

FINAL REPORT

FINAL COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION OF THE UNDP PROGRAMME: 2017-2021

PREPARED BY



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAITG:	ActionAid, The Gambia
ACCG:	Anti-Corruption Coalition, The Gambia
AfT:	Agenda for Transformation
AU:	African Union
AWPs:	Annual Work Plans
BDS:	Business Development Services
BJM:	Bakary & Jainaba Marong
CRR:	Central River Region
COP:	Conference of the Parties
COVID-19	Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)
CPD:	Country Programme Document
CRC:	Constitutional Review Commission
CSOs:	Civil Society Organisations
DSPD:	Department of Strategic Policy and Delivery
DWR:	Department of Water Resources
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EFSTH:	Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital
EMP:	Economic Management Project
ESPD:	Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development
ETWS:	Entrepreneurship Training Workshops and Seminars
EU:	European Union
EWS:	Early Warning Systems
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FGDs:	Focus Group Discussions
FLAG:	Female Lawyers Association of The Gambia
FR:	France
GBA:	Greater Banjul Area
GBoS:	Gambia Bureau of Statistics
GCCI:	Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry
GCF:	Green Climate Fund
GEAP:	Gambia Electricity Access Project
GEF:	Global Environment Facility
GFD:	Gambia Federation of the Disabled
GIEPA:	Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency
GIZ:	Germany International Cooperation
GoTG:	Government of The Gambia
GPF:	Gambia Police Force
GPU:	Gambia Press Union
GRCS:	Gambia Red Cross Society
GRTS:	Gambia Radio and Television Station
GSi:	Gambia Songhai Initiative
GWCC:	Gambia Women Chamber of Commerce
GYCC:	Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce
HRBA:	Human Rights-based Approach
IDEA:	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IEC:	Independent Electoral Commission

IFMIS:	Integrated Financial Management System
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IOM:	International Organisation for Migration
IPC:	Inter-Party Committee
KIIs:	Key Informant Interviews
KM:	Knowledge Management
LECRDS:	Low Emissions Climate Resilient Development Strategy of The Gambia
LGAs:	Local Government Authorities
LRR:	Lower River Region
LTV:	Loan to Value
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDAs:	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEAs:	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MECCNAR:	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources
MEL:	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MOA:	Ministry of Agriculture
MoFEA:	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MoGCSW:	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare
MoJ:	Ministry of Justice
MOTIE:	Ministry of Trade, Industries, Employment and Regional Integration
MSME:	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NALA:	National Agency for Legal Aid
NAWEC:	National Water and Electricity Company
NBR:	North Bank Region
NCCE:	National Council for Civic Education
NDC:	Nationally Determined Commitments
NDP:	National Development Plan (2018-2021)
NDPRP:	National Disaster Preparedness Response Plan
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHCR:	National Human Rights Commission
NSP:	NAMA Supported programmes
NSS:	National Statistical System
OHCHR:	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OP:	Office of the President
PAN:	Protected Area Network
PAU:	Policy Analysis Unit
PFM:	Public Finance Management
PLADs:	Prison Legal Aid Desks
PPEs:	Personal Protection Equipment
PSC:	Project Steering Committee
PWD:	People with Disability
QTV:	Q Television
RBM:	Results-Based Management
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SE4All:	Sustainable Energy for All Initiative
SGBV:	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SME:	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOER:	State of the Environment Report
SSR:	Security Sector Reform
TANGO:	The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
TOC:	Theory of Change

TOR:	Terms of Reference
TRRC:	Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission
TV:	Television
TVET:	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
UNCBD:	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity,
UNCCD:	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCDF:	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT:	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF:	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG:	United Nations Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNOWAS:	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNV:	United Nations Volunteer
USA:	United States of America
UTG:	University of The Gambia
VDCs:	Village Development Committees
VNR:	Voluntary National Review
WABSA:	West African Birds Study Association
WB:	World Bank
WCR:	West Coast Region
YOIPCB:	Youth Inter-Party Committee Branch

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been a critical development partner in The Gambia since the establishment of its country office in 1975. Over the years it has applied various instruments to support development efforts all with varying levels of success. In the last five years, support to the people of The Gambia has been guided by the Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021. The CPD supports The Gambia's development efforts under three pillars namely, Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication; Governance and Human Rights; and Environment and Resilience Development.

The CPD 2017-2021 coincides with a critical moment in the history of The Gambia. In 2017, there was an historic change of government in The Gambia. Under the new Government, United Nations including international developmental partners, civil society and other actors have made progress towards restoring democratic governance, rule of law, human rights, improved economic development, and resilience towards environmental changes with reaffirming commitment in achieving the SDGs.

This independent Evaluation is set against the backdrop of a clear commitment to continuous learning and improvement within UNDP and for accountability to national stakeholders and Implementing Partners in The Gambia. The Evaluation was commissioned by the UNDP to capture evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, national ownership, lessons learned, challenges and sustainability of the current programme. Findings from document review, stakeholder interviews, Online Survey and Field Visits have been consolidated to inform recommended changes to strengthen ongoing activities and to set the stage for the preparation of a new CPD in 2022.

The Evaluation was undertaken by a multidisciplinary team from BJM Management Consultancy Company composed of seven independent local and international consultants of diverse experiences and expertise. Two consultants are women professionals. The team was guided by the terms of reference and an inception report. Once the latter was approved in January 2022, the team applied a methodical four-pronged approach – (i) document review, (ii) key informant interviews (iii) self-administered Online Survey and (iv) field visits to randomly selected projects based on a list from UNDP. The approach was designed to ensure effective triangulation, minimise bias, and independence of findings.

There is strong evidence to suggest that the CPD's overall intervention **is appropriate and is guided by clear objectives, planned outputs and activities**. The interventions across all the three strategic pillars are relevant, aligned and supported the implementation of The Gambia's National Development Plan priorities, support to the UN Development Framework (UNDAF) and contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. Up to 42 percent of the budget was allocated to the Governance and Human Rights pillar and reflects UNDP's understanding of the critical work needed in this area following the historic change in the political landscape in 2017.

Furthermore, the CPD was found to be responsive to the changing national and sub-national contexts, in particular to the COVID-19 Pandemic which demonstrated the adaptive nature of the UNDP to direct efforts where they are needed the most.

As far as effectiveness is concerned, **there is plausible evidence that the CPD is on track to achieve planned results.** At output level, 65 percent of the output level indicators are fully achieved, 30 percent are partially achieved while the remaining 5 percent (corresponding to 1 indicator) was not designed.

While the COVID-19 Pandemic has been the major driving factor affecting delivery of results, Implementing Partners showed a lot of energy and commitment to use the extension into 2022 to jointly galvanise their efforts with the UNDP to complete any outstanding tasks towards achievement of outputs.

Beyond outputs the evaluation established that outcome level results particularly **improvements in national government capacity, including institutional strengthening, Human Rights and gender equity were satisfactory.** Mainstreaming projects into Ministries and Implementing Partners for example the ESPD and EMP projects at the MoTIE, have contributed to capacity building and institutional strengthening. Under the CPD, institutions such as TRRC, NHRC, CRC, Victims Centre, Parliamentary Research Unit, IPC, Women Caucus at National Assembly, and transformative reforms such as SSR (policies, strategies and study tours), Civil Service Reform (Policy mapping exercise for MDAs) have not only been established but operationalised. Support to the Ministries of Justice, Interior and Gender, Children & Social Welfare, and the Judiciary contributed to development of strategies, legislative revision as well as capacity enhancement and innovation towards strengthening Rule of Law and enhancing Justice and Security Service delivery in The Gambia. In the Environment Pillar, tangible support has been provided towards the enactment of legislation and the formulation of policy frameworks to integrate Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation into national policies and promote renewable energy.

Gender issues have to a large extent been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of CPD interventions. Gender Equality and Mainstreaming interventions received commendation from the UNDP Gender Equality Seal Certification Assessment Summary Report: 2018-2020 Round. The Country Office achieved a SILVER Level Certification with a final score of 72 percent. *“This is a significant improvement from a baseline of 44 percent in the 2018 assessment. Congratulations on your progress!”* (Haoliang).

The **UNDP partnership with the Government, Civil Society and Private Sector is considered effective allowing for efficient use of resources.** Additionally, the UNDP has been **efficient in building synergies and leveraging with other programmes and stakeholders in The Gambia.** These ways of working have allowed the efficient use of resources, with up to 76 percent of the allocated budget having been spent.

The findings above point a very positive picture to the work of the UNDP covering the CPD period. The Evaluation commends the efforts of all stakeholders, Implementing Partners and the UNDP staff in The Gambia and makes the following six recommendations:

Recommendation 1: The next UNDP CPD should capture The Gambia's key national priorities in order to consolidate gains registered in the previous CPD 2017- 2021.

The Government of The Gambia (GoTG) is formulating a Green Recovery-focused National Development Plan (2023 - 2027) and a Long-Term Development Vision (Vision 2050) (RF-NDP and LTDV). The RF-NDP as a successor to the NDP will serve as the vehicle through which the short- and medium-term needs of the country will be comprehensively addressed. The Long-Term Development Vision on the other hand, will chart the long-term trajectory of the country's development and transformation.

The Gambia's first long-term development plan (Vision 2020) was formulated in 1996. This 25-year plan was intended to guide The Gambia's socio-economic development for the period 1996-2020. To help implement the Vision, a series of medium-term development plans were formulated and implemented, namely; Strategy for Poverty Alleviation I (SPA I) 1995-1999, SPA II or Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper I (PRSP I) 2003-2005, PRSP II 2007-2011, Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) 2012-2015, and National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2021. Despite the achievements registered during the implementation of these development plans, The Gambia still remains a Least Developed Country with many challenges to overcome in order to attain middle- income status as envisaged in the Vision 2020. To this end, the Government is developing a successor Long-Term Development Vision (LTDV) for the period 2023 to 2050 (Vision 2050) for The Gambia.

It is important to note that the resulting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and country in general has resulted in the extension of the end dates of the NDP, UNDAF and CPD to 2022. The pandemic is far more than a health crisis: it has affected nearly every aspect of the social and economic life of the country. To curb the effects of the pandemic, the Government formulated a response strategy to address the short-term challenges it posed, but in view of its long-term impact, it is evident that the new NDP must have a green recovery as a central guiding theme of the new plan. Government therefore, intends to ensure that the new plan is a green recovery-focused NDP (RF-NDP) in order to anchor the socio-economic response to COVID-19 firmly within the country's medium-term development framework, especially, given the changing epidemiological pattern of the pandemic, the continued socioeconomic impact, and the urgency for climate action.

Under the new Government, United Nations including international developmental partners, civil society and other actors have made progress towards restoring democratic governance, rule of law, human rights, improved economic development, and resilience towards environmental changes with reaffirming commitment in achieving the SDGs.

As UNDP continue to support The Government of The Gambia in its development planning, it is important that progress registered in democratic governance, rule of law, human rights, improved economic development, and resilience towards environmental changes to date are aligned, sustained and scaled up in the next CPD.

UNDP should continue support to Governance, Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice.

There is strong political will on the part of Government to promote good governance and the respect for human rights and the rule of law in all institutions. This is evidenced by several legislative reforms, policies and strategies that have been developed. The Ministry of Justice, Judiciary and other government institutions have qualified and committed staff owing partly to improvements in emoluments and improved work conditions.

There is need to double interventions in civic spaces that are shrinking and increase the participation of CSOs in democratization and peacebuilding processes at the national and local levels. Resources should be mobilized consistently to sustainably engage CSOs in all governance areas as most UNDP interventions lean more towards the elections.

At the same time, the connections between people-state relationship should receive more attention to improve service delivery, accountability, equality and trust between people and the state, particularly at the local levels as the main interface between the citizens and the state is typically at the sub-national levels. Working with local governments to achieve these and other results will be critical as COVID-19 has shown that national levels of governance have been overwhelmed, making sub-national levels of government to take on more tasks. Local governance is also important for conflict prevention and peacebuilding as local solutions can be more targeted, particularly inclusive processes such as local infrastructures for peace that aim to ensure women and youth involvement. Yet the technical and institutional capacities at the sub-national levels can be weak.

Re-imagining governance to effectively address emerging complex challenges that cannot be addressed by traditional approaches, including use of digital technologies to “leap-frog” development. UNDP should also pay more attention and make interventions to improve security and peace in border communities especially in the Casamance region that has experienced a protracted conflict for the last 40 years. Such interventions should also improve livelihoods, cross border trade, community mechanisms for conflict resolutions, among others.

Following the outcome of April 2022 national assembly elections where only three women were elected and subsequent cabinet appointments that reduced the number of women

from five to four, there is urgency to target interventions that promote inclusive political participation of women, youth and PWDs ahead of May 2023 local council elections and future polls.

The human rights component of UNDP governance area has not received maximum attention in project interventions and there is need to consider more interventions, including training project staff on human rights-based approach, and building more partnerships especially with National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and relevant CSOs. TANGO has a human rights thematic area that can be leveraged to support human rights agenda in the country. At the institutional level, UNDP integrated/portfolio approach in project implementation should be fully embraced to maximize resources, reduce duplication and improve monitoring of results.

However, the justice delivery system is faced with limitations in the implementation of good governance and transitional justice reform due to resource constraints to equip governance institutions with the required tools for realization of their mandate. This includes incomplete digitalization of records and lack of automated and electronic storage mechanism. Similarly, inadequate infrastructure, funding and over centralization of services within the Greater Banjul Area coupled limited human resource capacity continue to impede legal and judiciary processes.

UNDP should continue support to Poverty Eradication and Employment Creation interventions.

The large and increasing youth population characterized by limited technical and vocational skills and capacities, and job opportunities has resulted to high unemployment rates and increased irregular migration to Europe and beyond.

The Gambia has a very youthful population with about 38.5 percent between the ages of 15-35 years¹. The rapid population growth (3.1%) coupled with limited opportunities pose serious challenges in the provision of decent work for the teeming youthful population. The unemployment rate among the youth is 41.5 percent (LFS 2018) which is higher than that of the national average (35.2%). The low absorption rate of the youth within the labour market is mainly due to skills mismatch and limited skills and capacities. In addition, the proportion of youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is 56.8 percent (LFS 2018). This has fueled irregular migration as well as rural-urban migration.

UNDP should continue to support the efforts of MOTIE and the private sector to promote and support inclusive job creation, entrepreneurship and innovation measures and interventions. In particular, UNDP should capitalize on the positive foundations created through its support to EMPRETEC, ESPD and The Gambia Songhai Initiative projects to expand youth employment opportunities, including strengthening national and sub

¹ 2013 Census

national institutions to achieve structural transformation of the productive capacities that are sustainable and employment-and livelihood-intensive.

Support to MSMEs is crucial, as the Government of The Gambia considers the MSME sector to be the engine of growth for the future, and support to more excluded and marginalized local populations to ensure that no one is left behind.

UNDP should continue support to Environment and Climate Resilience.

The 2015 NDC was considered one of the most ambitious in Africa. The Climate and Natural Resources sector has developed series of policies, programmes, an investment plan and also established coordination mechanisms for the effective implementation of policies and plans including the Climate Change Secretariat, Inter-Ministerial Climate Change Committee, The National Climate Change Committee, The National Climate Change Council, DRR and Climate Change Adaptation Platform and the recently established National Climate Change Focal Points.

Absence of a Climate Change Act, budget code and financial instruments to leverage private sector investment and the limited capacities of stakeholders in Climate Change issues is hindering the implementation of the policies, plans and programmes.

UNDP supported initiatives related to the Environment and Climate Change have generally been relevant, targeted and successful.

There is need for post-programme funding to maintain and upgrade infrastructure like the coastal defence structures at Tanji and Senegambia with the assistance of all relevant stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure to ensure sustainability of the results. The Metrological Centres also require funding so as to sustain the service to effectively guard against or mitigate effects of Climate Change.

Recommendation 2: UNDP should re-structure and reclassify the components and capacities of the Country Office to maximize on resources and effectively deliver required expertise.

In order to consolidate the support that UNDP is providing to the Government of The Gambia, especially against resource constraints, there is a need to re-structure and reclassify components and capacities of both its operations and programme to maximize on resources and effectively deliver the required expertise. Programmes could be merged due to inherent synergies, which would imply that CPD implementation would be anchored on less pillars to maximise use of the available technical expertise and other resources.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should ensure that the CO has the Human Resources required to successfully implement the next CPD.

For successful implementation of the Country Programme, the Country Office (CO) should strive to have adequate human capacity at all times. All the clusters should be well resourced and staffed at any given time so that the quality of programme implementation is not affected during the programme cycle. For some periods within the extended 2017 – 2022 CPD cycle, the three clusters (i.e., Governance, Poverty, and Environment) and operations (human resources, procurement and finance) have been relying on a lean staff to implement and manage programmes and projects leaving the team sometimes overwhelmed. In some instances, programme and project work would be assigned to personnel within the office to back stop, yet not subject matter experts and with no requisite knowledge and/or experience in respective programme and project related areas. Consequently, quality of and the pace of implementation in some instances have been affected.

A key part of UNDP's work is to offer tangible support towards the enactment of legislation and the formulation of policy frameworks related to Environment, Governance and Economic growth. Best practices are constantly evolving, and there is always new information and data being generated to better inform policy and decision making. In order for UNDP Programme to effectively play the advisory role to Government in policy and legislative formulation, it is important that time and resources are allocated to building on the capacities of relevant staff regularly, in order for them to remain relevant to Government as experts in their respective areas.

Recommendation 4: UNDP should strengthen Knowledge Management (KM) as critical component of the Country Office M&E architecture and bolster its central MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) capacity.

There is evidence to show that UNDP has processes and frameworks in place to support MEL practice in its funded initiatives. These include employment of sector M&E specialists, guidance, such as for evaluations, logframes, results based reporting and Implementing Partners mentioned the practice of “learning and reflecting together” at least on an annual basis. Systems such as the Voluntary National Review (VNR) set up with the support of the UNDP are good examples of national level efforts to enhance tracking and reflection on progress made on the attainment of the SDGs. There are several evaluations which have been commissioned over the course of the CPD, as well as a good number of project progress reports. The CPD has a results framework, albeit not revised to cater for adjustments over time e.g., the realignment with the updated NPD Priority Statements from the 2018 Plan.

While the above are good examples of M&E products and practice, gathering evidence from Implementing Partners during the evaluation was a mammoth task for the evaluation

team. The team made several attempts to gather the information both from Implementing Partners and key Focal Points within UNDP to get the reports to draw key insights to inform the analysis. It would seem there is a challenge with Knowledge Management (KM) which hampers quick retrieval and sharing of evidence. Where staff have left or were planning to leave, incoming staff struggled to provide historical evidence of progress, an area that can be addressed by having effective KM systems. Furthermore, engagement of UNDP staff and Implementing Partners in the evaluation was not optimal with many being rescheduled. Staff and Implementing Partners could better be supported to view M&E as a critical part of the programme cycle that should be accorded the same level of importance as any aspect of implementation. This will go a long way in ensuring evidence is properly captured, reflected and acted upon.

UNDP should consider establishing a fully resource central M&E unit, to complement M&E specialists in the CPD pillars. Some of the core functions of the central unit could include MEL for coordination and Quality Assurance on programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities through say a sharper results framework: Whereas UNDP CPD has a results framework, some indicators did not comply with SMART criteria and lacked baselines which hindered accurate measurement of progress. Central MEL will bring agility and a focus on addressing such issues.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should continue to enhance the capacity, including institutional strengthening, of Implementing Partners in the next CPD.

Should National Execution remain the preferred method of delivering the CPD, it is important that the capacity of Implementing Partners is strengthened to meet the expectations of the next CPD.

The National Execution approach has not only helped expedite project implementation and delivery but also contributed to capacity building and institutional strengthening within Government and Implementing Partners, and ensured ownership and sustainability. Mainstreaming projects into Ministries and Implementing Partners proved effective and efficient as it enhanced ownership, guaranteed sustainability and built capacity. Similarly, the Direct Cash Transfer method facilitated smooth implementation while flexibility in allowing stakeholders to lead Project Steering Committees (PSC) and to determine and guide project interventions in line with felt needs were found effective in achieving intervention results.

There is a huge capacity need across government. The capacity building plan referred to in the NDP document must be reviewed to capture new capacity needs and be implemented as a priority. Vacancies at the senior level in the Justice System have slowed down services such as Bill Drafting among many others.

Regarding coherence, it was noted that capacity building was a common issue being addressed almost across and within the three clusters. As such, periodic joint cluster

reviews and learning sessions would benefit the clusters for both collaboration between and within them. The next CPD should therefore be strengthened to capture any potential synergies and monitor them. Harnessing potential synergies and inter-linkages have potential to enhance coherence among and within clusters.

On the other hand, it was also noted that UNDP's interventions across the three clusters have a high degree of sustainability, especially those whose implementing partners are government Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) which have received respective capacity building and institutional strengthening support from the current CPD. However, the sustainability depends a lot on the extent to which the support is being standardised and integrated into the day-to-day functions of the MDAs. It is therefore imperative for the next CPD to consider ways of validating and ensuring that UNDP's capacity building and institutional support is well integrated into the day-to-day functions of the MDAs cognizant of the fact that interventions that are seen as 'short term projects' wither away after the project has elapsed unless there are in-built mechanisms for perpetuation of practices, systems, and results instituted by the project.

Recommendation 6: UNDP should scale up innovative techniques and adaptation models in the next CPD.

Innovative techniques and adaptation models had significant impact on programme delivery during the previous CPD especially with the advent of COVID-19. UNDP should capitalise on the Accelerator Lab and expand its reach across initiatives so as to identify scalable innovations.

Building on the good results of UNDP support to digitalization and e-services, which have been utilized in particular during the COVID-19 crisis, UNDP should continue working with the Government and private sector to strengthen internal interoperability mechanisms, build stronger government capacity, and develop specific e-services which have been identified as crucial to overcome accessibility problems (such as the restrictions due to COVID-19).

There are potentials in scaling up the PACD with its accelerated/adaptation model which serves as a vehicle for a multi-sectoral approach to addressing poverty and inequality at community level, delivering services to hard-to-reach communities and helping government respond to social demands through partnership with development partners.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Evaluation is to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of the UNDP's contributions to development results at the country level; assess the impact of UNDP's development assistance across the major thematic and cross-cutting areas of the three major pillars as articulated in both the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD); capture evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, national ownership, lessons learned and their operationalisation, challenges and sustainability of the current programme; and assess the extent to which adequate monitoring and risk management was undertaken throughout the period, the extent to which evaluation systems were adequate to capture significant developments and inform responsive management. Guided by the Evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, partnership and coordination, as well as cross-cutting issues of Human Rights, Gender Equality and Youth Participation, the evaluation aims to present the findings and recommendations based on the foregoing criteria on the UNDP Country Programme. **See Annex 1.**

UNDP has supported national development efforts in The Gambia since the establishment of its Country Office in 1975. It has continued to play a significant role in national development efforts through provision of technical assistance and advice, access to its global knowledge networks and financial support to implement government development frameworks. These interventions are aimed at boosting capacity development and acceleration of national efforts to eradicate poverty and attain inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The UNDP interventions are strategically guided by five-year Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021 and aligned to the overall United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as well as the National Development Plan (NDP). UNDP interventions are fixed on three major pillars, namely, i) Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication, ii) Governance and Human Rights and iii) Environment and Resilience Development.

The Evaluation exercise was undertaken by BJM, a Management Consultancy Company with a team comprised of seven independent consultants of diverse experiences and expertise two of whom are women professionals.

The report structure follows the standard evaluation report template as outlined in the ToRs. The main sections of the report are Introduction, Description of the interventions, Evaluation scope and objectives, Evaluation approach and methodology, Data analysis,

Findings, Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations. The Introduction Section gives the background and country context while the Description of the Interventions section provides an overview of the components of the CPD. Sections 3 and 4 outline the scope, objectives, approach and methods of the exercise, and section 5 explains how the data was collected and analysed.

The Findings section provides assessment of the evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Partnership and Coordination and the cross-cutting issues of Gender Equality and Human Rights. The last sections of the report focus on lessons learned and provide recommendations to improve the design and implementation of future UNDP programming.

BACKGROUND AND COUNTRY CONTEXT

The Gambia is the smallest country in mainland Africa with a population of 1.9 million of which 50.8% are female (GBoS, 2016). It is a least developed country with 48.4% of its population living below the poverty line of \$1.25 per day, an economy heavily reliant on agriculture, and a per capita income of \$787 in 2020.² In recent years, the country's economy has been steadily growing due to development of tourism, inflow of remittances and re-exports.

Poverty, inequality and exclusion are challenges in The Gambia due to: limited productive natural resources; limited resilience capacities to climate change and external shocks; disproportionate distribution of growth benefits between urban and rural areas;³ limited employment opportunities for youth and women; restrictive productive assets for women;⁴ limited institutional capacity for oversight; and absence of state-supported welfare programmes and social safety-nets.

The Gambia - classified as a fragile state largely due to its weak institutional capacity for effective economic management and limited policy coherence - has been relatively stable despite twenty-two (22) years of authoritarian rule.⁵

In 2017, there was an historic change of government in The Gambia. Under the new government, United Nations including international developmental partners, civil society and other actors have made progress towards restoring democratic governance, rule of law, Human Rights, improved economic development, and resilience towards environmental changes with reaffirming commitment in achieving the SDGs.

In March 2020, the first COVID-19 case was reported in The Gambia. The country is highly impacted by Covid-19 both at the macro and micro levels. It poses serious socio-

² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator>

³ Rural poverty rate of 79.5, against urban poverty of 24.4 per cent (Multidimensional poverty study, 2015)

⁴ In the Gambia, 76.4 per cent of women lack land ownership, against 61.9 for men (Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2013)

⁵ World Bank 2016 & CPD, 2017 Reports.

economic challenges with a multi-dimensional impact on sustainable development and achieving the SDGs.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTIONS

UNDP interventions are strategically guided by Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021 and aligned to the overall United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as well as the National Development Plan (NDP) of the Government.

The CPD is built on three pillars namely, Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication; Governance and Human Rights; and Environment and Resilience Development each with its related outputs as outlined in the CPD Results and Resources Framework.

Pillar I. Inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication

This pillar seeks to address the poverty, inequality and exclusion nexus, providing both upstream and downstream support and building on achievements: evidence-based planning, livelihoods and employment promotion; inclusive growth; and social protection. To this end UNDP will continue to provide support to the Gambia Bureau of Statistics and Planning and Policy institutions of Government to strengthen national statistical capacity; work with key Ministries to align resources with national priorities, assess risks to the achievement of national development objectives, and mobilize resources; prepare high-quality analytical products all with a view to enhancing the environment for evidence-based policy planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The capacity of relevant institutions were strengthened to design and implement skills and entrepreneurship development interventions for increased employment and productivity, to sustainably lift target groups out of poverty in the Central River and Western Coast Regions. UNDP will institutionalize and harness the linkage between skills development and export promotion; strengthen linkages with microfinance institutions to help local communities to produce, add value, and support diversification of the economy in partnership with UNCDF; reduce poverty and inequality by implementing a comprehensive social protection programme targeting the most vulnerable children, women and youth, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals objective of “*leaving no one behind*”. This will contribute to the attainment of goals 1, 8, 10 and 17.

The foregoing will be realised through the attainment of the following outputs:

Output 1.1. National and sub-national institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and employment- and livelihoods- intensive.

Output 1.2. Options enabled and facilitated for inclusive and sustainable social protection.

Output 1.3. Capacity of national and sub-national-level institutions strengthened to deliver improved basic services, formulate pro-poor and gender-sensitive strategies and plans.

Pillar II. Governance and Human Rights

This pillar consolidates governance-related reforms, strengthening national institutions to promote the culture of democracy, Human Rights, access to justice, anti-corruption through improved accountability and transparency, and the rule of law, using innovative approaches to reach the poorest.

UNDP supports access to justice by strengthening capacities of enforcement authorities in justice delivery and Human Rights institutions to provide services, enlarges citizen participation in decision-making and elections, and upholds the rule of law, tapping into its global network through South-South and triangular cooperation. Building upon lessons learned from previous CPD Cycles, this programme deepens the foundations for coordinated delivery of high-quality justice services to the poor, focusing on children and women through legal aid and assessments of development results; supports and continues to advocate for gender equity and women's empowerment, Human Rights and Human Rights monitoring mechanisms in collaboration with United Nations Organizations, Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations.

The pillar supports citizen participation and strengthens capacities of oversight and accountability institutions, the National Council for Civic Education, and the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations; provide voice to women and excluded groups; build capacity for implementation of the decentralization policy and strategy. This pillar aims to contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16.

The attainment of the following outputs is critical to realising the foregoing.

Output 2.1. Electoral institutions enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation and representation, including for peaceful transitions.

Output 2.2. Enhanced institutional capacity of the justice system to deliver accessible, efficient and accountable justice to all, especially women and vulnerable groups.

Output 2.3. Frameworks developed for effective and transparent engagement of civil society, including women's organizations, in national development.

Output 2.4. Strengthened operational capacities of oversight and accountability institutions actively engaged in the public sphere.

Pillar III. Environment and Resilience Development

This pillar seeks to support the application of evidence-based policymaking for increased resilience; improved absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities of at-risk communities; and the establishment of appropriate, coordinated and timely responses to risks and shocks. Through this programme, UNDP support enables the Government to implement the relevant climate change policies and related instruments namely National Climate Change Policy, 2015; COP21 Paris Agreement; Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Strategy, 2014-2017; Renewable Energy Policy; Sustainable Energy for All Initiative; and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. UNDP aims to strengthen national capacity to assess, respond to and coordinate disaster and climate risk management and strengthen protected areas management, sustainable use of natural resources and reforestation of degraded lands through the Land Use Policy.

The pillar supports the mainstreaming into development plans of low emissions, climate resilience, risk assessment and management; development of early warning systems; and implementation of priority mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce vulnerability across key sectors. UNDP support enhances the effectiveness of post-disaster recovery; the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems and watering points; construction of climate-resilient infrastructure; and development of a climate readiness plan, critical for resource mobilization. UNDP introduces innovative production techniques linked to agricultural value chains to facilitate local communities' adaptation to climate change. The programme engages the Private Sector in issues of natural resources management.

UNDP provides catalytic support to assist The Gambia in accessing the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to implement its national obligations, while strengthening dialogue and exploring funding opportunities with bilateral and multilateral donors (Qatar, European Commission and Government of Japan). South-South and triangular cooperation will be explored for community-based poverty reduction, renewable energy and a green economy. The pillar contributes to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13, 15 and 17.

The foregoing is realized through the attainment of the following outputs:

Output 3.1. Preparedness systems to effectively address the consequences of and response to natural hazards.

Output 3.2. Gender-responsive disaster and climate risk management integrated into the development planning and budgetary frameworks of key sectors.

Output 3.3. Scaled-up actions on climate change adaptation and mitigation implemented.

Output 3.4. Inclusive and sustainable solutions adopted to achieve increased renewable energy access and efficiency.

Output 3.5: Capacities of national and subnational administrations enabled to enhance conservation, sustainable management, and use of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems.

The UNDP CPD has been nationally executed through national Implementing Partners selected based on capacity assessments. Implementation of interventions involved a wide range of stakeholders including Government MDAs, LGAs, UN Agencies, Academia, NGOs, CSOs, Private Sector and beneficiary Communities.

Each of the three Pillars has undergone an Outcome Evaluation: Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication in 2019, and Governance and Human Rights and Environment and Resilience Development in 2020.

Table 1. Below summarises the three Pillars with their related outcomes:

Table 1: CPD Pillar Summary

Pillar I. Inclusive Macroeconomic Growth and Poverty Eradication	Pillar II. Governance and Human Rights	Pillar III. Environment and Resilience Development
<p>UNDAF Outcomes 1 & 3.2 By 2021, accelerated inclusive and sustainable economic growth to reduce poverty and inequality for the vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>UNDAF Outcome 1.2 Institutional reforms implemented to ensure rule of law and guarantee the protection of the Human Rights of all, including access to justice, Gender Equality, access to basic services, and democratic participation in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>UNDAF Outcome 3.3 By 2021, National institutions and community capacities are strengthened for effective disaster risk management, climate change response actions and resilience.</p>

3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The Purpose and Scope of this assignment as clearly spelt out in the Terms of Reference are as follows:

3.1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this consultancy is to undertake a final evaluation of UNDP Country Programme 2017-2021. The Evaluation was carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy and:

- Captured and demonstrated evaluative evidence of the UNDP's contributions to development results at the country level.
- Assessed the impact of UNDP's development assistance across the major thematic and cross-cutting areas of the three major pillars as articulated in both the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD).
- Captured evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, national ownership, lessons learned and their operationalisation, challenges and sustainability of the current programme.
- Assessed the extent to which adequate monitoring and risk management was undertaken throughout the period, the extent to which evaluation systems were adequate to capture significant developments and inform responsive management.

Evaluation findings will inform a set of and recommend changes that would be used to strengthen existing programmes and to set the stage for the preparation of a new CPD in 2022. The Evaluation serves as an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders and partners in The Gambia with an impartial assessment of the results of UNDP support.

3.2. SCOPE OF WORK

The Evaluation assessed UNDP's overall intervention including an assessment of the appropriateness of the objectives, planned outputs, activities and inputs as compared to cost-effective alternatives. The Consultant verified, analysed, and assessed, where relevant, the integration and impact of cross-cutting issues in the CPD notably gender mainstreaming, Human Rights, equity considerations, and access to resources etc. The Evaluation followed the policy procedure and structure as per the UNEG guidelines for evaluations.

4. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 APPROACH

The approach to this assignment was based on a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the purpose, scope of work and requirements of the assignment as outlined in the ToR.

The assignment adopted a participatory and inclusive approach, involving engagements with a wide range of stakeholders including UN Agencies, relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government, National Assembly Members, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society, Private Sector, and other relevant institutions.

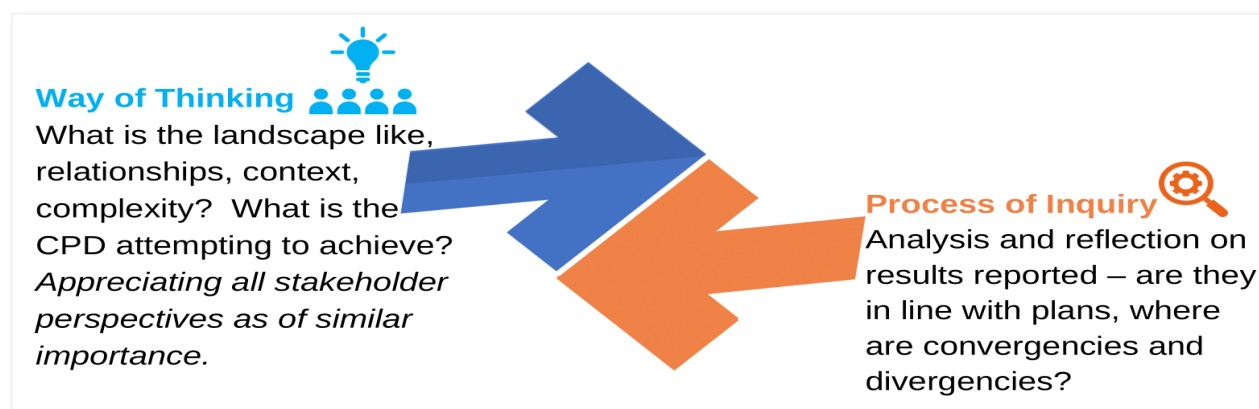
Drawing from the Consultant's past experience in similar assignments, the Evaluation followed a structured and methodological approach that involved building on the current local knowledge, stakeholder involvement, knowledge transfers, strong project management and flexibility as well as tailoring the approach to local requirements, Results-Based Management (RBM) systems, monitoring and evaluation methodologies and best practice models.

In addition, the Evaluation adopted a Gender and Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in the execution of this assignment to determine, *inter alia*, the extent to which the poor and vulnerable peoples, particularly women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from UNDP's work; the extent to which gender was addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring and reporting of the CPD; and the extent to which UNDP supported programme promoted positive changes in Gender Equality and Youth Participation.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

In line with the request in the Evaluation TOR to use a 'Theory of Change' (TOC) approach as part of the Evaluation, the team adopted a two-pronged approach in this Evaluation. The first aspect is adopting the TOC as a way of thinking to support the Evaluation in 'navigating complexity of social change' interventions. This allowed the team to explore the operational landscape, relationships between and within CPD Pillars, context, and complexity. The team sought to understand what the CPD is attempting to achieve and appreciate all stakeholder perspectives as of similar importance. The second component involved using the TOC as a 'process of inquiry' to analyse and reflect on results achieved, how they alignment to plans and how they have convergencies and divergencies. Figure 1 below summarised the team's approach.

Figure 1: Application of the TOC in the CPD Evaluation.



The Evaluation undertook a comprehensive review of key documents underpinning the implementation of the CPD in The Gambia including the UNDAF, UNDP CPD, and pertinent country programme documents, AWP, progress reports, monitoring and evaluation documents, as well as all relevant documentation concerning the three thematic areas and technical assessment reports provided by the UNDP Country Office.

Other documents reviewed included reports prepared by the Government of The Gambia that are relevant to the CPD/UNDAF such as the Government's Agenda for Transformation (AfT), National Development Plan 2018-2021, The Gambia Vision 2020, and other national reports, also provided by the UNDP Country Office.

The Evaluation built on documented evidence from structured Key Informant Interviews (KII), semi-structured interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Direct Observation, Field Visits, review of monitoring reports coupled with data derived from an Online Survey; a strategy for data collection and analysis; and an Evaluation Matrix. **See Annex 3A.**

Interviews were conducted with staff of the UNDP Country Office responsible for the three Pillars of the CPD, and other UN Agencies in-country. Interviews with Implementing Partners including Government (MDAs), Private Sector, Local Government Authorities, Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations were carried out in the relevant sectors to triangulate and validate findings.

Representatives of 20 institutions were interviewed. 90% of the interviews were conducted virtually via zoom in keeping with prevailing COVID-19 protocols. The rest of the sessions were in person. **See Annex 2.**

Field Visits were undertaken to consult and receive feedback of selected beneficiary communities in 13 intervention sites covering 15 villages across 3 Administrative Regions (WCR, NBR and LRR), and a total of 13 FGD sessions were held with project beneficiaries. Feedback was also received from the Online Survey administered to complement the desk review, interviews and Field Visits.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

The Evaluation complemented qualitative data obtained from Literature Review, Semi-Structured Interviews, Field Visits and Focus Group Discussions with quantitative data derived from the Online Survey.

Given that data collection was by both qualitative and quantitative methods, various data analysis techniques were adopted including triangulation, validation, interpretation and comparison.

The Evaluation ensured quality assurance of all the deliverables - at a technical level (methodological soundness, evidentiary basis) and linguistic level (copyediting, proofreading and logical flow). In this regard, the evaluation undertook rigorous quality assurance measures - including verifiable data (primary and secondary, qualitative and quantitative) on indicator achievement, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and Field Visits - to triangulate and validate findings.

6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 FINDINGS

This section presents the main findings and conclusions on each of the UNDP CPD Pillars.

The analysis tactic that was embraced in this reporting ensured that data obtained from all Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Field Visits, Online Surveys and secondary data from documents reviewed focused on presenting what is seen as the major contributions of the UNDP Country Programme Document to the National Development Plan.

This presentation answers the questions set along the key evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, partnership and coordination, and cross cutting themes of Human Rights, Gender Equality and Youth Participation as outlined in the ToRs.

RELEVANCE

FINDING 1:

The Evaluation concluded that the CPD interventions were duly consistent, aligned and supported the implementation of the National Development Plan. Support was concentrated in the areas of Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication, Governance and Human Rights, and Environment and Resilience Development.

There is strong evidence to confirm that the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2021 is highly relevant in driving alignment of resources with The Gambia's national development priorities. The UNDP Country Programme was found to be aligned to the development needs and priorities of The Gambia especially as they relate to priorities outlined in the National Development Plan. It is important to note that while the UNDAF and CPD were developed in 2016, the change of Government in 2017 and development of a new national development plan necessitated adaptation of the CDP to reflect priorities of the new Administration including but not limited to democratic governance, transitional justice, human rights and the rule of law. Notwithstanding, while 2017 CDP aligned to the key outputs, some key and relevant indicators could not be reported under the CPD as they did not align to the existing indicators.

The Evaluation found that the CPD supported initiatives were all aligned with the NDP, UNDAF and the SDGs. Under the CPD, UNDP supports 15 initiatives across three pillars addressing seven of the eight National Development Plan priorities as articulated in the National Development Plan 2018-2021⁶. The initiatives also demonstrate alignment with

⁶ The Gambia National Development Plan. Available from <https://ndp.gm>. Accessed 01 February 2022.

the UNDAF outcomes as proposed in the CPD and contribute to all 17 SDGs. However, there were reporting gaps with some CPD output indicators and the UNDAF indicators. Table 2 below summarises key interventions supported by the UNDP mapped against the NDP priorities, UNDAF and SDGs.

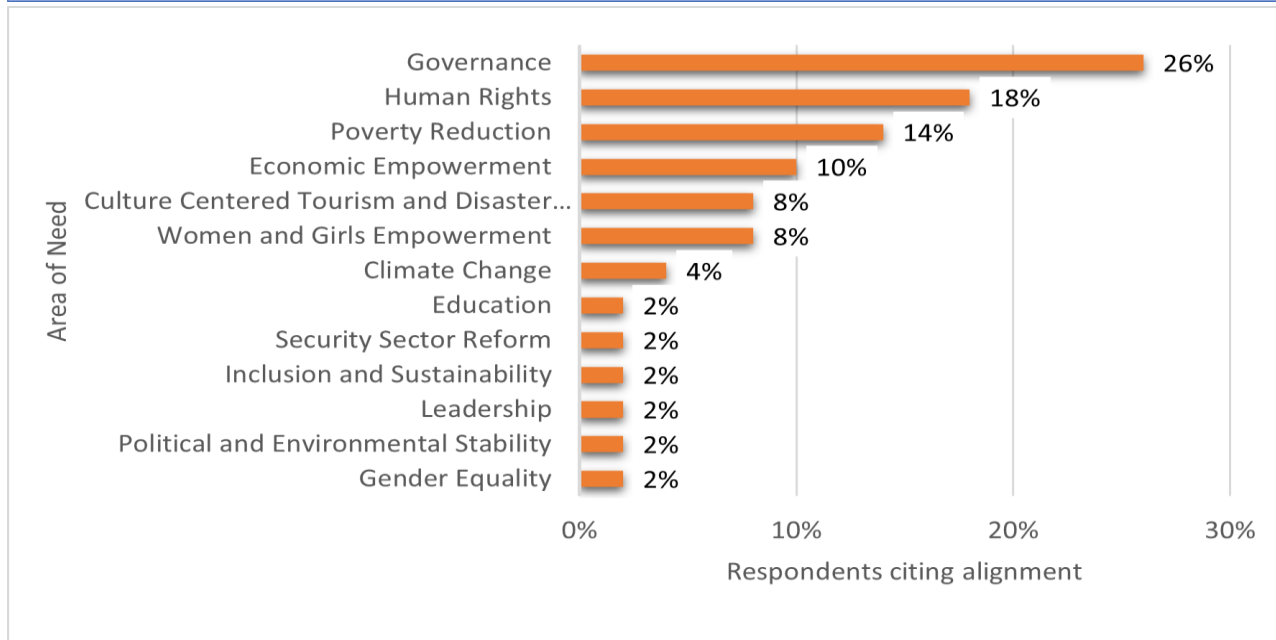
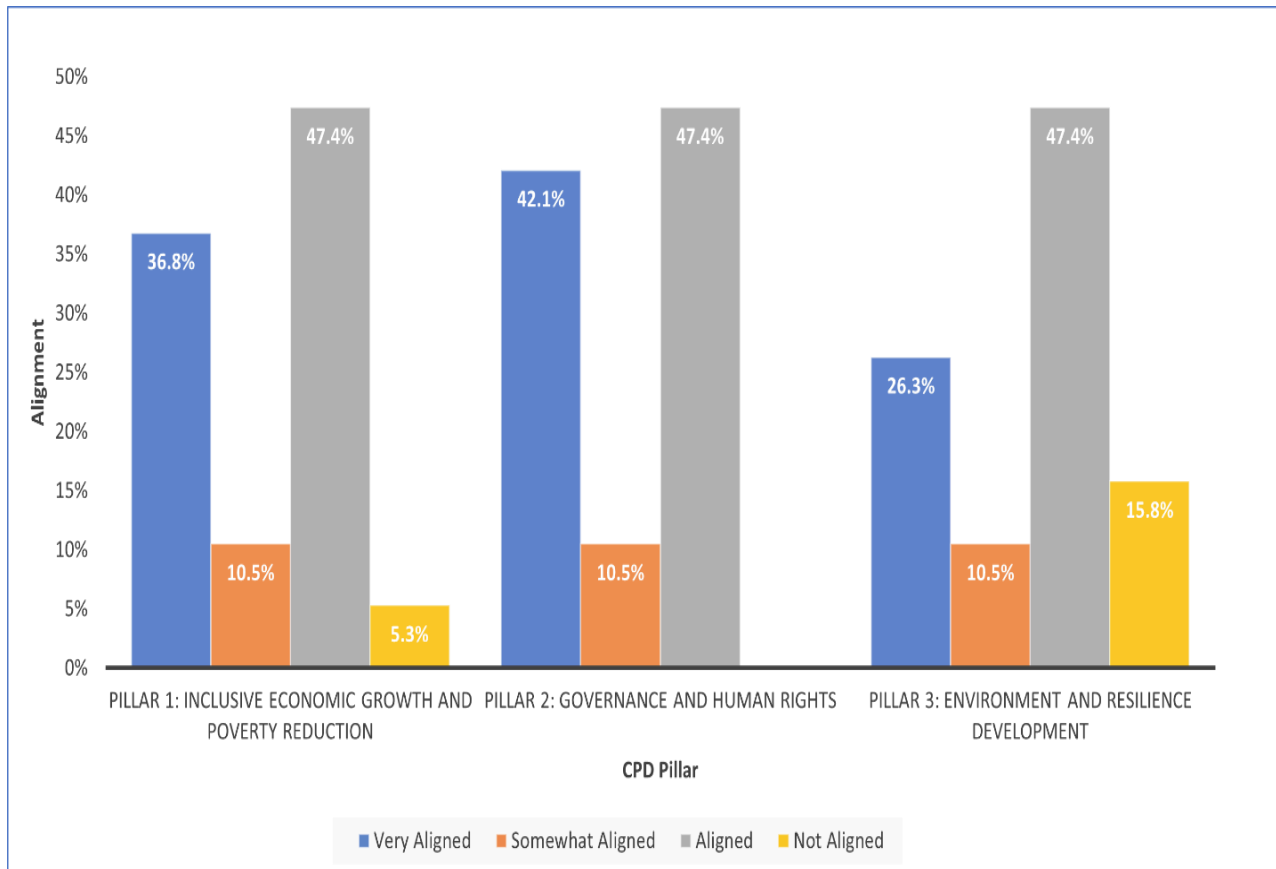
Table 2: UNDP CPD Supported Initiatives Mapped Against Gambia NDP, SDGs and UNDAF

CLUSTER	SUPPORTED INITIATIVES	NDP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES									SDGS																	UNDAF			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	CE4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	1	1.2	3.2	3.3
1. Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication	Economic Management Project																														
	Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development																														
	PACD																														
2. Governance and Human Rights	Security Sector Reform																														
	Support to Office of the President																														
	Transitional Justice & Human Rights																														
	Consolidating Governance																														
	Support to the Electoral Cycle and Democratic Processes in The Gambia																														
	Rule Of Law																														
3. Environment and Resilience Development	Strengthening Inclusive Citizen Engagement for More Accountable Governance in The Gambia																														
	Disaster Risk Management																														
	Protected Areas Network																														
	Early Warning Systems																														
	Coastal																														
U-PoPS																															

Source: Document Review, BJM Management Consultancy Company 2022.

Interviews with key informants representing various Implementing Partners also confirmed the relevance of the CPD. In all key informant interviews, respondents commended the UNDP for aligning its support and resources with the NDP. Figure 1 represents key informant views on the alignment of UNDP pillars against the national development needs and priorities, while Figure 2 shows the need and priorities addressed. However, there was a small percentage of respondents citing non-alignment under the Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication (5.3 percent) and Environment and Resilience Development (15.8 percent) pillars.

Figure 2: Key Informant Response on CPD's Alignment with National Development Priorities and Needs (N=19)



Source Online Survey, BJM Management Consultancy Company 2022.

Notwithstanding the relevance of the CPD, given the persistence and evolution of the COVID-19 Pandemic it would be prudent that future CPD development takes into consideration the effects of the pandemic on implementation and delivery.

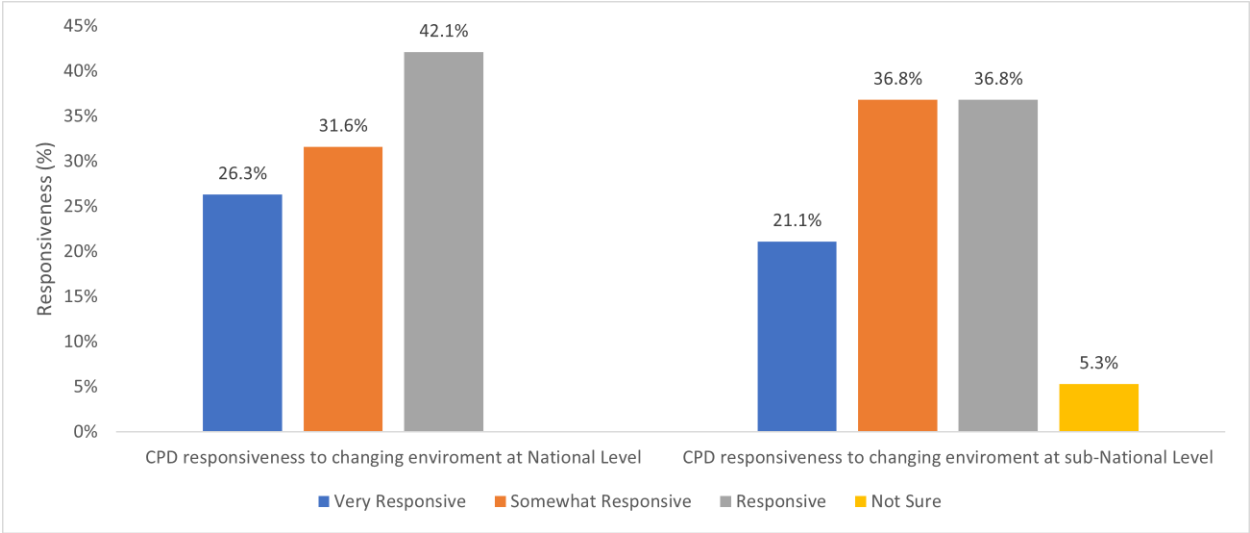
FINDING 2:

The CPD was found responsive and adapted to the changing environment in the country at national and subnational levels.

The relevance of CPD is further enhanced by its responsiveness to changing environments both at national and subnational levels, allowing the UNDP and its Implementing Partners to adapt their work (refer to Figure 3 below). For example, the political environment has changed rapidly since the change of Government in 2017 with a proliferation of political parties and democratic institutions, and the CPD was found able to adapt to these changes. Its support to the National Assembly and IEC before, during and after the 2021 Presidential Election serves as testimony to its responsiveness and adaptation to the changing environment. Similarly, the CPD responded and adapted to the COVID-19 Pandemic by re-budgeting and repositioning its interventions and leveraging technology among other initiatives.

It is important to note that the resulting impact of the pandemic on the economy and country in general has resulted in the extension of the end dates of the NDP, UNDAF and CPD to 2022.

Figure 3: CPDs Responsiveness to changing Environment at National and Sub-National Levels (N=19).



Source: Online Survey, BJM Management Consultancy Services 2022.

FINDING 3:

UNDP's selected Method of Delivery was found to be largely appropriate to the development context in The Gambia.

Another key element supporting UNDPs relevance is the implementation modality. The modality is inclusive, collaborative and provides technical and financial support to Government and Implementing Partners. In selecting the method of delivery, UNDP undertook micro-assessments of partners to determine their capacity to deliver projects on their own. Where capacity exists, partners were allowed to implement on their own and where it was found inadequate, UNDP support direct implementation. For example, MoFEA, MoTIE, MECCNAR, AATG, NHRC and *Mbolo Association* were assessed and found capable to implement interventions, while assessment of TANGO found inadequate capacity and consequently UNDP assumed direct implementation and the appointment of a local UNV at the Organisation. The IPC has undergone an assessment and is awaiting the outcome.

The National Execution approach has not only helped expedite project implementation and delivery but also contributed to capacity building and institutional strengthening within Government and Implementing Partners and ensured ownership and sustainability. Mainstreaming projects into Ministries and Implementing Partners proved effective and efficient as it enhanced ownership, guaranteed sustainability and built capacity. Similarly, the Direct Cash Transfer method facilitated smooth implementation while flexibility in allowing stakeholders to lead Project Steering Committees (PSC) and to determine and guide project interventions in line with felt needs were found effective in achieving intervention results.

However, conversations with several Implementing Partners revealed concerns about delays in disbursement of funds from the Malaysia Office, delays that often negatively impacts project delivery.

FINDING 4:

UNDP is found to be influential in national debates and has influenced national policies especially in the areas of Legal Reforms, Human Rights Protection, Gender Equality, Environment and Resilience Development.

UNDP is the largest UN Agency in-country and has significant influence on national debates and policy development working in close partnership with Implementing Partners. It supported the formulation of the NDP and facilitated resource mobilization efforts for the Plan including the Brussels Donor Roundtable in 2018.

Considering the changing political landscape in The Gambia which coincided with the CPD period (2017-2021) the UNDP should be commended for strategically allocating its resources to Governance and Human Rights-type activities. This meant the UNDP was instrumental in shaping/influencing national debates while at the same time strategically aligning with the NDP's strategic priority 1 - Restoring Good Governance, respect for Human Rights, the rule of law, and empowering citizens through decentralization and local governance. Up to \$20,282,075, which represents 42 percent of the 5-year budget was allocated to initiatives summarised in Table 5.

For example, UNDP supported several transformative legislations including the Anti-Corruption Commission Bill, Access to Information Act, TRRC Act, Constitutional Review Commission Act, Elections Reform Bill, Civil Services Reform, Security Sector, Women (Amendment) Discriminatory Act, Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill, Legal Practitioner (Amendment) Bill, Dispute Resolution (Amendment) Bill, Evidence (Amendment) Bill Disability Act, Labour (Amendment) Act among others.

UNDP also provided substantial support in the areas of Transitional Justice and Human Rights with the establishment and support to NHRC, TRRC, Janneh Commission⁷ etcetera; political dialogue and ensuring peaceful elections (National Assembly, IEC, Judiciary, MoJ, Security Services, CSOs); Gender Equality (MGCSW, Gender Equality Seal) and youth development and empowerment (Gambia Songhai Initiative); and institutional strengthening and capacity building (SSR, IPC, CRC, UTG, NSP, EMP, EPSD, SE4All Initiative). Support was also provided for the Mid-term review and Final evaluation of the NDP, and the Nationally Determined Commitments (NDC) - one of the most ambitious and Globally-recognised Action Plan on Climate Change.

The UNDP "Open Government" Platform/Initiative, through which Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Government institutions appear on TV and radio programmes to share with the public their institutions' mandate and service products is found to be innovative, useful and popular.

FINDING 5:

The design of the CPD addresses the needs of the most Vulnerable Groups in the country.

As far as addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups in the country, Implementing Partners noted the strong push by UNDP to consider these groups in the design of interventions. Respondents were able to reference frameworks and tools such

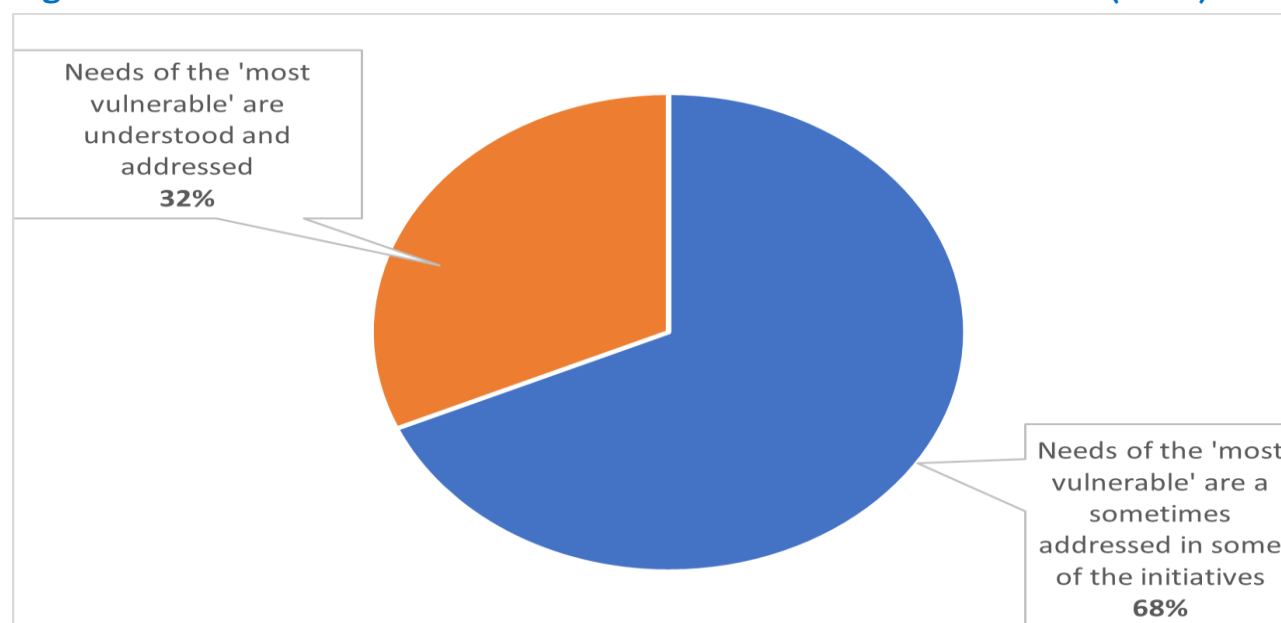
⁷ THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC BODIES, ENTERPRISES AND OFFICES AS REGARDS THEIR DEALINGS WITH FORMER PRESIDENT YAHYA A.J.J. JAMMEH AND CONNECTED MATTERS

as the Gender Marker which are recommended by UNDP. The recruitment of a Gender Associate was especially useful to drive the focus on Gender Equity in the programme. Under the CPD several initiatives or components thereof have been designed as summarised in the Table 3 below, while Figure 4 below presents key informant sentiment on this subject.

Table 3: CPD Interventions in Support of Vulnerable Groups

Women	Youth	Other Groups including Persons with Disabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building and supporting young women through various engagements. • Supporting and advocating for the establishment of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare. • Support to GWCC. • Supporting gender sensitivity analysis, and supporting the capacity assessment of women-led organisations in the country. • Establishment of strong women networks especially in the representation and participation in politics and decision making. • Strengthened women's knowledge and understanding on corruption, impacts of corruption and manipulation. • Establishment of a Career Guidance and Counseling Center at UTG (undergraduate course on Gender Studies to begin in September 2022). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to youth-led organisations such as National Youth Parliament, YOIPCB, Youth Chamber of Commerce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash Transfers for vulnerable populations. • Support the PWD organisations through the formulation of the Disability Act. • Building capacity of PWD Associations including GFD.

Figure 4: Extent to which CPD addresses needs of the Most Vulnerable (N=19).



Source: Online Survey, BJM Management Consultancy Company 2022.

While the evidence from this evaluation points to high relevance of the CPD, UNDP should consider streamlining its support towards areas where it can add the maximum value vis-à-vis other United Nations (UN) bodies in The Gambia, development partners, international and local NGOs, including CSOs. Considering the eight NDP priorities, supporting interventions in seven of these is putting strain on staff and Implementing Partners, the latter who often also work with other entities to deliver on the NDP. This is an area which the UNDP could strongly consider when developing the next CPD.

EFFECTIVENESS

FINDING 6:

There is plausible evidence that the CPD is on track to achieve planned results.

A review of reports and interviews with Key Informants across the three pillars confirms that the CPD is on track to achieve its planned results. As shown in Table 4 below 65 percent of indicators have been fully achieved, 30 percent partially achieved and 5 percent corresponding to one indicator which was not designed.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has been the major driving factor affecting delivery of results, however with the current extension of the CPD to 2022, there is an opportunity for UNDP and its Implementing Partners to galvanise their efforts to complete outstanding tasks towards achievement of outputs. On the 19th and 20th January 2022, UNDP held a retreat at the *Sunset Beach Hotel* to conduct a review of the 2021 Outcomes and Results and engaged in the planning process for the year 2022.

Table 4: Programme Results Framework Targets and Achievements

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
CPD Priority 1: Inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication				
Output 1.1: National and subnational institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and employment- and livelihoods- intensive.	Indicator 1.1.1. Number of gender-sensitive strategies, in place at the national and sub-national levels to generate and strengthen employment and livelihoods.	Baseline: 3 sectoral; 0 regional strategies Target: 6 sectoral; 4 regional strategies	8 LGA Strategic Plans	Trade, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Gender mainstreaming MSME Policy, Youth Policy, Investment Policy, Standard Operational Manual for the Women Entrepreneurs Fund, and Revised Labour Act, which has adopted the 6 months maternity leave
	Indicator 1.1.2. Number of schemes that expand and diversify the productive base.	Baseline: 0 central; 2 urban; 0 rural Target: 2 centrals; 3 urbans; 6 rural	13	ETWS & BDS, Gambia Songhai initiative, Women Bureau, Enterprise Fund, Job Centre, GCCI / E- Commerce Platform, Labour Department – minimum wages study, Attendance at conferences and workshops, Youth Connekt Gambia, PENDA Platform, Single Window Business Registration, National Business Council, SME Help Desk

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
	<p>Indicator 1.1.3.</p> <p>Number of new jobs and other livelihoods generated, disaggregated by sex and age.</p>	<p>Baseline: 700 men; 600 women; 600 youth; Total: 1,100</p> <p>Target: 2,000 men; 2,000 women; 1,000 youth; Total: 4,000</p>	<p>4223 in 2018, 476 in 2019, 14 in 2020, 721 in 2021 and 1,701 Livelihood enhanced in 2021</p>	<p>Jobs created through Gam-jobs and Livelihood enhanced (Kartong and the surrounding villages, GSI, Kotu women garden, Badijaran, GIEPA ETWs and BDS, GYCC- trade fair and packaging, GWCC international Trade Fair, Women Bureau EM, Women Trained on Detergent and soap making).</p>
<p>Output 1.2:</p> <p>Options enabled and facilitated for inclusive and sustainable social protection.</p>	<p>Indicator 1.2.1. Proportion of vulnerable children, women and youth receiving social protection support, disaggregated by sex</p>	<p>Baseline: 50,000 (29, 000 women, 10,000 youth).</p> <p>Target: 220,000 (100,000 women, 120,000 youth)</p>		<p>However, as indicated in the ToR, the project in response to output ii has not been designed.</p>
<p>Output 1.3.</p> <p>Capacity of national and subnational-level institutions strengthened to deliver improved basic services, formulate pro-poor and gender-sensitive strategies and plans.</p>	<p>Indicator 1.3.1. Number of national and subnational governments with functioning planning, budgeting and monitoring systems.</p>	<p>Baseline: 2 Target: 6</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5 out of 6 targets met - National Tourism Policy & Strategy 2021- 2026, Medium-term Strategic Plans for Janjanbureh, Mid-term evaluation of 7 LGA's Medium Term plans, PFM Strategy 2021 – 2025 and Evaluation of the LTV & NDP</p>

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
	<p>Indicator 1.3.2.</p> <p>Number of national statistical surveys that produced informed, gender-sensitive policies and plans.</p>	<p>Baseline: 2</p> <p>Target: 5</p>	5	IHS 2021 final report expected by 2022
CPD Priority 2: Governance and Human Rights.				
<p>Output 2.1.</p> <p>Electoral institutions enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation and representation, including for peaceful transitions.</p>	<p>Indicator 2.1.1.</p> <p>Proportion of eligible registered voters, disaggregated by sex.</p>	<p>Baseline:</p> <p>Presidential elections, 82%; National Assembly, 50%; local government, 12% (2011-2013)</p> <p>Target:</p> <p>Presidential, 88%; National Assembly, 65%; local government, 40% (2016-2018)</p>	<p>108.52%</p> <p>The final list contains 962,157 registered voters, including 545,318 women (56.68%) and 416,839 men (43.32%).</p>	<p>The 2016 voter register contained a total of 886,578 voters, and the number of voters (962,157) registered by the IEC during 2021 registration stands at 108.52% of the 2016 voter registry.</p> <p>Local elections are scheduled for April 2022.</p>

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
	Indicator 2.1.2. Number of women participating as candidates in local and national elections.	Baseline: 20/114 for local government, /48 for national assembly Target: 40/114 for local government; 15/55 for national assembly.	1 female presidential aspirant. Local elections are scheduled for April 2022	The list of aspirants included 13 independent candidates, including one woman and 13 political parties. However, the only female presidential aspirant was disqualified among other aspirants.
Output 2.2. Enhanced institutional capacity of the justice system to deliver accessible, efficient and accountable justice to all, especially women and vulnerable groups	Indicator 2.2.1. Number of legal aid centers established.	Baseline 3 Target 5	5 (in Regions and in Mile 2 Central Prison	Lead Aid Centres established in 4 regions (16 communities) and Prison Legal Aid Desks (PLADs) in Mile 2
	Indicator 2.2.2. Number of beneficiaries, particularly women and vulnerable groups, using legal aid centres, disaggregated by sex.	Baseline 672 cases 40% women Target 3000 cases 60% women	376	207 adults (106 females, 101 males), including 39 children In addition, 47 children (all boys) provided legal support were released from detention, 78 inmates (71 males, 7 female) received free legal consultations with 15 male and 6 females granted bail

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
Output 2.3. Frameworks developed for effective and transparent engagement of civil society, including women's organizations, in national development.	Indicator 2.3.1. Number of civil society organizations, including women's organizations, using open platforms and networks to engage in national and local governance and decision-making processes.	Baseline 2 Target 5	4	3 social media platforms (twitter and Facebook) used by GPU, ACCG and Action Aid to engage citizens TANGO website, social media platforms and corporate emails developed to provide space for citizen engagements. DSPD's website, social media platforms and corporate emails are under development
Output 2.4. Strengthened operational capacities of oversight and accountability institutions actively engaged in the public sphere.	Indicator 2.4.1. Number of backlogged audit reports and performance reports produced by National Audit Office	Baseline: 0 audit reports; 40 performance reports Target: 0 audit reports; 0 performance reports	2 (2019 & 2020) are due to be submitted to the National Assembly	11 reports were finalised and submitted to the National Assembly. The 2016, 2017 and 2018 Auditor General's reports on the consolidated financial statement of The Government of The Gambia were presented to the National Assembly and discussed.
CPD Priority 3: Environment and resilience development				
Output 3.1. Preparedness systems to effectively address the	Indicator 3.1.1. Number of end-to-end early warning systems for man-made and natural hazards.	Baseline: 1 Target: 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 (agric. & food security) ● 1 (EWS at DWR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Harmonized framework (Agric. & food security) ● Baseline EWS at DWR

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
consequences of and response to natural hazards.	<p>Indicator 3.1.2.</p> <p>Number of contingency plans at national and sub-national level to prepare for and recover from disaster events with adequate financial and human resources, capacities and operating procedures</p>	<p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 1 Central, 8 regional plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 regional Contingency plans for Banjul, KMC & WCR Community based Action Plans NBR (6), CRR (6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Contingency Plans for Banjul, KMC and WCR Community-based Action Plans for NBR and CRR.
	<p>Indicator 3.1.3.</p> <p>Existence of clearly defined institutional responsibilities and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms for disaster and climate risk management at national and subnational levels.</p>	<p>Baseline: At national level</p> <p>Target: National, 8 regional, 48 districts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Until 2020 there are 8 regional mechanisms All 48 districts have a disaster mgmt. structure each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional mechanisms in place as of 2020. Disaster Management Structures established.
	<p>Indicator 3.1.4.</p> <p>Percentage of the at-risk population covered by national and community level contingency plans for disaster events</p>	<p>Baseline</p> <p>15% (5% women)</p> <p>Target</p> <p>50% (25% women)</p>	<p>Hotspots identified population wise: WCR 699,000; BJL 31,201; KMC 322,733</p>	<p>Hotspots identified population wise: WCR 699,000; BJL 31,201; KMC 322,733</p> <p>(1.1 million people/ 2.28 million nat. Population * 100 =46%).</p>

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
Output 3.2. Gender-responsive disaster and climate risk management integrated into the development planning and budgetary frameworks of key sectors	Indicator 3.2.1. Number of districts with plans or strategies for enhanced resilience to climate change impacts.	Baseline 0 Target 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12 Community based action plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Action Plans developed
Output 3.3. Scaled-up actions on climate change adaptation and mitigation implemented.	Indicator 3.3.1. Number of systems in place to monitor, report and verify use of climate finance	Baseline 2 Target 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 Existing systems including MEAs focal points & MOFEA, UNCBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring systems in place to monitor, report and verify use of Climate Finance.
	Indicator 3.3.2. Number of comprehensive plans, strategies, policies, and programmes implemented to achieve low emission and climate-resilient development objectives	Baseline 3 Target 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SPCR (MECCNAR), LECRDS, SOER 3, GEAP 3 (UNDP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comprehensive plans, strategies, policies, and programmes implemented to achieve low emission and climate-resilient development objectives.

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
Output 3.4. Inclusive and sustainable solutions adopted to achieve increased renewable energy access and efficiency	Indicator 3.4.1. Number of new development partnerships for improved, efficient and sustainable energy solutions targeting underserved communities/groups and women	Baseline 1 Target 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with NAWEC UNDP NAMA solar energy plants at Basse & Farafenni UNDP Mbolo Association partnership in Kartong MFP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 new partnerships developed for improved, efficient and sustainable energy solutions targeting underserved communities/groups and women.
	Indicator 3.4.2. Proportion of population with access to energy.	Baseline 37% Target 76%	About 59%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of population with access to energy.
Output 3.5: Capacities of national and subnational administrations enabled to enhance conservation, sustainable management, and use of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems.	Indicator 3.5.1. Number of communities benefiting from sustainable natural resources management	Baseline: 5 communities (85% women's groups) Target: 8 communities (90% women's groups).	20 communities, 15 farmer packages under PAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities benefited from sustainable natural resources management. Farmer packages delivered under PAN.

Green = Fully Achieved	Yellow = Partially Achieved	Red = Not achieved	Not Designed	
CPD Outputs	Output Indicators	Baseline/ Target	Achievement	Remarks on achievement or non-achievement of the target
	<p>Indicator 3.5.2: Number of protected areas established and managed for biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>Baseline: 5 Target: 10</p>	<p>8 Protected Areas</p> <p>Including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ KWNP extension 10,000ha ○ Baobolong wetland reserve 5000ha ○ Jokadu National Park 15,000ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected areas established and managed for biodiversity conservation.

FINDING 7:

Evidence was found to showcase UNDP's contribution to improvements in National Government Capacity, including Institutional Strengthening.

I. Inclusive Growth and Poverty Eradication Pillar

Mainstreaming projects into Ministries and Implementing Partners have contributed to capacity building and institutional strengthening. The ESPD (MoTIE) and EMP (MoFEA) projects are classical examples of such mechanisms as staff of the host Ministries got their capacity built in project implementation among other skills.

The EMP developed a Management Information System, procured and delivered office equipment to strengthen GBoS and the National Statistical System (NSS) to ensure sustainability in the production of credible data that can be used to inform policy and for measuring progress. Beneficiary institutions include the MoTIE and its satellite institutions, Ministry of Lands, Regional Government and Religious Affairs, Gambia Police Force, Gambia Prisons Service, Gambia Civil Aviation Authority, Gambia Fire and Rescue Services among others.

Under the EMP, the Local Government Authorities (LGAs) were strengthened by developing medium-term Strategic Plans for 7 LGAs namely: Basse, Kuntaur, Kerewan, Mansakonko, Brikama, Kanifing, and Banjul City Council; a Planning Cadre developed, and the Integrated Financial Management Systems (IFMIS) rolled out, together with IFMIS infrastructure support, across all the 8 Councils including Janjanbureh⁸

Other examples of capacity building interventions under the EMP include support to the development of the National SDGS Status Report (Voluntary National Review) and post-VNR regional sensitisation among others⁹.

Similarly, the ESPD project contributions to capacity building interventions include development of the "Made in The Gambia Strategy 2021-2025"; support to the review and update of the GIEPA Act 2015; support to a policy dialogue on employment and formalisation of MSMEs in The Gambia; conducting a study on the effects of AfCFTA on MSMEs in The Gambia, sensitisation for 125 Border Security Officers on AfCFTA Online Reporting Platform and the development of national schedules on commitment on Trade Services as part of AfCFTA negotiations; support to the pre-feasibility plans for The Gambia Labour Force 2022; development of the "*E-commerce/Digital Jula*" Platform;

⁸ 6 Desktop Computers to each council, Servers, hands on training on the use of the IFMIS to over 64 end-users

⁹ Development of Tourism Policy and Strategy 2021-2026; Training of Planners on Impact Evaluation/Fundamentals of Development Planning, Development of the National Development Planning Platform, UTG Graduate Scheme, National Human Development Report; PFM Strategy 2021-2025; Tax Compliance Awareness strengthening and training of suppliers and actors on GPPA Regulations; Review of Medium-term Debt Strategy; Training of Gambia Strategic Review Board and MDAs on appraisal of investment projects; Donor Coordination Forum (2018); End-line Evaluation of The Gambia Aid Policy 2015-2020; Evaluation of Vision 2020; Mid-term Review and Evaluation of NDP; Gender-sensitive Review of Economic Management Policies.

PENDA Platform; and Single-Window Business Registration; Strategic Plan for The Gambia Manufacturers' Association; ETWS; BDS; Gambia Songhai Initiative; *Youth Connekt*; and 16 policies and surveys developed¹⁰.

II. Governance and Human Right Pillar

Under this pillar, UNDP's contributions to improvements in national government capacity are evident in the establishment and operationalization of institutions such as TRRC, NHRC, CRC, Victims Centre, National Assembly (National Assembly Service Bill, Parliamentary Research Unit, Women Caucus and IPC); implementation of transformative reforms such as SSR (policies, strategies and study tours), Civil Service Reform (Policy mapping exercise for MDAs etc.); capacity building and institutional strengthening for Government institutions (MoJ, GBoS). UNDP also contributed to the transformation of the former Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) into a fully-fledged Department of Strategic Policy and Delivery (DSPD) under the Office of the President; and supported GBoS and UTG in data collection on women and Youth Participation and empowerment.

UNDP helped establish the *Career Guidance and Counseling Center* and the *Research Unit* at the University of The Gambia and provided funding for research on important national issues including ongoing research on the "Witch hunt" saga of the former Government.

It also supported study tours to various countries for the Committees of the National Assembly to build capacity and learn lessons from other National Assemblies. This includes tours to Kenya, Ghana and The Hague in the Netherlands etc.

Under its COVID-19 Response and Recovery Initiative, UNDP and GCCI in partnership provided substantial support to the Prisons Services and Gambia Police Force¹¹

The rehabilitation and refurbishment of the *Ndemban Health Facility* and its annex to the EFSTH, coupled with the construction of an Oxygen Plant on site is further evidence of the UNDP support to government capacity building and institutional strengthening endeavours. This intervention was further support provided under the COVID-19 Response and Recovery initiative.

¹⁰ *Labour Force Survey; Feasibility Study of the establishment of the Tech-hub; Gender Assessment of Trade-related policies; Formulation of the National MSME Policy; Formulation of National Youth Policy; Development of National Employment Policy; Development of Labour Action; Development of Aid for Trade Strategy; Impact Assessment of SIC, DIC, EPZL; Injuries Compensation and Factories Act 1963 (revised); Factories Act (revised); SOPs for Women Entrepreneurship Fund; MSME Mapping 2018; Trade Policy 2018; Investment Policy 2018; E-Commerce Feasibility Study.*

¹¹ *A 30-seater bus with 6 months' worth of fuel vouchers; GCCI distributed 100,000-Dalasi worth of detergents and 10 hand washing stations; rehabilitated the kitchens and medical facilities in Mile 2 and Jeshwang Prisons, 2 dormitories in Jeshwang Prison, and raised the low perimeter wall; UNDP also procured PPEs of over 270 pairs of gloves and 5000 facemasks for the Prisons Service and Gambia Police Force, in addition to 9 internet dongles for Police personnel attached to the Statistics and the Community Policing Units.*

Prior to COVID, UNDP has been supporting the judiciary as well as the justice and security sector to enhance service delivery and citizen right, rule of law and SGBV related issues. Examples include the development and production of Community Policing Strategy & Implementation Plans; Community Policing Pilot Report & Recommendations; Rapid Prisons Assessment Report, Photo book & Short Video Documentary; Prison Case Management Implementation Plan; Rule of Law Roadmap (final version); SGBV Training and Handbook to improve the prosecution of SGBV cases; Radio Program Series; and support to the Gender Carnival to increase awareness, abolish the stigma associated with SGBV and break the culture of Silence.

In support of the Judiciary during the COVID-19 Pandemic, UNDP established the Virtual Courts and provided logistical/material support for the Courts and NALA¹²; a Legal Aid Desk at Mile 2 Central Prison; and Legal Aid Units established in four regions covering 16 communities.

As at 2021 UNDP support resulted in 246 people, including children, received free legal aid and mediation services through the Remote/Mobile Legal Aid Clinics in four regions; refurbishment of sanitation facilities in Mile 2 Prison; the development and launch of the Judicial Strategic Plan and Sector-Wide Rule of Law Roadmap; development of a Police Crime Mobile Data Collection Application; rolling out of Community Policing (CP) in four regions including the revision of CP Training Manual and development of CP frameworks; Virtual Court extension to the Magistrate level; Legislative and Strategic Reforms support:- The Gambia Bar Association Strategic Plan, The Sexual Offences Act, Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, and Judiciary Strategic Plan.

In addition, through the Rule of Law project, 25 judges were trained on the prosecution of cases that will arise from the Truth Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) recommendations, 25 state counsel from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and 43 judges, magistrates and children's court panellists were trained on the Children's Act and child-friendly justice. A training manual and guidelines for prosecutors on child justice were developed to strengthen implementation of the Children's Act. Additionally, 37 registrars and court clerks (Judiciary) were trained on data management for child protection and child justice.

Furthermore, three One Stop Centers (OSCs) were renovated in Basse, Brikama and Bundung equipped. Also, through the project support, six (6) social workers were recruited and trained seconded to the OSCs and are providing effective Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) response and justice delivery services to survivors of SGBV, including the renovation of the shelter at Bakoteh under MOGCSW which allows for an integrated and survivor-centered approach in dealing with cases of SGBV by providing, counselling of survivors, medical and access to justice services. The approach has ensured that survivors are reintegrated back into their normal lives without the fear of intimidation. Through the MoGCSW, the project supported the development of a

¹² A cell tower at Mile 2 Central Prison and Prison Service Headquarters, and an assortment of ICT equipment [27 laptops, 27 internet dongles, procured 7 laptops, 7 monitors, 7 docking stations, 5 internet dongles with 1-year subscription, 2 back up batteries and Zoom licenses] for NALA to facilitate its participation in the Virtual Courts to ensure inmates have access to justice during the COVID-19 pandemic.

women empowerment training manual, use in training women CSOs at the grass-roots level that are raising awareness and sensitizing communities on the SGBV related issues. In total, 105 women CSOs have been trained.

The UNDP promoted social cohesion, peace and democracy through the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) Initiative.

Additional examples of capacity building interventions include support to the IEC Electoral Cycle 2016-2021 (Presidential, National Assembly and Local Government/Councils), rehabilitation and refurbishment of 4 Regional Offices with attendant equipment and furniture in Brikama, Kerewan, Mansakonko and Basse in addition to COVID-19 PPEs¹³; the GPF Due diligence Assessment; 3 Social Media Platforms (Twitter and Facebook) and corporate e-mails for use by GPU, ACCG, AATG for citizens engagement; developed TANGO and DSPD websites; and 11 National Audit Reports developed and submitted to the National Assembly.

III. Environment and Resilience Development Pillar

Evidence of UNDP's contribution to improvements in national government capacity, including institutional strengthening under this pillar include: support to the enactment of legislation and the formulation of policy frameworks to integrate Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation into national policies and promote renewable energy; construction of a new Hydrological Headquarters in Bansang responsible for national hydro-met monitoring, provision of computers and other equipment installed at all Regional Meteorological Headquarters, and the 3 LED Weather Display Boards strategically installed at key locations along Kairaba Avenue, Brusubi Turntable and Tanji; and support to development and validation of various policy documents including: DRR , NDMA Act, SOER, GEAP, LECREDS, NAMA, (NDPRP).

Other interventions include involvement of neighbouring communities in Protected Areas management at local level and MDAs such as MECCNAR, MOA and TANGO which provided technical assistance and capacity enhancement of the MDAs as principals and custodians of the outcomes; formulation of a Climate-Resilient Strategy and adoption of sustainable agricultural practices for small-scale producers, rehabilitation of mangrove ecosystems, coastal protection and early-warning systems for better planning and management of climate-related disasters and shocks; Harmonised Framework (Agriculture and Food Security); Regional contingency plans for 3 Councils (Banjul, KMC and WCR); 12 Community-based Action Plans in two regions (6 in NBR and 6 in CRR); 8 Disaster and Climate Risk Management Mechanisms and 28 Districts with Disaster Risk Reduction Management Structures; 5 Systems to monitor, report and verify use of Climate Finance; NAMA Solar Energy Plants in Farafenni and Basse; Support to *Mbolo Association* (Multifunctional Platform in Kartong - set for replication in rural communities); and Protected Areas for biodiversity conservation.

¹³ 21 executive office tables, 21 executive chairs, 42 visitors' chairs, voter biometric kits, facemasks, sanitiser.

In addition, the UPOPs Project which is funded by GEF/UNDP supported the development of Legal Framework for PCBs and UPOPs which is referred to as the HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS REGULATIONS, 2022.

FINDING 8:

The Evaluation concluded that the UNDP has been proactive in utilising innovative techniques and best practices in its interventions under the CPD.

The Evaluation found that UNDP has utilised innovative techniques and best practices in implementing the CPD as outlined in the examples below. The Accelerator Lab¹⁴ has been a key ingredient in driving innovations across the UNDP initiatives in The Gambia, with over US\$10m delivered to drive innovations across the CPD Work Plan commitments.

I. Inclusive Growth and Poverty Eradication Pillar

In partnership with GCCI and under the ESPD project, the “*E-commerce/Digital Jula*” Platform (to share *inter alia*, information on products and produce available in weekly markets [*Lumos*] around the country) was developed and promoted. Digitalised platforms for Businesses over television (13-part series) were supported by the UNDP.

Innovative techniques and best practices under the EMP project include the development and roll-out of the Management Information System to MDAs in order to strengthen the GBoS and National Statistical System; the rollout of Integrated Financial Management Systems (IFMIS) with IFMIS infrastructure support across all the 8 Local Government Area Councils; migration from ASYCUDA+++ to ASYCUDA World; development and presentation of the first National SDGS Status Report (Voluntary National Review); development of the national Development Planning Platform to foster dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge sharing on The Gambia National Development Planning process, and support the understanding and promotion of national development plans as well as speed up their acceptance and popularization; and pro-poor and gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) to track budget responsiveness to women priorities and the way government use funds to promote gender equality.

Other innovations include but are not limited to development of IVR platforms, 3-D Printing for Development - recycling plastics and production of prosthetics for amputees- (See Figure 9 below), and introduction of Entrepreneurship Modules in TVET programmes to develop entrepreneurship skills of trainees and provision of seed capital;

¹⁴ UNDP Gambia Accelerator Lab. Available from <https://acceleratorlabs.undp.org/content/acceleratorlabs/en/home/locations/TheGambia.html>. Accessed 01 February, 2022.

Water Management Committees - capacity building of VDCs in water management for sustainability, establishment of GIS system for tracking project assets (labour-saving devices); and capacity building in solar installation skills for young women.

II. Governance and Human Right Pillar

Under its COVID-19 Recovery and Response efforts, UNDP developed and introduced Virtual Courts for the judiciary to expedite judicial proceedings especially for the Prison Service to decongest the Remand Wing; established a Legal Aid Desk at the Mile 2 Central Prison, Jeshwang Prison as well as complete a 200 capacity dormitories at Jeshwang Prison facility to decongest the overcrowded remanded wing at Mile 2 to mitigate the spread of the virus; Legal Caravans deployed to provide Legal Aid to improved access to justice especially for women and children who are victims of serious Human Rights violations; Zoom licenses issued to Implementing Partners in order to facilitate Zoom meetings; and Cash transfers to beneficiaries especially in rural communities using digital financial services such as NAFA, Mobile Money etc.

Additional innovative techniques adopted by UNDP include; the provision of a Digital Translator to improve National Assembly proceedings; introduction of Sign Language Interpretation services for national and private Television (GRTS, QTV) especially during the TRRC proceedings; engagement of traditional communicators (*Kanyleng Groups*) and community radios to sensitise communities at the grassroots level on issues of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV); and use of Preventive Diplomacy and Consultative Approach to peacebuilding and maintenance as championed by UNDP especially before, during and after the Presidential Election of 2021, and the Political Impasse of 2017 during which the UNDP in partnership with ECOWAS and UNOWAS facilitated the transfer of power.

UNDP support to the Gambia Police Force (GPF) helped digitalize the GPF for real-time reporting, coordination, asset management, and evidence decision-making processes through an innovative approach to map out all the police stations and post to the Geographical Information System (GIS) including the development of the mobile data application incorporated to a custom-built case management system. This has provided the GPF with the real-time number of personnel, and points of interest in those locations. To ensure that effective implementation of the digital system developed, 24 police officers were trained in Mobile App and Case management systems.

In the area of best practice, UNDP supported the establishment and operationalization of key institutions like TRRC, NHRC, CRC, Victims Centre; adopted the Direct Implementation Strategy as a mechanism to fill capacity gaps of Implementing Partners; supported study tours undertaken by Committees of the National Assembly to various

countries including Ghana (PEC), Kenya (Trade Committee) and The Haque (Human Rights and Constitutional Matters Committee) in The Netherlands.

In addition, the interest generated by participants of the SSR Gender-Responsive Training and the formation of a Gender Caravan to go nation-wide and sensitize targeted Security Personnel in security installations was innovative and remains relevant to mainstreaming gender in the Security Sector Reform process. Development of a Community Strategic and Implementation Plan and rolling out of Community Policing philosophy at regional and national level to foster trust and social cohesion which UNDP has set a benchmark being used by other developments for the security sector to better serve the population.

Furthermore, UNDP support to Civil Service Reform and Performance Management, and its participatory/joint planning approach particularly in its engagement with CSOs/NGOs have been applauded not only for being best practice but also promotes accountability.

III. Environment and Resilience Development Pillar

Innovative interventions and best practices under this Pillar include but not limited to: 3 LED Weather Display Boards strategically installed at key locations along Kairaba Avenue, Brusubi Turntable and Tanji guarantee sustained weather services; initiation and creation of the bottom-based institutional arrangements (Parks and Village Development Committees) in the protection of Biodiversity in Protected Areas; demonstration and the transfer of successful Coastal Adaptation Technologies and the introduction of economic diversification.

Further evidence of UNDP innovations include support to *Mbolo Association* and TANGO. *Mbolo Association* with support from UNDP is engaged in developing the productive capacity of women to become professional solar installers through its innovative Multi-Functional Facility (labour-saving devices [solar-powered milling and washing machines], ice plant, food preservation techniques [cold-storage and smoking]. Similarly, the use of improved cooking stoves to promote sustainable cooking practices in communities especially in NBR, WCR and GBA through UNDP support for TANGO is innovative in reducing carbon emissions and protects forest cover. Other innovations include the Mobile Compost Chambers given to women in Nuimi in NBR by the UPOPs Project. The beneficiaries use the Mobile Compost Chambers to make their own organic manure for their gardens.

EFFICIENCY

FINDING 9:

There has been an economical use of Financial and Human Resources, and project outputs have been delivered within allocated budgets, despite the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Evaluation shows an economical use of financial and human resources in the delivery of the CPD outputs as outlined in Table 5 below.

The CPD programme budget was \$48 million with an absorption rate of 76 percent.

As mentioned above the COVID-19 Pandemic has been the major driving factor affecting delivery of results, however with the current extension of the CPD to 2022, there is an opportunity for the UNDP and its Implementing Partners to galvanise their efforts to complete outstanding tasks towards achievement of outputs.

On the 19th and 20th January 2022, UNDP held a retreat at the *Sunset Beach Hotel* to conduct a review of the 2021 Outcomes and Results and engaged in the planning process for the year 2022.

Table 5: Financial Analysis

UNDP CPD FINANCIAL ANALYSIS 2017-2021				
CURRENCY: USD				
PROJECT	BUDGET \$	AL EXPENDITURE \$	BALANCE \$	%
Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Eradication				
Economic Management Project	6,834,750	6,490,674	344,076	95%
Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development	3,281,791	3,157,672	124,119	96%
Programme for Accelerated Community Development (PACD)	5,755,513	5,201,754	553,759	90%
Governance and Human Rights				
Security Sector Reform	1,400,000	1,392,579	7,421	99%
Support to Office of the President	500,000	499,869	131	100%
Transitional Justice & Human Rights	4,700,000	3,478,413	1,221,587	74%
Consolidating Governance	4,400,000	2,514,556	1,885,444	57%
Support to the Electoral Cycle and Democratic Processes in The Gambia	4,936,700	715,813	4,220,887	14%
Rule Of Law	2,695,378	2,312,298	383,080	86%
Strengthening Inclusive Citizen Engagement For More Accountable Governance In The Gambia	1,649,997	1,119,997	530,000	68%
Environment and Resilience Development				
Capacity building for PCBs and uPOPs in The Gambia	649,459	504,896	144,563	78%
Disaster Risk and Natural Resource Management	2,910,008	2,603,926	306,082	89%
Early Warning-Strengthening Climate Services in Gambia	1,922,405	1,628,461	293,944	85%
Enhancing Resilience of Vulnerable Communities & Areas	5,003,527	3,604,002	1,399,525	72%
Gambia Protected Areas Network	1,144,626	955,159	189,467	83%
Investing in Grid Connected Solar PV in The Gambia	244,538	210,314	34,224	86%
TOTAL PORTFOLIO	48,028,691	36,390,383	11,638,308	76%

Finding 10:

Monitoring and Evaluations Systems are supporting the capture, documentation and sharing of progress, and there is room for improvement particularly around Knowledge Management and Dissemination.

There is evidence to show that UNDP has processes and frameworks in place to support MEL practice in its funded initiatives. These include guidance such as for evaluations, and Implementing Partners mentioned the practice of “learning and reflecting together” at least on an annual basis. Systems such as the Voluntary National Review (VNR) set up with the support of the UNDP are also a good example of national level efforts to enhance tracking and reflecting on progress made on the attainment of the SDGs. There are several evaluations which have been commissioned over the course of the CPD, as well as a good number of project progress reports. The CPD has a results framework, albeit not revised to cater for adjustments over time e.g., the realignment with the updated NPD priority statements from the 2018 Plan.

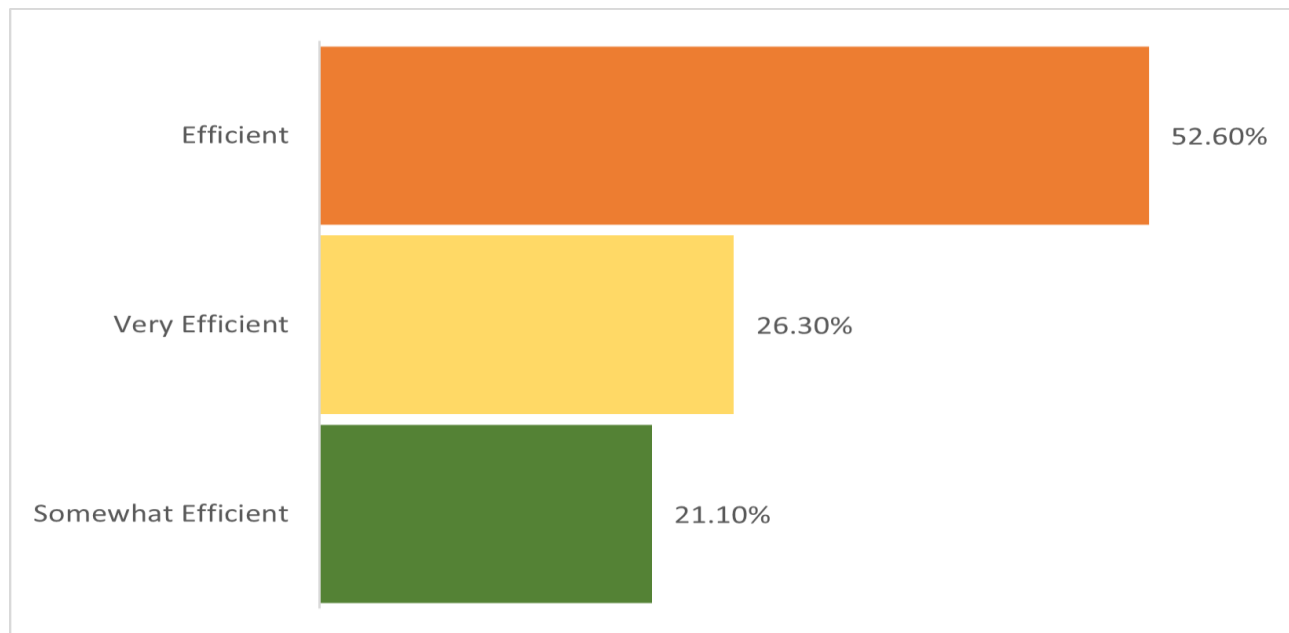
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FINDING 11:

UNDP is efficient in building synergies and leveraging with other programmes and stakeholders in The Gambia.

Comments received from Implementing Partners indicate that UNDP has a high degree of efficiency in building synergies with ongoing initiatives and partners in The Gambia (see Figure 6). This corroborates the earlier findings on implementation modality as reported under ‘relevance’. This is because the implementation modality allows for UNDP to leverage existing mechanisms and/or institutions in its delivery rather than creating new ones. Implementing Partners also benefit from institutional strengthening-type activities which has long term beneficial outcomes for sustainability.

Figure 5: Degrees of Efficiency in Developing Synergies/Leveraging Existing Programmes. (N=19)



Source: Online Survey, BJM Management Consultancy Company 2022.

SUSTAINABILITY

FINDING 12:

In principle, CPD interventions are found to be sustainable in design and implementation, and mechanisms are in place to sustain improvements made.

The evaluation reveals that CPD interventions are sustainable in design and implementation and that mechanisms are in place to sustain improvements made. This is manifested by several initiatives including capacity building and institutional strengthening both at the national and grassroots levels, establishment of strong institutions, partnerships and community engagements/participation among others. The National Execution Approach of project implementation and mainstreaming interventions within Government and Implementing Partners ensure ownership and sustainability. Examples include the EMP (MoFEA), EPSD (MoTIE), DSDP/PACD (OP), NSP (MECCNR), IPC (NA) and interventions within the LGA/Councils. See Table 6 below.

Table 6: Interventions Mainstreamed within Government and Implementing Partner Institutions.

PROJECTS	MDAS	INTERNATIONAL NGOs	LOCAL NGOs	UN BODIES	ACADEMIA	LGAs	OVERSIGHT INSTITUTIONS	PRIVATE SECTOR
TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS								
RULE OF LAW								
ESPD								
EMP								
PACD								
NAMA SUPPORTED PROJECTS								
STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE								
LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY								
PACD								

The establishment of the NHRC is another example of sustainable mechanisms put in place to sustain improvements in Transitional Justice and Human Rights especially in the post-TRRC era.

UNDP using its “Good Offices” to ensure continued engagement of Development Partners and Government in CPD interventions is another mechanism to ensure sustainability of its interventions.

Furthermore, community engagement through grassroots consultations from project design through to implementation including M&E also contribute to ensuring sustainability. Examples include the *Mbolo* Association’s Multi-functional Facility in Kartong - set for replication in all Administrative Regions of the country (See Figure 10 below); VDCs and Water Management Committees to manage water facilities (See Figure 8); Parks and Village Development Committees set up to protect and manage biodiversity in Protected Areas and support rural livelihoods in coastal zones to mitigate the impact of Climate Change; the Victims Centre to sustain interventions in respect of the interest and concerns of victims of former President Jammeh’s Administration; AATG and TANGO to sustain interventions in respect strengthening Democratic Governance and Human Rights.

Figure 6: Access to Potable Water in Kerr Jain and Kerr Njugary in Nuimi (NBR)



Source: Evaluator's Photograph during Field Visit (February 2022)

Figure 7: 3-D Printing for Development by *Make3D* in Brufut (WCR) & Tractor for Enhanced Food Security in Darsilami (NBR)



Source: Evaluator's Photograph during Field Visit (February 2022)

Figure 8: Multi-Functional Facility in Kartong Built by Young Women trained by Mbolo Association



Source: Evaluator's Photograph during Field Visit (February 2022)

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP

FINDING 13:

The Evaluation shows evidence that UNDP worked effectively with other International Delivery Partners to deliver on the CPD.

The desk review and consultations confirmed that partnerships were forged and maintained with regional, continental, and bi-lateral partners in the implementation of the CPD including but not limited to: ECOWAS, UNOWAS, International IDEA, WABSA, UNCDF, OHCHR, IOM, FAO, UNICEF, UNFPA, GEF, GCF, NAMA, UNEP, WB, IMF, AU, EU, UK, USA, FR, Egypt, Turkey.

FINDING 14:

UNDP partnership with Civil Society and Private Sector is considered effective in implementing the CPD.

The Evaluation noted strategic partnerships between UNDP, CSOs and the Private Sector in the implementation of the CPD. Examples include but not limited to the following: TANGO, *Mbolo Association*, GRCS, ACCG, NALA, Gambia Green Initiative, Gambia Bar Association, GCCI, GPU, GFD, WANEP, *Make3D*, FLAG, NGBV, NCCE, Think Young Women.

HUMAN RIGHTS

FINDING 15:

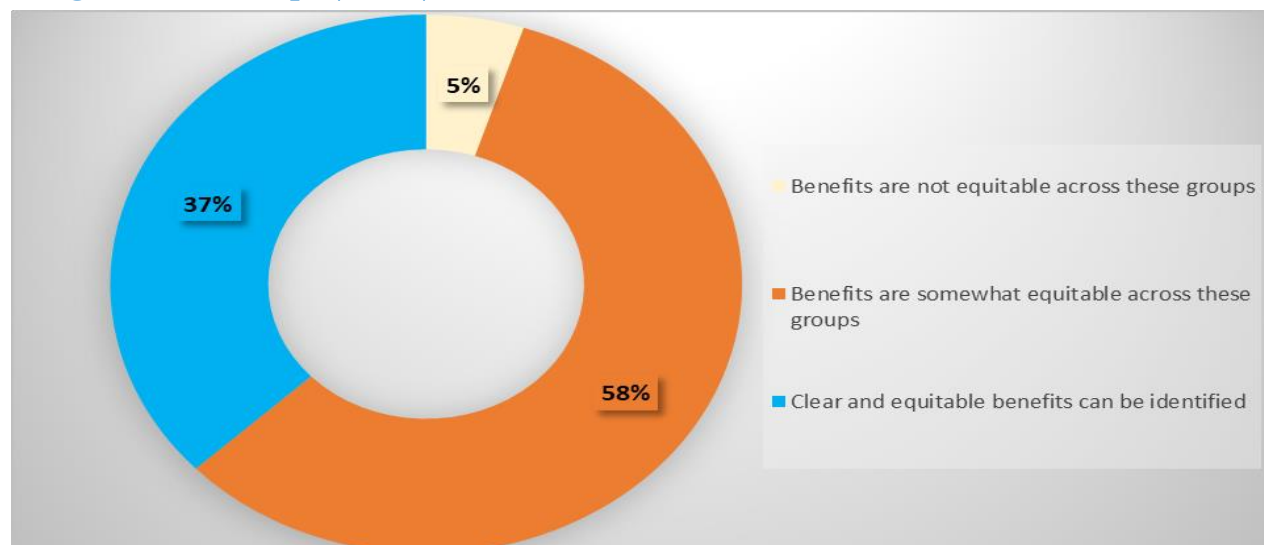
In general, UNDP interventions largely benefitted the Poor, Women and other Disadvantaged and Marginalised Groups.

UNDP interventions including COVID-19 Response and Recovery Initiative benefitted the poor, women and other disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the urban and rural areas. Justification for the result were based on the following:

- Access to information and justice systems were made available to all citizens in the Gambia between 2017-2021. Examples include the Virtual Courts, TRRC, Victims Center.
- Cash transfer initiatives favoured mostly the rural people who mostly fall under the category of poor and vulnerable.
- Economic growth and poverty reduction was realised due to the various UNDP interventions directly or through partners and government.
- Quality education, job creation and awareness were enhanced over the CPD period.
- Funding was extended for the children and girls focused initiatives.
- Most women- and youth-centered organisations were deliberately targeted for most projects e.g., the Anti-Corruption Coalition.

Furthermore, on the issue of civic engagement and enhancing participation by women, youth and other marginalised groups, UNDP strengthened the institutional capacity of the Gambia Federation for the Disabled (GFD) through reviewing and restructuring of the GFD Constitution and Programme of Action. Figure 11 below summarised perspectives from key informants.

Figure 9: Equity of Benefits for the Poor, Women, other Disadvantaged and Marginalised Groups (N=19).



Source: Key Informant Structured Interviews, BJM Consultancy Company 2022

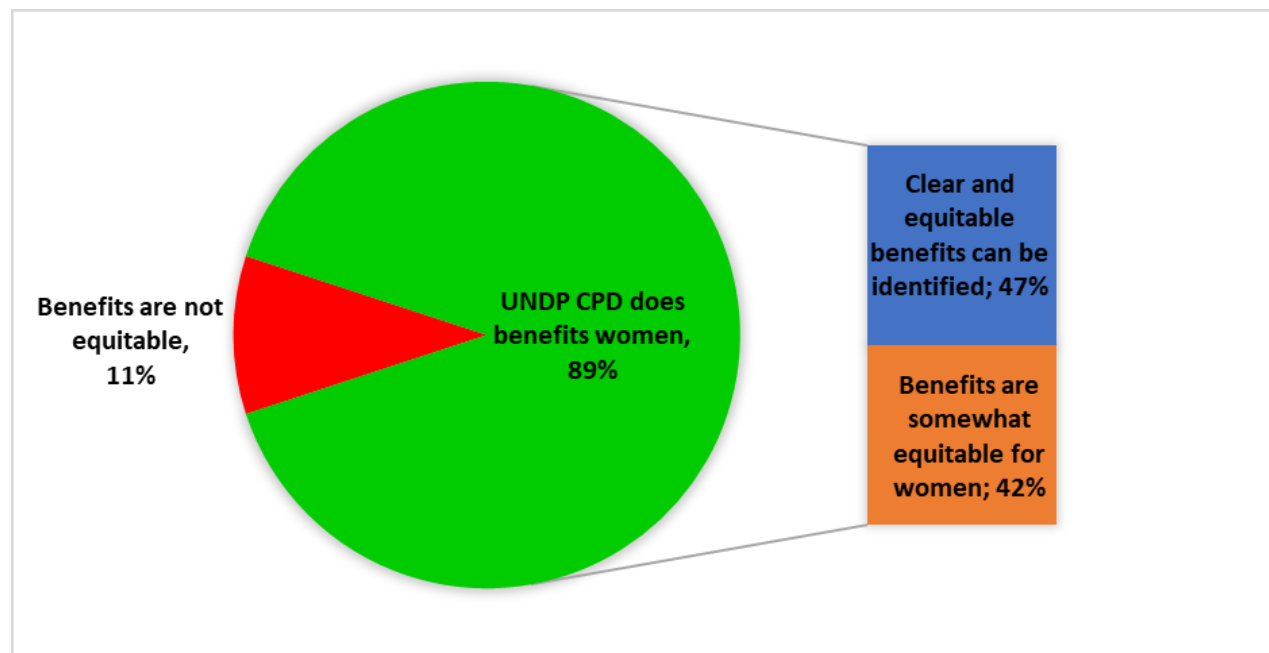
GENDER EQUALITY AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

FINDING 16:

The consultations reveal that Gender Issues have to a large extent been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the CPD.

The desk review and consultations revealed the successful implementation of the Country Office's Gender Strategy. The recruitment of a Gender Associate with UNDP was identified as a critical contributor to the attainment of Gender outcomes. Gender Equality and Mainstreaming interventions received commendation from the UNDP Gender Equality Seal Certification Assessment Summary Report: 2018-2020 Round. The Country Office achieved a SILVER Level Certification with a final score of 72 percent. "This is a significant improvement from a baseline of 44 percent in the 2018 assessment. Congratulations on your progress!" (Haoliang). Approximately 89 percent of stakeholders were confident in the work of the UNDP in the area of Gender Equity as summarised in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10: Extent to which Women benefitted from the CPD Interventions. (N=19)



Source: Online Survey, BJM Management Consultancy Company 2022

Some notable examples on UNDP efforts in this area include:

- Capacity building and supporting young women through various engagements.
- Supporting and advocating for the establishment of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare.
- Supporting gender sensitivity analysis, and supporting the capacity assessment of women-led organisations in the country.

- Establishment of strong Women Networks especially in the representation and participation in politics and decision making.
- Strengthened women's knowledge and understanding on corruption, impacts of corruption and manipulation.
- Establishment of a *Career Guidance and Counseling Center* (undergraduate course on Gender Studies to begin in September 2022) within the University of The Gambia.

FINDING 17:

CPD support has to a large extent promoted positive changes in Gender Equality and Mainstreaming as well as Youth Participation in The Gambia.

UNDP governance interventions contributed to the establishment of a separate Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare; supported existing Gender Units in Security Institutions, encouraged creation of new ones, and pushed for involvement of women in decision-making within the security institutions; opinions of men and women, girls and boys, marginalized groups and PWD are equally sought on the different aspects of activities as was the case in TJ&HR project; promotion of the Gender Equality Seal among Private Sector institutions and enterprises; and support to the CSO Gender Platform to champion SGBV and issues affecting women.

The appointment of the first female Deputy Director General of the Gambia Immigration Department can be considered among the unintended positive effects of UNDP's contributions to Gender Equality in The Gambia, as well as the establishment of the Female Police Network.

In the area of Youth engagement and participation in the national discourse, CPD interventions are manifest in many ways including but not limited to support provided to the review and validation of the following Acts and Instruments relevant young people's engagement in governance and leadership: National Youth Council Act, Youth Service Scheme, National Enterprise Development Initiative, and the Sports Council Act.

Some key achievements registered under UNDP interventions include:

- Youth Internet Radio successfully established and operationalized.
- Establishment of the Youth Peace and Security Situation Room and Early Warning Crisis Response Center, and training of Regional Monitors to ensure functionality of the Situation Room.
- 500 young women and adolescent boys and men (250 females and 250 men) trained on political participation through mentorship advocacy and leadership in five regions.
- Seven intergenerational community forums held involving 875 young people (420 females and 455 male) on youth involvement and participation in traditional community and conflict management mechanisms.

- Establishment of the Youth Inter-Party Committee Branch, (YOICB).
- 25 young men and women (11 females and 14 male) trained on Conflict Analysis and Mitigation, entrepreneurship skills, and awarded grants of D50,000.00 to mitigate conflict or undertake peacebuilding initiatives in their communities.
- Fact Check website (www.factcheckgambia.org) launched and 30 journalists from 25 Media Houses trained on how to debunk fake news and misinformation.
- Research on the prevalence of hate speech successfully conducted.

6.2 CONCLUSION

Evidence gathered in this Evaluation shows that the UNDP CPD (2017-2021) has been largely relevant and supports the efforts of the government of The Gambia as articulated in its National Development Plan. Furthermore, the CPD design clearly articulates how it contributes to the broader UN System efforts in The Gambia. Key informants and documents reviewed showed there was a strong line of sight towards driving outcomes of several Sustainable Development Goals. Notwithstanding the COVID-19 Pandemic which surfaced in 2020, about 2 years before the end of the CPD, the UNDP and Implementing Partners have demonstrated flexibility in exploring how interventions can be best adapted to tackle the new challenges it has brought.

The Evaluation has established that the planned outputs have been largely achieved. UNDP has also used innovative approaches and has a steady burn rate (efficiency). A review of its human resources (organogram) however shows significant gaps with some positions being unfilled. This may be one of the contributing factors to key informants from internal teams and Implementing Partners alike pointing out challenges with workloads to achieve these results.

Gender and Human Rights results across the Pillars are also noteworthy. The recruitment of the Gender Advisor is commendable and has helped to a great extent in driving attainment of the results. Implementing Partners spoke highly of the drive by UNDP to ensure Gender Equity and considering how the interventions address needs of the most vulnerable groups are taken into consideration. There is also a push to disaggregate data by gender, a practice which is gaining momentum with Implementing Partners.

Innovative practices, thanks to the drive by the Accelerator Lab, are also delivering good outcomes. Having a dedicated team, structurally located within the Executive, with an allocated budget and working across Pillars is creating some traction for innovation.

Other examples of innovative practice include the PACD, Transitional Justice, Rule of Law and the NDC. The PACD with its accelerated model which serves as a vehicle for a multi-sectoral approach to addressing poverty and inequality at community level, delivering services to hard-to-reach communities and helping government respond to social demands through partnership with development partners.

The establishment of the NHRC and TRRC, introduction of “Open Government” Platform/Initiative, “e-commerce/Digital Jula” and IVR platforms, and the NDC - one of the most ambitious and globally-recognised action plan on combating Climate Change - are good innovative practices.

Innovations are being handed over to Implementing Partners e.g., the virtual courts, ASYCUDA World¹⁵ and the NHRC in good show of effective development practice.

The modality of working with MDAs, international and local NGOs, including with Civil Society Organisations is highly valued. Key elements flagged by Implementing Partners is the capacity building and developing local human capacity. Notwithstanding, there were comments where Implementing Partners felt some roles within UNDP could be nationalised to help bring local knowledge and practice within UNDP.

Overall, the Evaluation concludes that the CPD has delivered quality results. The implementation modality has been appropriate and effective in driving ownership and sustainability of the interventions.

The Evaluation however posits that the next phase of the CPD should consider capturing key national priorities in order to consolidate gains registered (see recommendation 1), re-structuring and reclassifying the components and capacities of the programme to maximize on resources and effectively deliver the required expertise (see recommendation 2), considering the Human Resources requirement for the next CPD (see recommendation 3). strengthening Knowledge Management (KM) as critical component of the Country Office M&E architecture and bolster its central MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) capacity (see recommendation 4), enhancing the capacity, including institutional strengthening, of Implementing Partners in the next CPD (see recommendation 5) and scaling up innovative techniques and adaptation models in the next CPD (see recommendation 6).

¹⁵ ASYCUDA World/Latest Customs Web System – Online payment of Customs Duties and Taxes introduced by Gambia Revenue Authority

7. LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

This section identifies lessons learned and best practices that should help inform the preparation of a new CPD in 2022.

Lesson 1: National Execution has its benefits including ownership and sustainability as project staff stationed at strategic Implementing Partner institutions strengthen programme implementation and institutional capacity. This is effective and in line with locally led development efforts and was especially important in ensuring local knowledge, relationships and cultures are maximised for the delivery of the interventions. It was also important for ensuring sustainability and transfer of critical skills to local staff.

Lesson 2: The Accelerator Lab provides a promising approach for rapid testing and scaling of innovative solutions in resource constrained settings. Providing targeted funds and creating an environment for rapid cycles of testing and learning is particularly useful in rapidly changing contexts such as the ones brought by pandemics. Having committed staff who are open to thinking “outside the box” is a vital ingredient in sustaining the innovation efforts.

Lesson 3: Joint UNDP/GoTG planning sessions held to take stock of progress of projects and programmes coupled with UNDP annual review and planning meetings are common practice to improve implementation.

Lesson 4: Adaptation Models like the PACD which registered significant success within a relatively short period especially in remote and hard-to-reach communities are good vehicles addressing poverty and inequality at community level.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated above, the CPD interventions across all the three strategic pillars are relevant, aligned and supported the implementation of the National Development Plan priorities, UN Development Framework (UNDAF) and contributed to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

There is strong evidence to suggest the effectiveness of the CPD, efficiency, sustainability and an attention to cross cutting issues related to Human Rights, Gender Equality and Youth Participation.

The foregoing notwithstanding, analysis of the findings and lessons learned exposed some challenges and issues that need the attention of UNDP and Implementing Partners in the forthcoming CPD.

Accordingly, the Evaluation makes the following recommendations to guide UNDP and Implementing Partners in the preparation of a new CPD in 2022:

Recommendation 1: The next UNDP CPD should capture The Gambia's key national priorities in order to consolidate gains registered in the previous CPD 2017- 2021.

The Government of The Gambia (GoTG) is formulating a Green Recovery-focused National Development Plan (2023 - 2027) and a Long-Term Development Vision (Vision 2050) (RF-NDP and LTDV). The RF-NDP as a successor to the NDP will serve as the vehicle through which the short- and medium-term needs of the country will be comprehensively addressed. The Long-Term Development Vision on the other hand, will chart the long-term trajectory of the country's development and transformation.

The Gambia's first long-term development plan (Vision 2020) was formulated in 1996. This 25-year plan was intended to guide The Gambia's socio-economic development for the period 1996-2020. To help implement the Vision, a series of medium-term development plans were formulated and implemented, namely, Strategy for Poverty Alleviation I (SPA I) 1995-1999, SPA II or Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper I (PRSP I) 2003-2005, PRSP II 2007-2011, Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) 2012-2015, and National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2021. Despite the achievements registered during the implementation of these development plans, The Gambia remains a Least Developed Country with many challenges to overcome in order to attain middle- income status as envisaged in the Vision 2020. To this end, the Government is developing a successor Long-Term Development Vision (LTDV) for the period 2023 to 2050 (Vision 2050) for The Gambia.

It is important to note that the resulting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and country in general has resulted in the extension of the end dates of the NDP, UNDAF

and CPD to 2022. The pandemic is far more than a health crisis: it has affected nearly every aspect of the social and economic life of the country. To curb the effects of the pandemic, the Government formulated a response strategy to address the short-term challenges it posed, but in view of its long-term impact, it is evident that the new NDP must have a green recovery as a central guiding theme of the new plan. Government, therefore, intends to ensure that the new plan is a green recovery-focused NDP (RF-NDP) in order to anchor the socio-economic response to COVID-19 firmly within the country's medium-term development framework, especially, given the changing epidemiological pattern of the pandemic, the continued socioeconomic impact, and the urgency for climate action.

Under the new Government, United Nations including international developmental partners, civil society and other actors have made progress towards restoring democratic governance, rule of law, human rights, improved economic development, and resilience towards environmental changes with reaffirming commitment in achieving the SDGs.

As UNDP continue to support The Government of The Gambia in its development planning, it is important that progress registered in democratic governance, rule of law, human rights, improved economic development, and resilience towards environmental changes to date are aligned, sustained and scaled up in the next CPD.

UNDP should continue support to Governance, Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice

There is strong political will on the part of Government to promote good governance and the respect for human rights and the rule of law in all institutions. This is evidenced by several legislative reforms, policies and strategies that have been developed. The Ministry of Justice, Judiciary and other government institutions have qualified and committed staff owing partly to improvements in emoluments and improved work conditions.

There is need to double interventions in civic spaces that are shrinking and increase the participation of CSOs in democratization and peacebuilding processes at the national and local levels. Resources should be mobilized consistently to sustainably engage CSOs in all governance areas as most UNDP interventions lean more towards the elections.

At the same time, the connections between people-state relationship should receive more attention to improve service delivery, accountability, equality and trust between people and the state, particularly at the local levels as the main interface between the citizens and the state is typically at the sub-national levels. Working with local governments to achieve these and other results will be critical as COVID-19 has shown that national levels of governance have been overwhelmed, making sub-national levels of government to take on more tasks. Local governance is also important for conflict prevention and peacebuilding as local solutions can be more targeted, particularly inclusive processes

such as local infrastructures for peace that aim to ensure women and youth involvement. Yet the technical and institutional capacities at the sub-national levels can be weak.

Re-imagining governance to effectively address emerging complex challenges that cannot be addressed by traditional approaches, including use of digital technologies to “leap-frog” development. UNDP should also pay more attention and make interventions to improve security and peace in border communities especially in the Casamance region that has experienced a protracted conflict for the last 40 years. Such interventions should also improve livelihoods, cross border trade, community mechanisms for conflict resolutions, among others.

Following the outcome of April 2022 national assembly elections where only three women were elected and subsequent cabinet appointments that reduced the number of women from five to four, there is urgency to target interventions that promote inclusive political participation of women, youth and PWDs ahead of May 2023 local council elections and future polls.

The human rights component of UNDP governance area has not received maximum attention in project interventions and there is need to consider more interventions, including training project staff on human rights-based approach, and building more partnerships especially with National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and relevant CSOs. TANGO has a human rights thematic area that can be leveraged to support human rights agenda in the country. At the institutional level, UNDP integrated/portfolio approach in project implementation should be fully embraced to maximize resources, reduce duplication and improve monitoring of results.

However, the justice delivery system is faced with limitations in the implementation of good governance and transitional justice reform due to resource constraints to equip governance institutions with the required tools for realization of their mandate. This includes incomplete digitalization of records and lack of automated and electronic storage mechanism. Similarly, inadequate infrastructure, funding and over centralization of services within the Greater Banjul Area coupled limited human resource capacity continues to impede legal and judiciary processes.

UNDP should continue support to Poverty Eradication and Employment Creation interventions.

The large and increasing youth population characterized by limited technical and vocational skills and capacities, and job opportunities has resulted to high unemployment rates and increased irregular migration to Europe and beyond.

The Gambia has a very youthful population with about 38.5 percent between the ages of 15-35 years¹⁶. The rapid population growth (3.1%) coupled with limited opportunities pose serious challenges in the provision of decent work for the teeming youthful population.

¹⁶ 2013 Census

The unemployment rate among the youth is 41.5 percent (LFS 2018) which is higher than that of the national average (35.2%). The low absorption rate of the youth within the labour market is mainly due to skills mismatch and limited skills and capacities. In addition, the proportion of youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is 56.8 percent (LFS 2018). This has fuelled irregular migration as well as rural-urban migration.

UNDP should continue to support the efforts of MOTIE and the private sector to promote and support inclusive job creation, entrepreneurship and innovation measures and interventions. UNDP should capitalize on the positive foundations created through its support to EMPRETEC, ESPD and The Gambia Songhai Initiative projects to expand youth employment opportunities, including strengthening national and sub national institutions to achieve structural transformation of the productive capacities that are sustainable and employment-and livelihood-intensive.

Support to MSMEs is crucial, as the Government of The Gambia considers the MSME sector to be the engine of growth for the future, and support to more excluded and marginalized local populations to ensure that no one is left behind.

UNDP should continue support to Environment and Climate Resilience.

The 2015 NDC was considered one of the most ambitious in Africa. The Climate and Natural Resources sector has developed series of policies, programmes, an investment plan and also established coordination mechanisms for the effective implementation of polices and plans including the Climate Change Secretariat, Inter-Ministerial Climate Change Committee, The National Climate Change Committee, The National Climate Change Council, DRR and Climate Change Adaptation Platform and the recently established National Climate Change Focal Points.

Absence of a Climate Change Act, budget code and financial instruments to leverage private sector investment and the limited capacities of stakeholders in Climate Change issues is hindering the implementation of the policies, plans and programmes.

UNDP supported initiatives related to the Environment and Climate Change have generally been relevant, targeted, and successful.

There is need for post-programme funding to maintain and upgrade infrastructure like the coastal defence structures at Tanji and Senegambia with the assistance of all relevant stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Transport, Works, and Infrastructure to ensure sustainability of the results. The Metrological Centres also require funding to sustain the service to effectively guard against or mitigate effects of Climate Change.

Recommendation 2: UNDP should re-structure and reclassify the components and capacities of the programme to maximize on resources and effectively deliver the required expertise.

In order to consolidate the support that UNDP is providing to the Government of The Gambia, especially against resource constraints, there is a need to re-structure and reclassify the components and capacities of the programme to maximize on resources and effectively deliver the required expertise. Programmes could be merged with the due to inherent synergies. This implies that CPD implementation would be anchored on less pillars to maximise use of the available technical expertise and other resources.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should ensure that the CO has the Human Resources required to successfully implement the next CPD.

For successful implementation of the Country Programme, the Country Office (CO) should strive to always have adequate human capacity. All the clusters and operations should be well resourced and staffed at any given time so that the quality of programme implementation is not affected during the programme cycle. For some periods within the extended 2017 – 2022 CPD cycle, the three clusters (i.e., Governance, Poverty, and Environment) and operations (human resources, procurement, and finance) have been relying on a lean staff to implement and manage programmes and projects leaving the team sometimes overwhelmed. In some instances, programme and project work would be assigned to personnel within the office to back stop, yet not subject matter experts and with no requisite knowledge and/or experience in respective programme and project related areas. Consequently, quality of and the pace of implementation in some instances have been affected.

A key part of UNDP's work is to offer tangible support towards the enactment of legislation and the formulation of policy frameworks related to Environment, Governance and Economic growth. Best practices are constantly evolving, and there is always new information and data being generated to better inform policy and decision making. In order for UNDP Programme to effectively play the advisory role to Government in policy and legislative formulation, it is important that time and resources are allocated to building on the capacities of relevant staff regularly, in order for them to remain relevant to Government as experts in their respective areas.

Recommendation 4: UNDP should strengthen Knowledge Management (KM) as critical component of the Country Office M&E architecture and bolster its central MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) capacity.

There is evidence to show that UNDP has processes and frameworks in place to support MEL practice in its funded initiatives. These include employment of sector M&E specialists, guidance, such as for evaluations, log frames, results-based reporting and Implementing Partners mentioned the practice of “learning and reflecting together” at least on an annual basis. Systems such as the Voluntary National Review (VNR) set up with the support of the UNDP are good examples of national level efforts to enhance tracking and reflection on progress made on the attainment of the SDGs. There are several evaluations which have been commissioned over the course of the CPD, as well as a good number of project progress reports. The CPD has a results framework, albeit not revised to cater for adjustments over time e.g., the realignment with the updated NPD Priority Statements from the 2018 Plan.

While the above are good examples of M&E products and practice, gathering evidence from Implementing Partners during the evaluation was a mammoth task for the evaluation team. The team made several attempts to gather the information both from Implementing Partners and key Focal Points within UNDP to get the reports to draw key insights to inform the analysis. It would seem there is a challenge with Knowledge Management (KM) which hampers quick retrieval and sharing of evidence. Where staff have left or were planning to leave, incoming staff struggled to provide historical evidence of progress, an area that can be addressed by having effective KM systems. Furthermore, engagement of UNDP staff and Implementing Partners in the evaluation was not optimal with many being rescheduled. Staff and Implementing Partners could better be supported to view M&E as a critical part of the programme cycle that should be accorded the same level of importance as any aspect of implementation. This will go a long way in ensuring evidence is properly captured, reflected and acted upon.

UNDP should consider establishing a fully resource central M&E unit, to complement M&E specialists in the CPD pillars. Some of the core functions of the central unit could include MEL for coordination and Quality Assurance on programme design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation activities through say a sharper results framework: Whereas UNDP CPD has a results framework, some indicators did not comply with SMART criteria and lacked baselines which hindered accurate measurement of progress. Central MEL will bring agility and a focus on addressing such issues.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should continue to enhance the capacity, including institutional strengthening, of Implementing Partners in the next CPD.

Should National Execution remain the preferred method of delivering the CPD, it is important that the capacity of Implementing Partners is strengthened to meet the expectations of the next CPD.

The National Execution approach has not only helped expedite project implementation and delivery but also contributed to capacity building and institutional strengthening within Government and Implementing Partners, and ensured ownership and sustainability. Mainstreaming projects into Ministries and Implementing Partners proved effective and efficient as it enhanced ownership, guaranteed sustainability and built capacity. Similarly, the Direct Cash Transfer method facilitated smooth implementation while flexibility in allowing stakeholders to lead Project Steering Committees (PSC) and to determine and guide project interventions in line with felt needs were found effective in achieving intervention results.

There is a huge capacity need across government. The capacity building plan referred to in the NDP document must be reviewed to capture new capacity needs and be implemented as a priority. Vacancies at the senior level in the Justice System have slowed down services such as Bill Drafting among many others.

Regarding coherence, it was noted that capacity building was a common issue being addressed almost across and within the three clusters. As such, periodic joint cluster reviews and learning sessions would benefit the clusters for both collaboration between and within them. The next CPD should therefore be strengthened to capture any potential synergies and monitor them. Harnessing potential synergies and inter-linkages have potential to enhance coherence among and within clusters.

On the other hand, it was also noted that UNDP's interventions across the three clusters have a high degree of sustainability, especially those whose implementing partners are government Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) which have received respective capacity building and institutional strengthening support from the current CPD. However, the sustainability depends a lot on the extent to which the support is being standardized and integrated into the day-to-day functions of the MDAs. It is therefore imperative for the next CPD to consider ways of validating and ensuring that UNDP's capacity building and institutional support is well integrated into the day-to-day functions of the MDAs cognizant of the fact that interventions that are seen as 'short term projects' wither away after the project has elapsed unless there are in-built mechanisms for perpetuation of practices, systems, and results instituted by the project.

Recommendation 6: UNDP should scale up innovative techniques and adaptation models in the next CPD.

Innovative techniques and adaptation models had significant impact on programme delivery during the previous CPD especially with the advent of COVID-19. UNDP should capitalise on the Accelerator Lab and expand its reach across initiatives to identify scalable innovations.

Building on the good results of UNDP support to digitalization and e-services, which have been utilized during the COVID-19 crisis, UNDP should continue working with the Government and private sector to strengthen internal interoperability mechanisms, build stronger government capacity, and develop specific e-services which have been identified as crucial to overcome accessibility problems (such as the restrictions due to COVID-19).

There are potentials in scaling up the PACD with its accelerated/adaptation model which serves as a vehicle for a multi-sectoral approach to addressing poverty and inequality at community level, delivering services to hard-to-reach communities, and helping government respond to social demands through partnership with development partners.

LIST OF ANNEXES

- Annex1. Terms of Reference
- Annex 2. List of Persons/Institutions Consulted
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- Annex 3A. Evaluation Matrix
- Annex 3B. Key Informant Interview Guide (KII)
- Annex 3C. Survey Questionnaire (Online)
- Annex 4. List of Documents Reviewed