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ANNEX 1

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of the Republic of The Gambia for 2023

Action Document for ‘State and Resilience Building Contract (SRBC 4) for The Gambia’

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	State and Resilience Building Contract (SRBC 4) for The Gambia OPSYS number: ACT-61846 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (<u>NDICI-Global Europe</u>)
2. Team Europe Initiative	Yes (TEI Atlantic and Western Mediterranean route for the migration component – Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, The Netherlands)
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in The Gambia.
4. Programming document	Republic of The Gambia Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 ¹
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	MIP objectives: Promoting good governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To enhance democracy, rule of law and the respect of human rights - To enhance migration governance and management (SDG 10), with a focus on protecting those in need, and strengthening national systems for readmission and reintegration, in full respect of fundamental values and human rights Human development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen the social protection systems coverage
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Priority area 1: Promoting Good Governance Sector DAC code: 152 Priority Area 3 : Human Development Sector DAC code : 16010

¹ Commission Implementing Decision adopting a multiannual indicative programme for the Republic of The Gambia for the period 2021-2027, C(2021)9361 final, 14.12.2021.

7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 16 Other significant SDGs: SDG 1 (Targets 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.A, 1.B), SDG 5 (Targets 5.1, 5.2), SDG 10 (Targets 10.4, 10.7).			
8 a) DAC code(s)	DAC code 151 – Governance and civil society (including Public Finance Management (PFM), migration and Gender) 40% DAC code 152 - Conflict, Peace and Security - 35% DAC code 160 – Social Protection 25%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	Recipient central government – 12001			
9. Targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

	digital skills/literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	/
	digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	/
	energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @ (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14 02 01 20 Total estimated cost: EUR 40 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 40 000 000 of which: EUR 36 000 000 for budget support and EUR 4 000 000 for complementary support.			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Direct management through: - Budget Support: State and Resilience Building Contract - grants and - procurement contracts for services.			

1.2 Summary of the Action

<p>The current context for this action in The Gambia is characterised by an ongoing democratic transition that started in 2017, marked by important moments in the truth and reconciliation process, as well as a fragile economic recovery from the fallout of the pandemic with major social, economic and fiscal risks emerging due to external shocks, notably elevated inflation and interest rate increases in major developed economies.</p> <p>The Action will contribute to enhancing The Gambia's democratic transition and strengthening its resilience. It will also consolidate the gains acquired in terms of migration management. It will combine focus on the first MIP priority area, namely, promoting good governance (including migration and gender) and the third priority area, human development (namely social protection). The general objective of the proposed action is to contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth. The specific objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consolidate democracy, rule of law and transitional justice (including from a gender perspective); - improve migration management; - strengthen a social protection system that targets the most vulnerable groups, women among others; - improve management of public finances. <p>This action is co-ordinated with and complements other actions planned under the first and the third MIP priority areas. SRBC4 is an important part of the Team Europe Initiative 'Good Governance' and is expected to become an essential pillar of the EU policy dialogue with the national authorities. The budget support component will, in addition, reinforce the EU as the partner of reference regarding The Gambia's democratic transition. This budget</p>

support programme has been conceived to complement ongoing projects (on Good Governance and Security Sector Reform) adopted under the AAP 2022.

The Gambian Government and national bodies will be in charge of achieving progress on the four general conditions and reaching the targets on the agreed variable tranche performance indicators in the respective result areas. The EU Delegation will assess the general eligibility criteria and engage with the government to build a robust system for continuous monitoring of the progress as regards variable tranche triggers. The budget support contract will also form the basis for regular policy dialogues through structured quarterly progress meetings, to which resident EU Member States will be invited, in line with a Team Europe spirit.

In addition, complementary support measures will consist of: (1) technical assistance to the government on the social protection and public finance management components, and (2) a call for proposals to enable the government, through the intervention of civil society organisations, to test, through a pilot action, a universal social protection model based on categorical targeting, with a focus on particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and persons with disabilities.

The action mainly targets SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions although it also targets in a significant manner SDG 5 on gender equality (5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere; 5.2-violence against women and girl), SDG 1 on no poverty and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities.

The action will contribute to the realisation of the EU Gender Action Plan 2021-2025 GAP III², in particular to its thematic areas of engagement ‘ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence’ and ‘promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women’.

The commitment of the EU’s contribution to the Team Europe Initiative to which this action refers, will be complemented by other contributions delivered in a Team Europe approach. It is subject to the formal confirmation of each respective member’s meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the event that the TEIs and/or these contributions do not materialise, the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

The Gambia is the smallest and most densely populated country in mainland Africa, with a population of 2.486.933, where women represent 50.4%. The Gambia has more than 50% of its population below 25 years of age^[1]. The Gambia ranks 174 out of 191 in terms of its Human Development Index (0.50)³

The economy relies primarily on rainfed agriculture, tourism and re-export trade, with a very large role of remittances. It is therefore highly vulnerable to external shocks. Migration plays a significant role in Gambia’s economy. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) states that overseas remittances of an estimated 118,000 Gambians living abroad are equivalent to over 20% of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP).

The presidential elections in December 2021 and the parliamentary elections in April 2022 were deemed free and fair and their results were accepted. The Government, in its May 2022 White Paper (WP), committed to implement almost all recommendations of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TRRC).

The economy is on a recovery path from the pandemic-induced crisis. Tourism has partly rebounded in 2022, with a promising outlook for early 2023. At the same time, the impact of global shocks, especially food, fertilizers and energy commodity price hikes, has hit The Gambia hard, given the large share of these products in consumption baskets and a strong reliance on imports. Government’s ability to respond is limited due to an underdeveloped social protection system and a severely constrained fiscal space related to the country’s indebtedness and narrow

² https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf

³ UNDP 2021

revenue basis. Inflation has been in double digit territory since April 2022, with food inflation at 18% as of October 2022. Subsidies that limited the extent of fuel price increases totalled close to 1.5% of GDP in 2022, or some 12-13% of total tax and customs revenue.

The EU's Multi-Annual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for The Gambia has three priority areas (i) Promoting Good Governance, (ii) Green economy for sustainable growth and jobs and (iii) Human development. This action falls under the 1st and the 3rd of these priority areas.

The action is part of the Team Europe Initiative on Good Governance, and Member States will be associated to its follow-up, including for those based in The Gambia, by participating in the Steering Committee meetings. In addition, the Gambia is also part of the TEI Atlantic and Western Mediterranean route for the migration component. By supporting democratic transition and the rule of law, the Action participates to the values and principles underlying the EU Global Gateway.

The Gambian National Development Plan (2017-2021) recognises gender equality and women's empowerment as major challenges in Gambian society. The Gender Inequality Index for Gambia is 0,611, ranked 174⁴ out of 191 countries and the Global Gender Gap is 0,641, ranked 121 out of 146 countries⁵. Positive progress has occurred on a political level with the establishment of the Ministry for Women, Children and Social Welfare, however the National Gender Policy 2010-2020 expired and most data for The Gambia is outdated and of poor quality.

In terms of specific legislations promulgated for the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls, Women's Act which was amended in 2015 to prohibit 'female genital mutilation or cutting' (FGM/C) in The Gambia, the Domestic Violence Act 2013 and the Sexual Offences Act 2013, and the Labour Act of 2007, the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission Act 2017 which have all been promulgated to address the human right violations of the 22 years of dictatorship.

The Gambia is also signatory to and has committed itself to the implementation of the International Conventions, agreements and declarations which are directly relevant to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration, namely, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, The African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equity in Africa, and several other human rights instruments.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Problem 1: Weak capacity and ensuing risks to implementation of the rule of law and transitional justice including from a gender perspective (main policy/strategic document: White Paper and its implementation Plan).

The White Paper on the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission report published by the Gambian government in May 2022⁶ addresses various aspects related to strengthening the rule of law and advancing the reconciliation process. In paragraph 307 (theme 11), sexual and gender-based violence, the Commission recognises that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), which means that such violations and crimes are not properly identified, prevented, managed and/or subject to effective accountability⁷. However, the limited local capacity to effectively plan and implement these initiatives is a significant challenge that could result in disappointments and frustrations among some groups. To overcome these challenges, a close policy dialogue with resolute support is crucial during this delicate phase of the democratic transition process.

⁴ UNDP 2021

⁵ Global gender Gap Report 2022. World Economic Forum

⁶ In 2018, The Gambia set up a Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TRRC) in order to investigate on the crimes of the Jammeh era and propose recommendations on reconciliation and reparations. After extensive and participatory hearings, the TRRC submitted its report at the end of 2021. In May 2022, the Government submitted its report, endorsing most of the recommendations.

⁷ Government White Paper on the report of the Truth reconciliation and reparations commission. Republic of the Gambia. 2022.

To provide a more comprehensive analysis of the context, it is essential to highlight the central role of the rule of law in promoting peace and stability. The reasons for the limited capacities to plan and implement the agenda should be explored, along with the risks affecting the transition process and the challenges that need to be addressed. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge the opportunities that can be leveraged during this process. International indices that measure the rule of law, such as the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2022 or the Ibrahim Index of African Governance show a deterioration of the Gambian situation in terms of the rule of law, which underscores the need for urgent action. In this respect, the Anti-Corruption bill is tabled at the agenda of the March, 2023 session of the National Assembly.

Moreover, corruption is a significant issue in Gambian public institutions, affecting the effectiveness of public services, eroding the credibility of public institutions, and reducing citizens' trust in the state. While fighting corruption is not an explicit objective of this intervention, it is critical to acknowledge its far-reaching impact and the importance of addressing it in a comprehensive manner.

Problem 2: Weaknesses in migration management (main policy document: National Migration policy).

In December 2020, a milestone was registered through the official launch of the first stand-alone National Migration Policy (NMP) 2020-2030 in The Gambia. Cognizant that migration is a phenomenon that is ever present in the lives of many in The Gambia, the Government demonstrated its commitment to manage migration, address challenges of irregular migration and maximise the benefits of well-managed migration through the NMP. To facilitate the return, readmission and reintegration of Gambian nationals and to build the Government's capacity to effectively manage returning migrants and their reintegration into the society are two of the many objectives of the NMP.

The Gambia set up a National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM) in November 2019. The NCM is a government-led interagency coordination platform that aims to institute a whole-of-government approach to migration governance. Focusing on policy level coordination, the NCM aims to address emerging migration issues in a coordinated and timely manner; ensure policy coherence; and mainstream migration into development plans. The NCM is placed under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in 2022. Given limited national capacities, the NCM's inception and implementation strongly depends on IOM's support.

However, a weak economic growth per capita undiversified economy, unemployment and insufficient job creation, and limited access to education opportunities (just 29.9% of women have some secondary education compared to male 43.2%) and social protection create an environment where migration, including through irregular channels, is likely to remain among important coping strategies for Gambians in the medium-term. The percentage of unemployed women in 2021 was 14.8% and for men was 8.4%.⁸

Regarding irregular migration, restrictive measures related to art. 25a of the EU visa code were imposed in October, 2021. These measures were strengthened in December, 2022. On reintegration, the Government is willing to increase ownership. A NCM's technical working group on return and reintegration is led by the Ministry of Interior but there are no budget allocations associated and it strongly depends on external funding to operate and organise meetings. Although a national referral mechanism for vulnerable migrants and standard operating procedures have been developed, there is no governmentally-owned action or sustainability plan for the coordination and the provision of reintegration assistance in the long term. An Action Plan for the implementation of the NMP has yet to be developed. The standards operating procedures for assisted voluntary return and reintegration, developed with support from the EU-IOM Joint Initiative, are not sufficiently mainstreamed.

Problem 3: Weak capacity for developing a social protection system that targets the most vulnerable groups (main policy document: National Social Protection Policy, NSPP, 2015-2025).

Prior to the development of the NSPP in 2015, a wide range of social protection projects, schemes and programmes had existed and been implemented in The Gambia that focused on alleviating different risks, deprivations and inequalities facing poor and vulnerable groups. It was noted at the time, however, that the majority of interventions were short term, had limited coverage, were largely project-based and externally driven, and were generally

⁸ OIT. Estimation unemployed people.

emergency-oriented. Furthermore, it was recognised that in addition to weaknesses in terms of scope, coverage and finance, the social protection system in place at the time exhibited a range of institutional weaknesses in design, delivery and co-ordination and that human resource capacity was limited. The NSPP was introduced in 2015, with the intention of it being implemented in two phases: Phase 1 - Focus on addressing system fragmentation, through the harmonisation of administrative systems across agencies, including targeting, delivery, registration, monitoring and evaluation, grievance and redress mechanisms, and payment systems; Phase 2 – Scaling up of social assistance programmes.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and effects of fuel, food and fertilizers price increases have strengthened the case for provision of social protection to vulnerable groups. The percentage of women covered by any health insurance is 2.4%, while for the men is 3.9%.⁹

At the same time, the fiscal resources available to fund such interventions remain limited. The last few years have seen some improvements in developing capacity for designing and implementing social protection measures, e.g. with a decision to create a social registry that currently covers the majority of rural households. An institutional set-up for co-ordination of social protection policies has also been established. There is still a way to go for this institutional set-up to translate into a clear strategy of designing and rolling out social protection interventions. This lack of capacity affects both the high policy level, that is e.g. not yet able to assess needs and prioritise use of limited resources, as well as the regional level as regards both needs assessment and programme delivery. Three years after its inception, the social registry has not yet been completed neither used to the extent it could be and problems have emerged as regards the practical side of access to data, thereby delaying design of social protection interventions. The interoperability between systems, e.g. the birth registry, the national ID registry and the social registry, remain to be set up. At the same time, it is not yet clear if and how the social registry will be sustained in the long run.

Problem 4: Limited fiscal space to respond to emerging policy needs (main policy document : PFM Strategy 2021 – 2025)

The combined impact of the economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently to a substantial increase of global fuel, fertilizers and food prices in an environment of domestic price regulations have limited domestic fiscal revenues. As an illustration, in the first 11 months of 2022, total revenue collected by the Gambia Revenue Authority declined by 1% year-on-year in nominal terms, despite high inflation (13% as of October 2022) and solid real GDP growth. Large public debt limits the possibilities of debt-financed fiscal expansion. While some improvement in domestic revenue to GDP ratio will hopefully materialise compared to a particularly weak 2022, for the next few years at least, The Gambia will still lack own resources to adequately respond to policy challenges.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA): co-ordinating role for the implementation of the National Development Plan as well as for budget support, including reform monitoring, key role in public financial reforms. MoFEA has stronger capacity than other ministries but some gaps remain.

Ministry of Justice & Attorney General's Chambers (MoJ): playing key role in all legislative reforms and in implementation of several White Paper commitments related to the TRRC recommendations.

Ministry of Interior (MoI): playing a key role in implementing migration-related reforms. MoI capacity can be assessed as similar or somewhat above the average compared to other ministries.

Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment : playing a key role in relation to the Employment policy and the Labour Migration Policy.

⁹ The Gambia. Multiple indicator cluster survey 2018.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: playing a policy lead role on the National Coordination Mechanism, and a key role on readmission

Gambia Immigration Department (GID): under the ministry of Interior, responsible for the facilitation, controlling and monitoring of movements of people into, within and outside of the Gambia.

Office of the Vice President: playing an oversight / policy lead role in the area of social protection.

National Social Protection Secretariat (NSPS): playing a co-ordination role in the area of social protection.

Ministry of Health: playing a role in actions related to birth registration and in managing some of the existing social protection programmes.

Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW): playing various roles related to implementation of some of the White Paper commitments related to the TRRC recommendations and to design and delivery of Government social protection programmes for vulnerable groups.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC): The NHRC seeks to boost human rights standards in The Gambia and to nurture a culture of respect for rights and freedoms guaranteed by the rule of law. The NHRC has been established to promote and protect human rights of all persons, which includes human rights defenders in The Gambia. The Commission's protective mandate includes the power to monitor, receive and investigate any human rights violation in The Gambia. The NHRC was tasked to monitor implementation of the WP. NHRC's capacity can be assessed as strong compared to other public institutions in The Gambia.

Civil society organisations (CSOs). This Action will be of interest to several CSOs. Their interest and involvement, in particular in monitoring progress and in advocacy is expected, especially in areas related to the implementation of the White Paper commitments. Overall capacity of CSOs can be assessed as relatively weak but improving.

Media: This Action will be of interest to several media outlets which play an important role to support transparency and accountability of all actors involved in the State and Resilience Building Contract. Media access to information is expected to be strengthened thanks to the implementation of the 2021 Access to information Bill. Overall capacity of the media can be assessed as relatively weak but improving.

2.3 Additional Areas of Assessment

2.3.1 Public Policy

The Gambia is in the process of transiting from the previous National Development Plan (NDP - 2018-2022) to a new NDP covering 2023-2027, validated in December 2022. The assessment of the way in which the previous Plan's priorities and objectives translate into regular activities of various parts of the government is mixed. The mid-term evaluation of the NDP showed that a number of indicators improved but progress could have been even greater with a better coordination and leadership by the Government instead of a still existing 'silo approach' in some institutions.

The vision is that the future development agenda for The Gambia is to consolidate the gains of democratisation and socio-economic progress, and respond to new needs and challenges for sustainable growth and development in line with the SDGs. The identified medium-term goals of The Gambia include (i) further progress in democratic governance, (ii) accelerate green economic and social transformation and (iii) build resilience to shocks and crises.

Since the start of the democratic transition at the end of 2016, The Gambia has been able to maintain peace and internal stability. This has positive bearing on the quality of life and ease of doing business and is reflected in international rankings. The Gambia moved from 111th place in 2017 to 45th position in 2022 in the Global Peace Index. In the regional perspective this means that The Gambia was ranked as the 2nd most peaceful country in sub-Saharan Africa in 2022. This needs to be underlined in a region particularly tormented by unrest and coups.

The Gambia's democratic transition has been progressing since 2017, though it still requires consolidation. The process includes a broad range of political reforms.

The constitutional reform is an area that, after a promising start, saw a setback with the draft Constitution not securing the required majority in the Parliament in September 2020. An impasse followed and despite engagement of international mediators, the process has not resumed so far. Following the presidential elections in December 2021 and parliamentary elections in April 2022, the president and his government pledged to revive the constitutional reform. The commitments to these effects are also included in the White Paper. This will, however, remain a difficult task since a large majority for a new constitution needs to be found in the National Assembly, followed by a high voter turnout and positive voting in a referendum for it to be adopted.

The transitional justice process had made good progress, and is currently at an important juncture. The Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) was established in 2017 and has since achieved international recognition for its achievements, especially for the level of confidence that they could build with perpetrators – many of whom came forward voluntarily to confess atrocities – and for the level of public interest generated by the live public hearings and outreach activities. The TRRC published its final report in November, 2021, containing recommendations for follow-up in terms of criminal investigations, prosecution, reforms, reparations and memorialisation. In line with the previously set agenda, in May 2022, the government published its White Paper where it committed to implement almost all recommendations of the TRRC report.

The Government is currently in the process of preparing a detailed implementation plan for the White Paper. It is expected that the Government will seek donor support for the implementation process.

The WP contains several important commitments related to prevention of gender-based violence and support for its victims. The importance of the gender dimension is highlighted by a separate chapter of the White Paper focusing on Sexual and Gender Based Violence mirroring a separate volume of the TRRC report.

The new NDP also has a sufficiently developed discussion on several policy aspects from a gender perspective. The government explicitly acknowledged the need for full and equal participation and leadership of women in all areas of sustainable development. It also acknowledges the prevailing deep-rooted gender inequalities with women suffering from more difficult access to decent work, facing occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. A particularly strong underrepresentation of women is visible in political and economic decision-making processes. The proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments is 9%¹⁰.

The Gambia is explicitly seeking to progressively limit reliance on donor funding and strengthen its ability to collect taxes. Mobilisation of more domestic revenue notably requires reforms of tax policy and strengthening the Gambian Revenue Authority. Ensuring adequate fiscal space also requires improved public financial management, prudent planning of expenditure and keeping debt sustainability risks in check. The adverse global economic environment makes progress towards these objectives more difficult. In the near term, donor financing remains key for funding major policy areas.

There are a number of key sector national public policy documents which provide basis for SRBC4 support, e.g. The Gambia National Social Protection Policy 2015-2025, The White Paper implementation plan with corresponding budget, The Gambia National Employment Policy and Action Plan 2022-2026, The National Migration Policy (NMP) 2020-2030, and a Labour Migration Strategy and action Plan. The current Action will contribute to stimulating the policy dialogue around these, especially under a Team Europe approach (Member States present in The Gambia will be invited to policy dialogue sessions).

In terms of capacities, the public administration is affected by weaknesses in physical facilities and human resources. In mid-2022, an increase in civil service wages took place, yet its impact on incentives will be mitigated as high inflation significantly reduces its real impact. Human capacities are heterogeneous and logistic capacities are overall weak. The institutional framework to ensure the effective coordination of implementation strategies and policies is still in need of improvement. The gaps arising from the lack of a functional institutional framework

¹⁰ UNDP. HDI 2021

have resulted in duplication of some functions, inadequate dissemination of information, inconsistent monitoring, and inefficiency in government-donor dialogue and partnerships.

Quality and availability of statistics has somewhat improved, but important challenges remain. Some important data collection operations are currently planned (e.g. a census and labour force survey). Certain improvements in fiscal data are visible, inter alia thanks to the better use of the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS). Key challenges include the delay in enacting the statistics bill, limited awareness of the Gambia Data Quality Assessment Framework (GDQA), limited coordination among the National Statistical System (NSS) leading to conduct of surveys without GBoS approval and the inadequate capacity and funds for statistical development, e.g. the envisaged statistical training centre hasn't yet been established. However, overall, quality of statistical and monitoring systems can be assessed as sufficient for the credibility of the policy.

The current oversight framework for the NDP includes a Government-Development Partner forum, a National Technical Committee, Technical Clusters (Sector- and Thematic Working Groups, a National M&E Platform and a Regional Technical Advisory Committee. Whereas some of these are more functional than others, they provide nevertheless a solid reference framework for coordination and policy dialogue at various levels.

The Government is addressing numerous political, social, economic and security challenges. The Gambian population has become increasingly vocal in requesting visible results and, hence, the Government needs to strengthen its communication and be more open about successes and failures. However, the mid-term review of the NDP (2018-2021) observed limited involvement of youth in public policy dialogue and weak policy coherence and coordination around youth issues and similarly limited dialogue space for women and marginalised groups.

In conclusion, the public policy framework is sufficiently relevant and credible for budget support contract objectives to be largely achieved. Therefore the policy can be supported by the Commission with the proposed budget support contract.

2.3.2 Macroeconomic Policy

The economic recovery from the pandemic has continued at a modest pace. The negative impact of global economic developments, notably slowing growth, high inflation and rising global interest rates have a negative impact on short-term prospects. In its October 2022 assessment, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) expected 2022 GDP growth to reach 4.5%. The economy is supported by broadly positive developments in tourism, construction and agriculture sectors. Inflation has increased visibly exceeding 13% since April 2022, with a particularly strong rises of some food, fertilizers and fuel prices.

The authorities have taken measures to address some implications of the external shocks. In particular, growth of regulated domestic fuel prices was limited by a major increase of fuel subsidies at a significant fiscal cost and leading to some distortions in the foreign exchange market where some gap opened between official and market rates. The Government also heavily subsidised imported mineral fertilizers, even though the prices remained unaffordable for many farmers (with a tripling compared to the year before).

Going forward, and assuming broadly positive external developments, economic growth is expected to strengthen to around 6% in 2023-2024. These projections are predicated on a dissipation of commodity price shocks, a non-occurrence of an abrupt global slowdown or recession, full recovery of the tourism sector, and continued good performance of private construction and agriculture as well as continuation of a steady inflow of remittances. Risks to the outlook are tilted to the downside, including the uncertainty about the war in Ukraine, the uncertain outlook for the tourism industry in Europe, and climate-related risks which pose significant threats to the economy.

The authorities are implementing the IMF programme backed by the Extended Credit Facility. The IMF's assessment of PFM reforms has remained broadly positive, especially in relation to rationalising tax expenditures, digitalising tax systems and budget processes, and improving debt management.

In conclusion, the authorities are pursuing a stability-oriented macroeconomic policy; the eligibility criterion is met.

2.3.3 Public Financial Management

The PFM reform agenda appears to be strong and some PFM results have gradually improved since 2021. A five-year PFM strategy was published in early 2021 and has become a key reference point with quarterly reports on implementation. The PFM department at the Ministry leads and effectively co-ordinates the reforms, ensuring engagement of relevant stakeholders and providing a forum for regular discussions and information sharing. A Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment was launched, after delay, and in spite of experiencing some difficulties, will provide by mid-2023 an update on strengths and weaknesses of the PFM system. Most weaknesses generally reflect weak capacity of the Ministry of Finance and the public administration in general.

Progress could be observed in several areas, in particular:

- The draft PFM law was prepared following extensive consultations.
- New public procurement law was passed after several years of delay.
- MoFEA started publishing audited financial reports of state-owned enterprises and advanced preparations for signing performance management contracts with the first State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in a bid to improve their oversight.
- MoFEA formalised an engagement with the National Assembly aimed at strengthening capacity of relevant parliamentary committees to assess a budget and budget-related documents.
- Local authorities prepared their 2023 budget in a new programme-based format, more conducive to managing their finances.
- The roll out of a new version of Automated System for Customs Data ASYCUDA World to customs offices offering the potential to improve customs collection (the effects of the rollout have not yet been assessed) has started.
- A Tax administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool (TADAT) assessment is currently performed by the World Bank.
- The capacity of the Gambia Revenue Authority, a body responsible for collection of most tax and customs revenue is relatively weak but improving.
- Progress has been made regarding the conclusion of performance contracts with 3 of the (SOEs).

Important objectives as formulated in the PFM Strategy 2021-2025 include the following ones:

- Improving fiscal forecasting (revenues, expenditures and debt).
- Increasing the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA's) capacity for Programme Based Budgeting (PBB).
- Strengthening the medium-term perspective, with larger role of the MTEFF.
- Increasing domestic revenue collection.
- Improving tax compliance through process enhancement and risk-based compliance management.
- Enhancing the legal and regulatory framework for state-owned enterprises.
- Strengthening debt management to limit risks and keep debt servicing costs at manageable levels.
- Better co-ordination of donor activities and ensuring mobilisation of financial resources from donors.
- Digitalisation of the public procurement process.
- Standardisation of the legal and regulatory framework for the procurement process.

The outlook for reforms is broadly favourable, given government's efforts to engage all stakeholders and the sound level of complementarity of donors' support to assist the MoFEA on PFM reforms.

Further efforts are required, in particular as regards (i) enhancing the capacity of tax and customs administration to improve tax collection so as to go beyond the current level of domestically collected revenue (which currently stands at only 13% of GDP), (ii) improving multiannual fiscal planning and increasing the role of Medium Term Fiscal Framework, (iii) the reform of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), (iv) operating a solid system for granting and managing tax expenditures, and (v) strengthening debt management and ensuring that this function is well co-ordinated with macro-fiscal forecasting and budgeting. Moreover, improving the presentation of the budget (currently focused on inputs and institutions-allocated public funds, without link to outputs) would help make budgetary adjustments reflecting emerging macroeconomic challenges or policy priorities.

In conclusion, the public finance management reform strategy is sufficiently relevant and credible, including on domestic revenue mobilisation, and the eligibility criterion is met.

2.3.4 Transparency and Oversight of the Budget

Overall, there are positive prospects for improved budget transparency at all stages of the budget cycle. Considering the detailed estimated budget data (up to specific items, which is not the case in many countries), for the upcoming budget year, at the time of budget approval (showing also last (i.e. current) year budget approval and previous year actual outturn) that can be accessible to the public, the entry point regarding transparency is met. The format of budget documents could still be improved as hundreds of pages of tables in portable document format are difficult to process and analyse.

The government has consistently published both the executive's budget proposal and the enacted budget documents, including for a budget amendment during the year. The MoFEA's website has become the key place for publication of a growing number of documents, including monthly budget expenditure execution reports, quarterly PFM progress reports as well as PFM sub-sectoral strategies.

The COVID-19 policy response has been accompanied by some measures strengthening transparency. In early 2020, a special account was opened and a committee comprising all actors involved in the budget execution process was set up to execute the COVID-19 spending. Any of such spending in 2021 budget is subject to standard budget execution reporting requirements and published by MoFEA, on a monthly basis. Details of COVID-19 procurement contracts from March–October 2020, including the beneficial owners of successful bidding companies, were published on the website of the Gambia Public Procurement Authority. The internal audit function of the Ministry of Health has been enhanced and the National Audit Office (NAO) performed independent audits of the COVID-19 spending. These audit results are to be consolidated with the audit of the 2020 fiscal accounts, which have however been delayed by the long process of finalising the 2019 audit reports.

Alongside the 2023 budget document, a budget speech is also available, which includes the main information regarding assumptions, aggregates of the budget and tax provisions. Audits of annual government's report by the National Audit Institutions are still somewhat delayed with the audit of the 2019 report published in November 2022, a delay compared to the previous year cycle when the publication happened in May 2021. Nonetheless, the backlog of national audits have a realistic chance of being eliminated in the next 2 years.

A commendable initiative for strengthening transparency is the regular publication of the Citizen's Audit Reports by the NAO. This was initiated with an accessible summary of the 2016 Government financial accounts that was published in March 2021. Since then simplified audits of 2017 and of 2018 government's reports have been published contributing to a broader understanding of audits and the government finances in general by the general public. These short, user-friendly publications use simple language, and feature an attractive and clear graphical structure. They are straightforward in their key messages.

Transparency challenges remain for the finances of state-owned enterprises and ensuing contingent liability risks for public finances. This has direct links with overall fiscal risk outlook. Progress has nonetheless been made with centralised publication of audited financial reports of all SOEs on the MoFEA website.

The MoFEA has recently strengthened its rhetoric on anti-corruption reforms, a welcome development. This is also partly reflected in ongoing actions such as those strengthening public procurement functions and internal audit. Also, recent measures related to the tax policy look promising from the anti-corruption perspective. Introduction of new customs tools (the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) World) also has a potential for a reduction of corruption.

In conclusion, the relevant budget documentation, including the enacted budget, has been published and therefore the entry point / eligibility criterion of transparency and oversight of the budget is met.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to contribute to building a peaceful, inclusive and democratic society in The Gambia, while promoting gender equality.

The Specific Objectives (Outcomes) of this action are to

1. Enhance rule of law and transitional justice framework while making sure that gender perspective is incorporated
2. Improve migration management
3. Strengthen the social protection systems coverage
4. Improve the relevance and accountability of public financial management for the delivery of essential services to the citizens.

The Induced Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

1. contributing to Specific Objective 1: Enhance implementation of White Paper commitments¹¹, including those related to sexual and gender-based violence.
2. contributing to Specific Objective 2: Improve migration management with an emphasis on the readmission and reintegration of returnees.
3. contributing to Specific Objective 3: Increase proportion of population from vulnerable groups accessing social protection benefits.
4. contributing to Specific objective 4: Promote Programme-based Budgeting implementation.

Direct outputs:

1. The National Development Plan (NDP) 2023 - 2027 and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) integrated into a single document (on a rolling three-year basis).
2. Enhanced implementation and documentation of SRBC-4 Policy Dialogue Plan at (i) operational, (ii) strategic and (iii) political level.
3. Improved timeliness of availability of performance information on the targets of the SRBC-4
4. Implementation of the Technical Assistance is quarterly reviewed and documented with all concerned stakeholders.
5. Strengthened advocacy for an extended, more inclusive and better financed social protection system.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Regarding **budget support**,

Government and national entities will be in charge of :

1. achieving progress on the four general conditions
 - Satisfactory progress in the implementation, downward accountability, communication and visibility of the National Development Plan (2023-2027) and its continued credibility and relevance and in the White Paper.
 - Maintenance of a credible and relevant stability-oriented macroeconomic policy.
 - Satisfactory progress in the implementation of reforms to improve public financial management, including domestic revenue mobilisation, and continued relevance and credibility of the reform programme.
 - Satisfactory progress with regard to the public availability of accessible, timely, comprehensive, and sound budgetary information.
2. reaching the targets on the agreed variable tranche performance indicators in the respective result areas.
 - Enhance rule of law and transitional justice framework while making sure that gender perspective is incorporated.
 - Improve migration management.

¹¹ White Paper commitments are divided into accountability, legal and institutional reform and reparations.

- Strengthen the social protection system.
- Improve the relevance and accountability of public financial management for the delivery of essential services to the citizens.

Throughout the implementation of this SRBC contract, a continued policy dialogue will be conducted, both bilaterally and in the context of the semi-annual joint Budget Support reviews (to which member States present in The Gambia will be invited).

Disbursements will occur annually based on a request by government authorities substantiating progress on the general conditions and performance indicators and the subsequent assessment by the European Commission thereof.

The **complementary support measures** will mainly focus on Activities relating to result areas 3 and 4:

Result area 3 :

- Technical assistance provided in the area of social protection policy and implementation.
- A pilot social protection action is implemented supporting categorical targeting for universal social protection, focusing on particularly vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities.

Result area 4 :

- Technical assistance provided in the area of public finance management implementation reforms.

Regular operational, strategic and political policy dialogue sessions, involving EU, EU Member States, government (ministries and agencies), are carried out at different levels of responsibility, including where relevant CSOs, Women's Organisations and other stakeholders. In this context the donor reform monitoring group meets regularly to enable Gambian government's effective monitoring of progress made on the implementation of the matrix of indicators.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) screening

Given its nature, a SEA is not required. The Action will not provide support to environmentally sensitive sectors at a strategic level.

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is associated with no or low risk (no need for further assessment)

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender is a significant objective of the action, and gender equality is an important and deliberate objective of this programme. The programme is informed by the Gender Action Plan (GAP) for The Gambia and the draft Country Level Implementation Plan (CLIP), as well as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare's Strategic Plan 2021-2025. It is also in line with the EU roadmap for engagement with civil society in The Gambia for the period 2021-2023.

Women will be specifically targeted in activities. Across all objectives, targets aim at 50% participation of women where relevant (see logframe), especially as regards activities related to Specific Objective 3 (strengthening of the social protection system) and Specific Objective 1, where gender perspective is strongly present in specific White Paper commitments. This is expected to strengthen the rule of law, reduce gender disparities promote gender equality, increase inclusion and empowerment of women, and prevent sexual and gender-based violence.

Specific interventions that explicitly aim to empower women and reduce gender inequality will include:

- incentives for introducing sexual harassment policies in all police stations across the country
- incentives for regularly training Gambian Armed Forces on human rights
- incentives for improving governance and boosting the scope and reach of the Family Strengthening Programme, a government-funded social protection programme for most vulnerable groups
- technical assistance to the Government for the social protection policy and implementation, and funding for a pilot social protection intervention focusing on universal benefit provision for specific vulnerable groups, such as women and persons with disabilities.

The action will support the collection of gender-disaggregated data, the qualitative monitoring of action design and implementation arrangements, and the assessment of its effects on gender inequalities; This will allow narrowing the gender gap in socio-economic opportunities. The action contributes to the Gender Action Plan III (GAP III, 2021-2025)¹², more specifically under pillar 3, ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence and strengthening economic and social rights and the empowerment of girls and women.

Human Rights

This project is in line with the EU Human Rights and Democracy Country Strategy (2021-2024) *to support The Gambia's consolidation of democracy, in order to create the conditions for human rights to flourish*. This action is in line with the following priorities:

- Protecting fundamental freedoms: freedom of expression and media pluralism, access to information, peaceful assembly;
- Strengthening the rule of law by building the capacity of the judiciary to administer justice;
- Bolstering accountability mechanisms and checks & balances by supporting transparent, accountable and independent oversight institutions.

The key mechanism by which this Action will support the above priorities is by incentivising and supporting the implementation of the WP commitments. A large number of these commitments directly refer to various human rights.

The protection, promotion, and fulfilment of human rights by building the capacities of the duty-bearers (State actors) is integrated across all elements of this action, as well as empowering rights-holders, particularly women, youth, victims of human rights violations and persons living with disabilities.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that inclusion of persons living with disabilities is a significant objective. A specific component of this action will explicitly target persons with disabilities with emphasis, not only on piloting a model social protection instrument targeting this group, but also broadening the public discourse on persons with disabilities with a view to long-term strengthening of policies helping this group. Participation in outreach activities and strategic engagements with national authorities is expected to help in the implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act.

The Gambia has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol on 7 July 2015. The CRPD is an international human rights treaty that promotes and protects the human rights of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. The Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2020 was tabled on 8 June 2020 at the second ordinary session of the National Assembly in the 2020 Legislative Year. However it has not yet been adopted. The Gambia is yet to ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (Disability Protocol) which was adopted on 30 January 2018¹³.

Democracy

¹² European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EE External Action {SWD(2020) 284 final}, https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf

¹³ <https://www.lawhubgambia.com/latest-news/tag/CRPD>

Democracy in support of pluralism will be promoted and mainstreamed in the action. Specifically, a substantial number of government commitments from the 2022 White Paper that will be incentivised aim at strengthening democratic institutions and norms. Examples might include a constitutional reform, strengthening of the Law Reform Commission, reforms aimed at ensuring media freedoms, government engagement with political parties, civil society and victim-led groups on reconciliation.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The central role of the government commitments from the White Paper ensure that the action has a substantial potential to prevent conflicts and build mechanisms for peaceful development. Examples include commitments related to adequate training of armed forces and other uniformed services, constitutional reform, or reforms of the penal systems, including functioning of prisons.

Disaster Risk Reduction

There are no elements directly focused on reducing risks of disasters. Indirectly, the action has a potential to help, by building capacity of state institutions and increasing the fiscal capacity of the state. Investing in shock-responsive social protection systems can also help in preventing, managing and better responding to disasters.

Other considerations if relevant : n. a.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
Political	Insufficient political will and negative inter-party dynamics	Medium	Medium	Extensive phase for designing the Action, increasing reform ownership by authorities; close and regular policy dialogue as well as technical and financial support
	Another failure of the constitutional reform process	Medium	High	Given the high domestic ownership of this process, there is at this stage limited scope for externally arranged mitigating measures. These predominantly consist of close and regular policy dialogue as well as technical and financial support (including as key element of Actions under AAP 2022)
	A change in Gambian government's current cooperative position on migration management	Medium	Medium	Close and regular policy dialogue with a strong emphasis on positive aspects of migrations; technical and financial support
Economic	Economic crisis stemming from global and domestic factors, including climate-related ones	Medium	Medium	Key elements of the action, i.e. budgetary transfers accompanied by commitments to maintaining macroeconomic stability oriented policies would be mitigating potential negative economic developments; strengthening institutional setup for

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
				social protection system, an important element of the action would increase capacity to mitigate effects of a negative economic scenario
Institutional	Weakness in some parts of public administration could hamper implementation of agreed reforms	Medium	Medium	Extensive phase for designing the Action, increasing reform ownership by authorities; close and regular policy dialogue as well as technical and financial support

Lessons Learnt:

Lessons learnt from previous budget support interventions contributed to the design of this action and its complementarity to projects supporting the democratic transition included in the AAP 2022.

The previous budget support in The Gambia showed how important it was to agree on indicators which fall under the sole responsibility of the executive (with whom the Financing Agreement is signed). This is the case in SRBC4.

Another important lesson was that in the past ownership of and knowledge about budget support design and specific indicators among Gambian institutions was insufficient to build necessary reform momentum. The frequent turnover among Gambian officials did not help in this respect. Learning from this experience, this action involves even more extensive consultations on the design of variable tranche indicators. During the implementation, the EU Delegation will hold quarterly policy dialogues with key stakeholders in order to discuss policy reforms as well as progress of indicators, identify challenges and mitigate risks when necessary. The Gambian authorities and the EU Delegation will at an early stage establish a Policy Dialogue matrix for structured High-, Strategic- and Operational level Policy Dialogue A recently established Reform Monitoring Group by the Ministry of Finance is also likely to be among formats that will be used for this purpose. The establishment of this Committee is geared towards improving effective implementation of reforms under programmes with donors and ensuring efficient disbursement and monitoring of performance with an added value of ensuring better co-ordination with other donors. The establishment of this group reflects lessons described in the Delegation's final report on State and Resilience Building Contract no. 3 from March 2022. Frequency and quality of policy dialogue is expected to be increased.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that

If:

1. Budget support is provided in the framework of a state and resilience building contract with variable tranches disbursements conditioned on reaching targets in areas such as (a) public financial management, (b) transitional justice process , (c) social protection, and (d) migration management
2. Technical assistance is provided supporting the emerging social protection system and Public Financial Management Reforms
3. Funding is provided by this Action and by the Government for testing a model social protection intervention for particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and persons with disabilities

And the following assumptions are met:

6. Security and political environment remains stable
7. Political will and consensus is maintained to advance reforms in the targeted policy areas
8. Economic situation remains stable, without a major crisis hitting the country

Then:

1. The Gambia will make substantial progress in legal reforms to provide checks and balances, guarantee access to justice, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms
2. Transitional justice and reconciliation process will provide justice to victims of human rights violations
3. Public financial management will improve, enabling a more efficient, effective and accountable implementation of public policies in general and the delivery of essential services to the citizens in particular.
4. A basis will be substantially strengthened for developing a fit-for-purpose and fiscally sustainable social protection system
5. Migration management will be improved
6. The EU will remain among key partners of The Gambia.

Leading to:

The Gambia strengthening its capacities as a State as well as its resilience.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

BUDGET SUPPORT MODALITY as reflected by the national/sector public policy supported (4 levels of results / indicators / Baselines / Targets / Source of Data - no activities)

Results	Results chain	Indicators	Baselines (~ 2022)	Targets by the end of the contract (2025)	Sources of data
Indicative Impact of the policy	1. To contribute to building a peaceful, inclusive and democratic society in The Gambia, while promoting gender equality	1. SRI (State Resilience Index) Score	1. 5.1 (2023)	0. TBD	0. Fund for Peace (FFP) : https://fundforpeace.org/SRI/global-data.html
Expected Outcomes of the policy	1. Enhanced rule of law and transitional justice framework while making sure that gender perspective is incorporated	1. Number of the White Paper commitments related to the recommendations of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) implemented, including specifically identified ones (e. g. on gender)	1. 30	1.130 (tbc).	1. NHRC, MoJ, Ministry of Gender and MoFEA
	2. Improved migration management	2. Number of government framework(s) for the return, readmission and reintegration of returnees developed	2. 0	2. 1	2.a Ministry of Interior
	3. Strengthened social protection systems coverage	3. Proportion of population from vulnerable groups covered by at least one social protection benefit (disaggregated by sex)	3. TBD	3. TBD	3. NSPS, Bureau of Statistics, CRVS
	4. Improved relevance and accountability of public financial management for the delivery of essential services to the citizens	4. Status of formalisation of mechanism for the use of performance information in budget preparation, including performance dialogues and spending review	4. Baseline costing and a strategic phase of budget preparation are not required from Budget Entities (BEs)	4. Baseline costing, performance dialogue and spending review are required from at least 10 Pilot Budget Entities (BEs)	4.a 1 st and 2 nd Budget Call Circular instructions (Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs; MoFEA)
Induced Outputs	1.1 Enhanced implementation of White Paper commitments , including those related to sexual and gender-based violence	1.1 Status of operationalisation/use of a robust, publicly accessible monitoring system for implementation of TRRC recommendations	1.1 No system	1.1 In place and actively used	1.1. NHRC
	2.1 Improved migration management with emphasis on the readmission and reintegration of returnees	2.1.a Number of migration-related activities implemented by the National Coordination Mechanism and its relevant Working Groups. 2.1.b Operationalization of a National Referral Mechanism for returnees	2.1.a Not available 2.1.b National Referral Mechanism for the protection of vulnerable migrants, including victims of trafficking in The Gambia (Guidelines)	2.1.a TBD 2.1.b National Referral Mechanism for returnees in place and actively used	2.1 MoI, MoTRIE, MoFA

	3.1 Increase proportion of population from vulnerable groups accessing social protection benefits	3.1 Proportion of population from vulnerable groups receiving social protection assistance disaggregated by age and gender.	3.1 TBD	3.1 TBD	3.1 NSPS, MoFA
	4.1 Satisfactory Progress towards Programme-based Budgeting.	4.1 Extent to which budgetary tools for a gradual transition to PBB are used.	4.1 The Budget Call Circular (BCC) for FY 2023 does not include guidance to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) on PBB	4.1 A comprehensive assessment of the MDAs capacity to apply the PBB guidelines of the 2024 BCC has been completed and published for at least 3 pillars of the National Development Plan.	4.1 1 st and 2 nd Budget Call Circular instructions and public domain of the Budget Directorate (Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs; MoFEA)
Direct Outputs	DO.1 The National Development Plan (NDP) 2023 - 2027 and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) integrated into a single document (on a rolling three-year basis).	DO.1 Reduction of the negative fiscal space (i.e. reduce the difference between the total amount of expenditure needed to implement the NDP and fund baseline recurrent expenditure on the one hand, and the available total resource envelope on the other hand).	DO.1 The costing of the NDP 2023-2027 has not yet been completed (February 2023)	DO.1 Integration of the NDP 2023 - 2027 and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework into a single document (on a rolling three-year basis)	DO.1 a Public Document of the Directorates of Budget and Development Planning (Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs; MoFEA)
	DO.2 Enhanced implementation and documentation of SRBC-4 Policy Dialogue Plan at (i) operational, (ii) strategic and (iii) political level.	DO.2 Number of policy dialogue meetings on democratic reforms, migration policy and management, social protection and gender equality. Extent of participation by women and by women's rights organisations in social dialogue (GAPIII).	DO.2 12	DO.2 At least 12 operational, 2 strategic and 1 political level dialogue meetings per year	DO.2 reports on policy dialogue meetings.
	DO.3 Improved timeliness of availability of performance information on the targets of the SRBC-4	DO.3 Status of availability of Quarterly-, in-year and end-of-year progress reports on the Government's performance against the targets of the SRBC-4	DO.3 NA	DO.3 Available not later than 30 days after the end of the concerned performance period	DO.3 End-of-year progress report available MoFEA
	DO.4 Implementation of the Technical Assistance is quarterly reviewed and documented with all concerned stakeholders.	DO.4 Status of availability of Quarterly-, in-year and end-of-year progress reports on the Technical Assistance (Social Protection) against the targets of the SRBC-4	DO.4 Not available (TA not yet recruited)	DO.4 Available not later than 30 days after the end of the concerned performance period	DO.4 TA implementation reports.
	DO.5 Strengthened advocacy for an extended, more inclusive and better financed social protection system.	DO.5 Extent to which the EU-funded intervention supported effective civil society advocacy promoting the expansion of the social protection system.	DO.5 TBD	DO.5 TBD	DO.5 Progress reports for the EU-funded intervention

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with The Gambia.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 48 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation of the Budget Support Component

4.3.1 Rationale for the Amounts Allocated to Budget Support

The amount allocated for the budget support component is EUR 36 000 000. EUR 4 000 000 will consist of complementary support. This amount is based on dialogue with the government and development partners, financing needs of The Gambia, and assessment of the economic outlook and EU-Gambia MIP's budgetary framing.

The following disbursement calendar and profile proposed for the action is indicative. The actual disbursement calendar and profile will be set out in the financing agreement and may remain subject to change.

4th quarter of 2023: EUR 12 000 000 (fixed tranche)

4th quarter of 2024: EUR 2 000 000 (fixed tranche) and up to EUR 10 000 000 (variable tranche)

4th quarter of 2025: EUR 2 000 000 (fixed tranche) and up to EUR 10 000 000 (variable tranche)

4.3.2 Criteria for Disbursement of Budget Support

a) Conditions.

The general conditions for disbursement of all tranches are as follows:

- Satisfactory progress in the implementation, downward accountability, communication and visibility of the National Development Plan (2023-2027) and its continued credibility and relevance and in the White Paper.
- Maintenance of a credible and relevant stability-oriented macroeconomic policy.
- Satisfactory progress in the implementation of reforms to improve public financial management, including domestic revenue mobilisation, and continued relevance and credibility of the reform programme.
- Satisfactory progress with regard to the public availability of accessible, timely, comprehensive, and sound budgetary information.

b) The performance indicators for disbursement to be used for variable tranches may focus on the following policy priorities:

- Truth, reconciliation and reparations process, following the publication of the government's White paper committing to implement a large majority of the TRRC recommendations (including related on gender)
- Public financial management
- Migration management
- Social protection

c) Modifications.

The chosen performance indicators and targets to be used for the disbursement of variable tranches will apply for the duration of the action. However, in duly justified cases, the partner country and the Commission may agree on

changes to indicators or on upward/downward revisions of targets. Such changes shall be authorised in writing ex-ante, at the latest at the beginning of the period under review applicable to the indicators and targets.

In exceptional and/or duly justified cases, for instance where unexpected events, external shocks or changing circumstances have made the indicator or the target irrelevant and could not be anticipated, a variable tranche indicator may be waived. In these cases, the related amount could either be reallocated to the other indicators of the variable tranche of the same year or be transferred to the next variable tranche the following year (in accordance with the original weighting of the indicators). It could also be decided to re-assess an indicator the following year against the original target, if there was a positive trend and the authorities did not reach the target because of factors beyond their control. The use of this provision shall be requested by the partner country and approved in writing by the Commission.

d) Fundamental values

In case of a significant deterioration of fundamental values, budget support disbursements may be suspended, reduced or cancelled, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the financing agreement.

4.3.3 Budget Support Details

Budget support is provided as a combination of fixed and variable tranches. EUR 16 000 000 is envisaged as fixed tranches and EUR 20 000 000 is envisaged as variable tranches.

Budget support is provided as direct untargeted budget support to the national treasury. The crediting of the euro transfers disbursed into Gambian dalasi will be undertaken at the appropriate exchange rates in line with the relevant provisions of the financing agreement.

4.4 Implementation Modalities for complementary support

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures¹⁴.

4.4.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management) Call for proposals

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The objective of this call for proposals is to enable the Government to test (through a pilot action) a universal social protection model based on categorical targeting, focusing on particularly vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities. This will contribute to achieving expected output 3.1 of the SRBC. At the moment and for the near future, it would not be possible for the government to carry out such pilots through budget support because the national systems and capacities are not in place. Actions by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can help to set the basis and learn from the experience, for the government to take it up in the future. The implementation of pilot actions will allow to learn from the experience and compare between application of universal social protection based on categorical targeting with a focus on particularly vulnerable groups and the application of pro-poor support.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

In line with the purpose above, the targeted applicants will be legally established non-governmental organisations.

Other essential characteristics of the potential applicants, as well as the selection and award criteria will be specified in the guidelines for applicants of the call for proposals.

The call for proposals is expected to be launched during the first quarter of 2024.

¹⁴ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: have proven experience in managing Social Protection sector projects in the region in the past 5 years and have the operational and financial capacity to manage programmes of similar size.

4.4.2 Direct Management (Procurement)

1 - Subject: Technical assistance provided in the area of social protection policy and implementation. This will contribute to achieving output 3.1 of the SRBC.

Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure: Q2 2024

2 - Subject: Technical assistance provided in the area of public finance management implementation reforms. This will contribute to achieving output 4.1 of the SRBC.

Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure: Q2 2024

4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provision.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.6 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Budget support - cf. section 4.3	36 000 000
Complementary support measures	
Grants (direct management) – total envelope under section 4.4.1	1 900 000
Procurement (direct management) – total envelope under section 4.4.2	2 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2	100 000
Audit – cf. section 5.3	
Total	40 000 000

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

A Steering Committee shall be set up to oversee and validate the overall direction and progress of this State and Resilience Building Contract. The project Steering Committee will be chaired by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and include indicatively as members Office of the Vice President, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade, Integration and Employment, Gambia Immigration Department, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, and National Human Rights Commission, National Social Protection Secretariat, as well as the EU and its Member States present in The Gambia. It shall meet at least once a year. It will guide the implementation, monitor progress and ensure that the required technical expertise is

mobilised in a timely manner. Quarterly, follow-up meetings will continue to be organised regularly, and direct policy dialogue between the delegation and the structures directly concerned will be strengthened.

Regular policy dialogue meetings are envisaged with an indicative frequency of four per year. The precise format of these meetings will be adjusted flexibly responding to the current policy priorities and emerging challenges. Member States represented in The Gambia will be invited to these meetings. The already existing Donor reform monitoring group will hold its meetings on a regular basis (indicative frequency of 4 meetings per annum, to be adjusted when needed) to enable effective monitoring of progress made on areas relevant for achieving agreed targets for variable tranche indicators.

Regular engagement with civil society actors, organisations representing marginalised groups such as people with disabilities, and NHRC are envisaged. These engagements may be organised in the framework of already existing monitoring structures such as under the EU-financed project CSO Watchdog: Enhancing Civil Society Capacity for Increased Participation in the Implementation of the NDP in The Gambia (11th EDF). Measures will be taken to facilitate participation of persons with disabilities.

The technical assistance shall provide inputs on the social protection reform effort and report to the project Steering Committee and to the EU Delegation. The long term technical assistance recruited under Service contract will work in the area of social protection policy and implementation (Output 3.1). Another TA will be recruited in the area of public finance management implementation reforms (output 4.1)

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate bi-annual progress reports and final reports. The newly-established EU-Gambia Partnership Office will support this. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring can be summarised as follows:

- All disbursements are subject to continued compliance with the general eligibility criteria, while variable tranche disbursements are in addition determined by achievement of targets for agreed indicators. The MoFEA will regularly report on progress of public policy (with a particular focus on the National Development Plan, macroeconomic stability, PFM reforms, and budget transparency).
- In the likely event when a specific monitoring framework will be set up for the new National Development Plan (currently being validated), it will be utilised to the maximum possible extent also for the purpose of this budget support to limit administrative burdens. The Ministry of Finance (Directorate of Development Planning) would be the main driver behind monitoring the progress of the NDP.

- For complementary measures, the implementing partners, and the Delegation will be in charge of monitoring progress and relevant indicators.
- Any monitoring and evaluation will be gender-sensitive, assess gender equality results and implementation of rights-based approach working method principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency) in terms of implementation of the project and project outcomes. Key stakeholders will be involved in the monitoring process.
- Information sources for monitoring and reporting on the action will mainly come from the Gambia's statistical system, data collected by international organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, United Nations agencies, EU own information gathering, and other stakeholders. The National Human Rights Commission will be an important actor provided its responsibilities in monitoring the implementation of government's commitments contained in the White Paper.
- The statistical and monitoring systems as well as the quality of official data in the policy field covered have been assessed and deemed relatively weak as there exists important gaps of data needed by institutions in terms of a foresight on comprehensive statistics, which may be suitable for national policy issues and international comparison. Available data also presents shortcomings that hamper the quality of surveillance. This assessment has fed into the design of the action in that the choice of indicators took into account considerations on data quality and data availability. Meanwhile, a separate on-going effort, technical assistance under the SRBC3 programme works to improve the statistical system.

All monitoring and reporting shall assess how the action is considering the principle of gender equality, human rights-based approach, and rights of persons with disabilities including inclusion and diversity. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, an evaluation may be carried out for this action via independent consultants contracted by the Commission. In order to enable informing the design of future budget support contracts, such an evaluation would ideally be completed in the first half of 2025. Its scope would cover three previous state and resilience building contracts and the first half of implementation of this action.

This evaluation will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to the impact on democratic governance reforms. The evaluation would also serve accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that this action constitutes a 4th consecutive state and resilience building contract with a country undergoing democratic transition.

The evaluation of this action may be performed individually or through a joint strategic evaluation of budget support operations carried out with the partner country, other budget support providers and relevant stakeholders.

In case an evaluation is not planned, the Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 20 days in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

The evaluation will assess to what extent the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment. Expertise on human rights and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

With the 2021-2027 programming cycle a new approach has been adopted to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It remains a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as (tick one of the 4 following options);

Action level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action