
The Gambia

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1.0 CONTEXT/JUSTIFICATION

The Gambia is among the poorest countries in the World. According to the UN Human Development Index (HDI) Report for 2007, The Gambia ranked 155th out of a total of 177 nations. The Country has a per capita income of approximately US$350 at 2005, which is well below the Sub-Saharan Africa’s average per capita income of US$450. The main socio-economic factors of poverty, as seen from the perspectives of the Gambian poor, include food insufficiency, inadequate shelter and safe water, health facilities and quality education at all levels in the country.

Thus; Education became one of the key priority areas of The Gambia’s Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment 2012 – 2015. One of the educational institutions in the country partnering with Development NGOs for education as a vehicle for development initiatives geared toward poverty reduction is the Adult and Non Formal Education Unit (ANFEU), Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MOBSE). ANFEU is the Unit charged with the responsibility of overseeing the policy directives and interventions of adult and non formal education within the Basic and Secondary education Directorate.

Poverty in The Gambia manifests itself in the form of multiple deprivations. The Household Poverty Survey of 2005 reveals a high incidence of poverty in the country, with an increasing proportion of the population living below the poverty line over the past decades: food poverty increasing from 33% to 37%; overall poverty is calculated at 61.2%. Though poverty is pre-dominantly a rural phenomenon, urban poverty is rising fast, with women being particularly disadvantaged. Regional disparities are also evident. These and sundry are issues that the national literacy action plan is designed to redress.

The 2003 population census data shows that 42% of the population is under the age of 15 years and the economic dependency ratio is 1:1.22 (i.e. every 100 economically active persons is responsible for 1.22 dependents). Similarly the youth (15-24 years) and adults (15 years and over) constitute 22% and 57% of the population respectively.
1.1 National policy framework

According to the Policy on NFE (2010-2015), the Government of The Gambia continuously stresses the need to create a system of education (formal and non-formal) which is properly attuned to and more comprehensively meets the needs and aspirations of the nation.

The Education Policy (2004-2015) and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP, 2006-2015) provide an enabling environment for the realization of this policy, which is one of the internationally recognized sub-sectors of education.

The overall purpose of the National NFE Policy Framework (2010-2015) is the development of a well planned, organized and coordinated NFE operating system that will provide opportunities for adults and youths to have access to relevant quality learning programmes to enable them participate effectively in the economic, socio-cultural and political development of The Gambia.

The National NFE Policy Framework suggests ways of transforming the complex and difficult problems of non-formal education in The Gambia to a potent instrument for individual and national development; providing equal educational opportunities and for improving quality and extending coverage, including adults, out-of-school youth and children in difficult circumstances.

For effective implementation of Adult literacy and NFE in the Gambia, the Ministry of Basic Education has laid down strategic guidelines (ESSP) that draw various stakeholders together around a framework that would contribute more to accelerating national development and poverty reduction. In this endeavour, the current Policy on NFE will be reviewed in the not-too-distant future to provide a supportive policy environment which will ensure adequate resources, relevant pedagogues. In this vein, an integrated functional curriculum has been put in place in anticipation. It is within this context that the NFE policy is designed to map out an agenda for expanding non-formal education to cater for adult, out-of-school youth and children in difficult circumstances, thus contributing to government’s efforts to achieve 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015; and a non-discriminatory and all-inclusive provision of education with emphasis on gender equity, targeting the poor and the disadvantaged groups, especially women and girls, as enshrined in the National Education Policy (2004-2015).
1.2 Brief description of literacy status

The literacy rate in The Gambia for the population aged 10 years and over is estimated at 52.1% and the level is still low among females in the country – about 40% compared to an estimated 64% among males (GBoS, Census Report, 2003). Comparison of literacy levels among youths (15-24 years) in The Gambia is estimated at 63% and falls below the average for sub-Saharan Africa - 77% (EFA: GMR, 2005). The overall literacy rate for the adult population (15 years and over) is estimated at 42.5%; 30.6% among women and 55.1% for men (GBoS, Census Report, 2003). These literacy figures by gender indicate some improvements from the 1998 estimates of 48.5% and 25% for men and women respectively. However, the progress made over the period in improving the literacy levels and the gender disparity is significant in favour of men. This makes the provision of equal opportunity for learning a vital social service to be provided to all individuals as one of their basic rights and a condition for improving their quality of life.

The Education Policy 2004-2015 aims, not only at providing equal opportunities for individuals to learn, but also at achieving a learning society based on the acquisition, renewal and use of knowledge. This involves increasing the scope and opportunities for accessing knowledge to all individuals, thus, making education the key to sustainable human development.

The employment distribution by urban/rural category shows that 38.8% and 51.8% of the adult population are employed in urban and rural areas respectively. The proportionate distribution of employed persons shows that about 22.3% are paid employees, 57.2% self employed and 17.9% unpaid family workers. Out of the total self employed, women constitute about 62% with many of them never having attended school. This situation is one of the justifications for NFE and literacy provision incorporating skills training and income generation for economic empowerment of learners. The Government has unflinching faith in the role of community-based non-formal education structures and capacities for tackling these problems and some efforts have been made with the support of partners as UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, IDB & ADB.

1.3 Governance system and institution settings for literacy

Adult literacy and NFE Programme of The Gambia is being implemented within the framework of stakeholder participation, collaboration through Public Private-sector Partnership Approach (PPPA) involving NGOs, CBOs and CSOs. Based on these principles and the initial indications of the feasibility of the approach under the NFE component, Third Education Sector Project Phase II, government will maintain effective
partnership with the private sector in a bid to increase the availability of literacy programmes responsive to the needs of the target groups.

This is being done by way of strategically supporting qualified civil society organisations to develop and deliver NFE programmes. In the process, the capacities of providers are developed, including ANFEU staff, to manage larger programmes. Procedures governing access and the management of funds have also been developed constituting a Procedures Manual with defined eligibility criteria for contracting of providers.

In order to ensure compliance and accountability, the on-going education Policy review has taken cognizance of ensuring that all literacy providers are required by the policy to sign and/or renew a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. It is envisaged that this will enhance monitoring of Adult literacy and NFE. In ensuring this phenomenon, ANFEU will embark on lobbying for multi-sectoral and a broad-based approach to investment on Adult and NFE and service delivery.

1.4 Funding for literacy from 2002 – 2012

The budget allocation for adult literacy and NFE within the Education Sector is very minimal. This is mainly in the form of the provision of office space, payment of salaries of staff and non-wage cost – about 0.3% of the total education budget as of 2008. Funding for running Adult literacy and NFE provision comes mostly from donor agencies that sponsor specific projects such as the NFE component, Third Education Sector Project – phase II sponsored by the World Bank from 2009-2011 at a tune of $500,000.00

Funding for literacy by the Literacy providers (NGOs/CBOs) is also calculated to about GMD14,924,434.00 as of 2008.

Despite being potential players in the delivery of education, Local Government Authorities, Municipalities and other government Departments are yet to constitute a strong or important source of funding to education. Nonetheless, plans are ahead to sensitise LGAs for inclusion of NFE in their budgets.

Often time, literacy groups receive donations from private individuals and corporate sectors in kind or cash. Unfortunately these are not tracked at national level and it was impossible to provide data on annual expenditure from corporate sector much more to calculate this in relation to overall national budget and expenditure.
1.5 Existing activities and partnerships

Adult literacy and NFE activities have three dimensions. These are mainly centred on over all coordination by ANFEU, implementation of the Mothers’ Club Literacy Programme by the Regional Education Directorates and the implementation of various literacy programmes by the providers based on Public Private-sector Participation. The key programme activities include:

- Capacity building of functional literacy operators
- Development and production of functional literacy instructive and post literacy materials
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Coordination of a Public Private-sector Partnership Approach (feire-feire)
- Resource mobilisation
- Advocacy for increased investment and a broad-base participation

As of now, other government departments are yet to be significantly concern with the use of adult literacy and NFE as a tool for implementation of their sector activities.

2.0 OVERARCHING VISION FOR THE NATIONAL LITERACY ACTION PLAN

The vision of the National Action Plan for adult literacy & Non-Formal Education IN The Gambia is to contribute to the development of a literate society in which the majority of people can read and write using all possible forms of scripts and indigenous languages for application in their daily life.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION PLAN

To contribute to the improvement in levels of literacy by 50% and acquisition of life and livelihood skills by 2015

4.0 BENEFICIARIES

Adult literacy and NFE provision in The Gambia mainly targets vulnerable groups comprising:

- Illiterate adults, particularly women
- Out-of-school youth: In some cases, school-going-aged children not in school
- Prison inmates
- Children in Difficult Circumstances found in the Majaalis and juvenile prisons
5.0 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Specific activities (result areas) for increasing adult literacy rate include the following:

✓ Quarterly monitoring
✓ Quarterly review meetings with providers (NGOs/CBOs,) on the status of implementation
✓ Initial training of functional literacy operators (facilitators/supervisors)
✓ In-service training of functional literacy operators (refresher training)
✓ Facilitation of the procurement and distribution of teaching/learning materials for literacy
✓ Capacity building of functional literacy operators on income generation skills
✓ Organisation of International Literacy day celebration (8 September)
✓ Introduction of the Standardised Quranic Scripts (SQS) in adult literacy
✓ Review of the NFE M&E framework to speak to the sector-wide framework
✓ Implementation of Literacy Initiative For Empowerment ( Advocacy)
✓ Registration of providers and renewal of Memorandum Of Understanding
✓ Launching the Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education Policy 2010-2015
✓ A comprehensive Baseline survey on adult literacy & NFE programme(s)
✓ Impact evaluation of adult literacy & NFE programmes

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION/MANAGEMENT/GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Adult and Non-Formal Education Unit is under the Directorate of Basic and Secondary Education headed by a Principal Education Officer (PEO). The PEO is responsible for the overall coordination of Adult literacy and Non-Formal Education service delivery in The Gambia within the expanded vision of Basic Education. The PEO is assisted by three Senior Education Officers and provides technical and policy advice to the Director of Basic and Secondary Education.

Adult literacy and NFE provision is decentralised and each educational Region has a Focal Point (FP) for Non-formal Education under the Regional Directorates responsible of mobilizing public opinion and participation in favour of literacy and Non-Formal Education, as well as supervision, monitoring and reporting on NFE Programmes in the Regions.

In a bid to promote a participatory approach in NFE service delivery, a three tier structure was established - namely: the National Technical Committee for NFE, the Multi-Sectoral Working Groups (MSWG) at Regional levels and the Class Management
Committees at community level, to strengthen effective community-based literacy and NFE programme management.

7.0 EXISTING RESOURCE INSTITUTIONS
Series of projects since 1997 to date have been implemented through donor funding such as:
✓ The Community Skills Improvement Project, 2001-2008, jointly funded by ADB and The Government of the Gambia,
✓ The NFE-Component –Third Education Sector Project Phase II, 2010 – 2011, funded by the World Bank being continued by MoBSE until project is renewed,
✓ Integrated Functional Literacy Project 2008-2010 for material production, jointly funded by IDB and the Government of The Gambia
✓ Capacity building on Literacy for Mothers’ Clubs for ECD School Readiness 2009-2011 funded by UNICEF and is being continued by MoBSE.

However, most of the above projects have completed and the Ministry has taken steps to integrate some project activities into the mainstream budget.

With regard to resource institutions like the University

8.0 MAIN PARTNERS
The NFE Programmes will be implemented within the framework of stakeholder participation, collaboration and Public Private-sector Partnership Approach. Based on these principles, government will maintain effective partnership with the private-sector for increased scope and coverage of literacy programmes responsive to the needs of the target groups. The implication involves supporting a strategy by which qualified civil society organisations will be supported to develop and deliver NFE programmes.

9.0 REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION
Monitoring and evaluation of Adult literacy and NFE is based on the existing sector-wide M&E system of MoBSE according to defined performance indicators. A prime concern for NFE is the availability of a comprehensive data bank which is being pursued with the Planning, Policy and Budgeting Directorate of MoBSE to create a space for NFE in EMIS.
The on-going policy review has taken into consideration putting in place mechanisms to facilitate adoption of a reporting system by all stakeholders in quarterly and annual frequencies as well as giving special reports.

According to the Policy, key performance indicators for the monitoring and evaluation framework include:

- Budget allocation for NFE increased to 5% of MoBSE budget
- Enrolment of 9,000 new participants by 2015 done
- Retention improved to 80%
- Facilitators (300) trained on methods and Techniques of NFE
- Life and livelihood skills incorporated in NFE programmes
- Micro Finance Schemes annexed to NFE programmes;

10.0 ESTIMATE BUDGET FOR 2002-2015

Going by the intended plan of integrating the NFE Component, Third Education Sector Project into the mainstream MoBSE Budget, this can be projected at above GMD5,252,000.00. The formula applied is the establishment of 80 classes each year multiplied by 30 participants times a unit cost of $60.00

11.0 POTENTIAL RISKS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

The planning, designing, implementation and evaluation of Adult literacy and Non-Formal Education process is not without potential elements of risks and assumptions. These include:

- Alignment of the programme objectives, and activities with development policies and frameworks such as the national Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment
- Maintaining meaningful collaboration of the potential partners (both within and outside the central government)
- Timely disbursement of funds – particularly project funds
- Overall Government support and commitment
- Necessary stability both in the system and the politics
- Non-prioritisation of capacity building for adult literacy and NFE as well as programme
- Continual low level of Recognition, Validation and Certification in adult literacy and NFE

However, the Ministry has perceived and taken the stand to minimize these potential risks by:
✓ Raising awareness of partners and ensuring the involvement of stakeholders and adapting a participatory programme planning & implementation procedures
✓ Ensuring effective participatory monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process
✓ Integrating the Public Private-sector Partnership Approach initiative into the mainstream plan
✓ Reviewing the National Policy on NFE to capture renewed vision and emerging development issues
✓ Promoting reciprocity between formal and non-formal education
## 12.0 Calendar for Implementation of Proposed Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly monitoring</td>
<td>3 quarterly visits carried out each year</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly review meetings with providers (NGOs/CBOs,) on the status of implementation</td>
<td>3 quarterly review meetings convened each year</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial training of functional literacy operators (facilitators/supervisors)</td>
<td>125 facilitators trained each year</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-service training of functional literacy operators (refresher training)</td>
<td>125 facilitators trained each year</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation of the procurement and distribution of teaching/learning materials for literacy</td>
<td>11500 of each material procured &amp; distributed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building of functional literacy operators on income generation skills</td>
<td>375 facilitators trained</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation and coordination of International Literacy day celebration (8 September)</td>
<td>International literacy day celebrated each yr</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of the Standardised Quranic Scripts (SQS) in adult literacy</td>
<td>50 centres established</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of functional literacy materials in Standardised Quranic Scripts</td>
<td>1500 of each material developed &amp; distributed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building of literacy operators using SQS</td>
<td>50 pre-serviced &amp; In-serviced</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the NFE M&amp;E framework to speak to the sector-wide M&amp;E framework</td>
<td>NFE M&amp;F framework revised</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement Literacy Initiative For Empowerment (Advocacy)</td>
<td>NAMs, LGAs, Private Sector &amp; Gvt Ministries sensitised for increased investment on AL &amp;NFE</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration of literacy providers and renewal of Memorandum Of Understanding</td>
<td>A register of all providers developed &amp; MOUs renewed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch the Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education Policy 2010-2015</td>
<td>The Policy on adult literacy &amp; NFE published</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A comprehensive Baseline survey on adult literacy &amp; NFE programme(s)</td>
<td>Data collected on all KPIs</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact evaluation of adult literacy &amp; NFE programmes</td>
<td>National impact evaluation conducted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In developing this Action Plan, reference was made to the following documents:

- Education Policy 2004-2015
- The Policy on Non-Formal Education 2010-2015
- The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015
- MoBSE PER 2006 & approved estimates 1998 to 2008
- ANFEU completed Joint Proposal form08-09, capacity-building for EFA, July 2008
- The basic and Secondary Education Directorate Rolling Plan, 2010-2012
- Monitoring and Evaluation System Framework for Non-Formal Education programmes, January 2010