



# CURRENT STATUS OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA



## TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES

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# **CURRENT STATUS OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA**



## **INTRODUCTION**

- ❑ **Overview of ICT in the Gambia**
- ❑ **ICT as an economic indicator**
- ❑ **Bridging the Digital divide, taking advantage of the opportunities, way forward**



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## **OVERVIEW OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA**

### **❑ Brief History of ICT in the Gambia**

- ❑ Telecommunications - Telephone Density**
- ❑ Mobile phones – Analogue to GSM**
- ❑ Broadcasting Radio/Television – FM to Satellite and Cable TV**
- ❑ Internet Gateway Initiative**



# Gambia

## Key statistics

<b>Total Population (m)</b>	1,501,050
<b>GDP (US\$bn)</b>	0.408 (2001)
<b>GDP/Capita (US\$)</b>	302.7 (2001)
<b>Independent Regulator</b>	Process in place
<b>Fixed Telecom Operators</b>	Gamtel (Gambia Telecommunications Co Ltd)
<b>Fixed network growth</b>	5.1% CAGR (2000 – 2001)
<b>Fixed lines in service</b>	35,000 (2001)
<b>Fixed line capacity</b>	
<b>Fixed lines/100 pop</b>	2.62 (2001)
<b>Digitalisation</b>	100%
<b>Main line waiting list*</b>	16,900 (2000)
<b>Main line waiting time*</b>	
<b>Number of employees</b>	900 (2000)
<b>Main lines/employee</b>	31 (2000)
<b>Telecommunications revenue (US\$m)</b>	26.3 (2000)
<b>% of GDP</b>	
<b>Mobile telephony</b>	
<b>Mobile subscriptions</b>	55,100 (2001)
<b>Mobile penetration</b>	4.12% (2001)
<b>Internet Dialup Subscribers</b>	3,000 (2002) 5,000 (2003)
<b>Internet Users</b>	18,000 (2001)
<b>ISPs</b>	5
<b>Internat. Internet Bandwidth</b>	2.048 Mbps (2002) 3 Mbps (2003)
<b>National local-call dialup IP tariff</b>	No
<b>Cities with dialup IP POPs</b>	12. Serekunda, Abuko, Yundurn, Brikama, Kotu, Banjul (the capital), Bakau, Kerewan, Farafenni, Soma, Bansang and Basse.
<b>VSAT</b>	
<b>Voice terminal equipment</b>	NA
<b>Local loop</b>	
<b>Wireless data /ISM bands</b>	NA
<b>Cybercafes</b>	> 50
<b>Sector deregulation status</b>	Fixed-line monopoly.
<b>VOIP</b>	Gamtel uses ITXC for both national and international traffic.
<b>Exchange Rate</b>	US\$1: Gambian Dalasi 20.27 (2002 – 2003)
<b>Sources</b>	ITU, AITEC, Oanda, IMF World Economic Outlook (Sept 2002)

# Gambia

	<b>Gambia</b>
<b>Population</b>	1,372,000
<b>Rural population (% of total population)</b>	68
<b>Urban population (% of total)</b>	32
<b>Households</b>	175,000
<b>GNI per capita, PPP (current international US\$)</b>	1,680
<b>Gross domestic product (GDP) (in Million US\$)</b>	434
<b>Public spending on education, total (% of GDP)</b>	3
<b>Primary education, pupils</b>	156,839
<b>Pupil-teacher ratio, primary</b>	37
<b>Secondary education, pupils</b>	56,179
<b>Personal computers installed in education</b>	N/A
<b>Annual telecommunication investment (in Million US\$)</b>	7
<b>Daily newspapers (per 1,000 people)</b>	N/A
<b>Radios (per 1,000 people)</b>	N/A
<b>Television sets (per 1,000 people)</b>	3
<b>Television equipped households</b>	19,000
<b>Cable television subscribers</b>	N/A
<b>Television receivers</b>	20,000
<b>Personal computers (per 1,000 people)</b>	13
<b>Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants</b>	3
<b>Total telephone subscribers per 100 inhabitants</b>	10
<b>Residential monthly telephone subscription (US\$)</b>	2
<b>Residential telephone connection charge (US\$)</b>	51
<b>Telephone mainlines, waiting list</b>	10,884
<b>Telephone mainlines, waiting time (years)</b>	6
<b>Business telephone monthly subscription (US\$)</b>	2.23
<b>Business telephone connection charge (US\$)</b>	51
<b>Mobile phones (per 1,000 people)</b>	41
<b>Cellular connection charge (US\$)</b>	19
<b>Cellular monthly subscription (US\$)</b>	16
<b>Cellular - cost of 3 minute local call (peak) (US\$)</b>	0.05
<b>ISDN subscribers</b>	N/A
<b>Internet users (estimated)</b>	18,000
<b>Internet hosts</b>	568
<b>Internet service provider access charges (US\$ per 30 off-peak hours)</b>	18
<b>Internet telephone access charges (US\$ per 30 off-peak hours)</b>	2.70



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## **Important ICT Developments in the Gambia** **in the Recent Past**

**The Gambia joined the rest of the world in successfully tackling the millennium date change. The ad hoc outfits in public and private sectors brought about:**

- ❑ **a high appreciation of the potential and promise of information and communication technology**
  - ❑ **led to the reinforcement of ICT infrastructure networks and systems**
  - ❑ **help organisations see the extent of their integration into the global economy and the evolving e-society**
  - ❑ **helped organisation assess their risks exposure, dependencies and interdependencies being on the information superhighway brings about**
  - ❑ **the glaring emergence of a divide and potential development gap between those leveraging IT and those who are not**
  - ❑ **networking of individuals and entities in promoting IT in all aspects of our lives**
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- **The existence of the Internet gateway since November 1998**
  - **Zero tariff on computer equipment**
  - **Introduction of GSM services**

# CURRENT STATUS OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA



## ❑ a. ICT Equipment:

- ☞ Are there enough ICT equipment, applications and infrastructure in the place to develop ICT in the country?
- ☞ Where available, are these equipment put to optimal use? If not, why?

## ❑ b. Internet/Connectivity:

- ☞ Is there a reliable and affordable internet/connectivity available to support ICT ventures.
- ☞ How much and for what purposes the available connectivity/internet facilities are being used?

## ❑ c. Telephony:

- ☞ Are there reliable and affordable telephone systems in the country?
- ☞ How much and how far the available telephone facilities are being used for information sharing?

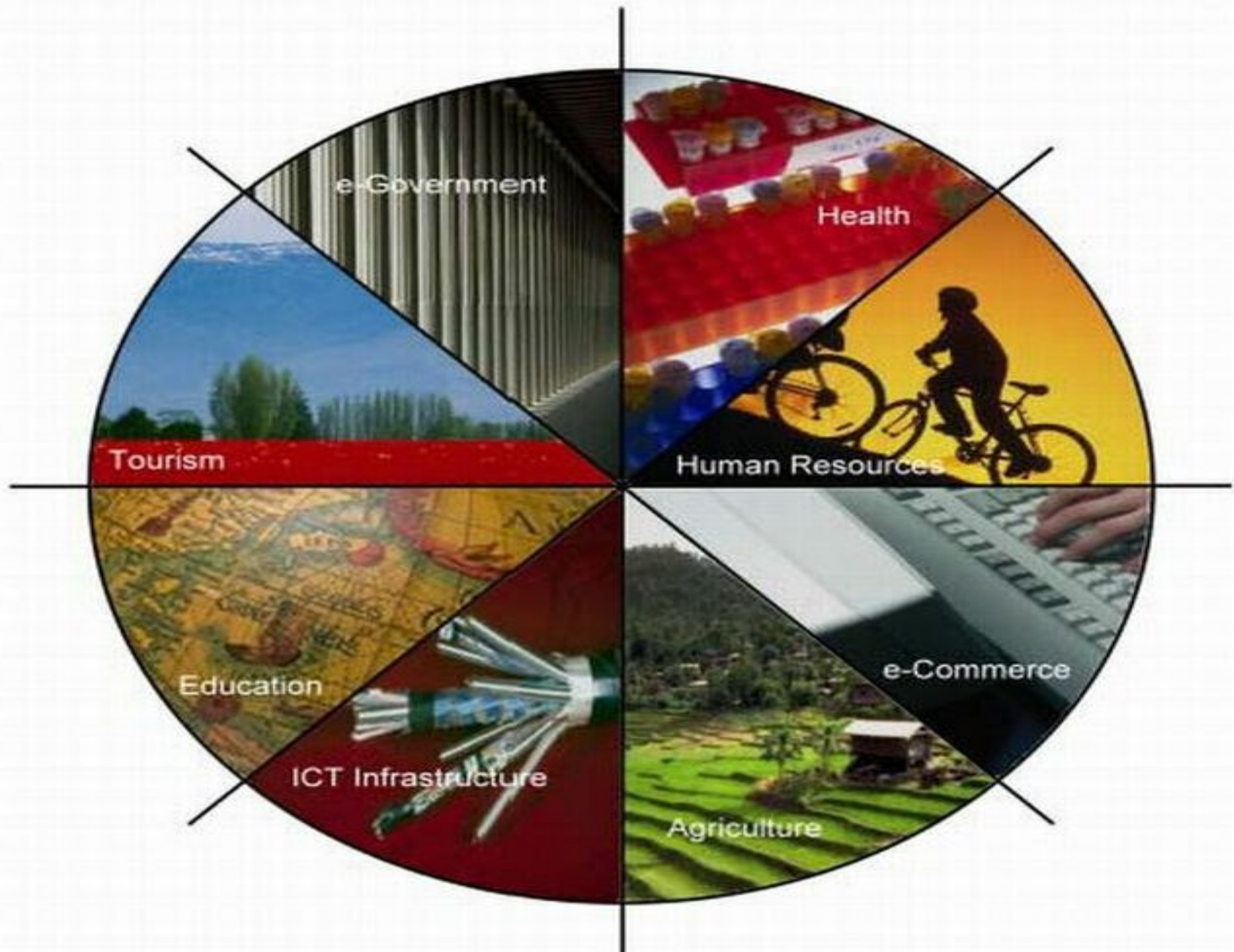
## ❑ d. Human Resources:

- ☞ Are there enough human resources available to support e-government?
- ☞ If not, what are the training needs of the HR in ICT?

## ❑ e. ICT Development and Policy









# **CURRENT STATUS OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA**



## **PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ICT**

- ❑ **Cost of ICT equipment prohibitive**
- ❑ **High illiteracy rates – Computer illiteracy included**
- ❑ **Limited ICT Human Resources – Lack of ICT Skills**
- ❑ **Internet Bandwidth is limited**
- ❑ **Energy Problems**
- ❑ **Monopoly of the Telecommunications Industry**
- ❑ **Lack of an independent regulator to promote fair competition—  
PURA have yet to be armed with the telecom bill**
  
- ❑ **High ISP license fees and charges**
- ❑ **Slow Deployment of new and cheaper technologies**

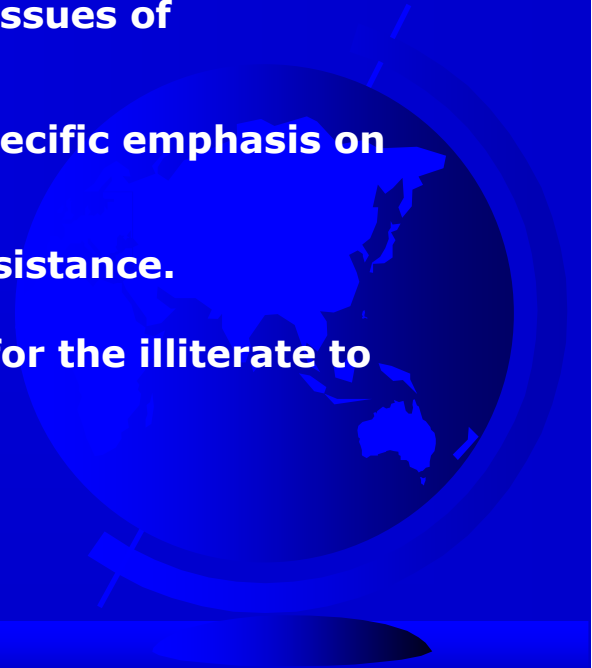


# **CURRENT STATUS OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA**



## **THE WAY FORWARD**

- ❑ **Turn Gambia into a knowledge based society and position the country as a regional ICT Hub. Introduce ICT as a subject from nursery to high schools**
- ❑ **A modern legal and regulatory Framework. creating a competitive environment in the ICT market by adopting liberal free market policies in the Telecommunications industry. Abolish monopolistic policies and allow an independent regulatory body to look after issues of Telecommunications licensing, etc.**
- ❑ **The development of tactical (sectoral) plans with specific emphasis on health, education and agriculture**
- ❑ **International support for financing and technical assistance.**
- ❑ **Tackling Gender and ICT and devising mechanisms for the illiterate to use ICTs**
- ❑ **Making use of Free and Open Source Technology**



# CURRENT STATUS OF ICT IN THE GAMBIA



## THE WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **An ultra modern telecommunications infrastructure with (100% digital network, extensive internet penetration, use of VSAT, wireless technology etc). Sufficient Energy resources**
- ❑ **High level commitment by government and strategic partnerships with countries that lead the way in ICT development. India, Mauritius, South Africa etc.**
- ❑ **Education and training facilities to develop ICT human resources**
- ❑ **No sales tax and Ecowas duty on computer equipment, favourable interest rates for ICT companies, incentive schemes promoting Universal access**
- ❑ **Designation of economic space to accommodate Local and Multinational ICT companies who want to invest in the country**
- ❑ **Adaptation of an e-government policy setting up web government portal services, government Intranet for information exchange with departments**

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**“We do not need to reinvent the wheel. From Mozambique to Mauritius to Ghana, the winds of change in promoting the use of ICT has shown success through sound ICT policies and strategies driven by Government, civil society and the private sector. Emulating the success stories of these countries in the context of our own communities is the way forward. Sound liberalization and regulation policies, human resource capacity, 1<sup>st</sup> class telecommunication and Energy infrastructure, fair competition are what govern these successes. The digital divide will then no longer exist, we would have turned it into a digital opportunity for the benefit of all citizens. Economic and social development opportunities for all”**







# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

