



**Ministries of Basic and
Secondary Education and
Higher Education Research
Science and Technology**

**EDUCATION SECTOR POLICY
2016 – 2030**

**Accessible, Equitable and Inclusive Quality
Education for sustainable
Development**

January 2016

Forward

The Education Sector Policy 2016 – 2030 is the first sector-wide policy written after the separation of the portfolio of Higher Education from Basic and Secondary which saw the creation of a Ministry responsible for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and the repositioning of the former Ministry of Education to focus on Basic and Secondary Education matters.

In recognition of the symbiotic and complementary nature of the functions of the two Ministries in executing their respective mandates, it became imperative that a sector-wide policy document, which cuts across the two sectors, was developed. While taking cognisance of the functions of these two distinct but inseparable institutions, the policy document is aimed at addressing the continuum that characterises education service delivery between the two Ministries in a coherent, integrated and sustainable manner with the ultimate goal of improving the human capital of The Islamic Republic of The Gambia.

Premised on The Gambia’s Vision 2020, Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE), as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the policy document was prepared using a highly participatory approach with the theme “**Accessible, Equitable and Inclusive Quality Education for Sustainable Development**”. Apart from the issues that have distinct institutional homes based on their specificities, the policy has highlighted themes that cut across the two sectors and made clear pronouncements on how they could be optimally implemented. These themes include, but are not limited to the areas of Technical and Vocational Training, Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and Teacher Training.

This education policy is therefore intended to guide education service delivery in the country for the next fifteen years and it is hoped that through its implementation, The Islamic Republic of The Gambia will significantly improve the status of literacy and numeracy.

Fatou Lamin Faye (Hon.)

Minister

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANFEU	Adult and Non-Formal Education Unit
CCM	Co-ordinating Committee Meeting
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CSR	Country Status Report
EBS	Educational Broadcasting Service
EBU	Educational Broadcasting Unit
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education For All
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
FAWE-GAM	Forum for African Women Educationalists - The Gambia
GABECE	The Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination
GC	Guidance and Counselling
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNLSA	Gambia National Library Service Authority
GRTS	Gambia Radio and Television Services
GSQF	Gambia Skills Qualification Framework
GTTI	Gambia Technical Training Institute
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INSET	In-Service Education for Teachers
LAN	Local Area Network
LAT	Learning Achievement Targets
LBS	Lower Basic School
LFE	Life Skills Education Programme
LGA	Local Government Authority
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDI	Management Development Institute
MoBSE	Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education
MoFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MoHERST	Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
MoHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MoICI	Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure
MoLRA	Ministry of Lands and Regional Administration
MoYS	Ministry of Youths and Sports
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NAQAA	National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority
NAT	National Assessment Test
NEPAD	New Partnerships for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTA	National Training Authority
NTL	National Training Levy
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
PAGE	Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment
PEGEP	President's Empowerment of Girls' Education Project
PER	Public Expenditure Review

PIP	Public Investment Programme
PMO	Personnel Management Office
PMS	Performance Management System
POP/FLE	Population and Family Life Education
PPM	Participatory Performance Monitoring
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSB	Professional Standard Board
PSLCE	Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SAFMU	School Agriculture and Food Management Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFG	School Farms and Gardens
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPMM	School Performance Management Meeting
SQAD	Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate
SSS	Senior Secondary School
STE	Science and Technology Education
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UBS	Upper Basic School
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USPC	United States Peace Corps
UTG	University of The Gambia
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WAN	Wide Area Network
WASSCE	West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations
WFP	World Food Programme

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Adult Education	Functional numeracy and literacy programme or continuing education for adult learners.
AMAANAHAH	The General Secretariat for Arabic and Islamic Education
Bantaba	An informal gathering where issues of common interest are discussed
Capital Investment	Monies spent on capital assets such as equipment, furniture and construction
Completion Rate	Total number of graduating students as a proportion of the official graduating age population
Gross Domestic Product	Total amount of goods and services produced by the economy in a given year.
Gross Enrolment Rate	Total enrolment as a proportion of relevant school age Population
Literacy	Ability to read and write in any language
Madrassah	Derived from the Arabic word “madrass” – a school where the medium of instruction is Arabic with emphasis on Islamic education
Majalis	Derived from the Arabic language depicted traditional Quranic education
Net Enrolment Rate	Total enrolment of relevant school age as a proportion of the relevant school age population
Numeracy	Ability to recognise numerals, interpret and use numbers
Public Schools	Government and Government Assisted Schools
Double-Shift	Double shift school is a type of school which operates in two shifts, with one group of students in the building early in the day and a second group of students later in the day
Multi-Grade	Refers to a class that has two or more grade level of children in one classroom
School Improvement Grant	Grants given to schools to abolish school fees and related charges.
Education Forum	Weekly Television programme on Education
Local Education Group	All partners in education resident in Country
Basic Education	Nine years uninterrupted education the expanded vision including ECD and Non-formal
Best Teacher Award Scheme	Rewarding of outstanding teachers
Star Award System	Awarding of schools based service delivery indicators
Quintile	One-fifth of a population
Recurrent Spending	Total recurrent spending in a given period (one year).

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CHAPTER 1: NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 The main thrust of this document is to provide a policy framework that sets out the national agenda for the delivery of quality education in The Gambia for the period 2016-2030.
- 1.1.2 The document outlines the aims and objectives of education in this country which are synchronised with the education-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),
- 1.1.3 Education for All (EFA) goals, the Global Partnership for education-related goals and the country's post PAGE goals. Policy priorities are identified to allow for the growth of educational opportunity and improve the effectiveness of education at all levels, from early Childhood development (ECD) to tertiary and higher education.

The document is set out in the following chapters:

- i. National Educational Development – A Policy Framework
- ii. Background to the Education Policy
- iii. Guiding Principles and Aims of Education in The Gambia
- iv. Policy Priorities and Objectives
- v. Expanded Vision of Basic Education
- vi. Secondary Education
- vii. Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Education
- viii. Management of Education
- ix. Financing of Education

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND TO THE EDUCATION POLICY

2.1 Education for Sustainable Development

2.1.1 The development of the Education Policy 2016 – 2030 is premised on The Gambia’s Vision 2020, Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), all of which are the development agenda of government, which seeks to improve the human capital of the country by reducing the number of people living below the poverty line. The policy development is also in tandem with the global efforts on sustainable development. Thus the theme of the policy consultations was **“Accessible, Equitable and Inclusive Quality Education for sustainable Development”**.

2.2 Policy Dialogue

2.2.1 The participation of all stakeholders in education was central in the policy dialogue process. The process attempted, in a variety of ways, to include children as well as adults; illiterate as well as literate members of the society; national assembly members, government departments; civil society and private sector representatives.

2.2.2 Meetings were organised that brought together school children, teachers and parents from both the rural and urban parts of the country to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Education Policy 2004 – 2015 for the development of a new education policy for the next fifteen years. These meetings included television 'bantabas', children’s forum and regional conferences supported by a series of television and radio programmes.

2.2.3 Feedback from these consultations together with issues emanating from the Coordinating Committee Meetings (CCM) and Joint Donor Reviews provided the basis for the debates of the fifth national conference on education, for this policy framework. Concerns raised included:

2.2.4 Improving access to quality education for all, particularly girls, for greater gender equity

- i. The expansion of secondary education to absorb a minimum of 70% of the basic education graduates.
- ii. Development of life skills and creation of awareness of killer diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, cancer and tuberculosis
- iii. Provision of relevant vocational education and technical training based on labour market intelligence
- iv. Further re-organisation of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) and the Ministry of Higher Education Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST) within the context of the local government decentralisation reforms
- v. Better management capacity and professional development at all levels.
- vi. Increased access to higher education, especially of girls and women. The elimination of all fees at the basic and secondary levels and the further reduction of expenditure burden on households for all levels of education.
- vii. The linkage between the policies of both ministries of basic and secondary and higher education, particularly in the areas of national languages, teacher training and post-basic technical vocational education and training within the context of a sector wide policy

2.2.5 The National Conference generated recommendations and resolutions aimed at addressing the above concerns. Having been guided by these recommendations and resolutions, the drafters developed the policy write-up into various drafts, the fourth of which was presented to the stakeholders for validation. Regional validation workshops were held across all regions of the country to ensure, among other things, that:

- i. The document captures the priority needs and challenges of education in the country.
- ii. The policy objectives are pertinent to the country's needs and aspirations
- iii. The policy statements are realistic and implementable.
- iv. The document takes into account factors that are likely to enhance the sustainability of expected results.
- v. The document addresses the concerns raised during the consultations.
- vi. The stakeholders are ready to take ownership of the policy.
- vii. The policy objectives are harmonised with Vision 2020, Education for All and the SDGs education-related goals.

2.3 Sector Analysis

2.3.1 Since 1998, the Education sector has institutionalised sector analysis as part of an ongoing process of monitoring the education system. During the implementation of the previous policy the sector conducted a PER in 2006, a CSR in 2010 and a sector report in 2014 the findings of which are summarised in sections 2.4 -2.9.

2.4 Education expenditure

2.4.1 Since the more affluent households in society enroll more of their children in school and retain them for longer periods, they benefit disproportionately more from government spending on education than the poor. Household expenditure on education shows the extent to which the burden of paying for education weighs more heavily on the poor. It could be observed that even though the rich (quintile 5 – rich 20%) spend more on primary education than the poor (quintile 1 – poor 20%), the burden on household expenditure is heavier on the poor than the rich. It is therefore evident that targeting subsidies will be critical for the attainment of equitable access to education.

2.4.2 In 2013, education expenditure per student was higher at upper levels of education. Recurrent unit cost in tertiary education was much higher than the other education levels with unit costs 2.5 times that of the lower basic. Households contribute mainly to basic and senior secondary education, which is due to the fact that most enrolments are concentrated at these levels of schooling. Lower basic absorbs 29 percent of household education spending, upper basic 30 percent and senior secondary 16 percent. The share devoted to higher education is only nine percent, reflecting the low number of students that pursue their education beyond senior secondary school.

2.5 Access and enrolment

2.5.1 Increased public expenditure on education has led to significant progress in expanding access and enrolment at all levels of the formal system. Since 2010, significant progress was made in expanding access to lower basic education (Age group 7-12years). Enrolment grew at an average annual growth rate of 5.2% between 2009/10 and 2014/15 (compared with the target of 5%).

2.5.2 Depending on the estimate chosen for population growth, enrolment ratios either increased substantially over the period, or remained roughly constant. If the revised population growth estimate from the Central Statistics Department of approximately 2.8% per annum was used, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) would increase from 88.3% in 2010 to 101.2% in 2015. Madrassa enrolment contributed about 15% of the age group to the enrolment ratios in 2009/10 and 19% in 2014/15 academic years.

2.6 Female enrolment

2.6.1 There is an encouraging trend in girls' enrolment in lower basic education from 2010 to 2015. Over the period, it grew at an annual rate of 5.5% while that of boys grew by 4.9%. This trend resulted in the growth of girls' GER from 89.1% in 2010 to 103.5% in 2015 compared to the GER for boys which increased from 87.5% in 2010 to 99.0% in

2015. One result of the change is that in formal lower basic schools, girls now represent over 50% of enrolment. In Madrassas, boys are 53% of total while girls constitute 47%. In the Upper Basic, the gender distribution is very similar to the lower basic schools. At the senior secondary level, there were fewer girls up to 2014. However, in 2015 the ratio of boys to girls was 1:1.

2.7 The private costs and benefits of education

2.7.1 Increasing enrolment will continue to depend on attracting children from the lower income groups for whom the cost of education to households is seen as a barrier to attending school, especially in deprived administrative districts like Upper Saloum, Nianija and Upper Fuladu West. The household expenditure and benefit incidence analysis in the PER continues to demonstrate that government subsidy to education is still in favour of the higher income groups. This will have to be reallocated in favour of the poorer groups. The cost burden is highest on the poorest households who spend a higher proportion of their per capita income on education, even though they spend much less than the rich and have a smaller share of enrolment at all levels. When efficiency is still a concern in the utilisation of resources and a commitment to poverty reduction as clearly articulated in the PRSP, a reallocation of resources targeted towards the poor cannot be more appropriate.

2.8 Efficiency of the education system

2.8.1 In addition to attracting children to school in the first instance, greater efficiency continues to be required in order to retain a larger proportion of children in basic education, particularly in regions 3- 6, where dropout rates continue to be highest. Even though repetition rates have dropped significantly, 26% of twelve-year-old girls and 27% of twelve-year-old boys do not complete grade 6. Out of those who started grade one in 2015, 54% will be expected to reach grade 6, 43% grade 9 and only about 21% to reach grade 12.

2.9 Quality and Relevance of Education

2.9.1 Over the years, the sector has developed many instruments to measure learning achievement. The NAT started as a sample base during the previous policy to a full census base where all pupils of grades three, five and eight are assessed in core subject areas. The early grade reading assessment in English was also introduced while the national languages as a medium of instruction for the early grades was also piloted.

2.9.2 The issue of quality and relevance of the curriculum and learning materials has been a concern for teachers and parents alike. Hence the curriculum at the level of basic education has been revised with emphasis on the strengthening of school-based assessment system and making it more relevant to the learning needs of children.

2.9.3 In 2014 the results for the NAT grade 5 showed a 50.9% pass rate in mathematics against 55.4% pass in English language. At the level of GABECE 15.4 % had a credit pass in mathematics and 20.1% had a credit pass in English language. The credit pass rates at WASSCE was as low as 6.4% in mathematics and 14.5% in English.

CHAPTER 3: GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF EDUCATION

3.1 Guiding Principles

3.1.1 The Gambia as a Nation remains highly committed to developing its human resource base with priority given to free basic education for all. It is for this reason that this policy will be used as a means for the attainment of a high level of economic growth to alleviate poverty with emphasis on the critical areas for the realisation of the SDGs, EFA and NEPAD. Therefore, the guiding principle for education is premised on.

- i. Non-discriminatory and all-inclusive provision of education underlining in particular, gender equity and targeting of the poor and the disadvantaged groups;
- ii. Respect for the rights of the individual, cultural diversity, indigenous languages and knowledge;
- iii. Promotion of ethical norms and values and a culture of peace;
- iv. Development of science and technology competencies for the desired quantum leap;

3.1.2 These guiding principles are in conformity with the national development agenda of The Gambia as articulated in Vision 2020 statement:

“to transform The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading, export-oriented, agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well-educated, trained, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population, and guaranteeing a well-balanced ecosystem and a decent standard of living for one and all, under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry.”

3.1.3 In order to translate the above vision into reality, the sector will be guided by a Mission Statement embodied in the following statement: “A Provision of Responsive, Relevant and Quality Education for All Gambians for Poverty Reduction”.

3.2 Aims of Education

3.2.1 Based on the principles above and the economic development prospects of the country, the basic aims of the education policy are to;

- i. Promote a broad-based education at the basic level for lifelong learning and training
- ii. Mainstream gender in the creation of opportunities for all to acquire literacy, livelihood skills and the utilisation of these skills in order to earn a living and become economically self-reliant members of the community
- iii. Develop the physical and mental skills which will contribute to nation building – economically, socially and culturally in a sustainable environment
- iv. Encourage creativity and the development of a critical and analytical mind
- v. Further an understanding and appreciation of the contribution of science technology and innovation to development
- vi. Cultivate sound moral and ethical values in the development of life skills
- vii. Develop a healthy body and an appreciation of the value of a healthy mind in response to life threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, cancer and tuberculosis
- viii. Create an awareness of the importance of peace, democracy and human rights, duties and responsibilities of the individual in fostering these qualities
- ix. Foster an appreciation of and respect for the cultural heritage of The Gambia
- x. Promote a sense of patriotism: service, loyalty, integrity and dedication to the nation and humanity
- xi. Promote the singing of the National Anthem in class and assemblies

CHAPTER 4: POLICY PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Policy Priorities

4.1.1 The policy priorities and objectives are set against the background of the high population growth rate, the cost of education in relation to the poor and the current education share of the government budget. Taking into account these considerations, the policy will be prioritised in the following five components aimed at providing equitable access to high quality education to all Gambians:

4.2 Access to Education:

4.2.1 Equitable access to basic, senior secondary, tertiary and higher education will be increased. Access to ECD centres and literacy programmes will be enhanced with specific emphasis on under-served regions, girls and other disadvantaged groups of the population:

- i. School and classroom construction and rehabilitation – the number of school places will be expanded by building the required number of classrooms and related school facilities such as sanitary and water facilities
- ii. An in-depth study will be carried out to inform on the districts with low enrolment and completion
- iii. Gender equity initiatives – A more gender sensitive curriculum and environment will be created and a continuous promotion on the community awareness on the benefits of both boys' and girls' education will continue to be mounted. Performance and completion will also be promoted
- iv. Adult and non-formal education and literacy programmes – a strategy for expanding non-formal education to cater for out-of-school youth and non-lettered adults will be implemented
- v. Special education – training programmes and teaching materials for special education teachers will be developed and special facilities extended into rural areas where mainstreaming does not satisfy the needs of severe cases
- vi. Life skills education – HIV/AIDS prevention, the reduction of gender based violence in and around schools and the inculcation of peace building, tolerance and patriotism will be introduced using Life skills education through population and family life education and guidance and counselling
- vii. The integrated approach of addressing the nutritional needs of the learner through school feeding/ canteen schemes will be enhanced and the provision of a conducive environment that takes cognisance of the importance of hygiene, water and sanitation promoted.

4.3 Quality Education

4.3.1 The learning outcomes at all levels will be improved through:

- i. Continuous provision of an adequate supply of trained educators through cost effective pre-service and in-service training programmes. For both conventional and Madrassah, a new set of programmes i.e Diploma and Advance Diploma in education will be introduced to replace the Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) and Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC)
- ii. Curriculum improvement – there will be on-going review, upgrading and harmonisation of the curricula across all levels based on explicit learning objectives upon which assessments will be more reliably based. Significant focus will be placed on school agriculture.

- iii. The national language pilot programme will be expanded to form the basis of a smooth transition from the home to the school to enhance performance and the appreciation of indigenous languages and knowledge as well as improve reading skills.
- iv. Instructional materials – Children will have access to a set of textbooks and the provision of instructional materials will be enhanced During the policy period, digital materials will be developed and supplied to teachers and students.
- v. Assessments and examinations – The Classroom Observation Tool (COT) which was pilot will be fully operational at basic and secondary levels
- vi. ECD – the growth and development of children between the ages of three and six through an integrated approach will be promoted
- vii. Information and communication technology – The E-learning centre will be enhanced to cater for teacher development needs. The tablets being piloted for gaming will be rolled out whilst broadband internet and related resources will be available to all public schools

4.4 Vocational and Technical Education

- 4.4.1 Programmes of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) will be strengthened, expanded and diversified to meet the emerging needs of a growing labour market. Efforts will be made to ensure that the quality and relevance of training and skills development match the demands of the market. There will be increased private sector participation in the provision and financing of training and skills development especially of the rural youth.

4.5 Tertiary and Higher Education

- 4.5.1 The tertiary and higher education system will strive to provide relevant, sustainable and high quality education and research to support the human resource needs for national development. The system will endeavour to support the socio-economic, scientific and technological advancement of the nation; and it will constantly pursue the quest for excellence by maintaining high standards, empowering students with the opportunity to realise their full potential. Guidelines and strategies will be developed to ensure that tertiary and higher education institutions will be committed to providing a high quality service to clients. It will also ensure the existence of a policy for quality and statement of institutional processes and procedures in pursuit of that policy.

4.6 Capacity Building

- 4.6.1 Prominence will be given to capacity building for sector management to enhance the performance of the education sector through:
- i. Organisational structure and decentralisation – the organisational structure of the MoBSE will be improved to enable the leadership to better co-ordinate and manage the programmes at all levels whilst MoHERST will conduct an institutional assessment which will inform the way forward
 - ii. Policy and planning – the central and regional directorates will be strengthened in terms of formulation, planning and monitoring and evaluation of education policy implementation
 - iii. Financial management – a financial and procurement management system through training and computerised record keeping at all levels will be established and improved upon
 - iv. Monitoring and evaluation – the EMIS and processes used for the monitoring and evaluation of the education system will be strengthened.

- v. Performance Management System (PMS) – will continue to be reviewed and fine-tuned for careful targeting of resources for training, promotion and other rewards.

4.7 Policy Objectives

4.7.1 With these priority areas and key strategies in mind, the policy seeks to attain the following objectives:

- i. Increase the basic education GER to 118% by 2030 including enrolment in Madrassas
- ii. Increase the completion rates in basic education to 100% by 2030
- iii. Increase the supply of trained teachers and make more efficient use of the teaching force by maintaining the pupil/teacher ratio at 45:1 at the basic level
- iv. maintain double-shift of classrooms at 36% by 2030 across all levels
- v. Phase-out double-shift teachers by 2030
- vi. Maintain multi-grade teaching in a combined class size not exceeding 40
- vii. maintain the share of enrolment of girls to 50% of total enrolment at the levels of basic and secondary education
- viii. Improve the quality of teaching and learning at all levels
- ix. Improve learning outcomes at all levels - at least 80% of students will attain minimum grade competencies by 2030
- x. Increase the gross enrolment ratio of Early Childhood to 75% especially in the rural areas by 2030
- xi. Increase access, for adults and out-of-school youth, to functional literacy and numeracy programmes in order to half the illiterate population by 2030
- xii. Provide marketable and social skills to enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life
- xiii. Strengthen the teaching of the five most commonly used languages – Wollof, Pulaar, Mandinka, Jola and Sarahule to be taught at the basic, senior secondary, tertiary and higher education levels as subjects. Explore the possibility of including Serere and Manjago
- xiv. Increase the transition rate from grade 9 to 10 to a minimum of 70%
- xv. Increase the quota of graduate teachers of Gambian nationality at the level of senior secondary from 66% to 95% by 2030
- xvi. Strengthen the institutional and management capacity of the TVET system
- xvii. Establish a sound financial basis for the long term development and sustainability of TVET
- xviii. Increase cost sharing and cost recovery at post-secondary training institutions
- xix. Develop and strengthen public-private partnership in the financing of higher education
- xx. Improve organisational structure of the sector for efficient and effective service delivery.

CHAPTER 5: BASIC EDUCATION

5.1 Basic Education for All

5.1.1 The Gambia Government is committed to upholding the right of every person to basic education, regardless of gender, age, religion or disability. Accordingly, basic education will be open to all. Learning at this level will be geared towards the holistic development of the individual for the positive realisation of every person's full potential and aspirations.

5.2 Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)

5.2.1 In an attempt to further diversify educational provision within the context of education for all, a conditional cash transfer scheme has been introduced with the aim of providing an alternative form of education with minimum curriculum standards to children and youth who are placed in the custody of religious leaders with responsibility to teach them the Holy Quran and other Islamic values.

5.2.2 This scheme which is known as CCT is being piloted in twelve centres across the country delivering functional literacy and numeracy alongside life and livelihood skills that will enable them earn a living. Accordingly, this policy period will witness a gradual scale up of the scheme with improvement levels of efficiency within learner participation and curricula content and delivery.

5.2.3 To this end, a study will be commissioned to investigate possible dual participation of students from conventional schools or madrassahs in the CCT scheme thus double-counting learners within the same education system. The study will also determine the parameters for the delivery of the minimum curriculum to the learners of the CCT programme.

5.2.4 The Ministry will also explore the possibility of extending CCT to out of school children on apprenticeship at local workshops such as mechanics, carpentry and welding workshops to provide literacy and numeracy skills.

5.3 Physical Facilities Provision

5.3.1 The continued establishment of new schools, construction of additional classrooms and the improvement, rehabilitation and maintenance of existing facilities will depend on a set of criteria that take into account the requisite legal framework. These facilities will include but not limited to kitchen, storage, water and sanitary services. All educational buildings should be accessible to all

5.3.2 Small communities will be provided with multi-grade classrooms including ECD while communities that cannot attract the establishment of schools due to low school age population will be provided with customised school transport services to ferry children to and from the nearest LBS

5.4 School Improvement Grant

5.4.1 In a bid to reduce the cost burden on households in educating their children in public schools, the education sector has abolished all forms of fees and levies in public basic and secondary education and subsequently introduced the payments of school improvement grants to support public schools undertake school improvement initiatives informed by an effective school development planning process.

5.4.2 The grants will continue to be provided to the schools on an annual basis using enrolment variable with approved unit cost for each level of education. In order to ensure that these funds are judiciously utilized and properly accounted for, the sector will strengthen the necessary structures that support monitoring and supervision in the

areas of disbursements, procurement and fiduciary responsibilities. Furthermore, government ECDs as well as government assisted ECDs and Madrassah will be included in the SIG during the policy period.

5.5 Early Childhood Development

5.5.1 Government acknowledges the importance of the early years of development for children. The capacities with which children are born enable them to communicate, learn and develop but these need to be supported and guided to ascertain that children develop holistically and positively. Government will therefore take a more active role in the provision of facilities and services for ECD, especially in communities where such services are not available. Early development centres will become part of lower basic schools in 'deprived' communities.

5.5.2 Government will introduce universal access to ECD services and to this end, support will be provided for the implementation of the community based and the annexed centres. In the case of the privately run ECD centres, government will continue to monitor compliance.

5.5.3 In the main, however, the MoBSE will continue to co-ordinate, support and facilitate the early years' education, care and development of children through monitoring, assessing and developing guidelines for the establishment and management of nursery schools.

5.5.4 The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education has developed strong linkages with other government departments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and committees to promote an integrated approach to ECD. Through these linkages, the MoBSE will participate in the implementation of the National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development and strengthen its ties and collaboration with parties interested in this area. Through the multi-sectoral working group and the committees set up for the promotion of ECD, partnerships and alliances with civil society and international agencies will be promoted and sustained.

5.5.5 The ECD learning standards will be reviewed, the school readiness strategy will be strengthened, preparatory classes for over aged children will be established and partnership in ECD services delivery will be strengthened. Different media of communication and advocacy will be used to promote ECD

5.5.6 Communities will be mobilised, sensitised and motivated to initiate and maintain ECD centres. They will be expected to complement government's efforts by providing the necessary inputs and participate in programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The ECD Parenting program will be reviewed and improved through community based approach

5.5.7 The Gambia College ECD module /curriculum will be strengthened and Government will continue to promote and encourage the establishment of private ECD training institutions. Furthermore, minimum standards for Early Childhood Development services will be developed for both private and public institutions. Opportunities for interested people to study ECD to graduate level will be created and ECD annexation will be extended to the urban areas

5.6 Lower and Upper Basic Schools

5.6.1 The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) in 2015 is 101.2% for grades 1-6 and the NER is 80.8% whilst the GER for the upper level of basic education was 68.3 %. These ratios have taken into account the enrolment of the Madrassah.

5.6.2 In order to build on the gains made over the last policy period, efforts will be sustained to enable every child have a minimum school career of nine uninterrupted

years. A net enrolment rate of 100%, matched by a completion rate of 100%, will be targeted for children aged 7 to 15 years.

5.6.3 The introduction of the School Improvement Grant (SIG) is a step towards making basic education free in all government and grant-aided schools. Parents will meet the cost of uniforms and stationery. User fees will be abolished at this level. The established bursary scheme for girls will be maintained to cover uniforms and stationery of needy, especially, rural girls.

5.6.4 To achieve completely free basic education, a strong and genuine partnership will be imperative for the mobilisation of the requisite funds.

5.6.5 To avert a situation where those who complete their basic education school career would not be adequately equipped for adult life, a minimum of 66.7% transition from grade 9 to secondary level (grade 10) will be maintained. In particular, cognisance will be taken of children in difficult circumstances, especially children in the following categories:

- i. Those displaced by war, conflict and/or natural calamities
- ii. The ‘unreached’, including street children, refugee children and victims of HIV/AIDS and early or forced marriages
- iii. Children with disability and those in custody

5.6.6 Access to education will focus on gender mainstreaming and ‘inclusion’ of all children residing in the country. In this regard, no individual or section of any community is ‘excluded’ from reaping the benefits of education provided in the country on condition that the prevailing circumstances so permit.

5.7 Madrasah

5.7.1 Government and partners will continue to support Madrasah education through the provision of adequate classrooms, toilets, laboratories, fence, furniture and water facilities, to ensure a healthy, safe and conducive teaching and learning environment. Government will continue to provide subvention for teachers’ salary in recognised Madrasah institutions. Moreover, MoHERST will further collaborate with AMAANAH and other stakeholders to explore possibilities to accommodate madrasah graduates in tertiary and higher education institutions in The Gambia.

5.8 Special Needs Education

5.8.1 Special needs education is not only an issue for schools and teachers who look after children with disabilities, but also a whole system approach that touches the whole nation in its drive to include all inhabitants in every aspect of responsible civic life. It therefore calls for a radical and holistic change of attitudes and misconceptions about persons with disabilities to ensure that they too have access to quality education. In this regard, the adoption of complementary and mutually supportive approaches that are based on the principles of inclusiveness, integration and participation of children with special needs will be encouraged and school-friendly environments will be promoted.

5.8.2 Mild and moderate disabilities will continued to be mainstreamed while the profound will be sent to special schools which will be strengthened to cater for the needs of the students and staff. All blind students will however be mainstreamed. The early identification of students with special needs including the gifted and talented will be sustained. Special treatment will be provided for students with multiple disabilities.

5.8.3 Government will continue to ensure an equitable access to quality teaching and learning for all special needs children. All regional education directorates will be provided with at least one functional resource centers to cater for the diverse needs of all

Special needs children. All teachers in special needs schools will be trained to respond to the needs of children in their classes. During the policy period, MoHERST in collaboration with partners will vigorously encourage higher education institutions to develop programmes that are responsive to special needs.

- 5.8.4 Expansion of the training of teachers at both levels, Pre-Service and In-Service will continue in order to support an inclusive teaching system. There will be continued closer collaboration between medical and educational personnel for early identification of children with disabilities and appropriate responses to their circumstances. Vocational and skills training will continue to cater for people with disabilities.

5.9 Adult and Non-Formal Education

- 5.9.1 A relevant and comprehensive Non-Formal Education (NFE) programme will be executed including distance education using modern technological media focused on literacy, numeracy as well as life and livelihood skills. The NFE programme will be designed according to learners' needs in the fulfillment of their right to education with the medium of instruction being mainly codified national languages and; content based on the socio-cultural, economic, ecological and civic life of the people.
- 5.9.2 Learners' interest will be sustained through the integration of income generation and innovative programme such as ICT, introduction of the Standardised Quranic Scripts in literacy as an option and the creation of a literate environment for the neo-literates. In order for efficient and effective implementation, the education sector will continue to use the Public Private Partnership approach (PPP) for the delivery of non-formal education service. MoHERST in collaboration with partners will support the development of a structured apprenticeship programme for non-formal education.
- 5.9.3 Adult and non-formal education programmes will continue to be designed in accordance with the ecological, social, economic and cultural characteristics of the various geographical regions of the country. Thus in the rural areas, they will take account of the way of life and the techniques employed by those engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, health, environment, income generating activities and awareness creation on matters pertaining to local governance. In the urban areas, the focus will be on the critical issues of urban life such as income generation and environmental sanitation and protection. Literacy, numeracy, civic education and indigenous languages will feature.
- 5.9.4 The programmes will continue to target the 15+ age group, which will differ partially according to target groups, whose needs vary according to age, sex, occupations and other needs. The programmes will provide an educational minimum. Clearly, the definition of an educational minimum will depend on the needs of the groups concerned and the resources available to the programmes.
- 5.9.5 Within the above framework, the adult and non-formal education programme will continue to be divided into three interrelated levels e.g. foundation, intermediate and advance levels. In providing functional knowledge, skills, attitude and values, the educational minimum outlined above will be the sine qua non for access to other forms of education. This will enable adult and non-formal education participants proceed to post-literacy and continuing education through the provision of facilities such as rural libraries and the creation of skill centres.
- 5.9.6 The Adult and Non-Formal Education Unit (ANFEU) will continue to widen participation opportunities by strengthening the capacities of civil society groups to permit outsourcing to community based organisations and NGOs. The benefit will be the advantage of mobilising indigenous talents and resources. The capacities of the Unit will be built to co-ordinate, supervise, monitor and evaluate this component of basic education.

5.10 Gender Mainstreaming

- 5.10.1 After the achievement of gender parity at Basic and Secondary education, government will continue to consolidate the gains registered in this sub-sector on one hand and continue to pursue initiatives to attain parity at tertiary and higher education levels on the other.
- 5.10.2 To reduce gender disparities in enrolments in mathematics and other core sciences, MoHERST, in partnership with other stakeholders will put greater efforts towards encouraging women and girls to pursue tertiary and higher education, especially in the sciences, mathematics and technical vocational subjects. MoHERST will put in place remedial programmes with incentive package for female students at tertiary and higher education institutions. Emphasis on gender equity in accessing quality technical, vocational and tertiary education will be institutionalised.
- 5.10.3 The need to intensify efforts in order to neutralise the factors that militate against girls' education especially at secondary and tertiary level is crucial, and so is the need to raise the confidence and performance levels of girls. Measures will be instituted to curb girls' dropping out of school before the end of grade 12. The 'Sexual Harassment Policy' will continue to be enforced to address gender-based violence in and around schools. The re-entry policy for girls who dropped out as a result of pregnancy and early marriage will be sustained.
- 5.10.4 The regional education directorates and other structures, such as the village development committees, the district and divisional committees, will be capacitated adequately and held responsible for facilitating and mainstreaming gender in their respective areas especially in the drive for higher education for girls. The Gender Education Unit will continue to be strengthened to work with its main collaborators like UNICEF, FAWE-GAM, the UNGEI Network and United States Peace Corps (USPC), together with other partners to ensure that programmes are co-ordinated, documented and monitored for effectiveness and efficiency. A gender equity committee will be set up to monitor the situation of gender and education matters.
- 5.10.5 Children (especially girls') participation in ECD activities will continue to be vigorously pursued. Initiatives and incentives of various types, including special scholarship packages for girls who excel in mathematics and the sciences at tertiary level will be instituted. The annual mathematics and science clinics, FAWE girls' clubs, and the capacitation of newly graduated teachers on gender responsive pedagogy and promotion of a gender responsive school environment will be instituted. Moreover, community-based interventions will be strengthened and popularised.

5.11 The School Feeding Programme

- 5.11.1 Since the launching of the home grown school feeding programme in 2012 followed by the development of a Home-grown School Feeding Framework, there has been government's commitment towards full ownership and management of the programme by 2020. The current school feeding programme is limited to LBS in deprived regions (3-6) including the Fonis in Region 2 but there is need to expand coverage to all regions and other levels.
- 5.11.2 To this end, Government with other stakeholders will expand and strengthen the school feeding programme to cover all regions and other levels from ECD to UBS, and SSS including Madrassah. Tertiary and higher education institutions will be encouraged to establish canteens. In this regard, School farms and garden programmes will be supported and promoted to enhance the home grown initiative. In addition, MoHERST will encourage relevant institutions under its purview to develop tools and protocols in support of the school feeding programme initiative.

5.11.3 Government will gradually take ownership of the school feeding program through the implementation of the Home-Grown School Feeding framework. In facilitating the gradual take over, capacities will be built to support the management of the programme

CHAPTER 6: SECONDARY EDUCATION

6.1 Access

6.1.1 In view of the envisaged expansion at the basic education level, it is imperative to further increase the number of senior secondary school (SSS) places for the three-year programme from grade 10 - 12. Therefore, to complement efforts aimed at attaining quality education for all at the basic level, SSS education will be expanded correspondingly. In this direction, a minimum transition rate of 70% by 2030 will be targeted. In principle, transition of the basic education graduates to SSS will be determined by satisfactory performance at the Gambia Basic Education Certificate Examination (GABECE), and measures will be taken to curb dropout rates and grade repetition whilst increasing completion rates.

6.1.2 Equity in the geographical distribution of schools and community needs will continue to guide the opening of new SSS. In particular, focus will be on the elimination of gender disparities. , Municipalities, local councils, religious missions, NGOs and private individuals will be encouraged to participate more in the establishment and operation of SSS. However, adherence to the guidelines for opening and running of SSS will be strictly enforced. These guidelines will be reviewed as and when the need arises.

6.2 Transition to Secondary Education

6.2.1 Entry to SSS will depend on performance in the GABECE which WAEC will continue to conduct annually. 30% of this examination will constitute continuous assessment marks in accordance with guidelines agreed with WAEC.

6.3 Curriculum

6.3.1 The SSS curriculum will continue to prepare students for higher education and for the world of work. It will be reviewed and made more relevant through a teaching syllabus that will be harmonized with the syllabus of the upper basic schools. Subjects offered at this level will include but not limited to: Foreign languages (including English, French and Arabic) – Mathematics - Science and Technology & ICT - Commercial subjects - Religious Knowledge and moral education - Arts subjects - Physical and Health Education - Life Skills Education - Technical subjects - Agricultural Science - National languages.

6.4 Staffing

6.4.1 Achieving the desired enrolment targets set for increased access to senior secondary education and the enhancement of quality education required, there will be a proportionate increase in the number of graduate teachers. To this end, recruitment and training of more Gambian teachers will be strengthened to meet the expanding staffing needs. Furthermore, sustained efforts will be made to attract SSS graduates to pursue subject based courses at the University of The Gambia (UTG) to enable them serve as graduate teachers at this level.

6.5 Governance

6.5.1 Each SSS will be governed by a gender-responsive board of governors in accordance with the Education Act. All SSS principals will also be encouraged to register with the Conference of Principals, which will serve as a link between the MoBSE and heads of schools at this level. While there will be commitment on the side of government to continue providing support, SSS will have to draw on their capacities to raise funds instead of depending on user charges to supplement government's effort.

CHAPTER 7: IMPROVING QUALITY AND RELEVANCE

7.1.1 In education, quality involves teaching and learning as defined by inputs, outputs, outcomes and processes related to the system. For this policy, quality and relevance of teaching and learning will be addressed through the various sub-themes including : Curriculum, Teaching and learning Materials, Assessment, Early literacy and Numeracy Skills, School Agriculture, School Library Services, Teacher Training (In-service and Pre-service), Life Skills Education Programme, School Improvement Initiatives, Science, Technology and Innovation, Monitoring and Supervision, Pre-Vocation/TVET, Bilingual Education, School Sports, Music Education and Environment including the effects of climate change.

7.2 Curriculum

7.2.1 In this policy, curriculum is defined as the totality of the experiences the pupil has as a result of the provisions made in terms of content, teaching and learning material development, pedagogical approach, assessment, school culture and organisation, and teaching and learning environment. Curriculum development, for the lower basic, upper basic and senior secondary levels currently remains with the central management of the Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education where syllabuses, teachers' guides and pupils' books are produced for the lower and upper basic and only syllabuses for senior secondary schools. The materials developed do not include structured content in certain curricula areas including but not limited to national language, entrepreneurship and Information and Communication Technology. Feedback on the suitability or otherwise of the materials from the point of view of the users is collected on an ad-hoc basis. As a result, the manner in which teachers are consulted with regard to their views on the suitability or otherwise of the materials is not systematic. The pedagogical approach remains traditionally teacher-centred and pays little attention to individual differences and different teaching strategies, which are also, constrained by the quality and quantity of teaching and learning materials at the various levels. In addition, the lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum weakens the review, enrichment and improvement processes. In some cases, targeted curriculum content areas are not sufficiently covered which may be due either to the volume of the syllabus or loss of instructional hours, thus the need for research, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum at all levels.

7.2.2 A set of principles and standards underpinning curriculum review and development to provide regular and systematic feedback will be established. In addition, clear student performance standards in terms of competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) will be established and operational at all levels.

7.2.3 The current curriculum framework will be updated to include senior secondary schools. Teaching syllabuses or programmes of study with cohesive and comprehensive structure of subjects, learning areas and cross-cutting themes will be produced and implemented in line with the updated curriculum framework;

7.2.4 School curriculum will be digitised to facilitate access to learning materials through devices such as tablets, computers and mobile phones.

7.2.5 Research findings will continue to be used to inform the development of new programmes of study, textbooks and digital materials.

7.2.6 Knowledge construction through enquiry and collaborative learning approaches will be promoted across all levels. To this end, the ECD learning standards will be reviewed, aiming at developing the child through play and prepare the child for the formal education system. The medium of instruction at this level will be in the child's mother tongue/area language

- 7.2.7 At the lower basic level emphasis will be placed on literacy, numeracy, life and livelihood skills.
- 7.2.8 The upper basic level, curriculum will continue to provide a variety of basic competencies especially in languages, mathematics, science and technology, agriculture and other life and livelihood skills.
- 7.2.9 Curriculum development will place emphasis on the pre-vocational and technology education at the Basic and Secondary levels to build competency of good foundation for employability, further learning and global citizenship.
- 7.2.10 Regarding special needs education, the main policy objective will emphasise inclusiveness. Support and equipment will be provided to enable pupils with mild disabilities to participate effectively in mainstream education. The curriculum will be the same as the mainstream schools but spiral in nature. Vocational and technical subjects will be given priority
- 7.2.11 The secondary school curriculum will continue to prepare students for smooth transition to higher education and for entry into the labour market. It will be reviewed and made more relevant through a teaching syllabus that will be harmonised with the syllabus of the upper basic schools.
- 7.2.12 Emphasis in the curriculum will be on the development of understanding and application of knowledge, problem solving skills, manipulative and soft skills, citizenship and environment across all levels.
- 7.2.13 Effective use will be made of the existing decentralisation, local, professional and traditional structures to facilitate public participation in curriculum research, development, monitoring and evaluation.
- 7.2.14 NAQAA and CREDD will collaborate in curriculum development towards ensuring a smooth transition from pre-vocational to vocational & technical education and training. This will be in line with the proposed expansion of Gambia Skills and Qualification Framework (GSQF) from level 4 upwards, incorporating identified local and global competencies and in conformity with international standards.
- 7.2.15 Curricula in the skill centres and institutions at the tertiary and higher education levels will be reviewed with a view to ensuring that the courses offered are relevant to those skills that are sustainable tools for growth, entrepreneurship and employment
- 7.2.16 To respond to the increasing demand for relevant tertiary and higher education, MoHERST will establish partnership with reputable private institutions to address skills and competency gaps through the participation of both state and non-state providers.
- 7.2.17 Necessary regulatory framework including legislation that allows the full participation of the non-state actors in providing tertiary and higher education service delivery in order to address the skills gaps will be put in place.
- 7.2.18 In order to meet international standards that prepare students for global competitiveness and to attract foreign students, MoHERST will provide support to tertiary and higher education institutions for them to strive to attain world-class status. Thus, the tertiary and higher education institutions will be encouraged to link with and form partnerships with other relevant international and professional bodies and institutions.
- 7.2.19 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and other stakeholders will ensure that the quality of all tertiary and higher education delivered in The Gambia is up to international standards and will encourage the external review of programmes in tertiary and higher education institutions within the country. During the

policy period, entrepreneurship education will be integrated in the curricula from basic to tertiary levels of education in the country,

- 7.2.20 Higher education institutions will be encouraged to develop curricula contents that cater for peace education, global citizenship education and sustainable development including issues of environment and climate change.

7.3 Teaching and Learning Materials

- 7.3.1 Considering the critical importance and the positive impact of relevant teaching and learning materials on the quality of education, the education sector is fully committed to ensuring that all students and teachers have equal opportunity to access learning and teaching materials at all times for all curriculum areas.
- 7.3.2 Over the years the education sector has put significant efforts in ensuring that relevant and sufficient teaching and learning materials are available in schools and accessible to students at no cost. Standards have been set to encourage schools and teachers to develop teaching and learning aids using local materials. However, the sector acknowledges the fact that the current type of teaching and learning materials are predominantly print based which is very expensive in terms of its development, printing and distribution, especially if it has to be reviewed regularly to avoid obsolete content.
- 7.3.3 Furthermore, the sector is faced with challenges regarding timely supply and replacement of textbooks in schools. Indeed, the time it takes to replace damaged or lost books in schools is sometimes long and this has serious implication on learning. When books are not sufficient teachers sometimes spend a lot of time talking and copying notes on the black board.
- 7.3.4 In light of the above, during this policy period the sector will promote the gradual shift from 100% reliance on print text to the introduction of digitalized interactive teaching and learning materials suitable for various teaching and learning platforms such as tablet (E-Reader), mobile phone, internet, radio and television.
- 7.3.5 The Sector will promote a gradual paradigm shift from teacher-centred and textbook based teaching towards interactive learner-centred approach that will include digitalizing teaching and learning materials across all levels and types.
- 7.3.6 The use of different e-learning tools will be promoted to engage learners in knowledge construction through enquiry and collaborative learning approaches.
- 7.3.7 The education sector will partner with relevant stakeholders to ensure that access and use of Internet for teaching and learning is widely disseminated in all schools, and learning institution in the Gambia.
- 7.3.8 The sector will promote expert participation in the development of supplementary materials in the area of literacy including national languages for both print and digitized forms.
- 7.3.9 The education sector will vigorously continue its investment in the acquisition of equipment and tools to support the teaching and learning of practical subjects at all levels.
- 7.3.10 During this policy period, mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that all learning materials satisfy a set of standards before their introduction into the school system. These include pamphlets developed by teachers and sold to students.
- 7.3.11 Teaching and learning materials will be organised in such a way that learners are guided to acquire the ability to learn how to learn and develop generic skills such as communication, creativity and critical thinking.

- 7.3.12 Teachers will be supported to develop a wide repertoire of teaching and learning resources to enable them adjust their teaching to cater for various needs, abilities and learning styles of their children.
- 7.3.13 In order to increase the participation of students wishing to study at work or from home, MoHERST will mobilize resources and provide support to create opportunities for all through Distance Learning programmes and other innovative approaches.
- 7.3.14 In line with best practices, the integration and application of ICT in curriculum design and teaching-learning processes in tertiary and higher education institutions will be accorded top priority and pursued during the policy period.

7.4 Assessment

- 7.4.1 The Education Policy of 1988 - 2003 and the Education Policy 2004 - 2015 placed emphasis on assessment as an issue in the quality improvement endeavours. However, there have been gaps in practice that are not as a result of the absence of relevant policies but rather a mismatch between policy and practice. Furthermore, these policies attempted to outline the types of assessment and their purposes but little or no reference of their use were made to improve teaching and learning in terms of pedagogical processes and curriculum design and implementation.
- 7.4.2 The national experience in past and current practices in the conduct of assessment engendered a new thinking that promotes Assessment for learning on the one hand and Assessment of Learning on the other as a diagnostic tool to strengthen the system rather than a sanction tool.
- 7.4.3 It is in recognition of this departure that the MoBSE initiated an intensive and extensive policy dialogue in the form of consultations through meetings and working sessions with key stakeholders and as a result, decided to develop an operational policy. That policy sets out the agenda for a standardised and uniform assessment strategy for all categories of schools. The accompanying strategy to that policy make specific provisions to cater for early childhood development and non-formal education centres.
- 7.4.4 Assessment will include formal examinations; continuous assessment, routine and ad hoc diagnostic tests, and other forms of assessments will be based on the curriculum. Benchmarks will be established also to determine and monitor the standard of education across the basic and senior secondary levels in pursuit of excellence.
- 7.4.5 The education sector will ensure that assessment of and for learning plays a critical role in its drive to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all. A well-designed and regulated assessment system will be put in place to ensure the improvement of teaching and learning as well as accountability and establish a reliable mechanism for certification.
- 7.4.6 The sector will ensure that there is synergy between curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment by initiating sound assessment policies, processes, procedures and assessment monitoring systems. Assessment results will be used to address learning outcomes particularly in early grade learning numeracy and literacy. Benchmark and standards will be established to guide assessment practices at all levels, particularly for the National Assessment Test (NAT 3, 5 and 8) and the GABECE and WASSE examinations.
- 7.4.7 The newly established Assessment Unit will engage and work closely with WAEC, PPARBD, CREDD and SQAD, in areas of storage, analysis, research, dissemination and publication of assessment related information.

- 7.4.8 The sector will ensure compliance with the assessment policy and assessment protocol. By the same token, the current GSQF will be expanded to cover tertiary, higher and Majalis.
- 7.4.9 In order to institute better assessment for the Majalis, MoBSE in collaboration with relevant partners will establish clear learning standards for students. These learning standards will be aligned with the GSQF. Further learning opportunities will be provided to students willing to pursue functional learning particularly in areas related to ICT and livelihood skills.
- 7.4.10 The National Assessment Test (NAT) will continue to be conducted for all students in grades 3, 5 and 8 in all categories of schools (government, private, mission and Madrassah) to inform the system on pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This information will be used in curriculum revision. SQAD, CREDD, the Assessment Unit and WAEC will collaborate in this venture.
- 7.4.11 In order to address the concerns of parents in the delivery of quality education and to encourage active participation of parents in education, a Participatory Performance Monitoring, (PPM) system, which will involve active participation of parents and communities in monitoring, supporting and collaborating with schools in all aspects of school life, will be introduced. School Performance Monitoring Meeting (SPMM), which is a component of the PPM, will be conducted annually in all schools.
- 7.4.12 Continuous assessment of pupils from grades 1-12 in all categories of schools using the learning achievement targets (LAT) will be put in place to ensure better teaching and to enable assessment of the value added as student's progress through basic education. Boards of governors of SSS and PTA committees at the basic level will be empowered to assume monitoring roles to enhance school management.
- 7.4.13 The GABECE and the WASSCE will continue to have continuous assessment components and set guidelines designed through collaboration between WAEC, Assessment Unit and CREDD will be reviewed from time to time. During the course of the policy period, learning achievement targets will be designed for all grades.
- 7.4.14 Certification delivered at tertiary and higher education institutions will be strictly monitored to ensure compliance with set standards. To this end, MoHERST in collaboration with relevant partners will promote quality assurance in institutional assessment system to ensure transparency and accountability.
- 7.4.15 A framework for criteria and standards for the assessment of quality professional and academic training will be developed for tertiary and higher education institutions. This will be supported by the provision of an external quality review of curriculum content through the relevant higher education body.
- 7.4.16 In view of the inherent weaknesses and the gains registered thus far, innovative strategies will be explored and implemented in order to achieve better learning outcomes. Such innovations will take account of systematic alignment of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to promote teaching and learning.
- 7.4.17 Emphasis will be placed on assessment of training needs, integration of ICT into literacy and numeracy programs, teacher deployment and Monitoring and evaluation of literacy and numeracy programs.

7.5 Early Literacy and Numeracy

- 7.5.1 There is growing body of evidence, which suggests that foundation skills in literacy and numeracy is a basic requirement for quality education provision. In this regard, the education sector has supported the interventions of Jolly Phonics, SEGRA and National Languages to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of early graders.

- 7.5.2 Although the findings from the recent EGRA and EGMA conducted in Gambian schools revealed some improvements in the reading and numeracy abilities of the students in Grades 1, 2 & 3, there still exists some skills gaps which continue to require attention. However, evidence from the assessment of Early Literacy in National Languages (ELIN) highlighted encouraging gains in the pilot intervention.
- 7.5.3 Convinced by the fact that each of the three literacy interventions has good practices in terms of content, instructional design, material production, delivery and monitoring, work is at an advanced stage to harmonise the best practices of all the intervention into a Gambia Reads Programme for the purpose of effectiveness and efficiency.
- 7.5.4 Following this harmonization of the reading programmes, early grade teachers will receive training on literacy skills in national and English languages while maintaining the geographical intervention coverage of Jolly Phonics, SEGRA and National Languages.
- 7.5.5 In order to strengthen the implementation of the literacy and numeracy programmes and achieve better learning outcomes, innovative strategies will continue to be explored and implemented. Such innovations will take account of systematic alignment of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to promote teaching and learning.
- 7.5.6 Environmental factors such as learners' area language, school leadership and teacher factors among others will be considered.
- 7.5.7 Emphasis will also be placed on assessment of training needs, integration of ICT into literacy and numeracy programmes, teacher deployment, and monitoring and evaluation of literacy and numeracy programmes.

7.6 School Agriculture

- 7.6.1 School Agriculture and the Home-grown School Feeding Programme (HSFP), will support and strengthen government's effort towards achieving the EFA goals and National objectives of the Program for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE).
- 7.6.2 In view of the national food security drive, School Agriculture will be promoted and supported to enhance school and community home grown school feeding program. To this end, the sector will collaborate with local authorities to provide institutions with suitable land for farming and gardening.
- 7.6.3 In collaboration with partners and stakeholders, school agriculture will be reoriented to cater for agricultural vocational education in schools. The School of Agriculture at the Gambia College will be strengthened and capacitated to produce the relevant technical professional staff.
- 7.6.4 Agriculture biased senior secondary schools will be established.

7.7 School Library Services

- 7.7.1 The current situation of school libraries in The Gambia has revealed certain challenges in the implementation of the revised education Policy. Reports emanating from CCM and Gambia National Library Service Association (GNLSA) monitoring visits reveal concerns relating to physical structure, book provision, trained librarians and the capacity of GNLSA to respond to the growing demands from school library services.
- 7.7.2 The focus of this policy will be on the creation of a high tech learning hub for school communities that will encourage teachers and students to collaborate, communicate, and share experience to support active learning.

- 7.7.3 This is premised on the fact that the library is the hub of support to both teachers and students by providing assistance with the best of the technologies available through staffs that are knowledgeable in the use of those technologies, and in assisting or supporting others in using them.
- 7.7.4 To this end, the school library will be central to learning and play a key role as a place for encouraging innovation, curiosity, and problem solving. It will serve as a catalyst for literacy and reading and for teaching and inquiry learning.
- 7.7.5 In cognizance of the need to ‘encourage creativity and the development of a critical and analytical mind’, all ECD centres will establish a Library Corner which will stock not only books and computers, but also materials essential for recreation and play.
- 7.7.6 The mobile library services will be revitalised and strengthened.
- 7.7.7 Efforts will be made for all school libraries, including ECD centres to have access and be connected to the internet with a view to establishing digital libraries.
- 7.7.8 Library and information literacy will be introduced into the curriculum at the LBS. Students will be taught to differentiate the different types of information sources.
- 7.7.9 Efforts will be intensified to ensure that all school libraries including ECDs are staffed with qualified librarians’/teacher librarians.
- 7.7.10 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology will ensure that library, e-library services and documentation centres are available in all tertiary and higher education institutions.
- 7.7.11 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology in collaboration with partners will support tertiary and higher education institutions to subscribe to digital specialized libraries around the world.

7.8 Teacher Training (Pre-Service and In-Service)

- 7.8.1 Currently, the Gambia College, the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) and the University of the Gambia (UTG) conduct teacher training in the Gambia. The Gambia College is the main provider of pre-service teachers for the lower and upper basic levels, whereas the GTTI trains teachers for the technical subjects at the upper basic level and UTG provides training targeted at the senior secondary level. Entry requirement for teacher training is based on secondary level qualifications. However, each programme has its own entry requirements.
- 7.8.2 There exists no direct link between teacher training at Gambia College and UTG. Teachers trained at Gambia College have to follow the same course as those from Grade 12. No consideration is given to training acquired from Gambia College.
- 7.8.3 Training of teachers using distance mode of training has helped in reducing the number of UQ Teachers in lower basic schools.
- 7.8.4 Research has been conducted on teacher content knowledge and it has been found that teacher content knowledge has been low in some areas. Other challenges in teacher training can also be traced to the absence of teacher professional standards, systematic in-service training, and periodical external curriculum review for teacher education.
- 7.8.5 In view of the foregoing challenges, the education sector will develop and implement sound and comprehensive strategies in support of teacher professional standards and ethics, systematic in-service training and periodical external curriculum review for teacher education.
- 7.8.6 Such strategies will be intensified to strengthen teacher quality and the institutionalization of in-service teacher training with a view to producing well trained

teacher educators. To this end, the current continuing professional development programme will be further developed to meet the diverse training needs of teachers within a framework of a motivational teacher education programme.

- 7.8.7 Pedagogy and assessment methodologies that are consistent with the new information and communication technology, programme learning and child-centred educational method will be put in place and practiced.
- 7.8.8 At the level of pre-service training, the teacher training curricula will be reviewed to cater for improved content knowledge and modern pedagogical practices. This will take into account the use of ICT in education, education in ICT, distance learning modes and further learning.
- 7.8.9 In order to ensure that the delivery of both pre-service and in-service training is devoid of duplication and inefficiencies, the education sector will work towards the harmonization of teacher training programmes with special attention paid to recognition of prior learning within and across programmes.
- 7.8.10 A comprehensive programme of teacher professional development that embraces action research, as means of school-based curriculum development and continuous professional development of teachers will be institutionalized at all levels.
- 7.8.11 The sector will continue to provide the training of all teachers both at pre-service and in-service levels including Madrassah teachers, ECD and non-formal facilitators.
- 7.8.12 Efforts will be made to ensure parity in training and recognition of the ECD certification and remuneration for ECD teachers, just as it exist for PTC and HTC.
- 7.8.13 MoHESRT will encourage institutions and, where feasible, provide support for them to increase the number of academic staff with doctoral degrees to improve the volume and quality of research carried out in the country.
- 7.8.14 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology in collaboration with key partners will develop a standard profile for lecturers and tutors operating in all tertiary and higher education institutions. To this end, staff below standards will be offered the opportunity to be upgraded.

7.9 Life Skills Education Programme

- 7.9.1 In keeping with government's commitment to the SDG, priority will be given to Life Skills Education (LSE) programme in the policy. LSE will help learners acquire not only knowledge and skills but also behaviours (adaptive and positive) relevant to their self-fulfilment in a changing social and economic environment.
- 7.9.2 The Life skills education programme will continue to intervene and strengthen the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention, the reduction of gender based violence in and around schools, the inculcation of peace building and tolerance, global citizenship and patriotism, population and family life and the environment including climate change, and support in the form of guidance and counselling services in schools will continue to be strengthened.

7.10 HIV/AIDS Prevention

- 7.10.1 As HIV/AIDS is more of a development problem rather than an exclusive health issue, children, youth, teachers and education sector personnel (vulnerable groups) will continue to be targeted to slow down the spread and progression of the problem. In order to sustain the gains already made, the education sector will continue the teaching of HIV/AIDS issues in all learning institutions to ensure that these institutions are used as effective vehicles to intensify HIV/AIDS sensitisation in communities.

7.10.2 Life skills education programme will continue to intervene and strengthen the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention; the reduction of gender based violence in and around schools; human rights education; the inculcation of peace building, tolerance and patriotism; population and family life and the environment including climate change.

7.11 Gender Responsiveness

7.11.1 Apart from poverty, which limits the participation of girls and women in education, other factors that also relegate women in general to a disadvantaged and disempowered position include the value, attitudes and practices that consider girls and women as objects of sex and servitude, thus leading to early and forced marriage, male child preference, sexual harassment and abuse.

7.11.2 Women are also largely prevented from participating in decision-making, leading to a socialisation process that produces girls who lack assertiveness, self-confidence or self-esteem. All these factors in turn lead to gender inequity and inequality and seriously affect girls' access, retention and performance in education at all levels.

7.11.3 To this end, the policy on sexual harassment's implementation will further be reinforced and schools will be encouraged and supported to establish disciplinary committees, which will include teachers, parents and students. Gender responsiveness will usher in gender perspectives in the decision-making processes and leadership. This policy will continue to promote equity in all facets of management at the school level, teacher recruitment, promotion and student enrolment and completion across all levels of the education system.

7.12 Peace Building and Tolerance

7.12.1 The Life Skills Education programme will equally focus on the promotion of peace education and conflict resolution. It will critically look at factors militating against peace, promotion of culture of peace and peaceful co-existence, and then build on strategies to make positive impact at the inter-personal, community and national levels. To meet the objectives and focus for a peace education programme, learners will be exposed to skills in conflict resolution and management (grievance handling, negotiations, arbitration). Schools will be encouraged to establish peace clubs and societies through which such skills can be practised and promoted or integrate the programme within the existing ones.

7.13 Population and Family Life Education (POP/FLE)

7.13.1 The 2013 Census have shown that over 21.4% of the population of The Gambia fall within the age cohort of 15-24, and 64% of the population under the age of 24 years are the most vulnerable groups. The growing need for awareness within this group is enough justification for the sensitisation of POP/FLE issues as inherent in the National Development Programmes.

7.14 Guidance and Counselling

7.14.1 Guidance and Counselling (G&C) will continue to be one of the support services intended to augment education programmes and the delivery of quality education in The Gambia. There is empirical evidence that G&C is contributing to the enhancement of access, retention and performance of both boys and girls in the upper basic and SSS where such services are provided.

7.14.2 Guidance and Counselling will therefore be expanded and extended to the lower basic schools. Thus, teachers and counsellors will be trained and equipped with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to effectively provide the required services.

- 7.14.3 Support in the form of guidance and counselling services in schools will continue to be strengthened.

7.15 Career Guidance and Counselling

- 7.15.1 The sector is cognizant of the need to raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes and encourage students to consider a wide range of vocations and courses through career guidance and counselling.
- 7.15.2 This is because there are so many career opportunities that the students have limited capacity to exploit. In addition, students have limited awareness of the existence of such career and vocational options. This ignorance often leads to unrealistic career aspirations and decisions. Therefore, there is, a need to assist students to have more realistic career choices, expectations and development in order to assist them to choose, prepare, enter, progress and grow optimally in a suitable career.
- 7.15.3 Accordingly, a career guidance and counselling programme will be developed and implemented to ensure that students make more informed and better educational and career choices
- 7.15.4 The programme will provide teachers, school administrations and parents with information that is much needed to support student's career exploration and post-secondary educational opportunities. Students will be assisted to make the best possible career choices, strengthen the educational system by providing motivation and meaning to education.
- 7.15.5 The programme will ensure that students become aware of the many courses to consider, Interpret occupational interest inventory and decide what to do after school as well as help students apply to tertiary and higher education institutions.
- 7.15.6 Such an important component of students' academic life will have to begin at the Basic cycle level where students will be assisted in considering and deciding on their choices of Senior Secondary school in relation to subjects offered by the various Schools to assure continuity and an ultimate structured career path.
- 7.15.7 For a sustained career-counseling programme, the required structures and resources will be made available to give this area the requisite impetus for the desired outcome. In the same vein, the education sector will collaborate and forge partnerships with relevant institutions to make the most of existing expertise and information to enrich the development and maintenance of comprehensive programme. Guidance and counseling with more emphasis on career counseling will be a mandatory and integral part of Teacher education programme of study at the university and the college.

7.16 Global Citizenship and Patriotism

- 7.16.1 Global citizenship is an ethos. It aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally to face and resolve global challenges in order to become proactive contributors to a sustainable world. Education for global citizenship helps and enable young people develop the core competencies, which allow them to actively engage with the world, and helps make it a more just and sustainable place. It will be implemented through a **whole-school approach**, involving everyone from learners themselves to the wider community. This will include the promotion of social justice and a culture of peace as well as the appreciation of diversity and the importance of sustainable development. Global citizenship will therefore be mainstreamed throughout the education process.
- 7.16.2 For the creation of a unified nation bound by a common purpose complemented by a sense of duty and loyalty to the nation, awareness of patriotism in all learners will

be developed. Attitudes and values guided by patriotism and democratic principles and practice, as well as elements that foster societal cohesion, will continue to be promoted.

7.17 School Health and Nutrition Education

7.17.1 Integrating a comprehensive inclusive school-based health program into the sector plan will lead to implementation of interventions that prevent many children from dropping out of school, and positively impacts on the performance of children. Enhanced understanding of basic health especially school-based de-worming and eye health (vision screening) will serve as a tool to implementing more comprehensive, inclusive life skills and school health programming.

7.17.2 School health will be delivered through the school system and supported by a formal agreement between the health and education sectors. Safe, simple, and effective school-based interventions by which the education sector, typically with oversight from the health sector, can address the most common health and nutrition conditions that affect school-age children and educational outcomes.

7.17.3 The sector will collaborate with the MoHSW to implement institution-based health service delivery and school health and nutrition education will be moved away from medical approach to school based programmes that will seek to improve access and retention; and school based de-worming. Awareness creation of neglected tropical diseases and vision screening will be introduced.

7.17.4 Awareness creation of neglected tropical diseases and vision screening will be introduced.

7.18 School Improvement Initiatives

7.18.1 In an effort to improve the organization and functioning of schools, a set of realistic and implementable interventions aimed at improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning has been institutionalized within an integrated framework of all school improvement initiatives referred to as the Programme for Improved Quality and Standards in Schools (PIQSS). Such initiatives are as follows:

- i. School Improvement Planning
- ii. Monitoring and Supervision
- iii. School Star Award System
- iv. After School Support Programme

7.19 School Improvement Planning

7.19.1 Under this intervention, the education sector will continue to put emphasis on schools to initiate and implement school improvement plans whose major source of funding will be the school improvement grants. The process of developing these plans will continue to be quality assured through a set of minimum requirements and levels of verifications and endorsements that must be met by the schools.

7.20 Monitoring and Supervision

7.20.1 In the area of monitoring and supervision of teaching and learning in schools, the minimum standards for quality education indicators will be periodically reviewed to provide an indication that schools that meet the standards are on the path of delivering quality education. To this end, the cluster-based monitoring system will continue to be strengthened in all facets of its mandate while the participatory performance monitoring which empowers community participation in school monitoring will continue to be promoted through support that will continue to be provided to the annual School Performance Monitoring Meetings in all public lower and upper basic schools.

7.20.2 Curriculum implementation will continue to be monitored at all levels of the education system. To this end, internal monitoring and supervision under the responsibilities of the head teachers will be reinforced to improve the performance of both teachers and students. Schools will continue to be monitored and supervised to ensure that objectives, targets and strategies for quality improvement are set and implemented.

7.21 School Star Award Scheme

7.21.1 The school star system will continue to be a school based program that rewards schools for improving learning outcomes of students. It will serve as a monitoring tool that will gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of schools while providing on-going feedback for all school community stakeholders. Accordingly, the scheme will continue to be promoted and supported in order to deliver the purpose for which it has been established.

7.22 After School Support Programme

7.22.1 In a bid to supplement the work of the teachers at schools and provide remedial support to students at home, an After School Support Programme has been introduced and piloted. The programme will be evaluated to determine the extent to which it has been successful and once this is the case, it will be scaled up and supported accordingly.

7.23 Science, Technology, Engineering Mathematics Education (STEM)

7.23.1 The education sector recognizes the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) as a pre-requisite for skills development, innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship and employability. However, the education sector is challenged with inadequate and poor infrastructure, insufficient number of trained teachers in the STEM areas, students' negative attitudes towards Mathematics and Science, inadequate number of schools offering science and inadequate teaching and learning materials, among others.

7.23.2 In this regard, the education sector will design and implement strong STEM education policies and programmes commencing from the basic education level to tertiary and higher education levels. To ensure quality STEM education, the following priorities will be pursued:

7.23.3 The sector will promote a STEM education policy that will ensure the development of a strong science, technology, engineering and mathematics education commencing at the basic and secondary level to the development of an in-country based research scientists, technologists and engineers at tertiary and higher education level;

7.23.4 Access to STEM education will therefore be increased at all levels with particular focus on youth, girls and marginalized groups;

7.23.5 Efforts will be intensified to strengthen research, teaching and the learning of STEM in formal, non-formal and informal settings with dynamic linkages with the social, productive and social sectors;

7.23.6 The tertiary and higher education system will be strengthened to improve the quality and quantity of STEM graduates;

7.23.7 For proper planning and steering of a national STEM education programme from basic education to higher education, the two sub-sectors will align their STEM related interventions;

7.23.8 Funding and priority will be accorded to the development, promotion and popularization of STEM education. In addition, alternative and innovative funding mechanisms will be promoted through greater private sector involvement;

7.24 Information and Communications Technologies

- 7.24.1 The importance of ICTs is recognised as essential tools to better facilitate effective and efficient management of the sector. This policy will ensure, through the use of ICTs that quality education is accessible to one and all.
- 7.24.2 An integrated ICT strategy, within a sound ICT infrastructure, vital for the successful achievement of the sector's main priorities will be developed. This ICT strategy will be driven by the need to invest in ICTs in a way that will achieve the greatest benefit at the lowest cost for the good of the greater majority of society.
- 7.24.3 In addition to the local area network (LAN) set up in the buildings of the Education Sector, additional networking facilities will be provided for the regional offices, given their anticipated responsibilities under the decentralisation process. A wide area network (WAN) linking all the directorates and units of the Education Sector and schools will also be strengthened;
- 7.24.4 All staff of the education sector, including the ancillary, will be facilitated to have varying degrees of computer literacy. At least, every staff member will be able to send and receive e-mail in a timely manner. E-mail accounts provided will be easily identifiable from private accounts. Appropriate ICT training will continue to be provided to all staff depending on rank and need.
- 7.24.5 Strategic partnerships will be built with all stakeholders, including the private sector and donor organisations. The sector will co-ordinate the implementation of all such interventions while taking into account the need to build local capacity and sustainability mechanisms;
- 7.24.6 All public educational institutions will progressively be provided through public-private partnership ventures, with networked computers, computer peripherals and Internet access during the policy period. Private institutions will be required to include ICT as part of the educational curriculum;
- 7.24.7 Training workshops and other professional development activities will continue to be conducted for school heads, teachers and students to ensure that every teacher and student in the country is computer and information literate. A website and school-net programmes will be set up for every school and both students and teachers will be encouraged to participate in projects and other educational activities;
- 7.24.8 In collaboration with other stakeholders, such as WAEC and USPC, a national ICT policy for educational institutions will be developed. ICT will be offered at the GABECE and WASSCE including tertiary and higher education levels and will include programming, database design, website and administration, maintenance and repair and network and systems administration;
- 7.24.9 Access to ICT resources and facilities in schools will be made available to out-of-school youth and other members of the community. Communities in which public education institutions are located will be encouraged to use the ICT resources and facilities in order to communicate and also improve their numeracy and literacy skills. Cyber café and computer resource centres will be established in every region to enhance the ODL programmes of both the University and the Gambia College.

7.25 Educational Broadcasting Services (EBS)

- 7.25.1 During this policy period the education sector will endeavour to strengthen EBS Capacity through in-depth training on the development of materials, production, editing and dissemination of educational materials;
- 7.25.2 The education sector through increased partnerships will establish a new EBS television and radio stations to facilitate the transmission of educational information,

programmes and materials dedicated to strengthen teaching and learning in all educational institutions;

7.25.3 During the policy period, the education sector will endeavour through partnership programmes to broadcast educational programmes through satellite to increase outreach to the most deprived communities;

7.25.4 EBS will be provided to support teaching/learning processes both in and out of the school setting. The Educational Broadcasting Unit (EBU) will therefore be strengthened and schools broadcasting of the overall EBS will be reactivated in order to design and develop educational programmes for transmission to the schools and communities.

7.25.5 These programmes will be based on the school curriculum, not only to complement instruction provided by teachers but also, improve on teacher effectiveness. The broadcasts will also be used, in tandem, for advocacy and sensitisation of the wider community on educational and relevant topical issues. In this endeavour, the sector will collaborate with the Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS), NGOs, international agencies and other partners to produce and broadcast documentaries and other education-related programmes for children and adults.

7.25.6 The services will be expanded to incorporate broadcasts for adult learners and out-of-school youth. Thus, EBS will gradually cover all components of the sector programmes for effective implementation of all activities at the basic and post-basic levels. Closer co-operation and collaboration will be established to better produce the forum devoted to educational issues on GRTS: Education Forum.

7.26 Pre-Vocational & Technical and Vocational Education & Training

7.26.1 The education sector believes that Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) has potential to create self-employable opportunities thus contributing to socio-economic development. Evidence also has it that early introduction of TVET in the education system sows the seeds of interest among young learners.

7.26.2 Notwithstanding the above benefits, TVET in The Gambia continues to suffer from inadequate infrastructure, low numbers of TVET graduates, non-responsive TVET training to the labour market needs, perception of TVET as second option and inadequate number of scholarships for TVET teachers, instructors and students, to name just a few. It is hoped that when implemented i.e. Possible Model will address the perennial challenges faced in the administration of Pre-Vocational and TVET programmes in The Gambia. Furthermore, it will create continuity for learners to transit from Basic and Secondary Education, and TVET to Tertiary and Higher Education.

7.26.3 In order to address the aforementioned challenges, Pre-vocational courses will be introduced from Grade four. In addition, an operational policy on TVET will be formulated and implemented.

7.26.4 Such policy will provide a national TVET framework with clear directions on established linkages between TVET and pre-vocational delivery, general education, tertiary and higher education, labour market needs and quality service delivery.

7.26.5 The policy will also provide focus on access, public-private partnerships arrangements, out-of-school youth, lifelong learning opportunities, teacher training, infrastructure and funding.

7.26.6 Notwithstanding, the sector must put in place a sound and adequate institutional and regulatory measures that will ensure that TVET education is mainstream into overall educational systems of The Gambia with emphasis on relevance and multi-stake holder participation

- 7.26.7 It will also be ensured that employers increase their engagement with TVET institutions to bridge the skill gaps and to deliver the needs of both young people and of society.
- 7.26.8 More resources will be devoted to the promotion of quality and relevant technical and vocational education at all levels for the ultimate goal of job-creation. Otherwise the situation of oversupply of mis-matched qualification for the current labour market may persist.
- 7.26.9 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology through NAQAA, will continue to develop qualification framework, accreditation and validation of the relevant skills identified through research findings.

7.27 Bilingual Education

- 7.27.1 In a more globalized society, the use of one or two international languages for effective communication among world citizens is indeed critical for any meaningful socialization that engenders sustainable development.
- 7.27.2 Equally important is the use of national languages as media of communication among indigenes in an effort to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of any country.
- 7.27.3 Cognizant of the importance of the above, a bilingual education programme will be introduced in two pathways.
- 7.27.4 English with French or Arabic will be a stream in the first bilingual pathway while one national language with English will be the second stream in the other pathway.
- 7.27.5 The first bilingual pathway will be pursued in schools and education sector institutions targeting both students and staff of the sector while the second will exclusively be pursued in schools from grade 4 to tertiary and higher education.
- 7.27.6 To this end, an operational policy on bilingual education will be developed and implemented with clear parameters on languages, content, curriculum and assessment on the one hand and teacher training, deployment and distribution on the other.
- 7.27.7 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology in collaboration with partners will explore the possibility of introducing Spanish and Mandarin as subjects at the University of the Gambia.
- 7.27.8 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology in collaboration with other partners will encourage the introduction and teaching of national languages at the University of the Gambia. Support will be provided to establish a linguistics department at the UTG.

7.28 Sport Education

- 7.28.1 The education sector acknowledges the fact that the salvation of sports in The Gambia must begin at the level of the school to ensure the growth of grassroots.
- 7.28.2 The sector also believes that school sports should not be treated as only a recreational matter but rather as a fundamental subject that contributes to the holistic development of students and their health contributing ultimately to better academic achievement.
- 7.28.3 The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education will ensure that school sport is fully provided for in all school and delivered by trained physical education and sport teachers.
- 7.28.4 During the course of this policy, special provisions will be made to encourage excellence in sport by eliminating barriers and conflict between sport and academic.

- 7.28.5 The education sector will work in close partnership to promote sports in holistic and positive manner in schools.
- 7.28.6 The education sector will ensure that venues for national sport championships for schools are decentralized.
- 7.28.7 Appropriate sporting infrastructure will be provided in every school and sport will be diversified to promote a wide variety of sporting activities. In the urban and peri-urban areas, where space for sporting facilities is limited, the sharing of facilities for proximate schools will be pursued. The education sector will ensure that each child practices the sport of his/her preference.
- 7.28.8 Innovative approach for sport financing will be promoted through community initiatives and public private partnership.
- 7.28.9 Synergies will be built together with the Gambia College and MoYS to develop training schemes for physical education and sport teachers. In an effort to promote education and school sports, which has hitherto been marginalized in the school curriculum, this education policy will vigorously pursue interventions aimed at advancing the cause of school sports in the country.

7.29 Music Education

- 7.29.1 Music education is a powerful tool for attaining children's full intellectual, social, and creative potential and is considered a fundamental component of human culture, particularly when the content is clearly linked to indigenous cultures.
- 7.29.2 In spite of these benefits, the teaching and learning of music in schools in The Gambia has significantly lost momentum over the years due mainly to a decline in interest and expert input resulting from the absence of a clear policy focus on key priorities such as curriculum and assessment, teacher training, partnerships and financing.
- 7.29.3 However, attempts have been made in recent times to regain its lost glory but the approaches used are more ad hoc than systematic and comprehensive
- 7.29.4 Accordingly, an operational policy accompanied by an implementable plan will be developed to sharpen the policy focus on music education that puts emphasis on indigenous cultures.
- 7.29.5 The development of the policy will be guided by a vision that enables all students from ECD to higher education to have an opportunity to learn music through a traditional instrument and progress to the next level of excellence.
- 7.29.6 Equipping teachers with the requisite skills to use music as a teaching methodology will feature prominently in the overall teacher training strategy as part of the new dispensation.
- 7.29.7 Once a new strategy for music education is finalized, it will be piloted and subsequently scaled up using the incremental approach

7.30 Environment Including Effects of Climate Change

- 7.30.1 Noting that environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources create cycles of poverty, poor health conditions, loss of wildlife and generally retard development, Government has over the period enacted coherent policies that has made provisions for the integration of environmental education in school curricula, among other legal frameworks for environmental planning, management and decision-making. MoBSE has promoted and encouraged environmental education through available opportunities and innovative approaches in schools. These include production of

educational materials, periodical training workshops, the introduction of Social and Environmental Studies as a subject since the early 1990s and the use of schools as centres for environmental awareness

- 7.30.2 Since then, new environmental issues have emerged, requiring the education sector intervention. For example, there is urgent need for young people to be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to address the challenges triggered by climate change resulting to global warming and sea level rise; coastal and marine degradation, loss of biodiversity, and issues of waste and waste management. Currently, MoBSE in collaboration with partners developed and trained trainers on a comprehensive training manual on environment education under the Programme for Regional Environment Education (PREE).
- 7.30.3 Considering the need to prepare the youth for adaptation to the effects of climate change, and to engage them with a view to a proactive, conscious and relevant response to the profound changes taking place on the West African coastline, the education sector will partner with the relevant stakeholders to push forward environmental education, including its integration in school curricula.
- 7.30.4 Over the policy period, the sector will nurture partnership with the relevant stakeholders to continue the identification of the educational contents and methods in relation to the emerging environmental issues with a view to integrating them in the curricula at all levels and types of education.
- 7.30.5 Institutional culture and social interactions that are needed for positive human-environment interactions will be promoted in all educational institutions (ECD to University).
- 7.30.6 In partnership with the national, regional and international bodies, pedagogical practices for accelerating learning outcomes and for engendering positive actions on the environment will be adopted and institutionalised in schools, including Madrassah. To this end, the use of the new ICT, development of environmentally friendly infrastructure and learning materials will be prioritised.
- 7.30.7 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology will encourage and facilitate the universities and other training institutions to develop and offer training courses in the area of natural resources management and other courses that are relevant for improving positive human- environmental interactions.
- 7.30.8 Educational institutions will continue to serve as entry point for community outreach programmes such as sensitizations, environmental awareness campaigns, workshops and competitions. In this regard, schools will be encouraged to develop a calendar of activities for the environmental education programme and actions to improve the environment.
- 7.30.9 Over the policy period, assessment and evaluation of environmental education programmes will be conducted on a regular basis. In addition, environmental impact assessment, in conformity of with the international standards, will continue to be conducted for all major infrastructural development projects of the sector.
- 7.30.10 The sector opens its door in partnerships within its mandates, for accelerating the implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures likely to reduce the impact of climate change, especially on the coastal and marine areas.

CHAPTER 8: MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

8.1 Organisational Structure

- 8.1.1 The ministries of education will continue to be responsible for policy development, management and Co-ordination in The Gambia. They will guide the development of the education sector during the policy period and beyond and further reinforce its management capacities to cope with the decentralisation process.
- 8.1.2 The Ministers for education will be responsible for leadership in the sector and policy oversight. The Permanent Secretaries are the chief executives and advisers to the Ministers and will provide oversight for the activities of the sector. There will be two Deputy Permanent secretaries for each ministry one of whom is assisting the Permanent Secretary in the administrative and financial management functions of the Ministry while the second is assisting in the co-ordination of policy, programmes and project implementation.
- 8.1.3 There will continue to exist, two management committees for the effective management and co-ordination of policy implementation. One will be the senior management teams (SMT) and the inter-ministerial senior management team comprising the two Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, deputy permanent secretaries and the directors and to be chaired by the Permanent Secretaries.
- 8.1.4 The second will be the co-ordinating committee meeting (CCM) to be made up of all Deputy Permanent secretaries, directors, principal education officers, managers/deputy managers and relevant stakeholders to be chaired by the Permanent Secretary. This committee will meet bi-monthly by rotation at each of the six regions.

8.2 Directorates under MoBSE

- 8.2.1 The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education will maintain professional directorates, each of which is headed by a director. The director will advise the Permanent Secretary on technical and professional matters relating to the area of expertise and responsibility, which are:
- i. Planning, policy analysis, Research and budgeting
 - ii. Human resources
 - iii. Basic and secondary education programmes
 - iv. Standards and quality assurance
 - v. Science and Technology Education
 - vi. Curriculum research, evaluation and development

8.3 Planning, Policy Analysis, Research and Budgeting Directorate

- 8.3.1 This directorate will have four integrated components: planning, budgeting, information and statistical analysis. Its primary function will continue to incorporate advice on analysis of policy issues; collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of education statistics; analysis and evaluation of recurrent and development expenditures from both government and external sources. EMIS will continue to be accorded a priority status in the quest for an effective tool in the rational planning of the education system. School mapping exercises will be mounted every year to ensure equitable distribution of educational facilities, institutions and resources.

8.4 Human Resources Directorate

- 8.4.1 The directorate will be responsible for human resource development and management.
- 8.4.2 Its work will incorporate teacher posting assessment; teacher recruitment through Gambia College and the UTG, and co-ordination of all aspects of the department's

training needs. The introduced PMS will be further strengthened to facilitate sector's training need and promotion. The department will continue to improve the system to enhance transparency and accountability.

8.5 Basic and Secondary Education Programmes Directorate

8.5.1 This directorate will be responsible for guiding and advising on policy directives within the context of basic and senior secondary education programming; co-ordinating and monitoring its effective functioning with programme linkages to include ECD, gender education, special needs education, Madrassa education, non-formal education, life skills education and school health, school agriculture and food management.

8.6 Science and Technology Education Directorate

8.6.1 This directorate will be responsible for advising on and co-ordinating all aspects relating to the design, programme development, training and capacity building in the area of science and technology education in schools and the sector as a whole. Although the emphasis is on science and technology education, this directorate will have oversight on all the other learning areas. It will also be responsible for the further development and enhancement of science and technology education at all levels. In addition, the directorate will also provide outreach medium for transmission of ministry's programmes and activities

8.7 Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate

8.7.1 This directorate will be responsible for monitoring compliance of the education policy and its associated acts and regulations in all schools operating in The Gambia. It will maintain its primary function of monitoring and supervision of standards at all levels of the school system (including pre-schools and the Madrassa); learning achievement targets, teacher quality and performance, PTA and SMC involvement. It will popularise the use of appropriate technologies to improve the performance of both teachers and students.

8.8 Curriculum Research, Evaluation and Development Directorate

8.8.1 Established as Curriculum Development Centre in 1975, the directorate is responsible for operationalising the broad strategic policy aims and objectives into syllabuses and text books in order to guide the teachers' classroom practices. Among its functions are to specify the overall goals of education in The Gambia and to guide the derivation of learning areas. Provide technical guidance and co-ordination in the development and production of suitable instructional materials for the basic and secondary education. Foster professional development within the teaching community by facilitating the formation of professional associations.;

8.8.2 Over the policy period, while these functions will remain pertinent, the organizational structure for curriculum research, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes will be reviewed and updated to reflect core functions of research, development and capacity building for the various specialised agencies in relation to curricula improvement, implementation and evaluation. Capacities will be developed at the various levels for curriculum research and evaluation.

8.9 Regional Education Directorates (MoBSE)

8.9.1 Regional education directorates will continue to be headed by regional directors. They will be engaged in education policy dialogue and take full responsibility for the planning and implementation of educational programmes in the regions. The directors at this level will, in the interim, be answerable to the Permanent Secretary pending the handover of the education service to the local government authorities. Given the anticipated responsibilities of the regional directorates in relation to the decentralisation

process, the directorates will continue to be strengthened within the context of government's decentralisation programme and will become absorbed into the local government structure at the divisional levels. The role of the MoBSE Headquarters will become largely to monitor and evaluate policy implementation across the system in the regions for quality assurance.

8.10 Projects Co-ordination Unit (PCU)- MoBSE

8.10.1 The Projects Co-ordination Unit will continue its role of donor mobilisation and co-ordination. The PCU will continue to manage and co-ordinate the classroom construction programme through a partnership arrangement and undertake the overall contracts management for the procurement of goods, works and services, arrange for the disbursement and replenishment of funds for project-supported activities, coordination of programme reviews and supervision, facilitate training activities and technical assistance requirements under the external support programme. It will support the ministries in the procurement of all goods and services. In recognition of the contribution of The Gambia's development partners to the education enterprise, effective co-operation will continue to be promoted with the donor community in this regard. To this end, efforts will be intensified to mobilise resources for the sector through bi-lateral and multi-lateral grant financing.

8.11 Directorates under MOHERST

8.11.1 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology will maintain professional directorates, each of which will continue to be headed by a director. The directors will advise the Permanent Secretary on technical and professional matters relating to the area of expertise and responsibility. However, there will be a functional analysis to establish the full structure of the ministry and the existing ones are:

8.12 Planning, Policy Analysis and Budgeting Directorate

8.12.1 This directorate will be responsible to coordinate, collect, process and analyse data for timely information provision, projections and simulations on relevant areas within the mandate of MoHERST

8.13 Tertiary and Higher Education Directorate

8.13.1 This directorate will be responsible for the co-ordination of all aspects of tertiary and higher education programmes, facilities and resources.

8.13.2 It is responsible for the co-ordination of all aspects of tertiary and higher education programmes, facilities and resources

8.14 Science, Technology and Innovation Directorate

8.14.1 This directorate will be responsible for STI and STI related activities and the management of the MoHERST website.

8.15 Research Directorate

8.15.1 This directorate will be responsible for areas related to research relevant to the directorate, coordinate research activities create and manage a documentation and publication unit

8.16 Support Structures

8.16.1 In order to effectively and efficiently manage subvented institutions at the level of tertiary and higher education, the following support structures (i-v) whose composition will continue to be determined by the ministers for Education, will continue to operate with a great deal of autonomy and accountability:

- i. National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority
- ii. Gambia College Council
- iii. University Governing Council
- iv. Advisory Council on Education
- v. Projects Management Unit

8.17 National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority

8.17.1 The National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) shall be the regulatory body responsible to regulate national tertiary and higher education institutions and programmes to enhance the provision of quality education. NAQAA will further ensure improved management, facilities, resources and learning outcomes in tertiary and higher education institutions. The number of established and registered institutions and accredited programmes are expected to increase. This will culminate into the development of the much needed human capital stock relevant to the socio-economic development of The Gambia.

8.17.2 Bring together the tertiary including TVET institutions currently under National Training Authority (NTA) and higher education institutions under the management of NAQAA to enhance the judicious use of financial and human resources. It will enable NAQAA to serve as a regulatory tool to ensure the rapid increase in access to tertiary and higher education without compromising quality and relevance in the sector.

8.18 Gambia College Council

8.18.1 Apart from its traditional role of human resource management and mobilisation of resources, the council has mandate to direct, regulate the instruction and teaching within the college and the examinations held.

8.19 University Governing Council

8.19.1 This council shall be responsible for the management and administration of the whole of the revenue and property of the university. It shall have general control over the university and all its affairs, purposes and functions and all such other powers and duties as may be conferred upon it by Statute or Ordinance.

8.20 National Research Council

8.20.1 The National Research Council of The Gambia will be the leading agency for management, funding and conducting of research in The Gambia. The mission of the Council will be to conduct research, advance science, technology and innovation, and support Gambian researchers. The Council will be an autonomous institution and will be governed by a Scientific Board whose members will be selected from prominent scholars from Government, universities, industry and research institutions.

8.20.2 The overall objective is to establish a council which will be responsible for promoting, developing, organising, conducting and coordinating research and development in line with national development targets and priorities thus assisting in the promotion of active participation in research activities across all academic, government and industrial sectors.

8.20.3 The National Research Council will consist of relevant stakeholders with authority as the lead organisation entrusted with the development and coordination of public-funded research schemes and programmes. This will help guide national research efforts to be consistent with national priorities. The above mentioned is duties are not exhaustive as the Council will oversee all research activities within the country in other areas such as law, arts, humanities, transport, trade and so on.

8.21 Advisory Councils on Education

- 8.21.1 Currently, there exist a council for Basic and Secondary Education. During the policy period another will be established for Higher Education Research Science and Technology.
- 8.21.2 These Councils will be responsible for advising the Ministers on questions of policy affecting education and matters of educational significance to perform such other duties as may be prescribed by or under the respective Education Acts.

8.22 Project Management Unit (PMU) MoHERST

- 8.22.1 The Project Management Unit is responsible for the management of projects and monitoring the implementation of Memorandum of Understandings with partners.

8.23 Decentralisation and Governance

- 8.23.1 Cognizant of the present challenges confronting Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in The Gambia, MoBSE will endeavor to harmonize education decentralization within the context of local government decentralization, in preparation for ultimate adoption and take-over of school management of all basic and secondary schools within their jurisdiction by LGAs and municipalities.
- 8.23.2 The education sector will strive to continue to align its organizational structures and sector management within the context of the national decentralization reforms and processes.
- 8.23.3 Education decentralization at the local level will be further enhanced through community participation with the involvement of parents and communities in such structures as Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), School Management Committees (SMCs) as well as Mothers' Clubs in school management and planning. The Boards of Governors within the SSS will continue to have oversight responsibilities for schools under them with support from both regional and headquarter directorates
- 8.23.4 Regional Education Directorates are mandated to engage in education policy dialogue to execute responsibilities of planning, management, coordination and implementation of educational programmes in the regions.
- 8.23.5 Without any prejudice to any structural reconfiguration which may take place during the implementation of the national decentralization policy, the regional directors will continue to be answerable to the Permanent Secretary within the current educational dispensation.
- 8.23.6 Given the anticipated responsibilities of the regional directorates in relation to the future decentralization process, the directorates will continue to be strengthened within the context of this policy and in readiness for absorption by the regional government structures. For quality assurance, MoBSE headquarters will continue to provide supervision, monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation across the system.
- 8.23.7 To the extent that the prevailing regulations will permit, MoBSE headquarters will transfer and devolve greater authority to the REDs to enable them manage financial, human, material and capital resources.
- 8.23.8 The provision of relevant tertiary education in the country will be decentralised gradually through expansion and diversification of TVET programmes in all the regions of the country, especially for the rural area.

8.24 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.24.1 In cognizance of the important role that monitoring and evaluation plays in flagging the achievements or successes made by the education sector, as well as indicating the gaps and shortfalls in relation to policy objectives, the sector continues to put great premium in advancing the monitoring and evaluation activities for an enhanced

insight of the education system. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education established a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit which has since based its activities on a sector-wide comprehensive framework. As already the practice, the education sector achievement trends and other findings that accrue from the M&E process, would continue to be shared with partners in the form of annual sector reports, updates on the sector progress during the CCMs, and in the Joint Donor Review and Supervision Missions.

- 8.24.2 There is need to continue to strengthen the capacities of the monitoring and evaluation structures, and to support wider coverage of the M&E process.
- 8.24.3 In view of the need to measure and share tangible results from policies and programmes within the framework of accountability, the sector will continue to support the existing monitoring and evaluation structures, both up and downstream.
- 8.24.4 In view of the need to measure and share tangible results from policies and programmes within the framework of accountability, the sector will continue to support the existing monitoring and evaluation structures, both up and downstream. A system of monitoring and evaluating MoHERST's programmes that are aligned to the mandate and functions of the Ministry will be instituted. Similarly, the individual directorates and units will monitor their activities and generate quarterly reports.
- 8.24.5 A central monitoring and evaluation unit will be established to compile all unit reports and produce a centralized quarterly monitoring and evaluation report, in conjunction with the policy objectives of the sector.

8.25 Partnership

- 8.25.1 The education sector has over the years witnessed meaningful participation of diverse partner institutions in the delivery of education and training services from early childhood development to university education including adult and non-formal education. Increasingly, the role of the education sector partners, such as religious missions and development partners, is becoming more relevant in the equitable provision of education and training and for improved educational outcomes, especially amongst the disadvantaged and marginalized groups of the population.
- 8.25.2 In spite of the encouraging mobilization of such partners through the use of memoranda of understanding, the absence of a well-designed partnership strategy that serves as a framework for multi-stakeholder participation in education and training continues to challenge the efforts of the sector in more meaningful engagements.
- 8.25.3 The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology will promote and support the establishment of links between tertiary and higher education institutions in The Gambia and other relevant institutions in the sub-region and beyond for closer collaboration and cooperation in research work. MoHERST will encourage public-private partnership in student training and placement
- 8.25.4 To this end, the education sector will develop a comprehensive partnership strategy to guide the mobilization of resources, competencies and commitment from the public and private sectors, civil society, Non-Governmental Organizations, Inter-Governmental Organizations and communities. Both MoBSE and MoHERST will use this framework to further develop operational partnership models that support interventions in pursuance of their own mandates. Such models will take account of the comparative advantage that resides within the key actors of the partnership with a view to maximizing the potential for expanding basic and secondary education opportunities, including early childhood development and adult literacy on the one hand and opportunities in tertiary and higher education, technical vocational education and training, research and science, technology and innovation on the other.

8.26 Performance Management

- 8.26.1 The Performance Management System has been introduced in the MoBSE to respond to a need of developmental system of management that seeks to synchronize functions of the personnel, the processes and the systems in the Ministry. The PMS was later extended to the school system with the development of operational structures and tools at both management and school levels. However, there is still insufficient accountability at school to the community.
- 8.26.2 Despite the enhanced rate of programme implementation, the PMS is yet to be fully operational. At the level of MoHERST, the systematic use of a recognised PMS has not been institutionalized.
- 8.26.3 At the school level, there will be a tripartite arrangement whereby the head teacher will sign with both the regional director and the SMC chairperson
- 8.26.4 In order to address the inherent weaknesses, the PMS will be further developed to be more efficient and effective in institutional assessment, job profiling, competency assessment and performance reward. The results generated from the systems will be used as a major component in decision making in the areas of promotion, disciplinary and capacity building.
- 8.26.5 In this light, the monitoring, documenting, reporting and reviewing processes will be improved upon across the sector.
- 8.26.6 The current situation at MoHERST will be reviewed with a view to introduce a comprehensive performance management system.
- 8.26.7 Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology will ensure that clear lines of accountability at the institutional level are established for and within every institution. These include: reviews of performance pegged against well-defined goals; external quality reviews and internal quality assurance processes for teaching and academic programs; reporting on financial accounts and conducting creditable internal and external audits; and good governance through information reports and statistics to the Governing Body.

8.27 Donor Coordination

- 8.27.1 Over the years, a strong donor coordination mechanism has been established by the sector. This mechanism has provided a unique experience, in the areas of good governance, effective stakeholder communication, strong community partnership through joint donor review and supervision missions, and Local Education Group (LEG) in which the sector's performance is reviewed. Through this donor coordination mechanism, a sector-wide approach (SWAp) has been introduced to help in the development and implementation of sector wide policies and plans.
- 8.27.2 Furthermore, the institutional arrangements that are required to enhance effective donor coordination within the framework of Paris Declaration will be strengthened. However, a major challenge is the full scale implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness.
- 8.27.3 It is on the basis of the above that the education sector acknowledges the need to continue to ensure that all donor coordination mechanisms are guided by the principles of the Paris Declaration.
- 8.27.4 To this end, donor coordination mechanisms within the framework of sector-wide approach will be further strengthened using the LEG, CCM and the Joint Donor Review and Supervision Missions

8.28 Knowledge Management

- 8.28.1 Considering that the education sector is a knowledge-based organization, Improved knowledge Management (KM) is essential to its management at the national, regional and local levels. The adoption and use of ICT to enhance and facilitate Knowledge Management (KM) has brought to focus the urgent need to come up with new methods, tools and techniques in the development of KM system frameworks to promote effective management of knowledge for improved service delivery in education.
- 8.28.2 An adapted ICT infrastructure will be put in place to facilitate staff to create and share knowledge effectively and contribute to the performance of knowledge keeping and transfer.
- 8.28.3 In addition the existing EMIS infrastructure will be explored further in the creation, storage, retrieval and sharing of knowledge.
- 8.28.4 Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology will put in place an infrastructure that caters for a higher education management information system (HEMIS). Notwithstanding the availability of the two management information systems, the two management information systems (EMIS & HEMIS) will be harmonised.
- 8.28.5 In this regard, the infrastructure at all levels including schools will be consolidated to cater for data on human resource, assessment, finance, Non- Formal Education and pre-tertiary vocational, tertiary and other socio-economic in order to allow access to predefined and customized reports to suit various stakeholder needs.
- 8.28.6 Furthermore, the current education sector website will be critically reviewed in respond to the increased demand of knowledge information and management.
- 8.28.7 In the case of tangible information such as research materials, reports, audio visual records, school records, etc, the existing documentation centres will be further developed and strengthened for alternative knowledge sharing and management.
- 8.28.8 In partnership with other stakeholders, MoHESRT will will develop a research agenda and map out a framework to coordinate national research activities. A system will also be put in place to strengthen the research infrastructure and capabilities within the tertiary and higher education sector in order to increase research output.

8.29 Human Resource Management and Development

- 8.29.1 The competitive advantage of any institution resides mainly in its human resources. Therefore, the effective management and utilization of these human resources cannot be over-emphasized. This has been recognized by MoBSE, leading to the creation of the Human Resources Directorate to ensure the effective management and development of its human resources.
- 8.29.2 As the policy implementation of any organization is the direct function of the activities of its human resources, the implementation requirements of the Education Policy and Strategic Plan puts pressure on the existing work systems and human resources coupled with the following challenges:
- 8.29.3 The absence of HR policy has restrained clarity in terms of understanding HR functions, thus culminating in overlaps in personnel data, unnecessary cost in remuneration and wastage in the sector.
- 8.29.4 The education sector has had a long tradition of staff training and development; however, the approach is more operational than strategic and needs to be improved upon
- 8.29.5 The inadequacy of a comprehensive HR data base has led to the system's inability to properly monitor and track staff training thus creating loss of financial resources for the education sector.

- 8.29.6 In view of the foregoing challenges, operational HR policies will be developed and implemented to guide the administrative functions of the HR systems.
- 8.29.7 The education sector will develop and implement a comprehensive training plan which takes account of the training needs.
- 8.29.8 A comprehensive HR data base will be further developed and used to strengthen coordination, monitoring and implementation of staff training, promotions and postings.

8.30 Teacher Welfare and Development

- 8.30.1 In order to attract and retain people with appropriate qualification to take up teaching as career, the sector will consolidate the existing incentives. To address the issues of unequal distribution of qualified teachers, MoBSE will continue to provide hardship allowances to teachers serving in deprived or designated hardship areas. In addition, staff quarters will continue to be provided based on set criteria in communities where accommodation is a challenge.
- 8.30.2 The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education will also continue to collaborate with relevant partners to promote teacher welfare such as loan and housing schemes and will continue to support the Best Teacher Award Scheme in collaboration with the GTU to motivate and retain teachers.
- 8.30.3 The competitive advantage of any institution resides mainly in its human resources. This has been recognized by MoBSE, leading to the creation of the Human Resources Directorate to ensure the effective management and development of its human resources.
- 8.30.4 The absence of HR policy has restrained clarity in terms of understanding HR functions, thus culminating in overlaps in personnel data, unnecessary cost in remuneration and wastage in the sector. In view of this, an operational HR policy will be developed and implemented to guide the administrative functions of the HR systems.
- 8.30.5 The education sector has had a long tradition of staff training and development; however, the approach is more operational than strategic and needs to be improved upon. Within the context of the emerging knowledge-based society, the roles, responsibilities and professional development of teachers will undergo significant changes. From exclusive classroom engagement, teachers will have to move towards becoming facilitators of learning, guiding students in accessing knowledge and applying it. Therefore, continuing professional development of teachers will be critical to the growth of the system.
- 8.30.6 The inadequacy of a comprehensive HR data base has led to the system's inability to properly monitor and track staff training thus creating loss of financial resources for the education sector.
- 8.30.7 A comprehensive HR database will be further developed and used to strengthen coordination, monitoring and implementation of staff training, promotions and postings.
- 8.30.8 A database of personnel will continue to be developed, in collaboration with the Personnel Management Office (PMO), to track more efficiently, the human capacity of the nation and attendant training needs.
- 8.30.9 The education sector will develop and implement a comprehensive training plan which takes account of the training needs.
- 8.30.10 The training of teachers through short-term in-service programmes in such fields like ICT applications, curriculum design and development, educational planning and management, and similar other areas will receive priority.

- 8.30.11 To this end, the UTG will be commissioned to provide degree level training, diploma and certificate courses for short and long term duration
- 8.30.12 Given the importance of the teacher factor in the provision of quality education, strategies to motivate and retain teachers will be put in place. This will include, among other things, better remuneration and recognition for teachers.
- 8.30.13 Teachers in difficult regions will be given varying levels of hardship allowances depending on the classification of the regions.
- 8.30.14 A special incentive package will be designed and introduced for teachers in regions 3 - 6. Coupled with this incentive package, will be the introduction of teachers' housing scheme for serving teachers in difficult areas. In addition to these support schemes, the area councils and communities will be encouraged to sponsor dedicated serving teachers in very deprived communities. This will go a long way in eliminating the disparity in the regional distribution of qualified teachers.
- 8.30.15 A Professional Standard Board (PSB) will be set up to ensure professional standards of teachers are developed and adhered to.

8.31 Efficiency Measures (Internal)

- 8.31.1 Cognizant of the fact that all children of school age must go to school, most importantly all children must remain in school and complete their education within the set number of years, the sector will endeavor to improve internal efficiency of the system through i) reduction of repetition and dropout rates, ii) the judicious use of the practice of double shifting of classrooms and multi grade teaching amongst other measures
- 8.31.2 Gender parity has been one of the sector's targets in its service delivery. The sector in a bid to overcome gender related challenges will continue to adopt strategies aimed at curbing dropout and repetition due to various reasons e.g. early marriages, teenage pregnancy and socio cultural factors.
- 8.31.3 In a bid to ensure access, retention and completion of schooling cycle for all children the sector will continue to encourage the use of multi grade teaching in less densely populated communities
- 8.31.4 In order to efficiently & effectively utilize the existing facilities while promoting universal access to education, the sector will continue to promote the double shifting of school classroom facilities to improve enrolment and retention of students
- 8.31.5 In an attempt to improve learning outcomes, the sector will continue to improve on strategies geared towards increasing and making best use of instructional time
- 8.31.6 The sector will continue to operationalize the ICT in order to improve efficiency & effectiveness of service delivery
- 8.31.7 The sector will continue to focus on strategies aimed at enhancing internal efficiency in the use of resources at school level including equitable teacher postings & deployment across the school system.
- 8.31.8 The sector will strengthen monitoring and supervision system & mechanism of schools to eliminate both teacher and student absenteeism.
- 8.31.9 Given the need to maximally and efficiently utilise existing facilities in schools, training centers and Higher education institutions, both MoBSE and MoHERST will continue to focus on key efficiency measures with emphasis on the use of physical facilities.

8.31.10 credit transfer system will be institutionalised within and across tertiary and higher education institutions for programme mobility of students. A clear and cost effective transition mechanism between College graduates and the University will be established

8.32 Research

8.32.1 Even though research is not optimally recognised and/or appreciated as an important means of generating knowledge and adding value to products and services produced by the public and private sectors, there are some research activities underway in The Gambia. Most of this research are carried out by such institutions as the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), the Medical Research Council (MRC), the Centre for Innovation against Malaria (CIAM), the CREDD, the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA) and the University of The Gambia (UTG). However, what is missing and needed by all stakeholders is coherent national laws on research, committees and institutions that regulate research processes and innovation in research.

8.32.2 Currently, there is insufficient investment in research and development at national and institutional levels; and, although there is a National Ethics Committee for ethical issues in health research, there is no national research council with clearly defined oversight functions within a policy setting.

8.32.3 As the Ministry responsible for research, MoHERST is committed to giving research a new impetus through the cultivation of a research culture, building research capacity and fostering research techniques in all the institutions. In partnership with other stakeholders, the Ministry will work towards strengthening the research infrastructure and capabilities within the tertiary and higher education sector in order to increase research output. Research institutions will be supported to establish the prerequisite infrastructure and mobilise funding for research activities.

8.32.4 Given the centrality of research capacity to achieving development results, more deliberate and systematic efforts are needed from all partners, therefore education sector and partners will encourage institutions and, where feasible, provide support for them to increase the number of academic staff with doctorate degrees to improve the volume and quality of research carried out in the country.

8.32.5 In collaboration with other stakeholders and partners, MoHERST through the Research Directorate will develop a research agenda and map out a framework to coordinate national research activities. The National Scientific and Technological Research Council (NaRDIC in the THEP) will be encouraged to develop a national R&D Strategic Plan to guide the implementation of research activities and programmes.

8.32.6 Government will initiate joint, strategic ventures for adequate and sustainable financing of tertiary and higher education research in The Gambia, as well as seek funding for research endowment Chairs and Units from non-state actors and affluent individuals to encourage research in various fields or disciplines.

CHAPTER 9: FINANCING OF EDUCATION

9.1.1 The implementation of policy interventions invariably come with substantial financial burden for the Sector. Accordingly, the achievements of major policy objective such as access, quality and relevance requires funding on operational activities like building of schools, payment of teachers' salaries and training and provision of teaching materials among others. Thus, making the financing of education a crucial issue for successful implementation of any given policy. The major sources of funding for the Gambia education sector are the Government and donor fund. Incidentally, household spending on education prior to the introduction of the SIG eclipsed both Government Local Fund and Donor fund combined but the tide is moving favorably in the direction of the easing such burden on household. With efforts now are geared towards reducing domestic expenditure on education, the sector will continue to scale up its resource mobilization campaign both locally and externally to fill in the funding gap created by the removal of charges and levies at schools. The sector will not only continue to advocate for more Government budgetary allocation but also upgrade the existing mechanism to attract more donor funding for the sector. As education is a business of everyone, private sector will also be encouraged to continue complementing government efforts in education service delivery in form of investing in schools and other tertiary institutions. In general, education will be financed from the following sources.

9.2 Government Local Fund

9.2.1 Government has a key role in education service delivery and therefore Government Local Fund (GLF) continues to be a major source of funding for education services. There has been steady but modest increment of Government Budget allocation over the years. In 2013, Government total expenditure was 3.2 % of the GDP and this figure has spiraled marginally upward to 3.9% in 2015. Despite being one of the major sources of funding, total Government expenditure towards education is still slightly below the international FTI benchmark of 4.2%. The Sector will therefore continue to advocate for budget increment during bilateral to improve government funding for infrastructure building, teacher training and incentives and provision of teaching and learning materials. The GLF will also be needed to support expansion, improve access, quality and digital and lifelong education

9.3 Donor Funding

9.3.1 The most significant contributor to the education sector is Donor fund. It provides the biggest support to the sector constituting 80% of capital expenditure. In 2012, there was a slight decline in Donor funding which has since taken an upward trend due to effective resource mobilization mechanisms. The Sector will scale up its collaboration with the Donor agencies and will continue to develop initiatives that will be presented to the Donors for their support. The Sector will also continue to encourage Donor agencies to provide continuous technical support and capacity building to the sector.

9.4 Household Funding

9.4.1 The Constitution requires that basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all, Notwithstanding, Household was spending about 12.8% of GDP annually prior to the elimination of levies at lower and upper basic school levels. In the effort to satisfy such Constitutional requirement, the Ministry elects for the elimination of all levies at lower basic, upper basic and senior secondary levels and introduced the School Improvement Grant (SIG) in 2013 which requires direct allocation of funds to all public schools. With the introduction of the new initiative Household expenditure on education has been considerably reduced leading to unprecedented boost in enrollment. Despite the commitment of the Government to drastically reduce domestic expenditure

on education, Households for now will continue to provide financial support to education in terms of providing uniforms, books and lunch money. In case of private schools, tertiary and vocational education centers, Household will continue to pay tuition fees in addition to other expenditure.

9.5 Ngo And Charitable Organization

9.5.1 NGO and other charitable institutions have also been making some contributions to education service delivery through building of infrastructure, provision of teaching and learning material and tuition fees. The Sector will continue to encourage their positive participation by signing MoU and enhancing the existing legal framework. In addition the existing monitoring mechanism will be strengthened to ensure that the funds earmark for education reach the targeted beneficiaries.

9.6 Training Levy

9.6.1 The imposition of Training Levies on all companies will be maintained as a means of fulfilling their social responsibility. The Funds generated from such levies will be used to support technical and vocational training.

9.7 Local Government Authority

9.7.1 Local government authorities play complementary role in supporting education and will be encouraged to maintain their contribution to the provision of educational facilities including resources for general education and sponsorship for needy students at tertiary and vocational institutions in their respective areas.

9.8 Private Sector Funding

9.8.1 The private sector also contributes to education financing through investment in the sector. Though mainly driven by profit their efforts in establishing schools, training centers and vocational centers has effectively complement Government efforts in bringing education to the door step of the people. Their investment is in mainly tertiary and vocational center and the sector will continue collaborate with them through Private Public Partnership to maintain quality whilst avoiding duplication.