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ANNEX 2

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 the Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) - Tourism

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	Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) - Tourism OPSYS number: ACT-62064 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (<u>NDICI-Global Europe</u>)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in The Gambia
4. Programming document	The Republic of The Gambia Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	The project directly contributes to MIP Priority Area 1 ‘Promoting good governance’ and Priority Area 2 ‘Green economy for sustainable growth and jobs’, in particular Objective 2.3 ‘To increase the competitiveness, inclusiveness and sustainability of the tourism sector (SDG 5, 8, 10 and 12)’. It is directly aligned with MIP Expected Result 2.3A ‘The Gambia attracts more tourists’ (Project Outcome 1) and MIP Expected Result 2.3B ‘The Gambia’s tourism practices and establishments are sustainable’ (Project Outcome 2).
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	The project directly contributes to MIP Priority Area 2 ‘Green economy for sustainable growth and jobs’ and supports the tourism sector (DAC 332). It also supports MIP priority Area 1 “Good Governance”, and it indirectly tackles root causes of irregular migration.
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 1 – No Poverty

	SDG 5 – Gender Equality SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production			
8 a) DAC code(s)	332 Tourism (80%) 311 Agriculture (10%) 114 Post-Secondary Education (10%)			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	42001 – European Commission - Development Share of Budget			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

	digital skills/literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	x	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020120 Total estimated cost: EUR 10 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 10 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing¹	Indirect management with the entity(s) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.4.1			

1.2 Summary of the Action

The action will increase the competitiveness, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the tourism sector in The Gambia (SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth; and also SDG 1 – No Poverty, SDG 5 – Gender Equality, SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities, SDG 12 – Sustainable Consumption and Production). The objective is to create and sustain jobs, generate income, and boost economic incentives for climate change adaptation and green growth (DAC 150: Green economy for sustainable growth and jobs). The action will achieve this by supporting the country to diversify source markets and attract more visitors year round, including tourists with higher purchasing power. At the same time, the initiative will boost The Gambia's offering of green and inclusive tourism services and improve value chain linkages. The action is directly linked to priority area 2 *Green economy for sustainable growth and job* of the multi-annual indicative programme for The Gambia (MIP 2021-2027)² contributing to results 2.3A and 2.3B. It also contributes to Priority Area 1 (Good Governance) and indirectly result 1.3B (tackling root causes of irregular migration and reintegration of returnees).

The Gambia has a small and undiversified economy that is exposed to external shocks including climate-related shocks. The main sectors, agriculture and tourism, are marked by strong seasonality which puts additional structural pressure on the economy and labour market. The 2019 Human Development Index ranks The Gambia 172 out of 189 countries and territories.

¹ Art. 27 NDICI

² 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.

Sustainable tourism is a growth market worldwide with 83% of global travellers expressing a preference for sustainable experiences. The Gambia's richness in cultural heritage, its nature and wildlife, the proximity to Europe, the favourable tropical weather, and an English-speaking and hospitable population make the country an ideal destination for sustainable and inclusive tourism. The Gambia's National Tourism Policy and Strategy (2021-2030)³ recognizes the need for a paradigm shift and sectoral transformation to tap the industry's full potential for socio-economic development. However, the sector currently suffers from limited in-country revenue capture, not having enough market-ready products, limited diversification of source markets with a dependency on low-value package tourism, overreliance on beach-related tourism, and limited linkages with other sectors. The project aims to tap into the potential of the sector for inclusive development by addressing both the supply and the demand side challenges with a focus on sustainability, which has proven to attract companies with a competitive advantage.⁴

The action will support public and private stakeholders in the development of new products and experiences. Diversifying the tourism offerings will focus on sustainable and inclusive products, such as nature-based, river-based, adventure, cultural or community-based tourism. Further, the action will support and champion the development of tourism in rural Gambia. The investments in product development will be underpinned by market-led skills training. The action will also enhance the stakeholder capacities to develop and manage new products and improve the business environment through regulatory reforms and introduction of sustainability standards for responsible tourism and industry-wide codes of conduct. To increase the gains of tourists visiting The Gambia, the project will support value addition and market linkages of tourism related micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). This includes standardisation, quality and certification support to small and medium-sized tourism establishments, and business development support throughout the supply chains, focusing on social standards and environmentally friendly practices.

The action will help diversify The Gambia's tourism source market through improved marketing capacities with a focus on digitalisation. Businesses, key partner institutions, and public authorities will be equipped with market intelligence and capacity to promote and attract investment. The action will also support local stakeholders to review regulations to activate new market opportunities, including through regional integration. The action will focus on attracting more tourists during the green season and higher spenders seeking responsible, inclusive, and sustainable tourism experiences. It will create cross-sectoral linkages and development, especially in agriculture, fishery, the creative industries, transportation, and information, communication and technology (ICT). Such backward linkages will be strengthened by improving business development services and enhancing productive capacities in key areas like processing and packaging with a focus on MSMEs and smallholders. The action will support the *Made In The Gambia* Strategy⁵ by the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment. This initiative creates a platform for businesses and institutions to promote sourcing and consumption of local products and services by promoting value addition, branding and facilitate market linkages including through public procurement.

The Action will build on the achievements of the EU funded Youth Empowerment Project (2017-2022). The latter promoted responsible and sustainable tourism products upriver such as new community-based tourism destinations in Central River Region and the Ninki Nanka Trail which has paved the way in changing the image of The Gambia as a responsible tourism destination. In addition, the YEP made significant investments in addressing the gaps in human capacity development through strengthening training institutions in tourism, providing standard training curriculums, equipment and financial support to Gambian youth to access skills training. At the same time, the project created cross sectoral linkages ensuring entrepreneurs in the creative industries, agribusiness, energy sector, tourism and ICT are supported to improve competitiveness, productive capacities and access to domestic and international markets.

³ National Tourism Policy and Strategy of The Gambia (2021-2023), validated in 2022. Final version not yet online.

⁴ [Projects | SWITCH Africa Green \(unep.org\)](#)

⁵ Made In the Gambia Strategy of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment. Validated in November 2021, not available online.

2. RATIONALE

2.1 Context

With a gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 2.4 billion (World Bank, 2021) and a population of 2.3 million people (Gambia Labour Force Survey, 2018), The Gambia continues to be among the world's weakest economies both nominally and per capita.

The country attracted a record number of tourists (235,788) in 2019 but was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the crisis, the sector provided 42,000 direct and 40,000 indirect jobs and accounted for approx. 16% of the GDP. It generated about USD 85 million in foreign exchange earnings annually, making it the largest foreign exchange earner for the country. Several factors favour tourism in The Gambia: the proximity to Europe, favourable tropical weather, affordability, hospitable people, rich culture and tradition, an English-speaking populace, and a peaceful and stable political environment. Despite these endowments, the sector has not been able to realise its potential in terms of revenue capture and its contribution to the country's socio-economic development. This is due to a combination of factors, including the sector's excessive dependency on international tour operators, strong seasonality, a history and image of a low-budget destination, poor infrastructures, and an ineffective strategy to diversify the product offering and attract new source markets.

The action is in line with the EU-Gambia partnership under the MIP (2021-2027) which aims to support the achievement of the National Development Plan (NDP) and is articulated around three Priority Areas (PAs): i) Promoting Good Governance; ii) Green economy for sustainable growth and jobs and iii) Human development. The MIP recognizes that such intervention is indispensable to The Gambia, whose economy relies largely on agriculture and tourism, which are both affected by environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and climate change. It has at the same time the potential to create numbers of 'green jobs'.

At the same time, Africa-EU alliance for sustainable growth and job creation action is imperative in a country where un- or underemployment is prevalent and is one of the causes for migration. Preserving and valorising the environment and biodiversity and better managing natural resources will be key for achieving this, along with social protection.

The programme will also support results achieved from the Gambia's National Development Plan (2017-2021) which identified private sector led growth and tourism as strategic priorities with a focus to promote an inclusive and culture-centred tourism for sustainable growth. The Gambia's National Tourism Policy and Strategy (2021-2030) recognizes that the industry requires a paradigm shift to better serve the country including undertaking demand-led product development, increasing linkages with other sectors, improving air and sea access for tourists, fostering domestic tourism, and increasing the impact in terms of revenue generation, employment and to make tourism a more people-centred and culturally focused venture.

2.2 Problem Analysis

The Gambian tourism sector performs below its potential due to a number of factors

Weak sector coordination and regulations

Over the last three decades, The Gambia adopted several policies, strategies and plans to guide the development of the tourism sector. However, in spite of the comprehensive package of policy prescriptions, The Gambia's competitive advantage eroded over time. A poor record of implementation, short-term planning, weak accountability for programmatic goals and inconsistencies in existing legislations and regulations contributed to it. Further, the sector lacks a coherent framework of collaboration and partnerships between key industry stakeholders including the private sector. Tourism development is led by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture with the support of three institutions, each of them established by act of parliament: The Gambia Tourism Board (GTBoard), the National Centre for Arts and Culture (NCAC) and the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI). The institutions face capacity gaps related to a number of their functions including product development or enforcement of intellectual property rules. The sector also suffers from weak environmental and social

standards. The Gambia's existing regulations are inadequate with regard to environmental and social standards and enforcement is weak (e.g. child protection, trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other harmful practices). This is also due to inadequate institutional and human capacity and limited public awareness of rights and standards. Similarly, capacity is limited related to waste management, resource efficiency, environmental technologies, green packaging or integrated environmental management. Only a small number of Gambian tourism related businesses meet international standards for sustainable and responsible tourism. Further, the Youth and Trade Roadmap for Tourism (2018-2022)⁶, and the Youth and Trade Roadmap for The Gambia's Creative Industries (2019-2023)⁷ highlighted the complexity of the quality assurance structure for tourism, creative industries, and allied sectors affecting the industry's competitiveness. The new Tourism Policy and Strategy addresses the bottleneck by putting forward a more robust coordination framework and accountability structure.

Narrow product offering and sub-standard quality

The main tourism offering is strongly concentrated on beach-related products. The tourism infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, remains poor with a low quality of services and substandard products and facilities. Productive capacity and value addition of MSMEs along the tourism and creative industries is low. Businesses lack adequate support services, training and coaching programmes, production and processing facilities, packaging equipment, knowledge and skills in branding and access to finance and markets. This hampers private sector growth and investment in higher value-added experiences, such as cultural, sport and adventure, community, river-based or eco-based tourism.

Limited market diversification and strong seasonality

The sector relies on a few international tour operators (ITOs) that offer low-value package tourism. The captive relationship with ITOs also extends to domestic tourism-related businesses. A World Bank assessment in 2019 found that 36 hotels get 85% of their deals from ITOs. The collapse of Thomas Cook in 2019 demonstrated the risk of this overreliance, causing loss of 57,000 bookings (flight + hotel), and an estimated drop of USD 26.8 million in tourist spending and arrival fees. The dependency is compounded by a low diversification of source markets with the majority of tourists coming from the traditional markets including UK, Scandinavia, Netherlands, Spain, and Belgium.

Despite all-year tropical weather, The Gambia's tourism is highly seasonal with strong arrival numbers during the dry or winter season that stretches from November to April (158,016 air arrivals in 2019) and much lower numbers in the green season from May to October (77,772 registered air arrivals in 2019). The pronounced seasonality creates structural issues for the industry rendering many businesses inactive and creating vulnerabilities for workers who are without income during the off-season. The Gambia lacks an effective destination marketing strategy that can tap innovative marketing platforms and channels. Because of the strong reliance on ITO, the private sector is also short of experience and knowledge particularly with regard to digital marketing and online presence.

Skill gaps

Assessments by the International Trade Centre (ITC) carried out as part of the Youth and Trade Roadmap for the Tourism Sector (2018 - 2022), the Youth and Trade Roadmap for the Creative Industries (2020-2024), and The Gambia Technical Vocational Education and Training Roadmap (2020-2024)⁸ mapped out skills gaps for key professions in the tourism sector and creative industries. The EU-funded Youth Empowerment Project helped improve significantly the relevance, quality and access to skills training, particularly through the investments in the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI). However, additional investments are required to boost market-led skills training. There are gaps in level of operational capacity and technical expertise of training

⁶ <https://www.yep.gm/storage/app/uploads/public/5b6/034/eb2/5b6034eb2623c487527702.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.yep.gm/storage/app/uploads/public/5df/0b4/983/5df0b4983a0bf173160428.pdf>

⁸ <https://yep.gm/storage/app/uploads/public/5e8/1d6/411/5e81d641142f4733337154.pdf>

providers for implementing high impact training programs as well as specialised and advanced courses. Moreover, training providers lack sufficient physical infrastructure, facilities and equipment, including in rural areas. Many Gambians from poor and vulnerable backgrounds cannot afford the training fees and require sponsorship.

Climate vulnerability

The Gambia is highly vulnerable to climate related shocks and to the negative impacts of climate change. The climate-change induced pressures have already aggravated existing tensions on land and natural resources, exacerbated poverty, and resulted in climate conflict in a number of areas. The adverse impacts of climate change are resulting in the changes in migration patterns to urban areas or abroad, often through irregular migration. The Gambia's attractiveness as a tourism destination is directly affected by climate impact through beach erosion, coastal degradation, and negative consequences for forests, biodiversity and other ecosystems, which will adversely affect The Gambia's tourism products.

The tourism industry can put additional pressure on land and communities, if not managed carefully. It is therefore imperative to develop a sustainable tourism development framework that yields benefit for people and planet. Nature, river-based and eco-tourism initiatives can create economic incentives to conserve the environment including forests and river-based ecosystems, while at the same improving income and livelihoods for local communities.

Low sector integration and limited positive spill over effects of the tourism industry to the wider economy and society

Tourism value chain encompass a wide range of stakeholders including local taxis and transportation providers, craft markets, juice pressers, tour guides, smallholders in horticulture, fishing communities, poultry and livestock farmers and other ancillary industries. Many operate in the informal economy. The tourism value chain shows limited integration of these sectors in spite of significant market opportunities. Due to challenges in product consistency, aggregation of supply and in-time delivery capacity, a large amount of locally available products is imported. Similarly, there is vast untapped potential in creating backward linkages with other agricultural values chains, processed food, arts, crafts, creative industries, ICT, transport and other service providers along the chain. The limited integration affects the industry's impact on inclusive growth and poverty reduction.

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

Priority stakeholders include the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE), and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOTC) and the three satellite institutions which lead the tourism sector and creative industries in The Gambia namely The Gambia Tourism Board (GTB), The National Centre for Arts & Culture (NCAC) and The Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI).

Other relevant institutions include: The Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA) - Industry associations, especially the Gambia Hotel Association (GHA), the Craft Market Federation, the Beach Bars and Restaurants Association, the Association of Small-Scale Enterprises in Responsible Tourism (ASSERT) and the Tourism and Travel Association of The Gambia (TTAG) - Tour operators - Small sector associations (taxi drivers, guides, birdwatchers, fruit sellers) as well different groups in the creative industries - The Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industries (GCCCI), the Gambia Women Chamber of Commerce (GWCC) - the Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce (GYCC) - Child Protection Alliance, Social welfare and the Gambia Police Force - Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources (MECCNAR), the National Environment Agency (NEA) - Civil society representatives.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The overall objective (Impact) of the action is to contribute to inclusiveness and sustainability of The Gambia's Tourism sector and Creative Industries.

Specific objectives (Outcomes) of the action are:

1. Improved business environment and institutional ecosystem for the tourism sector and creative industries.
2. Improved investment and market access for the tourism sector and creative industries.
3. Increased competitiveness of the Gambia's tourism and creative industries.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

Contributing to outcome 1 (or specific objective 1) Sector strategies and regulations for creative industries supported.

Contributing to outcome 1 (or specific objective 1) Technical and / or operational capacity of institutions in the tourism sector & the creative industries improved.

Contributing to outcome 2 (or specific objective 2) Enhanced marketing and branding capacity of actors in the tourism and creative industries.

Contributing to outcome 2 (or specific objective 2) Market linkages and investment opportunities in the tourism and creative industries facilitated.

Contributing to outcome 3 (or specific objective 3) Enhanced capacity of MSMEs in the tourism and creative industries with a focus on sustainable and inclusive tourism.

Contributing to outcome 3 (or specific objective 3) Improved skills of youth and women relevant to employment in the tourism sector & the creative industries.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities Relating to Output 1.1: Sector strategies and regulations for creative industries supported.

- Identify policy/regulatory/operational issues of the industry in key areas (e.g., e-commerce, regional integration, air access, cruise ships, intellectual property, green procurement, trade and investment policy instruments fostering the development of sustainable tourism).
- Facilitate public private consultation and forge consensus on regulatory reforms and implementation. Policy/regulatory initiatives will be supported in coherence with The Gambia's international trade related commitments (World Trade Organization (WTO), African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)).
- Review the tourism, creative industries and youth and trade roadmaps and carry out a strategic analysis of economic opportunities related to product and market diversification and assess their environmental and social impact.

Activities Relating to Output 1.2: Technical and / or operational capacity of institutions in the tourism sector & the creative industries improved.

- Provide advisory services to the public and private sector stakeholders including youth and women-led business support organizations to inform the reform process.
- Strengthen the operational and technical capacity of key institutions in quality and codes of conducts and national and international responsible and sustainable standards.

Activities Relating to Output 2.1: Enhanced marketing and branding capacity of actors in the tourism and creative industries.

- Strengthen the operational and technical capacity of public and private sector institutions, as well as businesses in the tourism sector and the creative industries on topics such as market trends and positioning, communication and marketing and branding.
- Support the implementation of The Gambia's marketing strategy, including the development and implementation of innovative marketing campaigns and preparation of material, creative content for country branding (e.g., photo exhibition, film, and documentaries) and the establishment and upgrading of digital platforms.
- Facilitate the organisation of national tourism and creative fairs and events to increase business visitors, regional tourism, and visibility for Gambian MSMEs.
- Foster partnerships for joint destination marketing across sectors and with other countries (in keeping with joint products and tourism packages).

Activities Relating to Output 2.2: Market linkages and investment opportunities in the tourism and creative industries facilitated.

- Connect Gambian tourism and creative businesses to new markets/buyers and investment opportunities through participation in trade shows, 'business to business' (B2B) meetings, farm trips and access to e-commerce platforms.
- Facilitate linkages between Gambian industry stakeholders and international market partners (e.g., hotel chains) to improve productive capacities, management practices and market access including marketing infrastructure and retail outlets at domestic level.
- Activate backward linkages between tourism industry and allied sectors fostering market access for agricultural produce, handicraft, fisheries and other sectors and foster value chain efficiency to meet demand in the tourism market.

Activities Relating to Output 3.1: Enhanced capacity of MSMEs in the tourism and creative industries with a focus on sustainable and inclusive tourism.

- Strengthen existing inclusive and sustainable tourism products and services such as river-based tourism through the Ninki-Nanka Trail and the scaling of customised and field-tested community-based tourism methodologies.
- In consultation with key players in primary and prospective markets, assess options for expanding then developing new sustainable tourism products and services (e.g., cultural, educational, sport, adventure or eco-tourism) based on market fitness, economic viability, environmental impact and social benefits with a special focus on youth and women.
- Support the creation of new tourism packages during the green season such as Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) Tourism and cross-country tourism packages (leisure tours, historically themed routes, or community-based tourism (CBT) with partner countries like Senegal or Canary Islands.
- Support selected infrastructure upgrades, including refurbishment of hospitality facilities, attractions, and memorial monuments.
- Support hotels, small businesses, and tour operators to achieve international inclusive/ sustainable tourism certification including green investments in sustainable consumption and production practices.
- Support the establishment of production hubs to improve productive capacities and market access of women and youth through training, production and commercialisation of creative and cultural products and services.
- Strengthen the capacity of business development organisations, sector associations, grassroots initiatives and social enterprises to offer relevant services to MSMEs with a focus on youth and women-owned businesses, provide value-added services and support awareness raising on potential negative environmental and social impacts of tourism.
- Roll out business support, incubation, and acceleration programmes for enterprises in tourism and related sectors with focus on women and youth.

- Facilitate access to finance for MSMEs and informal economic operators through grants, saving groups, angel investment and value chain finance and other mechanisms with a special focus on youth and women-owned businesses.
- Support the Made in The Gambia initiative and relevant stakeholders including branding and quality assurance systems and processes and consumption of locally made products.

Activities Relating to Output 3.2: Improved skills of youth and women relevant to employment in the tourism sector & the creative industries.

- Strengthen the relevance of training services by developing and updating curricula in different fields related to tourism, hospitality and creative industries, including modules on resource efficiency, green growth and circular economy in consultation with the private sector (e.g., through sector skills council).
- Support the development of a Competency and Sector Qualification Framework (SQF) by training institutes and stakeholders with the assistance of the National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA).
- Improve technical and operational capacity of relevant training providers through training of trainers, development of specialised trainings and courses, introducing/ strengthening certification schemes, international recognition of diploma and facilitating international partnerships for exchange programmes.
- Support the quality of training provision through investments in facilities and equipment, particularly in the creative industries and for training provision in rural areas.
- Build the capacity of employers to effectively deliver on-the job training through apprenticeship programmes in the tourism, ICT, and creative sectors.
- Build the capacity of employers in the formal and informal sector to foster diversification of skills and income generation streams to mitigate the impacts of seasonal employment.
- Roll out technical and vocational training on relevant skills for the tourism sector and the creative industries to youth and women, including traditionally disadvantages and vulnerable groups.
- Provide language training for Gambian youth and tour guides.

These activities could be effectively complemented and strengthened through international cooperation projects under the action for Capacity Building in Vocational Education and Training of the Erasmus+ programme.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Floods, droughts, saltwater intrusion, beach erosion, coastal degradation, extreme precipitation, temperature changes and other climatic factors have a direct and immediate impact on the overall competitiveness of the tourism sector, in terms of both products/services and demand from tourists. The action seeks to expand the tourism industry including the number of arrivals. Potential negative impact on the environment includes coastal erosion, pollution, pressure on natural resources and loss of biodiversity, including the river Gambia, which is a delicate ecosystem.

The action mitigates the risks by introducing standards and codes of conducts for sustainable tourism, developing products and experiences that are environmentally friendly and help protect the environment and ecosystem by generating economic incentives (e.g. eco-tourism, sports, river-tourism). It will support businesses in the tourism industry to optimise resource efficiency and meet internally recognised environmental standards. It will also promote ecological technologies and business solutions in ancillary sectors such as electric tricycles in the transport sector or environmentally friendly technologies in the building industry, such as construction with compressed stabilised earth blocks. The backward linkages will increase value chain efficiencies and local sourcing of products. The focus on sustainable tourism products and services will provide green jobs and income for communities while creating incentives to protect the environment and fragile eco-systems.

Outcomes of the SEA screening (relevant for budget support and strategic-level interventions)

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that key environmental and climate-related aspects need be addressed during design.

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category B (not requiring an EIA, but for which environment aspects will be addressed during design)

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is 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. The programme is informed by the Gender Action Plan (GAP) gender profile 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.

The project includes specific objectives and targets for women and women-owned business and strengthen existing structures and platform in support of economic empowerment of women (e.g. SheTrades Gambia). Women are a priority group for product development and training support provided under the project. The work on social standards, regulations and codes of conduct will reflect and promote socio-economic empowerment of women and will strengthen the protection from abuse. Gender equality will also be promoted in the project's governance framework and technical working groups.

Human Rights

Increased economic opportunities for women in the sector come with risks of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation including forced prostitution and gender based violence.

The action will address the risks by developing industry-wide codes of conducts that are applicable along the entire value chain, raising awareness and strengthening institutional and private capacity to meet codes and responsible tourism standards. At the level of institutions, the action will also strengthen referral systems for abuse.

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. Efforts will be made to ensure persons living with disabilities (PwDs) are included in all relevant activities, with an emphasis on accessibility of trainings, products and services.

The action will help support social enterprises and help develop socially inclusive products including for PwDs. The codes of conduct will develop relevant industry-wide wide guidelines. The training component will take appropriate measures to facilitate access to training programmes for persons with disabilities and explore bespoke capacity-building support.

Democracy

The action does not include specific measures with regard to political governance. It will, however, strengthen various institutions and the socio-economic empowerment of women and youth is expected to translate into more political freedoms.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

The action addresses economic fragility that is related to dependence and captive relationship with a small number of international tour operators as well the strong seasonality in the sector. The action will build resilience by diversifying market partners and income opportunities for stakeholders, including through year-round tourism promotion.

Further, the action will address social tensions that are triggered by the high rate of youth unemployment, migration as well as climate change which have been singled out as key conflict driver in the United Nations Conflict and Development Analysis for The Gambia. For instance, the action will support climate adaptation and coping mechanism at community level by providing alternative income solutions. The action also has a strong focus on employment creation by supporting market-led skills training, entrepreneurship support and boosting MSME growth. The action will include special outreach and quota for returnees and other vulnerable groups.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The action does not have a specific objective related to disaster risk reduction. However, different technologies and practices introduced and promoted by the action are expected to increase resilience. Examples are climate-proofing structures built with Compressed Stabilised Earth Blocks (CSEB) that are able to withstand extreme weather events, supporting circular economy approaches, diversifying income and livelihood of vulnerable group or addressing seasonality.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1 – External environment	1.1 Unfavourable political climate, conflict, unrest 1.2 Economic crisis 1.3 Health-related risks (e.g. pandemics, Ebola etc.)	1.1 Low 1.2 Medium 1.3 Medium	1.1 High 1.2 Medium 1.3 High	1.1 Redirect project support to geographical regions that are considered safe 1.2 Diversify economic sectors, including value chain support. Target focus on vulnerable groups 1.3 Market diversification, including domestic and regional tourism
2- Planning, processes and systems	2.1 Absorption capacity of national partners 2.2 Duplication of efforts with other development partners	2.1 Medium 2.2 Low	2.1 Low 2.2 Medium	2.1 Inherent capacity building for national partners and diversification of partners, including the private sector 2.2 Close coordination and joint planning, processed through existing platforms and working groups (e.g. Development Partner Group, Tourism taskforce with World Bank)
3 – People & the organisation	3.1 Negative environmental impact due to increased tourism activities 3.2 Harmful social impact of tourism in target destinations	3.1 Low 3.2 Low	3.1 Medium 3.3 Medium	3.1. Upfront impact assessment, focus on sustainable and green tourism products, investments in productive capacities of MSMEs to adopt environmental protection measures, awareness raising campaigns. 3.2. Upfront impact assessment, focus on inclusive approaches based on tested methodologies, supporting the adaptation of standards and

				codes of conduct for inclusive and responsible tourism, institutional capacity building to address exploitation
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LESSON LEARNT

This project will reinforce results from the European Union Trust Fund for Africa and in particular build on the achievements made under the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP). The implementation of the validated action plans for the Youth and Trade Roadmaps for Tourism and for the Creative Industries led to the following lesson learned:

- Complement strategies and plans with a strong implementation management framework based on an inclusive representation of relevant stakeholders
- Create coordination and governance mechanism at the level of senior officials paired with technical working groups or core team to facilitate implementation and buy at all levels
- Keep flexibility in the implementation management to cater for external factors, both shocks and upside risks, revisit workplans annually and adjust as needed
- Address institutional capacity gaps in the sector and foster collaboration and cross-sectoral dialogue for both public and private stakeholders
- Create performance-based training programmes to ensure employment targets are met. The Skills for Youth Employment (SkYE) Fund provides a good model for a market-led and performance based funding
- Complement institution-based training with formal apprenticeship options to foster buy-in from the private sector partners and facilitate access to skills training in rural areas
- Initiatives in support of product development require significant time to achieve market readiness. For instance, community-based tourism products take minimum one year to develop before they can be introduced to market partners.
- Reflect needs and realities of informal economy in economic support packages including investments in facilities, equipment and grant-based support to ensure effective participation.
- Diversify employment and income generating opportunities of target beneficiaries to counter the current seasonality in the industry tourism sector
- Provide foundation level training and feeder courses to allow vulnerable groups to meet eligibility criteria for accredited trainings, provide sponsorship and allowances to vulnerable groups
- Complement training courses with starter kits and small grants to facilitate self-employment opportunities
- Connect investment promotion activities to regional events and network to increase visibility of The Gambia and appetite from potential investors
- Tap the fast-growing creative industries of The Gambia to promote the destination in an innovative and authentic way
- Use traditional communication methods (e.g. drama performances, community bantabas etc.) to discuss issues at community level and secure buy-in
- Allocate sufficient resources for communication and coordination efforts, particularly for activities targeting vulnerable groups and operators in the informal economy

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that

IF the business environment and the institutional ecosystem for tourism & the creative industries are improved,

IF investment and market access in the tourism sector and creative industries are enhanced,

IF the competitiveness of the Gambia's tourism and creative industries is increased,

AND all stakeholders are committed to improving their own contribution and the overall growth, sustainability, and inclusiveness of the sector,

THEN the inclusiveness, and sustainability of The Gambia's tourism sector & creative industries is increased

BECAUSE the main constraints of the sector's competitiveness, inclusiveness and sustainability are a lack of product diversification and an overreliance on international tour operators, seasonality of visitor numbers, ineffective destination marketing, low institutional capacity and coordination, limited skills of workers, and insufficient backward linkages to other sectors.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

At action level, the indicative logframe should have a maximum of 10 expected results (Impact/Outcome(s)/Output(s)).

It constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (a): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (a): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (all by 2027)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To contribute to inclusiveness and sustainability of the Gambia's Tourism sector and Creative Industries.	1. Unemployment rate (disaggregated by sex, age, and disability sector) (GERF 1.11 SDG 8.5.2) 2. Number of tourist arrivals by air (annually) * 3. Proportion of air arrivals during the green season (April-October, out of annual visitors) * 4. Number of jobs, supported/sustained by the EU (disaggregated by sex, age, and disability status, green jobs) (GERF 2.13a)	1. National unemployment rate 35.2 %, youth unemployment rate: 41.5% (LFS 2018) 2. 236,000 (2019) 3. 33% (2019) 4. 0	1. tbd as part of the RF-NDP 2. 300,000 3. 37% 4. 3000	1. Gambia LFS 2. Public sector report, National Statistical report 3. Public sector report, National Statistical report 4. Database of beneficiaries/partici pants	<i>Not applicable</i>

Specific Objective 1	1. Improved business environment and institutional ecosystem for the tourism sector and creative industries	1.1. Number of investment and sector strategies/ plans / codes / regulatory recommendations adopted with support of the EU-funded intervention	1.1 0	1.1.4	1.1 text of laws and regulations; text of strategies and policy documents	<p>Political stability, absence of major security related incidents (e.g. terrorist attacks, border disputes and conflict).</p> <p>No sustained travel restrictions affecting transnational tourism due to health or other factors.</p> <p>Continued international demand for inclusive and sustainable tourism products.</p> <p>Tourism stakeholders, including public and private sector institutions, policy makers, and businesses, are committed to improving the business environment and tourism ecosystem in The Gambia.</p> <p>Appropriate climatic conditions for tourism and agricultural production (e.g., no sustained extreme levels of heat, drought, rainfall).</p>
Output 1.1	1.1 Sector strategies and regulations for creative industries supported	1.1.1 Number of strategic and regulatory recommendations developed with support of the EU-funded intervention.	1.1.1 0	1.1.1 6	1.1.1 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention; text of laws and regulations; text of strategies and policy documents	Sustained government commitment to the competitiveness, inclusiveness and sustainability of the tourism sector and related business reforms including international integration.

Output 1.2	1.2 Technical and / or operational capacity of institutions in the tourism sector & the creative industries improved	<p>1.2.1 Number of officials and stakeholders in tourism creative industries trained by the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>1.2.2 Number of institutions in the tourism sector & creative industries with improved technical services and operational infrastructure with support of the EU-funded intervention</p>	<p>1.2.1 0</p> <p>1.2.2 0</p>	<p>1.2.1 24</p> <p>1.2.2 6</p>	<p>1.2.1 Progress reports for the EU funded; Pre- and post-training test reports</p> <p>1.2.2 Progress reports for the EU funded</p>	Sustained government and private sector commitment
Specific Objective 2	2. Improved investment and market access for the tourism sector and creative industries	2.1 Number of MSMEs that have accessed new markets /buyers (including through e-commerce) with support of the EU-funded intervention	2.1 0	2.1. 15	2.1 Database of beneficiaries/participants;	<p>Continued international demand for inclusive and sustainable tourism products.</p> <p>No sustained travel restrictions affecting transnational tourism due to health or other factors.</p> <p>Appropriate climatic conditions for tourism and agricultural production (e.g., no sustained extreme levels of heat, drought, rainfalls).</p>
Output 2.1	2.1 Enhanced marketing and branding capacity of actors in the tourism and creative industries	2.1.2 Number of businesses /institutions in the tourism sector and creative industries with improved marketing capacity (disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural location, green profiles, and disability status)	2.1.1 0	2.1.1 25	2.1.1 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention; Pre- and post-training test reports; Database of beneficiaries/participants,	Tourism stakeholders, including public and private sector institutions, policy makers, and businesses, are committed to improving marketing of the Gambia as a tourism destination and unlocking new market opportunities.

Output 2.2	2.2 Market linkages and investment opportunities in the tourism and creative industries facilitated	2.2.1 Number of new marketing initiatives implemented (FAM trips, investment and campaigns, promotions) with support of the EU-funded intervention	2.2.1 0	2.2.1 6	2.2.1 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention	Market partners remain interested in sustainable and inclusive tourism
Specific Objective 3	3. Increased MSME competitiveness in tourism and creative industries	<p>3.1 Number of tourism businesses/products certified establishments in sustainable/ inclusive/ sustainable tourism products/services (disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural location, and disability status of owner) *</p> <p>3.2 Number of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises applying sustainable production and consumption practices with EU support (disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural location, and disability status of the business owner) (GERF 2.6. SDG 12.2.1)</p> <p>3.3 Number of youth and women graduated from skills training supported by the EU funded intervention</p>	<p>3.1 0</p> <p>3.2 0</p> <p>3.3 0</p>	<p>3.1 15</p> <p>3.2 200</p> <p>3.3. 2400</p>	<p>3.1 Progress reports for the EU-funded intervention, Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>3.2 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention, Baseline and endline surveys conducted the EU funded intervention</p> <p>3.3 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention and Database of beneficiaries,</p>	<p>Businesses remain committed to improving competitiveness and invest in sustainable production</p> <p>Continued international demand for inclusive and sustainable tourism products</p> <p>Young people, including those from traditionally disadvantaged groups, continue to be interested in pursuing training and working in the tourism sector and creative industries</p>

Output 3.1	3.1 Enhanced capacity of MSMEs in the tourism and creative industries with a focus on sustainable and inclusive tourism	<p>3.1.1 Number of MSMEs supported to improve productive capacity (disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural location, and disability status)</p> <p>3.1.2 Number of smallholders reached with EU supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land to increase sustainable production and access to market (disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural location, and disability status) (GERF 2.1, SDG 2.3.2)</p>	<p>3.1.1 0</p> <p>3.1.2 0</p>	<p>3.1.1 500</p> <p>3.1.2 1000 (min 80% women)</p>	<p>3.1.1 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention, Baseline and endline surveys conducted the EU funded intervention</p> <p>3.1.2 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention, Baseline and endline surveys conducted the EU funded intervention</p>	<p>MSMEs in the Gambian tourism sector & creative industries are committed to improving and growing their businesses including environmental standards.</p> <p>Smallholders are committed to learning and implementing market-based production for the tourism sector (e.g. varieties, production calendar)</p> <p>Buyers are interested in local sourcing and offer suitable terms to suppliers</p>
Output 3.2	3.2 Improved skills of youth and women relevant to employment in the tourism sector & the creative industries	<p>3.2.1 Number of training institutions and industry partners with improved training programmes on tourism and/or the creative industries and/or improved operational capacity with support of the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>3.2.2 Number of people who have benefited from institution or workplace-based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU (disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural location, disability status, and digitalisation-focused or not, and returnees) (GERF 2.14a, SDG 8.6.1.)</p>	<p>3.2.1 0</p> <p>3.2.2 0</p>	<p>3.2.1 4</p> <p>3.2.2 2,800</p>	<p>3.2.1 Progress reports for the EU funded intervention; Curriculum, training material</p> <p>3.2.2 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention and Database of beneficiaries,</p>	<p>Training institutions are committed to improving their programmes and delivering effective training for the sector.</p> <p>Young people, including those from traditionally disadvantaged groups, continue to be interested in pursuing training and working in the tourism sector and creative industries.</p>

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 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

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

N/A

4.4 Implementation Modalities

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 measures⁹.

4.4.1 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

This action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

Previous experience working in jobs creation and sustainable tourism in The Gambia; demonstrated operational capacity; and solid understanding of the Gambian tourism sector.

This implementation by this entity entails:

- Improved business environment & institutional ecosystem for tourism & the creative industries
- Creation of new market opportunities for the Gambian tourism sector & creative industries
- Development of high quality inclusive and sustainable tourism & creative industry products and services
- Increased capacity of MSMEs in the tourism sector & the creative industries
- Improved skills & employability of the workforce in the tourism sector & the creative industries
- Backward linkages between tourism and other sectors created

4.4.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for indirect management with an entrusted entity indicated in section 4.4.1 may, partially or totally, be implemented in Direct Management via grants:

(a) Purpose of the grant(s):

The grants should contribute to the achievement of the 3 Specific Objectives indicated in Section 3.1 above

⁹ 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.

(b) Type of applicants targeted:

In line with the purpose above, the targeted applicants will be entities (international organisations, NGOs, Member States Development Agencies) that can prove previous experience working in jobs creation and sustainable tourism in The Gambia; demonstrated operational capacity; and solid understanding of the Gambian tourism sector.

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.

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)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.4	
Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity - cf. section 4.4.1	9 900 000
Audits/ Evaluations cf. section 5.2/5.3	100 000
Total	10 000 000

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

Given the scope and scale of the proposed intervention, this project will be implemented through indirect management with a pillar assessed entity responsible for managing and coordinating the delivery of all planned activities and corresponding results. The entity will be responsible for the efficient and timely implementation of all activities, including the efficient identification, engagement and coordination of partner implementing institutions. To this end, a project implementation unit will be set up in The Gambia.

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will provide high-level policy guidance and oversight and facilitate coordination with other initiatives and measures. The Steering Committee will comprise senior officials from the principal line Ministries including the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOTC), the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE), the EU Delegation, relevant institutions as well as private sector representatives such as the Gambia Hotel Association, Chambers of Commerce or other industry bodies. The exact composition of the PSC will be determined in consultation with national stakeholders at the outset of the implementation of the action. The PSC will be co-chaired by MOTC and MOTIE.

Operating under the oversight of the Steering Committee, the action will set up two technical core teams for the tourism sector and the creative industries, respectively. The core teams will bring together representatives from different departments, institutions, private sector youth, women and environmental groups with the objective to plan, review and monitor implementation of the action at the technical and operational level. The technical core teams also

provide a platform to share information, lessons and discuss synergies with other initiatives. The chair persons of the core team will also be nominated as PSC members to ensure the flow of information.

The governance structure of the action may be adjusted in keeping with the national coordination mechanism set up for the industry following the adoption of the tourism policy and strategy.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

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 regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. 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. The action will collect the baseline data through surveys and questionnaires and will track progress at the level of individuals, institutions and businesses.

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).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a mid-term evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission or via an implementing partner. The Mid-Term Evaluation will determine progress being made toward the achievement of outcomes and will focus on effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness and identify course corrective actions and adaptive learning if needed. The final evaluation focusing on the delivery of the project's results as initially planned and corrected after the mid-term evaluation will be conducted in accordance with EU guidance, policies, and procedures. It will also provide recommendations for follow-up of results including lessons learned for sustainability, replicability of the project's results (best practice, future referencing and planning. 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. The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

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

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming, and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain 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

An Intervention (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

The present Action identifies as

Action level		
x	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action