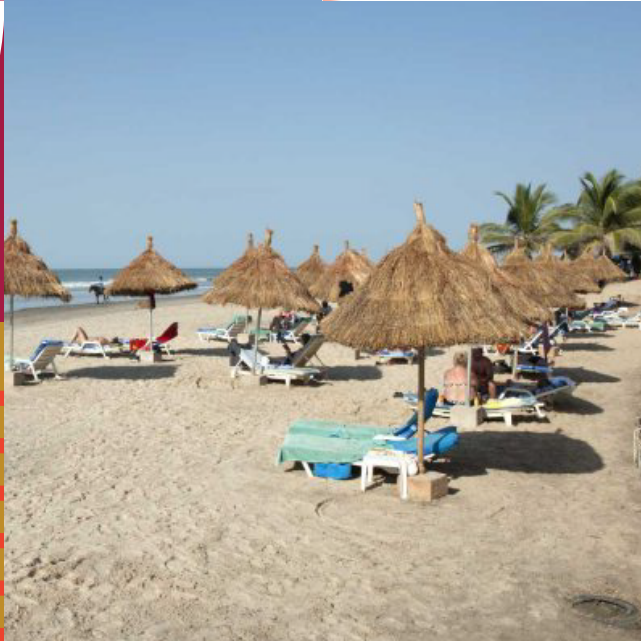
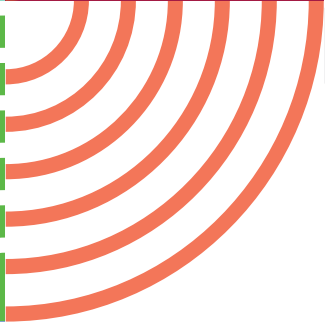


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The Tourism Policy Action Plan

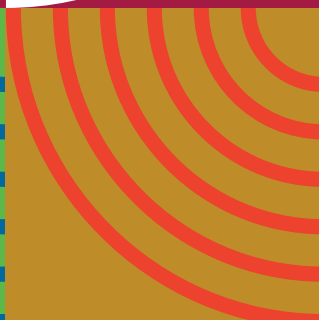
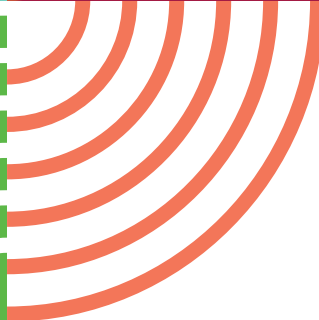
Tourism Sector of the Gambia



United Nations Conference on Trade
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The Tourism Policy Action Plan

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Any remaining errors and omissions are solely the authors' responsibility. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the official views of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Gambian Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

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Abbreviations

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
DoSTC	Department of State for Tourism and Culture
GDP	gross domestic product
GMD	Gambian dalasi
GoTG	Government of the Gambia
GT-Board	Gambia Tourism Board
GTHI	Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute
GVC	global value chain
ITTOG	Institute of Travel and Tourism of the Gambia
LGA	local government area
MECCNAR	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Natural Resources
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHERST	Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology
MoLRG	Ministry of Lands and Regional Government
MoTC	Ministry of Tourism and Culture
MoTIE	Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Employment
MoTWI	Ministry of Transport, Works, and Infrastructure
MoYS	Ministry of Youths and Sports
NAQAA	National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority
NCAC	National Centre for Arts and Culture
NDP	National Development Plan
NEA	National Environment Agency
PAGE	Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment
PAP	Policy Action Plan
R&D	research and development
RVC	regional value chain
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
TDA	tourism development area
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UTG	University of the Gambia
3S's	sand, sea, and sunshine

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Abstract

The Tourism Policy Action Plan is the final output as part of the Trade in Services project implemented by UNCTAD and the GoTG, with funding from the United Nations. The PAP is meant to guide policy towards actions that will enhance the contributions of tourism to the Gambian economy whilst increasing sector's specific performance by creating jobs and earnings to youths and women, in particular.

To this end, a detailed SWOT analysis of the Tourism and Culture sub-sectors has been made to assess the current situation. This was followed by the identification of six strategic objectives that will be the guiding strategy for the Ministry and its satellite institution for the period spanning 2022 to 2027 (5 years). The strategic objectives identified focuses on the four areas that the Action plan is divided into; Destination marketing, product development, quality in tourism establishment and human resources development.



Introduction

This document is divided into three main sections. The first section provides a background to the Gambian tourism sector and the Trade in Services project, and a justification for the preparation of the Policy Action Plan (PAP). The second section provides an overview of the plan, outlines the main goals, objectives, priority areas/actions and population group requiring special attention. Section three presents an implantation framework for the Gambia Tourism Policy Action Plan (PAP). It outlines action areas and recommended activities to be employed over the next five years. Timeframes and data sources for key indicators are provided (where available), as well as those involved in the development and implementation of activities.

1. Background

This study is commissioned as part of a development account project on Services Trade in Africa, which is funded by the United Nations (UN) and implemented by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The main goal of the project is to contribute to unlocking the potential of the services trade in Africa. The project endeavours to strengthen national and regional capacities to measure the value chain added that is generated by regional services value chains, assess the degree to which developing targeted services sector may improve the tradability of goods and services and improve integration into regional value chains (RVCs) and global value chains (GVCs), and support developing the necessary policy framework to enable the sectors' growth. Within the context of COVID-19, some of the project activities have been revised to account for the impacts of the pandemic on the services sector and how countries can best be supported to address these challenges.

The goal of the project is to identify measures and establish a roadmap for the necessary policy frameworks that would enable the country to maximize the benefits that it can derive from the tourism sector, in terms of facilitating trade, and supporting employment while fostering inclusive growth.

1.1. Situation of tourism in the Gambia

To understand and define the Tourism Policy Action Plan (PAP), a detailed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of

tourism and culture has been undertaken based on stakeholder consultations and literature review.

The priority areas identified for maximal delivery in the sector are as follows:

- Diversifying and improving the quality of the Gambia tourism products;
- Developing new niche markets, especially ecotourism, cultural, sport and conference tourism;
- Segmenting markets, establishing priorities and developing a plan for each segment;
- Encouraging major investments in high-class hotels with incentive packages;
- Fostering public-private partnerships for the development of the sector;
- Strengthening backward and forward linkages with the rest of the economy, in particular with agriculture and fisheries;
- Building the capacity of small and large professional associations to provide better services;
- Classifying tourism establishments to promote high standards;
- Encouraging responsible tourism through an awareness-building and education program designed to eliminate the problem of “bumsterism” and the vices;
- Develop a tourism database and information system for results-based management;
- Undertake policy revision to drive wide-ranging reforms aimed at enhancing competitiveness;
- Strengthen quality service delivery;
- Revamp and strengthen tourism security;
- Demarcate and lease out four tourism development areas (TDAs) to promote product diversification and inclusive tourism;
- Increase recognition/attractiveness of Destination Gambia through marketing;
- Undertake research and development (R&D) to continually improve competitiveness;
- Conserve and promote the Gambia's tangible and intangible cultural heritage for enhanced competitiveness; and
- Implement the mandate of the Collecting Society of the Gambia.

The SWOT analysis of the tourism and culture sub-sectors

It is from the tourism sector's potential to create employment and spur growth that this study was commissioned to take stock of the current policy situation, whilst identifying proposals for the reform needed, and detailing the associated strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the tourism sector.

The internal environment

The internal environment of the tourism and culture sub-sectors are marked with various strengths and weaknesses that enhance or affect their functionality. Below, they are listed as a reflection of the current internal environment:

Tourism

The areas of strengths for the tourism sub-sector include:

1. Attractive beaches in a semi-tropical environment
2. Value for money accommodations with very competitive prices
3. Short flight duration from Europe; airport close to tourist areas
4. Friendly people with English as an official language; safe cultural environment for tourists
5. Well identified tourism development area (TDA)
6. Political stability and peace
7. Institutionalization of the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI)
8. Institutional and legal framework for tourism

The weaknesses of the tourism sub-sector include:

1. Heavy dependence on few tour operators (European)
2. Undiversified and under-exploited product range (scenery, culture, sports, accommodation, river excursions)
3. Limited air access by scheduled carriers and heavy dependence on chartered flights
4. Limited marketing funding for Destination Gambia
5. Underdeveloped infrastructure relating to power, roads, water supply, sewage systems and communication
6. Inadequate R&D
7. Limited human capacity

Culture

The culture sub-sector has the following strengths:

1. Cultural diversity – multiple ethnic groups with diverse tangible and intangible culture and heritage
2. Well established cultural festivals at the community and national levels as vehicles for the manifestation of our rich cultural heritage
3. A high degree of cultural tolerance/peaceful co-existence (e.g., joking relationships between/within ethnic groups)
4. Two UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Kunta Kinteh Island and Related Sites + Stone Circles of the Senegambia)
5. One inscription in UNESCO's "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" (The Kankurang)
6. Several national, community and private museums
7. Vibrant arts and craft community
8. Extensive database on oral histories and traditions

The culture sub-sector's main weaknesses include:

1. Over-dependence on tourism for revenue generation
2. Poor public funding of the arts and culture sector/ the National Centre for Arts and Culture (NCAC)
3. Limited training opportunities in the arts and culture sector (no arts, music or film schools)
4. Lack of cultural infrastructure (National Theatre, National Art Gallery, publishing houses, cinema houses, media houses, etc.)
5. No endowment funds for the arts or National Awards for recognition of outstanding artists
6. Lack of incentive scheme for cultural preservation (e.g., historic buildings)
7. Weak artists' interest groups/associations
8. Lack of representation of artists in the National Assembly
9. Absence of cultural administrators and facilities at the regional and district levels
10. Marketing of cultural products and services (music, books, film, restored sites, etc.)
11. Limited development of the cultural industries

The external environment of the tourism sector

Numerous opportunities exist for the tourism and culture sub-sectors, which when leveraged can enhance the performance of the sector. Also, the sector can be impeded by threats such as social

vices, increasing competition from the neighbouring countries, acculturation and so on.

Tourism

The opportunities that exist within the tourism sub-sector include:

1. Suitable climate for year-round tourism
2. Possibilities to widen the present tourist offer through adding historical, cultural and sport-oriented attractions
3. Opportunities to make the Gambia a responsible tourism destination
4. Developing products around The River Gambia
5. Development and improvement of niche markets, e.g., bird watching, river cruises
6. Development of community-based tourism and eco-tourism enterprises with private partnership
7. Potential for improving linkages between tourism and the agricultural sector (fisheries, crop production, horticulture, poultry and livestock)

The threats that the tourism sub-sector is confronted with include:

1. Dependent mainly on international tour operators
2. Increased competition from the sub-region, e.g., Senegal/Cape Verde
3. Perception of insecurity in West Africa through terrorist attacks at hotels
4. Negative perception of health risks (e.g., malaria)
5. Degeneration of natural environment, including beach erosion, littering, poor environmental sanitation and waste disposal
6. Weak institutional framework, including uncontrolled development in the TDAs, as well as countrywide
7. Social vices (e.g., Bumster problem, sexual exploitation of children)
8. Pollution from fish meals in the coastal zones
9. Uncontrolled mining within the coastal zones

Culture

The opportunities for the culture sub-sector include:

1. Strengthening legal frameworks (NCAC Act, Copyright Act, and Culture Policy) to offer protections

2. A thriving tourism sector/industry

3. A youthful population engaged in the creative arts (65 per cent of the Gambian population is under 35 years of age) for self-employment

4. Bilateral and multilateral cultural co-operation agreements

5. Existence of the University of the Gambia and other tertiary institutions for capacity building

Threats that beset the culture sub-sector include:

1. Acculturation (globalization and new media)
2. Lack of comprehensive national inventory of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage
3. Degeneration of natural environment – fauna and flora
4. Rural-urban migration (e.g., passing down of traditional skills) and “back way syndrome”
5. Limited tourism facilities in the rural areas
6. Lack of empirical studies and data/statistics on the contribution of the cultural industries to the gross domestic product (GDP)
7. Limited development of the teaching of the local language

From the SWOT analysis, it is evident that a major challenge of the Gambia's tourism sector is that it is dominated by chartered flights, which is a result of limited air access. The other challenges and constraints facing the industry include product obsolescence, challenges in relation to the bed capacity at hotels, limited linkages with the rest of the economy, environmental degradation, quality service delivery challenges, access to competitive financing options, limited research literature on tourism, and social vices (such as “bumster” problem and sex tourism, to name two).

1.2. Why we need the Gambia Tourism PAP

Tourism is one of the most important sectors of the Gambian economy given its contribution to GDP, the employment it provides – either directly or indirectly – and the foreign currency it provides, thus helping to maintain a relative stable dalasi. Additionally, tourism should also be noted for the job opportunities it avails to Gambians of all ages and genders. However, the sector is characterized by:

- High dependence on charter flights;
- Seasonality (with winter being the most pronounced time for tourist arrivals);

- Focused on accommodations near the sea;
- Short duration of stays relative to the sub-regional average;
- Limited travel in country; and
- Relaxation being the main motive for visits (GoTG, 2018, 2011).

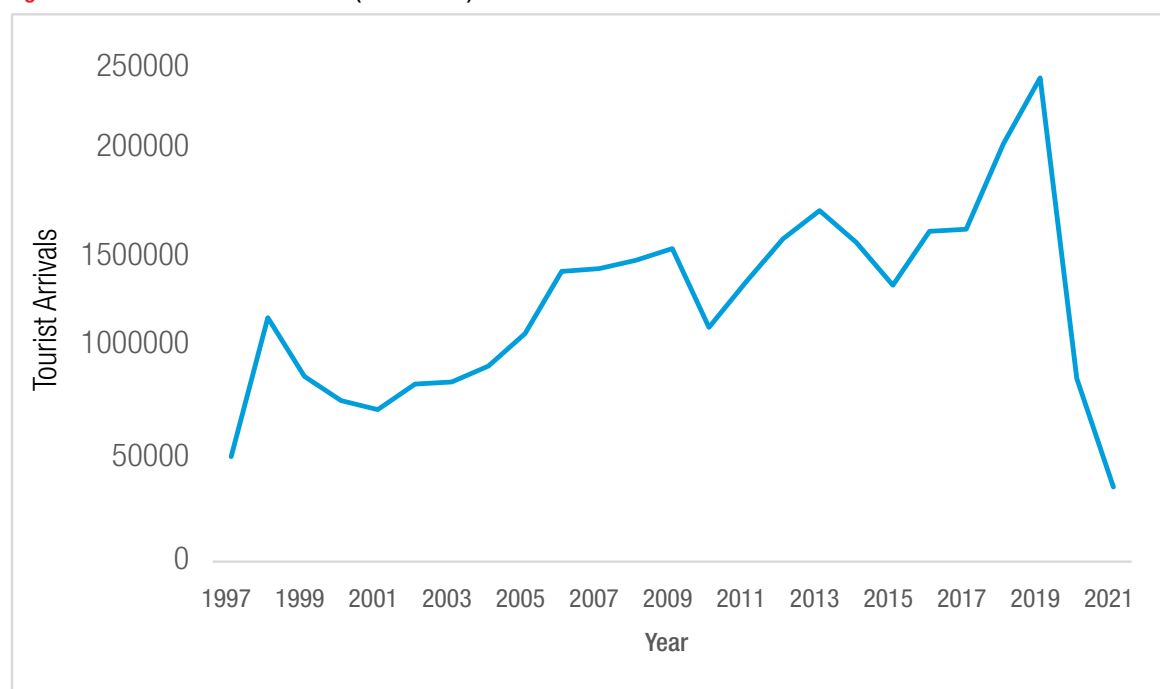
Recognizing the unique role of tourism's contributions and potentials for spurring growth in the Gambian economy, in 2006, the Government of the Gambia (GoTG) developed The Gambia Tourism Master Plan (DoSTC, 2006) under the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MoTC). This sector has been pronouncedly featured in the medium- and long-term development programs of the country, ranging from Vision 2020, the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE), and the Gambia National Development Plan (NDP). These plans and programs attest to the seriousness with which policy makers view the sector. In fact, the Ministry of Tourism has hired a team of consultants that have been tasked with updating its tourism policy. In addition, UNCTAD (2022) developed a study on the global value chains on the tourism services sector in The Gambia.

The graph below shows arrival of tourists overtime (1997-2021). Evidently, the overall trend is upward, albeit unstable. The numbers are prone to shocks,

such as the global financial crisis of 2007/08, the Ebola outbreak, political impasses, and most recently, Covid-19. Each of these individual events negatively impacted the tourist arrivals, and by extension, the sector's performance. Despite these shocks, the sector attained its target in terms of yearly tourist arrivals as set in the NDP of the Gambia, with about 230,000 arrivals. As predicted, the Covid-19 pandemic contributed to an enormous decline in the numbers, given the widespread mobility restrictions that were put into place to curb the spread of the virus at both source and destination countries around the globe. This facilitated substantial financial losses (GMD 6.8 billion) between April and June 2021. Most of this loss was borne by hotels (GMD 6.4 billion – 94 per cent of the total losses), followed by ground tour operators (GMD 58.4 million), restaurants (GMD 33.8 million) and beach bars (GMD 27.6 million). This led to massive downsizes in personnel and closures of activity within the sector; especially hard hit were transportation, hotels and restaurants. This exposes employees, especially women, to additional vulnerabilities. Furthermore, the number of tourist arrivals during the pandemic fell below the 1997 figure and is the lowest over the duration.

Developed from the tourism sector's potential to create employment (directly or indirectly), increase income (higher contributions to GDP) and spur greater growth for the economy, the Tourism Policy

Figure 1: Number of Tourist Arrivals (1997-2021)



Source: Author's calculations.

Action Plan was commissioned to take stock of the present policy situation, whilst identifying proposals for necessary reform, detailing the associated SWOTs of the sector.

1.3. Overview of the Gambia Tourism PAP

The Gambia's tourism PAP is divided into four main areas for action, which are to be implemented within a span of five years (2022-2027). The areas are broadly defined as follows:

- **Destination marketing:** To help meet the short- to medium-term strategy of market development and diversification. This will include the re-invigoration of the existing geographical markets (greater focus on regional tourism), development of specific niches and exporting new markets.
- **Product development:** Includes the enhancement of cultural and tourism products, services and linkages with local arts and crafts; will increase tourism related activities within the TDAs, rural Gambia, and explore the River Gambia more.
- **Quality in tourism establishment:** Ensures the establishment of minimum standards for hotels, bread and Breakfasts etc.; a proposed government policy that incentivizes well-performing hotels, whilst disincentivizing underperforming hotels, as well as the creating a classification of the TDAs.
- **Human resource development:** Improve job opportunities and service delivery, whilst showcasing tourism as a viable career development path for Gambians. To that end, developing standard curricula for tourism in consultations with stakeholders will be the hallmark of this action.

1.4. Context of the Gambia Tourism PAP

Goal: To find ways and establish a road map for the necessary policy frameworks that would enable the country to maximize the benefits that it can derive from the tourism sector, in terms of facilitating trade, and supporting employment while fostering inclusion.

In the Gambia, the focus on the tourism sector aims to:

- strengthen capacities to measure and analyze how tourism services contribute to the level and scope of the country's integration into RVCs

- assess the degree to which developing the sector further may improve tradability of goods and services, and improve the country's passage into RVCs

- assess the COVID-19 impacts and recovery responses

- identify policy gaps and how to address them to catalyze growth to further enhance the country's positioning and relevance in RVCs

2. Framework of the PAP

The Policy Action Plan has been developed by linking the activities already undertaken by the MoTC and its satellite institutions, particularly the Gambian Tourism Board (GT-Board) and the NCAC. The process relied on document review from the already undertaken activities within the project. This was then followed up designing a tool for stakeholder consultation. This tool identified four areas to strategically position the tourism sector for growth and enhanced contribution for economy-wide performance. These areas include;

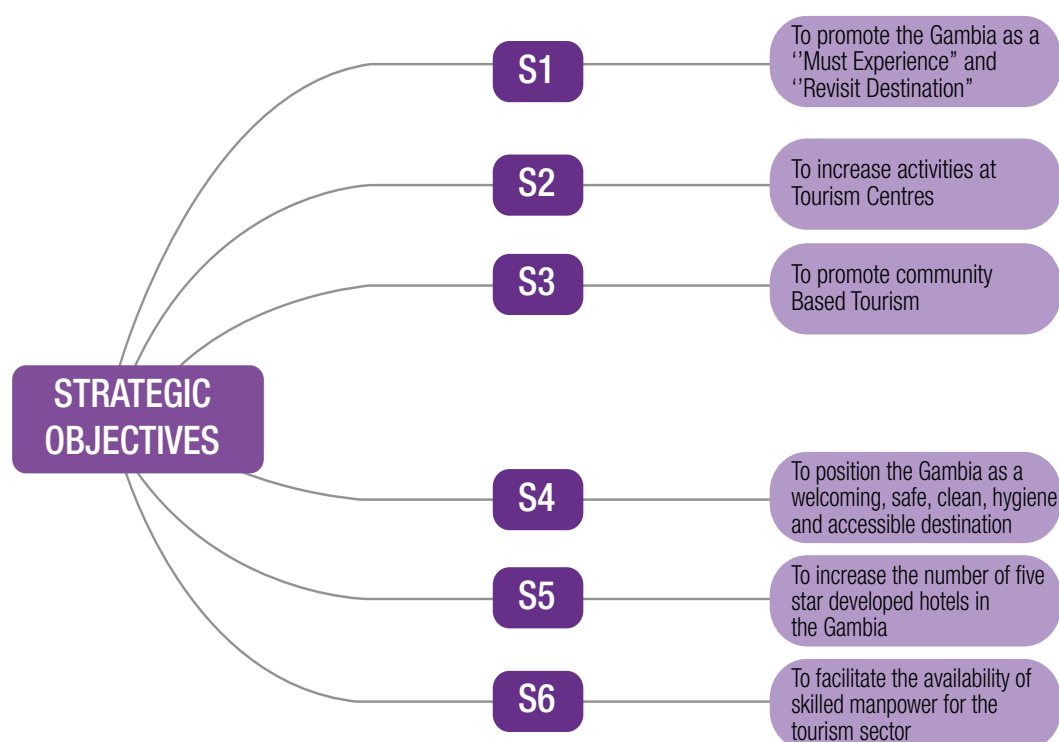
1. Tourism Marketing
2. Tourism Product Development
3. Human Resources and Training/Innovation/Enterprise Support and Competitiveness
4. The Implementing Policy and Service Delivery Mechanism

To guide the consultations, the objectives were defined and questions eliciting actions to be undertaken to increase the sector's performance were established. The consultations were a means to validate or the objectives around each of the four areas based on the overall objective of the project – which is to maximize the benefits that the Gambia can derive from the tourism sector, in terms of facilitating trade and supporting employment while fostering inclusion.

The actions identified were then used to construct an action matrix. In the action matrix, six strategic objectives were formed based on the responses from the consultations. The strategic objectives were sequenced; once sequenced, output, action, means of verification, responsible party, budget and timeline were identified for each strategy(ies) under each strategic objective.

Table 1: Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives
1. To promote the Gambia as a “Must Experience” and “Revisit Destination”
2. To increase activities at tourism centres
3. To promote community based tourism
4. To position the Gambia as a welcoming, safe, clean, hygienic and accessible destination
5. To increase the number of five-star developed hotels in the Gambia
6. To facilitate the availability of skilled manpower for the tourism sector

Figure 2: Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 1: To promote the Gambia as “Must Experience” and “Revisited Destination”

As a destination that seeks to achieve exponential growth and competitiveness, focus is required to leverage growth, to create compelling reasons for the Must Experience and Re-visitation that tap into the primary motivation of tourists, ensuring exceptional experience delivery, whilst at the same time providing other opportunities for discovery. The tourist journey that encompasses destination interest, research, decision making and bookings is an ever-evolving process that requires sound and dynamic interventions. This strategy will follow these broad principles:

Maintain and grow the market share of visitors into the Gambia

- Strengthen and create awareness on the destinations through digital and overseas marketing
- Conduct a perception survey about destination marketing

Ensure the Gambia remains a competitive and trusted destination to travel

- Strengthen engagements to build trust with local and regional stakeholders and tourism industry partners

- Develop a communication channel to level the fear in visitation to the Gambia with post pandemic restrictions

This objective would be further strengthened and attained by getting foreign missions in the Gambia with interests in cultural exchanges to collaborate with the MoTC and the NCAC through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to promote and showcase Gambian culture, and likewise appreciate and showcase their culture in the Gambia.

Strategic Objective 2: To increase activities at tourism centres

Product development, product deepening and product diversification by increasing activities

at tourism centres is a critical aspect of tourism development aspirations, without which, harnessing the sector's contributions to the economy and utilizing the gains offered by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) regional agreement, in particular, under the trade in service will remain a challenge. Traditionally, the Gambia has remained a SEASONAL destination – from November to April – and is able to meet the SUN aspect of the '3 Ss' (sand, sea and sunshine); for this reason, western Europeans and Scandinavians flock to the Gambia during their harsh winters with limited sunshine. Presently, the '3 Ss' are no longer a magnet to a tourism destination; neither is the EXOTIC appeal of tourism destinations, as every culture can claim to be exotic since the world has become a global village. As a result, the Gambia is unable to fully utilise a tourism season of 365 days due to limited product development/activities that sufficiently attract foreign and domestic tourism. Therefore, it is necessary for tourism stakeholders to undertake the following critical activities while maintaining high service quality delivery:

Promote River Gambia Cruises

River cruising has become a valuable niche for destinations across the globe, offering a more exclusive, intimate experience of the location. The Gambia is well irrigated by its rivers, which flow along the length and breadth of the country. Rivers also offer an alternative mode of transportation and recreational opportunities. This can provide a substantial amount of income, and direct and indirect employment can be generated by providing the right policy environment and infrastructure; the following are necessary areas for intervention:

- Create an air strip (between Basse and Kombos to enable one-day excursions)
- Encourage private sector investment on quality boats
- Support the development of cruise terminals along the River Gambia

Promote the development of event and exhibition centres

The exhibition centres are an important tool for promoting exhibitors' destinations. Exhibition centres act as a communicative environment for both the tourists and the exhibitors. Additionally, well-established exhibition centres can be utilized to further market new tourist destinations. Also, hosting special events, such as expositions and

festivals, has been recognized as an import strategy, not only for a short-term increase in tourist volumes and revenue, but also for improving the destination's image-building brands for sustainable development. Key areas of intervention include the following:

- Supporting the development of a cultural centre (already underway, with funds already secured) in the Gambia at the TDA in Senegambia
- Encouraging weddings and honeymoons at hotels
- Supporting weekly exhibitions of the art sector (music, drama, etc.)

Promote sport tourism-related events

Sports' events tourism is internationally recognized as a substantial and highly desirable niche market. The goal is to use it as a strategic part of Destination Gambia's attraction mix, increasing the demand for local business, hotel booking, food restaurants, and transportation. Key and necessary actions to promote sport-tourism related events will include developing a calendar of sports tourism tournament, and supporting the broadcasting of sports-related tourism events.

Strategic Objective 3: To promote community-based tourism

The ultimate goal is to decentralize tourism and obtain the benefits from tourism, such as creating job opportunities, increased earnings, more income for the government, social amenities etc. that profit rural folks. This initiative will largely focus on cultural festivals, ecotourism-related products, capacity development, infrastructure, and other critical activities that boost community-based tourism and strengthens cultural heritage and general relaxation. The MoTC and its satellite institutions will strengthen engagement coordination and mainstreaming tourism strategies with critical stakeholder, namely, the Ministry of Lands and Regional Government (MoLRG), the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources (MECCNAR), the Ministry of Youths and Sports (MoYS), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), as well as the Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure (MoTWI) to help implement the following timely strategies and actions:

Promote periodic national and regional cultural events

Festivals in the form of cultural events are a great anchor for attracting traditional and regional tourists. Festivals are also a prime opportunity to know the local culture and experience the essence of

the place. During cultural events, tourists have the unique opportunity to interact with the local community, gaining a deeper experience of the ambience, customs and local culture. In light of this, periodic national and regional cultural events can be promoted through the following:

- Festivals at all landing sites in the Gambia
- Development of local indigenous clothes, like Kunta Kinteh Clothing
- Capacity building in festival management
- Train handicraft producers to develop local indigenous souvenirs during festival periods

Suitable infrastructure to handle the events

- Develop eight wrestling grounds in the rural areas
- Develop eight museums at each of the identified wrestling grounds
- Support tent camping by providing accommodations in rural areas

Enabling framework to support land ownership rights of communities

Engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making about the management and future development of tourism in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders. Key interventions needed include:

- Support community participation in decision making
- Consult the local community in deciding major issues that directly affects their areas
- Provide training in hospitality management to enable the community can host tourists at their private properties

Strategic Objective 4: To position the Gambia as a welcoming, safe, clean, hygienic and accessible destination

To this effect, the Gambia will be marketed as a destination that will rival sub-regional destinations in terms of being the most welcoming, safe, clean and accessible destination. This helps tourists feel relaxed and comfortable during their stay. It will also help in lengthening the duration of stay for the average tourist and increase the chance of repeated visits. Thus, this strategic objective is critical in changing the seasonal nature of the sector, whilst improving employment and its contributions to the

economic performance of the Gambia. In line with this objective, the following will be undertaken:

Clean toilets facilities

Toilets are a basic human need. Every day, humans cannot escape the dependency on toilets. There is a need for a special toilet revolution program. The MoTC and local government area (LGA) to implement the following identified activities:

- develop pay-and-use toilet facilities in all tourism sites
- develop a mobile app to map all available toilet facilities
- developed a rating of service system using the App
- hold a clean public toilet competition that incentivizes the maintenance of clean toilet facilities

Cleanliness support component in all of the MoTC's projects

Setting up projects that focus on hygiene and sanitation, in order to achieve tidiness and cleanliness to attract foreign and domestic tourists, the MoTC can collaborate with the LGA council to implement the following activities:

- develop a benchmark standard for cleanliness and hygiene in all project activities of the tourism sector
- encourage large scale campaigns in schools and colleges, and communities involving all stakeholders on hygiene practices
- provision for frequent garbage collection service to ensure that waste is properly disposed

Enforce anti-littering law

Legislation has been enacted to guarantee the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in the Gambia. These include the National Environment Act and the Anti-Littering Act 2007 to regulate indiscriminate public dumping and littering of liquid and solid waste. The MoTC can collaborate with the National Environment Agency (NEA) to implement the following activities:

- monitor and evaluate the implementation of anti-littering laws within the TDA
- train security personnel to implement anti-littering laws
- raise awareness about anti-littering laws

Strategic Objective 5: To increase the number of five-star developed hotels in the Gambia

Five-star hotels provide a luxury service through all its means of operation; namely cleanliness, maintenance, hospitality, and quality of physical facilities and delivery of services. These hotels convey excellence, which make them worthy of the five-star classification. As a result, the MoTC and its satellite institutions need to focus on the following actions, with the view to increase the number of five-star hotels in country:

Develop TDA hotel clusters and make land readily available for investment

- Delineate tourism development area
- Zone each TDA in hierarchical order
- Update hotel classifications and standards for all-star rankings (1-5)

Ensure that non-performing sites within the zones are recovered for high-end investment

Strategic Objective 6: To facilitate the availability of skilled manpower for the tourism sector

The tourism sector provides a multitude of employment opportunities in a range of segments including hotels, tourism transport, ecotourism, and adventure tourism, travel, agents and tour operators, food and beverages, tourist guides, and other related areas. It needs to be recognized that it is service driven by visitors' experience. The people serving the specific industry segment need to be well trained to deliver both a positive experience and quality service delivery to visitors. Therefore, to meet the requirements of the industry and exploit the demographic bonus of the Gambia, the availability of a skilled workforce needs to be pushed by speed, scale and standardization.

Promote careers in tourism and hospitality

This goal is to increase the social acceptability of young women and men to pursue careers in tourism and hospitality. This can be achieved by implementing the following actions:

- strengthen the awareness level of job opportunities and career development within the tourism sector
- increase scholarship opportunities for the youth to pursue career development in tourism and hospitality management
- increase the number of enrolling students at GTHI, the Institute of Travel and Tourism of the Gambia (ITTOG) and the UTG
- support job fairs for individuals with specialized skills in tourism and hospitality management

Empower youth to take up Tourism related skilled training to offset the demand for skilled labor for the tourism sector

Apart from hotels, restaurants and tour operators, many areas can become important magnets for tourism. The MoTC and its satellite institutions will need to deepen the skill development programs to develop training in skill areas such as carving, weaving, tie and dye, culinary, etc.

Institutional strengthening: Capacity building of tourism institutions (GTHI, GT-Board, NCAC and those in the informal sector)

The capacity building of tourism institutions will help the overall implementation of the Tourism Action Plan. As a result, the following areas should be strengthened:

- Conduct in-service trainings for hoteliers on best international practices
- Conduct periodic study tours for the GT-Board and GTHI officials to learn best practices
- Provide more training for tourism and hospitality lecturers to enable responsiveness to the trend in demand within the sector
- Institute a research grant at the University of the Gambia to research tourism related matters

ANNEX 1 Activities Action Matrix

Table 2: Activities Action Matrix

Strategic Objective 1: To promote the Gambia as a “Must Experience” and “Revisit Destination”										
Strategy	Output	Activity	Means of Verification	Responsible party	Budget	Time				
						1	2	3	4	5
S1.1 Maintain and grow the market share of visitors to the Gambia	market share of visitors increased	strengthen/create awareness on destination marketing	number of awareness destination marketing conducted	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		conduct a perception survey about Destination Gambia post Covid-19	number of perception surveys conducted; reports generated from surveys	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
S1.2 The Gambia remains a competitive and trusted destination for travel	competitiveness of Destination Gambia is strengthened	strengthen engagement to build trust with local and regional stakeholders and tourism industry partners	reports of engagements with local and regional stakeholders	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		develop a communication channel to address the fear of visiting the Gambia post Covid-19	communication channel to address the fear for visiting the Gambia post Covid-19 (restrictions etc.)	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
Strategic Objective 2: To increase activities at tourism centres										
Strategy	Output	Activity	Means of Verification	Responsible party	Budget	Time				
						1	2	3	4	5
S2.1 promote River Gambia Cruises	River Gambia Cruise promotions	create an air strip between Basse and Kombos to enable day trip excursions	number of Air strip conducted	GT-Board		x	x	x		x
		encourage private sector investment for good quality boats	reports on the number of private sector investment on boats			x	x	x		x
		support the development of cruise terminals along the River Gambia	number of cruise terminals constructed	GT-Board/ MOTC		x	x	x		x
		support the development of cultural centres in the Gambia at the TDA in Senegambia	A cultural center developed	NCAC/ MOTC/ G-Board		x	x	x		x
S2.2 promote the development of events and exhibition centres	events and exhibition centres developed	encourage weddings and honeymoons at hotels	number wedding and honeymoons recorded	GT-Board		x	x	x		x
		support weekly exhibitions of the art sector (music, drama, etc)	number of weekly exhibition shows	GT-Board / NCAC		x	x	x		x
S2.3 promote sport tourism-related events	sport tourism related events promoted	developed a sports' tournament calendar	A calendar of sporting tournaments	GT-Board/ MOTC/ NCAC		x	x	x		x
		support the broadcasting of sports related tourism events	number of sports related events broadcasted	GT-Board/ MOTC/ NCAC		x	x	x		x

Strategic Objective 3: To promote community-based tourism										
Strategy	Output	Activity	Means of Verification	Responsible party	Budget	Time				
						1	2	3	4	5
S3.1 promote periodic national and regional cultural events	periodic national and regional cultural events promoted	promote festivals at all the landing sites in the Gambia	number of festivals held at the landings	GT-Board/ NCAC		X	X	X	X	X
		support the development of local indigenous clothes, like Kunta Kinteh Clothing	reports on the number of support provided for the development of local indigenous clothes	GT-Board/ NCAC		X	X	X	X	X
		promote capacity building in festival management	reports on capacity building on festival management	GT-Board/ NCAC / GTH/ ITTOG		X	X	X	X	X
		training of handicraft producers to develop local indigenous souvenirs during festival periods	reports on the number of handicraft producers trained	GT-Board / NCAC		X	X	X	X	X
S3.2 suitable infrastructure to handle the events	Suitable infrastructure to handle the events available	develop eight wrestling grounds in the rural area	number of wrestling arena's developed	NCAC		X	X	X	X	X
		develop 8 museums in all the identified wrestling grounds	number of museums developed	NCAC		X	X	X	X	X
S3.4 enabling framework to support land ownership rights of communities	enable framework to support land ownership rights of communities established	Support tent camping by providing accommodation in rural areas	number of tent camping supported	NCAC/ GT-Board		X	X	X	X	X
		support community participation in decision making	meeting minutes, reports, existing recording	MOTC		X	X	X	X	X

Strategy Objective 4: To position the Gambia as a welcoming, safe, clean, hygienic and accessible destination										
Strategy	Output	Activity	Means of Verification	Responsible party	Budget	Time				
						1	2	3	4	5
S4.1 clean toilets facilities	clean toilets facilities with- in the TDA	develop a pay and use toilet facility at all tourism sites	number of pay and use toilet facilities at all tourism sites	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		develop a mobile app to map all the available toilet facilities	a developed mobile app to map all available toilet facilities	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		develop a rating of service using the app	report generated	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
S4.2 Cleanliness support component in all the Ministry's projects		develop a benchmark standard for cleanliness and hygiene in all project activities of the tourism sector	a report on a benchmark standard for cleanliness and hygiene	GT-Board/ MOTC/ GTHI		x	x	x	x	x
		encourage large scale campaigns in schools & colleges, communities involving all stakeholders on hygiene practices	reports of campaigns	GT-Board/ MOTC		x	x	x	x	x
		provision of frequent garbage collection service to ensure that waste is properly disposed	number of garbage collection services conducted			x	x	x	x	x
S4.3 enforce anti-littering laws	strengthen the enforcement of the anti-littering law	monitor and evaluate the implementation of the anti-littering law	number of reported violations of the anti-littering law	GT-Board/ MOTC/ NEA		x	x	x	x	x
		train security personnel to implement the anti-littering law	reports on the number of security personal training	GT-Board/ MOTC		x	x	x	x	x
		raise awareness about the anti-littering law	number of awareness campaigns and the anti-littering law	GT-Board/ MOTC		x	x	x	x	x
Strategic objective 5: To increase the number of five-star developed hotels in the Gambia										
Strate- gy	Output	Activity	Means of Verification	Responsible party	Budget	Time				
						1	2	3	4	5
S5.1 develop TDA hotel clusters and make land readily available for investment	TDA hotel clusters developed and land readily available for investment	i. delineate the tourism development area	A report on a delineated tourism development area available	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		ii. zone each TDA in hierarchical order	A developed hierarchical order of the TDA area	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		iii. update hotel classification and standards for all star rankings (1-5)	A report on an updated classification and standard for all star rankings available	GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		iv. ensure that non-performing sites within the zones are recovered for high-end investment	Number of non-performing sites within the TDA recovered for high-end investment	GT-Board/MOTC		x	x	x	x	x

Strategic Objective 6: To facilitate the availability of skilled manpower for tourism sector										
Strategy	Output	Activity	Means of Verification	Responsible Party	Budget	Time				
						1	2	3	4	5
S6.1 Promote careers in tourism and hospitality	careers in tourism and hospitality promoted	i. strengthen awareness level of job opportunities and career development within the tourism sector	number of awareness campaigns	GTHI/ ITOG/ GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
		ii. increase scholarship opportunities for youth and women to pursue career development on tourism and hospitality management	number of scholarship opportunities provided	MOTC / GTHI		x	x	x	x	x
		iii. increase the number of enrolled students pursuing tourism and hospitality in GTHI, ITOG and the UTG	number of enrolled students	MOTC / GTHI/ Mo-HERST		x	x	x	x	x
		iv. support job fairs for individuals with specialised skills in tourism and hospitality management	number of job fairs conducted	MOTC / GTHI/NCAC/ GT-Board		x	x	x	x	x
S6.2 promote and build institutional capacities	institutional capacities built and promoted	i. increase the number of professional courses	number of professional courses	MoHERST/MoTC/ NAAQAA/GTHI		x	x	x	x	x
		ii. increase the number of certified lecturers on tourism management	number of certified lecturers	MoHERST/MoTC/ NAAQAA		x	x	x	x	x
		iii. Number of training institutions running tourism and hospitality management programs	number of training institutions	MoTC/MoHERST/ NAAQAA		x	x	x	x	x

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