



Center for Budget and  
Macroeconomic  
Transparency

**FUNDING ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS  
UNDER THE GAMBIA'S **MINISTRY OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION, RESEARCH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY:**  
2020 – 2023**

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## Introduction

The report focuses on the Government of The Gambia's development initiatives in the education sector, specifically targeting infrastructure projects of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST) from 2020 to 2023. It outlines various projects undertaken by MoHERST to enhance educational, technical, and healthcare infrastructures in The Gambia, including the construction of schools, campus facilities, and dental and surgery facilities. The article also provides detailed budgetary financial data regarding funding approved and received, source(s) of funding, and type(s) of funding for each project implemented by the ministry during 2020–2023.

## Overview

### *What are Government Development Projects?*

These are projects designed or intended for infrastructure development in a country – including but not limited to, the construction or rehabilitation of schools, hospitals, laboratories, roads and bridges, office/public buildings and structures, plants or factories, boreholes, markets, irrigation infrastructures, information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructures, etc.; purchase of laboratory and hospital equipment, agricultural machinery and equipment, vehicles, energy generating equipment, etc.; livestock development, research, etc.

In an effort to strengthen educational development in the country, the Government of The Gambia, through the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST), implemented four essential development projects between 2020 and 2023, inclusive. The projects were the **University of The Gambia (UTG) Campus Project** aimed at developing and enhancing the infrastructure of the country's main university, the **African Centers of Excellence Project** aimed at supporting higher education institutions in Africa, the **Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project** aimed at skills development, and the **Construction of UTG Dental and Surgery Building Project** for improving learning and health infrastructure.

### *How does The Gambia Government fund its Development Projects?*

The funding sources for The Gambia Government's development projects are broadly categorized into three main components or types – Government Local Fund (GLF), Project Grants, and External/Foreign Loans. **Government Local Fund (GLF)** is the sum of domestic revenues (tax and non-tax revenues), program grants (budget support), and domestic loans. **Project Grants** are money acquired – for development projects – from external donors who do not require repayment of the money. **External/Foreign Loans** are money borrowed – for development projects – from external creditors who require repayment of the money with interest. A sum of GLF, Project Grants, and External Loans equals **total funding**.

### *Funding for The Gambia's Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology's Development Projects: 2020–2023*

As displayed in Table 1 below, **D2.9 billion** got approved (by the Executive and National Assembly) for a total of four projects under MoHERST, for the period 2020–2023. Out of the approved sum, only **D109.2 million** (equivalent to **3.76%**) was secured during the four years.

- The *UTG Campus Project* accounted for most of the ministry's approved and actual development funds. However, it still experienced a gross financing deficit by receiving just D66.5 million despite being approved D2.224 billion.
- The *African Centers of Excellence Project* had the second largest approval of D593.5 million but received only 4.5% of the approved amount (D26.7 million).

- Third on the list is the *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project* which got approved D72 million but registered merely D6 million (8.33%).
- The *UTG Dental and Surgery Building Project*, although smallest in scale, was the most successful in securing its approved funding (83.33% of D12 million).

*Table 1: Total Funding Approved vs. Total Funding Received for the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology's Development Projects: 2020–2023*

Project Code	Project Name	Funding Approved 2020–2023	Funding Received 2020–2023	% of Approved Funding Secured
		GMD/D	GMD/D	%
0258	<i>University of The Gambia (UTG) Campus Project</i>	2,224,478,622	66,500,000	2.99%
0561	<i>African Centers of Excellence</i>	593,541,426	26,700,000	4.50%
0454	<i>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</i>	72,000,000	6,000,000	8.33%
0627	<i>Construction of UTG Dental and Surgery Building</i>	12,000,000	10,000,000	83.33%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,902,020,048</b>	<b>109,200,000</b>	<b>3.76%</b>

Source: Data extracted from approved Central Government/National Budgets from 2020 to 2025, published by The Gambia's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA).<sup>1</sup>

## Detailed Funding Analysis of Development Projects under The Gambia's Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology: 2020–2023

### 1. University of The Gambia (UTG) Campus Project

A project aimed at developing and improving the infrastructure of University of The Gambia, providing students and faculty staff with advanced facilities and promoting a conducive learning and research environment.

*Table 2: Funding for the University of The Gambia (UTG) Campus Project: 2020–2023*

FUNDING (in Dalasi)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020–2023
<b>Total Funding Approved (GMD/D)</b>	<b>710,991,000</b>	<b>765,885,622</b>	<b>358,602,000</b>	<b>389,000,000</b>	<b>2,224,478,622</b>
Government Local Fund (GLF) approved	23,900,000	17,250,000	9,000,000	23,000,000	<b>73,150,000</b>
Project Grants approved	-	-	-	-	-
External Loans approved	687,091,000	748,635,622	349,602,000	366,000,000	<b>2,151,328,622</b>
<b>Total Funding Received (GMD/D)</b>	<b>22,200,000</b>	<b>9,000,000</b>	<b>23,000,000</b>	<b>12,300,000</b>	<b>66,500,000</b>
GLF received	11,200,000	5,000,000	2,500,000	12,300,000	<b>31,000,000</b>
Project Grants received	-	-	-	-	-
External Loans received	11,000,000	4,000,000	20,500,000	0	<b>35,500,000</b>
<b>% of Approved Funding Secured</b>	<b>3.12%</b>	<b>1.18%</b>	<b>6.41%</b>	<b>3.16%</b>	<b>2.99%</b>

Source: Data extracted from approved Central Government/National Budgets from 2020 to 2025, published by The Gambia's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA).

Based on approved funding for the *University of The Gambia (UTG) Campus Project* for the period 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 2):

- The project's approved overall funding for the period (2020–2023) was **2.224 billion Dalasis**. **96.71% (D2.151 billion)** of that was External Loans, and **3.29% (D73.2 million)** was Government Local Fund (GLF);

<sup>1</sup> NOTE: The term "Central Government Budget" is synonymous with the term "National Budget". An "approved Central Government Budget" or "approved National Budget" is an annual budget legislated or enacted into law by the National Assembly (NA) and assented to by the President of The Gambia. The word "approved", herein, means "authorized, legislated or enacted into law by NA and assented to by the President", and all approved figures are estimates or projections, not actuals.

the approved External Loans were expected from the following donors:

- *Kuwaiti Fund for Economic Development (KFAED)*: D688.19 million (D207,500,000 for 2020, D205,690,659 for 2021, D100,000,000 for 2022, & D175,000,000 for 2023);
- *Islamic Development Bank (IDB)*: D448.26 million (D128,255,000 for 2020, D124,000,000 for 2021, D69,000,000 for 2022, & D127,000,000 for 2023);
- *Saudi Fund for Development (SFD)*: D379.43 million (D208,834,000 for 2020, D133,000,000 for 2021, D9,100,000 for 2022, & D28,500,000 for 2023)
- *Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)*: D293.7 million (D60,000,000 for 2020, D183,697,013 for 2021, & D50,000,000 for 2022);
- *OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID)*: D223.75 million (D82,502,000 for 2020, D102,247,950 for 2021, & D39,000,000 for 2022);
- *Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)*: D118 million (D82,502,000 for 2022 & D35,500,000 for 2023);

the approved GLF (D73,150,000) was expected from the *Central Government of The Gambia*.

- The various approved funds were intended for the following expenditures:
  - *expenditure on schools, laboratories and facilities* = D1.48 billion (D453,244,000 for 2020, D555,571,435 for 2021, D311,102,000 for 2022, & D163,750,000 for 2023);
  - *expenditure on furniture and fittings* = D440.8 million (D95,637,000 for 2020, D92,907,809 for 2021, D35,000,000 for 2022, & D217,250,000 for 2023);
  - *contingency expenses – other charges* = D146.4 million (D84,690,000 for 2020 & D61,709,640 for 2021);
  - *project evaluation and monitoring* = D97.9 million (D56,070,000 for 2020 & D41,868,627 for 2021);
  - *project operating costs* = D28 million (D10,000,000 for 2020, D5,000,000 for 2021, D5,000,000 for 2022, & D8,000,000 for 2023);
  - *expenditure on other buildings and structures* = D27.5 million (D11,200,000 for 2020, D8,828,111 for 2021, & D7,500,000 for 2022);
  - *expenditure on office equipment* = D150,000 for 2020.

Based on [actual funding](#) for the [University of The Gambia \(UTG\) Campus Project](#) during 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 2):

- The project registered only **D66.5 million (2.99%** of the approved D2.224 billion) from 2020 to 2023. D31 million of the funding registered was GLF from the *Central Government*, and D35.5 million was External Loans (15,500,000 from *BADEA*, and D20,000,000 from *IDB*).
- The D66.5 million secured was spent as follows:
  - *expenditure on schools, laboratories and facilities* = D32.7 million (D4,200,000 in 2020, D20,500,000 in 2022, & D8,000,000 in 2023);
  - *project operating costs* = D18.8 million (D7,000,000 in 2020, D5,000,000 in 2021, D2,500,000 in 2022, & D4,300,000 in 2023);
  - *expenditure on other buildings and structures* = D15 million (D11,000,000 in 2020 & D4,000,000 in 2021).

## 2. African Centers of Excellence

A project aimed at fostering higher-level skills development and innovative research in Africa, in areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); agriculture; health; environment; applied social science and education (see [World Bank Group](#)).

*Table 3: Funding for the African Centers of Excellence Project: 2020–2023*

FUNDING (in Dalasi)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020–2023
<b>Total Funding Approved (GMD/D)</b>	<b>151,294,400</b>	<b>115,473,026</b>	<b>157,656,000</b>	<b>169,118,000</b>	<b>593,541,426</b>
Government Local Fund (GLF) approved	2,000,000	15,000,000	12,500,000	23,962,000	<b>53,462,000</b>
Project Grants approved	149,294,400	100,473,026	145,156,000	145,156,000	<b>540,079,426</b>
External Loans approved	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Funding Received (GMD/D)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14,000,000</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>2,700,000</b>	<b>26,700,000</b>
GLF received	0	14,000,000	10,000,000	2,700,000	<b>26,700,000</b>
Project Grants received	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
External Loans received	-	-	-	-	-
<b>% of Approved Funding Secured</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>12.12%</b>	<b>6.34%</b>	<b>1.60%</b>	<b>4.50%</b>

Source: Data extracted from approved Central Government/National Budgets from 2020 to 2025, published by The Gambia's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA).

Based on approved funding for the *African Centers of Excellence Project* for the period 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 3):

- The project's approved overall funding for the period (2020–2023) was **593.5 million Dalasis**. **90.99% (D540 million)** of the approved total funding was Project Grants expected from the *International Development Association (IDA)–World Bank*, and **9.01% (53.5 million)** was Government Local Fund (GLF) expected from the *Central Government of The Gambia*.
- The approved funds were intended for the following expenditures:
  - *expenditure on schools, laboratories, and facilities* = D291 million (D58,932,000 for 2020, D55,148,026 for 2021, D85,000,000 for 2022, & D91,962,000 for 2023);
  - *expenditure on other buildings and structures* = D266.4 million (D78,576,000 for 2020, D55,000,000 for 2021, D66,406,000 for 2022, & D66,406,000 for 2023);
  - *project evaluation and monitoring* = D19.6 million (D11,786,400 for 2020, D325,000 for 2021, D3,750,000 for 2022, & D3,750,000 for 2023);
  - *project operating costs* = D16.5 million (D2,000,000 for 2020, D5,000,000 for 2021, D2,500,000 for 2022, & D7,000,000 for 2023).

Based on actual funding for the *African Centers of Excellence Project* during 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 3):

- The project registered only **D26.7 million (4.5%** of the approved 593.5 million) from 2020 to 2023. All funding reported to have been received was GLF from the *Central Government*.
- The D26.7 million secured was spent as follows:
  - *expenditure on schools, laboratories, and facilities* = D15 million (D10,000,000 in 2021 & D5,000,000 in 2022);
  - *project operating costs* = D11.7 million (D4,000,000 in 2021, D5,000,000 in 2022, & D2,700,000 in 2023).

### *3. Technical and Vocational Education and Training*

This project focused on providing skills training and education to enhance the employability of The Gambian workforce.

*Table 4: Funding for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project: 2020–2023*

FUNDING (in Dalasi)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020–2023
<b>Total Funding Approved (GMD/D)</b>	<b>9,000,000</b>	<b>6,900,000</b>	<b>6,100,000</b>	<b>50,000,000</b>	<b>72,000,000</b>
Government Local Fund (GLF) approved	9,000,000	6,900,000	6,100,000	50,000,000	72,000,000
Project Grants approved	-	-	-	-	-
External Loans approved	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Funding Received (GMD/D)</b>	<b>6,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,000,000</b>
GLF received	6,000,000	0	0	0	6,000,000
Project Grants received	-	-	-	-	-
External Loans received	-	-	-	-	-
<b>% of Approved Funding Secured</b>	<b>66.67%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>8.33%</b>

Source: Data extracted from approved Central Government/National Budgets from 2020 to 2025, published by The Gambia's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA).

Based on approved funding for the *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project* for the period 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 4):

- The project's approved overall funding for the period (2020–2023) was **72 million Dalasis**, all Government Local Fund (GLF) expected from the *Central Government of The Gambia*.
- The approved funds were intended for the following expenditures:
  - *expenditure on schools, laboratories and facilities* = D52 million (D3,000,000 for 2020, D5,000,000 for 2021, D4,000,000 for 2022, & D40,000,000 for 2023);
  - *project evaluation and monitoring* = D19.75 million (D6,000,000 for 2020, D1,900,000 for 2021, D1,850,000 for 2022 & D10,000,000 for 2023);
  - *contingency expenses – other charges* = D250,000 for 2022.

Based on actual funding for the *Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project* during 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 4):

- The project registered only **D6 million (8.33%** of the approved D72 million) from 2020 to 2023. All funding reported to have been received was GLF from the *Central Government*.
- The D6 million secured was spent as follows:
  - *expenditure on schools, laboratories and facilities* = D3,000,000 in 2020;
  - *project evaluation and monitoring* = D3,000,000 in 2020.

#### 4. Construction of UTG Dental and Surgery Building

This project was to enhance medical education and healthcare service delivery in the Gambia by building a dental and surgery building at the University of The Gambia (UTG).

*Table 5: Funding for the Construction of UTG Dental and Surgery Building Project: 2020–2023*

FUNDING (in Dalasi)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020–2023
<b>Total Funding Approved (GMD/D)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,000,000</b>
Government Local Fund (GLF) approved	-	10,000,000	2,000,000	-	12,000,000
Project Grants approved	-	-	-	-	-
External Loans approved	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Funding Received (GMD/D)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>
GLF received	-	10,000,000	0	-	10,000,000
Project Grants received	-	-	-	-	-
External Loans received	-	-	-	-	-
<b>% of Approved Funding Secured</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>83.33%</b>

Source: Data extracted from approved Central Government/National Budgets from 2020 to 2025, published by The Gambia's Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA).

Based on approved funding for the Construction of UTG Dental and Surgery Building Project for the period 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 5):

- The project’s approved overall funding for the period (2020–2023) was **12 million Dalasis**, all Government Local Fund (GLF) expected from the *Central Government of The Gambia*.
- All approved funds (D12 million) were budgeted for constructing office buildings.

Based on actual funding for the Construction of UTG Dental and Surgery Building Project during 2020–2023 (as reported in the approved National Budgets and summarized in Table 5):

- The project registered **D10 million (83.33%** of the approved D12 million) between 2020 and 2023. All funding reported to have been received was GLF from the *Central Government*.
- The D10 million was spent on office building construction.

## Conclusion, Key Findings, and Recommendations

Reports in the National Budgets indicate that **D2.9 billion** was authorized, by the Executive and Legislature, for The Gambia’s Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST) to implement a total of four development projects from **2020 to 2023**. The same reports reveal that of the grand figure approved, **3.76%** (precisely **D109.2 million**) was attained during project execution. The data shows that only a small percentage of the approved funding was realized, particularly for projects such as the University of The Gambia Campus Project, the African Centers of Excellence Project, and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Project.

- For fiscal year 2020, D871.3 million had been budgeted and approved for MoHERST’s development projects. However, in 2020, only D28.2 million was obtained. For 2021, D898.26 million had been approved but merely D33 million was secured during the year. D524.36 million had been approved for 2022 but again D33 million was obtained in the course of the year, and D608.12 million had been approved for 2023 with just D15 million realized throughout the year (based on data presented in the approved National Budgets 2020–2025).
- The **External Loans** approved for the ministry’s four projects (2020–2023) amounted to **D2.15 billion** (D687.09 million for 2020, D748.64 million for 2021, D349.6 million for 2022, and D366 million for 2023). However, it has been reported in the National Budgets that only **D35.5 million** in External Loans was secured for the projects (D11 million in 2020, D4 million in 2021, and D20.5 million in 2022).
- The **Project Grants** approved for the ministry’s four projects (2020–2023) amounted to **D540 million** (D149.29 million for 2020, D100.47 million for 2021, D145.16 million for 2022, and again D145.16 million for 2023). Nevertheless, it has been reported in the National Budgets that no Project Grants were secured for the initiatives from 2020 to 2023.
- The **Government Local Fund (GLF)** approved for the four projects (2020–2023) totaled **D210.6 million** (D34.9 million for 2020, D49.15 million for 2021, D29.6 million for 2022, and D96.96 million for 2023). However, it has been reported in the National Budgets that **D73.7 million** in GLF was secured for the projects (D17.2 million in 2020, D29 million in 2021, D12.5 million in 2022, and D15 million in 2023).
- The approved **external funders** of MoHERST’s development projects from 2020 to 2023 were **KFAED** (expected to provide D688.19 million in External Loans), **IDA** (expected to provide D540 million in Project Grants), **IDB** (expected to provide D448.26 million in External Loans), **SFD** (expected to provide D379.43 million in External Loans), **BADEA** (expected to provide D293.7 million in External Loans), **OFID** (expected to provide D223.75 million in External Loans), and **OPEC** (expected to provide D118 million in External Loans). Nonetheless, **BADEA provided D15.5 million while IDB provided D20 million, and that was it**; all other external receipts for the four projects were reported as zero (the budgets show).

## Key findings and recommendations:

### ➤ Extreme reliance on external resources

Like the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Petroleum & Energy, MoHERST depended heavily on external funding to implement development projects from 2020 to 2023. Over 90% of the approved funding for MoHERST’s development initiatives for the period was expected through foreign assistance. Also, a major portion of that was external loans, creating more debt burden for the country.

**Recommendation:** To reduce extreme dependence on outside assistance, The Gambia Government must strengthen domestic revenue mobilization by substantially investing in and re-structuring government revenue-generating Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs)—including State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and the Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA)—to improve revenue generation capacity, tracking, and allocation. Also, the government needs to diversify its funding portfolio by actively exploring viable public-private partnerships (PPPs) and engaging the private sector in financing infrastructure projects.

### ➤ Substantial funding deficits reported

Merely 1.32% of the approved D2.69 billion external funding and 35% of the approved D210.6 million GLF were realized (the budgets reveal), thus rendering MoHERST’s development budget “NOT CREDIBLE” over the years. Either the ministry or the government did not budget properly or there has been inaccurate budget reporting.

**Recommendation:** The government, particularly the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the National Assembly’s Finance and Public Accounts Committee (FPAC), must improve their analyses, monitoring, and evaluation of project funding estimates and actuals, and reporting on all project implementations to ensure credible budgeting, transparency, and accountability.

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## Disclaimer

The numerical datasets in this report have been extracted exclusively from The Gambia’s 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 National Budgets, produced by the Directorate of Budget at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA) and approved or enacted into law by the National Assembly and President of The Gambia. All the tables have been constructed, with numerical calculations and analyses done, using STRICTLY the data from approved 2020–2025 annual National Budgets published by MoFEA. Although the government may have published similar budget data through different public institutions or directorates of the same public institution, CBMT would like to firmly assert that it cannot guarantee absolute CONSISTENCY among all the budget datasets published by the different public institutions or directorates. Also, note that the percentages and some other figures in the texts are rounded off, which may cause slight but acceptable variations.



## BACKGROUND

Center for Budget and Macroeconomic Transparency (CBMT) is a non-profit Civil Society Organization that conducts budget and macroeconomic advocacy - aimed at increasing awareness around Public Financial Management and the macroeconomy, fostering public understanding and effective participation in government budgetary affairs and macroeconomic dialogues, promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development in The Gambia.

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