People's Choice

2026

A Transformation Agenda for an "Emerging Gambia



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ALLIANCE OF PROGRESSIVE CITIZENS (APC)

A NEW GAMBIA

A MANIFESTO FOR TRANSFORMATION AND RENEWAL

" A Transformation Agenda for an “Emerging Gambia

FOREWORD

A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE GAMBIA



Fellow Gambians,

I come before you not with the rehearsed promises of career politicians nor the hollow slogans of men and women who seek power for its own sake. I come before you with a diagnosis of our nation's condition, a prescription grounded in evidence, and an unshakeable commitment to execute. The Gambia I love — our Gambia — is a nation of extraordinary people trapped by an extraordinary failure of leadership. That failure ends now.

For more than fifty years since independence, successive governments have managed our poverty rather than defeated it. They have borrowed in our name, spent without discipline, and departed without accountability. Today, our national debt stands at over 80 percent of GDP. Nearly half of our population lives below the poverty line. Youth unemployment has reached 41.8 percent. The Gambia ranks 172nd out of 189 nations on the UN Human Development Index. These are not statistics, they are the lived reality of mothers who cannot feed their children, graduates who cannot find work, and farmers who cannot get their produce to market.

The current dispensation promised change. It delivered fragmentation. What we have witnessed since 2017 is not transformation, it is transition without destination. Political expediency has triumphed over policy substance. Personal repositioning has displaced national development. The people who were liberated from tyranny are now being failed by mediocrity. This must change!

The Alliance of Progressive Citizens (APC) was not born in the corridors of power. It was born in the conviction that The Gambia deserves better, deserves government

that is competent, accountable, and relentlessly focused on the wellbeing of its people. Our core values are not aspirational decorations. They are operational commitments: Unity. Discipline. Integrity. Hard Work. Accountability. Patriotism. UDIHAP is not a slogan. It is the constitution of our character.

This manifesto "A Transformation Agenda for an "Emerging Gambia" is our contract with the Gambian people. It is not a wish list. It is a governing blueprint. Every pillar in this document has been designed with execution in mind: clear objectives, structured reforms, realistic timelines, and defined accountability. We have studied what works in comparable nations. We have listened to our farmers in the regions, our youth in the urban centres, our women in the cooperatives, our professionals in the diaspora. This manifesto belongs to all of them.

I am standing to be your President because I believe in what The Gambia can become. I have seen what disciplined, principled governance achieves. I know that a country of our size, our natural endowments, and our human capital has no business being among the poorest nations on earth. We are not poor because we lack resources. We are poor because we have been governed poorly. That changes on election day.

I ask for your vote, not as a transaction, but as a partnership. Vote not just to remove a failing government, but to install a transformative one. Vote for A New Gambia.

With deep commitment,
THE APC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
Alliance of Progressive Citizens
Republic of The Gambia

INTRODUCTION

OUR VISION, OUR MISSION, OUR MOMENT

The Gambia stands at a crossroads. One path leads deeper into the same cycle of dependency, mismanagement, and deferred dreams. The other leads to transformation, to a Gambia that feeds itself, powers itself, employs its youth, educates its children, and takes its rightful place among the respected nations of the world.
We choose the second path. And we choose it without ambiguity.

"We are not poor because we lack resources. We are poor because we have been governed poorly."

Our Vision

An Alliance of Progressive Citizens government will create a people-centred state that promotes productivity for the common good, eradicates poverty, and transforms The Gambia into a middle-income country.

Our Mission

We will advance the economic, social, and cultural status of every Gambian by inspiring and enforcing a new culture of Unity, Discipline, Integrity, Hard Work, Accountability, and Patriotism (UDIHAP) in every institution, ministry, and community across this nation.

Our Governing Philosophy

We reject the philosophy of political patronage. We reject the appointment of loyalists over experts.We reject the idea that government exists to enrich those

within it. Our government will be a meritocracy, run by The Gambia's best and ablest citizens, accountable to the people, and relentlessly focused on delivery.

This manifesto is structured around Ten Pillars of National Transformation. These pillars are not isolated policy clusters, they are an integrated system. Investment in agriculture feeds food security. Food security reduces poverty. Poverty reduction builds social cohesion. Social cohesion enables security. Security unlocks investment. Investment creates jobs. Jobs generate revenue. Revenue funds better education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Everything connects. Everything matters.

The ten pillars are:

- Pillar 1: Government Reform & Accountability
- Pillar 2: Jobs & Economic Growth
- Pillar 3: Agriculture & Food Security
- Pillar 4: Poverty Reduction & Social Protection
- Pillar 5: Energy & Electricity
- Pillar 6: Infrastructure & Housing
- Pillar 7: Education & Human Capital
- Pillar 8: Healthcare
- Pillar 9: Security & Justice
- Pillar 10: National Development & Global Positioning

Each pillar is grounded in honest diagnosis, clear intent, and structured action. We are not here to manage The Gambia's decline. We are here to reverse it.

GOVERNMENT REFORM & ACCOUNTABILITY



The Reality We Inherit

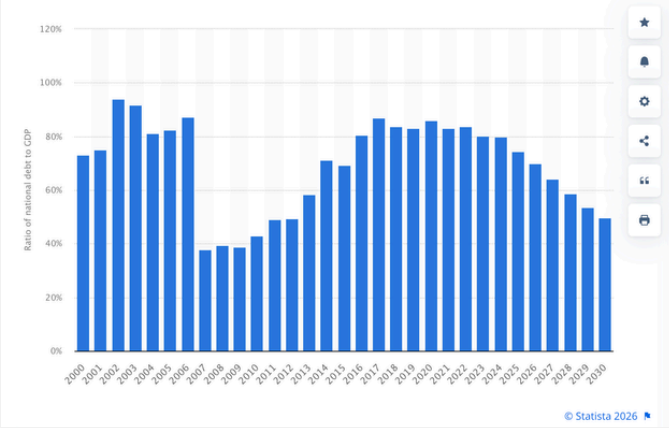
Governance in The Gambia has never fully recovered from the damage of the Jammeh era. The trauma of 22 years of authoritarian rule did not end at the ballot box in 2017, it left behind shattered institutions, a demoralised civil service, a compromised judiciary, and a public that had learned to expect nothing from its government. What was needed after that transition was a systematic, bold, and disciplined programme of institutional reconstruction. What we got instead was political theatre.

Today, our public institutions are understaffed, under-resourced, and often under the thumb of political appointees whose primary qualification is loyalty rather than competence. Government ministries operate without clear strategic plans, without meaningful monitoring, and without consequence for failure.

The accountability chain from citizen to government, from government to institution, from institution to individual officer, is broken at every link.

Our Debt-to-GDP ratio has ballooned to over 80 percent, yet public services deteriorate. Millions of dalasi pass through State-Owned Enterprises that produce neither profit nor quality service. The National Security Council has technically never met in its constitutional form. The Ombudsman's office remains a ghost. The Auditor-General's reports are filed and forgotten.

This must change!



Ratio of national debt to GDP of the Gambia from 2000 to 2030

What Failed and Why

The result is a government that consumes resources without producing outcomes. A bureaucracy that processes papers without delivering services. An anti-corruption framework that exists on paper but not in practice.

Our Commitment: A Government That Works

"We will not inherit government. We will rebuild it."

An APC government will execute a comprehensive programme of institutional reform within its first 100 days. This is not reform for the sake of activity, it is reform designed to unlock the capacity of The Gambia's state to serve its people.

Key Reforms

- **A New Constitution and Presidential Term Limits**

  We will champion and support the finalisation of a new constitution that enshrines presidential term limits, strengthens the separation of powers, enshrines diaspora voting rights, and guarantees the independence of key constitutional offices including the judiciary, the Ombudsman, and the Auditor-General.

- **Ministry of Governance, Project Monitoring and Evaluation**

  We will establish a dedicated Ministry of Governance, Monitoring and Evaluation, tasked with tracking every major government project, publishing quarterly performance reports, and holding ministries accountable. This is not ceremonial, it will have teeth.

- **Governance Effectiveness Review Committees (GERCs)**

  Each ministry, or cluster of three related ministries, will have a standing

Governance Effectiveness Review Committee comprising retired competent civil servants, experienced private sector leaders, and diaspora experts. These committees will audit strategic plans, review staffing competencies, and escalate governance failures directly to the Ministry of Governance.

- **Radical Meritocracy in Appointments**

  Political patronage ends under our administration. Ministerial portfolios will be led by technocrats with verifiable track records. Boards of State-Owned Enterprises will be reconstituted through transparent competitive processes. No appointment will be made that cannot be publicly justified on the grounds of competence.

- **A Dedicated Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises**

  We will create a standalone Ministry of SOEs to provide unified, focused oversight of all government enterprises: NAWEC, GAMTEL, GAMCEL, GCAA, GPA, and others. This ministry will mandate performance contracts, enforce financial discipline, and pursue the commercial viability of each enterprise. SOEs will contribute to government revenue, they will not be a drain on it.

- **Digitalisation of Government Services**

  Through the Ministry of Digital Economy, we will invest in a centralised, protected digital infrastructure that connects all government ministries and departments. Citizens will access services through digital platforms, reducing bureaucratic delay, eliminating opportunities for corruption, and improving service delivery across every sector.

- **Zero Tolerance to Corruption With Real Consequences**

  We will enact robust anti-corruption legislation with mandatory minimum sentences for public officeholders found guilty of corruption. The Gambia Financial Intelligence Unit will be strengthened and given operational independence. Whistleblower protection legislation will be enacted. Past acts of public theft will be investigated and prosecuted, there will be no statute of limitations on the theft of public funds.

- **Decentralisation and Local Government Empowerment**

  We will honour the 1997 constitution's provisions on decentralisation. Local governments will receive genuine fiscal and administrative authority, not token delegation. A new county/municipal structure will be created, with elected Governors and Mayors who are accountable to their communities, not to the presidency. This devolution will bring government closer to the people who need it most.

JOBS & ECONOMIC GROWTH



The Crisis of a Wasted Generation

The Gambia has the highest youth unemployment rate in the sub-region. At 41.8 percent, we are producing graduates, skilled workers, and young people full of ambition and then failing them completely. The back-way migration phenomenon is not a mystery. It is the rational response of desperate young people who see no future at home. Every young man or woman who risks their life crossing the Sahara or the Mediterranean is an indictment of every government that came before.

Our economy is structurally fragile. It depends on tourism, a seasonal industry. It depends on remittances, the generosity of Gambians abroad. It depends on foreign aid, the charity of others. An economy built on these three pillars is not an economy. It is a waiting room.

The current government has no coherent economic vision. It has managed donor relationships. It has processed IMF conditions. But it has not built an economy. Our Debt-to-GDP ratio has grown. Foreign reserves have shrunk. Inflation has punished ordinary Gambians. Real wages have declined. This must change!

Our Vision: An Economy That Creates, Not Just Consumes

An APC government will pursue a deliberate strategy of economic diversification and structural transformation. We will reduce our dependence on imports and increase our productive capacity at home. We will attract Foreign Direct Investment in priority sectors. We will incentivise the private sector. We will formalise the informal economy. We will harness the creativity and capital of the Gambian diaspora. Above all, we will create jobs, real, sustainable, dignified jobs.

Key Reforms

- **Commission of Financial Experts, An Economic Reset**

  Within the first 60 days of taking office, we will constitute a Commission of Financial and Economic Experts, drawn from Gambian professionals at home and abroad to conduct a comprehensive audit of government finances, recalibrate our fiscal strategy, and design a credible debt reduction pathway. We will reduce the Debt-to-GDP ratio from over 80 percent to below 40 percent within five years.

- **A New Investment Architecture**

  We will establish a dedicated Gambia Investment Promotion Agency with a mandate to actively recruit Foreign Direct Investment into priority sectors: agriculture and agro-processing, tourism, fisheries and marine biotechnology, ICT, and manufacturing. Tax incentives, simplified business registration, and investor protection guarantees will be the pillars of our FDI framework.

- **Blue Economy Development**

  The Gambia's coastal and riverine assets are massively under-exploited. We will develop a comprehensive Blue Economy strategy covering offshore fisheries management, aquaculture expansion, seafood processing and export, marine biotechnology, river river transport, and ocean energy. The River Gambia is a national asset. We will treat it as one.

- **A Sovereign Wealth Fund**

  Revenues from the responsible exploitation of our natural resources, ilmenite, zircon, rutile, and any confirmed oil and gas deposits will be capitalised into a Gambia Sovereign Wealth Fund. This fund will not be used for recurrent expenditure. It will fund long-term infrastructure, industrialisation, and innovation.

- **SME and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem**

  Small and medium enterprises are the backbone of any developing economy. We will create a National SME Fund providing low-interest credit, matching grants, and business development support to Gambian entrepreneurs. Women-led enterprises and youth-led startups will receive priority access. We will build business incubators in every region, not just in the Kombos.

- **Formalising the Informal Economy**

  Over 60 percent of Gambian economic activity takes place in the informal sector, contributing little to tax revenue and offering workers no protections. We will implement a structured formalisation programme

with simplified registration, low-cost tax compliance tools, and social security incentives that brings informal enterprises into the mainstream economy without crushing them.

- **Tourism Transformation**

  Tourism must become a year-round, high-value, diversified sector. We will develop cultural tourism, heritage tourism, eco-tourism, and conference tourism to extend the season and attract higher-spending visitors. We will enforce hotel and hospitality standards, invest in destination marketing, and create training programmes for hospitality workers at every level.

- **Diaspora Engagement and Investment**

  The Gambian diaspora sends home hundreds of millions of dollars annually in remittances. We will build a structured Diaspora Investment Framework, including diaspora bonds, investment matching schemes, and skills return programmes that converts the diaspora from a remittance pipeline into an active partner in national development.

Jobs are not a gift from government. They are the product of a thriving economy. Our job is to build the conditions, the policy framework, the investment climate, the infrastructure, the education system that allows the private sector to create jobs at scale. We will do that job.



AGRICULTURE & FOOD SECURITY



A Nation That Cannot Feed Itself Cannot Call Itself Free

The Gambia imports the majority of its staple foods. Rice, our primary food source, is imported. Wheat for our bread is imported. Cooking oil is imported. These imports cost us dearly in foreign exchange, make our food supply vulnerable to global price shocks, and export jobs and value that could be created at home. A nation that depends on others to feed it is not truly sovereign, it is perpetually at the mercy of international markets and donor goodwill.

Our agricultural potential is enormous and largely untapped. The River Gambia and its fertile banks, the rain-fed uplands of the Central and Upper River Regions, our groundnut heritage, our fisheries, our livestock capacity, these are gifts that we have consistently failed to develop into productive, profitable, food-secure systems.

Successive governments have spoken about agricultural transformation. None has delivered it. The reason is always the same: agriculture policy was crafted in offices in Banjul by people who had never worked a farm. Investment was scattered, uncoordinated, and often stolen before it reached the field. The farmer, who is the backbone of our national food system, has been consistently afterthought.
That era is over!

Our Commitment

"We will produce 70 percent of our rice consumption needs within four years. This is not a target, it is a mandate."

Key Reforms

- **Comprehensive Agricultural Development Programme (CADP)**

  We will establish a CADP with a dedicated budget of 10 percent of annual government expenditure. This programme will serve as the overarching framework for all agricultural investment, ensuring coordination, preventing duplication, and measuring results. A Special Agriculture Production Technical Committee will oversee implementation and report quarterly to the President.

- **Rice Self-Sufficiency Drive**

  We will engage the People's Republic of China and other technical partners for large-scale upland rice production in Sapo and other high-potential zones. We will procure 500 metric tonnes of certified, high-yielding, climate-smart rice seeds and 200 tractors, and prepare 10,000 hectares of land within the first 18 months of government.

- **Agricultural Produce Zoning**

  We will implement geographic agricultural zoning that allocates production responsibilities according to ecological advantage: large-scale vegetable farming for the Kombos and Foni regions; sorghum and millet intensification in the Central River and North Bank regions; groundnut and cashew production for their traditional zones with government-subsidised fertiliser and mechanised support.

- **Agriculture Development Bank**

  Access to affordable credit is the single greatest barrier facing Gambian farmers. We will establish an Agriculture Development Bank in partnership with development partners, providing low-interest loans to smallholders, cooperatives, and agribusinesses. The bank will be governed independently of political interference and operate on commercial lending principles adapted for agricultural risk.



- **Agro-Processing and Special Economic Zones**

  Raw commodity export is the lowest-value link in the agricultural chain. We will establish Special Agricultural Processing Zones in each region, attracting private investment in value-addition: tomato paste, groundnut oil and cake, mango juice, sesame processing, and seafood packaging. These zones will create manufacturing jobs, increase export revenues, and keep value inside The Gambia.

- **Women and Youth in Agriculture**

  Women are the backbone of Gambian agriculture. Youth are our greatest untapped agricultural resource. We will create targeted incentive programmes, equipment grants, training funds, land access guarantees, and market linkage support specifically designed to bring young Gambians and women's cooperatives into commercial agriculture. We will reduce drudgery and increase mechanisation so that farming becomes an attractive enterprise, not a burden.

- **Investment in Irrigation and Water Management**

  Rain-fed agriculture is inherently vulnerable to climate variability. We will invest in small and medium irrigation schemes, solar-powered boreholes, and community garden fencing to enable year-round production across all regions.

- **Livestock, Aquaculture, and Poultry**

  We will launch a national programme for large-scale poultry production, animal husbandry, and freshwater aquaculture. These sectors offer rapid returns, high nutritional value, and significant employment potential particularly for returning youth from the diaspora who can establish mixed farming enterprises.



A Gambia that grows its own food is a Gambia that controls its destiny. We will feed our people. We will employ our farmers. We will make agriculture the engine of our economic transformation.



POVERTY REDUCTION & SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Human Cost of Failed Governance

Poverty in The Gambia is not a natural condition. It is the product of choices of governments that chose to borrow and spend without building productive capacity; of systems that rewarded patronage over productivity; of development models that benefited the few while the many waited. When 54 percent of our population lives below the poverty line, that is not a development challenge. That is a governance failure.

The face of poverty in The Gambia is disproportionately female, rural, and young. Women who carry the burden of household food production receive the least institutional support.

Rural communities that produce the food we eat receive the least investment in roads, schools, and clinics. Young people who represent our greatest national resource are failing to find any foothold in an economy that has no place for them.

Social protection in The Gambia is fragmented, donor-dependent, and inadequate. The programmes that exist, cash transfers, school feeding, social safety nets are often poorly targeted, unpredictably funded, and unlinked to broader economic strategy. Poverty alleviation has been treated as charity rather than as a structural economic imperative.

This must change!

Our Framework: Productive Inclusion

We reject the charity model of poverty reduction. We embrace productive inclusion, the systematic removal of barriers that prevent Gambians from participating in and benefiting from economic growth. This means combining targeted cash support with skills development, asset provision, market access, and financial inclusion in an integrated package that addresses the multiple dimensions of poverty simultaneously.

Key Reforms

- **Ministry of Rural Investments and Community Development**

  We will establish a dedicated Ministry of Rural Investments and Community Development to house and coordinate all poverty reduction programming. The Department of Community Development will be transferred to this ministry to ensure unified strategy and implementation across rural areas.

- **The Enhanced Osusu Programme**

  The traditional Gambian Osusu savings model is one of our most powerful grassroots financial tools. We will formalise, scale, and supplement this model with cash transfer support, linking Osusu groups directly to government microfinance facilities and agricultural extension services. This allows poor households to build assets, access credit, and graduate out of poverty sustainably.

- **Productive Asset Transfers and Coaching**

  We will provide direct productive asset transfers, livestock, farming inputs, small business equipment, energy-efficient tools to the poorest households, combined with one-year coaching and follow-up support. International evidence demonstrates that this "graduation model" produces lasting poverty reduction. We will implement it at scale.

- **Village and Women's Development Committees Revival**

  Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Women's Development Committees (WDCs) will be reorganised, properly resourced, and given real decision-making authority over community development investments. These structures are the most legitimate channels for participatory development. They will be treated as such, not as mobilisation tools for political campaigns.



specifically targeted at women and young people in every region of The Gambia. This programme will have mandatory rural quotas to ensure that the interior of the country is not left behind.

- **School Feeding and Child Nutrition**

  No Gambian child should go to school hungry. We will expand and properly fund the national school feeding programme, using it not only to improve educational attendance and attainment, but to support local farmers who supply the produce. School feeding will be a demand-side agricultural development tool as much as a social protection measure.

- **Child Protection Committees**

  Community Child Protection Committees (CCPCs) will be established in every ward to identify vulnerable children, prevent child labour, and connect at-risk families to social services. This is not optional, it is the floor of any civilised society.

- **National Jobs, Skills, and Finance Programme for Women and Youth**

  In collaboration with international partners, we will design and fund a comprehensive programme providing skills training, financial literacy, business mentorship, and startup financing

We will not measure our success by the programmes we launch. We will measure it by the number of Gambians who no longer need those programmes because they have achieved economic independence. That is the goal of real social protection.

ENERGY & ELECTRICITY



Darkness Is Not Our Destiny

Since the catastrophic disruption of The Gambia's electricity system on that memorable Tobaski day in 1978, Gambians have lived with blackouts as a constant of daily life. Unreliable electricity is not a minor inconvenience. It is an economic stranglehold. It means businesses cannot operate at full capacity. Hospitals cannot reliably power equipment. Students cannot study at night. Factories cannot run. Cold chains for agricultural products collapse. The digital economy cannot develop. Darkness is not just an absence of light, it is the suppression of an entire nation's productive capacity.

As of 2024, only 63 percent of our population has access to electricity

Our monthly generated capacity of 76 megawatts falls significantly short of our average peak demand of 110 megawatts. Contractual arrangements with Karpowership, SENELEC, and OMVG offer partial relief but are not underpinned by the transmission infrastructure and management systems needed to convert contracted capacity into reliable supply.

NAWEC - the National Water and Electricity Company has been chronically mismanaged. It is overstaffed where it should not be, understaffed where it matters, financially unsustainable, and structurally inadequate. No government has had the courage to address this honestly. We will.
This must change!

Our Commitment

"Every home lit. Every clinic powered. Every business energised. This is what we commit to."

Key Reforms

- **National Energy Policy Overhaul**

  We will enact a comprehensive National Energy Policy that prioritises sustainability, affordability, universal access, and efficiency. The policy will set binding targets: 90 percent electrification within four years, and full electrification within seven years.

- **Decentralised Solar Power Grid**

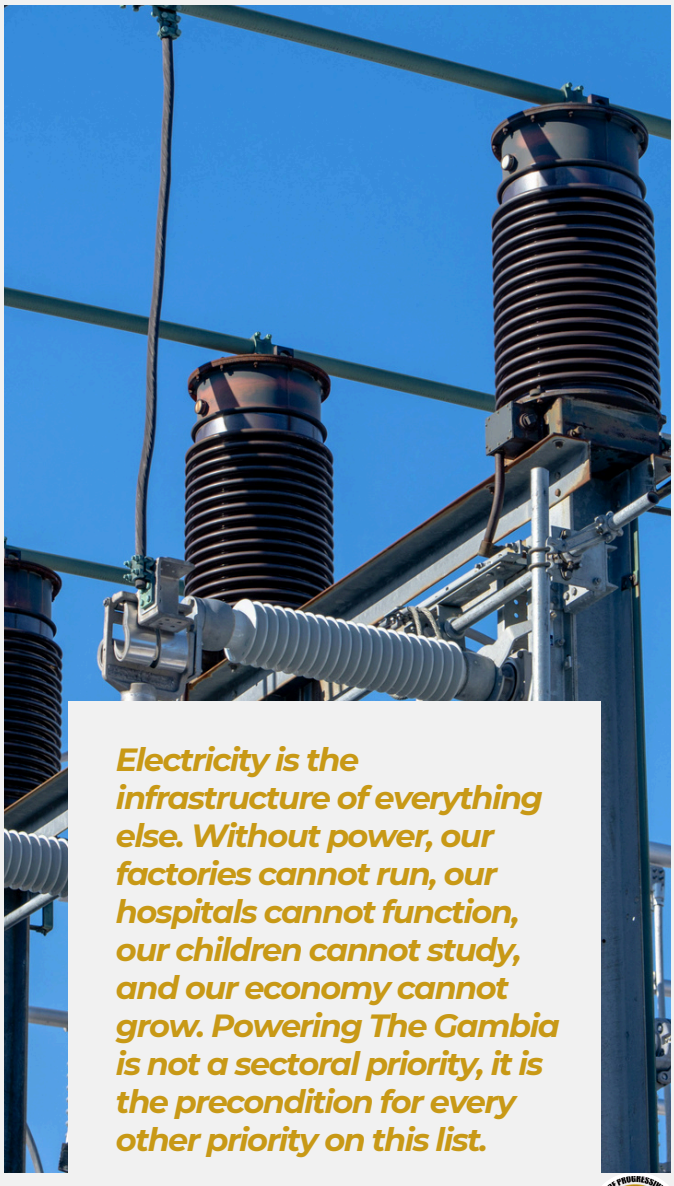
  We will draft a new national grid code that enables and incentivises the deployment of distributed solar generation plants throughout the country. Each governing region will be supported to develop 30 - 40 megawatts of solar capacity, dramatically reducing dependence on centralised, unreliable grid power.

- **Solar Street Lighting Revolution**

  We will invest in a national solar-powered street lighting system, prioritising roads, market areas, health facilities, and schools. Beyond improving public safety, this investment will reduce municipal electricity costs, support local security, and extend economic activity into the evening hours.

- **Private Sector Participation in Energy Distribution**

  We will invite credible private sector operators to participate in electricity distribution under a regulated framework. In partnership with institutions such as the Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) and West Africa Energy of Senegal, we will develop a gas-to-power project and accelerate the energy transition.



Electricity is the infrastructure of everything else. Without power, our factories cannot run, our hospitals cannot function, our children cannot study, and our economy cannot grow. Powering The Gambia is not a sectoral priority, it is the precondition for every other priority on this list.

- **NAWEC Reform and Commercialisation**

  NAWEC will be restructured under the new Ministry of SOEs, with a new governance board, a professional management team, and a performance contract that mandates financial sustainability within three years. Overstaffing will be addressed humanely, with retraining and severance support for affected employees.

- **Renewable Energy Investment Programme**

  We will develop a Renewable Energy Investment Programme to attract international climate finance, green bonds, and impact investment into solar, wind, and biomass energy projects across The Gambia. Our goal is to position The Gambia as a regional leader in sustainable energy, a model for West Africa.





INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING

The Foundation of a Nation

Infrastructure is not a luxury. Roads, bridges, ports, housing, and water systems are the physical expression of a government's commitment to its people. They determine whether a farmer can get crops to market, whether a patient can reach a hospital, whether a student can get to school, whether a family can live in dignity. The state of The Gambia's infrastructure tells a clear story about the state of our governance.

Our road network is inadequate, poorly maintained, and dangerously deteriorated in many areas. The promised 20 urban feeder roads programme remains largely unfulfilled. The Airport-Stink Corner Highway, poorly constructed from the outset, has never been properly remedied. The Banjul-Barra crossing, one of the most critical transport links in the country remains dependent on an ageing ferry service with no bridge in sight. River transport infrastructure has collapsed.

Housing in The Gambia is a crisis in slow motion. The country is among the most densely populated on the African mainland, with 245 people per square kilometre. Urbanisation is accelerating at among the fastest rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet we have no national land policy, no coordinated urban development plan, and no systematic programme for affordable housing. Families live in overcrowded, inadequate conditions in Serekunda and the Kombos, while rural communities lack even basic housing standards.

This must change!



Key Reforms

- **National Land Policy and Digital Land Registry**

  We will enact The Gambia's first comprehensive National Land Policy, a historic failure that has left us with land conflicts, tenure insecurity, and unregulated dual systems of customary and formal tenure. The policy will include systematic land registration, a digital land information system, central geographic mapping, and a National Land Use Plan. Clarity of land ownership is the foundation of investment.

- **Banjul-Barra Bridge**

  The construction of the Banjul-Barra Bridge is an economic and national necessity. We will prioritise this project as a flagship infrastructure investment, securing financing through bilateral partners, multilateral development banks, and public-private partnership arrangements. In the interim, we will supplement existing ferries with 300-capacity passenger watercraft to improve the daily crossing experience.

- **Port of Banjul Modernisation**

  We will advance the modernisation and expansion of the Banjul Port to increase capacity, reduce turnaround times, improve efficiency, and position Banjul as a competitive regional trading hub.

- **Banjul International Airport Upgrade**

  We will invest in upgrading the Banjul International Airport to world-class standard, improving facilities, expanding capacity, and marketing Banjul as a gateway for regional air travel, tourism, and trade.

- **Road Network Prioritisation**

  We will complete the 20 urban feeder roads programme with full financial accountability. We will construct a double carriageway from Brikama to Faraba University campus and from Brusubi Turntable to Kartong. We will improve the Airport-Stink Corner Highway, including an overhead interchange at Jabang and traffic light installations at all major roundabouts.

- **River Transport Revitalisation**

  All landing sites and wharves along the River Gambia will be reconstructed and modernised. River transport will be promoted as an economic development tool, connecting farming and fishing communities to markets and enabling inter-country trade with Senegal.

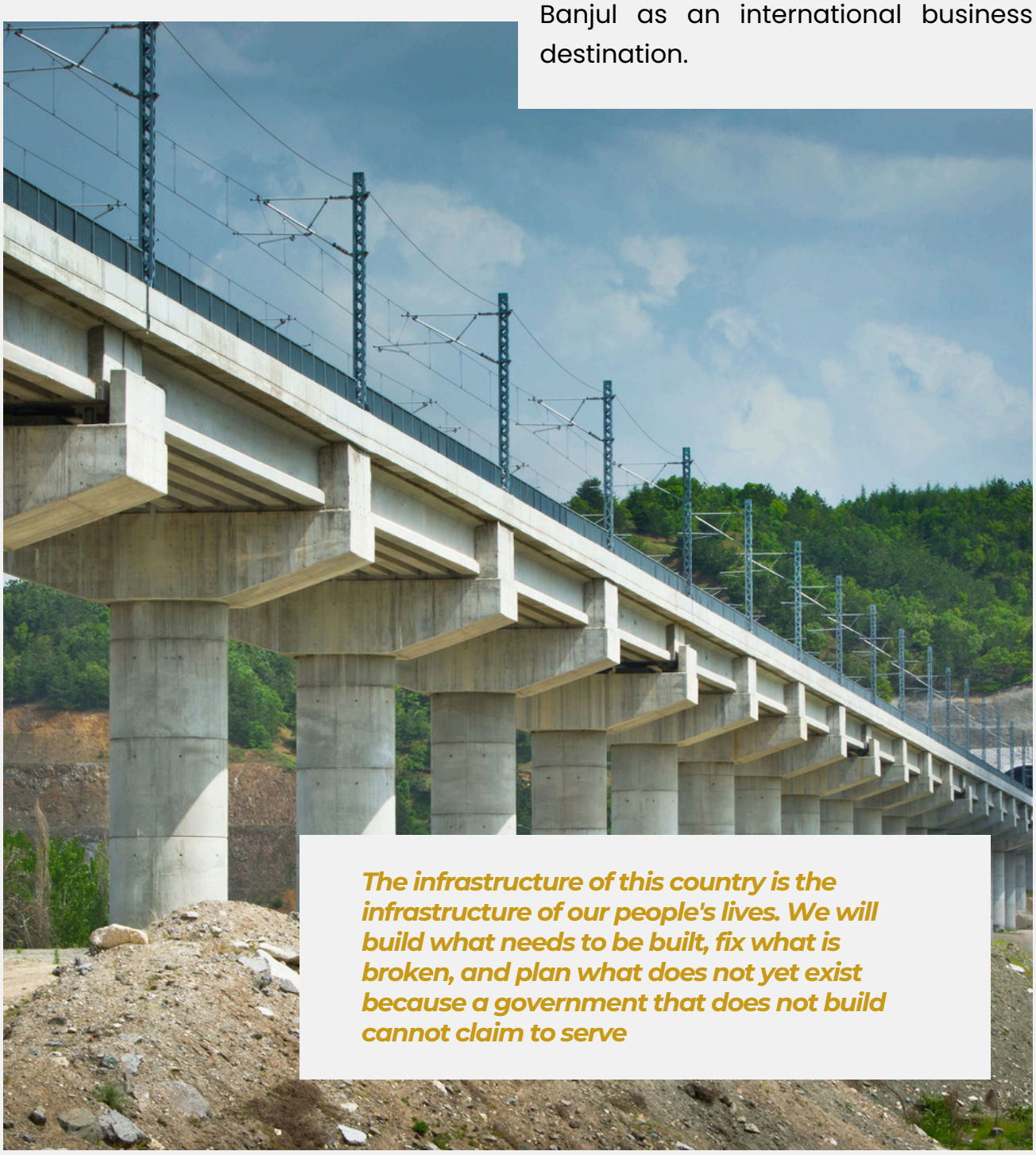
- **Affordable Housing Programme**

  We will collaborate with housing investors and development partners to deliver a national affordable housing programme, targeting civil servants and lower-income urban residents.

Housing developments will be integrated with schools, markets, health facilities, and utilities. Rural housing standards will be improved, with a five-year programme to phase out mud and thatched housing across The Gambia.

- **Transformation of Banjul**

  We will develop a master plan for the transformation of Banjul into a modern capital city, with relocation support for current residents, investment in commercial and public infrastructure, and active marketing of Banjul as an international business destination.



The infrastructure of this country is the infrastructure of our people's lives. We will build what needs to be built, fix what is broken, and plan what does not yet exist because a government that does not build cannot claim to serve

EDUCATION & HUMAN CAPITAL



The Country We Build in Our Classrooms

A nation's future is decided in its schools. Every child who receives a quality education becomes a productive citizen, a potential innovator, an economic contributor. Every child who receives a poor education or no education at all represents a compounding loss: to their own potential, to their family's prospects, and to the nation's capacity for growth.

Primary and basic education in The Gambia has produced consistently poor results. Pass rates at key examination stages are inadequate. The quality of teaching varies enormously between urban and rural areas. Girls continue to drop out at higher rates than boys. The curriculum has not been comprehensively reviewed in years. Digital literacy is non-existent in most schools outside the greater Banjul area.

At the tertiary level, our three universities UTG, USET, and the University of The Gambia for Education are underfunded, insufficiently equipped, and not yet producing the calibre of graduates and researchers that a developing nation urgently needs. Research and development receives minimal investment. Innovation ecosystems do not exist. We are educating people for a labour market that does not value what they have been taught.

At the vocational level, the situation is equally dire. We have produced a generation obsessed with degree certificates while the economy desperately needs skilled technicians, engineers, electricians, plumbers, and craftspeople. The vocational training sector has been starved of investment and prestige.
This must change!



Our Vision: An Education-Based Economy

"We will not merely reform our schools. We will reimagine what education is for."

Key Reforms

- **Curriculum Reform and Quality Standards**

  We will review and redevelop the national curriculum at every level, placing greater emphasis on critical thinking, scientific literacy, entrepreneurship, and civic responsibility. We will introduce bilingual education English, and French from early primary, recognising our heritage.

- **Digital Tablets for Every Primary School Pupil from Grade 3**

  Every primary school pupil from Grade 3 will receive a digital learning tablet, supported by digital lesson content developed specifically for the Gambian curriculum. Connectivity infrastructure will be extended to all schools as part of our national digitalisation programme.

- **Teacher Quality and Welfare Revolution**

  Teachers are the most important people in the country. We will treat them accordingly. Teacher remuneration will be benchmarked to a professional standard. Career development pathways will be created that reward performance and specialisation. Rigorous teacher retraining programmes will address current competency gaps, with particular focus on mathematics, science, and digital literacy.

- **SummerCamp-Talent Programme**

  We will introduce a national talent identification and enrichment programme that selects high-potential students from every region for immersive summer programmes connecting them to real-world careers, technical skills, engineering, computing, and entrepreneurship. We will find the Gambia's best young minds wherever they are and give them a pathway to their potential

- **Inclusive Education: Madrasas, Street Children, and Prisoners**

  Education must reach those society has abandoned. We will integrate street children into modern, well-resourced public Madrasas with combined secular and religious curricula. We will strengthen Quranic schools by connecting them to formal education pathways.

We will establish education and skills programmes in every prison, because rehabilitation is not optional.



- **University Excellence and Research Investment**

  We will invest 2 percent of GDP in research and development, making UTG, USET, and the University of Education globally competitive institutions. A national Education and Research Council will set and enforce academic standards, support emerging researchers, and connect universities to the national development agenda. South-South and South-North academic partnerships will be actively cultivated.

- **Polytechnic Institutes and Vocational Prestige**

  We will upgrade the national vocational training centres to full Polytechnic Institutes with modern equipment, qualified instructors, and industry certification programmes. We will mount a national campaign to restore the prestige of skilled trades because the electrician, the welder, the construction engineer, and the agricultural technician are as vital to this country as any university graduate.

Education is the great equaliser. It is how a child from Basse can grow up to compete with anyone in the world. It is how a nation breaks the cycle of poverty. We will build an education system worthy of the people of The Gambia.



HEALTHCARE

Health Is Not a Privilege

Healthcare is a human right. That statement is easy to make. What is harder and what every government before us has failed to do is to build a health system that actually delivers healthcare as a right, not a privilege for those who can afford private clinics or who live close enough to RVTH to access its limited resources.

The reality of healthcare in The Gambia is stark. Our average life expectancy at birth is 61.5 years well below the regional average and far below our target of 75 years. Maternal and neonatal mortality remain tragically high. Non-Communicable Diseases are rising rapidly with no adequate response system.

Skilled health personnel are chronically inadequate in number. Mental health care is almost entirely absent from our public health system. Gambians who need specialist care: cardiology, oncology, neurology must travel to Dakar at enormous personal cost, or forgo treatment altogether.

The public primary health care system has deteriorated. The World Bank invested over $91 million in Gambian health services between 2020 and 2022, yet the outcomes remain largely unaccounted for. Health facilities lack basic diagnostic equipment. Drug supply chains are erratic. Community health workers are underpaid and underequipped.
This must change!

Our Framework: Universal Health, Delivered

"No Gambian should die because they could not afford care. No Gambian should suffer because the clinic had no supplies."

Key Reforms

- **National Health Strategy: A Three-Tier Transformation**

  We will implement a comprehensive National Health Strategy that simultaneously strengthens primary care, develops secondary regional services, and builds specialist tertiary capacity. These three levels must function as a coordinated system, not as disconnected facilities.

- **Primary Care Revitalisation**

  Every health post and health centre in The Gambia will be resourced with essential medicines, basic diagnostic equipment, and trained staff. Community Health Assistants will receive proper remuneration, training, and supervision. We will invest in mobile health units for the most remote communities to ensure no Gambian is left without access to basic care.

- **Maternal and Neonatal Safety**

  Every primary and secondary health centre will be equipped with portable ultrasound devices that can be connected to phones and tablets, enabling nurses and midwives to perform life-saving ultrasounds for pregnant women. This simple, affordable technology, deployed at scale, will dramatically reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

- **Specialist Hospital Development**

  We will build or fully equip specialist units at the tertiary level in: Cardiology, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, Gastroenterology, Haematology and Blood Banking, Paediatrics, Orthopaedic Surgery, Urology, Dermatology, Otolaryngology, Forensic Pathology, Emergency Medicine, and Family Medicine. Gambians will no longer need to go to Dakar for treatment that we can provide at home.

- **Mental Health Reform**

  We will strengthen the Tanka Tanka Psychiatric Hospital, upgrade its facilities, and build a modern, humane mental health care system across all levels. Mental health will be integrated into primary care through trained community health workers, reducing stigma and ensuring early intervention.

- **Electronic Medical Records and Digital Health**

  We will implement a national Electronic Medical Records System (EMRS) across all public health

facilities, starting with RVTH and the regional hospitals. This system will improve clinical decision-making, enable population health monitoring, and create the data foundation for evidence-based health policy.

- **Population Health Screening Programme**

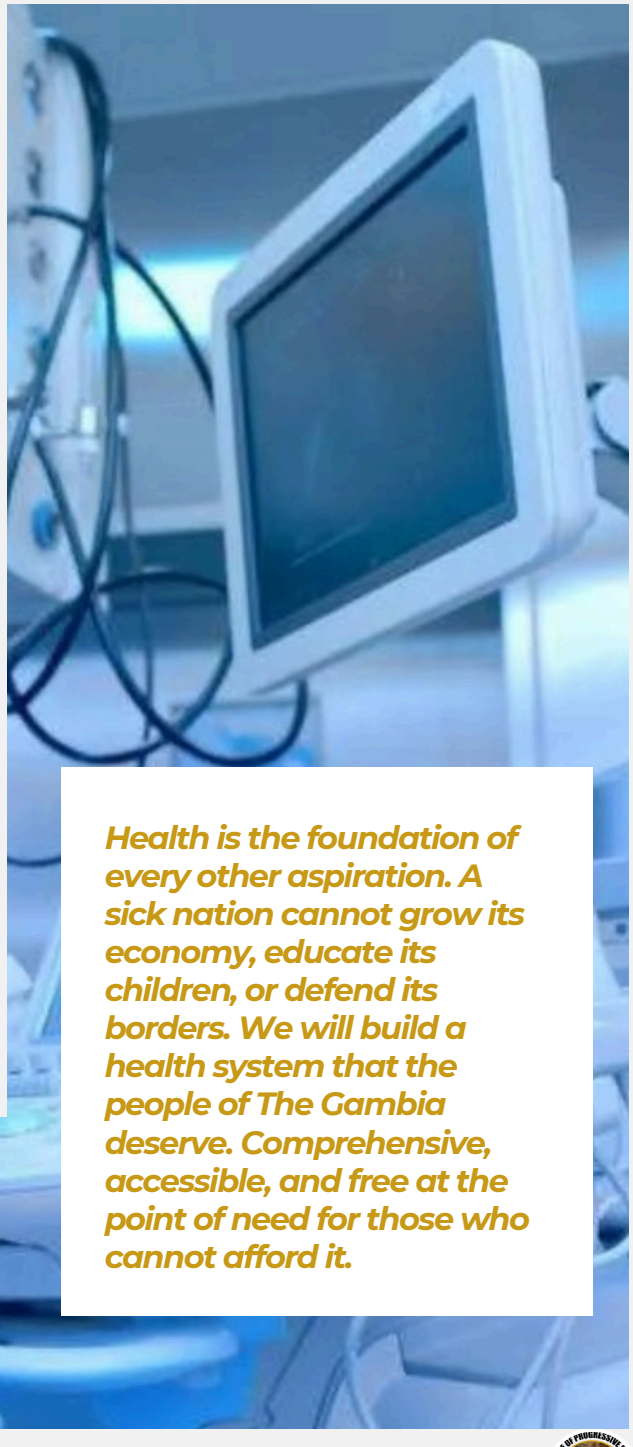
  We will introduce a Population Health Check Unit at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, providing universal screening for blood pressure, diabetes, fatty liver disease, and other NCDs. Early detection saves lives and dramatically reduces the long-term cost of treatment.

- **National Population Insurance Scheme**

  We will design and implement a contributory National Population Insurance Scheme, starting with formal sector employees and expanding progressively to cover the informal sector and the poorest households through government subsidy. Universal health coverage is the goal. We will build toward it deliberately.

- **Ambulance and Emergency Services**

  We will create a Health Care Services Department responsible for operating and coordinating national ambulance services, urgent care facilities, and emergency response. No Gambian should die waiting for an ambulance that never comes.



Health is the foundation of every other aspiration. A sick nation cannot grow its economy, educate its children, or defend its borders. We will build a health system that the people of The Gambia deserve. Comprehensive, accessible, and free at the point of need for those who cannot afford it.

SECURITY & JUSTICE



Safety Is the Prerequisite of Everything

No economic development, no social progress, no individual human flourishing can occur in an environment where people do not feel safe. The first obligation of any government is the security of its citizens, their physical safety, the security of their property, and their confidence that the institutions of the state will protect rather than threaten them.

The security landscape in The Gambia carries the deep scars of 22 years of authoritarian rule under Jammeh. The security services: the Armed Forces, the Police, the Immigration Department, the SIS, the Prisons Service were instruments of repression rather than public service. Reform was promised after 2017. It has proceeded too slowly, too tentatively, and without the institutional boldness the moment required.

The Gambia's security services remain disproportionately large for a country of our size.

The security sector accounted for 18,752 of the 40,569 employees in the public sector as of 2018, nearly 46 percent of all public servants in a country at peace. This is economically unsustainable and strategically unnecessary. Meanwhile, the police force that should be protecting communities lacks vehicles, forensic capacity, and modern policing tools.

Justice in The Gambia moves slowly and unevenly. Access to justice is often a function of wealth and connection rather than of right. The court system is under-resourced. Legal aid is inadequate. Prison conditions remain poor. Accountability for the atrocities of the Jammeh era remains incomplete, a wound that will not heal until justice is fully served.

This must change!

Key Reforms

- **Accelerated Security Sector Reform**

  We will speed up and deepen the security sector reform process, enshrining civilian oversight in the new constitution. The National Security Council will meet as constituted, regularly, formally, and with proper records. Defence and security portfolios will not be concentrated in the presidency. The appointment and deployment of senior security officers will require parliamentary approval.

- **Responsible Right-Sizing of the Defence Forces**

  A country of The Gambia's size and current security environment does not require an army nearly as large as Ghana's. We will conduct a careful, consultative review of military personnel needs, retrain redundant personnel for civilian professions in agriculture, construction, and services, and provide a Reservation Allowance and transition support for those moved to reserve status. This will be done with respect, fairness, and absolute transparency.

- **A New Vision for the Police Service**

  The Gambia Police Force will be transformed into a modern, professional, rights-respecting public safety service. We will provide: attractive remuneration with duty allowances; government-partnership housing; modern uniforms and professional identity; at least two motor vehicles per police station; motorcycles for patrol; tasers, pepper sprays, and non-lethal equipment; and a national Police Integrated Information Management System that digitalises records and case management.



- **Forensic and Criminal Investigation Capacity**

  We will establish a national Forensic Capability Unit under the Crime Investigation and Management Directorate, with modern laboratory facilities, trained forensic scientists, and digital investigation tools. The days of convictions being driven purely by confession and physical evidence will give way to evidence-based prosecution.

- **Community Policing**

  Policing done to communities breeds resentment. Policing done with communities builds safety. We will invest in community policing units, neighbourhood liaison officers, and local crime prevention partnerships in every LGA. The police will serve the community not extract from it.

- **Justice Sector Strengthening**

  We will increase the resources available to the judiciary, the legal aid service, and the Attorney General's chambers. Court backlogs will be addressed through additional magistrates, technology-assisted case management, and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Justice delayed is justice denied, we will fix the system.

- **TRRC Implementation – Full Accountability for Past Atrocitie**

  The Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations Commission produced a comprehensive report. Its recommendations will be implemented in full, including reparations for victims, prosecution of identified perpetrators, institutional reforms, and memorialisation. Gambians who suffered under Jammeh deserve more than a report. They deserve justice.

- **Community Engagement of the Armed Forces**

  The Gambia Armed Forces will develop a Community Service mandate, contributing skills in agriculture, bridge and road construction, technology deployment, and disaster response for the benefit of civilian communities. Our soldiers will be seen as servants of the nation, not only defenders of the state.





NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & GLOBAL POSITIONING

Small Nation, Strategic Ambition

The Gambia is small in area but not in potential. We sit at a strategic geographic location within West Africa. We have a stable democratic tradition now under threat but fundamentally intact. We have a diaspora with global reach and capital. We have a river that runs through the heart of the region, a coastline beloved by international tourists, a culture rich in heritage and creative energy, and a population that is young, educated enough to be built upon, and hungry for change.

What we have lacked is the strategic ambition to convert these assets into national advantage. We have punched far below our weight in regional diplomacy. Our foreign service has been under-resourced and under-directed. Our tourism sector has been managed as if it is incidental rather than transformational. Our cultural industries have been ignored. Our media has been constrained. Our civic identity has been eroded by decades of authoritarian misru



Our Vision: A Proud, Purposeful Gambia on the World Stage

"We are small in size but we need not be small in ambition, in impact, or in the respect we command."

Key Reforms

- **Strategic and Economic Diplomacy**

  We will reorient our foreign policy around economic diplomacy, the active use of our diplomatic missions to attract investment, negotiate trade access, and build bilateral partnerships that serve Gambian development interests. Every ambassador and high commissioner will be accountable for measurable economic outcomes, not just ceremonial representation

- **Regional Leadership in ECOWAS**

  The Gambia must play a more active, visible, and constructive role in ECOWAS. We will engage proactively in regional economic integration, contribute meaningfully to ECOWAS peace and security mechanisms, and position The Gambia as a model of democratic governance and peaceful development.

- **Mines, Natural Resources, and a Sovereign Wealth Fund**

  We will map, assess, and responsibly develop The Gambia's mineral resources including ilmenite, zircon, rutile, and potential oil and gas deposits through a strengthened Geology Department and transparent regulatory framework. Revenue accruing from these resources will flow into a Gambia Sovereign Wealth Fund, managed independently of the executive, with proceeds invested in long-term national development.

- **Tourism as a Strategic Industry**

  We will build a modern, year-round, multi-product tourism sector. Our tourism strategy will encompass beach and leisure tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, eco-tourism in the Upper River Region, conference tourism, and religious and cultural tourism related to our Islamic heritage. We will improve accommodation standards, train hospitality workers, and aggressively market The Gambia in new source markets.

- **Culture, Arts, and Creative Economy**

  The Gambia's artists, musicians, designers, craftspeople, and storytellers are economic assets as much as cultural treasures. We will identify creative talent in schools, create platforms for showcasing, support SMEs in the creative industries by removing punitive municipal taxes, and develop a Creative Economy Fund to support

professional artists and cultural entrepreneurs.

- **Civic Education and National Identity**

  We will launch a comprehensive national civic education programme, Gambia Forward, embedded in the school curriculum, broadcast through national media, and conducted through community programmes. The programme will build shared Gambian identity that transcends ethnicity, religion, and region, grounded in the core values of Respect, Responsibility, Resilience, Integrity, Care, and Harmony.



- **Media Freedom and Development**

  Press freedom is not a gift from government, it is a constitutional right that must be actively protected. We will support a vibrant, independent media sector, enforce the Freedom of Information Act, upgrade the GRTS to serve the entire country with quality public broadcasting, and invest in a School of Journalism at UTG to train the next generation of professional Gambian journalists.

- **Climate Resilience and Green Gambia**

  The Gambia contributes negligibly to global greenhouse gas emissions but faces disproportionate climate impacts: coastal erosion, flooding, shifting growing seasons, and biodiversity loss. We will collaborate with the Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, and international partners to fund and implement our National Climate Adaptation Plan. The Gambia will be a model of climate leadership in West Africa.

- **Sports and Recreation**

  Sports develop character, build national identity, and create economic value. We will develop accessible sports and recreation facilities in every region, identify and support sporting talent at the community level, and engage bilateral partners to invest in a

modern multipurpose national stadium that allows our national teams to play international matches at home, in front of their own people.



The world does not owe The Gambia recognition. We must earn it through the quality of our governance, the performance of our economy, the strength of our institutions, and the pride of our people. Under our leadership, The Gambia will earn that recognition.

Conclusion

This manifesto is not a collection of wishful thinking. It is a programme of governance detailed, sequenced, and grounded in the real conditions of our country. Every pillar, every reform, every commitment in these pages has been developed with the question of execution at its centre: not just what we want to achieve, but how, in what order, with whose involvement, and at what cost.

We do not pretend that transforming The Gambia will be easy. It will not be. The institutional damage of five decades of misrule is deep. The fiscal constraints are real. The expectations of a patient but long-suffering population are high. But we do not need perfect conditions to begin. We need leadership that is honest about the challenge, clear about the direction, and absolutely determined to move.

We come before you with ten pillars because national transformation requires simultaneous, coordinated action on multiple fronts. You cannot achieve food security without roads to get produce to market. You cannot achieve economic growth without reliable electricity. You cannot achieve any of it without governance reform that ensures every dalasi spent produces real outcomes. These ten pillars are not ten separate programmes, they are one integrated plan for a New Gambia.

"The Gambia we choose is a Gambia that feeds itself, powers itself, governs itself with integrity, and commands the respect of the world."

We choose a Gambia where a girl from Basse has the same chance at quality education as a boy from Banjul. Where a farmer in Janjanbureh has access to the same government services as a civil servant in Kanifing. Where the young man in Brikama does not need to risk his life crossing the Sahara because his country has created the opportunities he needs at home.

We choose a Gambia governed by merit, not by patronage. By accountability, not by impunity. By long-term thinking, not by short-term political survival.

We choose a Gambia that is proud of what it is and clear about where it is going.

That Gambia is within reach. It requires only that on election day, the people of this country choose it deliberately, choose it boldly, and choose it together.

Vote for A New Gambia.
Vote Alliance of Progressive Citizens.

H.E. MODOU LAMIN SIMA



Unity. Discipline. Integrity. Hard Work. Accountability. Patriotism. UDIHAP.