



**REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA**

**ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE  
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**HIGHER EDUCATION  
STRATEGY PAPER**

**2007-2011**

## **THE GAMBIA DONOR ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE 2007**

### **HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**

#### **1. Introduction**

Human Development Index (HDI) ranking of The Gambia, as measured in the UNDP Human Development Reports (HDRs), has remained low and declined from 149 out of 161 countries in the year 2001 to 155 out of 177 in 2004 and in 2006 (UNDP, HDR 2001, 2004, 2006). The Government of The Gambia (GOTG) considers the development of its human resource base as very important in shaping the future of the country, given that it has few natural resources and limited arable land. Typical of developing countries, The Gambia has a youthful population with 40 percent under 15 years of age and 20 percent between 15 and 24 years, implying a high degree of age and economic dependence.

Despite significant achievements by the education sector over the past decade, the education system in The Gambia continue to manifest significant problems of access, quality education and quality of service delivery. While the growth in enrolment at the Basic (grades 1-6) and Upper Basic levels (7-9) have been impressive, above 60 percent and 30 percent respectively, in 2005/06, Senior Secondary Education net enrolment ratios remained low at 10 percent (2000/01) rising to 18 percent in 2005/06). The growth in enrolment is registered in all Local Government Areas (LGA) although, skewed towards the urban Banjul and Greater Banjul Area/KMC areas. The demand for senior secondary education, and tertiary and university education continue to outstrip the supply of secondary, tertiary and university places. There is indeed a wide gap between demand for places and supply at these levels, making access a pertinent issue.

It is reported that Gambia College, the teacher training institution, attracts candidates who do not themselves have mastery of the content and that the College does not possess the capacity to bridge the knowledge gap before they are deployed to the school system (WB, 2006<sup>1</sup>). In effect, teachers who do not understand the content or do not know what to teach, are deployed to the classrooms. As teachers are one of the most important elements in teaching, the current state of affairs will have adverse consequences for the quality of education being delivered.

Poverty is widespread and severe, and is believed to have fluctuated between 58 percent and 63 percent from 1992 to 2003 (GOTG, 2006<sup>2</sup>). In 2003, it is reported that up to 58 percent of the country's population was living below the poverty line (of less than one dollar US a day).

Taking cognisance of the low level of human development and the widespread and deepening poverty, the GOTG developed a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) to reduce poverty and spur socio-economic growth. Following PRSP I, PRSP II (2007-2011), identifies "improve coverage of the basic social services" as one of the five priority areas in the battle to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of the people of The Gambia. The social services comprise the health and education sectors. It is important to note however, that in the case of education, the primary focus of the PRSP is on Basic and Secondary Education.

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<sup>1</sup> WB, 2006. Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Grant to the Republic of The Gambia for the Third Education Sector Project in Support of the Second Phase of the Education Sector Program, May 8, 2006, Report No: 35797-GM.

<sup>2</sup> GOTG, 2006. Poverty Reduction Strategy: 2007-2011 (Approved Copy), Department of State for Finance & Economic Affairs, Banjul, The Gambia

This notwithstanding, the GOTG has identified priority and investment programmes areas in the education sector to enable The Gambia realise a healthy and well-developed human resource base, with the aim of transforming The Gambia into a “financial centre, ... a trading export-oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation, ... sustained by a well-educated, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population, ...” (Vision 2020, GOTG 1996<sup>3</sup>, p. ix). To realise this goal however, GOTG must make substantial investments in higher education not only in the training of teachers but also in producing a critical mass of scientists and technicians and other professionals to provide the requisite productive skills and intellectual leadership to move the country forward.

The GOTG is in the midst of instituting reforms in the education sector, including the tertiary and higher education sub-sector, that it believes will address the problems of access to, and quality and relevance of education at all levels, and the quality of service delivery, among other things. It is believed that the successful implementation of the reforms will contribute positively towards the reduction of poverty nationally and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

### **1.1 Links between Higher Education and Socio-Economic Growth**

At the individual level, education is one of the most critical factors in transforming a person’s socio-economic status. With higher education come new specialised knowledge and skills. And with increased capacity come the ability to improve one’s socio-economic condition and contribute to the overall development of one’s country. At the national level, it goes without saying that a well-educated and highly skilled labour force is a pre-requisite for economic growth and socio-economic development. In order to achieve the kind of socio-economic and technological progress envisaged in *The Gambia Inc. ... Vision 2020*, there is need to develop a critical mass of university-educated people who are able to apply the products of research, science and technology to increase the productive capacities of the country. Indeed, the education sector is expected to continue “... investing in training infrastructure to produce a continuing stream of technicians in order to cater for a diversification of economic and social activities ...”. (GOTG, 1996<sup>4</sup>, p.39).

In addition, the education and training provided necessarily must be of high quality, relevant to the needs of the country and the labour market, and accessible to a majority of the people. As a result, the country’s labour force could apply the knowledge and skills to create wealth and economically propel the country forward.

### **1.2 Relationship between Tertiary Education and the rest of the Education System**

A symbiotic relationship exists between the higher education sub-sector and the rest of the education sector in that the products of the latter feed the former. Graduates of the secondary level of the education system enrol in the tertiary and higher education institutions. In return, the tertiary and higher education sub-sector train teachers and other professionals for the lower levels of the education sector and other sectors of the economy.

Higher education is therefore an extension of secondary education and is crucial in the development of The Gambia’s human resource development capacity to respond to the country’s labour market needs. Similarly, higher education is expected to

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<sup>3</sup> GOTG, 1996. *The Gambia Incorporated ... Vision 2020*. May 1996, p.3.

<sup>4</sup> GOTG, 1996. *The Gambia Incorporated ... Vision 2020*. May 1996, p. 39

produce the intellectual leadership needed to steer the country towards attaining its ideals.

## **2. Situational Analysis: issues and challenges**

Currently, tertiary education is provided by the three traditional post-secondary institutions, namely, Gambia College in education, the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) in technical and vocational education and the Management Development Institute (MDI) in the area of management studies provide the trained and skilled manpower at the middle levels of services and industry. The University of The Gambia (UTG), established in 1999, provides higher education to Bachelor degree level in a wide range of disciplines. A Master of Arts degree programme in History has recently been introduced (August 2007). Together, the tertiary and higher education institutions enrol just over 8000 (8373) students in a range of certificates, diplomas and degrees programmes. Work is underway to integrate the tertiary education institutions for increased efficiency in the use of academic resources at the various campuses, greater access to tertiary and higher education and improved quality of service delivery.

In addition to the tertiary institutions, there are about 103 registered Skills Training Centres providing courses towards local and external certificates and diplomas in a variety of professional fields. These are mainly privately operated centres. Information available on 50 centres indicates that about 10,000 students are enrolled in the centres. Data was not available on 53 other registered centres. The National Training Authority (NTA) was in the data collection exercise during the preparation of this paper. In total therefore, tertiary and higher education, including skills training centres enrol over 18,000 students.

The quality of instructions, as well as standards, varies widely from the more quality and standards-conscious university to the less vigorously monitored private skills centres. At present, each institution has its own way of ascertaining quality but a coherent system of quality assurance with set standards and benchmarks and an effective monitoring system is completely absent for tertiary education. This, invariably, impacts negatively on the quality of tertiary education programmes. Therefore, there is a need to establish and make the HEO functional to effectively institute and monitor standards and assure quality in tertiary and higher education. The main implementation agencies for this activity will be the DOSHERST and the tertiary institutions.

It should be mentioned however, that the NTA has developed a national skills qualification framework in a bid to instil standards and quality in the skills training programmes. While the NTA has developed quality-oriented framework instruments and are working to assure quality technical and professional education is dispensed, the institution continues to be challenged by institutional capacity constraints, especially, financial and human resources.

### **2.1 Issues**

The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015 (GOTG, 2006<sup>5</sup>) has identified some of the most critical issues confronting the tertiary and higher education sub-sector, relate to access to quality and relevant tertiary education; human resources capacity constraints; and availability of physical infrastructure and equipment.

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<sup>5</sup> GOTG, 2006. The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015. Department of State for Education (Now Department of State for Basic & Secondary Education), Banjul, The Gambia.

### **2.1.1 Access to Relevant Tertiary and Higher Education**

It has been observed that in order to realise the national aspirations embodied in Vision 2020, the PRSP and the MDG, it is critical to increase access to and improve quality of tertiary and higher education. The flexible/multiple entry routes to degree and diploma programmes that come with integration of higher education is expected to augment the number of students pursuing tertiary and higher education. Similarly, integration will have an impact on the relevance of tertiary and higher education and research as academic and professional programmes are rationalised and aligned with national aspirations and goals. Availability of adequate and timely allocation of financial resources to tertiary and higher education institutions is crucial for their successful operations.

### **2.1.2 Quality Improvement in Tertiary and Higher Education**

The tertiary and higher education component of the Education Policy 2004-2015 and the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015 have both identified quality improvement in tertiary and higher education as a major preoccupation of the sector over the next seven (7) years. In this regard, Government intends to establish a Higher Education Observatory to institute and monitor standards and quality of teaching and relevance of research undertaken in higher education institutions. When integration of the higher education system is complete and certificates, diplomas and degrees accredited and awarded by the UTG, improvements in standards and quality is expected.

### **2.1.3 Human/Intellectual Resources**

One of the most important academic resources in higher education is the human or intellectual resource. Without this resource in adequate quantity and quality, a university will be unable fulfil its mandate. In The Gambia, quality academics are very scarce at the tertiary and higher education sub-sector. As result, the UTG and the tertiary institutions depend heavily on foreign lecturers and foreign tertiary education service providers from the sub-region. As a result of this, Government is committed to train by the year 2015, about 1000 (992) Gambian academic degree holders and over 600 (616) Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) professional degree holders.

### **2.1.4 Physical Infrastructure**

The creation of opportunities for more people to access university education leading to increased enrolment in higher education institutions will necessarily have a direct bearing on availability of physical infrastructure and other resources. The increased demand for higher education places will require increased lecture room space and equipment. As a result, Government is committed to constructing a main university campus at Faraba Banta for the UTG and renovate and expand the Kanifing Campus to create more space for administration, university library and lecture rooms.

While integration is expected to increase efficiency in the use of academic/physical resources at various campuses (GC, GTTI and MDI), there is an urgent need to increase the current lecture room and associated office spaces. Government of The Gambia has therefore interested the World Bank in the rehabilitation and expansion of Administration, Library and Core University Facilities at the Kanifing Campus under Component 1: Improved conditions for Teaching and Learning of the Third Education Sector Project, Phase 2. It should be noted however, that the Bank is committed only to finance the design of the facilities (WB, 2006).

## **2.2 Challenges**

### **2.2.1 Financial Resources**

Financial resources have a direct bearing on every aspect of higher education – access, quality and relevance, human resources and infrastructure. Financial resources determine the status of all the issues mentioned above. Currently, tertiary and higher education institutions depend on government subvention, the levels of which are determined by the performance of the national economy. As the allocation of resources to the education sector from the national budget declined over the years, so did the amount of resources available to the tertiary and higher education institutions. While institutions are encouraged to generate resources from a variety of sources, the revenue is normally just enough to augment operational costs but not embark on any major development activities like the types required by the current situation. Indeed, the policy of encouraging tertiary institutions to generate additional resources for operations, institutions have tended to offer soft and popular certificate and diploma courses for which students pay. Some of these courses are not necessarily aligned to national priority needs.

### **2.2.2 Human Resources**

It has been stated earlier that the tertiary and higher education sub-sector relies heavily on foreign academics and tertiary education service providers. With this situation, planning for sustainability becomes difficult as academic staff mobility frustrates long-term planning efforts and the financial requirements to sustain such a system become very high.

### **2.2.3 Physical Infrastructure**

Currently, the UTG does not have a campus, neither at Faraba Banta nor at Kanifing and the basic infrastructure is rudimentary. The approximately 1500 students of the UTG use lecture room space of the main public tertiary institutions (GC, GTTI & MDI) leading to congestion and strain on the available space and furniture. The university teaching and learning conditions and the paucity of equipment, especially specialised equipment adversely impacts higher education delivery and the quality of education dispensed. It is expected that with improved physical infrastructure, teaching and learning conditions and adequate equipment, the quality of and access to tertiary and higher education will improve.

## **3. Strategy and Policy Direction**

A Higher Education Policy is being developed and elaborated following the establishment of the new Department of State for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DOSHERST) in early 2007. In the interim, the Tertiary and Higher Education component of the Education Policy 2004-2015, prepared by the then Department of State for Education (DOSE) is being used to guide the activities of the new Department of State.

Tertiary education will cover all post-secondary programmes in The Gambia, and will, in particular, include the following:

- Technical education
- Teacher education
- University education
- Research.

Government will ensure that the tertiary education sector provides a flexible and dynamic system of education and training. Flexibility will be provided by adopting a combination of methods and processes that will ensure the demands of access and

equity, on the one hand, and the need for quality and standards (excellence), on the other. Full-time institutional programmes will be complemented by a variety of ODL education and part time courses. Flexible entry and exit admission arrangements will be ensured to suit the pace of learning, learning needs, and the convenience of different groups of learners.

Provision of continuing education programmes to upgrade and update the knowledge and skills of people at work, those who missed their opportunities to pursue programmes of education and training of their choice early in life, and those who are looking for opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills through a diversity of means will be a significant element of this policy.

The Gambian tertiary and higher education system will evolve during the period of this policy around the development of the UTG at the apex, with the existing three tertiary institutions constituting the nucleus of the system.

The major objectives of the tertiary and higher education programmes are:

- To enhance the human resource development capacity of The Gambia in response to labour market needs;
- To provide relevant, sustainable and high quality tertiary education and research to support socio-economic, scientific and technological advances and development, and promotion of excellence in the creation and dissemination of knowledge; and
- To produce men and women who can provide intellectual leadership to the emergence of a nation wedded to the ideals of democracy and a socially, politically and economically self-reliant country in a globalised and interdependent world.

The main policy components for the UTG will be to:

- Encourage the integrated UTG to offer, beginning on a limited scale, graduate;
- Programmes within the existing faculties and in cooperation with foreign universities;
- Reduce dependency on expatriate teaching staff;
- Encourage the integrated UTG to collaborate with other universities in programmes relevant to The Gambia;
- Enable the integrated UTG to take up a strategic position within the national development programme; and
- Finalise the Higher Education Observatory Act.
- Establish the HEO as the body charged with accrediting and validating qualifications in order to reduce the dependency on external bodies

### **Research**

The GOTG takes the view that well-developed and equipped research facilities are essential to attract and retain academic talent. Thus, the GOTG will promote research in the fields of development relevant to the country. The proposed HEO and the Quality Assurance Council for Education (QACE) represent two instruments to ensure that investments in tertiary education give priority to improving the quality of teaching and research.

## **4. Programme: Activities/projects, indicators, institutions**

### **4.1 Planned Interventions**

#### **Purpose**

The interventions planned under the tertiary education Programme aim at providing expanded and quality Programmes for Gambians through an integrated system of tertiary education that will train more citizens in academic and professional disciplines.

#### **Result Areas**

Consistent with the National Education Policy (2004-2015) and reflecting the complex and varied nature of tertiary education, there are seven result areas, namely:

#### **Result Area 1: Adherence to standards of professionalism by both staff and student (Tertiary institution level)**

High level professionalism is an essential ingredient in the successful delivery of educational programmes, especially at the tertiary level. Therefore, specific attention will be given to the establishment of regulations and their implementation.

#### **Result Area 2: Improved management in all tertiary institutions (Tertiary institutions and DOSE)**

Quality institutional management is critical in providing the right kind of direction to the delivery of educational Programmes and for the efficient and effective use of physical and human resources. Under the planned integrated system of tertiary education, there will be a strengthened management system both at the tertiary institution level and at the level of DOSHERST.

#### **Result Area 3: Highly qualified and motivated academic staff**

For quality outputs at the tertiary level to be a reality, highly qualified and motivated staff is a prerequisite. This could be achieved through a continuous career development plan that will not only take into account staff performance but also their retention. Institutions should include as part of their work plans the establishment of units responsible for human resource development.

#### **Result Area 4: Improved regular maintenance of structures and resources for improved access to quality tertiary education (at the tertiary institution level)**

105. The ability of institutions to offer Programmes and access to such Programmes depends largely on a good maintenance policy and Programme. Structures and resources including laboratory and ICT equipment and buildings need to be well maintained to enable continuous access to tertiary education.

#### **Result Area 5: Adequate and timely funding of tertiary institutions (tertiary institutional level and DOSHERST)**

Availability of adequate funding is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of interventions planned for the tertiary education programme. This includes acquiring the funds as well as establishing a functioning effective, sustainable financial management system.

#### **Result Area 6: Improved relevant quality education in tertiary institutions (tertiary institution and DOSE)**

In order to achieve the objectives at the tertiary level, a higher education observatory will be established, mandated mainly to monitor and evaluate the performance of students as well as delivery in both terms of course content and examination outputs.

### **Result Area 7: Improved access to tertiary education**

108. Despite great efforts by government, access to tertiary education is still limited, especially in certain critical areas such as science and technology.

### **4.2 Indicators for the Result Areas**

The purpose set for tertiary education is: *Improved access to relevant, quality tertiary education*. At the purpose level there are several indicators, which will be used to measure the extent to which improved access to relevant, quality tertiary education has been achieved.

These are:

- 10,000 additional Gambian teachers by 2015, comprising:
  - 6297 qualified PTC
  - 2095 qualified HTC
  - 616 B. Ed.
  - 992 holders of academic degrees
- Gender parity in enrolment and completion across all the programmes
- Certificate, diploma, and degree programmes offered at tertiary institutions
- Degree programmes offered at the GTTI, MDI, GC and UTG campuses under the integrated system will be accredited by the proposed HEO

An HEO will be established to promote and maintain academic standards in education, learning and knowledge associated with the proposed integrated UTG by setting and monitoring standards for tertiary education and acting as an advisory body to DOSHERST. All these measures are consistent with the National Education Policy (2004 –2015).

### **Result Area 1**

- Clearly stated rules and regulations including specific sanctions against sexual harassment;
- Gender parity in completion in all the disciplines; and
- Establishment of regulations and an Examinations Committee to oversee the conduct of examinations for all tertiary education Programmes.

### **Result Area 2**

- Clearly defined and agreed statutes, terms of reference and mandate for all tertiary education units and the THERD consistent with the new planned integration of tertiary education structures.
- ?Management structures and relationships established in each tertiary education unit and at THERD. A minimum of two SMT meetings per term for each tertiary education unit will be required.

### **Result Area 3**

- The existence of a Human Resource Policy
- ?Clear conditions of service for all tertiary education staff
- ?Clearly outlined career profiles for tertiary education staff
- An attrition rate of academic staff below 5%

### **Result Area 4**

- 90% of structures are well maintained.
- ?90% of all necessary equipment in place and functional
- Maintenance policy for structures and equipment in place

### **Result Area 5**

- An overall increased budgetary allocation to Tertiary education.

### **Result Area 6**

- A rise of 50% in the number of academic staff holding PhDs, 50% holding Master's degrees and 50% holding first degrees DOSE Education Policy 2004 p 48.
- Quality assurance units in all tertiary education units established and functional
- Establish HEO, set standards and benchmarks for tertiary education programmes and mechanisms of monitoring them;
- Establish a functioning Monitoring and Evaluation Policy in all tertiary education units
- Establish a functioning Quality Assurance Policy for all tertiary education Programmes

### **Result Area 7**

- Successful attainment of planned increases in intake for all tertiary education programmes, especially for the areas considered to be critical such as science and technology
- Brochures, prospectuses and journals on tertiary education to be readily available to the public in sufficient quantities
- A functional Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) in place

## **4.3 Strategic Activities**

*The Main activities to be implemented to secure adherence to standards of professionalism by both staff and students are:*

### **Revise and implement rules, regulations and professional standards of the tertiary institutions**

The regulations on professional standards at the institutional level are either nonexistent or ad-hoc in nature. This activity will help to standardise procedures and thereby contribute to the quality of delivery of tertiary education.

### **Conduct training workshops on research and writing for staff and students (TIs)**

Research is essential for the generation of new knowledge and deeper understanding of practical issues such as the development of technology and, therefore, contributes immensely to the socioeconomic development of the nation. The culture of research needs to be embedded in academic staff and students. Training in research and writing is essential for this purpose.

### **Centralise printing and safe-keeping of examination papers (TIs)**

This will improve the quality and credibility of examinations. As of now, issues of examinations at some of the institutions are addressed on an ad-hoc basis and the centralisation of management of examinations will help solve the problem.

*Activities designed to bring about improved management:*

### **Conduct institutional assessment for tertiary educational units (THERD)**

It will be necessary to ascertain the needs of and challenges faced by tertiary education institutions/units to be able to effectively develop policies and strategies for improvement.

***Develop and implement standard management procedures and an operational planning framework for the tertiary education system (TIs)***

This activity will be an integral part of the process of integration of tertiary institutions that is currently ongoing.

***Establish appropriate management capacity at the tertiary education level (TIs)***

Management capacity is a prerequisite for the proper functioning of the institution. Management capacity, especially middle-level management, at tertiary institutions needs great improvement and this activity will help do that.

***Develop strategies for research and development (R&D) in management (THERD)***

Strategies to guide R&D will go a long way towards improving management. Presently, there are no such coherent strategies at any of the tertiary institutions.

***Implement a performance management system for the integrated tertiary education system (TIs)***

A system to manage performance is crucial for the tertiary education system to realise the full potential of its staff. Staff output may be very much improved by a well-managed system and, as of now, no organised performance management system exists at the tertiary institution level.

*Activities to be implemented to achieve this result:*

***Provide a legal framework for publishing research, establish research publications and research groups, and make available adequate funding for research activities (DOSHERST)***

Research generates new knowledge and provides a basis for sound policy and, therefore, establishing research groups and publications will have positive impact on overall socioeconomic development.

***Regularly monitor research output as measured by acceptance of research work for publication in academic journals (TIs)***

The acceptance of research work for publication is a strong measure of quality of work and subsequently possible usefulness of results and conclusions that emanated from the work. More publications in reputable journals, therefore, indicate high academic output from high quality academic staff.

***Secure and provide adequate funding for study Programmes, especially to the Master's and PhD levels, for staff that need to upgrade their qualifications (TIs)***

Increasing the qualification levels of staff to Master's and PhD degrees is critical for the tertiary education sub-sector to fulfil its role in providing lecturers for the tertiary education level, senior secondary school teachers, medical doctors, engineers and other professionals engaged in socio-economic development of the nation. Funding for this purpose is essential and needs to be pursued vigorously.

***Develop and implement a human resource policy at the tertiary institution level (TIs)***

All tertiary institutions have Conditions of Service which are short of full human resource policies. Institutions, therefore, are short of a proper planning tool for staff development. This activity will help resolve the issue.

***Establish and maintain relevant capacities and competencies at the tertiary institution level and at the DOSHERST***

Competencies in subject areas and capacities in management are necessary to improve at the tertiary institution level.

***Establish and maintain relevant capacities and competencies at the DOSHERST***

Capacities in policy development, management and programme implementation are necessary to improve at DOSHERST.

***Provide continued professional development for staff (lecturers and administration staff) (TIs)***

Continuous professional development to upgrade junior staff and keep lecturers abreast of latest discoveries and pedagogical innovations is necessary for the delivery of quality education at the tertiary education level. Continuous professional development for staff involved in administration is necessary to keep the organisation robust, and it is to the benefit of all staff. Currently, there is no coherent strategy for this purpose.

*Activities to be undertaken in pursuit of adequate and timely funding of tertiary education :*

***Each institution will develop and implement a maintenance policy for all structures, facilities and equipment and identify funds for doing so***

Currently, tertiary institutions do not have maintenance policies. The state of structures, facilities and equipment is fundamental for the delivery of quality educational services. Policies to guide their maintenance will not only help their upkeep but also reduce recurrent expenses.

***Equip laboratories, workshops and libraries at a level appropriate to the requirements***

The state of laboratories and libraries at the tertiary institutions needs great improvement. Quality teaching and learning, especially in the sciences, cannot be effective without well equipped laboratories, libraries and workshops.

***Formulate and implement a development plan for future expansion***

With the current rate of expansion of basic and secondary education and planned increases in these areas, expansion of tertiary education is inevitable. A planned expansion will help prevent or minimise challenges in the future.

***Develop and implement a plan for the integration of tertiary institutions***

The integration process of tertiary institutions is ongoing and the preliminary steps of broad-based consultations both within the institutions and the larger public have now been completed. Recommendations are now being considered for adoption and further action. This activity is one of the single most relevant activities in the move to improve opportunities for students, improve efficiency and effectiveness of use of resources, increase enrolment and improve delivery of quality Programmes. It is, therefore, a major part of the National Education Policy (2004-2015).

*Activities to be undertaken to achieve improved, relevant quality education:*

***Develop and implement effective financial management systems, including uniform financial planning and budgeting frameworks for tertiary education***

Under the planned integration of tertiary education in the country, a unified financial planning and budgeting system will be necessary.

***Develop an effective and sustainable planning and funding framework for tertiary education***

Given the high cost of tertiary education, a sustainable planning and funding framework will have to be an integral part of the operations of tertiary institutions. This will reduce dependency on government for funding.

***Develop and strengthen structures for public and private sector financing, including the development of modalities for increased cost sharing***

Cost sharing is an essential feature of the financing of tertiary education programmes, and tertiary institutions should effectively involve users of the services as well as public and private institutions. To do so, a systematic and coherent approach is needed.

***Establish capacity for financial planning and budgeting***

The successes of tertiary institutions are significantly dependent on the planning and budgeting of their resources, especially finances. In order to establish and maintain a reliable financial management system, capacity of the relevant personnel mandated with the day-to-day management of these institutions should be built and strengthened continuously.

***Each year, train a minimum of 10% of the academic staff to the PhD level, 20% to the Master's degree level and 30% to the first degree level***

For any tertiary institution to survive and make a positive impact on the socioeconomic well-being of its citizenry there should be a well-structured and planned career development plan. This begins with a training needs assessment that will establish the gaps and the necessary capacity required by the institution to face challenges.

***Establish and implement quality assurance units in all tertiary education units (TIs)***

No coherent quality assurance policy or Programme exists in any of the tertiary institutions. These impacts on the quality of the Programmes offered and an internal quality assurance policy and Programme are urgently needed.

***Establish and implement quality assurance policies for all tertiary units (DOSHERST)***

The DOSHERST will develop a central Quality Assurance Policy and the Tertiary Education sub-sector will draw from it to develop internal policies. These policies do not exist in any form at the central level or at any of the tertiary institutions.

***Establish and make functional an HEO with full capacity of trained staff and structures to house its operations***

The HEO will be the independent organ that will help set standards for all tertiary programmes and monitor them. It is only through the work of such an independent organ that tertiary Programmes will be credibly accredited to ensure that they meet the required academic and professional standards. It is, therefore, necessary to focus on establishing the HEO as part of the integration of tertiary education process.

*Activities to be implemented to achieve improved access to tertiary education:*

***Increase intake to all tertiary education programmes using both face-to-face and ODL modes***

Different modes of delivery of programmes will need to be employed to cater for the projected increase in demand for various tertiary programmes. It is not likely that only strictly face-to-face programmes will be able to cater for the demand and also the different realities of people who need tertiary education programmes. ODL has been increasingly employed, especially in teacher training, with mixed results but, overall, it has contributed greatly in producing more teachers in shorter periods of time. It is necessary to improve both the ODL as well as face-to-face techniques currently in use to make them more efficient and capable of effectively increasing enrolment and quality of delivery.

***Develop and implement effective strategies such as the production of brochures, prospectuses and journals describing Programmes, which are made readily available to the public in sufficient quantities***

Generating and sharing information and knowledge are the hallmark of tertiary education. Currently, tertiary institutions do not have a systematic and comprehensive way to share information either through print or other forms.

## 5. Costing and Financing

The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015 has costed priority programmes to determine the quantum of resources to achieve the goals and objectives of the tertiary and higher education sub-sector. The costing exercise also indicates available resources and the financing gap.

The total investment for the ten-year strategic plan period for the whole education sector is about US \$195 million of which about 66% is investment cost and about 34% is recurrent cost. It can be observed from Table 1 below that for the tertiary education sub-sector, the total required for the strategic plan period is about US \$4 million (US \$3.982 million) with about 45.5% (US \$1.813 million) committed leaving a gap of 54.5% (US \$2.169 million).

**Table 1: Total Investment and Funding gap by Component (\$000)**

Component Programme area	Committed Funding		Funding Gap		Total	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Basic education	54,013.46	38.5%	86,351.85	61.5%	140,365.31	72.1%
Secondary education	4,817.92	17.1%	23,343.70	82.9%	28,161.62	14.5%
<b>Tertiary education</b>	<b>1,812.90</b>	<b>45.5%</b>	<b>2,169.66</b>	<b>54.5%</b>	<b>3,982.56</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
Technical and vocational education and training	103.30	1.3%	7,737.91	98.7%	7,841.22	4.0%
Quality assurance	1,463.76	43.1%	1,928.82	56.9%	3,392.58	1.7%
Sector management	7,564.30	69.6%	3,305.60	30.4%	10,869.90	5.6%
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENT COSTS</b>	<b>69,775.65</b>	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>124,837.53</b>	<b>64.1%</b>	<b>194,613.18</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015, DOSE, Banjul, p. 37.

Table 2 below indicates the costs associated with the seven results areas of tertiary education.

**Table 2: Total Costs of Tertiary Education Programme and Result Areas (\$000)**

Programme and Result Area	Cost	% of Total <sup>6</sup>
<b>Tertiary Education</b>		
1. Adherence to standards and professionalism	547.44	0.30
2. Improved management in all tertiary institutions	212.33	0.10
3. Highly qualified and motivated staff	344.36	0.20
4. Improved tertiary education facilities	1,234.60	0.60
5. Effective financial planning and management	128.42	0.10
6. Improved relevant and quality education in tertiary institutions	1,358.69	0.70
7. Improved access to tertiary education	157.70	0.10
<b>Total Tertiary Education</b>	<b>3,982.56</b>	<b>2.10</b>

Source: Extract from Table 2 Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015, DOSE, Banjul, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> “Percent of total” column refers to total of all six programme areas of the Strategic Plan.

Tertiary education costs amount to only 2.1 percent of the total cost of the Education Sector Programme. In as much as it is critical to bridge the financing gap for tertiary education, it is also important with increasing awareness of the importance of tertiary and higher education, to increase the allocation of resources to the sub-sector.

**Table 3: Assumptions for Tertiary Education**

<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Argument</b>
Economy continues to grow to absorb all tertiary education graduates	The current growth rate has been sustained for the past couple of fiscal years.
Sufficient number of qualified female applicants to tertiary institutions available	The number of female students in the basic and secondary schools has more than doubled in recent years and the trend has been sustained long enough to predict that female applicants to tertiary institutions will be on the rise.
Adequate number of qualified lecturers can be recruited and retained	An integrated tertiary education system once set up will be in a better position to create more possibilities and incentives to attract and retain lecturers
Funding in place for planned activities, including the Higher Education Observatory	The current policy's main objectives are to improve quality at all levels of the education sector and, therefore, the sector will double up its efforts to mobilise funding from government and other sources to implement the activities of the tertiary programme
Parents/Students willing and able to pay one-third of the unit cost for tertiary education	Currently, students are participating in cost-sharing by paying tuition fees for their education. This trend is continuing
There is political will to merge tertiary institutions and create an integrated system of tertiary education	Political will up to the highest level has been demonstrated in the desire to merge tertiary institutions. This political will is now being implemented in stages

Source: Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2015, DOSE, Banjul. P. 72.

The success of the implementation of the tertiary and higher education programme, will depend on the extent to which the assumptions relate to funding availability, growth of the economy and political will to merge tertiary institutions, among others. The details of these assumptions are presented on Table 3 above.