ACTION DOCUMENT

THE EUROPEAN UNION EMERGENCY TRUST FUND FOR STABILITY AND ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFRICA

1.   IDENTIFICATION

Title	Reference: T05-EUTF-SAH-GM-04 *Digitalising The Gambia – Technical assistance to strengthen the ICT sector*
Zone benefitting from the action / Localisation	The Gambia
Total cost	Total estimated cost: 1,050,000 EUR Total amount drawn from the Trust Fund: 1,050,000 EUR Co-financing amount: 0 EUR
Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	Project Modality **Indirect management** with Enabel
DAC – codes[1]	15110 Public sector policy and administrative management - Institution-building assistance to strengthen core public sector management systems and capacities. 22040 Information and communication technology (ICT) - Internet Access. 43032 Urban development – Urban infrastructures and services.
Main delivery channels[2]	11000 – 11004 Other public entities in donor country.

Markers[3]	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective[4]	Principal objective[5]	
	Participatory development / good governance	☐	☑	☐	
	Aid to environment	☑	☐	☐	
	Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls[6]	☑	☐	☐	

			Significant objective	Principal objective
	Trade development	☐	☑	☐
	Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health	☑	☐	☐
	Disaster Risk Reduction[7]	☑	☐	☐
	Nutrition	☑	☐	☐
	Disability	☑	☐	☐
	Rio Markers	**Not targeted**	**Significant objective**	**Principal objective**
	Biological diversity	☑	☐	☐
	Combat desertification	☑	☐	☐
	Climate change mitigation	☑	☐	☐
	Climate change adaptation	☑	☐	☐
	Migration marker[8]	☐	☑	☐
	Digitalisation	☐	☐	☑
	COVID-19	☑	☐	☐
SDG[9]	SDG 8 decent work and economic growth SDG 9 infrastructure and innovation SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals			
Valetta Action Plan Domains[10]	A8. Step up assistance to youth to acquire labour market-relevant skills through education, vocational training, **access to digital technologies**, while ensuring equal opportunities for young women and men			
Strategic objectives of the Trust Fund[11]	Greater economic and employment opportunities			
Beneficiaries of the action	Direct beneficiaries: Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure (MOICI), the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and the State Owned Enterprise Gamtel. Indirect beneficiaries: the Gambian population benefiting from internet broadband connectivity.			
Derogations, authorised exceptions, prior approvals[12]	N/A			

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and objectives

With almost half of its population below the poverty line, and a poor business environment

providing few job opportunities, The Gambia is facing a migration challenge inside and outside the country. With a low internet penetration rate, the Gambia needs to develop into a digital economy supported by an effective connectivity that will benefit the delivery of public services and boost the private sector. Gamtel, the state-owned internet provider, in its effort to acquire the necessary technology, lacks capacity in managing large scale projects and, with debt arrears, to access investments.

This 24-month technical assistance project will provide Gamtel and Gambian regulatory authorities the necessary capacity to implement the regulation and policies of the sector with the delivery of 1/ a business plan, 2/ financial proposals and 3/ robust tendering methods. Eventually Gamtel will acquire broadband technology solutions that will be rolled-out in the Greater Banjul Area (during a pilot phase) and potentially all over the country.

At the end of the project the staff of Gamtel with the support of Gambian regulatory authorities will have the necessary management and business development skills to scale up its technical solutions for Banjul region towards the rest of Gambia including the rural areas, leading to 8,000 more people in the Greater Banjul Area being connected to a quality internet service, with a potential to expand to the whole country.

Those objectives match the Gambian government priorities of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 – 2021, whose fifth objective is to "Make The Gambia a Digital Nation and create a modern information society" by harnessing the benefits of ICT in all sectors of the economy for inclusive & sustainable development,

Those objectives are in line with the EUTF efforts on youth empowerment, job creation and support to local business environment with a more connected rural areas and supporting the government in providing enhanced and more inclusive services to their citizens, with a significant contribution to an "Improved Governance" in The Gambia.

2.2. Context

2.2.1. *National context*

The Gambia is one of Africa's smallest countries with a population of 2,2 million. Following the 2016 Presidential elections and 2017 Parliamentary elections, the Gambia experienced a democratic transition, taking important steps to set the country on a new development path. Despite the new government's efforts, such as the implementation of economic, public financial management (PFM) and state-owned enterprise (SOE) reform, openness to free press, the re-joining with the Commonwealth, and the re-built relations with Senegal and with international financial institutions, the Gambia is still one of the poorest countries of the world. With a population composed of 58% under 24 years, 38% of the youth are unemployed and more than 50% of the population is illiterate, with 60% female and 30% youth (UNESCO, 2017). Because of lacking skills to enter the labour market, many young people look for alternative means of subsistence including irregular migrations and informal jobs not

in line with decent work standards. Economic volatility, drought, and unemployment are the main causes that drive youth to migrate abroad, while the rest of the population is concentrated around urban and peri-urban centres hosting economic activities such as commerce, public administration and services. Between 2014 and 2018, it is estimated that 35,000 Gambians arrived in Europe irregularly (IOM 2019). Also, a sustained rural-urban migration has led to increasing urbanization.

The Gambian economy relies primarily on agriculture, tourism and inflows of remittances (around 90,000 Gambians living abroad contributes to over 20% of the national GDP). Poverty remains high with 48% of the population living below the international poverty line (World Bank). In line with the new Government's priorities, and drawing upon the previous draft of the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE) II, committed in reducing poverty and improving the well-being of the population as the focus of the Government's long-term strategy (Vision 2020), the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 – 2021 aims at achieving sustainable inclusive growth and prosperity. The goal of the Government is to "deliver good governance and accountability, social cohesion, and national reconciliation and a revitalized and transformed economy for the wellbeing of all Gambians" by incorporating into the new NDP the major national policies and sectoral plans, mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Istanbul Plan of Action.

So far, the weak capacity of the Gambia in achieving the SDGs has shown to be mostly related to the lack of human and institutional capacities affecting all sectors of the government institutions, as well as a weak social development policy framework and the need for sustainable natural resources management, due to the rapid growth of the population.

According to the World Bank, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the GDP growth is expected to decline between 2.5 and -2.4% in 2020 caused by the dramatic reduction of tourists from key markets in Europe, the trade disruption, the lower commodity prices as well as the limited fiscal, monetary, and financial buffers and high risk of debt distress. Health sector capacity is weak and social safety nets do not exist.

2.2.2. *Sector context: policies and challenges*

Internet penetration in The Gambia is around 20%. In contrast, neighbouring Senegal has a rate of 62%. While both countries have access to optical fibre submarine cables, Gambia's

challenge is to distribute internet services to end users. To date internet service delivery is characterised by a major concentration in the Greater Banjul Area.

The vision of the Gambia is to become a middle-income country by the year 2030. The country aspires "to build a more inclusive economy, in which the fruits of shared growth are more equitable, and which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to fulfil their own aspirations".

Among the seven crosscutting critical enablers that will complement the eight strategic priorities of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 – 2021, *Making The Gambia a Digital Nation and creating a modern information society* is the fifth point of the list. The objective of this enabler is to harness the benefits of ICT in all sectors of the economy for inclusive & sustainable development, including the following measures:

– improving regulatory services and policies;
– establishing a National ICT Agency;
– establishing a National Data Centre to strengthen e-government;
– upgrading the Telecoms Access Network (Last Mile Connectivity);
– establishing a National Technology Park to spur research and development;
– increasing roll out of regional ICT centres to enhance connectivity to schools and communities;
– achieving digital switch over and analogue switch off;
– strengthening cyber-security and enhancing postal service delivery.

While the outcome of this critical enabler is "Enhanced ICT infrastructure and services for increased access to quality broadband services and solutions to support inclusive and sustainable development", the key results are the following:

– Increase the proportion of the population using the internet daily from 20% to 90%;
– Increase the proportion of population with access to mobile phones from 78.9% to 90%;
– Increase the proportion of schools connected to broadband internet from 6% to 12%;
– Existence of National Information and communications Infrastructure policy II.

Through these strategic priorities and critical enablers, the NDP serves as an instrument for realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and the first ten-year implementation plan of the African Agenda 2063.

The Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure (MOICI) has the public responsibility for building and maintaining the national communication infrastructure (physical and systemic) to support overall national development. In 2004 the Gambia implemented the National Information and Communication Initiative (NICI Policy and plans), a mechanism to implement the vision of African Information Society Initiative (AISI) at the national level, which focuses its vision on ICT Development in Africa. The NICI Policy contains a guiding framework for ICT program planning, project development and implementation with mission "to achieve higher growth rates in all spheres of socio-economic activities using ICT as a platform to exchange data, information, knowledge and a tool to implement applications and provide services in order to 'leapfrog' several stages of development through a participatory approach". Among the pillars of the NICI, the e-government is considered a priority in: (i) assisting the country in its efforts to develop multi-sectoral e-government program, and (ii) within the AISI framework, supporting the projects prepared by the national technical committee. The development of portals, government-public interface and applications were the outputs prioritized to share the public information with the civil society, offering new opportunities for a more direct citizen involvement in the government policies implementation.

As part of the UNDP programme of institutional capacity support to government institutions, in 2010 MOICI developed and launched its Strategic Plan for 2010 – 2014, which has been revised to 2018. The major achievements of the 2014 - 2018 Strategic Plan include "the satellite and African Coast to Europe (ACE) projects, high proliferation of GSM services due to the granting of a license to the fourth provider (QCELL), radio communication and introduction of 3G and 4G ICT services". In order to ensure infrastructural and operational effectiveness in the different intervention areas, the MOICI ensures the Policy and Strategic Plan realization by the satellite institutions and through the private sector. In particular, the satellite institutions are: Gamtel (telecommunication and Internet), Gamcel (mobile network operator), GRTS (radio and television), GAMPOST (postal services), DOIS (information services) and GPPC (printing and publishing). A sixth department, the Directorate of ICT, is committed to assisting the Government in the ICT policies and activities coordination as well as ensuring that the services go online through networking and linking departments. The participation of the private sector in expanding the infrastructure and impacting the other sectors such as health, education, agriculture is also part of the MOICI investment opportunities strategy.

Despite a strong political engagement in improving the connectivity and the general digitalization of the country, the mobile phone penetration (voice and data) is currently around 79%, while mobile broadband penetration (data only) is estimated to be only around 38% (PURA, 2019). Internet use in the country has slowly grown over the past two decades with 18.5 percent adoption in 2018, compared to 6.2 percent in 2007 (World Bank, 2020). As the audit *Gamtel - Summary findings and recommendations* realized by Ernst&Young in 2019 suggests, the weak internet use and penetration is due to their mismanagement and lack of financial discipline under the former regime by Gamtel and Gamcel, which have not been able to adapt to the increasingly dynamic broadband market. With the introduction of the African Coast to Europe (ACE) submarine fiber optic cable, the Gambia had the potential to digitize its economy, "but Gamtel's inadequate management of essential fibre optic backbone infrastructure is hampering growth and the transition to a full-fledged broadband market" (IDA Report No PAD3273, World Bank, 2020). Due to their weak performance and significant external debt, Gamtel and Gamcel companies are two of the State-owned enterprises that pose the most urgent risk to the State from a contingent liability perspective. According to World Bank, in 2017, Gamtel's losses amounted to US$5.4 million and Gamcel's to US$2.9 million.

The main challenge for the country is to bring concrete digital opportunities to its citizens, by improving the ICT infrastructure and services and increasing the access to quality broadband services and solutions, with the aim of supporting inclusive and sustainable development.

2.2.3. *Justification for use of EUTF funds for this action*

The use of EUTF funds is justified by the need for rapidity in improving the ICT sector in The Gambia, which is interconnected with ongoing EUTF efforts on youth empowerment, job creation and support to local business environment. More broadly, lack of proper internet access has been hindering the development and attractiveness of rural areas, which is linked to rural-urban drift of youth and also migratory pressures towards Europe.

Moreover, supporting the government in providing enhanced and more inclusive services to their citizens, also aims at contributing to the "Improved Governance" Strategic Objective of the EUTF.

Also, in terms of rural development, the deployment of ICT solutions has a positive impact on the level of deployment of basic services to the rural populations such as health, education, water and sanitation and different types of government services.

Last, the deployment of ICT will improve the efficiency of government administration and service delivery reducing operational and transaction costs and also assisting in the transformation of a more people-centred government.

In different countries it has become clear that, in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, digital solutions are needed for the people to have access to health solutions, food supply (digital solutions to link demand to offer of food), etc. A better internet network connectivity therefore is crucial.

2.3. Lessons learnt

Technical assistance to government institutions and public sector reform via digitalisation has been one of the core business of Enabel especially since the publication of the strategic policy note 'Digital for Development' (D4D) for the Belgian development cooperation' published by the Belgian Cooperation Minister.

Enabel relies on an in-house expertise as well as that of other public actors (Belgian or other, with whom Enabel hase concluded over 60 framework agreements) and private organizations. Enabel also developed its 'Strategy for Capacity Reinforcement', working on different levels: the individual level, the organizational level and the institutional level. This strategy has been operationalized in different countries, implementing all levels of the organization and transposing it afterwards to decentralized units if needed. Interactions and reinforcement of learning between actors are crucial therein. Change management and leadership management are an integral part of this strategy, also keeping a strong focus on the monitoring of the impact of the actions.

Some of Enabel digital expertise in different partner countries are:

- Citizen Monitoring System (CMS) is a tool introduced by Enabel through the Rwanda Decentralization Support Program to manage complaints by citizens regarding infrastructure and social protection.
- The Renewable Energy for Rural Development program implemented by Enabel in Mozambique installed hundreds of off-grid solar systems on social infrastructure and developed a low-cost generic monitoring system, using the mobile phone technology and a central maintenance unit.
- Enabel and other Belgian public and private development actors have implemented the VUB-driven OpenClinic GA hospital information management system in more than 60 sub-Saharan hospitals.

- In Burundi, Enabel implemented an initiative for hosting Certificates in Applied Health Informatics at the National Institute for Public Health, in close collaboration with Belgian development actors. These certificates are post-graduate specializations in e-health are considered an instrument for building broader e-health capacity within the health care community.

- Enabel invested in Burundi and Senegal in the integration of OpenClinic GA hospital information systems with the national e-Health data warehouse built on DHIS2. Such solution enables to directly extract aggregate data for national health policy making.

This corpus of experience helped Enabel to draw lessons and anticipate risks on "Digital for Development' (D4D) programming" in 4 main areas: 1/ beyond the deployment of digital technology all interventions need to be based on a strong theory of change avoiding unrealistic assumptions. 2/ whereas digitalization can help promote human rights, it can also negatively compromise them (migration, health etc.). Data protection methods need to be guaranteed in the programming. 3/ A digitalized economy must serve the population interest and new models could be too disruptive in terms of human resource market and increase dependencies on certain providers, monopolies emergence, high costs etc. 4/ If not accessible for the many, a more digitalized society may also lead to further exclusion; digital literacy, especially for women, must remain a priority.

2.4.   Complementary actions and synergies

The EU is committed to supporting the democratic transition and has stepped up its cooperation with The Gambia, in line with the priorities of the new government and in view of encouraging democracy, respect of human rights and the rule of law. Several projects have been/are being implemented in line with this strategy and present opportunities of synergies with the proposed activity. Digitalization is a major priority in the next 2021-2027 EU programming and is one of the key enablers for The Gambia's Green Development. The Gambia has adopted an "ICT for Development (ICT4D) Policy Statement (2018-2028)" that will help donors and the EU to launch a comprehensive digitalization programme. However, the formulation of the "ICT for Development Master Plan" scheduled by MOICI for completion by mid-2020 is still pending. Both the European and Gambian private sector are willing to propose solutions in this sector and the quality and coverage of the internet connection will increasingly become a must.

An increasing number of NGO's and CSO's are operating in Gambia with whom close cooperation can be sought after.

In 2012, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs funded the International Communication Union (ITU) to implement *Connect a School, Connect a Community,* a project designed to promote broadband connectivity in schools in remote, rural or underserved areas of The Gambia, so that schools can be used as community ICT centres (CICs). This project aimed to improve ICT access and use by school children and members of the local community, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as women and girls, indigenous and rural people, older persons and persons with disabilities.

The schools benefitting from this project can be considered as potential beneficiaries in using the improved connectivity in the rural zones, as well as serving as case study for Enabel and the ICT State actors in The Gambia to capitalize potential challenges that the new broadband technology can encounter during the implementation phase.

According to the *Country Strategy 2018-2020 (UNESCO, 2017)* for The Gambia, among UNESCO's priorities in supporting the Government of The Gambia in the digitalization and the general information and communication sector, the following actions are previewed:

- Support programs on freedom of expression and access to information;
- The integration of media and information literacy, ICTs in Education;
- Mobile technology-supported learning modalities.

The United Nation is committed in supporting The Gambia in achieving the SDGs by strengthening the access to information through the use of digital frameworks. In order to allow the citizen to access these digital services, the importance to enhance the internet connectivity becomes then an absolute priority and UNESCO could become a strong strategic partner.

The *Youth and Trade Roadmap for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) 2018-2022* is an action plan developed under the aegis of The Republic of The Gambia, and the leadership of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE). The strategy benefited from the contributions of sector stakeholders and youth associations, who played an important role in the consultative process. This roadmap was designed thanks to the technical assistance of the International Trade Centre within the framework the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) funded by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. This document reflects the ambitions of the public and private stakeholders who defined the enhancements and future orientations for the sector in

view of developing economic opportunities for the youth in the communication and technology sector. This Youth and Trade Roadmap for the ICT sector is part of *The Gambia Youth Empowerment Project (YEP)*, a four-year initiative to build skills, enable value addition and foster market connections. YEP could represent an important partner with whom the government can implement further actions in creating job opportunities for young people through the use of ICTs and a general improved broadband connectivity and its related services.

The following on-going actions shall also be taken into account in order to ensure coordination and synergies whenever possible:

1. GLACY+ (Global Action on Cybercrime Extended): a project with global scope supporting partner countries to strengthen legislation and criminal justice capacities to fight cybercrime and ensure international cooperation in these matters. In the course of 2019, GLACY+ increased the focus of its action on human rights aspects entailed in the criminal justice response to cybercrime and the challenges of electronic evidence. To this regard, the issues identified on the global level are related to risks of under-or over-criminalization of illegal conducts, risks of using cybercrime laws to curb fundamental rights of individuals, including freedom of expression and right to personal life, risks that adequate safeguards are not put in place when conducting investigations and prosecutions of cybercrimes and cyber-related crimes. A number of activities were conducted in collaboration with the Data Protection Unit of the Council of Europe and support was provided to review and harmonize national policies and legislations with the international standards on protection of personal data (Convention 108 of the Council of Europe) in the Gambia. Moreover, advices were provided at national level through dedicated in-country missions to the Gambia, on the drafting of the national Data Protection Policy.

2. OCWAR-C (Organised Crime: West African Response on Cybersecurity): a project supporting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to build cyber resilience and improve capabilities to fight cybercrime. ECOWAS adopted a strategy for the ICT sector covering the period 2018-2023, with the objective of building an inclusive digital economy in the region. Regarding interventions, ECOWAS is mainly supported by the EU and the US (Department

of State and Justice) in the fields of cybersecurity and cybercrime and in the harmonization of the regional regulatory framework and capacity-building. Furthermore, the EU (alongside AEMU) is currently providing support to ECOWAS to establish a new harmonized policy and regulatory framework for the Digital Economy. In addition, the World Bank and AfDB have financed feasibility studies on behalf of ECOWAS. Donor coordination

The present project is a stand-alone EU initiative set up to address specific urgent issues related to present and future ICT challenges in The Gambia. Under the coordination of MOICI, the project will inform other donors and initiatives of the process and of project activities in order to ensure synergies, wherever possible.

This initiative is politically backed up by the D4D Hub, the platform of coordination of the EU in digital for development. The success of EU-Africa Digital Economy Task Force (DETF) has highlighted the importance of increased collaboration between the European Union and the African Union. The African Union Digital Transformation Strategy has the objective to leverage digital transformation to generate inclusive economic growth, stimulating job creation, closing the digital divide and eradicate poverty. The EU fully supports the African Union strategy and is ready to share its experiences and expertise to support the achievement of its objectives and establish partnerships that will leverage the benefits of digital for both continents. In order to build on the DETF experience, the European Commission and 5 EU Member States development partners are proposing to African partners the creation of a new, innovative joint instrument, the EU-Africa D4D Hub. The aim of the Hub will be to support digital transformation efforts in Africa by building on joint digital expertise and networks and by enhancing European and African partnership in the area of digital. The Hub is the implementation of the Team Europe initiative in digitalisation and its support is fundamental for the sustainability and the impact of this action.

Moreover, the 26 June 2018 Council Conclusions on EU External Cyber Capacity Building Guidelines (ref 10496/18) emphasised the importance of promoting the **EU's political, economic and strategic interests in the face of expanding and complex international discussions on cyber issues**, and ensuring that the international cyber capacity building and cooperation efforts led by the EU and its Member States follow overarching guidance to ensure a coherent, holistic and effective approach which also supports the EU's broader digital, development and security and strategic autonomy agendas.

The February 2020 EU Commission Communication "Shaping Europe's digital future" sets the geopolitical terms in which the EU should leverage its regulatory power, reinforced

industrial and technological capabilities, diplomatic strengths and external financial instruments to advance the European approach and shape global interactions. This includes the work done under association and trade agreements, as well as agreements reached in international bodies such the United Nations, the OECD, ISO and the G20, with the support of EU Member States.

The Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe (Council of European Treaty Series (CETS) No. 185), known as the Budapest Convention, will serve as a guideline for any country developing comprehensive national legislation against Cybercrime and as a framework for international cooperation between State Parties to this treaty in the framework of this action[13].Finally, the MOICI is involved in the management of the EU funded "ACP Trade Capacity Building Programme": "TradeCom II Programme P117: Competitiveness and digitalization in the Gambia". In the framework of this programme, a technical assistance has been put in place having the following objective:

1.   To evaluate the level of development of digital economy in The Gambia;

2.   To carry out an analysis of the potential of the digital economy market, and its impact (proven and potential) on growth and employment with specific focus on e-Services in commerce and tourism, agri-tech and e-Governance;

3.   To propose an EU response strategy to promote digital transformation of the Gambia;

The implementation of the project implementation is planned to start between September and October 2020

It will be therefore important to take into account the outcome of this project and plan potential synergies.

3.   DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In line with the Gambia NDP priorities in term of digitalization, this project aims to empower quality and sustainable ICT services for the Gambian population, while strengthening the capacity of the ICT State actors in governance and management. In particular, there is the need to promote the use of emerging broadband technologies for high-speed, high-quality delivery of services and impact positively the socio-economic conditions for the inhabitants. Following the strategic vision of the *Gambia's Broadband Policy 2020 – 2024*, which is based on a review of *ICT for Development Policy 2018-2028* ("ICT4D Policy") statements in relation to broadband, this solution is capable of building a solid information society that

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[13] The Gambia has been supported by the EU-funded project GLACY+ and is in the process of passing national legislation which will allow the adherence to the Budapest Convention.

generates employment and revenue, where people with enhanced ICT capacity will encourage a legal and regulatory environment for accessible and affordable connectivity for digital inclusion. The broadband will also contribute in transforming the country into a knowledge-based economy and an open and free information society where international standards and norms apply, while ensuring digital assets remain protected users rights and freedoms.

The project will facilitate the establishment of a strong partnership between the government and other ICT industry players, providing a possibility to expand the existing solutions and improve the connectivity for the Gambians, impacting positively in all sectors of the economy.

In general, the project will contribute to:

- Improve Government revenues, by strengthening the internal management of the ICT state actors and facilitating Gamtel's position on the Gambian market;

- Support Gamtel to develop a pilot program in the Greater Banjul Area, whose goal is to put the technology in operation and connect different customer profiles (residential, schools, SMEs etc.) The pilot has also to demonstrate its profitability and a fair level of quick return on investments.

- This will help develop a comprehensive business plan and a bankable nationwide project towards financial institutions to enable to meet the National Broadband strategy targets as enshrined in the Gambia National Development Plan (2018-2021).

- Create new employments in the ICT and other sectors, by offering a Last Mile Broadband connectivity, especially in rural areas (after the pilot phase in the Greater Banjul Area);

- Stimulate innovation, by planning education and training programs for Gambian engineers and stimulate youth generation with new technologies;

- Access and use the ICT Infrastructure, by empowering the connectivity within the government/private infrastructures (schools, hospitals, hotels, municipalities, etc.);

- Boost the e-Government services development, by improving the communication and interaction between citizens and Government;

- Improve the legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure at all times an inclusive, free and open Internet, in full compliance with Human Right principles, where rule of law applies throughout, being supported by a strong last mile connectivity and the technical support of Enabel;

- Lower the cost of internet services, by opening the market to new international private-sector providers, while making sure that the ICT SOEs stay competitive.

– Improving the quality and the reach of basic services such as energy opening the possibility of developing new business models already successful in other areas in Africa (Pay As You Go, etc.).

3.1. Objectives and expected outputs

The overall objective of this action is **to contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable socio-economic environment for the benefit of population of The Gambia.**

The specific objective is **to allow physical and economic access to quality internet connectivity** through the following outputs:

– **Output 1: ICT state actors are strengthened in the regulation and policy implementation**

Under this output, the project will support the three ICT State actors involved in order to improve the internal management, the performance and the governance.

In relation to the difficulties encountered during the former regime by the SOEs and the MOICI, the project will help identifying the main challenges facing the internal management of the ICT state actors and will conduct capacity building activities and trainings on (business and financial) management, business development, regulation, governance and other related topics. The partners will be also capacitated and equipped with IT items (to be determined after the formulation) and the needed systems and procedures in order to improve their performance and deliver new ICT services and policies to the country.

– **Output 2: Framework development for the acquisition of broadband technology solutions and their roll-out in the Greater Banjul Area (pilot phase) and potentially in other areas (phase two)**

Under this output, the project will facilitate the adoption of a branch of new services/technologies suitable for Gambia by 1/ providing a technical support to the ICT state actors in developing a business plan and investment proposals, 2/ preparing and launching a tender for the selection of an efficient private-owned broadband technology provider in the pilot phase, and 3/ follow-up of services delivery by this provider.

Both outputs will pursue full alignment with international standards and norms, notably seeking coherence with the EU policy packages specially the February 2020 EU Commission Communication "Shaping Europe's digital future", The February 2020 Commission

Communication "5G Toolbox" as well as EU Cyber Security Strategy that advocates for a free, open and safe digital space.

3.2. Main activities

3.2.1. *Activities associated with each result*

Output 1: ICT state actors are strengthened in the regulation and policy implementation function

1.1 Capacity building activities are provided to the ICT government agents (thematic-focused trainings will be organized on staff, business and financial management, internal auditing, public procurement service, human resources, new policies and regulatory reforms empowerment, etc.)

1.2 Adapted equipment is provided to strengthen the governance of the ICT state actors (IT equipment (computers, software, etc.)

Output 2: Framework development for the acquisition of broadband technology solutions and their roll-out in the Greater Banjul Area (pilot phase) and potentially in other areas (phase two).

2.1 ICT SOEs are strengthened in the preparation of the business plan to implement new efficient broadband technologies in the Greater Banjul Area. The pilot phase of the development of the project will be expected to serve as a proof of concept; the Enabel technical assistance will then support the ICT SOEs and agencies to plan for the second phase and expand coverage to other areas.

The business plan shall also aim at properly addressing discrimination and gender equality in access to ICT, as well as environment and natural resources preservation and universal access through social inclusion measures.

2.2 Gamtel, the MOICI and the PURA are assisted in their request for investments to implement new efficient broadband technologies (organization of a Design thinking workshop for the investment needs assessment and the drafting of the investment proposal addressed to Finexpo or any other international finance agencies)

2.3 Gamtel is technically assisted in the tendering phase launch of the pilot and potentially the second phase, the selection of the ICT private sector's partner (technical assistance for the tender drafting and launch).

2.4 Gamtel is supported in ensuring proper follow-up of contract implementation and rolling-out of the services for the pilot phase.

All the activities must be guided by the principles and standards enshrined in the EU policy. Especially when acquiring equipment, certification schemes and security standards should be considered.

3.2.2. *Target groups and final beneficiaries*

The target group of the project are:

- **Three ICT state actors:** The MOICI, The PURA and the State-owned Enterprise (SOE) Gamtel
- The **population of Gambia**, especially **young people** in need to access employment opportunities through the internet connectivity

According to Gamtel (2020), around 8000 people will directly benefit from the pilot phase of the improvement of the internet connectivity.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Risk	Level of risk (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
Insecurity and social unrest due to COVID-19 pandemic consequences, delaying the implementation of our intervention	Low	Belgian Embassy and Enabel keeping a close look at the situation, following security prescriptions.
Delays and operational hustles due to COVID-19 policies restrictions	High	Staff hired nationally. Regional support from Dakar.
Administrative and political interferences adding to the poor governance of the sustained structures	Medium	Close cooperation with all levels of management in the sustained structures, transparency & dialogue. Set up of a robust and transparent policy in competitive mechanisms.
Non-engagement of the partners to realize the activities and intervention strategy	Medium	Implication, coaching and accompanying by Enabel to support the capacity building of the partners at all levels, in the planning of their activities and use of the instruments put at their disposal.
Deep restructuring or insolvency of SOE Gamtel	Medium	Close cooperation with all levels of management in the sustained structures, transparency & dialogue. Assistance of Gamtel in proper financial management.

Lack of international credibility of the Gambia due to poor financial situation and/or heavy payment arrears	Medium	Enabel will help develop a business plan emphasizing on the profitability of the extended and new service of the SOE Gamtel.
Risk of integrity, fraud or corruption. Diversion of material or equipment	Medium	Important mitigation measures are taken by the local staff and/or representation, prevention measures, training and sensitization, empowerment of all parties.

The assumptions for the success of the project and its implementation include:

- The Gambian government shows solid ownership of this project and its objectives, which in turn leads to close cooperation by MOICI, other Ministries, PURA and SOEs.

- Genuine acceptance by Gamtel's management of a direct technical assistance support at Gamtel premises, and a fair level of collaboration between Enabel and Gamtel staff.

- Enabel intervention is seen as valuable support in the ICT SOE sector despite a project development phase where Gamtel's priority was the funding of a technical solution.

- The telecommunications authorities and the State accept the principle of a loan from international credit institutions to Gamtel (i.e. additional increase in the debt of SOEs).

- Enabel intervention does not interfere with the restructuring process of state telecommunications companies.

3.4. Mainstreaming

Environment: Efforts will be made to ensure that the environmental impact of future infrastructure construction and works is minimised and careful considered by all actors involved, including the waste disposal, the preservation and protection of all water courses, the protection of flora and fauna and natural resources in general. Environmental issues will be further developed in the description of the action.

People living in vulnerable situations: throughout the Action, efforts will be made to ensure wider social inclusion and gender equality. Capacity building activities will include gender equality sensitisation and non-discrimination module. A specific focus on ensuring universal access of the local population through social inclusion measures will be included in the business plan and should also be gender sensitive to ensure that discrimination and inequalities are tackled

Women and girls are suffering many discriminations when it comes to digitalisation:

- they are less educated, thus they face more difficulties with ICT because less literate

- due to socio-cultural norms, they have less access to ICT

- because they have less access to ICT, they are discriminated to develop their own business and become women entrepreneurs. Better internet connectivity can reduce the gender gaps and inequalities. Since the threshold to digital entrepreneurship is rather low, it can instigate women to develop their own activities, developing to women entrepreneurship for growth, not subsistence, however structural discrimination should be taken into account and addressed.

Human rights: In line with the EU core values, a rights-based approach will be adopted during the implementation of the Action and for the planning of the future works. Local authorities will consult the population affected and proper compensation should be guaranteed to land owners/land users affected by the infrastructure construction works. Health and safety measure of workers and the public will be taken into consideration as part of the SOE capacity building.

3.5. Stakeholder analysis

The Gambia Telecommunications Company Limited (Gamtel) is the primary provider of core telecommunication services in the Gambia. The company is a state-owned limited liability company.

The Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructure (MOICI) has the public responsibility for building and maintaining the national communication infrastructure (physical and systemic) to support overall national development.

The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) was established by The Gambia Public Utilities Regulatory Authority Act in 2001 to regulate the activities of providers of certain public utilities in the various economic sectors. The general mission of PURA is to create a competitive environment for utilities to expand their services and strengthen their infrastructure, by ensuring that services to consumers are accessible. PURA regulates the energy services (electricity, petroleum and gas), the communications services (telecommunications, broadcasting and postal services), the water and sewerage services and transport services (on land, water and in the air).

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Financing agreement, if relevant

Not applicable.

4.2. Indicative operational implementation period

The implementation period will start as of the last signature date of the contract implementing the present action fiche and will last until 31/12/2024. This operational implementation period will be followed by a closure period of 18 months that will end on 30/06/2026.

4.3. Implementation modalities

Indirect management: Delegation agreement with Enabel.

Enabel will perform a comprehensive capacity assessment of Gamtel and provide technical support to all the functions of the company, such as operational planning and follow-up, financial management, marketing, customer care, public procurement, internal audit, etc. This support will include equipment.

The technical assistance team will support Gamtel in raising the necessary funding to purchase and operationalize the best technical solution for wireless connectivity extension in the Greater Banjul Area. The priority funding partner will be FINEXPO, the Belgian governmental export financing agency. Once the loan secured, Enabel will assist Gamtel in ensuring proper follow-up of contract implementation and rolling-out of the connection's services. Enabel will ensure finally Gamtel's capacity strengthening in long-term infrastructure management and scaling-up strategy making.

4.4. Indicative budget

Component	Amount EUR
Implementation (Enabel)	1,000,000
Evaluation and audit	50,000
Total	**1,050,000**

4.5. Monitoring and reporting

The implementing partner must establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and prepare regular progress reports and final reports.

In the initial phase, the indicative logical framework agreed in contract and/or the agreement signed with the implementing partner must be complemented with baselines, milestones and targets for each indicator. Progress reports provided by the implementing partner should contain the most recent version of the logical framework agreed by the parties and showing

the current values for each indicator. The final report should complete the logical framework with initial and final values for each indicator.

The final report, financial and descriptive, will cover the entire period of the implementation of the action.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

The implementing partner(s) will report, if requested, on a number of common EUTF indicators of the selected results for this Action14.

Project Implementing Partners will be required to provide regular data, including the evolution of the actual values of the indicators (at least every three months) to the contracting authority, in a format which is to be indicated during the contract negotiation phase. The evolution of the indicators will be accessible to the public through the EUTF website (https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/) and the Akvo RSR platform (https://eutf.akvoapp.org/en/projects/).

4.6. Evaluation and audit

If necessary, ad hoc audits or expenditure verification assignments could be contracted by the European Commission for one or several contracts or agreements.

Audits and expenditure verification assignments will be carried out in conformity with the risk analysis in the frame of the yearly Audit Plan exercise conducted by the European Commission. The amount allocated for external evaluation and audit purposes should be shown in EUR. Evaluation and audit assignments will be implemented through service contracts, making use of one of the Commission's dedicated framework contracts or alternatively through the competitive negotiated procedure or the single tender procedure.

4.7. Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU. This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, which will be developed early

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[14] EN : https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/euetfa/files/eutf_results_indicators_41.pdf
FR : https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/euetfa/files/eutf_results_indicators_41_fr.pdf

in the implementation. The measures are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, the contractors, the beneficiaries and/or the entities responsible in terms of legal obligations regarding communication and visibility. Appropriate contractual obligations will be included in the financing agreement, purchase and grant agreements and delegation as well as contribution agreements. Communication and visibility requirements for the European Union are used to establish the communication and visibility plan for the action and the relevant contractual obligations.

List of acronyms

D4D	Digital for Development
ICT	Information and communication technologies
MOICI	Ministry of Information and Communication Infrastructures
NDP	National Development Plan
NICI	National Information and Communication Initiative
PURA	Public Utilities Regulatory Agency
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOE	State Owned Enterprise

Annex: Indicative Logical Framework Matrix (max. 2 pages)

Additional note: The term "results" refers to the outputs, outcome(s) and impact of the Action (OECD DAC definition).

	Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (at least one indicator per expected result)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Impact (Overall objective)	**To contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable socio-economic environment for the benefit of population of The Gambia**	Internet penetration rate	International Telecommunication Union reports Report produced by public and private ICT stakeholders; Visit of infrastructure sites	Not applicable
Outcome(s) (Specific Objective(s)	**To allow physical and economic access to quality internet connectivity**	Number of internet connectivity technologies and services augmented Number of areas/zones nationwide covered by broadband access Price reduction for broadband access (residential and business)	*Activity report;* Satisfaction survey; increased internet subscription rates; broadband coverage maps; price comparison reports	The Gambian government shows solid ownership of this project and its objectives, which in turn leads to close cooperation by MOICI, other Ministries, PURA and SOEs.

Outputs	Output 1. **ICT state actors are strengthened in the regulation and policy implementation** 1.1 Capacity building activities are provided to the ICT government agents 1.2 Adapted equipment is provided to strengthen the governance of the ICT state actors (IT equipment (computers, software, etc.) Output 2. **Framework development for the acquisition of broadband technology solutions and their roll-out in the Greater Banjul Area (pilot phase) and potentially in other areas (phase two)** 2.1 ICT SOEs are strengthened in the preparation of the business plan to implant new efficient broadband technologies in Banjul and around the country 2.2 Gamtel, the MOICI and the PURA are assisted in the formulation of the investment request to implant new efficient broadband technologies 2.3 Gamtel is technically assisted in the tendering phase launch of the pilot and potentially the second phase, the selection of the ICT private sector's partner, and the technology infrastructure implementation in the Greater Banjul Area.	O1: Number of ICT state actors strengthened 1.1 Number of staff from local authorities strengthened through capacity building activities 1.2 Number of items of equipment provided to strengthen governance O2: Number/type of technologies and services acquired and adopted by the government 2.1 Number of SOEs staff contributing efficiently to develop a business plan 2.2 The investment proposals (pilot phase and phase two, if the time allows) is ready and available within the deadlines 2.3 Internet coverage rate reached in the Greater Banjul Area	O1: Training report; surveys with the target group 1.1 Training report; surveys with the target group 1.2 Visit of equipment sites; report O2: Visit on site (number and type of operating technologies and services) ; Report 2.1 Business plan 2.2 Investment dossiers 2.3 Finance report; Activities report of the public and private ICT stakeholders (sales revenues; growth of internet subscription, etc.)	Genuine acceptance by the Gamtel management of a direct TA support at Gamtel premises. Fair level of collaboration between Enabel and Gamtel staff. Enabel intervention is seen as valuable support in the ICT SOE sector even during a project development phase where Gamtel's priority was the funding of a technical solution. The telecommunications authorities and the State accept the principle of a loan from international credit institutions to Gamtel (i.e. additional increase in the debt of SOEs). Enabel intervention does not interfere with the restructuring process of state telecommunications companies.

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