



UN
DP

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

The Gambia

National Human Development Report

2014

Youth Employment



Foreword

The Government of The Gambia has accorded employment an important status in its long term development framework. Vision 2020, gave due recognition for the need to seek “a well-educated, trained, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population to facilitate the transformation of The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading, export-oriented, agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector; thereby guaranteeing a well-balanced eco-system and a decent standard of living for one and all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry”. Similarly, the overall goal of the country’s medium term development agenda (the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment-PAGE) is to achieve accelerated pro-employment growth.

The Gambia produced its first National Human Development Report (NDHR) in 1997, and has produced two subsequent reports since then. The preparation of this NHDR has been guided by the six basic principles of national ownership; independence of analysis; quality of analysis; participatory and inclusive preparation; flexibility and creativity in presentation; and sustained follow-up that underpin the NHDR process. It is expected to serve as a powerful instrument to address central aspects of poverty eradication and human development.

The focus on human development as opposed to economic growth is largely because economic growth focuses on the expansion of income whilst human development embraces the enlargement of all human choices; whether economic, social, cultural or political. Therefore, growth is necessary but not sufficient to address poverty. Growth is an important means to enlarge human choices but it is not an end in itself. In short, to exploit the opportunities that economic growth offers for improved wellbeing of a nation, it must be properly managed.

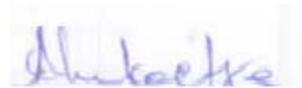
This Report is geared to support the implementation of The Gambia’s Medium Term Development Strategy, PAGE, by providing information on the quantity and quality of employment of the Gambian youth; and subsequently inform the design of the successor plan. Employment is the main source of income for most families in the world. Having a good and decent job is generally associated with being out of poverty, whichever way poverty is defined. Additionally, employment can give a sense of self-respect and fulfilment.

The youth make up the largest proportion of the Gambian population (36.7 per cent aged 13-30 years) and being the cohort experiencing the highest rates of unemployment (38 per cent) justifies the focus of the NHDR on ‘Youth Employment’. The findings of the NHDR will provide government and other stakeholders with information on youth employment, unemployment

and related indicators for informed decision-making in policy and programme formulation on youth employment. It will also facilitate targeting of programmes that will be beneficial to the youth of the country and will therefore serve as great contribution to PAGE and ultimately the realization of the National Vision 2020.

The NHDR process was funded by UNDP Country Office and executed by the Ministry of Youth and Sport, under the guidance of a National Steering Committee that contributed immensely to the finalization of the report. We thank all the institutions represented in the National Steering Committee and their representatives for their concerted efforts throughout the process.

We also take this opportunity to thank CIAM – Public Health Research & Development Centre that undertook the survey and the initial draft that served as a key input to the production of this report. Special thanks go to Abdou Kolley, Lead Consultant supported by Alieu Sarr, UNFPA and Sheriffo Sonko, National Malaria Control Programme, for producing the final document.



Ade Mamonyane Lekoetje
UNDP Resident Representative



Hon. Alieu K. Jammeh
Minister of Youth and Sports

Acknowledgements

This report owes so much to the generous participation of youth, parents and community leaders in interviews and focus group discussions during the survey conducted throughout The Gambia. Enormous thanks are also extended to representatives of several public, private, non-government and multilateral institutions that provided insight during interviews and shared documents and data relevant to the subject of youth employment and development in The Gambia.

Authors of Survey Report

Samuel E. Anya, CIAM – Public Health Research & Development Centre

Ayo Palmer, CIAM – Public Health Research & Development Centre

Advisor

Yusupha Dibba, University of The Gambia

Members of the Survey Team

Abdoulie Puye	Bakary S Sanneh	Jerome Preirra	NumuKebba Fatty
Alhagie Sarr	Buba Badjie	Jojo Williams	Ousman Janneh
Alagie Secka	Dembo Keita	Kawsu Drammeh	Ousman Sonko
Alieu Sonko	Ebrima Dibasse	Lamin Ceesay	Saikou Camara
Amadou B. Jallow	Ebrima Jabang	Lamin Kanyi	Salimatta Ceesay
Amie Dibba	Fatou Ceesay	Lamin Njie	Simon Colley
Annie Lusack	Fatou Faye	Malick John	Sohna Jobe
Antoinette Mendy	Fatou Kaba Camara	Mamadou A. Bah	Sunkary Badgie
Awa Loum	Fatou S. Jabang	Mbayang Johm	Tijan Njie
Awa Minteh	Gambia Sowe	Modou Ngum	Tumbul Drammeh
Baboucarr S.S. Ceesay	Ida Jatta	Muhammed Jobarteh	Yusupha Bojang
Baboucarr Sanyang	Isatou Joof	Ndey Fatou Sallah	
Bai Abie Njie	Jainaba Jallow	Nuha Nyassi	

Members of NHDR National Steering Committee

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Sports

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

Director, National Youth Service Scheme

Executive Director, National Youth Council
Director, the Association of Non-Government Organisations
Chief Executive Officer, Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Executive Director, Women's Bureau
Vice Chancellor, University of The Gambia
Statistician General, Gambia Bureau of Statistics
Economic Advisor, UNDP
Programme Specialist, UNDP

Technical Team for Finalisation of NHDR

Abdou Kolley, Lead Consultant
Alieu Sarr, UNFPA
Sheriff Sonko, National Malaria Control Programme

External Review of the NHDR

Human Development Report Office, UNDP New York

Table of Contents

Foreword	i
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Abbreviations	vii
Executive Summary	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction and Justification of Theme	1
1.1 The Human Development Concept	1
1.2 Brief Socio-Economic Overview	2
1.3 Rationale for NHDR with Focus on Youth Employment	6
1.4 Promoting Participation in the NHDR Process	7
Chapter 2: Youth and Human Development	9
2.1. Conceptual Frameworks	9
2.1.1: Youth	9
2.1.2: Systems Theory Framework of Career Development	10
2.1.3: Skills Towards Employment and Productivity (STEP)	11
2.1.4: The Gambia Incorporated: Vision 2020	13
2.1.5: Human Capability Approach to Human Development	14
2.2. Growth, Structural Transformation and Employment Trends	15
2.2.1: Growth and Structural Transformation	15
2.2.2: Employment Trends	17
2.3. Challenges and Opportunities of Youth Employment	26
2.3.1: Challenges	26
2.3.2: Opportunities	28
Chapter 3: Empowering Youth for Development	31
3.1. Education Sector Policies	32
3.1.1: Relevance of Early Childhood Development	33
3.1.2: Ensuring Educational Attendance	35
3.1.3: Matching Skills Training to Labour Market Demand	38
3.2. Enabling Business Environment for Job Creation	44
3.2.1: Entrepreneurship and Innovation	45
3.2.2: Labour Mobility and Job Matching	50
3.3. Harnessing Youth Energy for Increased Agriculture Production and Productivity	51

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations	56
Reference.....	61

List of Abbreviations

ECD	Early Childhood Development
GABECE	Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination
GAMJOBS	Gambia Priority Employment Programme
GIEPA	Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GTTI	Gambia Technical Training Institute
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
ILO	International Labour Organization or International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KILM	Key Indicators of the Labour Market
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NEAP	National Employment Action Plan
NEP	National Employment Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NYSS	National Youth Service Scheme
PAGE	Programme for Accelerated Growth and Development
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
STEP	Skills Towards Employment and Productivity
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UTG	University of The Gambia
WASSCE	West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

Executive Summary

This National Human Development Report has been prepared at a time when youth employment is a topical issue globally and locally. The central focus on employment in the current medium term development plan prompted the selection of youth employment as the subject of this report. Primary quantitative and qualitative data were collected to complement existing data including previously unpublished data from a variety of sources. Internationally recognized concepts and conceptual frameworks were used to guide analysis while *Vision 2020* was used to anchor the findings in the context of The Gambia's development objectives. The limited availability of like for like employment data over the years precluded an analysis of trends. Nevertheless, the report presents a clear and compelling picture of youth employment and development in The Gambia.

While efforts to improve access to basic education have been particularly successful, pre-school attendance rates have remained low and unchanged for over ten years despite evidence of their highly significant impact on literacy and numeracy skills of young children. Once they begin their basic education, the challenge is to keep the children in school for as long as possible, and thereafter, the continuing challenge is one of learning outcomes. As a result of difficulties in getting and keeping adequately qualified teachers, performance in standardized exit examinations after Grade 9 and Grade 12 are low. Recent investments to improve teaching capacity have been associated with small but definite improvements in performance. However, it is widely recognized by the Government and its development partners that so much more is needed to ensure that young people are adequately equipped with the skills they need for life-long learning, personal development and contribution to national development.

The transition from school to work is particularly difficult for the youth in The Gambia as they seek to enter the labour market facing two critical challenges – inadequate skills and a scarcity of jobs. Consequently, unemployment rates are high. The Government has long recognized these challenges and taken steps to address the shortage of jobs and the skills deficit among the youth. However, these efforts, particularly at creating jobs, have not been as effective as hoped. An investment incentive programme set up to attract investments in the private sector and create jobs for the working age population did not yield the desired results as some constraints still affect the development and growth of the private sector.

Furthermore, enduring challenges in the productivity of the priority sectors identified in *Vision 2020* have constrained what can be invested in education and job creation. Agriculture continues to receive shocks due to intermittent episodes of poor rainfall. The last occurrence was in 2011 leading to a loss in productivity of the crops subsector of 45-60 per cent and a

contraction of GDP by 4.4 per cent. The poor and erratic rainfall patterns for the 2014 rainy season are a cause for concern as it may result in significant loss in terms of agricultural production and productivity. The cycle of poor performance of the sector, among other factors, has driven the youth out of agriculture into the services sector. Manufacturing has retreated from its strong performance from 2004 to 2007. Furthermore, lack of backward and forward linkages between agriculture and other productive sectors restricts youth opportunity to engage in high productivity non-agricultural activities. Tourism, the third sector expected to drive growth in employment, has only just recovered from a large drop in performance from 2007 to 2010; and in 2014 it has faced an expected challenge from the Ebola outbreak in the West Africa region.

This report therefore provides a detailed analysis of these issues as well as the approaches that are required to ensure that young children are adequately nourished, get into school on time, remain in school and acquire the skills they need to reach their potential capability. It further assesses the actions needed when the youth leave school to ensure decent jobs are available for those who wish to work. Some of the recommendations emanating from the analysis and which require urgent policy attention are listed below, with more details provided in Chapter 4.

The analysis point to the need for Government to:

- Address issues of data inadequacy and existence of scanty employment data for policy planning and monitoring of development outcomes. Similarly, ensure consistency in the definition of Youth and in line with its international commitments.
- Leverage the potential of technology (and media) for early child development programmes.
- Address quality and efficiency concerns across all education levels.
- Identify skill gaps as well as provide resources for education and training institutions to address capacity-related constraints.
- Critically re-evaluate the country's investment climate to address constraints that hamper the growth and development of private enterprise.
- Undertake Agriculture Sector Reforms to enhance agriculture production and productivity. In this regards, attention should be provided in promoting Agriculture as an attractive opportunity for educated youth by providing appropriate incentives. This should be explored within the framework of inserting small holder farmers into the national, regional and international supply chain.
- Devise a mechanism to support the informal sector as it is already a source of growth and employment creation.

It is hoped that the detailed analysis of youth, employment and development contained in this report and the recommendations outlined would contribute to current efforts to address the multi-layered challenge of youth employment in The Gambia, and to the realisation of the objectives of Vision 2020.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Justification of Theme

1.1 The Human Development Concept

The Gambia produced its first National Human Development Report (NDHR) in 1997. The NHDRs present independent and objective analysis, statistics and other relevant data, applying the human development perspective to priority national concerns, emerging challenges and vision. These reports are powerful instruments for monitoring progress and setbacks; and as tools for policy development. The NHDRs contribute to the identification and monitoring of national development targets, tracking of development gaps and their impact on constituent groups.

From the publication of the first report in 1997, two subsequent reports have since been produced, one on Promoting Good Governance for Human Development and Poverty Eradication in 2000, and the other on Building Capacity for the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in The Gambia in 2005. These reports have generated widespread public debate across different sections of society; and have helped to raise greater awareness about the human development concept in the country, a concept which came to light with the publication of the first Global Human Development Report in 1990 (see Box 1 for an extract). In keeping with this approach, the focus of this NHDR, the fourth in the series, is on youth employment in the context of national development in The Gambia.

Box 1: The Human Development Concept

Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. The most critical of these wide-ranging choices are to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect.

Development enables people to have these choices. No one can guarantee human happiness, and the choices people make are their own concern. But the process of development should at least create a conducive environment for people, individually and collectively, to develop their full potential and to have a reasonable chance of leading productive and creative lives in accord with their needs and interests.

Extract from Page 1 of Human Development Report 1990, UNDP

Many years before the human development terminology came to prominence, economic growth was often associated with economic development. However, it became evident that there can be economic growth without economic development if growth does not translate into decent jobs, and with equitable distribution of wealth. As indicated in Box 1, human development is a much wider concept, which is all about expanding people's choices: including the choice to live a decent and healthy life, the right to quality and relevant education, freedom of speech and expression, and so on. Human development, therefore, calls on states to create the conducive environment for citizens to freely express themselves and go about pursuing their individual and collective wellbeing.

Generally, NHDRs are expected to: (a) raise public awareness of the human development perspective; (b) strengthen national statistical capacity to identify and measure human development status and short-comings, and strengthen analytic capacity to understand them; and (c) shape policies and programmes to achieve improvements in human development through solid analysis.

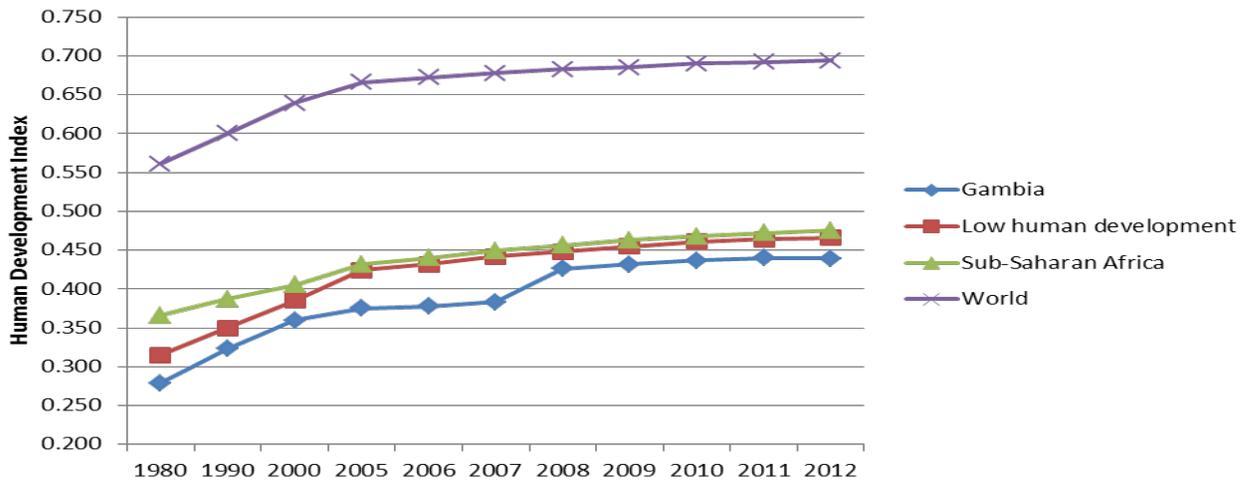
1.2 Brief Socio-Economic Overview

The Gambia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been growing at an estimated rate of 5-6 per cent over the last four years. The GDP growth rate was 6.5 per cent in 2010 and for 2011 the growth rate was - 4.3 per cent which was attributable to the crop failure. At the back of agriculture sector recovery and tourism sector, The Gambian economy grew by 5.3 per cent and 6.4 per cent in 2012 and 2013, respectively. The prospect for 2014 is largely gloomy owing to the delayed and erratic rainfall patterns and the cancelation of flights arising from the Ebola outbreak in some West African countries. Growth was driven by services sector, largely distributive trade, resulting in a higher percentage share for the sector. The percentage share of agriculture has been fluctuating with a declining trend clearly emerging, ranging from 29 per cent in 2010 to 22 per cent in 2013. The contribution of the industry sector to GDP was 12 per cent in 2010 increasing to 15 per cent in 2013.

The Gambia is a low income country and according to the World Bank, the GNP per capita using the Atlas method is USD 510 in 2012. In 2014 Human Development Report, the country's human development index (HDI) was 0.441 ranking it 172 out of 187 countries. Between 1980 and 2013, The Gambia's HDI value increased from 0.300 to 0.441, an increase of 46.9 percent or an average annual increase of about 1.17 percent. Between 1980 and 2013, The Gambia's life expectancy at birth increased by 12.5 years, meaning years of schooling increased by 2.1 years and expected years of schooling increased by 4.1 years. The Gambia's GNI per capita increased

by about 0.7 percent between 1980 and 2013. However, The Gambia's HDI has persistently been below the average for low human development countries and Sub-Saharan Africa but the gap was substantially reduced from 2008 going forward (Figure 1).

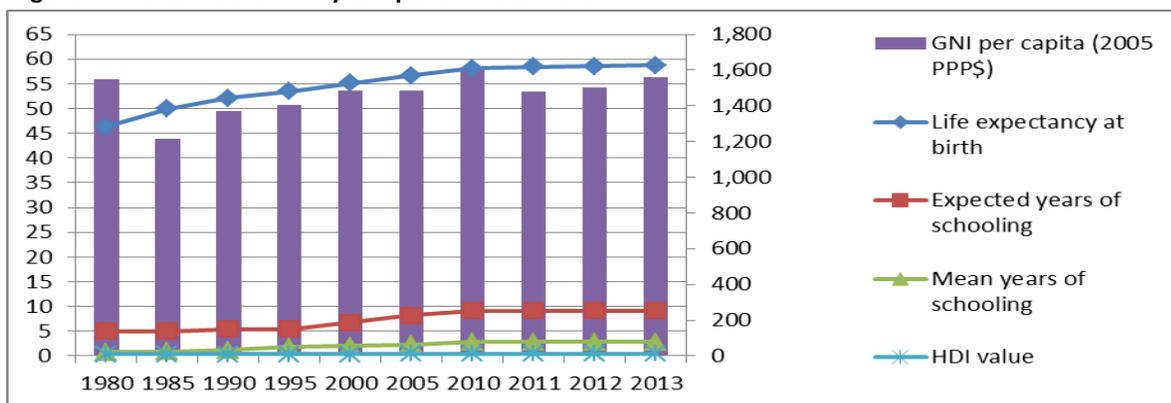
Figure 1: Trends in The Gambia's human development index from 1980-2012.



(Source of data - <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GMB.html>)

The low HDI values for education and income thus call for a rethink of relevant strategies to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to boost their performance. In effect, a further analysis of The Gambia's HDI trend by component (Figure 2) shows that from 2010 to 2013, the education indicators have stagnated while income fluctuated over time after peaking in 2010. The stagnation in education is most probably explained by the fact that the over-concentration on access has peaked, while more effort is needed to address other aspects of education including retaining children in school, quality, and socio-economic factors affecting the expected years of schooling. The fluctuation in income is largely linked to agriculture which suffers from various shocks including drought thereby reducing agriculture output.

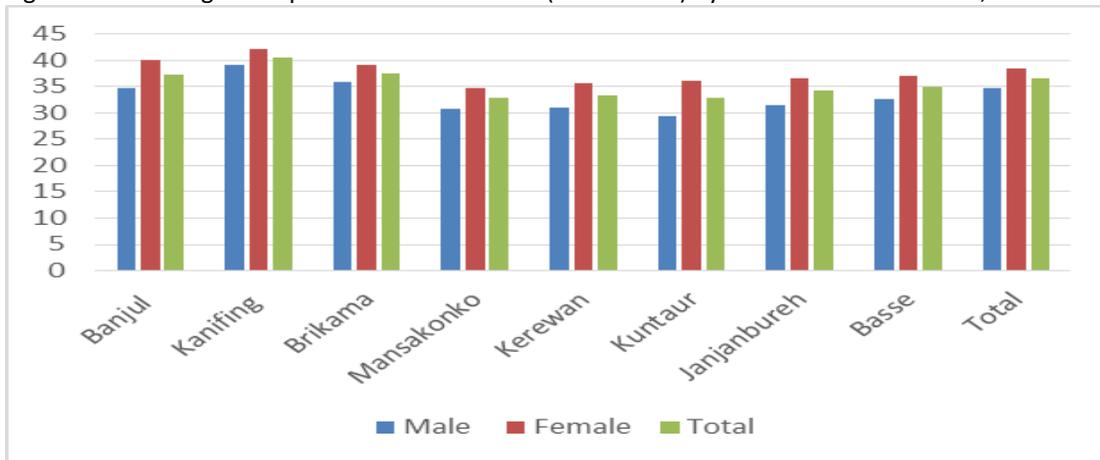
Figure 2: The Gambia's HDI by component 1980-2013



Source: HDR database

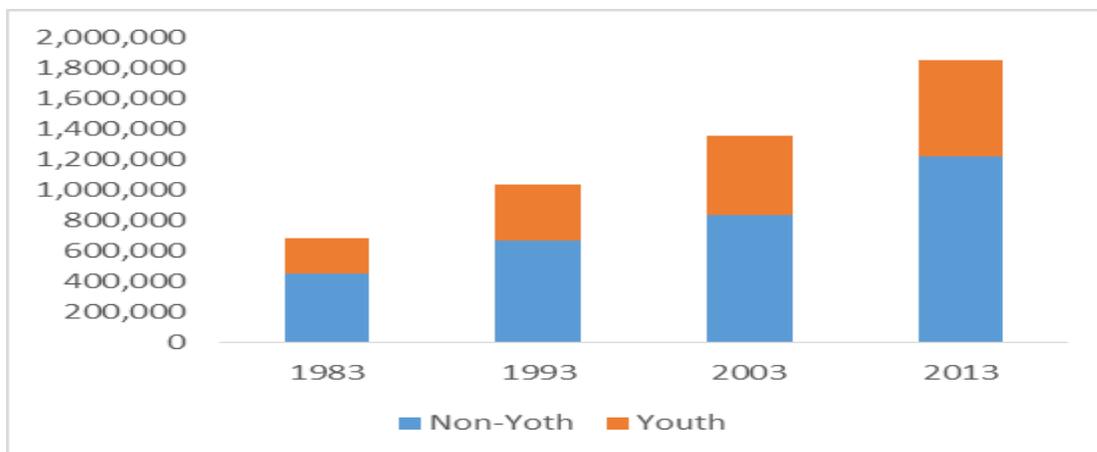
The population of the country is 1.9 million going by the 2013 provisional census results. The population growth rate decreased from 4.2 per cent per annum in 1993 to 2.7 per cent in 2003 but increased to 3.3 per cent according to the provisional results of the 2013 Population and Housing Census. The population of the country is growing at a fast rate, reducing the benefits of fast economic growth from being converted into improvement in living standard. The share of the youth aged 13-30 years continues to grow. It is 36.7 per cent of the total population; females represent 38.5 per cent and males 34.8 per cent (Figure 3). Banjul, Kanifing and Brikama seem to have higher youthful population than the national average in 2013. This means that youth are more concentrated in urban areas as opposed to rural areas while the differences are not significantly higher. It is also vividly shown that the proportion of female youth is higher than the male in all the Local Governments (LGs). This should be factored in at the designing of youth employment related interventions.

Figure 3: Percentage of Population that are Youth (13-30 Years) By Local Government Area, 2013



Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics 2013 Population and Housing Census

Figure 4: Share of Youth in Total Population



Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics, Census data, 2003, 2013

The growing youthful population of The Gambia (Figure 4) raises many questions among them are employment and assuring a decent standard of living to all. This is indeed a major challenge in light of the results of the 2010 Integrated Household Survey (IHS), which shows that 48.4 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line of US\$ 1.25 per day, even if this is an improvement over to the 58 per cent of the population in the 2003-2004 IHS.

The major determinants of poverty according to the IHS 2010 using a US\$ 1.25 per day poverty line include: place of residence (with poverty higher in rural 73.9 per cent than in urban areas 32.7 per cent); Average household size (with poverty increasing as the household size increases - ranging from 2 per cent for single person households to 69.1 per cent for households with 10 members and above); Educational attainment of the household head (the higher the educational attainment, the lower the likelihood of poverty with rates ranging from 58.4 per cent for those with no education, to 17.8 per cent for those with tertiary education); Gender of household head (the incidence and severity of poverty is lower for female headed households 38 per cent than for their male counterparts 50.9 per cent); Sector of employment of the household head (Household heads employed in the agricultural and fishing sector exhibit higher poverty rates compared to household heads employed in the other sectors); and malnutrition, a manifestation of poverty, especially among children, is found predominantly in the rural areas.

These findings point to specific sectors where policy interventions have the greatest potential to alleviate poverty. The strong correlation of poverty with rural residence and employment in agriculture points to the need to prioritize agriculture for purposes of poverty alleviation while appreciating the fact that other sectors such as services are offering the youth alternative sources of income in view of the weak performance of the agriculture sector in the recent past.

1.3 Rationale for NHDR with Focus on Youth Employment

In 1996, the Government of The Gambia declared the long term development goal of achieving middle income country status by 2020 (The Gambia Incorporated Vision 2020). Subsequently, the steps towards achieving this goal were laid out in 5-year medium term plans that focused primarily on poverty alleviation and poverty reduction.

In 2012, a medium term national development strategy and investment plan known as the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) was developed. The national plan is expected to consolidate positive outcomes achieved over the last decade and significantly enhance progress towards middle income country status and higher human development by taking actions to enhance economic growth and provide employment among other things. The Government recognizes that even as the economy grows it may still not lead to more and better jobs or an equitable sharing of wealth in the country. For this reason, the PAGE seeks to ensure that actions to stimulate rapid economic growth also create decent, durable jobs which the Government regards as essential to eradicating poverty.

The youth make up a substantial proportion of the total population and according to the 2013 Population and Housing Census, those aged 13-30 years constitute 36.7 per cent of the population. It is in recognition of this that the Government considers youth employment as crucial to generating the resources the country needs to become a middle income country. This led to the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes on youth and employment, including the National Youth Policy and the National Employment Policy, both of which recognized youth employment as a significant and growing problem in The Gambia.

Employment is the main thrust of the PAGE as the government seeks to achieve growth that is all-inclusive, that creates decent jobs and that diversifies the economic base of the country to tap the export market. PAGE aims at promoting employment in multiple ways: (i) creating an appropriate macroeconomic policy environment for private sector growth; (ii) encouraging more labour-intensive economic activities, particularly in agriculture, natural resources, fisheries and construction; (iii) adopting the green economy and green investment initiatives for the creation of green jobs and for the stimulation of green growth of the national economy; (iv) promoting access to credit for productive investments particularly for creation of self-employment and to micro and small enterprises; and (v) Strengthen institutional frameworks and mechanisms including the creation of labour market intermediation centres to match the demand for labour with the supply.

With strategies and programmes in general, it is practically impossible to talk about employment without mentioning the youth, given that in many parts of the world, youth represent a significant, if not the most significant component of total population. This is particularly the case in The Gambia where the youth form the largest segment of the country's population.

Consequently, the choice of youth employment as theme of the 2014 NHDR is apt and provides the Government of The Gambia, UNDP, partners and stakeholders with the most needed information on youth employment, unemployment and related indicators for informed decision-making in policy and programme formulation. It will also facilitate targeting of programmes that will be beneficial to the youth of the country; and it will therefore contribute to achieving the goals set in the PAGE and ultimately the realization of the National Vision 2020.

1.4 Promoting Participation in the NHDR Process

The NHDR process requires broad based consultation and participation of key stakeholders right from the onset in order to ensure strong national ownership, stakeholder buy-in and facilitate dissemination and uptake of the findings later on. It is for this reason that a National Steering Committee comprising all the agencies and institutions relevant to the theme of the report was constituted to steer and guide the process.

The team of consultants, in carrying out the assignment, conducted a nationwide survey to gather the views and opinions of different segments of the Gambian society. This report therefore incorporates the views of youth, parents and community leaders that were gathered during consultations in communities randomly selected from each of the seven administrative regions in The Gambia. The views of those who participated in the these consultations on a range of issues relevant to youth employment and youth development were explored through 376 focus group discussions and 141 in-depth interviews.

To ensure that a broad range of youth were consulted the focus group discussions were organized in such a way that 16 categories of youth were included in the discussions based on their age groups (13-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34); their sex (male and female); and their employment status (employed and not employed). The views of parents - mothers and fathers - were also sought in focus group discussions.

In-depth interviews were conducted for community and youth leaders as well as representatives of relevant government ministries and agencies and selected international agencies. Since this NHDR sought to explore the relationship between youth employment and youth development, it includes the responses of over 3,200 youth living in 1,143 randomly selected households obtained in a quantitative survey conducted in the seven administrative regions of the Gambia. The qualitative and quantitative data obtained from these consultations complement information from the literature review on the subject.

Youth employment and human development are discussed in more detail in the next chapters that follow. **Chapter 2** explores the different conceptual frameworks within which youth is defined and discusses the general theme of the NHDR. **Chapter 3** focuses on empowering youth by looking at relevant government policies and programmes that address youth and employment and **Chapter 4** draws relevant conclusions and recommendations for action.

Chapter 2: Youth and Human Development

Youth and human development are themes with a broad range that cut across many sectors and therefore dealing with them requires a holistic approach, which will help to better situate the context within which appropriate policy and action can be undertaken. This chapter briefly examines the different conceptual frameworks within which youth is defined, before discussing the main theme of youth employment in terms of growth, structural transformation and employment trends as well as the challenges and opportunities of youth employment.

2.1. Conceptual Frameworks

The discussion that follows uses a number of concepts and conceptual frameworks to analyse the subject of youth employment in The Gambia as summarized below.

2.1.1: Youth

The National Youth Policy (2009-2018) defines youth as individuals within the age bracket of 13-30 years. For the United Nations and World Bank, youth refers to individuals aged 15-24 years. A third definition that is relevant to The Gambia is provided in the African Union's African Youth Charter which defines youth or young people as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. The Charter, to which The Gambia is a signatory, is a political and legal document that serves as a strategic framework of action for African youth. It was adopted on 2 July 2006 during the 7th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union that took place in Banjul and went into force on 8 August 2009.

While the three definitions of youth outlined above are relevant to The Gambia, therefore, youth in the NHDR survey refers to individuals aged 13-34 years for purposes of comprehensiveness, but in this report the reference age for youth will be based on the government current policy. Where data relate to a different age group, this will specifically be indicated. For primary data (and secondary data, where possible) this age range is disaggregated into five age groups: (i) 13-14 years; (ii) 15-19 years; (iii) 20-24 years; (iv) 25-29 years; and (v) 30-34 years.

Beyond the above definitions, society has different construct for youth based on certain socio-physical characteristics. Box 2 gives further discussion on the subject.

Box 2: Understanding Youth in Contemporary Africa

The continuing debate on who is a 'youth' in Africa has not resolved the confusion surrounding the concept. Not surprising, therefore, the concept of 'youth' has been understood and used differently by different governments, NGOs and the public in general in many African countries and elsewhere in the world (Mkandawire, 1996). In much of Africa, for instance, laws define 'adulthood' as commencing from the age of 21, although in recent years there has been an attempt to lower this age to 18 years (Curtain, 2000; Mkandawire, 1996). However, for most countries, 21 years still remains the age at which many of the activities and responsibilities of 'adulthood' are assumed legally. Sociologically, 'youth' denotes an interface between 'childhood' and 'adulthood'. However, in many African societies, especially rural Africa, the status of 'adulthood' is largely determined by the capacity to sustain a 'legal' marriage. Abdullah (1999) observes that in Mali, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea Conakry and Senegal, 'adulthood' is defined as the capacity to sustain a marriage.

Those who are not married, or are not able to do so for economic or other reasons, as many young people in Sub-Saharan Africa currently are, will, whatever their chronological age, still be regarded as 'children'. Hence, it is not uncommon to find a 12 year old girl who, by virtue of being married, will be considered an 'adult', while an unmarried 40 year old man will still be considered a 'youth' or 'child' and still be dependent on the father for support (Mkandawire, 1996). Nonetheless, it is generally the case that 'youth' as a social group are defined in terms of age. For this reason, the spectrum of youth has been variously defined as ranging from the ages of 10 or 11 years (as in some cultural traditions in Africa) to as high as 35 years (as in South Africa, for instance).

In an attempt to 'standardise' youth programmes, international organizations, in particular the United Nations and the (British) Commonwealth Association of Nations, have come up with specific age categories to define 'youth'. For instance, the United Nations uses the age category 15-24 years to define a 'youth', while the Commonwealth uses the age category 15-29 years. Most African countries have either adopted the UN or Commonwealth definition. However, the age range '15-30' years is generally taken as representing the category of youth in Africa

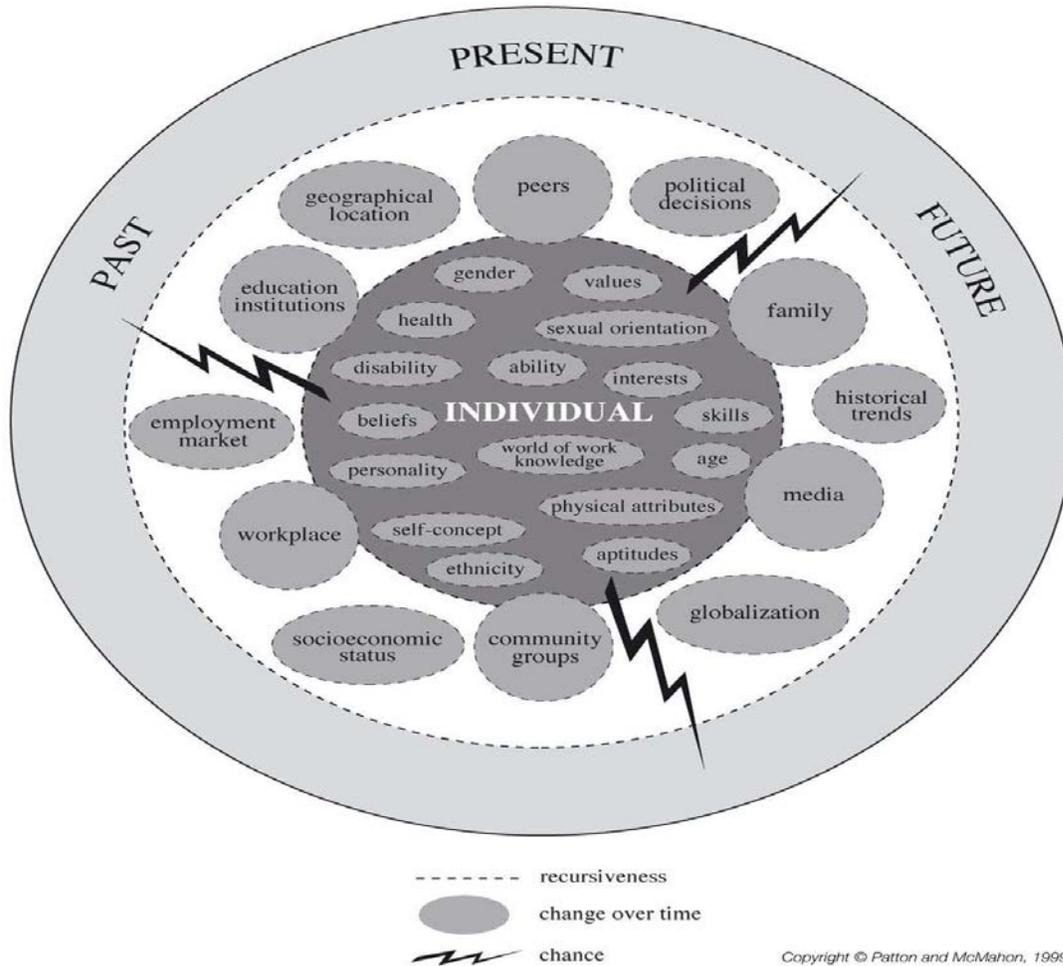
Extract from Chigunta F. The Socio Economic Situation of Youth in Africa Draft July 12, 2002

2.1.2: Systems Theory Framework of Career Development

The Systems Theory Framework of Career Development shows that several factors contribute to youth employment outcomes. While many factors operate at the individual level, several others not only lie beyond the individual but also influence the attributes of the individual. The framework is summarised graphically in Figure 5 below. While all factors are important, the aspects that involve a policy and programming are most relevant to be looked at in the case of

The Gambia. In particular, labour market, education, geographical location, participation in decision making-particularly in politics, and socio economic status.

Figure 5: Systems Theory Framework of Career Development



2.1.3: Skills Towards Employment and Productivity (STEP)

The STEP framework identifies skill as the main factor contributing to the positive employment outcomes and economic growth that are the goals of the *Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment* in The Gambia. Apart from the acquisition of skills, the framework also recognises that there must be action to create an environment in which these skills can be used optimally. There are five “steps” in the framework, representing progress in the acquisition of skills and promotion of an enabling environment for utilization of these skills with the expectation that these steps would lead to decent jobs, productivity and economic growth. The steps are summarized in Box 3 and presented pictorially in Figure 6.

Box 3: The STEP framework (Source - <http://go.worldbank.org/LSCAAIJ890>)

Step 1. Getting children off to the right start — by developing the technical, cognitive, and behavioural skills conducive to high productivity and flexibility in the work environment through early child development (ECD), emphasizing nutrition, stimulation, and basic cognitive skills. Research shows that the handicaps built early in life are difficult if not impossible to remedy later in life and that effective ECD programs can have a very high payoff.

Step 2. Ensuring that all students learn — by building stronger systems with clear learning standards, good teachers, adequate resources, and a proper regulatory environment. Lessons from research and ground experience indicate that key decisions about education systems involve how much autonomy to allow and to whom, accountability from whom and for what, and how to assess performance and results.

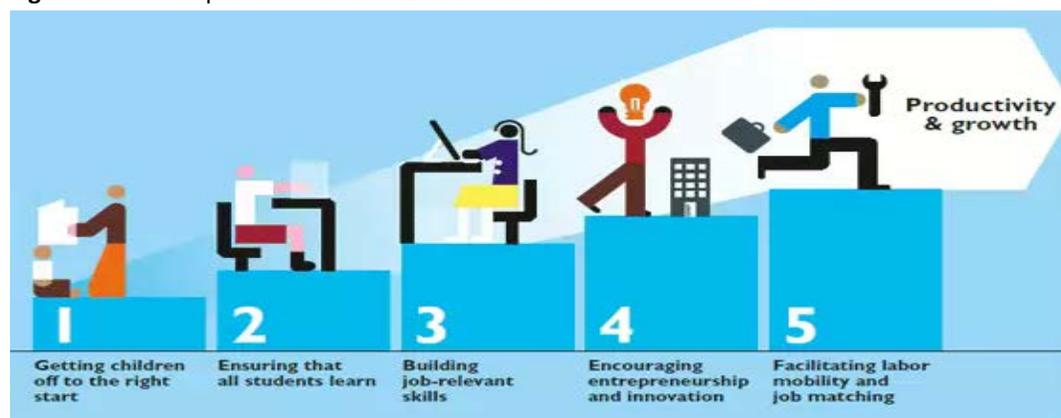
Step 3. Building job-relevant skills — by developing the right incentive framework for both pre-employment and on-the-job training programs and institutions (including higher education). There is accumulating experience showing how public and private efforts can be combined to achieve more relevant and responsive training systems.

Step 4. Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation — by creating an environment that encourages investments in knowledge and creativity. Emerging evidence shows this demands innovation-specific skills (which can be built starting early in life) and investments to help connecting people with ideas (say, through collaboration between universities and private companies) as well as risk management tools that facilitate innovation.

Step 5. Facilitating labour mobility and job matching — by moving toward more flexible, efficient, and secure labour markets. Avoiding rigid job protection regulations while strengthening income protection systems, complemented by efforts to provide information and intermediation services to workers and firms, is the final complementary step transforming skills into actual employment and productivity.

The two conceptual frameworks will be used to guide the analysis of information in the subsequent chapters aimed at critically assessing factors that affect youth and their development in The Gambia. While the two approaches have quite a lot in common, STEP follows a life cycle approach focused on employment whereas the Systems Theory Framework of Career Development provides a broader and comprehensive approach to youth development.

Figure 6: Pictorial presentation of STEP framework



2.1.4: The Gambia Incorporated: Vision 2020

In 1996, the Government of The Gambia developed a long term development agenda called *The Gambia Incorporated: Vision 2020* that was the basis for subsequent national medium term plans including the current national medium term development plan titled, *Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment 2012-2015*.

Box 4: Vision 2020 Mission Statement

To transform The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading, export-oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well-educated, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population, and guaranteeing a well-balanced ecosystem and a decent standard of living for one and all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry by the year 2020.

Source: PAGE 2012-2015

The Mission Statement of Vision 2020 (Box 4) articulates the framework for national development in The Gambia. It provides an indication of government's priorities; economic model; system of governance; development expectations; and the means by which these expectations will be achieved. Therefore, it summarizes the context within which the youth are expected to live, work and achieve their valued life outcomes as well as how government may act to support them. In *Vision 2020*, three sectors of the economy would drive the labour market – agriculture, manufacturing and tourism.

This NHDR uses this statement as a contextual framework to explore how and the extent to which public policies, strategies and actions have contributed to the outcomes stated in Vision

2020 as they relate to youth employment. Thus, *Vision 2020* has been used to situate the capability approach to human development, the systems theory framework of career development and the STEP framework within the context of The Gambia.

2.1.5: Human Capability Approach to Human Development

Underlying the analysis and discussions about youth employment and national development is the Capability Approach to Human Development. The capability approach assesses quality of life and development in terms of what people are able to be and do. It is the paradigm underlying the view of human development captured in Human Development Reports (HDRs) and from this perspective, development is all about expanding what people are able to be and do.

Therefore, the hallmark of the capability approach is that it shifts the focus of development from the economy to people. In light of this, a country that is rapidly developing would be one in which there is a rapid increase in the ability of people in that country to be and do what they value in life. The capability approach is defined by three key concepts as summarized in Box 5.

Box 5: Key Concepts in Capability Approach to Human Development

Functionings: Functionings are the different things a person may value being or doing – the combination of an individual’s valued achievements that underlie his or her well-being. There is a very wide range of activities and states that an individual may value. Examples include, being healthy, having decent employment, going on holiday, having self-respect, voting in an election, donating to charity.

Capability: Capability refers to the various or alternative combinations of functionings that an individual has the real freedom to achieve. For example, while travelling is a functioning, the real opportunity to travel is the corresponding capability. Freedom is the key word underlying capability and its significance may be summarized as follows – “...choosing a lifestyle [i.e. having a certain combination of functionings] is not exactly the same as having that lifestyle no matter how chosen, and a person’s well being does depend on how that lifestyle came to be.”¹⁹

Agency: Agency is the ability to act and bring about change in the pursuit of goals that one values and has reason to value. An individual may act as an agent to further his or her own well-being or the well-being of others. Agency may be individual or collective. Someone who does not have agency is forced, oppressed or passive.

Adapted from sources: References 17 and 19; and <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/capability-approach>

2.2. Growth, Structural Transformation and Employment Trends

2.2.1: Growth and Structural Transformation

The performance review of the National Employment Policy and Action Plan 2003-2008 leading to the development of the current policy (2010-2014) showed that while GDP grew on average by more than 5 per cent per annum during the implementation period of the action plan, unemployment and underemployment actually increased. According to The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, unemployment rate of the labour force increased from 5.8 per cent in 2003 to 7.9 per cent in 2008 and later to 28.9% in 2012. This confirms the point that economic growth by itself is not sufficient to address the problem of massive unemployment and poverty in The Gambia. It also shows the need for employment policies and strategies to be fully mainstreamed and treated as a core-objective of macroeconomic and sectoral policies.

Informed by the lessons learnt from the implementation of previous policies and strategies, the Government remains convinced that decent, durable jobs are the key to eradicate poverty. This strong link between employment and poverty led to the formulation of the medium term plan – the PAGE with an overwhelming emphasis on inclusiveness and employment. PAGE aims to promote inclusive growth that will address the issue of inequality, and also make poverty reduction efforts more effective by explicitly creating productive economic opportunities for the poor and vulnerable sections of society, including the youth. Under Pillar III- strengthening human capital stock to enhance employment opportunities, the government explicitly outlined its strategy for creation of employment. It aims to do so through pursuing four interrelated strategies, namely (i) by formulating an appropriate macroeconomic policy environment; (ii) encouraging more labour-intensive economic activities, particularly in agriculture, natural resources, fisheries and construction, by means of more support and incentives for the private sector; (iii) adopting the green economy and green investment initiatives for the creation of green jobs and for the stimulation of green growth of the national economy; and (iv) promoting access to credit for productive investments.

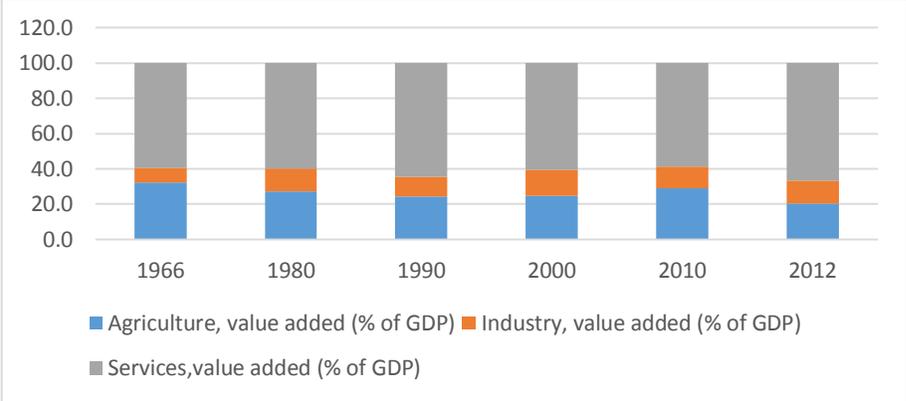
Although The Gambian economy has sustained strong growth before 2011, it has faced fluctuation in economic growth following the extreme weather situations. The economy has slowly recovered from the shock registering 6.4 per cent economic growth in 2013 slightly below the West African sub region's average of 6.6 per cent. The Gambia's growth outlook almost always is subject to risk and uncertainties particularly as it relates to climate change and its reliance on rain-fed agriculture. Transforming rapid economic growth into sustained and inclusive development, however, requires effective strategies that can foster diversification, create jobs and boost access to basic services while addressing down side risks such as climate

change. This can only be done through a well guided structural transformation process. This means The Gambia needs to embark on well thought through strategies to transform its economy through increased value addition in the primary commodity sector and diversify into higher productivity employment-generating sectors especially manufacturing and modern services.

A closer look at the structure of The Gambian economy over a long period shows that there is some structural transformation taking place in The Gambia. This is evident from the declining share of Agriculture to the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while the share of services is increasing steadily (Figure 7). Traditionally and the lessons from east Asian countries demonstrate that industry, particularly manufacturing, has been the source of substantial employment generation in the transformation process. However, what is happening in The Gambia resembles what is happening in the rest of Africa in general, as shown in the UNECA report 2014 on dynamics of industrialization in Africa whereby decade long high to moderate economic growth has not led to increased share of the manufacturing sector to GDP.

The structural transformation happening in Africa and in The Gambia in particular seems to suggest that instead of resources being allocated to high productivity activities across and within sectors, especially to manufacturing and modern sectors, resources are channelled to low productivity activities mainly to the informal sector. Indeed the growth in GDP, mainly contributed by the services and low manufacturing sectors, has not sufficiently expanded to generate adequate employment opportunities to absorb the increasing urban young job seekers most of whom have little or no employment skill and are highly concentrated in the Greater Banjul Area. Each year, the labour market demonstrates a weak absorption capacity as growing numbers of Gambians demand jobs that do not exist.

Figure 7: Structural Transformation in The Gambia



Source: world Bank.

The agricultural sector and fisheries, which are the dominant sectors in terms of their potential to generate employment and have the highest propensity to absorb labour especially the poor,

are declining. As shown in Figure 7, while agriculture value added declined from 32.2 per cent in 1966 to 20.3 per cent in 2012, the industry and services value added increased from 8.3 per cent to 12.9 per cent and from 59.5 per cent to 66.8 per cent, respectively. To the extent that the rural population share exceeds the agriculture value added share of GDP, it implies that a relatively large segment of the rural population is relying on a smaller share of the national pie. This has been typically the case in The Gambia. Agriculture remains the mainstay and the second largest employer of the overall population, although its share has been declining over time. The continuous decline in agricultural value added means those relying on agriculture are sharing a dwindling income among each other and hence rural poverty, agriculture being predominantly a rural activity.

The economic structure of The Gambia, where services are the dominant sector, is atypical in the sense that the base (agriculture and industry) is not sufficiently developed to support and ensure a beneficial services sector. The services sector remains largely informal, predominantly low value distributive trade with low skilled workers and low paying jobs. It is important that greater attention is given to the productive sectors of the economy as it is generally accepted that this is where jobs and wealth are created, thus having a much bigger impact on poverty reduction efforts. It is also important to reconfigure the allocation of resources towards high productive service sector to ensure that the employment opportunities created are high paying and more productive.

2.2.2: Employment Trends

In 1999, the International Labour Office (ILO) introduced a core set of labour market indicators to aid monitoring of employment trends globally and in individual countries. Several of the 18 key indicators of the labour market (KILM) have been used to examine the youth in and out of employment in The Gambia. Analysis of trends over time was constrained by limited comparability of data as the two main sources of labour force data, the integrated household surveys of 2003 and 2010, did not generate ILO-criteria based definitions of employment and unemployment (Box 6) nor provide a breakdown of the economically inactive population.

Box 6: Definition of Key Employment Terms

Employed person: A person who meets any of the following criteria: he or she (i) in paid employment, that is, worked for someone else for wage or salary, in cash or in kind; or (ii) was self-employed, that is, worked for own profit or family gain, in cash or in kind. The definition includes unpaid family workers. Students, homemakers and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period but who at the same time satisfied the criteria should be classified as employed on the same basis as other categories of employed persons.

Unemployed person: A person who meets all of the following criteria: he or she is (i) without work; (ii) currently available for work; and (iii) seeking work. Students, homemakers and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period should satisfy these criteria to be classified as unemployed on the same basis as other categories of unemployed persons. Employed and unemployed persons are classified as economically active.

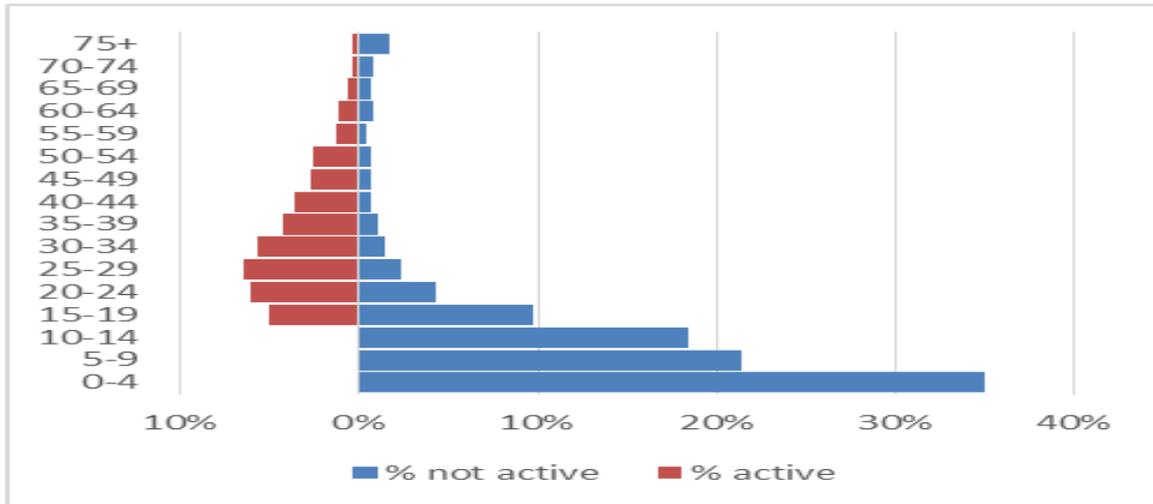
Economically inactive person: A person who is neither employed nor unemployed during the brief reference period of, usually, one week due to: (a) attendance at educational institutions; (b) engagement in household duties; (c) retirement or old age; or (d) other reasons such as infirmity or disablement, which may be specified. The definition includes persons who are without work and available for work but not seeking work (see discouraged worker).

Discouraged worker: A person who meets all of the following criteria: he or she is (i) without work; (ii) currently available for work; and (iii) is not actively seeking work for reasons implying that he/she felt looking for a job would be in vain for any specified reason. These individuals are counted as economically inactive in ILO standard of definitions (see above).

Relaxed unemployment rate: A measure of unemployment that includes the discouraged worker.

In this section, attempt will be made to the extent possible, to analyse information based on the standardized definitions of employment based on the latest census and labour force surveys available but large sections of this report rely on the NHDR 2012 survey for specific issues. As discussed in the earlier section, although there is no standardized definition of youth in The Gambia, an attempt has been made to provide a working definition on what is considered as youth in this report. Following the broad discussions of economic-wide fundamentals, it is apt to look at employment trends broadly and specifically the involvement of the youth in the labour force.

Figure 8: Labour Force Participation



Source: The Gambia LFS 2012

The labour force consists of employed and unemployed persons, that is, the economically active individuals in the population (Figure 8). There has been considerable discussion and debate about how to categorise and measure the individuals who are not in employment. The standard ILO definition of unemployment counts only individuals without work who are currently available to work and are looking for work. It has been argued that this definition of unemployment is too narrow and excludes individuals who are not in employment and are not looking for work because they have given up hope of finding work. Although the standard rate is adopted in the report, to accommodate them, the *relaxed* or *broad unemployment rate* will be mentioned when information is available.

As shown in figure 8, close to 40 per cent of the total population of The Gambia is economically active while a whopping 60 per cent are not economically active. This is mainly because large segments of the population are attending school, relatively young and family responsibility accounting for 49.3 per cent of the inactive, 21.7 per cent and 11.5 per cent, respectively. As clearly shown in Figure 8, the majority of the active labour force is the youth. The peak age for which the youth are more active in the labour force is 25-29, which corresponds to the completion of school and full engagement of the individual in the labour market. It is also important to note that data was collected from the Labour survey, which assumes that individuals are not active in the labour force before 14 years of age, which may not be a correct representation of the reality on the ground.

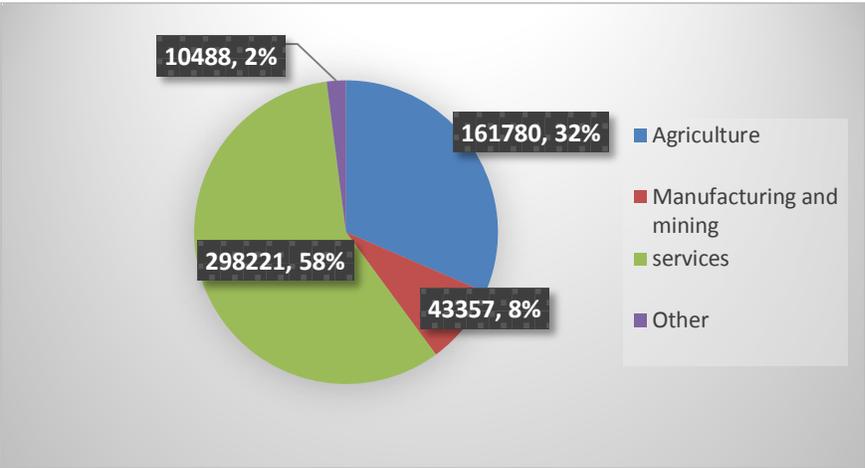
Notwithstanding the above, close to 5 per cent of the population engages in the labour force as early as 15-19 years. The total number of employed persons in The Gambia stood at 522,670 (71.1 per cent of the labour force) while the unemployed persons number stood at 221,414 (28.9 per cent) in 2012. There is marked differential in male and female unemployment, with

close to 20.9 per cent and 38.3 per cent, respectively. This shows the urgent need to bridge the gender gap in employment.

The agriculture and natural resources sector is responsible for generating farmers' incomes, improving food security, increasing foreign exchange earnings, and boosting tax revenue. It is the Gambians' main source of income and plays an important role in reducing poverty. In terms of employment, agriculture is the most pro-poor sector in the country's economy, accounting for 44 per cent of the population (IHS, 2010) and 38 per cent of employment in 2012 (LFS, 2012). The sector, however, remains to realize its full potential including in employment generation due to a number of factors including erratic and reduced rainfall, low quality and insufficient supply of inputs and mechanical implements, inadequate linkages within the agriculture and natural resource sector as well as with sectors such as tourism, manufacturing and services.

The predominance of the services sector in terms of employment is shown in Figure 9 which presents the structure of employment in The Gambia. The employment structure mirrors that of the overall economic structure.

Figure 9: Structure of Employment in The Gambia

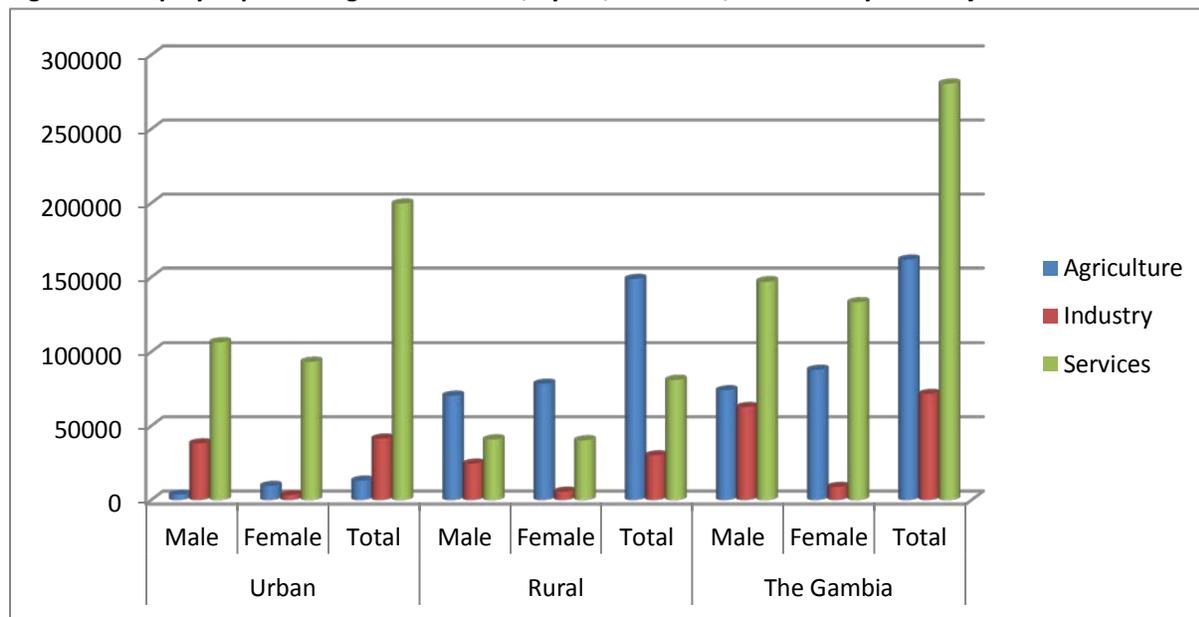


Source: The Gambia LFS 2012

Furthermore, a closer look at employment by resident areas (Figure 10) shows employment over-concentration in the services in the urban areas whereas in the rural areas, agriculture remains the predominant activity, with females being disproportionately represented. This over-representation of females in agriculture is explained by the fact that women, at the end of the farming season, proceed with horticulture activity whereas the men hardly take up that

activity. Thus, agriculture for women is an all-year round activity as opposed to men who engage on a seasonal basis, and this helps to explain why the incidence and severity of poverty is less for female-headed households compared to male-headed ones, as noted in Chapter 1.2.

Figure 10: Employed persons aged 15 and over, by sex, residence, and industry in main job



Source: adapted from Table 7.3aa of Labour Force Survey 2012

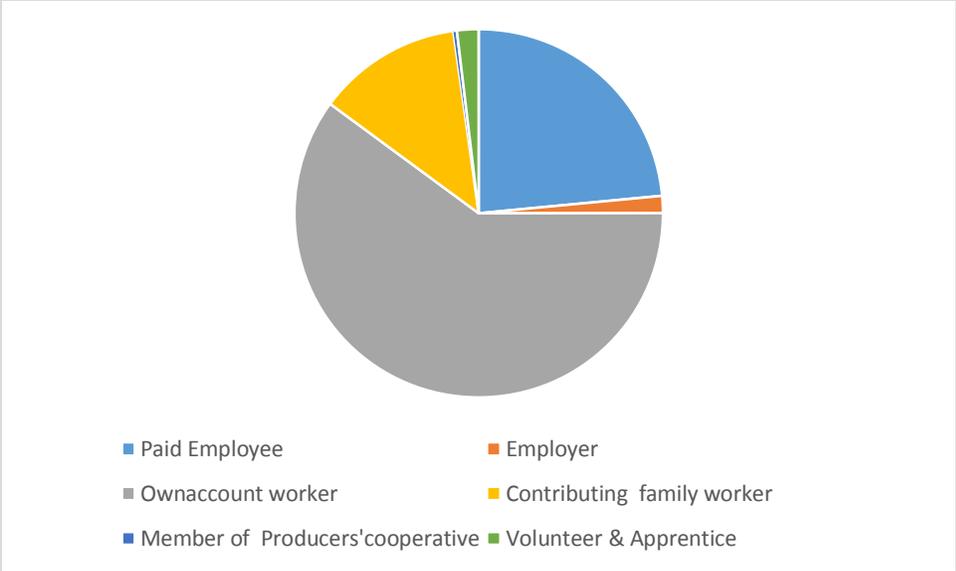
In conclusion, from the above analysis it is clear that labour is moving from agriculture to a large part to services and to a smaller extent to manufacturing in The Gambia. To the extent that the migration of labour to an expanding sector with a rapidly growing productivity will determine the ultimate outcome of the structural transformation on employment. If labour moved from agriculture to services but to specific sectors with no or limited potential to rapidly improve productivity such as informal trade in the case of The Gambia then it means, The Gambia has only managed to reap the static gains but it accrued dynamic loss from structural transformation.

The static gain arise because the level of labour productivity in services – even if it is in the informal sector is higher than that of agriculture; while the dynamic loss arise because the growth of labour productivity in the expanding sector – services mainly informal trade in this case - is lower than in manufacturing or other services. Ideally therefore, if The Gambia is to benefit from structural transformation then a carefully designed strategy needs to be put in place to guide the country's economic transformation process. Successful structural transformations in many countries were preceded by productivity growth in agriculture. It

should also be underscored that institutions and policy reform are important drivers of such transformative process that will enhance productivity in the agriculture sector and jump start the stagnating and/or decelerating manufacturing sector in The Gambia in recent years. Other critical high productivity service sector options should also be explored such as ICT.

As depicted in Figure 11, most of the employed population is working in the informal sector with 62.8 per cent of the population working as self-employed, which is about 220,924 of 522,670¹ of the total employed persons. In terms of gender, women are disproportionately represented in the informal sector, with 55.3 per cent and 73.8 per cent informal employment rates for males and females respectively. Furthermore it is observed that those who participate in the informal sector have little or no education – 59 per cent.

Figure 11: Employment by type



Source: LFS 2012.

The Labour Force Survey further reveals that most jobs are being created in the wholesale/retail trade sector. Most of these jobs remain informal, own-account workers with greater participation by contributing family workers. In the Gambia, the policy objective as it relates to the informal sector is to formalise it as much as possible (Box 7) as the government faces numerous challenges in dealing with the sector, including those relating to tax collection and compliance.

Box 7

¹ The Labor force survey had 521,061.

The overall policy objective is to establish an efficient and effective MSME sector that both serves the needs of the poorer members of society and serves the needs of national economic growth and development. As an integral part of this policy:

- (a) All MSME businesses in the Gambia will be encouraged to register as formal enterprises using a new and easier business registration process (See Business Registration Act of 2013) and financial incentives will be granted to all new operations to allow them to grow and mature.
- (b) Financing instruments will be developed for all levels of MSME businesses so that access to finance will not be a constraint for growth and development. In particular, support will be given to those enterprises involved in export or import substitution.
- (c) Taxation will be rationalised and harmonised so that advances are not used and a 5-year tax break will be given to all newly registered enterprises involved in export or import substitution, or in job creation, including those financed by foreign direct investment (FDI).

.....

Extract from Page 11 of The Gambia National Policy for MSMEs 2014-2018

Youth Employment Trends

The Gambia has one of the highest population growth rates (3.3% according to 2013 provisional census results), with a large proportion of the population being youthful (36.7 per cent aged 13-30 years) while those below age 12 years are 661,257 accounting 35.1%. This youth bulge certainly poses many challenges, especially to a resource constrained country like The Gambia. It is also true that the growing youth population could yield a demographic dividend if only it is properly and effectively harnessed towards national development. Indeed if managed well, The Gambia's young population has the potential to provide labour to all sectors and could ultimately lead to equitable growth.

The agriculture aggregate sector is described as the key to investing in the youth and accounts for 41.5 per cent of employed youth aged 13-30 years (Table 1) with 30.7 per cent male and 52.2 per cent female. Agriculture remains a predominantly rural activity with youth in rural areas nine times more likely to be employed in the agriculture sector than youth living in urban areas (66.3 per cent rural against 7.5 per cent urban). This is not surprising in the sense that most of the farmlands are in the rural areas whereas industry and services are concentrated in urban areas especially Greater Banjul Area, thus leading to rural-urban migration of the youth.

Table 1: Distribution of Economically Active Youth (13-30 Years) by Industry, Sex and Residence

Industry	Urban		Rural		The Gambia		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture Hunting Fishing Forestry	5.04	9.89	56.20	76.47	30.68	52.21	41.45
Mining Quarrying	0.22	0.07	0.19	0.08	0.21	0.08	0.15
Manufacturing Processing Services	20.17	2.92	8.98	1.25	14.56	1.86	8.21
Electricity Gas Water	1.09	0.22	0.37	0.05	0.73	0.11	0.42
General Construction	10.91	0.61	6.34	0.15	8.62	0.31	4.47

Wholesale Retail Restaurant Hotel	22.96	30.70	7.89	6.75	15.41	15.48	15.45
Transport Communication Storage	10.35	1.65	5.87	0.24	8.11	0.75	4.43
Finance Insurance Estate Business Service	1.03	1.76	0.18	0.13	0.61	0.72	0.67
Community Social Personal Service	15.83	33.07	8.95	8.97	12.38	17.75	15.07
Not Adequately Defined	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not Stated	12.40	19.11	5.04	5.91	8.71	10.72	9.72
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics 2013 Population and Housing Census

The NHDR survey found out that more than two thirds of unemployed youth (95 per cent of male youth and 57 per cent of female youth) would consider moving to find work. In contrast to employed youth, internal migration to Greater Banjul or other urban area is preferred by unemployed youth ahead of migration to another country. This seems to suggest that the youth first search for jobs in the country and only consider leaving The Gambia if they cannot find suitable work. Migration within or outside The Gambia is further exacerbated by the pressures that society places on unemployed youth who are mostly seen as lacking in ambition, hopeless and insignificant. This perception is succinctly summed up by the following quote from focused group discussion:

“Those who are not employed are given low status in the sense that most of the time society sees them as irresponsible and they don’t bring much to their family and as a result most of the time at the society, family and community level they are not valued, they don’t even have a voice to speak.” **Youth Leader, Lower River Region**

Nevertheless, education appears to have a substantial effect on the livelihood of youth. Rural youth with primary education or less are most commonly employed (41.2 per cent) in the agriculture sector (Table 2). In contrast, only 18.5 per cent of rural youth who had completed at least junior secondary education are employed in the agriculture sector. Similarly, in the urban areas, 10.8 per cent of youth with primary education or less are engaged in agriculture compared to 5.6 per cent for those with junior secondary education or higher. Thus, in rural areas, education has a more than two-fold effect on work in the agriculture sector while in urban areas the effect is just about two-fold with significantly higher proportions in the rural areas.

Table 2: Youth employment by aggregate sector disaggregated by level of education completed

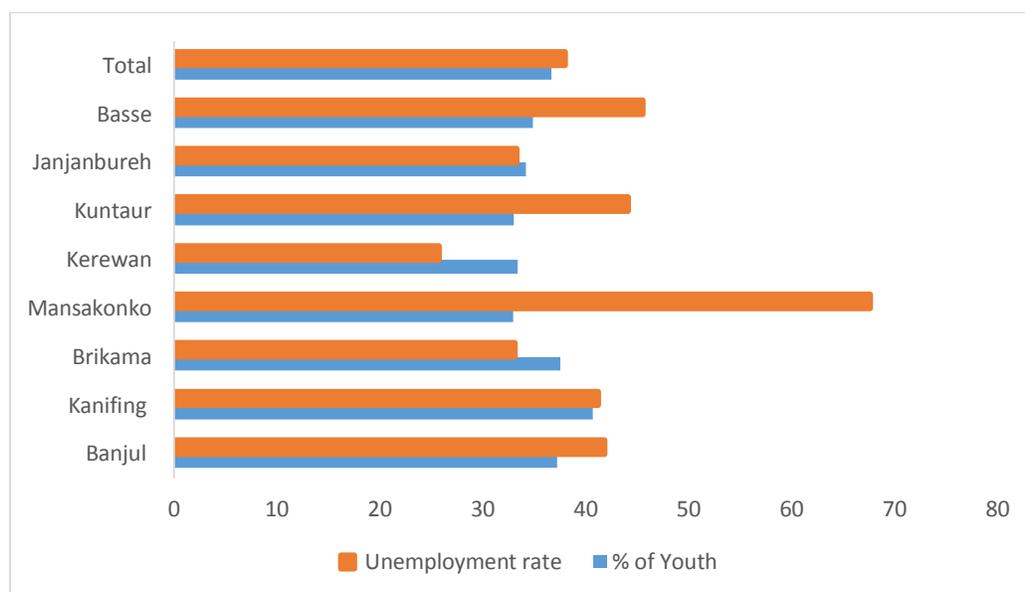
Aggregate sector	Rural		Urban	
	Primary or less	Junior secondary or higher	Primary or less	Junior secondary or higher
Agriculture	41.2	18.5	10.8	5.6

Industry	22.1	15.2	17.6	11.3
Services	36.8	63.0	64.7	78.9
Sector inadequately defined	0.0	3.3	6.9	4.2

Source: NHDR Survey, 2012

Of the overall unemployment rate, the rate of youth unemployment (those aged 13-30 years) according to the 2012 Labour Force Survey stands at 38 per cent, of which female unemployment is 44.7 per cent and male unemployment is 29.5 per cent (Figure 12). From the same figure 12 below, it is noted that youth unemployment is slightly higher in urban areas and in regions with the highest proportion of youth. Rural youth unemployment is around 36.9 per cent while urban unemployment is 39.2 per cent, and in terms of local government area, Mansakonko has the highest youth unemployment 67.6 per cent and Kuntaur the lowest 25.7 per cent.

Figure 12: Percentage of Youth vs Unemployment by Local Government



Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2013 Census and LFS 2012

While unemployment, under-employment, working poor and vulnerable employment are all states that the youth face in The Gambia, it is believed that under-employment remains the major challenge. This is particularly the case with agriculture where, by its nature, the youth and most agriculture workers in general, are only engaged for half of the year while remaining mostly idle for the other half, with little or no off-farm activity. Under-employment thus increases vulnerability. Similarly, in the service sector, most of the services are low value and the jobs are low paid leading to what the NHDR survey concludes as “subsistence services”.

Employment is valued principally because it provides an income to achieve other life goals. This presupposes that the income earned would be adequate to meet the needs of the youth or the employed person in general. However, with a median income of D1,500 per month and a higher median income of D3,000 per month for youth with post-secondary education, a diploma or degree (NHDR Survey), it is difficult to see how all these needs would be met. With such a low median income, it is safe to conclude that youth are effectively employed but remain working poor as their earnings are not able to meet their basic family needs. The structural transformation needed to lift the youth out of this vulnerable situation into high paying and rewarding jobs is yet to take place in The Gambia.

From the foregoing analysis, it becomes evident that achieving Vision 2020 may not be feasible without a reorientation of the economy's structure to give agriculture and natural resources sector the required attention and investments. While that is being done, attention should be given to ensuring adequate linkages within the broad ANR sector and with other sectors such as light manufacturing and agro-processing, which will then lead to a more vibrant services sector. In this regard, the development and implementation of the Gambia National Agriculture Investment Programme (GNAIP) as well as the Government's Vision 2016 for food self-sufficiency are commendable initiatives that need to be supported.

Although the focus of PAGE is on the creation of employment for poverty reduction, there exists scanty employment data in the country, thus the need for in-depth studies of the state of employment in the country at regular intervals. The government recognizes the need to revitalize the Employment and Earnings Unit at the Gambia Bureau of Statistics to help address the data gaps on employment. Also there is a need for the planning units in the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) of government to work closely with the Gambia Bureau of Statistics to regularly update their human resources database.

2.3. Challenges and Opportunities of Youth Employment

2.3.1: Challenges

High level of poverty and unemployment: One of the major challenges that the youth population suffers from is high poverty and unemployment rates. The main policy-related issues to this state of affairs include an uncoordinated policy and weak institutional framework for youth development, and inadequate vocational and skills training facilities. The persistent increase in unemployment among high school leavers, drop-outs, and those who never attended school are a cause for concern as it could lead to increasing numbers of street

children and growing crime; the under-mobilization and under-utilization of the youth talents; and youth energies being channelled into anti-social activities.

Youth as crosscutting: The fact that youth is treated in many national documents and frameworks as a crosscutting issue is in itself a challenge, as everybody's business is nobody's business. In The Gambia, actions on youth employment are mainly handled by the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with little or no coordination between the two. This lack of coordination at both policy and implementation levels, which often leads to duplication and inefficiency is further exacerbated by the lack of adequate data for planning employment creation.

Skill deficit and inadequate jobs: The majority of youth (42.6 per cent), particularly those living in rural areas (46.5 per cent) and females (48.3 per cent), are concerned that they cannot find jobs because they are inadequately trained for the jobs that are available in the market; while not enough jobs ranks as second biggest obstacle to finding a job (Table 3). This is consistent with the evidence that the level of education of a youth increases the likelihood of getting a job, but then as individuals become more educated, they increasingly perceive an insufficient number of jobs as being the main obstacle to securing employment. Unsurprisingly therefore, for youth with post-secondary education or a diploma/degree, a scarcity of jobs is considered the leading obstacle to finding work.

Table 3: Main obstacles to finding a job reported by employed youth disaggregated by residence and sex

Main obstacle	Residence		Sex		Total
	Rural	Urban	Male	Female	
Inadequate education	46.5	39.0	38.2	48.3	42.6
Not enough jobs	16.8	29.2	27.0	18.4	23.3
No work experience/considered too young	7.1	9.8	9.3	7.5	8.5
Discriminatory prejudices	1.3	5.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Low wages/poor working conditions	4.0	2.5	3.1	3.5	3.3
Other obstacles	5.8	3.4	4.2	4.0	4.5
No obstacle	4.0	3.4	3.9	3.5	3.7
Did not search for a job	4.0	1.7	1.9	4.0	2.8
Blank response	10.6	5.5	8.9	7.5	8.0

Source: NHDR Survey, 2012

Lack of foundational skill: The Gambia continues to invest heavily in education with the sector accounting for more than 20 per cent of the national budget. As a result of the conscious effort to improve access to education, The Gambia is on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2, which is to provide education to both male and female school age children. Notwithstanding the progress made, improving the quality of education, retaining children in school and aligning the curricula with labour market requirements continue to be a major challenge. To be prepared for employment, all young people need foundational skills

acquired through education that continues at least as far as lower secondary school. Foundational skills include the literacy and numeracy skills necessary for work that can pay enough to meet daily needs. These skills are the prerequisite for continuing in education and training and for acquiring transferable and technical and vocational skills that enhance the prospect of getting good jobs. It is most surprising to note that only 42.1 per cent of the labour force is literate. This means more than half of the labour force lack foundational skills, jeopardizing their prospect to get jobs or quality jobs. Young people and adults need to be given a second chance. This calls for specific policy actions to address their needs. Gambia College, the main teacher training centre, continues to be afflicted by inadequate learning and teaching materials, together with an ill-equipped library and shortage of staff that make it ill-equipped to deal with the knowledge gap. The inadequate supervision of trainee teachers and overcrowded classrooms also require attention.

Low agricultural production and productivity: the youth in The Gambia are migrating out of Agriculture. Increasingly they have no incentive to remain or go back to the sector. This is another challenge that needs to be addressed. While it is accepted that agriculture presents probably the best opportunity for increasing employment and reducing poverty, the challenge is that it largely remains a rural activity with the more educated youth more likely not to take up agriculture as a career. At the same time, the share of industry has not increased to levels that can absorb a significant number of youth. This, together with an expanding informal sector, calls for a rethink of relevant government policy.

Inequality in employment: Discrimination in employment is not allowed under Gambian law. However, ensuring equal opportunities for young women and men remain a challenge, and this has its roots in education system, even though much progress has been made at that level. Certain negative cultural practices and attitudes also hamper the country's development process. In some cases, The Gambia's religious and cultural norms have constrained women and young people's voices in socioeconomic issues, thus undermining economic growth and the development of the women and youth. This is particularly vivid in the un-proportional presence of women in vulnerable employments as shown above.

Other challenges in the government's efforts to reduce the high unemployment rate of the growing youth population include the following: inefficient national coordinating and monitoring mechanisms; insufficient funding for job creation; preference for white collar jobs to blue collar jobs; insufficient information and advocacy for jobseekers; and inadequate mainstreaming of youth and employment issues into macroeconomic and sector policies.

2.3.2: Opportunities

Education as a prerequisite: While challenges abound, there are many opportunities that can be exploited to address the problem of youth employment and boost economic growth and development, starting with education. It has been observed that youth with higher levels of education and skills tend to have better job opportunities and pay. Education at all levels, including TVET and non-formal adult literacy, therefore remains one of the best opportunities to tackle the problems of youth employment and poverty. This certainly calls for a review of the education sector strategy to mainstream employment issues and ensure a direct link between education outcomes and youth employment.

Agriculture's effectiveness to reduce poverty: Agriculture, despite all the constraints, still constitutes the best response to the growing youth employment challenge and poverty in the country. Not only does agriculture have the capacity to employ large numbers of youth, but it also provides valuable inputs for the development of industry and service activities. It is this recognition that motivates the government's "Back to the Land" call to *"grow what we eat and to eat what we grow"*, as well as Vision 2016 for food self-sufficiency in The Gambia. Progress in this area will require increasing the share of farmlands under irrigation, restructuring the land tenure and inheritance system to correct gender bias, improving the supply of fertilizers and promoting pest and disease control programmes. It is well documented that Agricultural growth is especially effective in reducing poverty. Cross-country analysis shows that overall GDP growth originating in agriculture is, on average, at least twice as effective in benefiting the poorest half of a country's population as growth generated in non-agricultural sectors. Indeed, many countries that had relatively high agricultural growth rates saw substantial reductions in poverty particularly among women. For example, China's rapid growth in agriculture, the liberalization of markets, and rapid technological change were initially responsible for the rapid decline in rural poverty from 53 per cent in 1981 to 8 per cent in 2001.

Economic potentials of an under-exploited river: Allied to the agriculture and natural resources sector is the River Gambia, which has tremendous potentials to contribute to employment creation and poverty reduction. First, as a means of transport, the River Gambia is an alternative and a cheaper route that can improve trading and the rural economy with great multiplier effects especially in villages along the river bank. Second, as a source of water for agricultural use, irrigation from the River's fresh water can help in modernizing agriculture, especially for reducing farmers' vulnerability to variability in rainfall. Third, the flora and fauna along the River Gambia have great potential to diversify the tourism product base to include river sports, bird watching, and other attractions.

Tourism as a key source of inclusive growth: Just like agriculture, tourism is another sector that is yet to realise its full potential both in terms of job creation and contribution to national output. In effect, efforts to increase employment could be enhanced by exploiting the potential

inherent in linking tourism to the agriculture and natural resources sector, to industry and to the arts. Furthermore, exploiting the potentials of eco and rural tourism will contribute to the creation of employment and improve livelihoods, especially in rural areas.

Youth as a resource for economic development: The rapid growth in population has not been matched with growth in gainful employment and therefore the government has an opportunity in implementing PAGE by transforming the current youth boom into youth resource. In effect, the youth is a resource that is energetic and mainly optimistic with strong zeal to actively shape their future, and contribute to national development, but it needs to be harnessed. Managing youth would involve training them in knowledge and skills relevant to the job market and making them competitive in an increasingly global world. Other policy objectives include mainstreaming youth development into the national development policy framework, implementing the recently formulated National Youth Policy which provide for the harmonising of the different interventions and work in a more concerted strategy on youth, equipping youth with employable skills and introducing new initiatives for youth development.

International cooperation in youth development: Youth employment is a global agenda and a major concern for many countries. As such, there is scope for increased international cooperation that can facilitate peer-exchange and support among countries, in addition to the ongoing social dialogue and partnerships between governments, the private sector, civil society and youth themselves. In this regard, countries with large numbers of unemployed youth, both skilled and unskilled, could supply labour to those with aging populations and who are deficient in number of workers.

Technology as an enabler: Technology and Information Communication Technology (ICT) in particular, is a key driver of employment if the opportunities that the sector presents are effectively harnessed. The ICT sector has a very strong youth movement both as producers and consumers, while presenting many opportunities in support of the country's drive for gainful employment, economic growth and social development. ICT has played a pivotal role in globalisation and would continue to be a key driver of growth and prosperity in many parts of the world for the foreseeable future. Its uptake would, however, require primarily youth to be well-educated and highly innovative. Furthermore, the penetration of ICT, including mobile phones, broadband, and PCs need to be expanded. To increase the penetration rate of ICT huge capital is needed. The required capital in the sector could be attracted by putting in place appropriate vision for the ICT sector that can bring the interests of the different parties together and put them to work toward a common goal. This could be complemented by creating the right incentives for industry to develop and put in place the regulators and competition authorities.

Chapter 3: Empowering Youth for Development

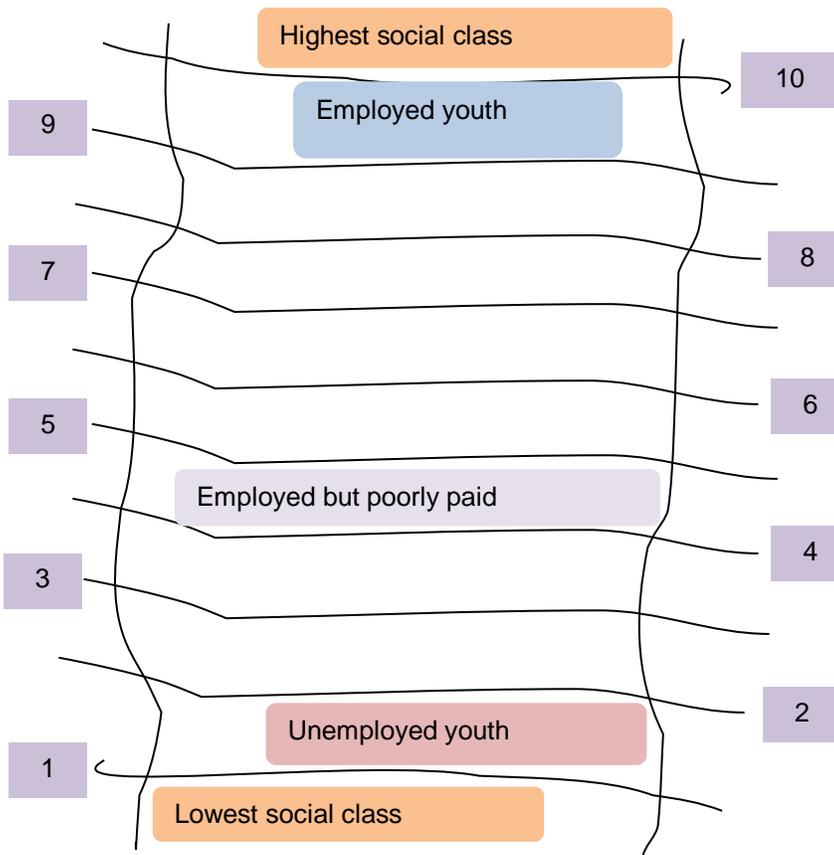
The concept of empowerment has long been debated in public policy setting with respect to the poor, women and other vulnerable groups. The recently concluded United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, adopted an action-oriented outcome document on “The Future We Want”. In that document the UN defines empowerment as *“the process of enabling people to increase control over their lives, to gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives, to increase their resources, qualities and to build capacities to gain access, partners, networks, a voice, in order to gain control”*.

Empowered people have freedom of choice and action. This in turn enables them to better influence the course of their lives and the decisions which affect them. However, perceptions of being empowered vary across time, culture and domains of a person's life. Empowerment is also a cross-cutting issue: from education and health care to governance and economic policy activities, which seek to empower poor people. The main concerns of Gambian youth according to the National Youth Policy, which is also in line with the findings of the survey conducted for the purpose of the NHDR, are education and employment while they feel that they are free to participate in all aspect of their lives.

Irrespective of sex and employment status, the most valued achievements for the youth include a sound education that leads to marketable skills and employment. The majority of the youth are engaged in education/training as their main activity. For male youth, the second commonest activity was working/searching for work while for female youth, family responsibility ranked second and economic activity third. Males were more likely than females to be engaged in education/training or economic activity, whereas, greater shares of females than males were economically inactive due to family responsibilities or as discouraged workers.

Employment is highly valued because the employment status of youth determines their social standing in society. During the NHDR Survey, participants were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 the highest category) their perceptions of employed and unemployed youth. It emerged from this exercise that the employed are ranked near the top, representing those in the highest social class, because they have access to money and are expected to increase their wealth over time and continue to climb the social ladder. This is in contrast to the unemployed youth who are consistently placed in the bottom strata of society because they are poor and powerless (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Ranking of social positions of employed and unemployed youth on a scale of 1 to 10



Source: NHDR Survey 2012

In this chapter, based on the conceptual frameworks provided in chapter 2, it is necessary to take a closer look at education policy as the bedrock for youth empowerment and development; the enabling business environment as crucial factor for the creation of decent jobs; and incentivising youth for agriculture production and productivity.

3.1. Education Sector Policies

The legal basis for education service delivery in The Gambia responds to upholding the right of everybody to free and quality basic education, as contained in the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia. It is for this reason that the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) continues to be preoccupied with the execution of its mandate to deliver quality education in the areas of early childhood development (ECD), basic education, adult and non-formal education and secondary education. Building upon these foundations, higher and tertiary

education is a key factor in human capital formation with the mandate of producing an informed, skilful, and disciplined workforce.

The Systems Theory Framework of Career Development and the *Step Towards Skills and Productivity* (STEP) framework (see Box 3) are useful tools for examining the relationship between employment-related policy outcomes and youth employment outcomes in the context of national development. Within the STEP framework, the single most important consideration is an education system that begins at an early age to empower people with appropriate skills for productive employment. The critical value of a high quality education system is also reflected in the Mission Statement of Vision 2020, which clearly declares that the prospect of becoming a middle income country is dependent on a well-educated and skilled population.

3.1.1: Relevance of Early Childhood Development

Early childhood interventions that contribute to skills development are considered in four domains of child development – physical (immunization and nutrition), cognitive, language and socio-emotional. The Gambia has excelled in providing childhood immunizations, but results in nutrition are mixed, with stunting and lack of iodised salt prevalent in some parts of the country especially in rural areas. The impact of under-nutrition and the benefits of nutrition interventions on physical, behavioural and cognitive development are considered to be greatest when they occur during the intrauterine period and in the first two years of life.

Centre-based early child development (ECD) programmes are regarded as effective delivery mechanisms for interventions to stimulate cognitive and linguistic development of preschool-age children and also deliver health/nutrition interventions. This is particularly the case in circumstances like those of The Gambia where effective cognitive and linguistic stimulation at home are inadequate and nutritional intake suboptimal in many instances.

In the first medium term plan following the launch of Vision 2020, ECD was left entirely to the private sector and was not considered a priority by the government. However, in the second medium term plan (PRSP II), ECD became one of the priorities in the education sector with a target of 50 per cent increase in gross enrolment rate and 50 per cent increase in ECD centres attached to lower basic schools. This commitment was maintained in the third medium term plan (PAGE) but modified to target 9 per cent increase in gross enrolment annually.

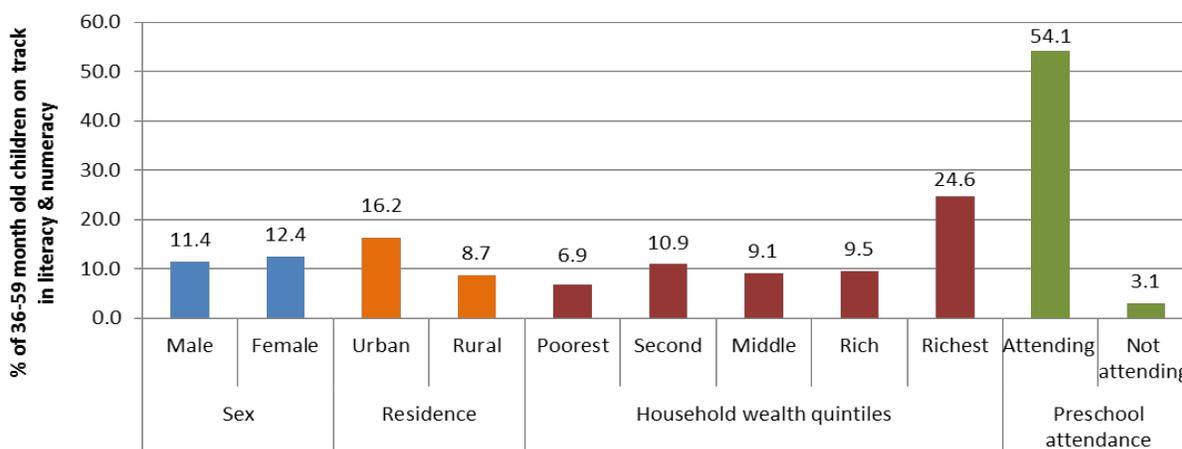
Table 3: Percentage of 36-59 month olds that attended early child education programme in The Gambia

Characteristics of 36-59 month old children	% attending early child education in year of survey		
	2010	2005/2006	2000
Sex			
Male	17.2	20.0	16.1
Female	19.1	19.4	16.5
Residence			
Rural	15.0	13.0	13.9
Urban	22.4	30.2	20.3
Household wealth quintiles			
Poorest	12.2	6.7	11.2
Poor	17.0	14.3	11.5
Middle	15.1	16.0	9.4
Rich	16.5	21.8	19.0
Richest	31.8	41.6	29.2
Total	18.1	19.7	16.3

Source: Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys in 2010, 2005/2006 and 2000

Despite all the current efforts, as can be seen from Table 3, progress in the participation of preschool age children in ECD programmes remains low, and in 2010, only 18.1 per cent of children aged 36-59 months attended preschool compared to 16.3 per cent in 2000 with the usual disparities based on geographical location and household wealth. This means that inadequacies in cognitive and linguistic stimulation at home remain unmitigated for the vast majority of children. It is not surprising that only 11.9 per cent of 36-59 month children surveyed in 2010 were developmentally on track in the literacy and numeracy domains as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Percentage of 36-59 month olds that are developmentally on track in the literacy and numeracy domain in The Gambia disaggregated by sex, residence, wealth and preschool attendance



Source: 2010 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, courtesy of Gambia Bureau of Statistics

3.1.2: Ensuring Educational Attendance

Ensuring that all children are enrolled and stay in school has been a leading priority in The Gambia with an emphasis on universal access to basic education among 7-15 year olds. This commitment is strong as demonstrated by the documentation of the government's obligation to provide free and compulsory basic education in the Constitution of The Gambia, Education Policy and Children's Act. This commitment is now being fulfilled through the gradual phasing out of school fees and other charges from primary through to senior secondary school.

According to The Gambia Education Country Status Report (CSR, 2011), the individual behaviour towards the human development variables such as fertility, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS knowledge, poverty, is more positive for more educated people than those with less education, regardless of income, area of living, health facility, etc. Analysis of the share of the different levels of education shows that basic education accounts for 63 per cent of the total impact on human development. Hence, the provision of basic and secondary as well as higher and tertiary education of good quality is extremely fundamental in facilitating accelerated growth and employment.

Following the articulation of Vision 2020, The Gambia prioritized both access to and quality of basic education. However, in the beginning, access has received far greater attention and the key indicators of progress in the education sector in successive national medium term plans have related mainly to access rather than performance as measured, for instance, by standardized tests.

The various initiatives to increase access to basic education have since paid off. Over a 30-year period beginning in 1985, access to education increased progressively. While 58 per cent of individuals who reached school age in 1985-1989 reported attending school, this figure reached 87 per cent in 2005-2006, with the most progress made in 1995-1999. With access no longer a major challenge, the education sector has, since 2000, turned attention to addressing the issue of quality and relevance with different interventions supported by partners.

The West African Examinations Council organizes two examinations that are used to assess performance. These are the Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination (GABECE) at the end of basic education (Grade 9); and the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) at the end of Grade 12. Results in individual subjects are classified into nine grades from highest to lowest are – A1, B2, B3, C4, C5, C6, D7, E8 and F9 with C6 as the

minimum acceptable level of competence. The GABECE is used to determine progress to Grade 10 while the WASSCE is necessary for progress to tertiary education.

It appears that interventions to improve quality are associated with some improvement in performance in these two standardized, external examinations. Table 4 shows steady improvement in English Language and Mathematics results for both Grade 9 and Grade 12 students over a five year period from 2008 to 2012.

Table 4: Percentage of students that sat GABECE and WASSCE that obtained at least a C6 (minimum acceptable competence) in English and Mathematics.

GABECE (Grade 9)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
% with at least C6					
English	13.5	12.9	15.1	23.2	27.2
Mathematics	4.7	7.3	7.5	8.9	12.4
Number that sat exam					
English	18,393	19,093	19,393	21,140	20,607
Mathematics	19,130	19,089	19,378	21,120	20,593
WASSCE (Grade 12)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
% with at least C6					
English	3.1	13.2	8.7	14.9	17.0
Mathematics	2.6	3.2	3.6	5.3	6.8
Number that sat exam					
English	8,071	8,021	7,850	7,827	7,762
Mathematics	7,959	7,843	7,708	7,612	7,536

Source: West African Examination Council, The Gambia

Similarly, there was improvement in the percentage of Grade 12 students that obtained at least five credits including credits in English Language and Mathematics from 2.15 per cent in 2010 to 5.02 per cent in 2012 (Table 5). This indicator is important because it is a measure of overall competence after 12 years of education.

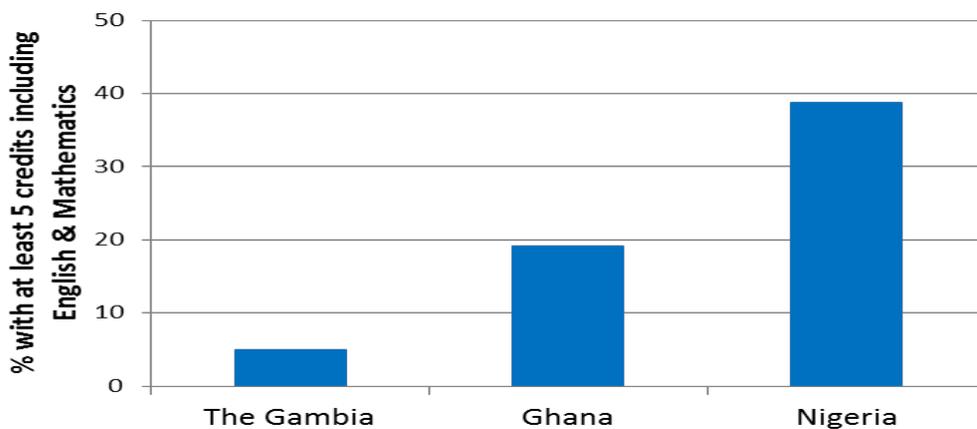
Table 5: Percentage of Grade 12 students that obtained at least five credits including in English and Mathematics in The Gambia in the 2010 to 2012 WASSCE

WASSCE	2010	2011	2012
Number that took the examination	7,850	7,888	7,847
Number with at least 5 credits including English & Mathematics	169	351	394
% with at least 5 credits including English & Mathematics	2.15	4.45	5.02

Source: West African Examination Council, The Gambia

Nevertheless, the percentage of students achieving the minimum acceptable level of competence (C6) in English and Mathematics after 9 and 12 years of education is low as is the percentage obtaining credits or higher in at least five subjects including English & Mathematics. The challenge becomes more obvious when the results are compared to those from Ghana and Nigeria where the same examination is conducted (Figure 15). This therefore calls for more effort in addressing the quality of education, which is essential for producing a highly skilled and enterprising population with better chances of employment and self-employment prospects.

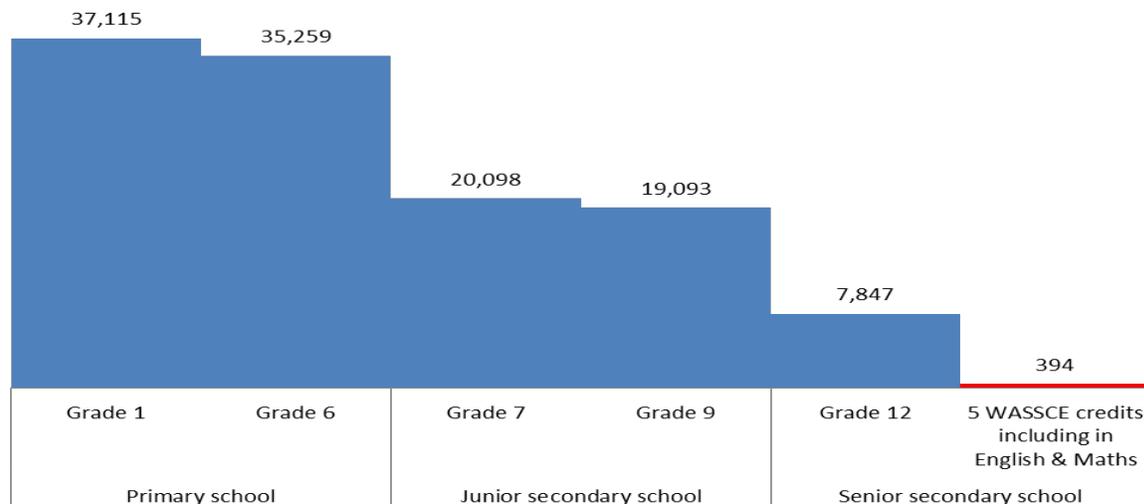
Figure 15: Percentage of candidates with at least 5 credits including English and Mathematics at the 2012 West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination in The Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria



Source: West African Examination Council, The Gambia

Furthermore, The Gambia has a very high number of children leaving school before completion. Only about 1.1 per cent of the children who enter Grade 1, complete their education after 12 years with at least 5 credit including in English and Mathematics in the West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (Figure 16). This is considerable loss for the overall economy as the scarce public resources are availed to train the population and a significant number of the students drop out of the school before even obtaining foundational skills that they can deploy in the labour market. According to the latest labour force survey, the main reasons for not attending school for persons between 5 to 30 year old are family not allowing schooling (29.2%) and affordability of schooling (24.0%) while other factors were mentioned.

Figure 16: Diagram showing progressive drop off in student numbers from Grade 1 to Grade 12 and number of students with at least 5 credits including English & Mathematics in 2012 WASSCE.



NHDR Survey: Authors' calculations based on: (a) number of students that sat Grade 9 (GABECE) examinations in 2009 and Grade 12 (WASSCE) examinations in 2012; rate of transition from primary school to secondary school (57% in 2010); and rate of transition from Grade 1 to Grade 6 (95% in 2010). It is assumed that all students in Grades 9 and 12 sat the GABECE and WASSCE, respectively. The 95% transition rate for Grade 1 to Grade 6 was applied to transition from Grade 7 to Grade 9.

3.1.3: Matching Skills Training to Labour Market Demand

A major constraint facing Gambian youth is skills deficit either to be self-employed or getting a job. The business in The Gambia lack adequately skilled labour that can produce quality goods with the efficiency necessary for the country to compete and maintain a presence in global markets. While The Gambia has expanded basic and secondary education and the National Training Authority is introducing new vocational training programmes to develop skills, the level of youth employed in highly professional occupations remains very low (Table 6) whether it is male or female, urban or rural. The Government commits to continue to invest in higher education with a view to creating sound infrastructure for tertiary and university education, and developing the science and technology competencies needed to stimulate growth and development.

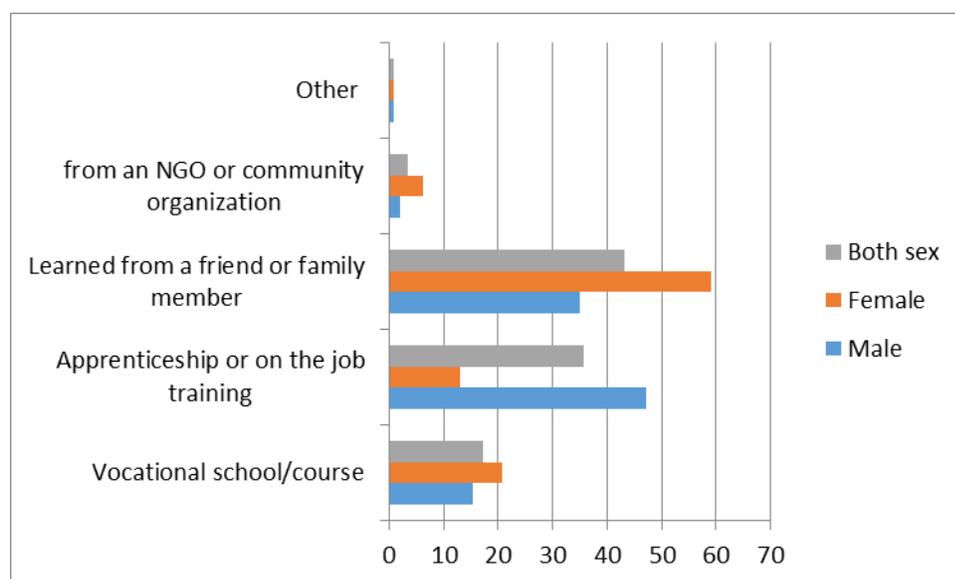
Building job-relevant skills that employees need to be meaningfully engaged should be the most important consideration of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the realization of development outcomes. The education sector strategy has from the country's independence to mid-nineties given more focus to basic and secondary education and less attention to vocational, technical and tertiary education. It is only from the late nineties with the establishment of the University of The Gambia that the country witnessed a proliferation of vocational and tertiary institutions of learning. This phenomenon is in line with one of the objectives of the education sector policy "...a diversification of institutions to favour vocational and skilled based training..."

While there appears to be strong demand for TVET, a performance review of the 2003-2008 National Employment Policy and National Employment Action Plan indicated that there are a number of challenges in providing the number and level of qualified manpower required by the labour market. These include a general limited capacity in technical training institutions and a lack of reliable and current labour market information. There is also concern about the relevance of training programmes to the labour market and the non-inclusion of entrepreneurship training in the curriculum of many institutions.

In terms of access, the Labor Force Survey 2012 indicates that over 106,241 (10.9 per cent) of the overall population with 15 years and above have received vocational training in 2012. Roughly, around 22.8 per cent of these vocational trainees were youth; followed by 35-54 year olds forming 11.3 per cent. The most commonly acquired skills during the training were tailoring & sewing, masonry and carpentry, accounting 21.4 per cent, 9.8 per cent, and 8.7 per cent, respectively.

This is a cause for concern as the number of youth receiving skills development is substantially low. More importantly, as shown in Figure 17 below, the number of youth who receive skills development from credible sources is much lower. Informal systems such as friends and family members remain the major providers of skills in The Gambia- 43.1 per cent of those 15 years and above who received training. Apprenticeship and on-the-job training is only contributing to 35.6 per cent of the trainees. This is particularly concerning as the likelihood of youth obtaining quality skills that can contribute for employment or enhance their productivity is very low. The informal system for skill development is characterized by high level of informality, lacks cutting-edge technology and innovations, and has no quality assurance and no regulations. Notwithstanding this, there are efforts to integrate the informal into the formal system, and this needs to be encouraged and scaled up. The effort to match the skills gap of the youth based on their needs in the areas they are engaged on is another important step.

Figure 17: Source of Skills Acquisition



Source: The Gambia LFS 2012

Apart from TVET institutions, University of The Gambia (UTG) is a critical institution for developing the well-educated, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population that is a pre-requisite to achieving Vision 2020. Although enrolment has grown steadily and courses offered expanded up to doctorate level, UTG also faces challenges related to manpower, financial resources and relevance of its programmes to the labour market. Despite these shortcomings, individuals with TVET and tertiary education qualifications have the lowest relaxed unemployment rates and highest incomes (NHDR Survey 2012).

Another important aspect to look at is the relevance of the skills training provided in addition to the access issue that is highlighted above. The tracer study, supported by UNDP surveyed 1,314 TVET graduates during 2009–2011, sheds some light in relation to skills development in particular from TVET centers and employment. The study revealed that the majority of the graduates from the TVET centers were within the youth age group of 20 to 29 years

representing 79.4 per cent. It also shows that overall employment rate of TVET graduates differs from one year to another; and within sex groups. In 2009, the employment rate of TVET graduates was 44.6 per cent, but declined successively during the periods 2010 and 2011 to reach 34.7 per cent in 2013.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 7, a very high percentage of female respondents were unemployed representing 63.9 per cent of total unemployed graduate respondents. The high unemployment rate of graduates is worrying considering the investments made in training the youth. It calls for a serious examination of the situation.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of TVET graduates by employment status and gender, 2013

Employment and unemployment	Gender of TVET graduates						Total	
	Male		Female		NS		Number	Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Employed	199	43.9	173	27.9	0	.0	372	34.7
Unemployed	250	55.2	443	71.6	0	.0	693	64.6
NS	4	.9	3	.5	1	100.0	8	.7
Total	453	100.0	619	100.0	1	100.0	1073	100.0

Source: Survey of TVET Graduates, 2013

In addition, there is still a significant disconnect between labour market demands and the labour supply as demonstrated in the study where by 20.2 per cent of graduates stated that the job was not the same as that for which they were trained (Table 8). The challenge for TVET graduates is not only to get job but also the difficulty to set up their own employment. As shown in Figure 18 below, although many of the TVET graduates found the training and skills development adequate (44.6 per cent of graduate respondents indicated that their job is the same as that for which they were trained) they were unable to create their own job due to lack of start-up capital - 85 per cent.

Table 8 : Percentage distribution of employed TVET graduates by opinion on relevance of TVET training for their jobs by gender, 2013

		Gender of TVET graduates				Total	
		Male		Female		Number	Percent
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Graduates	The job is the same as that for which I was trained	74	37.2	92	53.2	166	44.6
	The job is highly relevant and related to the training	49	24.6	24	13.9	73	19.6
	The training has served as a foundation for the job	20	10.1	14	8.1	34	9.1
	The job is not the same as that for which I .was trained	43	21.6	32	18.5	75	20.2
	NS	13	6.5	11	6.4	24	6.5
Total		199	100.0	173	100.0	372	100.0

Source: Survey of TVET Graduates, 2013

Designing effective skills development requires a clear understanding of where youth are employed currently and then assess if they are equipped with the right skill to perform their jobs. It is also important to identify which economic opportunities are promising ones for youth to engage in the future; to train those unemployed to get jobs. It seems from table 6 that majority of the youth are engaged in agriculture sector, and services shop and market sales, while the labour force survey and the recently completed tracer study shows that majority of the TVET centres are providing trainings focused on service sector such as tailoring & sewing, masonry and carpentry, business management and public administration, Computing, IT, ICT and Tourism.

Table 6: Distribution of Economically Active Youth (13-30 Years) by Occupation, Sex and Residence

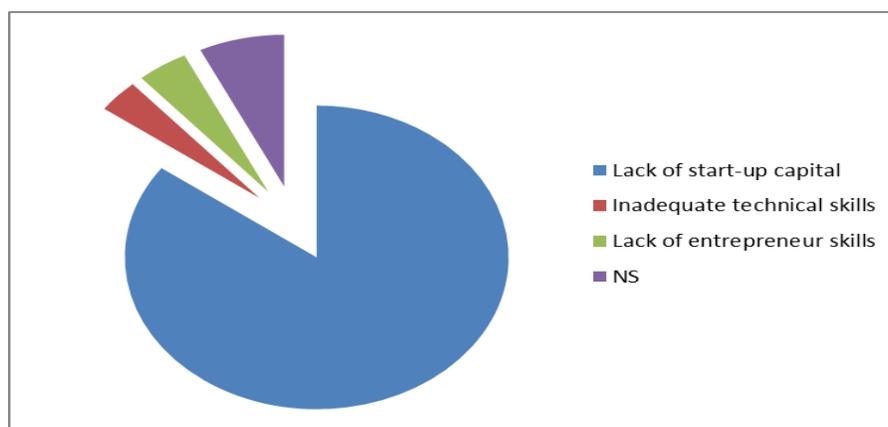
Occupation	Urban	Rural	The Gambia
------------	-------	-------	------------

	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Legislators Senior Officials & Managers	0.15	0.16	0.03	0.02	0.09	0.07
Professionals	3.53	4.54	2.94	1.66	3.23	2.71
Technician and Associate Professionals	3.85	3.27	1.06	0.52	2.45	1.53
Clerks	1.32	2.89	0.48	0.43	0.90	1.32
Services Shop & Market Sales Workers	26.18	45.54	9.20	9.79	17.67	22.82
Skilled Agriculture Workers	5.00	9.90	55.84	77.11	30.48	52.61
Craft and Related workers	33.53	4.28	17.11	1.69	25.30	2.63
Plant/ Machines Operators and Assemblers	8.49	0.46	5.40	0.23	6.94	0.31
Elementary/ Labourers	4.38	9.95	2.95	3.51	3.66	5.86
Others	1.64	1.74	0.77	0.76	1.20	1.12
Not Stated	11.95	17.27	4.23	4.28	8.08	9.02
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics 2013 Population and Housing Census

Other studies conducted in recent times such as the NYSS and GTTI Tracer Studies have come out with interesting findings in relation to linking the skills development with other economic wide initiatives. According to the TVET graduates interviewed, adequate technical and entrepreneurial skills have not been major constraints in establishing their own businesses/enterprises, rather start-up capital was mentioned as a critical constraint as shown in Figure 18. This shows the need to have a comprehensive approach to skills development.

Figure 18: Challenges faced by TVET Graduates



Source: Survey of TVET Graduates, 2013

The ability of the employed youth and overall population to perform well in their economic activity, and the likelihood of getting new jobs for unemployed youth depend on their skill sets. Youth have been acquiring skills both from the formal and informal system. Like the other levels of education, therefore, the higher education and TVET sub sector should address the issue of

access, quality and relevance as a priority issue. This means policy makers should address challenges pertaining to poor delivery, irrelevant curriculum and the mismatch between output of the training system and job market requirements. It should also be noted that the TVET and skills development should be viewed holistically with other private sector development policies and strategies for effectiveness.

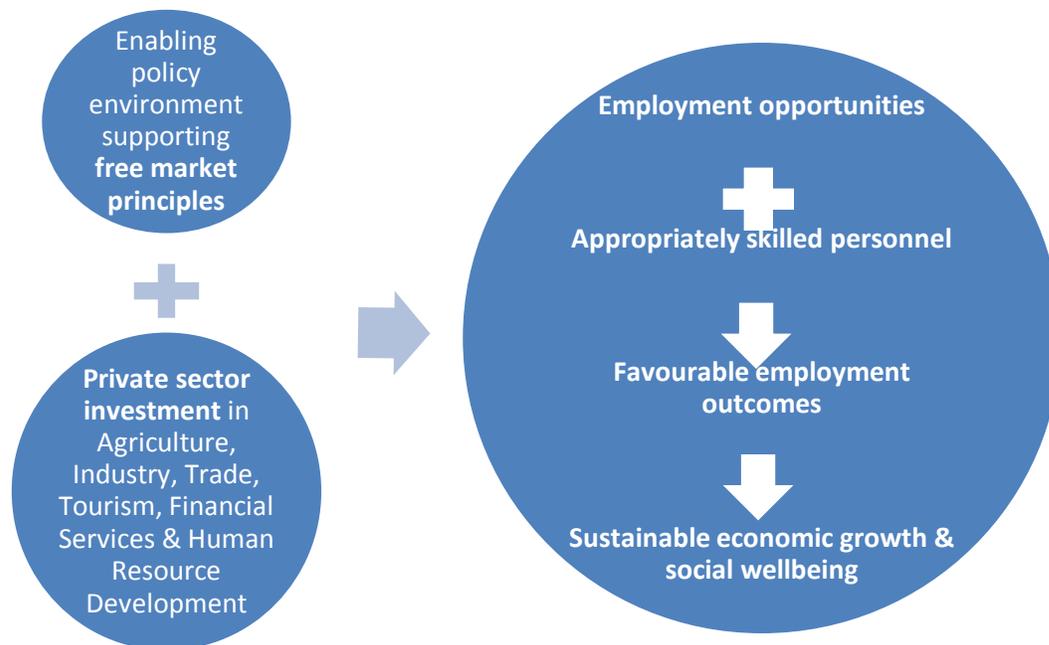
In conclusion, there is inadequate information about the effectiveness of TVET programmes because the employment outcomes of youth beneficiaries are generally unknown. The review also revealed that the lack of reliable and current labour market information is a major constraint and a serious setback in the TVET system. Improving the feedback on information about the labour market outcomes will be an important step towards orientating the TVET system to outputs rather than inputs. The provision of labour market information to trainees will not only help in influencing their occupational choices but also directing them to employment opportunities. Indeed it is vital that information about employment opportunities is adequately disseminated to facilitate job matching and job search.

3.2. Enabling Business Environment for Job Creation

The current efforts to improve youth employment outcomes and youth development have their origins in 1996 when the Government articulated a long term vision for national development known as *The Gambia Incorporated: Vision 2020*. The aim of *Vision 2020* is to transform The Gambia into a dynamic middle income country by the year 2020 by implementing policies that promote investment in six major areas - Agriculture, Industry, Trade, Tourism, Financial Services and Human Resource Development.

As shown in Figure 19, it is anticipated that government policies would encourage private sector investment that would lead to: (a) job opportunities relevant to making progress towards middle income country status, and (b) appropriately skilled personnel to fill those jobs. It is then expected that the productivity resulting from favourable labour market activity would lead to sustainable national economic growth and individual social wellbeing.

Figure 19: Schematic diagram of the employment-related logic of *Vision 2020*.



To achieve its aim, Vision 2020 recognizes *“the creative spirit of the private individuals as a catalyst towards the achievement of the common good... [and]... seeks to empower the people in order for them to realise their fullest potentials in a free and competitive environment”*. This is consistent with the capability approach to human development.

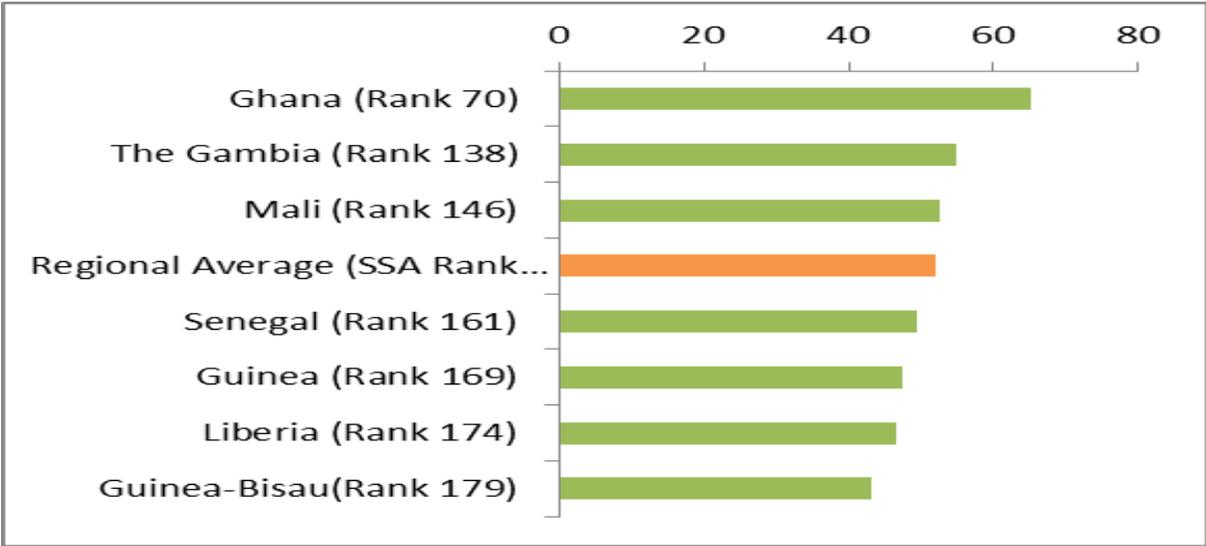
3.2.1: Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation is a central pillar of Vision 2020 and remains critical in the drive towards creating decent jobs. The challenge for The Gambia is to develop and market creative and innovative ideas that would attract investment, particularly external investment. The success of Vision 2020 and efforts to enhance youth employment and development depends on private sector investments since the Government has limited resources to do so. Consequently, the national policies seek to create macro and sectoral policy environments that would attract investments that in turn would lead to job opportunities for the youth and older population.

A variety of constraints, however, limits the ability of firms to thrive and expand in order to create jobs. These factors are highlighted in the Ease of Doing Business report and Competitiveness Report. The 2015 Ease of Doing Business report published recently has ranked The Gambia 138 out of 189, above the regional average for Sub Saharan Africa. Doing Business

provides an aggregate ranking on the ease of doing business based on indicator sets that measure and benchmark regulations applying to domestic small to medium-size businesses through their life cycle. A closer look at the doing business index shows that The Gambia is making progress in some aspects of creating a conducive environment for businesses to grow while it is still facing some challenges in some. In order to demonstrate this, the World Bank has introduced a new measure of distance from the best performing economies. The distance of The Gambia in each aspect of doing business is presented in Figure 21 below.

Figure 20: The Gambia Doing Business Index Rankings



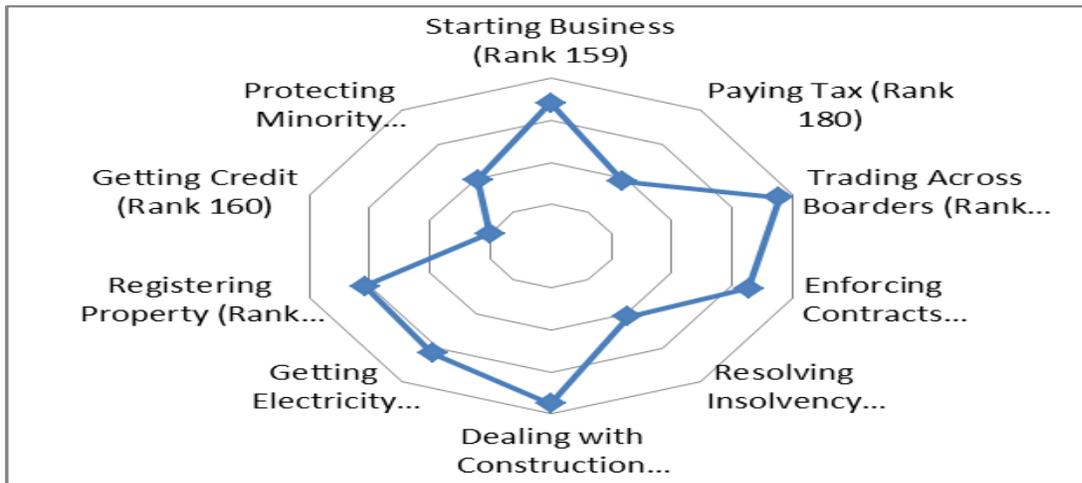
Source: World Bank Doing Business Report 2015

In particular, getting credit followed by paying taxes and protection of minority investors seem to be the greatest challenges for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in The Gambia. This confirms the previous finding in relation to the TVET graduates who seem to report that they had difficulty in getting start-up capital to commence their own businesses after completion of skills training. It should, however, be noted that doing business does not capture all aspects of business environment. Other areas important to business—such as an economy’s proximity to large markets, the quality of its infrastructure services (other than those related to trading across borders and getting electricity), the security of property from theft and looting, the transparency of government procurement, macroeconomic conditions or the underlying strength of institutions—are not directly studied by the Doing Business survey.

To provide complementary information the Competitiveness Report is generated by the World Bank. The Gambia registered higher scores in security, institution and government efficiency and lower scores in market size, macroeconomic environment and technological readiness in 2013(Figure 22). Labour market efficiency and good market efficiency were above mid-point in

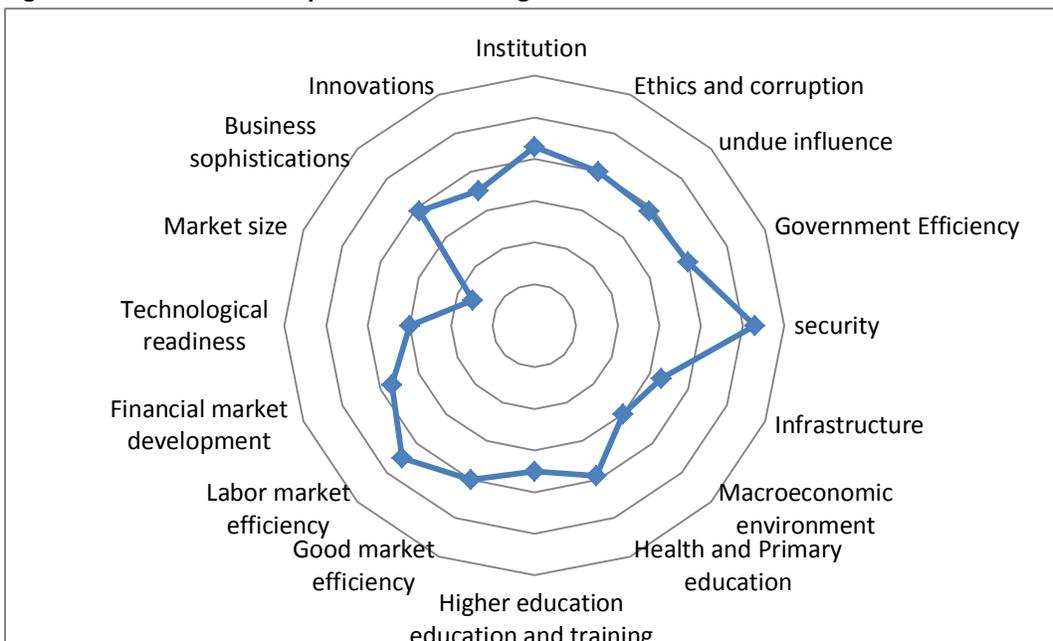
the scale of 1-7. This is similar to the 2006 Enterprise survey findings related to the labour, customs and trade regulations, the legal system and corruption, which were not considered major constraints by the vast majority of firms surveyed in The Gambia. However, electricity, access to finance, labour skill level (higher education and training) and tax rates were considered the major constraints (Figure 22).

Figure 21: The Gambia Ease of Doing Business ranking



Source: World Bank Doing Business Report 2015

Figure 22: The Gambia Competitiveness ranking



Source: World Bank Competitiveness Report 2014

The 2006 Enterprise Survey, however, shows some differences among firms. While electricity was the main obstacle affecting 50-60 per cent of small to medium sized firms, tax rates were the main obstacle for 52 per cent of large firms. Nevertheless, 89.6 per cent of large firms considered electricity a major constraint compared to 84.7 per cent of medium sized firms and 74.9 per cent of small firms. While this Enterprise Survey is old and yet to be updated, its findings remain relevant today as most of these constraints reappear in successive World Bank Doing Business and Competitiveness reports.

In keeping with its commitment to create an investment-friendly environment, the Government has initiated tax reforms to reduce the overall tax burden and enlarge the tax base. While there is still room for further improvement, the corporate tax rate has been gradually reduced from 35 per cent in 2009 to 31 per cent by 2014; a value added tax was introduced in place of the burdensome sales tax; and self-assessment was introduced allowing taxpayers to assess themselves and pay taxes quarterly as opposed to waiting for a year end assessment by the tax authorities. Similarly, efforts are also being made to strengthen the finance sector to improve access to finance, including raising the minimum capital requirement of banks to safeguard the soundness of the banking system.

The cost of electricity in the country is among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, and supply is insufficient due to inadequate generation capacity and an aging and limited transmission and distribution network. The limited supply of electricity and electricity's high cost thus undermine the competitiveness of Gambian businesses and therefore limits ability for job creation. In order to improve the electricity supply, the Government undertakes to produce more electricity to make energy more affordable to small businesses. Also, efforts are being made to promote renewable energy through a generous incentive scheme as provided in the Renewable Energy Act 2013, as well as rehabilitation of the transmission and distribution network.

At the same time the Government is keen to move from a culture of "job seekers" to "job creators" and "self-employment". Employees, own account workers and contributing family workers constitute 90.1 per cent of the employed youth population (Table 9). The employee still remains the largest category with 41.7 per cent of the employed youth followed by own account workers (35.9 per cent) and contributing family workers (12.5 per cent). In urban areas, employed youth are mostly employees (39.8 per cent); and in rural areas, own account workers predominate (40.9 per cent).

Table 9: Status in employment of youth disaggregated by residence and sex

Status in employment	Residence		Sex		Total
	Rural	Urban	Male	Female	
Employees	34.0	48.8	39.8	44.1	41.7
Employers	7.2	5.6	9.5	2.4	6.4
Own account workers	40.9	31.3	31.8	41.2	35.9
Members of producers' cooperatives	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.5	0.2
Contributing family workers	14.5	10.7	15.7	8.5	12.5
Workers not classifiable by status	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3

Source: NHDR Survey, 2012

The Government's past efforts at promoting entrepreneurship have been disjointed, mostly uncoordinated and very often following project style intervention, where the activity ceases at the end of the project. For example, the Gambia Enterprise and Skills Development and Training Fund (GETFUND) was established through GAMJOBS to promote entrepreneurship in the formal and informal economy, to develop skills, to encourage training, and to improve access to financial services. While the GETFUND had weaknesses especially relating to loan management and recovery, its goal was laudable as it aimed to stimulate the creation of micro, small and medium enterprises as a means of creating wealth and jobs. Unfortunately, the fund has ceased to exist at the end of the GAMJOBS programme in 2012. This, therefore, calls for the mainstreaming of key government interventions as well as for better coordination between different government departments to ensure synergies and avoid duplication.

In addition to the National Employment Policy, relevant policies in this direction include the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) policy and the National Export Strategy; all of which seek to enhance the ability of firms to grow and expand and thereby create decent jobs for the youth. The main thrust of government policy is investment in job creation by encouraging private sector investment, supported by a programme of incentives that has been in effect since 2002. In this regard the investment law is regularly updated to keep abreast with developments in the investment climate and to address the needs of enterprise.

In the area of entrepreneurship and innovation, several initiatives have been instituted by the government with the support of partners. An EMPRETEC model of enterprise support program was initiated in June 2014 and launched shortly thereafter with UNDP support. It aimed at ensuring that private sector-led Gambian manufacturing and services industries, especially micro and small enterprises and rural farmers, sustainably improve their competitiveness and

employment creation potential. The program will also strengthen the capacity of the Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency to effectively discharge its added mandate of enterprise support, with the ultimate objective of setting up a specialized enterprise support agency at the end of the three-year project.

3.2.2: Labour Mobility and Job Matching

Facilitating labour mobility and job matching are relevant services that help in addressing the employment challenge. The Department of Labour under the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment has a mandate to provide employment services including job matching. However, the department is inadequately resourced (human and financial) to carry out that function effectively. In order to facilitate job matching, the Government through the GAMJOBS programme, supported the establishment of job centres in 2010 under YMCA, an NGO and AMRA, a private marketing and employment agency. However, the impact of these two centres has been found to be very limited. As at 2012, YMCA had sent only 13 people on placement while AMRA had arranged employment for 276 people, 66 per cent of whom were either pump attendants at fuel stations or car wash attendants, and a further 30 per cent were employed in sales and marketing.

As a result of the limited access to employment information, 89.3 per cent of employed youth and 73.3 per cent of unemployed youth in The Gambia had not received employment advice. The unemployed youth search for jobs in three main ways – (a) 36.4 per cent apply directly to employers; (b) 29.2 per cent answer advertisements; and (c) 13.0 per cent check work sites such as farms, factory gates, markets and other assembly places. These findings suggest that there is a large unmet need for services that provide employment advice/information and job matching, even though the effectiveness of such a service is heavily dependent on the availability of jobs and skilled personnel to fill those jobs.

In an effort to remedy the situation, a labour market information system is currently being established at the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment. However, there are multiple challenges to overcome if high youth unemployment rates and poor quality jobs are to be successfully and sustainably addressed. On one hand, the youth are inadequately skilled and on the other hand, there is a shortage of jobs. Underlying both issues is the limited availability of financial resources to invest in education and job creation.

While the current NEP and NEAP expire in 2014 and are yet to be evaluated, some of the findings of the performance review of the preceding NEP/NEAP concerning the institutional set

up and actors involved in the coordination, implementation and monitoring of the progress in implementation of employment policy and programmes remain largely unresolved. A National Employment Commission is yet to be established, whilst the Employment Division of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment as well as the Department of Labour responsible for actively promoting employment and coordinating the action plan, lacked the capacity and resources to effectively carry out their functions.

3.3. Harnessing Youth Energy for Increased Agriculture Production and Productivity

Youth is a theme that cuts across many sectors, yet governments do and need to formulate specific youth policies and programmes to address the specific needs and concerns of the youth. It is in this perspective that that The Gambia formulated the National Youth Policy 2009-2018 and the Ministry of Youth and Sports has been implementing important youth programmes including the National Enterprise Development Initiative (NEDI) and the National Youth Service Scheme (NYSS) in a bid to foster attitudinal change, employability through appropriate training and a sense of pride and allegiance to the nation.

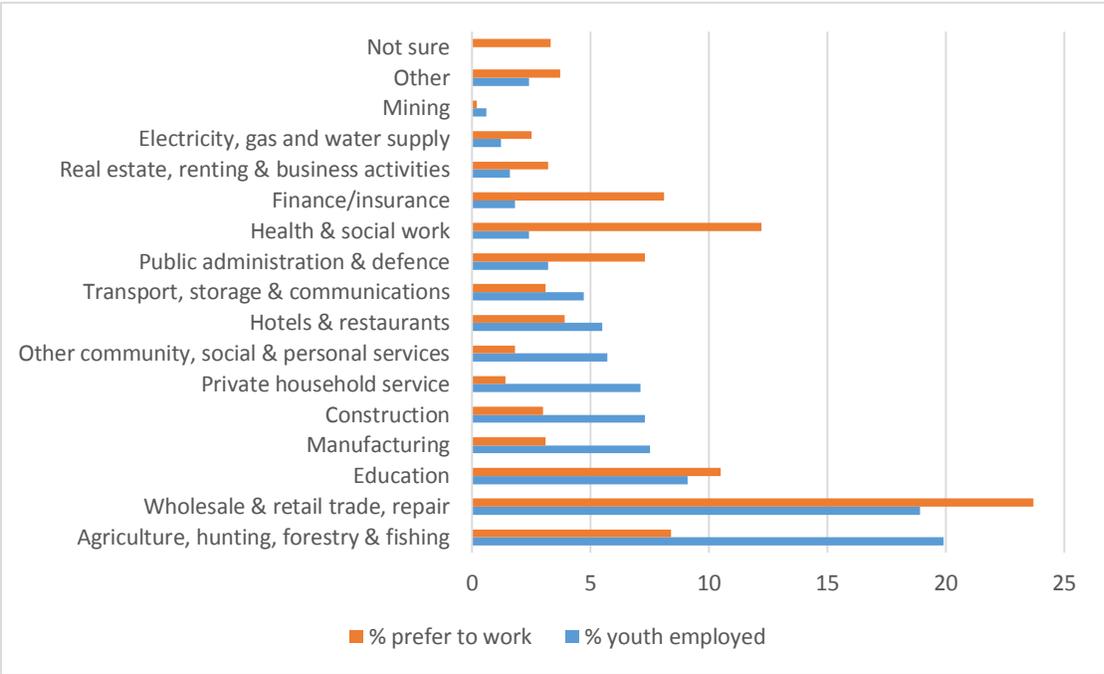
The National Enterprise Development Initiative (NEDI) which started in 2004 aims to empower the Gambian youth and women, through the provision of training in business entrepreneurship; funding to operate businesses in the informal sector; and business advisory services to ensure sustainability of operations. This initiative of training-based investment funding of youth and women is the result of the need to create jobs for Gambian youth and women, ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of basic food commodities in The Gambia.

The National Youth Service Scheme (NYSS) was established in 1996 to provide youth with skills for employment, promote self-reliance and discourage the rural-urban drift that largely affected the youth. Enrolled youth from each of the seven regions are first provided with orientation to build their self-esteem and leadership abilities, and then exposed to various types of occupation from which they chose a specialization. The scheme also introduced an apprenticeship program in 2002, taking in youth with low levels of prior education.

An analysis of youth employment and youth preference by sector shows that overall, the top three sub-sectors in which the youth work are agriculture (20 per cent), trade (19 per cent) and education (9 per cent) as shown in Figure 23. In rural areas, the top three sectors that the youth work in are the same as the top three sectors overall. In urban areas, agriculture ranks joint third with hotels and restaurants behind trade and private household service. Although

agriculture remains to be the default employer of the majority of the youth, the majority of the youth do not prefer to work in the sector- only 8.4 per cent. A significant share of the youth, on the other hand, prefer sectors such as the wholesale and retail trade (23.7 per cent), health and social work (12.2 per cent), and education (10.5 per cent). Although the preference of the youth is largely influenced by their exposure and their residence area, it is also an indication of the fact they attach low expected return in working in agriculture for instance than trade. This is an important consideration in making agriculture the preferred employer for the youth.

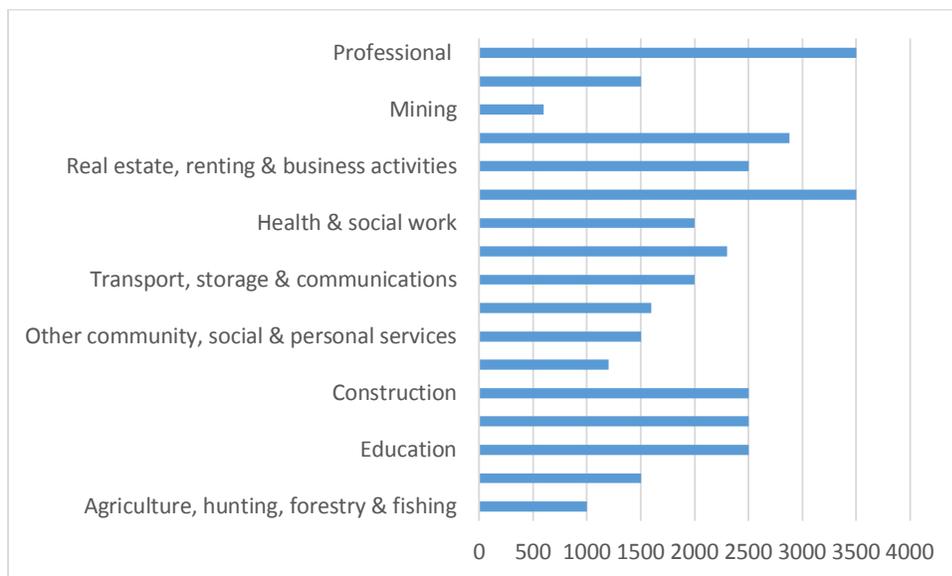
Figure 23: Youth employment and Youth Preference by sector



Source: NHDR Survey, 2012

As shown in the LFS 2012, Agriculture is the second lowest payer followed by the mining sector, which has very limited number of youth employed (Figure 24 below). The median income for an individual engaged in agriculture is quite low around GMD 1000, while other sectors such as manufacturing, real estate, health sector pay much more. The youth working in the agriculture are among the working poor earning less than a US\$ 1.25 a day. This is a clear indication that if agriculture is to realise its potential to generate employment, then high productivity and high paying jobs have to be created in the sector.

Figure 24: Median Income by Job Category (in GMD)



Source: *The Gambia LFS 2012*

During the NHDR survey, youth were requested to provide their view as to what needs to be done to make agriculture attractive and make it preferred employment option to the youth. The responses were largely related to use of new technology to farming, including mechanized and large scale farming, while inputs and financial support be provided in a subsidized rate. Some of the responses of the youth are given below:

“We all know that all the graduates cannot be employed at the same time but other industries like sea farming, land farming, poultry farming should be established and improved upon so that any student who studies these fields in school will go there directly to look for a job when they finish their schooling without which the employment rate will never be reduced because the number of graduates is increasing every year.”

Fathers, Kanifing

“So if avenues such as skill centres, state farms, divisional and village farms can be created in partnership with agriculture, this can stop the back way and Europe syndrome which cost loss of lives in the Sahara and on the seas, and youth can earn a productive living.

Fathers, West Coast Region

Gambian agriculture has largely remained subsistence agriculture with low production and productivity, in spite of repeated government pronouncements with regards to the sector. The fact that irrigation is currently done on a limited scale, with much of the activity dependent on erratic rainfall, does not naturally lend to reliable and sustainable production and productivity. Similarly, the repeated shortages of pesticides, fertilisers and other farming implements affect the ability of farmers to maximise their output from the little activity that they undertake. Also, most farmers are smallholders with little plot sizes that do not lend to economies of scale. Thus motivating the youth to take up agriculture as a viable business activity will require addressing some of these salient issues, including that of land tenure, without which little progress can be made even if all the youth enter the sector.

Transforming and modernizing agriculture require coordinated reform including: affordable loans to smallholder farmers and agribusinesses, inserting the small holder farmers into the national or regional supply chain through establishing contract farming arrangements with large firms, creating markets for smallholder farmers' produce and agricultural inputs. In doing the above activities ICT could play a major role.

Other agriculture activities that have the potential to raise production and productivity of the agriculture and natural resources sector and for which the youth can be oriented to, include poultry, animal husbandry and fishing. Poultry in particular presents interesting opportunities in terms of its spill-over effects and linkages with the crop especially maize and fishing subsectors for feed production. Poultry thus provides a ready market for produce from farms and fishing thereby addressing another constraint of agriculture – access to markets.

One key policy objective of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and its agencies and programmes, has to do with attitudinal change and orienting the youth towards productive activities. There is however a mismatch between the high youth unemployment and poverty rates and the relatively low levels of youth participation in agriculture, when the sector presents the best potential to address these challenges. The challenge therefore is how to incentivise the youth to see and take up agriculture as a viable business, and not to see it as a subsistence activity reserved for elderly and rural dwellers.

As part of the reorientation programmes targeting youth, it will be important to relook at the TVET system with a view to training youth in skills that are relevant to the growth and development of the country. While in the last decade, the Government has developed vocational and skills training programmes as integral parts of broader strategies to develop the economy and promote employment, The Gambia still faces several challenges when it comes to linking skills training to the job market. Some of these challenges include shortages of qualified

staff, and ill-adapted programmes; insufficient capacity to expand technical and vocational training to the regional levels; and inadequacies in changing the attitudes of young job-seekers from white collar jobs to self-employment and out-of-office technical jobs.

Designing training programmes and activities consistent with the demands of the job market; creating accessible credit schemes for women and the youth; building the capacities of the National Training Authority and key vocational and technical training institutions; as well as establishing a reliable and efficient labour market information system, would go a long way in addressing the challenges. It is also important to work on changing the negative stereotypes that many youth and Gambians have of agriculture as an activity for dropouts or people that never attended school.

In effect, as shown in foregoing analysis, the more educated the youth are the more likely they are to turn their back to agriculture. This trend needs to change if agriculture production and productivity is to increase to the desired levels and lead to the transformation that both Visions 2020 and 2016 are yearning for. Indeed, not only do the country need able-bodied youth to take up farming, but also well-educated farmers that can easily adapt to new farming techniques and can apply innovative approaches that yield better results.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

This concluding chapter recaptures some of the key messages and recommendations from the foregoing analysis. It is not meant to be exhaustive and the reader is required to go through the report as it contains many messages and recommendations that cannot all be recaptured here.

The labour force consists of employed and unemployed persons, that is, the economically active individuals in the population. While unemployment rate stands at 38% for the youth, from the NHDR Survey 2012, the relaxed unemployment rate stands at 55.6 per cent. However, the LFS 2012 puts overall unemployment in the economy for the entire labour force at 29.8 per cent in 2012. The differences between rate of unemployment for all persons 15 years and above and the youth specifically point to the fact that youth are un-proportionately affected by unemployment. In addition to this, the NHDR process brought into fore the strain to obtain time series data on employment trend in The Gambia to come up with appropriate policy recommendations. The difficulty of getting reliable and accurate employment data in the country, even though the focus of PAGE is on the creation of employment for poverty reduction, should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

It is therefore strongly recommended that:

- In-depth studies should be conducted on the state of employment in the country at regular intervals to generate the required data for informed policy making and monitoring of development outcomes.
- The Gambia Bureau of Statistics revitalizes and strengthens its Employment and Earnings Unit to help address the data gaps on employment.
- Planning units in the ministries, departments and agencies of government work closely with the Gambia Bureau of Statistics to regularly update their human resources database.
- The recently established Labour Market Information System at the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment should be made fully functional to alleviate the information gap.

The benefit of early child development programmes on the cognitive development of children has been recognised as critical in their future development. Early child development ensures that children no longer start school already lagging behind in their cognitive development. While resources are scarce with many competing needs, innovative approaches to delivering early childhood development programmes should be encouraged. For instance, it may be

worthwhile looking into how battery or solar-powered audio-visual technology could be used to teach young children reading, basic mathematics and more in the absence of printed books.

- Expansion of access to early childhood development programmes should be prioritized while exploring and incorporating innovative technology-supported approaches to learning.

While much progress has been made to expand access to education at all levels, more effort is still needed to improve the quality of education and student performance while tackling adult illiteracy. Each year, the University of The Gambia graduates quite a sizeable number of students, majority of these could not find work in the offices. Innovative mechanisms need to be explored to take advantage of these youth to help address the issue of inadequate teachers. The National Volunteer Service Scheme that was introduced few years ago is one possibility that could be expanded to deploy graduates to lower basic, upper basic and senior secondary schools to teach subjects in which there is a deficiency in qualified teachers. Graduates to be deployed would require orientation on the primary and secondary school curricula, which could be included as a module in the final year of study.

Thus the following measures could be considered:

- Explore the use of information and communication technology in content formulation and delivery to aid teaching and learning at all levels.
- Introduce an incentive scheme to entice and deploy new graduates of the tertiary institutions to primary and secondary schools for one year to enhance the availability of teachers and quality of instruction.
- Reinforce non-formal adult literacy programmes to build the capacity of the workforce given the high illiteracy rates among the labour force.

Over the last two decades, there has been a remarkable increase in the number of training institutions providing TVET in the country, yet there is a noticeable mismatch between the skills of graduates from these institutions and the requirement of the labour market. It has also been observed that many of these training institutions do not offer entrepreneurship training while this is an essential component in the government's effort to promote self-employment. This situation cannot be fully addressed without reforming the TVET system, strengthening the labour market information system, and identifying the skills needed by the economy with a view to adapting the training programmes to meet the skills requirements.

In this regard, the following measures could be taken:

- A detailed assessment of the skills required to achieve the objectives of Vision 2020 and those required by the current labour market should be conducted to determine the extent

to which current TVET and tertiary education curricula equip the youth with these skills and provide recommendations to address any identified skill gaps.

- Adequately resource and equip education and training institutions to address capacity-related constraints that prevent them from effectively delivering on their mandates.
- Build effective labour market institutions and systems including strengthening the Department of Labour, for information dissemination and job-matching.

In addition to addressing education-related challenges to employment, practical steps need to be taken to confront the challenges that stifle the growth and development of the private sector as engine of growth. Indeed encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation remains a challenge. Domestic resources are limited and domestic demand is inadequate to drive job creation because of the size and purchasing power of the population. The country therefore needs increased foreign direct investments with the potential to tap the export market, and raise total productivity. Without some major change, The Gambia could not achieve its potential fully.

In light of the above, measures including the following could be taken:

- Critically re-evaluate the country's investment climate with a view to addressing the barriers to the rapid expansion of investment and growth.
- Strengthen current efforts to promote investment and growth in key priority sectors of agriculture, manufacturing and tourism while leveraging on the potential of ICT.

The agriculture and natural resources sector is responsible for generating farmers' incomes, improving food security, increasing foreign exchange earnings and boosting tax revenue. It is the most pro-poor sector in the country's economy, accounting for 44 per cent of the population (IHS, 2010). Yet, it remains to realize its full potential including in employment generation due to a number of factors including erratic and reduced rainfall, low quality and insufficient supply of inputs and mechanical implements, inadequate linkages within the agriculture and natural resource sector as well as with sectors such as tourism, manufacturing and services.

In order to increase the attractiveness of the agriculture sector, some measures could be taken within the framework of the Agriculture Sector Reforms including:

- Expanding the current low levels of irrigation to reduce farmers' dependence on erratic rainfall as well as increased mechanisation to reduce the drudgery involved in farming.
- Provision of appropriate incentives for an expanded private sector role in agriculture production including the provision and supply of inputs and fertilisers.
- Reforming the land tenure system to facilitate access to land and encouraging smallholder farmers to form cooperatives to increase plot sizes to benefit from economies of scale.

The agriculture aggregate sector is described as the key to investing in the youth but accounts for only 20 per cent of employed youth, aged 13-34 years, while a significant number 52 per cent are economically active in the sector. It remains a predominantly rural activity with youth in rural areas more likely to be employed in the agriculture sector than youth living in urban areas. The relatively low percentage of youth working in agriculture has been attributed to the migration of youth from rural to urban areas; high level of unemployment in the sector. Nevertheless, education appears to have a substantial effect on the type of youth that is employed in agriculture with the more educated youth turning their back to agriculture compared to the less educated. If this trend is not reversed, it will be difficult to make any significant inroads in agriculture production and productivity as the sector cannot be left solely in the hands of the elderly and less educated youth.

- Advocacy efforts should be intensified to make the youth understand that agriculture is a business just like any other and not an activity meant for the uneducated.
- Appropriate incentive scheme including capital grants, subsidised loans, business advisory services, entrepreneurship training and mentorship should be provided for the youth that take up agriculture to help them better establish and grow their business.

According to the Labour Force Survey 2012, most of the employed population is working in the informal sector with 62.8 per cent of the population working as self-employed, and women being disproportionately represented in the informal sector, 73.8 per cent, compared to their male counterparts, 55.3 per cent. Furthermore, it is observed that those who participate in the informal sector have little or no education – 59 per cent. While the government's response to the growing informal sector is to formalise it as much as possible (MSME Policy):

- Programmes should be developed that directly support the sector in light of its employment generation potential.

Finally, some consideration needs to be given to the definition of youth, given the existing disparities in terms of age range; as well as enhancing coordination in youth matters. According to the National Youth Policy, youth age bracket is defined as 13-30 years; the United Nations 15-24 years; and the African Union 15-35 years. The Gambian definition falls short of meeting both the United Nations and African Union requirements. Given that the country is party to both the United Nations and African Union Charters, it cannot afford to fall short of its international obligations by including younger persons aged 13 and excluding from its youth policies and interventions those individuals aged 30-35 years. It is therefore strongly recommended that:

- The definition of youth in the National Youth Policy should be revisited to include individuals aged 15-35 years and to adjust youth programmes and interventions accordingly.
- All government agencies and partners working in The Gambia consistently adopt this unified definition in their work programmes.
- Coordination between the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment be strengthened to ensure a harmonised policy formulation and implementation, and better employment outcomes for the youth. In this regard, the Inter-Ministerial Taskforce on Youth Programmes recently established by Cabinet under the Ministry of Youth and Sports is a good platform for such cooperation.

From the foregoing, it becomes evident that achieving Vision 2020 may not be feasible without a reorientation of the economy's structure to give agriculture and natural resources sector the required attention and investments. While that is being done, attention should be given to ensuring adequate linkages within the broad agriculture and natural resources sector and with other sectors such as light manufacturing, agro-processing, tourism and financial services, which will then lead to a more vibrant services sector. In this regard, the development and implementation of the Gambia National Agriculture Investment Programme (GNAIP) as well as the Government's Vision 2016 for food self-sufficiency are commendable initiatives that need to be supported.

While the implementation of the above recommendations remains the Government's responsibility, the support and collaboration of all development partners are crucial and highly sought for.

Reference

1. Abayomi A, Adesulu D, Arenyeka L. Ghana: WAEC 2012 - Nigeria performs better than Ghana, The Gambia. Vanguard. Nigeria; 2012 Aug 16;
2. AfDB, OECD, UNDP, UNECA. African Economic Outlook 2012. Special Theme: Promoting Youth Employment.
3. African Union. African Youth Charter. Available at www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/AFRICAN_YOUTH_CHARTER.pdf
4. AfDB, OECD, UNDP, ECA. African Economic Outlook 2013. Regional Edition, Western Africa.
5. African Union. List of countries which have signed, ratified/acceded to the African Youth Charter. Available at <http://africa-youth.org/sites/default/files/youth%20Charter.pdf>
6. Alkire S. Choosing dimensions: the capability approach and multidimensional poverty. CPRC Working Paper 88. Chronic Poverty Research Centre ISBN 1-904049-87-7; August, 2007.
7. AMRA. AMRA Job Centre. 2012.
8. Chigunta F. The Socio-Economic Situation of Youth in Africa. Problems, Prospects and Options [Internet]. 2002. Available from: www.yesweb.org/gkr/res/bg.africa.reg.doc
9. Deneulin S, Shahani L (eds). An Introduction to human development and capabilities approach. International Development Research Centre; 2009.
10. Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education. Education Sector Medium Term Plan: 2008-2011. 2008.
11. Department of State for Education. Education Policy 2004 - 2015. 2004.
12. Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs. The Republic of The Gambia Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2007 - 2011. Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs; 2006.
13. Elder S. ILO school-to-work-transition Survey: A methodological guide. International Labour Office, Geneva.; 2009.
14. Fukuda-Parr S. Rescuing the Human Development Concept from the HDI - Reflections on a new agenda.
15. Gambia Bureau of Statistics. Population Estimates and Projections (2003-2020) at National, LGA and District Levels. Kanifing: December 2011.
16. Gambia Bureau of Statistics. Integrated Household Survey 2010. Household Socio-economic Characteristics. December 2011.

17. Gambia Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF. The Gambia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010. Final Report, June 2012.
18. Gambia Bureau of Statistics. The Gambia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2005/2006 Report. 2007.
19. Government of The Gambia and UNICEF. The Gambia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Report, 2000. 2002 Feb.
20. International Labour Organization. Key Indicators of the Labour Market. 7th edition.
21. International Labour Organization. Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians. 1982. Available from:
http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_087481/lang--en/index.htm
22. International Labour Office. Guide to the new Millennium Development Goals Employment Indicators - including the full set of Decent Work Indicators. Geneva; 2009 Jun.
23. International Monetary Fund. The Gambia: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper - Annual Progress Report. IMF Country Report No. 09/75. 2009.
24. International Monetary Fund. The Gambia: Letter of Intent, Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies, and Technical Memorandum of Understanding. May 2013.
<https://www.imf.org/external/np/loi/2013/gmb/050713.pdf>
25. International Monetary Fund. World Economic Outlook. GDP per capita, current prices (US\$).
http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=k3s92bru78li6_#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nslm=h&met_y=ngdpdpc&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=world&idim=world:Earth&idim=country:GM&ifdim=world&hl=en_US&dl=en_US&ind=false
26. Janjanbureh Local Government Council. Database of Registered Businesses. 2012.
27. Lahire N, Johanson R, Wilcox R. Youth Employment and Skills Development in The Gambia. Washington, D.C.: World Bank; 2011.
28. Ministry of Agriculture. Strategic Plan 2010 - 2014. 2009.
29. Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment. The National Employment Policy and Action Plans 2003-2008 and 2010-2014. March 2010.
30. Ministry of Youth and Sports. National Youth Policy 2009-2018.
31. Okojie CEE. Employment creation for youth in Africa. Expert Group meeting on Jobs for Youth: National Strategies for Employment Promotion. January 2003, Geneva.
32. Patton W, McMahon M. The Systems Theory Framework Of Career Development And Counseling: Connecting Theory And Practice. Int J Adv Couns. 2006;28(2):153–66.
33. PwC, The World Bank/IFC. Paying Taxes 2012 - The Global Picture.
34. Republic of The Gambia. Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia, 1997. Reprinted 2002.

35. Republic of The Gambia. The Gambia Incorporated: Vision 2020. 1996.
36. Republic of The Gambia. Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan (GNAIP) 2011-2015.
37. Sahel Invest Management Intl. Report on Mid Term Review of The Gambia Priority Employment Programme and Establishment of Matrix Action Plan for Development. 2010.
38. Strategy for Poverty Alleviation Coordinating Office. The Republic of The Gambia Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (SPA II) (PRSP). Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs; 2002.
39. The Republic of The Gambia. Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment 2012 -2015.
40. The United Nations System in The Gambia and The Government of The Gambia. United Nations Development Assistance Framework: UNDAF 2012 - 2016, The Gambia. Jul 2011.
41. The World Bank. Stepping up skills for more jobs and higher productivity. 2010.
42. The World Bank. Enterprise Surveys - Country Profile, Gambia 2006.
43. The Gambia Labour Force Survey, 2012.
44. UNECA (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) and AU (African Union). 2014. Economic Report on Africa: Dynamic industrial Policy in Africa.
http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/COM/com2014/Documents/unera2014_executivesummary_8pages-hires-cropmarks.pdf
45. UNDP. Evaluation of the National Human Development Report System. UNDP Evaluation Office; 2006.
46. United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 1990. Oxford University Press; 1990.
47. UNDP. International Human Development Indicators. Gambia - Country Profile: Human Development Indicators. 2013. Available from:
<http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GMB.html>
48. UNDP, The Gambia. Common Country Assessment, The Gambia. 2011.
http://www.undg.org/docs/12132/Gambia-Common-Country-Assessment_Final_April2011.pdf
49. Wikipedia. Capability Approach. Wikipedia citing Sen, Amartya. 1992. Inequality Re-examined. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Available from:
https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Capability_approach&oldid=582986657.
50. World Bank. Early Child Development - Nutrition. Available from:
<http://go.worldbank.org/DL9AKYWQ70>.
51. World Bank. Project Paper on Proposed Additional Grant to the Republic of The Gambia for the Third Education Project. Report No. 54011-GM. 2010.
52. World Bank. Data: Agriculture, value added (constant 2005 US\$). Available at
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.KD>

53. World Bank. Data: Manufacturing, value added (constant 2005 US\$). Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.IND.MANF.KD>
54. World Bank. Data: International tourism, receipts (current US\$). Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.RCPT.CD>
55. World Food Programme. Biennial Programme of Work of the Executive Board (2010-2011). 2010.
56. YMCA. YMCA Job Centre. 2012.