



## National Dialogue on Financing for Development

**Theme:** *Debt-Free Pathways: Financing Inclusive Growth for a Resilient Nation*

**Report Period:** June 12<sup>th</sup> – July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**In Collaboration with:** *ActionAid International The Gambia and Activista The Gambia*

### Introduction

Under the current leadership, The Gambia has had two National Development Plans (NDP), one for 2018–2021/22 and the other for 2023–2027. However, the former performed below expectations with only 38% of the overall targets achieved (see page 36 [here](#)), and was abandoned for the latter. Similarly, the 2023–2027 NDP, referred to as the Recovery-Focused NDP (RF-NDP), has made little progress halfway through implementation, showing signs that it may also perform poorly.

Concurrently, The Gambia's debt situation is worsening, with 20.8% of the country's 2025 national budget allocated to debt interest payments and debt principal repayments, exceeding the 2023 debt service allocation (11.09%) and 2024 allocation (17.85%) (See page 7 of the budgets). Furthermore, climate change has become a great cause for concern in The Gambia, affecting domestic farming and agricultural productivity.

It is due to these various concerns that we collaborated with ActionAid International, The Gambia, and Activista, The Gambia, to organize a national forum on the RF-NDP implementation, debt-free pathways, and climate change.



A family photo at the National Dialogue on Financing for Development, July 8, 2025

## Project Description

The project was implemented in two phases – **civil society engagement** (aimed at strengthening CSO research skills, knowledge, and collaboration), and a **national dialogue** (aimed at facilitating a meaningful forum on The Gambia's 2023–2027 National Development Plan implementation and financing progress [including climate change]; and on ways and justifications for debt cancellation to enable adequate and sustained development financing).

### Phase 1 – CSO Engagement

Phase 1 comprised bringing together over 15 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and media for a one-day event (on June 12, 2025) to reflect on public debt, climate change financing, and to conduct a thorough analysis of progress on RF-NDP priorities linked to food security, community resilience, and climate and environmental sustainability. The aim was to strengthen collaboration and prepare CSOs for an informed, meaningful, knowledge-driven national dialogue on development financing.



*A Photo from the CSO engagement on June 12, 2025*

### CBMT's Role at Phase 1

During the civil society engagement, CBMT presented and led technical discussions and group work (research) on the RF-NDP, its financing prospects, and RF-NDP outcomes and indicators relevant to building community resilience to shocks and crises, climate change and climate change governance, agriculture, fisheries, environment, and natural resources. CBMT also compiled the

CSOs' NDP research findings for refinement and then presentation at the national dialogue. However, prior to the dialogue, CBMT sat with the Directorate of Development Planning (DDP) at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (a directorate responsible for NDP tracking and reporting) to compare findings and ensure data consistency.



*CBMT Executive Director leading the discussion on RF-NDP at the CSO engagement on June 12, 2025.*

### Phase 2 – National Dialogue on Financing for Development

The dialogue took place on July 8, 2025, where we brought together NGOs/CSOs, key government representatives, key development partners, the academia, and the media to have an in-depth reflection on The Gambia's Recovery-Focused National Development Plan (specifically on NDP pillars linked to community resilience, agriculture, fisheries, climate change, environment, and natural resources), the current public debt situation, and ways to sufficiently and responsibly finance our national development.



*EU head of Cooperation participating in the national dialogue on July 8, 2025*

## CBMT's Role at Phase 2

CBMT refined the RF-NDP research findings that emanated from the CSO engagement and reports provided by the Directorate of Development Planning, and presented on those findings at the national dialogue for open reflection and discussion.



*CBMT Executive Director presenting on the RF-NDP research findings on July 8, 2025*

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See below the final research findings on the RF-NDP progress with respect to certain Pillars, Outcomes, and Indicators.

### Data Source for the research:

- RF-NDP 2023-2027 (published by The Gambia's Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs – MoFEA)
- 2023 & 2024 Annual Progress Reports of RF-NDP 2023-2027 (produced by the Directorate of Development Planning – DDP, MoFEA)
- Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources (MECCNAR)

## RF-NDP PROGRESS CHECK (Community Resilience, Climate Change, Domestic Food Security, Economic Growth)

PILLAR I: BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO ADDRESS SHOCKS AND CRISIS					
Outcome	Indicator	Baseline 2022 (PACD Phase 1)	National Target (2027)	Updated Data (DDP)	Progress
<b>Community level resilience to shocks and crisis enhanced.</b>  to improve the socio-economic conditions of rural communities.  to address the rural-urban inequalities and disparities.	Number of communities provided with electricity	10 Cs (2,500 HHs) – DDP	54 Cs	12 Cs (at 2023) 16 Cs (at 2024) – during completing remaining activities under Phase I	Below average (8.8/yr)
	Number of communities provided with clean water	31 Cs (16 Boreholes)	120 Cs	PACD Phase II not started as at end 2024	None
	Number of youths access to finance (land, equipment, tools)	0	480	PACD Phase II not started as at end 2024	None
	Number of hectares of land provided with irrigation for pasture growth and exotic animal breeding	5 hectares (field fenced at WALIC)	10 hectares	PACD Phase II not started as at end 2024	None
	Number of Communities provided with dairy livestock (goats and cattle)	0 Cs (12 dairy goats at WALIC for research & multipli.)	750 Cs (750 cattle, 1000 goats)	PACD Phase II not started as at end 2024	None
	Number of Communities provided with Labour-saving Devices (tractors etc.)	38 Cs (2,650 HHs)	207 Cs	PACD Phase II not started as at end 2024	None
The factor hindering progress in this outcome is the delay in the commencement of the PACD Phase II due to resource constraints.					



PILLAR II: GOVERNANCE REFORMS					
Outcome	Indicator	Baseline 2022	National Target (2027)	Updated Data (DDP)	Progress
<b>Climate and Climate Change Governance is enhanced.</b>	Existence of a climate change Act	No	Yes	-“Recruitment of the consultant to develop a new Climate Change Act is in progress” (2023) -A consultant was recruited “to develop the Climate Change Act” (2024)	Slow
	Existence of a National Waste Management Act	No	Yes	-Bill done & awaiting approval by NA (at end 2023) -Bill printed & presented to NA for enactment in November 2024.	Slow
	Existence of a revised Biodiversity and Wildlife Act	No	Yes	-“The 2013 bill still awaiting approval” by NA (2023) -Yet to be enacted by NA (2024)	Slow
	Existence of a revised Forestry Act	No	Yes	-“Legal Analysis of the 2018 Act completed” (by end 2023) -“2018 Forestry Act is being reviewed and updated.” (2024)	Slow
	Existence of a Revised Water Act	No	Yes	-Bill reviewed by Cabinet (2023) -Bill redrafted incorporating feedback from Cabinet (2024)	Slow
Factors Hindering Progress: Slow pace of finalizing the various Acts; limited technical and financial resources					

PILLAR V: AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE					
Outcome	Indicator	Baseline 2022	National Target (2027)	Updated Data (DDP)	Progress
<b>A modern, productive and sustainable agriculture for food and nutrition security, economic growth and poverty reduction</b>	Agriculture contribution to GDP (GDP)	25.4% (2021)	30.1%	23.4% (in 2023) 20.6 % (in 2024)	Declining
	Annual Agriculture growth rate	13.7% (2021)	10%	3.7% (2023); -1.1% (2024)	Declining
	Annual Value of rice imports (MT)	196,886 198,425 (DDP)	98,443	254,015 (in 2023); 244,688 (in 2024)	None (still above baseline)
	Annual Value of poultry imports (GMD)	38,411,774 825,065 (DDP)	19,205,887 0 (DDP)	1,067,315 (in 2023) 1,246,032 (in 2024)	None (still above baseline)
	Area of land under cultivation (Ha): • Rice (Ha) • Maize (Ha)	DDP 44,241 (2021) 25,246 (2021)	77,869 40,665	47,898 (2023); 49,811 (2024) 26,325 (2023); 27,688 (2024)	Slow-5.6k ha, 3yrs Slow-2.4k ha, 3yrs
	Annual production (Metric tons) • Rice (MT) • Maize (MT)	DDP 41,910 (2021) 19,614 (2021)	194,674 81,330	47,410 (2023); 52,548 (2024) 21,220 (2023); 25,817 (2024)	In 3 yrs Slow: <half of NT Slow: <half of NT
	Cereals yield (Metric Tons per Hectare) • Rice (Mt/ha) • Maize (Mt/ha)	DDP 0.95 (2021) 0.78 (2021)	2.5 2.0	0.99 (2023); 1.1 (2024) 0.81 (2023); 0.9 (2024)	In 3 yrs Slow: <half of NT Slow: <half of NT
	Volume of poultry meat produced annually (MT)	51,963 370.61 - DDP	83,686 1,150 - DDP	308.85 (2023); 578.16 (2024)	fluctuates
	Volume of vegetable produced annually (MT)	589,850 10,285.34 - DDP	949,959.32 50,000 - DDP	10,695.75 (2023); no data - 2024	Slow
	Volume of production of small ruminant meat annually (MT)	1,634,200 555.96 - DDP	2,631,895 1,550 - DDP	447.31 (2023); 1004.9 (2024)	fluctuates
	Small ruminant mortality rate	6% 40.0% - DDP	2% 10.0% - DDP	22% (2023); 20% (2024)	Promising
	Area of land under irrigation practices (ha)	4,050 8,124.08 - DDP	81,000 20,000 - DDP	8,413 (2023); no data - 2024	Slow
<b>Factors Hindering Progress:</b> Limited funding for developing advanced agric. technologies., for agric. research & dev.; Poor agric. Infrastructure – irrigation, cold chains etc; Traditional land ownership practices hindering agric. expansion; etc.					

PILLAR V: AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE					
Outcome	Indicator	Baseline 2022	National Target (2027)	Updated Data (DDP)	Progress
<b>A vibrant fisheries and aquaculture sector contributing to economic growth and employment creation.</b>	Fisheries contribution to GDP	11.7% (11.6% -DDP)	15.7%	10% (2023); No data (2024)	Declined
	Existence of Fisheries (artisanal and industrial) Masterplan	No	Yes	-Recruitment of the consultant initiated and the Plan expected to be validated by December 2024 (2023). -TOR of the consultancy finalised and adopted by the TWG set up by the Ministry. The EOI advertisement to be sent to the print media (2024).	Slow
	Existence of National Monitoring Control and Surveillance Strategy	No	Yes	-Strategy currently being developed” (2023). -Draft Strategy Developed (2024)	Slow
	Number of artisanal fisheries onshore infrastructure with support facilities constructed in major fish landing sites (modern Artisanal fish landing sites)	11	30	11 (The procurement process for 2 additional onshore infrastructures (Platform) in Sanyang and Kartong is to commence. Approval has been granted for the construction to commence in Kartong) - 2024	Slow
	Existence of artisanal fisheries and aquaculture insurance policy	No	Yes	-A sectoral sub-committee constituted to spearhead the policy formulation (2023) -Engagements/consultations done with several insurance companies on the process of developing the insurance policy (2024)	Slow
<b>Factors Hindering Progress: Ineffectiveness of the subcommittee on artisanal fisheries and aquaculture insurance policy;  Limited resources slowing the full implementation of insurance policy and modern post-harvest management structures.</b>					

PILLAR V: AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE					
Outcome	Indicator	Baseline 2022	National Target (2027)	Updated Data (DDP/MECCNAR)	Progress
<b>Sustainable environmental and natural resources management, disaster risk reduction attained, and adverse impacts of climate change minimized.</b>	Existence of National policy on minimum tree cover	No	Yes	-Draft policy validated, awaiting submission to cabinet for approval (2023) -Policy still not approved (2024)	Slow
	% of National Budget disbursed for climate change financing	14%	25%	No data by DDP	-
	Creation of a climate change budget code	No	Yes	-A pilot lead hired for the budget code creation (2023) - A Project on developing climate expenditure and budget tagging codes in the System of National Accounts already launched (2024)	Slow
	Existence of national cadastral map	No	Yes	No data by DDP	-
	Existence of an ICZM Secretariat	No	Yes	-Bill developed for the establishment, awaiting cabinet approval (2023) -Bill sent to MoJ for legal advice (2024)	Slow
	Hectares of Marine Protected Areas Gazetted	67,381 ha 64,253ha-DDP	84,381 ha 82,753ha-DDP	97,381.1ha (2024)	Excellent
	Existence of an integrated fire management policy	No	Yes	Yes (says Planning Department MECCNARR)	Exists
	Existence of weather-based index risk financing mechanism (eg farmers - financial protection against weather-related risks)	No	Yes	Yes (Index product designed and validated on Groundnut, Millet, Maize, and Rain-fed Rice (2023)) -No progress (2024)	Exists
	Proportion of population having access to early warning information.	60%	100%	60% (2023); 65% (2024)	Slow
	Existence of national water policy	No	Yes	-Recruitment of the consultant initiated (2023) -ToR for the consultancy adopted (2024)	Slow
	Degree of IWRM implementation	30% 31.0% - DDP	100%	37% (2023); 37% (2024)	Stalled
<b>Factors Hindering Progress:</b> Bureaucratic issues slowing down decision-making processes and delaying the implementation of critical interventions; Difficulty in accessing climate funds; Slow pace of policy document review at MoJ					