



 **REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA**

BUDGET **2026** SPEECH

***“IMPROVING THE WELL-BEING AND QUALITY
OF LIFE OF GAMBIANS”***

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BY THE *poverty*
**HONOURABLE MINISTER OF
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**





HONOURABLE SEEDY K.M KEITA
MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Agreement
AFCON	Africa Cup of Nations
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFRITAC	African Regional Technical Assistance Centre
AIC	Audit Implementation Committee
AIS	Automatic Identification System
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
ATI	Access to Information
ATI	Africa Training Institute
ATIIF	Access to Information Implementation Framework
AU	African Union
BADEA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
CBG	Central Bank of The Gambia
CBPP	Contagious Bovine Pleurae Pneumonia
CFA	Communauté Financière en Afrique (Franc)
CPPR	Country Portfolio Performance Review
CRB	Complaint Review Board
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
CRM	Compliance Risk Management
CRR	Central River Region
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSRWASHDEP	Climate Smart Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Development Project
DCAF	Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance
DCD	Department of Community Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
DLEAG	Drug Law Enforcement Agency, The Gambia
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EHSSS	Essential Health Services Strengthening Survey
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework
ENABEL	Belgian Development Agency
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FMC	Fisheries Monitoring Centre
FX	Foreign exchange
GAMCEL	The Gambia Cellular Company Limited
GAMREN	Gambia National Research and Education Network
GAMSR	Gambia Social Registry
GAMTAXNET	Gambia Tax Management System
GAMTEL	The Gambia Telecommunication Company Limited
GBA	Greater Banjul Area
GBoS	Gambia Bureau of Statistics

GCCPC	Gambia Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDA	Governance Diagnostic Assessment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFRS	Gambia Fire and Rescue Service
GIA	Gambia International Airline
GID	Gambia Immigration Department
GIEPA	Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency
GIRAV	Gambia Inclusive and Resilient Agricultural Value Chain
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GLF	Government Local Fund
GNFQ	Gambia National Qualifications Framework
GNPC	Gambia National Petroleum Company
GPA	Gambia Ports Authority
GPPA	Gambia Public Procurement Authority
GRA	Gambia Revenue Authority
GSI	Gambia Songhai Initiative
GSRB	Gambia Strategic Review Board
GTHI	Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute
GTTI	Technical Training Institute
HFO	Heavy Fuel Oil
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMB	Information, Media and Broadcasting
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standard
ITAS	Integrated Tax Administration System
ITAS	Integrated Tax Administration System
ITC	International Trade Centre
KMC	Kanifing Municipality Council
LoCAL	Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility
LRR	Lower River Region
LTDV	Long-Term Development Vision
MDA	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MDI	Management Development Institute
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MNO	Mobile Network Operators
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoCDE	Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy
MoFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

MoHERST	Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology
MOTRIE	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
MPR	Monetary Policy Rate
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NaNA	National Nutrition Agency
NAQAA	National Accreditation and Quality Qualification Authority
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NAWEC	National Water and Electricity Company
NBR	North Bank Region
NCAC	National Council for Arts and Culture
NCD	New Castle Disease
NCM	National Coordination Mechanism on Migration
NDA	Net Domestic Assets
NDCS	National Drug Control Strategy
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEDI	National Enterprise Development Initiative
NFA	Net Foreign Assets
NFL	National Land Policy
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NHSI	National Health Insurance Scheme
NRM	National Referral Mechanisms
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSPS	National Social Protection Secretariat
NSS	National Statistical System
NYSS	National Youth Service Scheme
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OMVG	Gambia River Organization for Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PACD	Program for Accelerated Community Development
PAMP	Public Administration Modernization Project
PBB	Program Base Budgeting
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PFM	Public Finance Management
PHC	Primary Health Care
PIP	Public Investment Program
PIUs	Project Implementing Units
PMO	Public Management Office
PPA	Power Purchase Agreement
PPA	Project Preparation Advance
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PPR	Peste des petite ruminant
PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement

QPR	Quadrennial Periodic Reporting
RCIC	Rural Communities Information Centres
RF-NDP	Recovery Focused National Development Plan
RISE	The Gambia Resilience, Inclusion, Skills, and Equity Project
ROOT	Resilience of Organization for Transformative Smallholder Agriculture Project
RPSF	Rural Poor Stimulus Facility
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDR	Special Drawing Rights
SENELEC	Senegal National Electricity Company
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
SOP	Standard Operational Procedure
SPUs	Special Procurement Units
SREP	Small Ruminant Enhancement Project
SSHFC	Social Security and Housing Finance Corporation
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SWEDD	Sahel Women's Empowerment Demographic Dividend
TDA	Tourism Development Area
TOT	Training of Trainers
TRRC	Truth Reconciliation and Reparations Commission
TSA	Treasury Single Account
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVET	Technical Education and Training
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization:
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crime
URR	Upper River Region
USD	United States Dollar
USET	University of Applied Science, Engineering and Technology
UTG	University of The Gambia
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WACA	West Africa Coastal Areas
WACOMP	West Africa Competitiveness Project Gambia
WAPIS	West African Police Information Database system
WAPP	West Africa Power Pool
WARDIP	West Africa Regional Digital Integration Project
WB	World Bank

WCR	West Coast Region
WEO	World Economic Outlook
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
YEP	Youth Empowerment Project

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Honourable Speaker,

1. I beg to move that the bill entitled “An Act to provide for the services of the Government of The Gambia for the period 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026 (both dates inclusive)” be read a second time.

INTRODUCTION

Honourable Speaker,

2. The Government of The Gambia, under the leadership of His Excellency President Adama Barrow, remain committed to advancing Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms aimed at improving service delivery to the Gambian people. This is evident in the 2024 Annual Progress Report (APR) of the Recovery Focused National Development Plan (RF-NDP 2023-2027) commonly dubbed as Yiriwaa. The Review highlighted significant progress in macroeconomic management, infrastructure development, increased access to electricity, and establishment of schools outside a 2-kilometre radius of existing ones.
3. The global economy is characterized by increased fragmentation and protectionism. Consequently, growth is forecasted to slow from 3.3 percent in 2024 to 3.2 percent in 2025, and further to 3.1 percent in 2026. On the domestic front, economic performance has gained momentum. Real GDP is estimated at 5.9 percent in 2025 compared to 5.6 percent recorded in 2024. This is supported by macroeconomic stability, enhanced agriculture productivity, Government commitment to close the infrastructure deficit, growth in tourist arrivals, and robust inflow of remittances. These compare favourably to the Sub-Saharan average of 3.9 percent in 2024, 4.0 percent in 2025 and 4.2 percent in 2026.
4. The sustained tight monetary policy rate of 17 percent (since August 2023) by the CBG, and improved domestic supply conditions has successfully reduced inflation from 10.0 percent in September 2024 to 7.4 percent in September 2025, and declined further to 7.0 percent as end October 2025. The rate of depreciation of the Dalasi has slowed down in 2025 compared to a year ago. In the first nine months of 2025, it has narrowed to 5.2 percent for USD, 10.0 percent for Euro, and 9.7 percent for CFA, compared to same period

last year in which 10.5 percent, 15.7 percent, and 13.1 percent was recorded for USD, Euro and CFA, respectively.

5. His Excellency Adama Barrow, is championing the implementation of domestic resource mobilization reforms to foster sustainable growth, promote economic diversification, and enhancing resilience against external shocks, as the country moves toward 2026 and beyond. Revenue performance has been robust over the years, with tax revenue exceeding target. Resultantly, tax to GDP is estimated to increase to 12.0 percent in 2025 and projected to reach 13.2 percent in 2026. This expected improvement is due to the ongoing and planned reform measures being implemented by the Government. However, it remains below the OECD and SSA averages of 34 percent and 16 percent in 2024 respectively. In the medium-term, the Domestic Resource Mobilization Strategy (DRMS) target is to reach the SSA average.
6. On public expenditure, despite fiscal pressures, the Government has completed the construction of Phase I and II of the OIC Road, with 35 percent domestic funding. The Kiang-West (87km), Nuimi-Hakalang (85km) are completed and the ongoing Kabbada (102km) roads were also fully funded from domestic resources. In addition, the Government embarked on the construction of key priority roads nationwide with total length of 355km.
7. To boost agricultural productivity and reduce input cost for farmers, the Government has provided considerable subsidies for crop financing and fertilizer purchase amounting to D900 million as well as high yielding seeds at no cost to farmers. To strengthen the financial position of National Food Security, Processing and Marketing Corporation (NFSPMC), the Government has provided them with D300 million as equity investment.
8. The Government has subsidized the electricity sector to the tune of D 1.3 billion in 2024, and allocated D1.0 billion in the 2025 and 2026 budgets. In 2026, the Government will continue to support various life-changing programs and projects despite the fiscal constraints.

9. The overall fiscal deficit in the 2026 budget is projected to narrow to 1.0 percent of GDP compared to 1.3 percent of GDP in 2025. This fiscal consolidation is intended to reduce the borrowing needs of the Government to ensure debt sustainability and ease access to private sector credit.
10. In the face of global economic uncertainties, the theme of the 2026 Budget is “*Improving the Well-Being and Quality of Life of Gambians.*” This guides our three core objectives: to sustain macroeconomic stability through prudent policies; to deepen structural reforms for a resilient economy; and to strengthen public financial management for the efficient use of our national resources. Hence investment in human capital sectors such as Health, Education and Agriculture amounts to D18.6 billion representing 35.3 percent of the total Budget, representing the highest allocation.

MACROECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Honourable Speaker,

Developments in the Global Economy

11. Despite the tariff shock being less severe than initially anticipated, uncertainty regarding the stability and direction of the global economy has intensified. As a result, global growth is forecasted to slow from 3.3 percent in 2024 to 3.2 percent in 2025, and further to 3.1 percent in 2026. The slowdown reflects uncertainties ranging from cuts to development aid, and increased fragmentation and protectionism.
12. Growth in advanced economies is projected to be 1.6 percent in 2025 and 2026 with the United States slowing to 2.0 percent in 2025 and gain slightly to 2.1 percent in 2026. The weak growth is on account of policy uncertainty, higher trade barriers, and lower growth in both the labor force and employment. In sub-Saharan Africa, growth is expected to remain unchanged in 2025 from 4.1 percent in 2024, and is expected to pick up to 4.4 percent in 2026.

13. Global inflation is expected to decline to 4.2 percent in 2025 and to 3.7 percent in 2026, with notable variation across countries and regions. The global outlook is faced with prolonged uncertainty, more protectionism, and labor supply shocks. Fiscal vulnerabilities, potential financial market corrections, and erosion of institutions could threaten stability.

Developments in the Domestic Economy

Honourable Speaker,

14. The recovery process in the domestic economy continued to gain momentum. Consequently, real GDP is estimated to grow by 5.9 percent in 2025, following a preliminary growth of 5.6 percent in 2024. This will be supported by slower inflation, a stable exchange rate, booming construction activities, enhanced agriculture productivity, ongoing growth in tourist arrivals, and robust remittance inflows.
15. This year's agricultural season has benefited from above-average rainfall, couple with support by Government and development partners. Similarly, growth in the livestock sub-sector, fishing and aquaculture are estimated to be resilient. While the forestry and logging sub-sector is expected to register a modest growth due to policy position on the ban of timber export. Overall, the agriculture sector is expected to grow by 5.1 percent in 2025.
16. Growth of the industrial sector is estimated to reach 6.0 percent in 2025 compared to 5.3 percent recorded in 2024. This is being supported by Government's commitment to close the infrastructure deficit and robust inflow of remittances. On electricity, the gradual increase in domestic generation, operationalization of the 225-kilovolt transmission line and import diversification have improved supply. The mining and manufacturing sub-sectors are estimated to sustain a steady growth on account of increasing construction activities and local demand.
17. The services sector is estimated to expand by 6.0 percent in 2025. This is supported by the initiatives from the Gambia Tourism Board (GTB) and sector players. The wholesale and retail trade is being driven by rising consumer spending following the stabilization of prices and increased diaspora remittances. Transport is benefiting from the robust infrastructural development and enhanced ferry services. Information and communication is benefiting from the stiff competition among Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and increasing data

usage while financial and insurance is riding on improved bank capitalization and robust growth in fintech.

18. On price stability, the declining global commodity prices coupled with the sustained tight monetary policy stance by the CBG has triggered moderation in inflationary pressures. Inflation has been consistently declining in the first six months; however, an uptick was witnessed in July and August. As end September 2025, a decline was observed and is expected to remain on a downwards trend by year end. Exchange rate stability has been restored supported by forex policy introduced in 2023, increased tourist receipts, and steady inflows of private remittances.
19. The continued implementation of domestic revenue mobilization reforms is bearing fruits. Domestic revenue collection for the first nine months of 2025 amounted to D 28.8 billion against the target of D22.0 billion. Relative to the same period in 2024, domestic revenue recorded a growth of 22 percent. Tax collection exceeded target by 15 percent as end September 2025, while non-tax revenue underperformed. Grant disbursements are on track. Overall, revenue and grants outturn is anticipated to be on target.
20. On the spending side, the implementation of the 2025 budget faced pressures related to 2024 outstanding commitments of about D690 million, which were carried over to 2025, unbudgeted transfers linked to earmarked revenues of about D1.6 billion, and contingent liabilities from SOEs. Total expenditure for the first nine months of 2025 stood at D36.3 billion representing an execution rate of 103 percent against the target. However, due to reprioritization, overall expenditure is expected to be within budget by end year.
21. Because of higher expenditure pressures and underperforming nontax revenues, the overall deficit including grants amounted to D 7.0 billion during the first nine months of 2025. The budget deficit is projected to narrow towards the target due to expected disbursements in budget support.
22. On public debt, the debt stock remains high but sustainable with a total debt of D110.7 billion (USD 1.74 billion) in 2023 which increased to D129.5 billion (USD1.85 billion) in 2024. This is attributable to exchange rate depreciation and additional stock accumulation. Measures to achieve debt sustainability will include the following: borrowing at highly concessional terms, reduction of the fiscal deficit and annual borrowing ceiling.

KEY SECTORS

Finance and Economic Affairs

Honourable Speaker,

23. The Government of the Gambia in collaboration with the IMF completed the fourth review of The Gambia's Extended Credit Facility (ECF) and the first review of the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). The performance under the ongoing ECF and RSF has been strong, reflecting the Governments adherence to improving macro-fiscal management and implementation of reforms.
24. On June 18, 2025, the World Bank published the outcome of the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) for 2024. The CPIA assesses each IDA-eligible country's policy and institutional framework for fostering poverty reduction and sustainable growth and provides an indication of the ability to use development assistance effectively. The overall 2024 CPIA score for The Gambia is 3.2.
25. This represents an improvement from the CPIA rating of 3.1 in 2023. The score not only surpassed the Sub-Saharan African average of 3.1 but the highest in the country's history since the start of the exercise. This performance indicates the current Administration's efforts in institutional reform, economic management, social protection, human capital development and investment in infrastructure. These investments have leapfrogged the country's development agenda. In addition, the higher score implies access to more resources from the World Bank and African Development Bank.
26. The Government of The Gambia has shown notable improvements in the fight against corruption and improved transparency. In 2024, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by the Transparency International indicated a score of 38, (a score of 26 in 2016) and the highest in the last ten years. This compares favorably to the SSA average of 33. This has led The Gambia's ranking to improve to 96 out of 180 countries in 2024 from 145 in 2016. These improvements were as a result of digitalization of public services, procurement reforms, implementation of governance diagnostic road map, and the on-going anti-corruption reforms.

27. The Ministry is expanding the PBB pilot from five to fifteen Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). This strategic shift is designed to tightly align MDAs program with the Recovery-Focused National Development Plan (RF-NDP, 2023–2027). This will ensure that MDAs are focused on outcomes rather than inputs, enhance the effectiveness of public spending, and ensure it directly serves our national priorities. The Government has developed a medium-term roadmap to mainstream Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). This initiative will integrate gender analysis into policy and budgetary decisions to address inequalities and advance gender equality.
28. In The Gambia, the demand for infrastructure remains high amid limited fiscal space. To address this, the Government of The Gambia (GoTG) continues to promote PPPs as a strategic approach to mobilize private sector resources, expertise and innovation in complementing public investment. In this regard, the GoTG made progress in advancing the National PPP Bill. Once into force, the PPP Act together with the draft PPP Operational Guidelines will provide a comprehensive legal and institutional framework to boost investor confidence, ensure transparency and enhance private sector participation in national development.

PRODUCTIVE SECTORS

Agriculture

Honourable Speaker

29. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food Security, with support from partners continues to drive its transformation agenda guided by the Recovery Focused National Development Plan 2023-2027. The sector saw a 6 percent increase in cultivated land, totaling 179,663 hectares, with cereal cultivation rising by 8 percent and rice by 4 percent.
30. Challenges remain, particularly in seed quality, as 85 percent of seeds used are sourced from farmers' stores, often of lower quality. However, initiatives are underway to improve seed quality, fertilizer accessibility, which are essential for enhancing productivity and resilience in the sector. With regards to the livestock sector, the population for Goats have

increased from 435,709 in 2024 to 451,394 in 2025, Sheep from 181,414 in 2024 to 182,539 in 2025, Chickens from 1,028,610 in 2024 to 1,040,542 in 2025, while cattle decreased marginally from 277,727 in 2024 to 275,894 in 2025. The decrease in cattle population is attributed to the limited coverage in the vaccination against CBPP (Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia) and pressure on grazing land, resulting to cattle moving to Southern Senegal.

31. Looking ahead to 2026, the Ministry aims to further enhance agricultural productivity through the continued transformation agenda. Plans include increasing access to quality seeds and fertilizers, expanding infrastructure for post-harvest management, and bolstering support for gender-inclusive initiatives in agriculture. Additionally, ongoing collaborations with development partners will be crucial for achieving these goals and ensuring that agriculture remains a pillar of the Gambian economy, which employs a significant portion of the population.

Fisheries and Water Resources

Honourable Speaker

32. The Fisheries Sector remains a strategic pillar on the Government's development agenda, with enormous potential to contribute significantly to the national socio-economic transformation. In this regard, the Ministry distributed 20 fishing boats and related accessories to six coastal and seven inland fishing communities. These interventions aimed at promoting youth participation, increasing fish availability, reducing rural unemployment, and curbing irregular migration.
33. The focus on aquaculture has been intensified to serve as a climate-smart alternative to reduce pressure on capture fisheries. Resultantly, the Ministry acquired a fish feed extruder for the Department of Fisheries, rehabilitated 58 fishponds, a hatchery, and constructed a four-chambered aquaculture pond, stocked with 4,000 fingerlings and equipped with a fish feed mill machine.

For Water Resources, 68 solar-powered piped-water supply systems were constructed and installed to serve 250,000 rural residents. In 2026, the sector is prioritizing upgrading of the Banjul Fisheries Jetty to improve fish landings and targeting public-private partnerships to expand aquaculture and inland fisheries. Increased investment in research, surveillance, enforcement mechanisms and accelerate the implementation of licensing. The Ministry is also prioritizing the scaling up of investments in rural water and sanitation infrastructure and accelerating the implementation of reforms to manage the nation's water resources in line with Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) principles.

Communication and Digital Economy

Honourable Speaker,

34. The Ministry continues to play a pivotal role towards inclusive socioeconomic transformation. In this regard, the Ministry has finalized a number of policy documents to strengthening policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks. These includes: the Digital Government Policy and Roadmap (2025–2035), the National Data Policy, the Digital Startups Policy, the Draft Postal and Courier Services Policy. To prepare for the era of artificial intelligence, MoCDE has initiated the formulation of the National AI and Emerging Technologies Policy and Strategy. This will promote ethical, effective use of AI across all sectors.
35. In 2026, the Ministry will prioritize the integration and interoperability challenges in the payments space. Strengthen national connectivity by rolling-out of a second subsea fiber optic cable. The Ministry will also spearhead the development of an Enterprise Architecture Framework to ensure interoperability of Government systems and rolling-out of MyGov. On cybersecurity and cybercrime prevention, the Government Security Operations Centre which is currently under establishment, is expected to provide robust support for cybercrime management.

Tourism and Culture

Honourable Speaker,

36. The Ministry has actively participated in six major international expos, hosts heritage-focused tours fostering academic and cultural exchange while continuing collaborations with prominent Gambians on the Global stage, to promote Destination Gambia. The sector has successfully hosted the inaugural International Conference with National Association of Nigerian Travel Agencies (NANTA) and partnered with Value Jet to launch direct flights from Nigeria in May 2025.
37. On Arts and Culture, the sector completed the refurbishment of Fort Bullen Site Museum, rehabilitated the Mungo Park Memorial Obelisk at Sami Karantaba, and launched UNESCO-funded initiative to inventory 90 intangible cultural elements in CRR North and South.
38. The Ministry plans to intensify strategic investments, heritage preservation, and inclusive policies in 2026. This will focus on upgrading the Wassu Stone Circle, Sea defense works, restoration of West Coast beaches, and construction of two jetties to improve access to the Kunta Kinteh Island. The sector will implement the 5-year Marketing and Branding Strategy Action Plan to reach 298,042 tourist arrivals in 2026, a milestone that will move it closer to its RF-NDP arrival target.

Trade Industry Regional Integration and Employment

Honourable Speaker,

39. The Ministry is advancing the Industrial and Diversification Policy to drive structural transformation, expand manufacturing capacity, and diversify exports beyond traditional commodities. This policy will align industrial incentives, regulatory reforms, and investment promotion strategies with African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) opportunities and global market trends. On regional integration matters, MoTIE is working with Senegal, and Guinea Bissau to sign a Trade and Transit Cooperation Agreement. This cooperation agreement aims at facilitating trade among the three countries for the benefits of their citizenry.

40. The 2026 Budget will prioritize investments that transform strategic corridors into manufacturing and trade gateways, modernize agricultural value chains for food security and export growth. This includes scaling-up MSMEs through financing, skills, and market linkages, upgrade rural markets into inclusive, climate resilient, commercial hubs and implement policy reforms that diversify our economy and attract sustainable investment.

Transport, Works and Infrastructure

Honourable Speaker,

41. The project for the rehabilitation of roads, drainage and sewage system in Banjul is now in its final stages of implementation. With regards to the ongoing projects, the 50km urban roads are progressing well and most of them near completion. Similarly, significant progress has been registered in Banni-Salikene-Njaba Kunda and Brufut-Madiana-Banyakang -Kunkujang Marima Roads standing at 85 and 87 percent respectively. In total, 355km key priority roads (in eight (8) lots) nationwide were constructed with an overall completion rate of 70 percent.
42. On Maritime Subsector, the pavement of the acquired properties in Half-Die has improved the waiting time for clearing goods / cargo from the Port of Banjul, from 343hrs to 82hrs. The legal framework for the Aviation Sector reform has been revised and validated. The bill establishing the various entities are expected to be enacted by the National Assembly before the end of the year.
43. In the upcoming year, the Ministry plans to scale-up the implementation of Phase 3 of the OIC Road Project. This will address most of the safety deficiencies and the issues relating to the congestions of roundabouts and some of the heavily travelled intersections. The Sanyang Deep Seaport project is expected to commence early next year. This project has the potential to attract bigger and deeper draft vessels with huge opportunities to impact on the freight charges. On the Airport modernization, the Ministry plans to construct an ultramodern Passenger Terminal Building with other related airport infrastructure. This is expected to be implemented through a Public Private Partnership (PPP).

Petroleum, Energy and Mines

Honourable Speaker,

44. To achieve universal access to electricity by 2026, the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy has completed the country's first-ever 225kV transmission line, linked to the OMVG network, and inaugurated the first National Control Centre, through the Gambia Electricity Restoration and Modernization Project. The 23MW Jambur Solar Plant was commissioned and preparations are at an advanced stage to commission the 150MW Regional Solar Park at Soma.
45. The costs of electricity imports remain high despite tariff adjustments, as a result, the Government undertook tariff compensation measures until a sustainable cost-recovery balance is achieved. The non-renewal of the Karpowership contract marks a decisive shift towards cheaper and more sustainable power generation alternatives, reinforcing the Government's commitment to energy self-sufficiency and fiscal sustainability.
46. To enhanced access to safe drinking water, NAWEC is implementing several major projects with the support of development partners to strengthen supply. These include separation of the water and electricity units to improve operational efficiency, expand the OGAS platform to Phase II, add new service stations in Brusubi Annex and Yorobawol, and venture into the Liquified Petroleum Gas market for the first time.
47. In 2026, the Ministry will implement the ECOWAS Fuel Directive and support the establishment of a National Petroleum Testing Laboratory., On Geology, the Ministry will establish a National Mining Policy, introduce a Mining Cadastre System, and amend the Mines and Quarries Act of 2005. Quarry regulations will be finalized to improve governance in the sector.

SOCIAL SECTORS

Basic and Secondary Education

Honourable Speaker,

48. The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education has made significant progress in advancing equitable, quality education and human capital development. In 2025, gross enrollment rates increased at all levels, with notable rises in Early Childhood, Lower Basic, and Senior Secondary Schools. The total number of schools grew from 3,839 to 4,039 between 2024 and 2025. The number of trained facilitators also increased at most levels, except for a slight decline in the Lower Basic category.
49. On textbook supply and digital transition, over 1.4 million textbooks for lower and upper basic schools have been procured and distributed, ensuring timely access to learning materials. At the same time, the sector is reducing reliance on printed texts by introducing digital and interactive resources such as e-readers, smart boards, radio lessons, and digitalised scripted lessons and online platforms—broadening access to modern teaching and learning tools. For the Senior Secondary Schools, MoBSE is partnering with The Gambia Writers' Association and GPPC to now publish locally produced textbooks.
50. Consequently, performance in the education sector has improved, with 961 students earning credit passes in five or more subjects, including English and Mathematics where female students outperformed males in these results. Additionally, 15,607 candidates achieved strong aggregate scores (6–42) in 2025, up from 14,761 in 2024, marking the second consecutive year of increased high achievement and showing that over half of GABECE participants earned passing aggregates.
51. The Ministry plans to consolidate the gains registered in the implementation of reforms while introducing new initiatives that respond to emerging educational needs. Among them is the enhancement of digital learning via the I-Learn Gambia Platform, the implementation of a competency-based curriculum across schools and the expansion of Early Childhood Development (ECD). Efforts will also focus on teacher training and welfare, school infrastructure development, inclusive education, science and technical education

strengthening. Additionally, MoBSE aims to widen the reach of school feeding programmes, promote data-driven management systems through one laptop per school initiative, and improve Madrassah integration within the national education framework.

Higher Education

Honourable Speaker,

52. The Ministry has made significant strides in fostering a robust and inclusive tertiary and higher education system that meet the needs of all citizens. The completion of the USET Brikama campus signifies another milestone in our efforts to broaden access to higher education quality. The modern facility will offer students a conducive learning environment and opportunity to attain the much-needed higher qualifications in vital disciplines such as engineering. The campus is fitted with contemporary industry-standard equipment capable of producing essential tools and parts for various sectors of our economy. In collaboration with partners, the Ministry awarded 1087 scholarships to students in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), over 18 PhD and master's scholarships to staff of public universities. This initiative aims to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to enhancing the quality of teaching and research.

53. The ongoing TVET decentralization process is progressing well. The Multi-purpose Skills Centre in CRR North and the Agribusiness Skills Centre in CRR South are expected to be operational by early next year. All the centres will have dormitories and workshops, equipped with modern tools for hands-on practical experience. In addition, funding has been secured to establish two Centres of Excellence in Fisheries and Aquaculture (Tujereng) and Agribusiness (Ndemban) to support the development of employability skills and entrepreneurship for youths and women. The Ministry plans to start the development of the School of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (SMAHS) at the UTG Faraba Banta Campus. The project is geared towards addressing the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in our country.

Health

Honourable Speaker,

54. The Ministry of Health continues to advance its mission of improving health and well-being of Gambians through various initiatives focused on governance, technology, service delivery, infrastructure, and human resource development. Key achievements include the installation of satellite internet in health facilities to improve birth registration, the digitalization of health information systems, and the procurement and distribution of 61 motorcycles, 157 bicycles, and 40 new equipped ambulances with 6 supervisory pick-ups to bolster routine immunization, community surveillance and patients' referrals. With regards to health infrastructure, improvements included refurbishment of key health facilities and construction of new health centers, along with the establishment of a National Drug and Food Testing Lab. Additionally, 42 State Enrolled Community Health Nurse Midwives graduated, and the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) was rolled out.
55. Looking ahead to 2026, the Ministry intends to continue efforts to promote universal health coverage and improve service delivery. Key initiatives will focus on expanding the NHIS to more facilities, ensuring timely emergency medical responses with the procurement of additional ambulances, and further investments in health infrastructure through the refurbishment of existing facilities and construction of new health posts. The Ministry will also scale up training of personnel in order to streamline services and improve the quality of healthcare provided to citizens.

Gender, Children and Social Welfare

Honourable Speaker,

56. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (MoGCSW), remains committed in advancing gender equality, safeguarding the rights and welfare of children, and empowering vulnerable populations. Consequently, the will Government economically empower 1,000 women through comprehensive entrepreneurship training, benefiting 75,900 women, including women with disabilities, with a total investment of D82.1 million. These interventions have translated into increased incomes, expanded business ownership, job creation, and strengthened community-level financial independence for

thousands of women. The Government has allocated D3.3 million to support victims and survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). These include financial assistance for rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration as enshrined in the Sexual Offences Act, 2013. To date, a total of 72 survivors are supported.

57. The plans for 2026 are to expand shelter facilities to other regions, construct a new rehabilitation centre in Bansang, build a stronger social services workforce, operationalize a Disability Fund to support Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), enhance welfare support for vulnerable Gambians and accelerate the establishment of a dedicated Special Court for GBV, which is 80 percent complete. This is a critical step toward ensuring timely, sensitive, and survivor-centred justice for GBV cases.

Social Protection

Honourable Speaker,

58. The Social Protection Agency has successfully achieved nationwide coverage of The Gambia Social Registry data collection. This will contribute in establishing a robust repository that will allow us to effectively target and provide support to those who need it most. The Gambia is the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa with 100 percent social registry coverage. The Agency in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, enrolled over 5,000 beneficiaries in the Government cash transfer program. Monthly cash transfers of D1,000 were provided to the most vulnerable citizens, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, orphans, and female-headed households to restore dignity and ease hardship.
59. In 2026, the plan is to consolidate the gains of the Social Protection Fund by increasing the number of beneficiaries. This will include orphans, persons with disabilities, female headed households, and older persons. The Fund also seeks to support disaster risk reduction and response, livelihood and skills development for youth to enhance social protection coordination structures.

Youth and Sports

Honourable Speaker,

60. The Ministry of Youth and Sports continues to play a central role in advancing national development by empowering young people and strengthening sports, entrepreneurship, peace-building, and employability initiatives. In collaboration with partners, the Ministry directly benefitted 2,427 youth and women, including vulnerable groups and returnee migrants. A total of 50 youth were trained on agricultural transformation and entrepreneurship. The NYSS recruited 200 corps members, deploying 150 out-of-school youth in apprenticeship programs, and supporting university graduates through a new one-year paid internship program.
61. In 2026, the Ministry will prioritise completing the stadium rehabilitation, expanding mini-stadia, enhancing technical training, and increasing international exposure. Plans are underway to recruit 60 new trainees, expanding food processing and value addition programs, and introducing biogas production as a sustainable energy initiative. In addition, scaling aquaculture programs, commercial egg production with 3,000-layer chicks, and purchasing modern vehicles and farming equipment. These interventions are expected to strengthen agribusiness and promote youth self-reliance.

CROSS CUTTING SECTORS

Interior

Honourable Speaker,

62. The Ministry of Interior will continue to reform the Gambia Police Force (GPF). In this regard, a comprehensive reform agenda was launched in January 2025 and new policies were implemented such as the Police Bill 2024, the GPF Strategic Plan 2024–2028, and new Police Doctrines on Ethics, Gender Mainstreaming and Public Assembly Policing.
63. The Gambia Immigration Department (GID) constructed new border posts, deployed mobile teams for passport issuance domestically and abroad, and intercepted 1,343 migrants attempting irregular migration. Regarding the Prisons Department, 293 inmates graduated with vital vocational skills and advanced staff training. On drugs, DLEAG have

registered 627 drug cases in the first half of 2025, leading to a significant drop in Kush-related hospitalizations. A new drug control bill was drafted to amend the Drug Control Act and with the support of ECOWAS. The construction of The Gambia's first drug treatment and rehabilitation centre in Tranquil has commenced.

64. In 2026, plans are to revamp the River Patrol Unit to combat smuggling and securing waterways. The Ministry is also prioritising the expansion of the Drone Surveillance Unit, developing a modern centralized training academy, and establishing a police central hospital, regional clinics, and a health insurance scheme. Plans are underway to enact the Gambia Immigration Services (GIS) Bill to replace obsolete laws, decentralizing passport and ID card issuance to Sankandi and Pirang, and expanding the Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) to more entry points.

Information

Honourable Speaker,

65. The Ministry remains committed to digital transformation, media empowerment, and public accountability. It is against this backdrop, the Ministry conducts Ministerial Town Hall Meetings (Mansa Kunda), Press Conference and Documentaries, Weekly Government Updates and engaged in nationwide campaigns on misinformation and disinformation reaching both rural and urban population. These initiatives are to enhance public knowledge and understanding of Government policies, programs and projects through proactive disclosure, interactive media and public consultations and popularization of Government Agenda. Policy and legal reforms are ongoing in the sector to align media and broadcasting policies and legislations with international best practices, promote transparency, and foster a well-informed society. Thus, the enactment of Information and Media Broadcasting Bill and its related regulations on the Access to Information (ATI) Law.
66. The strategic priorities in the 2026 will focus on reforming Department of Information Services (DOIS) and repositioning it to be a vibrant public information service provider. This will ensure that citizens are consistently informed about government activities and

policies to foster a more open, accountable, and dynamic information environment. Establish a Central Media Accreditation Committee, this will ensure that competent persons of high moral integrity will be providing information to the public.

Justice

Honourable Speaker,

67. The Government of The Gambia has established the Reparations Commission as part of efforts to implement the TRRC recommendations. This Commission is mandated to administer reparations to victims of past human rights violations, advance national healing and promoting justice. The Government has initiated the implementation of the Special Prosecutor's Office (SPO) and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), both of which were established through legislative enactments by the National Assembly to address high-profile TRRC-related cases and to strengthen the fight against corruption. The recruitment of the Anti-Corruption Commission members is at its final stage, after which appointments will be submitted to the National Assembly for approval, reaffirming the Government's strong commitment to operationalizing the Commission and ensuring credible anti-corruption enforcement.
68. To strengthen service delivery and accountability in the upcoming year, the Ministry is prioritizing the introduction of a comprehensive Case Management System. This digital platform will address inefficiencies such as duplicated efforts and lost case files, while laying the foundation for an integrated justice system.

Public Service, Administrative Reform, Policy Coordination and Delivery

Honourable Speaker,

69. As part of the Civil Service Reform Program, the Ministry and partners had carried out a functional review of MDAs to streamline and rationalize the overlapping role conflicts with a view of making Government more efficient and effective. Similarly, a capacity gap assessment was conducted with relevant cadres. This is geared towards formulating competency development programs relevant to these cadres. Recently, staff audit exercise

was carried out on the three biggest ministries (MoBSE, HoH and MoA). This will help to keep track of the attrition rate and manage the wage bill.

70. In 2026, there are plans to link the biometric systems to Government payroll and an executive dashboard for the Executive. These will strengthen accountability and reduce absenteeism. The dashboard will offer the Executive timely updates of all projects especially flagship.

Environment, Climate Change and Wildlife

Honourable Speaker,

71. The Ministry has made significant strides in enhancing the management of the country's natural resources and mitigating climate related risks. Key achievements include the successful launch of the Resilient Gambia Project, which aims to promote mangrove restoration and community livelihood initiatives. The Ministry also advanced the formulation of the Climate Change Act and updated the National Climate Change Policy. The review of the Gambia Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for 2025-2035 was initiated with a view to align it with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. On Forestry matters, the Department of Forestry increased the total protected areas dedicated to flora and fauna from 86,981 to 113,086 hectares. The focus on Community-Based Forest Enterprises (CBFEs) led to the establishment of 20 new businesses utilizing non-timber forest products, fostering both ecological sustainability and economic opportunity among local communities.
72. Looking ahead to 2026, the Ministry plans to continue the momentum by implementing the updated climate change policies and further enhancing biodiversity conservation measures. Efforts will target encroachment and illegal dumping, while supporting and training local communities. With a commitment to sustainable practices, the Ministry aims to strengthen environmental governance, promote biodiversity, and foster resilient livelihoods.

Lands and Regional Government

Honourable Speaker,

73. The Ministry of Lands, Regional Government, and Religious Affairs continue to advance land governance, institutional reforms, and digital transformation. The National Land Policy, which is a significant milestone in the country's land governance reform is set for Cabinet submission. This policy establishes a comprehensive framework to guide equitable access, effective use, and sustainable management of land resources.
74. To address the rising demand for housing, the Ministry in collaboration with stakeholders are working on a National Housing Scheme that prioritizes 10,000 affordable housing for low-income civil servants. This is expected to kick start before the end of the year. In addition, steps have been taken toward regulating a rapidly evolving real estate industry. This initiative aims to protect consumers, ensure orderly development, and enhance investor confidence in the real estate market.
75. In 2026, the Ministry plans to finalize the development of a new Land Use Plan, a Land Information System (LIS), Digital Land System, and the digitization of land records. The Land Use Plan seeks to promote sustainable land use by balancing urban development, agriculture, conservation, and infrastructure growth, while safeguarding natural resources and building resilient communities. The Ministry will also prioritise the development of a Hajj Policy and Regulation to enhance transparency and coordination. This will improve the welfare of Gambian pilgrims during Hajj periods.

Foreign Affairs

Honourable Speaker,

76. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to undertake initiative through diplomacy to advance the interests of the country and her citizens. The Gambia remains active internationally, especially as Chair of the OIC to expand engagements, cooperation, and peaceful conflict settlement. Migration is still a key priority of the Government, resultantly, the Ministry hosted the First Global Forum on Missing Migrants under the Rabat Process.

The event brought together over 120 delegates from Africa, Europe, and international organisations to address the critical issue of missing and deceased migrants.

77. The Ministry plans to expedite the implementation of reforms in 2026. Central to the reforms is the development of a Foreign Service Bill. This is geared towards institutional strengthening with emphasis on capacity building and improving service conditions for Foreign Service Officers.

Data and Statistics

Honourable Speaker,

78. The Gambia Bureau of Statistics continues to play a pivotal role in generating reliable data that will inform national planning, policy formulation, and development programs. The Bureau successfully conducted an economic census field data collection to establish a statistical business register and developed a sample for the Business Enterprise Survey. Moreover, number of surveys were conducted, among them is the Labour Force Survey, which provides vital information on employment, underemployment, and informal sector dynamics.
79. In addition, the Business Enterprise Survey is essential for improving national accounts estimates, particularly to rebase the GDP from 2013 to the new 2024 base year. This is recommended for every five years, to capture key emerging sectors of the economy, thereby producing GDP figures that are reflective of the economic situation.

State Owned-Enterprises

Honourable Speaker,

80. The Government has strengthened oversight functions of the SOEs through the SOE Commission. With focus on performance and institutional reform, the Commission has negotiated and signed seven performance contracts with key SOEs. This is geared towards establishing measurable targets, timelines, and responsibility mechanisms. These agreements are not merely administrative formalities; they serve as binding covenants that link operational autonomy to measurable outcomes. Through the rigorous monitoring of

these contracts, the Commission is actively shifting the SOEs from a posture of inefficiency to, accountability and ensuring that public resources yield tangible returns for the Gambian people.

81. Looking ahead, the SOE Commission will continue to prioritise rigorous performance contract management, transparent governance, and measurable outcomes. s. This will be supported by SOE Regulations and Code of Good Corporate Governance.

MEDIUM TERM MACROECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK

Honourable Speaker,

GDP Growth

82. The medium-term outlook remains positive with solid growth prospects. Real GDP growth is projected at 5.5 percent in 2026 and average 5.1 percent in the medium term. This will benefit from the acceleration of structural reforms outlined in the RF-NDP (2023-2027), growing digitalization of the economy, envisaged macroeconomic stability on account of easing inflation and exchange rate pressures. The agriculture sector is expected to sustain a robust growth momentum, building on current Government and development partners initiatives such as distribution of matching grants, continued fertilizer support, the use of high-yield crops, and enhanced groundnuts price support. Livestock sector will be supported through scaling up disease management and control as well as research. Growth in industry will be driven by the completion of ongoing construction of roads, plans to initiate new projects, resilient remittance inflow, and retained funds are expected to anchor most of the private sector funded projects.
83. The completion of 225-kilovolt transmission line is expected to enhance power purchases and sales, reduce distribution losses and increase efficiency in the energy sector. The services sector is expected to expand, assuming a broader macroeconomic stability in 2026. Beyond stability, growth will be driven by rebuilding and modernization of tourism infrastructures, attracting both new arrivals and repeaters through destination marketing, broadening the tourist packages, and efforts to carve a niche market by GTB.

Inflation

84. Inflationary pressures are expected to continue to ease in 2026 and the medium term. This will be supported by easing global commodity prices, the restrictive monetary policy stance, growth in domestic production and continued fiscal consolidation efforts by the government. The exchange rate stability is expected to be sustained in the medium term, supported by the enhanced forex policy, tourism revenue, remittances, and disbursements from development partners.

Fiscal Outlook

Revenue and Grants

85. In the medium-term, strong revenue performance will be supported by the ongoing policy reforms, growing digitalization of the economy, and broader economic stability. Revenue and grants are expected to total D50.3 billion in 2026, with D32.2 billion coming from domestic sources and 18.1 externally.
86. Tax revenue is anticipated to increase by 13 percent relative from the previous budget, amounting to D27.0 billion in 2026. This will be driven by digitalization of tax and customs administration following the launch of Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS) and rolling out of ASYCUDA, streamlining incentives, and the implementation of reforms prioritized in the Domestic Resource Mobilisation Strategy (DRMS) which targets a tax-to-GDP of 15 percent by 2030.
87. The growth in tax revenue will be driven by various tax heads. Personal Income Tax is expected to benefit from enhanced enforcement, rolling-out of the rental income solution and tax audit. While Corporate Income Tax is expected to improve on account of enhanced compliance among donor-funded projects. The ongoing audit of major public work contractors is expected to address long-standing loopholes in tax compliance and underreporting. With the expected rollout of the revenue assurance solution before the end of the year, excise telecom is projected to grow by 40 percent in 2026, reaching D659 million. Value Added Tax (VAT) is expected to grow significantly driven by the implementation of a new electronic invoicing solution, which is aimed at improving compliance and reducing fraud.
88. Non-Tax Revenue is projected at D5.2 billion (2.5 percent of GDP) in 2026. This will be supported by the planned and ongoing efforts by Government to increase revenue collection by MDAs, higher dividends from SOEs, and the disbursement of D1.5 billion from Africa50 Asset Recycling Program for the Senegambia Bridge.

89. The emerging geopolitical tensions and shifting priorities of development partners have risen uncertainties on grants. Despite these, project grants are projected at D14.4 billion while budget support at D3.7 billion, of which D2.5 billion is from the World Bank, D597 million from the EU and D528 million from the AfDB.

Expenditure

90. In 2026, total expenditure is expected to reach 52.4 billion. Representing a nominal growth of 12 percent relative to the 2025 budget. This will be driven by funding of election related activities, clearance of expenditure arrears, and full provisioning of subsidies. Recurrent expenditure is projected at D31.3 billion while capital and net lending at D19.5 billion.
91. Personnel emolument is projected at D10.3 billion. This represents a 5 percent increase relative to the previous budget. The increase will emanate from promotions and grade point changes. The salary increment for civil servants last year, which brought the total salary increase to 110 percent under the current administration has continued to improve the well-being of Gambians.
92. Other charges will be driven by the funding of election related activities, clearance of domestic arrears, full provisioning of subsidies and electricity subsidy.
93. Capital expenditure will be composed of project grants and loan financed. The GLF funded will be relatively low. However, most of the projects, particularly roads are now being financed through resources mobilized by the National Road Fund under Ministry of Transport. To ensure fiscal sustainability in the medium term, the thrust of the Medium-Term Economic Fiscal Framework (MTEFF) is to keep expenditure growth below that of nominal GDP. However, medium-term fiscal consolidation is supported by reforms on program-based budgeting (piloted since last year), rationalizing redundant agencies, prioritizing investment, and overhauling SOEs and strengthening their management over the medium-term.

Budget Deficit and Financing

94. In 2026, the Government target an overall deficit of D2.1 billion (1 percent of GDP). The lower deficit target than previously envisaged arises from the need to contain domestic borrowing. This consolidation path strikes a balance between still-high debt-vulnerabilities and needed development spending. The gross financing need will be met through issuing long term debt instruments, RSF on lent facility, rolling over short-term, and concessional external debt.

Public Debt

95. To reduce debt vulnerabilities, the Government will ensure debt to GDP is on a downward trend in the short to medium-term. To realize this objective, Government will continue bolstering domestic revenue mobilization, strictly adhering to the agreed external borrowing plan, and ensuring that SOEs and PPPs do not give rise to undue fiscal risks and contingent liabilities. Resultantly, public and publicly guaranteed debt is projected at 68.8 percent of GDP in 2026 and is expected to gradually trend downwards to 58.4 percent of GDP by 2028.

Risks to the Budget

96. The 2026 budget is subject to downside risks, which has the potential to cause deviations. These risks may arise from global sources, such as rising geopolitical and trade tensions triggering global commodity price volatility. The realization of these could affect macro variables that were used to anchor the budget.
97. On the domestic front, key risks may stem from potential fiscal slippages in the run-up to the 2026 elections, elevated SOE-related contingent liabilities, and risk of rising domestic debt servicing costs which could crowd out priority spending in the absence of robust grant support. Shifting priorities of development partners could affect previously supported programs on governance, health and energy. More frequent natural disasters are threatening to damage infrastructure and livelihoods requiring unbudgeted government intervention.

98. On the upside, the possibility of a quicker pace of disinflation and interest rate reductions than assumed may boost demand. In addition, faster progress on reforms could boost revenue collection.

RATIONALE FOR 2026 BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

Honourable Speaker,

99. The Rationale for the 2026 Budget Allocation being discussed below is focusing mainly on Government Local Funds (GLF).

Ministry of Defence (MoD)

100. The MoD's budget increased by 7 percent to D1.2 billion. A key driver is the D820.9 million budgeted for wages and salaries (a 17 percent increase year-on-year). This is to partly cater for the Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS) of the Armed Forces. Food and Food services for the Army increased by 7 percent to D160 million (compared to 2025). An amount of D13.7 million is also allocated for the Operation and Maintenance of Boats for the Navy. A further D41.8 million (a 71 percent increase) has been set aside for the renovation of military barracks.

Ministry of Interior (MoI)

101. The MoI's budget increased by 24 percent to D2.4 billion. Approximately 68 percent is allocated to Personnel Emoluments. Goods and Services account for D538.1 million, a significant increase from 2025. About 50 percent of the Food and Food Services budget is for the Police, with 47 percent for Prisons. An amount of D50 million has been budgeted for the prisons to cater for the feeding of prisoners. The budget also includes D38 million for Passports and ID Cards and D10.5 million for the construction of police stations. A subvention of D180 million is allocated to the Drug Law Enforcement Agency to continue the fight against drugs.

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MoTAC)

102. The MoTAC's budget increased by 9 percent to D59.3 million. Key areas include Wages and Salaries (D9.5 million, an 82 percent increase) and Buildings and Structures (D6 million, a 200% increase). About D4 million of the D6 million budgeted for Buildings and Structures is to support the revamping of the Juffureh (Kunteh Kinteh) Island. The Ministry continues to oversee the Tourism Diversification & Resilience Project. The GT Board

generates revenue from tourism development levy amounting to D200 million is expected in 2026 for investments in the sector.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)

103. The MoFA's budget increased by 8 percent to D2.11 billion, largely due to a D99 million increase in Personnel Emoluments to cater for Embassy allowances. It also includes D61.0 million for the construction of a Chancery in Abuja and Dakar (an increase of D31.0 million). Other increases were recorded for Embassy Rents (D89.3 million or 25 percent year-on-year), Purchase of Fuel and Lubricants (D4.20 million or 17 percent), and Electricity, Water & Sewage (D3.7 million or 14 percent).

Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA)

104. The MoFEA's 2026 budget is D2.3 billion, indicating a 5 percent decrease from 2025. This decline is mainly due to decreases in Subventions to Non-Financial Public Corporations (29 percent), and Maintenance of Buildings and Facilities (82 percent). The budget includes D250 million for Equity participation and D276.48 million for the PAMP. Furthermore, the budget also includes D870 million as subvention to the Gambia Revenue Authority's (GRA).

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

105. The MoA's budget is D1.8 billion indicating a significant increase of 83 percent or D794.9 million. This is mainly driven by the D900 million for input subsidies and organic fertilizers (a 77 percent increase) and D300 million for the recapitalization of the NFSPMC. The agriculture budget also includes D75 million for the purchase of tractors. An additional D50 million has also been budgeted for the insurance scheme for farmers under the GAMIRSAL project.

Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure (MoTWI)

106. The MoTWI's budget is D2.0 billion, a 9 percent decrease. However, additional resources are available to the Ministry through the NRA levy. The 2026 budget includes D1.58

billion for roads, D215 million for Land Compensation and D77 million for consultancies on road constructions.

Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE)

107. The MoBSE's budget is D5.9 billion a 16.2 percent increase. Significant portions of the increase are for Subventions and Personnel Emoluments. Other key items include the school improvement grant (D352.4 million), WAEC fees (D230.9 million), and School feeding (D250 million). The budget also includes D46.6 million for the PAMP and D24 million for the Gambia National Library Service Authority.

Ministry of Health (MoH)

108. The MoH's budget is D3.1 billion, a 15.3 percent increase compared to the 2025 estimates. About D1.6 billion of this amount is for Subventions to hospitals, Councils and agencies. Other key items include Drugs, Dressings and Medical Supplies (D241.8 million), payments for Cuban Doctors (D150 million), Vaccines (D50 million), and Personnel Emoluments (D805.7 million). D50 million has also been allocated for the National Health Insurance Scheme. For infrastructure, D33.8 million and D22 million are budgeted for health facilities and buildings, respectively. Results-Based financing is also catered for with an amount of D20 million. New additions to the MoH budget include the Farato Emergency Treatment Centre (D51.0 million) and the Food & Drugs Lab (D39.2 million).

Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS)

109. The MoYS's budget is D146.5 million, an 8.3 percent increase, which includes allocation of D64.7 million to subvented agencies. However, this is not the only resource envelop available to the Ministry. The Ministry is benefiting from the sport development levy of D112 million, and a 5 percent on the revenue from pool betting which is estimated to generate about D5 million in 2026. In addition, the youth sector is benefitting from scholarships to the tune of D103 million.

Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources (MoFWR)

110. The MoFWR's budget is D60.6 million, a 7.2 percent increase. Major items include D6.8 million for Fish Ponds and Water Breeding Facilities and D10 million for Wells, Boreholes, and Water Points. The Ministry is also a beneficiary of fisheries development levy which is expected to generate about D70 million in 2026.

Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (MoPE)

111. The MoPE's budget is D1.5 billion for 2026, indicating a 19.7 percent increase (D248.4 million) compared to the D1.3 billion for 2025. Key items include Plants, Machinery & Equipment (D357.6 million) for energy access and a D1 billion Energy Subsidy for tariff compensation to NAWEC. The budget also includes D70 million for Land Compensation.

Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (MoGCSW)

112. The MoGCSW's budget is D115.9 million, representing a 17.2 percent increase from the approved estimates of 2025. It includes D7.4 million for Food and Food Services to support the Bakoteh shelter and D15 million for the Women Enterprise Development Fund. The budget also caters for support to the differently abled (D4 million) and vulnerable children (D4 million) as well as support to victims of Gender Based Violence (D4.3 million).

Independent Institutions

113. The total appropriation for the independent institutions (National Assembly, Judiciary, Independent Electoral Commission, and National Audit Office) combined amounts to D1.9 billion, representing an increase of D648.6 million (or 52 percent) compared to 2025. It is worth noting that the appropriations for these institutions can only be altered or changed by the National Assembly.

Debt Service

114. In 2026, debt service (repayment of interest and principal falling due in the fiscal year) is estimated to consume 31.0 percent of GLF and 22.7 percent of All Funds (loans and grants). The 2025 debt service ratios were 29.1 percent for GLF and 20.8 percent for All Funds.

115. The Government Debt Management Strategy is consistent with the debt management objectives stipulated in the Public Finance Act (2014), which requires the Government to borrow at the lowest possible cost within a prudent degree of risk. In this regard, the Government will only contract concessional loans with a grant element of nothing less than 35 percent. The strategy also aims at developing the domestic debt market by lengthening the maturity profile of domestic debt and increasing the share of longer-dated domestic debt instruments.

MEDIUM TERM POLICY REFORMS

Honourable Speaker,

116. To support economic stability and underpin the commitment to fiscal sustainability, the Government will implement the following measures:
- i. Strengthen public investment management through the institutionalization of medium-term Public Investment Programme (PIP) for all sectors, and ensuring all public investments pass the Gambia Strategic Review Board (GSRB) selection criteria;
 - ii. Continue the existing use of key performance indicators to monitor and analyze SOEs operations;
 - iii. Development of a travel policy for the entire public sector to ensure value for money;
 - iv. Development of a Foreign Service Policy with the aim of rationalizing foreign missions;
 - v. Implementation of the Domestic Resource Mobilization Strategy (DRMS) that will identify and leverage on the potential sources of revenue and inform medium term revenue reforms aimed at broadening the tax base;
 - vi. Restructuring and rationalization of subvented agencies;
 - vii. Cabinet has approved the revised GIEPA Act 2015, to make it more responsive to fiscal policy and attract high-quality investment in priority sectors. The draft Bill been submitted to the National Assembly for legislative review. Its passage is expected to enhance the strategic alignment of investment incentives with national revenue and development objectives;
 - viii. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs is developing the first Tax Expenditure Report to quantify the revenue forgone through various tax incentives and exemptions, and to provide a clear understanding of the magnitude and distribution of these incentives. The Ministry will further rationalise the duty waiver processes and strengthen its monitoring to minimize revenue losses;
 - ix. Introduce an electronic invoicing system on VAT and other taxes aimed at addressing VAT fraud and under declaration;

- x. Going forward all subvented revenue generating entities must provide evidence of their revenue collection on quarterly basis to MoFEA. Allocation for the first quarter will be provided; however, subsequent allocations must satisfy this requirement; and
- xi. Cabinet has approved the transformation of the Social Development Fund (SDF) into The Gambia Development Bank. The objective of this development bank is to provide access to finance at affordable rates for youth, women, farmers and entrepreneurs. This will provide funding opportunities for economic development.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

Honourable Speaker,

- 117. This year marks the beginning of implementation of the Gambia Revenue Authority's (GRA) Corporate Strategic Plan (2025 – 2029). The objective of which is “to drive digital transformation across the revenue Authority, enhancing revenue mobilization, trade facilitation through the adoption of disruptive technologies, streamlined processes, and effective stakeholder engagement”. The transformation program will focus on process re-engineering, automating operations, fostering a culture of innovation through change management, and ensuring necessary legislative reforms to support a modern, efficient tax administration.
- 118. On the implementation of reforms, the launch of the ASYCUDA World system has improved international trade revenues significantly. For instance, the revenues collected by the Customs & Excise Department grew by 85 percent between 2022 and 2024. The SICPA Project, which is in three phases, namely: digital tax stamps for excisable goods; fuel marking solutions for refined fuel; and revenue assurance for telecommunication services and fintech. This has supported growth of import excise tax by 76.4 percent, revenue from imported fuel by 41 percent and domestic excise duty by 52.5 percent as at end September 2025.
- 119. In 2026, the Authority will focus on building upon ongoing reforms, including the National Single Window project, Rental Compliance systems, Digital Excise Stamps, Fuel marking,

revenue assurance, ITAS implementation, and electronic VAT invoicing to improve domestic revenue collection efficiency. Furthermore, consideration is underway to adopt a platform to tax gaming receipts. With regards to administrative measures:

- i. All SIC and EPZL holders must file quarterly and annual tax returns with the GRA, no later than the time stipulated in the Income and Value Added Tax Act 2012. Failure to comply will result in the automatic suspension of all fiscal incentives and privileges. The Commissioner General of the GRA is mandated to enforce this measure strictly.
- ii. To ensure compliance with withholding tax requirements for non-residents, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, the GRA, and Project Implementation Units will jointly develop a framework for the enforcement of withholding tax on direct payments to contractors and consultants. This framework will provide clear guidance and procedures for implementing and managing withholding tax obligations for non-resident contractors and consultants.
- iii. Going forward, the mandatory filing of financial accounts for corporate income tax will be reinforced and the Commissioner general GRA is hereby tasked to fully implement the provisions of IVAT Act 2012. In the same vein, payment of Pay-As-You Earned (PAYE) must be accompanied with a payroll schedule.

PROPOSED REVENUE MEASURES FOR 2026

Honourable Speaker,

120. To improve revenue administration, the following measures will be implemented:

- i. In line with our commitment under both the WHO and ECOWAS Convention framework on Tobacco control, the Tobacco control levy on cigarettes, cigars, and cigarillos will be increased from D2 per kilo to D3 per kilo.
- ii. The tax rate on the winnings from betting, gaming, lottery, and gambling will be increased from 40 percent to 50 percent of the winnings to reinforce the fight against the menace posed by gambling and betting in society. The Government will also introduce a digital platform to enhance the revenue assurance of the gaming sector.

- iii. The Government will implement a Carbon-Based Excise Duty on Fuel Products to replace the existing ad-valorem excise on the fuel price structure, which is in line with the commitment to combat climate change and promote the energy transition efforts. (See the attached schedule for the applicable rates in annex 7).
- iv. An annual social protection levy will be introduced, applicable to all motor vehicles, motor bikes, and tricycles. This is aimed at providing financing source for government social protection programs (See the attached schedule for the applicable rates in annex 8).
- v. In order to promote menstrual health and hygiene for Women and Girls, the Government will eliminate import duty and VAT on imported sanitary pads. This measure is aimed at addressing both economic and health disparities related to menstrual hygiene for school going girls, by improving access to sanitary pads, and lower retail prices. Measures will be taken to assess the implementation of this reform in subsequent years.
- vi. Given the low level of compliance in annual land rent payments, MoFEA in collaboration with the Ministry of Lands, Regional Government and Religious Affairs will fully enforce the provision of the State Land Act 1991. To this end, with effect from January 1st, 2026, all land lease documents used as collateral in the Commercial Banks or other financial institutions shall be deemed null and void if the Annual Land Lease Rental payments are not fulfilled. Therefore, all Commercial Banks or other financial institutions holding land lease documents as collaterals are required to ensure that annual land lease rentals are fully paid. Failure of which, the Minister responsible for Lands and Regional Government and Religious Affairs will nullify the lease.

CONCLUSION

Honourable Speaker,

121. In conclusion, The Gambian economy has gained momentum, despite the increased fragmentation and protectionism in the global economy. This has led to a slow global growth projection in 2026. On the domestic front, the envisaged broader macroeconomic stability, the acceleration of structural reforms outlined in the RF-NDP (2023-2027), strategic investment in key sectors of the economy such as agriculture, health, and education will anchor growth in 2026.
122. The targeted fiscal deficit in 2026 is 0.3 percent of GDP for GLF and 1.0 percent for all funds (GLF and Donor funds). The 1.0 percent is the lowest in the last decade. This is meant to strengthen our fiscal consolidation efforts and reduce debt vulnerabilities. And, this consolidation path strikes a delicate balance between still-high debt-vulnerabilities and the broader goal of inclusive growth and poverty alleviation.
123. The Government will continue to pursue domestic resource mobilization reforms to reduce debt vulnerabilities and build fiscal resilience. This will be supported by plans to implement the first Domestic Resource Mobilization Strategy (DRMS) starting 2026. The strategy will facilitate domestic revenue policy implementation through a coordinated approach, guide medium-term revenue policy and deepen efforts to broaden the tax base. Efforts will also be made to mitigate the impact of contingent liabilities emanating from SOEs and PPPs.
124. The Government remains steadfast in its commitment to fiscal discipline and strategic allocation of public resources. Resultantly, a mandatory baseline costing for all MDAs will be introduced in 2026. This will enable sectors to estimate the minimum cost required to maintain existing programs and services at their current levels, excluding new initiatives or capital projects unless previously approved. In addition, it will provide a realistic foundation for the budget and help control expenditure growth. The Government is compiling a comprehensive and confirmed arrears list. Strategies will be put in place to address the issue of arrears. The objective is to start the liquidation process in 2026, and is expected to continue in the medium-term.

125. To ensure inclusive development, the Government has over the years adopted innovative financing measures to reduce the rural and urban disparities. This is demonstrated by the ongoing and new infrastructure projects launched by His Excellency, President Adama Barrow. These were aimed at not only transforming rural Gambia but to catalyze economic growth, and improve the livelihoods of our people. The commitment demonstrated under this administration is to give every Gambian hope to resolve outstanding challenges as we look ahead to 2026.
126. I would like to use this opportunity to thank all our Development Partners who have supported The Gambia over the years. In this regard, I extend our deepest gratitude to the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, the African Development Bank Group, the Islamic Development Bank Group, UN Agencies, the African Union, the OPEC Fund for International Development, the Arab Bank for Economic Development, GIZ, IFAD, ECOWAS, the MRC Holland Foundation, the Commonwealth, the Red Cross, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Saudi Fund for Development, Kingdom of Morocco, Türkiye, the State of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti Fund, Russia, The People's Republic of China, Japan, South Korea, Cuba, the Republic of France, The United Kingdom, the United States of America. Abu Dabi Fund For Arab Economic Development, African Development Fund, Ecowas Bank For Investment and Development, European Investment Bank, Export-Import Bank of India, Islamic Development Bank Group, International Development Association, Agency Francaise De Development, Commission of European Communities, Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau (KfW), African Risk Capacity Group (ARC), Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Fund (GF), Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).
127. I would also like to thank His Excellency, President Adama Barrow for his visionary leadership and transformative initiatives to build a Gambia that works for all. I want to express my gratitude to my Cabinet colleagues and the hardworking staff at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. I am equally thankful to this august Assembly and the staff of the National Assembly under the leadership of the Speaker and the Clerk for working tirelessly to approve the 2026 budget estimates.

128. With continued determination, I am hopeful that we will continue to move this country on a path of poverty reduction and sustained economic growth and prosperity which will be inclusive and impactful on the lives of every Gambian.

On this note, Honourable Speaker, I beg to move.

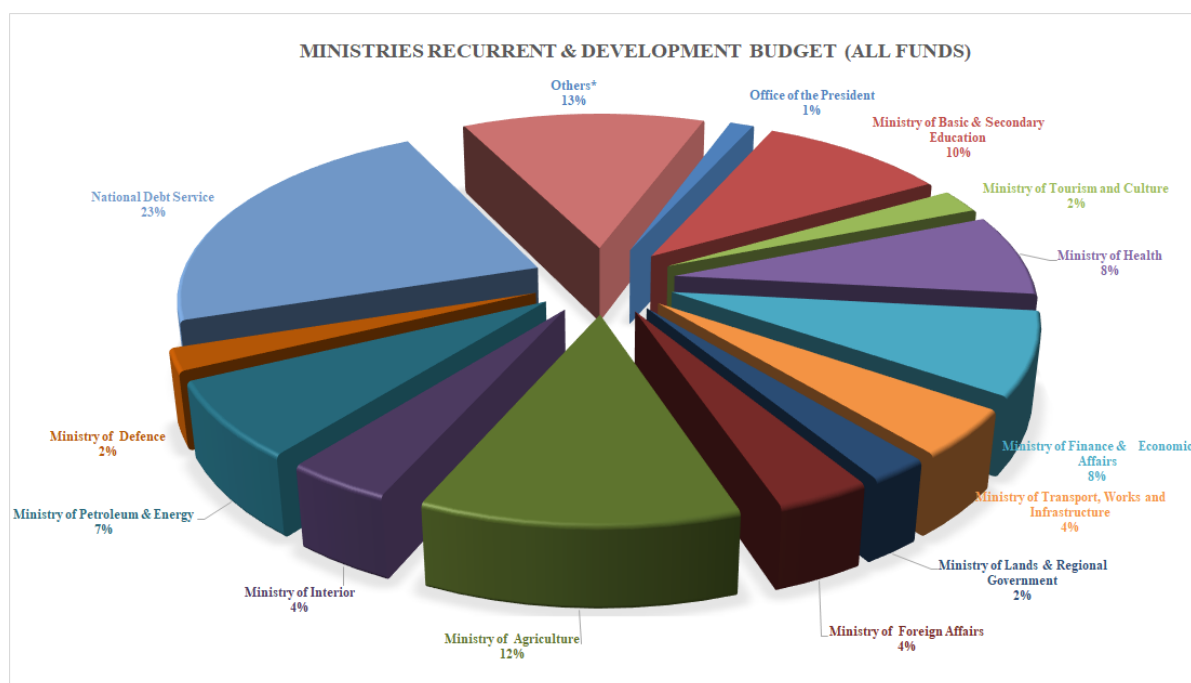
ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

SECTOR ALLOCATION FOR 2026 BUDGET (ALL FUND)

Ministries Recurrent & Development Budget (All Fu	D' Millions	% of Total
Office of the President	737.82	1.24
Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education	5,909.14	9.95
Ministry of Tourism and Culture	1,328.63	2.24
Ministry of Health	4,588.58	7.73
Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs	4,651.66	7.84
Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure	2,602.93	4.38
Ministry of Lands & Regional Government	1,345.02	2.27
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2,108.71	3.55
Ministry of Agriculture	7,103.36	11.97
Ministry of Interior	2,374.98	4.00
Ministry of Petroleum & Energy	4,249.55	7.16
Ministry of Defence	1,238.09	2.09
National Debt Service	13,458.76	22.67
Others*	7,663.88	12.91
Total	59,361.09	100.00

*Others: Ministries not listed above

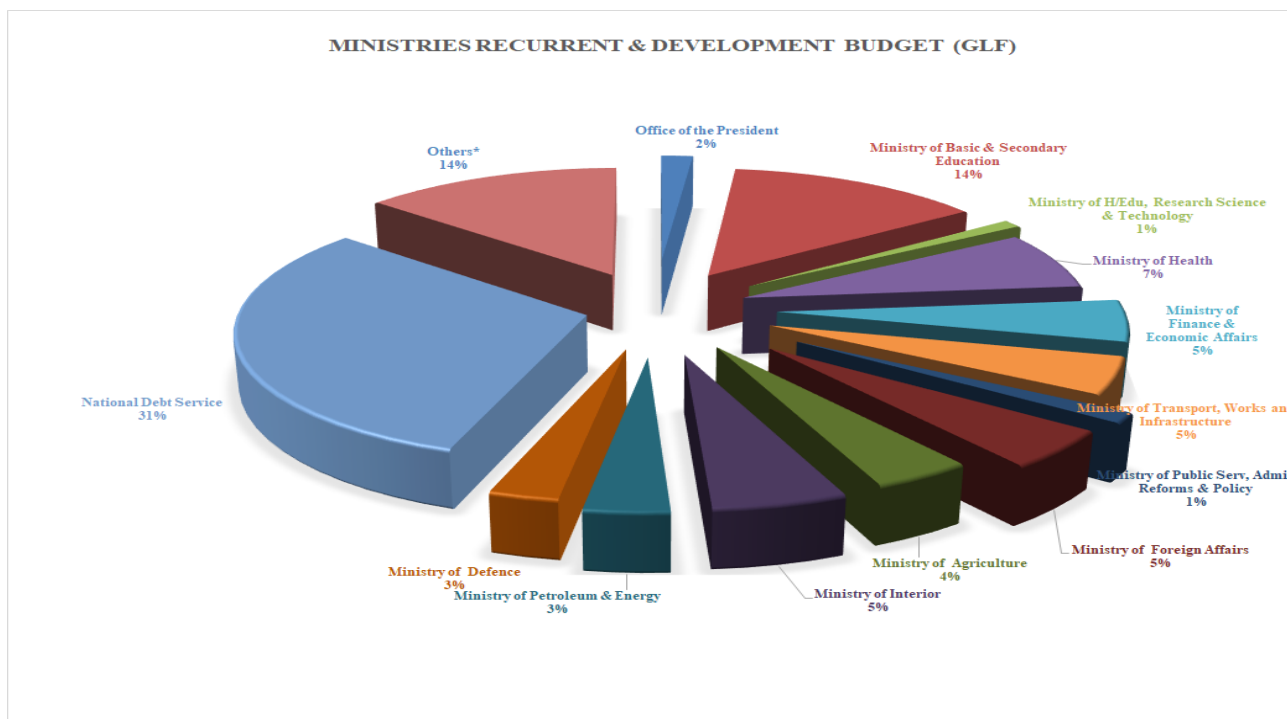


ANNEX 2

SECTOR ALLOCATION FOR 2026 BUDGET (GLF)

Ministries Recurrent & Development Budget (GLF)	D' Millions	% of Total
Office of the President	736.31	1.69
Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education	5,909.14	13.59
Ministry of H/Edu, Research Science & Technology	425.27	0.98
Ministry of Health	3,141.77	7.22
Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs	2,282.50	5.25
Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure	2,033.15	4.67
Ministry of Public Serv, Admin Reforms & Policy	569.08	1.31
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2,108.71	4.85
Ministry of Agriculture	1,757.06	4.04
Ministry of Interior	2,374.98	5.46
Ministry of Petroleum & Energy	1,512.26	3.48
Ministry of Defence	1,238.09	2.85
National Debt Service	13,458.76	30.95
Others*	5,943.87	13.67
Total	43,490.96	100.00

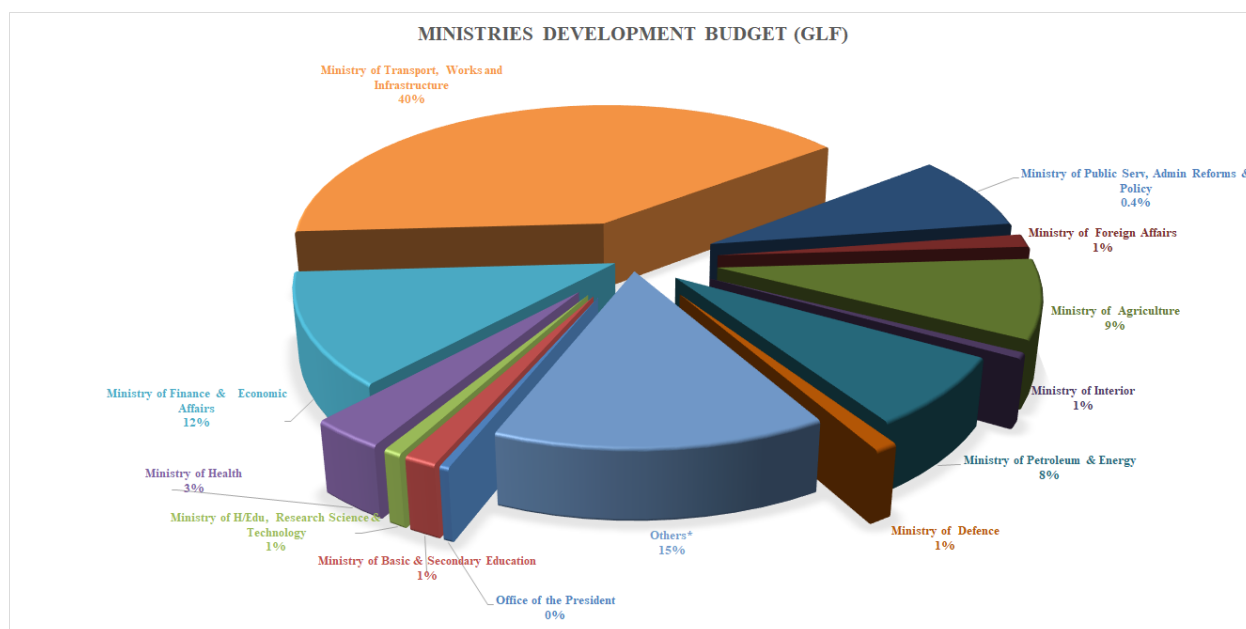
*Others: Ministries not listed above



ANNEX 3**MINISTRIES DEVELOPMENT BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR 2025 (GLF)**

Ministries Development Budget (GLF)	D' Millions	% of Total
Office of the President	185.00	4.1
Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education	180.79	4.0
Ministry of Higher Education	34.00	0.8
Ministry of Health	227.48	5.0
Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs	692.78	15.3
Ministry of Works, Construction & Infrastructure	2,198.41	48.5
Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration & Employment	4.50	0.1
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	46.00	1.0
Ministry of Agriculture	126.06	2.8
Ministry of Interior	31.48	0.7
Ministry of Petroleum & Energy	57.19	1.3
Ministry of Defence	31.76	0.7
Others*	713.72	15.8
Total	4,529.16	100.0

***Ministries not listed above**

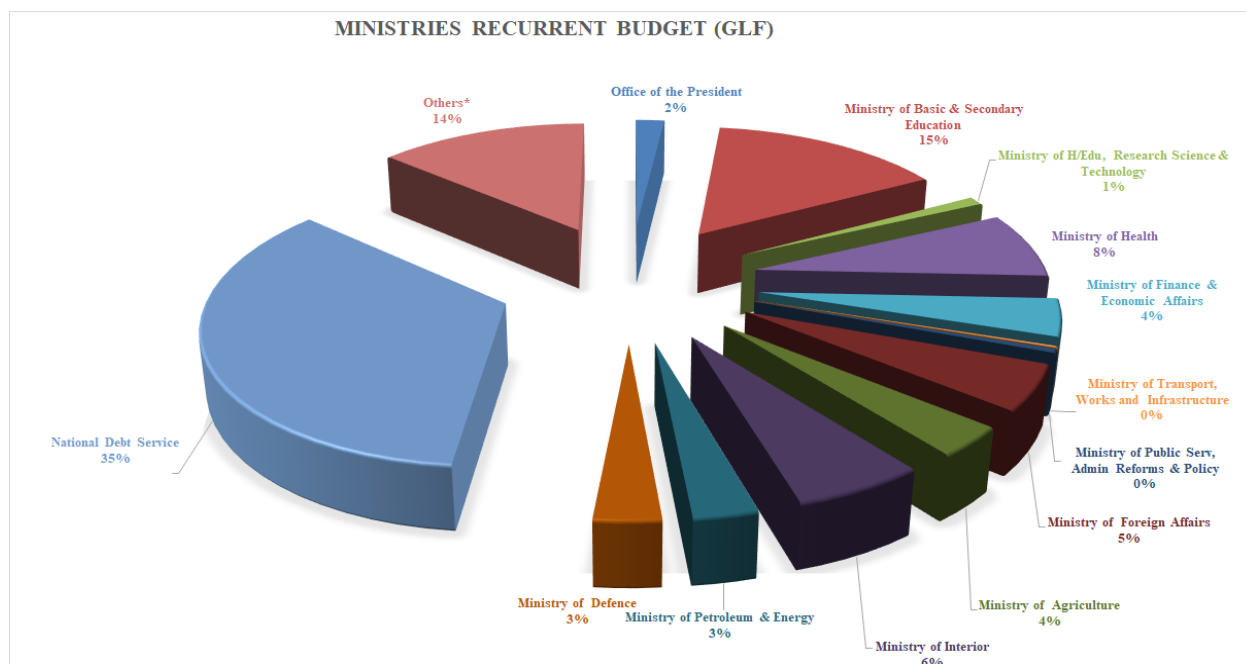


ANNEX 4

MINISTRIES RECURRENT BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR 2026 (GLF)

Ministries Recurrent Budget (GLF)	D Million	% of Total
Office of the President	717.79	1.9
Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education	5,840.67	15.1
Ministry of H/Edu, Research Science & Technology	387.47	1.0
Ministry of Health	2,985.11	7.7
Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs	1,690.27	4.4
Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure	70.74	0.2
Ministry of Public Serv, Admin Reforms & Policy	172.69	0.4
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2,040.76	5.3
Ministry of Agriculture	1,344.93	3.5
Ministry of Interior	2,344.87	6.1
Ministry of Petroleum & Energy	1,148.99	3.0
Ministry of Defence	1,189.02	3.1
National Debt Service	13,458.76	34.8
Others*	5,239.80	13.6
Total	38,631.88	100.0

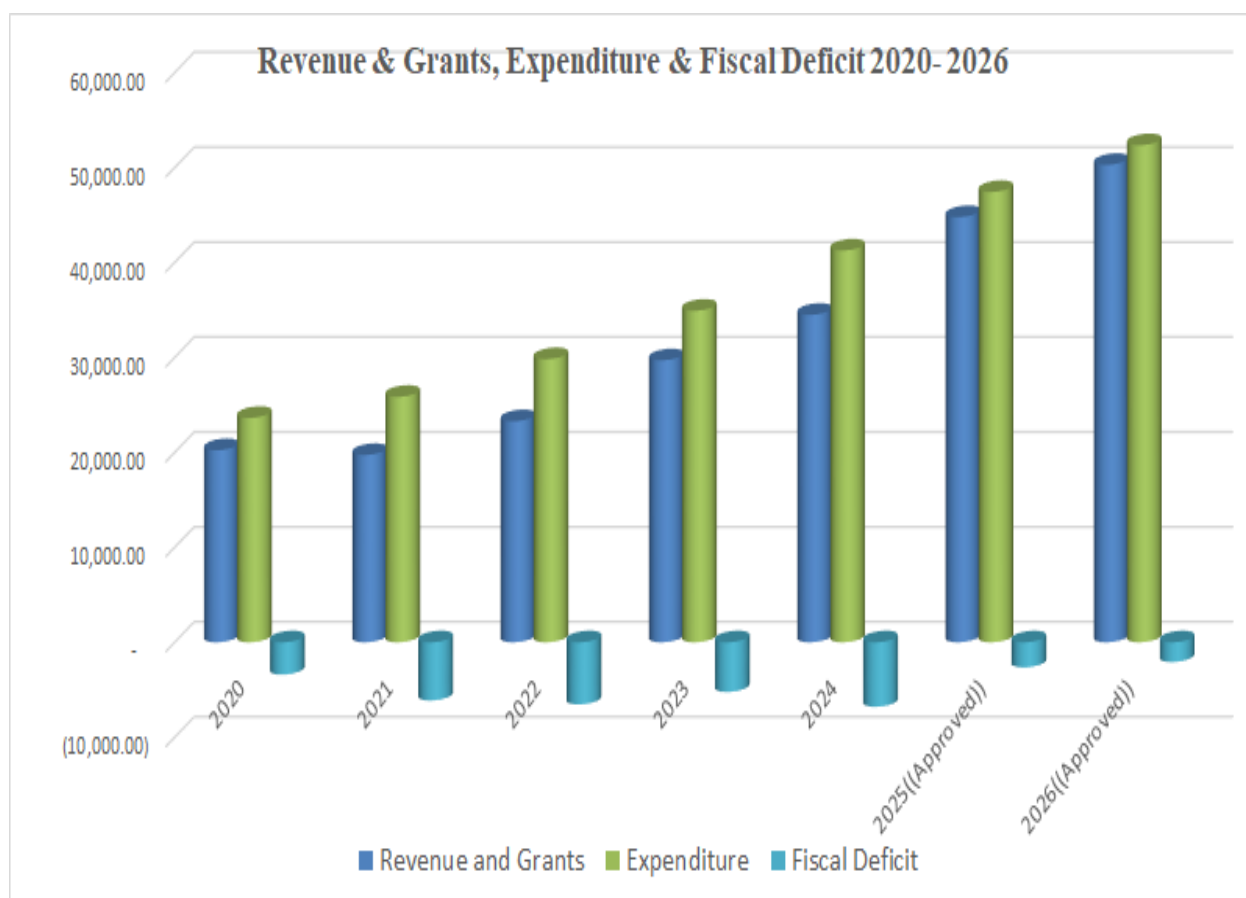
*Ministries not listed above



ANNEX 5

Revenue & Grants, Expenditure and Net Lending and Fiscal Deficit (2020 - 2026)

D' Millions	Revenue and Grants	Expenditure	Fiscal Deficit
2020	20,236.17	23,635.73	(3,399.56)
2021	19,731.12	25,856.15	(6,125.03)
2022	23,287.81	29,831.39	(6,543.58)
2023	29,701.28	34,925.09	(5,223.81)
2024	34,492.00	41,272.28	(6,780.28)
2025((Approved))	44,787.43	47,434.75	(2,647.32)
2026((Approved))	50,286.74	52,358.34	(2,071.60)

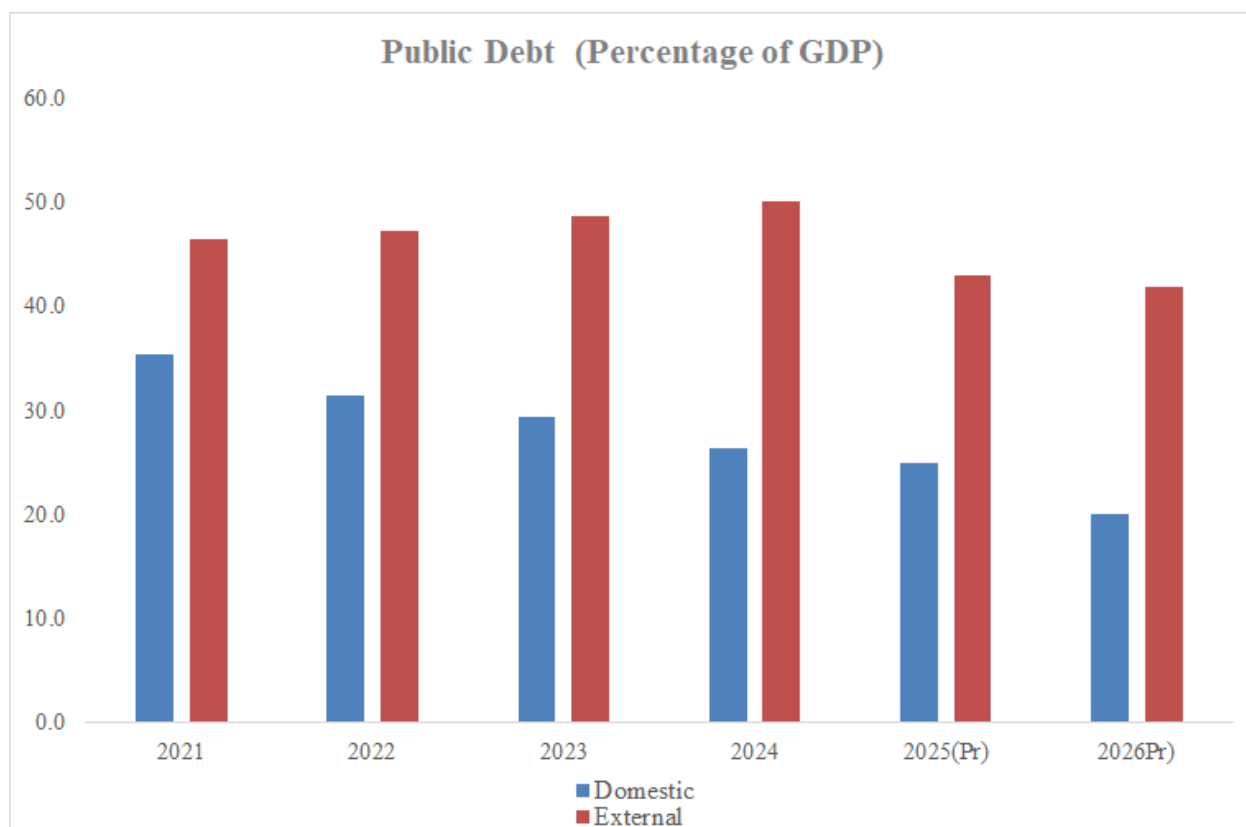


ANNEX 6

PUBLIC DEBT (PERCENTAGE OF GDP)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025(Pr)	2026Pr)
Domestic	35.3	31.5	29.4	26.3	25.0	20.0
External	46.4	47.2	48.6	50.0	43.0	41.9

Note: All figures are as per the old GDP



Annex 7

New Revenue Measures for 2026

Revenue Heads	Tax Base	Rate	2026 Estimates
Carbon Tax	Volume	Specific	195,220,471.32
Tobacco Control Levy	KG	3	22,600,542.86
Pool Betting	Winnings	50%	72,673,728.18
SPL	Vehicles	Varied	52,571,200.00
GROSS ESTIMATED REVENUE			343,065,942.36

Annex 8	
Schedule for the Social Protection Levy Rate	
Vehicle Type	Social Protection Levy Rate
Company Names	Levy
Buses	1,200.00
Vans	600.00
Trucks	1,000.00
Salon Cars	400.00
4x 4 Drives	700.00
Motorcycles	200.00
Tricycles	500.00
Others	1,000.00