



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
20 May 2024

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Combined fourth to seventh reports submitted by the Gambia under article 44 of the Convention, due in 2021* **

[Date received: 19 April 2024]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
** The present document was submitted pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure. It contains the responses of the State party to the Committee's list of issues prior to reporting(CRC/C/GMB/QPR/4-7).



Introduction

1. The Gambia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) on 3rd August 1990. The Initial Report on the implementation of the UN CRC was prepared in 1997 and submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (hereafter referred to as the Committee) in November 1999. The Gambia's initial report was considered, and the Committee adopted its concluding observations at its 749th meeting in October 2001. In 2008, The Gambia prepared her Combined 2nd and 3rd Periodic Report on the UN CRC and later submitted it to the Committee. Subsequently, in June 2014, the Committee held its Pre-sessional Working Group session on The Gambia's Report and was issued with the List of Issues in which the Committee requested The Gambia to provide written updated information to the Combined 2nd and 3rd Periodic Report. This was done and submitted to the committee as requested in 2015. In February 2015, the Committee adopted the Concluding Observations on the Combined 2nd and 3rd Periodic Reports in which it also invited the State party to submit its combined fourth to seventh periodic reports by 6th March 2021. However, since the submission of the Combined Periodic Reports in 2008 and the subsequent written responses to the list of issues in 2015, The Gambia has not submitted another periodic report to the Committee. Thus, pending submission of the combined fourth to seventh periodic reports, the Committee's pre-sessional working group in February 2020 adopted the country's list of issues prior to submission of the combined 4th to 7th periodic reports and requested responses to be submitted before 15th February 2021. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to provide written replies to the list of issues raised by the Committee prior to submission of the combined 4th to 7th periodic reports of the State.

2. The 2013 census estimated The Gambia's population at 1.9 million, with an annual growth rate of 3.3 percent (GBoS, 2013). The population of the country is relatively young as revealed by the DHS (2019/20)¹ (Figure 3, please indicate what Figure 3 means) with almost half of the population (45%) aged 0–14, while only 4% is aged 65 or older. The relatively young age of the population was also evidenced by the Population and Housing Survey (2013), with children representing (49.4%) of the total population in 2013. A high number of children in the age group 0–4 and 5–9 and fewer in the age group 15–17 years. As shown in figure 4, in 2013, more children lived in urban areas, compared to rural areas.

3. In response to the list of issues as required under paragraph 1, The Gambia as a state party to the UN CRC prepared this written response. This report is submitted in accordance with article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereafter "the Convention") and covers the period from 2015 to 2024. The report follows the structure of the list of issues for The Gambia. The report was prepared and drafted by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare through a consultative process. Public consultations were conducted with other government ministries and offices, civil society organisations and development partners. The report was thoroughly reviewed and validated by stakeholders including CSOs, government and development agencies.

I. New developments

Reply to paragraphs 2 (a), (b) and 3 of the list of issues prior to reporting

4. Reform of Laws – Chapter 4 of the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia makes provisions for the protection of fundamental rights and freedom of all individuals, including children. Currently, several legislations that promote and protect children are being reviewed with a view to align with best practises and international standards. This includes the Sexual Offence Act 2013, the Children's Act 2005 which was amended in 2016 to prohibit, criminalize and punish people who engage in child marriage and child betrothal. These laws are also currently under review for more progressive amendments to ensure effective enforcement of the Children's Act, including by providing adequate human, financial and administrative capacity for its implementation and establishing a monitoring mechanism. Key legislation on child rights, in particular the Children's Act, Sexual Offences Act and

¹ The Gambia Demographic and Health survey, (2019-2020).

Women's Act have been popularized and disseminated at all levels, with law enforcement, justice actors and other service providers. Simplified and child friendly versions of the Children's Act were developed and disseminated to adolescents. Community dialogues and community radios were used as a medium to disseminate key legislations on child rights legislations.

5. Section 24 of the Tourism Offence Act was amended in 2014 to have 24 hours court service for tourism related offences including offences relating to child sex tourism.

- The Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 is also under review.
- The Women's Act was amended in 2015 to criminalize the practice of FGM/C thereby domesticating article 5 of the Maputo Protocol.
- The Disability Act came into force in 2021 for the protection of persons with disabilities including children.
- The Labour Act is being reviewed to be in line with the Children's Act 2005.
- The legal reforms extend to the review and passing into law of the Tobacco Control Act 2016.
- The review of the 1990 Health Act to conform with the International Health Regulations 2005; and
- Formulation of the Public Health Bill 2021.

6. Policies – In 2021, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare has conducted a Situational Analysis of the state of Children. The child protection situational analysis provided up to date data information on the status of children in The Gambia. The situational analysis will inform policy and programming interventions, in particular the development of the National Children's Policy. In addition to the National Child Protection Strategy and Plan of Action for child protection in The Gambia. Furthermore, the Minimum Standard for Quality Care (developed in 2022) aims to monitor the status of children under institutional care, to prevent and address child rights violations. Additionally, the Child Labour Policy (2023) was developed, validated and disseminated with relevant stakeholders by the Department of Labour with support from UNICEF.

7. The Tourism Code of Conduct is also under review to address the issues of child sexual abuse and exploitation in the context of travel and tourism.

8. A Policy for Children in Residential Child Care Facilities was also reviewed and validated in 2022. The policy provides for standards on admission of children into residential homes for children and strengthening reintegration of children with their families. The policy further provides for the use of volunteers in residential care homes as a safeguard to protect children. In line with the CRC, the revised standards aim to only set residential care on a temporal basis pending reintegration with their families or foster families. The Policy 'checklist' aims to measure compliance with the standards in care homes to ensure child safeguarding.

9. Ministry of Health has recently engaged in some policy reforms, including the reviewing, and updating of the Integrated Management Childhood Illness (IMCI) protocol and the National AIDS Control Program Policy on HIV testing and counselling. It also developed a new National Health Policy 2021 to 2030, The Gambia National Policy for Sanitation and Hygiene 2020 and a Cancer Registry Programme.

10. These policies contribute to addressing issues of children in relevant intervention area.

11. Measures – Since the submission of the combined 2nd and 3rd periodic reports, the State has taken the following measures:

- (a) Establishment of Child Protection Units in almost all the security agencies within the Country.
- (b) Establishment of a Directorate of Children's Affairs at the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare.
- (c) Establishment of a Child Labour Unit at the Department of Labour.

(d) Establishment of a Child Rights Unit at The Attorney General's Chambers and the Ministry of Justice.

12. These established structures always have the best interest of the child as their paramount consideration. In 2019, the National Human Rights Commission was established with the mandate to receive and investigate human rights complaints, including Child connected matters. Additionally, in 2022 the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) obtained "A" status because of its compliance with the Paris Principles. The NHRC has the mandate to promote and protect human rights in The Gambia, including the rights of children. They have established a thematic working group on 'vulnerable groups' which includes children. MGCSW is an active member of this working group alongside child protection actors, where issues relating to the implementation of children's rights are discussed and addressed. NHRC conducts human rights education to children in schools, advocate for the elimination of harmful practices and under the NHRC strategic plan, NHC is working with MOBSE to integrate human rights education in the school curriculum. NHC works with various CP stakeholders to advance children's right in The Gambia.

13. The Ministry of Health has implemented programmes to address issues of children which include Maternal, Child, Nutrition and Health Results Project (MCNHRP), Building Resilience through Social Transfer for Nutritional Security (BREAST); Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS); National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT). The Network against Gender Based Violence (NGBV), in partnership with health facilities under the Ministry of Health, has established One-stop Centres to respond to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in all the regions. During the year 2023, a total of 511 SGBV cases were recorded on the GMIS platform whilst 611 cases were received by one stop centres in 2022, resulting in all survivors being provided with social, medical, and legal services.

14. The Department of Labour, with support from UNICEF, conducted an eight-month radio advocacy programme in 2022–2023, on child labour. Additionally they trained social workers and labour inspectors on child labour and organised national and regional fora to sensitize stakeholders on child labour and child abuse.

15. ChildFund The Gambia, in collaboration with MGCSW has developed and is piloting the Responsive Parenting Program (RPP) in Nianija and the School-Based Violence Prevention (SBVP) through its DingDing Yiriwa Federation based in Kombo North and South. The Network Against Gender-Based Violence (NGBV), in partnership with Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare and with support from UNFPA, is developing a National Gender Management Information System (GMIS) which will address child protection issues. The GMIS was launched in will be launched in August 2023. A Shelter for temporary accommodation of survivors of SGBV, including child survivors, was established in 2021 and is currently housing survivors most of whom are children.

16. The Gambia Government with support from the German Government and European Union through GIZ, an international NGO in The Gambia in partnership with The Gambia Police Force (GPF) constructed 4 Model Police Stations at Bundung, Serrekunda, Bakoteh and Brusubi which includes child friendly detention facilities, interviews rooms, and separate cells for children and adults in both rural and urban areas. The model police stations were officially opened by the President of The Republic of The Gambia on 04 September 2023 and are currently operational. However, the State is challenged with human and financial resource in child justice administration, with limited specialization of Child Protection (CP) actors on sign language interpretation, psychologists and limited budgetary allocation to CP services.

17. The Ministry of Health and its partners have been implementing the Maternal, Child, Nutrition and Health Results Project (MCNHRP) from 2016 to date. This project has increased access to nutritional and health care services for vulnerable children and their families in poor communities. The number of targeted communities for the MCNHRP was 341. Number of children benefited from the BReST project has reached 6000 children since its inception.

18. The National Youth Parliament is a key partner in planning, implementing, and monitoring of actions related to children and their welfare through a right based approach.

The parliament has regional chapters that are used to consult with children in matters relating to their welfare in enhancing child participation in national development.

II. Rights under the Convention and its Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

Legislation

Reply to paragraphs 4 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

19. The Children's Act 2005 is being amended and issues relating to Female Genital Mutilation, child labour and other child protection emerging issues are being considered. The impact of personal law on child issues like child marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and child custody will be considered in compliance with international standards. The Government is committed to full enforcement of the Children's Amendment Bill once it is enacted.

20. Currently there is no child-rights impact assessment procedure for any child-related legislation of The Gambia although it is being considered as a standing order when a Bill is before the National Assembly.

Comprehensive policy and strategy

Reply to paragraphs 5 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

21. The National Child Protection Strategy and Plan of Action was revised to complement the National Social Protection Policy 2015–2025. The Strategy has a monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place and is currently being implemented. A minimum social protection package was developed for effective implementation of the Social Protection Policy which is under mid-term review and will avail the opportunity to reflect on existing realities faced by children. Despite the progress made, the Government will consider the formulation of a comprehensive National Children's Policy to accompany the Strategy in protecting the rights of children in The Gambia.

22. Unfortunately, the National Plan of Action against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children 2011 – 2015 is yet to be renewed but it is noted for consideration.

Coordination

Reply to paragraph 6 of the list of issues prior to reporting

23. Since its establishment in 2019, the Ministry responsible for children has taken actions to ensure it clearly defines its mandate and has sufficient authority to manage, coordinate and monitor issues concerning Children. These include the following:

(a) Development of a Strategy (2020–2025), which gave birth to the establishment of new Directorates including the Directorate for Children's Affairs.

(b) Amendment of the Women's and Children's Act to include the mandates of the Ministry.

(c) The Minimum Standard for Residential Care for Institutions (guidelines) has been validated.

(d) A Situational Analysis of Children in the Gambia has been conducted and Standard Operating Procedures have been developed for the protection of vulnerable children in The Gambia.

(e) In addition, new Directors and senior officers have been appointed at different technical positions to enhance the human resource capital needs of the Ministry in responding to child protection issues in the country.

(f) Furthermore, it provided the opportunity for capacity building programmes for staff particularly social workers on different field of studies. Over the past years the Ministry has advocated for increased budgetary allocation for women and children's issues and has been working with development partners, including UN Agencies, to strengthen its child protection policies and programmes.

24. Despite the achievements highlighted above, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, established in 2019, is faced with numerous challenges such as inadequate technical, financial, capacity and human resources to fully perform its functions and coordinating roles on the implementation of the CRC. To address these challenges, the Ministry is filling the human resource capacity gaps and training staff in various disciplines and advocating for budgetary increment for child protection with National Assembly Members. Additionally, the Department of Nursing and Reproductive Health at School of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences at the University of the Gambia has introduced a module on Child Protection Laws and Welfare for students studying paediatric nursing. The module aims to broaden the knowledge base of students in delivering quality protection services for children.

Allocation of resources

Reply to paragraph 7 of the list of issues prior to reporting

25. Currently there is no system in place to identify and increase budget allocation for expenditure on children by specific Ministries in the Gambia thus data is not available on whether there has been an increase in budget allocation and expenditures since the last report. Nonetheless, the 2023 Sustainable Financing Strategy for Social Protection, which will factor vulnerable children and their families, is being developed by the National Social Protection Secretariat (The Secretariat was established in 2019). The responsible Ministries will, however, consider establishing a system to identify and improve budget allocation and expenditure on children's issues in the future. In addition, UNICEF The Gambia is supporting the development of the Public Finance Strategy and guidelines for budget officers of the Social Sector Ministries. The strategy and guidelines, when finalized and adopted, will ensure inclusion of children issues in the national budget process, influence increment in public expenditure on child protection and facilitate budget tracking on expenditure for children. In the same vein, there will be Meet and End line) meeting planned for the first quarter of 2025 with the National Assembly Members to review the social sector budget and social sector expenditure tracking for children. There are also plans to develop the Integrated National Financing Framework Assessment that will translate the citizen budget into a child-friendly version.

Corruption

26. The Gambia ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption on 8 July 2015 and ratified the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption on 30th April 2009. During the reporting period, the government through the National Human Rights Commission has made notable efforts during the reporting year to address corruption and promote justice and accountability within the public sector. The National Assembly passed the Anti-Corruption Bill 2023. This significant legal framework designed to prevent, detect, and punish corrupt practices. During the reporting period, Ministry of Justice has prosecuted and secured convictions on charges of corruption. Plans are underway to popularize the anti-corruption law and strengthen institutions and law enforcement to detect and investigate corruption.

Data collection

Reply to paragraph 8 of the list of issues prior to reporting

27. With support from the UN Agencies in the country, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, in partnership with the Network against Gender Based Violence (NGBV), has developed a national Gender Management Information System (GMIS) which was

launched in December 2022 and includes child protection issues. Once the GMIS is fully operational, it will be an integrated system to examine the situation of children through a comprehensive analysis of data. It will ensure that good quality data is reported frequently on a quarterly basis, covering data including child labour, child trafficking, child mortality, sexual abuse and exploitation of children, and domestic violence against children, and disaggregated by, inter alia, age, sex, disability, geographic location, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background in order to facilitate analysis of the situation of all children, particularly those in situations of vulnerability. The GMIS will also enhance reporting since it is linked with a helpline which will be accessible nationwide and is toll free on all GSM lines in the country. Plans to develop monitoring and evaluation policies are underway.

28. Paradise Foundation, with support from UNFPA and in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, is currently operating a GBV helpline which is toll free and is being used to report child protection cases.

29. The Gambia Social Registry Information System (SRIS) was established in 2020 as a comprehensive database that contain socio-economic and geographic information of all households to make appropriate eligibility determination for social protection programs, including children. As of 2024, GamSR data has been collected in every part of the country except for Kanifing Municipality and Banjul. Plans are underway to extend coverage to KM and Banjul in 2024. The development of the Social Registry Information System (SRIS) that will house the dataset is completed.

30. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education has a data collection mechanism through which its Cluster Monitors collect, collate, segregate data and report monthly or quarterly on school data. The data includes school enrolment, performance, dropout, and distance to school using Geographical Information System to better advice the policy on matters affecting children. It has also developed school data score cards that accounts for students' age, nationality, gender, religion, ethnicity and origin to better collect accurate data about children. The Ministry equally has a reporting mechanism on data through its annual publication called the "Yearbook" on which every aspect of the sector's main indicators are reported. Monitoring and evaluation policies are currently being developed to ensure mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of interventions and programmes.

Dissemination, awareness-raising and training

Reply to paragraph 9 of the list of issues prior to reporting

31. Since the enactment of the Children's Act 2005 several awareness raising and training programmes were conducted reaching different target groups in communities and organizations. Such awareness was conducted using radios, community outreaches, school outreaches and television shows. The programmes are organized by different government institutions including Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior, Department of Labour and Gambia Tourism Board. Several NGO and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have also conducted education and training programmes to raise awareness on the provisions of the Children's Act, particularly the child marriage and FGM laws. During the reporting period, UNICEF has consistently supported capacity building and strengthening of key actors in particular; judges, prosecutors, lawyers, law enforcement, security forces, social workers and prisons officials on child rights, governance, rule of law and human rights to aid the implementation of key legislation on child rights.

Independence of NGOs

32. NGOs in The Gambia enjoys full autonomy in carrying out their work inline with the laws of the country and with no interference from the government. The government has established an NGO Affairs Unit under the Ministry of Lands, Regional government and religious affairs to monitor and coordinate the activities of NGOs in the communities without any interference with their work. The Unit serve as a focal point within the government for addressing NGO matters and the functionality and administrative link between the government, NGOs and other development partners. The Gambia Association of

Non-Governmental Association (TANGO) is the umbrella organisation for all NGOs in the country, responsible for registration and coordination. The Ministry collaborates and work closely with all NGOs on child rights.

Child rights and the business sector

Reply to paragraphs 10 (a), (b) and (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

33. Gambia Tourism Board (GTB) in 2014 established a special tribunal for tourism related offences to enable cases involving tourists to be heard in an expeditious manner. It has also established an Enforcement Unit and an Inspectorate Unit to monitor child abuse and exploitation in the tourism industry. The Department of Labour has Labour Inspectors who conduct inspection of workplaces to monitor occupational safety and health, labour laws compliance and child labour. It has established a Child Labour Unit to coordinate programs and activities geared towards the prevention and elimination of child Labour in The Gambia. The NGBV is engaging the Government for the ratification of Convention 190 on sexual Harassment in workplace for the effective protection of women and children in the employment domain.

34. The business sector in The Gambia has not been actively involved in child protection matters. However, the Child Protection Alliance and Gambia Tourism Board have begun implementing programs on Child Right in Business Principles to promote greater involvement of the private sector within the tourism sector in child protection. Through efforts of the Government, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture has developed the National Tourism Strategy and policy geared towards promoting responsible tourism in The Gambia. The Government has recently launched the Tourism Diversification and Resilience Programme which factors child protection with support from the World Bank.

35. The Gambia Tourism Board is holding regular radio sensitization programs to educate the tourism sector and other businesses in communities on the Tourism Offences Act 2003 and its amendments, the Children's Act 2005 and the Labour Act 2007. The Board also sensitized the business community on environmental and health standards. They also have inspectors to enforce the laws and ensure violators are taken to court for appropriate sanctions. The Ministry of Fisheries is also sensitizing coastal communities and people working in the fisheries industries on the laws and environmental health standards. The Department of Labour under the Ministry of Trade and Industries also conducts radio sensitizations on child labour and its legal framework which includes the Children's Act 2005 and Labour Act 2007. Labour inspectors conduct regularly visits to industries to ensure compliance with the law including prevention of child labour and ensure violators face the law for appropriate sanction. However, this has been a challenge due to inadequate inspectors, mobility and resources for regular inspections. To ensure compliance among stakeholders in the Tourism Sector, the Gambia Tourism Board, in partnership with the Child Protection Alliance, has developed a Code of Conduct for the protection of children in travel and tourism and all the major hotels are signatories to it.

Minimum age for marriage

Reply to paragraph 11 of the list of issues prior to reporting

36. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare has conducted series of community engagements with traditional, religious and community leaders to sensitize them on the Children's Amendment Act 2016 which sets the minimum age for marriage at 18 years. Furthermore, the Sexual and Gender Based Violence and Child's Right Units of the Ministry of Justice conducts trainings on child marriage, sexual abuse, provisions of the laws and protection of the rights of children in all the regions of the country. Over 500 justice professionals and law enforcement officers have benefited from government led trainings. Whilst specific data on the number of trainings conducted is not available, series of training and sensitization was conducted with key actors including communities, traditional leaders, and adolescents. The police under their community policing and Gender/Child Welfare Units conducts community awareness programmes on different criminal issues including child

marriage in all communities in the 7 regions of the country. All communities in The Gambia have been sensitized on child marriage and the government recently validated the child marriage strategy which will also be popularized in the regions. Also several NGOs/Community Based Organizations (CBOs) such as the Network against Gender Based Violence, ActionAid International The Gambia, ChildFund The Gambia, Child Protection Alliance, The Girls' Agenda, Think Young Women, Forum for African Educationalist-Gambia Chapter (FAWEGAM), Gambia Association for Traditional Practices (GAMCOTRAP) and others continue to conduct series of community and school outreach activities targeting traditional, community and religious leaders, and school authorities on child protection issues, including child marriage and the Children's Amendment Act 2016. All these activities are aimed at ensuring customary and personal laws are interpreted in line with the Children's Act and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Non-discrimination

Reply to paragraph 12 of the list of issues prior to reporting

37. Section 33 of the 1997 Constitution and sections 19 and 21(2) of the Children's Act 2005 makes provision for the protection of children from all forms of discrimination based on gender, sex or social status. The Children's Act recognizes the CRC principles, including best interest and non-discrimination. This is evident in school enrolment where there is an increase in number of females than males. The Government is working to ensure that children of different nationalities enjoy the same rights and protection services as Gambian children. The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act (1990) is currently under review to eliminate discrimination of children who are born out of wedlock, who cannot inherit from their father under sharia law. It is also the aim of government to see that children in The Gambia are treated the same despite their ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, geographical, and socio-economic status. For asylum seekers, refugees and migrant children, there exists a national referral mechanism where they are all screened and referred to the relevant authorities and institutions for support without discrimination. However, with regards to children with disabilities the Government faces challenges to provide their basic needs like education, health and care services in all the regions due to technical and financial constraints. Nonetheless, it is endeavouring to progressively meet their rights.

38. The measures taken to address discrimination under the Ministry of Health includes the development and implementation of guidelines and Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) on Civil Registration and Vital Statistic (CRVS) catered for the provision of the 1990 Births & Death Act that mandated registration of all births in the country irrespective of race or country of origin. The HIV&AIDS Prevention and Control Act 2015 addresses discrimination, including prohibiting disclosure of the results to a third person without a written consent or a witness evident verbal consent from the person tested including children.

39. On the issue of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) children under our national laws, specifically the suggestion to amend the Criminal Code regarding same-sex relationships. We wish to assert clearly that these issues are not largely accepted in the Gambia and the Government does not plan to decriminalise it.

Best interests of the child

Reply to paragraphs 13 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

40. Section 3 of the Children's Act 2005 provides for the welfare principles and the Best Interest of the Child as a primary consideration. According to this section any decision taken by parents, institutions, the court or other bodies regarding a child shall be based on the best interest of the child. This has been evident with the establishment of the Police Child Welfare Unit in all regions of the country and the Children's Court in four regions with the intention of progressively having it in all regions. The Directorate of Social Welfare is decentralized to ensure social workers are available in all regions to conduct home assessments and social

inquiry reports on children matters and attend Children's Court sittings so that decisions are taken in the best interest of the child.

41. To ensure that the best interest principle is adhered to, the 'After Arrest Procedures' was developed to guide actions of all law enforcement agencies of the government like the Child's Right Unit of the Ministry of Justice, the Police Child Welfare Unit as well as the gender/child protection units of the Immigration Department and Drug Law Enforcement Agency. Criminal cases involving children are treated based on the best interest of the child and referred to the Children's Court which is more Child friendly for trial. In reinforcing the best interest of the Child principle into the judicial system, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare have conducted trainings for staff of the Children's Courts, and the Cadis of the Islamic Courts so that their decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

42. The Best interest of the child principle is taken into consideration within the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education because all programmes and policies are designed considering the interest of the child. The management and development of school policies, such as the School Improvement Plan, Senior Management Committee, Parents Teachers Association, and the Students Council, all take into consideration the best interest of school children. The access to school policy of not more than three kilometres between the school and community for lower basic education investigates the safety needs and access to education. The management council of the schools also involves students in designing policies that investigate the interest of the child. The above-mentioned policies were developed in consultation with children and their caregivers. Children serve on the above-mentioned committees within the Ministry of Education. Additionally, the above-mentioned policies have served as a benchmark in designing training initiatives for teachers and learners.

43. To ensure the best interest of the child is protected, the Ministry of Health has embarked on numerous sensitizations on the harmful effects and complications that can result from FGM/C targeting women groups, school children and religious leaders.

Respect for the views of the child

Reply to paragraphs 14 (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting

44. The decisions of the Children's Courts are guided by the principles of the best interest of the child and the views of the child in all criminal and civil matters particularly custody disputes, adoption, foster care, ward-ship, and institutional placement. Other institutions like the Police, Immigration, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, Juvenile Wing of the Prisons Service all respect the principle of the view of the child as indicated in the 'After Arrest Procedures'. This is in line with the provision of the Children's Act 2005 which made it mandatory for the view of the child to be taken into consideration especially when the child is twelve years old and above or if younger but has the mental capacity to make a sound opinion on issues affecting them.

45. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, conducts trainings in all the regions especially child-friendly piloted schools in Central River Region (CRR) and Upper River Region (URR) and child rights and protection issues including the four principles of the CRC. During the reporting period, the national trainings on safe school program for teachers and students to ensure school grounds are safe for children to learn and thrive in a safe environment, free from violence. Moreover, other government institutions and Civil Society Organizations included the respect for the view of the child in their school and community sensitization on child rights and child protection. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, in partnership with Amnesty International in Senegal, is implementing a programme to train parents, school administrators, Mothers' Clubs and the general student body on human rights issues. The basic training is centred on child rights, specifically on the CRC and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). The Guidance and Counselling Manual developed for schools also take into consideration the best interest of children especially their psycho-socioeconomic situations and adolescence development issues.

46. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, in collaboration with the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), is implementing a pilot project where the residents of the CRR North are trained on child participation at the family level. The project will be rolled out to all the regions in subsequent years. Secondly, the awareness raising strategy implored by the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Nation Youth Council and the Directorate of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, created the Children's National Assembly of The Gambia (CNAG), the composition of which is school children. The recent sitting of CNAG was conducted on 12 August 2023 and they presented a position paper to the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Welfare with recommendations on issues of Female Genital Mutilation, child friendly schools for children with disabilities and recreational centers amongst others. This platform provides children the opportunity to lodge their concerns to government through petition or call to action by State Parties. They equally used the platform to suggest policy reforms or implementation on children's issues. The forum is also used to raise awareness of parents on children's role in decision making especially issues that affects their wellbeing and development.

47. The functions of the Children's National Assembly include debates on issues affecting children and come up with resolutions which are forwarded to the relevant institutions, including the National Assembly and Ministries. The Children's National Assembly is inadequately funded thus restricting their operations. Currently it only receives support from development partners via government sectors like the National Youth Council.

48. Children are involved in the transitional justice process as they were part of the national consultation on the transitional justice process such as the consultations on the Truth Reconciliation and Repatriation Commission (TRRC), the Draft Constitution as well as the formation of The Gambia Centre for Victims of Human Rights Violations (Victim's Center.)

Birth registration, nationality and statelessness

Reply to paragraphs 15 (a), (b) and (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

49. The Government, under the Ministry of Health and with support from development partners, has developed an electronic Civil Registration and Vital Statistic (eCRVS) system and a Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) to ensure universal registration of births with specific detail on the registration protocol for the different categories of birth. In addition, several birth registration campaigns are conducted to improve the registration of birth of children particularly under 5 years. Birth registration is also decentralized to ensure access to children born in all parts of the country. This has resulted in increase in number of birth registration for children under 5 years. At national level, the number of births registration for children under 5 years has increased from 52.5% Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS 2010) to 57.9% (MICS 2018) or 59% (DHS 2019/2020). The number of children under 5 years who have an actual birth certificate also increased from 23.2% in 2010 (MICS 2010) to 32.3% in 2018 (MICS 2018). This trend was also confirmed by the DHS (2019/20), which shows that 49.8% of boys and 45.6% of girls (under 5 years) who are registered have their birth certificates. A bill is currently under review to amend the 1990 Birth, Death and Marriage Registration Act to improve the law and ensure easy registration of births and access to birth registration facilities across the country:

(a) The eCRVS guideline provides registration procedures of children born to Non-Gambia Parent (NGP) to avoid statelessness. To ensure no child is left stateless, the country has developed registration guideline to cater for residency.

(b) The Government through the Immigration Department established the National Refugee Commission to deal with amongst other things the status of stateless persons in The Gambia.

(c) The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education on its part is engaging parents to sensitize them to register the births of their children especially during enrolment into schools. The Ministry, in collaboration with the Department of Community Development and Ministry of Health, has jointly developed a Social Behavioral Change Communication

(SBCC) messaging document to be used by Multi-Disciplinary Facilitating Teams (MDFTs) to promote birth registration and upkeep to avoid stateless children.

(d) Through eCRVS, all children, including children born out of wedlock, are properly registered at birth without any form of discrimination. Community awareness is ongoing to address discrimination and stigma faced by children born out of wedlock and their mothers.

Freedom of expression

Reply to paragraph 16 of the list of issues prior to reporting

50. The Gambia has enacted the Access to Information Act 2021 which gives citizens the right to access information from any institution. The Criminal Code is also under review. There have been situations where journalists were intimidated although there are no criminal prosecutions of perpetrators of these intimidations. As far as we are aware no child rights defender have been intimidated.

Access to appropriate information and right to privacy

Reply to paragraph 17 of the list of issues prior to reporting

51. The Government has not taken measures to ensure effective monitoring of the information accessible to children, including online media. Nevertheless, this is noted and through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Information the Government will take measures to address this.

Freedom of the child from all forms of violence

Reply to paragraphs 18 (a), (b) and (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

52. No specific study has been conducted on the prevalence of violence against children but rather issues of violence against children like FGM, child marriage, corporal punishment and child labour were included in the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS 2018). According to the Survey, the national FGM prevalence rate reduced from 76% (MICS 2018) to 73% (DHS2019/2020) which is still very high. However, a slight decrease was recorded in the percentage of girls (0–14 years) who had undergone circumcision from 56.1% (MICS 2010) to 50.6% (MICS 2018). The prevalence of child marriage among women aged 20–49 years who were married before their 18th birthday was 34.2% in 2018 (MICS 2018) which is a reduction from 46.5% in 2010 (MICS 2010).

53. According to the 2018 MICS, there is an overall decrease in the prevalence of children aged 5 to 17 years who are involved in economic activities, household chores and hazardous work (MICS 2018). This trend was observed since 2010, with a noticeable reduction from 39.3% (in 2010) to 24.7% (in 2018).

54. There are no recent studies on child sex tourism. The last study was conducted in 2013 and published in 2014 by CPA working closely with the Gambia Tourism Board. The study confirmed that child sex tourism exists in The Gambia, which was also noted by respondents during the interviews of the situation analysis of children conducted by UNICEF in 2022. However, no evidence or data is available to assess the prevalence and magnitude of the phenomenon. The Government recognizes and notes the need to develop and implement a comprehensive policy for prevention and intervention in cases of violence but currently there is none.

55. In its endeavor to complement Government's efforts, ChildFund The Gambia implemented the Responsive Parenting Program (RPP) in North Bank, Central River and Lower River Regions of The Gambia with support from UNICEF. The program reached 400 parents and 1000 children within the three regions. Equally with support from World Bank, ChildFund implemented the RPP in the District of Nianija in Central River Region in 32 communities reaching 579 parents and 1,222 children. In the area of School-Based

Violence Prevention, a baseline study has recently started reaching 476 children in grades 3-4 between the ages of 6-12 in Jambanjelly Basic Cycle and Kunkunjang Arabic Schools. Moreover, 38 educators, 476 caregivers, 2 head teachers, 21 facilitators and 15 assessors were trained on how to prevent and address school-based violence.

56. In accordance with the laws of the Gambia, violation of children's rights of all kind are punishable by law using provisions of different Acts of the National Assembly. Key among these Acts are the Tourism Offences Act 2003, Children's Act 2005, Trafficking in Persons Act 2007, Women's Act 2010, Sexual Offences Act 2013, Domestic Violence Act 2013, Persons with Disabilities Act 2021 and the Criminal Code 2009 among others. It is also clear in the laws that maltreatment and all forms of violence against children, including sexual abuse, are prohibited and punishable by law. Therefore, any reported case or incident of child abuse would be investigated and prosecuted if there are any supporting evidence. Additionally, the Government established agencies and units in different Government Institutions to deal with cases of violence/maltreatment against children which includes the Child Welfare Unit of the Police; the SGBV Unit of the Ministry of Justice; Directorate of Children's Affairs; National Agency Against Trafficking In Persons (NAATIP) and the Children's Court under the Judiciary of The Gambia. Unfortunately, national data on the outcome of cases of all forms of violence against children and the remedies provided to child victims is not available. It is a cause for concern and the Government recognizes this gap and would endeavor to ensure availability of data in this area through its responsible organs.

57. The Government established the National Agency for Legal Aid (NALA) under the Ministry of Justice to provide legal support and representation to individuals including Accused Child Offenders (ACO) who cannot afford the services of a Lawyer. The Agency is also decentralized to ensure legal support is accessible to people in all the regions of the country. However, NALA has limited lawyers to provide legal support services to all those who are in need of Legal Service. Legal support for victims of criminal cases such as child victims of sexual abuse are provided by State counsel (lawyers) from the Ministry of Justice or police prosecutors to an extent which mainly includes counselling.

58. As far as child-friendly and confidential complaint mechanism is concerned. The SOS Children's Villages in The Gambia is the largest residential care institution and has a complain mechanism in place. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, in partnership with Paradise Foundation Initiative and Network against Gender Based Violence (NGBV) with support from UNFPA, has established the GBV Helpline and the GMIS with a helpline respectively where cases of child abuse can be reported by children and community members in confidence and free of charge.

Corporal Punishment

Reply to paragraph 19 of the list of issues prior to reporting

59. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education has given a directive banning corporal punishment in all schools pending the amendment of the Children's Act 2005. As a result, there is zero tolerance on the practice of corporal punishment in schools across the country. The directive warns "...all schools continuing the practice to stop with immediate effect failing which drastic action will be taken against those found wanting". Section 220(9) of the Children's Act 2005 prohibits the Courts from ordering a child to be subjected to corporal punishment. The proposed amendment to the Children's Act endeavors to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, as the current laws are silent on the prohibition of corporal punishment in within homes. Children, teachers and caregivers have been sensitized on physical violence and other forms of violence through the safe school programme which among others also covers issues of violence in schools.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

Reply to paragraphs 20 (a), (b) and (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

60. In 2018, the Ministry of Justice established a unit responsible for Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) cases. The Unit is composed State Counsel, social workers, Police Officer and Police Investigators. All the members of the unit continue to receive special training on SGBV to enhance their competence in handling cases of SGBV in a confidential, gender sensitive and child-friendly manner. Data on the number cases received and finalized by the SGBV Unit at Ministry of justice is not available. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare receives child victims at the Orange Centre where they are provided with shelter and all other services such as security, medical and psychosocial support.

61. Some of the measures taken to ensure mandatory report of sexual exploitation and abuse of children are: The Children's Act 2005 which imposes an obligation on all persons who know or have information on a violation of the right of a child, such as child neglect, child abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation in travel and tourism, or a child in need of care and protection. Cases of Child Abuse can be reported to the Department of Welfare or the nearest Police Station. Toll free Helplines (1313 and 199) have been established to ease the reporting of cases by children and members of the community. Furthermore, traditional structures such as Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) and Tundol Binko/Bajeni Gokh² have also been established as monitoring mechanisms for child protection and GBV as well as reporting of cases to the authorities.

62. To protect children from online sexual abuse and exploitation, several community and school sensitization programs are conducted by Government institutions and Civil Society Organizations on child protection issues and cyber violence. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare is currently reviewing the Children's Act 2005 and provisions meant to protect children from all forms of online sexual abuse and exploitation were included in the revised version. Additionally, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is working on a legislation on Cybercrime which among others will address the different forms of online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Child online protection and all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation is incorporated in capacity building initiatives as well as community sensitization. Support services for child victims of online sexual exploitation and abuse are offered through the One Stop Centers and Orange Centre. The Helpline 199 serves as a reporting channel for child rights violence.

Harmful practices

Reply to paragraph 21 of the list of issues prior to reporting

63. The Government of the Gambia has taken measures to address harmful traditional practices, including Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting (FGM/C) and child marriage. Notable amongst these is the enactment of the Women (Amendment) Act 2015 which prohibits female genital mutilation and provides penalties for those practicing, promoting or with knowledge about it and fail to report it to the authorities. The law was popularized in communities engaging religious and traditional leaders for effective enforcement at grass root levels. police officers, social workers, health care workers, teachers and students were also sensitized on the law to prevent the practices. These were steps taken in accordance with the National Action Plan for Accelerating the Abandonment of FGM/C 2013–2017. A successor strategy and action plan has been developed to sustain the gains made during the implementation of the last National Action Plan. Currently a technical committee has been set up by the Directorate of Gender and Women Empowerment, under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, to consult with stakeholders for the drafting of a comprehensive FGM/C Bill to eradicate the practice in The Gambia. Recently there has been a controversial issue by some groups, to repeal the FGM law. Civil Society Organizations have been actively engaging the government and advocating for the law not to be repealed.

² (Group of community women leaders trained to receive reports, support survivors and link them to services).

64. All the hotlines have been merged into one national helpline 199, to ensure ease coordination and integrated reporting services of all forms of child abuse including FGM. All staff have been trained on operating the helpline and rendering psychosocial support to child victims. The helpline has been popularized in schools, communities, radio, TV and billboards, to ensure communities are aware of the available reporting channels.

Family environment

Reply to paragraphs 22 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

65. The Government has taken steps to strengthen families through numerous initiatives including training on positive parenting for parents and caregivers as well as the identification and training of host families to support vulnerable children without parental care. The Child Safeguarding Policy ensures that parents and caregivers are reminded of their parental responsibilities towards their children, in providing the necessary protection in a more conducive environment.

Children deprived of a family environment

Reply to paragraphs 23 (a), (b) and (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

66. SOS Children's Villages in The Gambia, in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare in complementing Government efforts, has introduced a Gatekeeping Guideline to ensure that children in need of care are placed in the right care option to ensure quality care for vulnerable children. SOS is implementing the family strengthening programmes which aim at preventing children from coming into care institutions unless it is the best option.

67. SOS Children's Villages has a package for each child leaving the care of SOS Children's Villages and are being supported further in their integration process and education.

68. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare with support from the European Union will be implementing a three year nationwide (2024–2027) the family strengthening programme, to ensure the most vulnerable families are within the family setup and are provided with the necessary family support by the government.

69. MGCSW is supporting the shelter for children with human, technical and financial resources ensuring the day-to-day affairs of the shelter. Resource constraints remains a major challenge for the ministry in supporting other alternative care homes.

Adoption

Reply to paragraph 24 of the list of issues prior to reporting

70. There is an adoption and foster care register for formal adoption and foster care to help in monitoring potential abuses of children who are formally adopted or under formal foster care. However, there is no register for informal adoption and no step has been taken to monitor potential abuses of children who are informally adopted within their extended families. There are mechanisms set up by law in the Children's Act 2005 to assess and monitor adoption.

71. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare is planning to develop a register and monitoring framework to monitor potential abuses, these categories of children may be exposed to. Government has and will continue to encourage formal domestic adoption of children without parental care.

Children with disabilities

Reply to paragraphs 25 (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting

72. The Government has enacted the Persons with Disabilities Act 2021 to ensure non-discrimination, proper inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities into socio-economic development programs and services in the country. The process leading to the enactment of the Act was highly participatory as it involved persons with disabilities including children and their affiliated federations.

73. The Gambia Association of Albinos, in collaboration with the Gambia Federation of Disabled, has conducted awareness raising on radios, TVs and other print media outlets across the country on the right to protection for albinos and children with other forms of disabilities. The Social Protection Programme of The Gambia supports poor and vulnerable families, including children with disabilities. However, children with disabilities are not specifically targeted although the Government recognizes the importance of this and will take appropriate action to address it.

74. Specialized health and rehabilitation services for children with disabilities and children with albinism is not in place at the moment. This is due to limited resources and personnel who can provide such specialized health services in the country. Nonetheless, Government has acknowledged it as a gap and will be making plans to address it.

Health and health services

Reply to paragraphs 26 (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of the list of issues prior to reporting

75. To reduce maternal, neonatal, childhood mortality and stillbirth, the Government has put in place measures to improve equitable access to evidence-based interventions, including Basic and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetrics, newborn care services and increased the capacity of skilled birth attendants.

76. The Government has a National Health Policy 2022–2030 aimed at ensuring health care coverage for all categories of people irrespective of their financial status. The policy objective includes the increment in the delivery of essential health service package to all individuals irrespective of nationality, age, and other socioeconomic status.

77. The Government through the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) has developed a policy to ensure equal access to quality EPI services to children and women of childbearing age.

78. The Maternal, Child, Nutrition and Health Results Project (MCNHRP) is designed to increase the efficiency of the health system and to strengthen the link between health facilities and the communities they serve. This will improve the coverage and quality of priority MCNH services, improve adoption of healthy behaviors, and increase demand for MCNH services. The midline data shows an increment in the uptake of certain health services and adoption of some healthy behaviors; including referral and accompaniment to facility delivery, exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and the availability of hand washing stations. These appear to be attributable to the project. There is also ample evidence of the complementarity and mutually reinforcing nature of the demand and supply side interventions.

79. Positive indicators include; improved governance, supervision and management flexibility at health facility levels, improved health worker satisfaction, improved client satisfaction, early uptake of Anti-Natal Care (ANC), and increased initiation of breastfeeding within one hour of delivery. There are areas where no discernable change is occurring, which will require additional attention moving forward. The latter includes children's nutritional status, maternal anemia, uptake of modern methods of family planning, institutional delivery, and Post-Natal Care (PNC), the quality of services provided at ANC and PNC, and the availability of water at household hand washing stations.

80. The National Nutrition Agency (NaNA) has developed a National Nutrition Policy that seeks to address the nutritional and health status of infants and young children. The

Policy's priority areas include and are not limited to improving maternal nutrition and promoting optimal infant and young child feeding. It further implements baby friendly hospital initiatives to support and promote breastfeeding and advocate for proper infant and child feeding practices. This initiative has been extended to all the hospitals and major health facilities across the country.

81. In The Gambia, food and nutrition security situation at the household level is one of the main underlying determinants of malnutrition. When food becomes scarce, hygiene, safety and nutrition are often ignored as people shift to less nutritious diets and consume more unsafe foods due to poor hygiene practices. The minimum dietary diversity for women aged 15–49 years was reported at 70.8% (Gambia Micronutrient Survey, 2018) during the day, while 20.8% of children aged 6–23 months (given food from at least 5 different food groups) were reported to have consumed a diverse diet (Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2019-20). The level of food insecurity in the country was reported at 13.4% in 2021 (Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis Report, 2021).

82. The Gambia is faced with the triple burden of malnutrition which is (i) undernutrition, (ii) over nutrition and (iii) micronutrient malnutrition. Undernutrition continues to be a major public health problem in The Gambia especially for children under five years of age. However, declining trends have been observed over the past few years among children under 5 years of age, with stunting reduced from 25% to 17.5% between 2013 to 2019-20 while wasting was reduced from 12% to 5.1% between 2013 to 2019-20 and underweight reduced from 16% in 2013 to 11.6% in 2019-20 (Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2019-20). The prevalence of anemia among women of childbearing age was reported at 44.3% in 2019-20 compared to 60% in 2013 (Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2019-20), while the same report showed the proportion of children 0–5 months of age who were exclusively breastfed increased from 47% in 2013 to 53.6% in 2019-20, surpassing the World Health Assembly Target of 50%. The proportion of women of childbearing age classified as overweight and obese increased from 23% in 2013 to 36% in 2019-20, while the prevalence of overweight among children under 5 years of age has reduced from 2.7% in 2013 to 2.1% in 2019-20 (Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, 2019-20). However, the gains registered in nutrition are fragile due to the emergence of COVID 19, climate change, and the hike in food and energy prices largely as a result of the Russia-Ukraine war. Therefore, investing in proven nutrition programs can help in sustaining the gains.

83. It was estimated that between 2013 and 2018 a total number of 6,316 child deaths in The Gambia were directly associated with undernutrition (Cost of Hunger Study in Africa-The Gambia Report, 2020). These deaths represent 20.3 percent of all child mortalities for that period. Thus, it is evident that undernutrition significantly exacerbates the rates of death among children and limits the country's capacity to reduce child mortality. The study also found that a total number of 23,429 children repeated grades 1 to 12 in 2018 (representing 4.6% repetition rate in 2018), and also estimated that the country has lost an equivalent of about GMD 3.956 billion in 2018, which represented 5.1 percent of the GDP, due to child undernutrition (COHA, 2020).

Adolescent health and HIV/AIDS

Reply to paragraphs 27 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

84. The Gambia Health Policy 2020–2030 objective 3.2: Maternal, Childhood and Reproductive Health Services strategy seeks to address both fertility and reproductive health issues through the expansion of Adolescent and Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH) services. It also seeks to integrate adolescent and youth friendly services in a form of “one-stop-shop” into the existing public health system. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education is Strengthening Access to Quality Comprehensive Health Education for in-and-out of School Adolescents in The Gambia through the implementation of a research project with funding from International Development Research Center (IDRC), Canada. Counselling and other HIV/AIDS prevention services are integrated into routine basic health care services. Efforts are currently underway to review the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) Policy and Strategic Plan to enhance support to

adolescents and strengthen Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMCT) – of HIV/AIDS. However, there is the need for life skills education and Behavioral Change Communication (BCC) to be integrated into the school curriculum at all levels and strengthened to better address youth related issues. Furthermore youth have access to accurate information on protecting themselves from early sex, unwanted pregnancy and HIV and AIDS through improving the quality and coverage of in and out of school programs. The Policy equally seeks to ensure that youth access to reproductive health services is improved through youth friendly facilities, in which these services will be promoted and provided.

85. The issue of reviewing the law that criminalizes abortion has been raised as a concern in different consultations with communities, traditional and religious leaders. Although there is no data, majority of Gambians during the consultations were not in support of abortion being legalized due to their religious beliefs. It should be noted that abortion is not fully criminalized, Section 30(1) of the Women’s Act 2010 gives women the right to medical abortion. It provides that ‘where the continued pregnancy endangers the life of the mother or the foetus’ and the law further states under subsection (2) that “the medical abortion permitted under subsection (1) cannot be carried out without confirmation of the state of health of the woman in question by a registered medical practitioner who possesses the necessary expertise in the field” despite these provisions the issues surrounding abortion remains partly unresolved as such the Government takes note of this.

Environmental health

Reply to paragraph 28 of the list of issues prior to reporting

86. Over the years the country has developed laws and policies that seek to protect the population from the effect of environmental hazards. Despite the existence of these laws, adequate clean potable water and air pollution remains a challenge. The Gambia Government developed a Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) Policy and Strategic Plan in 2020 and established a technical working group to spearhead the coordination of relevant Ministries, Departments and stakeholders’ participation in WaSH interventions. The primary aim of this Policy is to create the enabling environment for all households in The Gambia to be well-informed of the importance of safe sanitary practices and hygiene for improved health. In doing so, it is expected that The Gambia will be able to move closer to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals for sanitation and hygiene, “to improve universal access to sanitation and hygiene services”.

87. Laws enacted by the National Assembly such as the Anti-littering Regulation 2007, S. 3(1) which states that “A person shall not deposit or cause the deposit of litter in a Public Place or in any place that is visible to any extent from a public place” and the Tobacco Control Act 2016 which states that “A person shall not smoke in an enclosed space that is within 100 meters of a public place, workplace, public transport or any others place that provide services to a minor” Tobacco Control Act is geared towards reducing air pollution levels in the environment in which children are born, live and grow.

88. Additionally, to prevent water and air pollution, the Ministry of Health has made significant efforts to invest in climate change initiatives The government with support from UNICEF established the Water and Sanitation Working Group which comprises of government departments, NGOs and CSOs. The government in partnership with UNICEF has built Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools to address issues of open defecation and strengthen personal hygiene in schools.

Education, including vocational training and guidance

Reply to paragraphs 29 (a), (b) and (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

89. One of the primary responsibilities of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) is to provide quality and accessible basic education to all children in The Gambia. Consequently, MoBSE has made sure that schools in rural Gambia inculcate early childhood education programs in Lower Basic Schools so that access to basic education can be

achievable to children living in the rural communities. To this effect, such initiative has started in most of the Lower Basic Schools in the rural communities.

90. Equal rights to education are a fundamental right of every child irrespective of sex, status or background. Therefore, children with disabilities are no exception to this right. To avoid marginalization of children with disabilities, the Ministry has created a new Directorate of Special Needs to promote equal access to education for children with disabilities in The Gambia.

91. To complement this, the Ministry deployed trained special needs teachers called 'Itinerary Teachers' in special and mainstream schools. The role of these teachers is to identify the different special needs of children in schools and the support they should be provided.

92. Moreover, the Ministry provides materials to those children to ease their learning in the schools. Materials like braille machines, wheelchairs, and glasses for the visually impaired are given to these children based on the identified needs and distributed in identified schools. These categories are from early childhood to secondary level.

93. In addition, new classroom structures are now constructed to be accessible to children with disabilities.

94. According to data from Education Management Information System 2023, the issue of school dropout is a major concern to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education especially in the case of girls. In the implementation of Section 27 of the Women's Act 2010, schoolgirls who become pregnant are not expelled from school. The Ministry has introduced the Re-entry Program that responds to girls who drop out of school due to early pregnancy to be given the opportunity to go back to school without obstruction.

95. The Ministry also introduced the Second Chance Programme to address children dropping out of school. This programme is designed to allow all those who are affected in one way or the other during their school journey and could not complete their education the opportunity to have a second chance of making up for the lost time.

96. MoBSE works with CSOs such as Forum for African Educationalist-Gambia Chapter (FAWEGAM) and Education For All Network to ensure that no girl is withdrawn from school for the purposes of marriage. This is also in line with Section 28 of the Women's Act 2010 which prohibits such practices.

Rest, leisure, recreation, and cultural and artistic activities

Reply to paragraph 30 of the list of issues prior to reporting

97. The Government recognizes the importance of rest, leisure, cultural and artistic activities for children. MoBSE, realizing that some schools were not in compliance with minimum standards in this area, took measures to ensure that schools have the recreational facilities. In pursuit of this measure, the Ministry temporarily closed all the schools that did not meet the requirement and moved their students to other schools with those facilities so that it does not affect their teaching and learning.

98. Moreover, the Ministry took actions to ensure that schools have, as a minimum, a football field, basketball court and volleyball court. To complement these activities, the Ministry allocates 15% of the school budget to sports. This is done to empower the schools to promote the extra-curricular activities of the schools. During school sporting activities, schools also take the opportunity to organise cultural activities for children. Inter-house and inter-school sporting activities are organized to promote the importance of rest, leisure, and recreation.

Economic exploitation, including child labour, and children in street situations

Reply to paragraph 31 of the list of issues prior to reporting

99. The 2005 Children's Act criminalizes certain forms of child labour including in family businesses and informal sector where it affects the wellbeing of the child. These provisions of the Act are yet to be effectively enforced because of limited personnel to regularly inspect such workplaces but the Government is cognizant of this challenge and will try to address it.

Sale, trafficking and abduction

Reply to paragraph 32 of the list of issues prior to reporting

100. Cases of trafficking involving children are investigated and prosecuted, and perpetrators found guilty are punished according to sections 28 and 29 of the Trafficking in Persons Act 2007.

101. The National Agency against Trafficking in Person (NAATIP) conducts awareness raising programmes in partnership with International Organization for Migration (IOM) and in collaboration with Home – Health Promotion and Development Organisation (HEPDO) and Sama Kairo Federation in border villages including Amdalaye, Foni border villages, Farafenni border villages and Basse border villages. In addition, radio and TV talk shows were conducted at Koloro, Barra, Farafenni, Soma and Brikamaba. School sensitizations were equally conducted in the same communities. Trainings are also regularly conducted targeting CSOs and key stakeholders on child rights.

102. National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (NAATIP), in partnership with Department of Social Welfare (DSW), supports victims of trafficking, including children, with protection, shelter, counselling, medical care and support for their integration. IOM in partnership with NAATIP also provides financial support to victims of trafficking for their economic empowerment.

Administration of child justice

Reply to paragraph 33 of the list of issues prior to reporting

103. The Government through the judiciary is progressively establishing Children's Courts in all the regions of the country in accordance with the Children's Act 2005. In 2022 a new Children's Court was established in Lower River Region making it four courts; one at central level and three at regional levels to make the court accessible to children.

104. The minimum age of criminal responsibility is 12, as of now no step is taken to raise the age from 12 to 14.

105. Over the years several trainings on child justice matters have been conducted targeting different stakeholders including police officers (prosecution and child welfare officers), social workers, probation officers, State Counsel and Chairpersons of the Children's Courts. These trainings shall continue targeting judges and defense Counsel to ensure the rights of the child is protected throughout the justice system.

106. Though not many steps have been taken to promote non-judicial measures for children accused of criminal offences, mediation and counselling are sometimes used in minor criminal cases involving children to implement non-custodial measures. Measures have been taken to prevent detention of children with adults in police custody; children are kept behind the counter due to lack of separate detention facility. To address this problem, currently with support from development partners (GIZ and UNDP), four modern police stations with separate detention facilities are being built for children and women. A separate Juvenile Wing has been established for boys under detention and girls under detention are kept at special place at the Shelter for Children. According to the Children's Act in addition to the 'After Arrest Procedures' provides that children in detention should be allowed to maintain regular contact with their families.

107. As far as rehabilitation and reintegration in the child justice system is concern, the Government through the department of gender and its partners provides psychosocial support, counselling, educational support and reintegration to children in detention at the Juvenile Wing and Shelter for Children.

III. Statistical information and data

Reply to paragraph 34 of the list of issues prior to reporting

108. As directed the answers to the list of issues under this section covers the period since The Gambia's last report was considered by the CRC Committee on the implementation of the CRC and its optional protocols. The data where possible will be disaggregated as instructed.

Reply to paragraph 35 of the list of issues prior to reporting

109. The data will be presented in tabular form with explanations for easy understanding as directed in this paragraph of the list of issues.

Reply to paragraph 36 of the list of issues prior to reporting

110. National data on the budget lines regarding children and social sectors as requested is not available but it is well noted, and Government will take necessary measures to make it available in future.

Reply to paragraph 37 of the list of issues prior to reporting

111. The Gambian population is relatively young. This feature is underlined by the DHS (2019/20)³ (Figure 2) below which shows that almost half of the population (45%) is aged 0-14. The current age structure represented in figure 2, shows a broad base of the pyramid, demonstrating that The Gambian population is largely young.

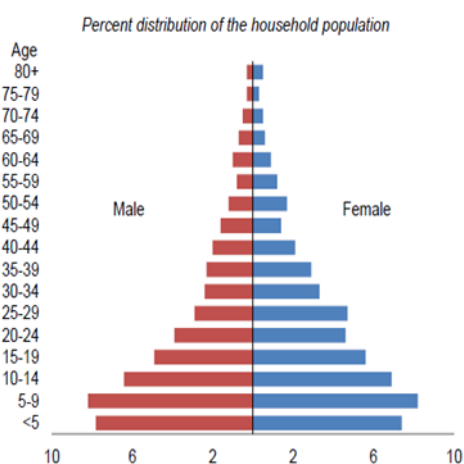


Figure 2: Population Pyramid (DHS 2019/20).

112. The relatively young age of the population was also evidenced by the Population and Housing Survey (2013), with children representing (49.4%) of the total population in 2013. Concerning the distribution of children's population by age, it was noted that there is a high number of children in the age group 0-4 and 5-9 and fewer in the age group 15-17 years.

113. As shown in figure 3 below, more children lived in urban areas, compared to rural areas. Comparatively, in 2003, the population of children in rural areas was higher (362,091) than those living in urban areas (306,304). This evidence shows that the population of

³ The Gambia Demographic and Health survey, (2019-2020).

children in urban areas has increased from 306,304 to 489,534, and those residing in rural areas have equally increased from 362,091 to 427,500.

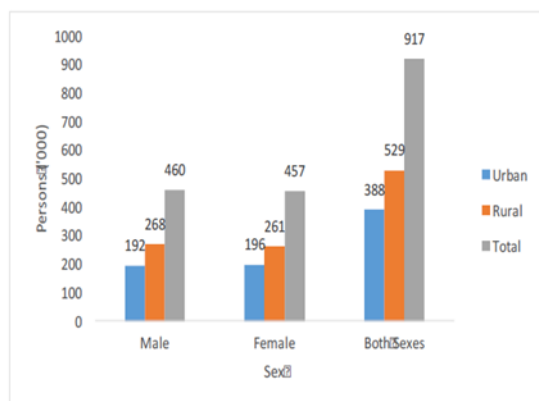


Figure 3: Population of children by sex and residence in ('000) (PHC 2013).

114. The large number of children in the age frames (0–4) and (5–9) underlines the need to invest in Early Childhood and mid-childhood Development; these ages are critical for the growth and future development of children. Child marriage has been prohibited in The Gambia since 2016 by the Children’s (Amendment) Act 2016 which expressly sets the legal age for marriage at 18. Nonetheless, child marriage is high in The Gambia as evidenced by the MICS 2018 which revealed that the percentage of women aged 20–49 years who first married or entered a marital union before their 18th birthday stands at 34.2% (MICS 2018).

Reply to paragraph 38 of the list of issues prior to reporting

115. Data on the number of children who committed suicide is not available at the time of writing this response. The relevant Government institutions have taken note of it for future reporting.

Reply to paragraph 39 of the list of issues prior to reporting

116. Data on the number of stateless children, including those with an unknown nationality, and on undocumented children is not available at the time of writing this response. However, the relevant Government institutions have taken note of it for consideration in the future.

Reply to paragraph 40 of the list of issues prior to reporting

117. Data from One Stop Centres nationwide indicates that 611 cases were reported in 2022, whilst the Orange Centre recorded 511 cases of violence against women and children in 2023.

Reply to paragraph 41 of the list of issues prior to reporting

118. Through the project “Building Resilience through Social Transfers for Nutrition Security in The Gambia (BReST)” the Department of Social Welfare works in close collaboration with National Nutrition Agency from 2017–2019 to provide cash transfer to lactating mothers and as part of COVID 19 response, cash transfers were given to BReST beneficiaries in three regions, namely, of North Bank Region (NBR), Central River Region (CRR) and Upper River Region (URR) (targeted beneficiaries 6,176). The Project also supported vulnerable individuals/ families through family strengthening program (40 individuals benefitted each D2000.00 and other 20 each D1000.00) amounting to a total of D100, 000.00.

119. The Government of The Gambia with support from the World Bank as part of COVID-19 response provided cash transfer to 83,000 households in 30 districts in rural Gambia.

120. The Government through support from UNICEF provided cash transfer to 1000 vulnerable families with children in three regions of the country, namely, NBR, CRR and West Coast Region (WCR) as part of the COVID 19 response.

Reply to paragraph 42 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number of children in institutional care and the average number of days of stay

<i>Alternative Environment</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Sex</i>	
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Placed in Institutions	995	543	452
Placed with Foster Families	86	62	24
Adopted Domestically	287	126	161
Inter-Country Adoption	6	4	2

Reply to paragraph 42 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number of children in family and community-based care

121. There is no reliable data on this, but government takes note of this and will put in place mechanisms for collection of accurate data in this area.

Reply to paragraph 43 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Children with disabilities and children with albinism

122. No data.

Reply to paragraph 43 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Children with disabilities living with their families or living in family- and community-based care

123. No data.

Reply to paragraph 43 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Children with disabilities enrolled in inclusive education and in separate schools

124. No data.

Reply to paragraph 43 (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Reported cases of ill-treatment, abuse, neglect and sexual violence against children with disabilities placed in institutions, the number of investigations and prosecutions carried out, and sentences issued

125. No data.

Reply to paragraph 44 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number and percentage of children with health insurance

Table SR.5.2: Children under 5's background characteristics			
Percent and frequency distribution of children under five years of age by selected characteristics, The Gambia MICS, 2018			
	Weighted percent	Number of under-5 children	
		Weighted	Unweighted
Total	100.0	9,907	9,907
Sex			
Male	50.5	5,006	5,035
Female	49.5	4,901	4,872
Area			
Urban	61.3	6,075	3,654
Rural	38.7	3,832	6,253
LGA			
Banjul	1.0	96	463
Kanifing	16.3	1,620	876
Brikama	36.8	3,645	1,244
Mansakonko	4.3	431	1,064
Kerewan	12.4	1,231	1,316
Kuntaur	5.8	577	1,580
Janjanbureh	8.1	804	1,438
Basse	15.2	1,504	1,926
Age in months			
0-5	9.5	940	910
6-11	8.6	849	829
12-23	19.0	1,880	1,895
24-35	20.2	1,998	1,969
36-47	21.3	2,114	2,190
48-59	21.5	2,126	2,114
Mother's education^A			
Pre-primary or none	53.9	5,343	6,010
Primary	16.1	1,598	1,623
Secondary+	29.8	2,953	2,258
DK/Missing	0.1	13	16
Respondent to the under-5 questionnaire			
Mother	92.4	9,156	9,184
Other primary caretaker	7.6	751	723
Health insurance			
With insurance	1.6	160	96
Without insurance	98.3	9,735	9,800
DK/Missing	0.1	13	11

Table SR.5.3: Children age 5-17's background characteristics			
Percent and frequency distribution of children age 5-17 by selected characteristics, The Gambia MICS, 2018			
	Weighted percent	Number of children age 5-17	
		Weighted	Unweighted
Respondent to the children age 5-17 questionnaire			
Mother	72.9	4,152	4,143
Other primary caretaker	26.6	1,516	1,522
Emancipated ^B	0.5	27	31
Health insurance			
With insurance	2.0	115	74
Without insurance	97.9	5,576	5,616
DK/Missing	0.1	6	6
Child's functional difficulties^C			
Has functional difficulty	9.4	533	548
Has no functional difficulty	90.6	5,163	5,148
Mother's functional difficulties^D			
Has functional difficulty	1.9	110	132
Has no functional difficulty	76.4	4,352	4,231
No information	21.7	1,234	1,333
Ethnicity of household head			
Mandinka	30.5	1,740	1,709
Wolof	12.7	725	912
Fula	21.9	1,248	1,506
Jola	11.9	676	322
Sarahule	5.4	307	331
Other ethnic groups	7.5	430	404
Non Gambian	10.0	570	512
Wealth index quintile			
Poorest	22.1	1,261	2,002
Second	19.0	1,081	1,138
Middle	18.6	1,058	857
Fourth	19.3	1,101	816
Richest	21.0	1,195	883

NB: Adopted from The Gambia MICS 2018 page 36–38.

Reply to paragraph 44 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number of paediatric and mental health services and professionals specialized in young children and adolescents, disaggregated by region

	Female	Male	Total
Paediatric	6	4	10
Psychiatrist Dr	1	0	
Psychiatry Nurse	0	6	0
Professional specialized services for children	0	0	0

Adopted from The Gambia Health service statistics report 2021.

Reply to paragraph 45 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Adolescent mothers

Table 4 Teenage pregnancy and motherhood

Percentage of women age 15-19 who have had a live birth or who are pregnant with their first child, and percentage who have begun childbearing, according to background characteristics, The Gambia DHS 2019-20

Background characteristic	Percentage of women age 15-19 who:		Percentage who have begun childbearing	Number of women
	Have had a live birth	Are pregnant with first child		
Age				
15	0.8	0.2	1.0	468
16	2.1	2.3	4.4	565
17	9.1	3.2	12.4	551
18	15.9	5.1	21.1	519
19	24.8	4.5	29.3	529
Residence				
Urban	8.5	2.8	11.3	1,901
Rural	16.2	4.1	20.2	732
Local Government Area				
Banjul	8.5	1.6	10.1	35
Kanifing	9.0	3.3	12.3	535
Brikama	6.9	2.5	9.4	1,174
Mansakonko	14.0	3.6	17.6	98
Kerewan	13.5	2.2	15.7	259
Kuntaur	21.3	7.2	28.5	129
Janjanbureh	17.5	5.0	22.4	142
Basse	17.9	3.5	21.4	261
Education				
No education	28.6	7.6	36.2	435
Primary	17.9	3.2	21.1	470
Secondary or higher	4.1	2.0	6.1	1,728
Wealth quintile				
Lowest	16.4	5.3	21.7	463
Second	15.0	4.2	19.2	486
Middle	13.6	3.7	17.3	521
Fourth	5.8	1.9	7.8	604
Highest	4.4	1.2	5.7	558
Total	10.6	3.1	13.8	2,633

Adopted from The Gambia 2019-20 DHS.

Adolescent Mother 12–14 Years

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	TOT
CRR	9	10	5	1	1	5	6	32	69
LRR	0	0	13	1	0	1	0	0	15
NBE	1	0	4	4	4	4	3	7	27
NBW	1	2	10	58	8	4	6	2	91
URR	9	75	4	4	4	9	6	25	136
WCR 1	16	21	12	23	22	17	13	227	351
WCR2	1	6	3	3	6	3	3	8	33
National	37	114	51	94	45	43	37	301	

Source: DHIS2.

Reply to paragraph 45 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Children who abuse drugs and alcohol

126. Data not available.

Reply to paragraph 45 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Sexual and reproductive health services available to adolescents, disaggregated by region

Table 46: Number of RMNCAH clinics held and cancelled by region and nationally in 2021

Region	Clinics Scheduled	Clinics Held	Clinics Cancelled	Percentage Cancelled
CRR	1208	1206	2	0.2
LRR	759	757	2	0.3
NBER	561	561	0	0.0
NBWR	673	666	7	1.0
URR	1162	1144	18	1.5
WHR1	2977	2701	276	9.3
WHR2	1092	1057	35	3.2
NATIONAL	8,432	8,092	340	4.0

Adopted from The Gambia Health service statistic report 2021.

Reply to paragraph 46 of the list of issues prior to reporting

127. No data.

Reply to paragraph 47 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Out of School Children

<i>Region</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Total</i>
Region 1	1 062	-	-
Region 2	13 614	6 493	20 107
Region 3	6 059	5 235	11 294
Region 4	2 095	1 484	3 579
Region 5	5 235	4 840	10 075
Region 6	7 311	6 505	13 816
Grand Total	35 375	22 615	57 991

Reply to paragraph 47 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number and percentage of children dropping out of school



Executive Summary (Other Education Indicators)

Trend of survival and dropout rate 2016/2017 and 2019/2020

Gender	Survival Rate		Drop out rate before last grade		Number of Dropouts		Total
	7	8	7	8	7	8	
MF	94.11%	95.67%	10%	4%	3,163	1,267	4,430
M	93.92%	94.45%	11%	6%	1,741	802	2,561
F	94.17%	96.87%	9%	3%	1,422	465	1,869
M 2019/2020			7.1%	11.0%			
F			4.1%	7.2%			
Total			5.5%	9.0%			

18



Executive Summary (Other Education Indicators)

National Drop out Rate by Education level 2019/2020

National	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11
	M	7.1%	11.0%	9.4%	6.2%
F	4.1%	7.2%	7.7%	5.2%	6.9%
Total	5.5%	9.0%	8.5%	5.7%	7.8%

20

Reply to paragraph 47 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number of children with disabilities in segregated schools and in segregated classes in regular schools

128. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education operates a Mainstream Education Policy which means that all the Special Needs Students are mainstreamed in public school although there exist few special schools for the disability groups. According to the Ministry's Year Book 2019 the number of students with Special Needs stand at:

- (a) Senior Secondary Schools 1163;
- (b) Upper basic Schools 1766; and
- (c) Lower Basic Education 5864.

129. These numbers include those in the Madrassas Education system.

Data on segregated schools

<i>N</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Number</i>
1	St John's School for The Deaf	287
2	GOVI Resource Centre for the Blind	45
3	Methodist School For learning Difficulties	250
4	GADHOH Centre for the Deaf Brikama	150
5	St Joseph's Unit for the Deaf Basse	30
6	Essau Unit for the Deaf Essau	30

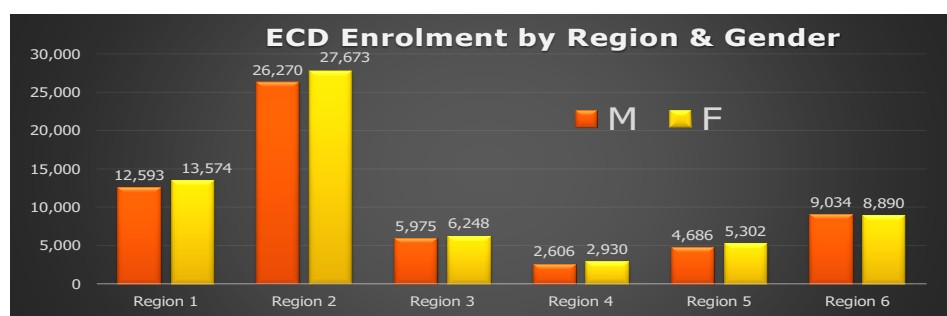
Reply to paragraph 47 (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number and percentage of children who attend ECD programmes and the average number of years of attendance



ECD Enrolment by Region and Gender

	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Total
M	12,593	26,270	5,975	2,606	4,686	9,034	61,164
F	13,574	27,673	6,248	2,930	5,302	8,890	64,617
Total	26,167	53,943	12,223	5,536	9,988	17,924	125,781



4

Most recent data 2021/2022*ECD Enrolment*

<i>Region</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Total</i>
Region 1	11 942	12 943	24 885
Region 2	27 795	29 031	56 826
Region 3	5 589	6 015	11 604
Region 4	3 383	3 482	6 865
Region 5	5 948	7 179	13 127
Region 6	8 679	8 966	17 645

Population Age 3-6

<i>Row Labels</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>T</i>
1	25 601	24 631	50 232
2	62 634	60 780	123 414
3	18 436	19 070	37 506
4	6 270	6 088	12 359

Population Age 3-6			
Row Labels	M	F	T
5	19 427	19 046	38 473
6	22 212	21 071	43 283

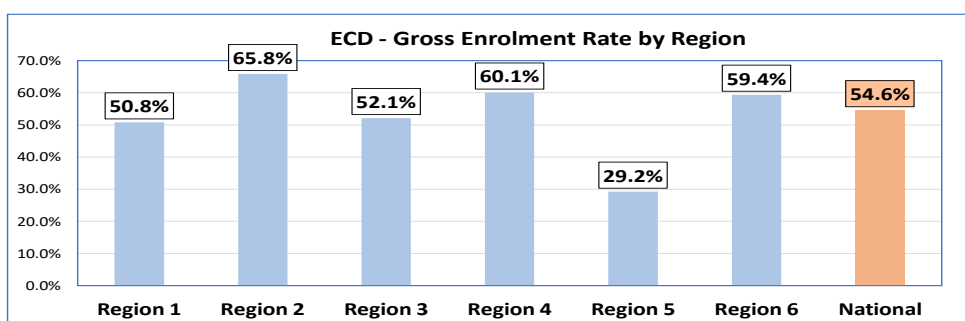
Gross enrolment rate ECD

Year	M	F	T	GPI	ENR GP (F/M)
Region 1	46.6%	52.5%	49.5%	1.13	1.08
Region 2	44.4%	47.8%	46.0%	1.08	1.04
Region 3	30.3%	31.5%	30.9%	1.04	1.08
Region 4	54.0%	57.2%	55.5%	1.06	1.03
Region 5	30.6%	37.7%	34.1%	1.23	1.21
Region 6	39.1%	42.6%	40.8%	1.09	1.03



ECD - Gross Enrolment Rate by Region and Gender

ECD-GER	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Total
Boys	48.9%	63.7%	50.0%	55.5%	27.4%	60.3%	52.9%
Girls	52.6%	67.9%	54.3%	64.8%	31.0%	58.5%	56.3%
Total	50.8%	65.8%	52.1%	60.1%	29.2%	59.4%	54.6%



6

Reply to paragraph 47 (e) of the list of issues prior to reporting

The number of children enrolled in public and private, including religious schools



Number of Schools by Type and Year

Number Of Schools - Trend					Latest evolution	
Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	Type	2018 --> 2019
LBS	718	758	811	861	LBS	6.2%
UBS	150	163	188	189	UBS	0.5%
BCS	240	236	250	292	BCS	16.8%
SSS	160	171	189	193	SSS	2.1%
Total	1,268	1,328	1,438	1,535	Total	6.7%

Number of Schools by Type & Local management - 2019					
Type	Government	Grant-Aided	Private	Madrasah	Total
LBS	445	30	182	204	861
UBS	92	26	60	11	189
BCS	90	12	26	164	292
SSS	64	44	35	50	193
Total	691	112	303	429	1,535
%	45.0%	7.3%	19.7%	27.9%	100%

8

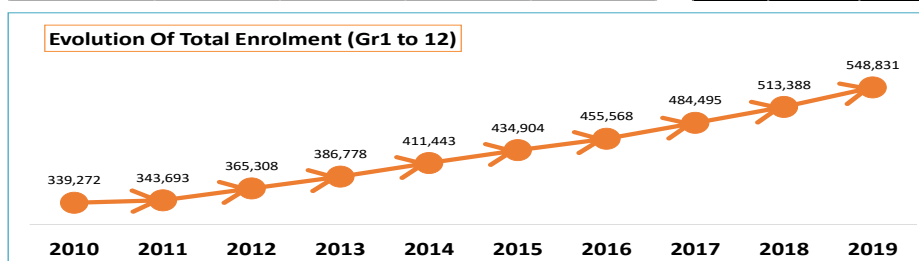
Number of students by Management type

Levels	Government	Grant-Aided	Madrassa	Private-Conv.
LBS	247 939	28 135	92 908	45 495
UBS	72 675	20 092	17 768	12 546
SSS	23 168	36 972	8 777	9 789
Grand Total	343 782	85 199	119 453	67 830



Global Evolution of Enrolment

Evolution of Enrolment by Education Level					2018 --> 2019	
Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	Level	Growth Rate
Lower Basic	308,729	329,828	350,323	374,962	LBE	7.0%
Upper Basic	90,838	94,357	98,108	104,554	UBE	6.6%
Senior Sec.	56,001	60,310	64,957	69,315	SSE	6.7%
Total	455,568	484,495	513,388	548,831	Total	6.9%



Reply to paragraph 48 (a), (b) (c) and (d) and paragraph 49 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

Children place on alternative care/shelter at the Shelter for Children (Bakoteh) 2017–2022

Year	Child at risk	Trafficking	Returnees	Child neglect	Run away	Physical abuse	Total
2017	25	2	6	2	1	6	43
2018	12	4	0	2	19	6	44
2019	31	5	1	0	18	7	62
2020	31	4	2	2	9	6	54
2021	8	6	1	2	10	6	35
2022	25	16	0	2	11	4	58
Children in conflict with the law 2022 data	Boys: 18 Girls: 1						Total = 19
Foster care & Adaption	Boys = 214 Girls = 244						Total = 458
Child marriage cases recorded from MoGCSW	Girls = 50 Boys = 0						Total = 50

Reply to paragraph 49 (c) the list of issues prior to reporting

130. No data.

Reply to paragraphs 50 (a) and (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

131. No data.