

The MSDG Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is co-financed by GK Partners (GKP) and the Government of Switzerland through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC); implemented by GKP in partnership with the Government of The Gambia (GoTG)



MSDG PROJECT
MIGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN THE GAMBIA

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Migration and Sustainable Development: Expansion and Replication of Impactful Innovations in Diaspora-Development Practice

The Gambia is a small country with big migration. Of a population of about 2.2 million, 10 percent are emigrants, and it **has the highest dependency on remittances in Africa**. MSDG was established in January 2017 as an innovative diaspora-led Technical Assistance (TA) and Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). The first activity was the **'Induction and Training Workshop for New Cabinet Ministers'** on 11 February 2017, a week after the formation of a new democratic government, after 22 years of dictatorship.

MSDG aims to **"enhance and expand the role of the Gambian diaspora in national development, as the Eighth Region of the country"** through **"diaspora participation in socioeconomic development policy and practice, and institutionalised engagement"**. MSDG is a feasible and efficient mechanism for delivering sustainable and inclusive outputs and impacts on Migration, Diaspora and Development, through innovation, implementation of global good practice and maintenance professional and operational excellence.

MSDG started as a 7-month pilot project with a **budget of €28,000 (January to July 2017), and the operating budget of the Third Phase (July 2021 to June 2024) is €4.5 million**. About €2m comprise cash grants, donations, fees and investments, and €2.5m comprise in-kind contributions from the 52 Diaspora Fellows, Government of The Gambia, and other development partners. Institutional cooperation grew from three (3) formal relations with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in 2017, to 20 institutional partnerships in 2023. **Ten (10) Diaspora Development Fund (DDF) awards were made in 2020, and 47 new DDF awards were made in 2022.**

The experience and lessons learnt in The Gambia since 2017 make the MSD programme suitable for feasible and viable scale-up and replication, especially in countries without diaspora strategies and DDF programmes. MSDG is recognised in the United Nations Repository of Good Practice



United Nations
Network on Migration

Working Better Together

<https://migrationnetwork.un.org/practice/migration-and-sustainable-development-gambia-msdg>

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Specific MSDG Innovations and Impacts

	<h2>Diaspora Technical Cooperation</h2>
<p>Initiation and pioneering of a structured diaspora-led Technical Assistance (TA) and Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). The impacts include: progress from ‘mainstreaming’ to ‘institutionalising’ diaspora contributions; enhanced and expanded brain-gain and self-help; optimised leveraging of the Migration, Diaspora and Development (MDD) nexus; formal institutional recognition and leveraging of the extensive, resilient and countercyclical development resources provided by the diaspora; diversified and strengthened international cooperation sector.</p>	
	<h2>Comprehensive Diaspora Action</h2>
<p>Implementation and facilitation of a critical mass of comprehensive and diverse portfolio of 200 diaspora-led development interventions and activities since 2017. The impacts include: introduced substantive and substantial diaspora resources and expertise in different thematic fields; inspired and catalysed similar or related practices, projects and initiatives; incorporated and ‘localised’ new good practices within the activities of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), and Non State Institutions (NSIs); broken down some of the barriers and impediments to diaspora-government cooperation and development; created frameworks for ongoing dialogue for sustainable and inclusive development.</p>	
	<h2>Diaspora Development Fund</h2>
<p>Piloting and establishment of a Diaspora Development Fund (DDF) in line with Objective 19 of the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). The impacts as at June 2023 include: Gambia being one of a few countries in the world to implement this aspect of the GCM; leveraged and enhanced the professional and expert intervention of 52 Diaspora Fellows in priority sectors; enhanced diaspora-community partnerships through 57 rural and urban projects; enhanced capacity development of 20 MDAs and NSIs; expanded and enhanced project service provision through cash grants of €405,000 Euros (about 25 Million Dalasis); grant awardees leveraged and raised €3.25 Million Euros (over 200 Million Dalasis) in cash and in kind; 65 full-time and 158 part-time jobs created (171 women [77%]; 52 men [23%]; 177 rural [79%]; 46 urban [21%]).</p>	
	<h2>Remittances and Financial Inclusion</h2>
	<p>Design and implementation of a remittance and diaspora finance technical support programme for Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG) and Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MOFEA). The impacts include: improved remittance data compilation; publication of annual inflows in the first 14 days of every January; global recognition of The Gambia for remittance good practices through UN award at the 2023 Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID); ongoing improvements in regulatory practice and financial inclusion; improved policymaking through production and publication of an annual ‘Remittance and Diaspora Finance Factbook’.</p>
	<h2>Integrated Rural Development</h2>
<p>Facilitation and co-funding of a portfolio of integrated rural development projects and programmes. The impacts include: expanded and enhanced community-based health interventions such as the largest single provision of face masks during the Covid 19 pandemic, new maternity facilities, services and resources in un-served areas, and pioneering sensitisation and counselling services on diabetes, hypertension, epilepsy and youth mental health; expanded and enhanced livelihood support such as provision of agricultural resources, veterinary training, microfinance and marketing support for women and young people, and employability skills in traditional cloth-making, rural tourism, cookery, digital and multimedia technology.</p>	



Annual Stake in the Nation Forum (SNF)

Initiation and convening of an **annual Stake in the Nation Forum (SNF) as an inclusive stakeholder consultative dialogue**. The impacts include: improved trust and productive interactions between the diaspora, government, civil society and the private, security, diplomatic and development sectors; increased knowledge and understanding of diaspora-development issues by policymakers, with SNF being the largest annual policy forum in the country; new partnerships and collaborations on diverse initiatives; greater diaspora awareness of 'Made in The Gambia' products; increased product sales and clientele for local producers.



Gambian President, GKP Director, Cabinet Ministers and Partners at the inaugural SNF on 13 January 2018



National Assembly Television (NATV)

Facilitation and co-funding of a **fully functioning online parliamentary television service, with secure video-conferencing functionalities**. The impacts include: new capacity for live broadcast, recording and archiving of all on-site and off-site parliamentary proceedings; online accessibility of parliamentary proceedings to the diaspora and general public; National Assembly capacity as a master broadcaster, providing high-quality film feeds and footage to media houses for them to edit and broadcast on their own platforms; capacity for parliamentarians and invited witnesses including people in the diaspora, to participate in parliamentary proceedings through video-conferencing.



University Scholarship Endowment Fund

Design and establishment of a **scholarship fund as a perpetual endowment for the University of The Gambia Students Union (UTGSU)**. The impacts include: creation of a long-term income-generating asset to fund annual university scholarships; access to new capital resources to invest in other income-generating activities such as provision of cafeteria and catering services at all UTG campuses and sites; development of new national policy and legislation by the Ministry of Higher Education in the form of a 'National Scholarship Endowment Fund Bill, 2023'.



Cultural and Scientific Development



Facilitation and co-funding of a **portfolio of cultural and scientific education and development schemes and activities**. The impacts include: improving the language and cultural knowledge and affinity of multigenerational diaspora children through the creation of audiovisual and workbook resources on traditional lullabies and songs; improving knowledge and competencies in the natural sciences through fitting-out and kitting-out science labs at rural schools; improving teaching and exam pass rates through placement of diaspora science teachers in schools.



Diaspora Institutionalisation in the Public Sector

Facilitation and co-funding of a **portfolio of actions to embed and institutionalise diaspora contributions within the public sector**. The impacts include: government declared the diaspora as the Eighth Region of The Gambia and formally recognised it as one of the seven 'enablers of national development'; the first ever Gambian Diaspora Strategy incorporated fully in the post-dictatorship National Development Plan; creation of the Gambia Diaspora and Migration Directorate (GDMD) within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, providing policy and coordination support to the diaspora; creation of the Diaspora Advice Desk (DAD) at the Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA), providing investment and incentive advice and support; accredited training to officials from public, private and civil society sectors, enhancing knowledge and skills for optimised diaspora-development; diaspora facilitation of bilateral, multilateral and other international relations for optimised development cooperation; recruiting and appointing suitably qualified diaspora professionals to technocratic roles, to fill national skills gaps and increase brain-gain and circular migration.

MSDG Programme Scalability and Replication

Since its formation in 2004, GK Partners (GKP) has embodied its co-founders' commitment to **continuous innovation for inclusive development, responsible business, and paradigmatic transformations in social enterprise, programme implementation and diaspora-development**. To leverage and build on its impactful innovations in The Gambia, GKP seeks new partnerships, to scale up the delivery of development outcomes to diverse beneficiaries in The Gambia and other African countries. The main MSD innovation, scalability and replication action points are:

- 1. Diaspora Voting and Representation:** Continue technical cooperation with the Gambian National Assembly, Independent Electoral Commission, Ministry of Justice and other stakeholders to actualise: registration of diaspora voters; demarcation of five (5) diaspora constituencies across the world; and constitutional amendment of three (3) non-entrenched clauses, to facilitate the election of diaspora parliamentarians.
- 2. Issuance of Diaspora-Targeted Bonds:** Continue technical cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank of The Gambia for the issuance of local currency Diaspora-Targeted Bonds (DTBs) using the existing treasury bond framework, to finance pre-selected priority projects, and kick-start Diaspora Portfolio Investment (DPI) as a new financial sector.
- 3. Expand Diaspora Development Fund:** Expand the Diaspora Development Fund (DDF) in The Gambia to co-finance 100 diaspora professionals and 20 institutional partners per year for five (5) years, to deliver a wide range of integrated rural development and technical cooperation priority activities. GKP can also deliver a continental DDF scheme for all African countries (the GKP director is the African Union Lead Consultant on Diaspora and Innovative Finance, and GKP produced the framework for an African Diaspora Finance Corporation [ADFC], endorsed by the AU Executive Council in February 2022).
- 4. Programme Replication:** Replicate and implement the core elements of the Migration and Sustainable Development (MSD) programme in West and other parts of Africa. The first set of replication countries may include: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte D'Ivoire, Benin and Togo.
- 5. Thematic Replication:** Replicate and implement specific MSD innovations such as: production of national Diaspora Strategy (DS); establishment of Diaspora Development Fund (DDF); issuance of Diaspora-Targeted Bonds (DTBs); and facilitation of diaspora voting and representation. These thematic schemes can be delivered in multiple countries, and the first set of West African countries may include: Sierra Leone, Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire and Nigeria.

The Gambian Diaspora Strategy (GDS) produced by MSDG on behalf of the Government of The Gambia Government is older than the Global Compact on Migration (GCM), yet its provisions are remarkably similar to the GCM Objectives. This is partly due to the fact that MSDG incorporates globally accepted and emergent good practices on Migration, Diaspora and Development (MDD). MSDG is in compliance with all the 10 GCM Guiding Principles.

MSDG covers 11 of the 23 GCM Objectives, with emphasis on Objectives 1, 19, 20 and 23



MSDG is also aligned to 11 of the 17 SDGs



Since its establishment in 2004, GK Partners' clients, partners and associates include the following:



MSDG was designed and is led by: Professor Gibril Faal FRSA, OBE, JP; Visiting Professor in Practice Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa (FLIA), London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)