation of this Strategy shall be a challenge without support and active participation of government and its development partners.

3.4.5 Directorate of Child Protection

Government of The Gambia (GoTG) is committed the protection of children in The Gambia. The President lamented – (link: *http://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/article/un-agencies-update-president-barrow-on-child-marriage-female-genital-mutilation*) on the negative consequences of Child Marriage and FGM, from a health point of view but noted that these are culturally sensitive issues. He called on the population to end the practices. President Barrow also asserted that his government will cooperate with UN bodies to come up with laws that will be sustained. Therefore, the Directorate of Children's Welfare seeks to promote the development of a coalition of efforts in transforming services providing child protection and development in The Gambia; as well as ensuring equal access for youth of both sexes to useful, affordable and quality technical and vocational skills

The Directorate will emphasise and pursue gender transformative child protection systems approach for establishing viable and vibrant child protection and development services in The Gambia. While substantial efforts have been made in the sector, it is absolutely clear that there are great amounts of work required to positively transform the protection services. A lot more thinking, innovations and initiatives are required to consolidate the gains so far. More attention, capacity building and input will be required to develop the referral mechanisms. The gap in developing referral pathways - between the communities and regional service providers as well as the policy makers is wide, and it is a daunting task for community-based child protection actors to fill this gap. Although, regional stakeholders have been sensitized, trained and/or engaged, child protection systems and referral pathways will require more investments.

Directorate in partnership with the relevant sectors and child-focus CSOs can scale-up the systems approach to child protection initiatives in the country. Despite the significant efforts and well-intentioned child protection policies, laws and strategies (e.g. the Children's Act), the resultant effects are not being translated on the ground. The Directorate will persuade the Government to provide significant budgetary and technical support to improve the capacities of core child protection actors to roll-out the children's Act in the country.

a) Our Child Protection Framework:
Government strengthened its declaration with the amendment of the Children's Act in 2016", and the Directorate is fully supportive of this Act. We shall demonstrate scalable models of integrated approach to child protection, and this will encourage popular uptake of child-sensitive social protection services and transfers. As The Gambia Government embraces the Children's Law, there is a need to ensure that programmes, awareness-raising campaigns, and establishment of new structures and policies build on a system-based approach to addressing issues concerning

vulnerable children. At the core of our child protection services is the child, the family welfare and a social protection system. It has been confirmed in child protection practice that the best for a child is at her/his home.

The main thrust of our framework is a systems approach to child protection, underscoring a multidisciplinary approach that requires collaboration across many sectors. This goes beyond social protection and justice for children. The framework for looking at child protection assumes a protective module where children are at the center and the layers surrounding a child assume the most important roles in terms of responsibility, care, and protection.
The law enforcement agencies providing the lead role in preventing and responding to abuse, violence and exploitation of children must be supportive to this arrangement.

Each layer must be strengthened in terms of capacity, awareness, and more importantly with a linkage between each level to ensure that information is shared, services are appropriate, and that policies reflect the reality on the ground. To better provide for and protect vulnerable children, the system surrounding the child must be supported and strengthened both to catch children that might fall through the cracks of the safety-net, but also to enhance and build on children's resilience and positive coping mechanisms when risks and vulnerabilities do arise.

Our systems-based approach emphasizes prevention at its core, and shall respond to child protection problems through multi-sectoral channels grounded in community and family values. Partnership will be cardinal to our programming, and we shall be developing and shaping sound relationship with other stakeholder actors from community, regional and at national levels. We intend to be heavy on the ground with our child protection programmes and support structures at decentralised levels ~ regions, district and community levels.

Figure 2: Protective Rings to System Building

The Directorate shall strengthen and engage all other formal child protection systems at national and regional levels based on our understanding of local cultural, social and economic factors. We shall develop and place sufficient attention on community protection responses, which are a fundamental component of our child protection system in The Gambia. Families and communities are always there preventing and responding to child protection concerns. We shall develop the child protection referral protocols, and link the informal community child protection mechanisms to formal service providers to form an effective system that protects children. The directorate of children's Welfare shall employ effective measures to end child trafficking and secure the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour.

b) Our Strategy Orientation and Approach
The Directorate's business model and programme approach will be organized around the life-stages of children. Programme designs will be partly informed by the international instruments (CRC, SDGs and African Charter), and partly by the functions of child-context relationship, Government's major policy instruments, and the transactional developmental theory (Sameroff, 1975; Sameroff, & Fiese, 2000). Sameroff model of transactional approach demonstrates how

child-context interactions with, and contribute to children's development at different levels in the life cycle. The key feature in this model shows how the changing developmental status of the child contributes to the child-context transactions. This model will be used in programme designs to further determine the developmental needs of children.

In keeping with child rights perspective ~ emphasising the holistic fulfilment of rights of all children, the life-cycle approach shall be the basis of our programming. The approach could be perceived contrary to the conventional approaches that traditionally follow the sectorial organisation of service provision, according to education, nutrition, health, child protection, etc.
Rather life-cycle approach is complimentary in designing appropriate programmes based on the developmental stages and ages of children. Emphasis in life cycle approach is child-centred rather than sector- and intervention-centred. The evolving capacity of the child come to the fore, along with the natural sequencing of child survival and development strategies according to different age-groups. In a programming context, it helps to identify the potential for linkages across sectors and break down the barriers that impede programme collaboration and sharing of experiences.
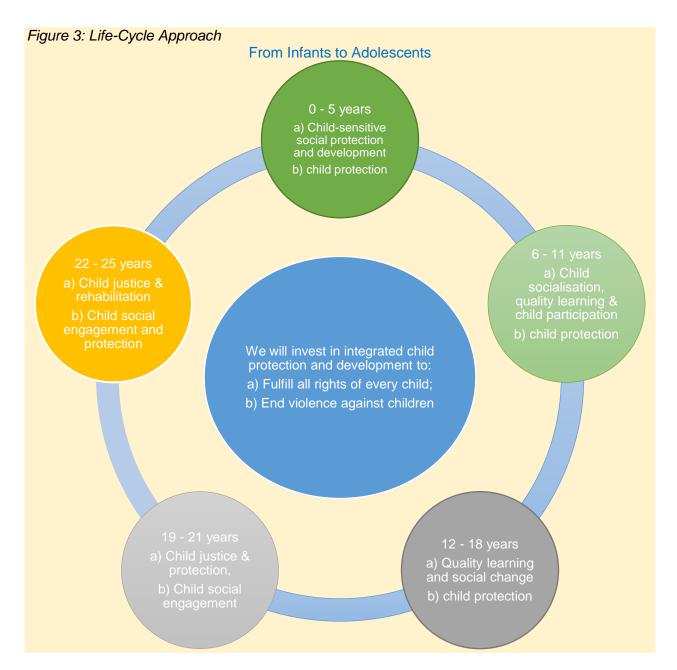
Within the approach, sectoral contexts are analysed to incorporate physical health, cognitive development, and personal and psycho-social growth, protection and participation concerns at particular ages and stages in life. Cross-cutting issues, notably gender and protection, are addressed within each age-group, and equity ~ across age-groups, sexes, geographical areas, and income or other disparities ~ become reference points throughout.

Furthermore, an advantage of the approach is that it captures the ebb and flow of vulnerabilities over time. The balance of needs and risks changes throughout the growing up process of a child ~ from infancy through to adolescence as do the setting in which they found themselves. Focusing on changing capacities and settings also brings out thresholds ~ going to school, taking on family responsibilities, the arrival at sexual maturity ~ that sectoral programmes may miss because they are concerned with the child as the target, and not as an agent. As they grow up, children increasingly become independent in how they behave and start to speak for themselves ~ things that are not accepted in all child-raising conditions, but regarded as a child right under the UN convention on the rights of the child (CRC).

The approach proportionately gives more attention to older child groups. This is important for The Gambia where majority of our children come from poorer families. Young children with their range of complex problems are increasingly becoming are our challenge. Soon after maturity (above 18 years according to the CRC), some of them may engage in marriage and parenthood. At this stage, their experience of childhood and access to care, nurture, knowledge, and protection will determine their own capacity as parents and economically active members of society. The life-cycle perspective illuminates that the survival and health of infants and young children are often partially determined by the quality of marriage and parenthood at family level, making it more important to invest in youth ~ not only because they are themselves 'children', but to bring about reductions in infant and maternal mortality, especially for those excluded from health care services.

Our life-cycle child protection approach proposes five programme areas: a) child-sensitive social protection and development, providing child protection and family welfare services with interventions in child survival and save motherhood (including birth registration), community-based nutrition education and early childhood care and development; b) child social engagement (participation) for socialization, quality learning and enhancing achievements in basic education; c) quality learning, technical and vocational training for youth; d) child social engagement and justice for children, and e) justice for children and rehabilitation (if necessary) for social change.

The types of services and mechanisms to deliver such programmes shall be context-specific, depending on available resources and capacities. There will be a need to adapt child protection systems to specific regional contexts. Rural and urban areas, as well as cross-border issues (e.g. migration, trafficking), require different service delivery models. Furthermore, our child protection systems will have to rely on other sectors, such as health and education for the delivery of services and interventions.

Figure 3: Life-Cycle Approach

From Infants to Adolescents

0 - 5 years
a) Child-sensitive social protection and development
b) child protection

6 - 11 years
a) Child socialisation, quality learning & child participation
b) child protection

22 - 25 years
a) Child justice & rehabilitation
b) Child social engagement and protection

We will invest in integrated child protection and development to:
a) Fulfill all rights of every child;
b) End violence against children

19 - 21 years
a) Child justice & protection,
b) Child social engagement

12 - 18 years
a) Quality learning and social change
b) child protection

As discussed above, our strategic emphasis to child programming shall involve an equity-focused approach. That means focusing on the poorest and most marginalized families and areas first, in narrowing the gap between the poor and non-poor in child protection and development. This

approach proved elsewhere, most effective ~ and most cost-effective ~ in reducing maternal and child mortality, diminishing stunting, and eliminating unsanitary conditions through child survival programmes.

Key strategies will include:

i) Establishing a more diversified and integrated programmes, with a balance between immediate child protection needs and long-term development initiatives ~ empowering youth through affordable quality technical and vocational skills training.

ii) Devolving both implementation and management of the directorate's pro-child programmes to partner local organizations. Although the directorate is likely to remain operational, increasing efforts will be made to work with Local NGOs.

iii) To develop clear strategies for child protection and holistic early childhood care and development (ECCD); and establish clear minimum standards of services with aligned actors, and to use these agreed standards as the basis of its influencing and advocacy work.

c) The Priorities and Opportunities for Children
The Directorate of Children's Welfare shall become the national force for Gambian children. This is what we stand for and what sets us apart. While working in the country side, our staff will reach the deprived, excluded and vulnerable children in most remote communities. We shall constantly be challenging our thinking and engage communities where we work to advance our practices and lead change with innovations and creativity for children in The Gambia.

The Directorate is now adapting culturally to a longer term development process to address the plights of Gambian children and youth. We will continue our work with children and youth to understand their experiences of poverty and actively provide them with opportunities to influence the way we design and implement programmes. Our programmes shall be designed and managed with our distinctive life stages approach that focuses on the journey of a child from birth to young adulthood. Part of our strategy involves an exciting development that allows children to get healthy, to get smart and to change their world. These views shall be our distinguishing features, and will always be at the centre of our work in The Gambia. We believe that children and youth have the capacity to improve their own lives and to be leaders of the next generations. Experience proves that the most sustainable change comes from within the community.

The Directorate is developing a new mission ~ working with communities of partners to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything that we do ~ in our operations, in our programmes, and in our advocacy and influencing work. A combination of our strategic approaches ~ our systems-based approach, life-cycle approach and equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children's rights into action. We are aiming at offering all the children the opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favoritism. This means equal opportunity and chance in life for all children ~ in their social, political, economic, civic and cultural world with fulfilled rights. Our equity strategy will not only give children the opportunity to fulfil their potential, but also will lead to sustained growth and stability in The Gambia. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of all children as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Finally, the directorate shall support communities and families to increase their resilience to volatility and shocks, whether caused by economic shift, climate change, natural disaster etc. so

that achievements for girls and boys can be sustained. We will pursue the political will to mobilise the required financial investments to advance the plights of the poor and marginalized people, particularly children.

3.5 The Ministry's Role and Niche (*What we do and where we shall be good at*)

The MoWCSW will take advantage of the existing political will to build a niche as the responsible government institution with a mandate to catalyze positive changes in gender relations through the empowerment of women, and in child and social protection with more effective policies, stronger coordination, increased funding and deeper accountability. To fulfil this niche, we will particularly ensure institutional efficiency, entrench a values-driven approach to our work, strengthen our local presence and enhance our institutional legitimacy.

The Ministry is elaborating on the nexus between gender equality and women empowerment, and social protection ~ particularly, the protection and development of children and other vulnerable groups with a focus on sustainable development. Linking gender equality and social protection can yield powerful development synergies for Gambians of present and future generations. Building on these imperatives, the Ministry is now modeling the principles of inclusiveness, equality, human rights and social change as a niche, while addressing causes of vulnerability in society. It will remain the mandated public institution of gender and social welfare representing and

Our Niche
Gender-responsive programming with an equity focus, while pursuing a systems-based approach in integrated child and social protection. We are about women empowerment and social protection of children and other vulnerable groups, while mutually reinforcing the linkages between gender equality ~ child protection and social protection.

promoting the interest of women, children and other vulnerable groups. It shall create strategic alliances and partnership platforms with the key stakeholders (including CSOs) for the enforcement of national, regional and international human rights instruments; while influencing the government to prioritize and invest in programmes of children, women, elderly and people living with disability (PWD).

The Ministry will launch a renewed vision for the empowerment of women, and social protection of children and other vulnerable groups ~ a vision of increased livelihood, dignity, security, equality and prosperity for all. With these views, the ministry is broadly elaborating its strategy, emphasizing that reducing poverty and eliminating inequalities shall be at the centre of its policy and practice. It is poised to invest in women and girls ~ in both rural and urban contexts in order to enhance gender equality, achieve more sustainable development and accelerate progress towards the SDGs. The ministry believes that mutually reinforcing the linkages between gender equality ~ child protection and social welfare will create a society that maintains respects for human rights and provides women and men, girls and boys with the lives and future they deserve.

The Ministry will continue work in partnership with its supporters and donors to fulfill its mandate in this area. It shall maintain the strategic support started on the ground, build the capacity of the ministry, share its best practices and move forward with advocacy and lobbying for increased sector financing. The ministry would better reflect grassroots concerns and interests at all levels, define and professionalize its programming, and increase information flow outwards to partners, supporters and donors to harmonize relationships for effective programming. Alliance building and

partnership programming will be fundamental to the achievement of its strategic priorities and programme goals.

The Ministry shall improve its mechanisms for organisational development, and transform itself into a viable and self-managed public institution on behalf of The Gambia Government using all the available opportunities. It shall continue to be an essential vehicle for the delivery of the needed humanitarian services to affected populations.
It shall further generate and sustain positive linkages between service providers and organizations within civil society committed to inclusive social and economic development. The overriding and long-term objective will remain to provide better and more cost-effective development and protection services to the local populations. We shall be reaching deprived, excluded and marginalized families in most remote communities, where others may not venturing. This is what we will stand for and will set us apart.

Systems-based approach is the hallmark of our programming; and to advance this, MoGCSW seeks to remain a facilitator to catalyze the transformational social change process in the country. It will capitalize on the excellent relationship with its supporters and launch an integrated campaign on gender equality and social justice. We will maintain and deepen the quality and intensity of our engagement with partners in other line ministries and CSO partners in gender and child protection service delivery in the country. The ministry will emphasize the collaborative drive, and move into new forms of partnerships to ensure that government obligations and donor commitments are translated into action, with enduring accountability to the local populations. That will create space for the ministry in national development at the higher level, if it chooses to be a vibrant public institution. This Strategy Plan (SP) is designed to respond to the wider context of peoples' lives, and is directly aligned and relevant to the national development objectives, supporting other macro-sectoral strategies. It will directly address the causes of rural vulnerability.

3.5.1 Our Area of Excellence (Where we must excel to discharge our mandate)

Our niche (above) defines our area of excellence. This is the area where we must excel to achieve core outcomes. It defines the strategic competency that we must build as an organization to discharge our mandate, fulfil our core intent and bring about the core outcomes. Specifying an area of excellence does not mean that we will not develop strong competencies in other areas – indeed we must in order to achieve the ambitions of our purpose of existence. Rather, it simply outlines where we want to be *the best*.

As we increased our understanding of rural conditions, we realized the need to embrace effective holistic approaches to addressing deprivation and vulnerability at all levels. This is critical for us to achieve the long-term, sustained change we are seeking – *"empowering women for inclusive social and economic development, and protecting the rights of children and other vulnerable groups"*. For this reason, we must ensure that we provide space for the poor and marginalized people to become primary stakeholders to secure the impact of all that we do.

The Ministry will develop the pre-requisite competence in addressing female poverty and vulnerability. We will work with children and marginalised members of society to understand their experiences of poverty and actively provide them opportunities to influence the way we design and implement our programmes. This means employing a dynamic participatory approach where people will control their economic, social, political and cultural processes that affects their lives. This provides better understanding of people's experiences of poverty and marginalization by allowing the poor articulate and take control of their new solutions. It means our programming will be partnership-oriented, where people become of primary importance in the process due to their

multiple responsibilities and roles, while the ministry remain an 'active facilitator' with responsibility of assisting them on jointly negotiated terms. This widens people's development choices and enables them to access broader range of opportunities by their own efforts.

Part of this Strategic Plan (SP) involves an exciting development that underline sustainable human development: ~ to invest in women and children for quality productivity and sustained prosperity. The protection and development of women, children and marginalised people by allowing them to make choices ~ means empowering them to get smart and change their world. That is what we are for. These are the distinguishing features of the ministry, and will be at the core of its work in the next five years as part of the global force for women, children and marginalised people. The ministry believes that the poor and marginalised have the capacity to improve their own lives and to be leaders of their own development. The most sustainable change comes from the people.

Our Area of Excellence
The empowerment of women and children ~ placing their experiences of poverty, exclusion and vulnerability at the center of our policy and practice.

The Ministry shall be engaging on long-term programming in the Country, and this SP will expand our reach in terms of fundraising and development. The new programme methodology will be more people-centered, more integrating, more holistic, and more participatory.

The Ministry, through Community-based Organisations (CBOs), will support appropriate home-grown holistic women-, and child-centred programmes. We will continue to promote new initiatives clearly targeted at women and children. The Ministry shall be fully committed to the innate worth and capacity of women and children, and their rights to lead their lives. By doing this, the ministry will maximize the impact and sustainability of its work. This SP is a reflection of our renewed commitment, vigor and dreams of larger and greater services for women, children and other vulnerable people.

3.6 The Ministry's Theory of Change

3.6.1 The Transformative Change Process

The MoWCSW upholds both the national and international instruments (especially the CEDAW, CRC and SDGs) in discharging its mandate. Our strategy is based on six essential elements: ~ people (women, girls, boys and men); dignity (for marginalised and vulnerable groups); inclusion (with leaving no one behind); empowering (women for equality); justice (for protecting rights); and partnership (in programming). We believe that achieving gender equality, and assured healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages by 2030 is achievable through inspired citizens and families, protection of rights of children, women and PWDs, and empowered communities, CSOs and other service providers supported by enabling environments; and the MoWCSW increasing its accountability and commitment to lead the transformative change. We seek

Our primary focus will be human rights, gender equality and social protection, among others. - *"empowering women for inclusive social and economic development, and protecting the rights of children and other vulnerable groups".*

to realize human rights of all; and to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. These elements are integrated and indivisible for our progress and prosperity. We believe that emphasis in promoting human rights, gender equality and social protection, all Gambians can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality.

The Ministry recognise that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all our development goals. The achievement of full human potential is not possible if women and girls are denied of their full human rights and opportunities. We are determined to ensure that women and girls enjoy equal access to quality education, health, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels.

We will work for a significant increase of investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for implementing partners in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at both regional and national levels. All forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls will be eliminated, through the engagement of men and boys to address negative masculinities and harmful social norms. The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in programming will be crucial to the ministry.

The Ministry is determined to take the bold and transformative processes to collectively engage our populations onto a sustainable and resilient path. We will mobilize resources to so through productive partnerships, based on a spirit of strengthened solidarity as a government, and focused, in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all partners and stakeholders. The interconnectedness and integrated nature of our programmes are of crucial importance to achieving our strategic intentions. If we realize our goals across the full extent of this strategy, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our country will be transformed for the better. We further believe that transformative change will be achieved when we, as the mandated ministry and other national service delivery programmes are strengthened and scaled up to address the increasing rural poverty.

Social exclusion resulting to inequitable access to productive resources is increasing in rural Gambia, and affecting the lives of women and children (especially girls in learning institutions) and communities in hard-to-reach areas; and denying them of their rights to quality food, health and WASH. In our social development and advocacy efforts, the ministry will engage our partners in government to address these inequalities. We believe that holistic mode of partnership with service providers, CSOs and CBOs to undertake initiatives that will target excluded groups, the poorest and most marginalised communities will result to equitable and sustainable access to quality social services. We believe that these efforts will have a profound impact on the lives of people and will result in transformative outcomes in minimizing inequalities. Communities do not have the capacity to exclusively take-up their basic service deliveries.

The Ministry will design and scale up social protection systems, ~ enforce the instruments that promote social inclusion, systems for social and gender budgeting, child-sensitive financial management, and related monitoring systems. We believe that the existing policies and our systems-based approach will combat multidimensional child poverty, address the drivers of vulnerability, build resilience to external shocks and improve service delivery. Collaborating with our partners and supporters, we will support interventions on access to justice that address discrimination and promote accountability, strengthen families in their child-care role, particularly for the youngest children, and support the poorest and most marginalized families to demand and access basic services. As a contribution to social inclusion as well as to other outcomes, the meaningful participation of women and children, including adolescents, in processes that relate to them will be emphasized, including through strengthening their own decision-making and communication capacities.

With the growing donor fatigue, the ministry will continue to engage the government to increase our budgetary allocations; lobby the growing private sector and decentralized local governments to finance women empowerment, child and social protection initiatives. We will encourage our

service delivery partners to diversify their funding sources – attracting interested donors to invest in women empowerment, child and social protection and development. Our institutional mapping and impact measurement will be promoted to develop knowledge and document evidence base practices in order to improve the quality of our transformational change process.

3.6.2 Conditions for Change to Happen

The proposed transformational change can happen if peace and stability continues with smooth political transition in the country. A stable economy, willingness and commitments of governments to commit more funds to the Ministry will be essential. The following conditions of change are fundamental to discharge our mandate:

Condition 1: Committed and Accountable Government

The political will and Government's commitment to the development and protection of children, gender equality and empowerment of women, and safeguarding other vulnerable citizens demonstrated by increased resource allocations to the ministry is a crucial pre-requisite. The ministry will encourage government to provide strategic investments for protective services and for social change ~ i.e setting standards and leveraging resources for partnership programming, capacity strengthening, coordination, and systems development.

Condition 2: Strong Governance for Child and Social Protection:

Strengthened institutional capacity of the ministry to govern national child and social protection programmes demonstrated by strategic investments for protective services, and for social change with efficient systems and processes: transparent roadmaps, policies and budgets; improved sector planning and coordination; improved programme quality, learning and documentation; and policy implementation and enforcement. Also, ensure harmonized national legislation, policies, regulations and practices (formal, informal, religious, customary) with international law, and set and promote standards of care and protection with institutionalised professional behaviour

Condition 3: Broadened and Strengthened Partnerships

Gender and women empowerment, child and social protection addressed with collaborative efforts of many actors in society ~ demonstrated by a coordinated partnership involving ministry, civil society, religious institutions, regional organisations and international agencies. Prioritised social protection services and social transfers reducing vulnerabilities and related risks on children, women and other vulnerable groups.

Condition 4: Strengthened Capacities of Gender, Child and Social Protection Actors

Existence of competent helping professionals in the areas of gender analysis and mainstreaming, child protection, social work and protection, justice security, etc. demonstrated gender responsive programmes, existence of sector-specific experts and professionals providing relevant services in gender and women empowerment, child protection, and social protection.

Condition 5: Empowered Communities and their CBOs demanding their rights and taking collective actions: Empowered communities and their organizations (CCPCs, women's groups, etc.) with effective referral systems become primary stakeholders in their child and social protection, and gender service delivery, actively taking collective actions and responsibilities in promoting human and child rights. Trained and empowered youth actively engaged and maintaining productive enterprises.
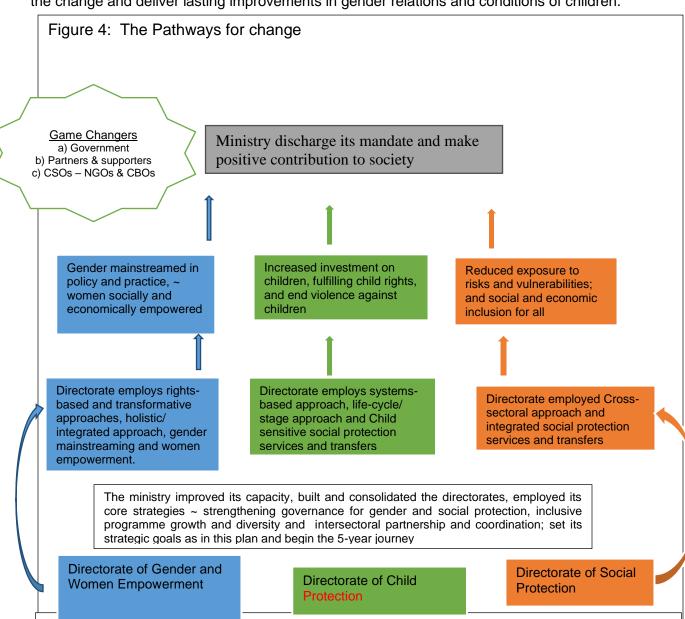
Condition 6: Stable Funding Sources for Local Programming:

Willingness of our partners and donors continuing to support our programming is critical for us. The Ministry will critically engage government to invest ~ increase social spending on child and

social protection, and ensure that appropriate and sufficient funds are available to enable us achieve our mission. We will seek strong national ownership and the ministry's leadership in programming at all levels (national, regional and community).

3.7   Drivers of Change

We believe that strong political will and commitment of the government will support the crusade towards implementing national, regional and international instruments (e.g. the CRC) in achieving the related SDGs. Improved capacity of MoWCSW and existence of sound governance and critical engagement with committed service delivery and CSO partners will support our efforts towards fulfilling rights of all children, improved gender relations and social services for vulnerable citizens, and ending violence against children. Empowered Communities taking collective actions will drive the change and deliver lasting improvements in gender relations and conditions of children.

Figure 4: The Pathways for change

Game Changers
a) Government
b) Partners & supporters
c) CSOs – NGOs & CBOs

Ministry discharge its mandate and make positive contribution to society

Gender mainstreamed in policy and practice, ~ women socially and economically empowered

Increased investment on children, fulfilling child rights, and end violence against children

Reduced exposure to risks and vulnerabilities; and social and economic inclusion for all

Directorate employs rights-based and transformative approaches, holistic/ integrated approach, gender mainstreaming and women empowerment.

Directorate employs systems-based approach, life-cycle/ stage approach and Child sensitive social protection services and transfers

Directorate employed Cross-sectoral approach and integrated social protection services and transfers

The ministry improved its capacity, built and consolidated the directorates, employed its core strategies ~ strengthening governance for gender and social protection, inclusive programme growth and diversity and intersectoral partnership and coordination; set its strategic goals as in this plan and begin the 5-year journey

Directorate of Gender and Women Empowerment

Directorate of Child Protection

Directorate of Social Protection

a) Gender mainstreaming is flawed in policy and practice, and women have limited access to productive resources, yet they are subjected to harmful traditional practices. The gender machinery actors are weak to mainstream gender and enforce the legislations due to their low technical capacity.

b) There is heighten child rights abuse and violence against children coupled with inadequate investment ~ social spending on the development and protection of children, adolescents and youth in The Gambia.

c) Social welfare and protection is marred by poor policy enforcement, inadequate resource (budgetary) mobilization and low government capacity in programming

The Gambia operating context is constantly changing, and in the same way the Ministry will increase its understanding of the dynamics as we gain more experience at the grassroots. A fairly rigid "orchestrated" strategy is therefore felt to be inappropriate to either the operating environment, or the Ministry's operating structures and the principles of our programme approach. Sustainable human development[19] programming and pro-poor policy advocacy and influencing will be the feature of our work in The Gambia. The strategy is guided by the principles of rights-based programming; social inclusion and equity; strong national ownership and Government leadership; accountability and transparency; needs- and evidence-based programming; multisectoral integration and coordination; and sustainable long-term funding.

This strategy recognizes that current poverty reduction efforts in The Gambia promotes economic growth and export-oriented model of development. It is believed that children and other vulnerable groups will be taken care of through 'safety-nets'. The 'broadly inclusive growth' and gender equity that is talked about remains largely untested in The Gambian context where "class" and market factors constitute an element in the poverty web. The Ministry will therefore have to reposition itself to invest and close the gender gap, support institutions in relation to child and social protection, and promote gender equality and empowerment of women in the country.

With the above mainstream thinking, this strategy has been formulated after careful assessment of our context and our future role as a Ministry. The strategy is designed to make the fullest use of our comparative advantage and niche in gender programming, child protection and social development. In keeping with our mission therefore, our main business will be: a) protecting children and eliminating all harmful practices such as child abuse, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation; b) empowering and eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against all women and girls; and c) implementing social protection systems and measures to build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations in reducing their exposure and vulnerability to all forms of shocks, while ensuring their rights to economic resources and access to basic services. These will be carried out directly and indirectly, with the object of engaging the forces that facilitate or hinder the process of our mandate.

The scope of our strategic programming will be dependent on the nature of interventions. There are three strategic elements that we shall be pursuing: a) fund raising and resource mobilisation for programming; b) advocacy and influencing game changers (government, our partners and supporters, and other service providers) to improve access to child protection and social services; and c) effective partnership and collaborative alliances – none of which are mutually exclusive. Our role in relation to these elements would primarily be that of a facilitator and a coordinator.

Chapter 4: The Strategy

4.1 Strategy Foundation
In synchronizing with both national and international instruments, this strategy is based on the practical and strategic needs of women, girls, boys and men linked to changing the circumstances of their lives, and realizing their human rights. It is anchored on gender justice, that is, the equitable treatment of men and women, women's rights, the granting of full citizenship rights to women and the acknowledgement that equality between men and women requires a process of social

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[19] investing in women and children for quality productivity and sustained prosperity

transformation. This is particularly helpful because it leads us to consider the inherent inequalities present in the current system, and suggests a complete transformation rather than adding gender to the existing structures. It is also useful in that it highlights the importance of rights, entitlements, responsibilities and accountability of key political, economic and social institutions that have relevance to the experiences of men, women, boys and girls.

The strategy provides a more accurate understanding of the Ministry's roadmap for programming; enables us to meet the needs and priorities of the populations in a more targeted manner, based on how people are affected by poverty. Responding to the multidimensional nature of vulnerability faced by Gambians, and the weakness of its current child and social protection systems, this strategy provides a comprehensive set of social development and protection programmes to address the varied vulnerabilities affecting different categories of the population. It is meant to accelerate and sustain pro-poor and inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction, human capital development, social cohesion and the attainment of basic human rights for the people.

We believe that the strategy will contribute to greater gender equity and pro-poor growth; and promote the progressive realisation of human rights. The Ministry will address the economic and social barriers that prevent access to services while placing special emphasis on the poorest and most vulnerable – thereby contributing to a fairer distribution of resources and benefits. The redistributive potential of social protection programmes can also help reduce the growing inequality in The Gambia and create economic opportunities for the poor and marginalised people. In addition, the strategic is aligned to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals particularly Goals 3, 4, 5 and 17 that critical to the realization of women and children rights.

4.2 The Vision
An equitable society where women, men, boys and girls', and vulnerable populations' basic human rights are guaranteed, protected and fulfilled. A harmonious and inclusive society in which men and women are empowered and the rights of children, people with disabilities and marginalized groups are protected.

4.3 The Mission
The Ministry of Women, Children and Social protection exists to contribute to the development of The Gambia through through the principle of equity, inclusiveness and equality, protecting the rights of women and children and the integration and protection of vulnerable and excluded groups including people living with disability through appropriate policies, strategies and adequate resources.

4.4. Values
Integrity, Respect, Inclusivity, Accountability and Social Justice

4.5 Our Strategic Intent and Core Outcomes
The Ministry's long-standing commitment to gender and women empowerment; and our drive to child and social protection lead us to promote a right-based approach to gender and women empowerment, systems-based approach to child protection, and integrated social protection services and transfers.
We seek lasting solutions by promoting the three fundamental approaches that entitle vulnerable and marginalized people to a fair share of society's resources. The strategic approaches recognize our active role, while emphasizing the responsibilities of the state and society towards people in need. The Ministry will continue to learn and increase our experiences of working with poor and marginalized people, while addressing key challenges that keep them in perpetual vulnerability. We will support and engage the game changers to strengthen their systems and processes,

advocate for increased investment ~ social spending on gender and women empowerment, and protection of children, adolescents and youth, and influence the desired transformational changes.

Our Core Outcomes: Given the mission we have defined for the Ministry, we identify here the results we must drive towards in order to achieve our vision. We call these our core outcomes, and they clarify our understanding of what needs to be in place to enable us discharge our mandate. As shown in the circular diagram below, our core outcomes are inter-linked; they are all essential parts of the impact we wish to have. Based on our changing context, we will reposition ourselves to achieve and ensure:

a) Gender is mainstreamed in policy and practice for women's empowerment:
Social justice and equity are key outcomes of our gender and women empowerment programming. The aim is to promote gender justice and secure gender equality in all spheres of our society; respect for human rights, social justice and women empowerment. All programmes (including those of the state) are able to meet the needs and concerns of women, girls, boys and men in an equal manner. Also, populations are enabled to exercise equal rights to achieve equal well-being, influence and status.

b) Fulfilled Child Rights & Ending Violence Against Women and Children
Ensuring and actualizing the right of children to a life free from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. Also, all women and children in The Gambia are protected from violence, abuse and exploitation; and all forms of violence against women and children including physical, sexual and emotional violence in all settings ~ in homes, in communities, schools and institutions are prohibited. The national child protection systems are strengthened by providing critical social services available to support all children at risk or victims of violence; and enhancing coordination among the child agencies. Also, fragile and vulnerable families are strengthened by enabling them access assets, financial services and markets to enhance their productivity and support their children.

c) Reduced Exposure of Marginalised People to Risks and Vulnerabilities:
Equipping vulnerable people with the means to protect themselves from risks and hazards. Greater and more effective investment in social protection for improved productivity and employability; as well as enabling families to invest in their own income-generating activities that will provide them the security they need, send children to school and take risks with greater investments in future production. It also means closing the gaps in coverage with aligned programmes that will effectively meet the varied needs of the populations.
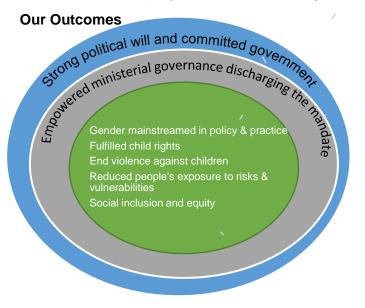
d) Social Inclusion and Equity:
Establishing an inclusive, integrated and comprehensive social protection system that will effectively provide protective, preventative, promotive and transformative measures to safeguard the lives of all poor and vulnerable groups in The Gambia; and contribute to broader human development, greater economic productivity and inclusive growth. It means to eliminate both economic and social barriers that prevent access to services for the poorest and most vulnerable ~ while ensuring a fairer distribution of resources and programme benefits. Also to ensure that most vulnerable groups ~ including population living in poverty, people living with disabilities, and households affected by HIV and AIDS and other forms of chronic illness – benefits from expanded program coverage.

e) Strong Political Will and Empowered Ministerial Governance and Coordination:

As stated under the theory of change, a strong political will, and the commitment of government to invest and increase spending on the plights of the nation's vulnerable people; and develop the capacity of the ministry to govern and coordinate national programmes of children, gender and women empowerment, and social protection are critical pre-conditions for the Ministry in discharging its mandate. Part of developing the capacity of the Ministry shall include four imperatives: a) *leveraging innovation and technologies to support our children, and gender and women empowerment; b) tracking impact for mutual accountability for investments on women, children and social protection; c) investing in new partnerships on programmes that have direct and indirect impacts on women and children; and d) investing in grant acquisition managed with results-based reporting to spending on women, children and social protection*

Our Outcomes

Strong political will and committed government

Empowered ministerial governance discharging the mandate

Gender mainstreamed in policy & practice
Fulfilled child rights
End violence against children
Reduced people's exposure to risks & vulnerabilities
Social inclusion and equity

These core outcomes are interconnected and represent the essential parts of the impact the Ministry desires to achieve. They will represent the direct outcomes of our work with the poor and marginalized people. The Ministry also recognizes the critical role that CSOs and local organizations play in our engagement in child and social protection. Together we stand in solidarity and that is what represents our identity and mission.

4.6 Strategic Choices and Priorities

The Ministry intend to promote social and economic rights to women, children and other vulnerable groups, while aligning programmes to the national strategic frameworks and sustainable development goals. We shall further expand our partnership model by engaging the government on gender-sensitive budgeting, and making communities and their organizations primary stakeholders in gender and women empowerment, child and social protection. We shall prioritize partnership and linkages with private sector, and other game-changers that have potential to solve the challenges of social and economic vulnerabilities.

The new business model shall prioritise the promotion of human rights and advance social protection, while refocusing on equity and its key contribution to the realization of women empowerment and children's rights. We shall scale-up proven interventions, enhancing and systematically strengthening the use of services while encouraging appropriate behavioral change, and seeking the active participation of women and children, including adolescents, and communities in social development and protection. Our intervention methods shall be complementing sector-based approaches with stronger results-based management systems paying particular attention to synergies across sectors. The Ministry shall be harnessing innovation with deeper and wider evidence base results to drive programming towards the realization of rights of children, women, and other vulnerable groups.

The Ministry will enhance its capacity and embrace a new model of doing business to improve our programming methods, and shall find new and innovative ways to engage and work with supporters and partners in contributing towards the above outcomes of our engagements. Our new business model will be underpinned by Citizen Engagement and partnership programming. We will further demonstrate our commitment to measuring the core outcomes of our programmes; monitor and increase investment on child, adolescent, and youth-focused SDG priorities, and adopt the principles of result-based reporting on our programmes. Therefore, we will upgrade our capacity to increase our critical engagement with other actors, ensure equity in service delivery as well as support and learn from the best practices in evaluation

4.7 Strategic Directions and Goals : Clarification of our Roadmap in the Next Five years

The strategic intent articulates what the Ministry wishes to achieve with this strategy that will contribute towards the vision – "*an equitable society where basic human rights of all are guaranteed...*" As such, it implies three fundamental elements that are believed to be inextricably linked: a) Ability and willingness of government to discharge its moral obligation to increase financing (budgetary allocation) for women, children and marginalised people; b) Ability of the Ministry, and willingness of related sectors to promote gender mainstreaming, child and social protection; and c) Willingness and abilities of our partners and supporters to assist with resources, and communities to successfully implement priority interventions, which underpin the fundamental belief of the ministry's work in bringing about sustainable change in their lives. These signifies the ultimate goal of the strategic directions as we are collectively tackling the challenges of women, children and other vulnerable groups in The Gambia.

We shall embrace bottom-up approaches with participatory and inclusive methodologies placing families at the centre of our programming. This is based on the belief that empowering families is fundamental for gender equality, women empowerment and child and social protection. Partnership and networking with CSOs for stimulating change at the grassroots will continue to be at the core of our strategy for the future. These gives us a clear comparative advantage as they bring to us first hand understanding of the problems, and provide legitimacy for our advocacy work. The Ministry's theory of change and strategic intent articulated the strategic goals, which presented the road map for the next ten years.

4.7.1 Partnerships

Alliance building and partnership programming remains fundamental to the achievement of our strategic priorities and programme goals. The Ministry will engage a holistic model of partnership with other service providers, CSO and CBOs in programming. We shall create strategic alliances and partnership platforms with key actors in social and child protection, and engage on sound policy advocacy to lobby and influence government to increase social sector financing.

We shall continue our critical engagement with our supporters and CSO partners as the centre-piece of our programmatic approaches, while sharing the best practices in social and child protection with a complimentary mode. With our catalytic and supporter role, we will continue to enhance capacities of partner organisations and inspire them to join us in our campaign for the protection of children and marginalized people. Our role in shaping social and child protection strategies and policies of the government will require skilled management of our relationships with them and this in turn, will require the continuity of our leadership role in the sector for the next five years.

4.7.2 Defining the Roadmap
a) Mission-related Strategy: The methods/means that we shall pursue over the next ten years to demonstrate our area of excellence and achieve our objectives (core outcomes):

	Table 1: Mission Related strategy	
	Direction	**Meaning**
Mission-Related Strategy	**Theme One: Gender Equality and women empowerment.**	
	Pillar 1: Gender mainstreaming and inclusive governance	Elimination of gender disparities in programming and ensuring women and men do access services equally. Legal reforms and update of outdated laws and policies and their enforcement for promotion of women's rights, including putting in place special measures or quota systems for women in politics and decision making, Advocate for gender responsive budgeting ensuring government budgets are equally addressing needs of females and males; and women participating in politics and local leadership.
	Pillar 2: Effective partnership and collaborative alliances	Strengthening partnerships with other actors ~ Donors, CSOs (including women CBOs), private sector, the media and community leaders for gender equality, equity and empowerment of women. Pursuing intersectoral partnership and alliances in various forms will improve coordination among gender actor for effectiveness and efficiency.
	Pillar 3: Inclusive socio-economic empowerment of women	Prioritising the active involvement of women, girls, boys and men in programming reaching deprived, excluded and marginalized families in most remote communities. inclusive industrialisation through increase of women in STEM fields; achieving gender equal employment opportunities; increase number of women owned businesses, gender sensitive procurement systems, financial inclusion measures, Gender and food and nutrition security, gender and access to finance; gender and access to energy, and women in WASH management, introduction of labour saving technologies, and programmes addressing negative gender and social norms targeting local & religious leaders as well as using male engagement to address negative masculinities. Providing space for women CBOs becoming primary stakeholders in natural resource management, and climate change adaptation.
	Pillar 4: Sexual and reproductive health - care services & education	Strengthening sexual and reproductive health rights, improving access to sexual and reproductive health services including family planning, elimination of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)
	Theme Two: Care and protection of children's rights.	
	Pillar 5: Child-sensitive social protection and transfers	Effective interventions of significant effects in preventing violence, abuse, neglect & exploitation of children across a country. Identifying and engaging effective levers of change, both in relation to child poverty and to social norms to have positive impacts on prevention and redressing neglect, abuse and exploitations
	Pillar 6: Strengthen capacities of child protection actors	Strengthening protective roles of CBOs, local leaderships and families, while developing the capacities of child protection agencies (CPAs) and child-focus CSOs to secure appropriate structures and systems for effective child protection. Also to engage in alliances with child protection agencies to create platforms and advocate for adequate budget allocations and enforcement of national policy and legislations
	Pillar 7: Social change and family support	Strengthening protective roles of families and supporting child/infant mothers, while promoting children's civil rights and encouraging their civic engagement. Also, engaging on public education and social dialogue for social change, and raising awareness and strengthening capacities among duty-bearers to appreciate child protection
	Pillar 8: Child justice and legal aid	Mainstreaming child-sensitive justice protocols within rule of law and supporting children in conflict with the law, while assisting them through diversion programmes and other alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Also, strengthening the referral systems and supporting child victims, witnesses and parties seeking legal redress.
	Theme Three: Social Protection Welfare	
	Pillar 9: Humanitarian service delivery	Strengthening the social protection assistance during emergencies, and expanding (NAFA) unconditional cash transfer supporting the extremely poor households; and provide psychosocial support to marginalised persons including PLWD. Also, strengthening 'lean safety nets' to tackle seasonal food insecurity and food price shocks.
	Pillar 10: Inclusive economic and social development	Addressing seasonal unemployment among vulnerable families, providing them livelihood opportunities of social protection and development. Also, developing strategies linking the informal rotating savings schemes and formal social transfers
	Pillar 11: Integrated social protection and networking	Ensuring access to social protection and legal services to promote social inclusion, while providing social assistance and expanding the insurance mechanisms.
	Pillar 12: Social and economic empowerment of PLWD	Strong advocacy initiatives promoting social inclusion and active employability of PLWD, ensuring their access to social protection and legal services while providing them a wide range of development and protection-related services.

b) Enabling Strategy: Organizational development over the next five years to support our methods/ means and maintain alignment with our core intent[20].

	Table 2: Enabling Strategy	
	Direction	**Meaning**
Enabling	Building effective & coherent organisation	Strengthening governance for enforcement of relevant national and international instruments, and developing capabilities for effective coordination among partners.
	Investment ~ improved social spending on women, children and social protection	Engaging government on child- and gender- responsive budgeting, prioritise grant acquisition from donors, partners and supporters, improve reporting on expenditures and programmes by introducing result-based reporting on spending.
	Impact measurement and organisational learning	Impact assessment and organizational learning to promote knowledge generation and management to inform policy and practice

4.7.3 Strategic Themes

In line with the Ministry's structure of two departments but three directorates, we have articulated four thematic areas of a) Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment, b) Care and protection of children, c) Social protection and welfare, d) Sector governance and investment. To operationalize these, we have defined strategic pillars areas in which we will focus and intensify our programmes, communication, funding, and learning efforts. Also outlined in our strategy, we commit to long-term investments in the three directorates. Related to programming, evidence suggests that a long-term and integrated package of services is more cost effective and provides more sustainable benefits than short-term projects addressing a single sector. Therefore, we will define the following thematic areas, identify their strategic pillars and priority interventions to inform our core programme areas:

i) Theme one: Gender Mainstreaming and Women's empowerment

This thematic area will be implemented by the Directorate of Gender and Women Empowerment following the programme cycle with gender lens. The theme is about protecting human rights and promoting gender equality, which is central in the Ministry's policy and practice. This strategy underpins gender mainstreaming, women empowerment and targeted actions informed by gender analysis as the mainstream intervention methodologies. The Ministry believes that mainstreaming gender in policy and practice shall enable us to meet the needs and priorities of the population in a more targeted manner, based on how women, girls, boys and men have been marginalised.

The Ministry intends to accelerate gender equity, equality and women empowerment through inclusive processes ~ capacity building, advocacy, socio-economic and political empowerment interventions. We will ensure equal access of women, girls, boys and men to available social and economic services, promote and protect human rights of all through effective/full implementation of national and international human rights instruments. The directorate will ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education. The directorate will further employ pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions. It will promote women's full participation in governance structures, leadership, and decision-making.

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[20] Elaborated under chapters VI: High level success measurement & VII: Resource and organisational development

a) The Strategic Pillars and Priority Interventions:

Strategic pillars		Priority Strategic interventions
	Theme one *strategic goal: Gender Mainstreamed in Policy and Practice*	
Mission-Related Strategy	Pillar 1: Gender mainstreaming and inclusive governance	• Enabling environment for elimination of gender disparities • Legal reform and updating of outdated laws and policies, including harmonisation of laws • Gender equal rights and access to services • Advocate for gender responsive budgeting • Women's participation in politics and local leadership
	Pillar 2: Effective partnership and collaborative alliances	• Citizen engagement on gender and women empowerment, including male engagement and engagement of traditional and religious leaders • Intersectoral partnership and alliances • Strong coordination among gender actor • Capacity building of women's organisations
	Pillar 3: Inclusive socio-economic empowerment of women	• Inclusive education and training • Gender & natural resource management; and promoting clean energy • Gender sensitive Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) promotion • Promote and protect women's human rights • Gender equal employment opportunities • Gender and food & nutrition security
	Pillar 4: Sexual and reproductive health - care services & education	• Sexual and reproductive health • Sexual and gender based violence (prevention & responses

b) Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objectives	Output (for monitoring and evaluation)
Gender equity and equality Enhanced	Gender mainstreamed in all national policies, plans and programmes; and related policies are enforced	Negative cultural practices against all sexes mitigated
		Equal access and benefits from SRH and all other social services
	Strengthen gender capacity and capability of the gender machinery	Improved competencies in gender analysis and mainstreaming
		Improved performance of the ministry
	Promote and protect women's human rights, eliminate all forms harmful practices perpetuated against women & increase access to legal services and shelters for GBV survivors	Improved human rights for women
		M&E tools and data available
		Improved community awareness of women's
		Improved access to justice among women
		Increased access to victim friendly procedures and services for GBV survivors
		Strengthened National referral systems on abuse and violence
		%age reduction of harmful practices and sexual and gender-based violence
	Ensure women's active participation in politics, leadership positions and decision-making processes	No. of women in active politics, in leadership positions, and in local level village committees
	Gender-sensitive national budgets with increased allocation for gender mainstreaming	Increased public spending on gender mainstreaming
Strengthen gender governance and coordination among stakeholders	Gender mainstreamed in the policies and programs of all partners and relevant stakeholders	Gender-responsive budgeting institutionalised
	Strengthen capacity and coordination among partners and relevant stakeholders	No. of partners and stakeholders with improved competencies
		Strong coordination in programming on gender and women empowerment
Reduced poverty amongst poor women and men, particularly young women and PWD	Ensure equal employment opportunities and benefits for women, men and youth	Equal participation, and benefits from social and economic programs
		No. of women engaged in gainful employments
	Improve women and men's access to economic resources, skills training, credit, appropriate ICT technologies, value adding labour saving devices and market	No. of women and men accessing & benefiting from economic resources
		No. of PWDs, women and youth skilfully trained for employment
		No. of PWDs women and youth empowered through value chain SMEs
		No. of women with improved marketing
Improved household food and nutrition security	Increase production and intake of high quality food by women and children	Increased food and nutrition security among women
		No of women accessing balanced diets
	Increase women's earnings through local purchases of school feeding programme	Increased cash income earnings among women
		%age reduction in malnutrition among women and children

Goal	Objectives	Output (for monitoring and evaluation)
Sustainable livelihood and income sources among women	Strengthen capacities of value chain actors (women) of agro-commodities	No. of women engaged on income enterprises
		No. of women accessed investment finance
		No. of women engaged on agri-business/agro processing
		% age increase of cash income among women
Women's improved access to equitable and sustainable safe water and sanitation	Increase access and equity to sustainable sanitation and safe water	% age access to safe water and quality sanitation
		Increased access to quality WASH in learning institutions
		Enhanced hygiene behaviour among women
Empowered and engaged women's cooperative groups	Strengthen women's NGOs / CBOs and their capacities to and provide inclusive services for members	No. of women NGOs / CBOs engaged on gainful enterprises
		No. womenNGOs / CBOs engaged on cooperative marketing
		Increased cash income for femaleNGOs / CBO members
Enhanced community resilience to climate change hazards	Improve women's access to clean energy sources	Increased uptake of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG),
		Increased uptake of improved cooking stoves
	Promote nature-based enterprises ~ processing and marketing of forest product among women	Average increase in annual cash income from forest products among women

ii) Theme Two: Care and Protection of Children,

This thematic area is has four pillars of this strategy including a) Child-sensitive Social Protection & Transfers, b) Strengthening Capacities of Child Protection Actors, c) Social Change and Family Support, and d) Child Justice and Legal Aid. The thematic programmes shall be implemented by the Directorate of Children's Welfare, beginning with strengthening service delivery mechanisms (including the protective roles of communities and families), in order to improve access, increase uptake and improve quality of child protection services. Make better use of existing resources and capacities to strengthen formal and informal child protection structures; and provide legal identity for all, including birth registration. The Directorate will further work with the private child centres, particularly those engaged on Kindergartens to increase access to quality early childhood care and development, (ECCDs) and pre-primary education. The Ministry shall work in partnership with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) to promote education facilities that are child-friendly, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe and inclusive learning environments for all. We shall promote holistic child development; (learning, socio-emotional skills, motor skills, etc beyond learning) and this ministry will play great role for holistic ECCD programming.

The Ministry shall link its child rights interventions to Align and harmonise child protection services and promote common standards to maximise the impact of existing child protection services and mechanisms. Our interventions will underscore prevention of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, aiming at reaching all vulnerable children at affordable cost. We shall focus on linking existing services and on establishing referral networks and coordination mechanisms at all levels between service providers and community mechanisms. This includes two- way referral pathways and national referral procedures and protocols, providing adequate support to community structures and putting in place coordination and communication mechanisms. We shall use appropriate Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in interventions for information sharing; including development of a Child Protection Information Management System

a) The Strategic Pillars, Goals and Priority Interventions:

Strategic pillars	Priority Strategic interventions
Theme two strategic goal: *Fulfilled child rights, and ending violence against women and children*	
Pillar 5: Child-sensitive social protection & transfers	• Provision of social services and social protection transfers; • Birth and civil registration • Strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms • Care and support to vulnerable children • Exploitation and violence prevention & response services.
Pillar 6: Strengthen capacities of child protection actors	• Support and strengthen capacities of child protection agencies (CPAs) • Support CPAs secure appropriate structures, personnel and systems • CPAs advocate for adequate budget allocations to child protection • Empower CPAs ensure policy and legislative enforcement
Pillar 7: Social change and family support	• Strengthen protective roles of families, and support child/infant mothers • Promote children's civil rights and civic engagement • Public education and social dialogue for social change Strengthen capacities among duty-bearers on child protection
Pillar 8: Child justice and legal aid	• Mainstream child justice within the rule of law • Support children in conflict with the law • Support child victims, witnesses and parties seeking legal redress

(Mission-Related Strategy)

b) Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objectives	Output (for monitoring and evaluation)
Adequate care and support for all children	Improve child care and protection in family settings	Vulnerable children receiving adequate care
		No. of children registered at birth
		Improved child health and nutrition
		No. of at-risk families that received social transfers and welfare services
		Zero reliance on institutional care
	Increase access to formal child protection services	Increased access to basic services, social protection, and psycho-social care and support
	Increase access to quality ECDs and pre-primary education	No. of children graduated from ECDs and Kindergartens; & %age transition to primary education
Improved and equitable prevention of, and response to violence, exploitation and abuse of women and children.	Strengthen informal and formal service delivery mechanisms and promote women and children's rights to protection	% age reduction in all forms of violence against women and children
		% age reduction in acceptance of domestic violence
		% age reduction in FGM/C and other harmful practices
		Reduced worst forms of child labour
		Reduction in the number of trafficked children,
		No. of community child protection structures established & empowered
		Strengthened National referral systems on abuse and violence
		Improved coordination and networking
	Expand & improve shelters for GBV survivors and child shelters/reception centres	Reduced vulnerability and risk of women and children on the move
Justice for every woman and child everywhere	Fulfilling rights of all children everywhere	Reduction in forced and child marriage
		Strong GMIS and M&E data bank established at the ministry
		No. of children accessing legal assistance in civil and criminal matters
		% age reduction in the number of children annually detained
		Increased access to women- and child-friendly court procedures for GBV survivors, witnesses and children in conflict with the law
		Improved juvenile justice systems everywhere (including the regions)
Strengthen the policy and legal frameworks	Enforcement of national protection policies and implement all other instruments	All national protection policies & international instruments fully implemented
		Legal ban on FGM/C enforced; & policy on corporal punishment enforced
Existence common standards with maximise the impact	Align and harmonise child protection services; and strengthen coordination among actors	Improved policy environment for effective and efficient in child protection
		Aligned to child protection approaches to international norms and quality standards to maximised impact
Improved organisational capacities and resource-base of CPAs	Strategic partnership to leverage new resources and capacities	Increased spending for social protection for children and youth
		Inter-sectoral and integrated approach adopted
		%age increased in coverage and equity in approach
	Ensure increased public financing on children	%age increased in government budgetary allocations for child protection

b) Strategic Goals and Objectives (Continued)		
Goal	**Objectives**	**Output (for monitoring and evaluation)**
Develop the informal child protection mechanisms	Strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms	No. of strong Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs), other structures (Village Development Committees-VCDs & mother's clubs)
		Increased awareness of child rights among children
		Referral networks and coordination mechanisms established at all levels
	Strengthen the protective roles of communities and families	No. of CCPC members and family heads that received parenting education to promote positive child rearing approaches
		% age reduction in teenage pregnancy in communities and schools
	Strengthen community-based CP monitoring systems	Increased reporting on child abuse and exploitation the referral systems
		% age reduction of incidences of child abuse in communities and schools
		% age reduction in sexual exploitations and abuse (SEAs) in schools
Improve uptake of child protection services for assured health and security of infants	Promote MCH services among community child protection structures and child mothers (through media houses and the Social Workers)	Increased attendance of child mothers to MCH services
		Increased health facility delivery and attendance to Antenatal care services
		Increased uptake of quality health care services
		Increased access to quality Reproductive Health Commodities for women
		Improved health and nutritional status of infants
		The well-being and optimal development of infants ensured
		% age reduction in child & maternal morbidity and mortality
Improve equity on access to health and education services	Support partner Ministries of Health and MoBSE to increase access to health and education services in remote areas	Increased coverage with outreach home and community-based ECDs
		Improved equity for access to quality learning
		Increased coverage with outreach community-based MCH services
		Improved well-being of children
Empowered communities, CBOs and families protecting the rights of children & taking collective actions	Improve community awareness of rights and responsibilities of children	Ethnographic study of Community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkages with formal systems conducted
		No. of empowered community structures engaged on child protection
		Improved protective environment for children
		Improved parents ability (with increased incomes) to care for children
		Improved capacities of women's agricultural groups
		Reduced security risks for children
Promote social change to improve child protection procedures	Strengthen capacities of formal child protection agencies (police, social workers and justice system)	Positive values and norms related to children's rights among protection agencies assured
		No. of life skills-based & peer-based education programs conducted
		No. of child protection training involving protection agencies conducted
Zero illegal child migration and trafficking	Strengthen community-based child protection structures and referral systems	%age reduction on children on the move, and under-age child migration
		Improved local border patrolling and reporting through the referral system
	Develop capacities of border immigration authorities	Improved capacity of border immigration authorities; increased border patrolling
		%age reduction in child trafficking across borders

c) Theme three: Social Protection and Welfare,

The existence of the National Social Protection Steering Committee (NSPSC) and National Social Protection Forum were initiatives towards the right direction. However, with the creation of this Ministry, the NSPSC is no longer being appropriate under the patronage of the Policy Analysis Unit of Office of The President. As a platform to promote networking, coordination and the harmonization of social protection programming, the committee should be relocated to the MoWCSW. Its specific tasks, including guidance to the development of a National Social Protection Strategy, action plan and legislation are all within the domain of this ministry. Notwithstanding, the Policy Analysis Unit in partnership with NSPSC should maintain their strategic support to the ministry, and consolidate current gains by strengthening the MoWCSW, and share their best practices and move forward with advocacy on social protection and development programming.

In line with the National Social Protection Policy (2015 – 2025), the directorate will "facilitate the reform of the social protection system by ensuring more efficient and effective use of resources, strengthened management and administrative systems, and progress towards a more inclusive form of social protection that makes basic income and social services available to The Gambia's poorest and most vulnerable people – gradually expanding access to the entire population". We shall increase coverage and align our programmes more effectively in order to meet the varied needs of the populations; improve coordination and provide guidance by employing systematic and harmonised mechanisms for targeting and programming. The Ministry will strengthen the capacity of the directorate while decentralising social protection and rehabilitation services at sub-national (Regional) and local level.

The Directorate will ensure effective integration and coordination, while promoting needs- and evidence-based programming on the ground. Gender will be mainstreamed in the directorate's services. Sound and sustained partnerships will be promoted between the directorate, donor and non-state actors involved in social protection. We will commit key stakeholders to a common set of standards in targeting, reporting and M&E. Rights-based approach and, social inclusion and equity shall be the main thrust of our social protection programming ~ addressing multidimensional risks, paying particular attention to social vulnerabilities that exacerbate people's exposure to risks, discrimination and poverty.

The Directorate shall support the extreme poor and other most-vulnerable groups in attaining an improved standard of living and enhanced human development by providing predictable access to basic social services, welfare support and long-term income support. We shall address the basic needs of extremely poor individuals and households, prioritising those without labour capacity and other vulnerable groups such as the elderly, PLWD, and the chronically ill, including PLHIV. We will introduce unconditional cash transfer for extremely poor, labour-constrained households.

The directorate shall promote and enhance the traditional and informal social protection mechanisms, as in the absence of well-developed social protection measures, most communities and families draw on a range of informal social protection mechanisms in the face of shocks and chronic poverty. While the poor and destitute shall draw assistance from the kinship-based support systems, our primary focus shall be the promotion and enhancement of community-based systems of support ~ community-based social insurance and saving schemes with CBOs, community-based safety nets and faith-based support networks; the directorate shall initiate several studies to document the role of informal social protection in The Gambia.

There exist a multitude of social protection programmes in The Gambia that addresses a range of risks and deprivations facing poor and vulnerable groups. However, majority of these interventions have limited reach and are short-term and emergency-oriented. The directorate is committed to continue implementing and expanding the social assistance schemes targeting the poorest and most vulnerable populations (especially PLWD). Our social transfers (either cash or in-kind) shall be providing relief for PLWD and very poor households for consumption, as well as promoting household asset accumulation. Our Adult and Elderly Care Unit shall continue running the Family Strengthening Programme – a conditional cash transfer programme targeting poor and vulnerable families in order to strengthen their income-generation capacities, and contribute to their livelihood security. The directorate will work in partnership with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education to promote (the already piloted) conditional cash transfers (CCT) targeting secular schools and selected schools run by the Marabouts 'Margilis' focusing on very vulnerable children.

The directorate will ensure access to social protection and legal services to promote social inclusion in providing a wide range of protection-related services to these vulnerable groups, strengthen social protection programmes and create a preventative and responsive social protection system linked to the justice system. Services may include home-based care for elderly people; basic physical and psychosocial services for PWD; and sensitisation campaigns at the community and family levels with regard to essential family practices, and harmful practices.

Equitable access to quality education and learning outcomes will be prioritized for PLWD. The directorate will further underscore their access to information and communication (in sign language braille), as well as public building and employment. The Ministry will retain focal persons in all government departments and ministries to support marginalised persons and PLWAs in their errands. We shall address issues of stigma and discrimination against PWD, and ensure their access to services, including disability friendly infrastructure and psychosocial support.

The Strategic Pillars, Goals and Priority Interventions:

	Strategic pillars	Priority Strategic interventions
	Theme three: *strategic Goal: Reduced people's exposure to risks and vulnerabilities; and Social inclusion and equity*	
Mission-Related Strategy	Pillar 9: Humanitarian service delivery	• Strengthen social protection support during disasters and emergencies • Expand unconditional cash transfer (NAFA Project) for extremely poor households • Provide psychosocial support targeting marginalised persons and PLWD • Strengthen 'lean safety nets' to tackle seasonal food insecurity& price shocks
	Pillar 10: Inclusive economic and social development	• Review and update all social protection legislations, policies and strategies • Address seasonal unemployment and underemployment • Provide livelihood opportunities and labour capacity for vulnerable families • Eliminating economic and social barriers preventing the poorest and most vulnerable accessing services
	Pillar 11: Integrated social protection and networking	• Ensure access to social welfare & legal services to promote social inclusion • Provision of social assistance and the expansion of insurance mechanisms • Strengthen social security schemes and labour standards
	Pillar 12: Social and economic empowerment of PLWD	• Capacity strengthening of actors in issues of disability • Update policies and laws, including disability bill • Expand the family strengthening programme to include PLWD • Research and communication on disability, and needs of PLWD • Expand other social assistance schemes targeting PLWD

b) Strategic Goals and objectives

Goal	Objectives	Output (for monitoring and evaluation)
Pillar 9: Humanitarian service delivery		
Safeguard the welfare of the poorest and most vulnerable populations	Strengthen social protection support during disasters and emergencies	Early warning systems on food and nutrition hazards established
		Improved humanitarian response during emergencies
		No. of vulnerable persons supported during emergencies
		%age increased coverage of the poor and vulnerable
		No. of vulnerable families assisted with minimum package of benefits and services
Protect vulnerable populations from transitory shocks	Strengthen 'lean safety nets' to tackle seasonal food insecurity& price shocks	Improved resilience to risks and external shocks
		Increased frequency of household food security & market price assessment
		Grain reserves stores in areas of transitory food insecurity established
Pillar 10: Inclusive economic and social development		
Mitigating poverty and promoting equity among the poor and vulnerable	Eliminate socio-economic barriers preventing the poorest and most vulnerable access to services	Multidimensional of poverty mitigated through increased returns to labour
		Reduction of income stress amongst the poor & vulnerable.
The poor and most vulnerable have equal rights to economic resources, and access to basic services	Ensure fairer distribution of resources and programme benefits.	Equal rights and access for all, to livelihood opportunities ensured
		Increased purchasing power of vulnerable families during income transfer
	Ensure that most vulnerable groups benefits from the expanded programme	Equal rights and access for all, to basic services ensured
		No of families engaged on micro and small enterprises
Pillar 11: Integrated social protection and networking		
Reduce people's exposure to social risks and vulnerabilities	Ensure access to social welfare & legal services to promote social inclusion	No. families benefited from emergency cash, food and nutrition transfers
		Enhanced resilience and improved nutritional status of lactating women and children
	Strengthen social security schemes and labour standards	No of families accessing life and livelihood support
		No. of children from vulnerable families receiving scholarships and school fee waivers
Increase investment for improved productivity and employability	Empower vulnerable people with productive assets to protect themselves from risks and hazards	No. of households in gainful employment
		Improved income and consumption capabilities
		No of vulnerable families accessing productive assets

4.7.3 Operationalizing the Strategy

The overarching goal of the Ministry in this strategy is to bring about sustainable positive change in the lives of the poor and vulnerable people through greater inclusiveness. Exclusion and deprivation remain the primary risks to long term wealth creation in The Gambia. To minimize these risks, the Government must include *all citizens* in the growth process and give them a stake in ensuring their security (protection) and welfare. A twin track approach will be adopted where gender is mainstreamed into programme pillars with the aim of transforming gender norms while at the same time pursuing stand-alone women empowerment programmes. The Ministry will strive to meet the following objectives:
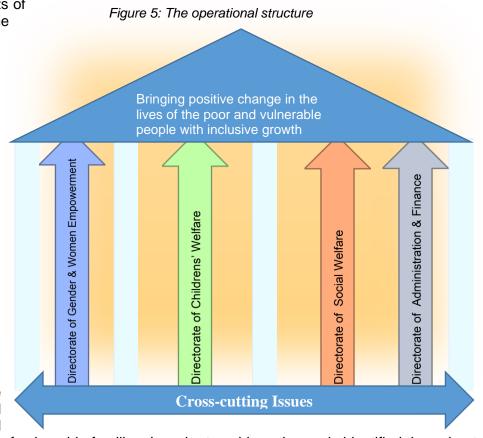
a) Generate economic opportunities with *a special focus on women and vulnerable families:* Productive employment is an unquestionable avenue toward raising people out of poverty and giving them a stake in development. While Government can provide a small share of manual employment through public works projects, the majority of jobs must be generated through higher-productivity agricultural activities and micro- small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The Ministry will support such job creation by implementing strategies for human development; by increasing focus on practical skills and vocational education programmes; and by expanding our reach to hard-to-reach remote communities throughout the country. A special focus will be on job creation for women and chronically poor families, who are currently underrepresented in formal employment, in order to empower them to be full participants in all aspects of Gambian society.

b) Increase access to education through Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) approach, especially in rural areas and among women. Informed and educated citizens are more likely to escape poverty; educated mothers have lower levels of fertility and children with better development outcomes. The Government has implemented a policy of free and compulsory basic education; however, more effort is needed to ensure that these services reach distant rural areas and that achievements among boys and girls are equalized. Therefore, the Ministry will continue to broaden access and improve quality of public education forums.

c) Institute social safety nets: While the Ministry will make all efforts to improve opportunities available to the poor and vulnerable citizens, it will also seek to institute safety nets for those at high risk of sliding into destitution ~ especially persons with disabilities and at-risk children.

d) Broaden and deepen provision of services: Beyond efficiency, the Ministry must be more responsive and seek to equalize opportunities across the Administrative Regions. We will strive to enforce policies that are catering, not only to formal business but also to the many Gambians in the informal sector.

The Ministry will adopt a clear and comprehensive operational procedures and fiscally sustainable systems for programming to benefit the poorest and most vulnerable households. Improve social service capacity and operations nationally and in administrative regions, including participation of CSOs and communities. We will double efforts to increase employment readiness, especially of women, by promoting behavioral changes; and improve livelihoods of the extreme poor, and the most vulnerable households and groups. The Ministry will develop a costed Action Plan with a resource mobilization strategy to operationalize change. Coordination will be strengthened and a national database established to register and track beneficiaries of social protection interventions. It will support a range of social protection programmes, including expanding the social cash transfer programme, and implementing food-for-work schemes, and micro-credit programmes. These will be designed to enable and motivate poor households to graduate from social cash transfer to a micro-credit scheme, as their circumstances change, or to enable individuals to progress from food-for-work to cash paying jobs. Food supplementation programmes will also be supported for children, pregnant women, and those affected by HIV and other illnesses such as TB in the most food insecure areas.

The Structure of the Ministry: The four directorates ~ Directorate of Gender and Women Empowerment; Children's Welfare; Social Welfare; and Directorate of Finance and Administration ~ represent the Ministry for bringing positive change in the lives of the poor and vulnerable people with inclusive growth. There are also cross-cutting critical issues that need to be taken into consideration in all the directorates. Each Mission-related directorate described as a theme presented a number of pillars, as shown in the strategic direction. The description of the change process and the agents of change, the outcome indicators and the priority interventions are also discussed. The directorates are mutually reinforcing, and progress in one directorate will facilitate progress in another. For example a child mother supported by the directorate of children's welfare will reinforce gains made by the directorate of Gender and Women.

The Ministry must have a strong and effective directorates in order to fulfill their tasks of upholding the rights of the poor and marginalised, and

Figure 5: The operational structure

Bringing positive change in the lives of the poor and vulnerable people with inclusive growth

Directorate of Gender & Women Empowerment

Directorate of Childrens' Welfare

Directorate of Social Welfare

Directorate of Administration & Finance

Cross-cutting Issues

increasing the welfare of vulnerable families. In order to achieve the goals identified throughout this strategy, the Ministry must invest in developing the directorates and their **Action Plans** from this strategy plan, and continue to build its own institutional and human capacity in order to improve the quality and the distribution of services delivered to the poor and vulnerable people. This strategy aims to achieve these objectives by creating directorates that are: a) independent from inappropriate influences; b) responsive to the needs of the people; c) effective at delivering results; d) efficient in making best use of resources; and e) performance-oriented, improving service delivery by focusing on the needs of the poor and vulnerable families.

To improve service productivity of the directorates, the Ministry will continue to raise the bar for performance standards and will build a robust system for managing under-performance. At the same time, a coordinated effort across the relevant ministries and align institutions, including civil society organizations will grossly be improved. In order to build upon progress already made to remove institutional barriers hindering high performance, continued restructuring and implementation of review recommendations will remove any persisting duplications among the directorates, aligned ministries, and partner agencies including CSOs; and ensure that the Ministry is as streamlined and focus as possible. Capacity development will be required in recruitment, career development, and both formal and in-service training to fit new mandates and defined functions.

PART 3: PROGRAMMES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Chapter 5: Aligned Core Programmes

The Ministry's approach towards programming will build upon the solid foundations of the former Women's Bureau and DSW, and of the ongoing reforms. First, it will ensure that current and planned reforms are implemented so that their full benefits can be realized. Second, the performance of the current manpower must be managed to increase productivity of the services. In order to continue to modernize human resource practices, the Ministry will continue to support the recruitment and development of skilled civil servants and ensure gender equity across the directorates. We will also seek to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of all the directorates through a rigorous overhaul of their operational frameworks.

5.1   Our New Programme Direction

There are several reasons why the new Ministry felt the need to undertake a systematic change of its role and strategy for long-term engagement. The global and national context in which it is operating have undergone substantial changes in the last few years. The most significant change has been from repressive governance to emergence of „democratic" market economy as the universal nostrum for growth and development. The success of President Adama Barrow's administration provided new avenues for long-term sustainable human development. This has led to a redefinition of the role of both the state and markets, and consequently a rethinking on the role of this new Ministry. With the launch of the National Development Plan (NDP), overtures from government to the population are already visible. Therefore, there are compelling pressures from the rapidly changing operating environment for the new programme direction.

Our work with organizations including CBOs is about helping the poor, marginalised and vulnerable people secure access to life-changing basic rights. Based on the needs and priorities of women, children and vulnerable persons, we extend our supports in diversified programming, complimented by capacity building programmes. We shall work on the basis of mutual trust with the communities to innovate, and together take on challenges of poverty, marginalization and vulnerability. We shall continue to learn from the poor and vulnerable; and from a valuable diversity of partners with their grassroots experiences, giving us distinctively a robust perspective on the causes of poverty and marginalization.

The quality of our long-term relationships with our supporters is crucial to our approach. Supporters want to be informed of the daily struggles and triumphs of poor and marginalized communities, and to feel that their financial contributions add real value to the development process. Our approach to tackling the challenges of poverty and vulnerability shall be holistic, seeking to understand and act with an integrated approach based on the overall needs, aspirations and circumstance of the poor and marginalized people. To drive change and deliver lasting solutions depends upon identifying and addressing the reasons that keep people in perpetual poverty and vulnerability.

5.2   Programmatic Approach

As a new Ministry, we engaged ourselves on programme reflection, stock-taking of the past and existing interventions, and increase our learning about similar ministries in the region in order to inform the strategic re-alignment. Improved learning within the Ministry will be a priority, especially at the programme level. Our approach to programming will be holistic, seeking to understand and act on the overall context, needs, aspirations and circumstance of the poor and marginalized

people. The Ministry shall conduct an applied research on appropriate approaches to inform knowledge and innovative technologies in social protection programming.

In the new programme direction, the Ministry will have a key role to promote such learning, and coordinate best practices for local level policy formulation. In the past, revenue growth (through grants) was our noble priority to maintain both the momentum and fulfil the existing programme needs, as well as provide space for new initiatives and innovations. Within this re-adjustment of the overall programme balance, there is an opportunity for an enhanced programme approach. Partnership engagement and alliances of various forms is becoming an increasing feature in the Ministry's programming. Our commitment to self-sustaining and cost-effective methods will give us significant credibility with partners, government and donors. Thus, we will scale-up the impact of our programmes through our partnership work on the ground, carefully designed to influence the government and donors, whether through replication of our successful models or through wider policy change. We shall employ the following programmatic approaches on the ground:

a) Rights-based and gender transformative approach in service delivery is the hallmark of our programming. The approach is found more engaging (with other duty-bearers) and inclusive, emphasising equity-focused by targeting the poorest and most marginalized families in remote areas of the country. As a ministry, we seek to be a facilitator and coordinator in catalysing the transformational change process. We will focus on supporting our partners and other service providers (including CSO partners) to strengthen the systems and processes required in actualizing the rights of the poor, marginalized and vulnerable people to social protection and development. The human rights-based approach (HRBA) within a humanitarian context will challenge the prevailing social exclusion and unequal access to quality protection services.

b) Participatory approaches practiced in our work with poor and vulnerable families reflects our fundamental commitment to the innate worth and capacity of the people and their right to lead their lives on their own terms. This made us believe that transformational change can come from within the communities. They also give meaning to our conviction that the poor and marginalized people themselves can be the main actors in their child and social protection service delivery.

c) Partnerships and Sector Integration: Intersectoral partnership, networking and coordination will be fundamental in our institutional capacity development; while investing in partnership with the CSOs and private sector for sustainable employment creation. The Directorate of Social Welfare will shall therefore, employ a combination of service delivery methods in its social protection programming. Systems-based and life-cycle child protection approaches shall be our methods of preventing and responding to child rights abuses and violations through available multi-sectoral channels. To make this work in practice, we shall be developing and shaping sound relationship with all actors in child protection programming. We recognize that sustained child and social protection outcomes depend on partnership with service providers, CSOs and communities in charge, supported with the tools they need to find solutions and transform their conditions.

The Ministry will also promote entrepreneurial approaches as well as embracing a new model of doing business – integrated challenge on poverty, vulnerability and injustice, and ensuring equity in access to service delivery. These will be our new and innovative ways to engage and work with partners at all levels:

a) At Community Level, we will be promoting inter-sectoral approaches, providing catalytic and continuous support for scaling up and promoting partnership and sector integration with human rights-based and equity-focused approaches; while building community awareness and local capacities that will enable local protection structures become primary stakeholders in managing

their social and child protection services. Our aim at community level is effective partnership with service delivery partners, CBOs and empowered local protection structures taking responsibilities.

b) At Regional/Municipal Level, we will strengthen local government capacity and enable them in delivering equitable, sustainable gender responsive social and child protection services. We shall support actors from line ministries (including Regional Multi-Facilitation Teams and the Technical Advisory Committees) and CSOs to create strong institutions at the intermediary level (district/municipal, or ward) since they are critical to supporting community managed service provision, which is in turn essential to the sustained scaling up of child and social protection coverage. Our shift towards urban (municipalities) child and social protection programming shall be targeting the urban poor and slum dwellers to expand our inclusive child and social protection interventions.

c) At National Level, our aim is to work with partner ministries and the justice systems to develop institutional capacities and establish robust gender responsive child and social protection governance, which is in turn essential to increase sector financing, as well as strengthening systems and processes to reach many more people with quality services. We will support our government partners to establish strong and accountable gender responsive child and social protection systems, provide evidences of underlying causes of social exclusion on access to quality services and influence them to address these inequalities.

While provision of humanitarian services will be central in our programmatic approach, the Ministry shall promote intersectoral partnership and emphasize sustainability of basic services, capacity building models; research, documentation and spread of best practices in programming. We shall particularly nurture multi-stakeholder partnerships (especially with the civil society) that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources; while building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships to support the achievement of our strategic goals. Promoting basic rights and equity will

> *…from transitioning and transformation as an operational ministry to more of learning and long-term partnership programming*

be the focus in all our work; and collaborating with local structures underscores our programmatic approach. We are not just a player, but will remain a role model, a catalyst in leadership of the transformational change wherever we work.

5.3   Core Programme Areas

In our theory of change and core intent, we have articulated the three goals in our **core outcome**: gender mainstreamed in policy and practice, fulfilled child rights, end violence against women and children, reduced people's exposure to risks and vulnerabilities, and social inclusion and equity. To achieve these, we have to define core programme areas in which we will focus and intensify our programme, communication, funding and learning efforts. Also outlined in our strategy, we commit ourselves to long-term investments in these core programme areas. Furthermore, evidence suggests that a long-term and integrated package of services is more cost effective and provides more sustainable benefits than short-term projects addressing a single sector.

Therefore, we will design and implement multi-sectoral programmes consistently in the next five years, which encompass the core programme areas. Key interventions have also been selected to guide what we do on the ground in each of these core program areas. These key interventions have been chosen because there are evidences of their effectiveness in producing positive

outcomes for children, women and other vulnerable groups. We have also defined key interventions in the following table to guide what we do on the ground in each of these core programme areas.

Table 3: Our Core Programme Areas

Core Programme Area	Key Programme Interventions
Directorate of Gender and Women Empowerment	
Strengthening gender machinery	Capacity building of gender ministry & the executing arms
	Promote gender responsive budgeting & resource allocation
	Gender-sensitive planning and enforcement of gender legislations
Gender and local governance	Strengthening national women's council and governance
	Participatory local governance and leadership
	Promote women in political leadership and decision making at all levels
Women social and economic empowerment	Sexual and gender-based violence prevention & response including victim friendly court services and safe shelters
	Strengthen women in agriculture, businesses and value additions
	Enhancing community resilience to climate change hazards
	Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion
	Strengthening women's agricultural groups
	Developing alternative energy sources for women
	Strengthen women's economic and social rights (e.g. resources)
Sexual and reproductive health - care services & education	Strengthening sexual and reproductive health rights
	Family planning and reproductive health education
	Safe motherhood and neonatal health-care services
Directorate of Child Protection	
Institutional capacity development	Institutionalising the directorate of children's welfare
	Strengthening institutional capacity of directorate children welfare
	Building and developing national child protection systems
	Invest in performance measurement & learning
Child-sensitive social protection and development	Promoting basic social services and transfers (e.g. ECD, Birth & civil registration, social cash transfers, etc.)
	Integrated community management of childhood illness and nutrition
	Strengthening Community-based child protection mechanisms
	Care and support for vulnerable children (e.g. family base care, referral and support services, psycho-social care and support, etc.)
	Prevention of, and response to violence and exploitation
Quality learning and social change services	Promote child-friendly WASH services in learning institutions
	Prevention of, and response to violence and exploitations in schools
	Social assistance for education: scholarships and school fee waivers for orphans and vulnerable children
	Strengthen child protective roles of families and communities
	Public education and dialogue for social change
	Promote children's civil rights and civic engagement
Child justice and rehabilitation	Capacity building involving local protection structures on child rights
	Support children in conflict with the law
	Support child victims, witnesses, families seeking legal redress in civil and criminal proceedings
	Temporary shelters for children at risk & on the move, family reunification
	Legally processing child adoption and placement
	Provide safe-homes for survivors of GBV; and abandon babies
Directorate of Social Welfare	
Institutional capacity development	Strengthening institutional capacity of the directorate
	Invest in human resource development

Core Programme Area	Key Interventions
	Establish social welfare management fund for policy implementation
	Strengthening knowledge management and learning on social protection
	Conduct research and communicate on issues of disabilities
	Review and update outdated policies and strategies on social protection
Core Programme Area	**Key Interventions**
Directorate of Social Welfare (Continued)	
Social protection services and education	Strengthen early warning systems on food and nutrition hazards
	Expand family strengthening programmes for destitute families
	Expand Building Resilience through Social Transfer (BReST)
	Expand unconditional cash transfers (NAFA PROJECT)
	Introduce social insurance mechanisms for vulnerable families
	Strengthen social registry programme & civil registration and vital statistics
	Expand social security schemes ~ compensation for injuries, and housing scheme for tenants with large families
	Strengthen life and livelihood through Cash Transfers for IGAs
	Promote school meals for improved nutrition and guaranteed market
	Establish grain reserve stores in areas of transitory food insecurity
	Engage SDF to support vulnerable families with micro & small enterprises
	Support vulnerable families with productive assets for gainful engagement
Disability, HIV/AIDS and mental ill-health care and rehabilitation	Free access to healthcare and maintain basic health package for PLWDs
	Build institutional capacity of organisations of PLWDs (GOVI, GAPD, etc.)
	Advocate for active employment of PLWA's in public and private sectors
	Develop and support life-skills training facilities for PLWDs
	Strengthen the capacity of disability workers (Visual, Physical Hearing and Mental)
	Support with predictable cash transfer scheme (CTS) for PLHIV and PWD
	Expand access to antiretroviral drugs, complemented with counselling and psychosocial support; one-off grant for expenses on drugs & transportation
	Extend counselling services to the mental home for psychiatric patients; and prisons – juvenile wing and rehabilitation centres for adult convicts
Elderly care and protection	Expand health bill waivers for elderly and extremely poor families
	Relief assistance - unconditional cash transfer for elderly and chronically ill with their families
	Residential care for elderly and counselling support services

Chapter 6: High Level Success Measurement

6.1 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)

The Gambia's operating environment is becoming increasingly complex. Therefore, the Ministry's new programme direction of our gender, child and social protection initiatives demands the use of evaluation as a crucial tool to inform programming, and enable the directorates make hard choices based on available best evidences. The directorates shall be collecting and analysing information on the outcomes of our programmes as a basis for judgments, to improve effectiveness, and/or inform our decisions about our existing and future programming. We shall engage on performance management (Managing for Results) with a systematic process of monitoring achievements of our gender, child and social protection programmes; collecting and analysing performance data to track progress toward planned results; and using such information in our cabinet debates to advocate and influence adequate resource allocations; while we communicate the results to promote organizational learning with our supporters, partners and other stakeholders.

Monitoring of results and evaluation of impact of our programmes will be underscored in the next five years. Based on our experiences in constantly adapting to the changing operating context, this strategy sets out our commitment to develop an ambitious PME Framework (during the first year of this strategy) to learn as we —do business, updating our standards and practices to address contemporary needs of the poor and vulnerable people. Our Results Framework (FR) will be developed, and this will present outcomes of our strategic actions, aligning and building into achievements towards our core outcomes. It shall present the hierarchy of outcome indicators with cause-and-effect linkages between the intermediary results and the next level objectives. The M&E framework of our core programmes will be rolled-out during the first year of this SP period to increase accountability, inform decision-making, improve programme management, and contribute to learning through our operational and programmatic work. This exercise will be structured to generate practical knowledge, and share experiences gained from the implementation of our core programmes; and inform our next planning cycle.

6.2 Impact Measurement and Organizational Learning

The Ministry's impact assessment and organizational learning approach will be designed to promote the development of knowledge for us and our partners, and the synthesis of on-the-ground learning to inform our programme design and practice.

Key Strategic Actions

- In setting-up a critical M&E foundation for impact assessment and programme learning, the Ministry will recruit highly qualified personnel to be responsible for the management of our in-house databank, while ensuring relevant data are translated into user-friendly documentations for organizational learning.

- The Ministry will build staff capacity and invest in developing an M&E Conceptual Framework that will support us in developing logical frameworks that lay out pathways to results with critical intermediate points and suggested indicators; provide a mechanism for monitoring, reporting and evaluating programme performance to assess results against the target objectives; serve as a tool for the regular identification of lessons learned in implementation and providing space for critical reflection and learning; and provide the mechanism that will allow us to demonstrate results to government, supporters/donors, partners and allies, as well as communities.

- The directorates shall prepare on a yearly basis an inventory of evaluations to be undertaken during the following fiscal year, as well as those completed. In general, programmes for evaluation shall follow set timeframes. The Ministry shall develop log-frames for all active projects, conduct periodic joint monitoring involving all the three directorates, our supporters, partners, and communities as well, provide annual reports of our programme performance and document evidence-based best practices and lessons for organizational learning.

The main activities will include piloting new research and evaluation methods; demonstrate evidences with regards to child and social protection ~ e.g. early childhood development, and outreach programmes promoting the uptake of MCH and Reproductive Health services; mainstreaming gender in everything we do ~ our programme designs and practice; share learning among our partners and supporters, and educate

The aim is to develop knowledge and document evidence-base practices in order to improve the quality of our gender work, social and child protection programming.

stakeholders and policy makers; disseminate and spread promising and proven practices, as well as multiplier effects of our programme initiatives and innovations; and organize trainings, workshops and inter-agency sharing and learning.

Organizational Learning and Communication: The Ministry will promote organizational learning and coordinate best practices to provide space for new initiatives and innovations. The directorates shall establish internal data warehouses (databank) to support current and future

organizational data requirements; build staff analytical capacity and establish a strong impact assessment and learning office; and facilitate the conduct of programme reviews.

Given that people's behaviour change communications is one of our emphases to support the strategic shift, it will be crucial to strengthen our learning, packaging/documentation and communication systems and processes.

Therefore, the Ministry will develop a comprehensive communication strategy that is aligned with the shift in our strategic directions. We shall also improve information management including the sharing and flow of information through appropriate channels and strengthen the close link between program and policy functions in our partnership, advocacy and influencing efforts. Programme and policy staff will identify and document the best practices relevant for dissemination to key stakeholders ~ government and other service providers, existing and potential donors, the media and other key audiences. Learning (M&E) and communication function will support this link by developing innovative and impactful communication and knowledge products towards achieving our programme and advocacy goals.

Table 5: Summary of Priority Interventions

Strategic Action	Priority interventions
Investment ~ Increase social spending on women empowerment, children and social protection	• Engage government for child- and gender-sensitive budgeting • Improve grant portfolio that explores and maximizes all funding sources including Philanthropy and corporate donors • Intelligent gathering, trend analysis and donor mapping • Lobbying government and advocacy for budget allocation
Impact measurement and organisational learning	• Establish and recruit learning (M&E) and communication functions • Engage on research and development: participatory social impact analysis for the development and integration of innovative initiatives • Improve staff ability to assess our impact • Documentation, sharing and spread • Strengthen programme monitoring and evaluation system

Mid-term SP evaluation: During the planned period, we will conduct a mid-term review of this strategic plan: measuring changes (outcome indicators/results as set in the Result Framework) attributable to our interventions. This mid-way performance evaluation will determine how the strategy plan is being implemented; how it is perceived and valued; its relevance, and whether expected results are occurring in the country-side; and other issues that are pertinent to the Ministry's programme direction.

Reporting:

The directorates shall be obliged to prepare their annual progress reports, which will also be compiled as the Ministry's yearly report and shared with all stakeholders. In this report, we shall reflect the level Gambia's political commitment under the Agenda 2030 (by reporting its spending on children, women and social protection), and related agreements are being translated into actions benefiting excluded and vulnerable populations. Thus, we shall introduce result-based reporting on government overall spending on the Ministry.

Chapter 7: Organisational Development, governance and investment.

7.1 Organizational Development (OD)

The Ministry will develop coherent organizational systems and structures that align with our strategy. Aligning to local government decentralisation framework, the Ministry shall re-organize both its operational and programming structures to adequately cover all the Administrative

Regions. It will flatten its organizational structure into four directorates, aiming for cost-effectiveness and efficiency. The Ministry will develop its Finance and Administration directorate, separating administration and finance in stand-alone units. During this Strategic Plan (SP) period, the administration unit will combine, logistics, procurement, M&E and HR functions that will handle legal issues and human resource management. The Ministry will strengthen its internal control systems in order to promote its operational efficiency and effectiveness, safeguard its assets and records, and provide reliable financial and programmatic information at all times. It shall ensure adherence to prescribed policies and compliance with government regulatory requirement.

In order to support the execution of the strategy, we shall improve our structure by focusing on enhancing employee ability to discharge their roles, collaborate, solve problems, share information and make decisions. Our primary focus will be to help staff understand their roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority, and use information to take effective action. Investments in such areas have proven to be effective drivers of organizational change and performance. We will also evaluate our organisational performance during the third year of the SP period, and this may require restructuring of the directorates as may be necessary to support effective implementation of our strategy. We intend to be known for quality in programming, which shall be deeply rooted in our understanding of people's experiences of inequality and exclusion from child and social protection services. We will review the programme in 2 years' time ~ by end of 2021, and if more opportunities /risks arise, we can trigger a 3-year rolling plan to complete the duration of this strategic plan.

Summary of Interventions

Strategic Action	Priority interventions
Building effective & coherent organisation (Ministry)	• Improve staff capacity to lead and manage organizational performance • Clarify roles and responsibilities and improve organizational design/systems to enhance performance • Organisational development and structural improvement • Change management and succession planning

7.1.1 The OD process ~ 2020 to 2021:

Building this new Ministry will indeed be a gradual process in tandem with the external environment. We shall be aiming for organisational excellence by staging the following activities:

a) Establishing strong SMT: Effective leadership of the directorates will be achieved by recruiting, retaining and strengthening the Senior Management Teams (SMT) to support the growth and development of the technical core through a well-organized human capacity development and succession policy and planning process.

b) Structural improvement: Individual directorates will require new structures with clear roles and responsibilities, decision making rights, sound procedures for implementation and utilization of the Ministry's resources fit within Government's General Orders and Financial Instructions (FI).

c) Capacity development: The directorates will develop effective systems and processes, and adhere to best practices of programming, human resource management, administrative and financial management procedures supported by strong internal structures and policies including leadership, ways of working with people to enhance overall organizational performance in line with our aspirations and growth trajectory. This will support change management, organizational learning and high performance of our Ministry. The directorates will then continue to analyse management risks and maintain strong internal control systems in order to increase our

operational efficiency and effectiveness, safeguard our assets and records, and provide reliable financial and programmatic information at all times.

d) Process improvement: The directorates will develop our methodological procedures (Operational Manuals), e.g. Case Management, Human Rights-based Approach, Gender Transformative Approach, Systems Approach, etc. to guide our ways of working and inform our strategy implementation. These will help to support decision making at all levels, and to ensuring that they are efficient and relevant to the strategy.

e) Cultural development: The directorates will promote a clear and enabling organizational culture and values. We recognize the need to develop a strong collective sense of organizational culture and values that guide our work. Individual directorates will facilitate understanding of our values as a Ministry, and ensure that these culture and values are reflected in whatever we do everywhere.

f) Team building: The directorates will engage on team building among various cadre of staffing level to improve co-ordination to demonstrate our organisational excellence as a Ministry. We shall conduct team process analysis to improve inter-personal engagement down the organisational hierarchy, analyse roles to increase understanding of staff responsibilities.

Some of the activities could happen simultaneously and repetitively; employing different methodologies and tools to support the OD process. These activities will be complimented by the mid-term review of the SP, which will as well establish the baseline data for onward programming of each directorate.

7.1.2 The structures
The Ministry is in the process of hiring services of an HR Management Change Consultant who, with support from the Ministry's SMT, will guide us in our overall OD and staffing. Meanwhile, the Institutional Assessment (IA) report has proposed the staffing needs of the directorates, and standard job descriptions have been developed; reflecting consistency in benefits, and aligned to the overall structure of the Ministry. Changes in the Ministry's structure will be made to reflect the new strategic shifts and ways of working to support our programme delivery in relation to the growth trajectory of the Ministry.

7.1.3 Human Resource Development (HRD)
The new directorates will determine their capacity needs, identify the skill gaps and develop a comprehensive plan to bridge the gaps. In order to support the execution of our programmatic plan, improvements in our people will focus on enhancing employee ability to manage the paradigm shift and effectively deliver on programme objectives, maintaining the Ministry's values, culture and norm in keeping with our leadership behaviour and performance management systems. We seek to better equip staff members with leadership and people management skills at multiple levels to lead and manage organizational performance. Our human resource strategy will focus on recruiting, and developing highly skilled and motivated individuals to create a diverse and high performing teams for the directorates.

7.2 Fund Raising
As a Ministry, we shall build constructive relationships by improving our partnership management, donor retention, compliance and performance for enhanced grant acquisition. We will further ensure timely response in donor communication, and establish integrated management systems to support grant acquisition. The directorates shall ensure efficient project cycle management to maintain our good reputation and donor commitment for continued funding.

Donor landscape is changing in The Gambia, as major official and humanitarian donors are shifting attention to other emergency prone countries. However, we will take advantage of the Paris Declaration - 'Aid Effectiveness', by which bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors shall be directing bulk of their funding to the government line ministries. We will scan the donor market and engage on intelligence gathering in consultation with our regional and international supporters to strengthen our resource mobilization efforts. Staff capacity enhancement on vibrant program development will be underscored to generate more revenue from diverse sources - new and existing supporters and donors. We will develop & implement a five-year resource mobilization plans, conduct donor mapping and document findings, produce monthly grants tracking reports and develop relationships with our in-country major supporters.

7.2.1 Our Fund Raising Strategy -

Our Major funding source for programming is the Government of The Gambia. The Ministry will increase efforts in securing funding from Government through budgetary allocations, but will maintain a good professional relationship with our in-country supporters. We will also develop business partnership with the corporate sector, foundations and philanthropies.

a) Advocacy and lobbying for increased government allocations:
The Ministry will increase dialogue with the Government Ministry of Finance and promote understanding on issues related to women's empowerment, children's affairs, and people's rights to social welfare and protection.

b) Grant Acquisition and Management ~ The Grant Business Cycle:
We shall establish a strong fund raising and grant management function that will explore donor funding with innovative proposals. We shall implement the following grant business cycle:

i) Branding for improved visibility and profiling:
The Ministry will improve its visibility by engaging on profile building through appropriate use of media to share experiences and best practices by making our work known, while maintaining positive relationships and rootedness within administrative regions. We shall engage on viral messaging – of our successful high profile initiatives out on to the social networking sites which donors actually want to download rather than feeling like they're being spammed. We will further conduct project visits for potentially interested major donors in the communities ~ organising field trips with targeted donors showcase our top projects prior to formal negotiations for funding.

ii) Intelligent gathering, trend analysis and donor mapping
The Ministry will create a function (Fund Raising & Grants Manager) to engage on national, regional and international intelligence gathering on major official donors, corporate sector and philanthropies. The directorates will also, conducted a detailed analysis of the donor landscape and to identify those that their directorates could partner with for 3-5 years.

iii) Engaging Philanthropy and corporate donors
Approaching individual Philanthropies is becoming a major method of fundraising around the world. We will identify and develop a portfolio of potential donor individuals and carefully engage them for funding programmes of their interest. The Ministry shall also engage the private sector with the aim of increasing corporate/private investment in children and women's programmes.

iv) Information, communications and liaison:
The directorates will create a data base of their programme profile for good proposal development and generation to be managed by and the Fund Raising and Grants Management Function. We will develop flyers and publicize our core activities and uniqueness, inform the target audience of

our niche competences and success stories; and to strengthen our public relations activities. We shall establish a network with the local media, in order to obtain and exchange accurate and updated information about our programmes. Also establish internet connectivity with our supporters and partners by keeping them updated of all our programme activities, changes, challenges and initiatives.

v) **Professional grant management:**
The Ministry will maintain a grand style of grant management process as follows:
- Offer to the donor and supporter a highly professional and cost effective option;
- Implement high quality work at a competitive price;
- Keep existing donors and supporters happy to fund us; and report to donors in a first rate manner (narrative and financial reports); and
- Publicize our good work through Public Relations.

7.2.2 Summary of Projected Costs
There are two key drivers of our ability to fulfil this SP -- programme (service delivery and social protection governance) and revenue generation. As such, these two areas will receive the highest proportion of planned investment through the strategy. It is our intention to prioritize spending in order to ensure that 75% of our revenue is invested in programmes. Additional investments in capacity building, partnership and service delivery overheads will result from increased government revenue that we will realize during this plan period. We will also underscore the importance of strengthening organizational capacity that will enable us to effectively and efficiently run our businesses. Therefore, some spending will be focused on increasing capacity with new competencies, and on systems development.

ANNEXES
Annex 1: Budget Assumptions

Three main sources of funding are anticipated for the period 2020-2024, and these include
- Government - MoFEA
- Grants - Donor/Partners/Supporter
- Other Income Sources (the Ministry's supporters, philanthropies and corporate donors)

This budget is estimated based on Gambia 2020 approved budget for the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare

The total government approved estimated budgetary allocation for the Ministry in fiscal year 2020 was **GMD79, 059,000;** and donor funding for the Ministry was also estimated at **GMD16, 090,000**[21] which were both distributed among the three directorates as follows:

- Directorate: Gender and Women Empowerment (35% of approved budget and estimated donor funding)
- Directorate: Social Protection (30% of approved budget and estimated donor funding)
- Directorate: Children's Welfare (35% of approved budget and estimated donor funding)

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[21] National Budget - 2020

i. We assume that with strong political will, there shall be 15% annual growth rate of government's (MoFEA) allocations (funding) towards the Ministry's for the five year period; (as there was 27% increase over 2019 budget ~ towards 2020 estimated allocation).

ii. We anticipate 10%annual increase in donor support up to 2022 and then 10% annual decrease in the last two years of the strategy period

iii. 3% annual increase in other income sources (with increasing efforts of the fund raising office)

iv. We assume that the ministry will prioritize spending in order to ensure that 75% of the revenue is invested in programmes

Annex 2: Consolidated Budget estimates for the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare

Code		Description	Yearly Allocations ('000 GMD)					Total
		Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare						
		Detailed Budget: Broad Cost Estimates						
			2020	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	
A		**Income**						
	D1	Directorate: Gender and Women Empowerment	33,802	38,531	43,320	48,205	53,977	217,834
	D2	Directorate: Social Protection	29,056	33,112	37,221	41,367	46,287	187,043
	D3	Directorate: Children's Welfare	33,802	38,531	43,320	48,205	53,977	217,834
		Total Targeted Annual Incomes	96,660	110,174	123,860	137,777	154,240	622,712
B		**Cost Estimates on Programmes**						
D1		**Directorate: Gender and Women Empowerment**						
	B1	Strengthening gender machinery (8%)	2,704	3,082	3,466	3,856	4,318	17,427
	B2	Gender and local governance (5%)	1,690	1,927	2,166	2,410	2,699	10,892
	B3	Women social and economic empowerment (55%)	18,591	21,192	23,826	26,513	29,687	119,809
	B4	Sexual and reproductive health - care services (20%)	6,760	7,706	8,664	9,641	10,795	43,567
	C	Programme Effectiveness & Coordination (12%)	4,056	4,624	5,198	5,785	6,477	26,140
		SUB TOTAL	**33,802**	**38,531**	**43,320**	**48,205**	**53,977**	**217,834**
D2		**Directorate: Social Welfare**						
	B1	Institutional capacity development (12%)	3,487	3,973	4,467	4,964	5,554	22,445
	B2	Social protection services and education (41%)	11,913	13,576	15,261	16,960	18,978	76,688
	B3	Disability, HIV/AIDS and mental ill-health care and rehab. (24%)	6,973	7,947	8,933	9,928	11,109	44,890
	B4	Elderly care and protection (10%)	2,906	3,311	3,722	4,137	4,629	18,704
	C	Programme Effectiveness & Coordination (13%)	3,777	4,305	4,839	5,378	6,017	24,316
		SUB TOTAL	**29,056**	**33,112**	**37,221**	**41,367**	**46,287**	**187,043**
D3		**Directorate: Children's Affairs**						
	B1	Institutional capacity development (13%)	4,394	5,009	5,632	6,267	7,017	28,318
	B2	Child-sensitive social protection and development (35%)	11,831	13,486	15,162	16,872	18,892	76,242
	B3	Quality learning and social change services (25%)	8,451	9,633	10,830	12,051	13,494	54,459
	B4	Child justice and rehabilitation (15%)	5,070	5,780	6,498	7,231	8,096	32,675
	C	Programme Effectiveness & Coordination (12%)	4,056	4,624	5,198	5,785	6,477	26,140
		SUB TOTAL	**33,802**	**38,531**	**43,320**	**48,205**	**53,977**	**217,834**
		GRAND TOTAL	**96,660**	**110,174**	**123,860**	**137,777**	**154,240**	**622,712**

ANNEX 3 : Budget estimates for the Directorate of Gender and Women Empowerment

Code	Description	Yearly Allocations ('000 GMD)					Total
		2020	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	
	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare						
	Directorate: Gender and Women Empowerment						
	Detailed Budget: Broad Cost Estimates						
A	Income						
A1	Opening Balance	0	0	0	0	0	0
A2	Government – MoFEA	27,671	31,821	36,594	42,084	48,396	186,566
A3	Grants - Donor/Partners/Supporter	5,632	6,195	6,195	5,575	5,018	28,614
A4	Other Income Sources	500	515	530	546	563	2,655
	Sub-total	33,802	38,531	43,320	48,205	53,977	217,834
B	**Cost Estimates on Programmes**						0
B1	**Strengthening gender machinery (8%)**						0
	Capacity building of the ministry	1,623	1,849	2,079	2,314	2,591	10,456
	Gender-sensitive planning & enforcement of legislation	1,082	1,233	1,386	1,543	1,727	6,971
	Sub-total	**2,704**	**3,082**	**3,466**	**3,856**	**4,318**	**17,427**
B2	**Gender and local governance (5%)**						
	Strengthening national women's council/gov	930	1,060	1,191	1,326	1,484	5,990
	Participatory local governance and leadership	761	867	975	1,085	1,214	4,901
	Gender Mainstreaming in Policies and Programme for all MDAs	**650**	**890**	**990**	**1,185**	**1,314**	**5,200**
	Sub-total	**1,690**	**1,927**	**2,166**	**2,410**	**4,012**	**15,092**
B3	**Women social and economic empowerment (55%)**						
	Sexual and gender-based violence – response	1,859	2,119	2,383	2,651	2,969	11,981
	Strengthen women in agriculture & businesses (MSMEs)	2,789	3,179	3,574	3,977	4,453	17,971
	Enhancing community resilience to CC hazards	3,718	4,238	4,765	5,303	5,937	23,962
	Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion/edu	3,718	4,238	4,765	5,303	5,937	23,962
	Strengthening women's agricultural groups	1,859	2,119	2,383	2,651	2,969	11,981
	Developing alternative energy sources for women	2,789	3,179	3,574	3,977	4,453	17,971
	Strengthen women's economic and social rights	1,859	2,119	2,383	2,651	2,969	11,981
	Women Enterprise Fund (WEF)	1,059	5,119	5,383	5,651	5,969	22,981
	Sub-total	**19,650**	**26,310**	**29,210**	**34,164**	**35,656**	**142,790**
B4	**Sexual and reproductive health - care services (20%)**						
	Strengthening sexual & reproductive health rights (FGM/C)	1,690	1,927	2,166	2,410	2,699	10,892
	Family planning & reproductive health education	2,704	3,082	3,466	3,856	4,318	17,427
	Safe motherhood & neonatal health-care services	2,366	2,697	3,032	3,374	3,778	15,248
	Sub-total	**6,760**	**7,706**	**8,664**	**9,641**	**10,795**	**43,567**
C	**Programme Effectiveness & Coordination (12%)**						
	Management, recurring & execution	1,623	1,849	2,079	2,314	2,591	10,456
	M & E and organisational learning	1,420	1,618	1,819	2,025	2,267	9,149
	Coordination & harmonisation	1,014	1,156	1,300	1,446	1,619	6,535
	Sub-total	**4,056**	**4,624**	**5,198**	**5,785**	**6,477**	**26,140**
	Grand Total	**33,802**	**38,531**	**43,320**	**48,205**	**53,977**	**217,834**

ANNEX 4 : Budget estimates for the Directorate of Social Welfare

Code	Description	Yearly Allocations (GMD '000)					Total
Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare							
Directorate: Social Protection							
Detailed Budget: Broad Cost Estimates							
		2020	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	
A	**Income**						
A1	Opening Balance	0	0	0	0	0	0
A2	Government – MoFEA	23,729	27,288	31,381	36,088	41,501	159,987
A3	Grants - Donor/Partners/Supporter	4,827	5,310	5,310	4,779	4,301	24,526
A4	Other Income Sources	500	515	530	500	485	2,530
	Total Targeted Annual Incomes	**29,056**	**33,112**	**37,221**	**41,367**	**46,287**	**187,043**
B	**Cost Estimates – Programmes**						
B1	**Institutional capacity development (12%)**						
	Strengthening institutional capacity of the Directorate	1,220	1,391	1,563	1,737	1,944	7,856
	Invest in human resource development	1,046	1,192	1,340	1,489	1,666	6,734
	Establish social welfare fund for policy enforcement	697	795	893	993	1,111	4,489
	Strengthening knowledge management and learning	523	596	670	745	833	3,367
	Sub-total	**3,487**	**3,973**	**4,467**	**4,964**	**5,554**	**22,445**
B2	**Social protection services and education (41%)**						
	Strengthen early warning systems on food and nutrition hazards	953	1,086	1,221	1,357	1,518	6,135
	Expanded family strengthening programmes	1,191	1,358	1,526	1,696	1,898	7,669
	Building Resilience through Social Transfer (BReST)	953	1,086	1,221	1,357	1,518	6,135
	Social insurance mechanisms for vulnerable families	715	815	916	1,018	1,139	4,601
	Expand social security schemes ~ compensation for injuries, housing scheme for tenants of large families	953	1,086	1,221	1,357	1,518	6,135
	Strengthen life and livelihood through Cash Transfers	2,025	2,308	2,594	2,883	3,226	13,037
	Promote school meals for improved nutrition and guaranteed market for women farmers	1,191	1,358	1,526	1,696	1,898	7,669
	Establish grain reserve stores in areas of transitory food insecurity	1,549	1,765	1,984	2,205	2,467	9,969
	Support vulnerable families with MSME	1,191	1,358	1,526	1,696	1,898	7,669
	Support vulnerable families with productive assets	1,191	1,358	1,526	1,696	1,898	7,669
	Sub-total	**11,913**	**13,576**	**15,261**	**16,960**	**18,978**	**76,688**
B3	**Disability, HIV/AIDS and mental ill-health care and rehab. (24%)**						

	Healthcare package for PWDs	1,046	1,192	1,340	1,489	1,666	6,734
	Build institutional capacities of organisations of PWDs	1,255	1,430	1,608	1,787	2,000	8,080
	Develop and support life-skills training facilities for PWDs	1,395	1,589	1,787	1,986	2,222	8,978
	Predictable cash transfer scheme (CTS) for PLHIV & PWD	1,046	1,192	1,340	1,489	1,666	6,734
	Expand access to antiretroviral drugs, with counselling and psychosocial support	1,185	1,351	1,519	1,688	1,889	7,631
	Extend counselling services to mental homes; prisons – juvenile wing and adult convicts	1,046	1,192	1,340	1,489	1,666	6,734
	Sub-total	**6,973**	**7,947**	**8,933**	**9,928**	**11,109**	**44,890**
B4	**Elderly care and protection (10%)**						
	Expand health bill waivers for elderly and poor families	1,017	1,159	1,303	1,448	1,620	6,547
	Relief assistance - unconditional cash transfer for elderly and chronically ill with their families	1,162	1,324	1,489	1,655	1,851	7,482
	Residential care for elderly & counselling support services	726	828	931	1,034	1,157	4,676
	Sub-total	**2,906**	**3,311**	**3,722**	**4,137**	**4,629**	**18,704**
C	**Programme Effectiveness & Coordination (13%)**						
	Management, recurring & execution	1,511	1,722	1,935	2,151	2,407	9,726
	M & E and organisational learning	1,322	1,507	1,694	1,882	2,106	8,510
	Coordination & harmonisation	944	1,076	1,210	1,344	1,504	6,079
	Sub-total	**3,777**	**4,305**	**4,839**	**5,378**	**6,017**	**24,316**
	Grand Total	**29,056**	**33,112**	**37,221**	**41,367**	**46,287**	**187,043**

ANNEX 5: Budget estimates for the Directorate of Children's Welfare

Code	Description	Yearly Allocations (GMD '000)					Total
	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare						
	Directorate: Child Protection						
	Detailed Budget: Broad Cost Estimates						
		2020	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	
A	**Income**						
A1	Opening Balance	0	0	0	0	0	0
A2	Government – MoFEA	27,671	31,821	36,594	42,084	48,396	186,566
A3	Grants - Donor/Partners/Supporter	5,632	6,195	6,195	5,575	5,018	28,614
A4	Other Income Sources	500	515	530	546	563	2,655
	Total Targeted Annual Incomes	**33,802**	**38,531**	**43,320**	**48,205**	**53,977**	**217,834**
B	**Cost Estimates on Programmes**						
B1	**Institutional capacity development (13%)**						
	Institutionalizing the directorate (branding & visibility)	439	501	563	627	702	2,832
	Institutional capacity building & strengthening	1,758	2,004	2,253	2,507	2,807	11,327
	National child protection systems development	1,538	1,753	1,971	2,193	2,456	9,911
	Establishment of Child protection M & E system	659	751	845	940	1,053	4,248
	Sub-total	**4,394**	**5,009**	**5,632**	**6,267**	**7,017**	**28,318**
B2	**Child-sensitive social protection and development (35%)**						
	Integrated community-based child health & nutrition	1,775	2,023	2,274	2,531	2,834	11,436
	Promoting basic social services and transfers	4,141	4,720	5,307	5,905	6,612	26,685
	Strengthening community child protection systems	2,484	2,832	3,184	3,543	3,967	16,011
	Care and support for orphans & vulnerable children	2,248	2,562	2,881	3,206	3,589	14,486
	Prevention and response to violence and exploitation	1,183	1,349	1,516	1,687	1,889	7,624
	Sub-total	**11,831**	**13,486**	**15,162**	**16,872**	**18,892**	**76,242**
B3	**Quality learning and social change services (25%)**						
	Child-friendly WASH services in learning institutions	1,690	1,927	2,166	2,410	2,699	10,892
	Prevention & response to violence/exploit. in schools	1,437	1,638	1,841	2,049	2,294	9,258
	Social assistance for education (e.g. scholarships)	1,183	1,349	1,516	1,687	1,889	7,624
	Strengthen child protective roles of families & comm	1,521	1,734	1,949	2,169	2,429	9,803
	Public education and dialogue for social change	1,183	1,349	1,516	1,687	1,889	7,624
	Promote children's civil rights and civic engagement	1,437	1,638	1,841	2,049	2,294	9,258
	Sub-total	**8,451**	**9,633**	**10,830**	**12,051**	**13,494**	**54,459**
B4	**Child justice and rehabilitation (15%)**						
	Capacity building of protection structures on child rights	659	751	845	940	1,053	4,248
	Support children in conflict with the law	1,115	1,272	1,430	1,591	1,781	7,189
	Support child victims and families seeking legal redress	659	751	845	940	1,053	4,248
	Temporary shelters for children at risk & on the move	1,014	1,156	1,300	1,446	1,619	6,535
	Legally processing of child adoption and placement	507	578	650	723	810	3,268
	Temporary safe-homes for victims of GBV & abandon babies	1,115	1,272	1,430	1,591	1,781	7,189
	Sub-total	**5,070**	**5,780**	**6,498**	**7,231**	**8,096**	**32,675**
C	**Programme Effectiveness & Coordination (12%)**						
	Management, recurring & execution	1,623	1,849	2,079	2,314	2,591	10,456
	M & E and organisational learning	1,420	1,618	1,819	2,025	2,267	9,149
	Coordination & harmonisation	1,014	1,156	1,300	1,446	1,619	6,535
	Sub-total	**4,056**	**4,624**	**5,198**	**5,785**	**6,477**	**26,140**
	Grand Total	**33,802**	**38,531**	**43,320**	**48,205**	**53,977**	**217,834**