
	<p>Evaluation of The Pilot</p> <p>Songhai Project in The Gambia</p>	
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FINAL

EVALUATION OF PILOT
GAMBIA SHONGHAI INITIATIVE PROJECT

DECEMBER, 2016

SUBMITTED BY

DOMINIC MENDY



CONSULTING CO. LTD.

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1. INSTRUMENTS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT
2. EVALUATION OF THE PILOT GAMBIA SHONGHAI PROJECT INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONNAIRE [GRADUATED AND ON-GOING STUDENTS]
3. List of Persons Consulted

FOREWARD

Two years ago under the dynamic leadership of H.E. The President Sheikh Professor Dr Alhaji Yahya AJJ Jammeh Babili Mansa, Government of The Gambia and Development Partners, in particular the UNDP, The Gambia came up with the Gambia Songhai Initiative (GSI) programme to tackle the multiple challenges of food insecurity, environmental degradation and youth unemployment.

To that end and in 2014 we undertook a study tour to the Songhai Regional Centre in Benin to study the Songhai agricultural model, whose primary purpose was to attain sustainable economic development through agriculture. Once in Benin, it did not take us much time to conclude that the activities of the Songhai Regional Centre, the brain work of its founding father and CEO, Fr. Godfrey Nzamujo be replicated in The Gambia and agreed to forge a technical partnership cooperation agreement.

Today, after two years of GSI implementation with crystal results achieved by the pilot phase, it has been proven to all doubting Thomas's and to the whole world that GSI is a viable model for Gambia's economic development and provides solace for its teeming young population for employment and livelihood.

With sincere support and goodwill of our partners, I am proud to state that 30 Gambian youths from all regions of the country of which 40 per cent are women, successfully completed a six-month agricultural training course at the Songhai Regional Centre (SRC) in Benin Republic in various specialised areas of production, value chain development and commercialisation, which allowed them to be employed and some became entrepreneurs on their own rights.

In confidence, I can state that The Gambia Songhai Initiative Centre (GSI) formerly known as the Chamen Agricultural and Seed Multiplication Centre has made a land mark in the Gambia's farming and SMEs system. The Gambia's growing economy from a limited natural resources base has been the biggest challenge and our quest for resources self-sufficiency for our food needs and achieving it at the highest level shows that the GSI is on track towards the nation's aim to become a high-income country.

The findings of this evaluation and its smart recommendations are useful information in shaping the future of GSI, influencing policies and decisions of government, partners and stakeholders going ahead.

On this note, let me take this opportunity on behalf of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, members of the project steering committee, Chamen communities, the youths of this nation, and the Government of The Gambia, most sincerely thank the UNDP, FAO and all those development partners who have provided much needed funding and continue to count on their support in subsequent phases. We also thank and applaud the efforts of the Technical Partner in steering and guiding the programme and all those in one way or the other contributed to the implementation of this project.

.....
Hon. Alieu Kebba Jammeh
Minister of Youths & Sport

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The efforts of Staff of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The Gambia in particular **Ade Mamonyane Lekoetje, United Nations Resident Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative The Gambia**, Mr. Fernando Abaga Edjang, Deputy UNDP Resident Coordinator in ensuring that resources are available for the evaluation of the pilot phase of GSI needs commendation and equally important are roles played by staff, namely Mr. Abdou Touray, the Programme Specialist Poverty, MDGs and Environment, Ms. Adama Njie, the Programme Associate in coordinating and supporting the process to its successful completion.

This evaluation is made possible through the concerted efforts of individuals who have done different tasks that led to this report. Special thanks to members of The Gambia Songhai Coordinating Team, Management and PSC for their invaluable insight, guidance and logistical support to the consulting team in the conduct of the evaluation. The staff and students of GSI for agreeing to participate in the administration of questionnaires and furnishing us with useful honest opinions about the project which informed conclusions reached on this evaluation.

So too a warm appreciation to the Client Ministry of Youth and Sports and Implementing Agent (IA) especially Hon. Minister, Alieu K. Jammeh and his Permanent Secretary, Mr. Momodou Lamin Ceesay for their leadership and moral support in the timely execution of this important task.

Similarly, we wish to recognize the contributions and thank all other stakeholder institutions and partners of GSI, Mr. Lamin Camara, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MOFEA), Messes Alagie Fadera, Director of Planning, Musa Mbye, Director of Youth & Sports, staff of the MOA; just to name a few for their invaluable contributions to this very important assignment.

We would be remiss concluding this acknowledgement without recognizing the good job done by Emanic Consulting Co. Ltd faculty members and support staff for the technical inputs and sacrifices during the time of this assignment.

Dominic Mendy

Managing Consultant

Emanic Consulting Co Ltd

ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AG Chamber's	Attorney General Chamber
AmCham	American Chamber of Commerce
AU	African Union
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CIGs	Commodity Interest Groups
CIGs.	
COP22	Conference of Parties 2022
CP	Cooperating Partner
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Program Development
CRR	Central River Region
CU	Concern Universal
Empretec	Entrepreneurship Training
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FASDEP	Food and Agricultural development project
GC	Gambia College
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIEPA,	Gambia Investment Export Promotion Agency
GNAIP	Gambia agriculture Investment plan
GoTG	Government of The Gambia
GP4P	Government Poultry 4 Prosperity Project,
GSI	Gambia Songhai Initiative
GSI	Gambia Songhai Initiative – “ The PROJECT”
IP	Implementing Partners
KMC	Kanifing Municipal Council
LRR	Lower River Region
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOTIE	Ministry of Trade Industry and Employment
MOYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NARI	National Agriculture Research Institute
NBR	North Bank Region
NEPAD's	New Partnership for Agricultural Development
PAGE II	Programme for Accelerated Growth & Employment II
PMT	Program management team
PMU	Project Management Unit
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTC	Project Technical Committee
SBM	Songhai Business Model
SDF	Social development Fund
SDF	Social Development Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SM	The Songhai Model

SRC	Songhai Regional Centre
SRC	Songhai Regional Centre
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
TOT	Training of Trainers
TP	Technical Partner
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UTG	University of The Gambia
WCR	West Coast Region

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the support of UNDP and in partnership with the Songhai Regional Centre and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in The Gambia, the first phase of the Gambia Songhai Initiative project was launched in February 2015. The preparatory phase was for one (1) year but extended for another year to December 31st, 2016 due to delays in implementation in the first year.

The specific objectives of the preparatory phase is to prepare the ground for solid take off of the full project by focusing on four key areas:

- 1) Identification of facility and project staffing,
- 2) Equipment and rehabilitation of facilities,
- 3) Training of initial youth cohort, and
- 4) Partnership and resource mobilization.

Almost two years after the launch of the implementation of the project and with a total budget spent now reaching US\$1.6 million and taking into account that the current UNDP- Country Program Development (CPD) is ending in December 2016 and a new one scheduled to start in January of 2017, it is important at this juncture to carry out an evaluation in order to take stock and learn lessons to inform decisions regarding the future of UNDP support to the GSI.

Emanic Consulting Co. Ltd was hired to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the initiation-preparatory project and assess the overall performance of implementation of this phase and provides information for evidence-based judgments on results, learn lessons and inform future decisions.

The evaluation exercise commence November 1 to last for 30 days covering all aspect of the GSI project from designing, implementation performance, coordination, management and institutional set up including processes, operations, and results for the period February 2015 to December 2016. We deployed a mix of evaluation methodology mainly stakeholder interviews and consultations, desk reviews, field visits, quality and quantitative analysis generated through administration of questionnaires, SWOT analysis, tracer study to among others to determine degree of GSI relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Findings:

Baring delays and teething implementations challenges experienced at the pilot phase, it is our considered view that the program has built a solid foundation and partnership toward sustaining GSI in The Gambia. Some progress is made as most short-term project results were largely achieved and the authorities' expectation largely fulfilled creating the foundation for project implementation take-off.

Short term project implementation results achieved during the pilot phase were as follows:

- Over nearly two years into implementation the Centre have trained /graduated successfully 22 , all of whom are employed. 32 youths being the second intack/batch have successfully completed their training some of whom have already secured employment now and currently 40 are undergoing

training.

- Over 100 ha of land is put under productive cultivation, Agro-business and processing units established;
- Permanently employed over twenty people and created over 300 seasonal jobs thereby improved beneficiary incomes estimated at GMD45,000 per annum; well beyond national income average earned and enhanced their food security status;
- Introduction of farming techniques which have enhanced sustainable agriculture and increased productivity. Productivity at GSI Centre and network of commodity interest groups (CIGs) farms as measured by yield per hectare (field crops and horticulture) is constantly and substantially higher than host community farms by a ratio of 1:3;
- GSI generated internal funds lodged into an escrow account totaling over D500 , 029 as at end November 2016;
- Construction of three poultry houses with capacity of 5,000 chicks each;
- Groom critical mass of Agro- entrepreneurs in The Gambia and developed human, technical, infrastructural and organizational capacity to improve and scale-up production;
- GSI is contributing toward curbing youth migration because it provided marketable and gainful skills. Though experienced some dissertations of students from the programme reported to have joined the back way migration outflow majority of students and graduates completed and stayed in country.
- Establishment of functional project governance structure i.e. project steering committee, PMT and project management unit having nine staff recruited, a Project Manager and eight former trainees employed and added in the staff roll;
- Although no major investment achieved in the pilot phase, partnerships have been created with different ministries. Resource mobilization efforts have been step with government counterpart contribution received in 2016 and budgeted for the financial year 2017. FAO and GSI have concluded a TCP during the period and some cash donations obtained from H.E. the President of the Republic.

While those targets planned and missed under the current phase were:

- I. An additional 30 Hectares or more at the Nyaniberi Farm . Standard centre require minimum 100 hectares;
- II. Related to I above, rehabilitation of core facilities and equipment at Nyaniberi Farm ;
- III. Some key production and facilities at mother firms are not yet in place – Centre operating below capacity;
- IV. At least start-up activities in one satellite centre not achieved;
- V. Commence training activities in the two main hubs and network of commodity interest groups (CIGs) of trained youth/grandaunts;
- VI. Agro-Service department (credit, inputs, advisory and marketing services and the development of business start-up kits for youth) support scheme not created; and
- VII. Limited resources mobilized.

Conclusions:

- I. Weak harmonization of (GSI's IPS, CPs and donors especially the four major partners (MOYS, Ministry of Agriculture, MOTIE, UNDP and FAO) inputs for more synergy especially in the Youth training, Farming system development, entrepreneurship development, value chain development by integrating GSI activities with domestic local initiatives);
- II. GSI training and student selection criteria is not based on well-articulated human resource

development plan to enhance relevance and properly link to demand for their services and future growth and professional development and/or career path of student such as technician, professional, trade, farmers, industrialist etc while prioritizing or focus on Agro-entrepreneurs development;

- III. GSI have not yet established cooperation with other tertiary institutions such as the University of The Gambia (UTG), National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI), Gambia College, school of Agriculture, Management Development Institute in delivering training courses, curriculum development and standardization for universal recognition and acceptance. This is beneficial to students of GSI. Importantly the National Accreditation Authority;
- IV. The current financial management system in place is not responsive or sensitive to an agro-based program for smooth conduct of GSI business;
- V. Capacity limitation at the level of the implementing agency (MOYS) and GSI to handle all fiduciary management aspect of GSI including financial management, monitoring and evaluation, accounting reporting of programme activities is serious issues in safeguarding both operational and FM independent of GSI as well as accountable for public resources.

Recommendations:

- I. In the near term GSI should be supported to consolidate by providing necessary funds for investment to operate at full scale capacity to enhance its financial viability. This mean adopting interim measures to speed up implementation of the remaining activities of the pilot phase and development of a comprehensive business plan that lead to sustainability.
- II. GSI IPS, CPs and donors especially the four major partners (MOYS, Ministry of Agriculture, MOTIE, UNDP and FAO) should harmonize their inputs and create more synergy especially in the Youth training, Farming system development, entrepreneurship development, value chain development by integrating GSI activities with domestic local initiatives.
- III. GSI training should be based on well-articulated human resource development plan to enhance relevance. This would require adopting well defined entry selection mechanism properly linked to demand for their services and future growth and professional development and/or career path of student such as technician, professional, trade, farmers, industrialist etc.
- IV. GSI has to cooperate with other tertiary institutions such as the University of The Gambia (UTG), National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI), Gambia College, school of Agriculture, Management Development Institute in delivering training courses, curriculum development and standardization for universal recognition and acceptance. This is beneficial to students of GSI to get accreditation. While the purpose of GSI is not to produce nonfunctional graduates with “accreditation”, but people who will become socio-economic entrepreneurs, we stress the need for institutional collaboration reason why The Gambian Government brought key figures of these institutions to the Songhai regional center early this year to establish formal collaborative arrangement.
- V. There is need to review and develop a responsive and efficient financial and procurement system that is sensitive to an agro-based program for smooth conduct of GSI business. In the near term broaden the TCP agreement to include responsibilities to procure goods and services haven secured necessary single sourcing waivers retroactively as a stop gap measure to allow full implementation and utilization

of all committed funds within the time frame remaining under the current phase. SRC can and has the capacity to source all input materials not available locally identified in the GSI stop-gap budget at competitive prices. These items can be identified and negotiated with SRC and add to their contract within the framework of GPPA rules and regulations. The SRC technical personnel on the project should provide technical support to the procurement committee of the Ministry in procuring items that cannot be source locally and is within their competence but not as agents of suppliers.

- VI. In the long term, put in place a full fledged project implementation unit and ensure their capacity is built to handle all fiduciary management aspect of GSI including financial management, monitoring and evaluation, accounting reporting of programme activities. This is critical in safeguarding both operational and FM independent of GSI.
- VII. Introduction of take-off grants to support GSI graduates and outsourced its administration to existing professionalized entities such as GIEPA start up support (BDS) scheme and the Social Development Fund. Trainee savings can be leverage on to catalyze matching grant facility under projects like NEMA, FASDEP or even reliance bank in order to attract three times or more of the saved amount. This would have enabled them settle well with good start-up. Such arrangements could not materialize as expected but need to be pursued.
- VIII. Step up resource and fund mobilization efforts by developing a clear resource mobilization strategic plan;
- IX. Revisit MOU with SRC – Benin to go beyond TA Support but future cooperation and collaboration partnership in service delivery and networking; Technical and advisory support is the main comparative advantage at the moment-any additional need should be considered on case by case basis and relevant contract issued like how it is happening now. Independent of the main MOU several contracts are main for the supply of essentials which are not available in country.
- X. Gambia Songhai Initiative or project be integrated with other anti-migration programme and supported as such to contribute towards stemming youth outflow through the backway or illegal routes;
- XI. Institutionalized government subvention to GSI and releases it on timely basis;
- XII. Allow for 2nd extension of the pilot phase to allow consolidation and completion of remaining activities and enhance long term sustainability;
- XIII. Address the water shortage / problem at Chaemen to operate at full capacity
- XIV. Timely provision of farm tools , organic fertilizers and seedlings through better contract supervision and management;
- XV. Entrepreneurship development, administration of credit scheme outsource to existing professionalized entities such as GIEPA start up support (BDS) scheme and the Social Development Fund for linkages and synergy. Linking the Entrepreneurship training to the EMPRETEC project under GIEPA within the same funding source-UNDP.

Chapter 1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Farming is critical across the African continent, accounting for over 30% of overall economic output. Over 60% of people in Africa live in rural areas and rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. Many countries in the continent have up to 85% of their workforce employed in the agricultural sector. Close to 40% of Africa's working youth are employed in the sector of which women make up at least half of the total agricultural labor force. Simply, agriculture represents the driver of growth, jobs opportunities and livelihood for those in rural areas, youth and women, and the vulnerable segment of society.

For The Gambia, agriculture sector is the second largest contributor to GDP, closely followed by the services sector with an average contribution of 22% since 2011. Agriculture, forestry and fishing combined, employs up to 57% of Gambia's rural population and 75% of the country's population.

Notwithstanding, unemployment-national 29.2% particularly, amongst the youth 38% which account for the large majority is a major problem in The Gambia like most African countries. Government, donor agencies and civil society organizations are increasingly showing interest in and being aware of the need to better integrate youth in economic and social development. In The Gambia like most countries in West Africa, food and agricultural systems are moving rapidly towards market-driven systems, and the role of the private sector is becoming increasingly important, while smallholder farming is becoming commercialized. These are important developments that underscore the need, on the part of governments, for good policies, appropriate institutions, and the establishment of adequate infrastructure as well as the need to strengthen human resource capabilities to leverage agricultural and rural development.

Since the agricultural sector is estimated to be a driving force of the growth potentials of the region, it is imperative to make this sector attractive not only to the large majority of the population and future entrepreneurs who are the youth, but also to investors.

Among others, lack of marketable skills is a major factor for youth to be unemployed resulting in mass irregular migration exodus to western countries and breaking the social cohesion of many rural areas. It is imperative to find a lasting solution to transform agriculture as vanguard for development and increased participation of youth in agriculture in response to the youth unemployment and stem the flow of illegal migration. It is against that background that the Songhai-Gambia Initiative was designed to effectively tackle the triple challenges in The Gambia today: Agriculture/Food Security, Demographic transition/Youth Employment/Poverty and Environmental by adopting the integrated farming system (The Songhai model) blueprint for translating farming opportunities into a reality, and transforming agriculture into a productive, efficient, sustainable and remunerative enterprise. The model amply demonstrates that despite a myriad of constraints, it is possible for agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa to develop, prosper, become attractive and constitute a strong engine for a broad-based and inclusive economic growth. The Songhai model could constitute a viable initiative in delivering the ambitious "Vision 2016" of the President of The Gambia and other long term objectives of empowering farmers, agricultural growth, wealth creation and poverty reduction as enshrined in the national development plan (PAGE1 2012-2016 Draft PAGE II 2017-2020) and the Gambia agriculture Investment plan (GNAIP), the NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) as well as the African Agenda 2063, MDGs and/or SDGs. The programme builds on capacities, strengthened institutions, and support policies for pro-poor and equitable distribution of economic growth, and job creation in line with United Nations Development Assistance Framework

(UNDAF) to The Gambia.

It was within this context that the UNDP supported the Gambia Songhai Initiation (GSI) project for one year aimed at eradicating the logic of poverty and unleashing sustainable broad based and inclusive development in The Gambia. It is designed as an innovative platform for a broader, multi-partnership program to support the activities of The Gambian Government in promoting access of youth, men and women, to appropriate agribusiness entrepreneurial, leadership and management skills required for their effective participation in the creation of wealth and investments in socio-economically viable agribusiness enterprises in every community in The Gambia.

Through the support of UNDP and in partnership with the Songhai Regional Centre and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in The Gambia, the first phase of the project started in February 2015 as project preparatory assistance. The preparatory assistance was for one year but extended for another year due to delays in implementation in the first year; and government strong request. The specific objectives of the preparatory phase is to prepare the ground for solid take off of the full project by focusing on four key areas:

- 1) Identification of facility and project staffing,
- 2) Equipment and rehabilitation of facilities,
- 3) Training of initial youth cohort, and
- 4) Partnership and resource mobilization.

Almost two years after the launch of the implementation of the project and with a total budget spent now reaching US\$1.6 million and taking into account that the current UNDP- Country Program Document(CPD) is ending in December 2016 and a new one scheduled to start in January of 2017, it is important at this juncture to carry out an evaluation in order to take stock and learn lessons to inform decisions regarding the future of UNDP support to the GSI.

GSI is already a household name in The Gambia and a flagship project for UNDP interventions in The Gambia having made significant strides and contribution toward Gambia's development in the areas of skills and employment, food and nutrition security and transformation of agriculture.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION:

The objective of this assignment is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the initiation-preparatory project and assess the overall performance of implementation of this phase and lessons learnt; which will feed into future scaling up and/or restructuring on a sustainable basis. Project evaluation is mandatory as it provides an essential basis for the evaluation of performance outcomes and provides information for evidence-based judgments on results, learn lessons and inform future decisions.

This project is being evaluated because it is a pilot project and significant resources have been invested over the past two years (US\$1.6 million) to account and justify the investment, generate specific lessons and useful information to determine opportunities for up-scaling and adaptation or adjustment where required.

Primarily the objective of the evaluation is to check quality and appropriateness of the project, implementation performance outputs and or outcomes and to draw useful lessons to shape the way forward.

1.2 EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation design and methodology cover all elements of the GSI project design, implementation, performance, coordination, management and institutional set up including processes, operations, and results from the start of the project implementation to the end of the pilot phase (February 2015 to December 2016). The evaluation methodology adopted is mainly stakeholder interviews and consultations, desk reviews, field visits, quality and quantitative analysis generated through administration of questionnaires, SWOT analysis among others. It will also involve a degree of tracer study to understand the level of engagement of graduates of the pilot phase. The interviews will involve the dimension of activities and partners; either as direct beneficiary or funding agent.

1.3 Key Evaluation issues to address

The evaluation issues include:

- ✓ Assessing the overall performance of the initiation phase;
- ✓ Checking quality and appropriateness of the project for particularly ambitious outputs and or outcome and to draw useful lessons from the pilot for possible replication or up-scaling;
- ✓ Show the adequacy or otherwise of the programme and institutional support, the operational environment and challenges, the success stories;
- ✓ Indicate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the pilot programme; and
- ✓ Provide evidence-based recommendations and lessons learnt for use in consolidating or expanding similar programme.

1.4 Methodological Approach

The methodological approach involved mix of evaluation techniques and tools such as interviews, desk reviews, discussions with key stakeholders, implementing players, donors, students, host communities, local authorities with a view to show degree of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the pilot programme.

1.4.1 Sampling frame and Data Collection Tools

Accordingly, the evaluation processes was planned and sequenced as follows::

- ✓ Assessment of capacity of the management of the project team in relation to implementation performance such as results and target delivery and timeliness, as defined in the project document;
- ✓ Performance delivery under the memorandum of understanding or partner agreements, financing agreement, etc by parties; Here the delivery of the planned outputs shall be confirmed and explanations obtained for variations in outputs. The project team and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) member shall be interviewed for explanations on result variations where exist;

- ✓ A representative sample of the project graduates (70%) and on-going students (100%) were traced and interviewed based on a developed questionnaire instrument for the collection of human resources development outputs and its effectiveness and contribution to their employability/employment and livelihood;
- ✓ Administered of a discussion guide to implementing partners, cooperating partners, beneficiaries and policy makers to gauge project productivity and production improvements, employment and/employability of GSI graduates, project relevance and effectiveness as well as impacts of the project and lessons learnt.

Chapter 2.0 The Gambia Songhai Initiative (GSI) – PROJECT

2.1. Songhai Business Model (SBM)

The SBM comprised of the following elements described below:

2.2 Technology Park for Applied research: Research for Development.

- ✓ Soil improvement facilities and activités;
- ✓ Crop and genetic improvement and protection technologies and facilities;
- ✓ Post-Harvest Research technology research facilities;
- ✓ Renewable Energy Research facilities; and
- ✓ Water conservation and management research facilities.

2.3 PRODUCTION DEPARTMENTS / FACILITIES (Industrial Park)

Primary Production

Ai) Crop production/ Staple crops
Rice, Soybean, corn, yam etc

Aii) Crop production Market Garden
Varies vegetables

Bi) Livestock:
Grass cutters, rabbits, cows, pigs, goats, sheep etc

Bii) Poultry:
Chicken, quails, guinea fowl, Turkey, ducks

C. i) Aquaculture:
Catfish, Carp, Bighead and Tilapia production

Secondary Production:

- ✓ Hatchery
- ✓ Feed Mill
- ✓ Abattoir and Meat processing
- ✓ Mechanical workshop for the production of Post-Harvest machines.

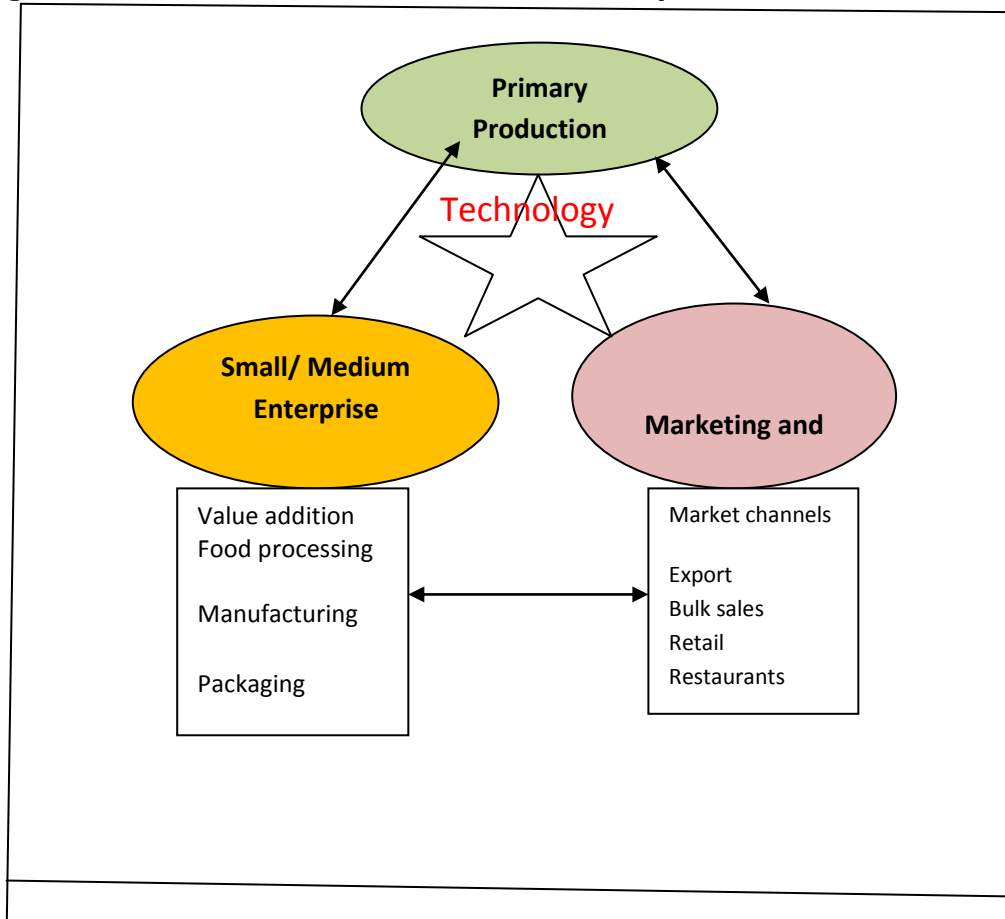
2.4 INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- i. Hostel facilities.
- ii. Accommodation facilities for 35 Instructors / Trainers.
- iii. Lecture Halls and Students canteen.
- iv. Income generating guest houses with accommodation
- v. Roads, Drainage, Electricity and Water Distribution Systems.
- vi. Administrative Block with office accommodation.

- vii. Supermarket for marketing products of CIGs.
- viii. Restaurant
- ix. Well-equipped and furnished Conference Centre (150-200 seats capacity).

Figure 1. The Songhai Model

(showing the interlink between one section and another)



2.5 Gambia-Songhai Initiative (GSI) Project:

The GSI project consist of two (2) Main Hubs-Mother farms at:

- 1) **Nyaniberreh** in the South Bank (about 42 km away from Banjul).
- 2) **Chamen**, in the North, and

Three (3) satellite farms (two Public and one Private) at:

- 3) Wellingara Agricultural Centre - Public
- 4) Sapu Rice Fields - Public
- 5) Kanilai Farms - Private

2.6 Implementation Phases:

a) Setting up the Mother Firms – Main Hubs:

The first year (pilot Phase)/inception period would be the setting-up or the establishment of the Project Management Team and implementation targets/planned activities under this stage were:

- I. Expansion of the mother farm (GSI Chamen Centre) to include Nyaniberi Farm which is 30 Hectares
- II. Recruitment and training of core competency group for the Program management team (PMT) - 15 people;
- III. rehabilitation of core facilities and equipment for both centres;
- IV. Production and management in mother firms - Technology and Industrial parks);
- V. Set-up the Project Steering Committee (PSC), PTC.; and
- VI. Start-up activities in one satellite centre.

b) Development stage: Operational phase

- Full development of production in mother firms - Technology and Industrial parks;
- Commence training activities in the two main hubs and network of commodity interest groups (CIGs) of trained youth/grandaunts;
- Agro-Service department (credit, inputs, advisory and marketing services and the development of business start-up kits for youth) support scheme created; and
- Set-up of two satellites to functional operations.

The (a-b) activities above are reconstituted into five project components namely 1): Strengthening managerial, administrative, technological and production capacities; 2): Building the human capital and strengthening the capacity in training: Strong management Team; 3): Services to local government or state agribusiness development centers and rural youth entrepreneurs; 4): Advocacy, policy dialogue, communication and knowledge-sharing and networking and 5): Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of the programme.

2.7 GSI Implementation achievements/results:

Barring delays experienced at commencement and putting together the project team, progress is made as most short-term project results were largely achieved and the authorities' expectation largely fulfilled creating the foundation for project implementation take-off. Project implementation results achieved were as follows;

- Over nearly two years into implementation the Centre have trained /graduated successfully 22 youths, all of whom are employed now and currently 61 are undergoing training of which 32 are nearing completion;
- Over 100 ha of land is put under productive cultivation, Agro-business and processing units established;
- Permanently employed over twenty people and created over 300 seasonal jobs thereby improved beneficiary incomes estimated at GMD45,000; well beyond national income average earned and enhanced their food security status;
- Introduction of farming techniques which have enhanced sustainable agriculture and increased

productivity. Productivity at GSI Centre and network of commodity interest groups (CIGs) farms as measured by yield per hectare (field crops and horticulture) is constantly and substantially higher than host community farms by a ratio of 1:3;

- GSI generated internal funds lodged into an escrow account totaling over D500 , 029 as at end November 2016;
- Construction of three poultry houses with capacity of 5,000 chicks each;
- Groom critical mass of Agro- entrepreneurs in The Gambia and developed human, technical, infrastructural and organizational capacity to improve and scale-up production;
- Curbed youth migration because it provided marketable and gainful skills. Though experienced some dissertations of students from the programme reported to have joined the back way migration outflow majority of students and grandaunts completed and stayed in country.

8 GSI - SELECTED PHOTOS:















The above results when contrasted with planned activities of the pilot phase being evaluated which had four broad objectives cited indicated mix results. The causes of the shortcoming are explained in section 2.6.

2.9 Implementation Challenges & Lessons:

1. Delay in putting in place a full fledged PMT to enable not only timely implementation of planned activities but also provide opportunity to understudy the technical team. The hiring of the Project Coordinator was done sometime in June 2016;
2. No active participation of MoA in terms of cross support and integrating the initiative into the national agricultural system, particularly in the areas of research, complementarity of resources, and technical support;
3. Training and capacity development: eight (8) students deserted during training and low level of support services and provision of micro-credit to graduating students;
4. Complex multi-partnership arrangements and institutional set up;
5. Complex coordination mechanism and absence of full-fledged PMU structures for implementation of GSI; and
6. FM Not conforming to designed implementation arrangements resulting to procurement delays, delayed activity execution and at high cost even when operating using request for direct payment and or request for special services (RDP/RSS) having regard to regulation as that all local procurements must follow GPPA rules which applies for RDPs and for RSS UNDP rules must be adhered and apparent capacity deficit at the level of the IP (MOYS) shown by the UNDP mico-assessment of IPs.

Chapter 3.0 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

3.1 THE GENERAL CONTEXT:

The evaluation, as tabulated below revealed that students at GSI are from different regions of The Gambia with North Bank Region (38.60%) having the largest percentage of enrollment followed by West Coast Region (20.50%) and Central River Region (18.20%). Kanifing Municipal Council and Lower River Region are having the least enrollment with 6.80% each. Of the sample selected during the evaluation, 36.40% have graduated while 63.60% are on-going students.

Table 18: Student status by region

Region	Status of student		Total
	Graduate	On-going	
Central River Region	6.80%	11.40%	18.20%
Lower River Region	4.50%	2.30%	6.80%
North Bank Region	13.60%	25.00%	38.60%
Upper River Region	4.50%	4.50%	9.10%
West Coast Region	2.30%	18.20%	20.50%
Kanifing Municipal Council	4.50%	2.30%	6.80%
Total	36.40%	63.60%	100.00%

From the gender perspectives, the program has been quite considerate given that 38.60% as tabulated below are female with 13.60% from West Coast and 11.40% from North Bank. This is in line with one of the recommended strategies of the youth policy i.e. promoting mutually respectful and equitable gender relations for youth.

Table 19: Gender of students

Region	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Central River Region	18.20%		18.20%
Lower River Region	4.50%	2.30%	6.80%
North Bank Region	27.30%	11.40%	38.60%
Upper River Region	2.30%	6.80%	9.10%
West Coast Region	6.80%	13.60%	20.50%
Kanifing Municipal Council	2.30%	4.50%	6.80%
Total	61.40%	38.60%	100.00%

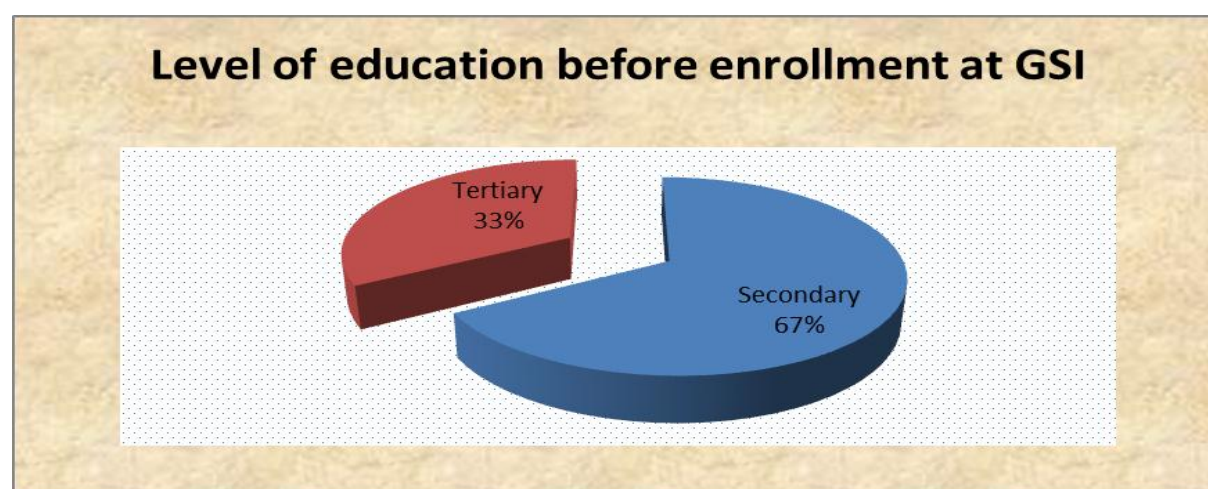
As tabulated below, 80.50% of the interviewed students are within the age bracket of 19 to 28yrs and 17.10% are within the bracket of greater than 28 to 38yrs. Of the youngest age category, 29.30% are students from North Bank Region. This is an indication that the program is targeting the youthful population and by extension can immensely contribute to reduction of illegal migration.

Table 20: Age distribution of students by region

Region	Age (in years)			Total
	19 to 28	Greater than 28 to 38	Greater than 38 to 48	
Central River Region	7.30%	7.30%		14.60%
Lower River Region	7.30%			7.30%
North Bank Region	29.30%	7.30%	2.40%	39.00%
Upper River Region	9.80%			9.80%
West Coast Region	19.50%	2.40%		22.00%
Kanifing Municipal Council	7.30%			7.30%
Total	80.50%	17.10%	2.40%	100.00%

On level of education prior to enrollment at GSI, 67% of the interviewees got secondary and 33% tertiary. The tertiary education is however limited to short courses attained after completion of secondary education. None of the students interviewed have a university degree prior to enrollment at GSI even though the programme is not targeting University graduates at the moments..

Figure 4: Level of education prior to enrollment



When asked about their reasons of joining GSI, 47.70% said is in response to their quest for; National Development, Employment opportunities and skill/technique and entrepreneurship in agriculture while 45.50% expressed the desire for; Youth impact in agriculture, integrated farming system and use of organic fertilizer in agriculture. Only 6.80% reported that they enrolled for discipline, technique and hardworking attitude

Table 21: Reasons for joining Songhai Program

Region	Reasons for joining Songhai Program			Total
	National Development, Employment opportunities, skill/technique and entrepreneurship in agriculture	Youth impact in agriculture, integrated farming system and use of organic fertilizer in agriculture	Discipline, technique, hardworking attitude	
Central River	6.80%	11.40%		18.20%
Lower River	4.50%	2.30%		6.80%
North Bank	18.20%	13.60%	6.80%	38.60%
Upper River		9.10%		9.10%
West Coast	15.90%	4.50%		20.50%
Kanifing Municipal Council	2.30%	4.50%		6.80%
Total	47.70%	45.50%	6.80%	100.00%

3.2 Relevance

GSI relevance is assessed in terms of degree of alignment to Government policies, plans and programmes. Its integration and complementarity to domestic agenda such as the youth employment food self-sufficiency drive, broad based growth inclusiveness agenda. Relevance is also checked against implementation alignment with The GSI business model and strategic objectives.

Songhai is a production, a research and a service center that addresses shortage of human capital by producing a critical mass of men and women with a new entrepreneurial culture and who are equipped morally, technically, and spiritually with organizational skills leveraging on technologies and methods that enhance local resources and improve production, while respecting the environment and society.

Key objective of Songhai development model is creating rural cities to stem rural migration through an integrated agriculture linked to industrialization and service provision thereby making farming a viable proposition for the youths, creating jobs and sustaining livelihood. Songhai farming imbibed productive, resilient agriculture, based on a sustainable soil management capable of generating jobs and incomes while ensuring sustainable development.

Clearly, GSI fall within the remits of both national and international commitments to development as expounded in the national development plans, policies and strategies as well as the much touted green economy promoted under the social development goals(SDG), COP22, the AU and AfDB agricultural transformation agenda among others. GSI too is properly aligned to the Gambia Government-United Nations

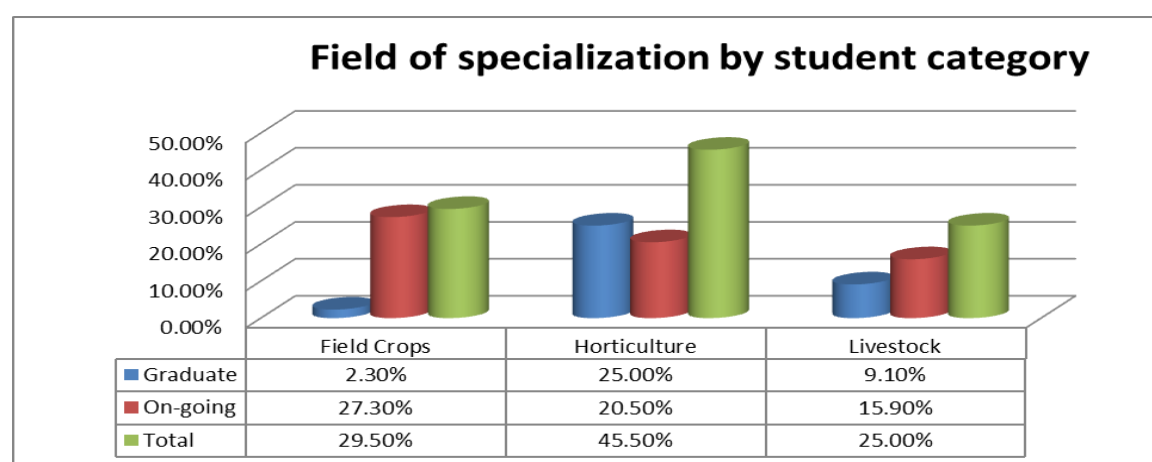
Development Assistance Framework expiring December 2016 and its draft successor programme 2017-2020. It falls under the country programme action plan (CPAP) outcome 2 for entrepreneurship development, Government employment policy, Entrepreneurship Policy and Action Plan, industrial development agenda; in particular the cottage and craft industry among others.

In terms of linkages and integration with domestic programmes, GSI aligned well with other national initiatives such as the GIEPA, SDF and AmCham Start Up Incubator Programs, the GoTG-UNDP sponsored Empretec Project, the FASDEP-Government Poultry 4 Prosperity Project, NEDI- SAADIS Group -MG University- Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) to name a few. However concern is raised about level of integration and complementarity with these national programmes and national agricultural systems for synergy and leveraging on each other's comparative advantage in the delivery of programmes and services. GSI suffer from the usual silo mentality approach to development by jealously protecting their hard earned farming system at the expense of mainstreaming within national system properly linked and integrated.

3.3 Training

Another layer of relevance relates to training based on knowledge, skills, entrepreneurship development – a talent pool of high level of human resource base that will be able to cope with the dynamics of technology development, training/incubation and mentoring, implementation at pilot and scaling up phases. As illustrated below, 45.50% of interviewees specialized on horticulture and 29.50% on field crops while only 25% are specializing on livestock production. This mix of specialization is in-line with government's food self-sufficiency drive but fall far short of the competency skill set of a full fledge functional Songhai outfit.

Figure 5: Field of specialization



The key objective of Songhai is creating rural cities to stem rural migration through an integrated agriculture

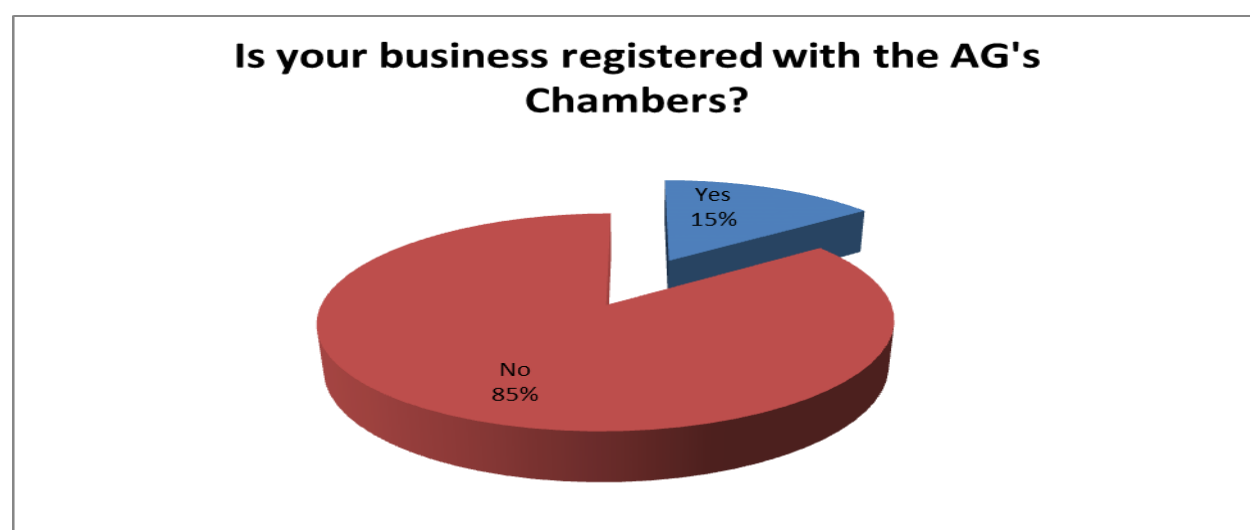
linked to industrialization and service provision, thereby making farming a viable proposition for the youths, creating jobs and sustaining livelihood. . Interestingly and as revealed in the table below, 31.40% of respondents have already established their enterprises with 42.90% also planning to follow suit. This shows the relevance of GSI within the context of youth empowerment and employment creation. However, 25.70% of respondents are of the view that they are not operating or planning to operate their own enterprise with the hope that they will have gainful employment. This finding does not defeat the relevance of GSI given that such youth are equipped with skills that will keep them competitive in the labor market. In fact, some of them [16 graduates are already employed by FAO as extension agents and currently supporting horticultural producers in some villages in The Gambia. Eight of them also employed by the project at Chamen and MOBSE also recruited (five 5) for their School gardens

Table 22: Operating or planning to operate own business

Status of student	Are you operating or planning to operate your enterprise?			Total
	Yes; operating	No; but planning to	Not operating or planning	
Graduate	20.00%	20.00%	2.90%	42.90%
On-going	11.40%	22.90%	22.90%	57.10%
Total	31.40%	42.90%	25.70%	100.00%

Despite the number of enterprises that are being currently operational, 85% are not registered with the AG Chamber's thus still considered informal and non has financial or technical support.

Table 23: Business registration



GSI students' entry selection method currently is not based on academic qualification or experience linked to career paths or future professional development. Thus, the selection mechanism provides for all categories of varied capacities and background. This obviously limits transfer of knowledge and capacity development and appropriate linking of training to demand for jobs. Training and specialization must response to demand for the service, future career plans of students and policy. Invariably this requires careful selection and prior test of level of competency to avoid waste of time and valuable resources.

Measure of graduates' performance by assessing their activities in the fields indicates some level of satisfaction. We are told that, the 1st cohort of Gambian Songhai graduates that worked with the Songhai Regional center engineers in setting up the irrigation systems in the two sites were not only able to maintain and service the irrigation systems built by Songhai engineers, but they extended the services and even built an irrigated rice section using the SRI (System of Rice Intensification) system and grow Songhai improved high quality rice varieties at Chaemen.

The foregoing point to some degree of implementation and replication of the Songhai business model in The Gambia especially the farming system (production), an indication of level of performance by the Technical Partner (Songhai Technical Team). However, it remained to be seen if transfer of knowledge for long term sustainability has taken place and seriously doubt self-sustaining derive of GSI in the near term.

3.4 Efficiency

The effectiveness section of the evaluation analyses GSI's achievements in relation to planned outputs and outcomes. It also examined the extent to which the outputs contributed to changes observed at outcome levels and what factors facilitated/hindered these achievements. It further documents the approaches that have been undertaken and their effectiveness in contributing to GSI's overall performance. Both past and current students of GSI have great business ambitions since 74.40% of questionnaire respondents have business plans. Having a business plan is one thing but making it operational is another; as students complaint that they do not have the capital to operationalize their business concepts.

Table 24: Availability of business plan

Category	Do you have a business plan		Total
	Yes	No	
Graduate	34.90%	2.30%	37.20%
On-going	39.50%	23.30%	62.80%
Total	74.40%	25.60%	100.00%

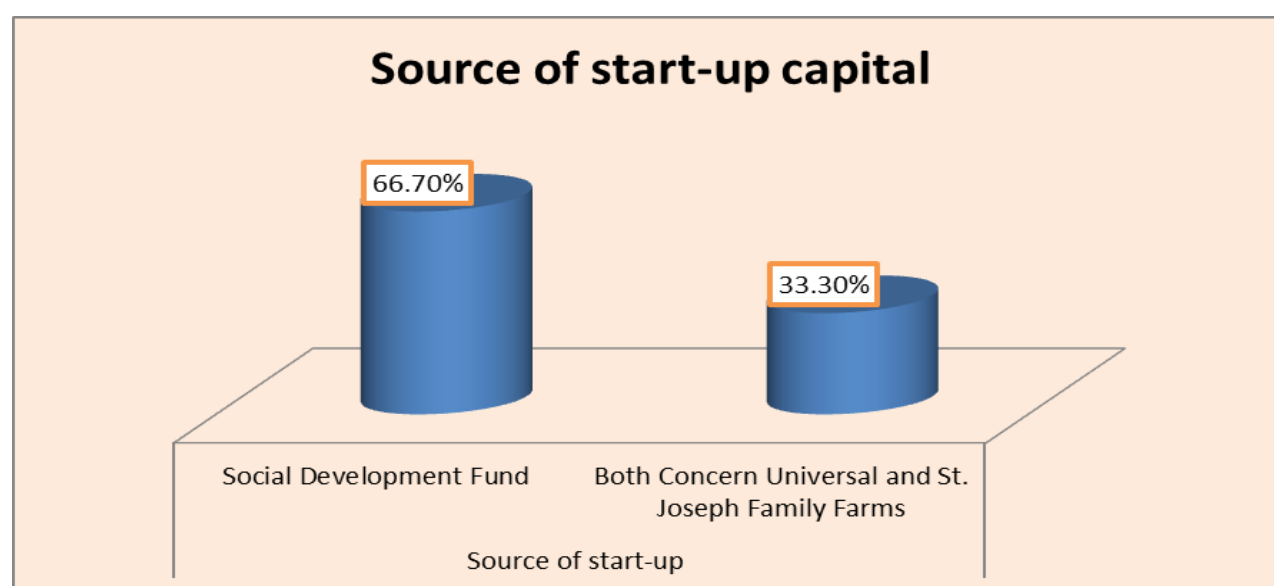
Evidence from the evaluation has showed that 92.70% of students did not receive any start-up capital and the few (7.30%) that benefitted received it from Social Development Fund and Concern Universal jointly with St. Joseph's Family Farms. Trainee savings are considered and regarded as allowances by most instead of contribution to startup capital.

Table 25: Start-up capital

Category	Did you receive any start-up capital		Total
	Yes	No	
Graduate	4.90%	34.10%	39.00%
On-going	2.40%	58.50%	61.00%
Total	7.30%	92.70%	100.00%

The lack of start-up capital is a major constraint of the GSI program and graduates without such support are unlikely to sustain their enterprises. Future scaling up or expansion must take post training support into account by forging strong partnership with existing entrepreneurship development initiatives and The Gambia Social Development Fund programs.

Figure 6: Source of start-up capital



The test for efficiency addresses cost optimization and benefit maximization. The project design envisaged adoption and replication of the Songhai farming and business model in terms of technical, operational and financial management operations. All the elements of fiduciary functions of project management are ceded to the technical partner provided their operating instruments conform to international standards and national regulations and laws. Under this arrangement the SRC provides the project team to operationalize and manage the programme under the TCP agreement covering all

technical and financial aspects using the SRC instruments.

GSI however adopted a hybrid of the typical Songhai model necessitated by absence or low capacity of the implementing agent (MOYS) following the capacity assessment conducted by UNDP in 2014 which indicated such. The lack of a project management unit (PMU) to steer the affairs of GSI and fully capacitated to manage the fiduciary responsibilities of GSI and to avoid risks associated with third party having dual responsibility of technical implementation and financial manager, resorted to the use of UNDP as Fund administrator while contribution of government is handled by the project team. Songhai fully managed centre combines management, implementing contractor, procuring responsibilities. This may pose some degree of conflict of interest and complexities in the management of public funds. While under the TCP agreement can join implementation and procurement responsibilities, in the candid opinion of evaluators, the management of the fund must be separated to safeguard and account for public resources.

Thus the current management set up reflecting the institutional arrangement shows a complex and bureaucratic set up with multiple reporting lines significantly deviated from the standard Songhai approach to project implementation. The PMU self-accounting arrangement would address the deviation by cutting on the processes and yet complying with public procurement system and government financial regulations. While SRC focused on core technical operations of GSI and supervision of implementation of activities. Whatever FM arrangement is adopted, it should be inform by the need optimize cost and guarantee smooth functions of an seasoned based farming cycle, safeguarding and accounting for public financial resources of donors, government and GSI generated funds.

The FM options suggested by parties concern are:

1. Modifying the TCP contract to cover both technical and financial management including being responsible for contracting and procuring (single sourcing) of GSI activities
2. Put in place and build capacities of a full fledged GSI's project management unit to handle the fiduciary responsibilities of the project similar to self-account status arrangements to cut down on delays in process of procurement of goods and services;
3. Modify the current FM set up by creating a unified funding mechanism (basket funds) administered by UNDP which continue to releases cash advances tied to budgetary targets and results.
4. Putting in government counterpart contribution-funds through the UNDP as above.
- 5.

3.5 Effectiveness

Songhai farming and business techniques and processes in theory increases productivity, insure nutritional quality and eliminate waste and pollution in a dramatic way.“The concept of sustainable development implies that productivity is increased while protecting and enhancing our environment leveraging on technology and

know-how to produce more with less”. “This is only possible within an integrated system of production where the principles of synergy, complementarity, supplementary are in play” (Quote from CEO SRC).

Implementation of GSI in its current state falls short of this ambition in many respect appropriately highlighted under section 2.6 above. Greater involvement of MOA and integration of GSI into the Gambia’s agricultural system would create the synergy and complementarity of investment resources, technical backstopping and sharing of technical how and its dissemination.

3.6 Sustainability

The assessment strategy covered four important aspects of sustainability below:

3.6.1 Resource sustainability:

Well trained rural youth can help to sustainably harness the potentials in their communities to improve their livelihood and income levels as they enhance their natural resource base. GSI and Its network of satellites farms manage and driven by trained entrepreneur professionally operated and equipped to standard have potential to be self-sustaining. Currently with less than 30 percent of a standard functional Songhai outfit GSI has attained coupled with the identified challenges in its operations, It is still too short a time to judge its financial viability in near to long term.

GSI training strategy in the long should depart from the stipend driven recruitment to user fees based admission to beef up its internal generated funds.

Long-term financial commitment of government demonstrated by annualizing the subvention support and mobilizing the required investment funds to put in place a full boarded Songhai facility is critical to enhance resource sustainability advocacy for the participation of other funding partners.....

3.6.2 Economic sustainability:

The harnessing of natural resources will trigger off economic activities that promote wealth creation, employment and incomes. This will create a snow ball effect if these resources are reinvested. Socio-economic return appraisal is beyond the scope of this evaluation but suffice it to say indications are that GSI has positive prospect in terms of job creations, income returns, and qualitative social benefits such as improved food sufficiency, nutrition standards, and poverty reduction. Furthermore the farming approach of zero waste, zero emission, and organic system integrated agriculture is environmentally sound. Since the outcomes of the program will be expanded and sustainable activities of rural enterprises engaged in Agro business (input supply, marketing, and processing), the rural zones will become socio-economically viable. These activities will generate employment in rural areas; increase the value addition of traditional crops and commodities.

3.6.3 Social/institutional sustainability:

The program’s focus on capacity building and strengthening institutions at all levels. The benefits include high level political support, synergy, cross-learning, economies of scale and peer support leading to more cost effective implementation. The authorities (IP) have stated categorically that GSI is beyond a project and here to stay. It has strong political support and the goodwill to institutionalize it. For this to happen

however GSI must be mainstreamed within the farming and natural resource management system with active support and participation of all cooperating partners most specially MOA. Streamlining institutional arrangements and fiduciary functions of GSI including financial management framework to enhance smooth functioning of its activities is essential in reinforcing institutional sustainability.

It is also complained that the Songhai teams tends to work in isolation, which situation does not effectively transfer technology especially the management capacity of the programme to Gambians. It is understood that Songhai will not be here forever even though the method will' and for this reason, it is important to rearrange management of the project to ensure that each Songhai manned position has a Gambian assistant who must understudy the Songhai expert and the Songhai experts must be committed to building capacity of their Gambian counterparts and transfer managerial and technical skills.

3.6.4 Technical sustainability and culture of maintenance:

Rural youth will be trained to utilize and maintain equipment and gain an understanding of production, manufacturing and marketing processes. GSI Technical partner has key responsibility to train and transfer skill and knowhow to training of trainers (TOT) cohort for step down training and future takeover of the management of GSI. Presently the initial ToT grandaunts have not fulfill that role and the evaluators doubt if they had the competency to fill the planned role even if they were maintained at the mother farm. The silo approach to GSI implementation also does not support skill transfer and full integration of its activities into the national farming and agricultural system

Specifically, the program will target rural youth that do not previously have the technical capacities or means to mobilize the financial resources they require to open up agribusiness or to scale up their activities.

On overall sustainability of the program, 61.40% of respondents are of the view that the program will not continue without external (donor) support. Disaggregated by student status, 45.50% of on-going students interviewed said the program will not continue without donor funds.

Table 26: Continuation of program without external support

Category	Will the activities of the Songhai Program continue without external support?		Total
	Yes	No	
Graduate	20.50%	15.90%	36.40%
On-going	18.20%	45.50%	63.60%
Total	38.60%	61.40%	100.00%

When asked, the following reasons were given for not rating the project sustainable:

- The duration of training is short and further capacity building would be required for enhanced farming, harvesting and storage management techniques;
- Absence of follow up business development & management training after the initial technical training;
- There is high rate of youth employment and without adequate enterprises, trained youth may still opt to migrate;
- The program lacks start-up capital and without which the trained youth would not be able embark on meaningful enterprises;

- Access to credit is so difficult because of high interest rates and difficulty to have a dependable financial service provider;
- Given that the program is business oriented, students should as well be trained on business management;

As lamented by respondents, without addressing the above mentioned challenges, GSI will keep training but the ultimate outcome of the program will not be realized.

3.6.5 Impact

The GSI targeted to employ more than 300 permanent workers over years, build core networks of integrated field farms and satellite farms creating indirect jobs of over 2000. The host and neighboring rural communities will learn and employ new farming techniques capable of improving agricultural production and yields. They will also benefit from amenities brought about by the establishment of the program.

The evaluators in the cause of this exercise observed and were told that GSI has a positive impact on the communities livelihood and farming practices in so many aspects;

Institutional strengthening of MOYs and the centre /management-well established coordination set-up i.e. PSC and PMT

- Many of the farmers are now using agroforestry practices resulting to better soil conservation, fertility improvement and multiple crop harvests all the year round resulting to better Crop production diversification and techniques learnt at the demonstration mother farm. Prior to the project, communities practiced mono-cropping;
- Change in farming techniques and knowhow have reduced community expenditure on farm inputs particularly for purchasing chemical fertilizer;
- Enhanced their food security and nutrition status through increased production and productivity and use of fruits and nutritious foods; and
- Stemming youth migration in the area.

Overall the communities fully embrace the initiative and wishes continuity of GSI. On low level participation of girls and women in GSI, the community associated it with the perceived risk for keeping young girls at the centre. With the introduction of the Commuter Bus Services allowing girls resides outside the centre is reverse this with increased rate of girl registration in on-going batches of trainees.

Trainees in particular embraced the program as 95.50% in the below table claimed that it has contributed to improving their livelihoods.

Table 27: Program contribution to improved livelihoods

Category	Did the program results improve your livelihood		Total
	Yes	No	
Graduate	36.40%		36.40%
On-going	59.10%	4.50%	63.60%
Total	95.50%	4.50%	100.00%

On a more precise description, the following table shows the benefits that mostly affects the lives and livelihoods of respondents. As tabulated, 34.10% indicated that GSI contributed to; increased income, work experience and employment while 31.70% reported gaining farm management techniques, discipline and hard work.

Table 28: Most important benefits of the program

Category	Three most important benefits of the program					Total
	business administration, knowledge in farming, entrepreneurship	Farm Management Technique, Discipline & hardworking	Business planning, Leadership, crop & livestock management skills	Source of Income, work experience & employment	Entrepreneurship, Poverty alleviation, National Development	
Graduate	2.40%	4.90%	9.80%	14.60%	7.30%	39.00%
On-going	12.20%	26.80%	2.40%	19.50%		61.00%
Total	14.60%	31.70%	12.20%	34.10%	7.30%	100.00%

3.7 SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT	Strengths	Weaknesses
Structure	Songhai farming & business model – sustainable farming techniques that's innovative, productive and economical	Weak national development strategy bring all stakeholder particularly the public sector as a block to reinforce one another;
	Multi-partnership cooperation arrangements with each partner bringing in its comparative advantage	Complex institutional arrangement and financial management set up that is bureaucratic and driving cost

		up.
<i>Skills</i>	Qualifications and competences of staff and relevance of these to the project	Inadequate staff due to limited funds
	Leveraging on the competence of the technical partner on GSI operations and corporate management	Willingness to transfer knowhow and cooperation beyond technical support
	Quality training for budding cohort of future Gambian farmers and entrepreneurs	Weak integration of training into the national system
<i>Leadership style</i>	MOYS – strong commitment & leadership demonstrated.	Weak linkages with other cooperating partners such as MOA and MOTIE to reinforce the identified capacity weakness of the major IP.
	Higherly discipline staff and students	Weak linkages of GSI to national strategies and policies on employment, entrepreneurship, ANR etc.
<i>Culture</i>	GSI innovative farming techniques focusing on zero waste, zero chemical and 100% organic enhances or the achievement of project objectives?	Difficulty weaning off Gambian farmers from traditional methods and in particular dependency on fertiliser
	No existing conflict. Non expected in the near term with expansion as land available to the centre is big enough space;	Currently not an issue but may be in future expansions
	changing mindset of farmers about farming	Long held believe that farming is for the poor
<i>Management systems</i>	Multi-partnership leveraging on each partner comparative advantage;	Low level transfer of knowhow for long term sustainability
	Strict adherence to Public sector regulations and procedures	Weak and complex FM structure requiring adjustment and capacity development

<i>Staff reward and motivation</i>	Well motivated and incentivize staff.	Labour regulation not aligned to laws of The Gambia. Most are contract staff and TAs.
	Opportunities	Threats
<i>Political</i>	Strong political support & goodwill	Change in political commitment or priority
	GLF commitment high and long-term	Inadequate budgetary resources to sustain GSI operations
	GSI remained priority for both UNDP and GoTG	Change in priorities in the coming UNDAF and PAGE II
<i>Economical</i>	Increased interest by donor partners in the initiative such as IFAD, FAO, WFP, NGOs but so far no firm commitment;	Low level resource mobilisation. Inability to translate interest to commitments
	Availability of Complimentary resources from on-going Agricultural projects key for expansion and joint activities or production (satellite farms);	Lack of integration /weak intergration of GSI with ongoing and future agricultural initiatives
	Leveraging on MOA's technical support and project and programs resources;	Increased engagement and participation of MOA to reinforce technical aspect of GSI management and operational issues
	Maintain Songhai long-term partnership and leverage on its network of support through collaboration and resource mobilising;	Limited cooperation with SRC beyond TA
<i>Sociocultural</i>	Re-orienting perception of agriculture and farming	Farming for the poor mind-set

<i>Technological</i>	Safeguarding the Songhai brand attracting donor support	Weaken or breaking relations with SRC
	Mainstreamed GSI as an Anti-migration agenda	Not properly mainstreaming GSI into the anti-migration initiatives
	Availability of enhancing ICTs	Low Capacity status
	Friendly Climate/weather impacts practices for project long term sustainability.)	Expensive techniques or lack of adequate organic materials to support the practice
	Friendliness of business and regulatory environment	Change in policies

3.7.1 STRENGTH

GSI major strength lies on the novel Songhai farming & business model for sustainable farming techniques that is innovative, productive and economical. It is a tried and tested farming approach that has been acclaimed universally. It is started in Benin Republic and now has spread across in the West Africa region including Nigeria and Liberia.

In The Gambia the bringing together of Multi-partners forging a cooperation arrangements with each partner bringing in its comparative advantage puts the scheme in a unique advantage leveraging from a wide spectrum of services and resources. The technical partner (Songai Regional centre) in particular bring in technical knowhow, competencies and corporate management spanning over 4 decades relevance to the project success.

The prospect of long term future sustainability of GSI is bright given the quality training for budding cohort of future Gambian farmers and entrepreneurs capable of transforming Gambian Agriculture to a modern and commercial enterprise for food self-sufficiency, job creations and source of livelihood for Gambians

The leadership provided by the implementing partner (MOYS) couple with strong commitment from the authority demonstrate a strong statement that GSI is here to stay.

Furthermore, GSI innovative farming techniques focusing on zero waste, zero chemical and 100% organic enhances or the achievement of project objectives of sustainable, inclusive and viable project.

Strict adherence to Public sector regulations and procedures in GSI financial management enhances transparency, accountability and judicious use of scarce public resources in attracting government and donor funding.

3.7.2 Weakness

From the review of GSI operations and management we observed weak coordination among cooperating stakeholders particularly the public sector as a block in reinforcing one another. While the multi-partnerships is beneficial it has its peculiar challenges including complex institutional arrangement and financial management set up that is bureaucratic and driving cost up.

GSI currently operates under an inadequate staff due to limited funds and is crossed supported by the TP. While the Willingness to transfer knowhow and cooperation beyond technical support is not in doubt, it is happening on at a snail space due to limited capacity of local staff and deployment of trained staff elsewhere.

One critical concern or weakness of GSI is its lack of integration into the national system or domestic economy. This silo approach to business must change and stronger cooperation enhance with cooperating partners such as MOA, MOTIE, donors, service providers to reinforce the identified capacity weakness of the major IP and GSI in service delivery. GSI programmes must be better aligning to national strategies and policies on employment, entrepreneurship, ANR management among others for synergy and complementarity. .

Change management in the areas of long held believes and practices and may take a while. Weaning off Gambian farmers from traditional farming methods and in particular dependency on fertilizer application and attracting disillusioned youths into farming remains a challenge.

The current financial management set up does not quite fit a seasonal based activity such as farming requiring adjustment and capacity development toward a fully fledged project management unit.

Most staff and TAs contracts are not aligned to laws and regulations of The Gambia relating to labour which GSI into potential industrial action or litigation.

3.7.3 Opportunities

GSI enjoys strong political support and goodwill which is translating into institutionalized budgetary (GLF) long term commitment. So too GSI remained priority for both UNDP and GoTG and Increased interest by donor partners in the initiative such as IFAD, FAO, WFP, NGOs which it needs to take advantage of.

In terms of resource mobilization drive, GSI strategy should tap into the significant available complimentary resources from on-going Agricultural projects key for expansion and joint activities or production (satellite farms) leveraging on MOA's technical support and project and programs resources as well as maintaining Songhai long-term partnership and cooperation to leverage on its network of support through collaboration and resource mobilizing. Safeguarding the Songhai brand in attracting donor support.

The initiative also be mainstreamed as part of the wider anti-migration agenda of government and the international efforts.

In the areas of Technology, GSI is leveraging ICTs to enhance productivity, promote ecological friendly Climate/weather impacts practices for project long term sustainability.

The existence of friendly business and regulatory environment provide conducive environment for the realization of GSI objectives.

3.7.4 Threats

Changing political situation in the country creates risk for GSI if it results to change in commitment or priority of government and donors country plans even though agriculture is expected remained critical priority regardless which ever direction the changes go,

Inadequate budgetary resources to sustain GSI operations remain a serious threats to GSI sustainability warranting serious efforts required to beef up GSI capacity to generate local funds to support it self and wean itself of donor dependency in the medium to long term.

Withdrawal of SRC (TP) or breaking relations with SRC in the short term will result to the collapse of the initiative given the inadequate mainstreaming of GSI into the domestic and international initiatives and Low level capacity status of GSI.

3.8 PROJECT RATING BY STUDENTS

On the rating criteria, the following issues were considered:

- Location of training center
- Duration of Training
- Quality of Training
- Student Incentives
- Learning Materials

When asked about location of GSI, 90.50% said they are satisfied given that there are good access roads to the centre. In addition, it is almost centrally located and not very far from the other regions.

Table 29: Location of Training

Category	Location of Training		Total
	Satisfactory	Moderate	
Graduate	33.30%	4.80%	38.10%
On-going	57.10%	4.80%	61.90%
Total	90.50%	9.50%	100.00%

Table 30: Duration of Training

Category	Duration of Training			Total
	Satisfactory	Moderate	Unsatisfactory	
Graduate	29.50%	4.50%	2.30%	36.40%
On-going	38.60%	13.60%	11.40%	63.60%
Total	68.20%	18.20%	13.60%	100.00%

Table 31: Quality of Training

Category	Quality of Training			Total
	Satisfactory	Moderate	Unsatisfactory	
Graduate	23.30%	14.00%		37.20%
On-going	25.60%	25.60%	11.60%	62.80%
Total	48.80%	39.50%	11.60%	100.00%

Table 32: Student Incentives

Category	Student Incentives		Total
	Satisfactory	Moderate	
Graduate	25.00%	12.50%	37.50%
On-going	30.00%	32.50%	62.50%
Total	55.00%	45.00%	100.00%

Table 33: Learning Materials

Category	Learning Materials			Total
	Satisfactory	Moderate	Unsatisfactory	
Graduate	20.90%	11.60%	4.70%	37.20%
On-going	25.60%	20.90%	16.30%	62.80%
Total	46.50%	32.60%	20.90%	100.00%

3.9 INNOVATIONS

As tabulated below, 86.10% of respondents are able share some innovations adopted during the training program. These innovations are related to:

- Best animal production and livestock husbandry practices
- Crop production and distribution techniques (seed selection, mulching, staking and treatment etc)
- Integrated farming system and the use of organic fertilizers

Table 34: Innovations

Category	Can you share any innovation(s) you have adopted that has increased your productivity and income?		Total
	Yes	No	
Graduate	38.90%		38.90%
On-going	47.20%	13.90%	61.10%
Total	86.10%	13.90%	100.00%

Chapter 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Baring delays and teething implementations challenges experienced at the pilot phase, it is our considered view that the program has built a solid foundation and partnership toward sustaining GSI in The Gambia.

- VI. Weak harmonization of (GSI's IPS, CPs and donors especially the four major partners (MOYS, Ministry of Agriculture, MOTIE, UNDP and FAO) inputs for more synergy especially in the Youth training, Farming system development, entrepreneurship development, value chain development by integrating GSI activities with domestic local initiatives);
 - VII. GSI training and student selection criteria is not based on well-articulated human resource development plan to enhance relevance and properly link to demand for their services and future growth and professional development and/or career path of student such as technician, professional, trade, farmers, industrialist etc while prioritizing or focus on Agro-entrepreneurs development;
 - VIII. GSI have not yet established cooperation with other tertiary institutions such as the University of The Gambia (UTG), National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI), Gambia College, school of Agriculture, Management Development Institute in delivering training courses, curriculum development and standardization for universal recognition and acceptance. This is beneficial to students of GSI. Importantly the National Accreditation Authority;
 - IX. The current financial management system in place is not responsive or sensitive to an agro-based program for smooth conduct of GSI business;
 - X. Capacity limitation at the level of the implementing agency (MOYS) and GSI to handle all fiduciary management aspect of GSI including financial management, monitoring and evaluation, accounting reporting of programme activities is serious issues in safeguarding both operational and FM independent of GSI as well as accountable for public resources.
3. Need to diversify the production units which are the income generating avenues of the project-e.g poultry, aqua-culture, seasonal crops etc.

4.2 Recommendations:

- XVI. In the near term GSI should be supported to consolidate by providing necessary funds for investment to operate at full scale capacity to enhance its financial viability. This mean adopting interim measures to speed up implementation of the remaining activities of the pilot phase and development of a comprehensive business plan that lead to sustainability.
- XVII. GSI IPS, CPs and donors especially the four major partners (MOYS, Ministry of Agriculture, MOTIE, UNDP and FAO) should harmonize their inputs and create more synergy especially in the Youth training, Farming system development, entrepreneurship development, value chain development by

integrating GSI activities with domestic local initiatives.

- VIII. GSI training should be based on well-articulated human resource development plan to enhance relevance. This would require adopting well defined entry selection mechanism properly linked to demand for their services and future growth and professional development and/or career path of student such as technician, professional, trade, farmers, industrialist etc.
- XIX. GSI has to forge cooperation with other tertiary institutions such as the University of The Gambia (UTG), National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI), Gambia College, school of Agriculture, Management Development Institute in delivering training courses, curriculum development and standardization for universal recognition and acceptance. This is beneficial to students of GSI to get accreditation.
- XX. There is need to review and develop a responsive and efficient financial and procurement system that is sensitive to an agro-based program for smooth conduct of GSI business. In the near term broaden the TCP agreement to include responsibilities to procure goods and services haven secured necessary single sourcing waivers retroactively as a stop gap measure to allow full implementation and utilization of all committed funds within the time frame remaining under the current phase. SRC can and has the capacity to source all input materials not available locally identified in the GSI stop-gap budget at competitive prices. These items can be identified and negotiated with SRC and add to their contract within the framework of GPPA rules and regulations. The SRC technical personnel on the project should provide technical support to the procurement committee of the Ministry in procuring items that cannot be source locally and is within their competence but not as agents of suppliers.
- XXI. In the long term, put in place a full fledge project implementation unit and build their capacity to handle all fiduciary management aspect of GSI including financial management, monitoring and evaluation, accounting reporting of programme activities. This is critical in safeguarding both operational and FM independent of GSI.
- XXII. Introduction of take-off grants to support GSI graduates and outsourced its administration to existing professionalized entities such as GIEPA start up support (BDS) scheme and the Social Development Fund. Trainee savings can be leverage on to catalyze matching grant facility under projects like NEMA, FASDEP or even reliance bank in order to attract three times or more of the saved amount. This would have enabled them settle well with good start-up. Such arrangements could not materialize as expected but need to be pursued.
- XIII. Step up resource and fund mobilization efforts by developing a clear resource mobilization strategic plan;
- XIV. Revisit MOU with SRC – Benin to go beyond TA Support but future cooperation and collaboration partnership in service delivery and networking; Technical and advisory support is the main comparative advantage at the moment-any additional need should be considered on case by case basis and relevant contract issued like how it is happening now. Independent of the main MOU several contracts are main for the supply of essentials which are not available in country.
- XXV. Gambia Songhai Initiative or project be integrated with other anti-migration programme and supported as such to contribute towards stemming youth outflow through the backway or illegal routes;
- XVI. Institutionalized government subvention to GSI and releases it on timely basis;

- ⒸVII. Allow for 2nd extension of the pilot phase to allow consolidation and completion of remaining activities and enhance long term sustainability;
- VIII. Address the water shortage / problem at Chaemen to operate at full capacity
- XIX. Timely provision of farm tools , organic fertilizers and seedlings through better contract supervision and management;
- ⒸXX. Entrepreneurship development, administration of credit scheme outsource to existing professionalized entities such as GIEPA start up support (BDS) scheme and the Social Development Fund for linkages and synergy. Linking the Entrepreneurship training to the EMPRETEC project under GIEPA within the same funding source-UNDP;
- XXI. Recruitment, training quality and post training engagement in sustainable livelihood is important in the evaluation;
- ⒸXII. Future funding of the initiative is crucial and particularly the sustainability of the initiative;
- XIII. Inbuilt mechanism for transfer of skills should considered as sustainability not only financial but technical capabilities

Annexures:

1. INSTRUMENTS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

A. Discussion Guide to Stakeholders for Assessment of the relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability of the Project

Table I: Key Performance Evaluation and Impact Discussion Guide

Ref.	Evaluation Criteria/Key Issues	Specific Questions/Issues	Data collection tools/methods	Data source
A	Relevance	Is the project's design adequate to address national and sectoral priorities (food security and youth unemployment)?	Desk review and consultation	Project stakeholders
		Project's alignment/consistence with the priorities of key partners stakeholders (UNDP etc.)		
		Does the project remain relevant?	Key informant interviews	Key informant interviews
		Is there a need to reformulate project design given for better alignment to national priorities?		
	Effectiveness	Has the pilot project attained its intended targets as set forth in the initial project design?	Desk studies, Key informant interviews	Project reports and related actors
		What has the performance been with respect to the projected performance indicators?		
		Does the current performance indicate probability in achieving the project purpose (specific objective)?		

		Have there been any unplanned effects?		
		What are recommendations for improving the execution of subsequent phases of the project?		
		Has the project generated any results that could indicate that the assistance would likely have an impact on the operation's target beneficiaries?		
	Efficiency	Has the project reached the expected number of beneficiaries within the expected time frame? Planned cost and time Vs. actual	Desk studies, Key informant interviews	Project reports and related actors
		How many youths were trained and on what enterprise?	Desk studies, Key informant interviews , individual questionnaires	Project reports and related actors
		Are those trained currently operating their own enterprises?		
		What is the response rate from donors/partners during project implementation?		
	Impact (including youth employment/employability)	Has the project generated any results that could indicate that the assistance would likely have an impact on the operation's target beneficiaries?	Desk studies, Key informant interviews , questionnaires	Project reports and related actors
		Number/percentage of graduates employed		
		Level of achievement of employment performance indicators		
		Overall contribution to national employment targets		
	Sustainability	To what extent will the interventions/activities of the	Key informant interviews ,	Project actors

		project continue after the project ceases to exist?	questionnaires	
		What are the major factors that influence the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project (scalability, replication and institutionalisation)?		
	Gender	Has a “gender approach” been considered in the programme design and implementation?	Key informant interviews, review of reports	Project stakeholders
		Number/percentage of students based on gender		
Performance of students based on gender				
Ref.	Evaluation Criteria/Key Issues	Specific Questions/Issues	Data collection tools/methods	Data source
B	SWOT	Strengths/Weaknesses	Data collection methods/tools	Data source
	Structure	Bureaucratic/top-down or bottom-up/flexible?	Key informant interviews	Project stakeholders
	Skills	Qualifications and competences of staff and relevance of these to the project		
	Leadership style	Existence of conducive environment for employee involvement/empowerment, learning and innovation		
	Culture	Enhances or militates against the achievement of project objectives?		
	Management systems	Meetings, reporting, policies, procedures, etc.		
	Staff reward and motivation	Equity of incentives/benefits		

		<i>Opportunities/Threats</i>		
	<i>Political</i>	Level of support from the executive and legislature and line ministry		
	<i>Economical</i>	Investment incentives, market demand for skills and services produced, market support infrastructure, etc.		
	<i>Sociocultural</i>	Public and youth perception of the project areas of intervention)		
	<i>Technological</i>	Availability of enhancing ICTs		
	<i>Ecological</i>	Climate/weather impacts on project, sustainability issues, etc.)		
	<i>Legal</i>	Friendliness of business and regulatory environment		

Annex 2. EVALUATION OF THE PILOT GAMBIA SHONGHAI PROJECT
INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONNAIRE [GRADUATED AND ON-GOING STUDENTS]

NOVEMBER, 2016

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Date:

Name of student..... Tel:

Nationality -----

Village of Origin-----

District----- Region -----

Status: -----Graduated [1] Ongoing [2]

GenderMale [1] Female [2] Age in years []

Highest level of education prior to joining the program

1=Primary; 2= Secondary; 3=Tertiary, 4= Non Formal, 5= Arabic, 5=Not educated

Please list three things that inspired you to join the Songhai program?

1-----

2-----

3-----

SECTION 2: ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 What On-farm and off – farm enterprise are you trained/training on?

Field Crops = 1, Horticulture= 2, Livestock = 3, Fishing= 4, Carpentry= 5, Masonry= 6

Trading= 7, Welding= 8 and others = 9 (please specify)

2.2 Are you currently operating or plan to operate your enterprise?

2.3 If yes, is your business formally registered with the AGChambers? Yes = 1, No= 2

How many people did you employ by gender? Total ----- Male----- Female-----

On average, what is the annual turnover of your enterprise? -----

2.4 Do you have a business plan? Yes =1, No =2

2.5 Did you receive any start-up capital for your enterprise?

Yes =1, No =2

2.6 If yes, please indicate the source -----

2.7 How much (in Dalasi) did you receive to support your enterprise? [-----]

SECTION 3: PROJECT IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

3.1 In your opinion, has the project generated any results that could contribute to your live and livelihood? Yes= 1, No=2

3.2 If yes, please indicate the **three** most important benefits to you?

1-----

2-----

3-----

In your view, will the activities of the Songhai initiative continue without external support?

Yes= 1, No=2

If yes, give reasons-----

If no, please indicate at least **three** factors that could lead to project sustainability.

1-----

2-----

3-----

SECTION 4: FUTURE PLANS AND BUSINESS CONSTRAINTS:

4.1 Do you plan to expand your business during the next 12 months?

If yes, how? -----

If no, why?-----

4.2 What in your view, are the three most important constraints limiting the success of your business?

SECTION 5: PROJECT RATING

How would you rate the Songhai Initiative based on the following criteria?

Please tick as appropriate

CATEGORY	Satisfactory	Moderate	Unsatisfactory
Location of Training			
Duration of Training			
Quality of teaching			
Student incentives			
Learning materials?			
?			
?			

SECTION 6: INNOVATION

6.1 Can you share any Innovation(s) you have adopted that have increased your productivity and income? Yes 1..... No. 2.....

6.2 If yes, can you mention some of these Innovations

SECTION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS

If there is only one thing to be done by the project to support your business, what would that be?

Thank you and I really appreciate your valuable time.

Annex 3. List of Persons Consulted

Ref.	Name	Institution	Designation
	Fernando AbagaEdjang	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Deputy Resident Representative
	Abdou B. Touray	"	Programme Specialist Poverty, MDGs and Environment
	Ms. AdamaNjie	"	Programme Associate
	MomodouLaminCeesay	MOYS	Permanent Secretary
	LaminCamara	MOFEA	Permanent Secretary
	Alagiefadera	MOFEA	Director of Planning
	Musa Mbye	MOYS	Director of Planning
Technical Team Chamen			
1	Ebou-FyeNjie	GSI	Project Manager
2	AuduMoupa	GSI	TA
3	Kebba Lang Camara	GSI	Field Operations Manager
Host Communities			
1	KatimTouray	JerryKaw	
2	MomodouDemba-Bah	Wallallang	
3	TambaJammem	iLLiasa	
4	Amie Ceesay	JerryKaw	
5	ZainabouChongai	JerryKaw	
9	Begi Bah	Wallalang	
10	Kebbah Bah	"	
11	Baboucarr Bah	"	
12	ModouTouray	Jerrykaw	
13			

14	Hassan Jallow	MOA	DPS
15	Sheriifo Bojang	MOA	Deputy Minister
16	Ndey Fatou	MOA	DPA
17	Abdoulie Touray	M&E Officer	CPCU, MOA
18	Mariatou njie		FAO

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Gambia Country Assistance Strategies Papers
Gambia Trade policy 2010
Finance & Audit Reports
Indicator Tracking Reports 2016
Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy 2009-2015
Sustainable Development Goals
Gambia Employment Policy
Gambia Entrepreneurship Policy
SME/MSMEs Policy
<http://songhai.org/index.php/en/home-en>
UNDP- Country Program Development (CPD)
GSI manual of operations
GPPA Regulations
GSI-SRC MoU
Gambia agriculture Investment plan (GNAIP),
NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP)
African Agenda 2063, MDGs and/or SDGs
Economic Census 2013
DHS Survey 2010
Census 2013
MDG Midterm review