

# **NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT YOUTH CORPS PROJECT**

## **Terminal Evaluation Draft Final Report**



Prepared by: Terminal Evaluation Consultants  
May 19, 2006

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AEU	Adult Equivalent Unit
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CCF	Country Cooperation Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
DOSFEA	Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs
DOSYS	Department of State for Youths and Sport
EMA	Environmental Management Activity
GBA	Greater Banjul Area
GCCI	Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAP	Gambia Environmental Action Plan
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GHE	Gambia Horticultural Enterprise Ltd.
GoTG	Government of The Gambia
IGA	Income Generating Activity
KAC	Kerewan Area Council
KMC	Kanifang Municipal Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment
NAYCO	National Association for Youth and Children Organization
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEYC	National Environment Youth Corps
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NYC	National Youth Council
PD	Project Document
NYSS	National Youth Service Scheme
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RR	Resident Representative
SPA II	Strategy for Poverty Alleviation II
TA	Technical Assistance
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
VDC	Village Development Committee
VISACA	Village Savings and Credit Association

## **Acknowledgements**

The consultants for the Terminal Evaluation gratefully wish to thank the UNDP The Gambia, the concerned ministries and agencies of the Government of The Gambia, the Project Management Unit of the National Environment Youth Corps Project, and the youths who participated in this project for sharing with us their experiences and insights on this project. We greatly appreciate the time these persons gave to us. We also wish to extend special thanks to Mr. Mamour Jagne, Programme Analyst – Energy and Environment of the UNDP The Gambia for coordinating our mission.

Mr. Gregory Pearson, International Consultant  
Dr. Saidou Jallow, National Consultant

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outcomes of the project, as well as determine the sustainability of benefits accrued. Specifically, the terminal evaluation addresses the following:

- Assessment of the design of the project, as well as its management and implementation arrangements in relation to project objectives;
- Assessment of the performance, specific outputs and outcomes, and overall impact of the project in relation to its stated target objectives;
- Determining the cost-effectiveness of project implementation in relation to the management and implementation arrangements;
- Determining whether the disbursement of project funds and the implementation of project activities were in line with project objectives;
- Examining whether there were adequate checks and balances regarding the use of project funds and implementation of project activities;
- Determining whether the requirements and procedures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project activities were adhered to;
  - Determining what sustainability measures were put in place, and their effectiveness, to consolidate on project gains and ensure continuity;
  - Determining the agronomic, financial and marketing feasibility of the floriculture component;
  - Determining which Income Generating Activities and youth groups have the best prospects for success, as well as the requirements for consolidation of project gains;
  - Identification of the factors responsible for the performance or non-performance of the project in relation to its objectives, and make recommendations for the future; and,
  - Determining the aspects and areas that were successfully implemented (or otherwise), identify the contributory factors, and make recommendations for the future, including a project exit strategy.

The scope of the terminal evaluation covers the implementation of project activities from 2002 to date, and includes examining the roles of the various stakeholders (project beneficiaries, management, Local Government Authorities, the Technical Coordinating Committee, Gambia Government, UNOPS and UNDP). The terminal evaluation also examines in detail financial disbursement records to assess the cost effectiveness of the project design and its implementation. The evaluation covers all areas of project intervention, namely Kanifing Municipality, North Bank, Western, and Upper River Divisions.

### **1.3 Methodology and Approach**

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) was conducted between April 24–May 26, 2006 by a team consisting of an International Consultant and a National Consultant. The methodology and work activities of the TE consisted of three principal activities: (1) Initial Consultation and Document Review; (2) Information Gathering and Field Investigation; and (3) Analysis and Reporting. The work activities schedule of the

Terminal Evaluation is presented in Annex Two: Schedule of the Terminal Evaluation. A description of the principal activities of the TE Team is presented below:

*Initial Consultation and Document Review:*

This phase of the work began with an initial briefing to the TE Team by representatives of the UNDP The Gambia, including the Resident Representative, the Deputy Representative, the Programme Analyst – Energy and the Environment and the Programme Associate – Energy and the Environment, on the status of the project and key issues which had arisen during its implementation. Key issues discussed included drawing appropriate lessons learned from the project in consideration for the new UNDP Country Assistance Strategy for 2007-2011, concerns over the content of the project, particularly the floriculture component, and financial management issues within the project.

The TE Team was also provided with a number of key documents regarding the project for review. A complete list of documents reviewed is presented in Annex Four: Documents Reviewed

Following the initial briefing and document review, the TE Team began to develop and refine the methodology and analytical framework for information gathering. To give context to the information gathered from the relevant UNDP officers, the Executing Agency, the Government Implementing Agency and other government agencies, and the Project Management Unit, the TE Team in consultation with the UNDP Programme Officer Analyst undertook a number of field visits to project sites to conduct in-depth interviews with intended beneficiaries.

*Information Gathering and Field Investigation:*

The Terminal Evaluation Team employed a participatory methodology in conducting the information gathering component of the TE. The TE Team interviewed a wide variety of stakeholders involved in differing levels of project implementation including:

**1. Donor and Executing Agencies**

Representatives from the

- UNDP The Gambia
- UNOPS Regional Office for West and Central Africa
- Former Resident Representative of UNDP The Gambia
- Chief Technical Adviser
- National Project Coordinator

**2. National Stakeholders:**

Representatives from the

- The National Environment Agency
- Policy Analysis Unit
- Permanent Secretary for the Department of State Forestry and the Environment
- Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs
- Department of State for Agriculture

- Gambia Chamber of Commerce
- Proprietor of floriculture farm site and Director of Gambia Horticultural Enterprises
- Department of Agricultural Services
- National Youth Service Scheme

### **3. Administrative Division Stakeholders**

- The Regional Governor (formerly The Commissioner)
- The Mayor, Kanifing Municipality (KMC)
- Chairman, Brikama Area Council (BAC)
- Chairman, Kerewan Area Council (KAC)
- Chairman, Basse Area Council (BSAC)
- Divisional Development Committee (DDC)
- Village Development Committee (VDC)

### **4. Youth Group Beneficiaries (Visited)**

- Western Division: Kembujeh, Kartong, Daranka
- Kanifing Municipality: Kanifing
- North Bank Division: Kerr Jarga, Farafeni (1), Farafeni (2), Essau-Sameh
- Upper River Division: Touba Bureng, Limbambulu, Diabugu, Drammaney

The participatory methodology used in interviewing the stakeholders included key informant interviews, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. In addition, to better understand participation, involvement and ownership of project results at the community and youth group levels, the TE Team conducted a number of field visits and conducted focus group discussions with youth groups involved in different environmental rehabilitation and income generation activities (IGAs). A number of IGA projects were also visited to assess the quality of the projects and their ability to generate income for the youth group members.

#### *Analysis and Reporting:*

The TE Team conducted a detailed analysis of the information gathered according to the individual specializations of the TE Team members. Particular attention has been paid during the analysis to reviewing the following aspects of the NEYC PROJECT

- The relevance and effectiveness of the project objectives and the extent to which they are achievable in the context of NEYC PROJECT implementation.
- The appropriateness and adequacy of project design, implementation arrangements, and accountability mechanisms
- The efficiency and effectiveness of the project components and outputs in meeting the project objectives.
- The adequacy of institutional arrangements and operational procedures, including planning, budgeting, bidding, implementation, technical supervision and certification
- The likely long-term sustainability and institutional development impacts of the project outcomes.



## **Section Two: Observations and Findings**

### **2.1 Review of Project Design**

This section of the Terminal Evaluation report responds to the direction from the ToR for the TE Team to assess the design of the project in relation to project objectives. Specifically, this section of the report addresses:

- (1) the relevance of the project objectives;
- (2) the appropriateness and adequacy of the project design for reducing youth unemployment through environmental conservation activities.
- (3) an assessment of the extent to which the project objectives are achievable in the context of the NEYC Project implementation.

#### **2.1.1 Relevance of Project Objectives**

The project development objective<sup>1</sup> of the National Environment Youth Corps Project is “poverty reduction of the unemployed youth through ensuring proper management of the Gambia’s environment and its rehabilitation. They [the youth] will generate income through the use of environmentally friendly techniques.” (NEYC Project Annual Progress Report 2003, p. 3). Four immediate objectives are identified in the project document as:

1. To establish a National Environment Youth Corps (NEYC) in the Gambia.
2. To ensure the reduction of youth unemployment features through the development and implementation of income generating projects.
3. To facilitate the rehabilitation and proper management of the Gambian environment.
4. To facilitate the introduction of environmentally friendly technologies with income generating opportunities for the youth.

A fifth immediate objective was added midway through the project implementation<sup>2</sup> which is:

5. To ensure the IGA [Income Generating Activity] products are marketed. (NEYC Project Plan of Operation: January – December 2004, p. 4).

The identified project objectives are very relevant to the context of The Gambia as environmental degradation and high youth unemployment are critical issues affecting the country. Additionally, the project objectives accord well with GoTG strategies and initiatives such as:

- Vision 2020, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

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<sup>1</sup> The NEYC Project Document does not identify an overall project development objective. Rather, the development objective put forward in the Project Department is a general statement on the features of the project and its expected development contributions. A clear project development objective does not appear in the project documentation until the 2003 annual progress report.

<sup>2</sup> The fifth immediate objective appears for the first time in the project documentation in the 2004 annual plan of operations. No explanation is provided for the necessity of including the additional objective.

- National Environment Action Plan (NEAP) 1992-2001
- National Youth Policy 1999 to 2008.

Moreover, the objectives of the NEYC Project are aligned with the UNDP Country Cooperation Framework 2002-2006. In discussions with stakeholder agencies of the GoTG, it was expressed to the TE Consultants that these objectives were very relevant.

### **2.1.2 Appropriateness and Adequacy of Project Design**

The design of the National Environment Youth Corps Project is outlined in the Project Document (PD) which was signed into effect on November 22, 2001 by representatives of the Office of the President, the UNDP The Gambia and UNOPS Regional Office for West and Central Africa. The PD provides the context and justification for the NEYC Project, as well as a project strategy, management arrangements and objectives, outputs and activities.

In assessing the appropriateness and adequacy of the project design, the TE Consultants would emphasise that the PD has significant design constraints and that it is particularly weak in providing clear guidance on how the project should be implemented. In comparison with other UNDP project documents reviewed by the TE Consultants it is noted that these project documents are much more thorough and provide detailed work plans and project budgets, elements that are missing in the NEYC Project Document. The NEYC PD adequately identifies the relevance of formulating a NEYC Project in response to the conditions of high unemployment amongst The Gambia's youth and growing environmental problems, and provides reasonable justification for the UNDPs involvement in the project as it is aligned with the Country Cooperation Framework (CCF II). However, beyond identifying the need for a project of this nature, the project document does not adequately address practical management and finance issues for implementing the project.

The TE Consultants have identified significant limitations in the project design, specifically: (1) critical under-funding; (2) lack of a project results framework; (3) the absence of a risk mitigation strategy; and (4) over-emphasis on international personnel; and (5) an unviable exit strategy following the cessation of UNDP support.

#### Under-funding of the NEYC Project

One of the most notable weaknesses of the project design is the critical under-funding of the project in relation to its expected project cost. The Project Document identifies the expected total project costs as US\$ 3,000,000 over the three year lifespan of the project, with funding commitments of US\$ 660,000 to be provided by the UNDP and US\$ 50,000 to be provided by the GoTG. US\$ 2,340,000 (78% of project costs) was to be mobilized from unidentified sources. The PD notes that pledges were obtained from various donors to support the project (Project Document, p. 17); however, no information is given as to who these donors were or the amounts that were to have been pledged.

The decision to move forward and sign the Project Document into effect despite the considerable gap between the level of the funding commitments and the expected project costs would not seem to be appropriate. It is immediately evident that there was insufficient funding available to cover expected costs over the lifespan of the project, effectively resulting in a period when the project would have consumed its available budget well ahead of the completion of project activities. This situation is predicted in the initial budget plan<sup>3</sup> projection which indicates that the project would exhaust its funding at the end of 2003, with one year remaining in the intended project duration. As noted above, the PD indicates that pledges from other donors to support the project were expected to cover the resource short-fall. The TE Consultants would express that these pledges should have been formalized prior to the Project Document being signed so as to mitigate the financial risk of the project being insufficiently funded.

No information is provided in the Project Document or elsewhere in the related documentation as to how the figure of US\$ 3,000,000 was determined as the expected total project cost. As the project design was predicated upon 78% of the US\$ 3,000,000 project cost being mobilized from other sources, this creates a risk prone financial framework wherein the UNDP would need to continue to provide additional funding beyond its original commitment (but not to exceed the total project cost) so that the project would begin to have results.

It should also be noted that the NEYC Project design is insufficiently resourced to achieve its project objective. The Project Document projects that 2000 youths would have been trained by the end of the three year project lifespan. A core feature of recruiting youths to participate in the project was the provision of basic monthly allowances to the youth which the PD notes would be funded from the US\$ 50,000 GoTG contribution to the project. Based on a calculation of a monthly allowance of 300 Dalasis per month for the participating youth over a maximum one year period while they are scaling up their income generating activities, the GoTGs contribution would have only been sufficient to provide allowances to 249 youth beneficiaries over the entire lifespan of the project. To provide each of the 2000 projected youth beneficiaries with a basic allowance for a one year period would have required a funding allocation of US\$ 427,477 or 60% of the funds committed to the project. It is unclear where the additional US\$ 377,477 beyond the GoTGs contribution was to be allocated from within the budget in order to reach the target of 2000 beneficiaries.

#### Lack of a Results Framework

A significant missing component of the Project Document is the project results framework. Although the PD does provide a hierarchical list of immediate project objectives and outputs, the primary components that would comprise a project results framework are absent. As such, the PD list of immediate objectives and outputs is incomplete as there is no information presented on intended outcome indicators, the means of verification for assessing whether expected outputs and outcomes are being achieved, and no identification of critical assumptions.

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<sup>3</sup> UNDP GAM/01/002 – Establishment of National Environment Youth Corps: Budget “A”. P. 4

The results framework is a critical component of project design as it concisely maps out the desired outcomes, outcome indicators and outputs to be produced through the UNDP supported project and related activities and inputs. Results frameworks are designed to be used during implementation as a management and monitoring and evaluation tool to provide continual feedback as to whether a project is on track to achieve its intended objectives and desired outcomes. As noted from UNDP Circular/UNDP/PROG/01/02 (dated 16 November 2001), the minimum corporate standards for a simplified project document includes a results framework in a specified format.

Two significant problems result in the absence of an NEYC Project results framework. First, by not having specific, time-bound indicators the project would not be able to assess whether it is achieving critical milestones within the expected timeframes. Second, the lack of a clear results framework allows for slippage and transformation of project objectives during implementation.

#### Absence of Risk Mitigation Strategy

The Project Document identifies the following risks:<sup>4</sup>

1. Pledges from various donors to support the project would not be honoured and the project would then be under-resourced.
2. Start-up and coordination of some activities may take time, as some activities are easier to implement than others.
3. Stakeholders should guard against the politicization of project activities.
4. Due to the unique nature of the project, there may be delays in recruiting national personnel.

The risks identified are relevant to the context of implementing the NEYC Project in The Gambia. Moreover, each of the identified risks are critical and their realization would have a significant impact on the viability of the project. However, the PD does not advance any form of a risk mitigation or risk management strategy. The TE Consultants would suggest that it is insufficient to identify risks that could significantly impact or cease the implementation of the project and then not identify means of safeguarding or mitigating against these risks.

#### Over-Emphasis on International Personnel

The Project Document puts forward terms of reference for eight personnel inputs during the lifespan of the project: Chief Technical Adviser; National Project Coordinator; United Nations Volunteer – Solid Waste Management and Recycling Specialist; United Nations Volunteer – Eco-Tourism Development Specialist; United Nations Volunteer – Erosion Control and Coastal Zone Management Specialist; United Nations Volunteer – Micro-Enterprise Development / Marketing Specialist; United Nations Volunteer -- Horticulturalist / Natural Resources Development Specialist; and United Nations Volunteer – Apiculture (Beekeeping) Specialist. Each of these personnel inputs were designated for two-year inputs. According to the initial project budget plan A, the

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<sup>4</sup> Summarized from pp. 17-18 of the Project Document.

projected cost for international personnel including the United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) was US\$ 371,800 or 62% of the available project budget.<sup>5</sup>

The project design's over-reliance on international personnel indicates a lack of awareness of local capabilities in The Gambia. In the course of the key agent interviews conducted with representatives of various departments and agencies of the GoTG, it was continually expressed to the TE Consultants that local expertise existed within The Gambia that was capable of providing the services undertaken by the contracted UNVs. Particularly for the income generation activities of horticulture and apiculture, the TE Consultants noted that the Department of Agriculture Services provides regular training and extension services in horticulture as a key component of its activities and that the National Beekeeping Association of The Gambia, although dormant at the time of the project design, would have been able to refer a national expert for the position of Apiculture Specialist. As national salaries are lower than the stipends provided to UNVs and employment of nationals does not involve associated costs such as travel and subsistence allowances, greater emphasis should have been placed on incorporating national personnel inputs in the project design. Beyond the cost factor associated with the use of international personnel, the sustainability of the project's results would have increased if nationals were involved and further refined their abilities and skills through their involvement with the project.

### Unviable Exit Strategy

The Project Document envisions the end of project situation as "2,000 youth group members will have been trained and equipped in environmental management techniques, and be engaged in a range of sustainable, income generating activities." (Project Document, p. 10). Employment related activities and income generating activities of the project are identified as afforestation, mechanical soil conservation, solid waste management, waste materials recycling, bee-keeping, eco-tourism, mushroom and livestock feed production, clay brick and block making, and bamboo furniture making.

Although no direct exit strategy is put forward following the cessation of UNDP support to the project, the intended exit strategy would seem to be premised upon the beneficiaries having been involved in the project continuing their environmental management and preservation activities while earning a sustainable income through the continuation of the income generating activities they have learned from participating in the project. It is difficult for the TE Consultants to concur fully with the sustainability component of the income generating activities. Very few of the IGAs would seem to be able to provide a sufficient income on their own that would be capable of supporting the youth. A more realistic expectation is that the IGAs could supplement income earned from other sources. In the case of the NEYC Project income earned from the IGAs

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<sup>5</sup> Of the US\$ 710,000 committed to the project, the Government of The Gambia's contribution of US\$ 50,000 was designated for funding the youth allowances while the UNDP's contribution of US\$ 660,000 designated US\$ 60,000 to Administrative and Operational Services costs. As such, only US\$ 600,000 was projected as being available to cover project costs.

would supplement the monthly allowances being provided to the youth. Following the end of the project and the termination of the monthly allowances it does not seem likely that the majority of the youth would carry out the IGAs in any meaningful way. Similarly for employment related activities associated with the environment, if external funding is withdrawn for these activities it could be expected that youth participation would consequently diminish.

Beyond the specific project design limitations noted above, there are some peculiar circumstances of the design of the NEYC Project which should be commented on. The NEYC Project in The Gambia is very much a replica of the UNDP Lesotho project, “National Environment Youth Corp Project in Lesotho” which was implemented from July 1998 to December 2001. The objectives of the NEYC Lesotho project were to:

1. Consolidate the establishment of a National Environmental Youth Brigade (NEYC) for environmental rehabilitation
2. Create employment for the youth;
3. Contribute towards the rehabilitation of degenerated environment and improvement of nature management;
4. Train the youth in sustainable environmental use and management;
5. Create a basis for a framework of potential trainers on environmental management within the village communities;

which are nearly identical to the objectives of the later NEYC The Gambia Project.

Two key agents involved in the design and implementation of the NEYC Lesotho project were the UNDP Lesotho Resident Representative, Dr. John Kakonge and the project's Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), Dr. Henry Sibanda. Evaluation reports for the NEYC Project in Lesotho indicate the project was largely successful.

Following the completion of the NEYC Project in Lesotho and the end of term of the UNDP Lesotho's Resident Representative, Dr. Kakonge was appointed as UNDP Resident Representative for The Gambia in 2002. On October 5-6, 2001 a workshop was held at the Palm Grove Hotel in Banjul, The Gambia by the National Environment Agency on “Youth and the Environment.” The Government endorsed the concept of establishing a national programme for youth, the environment and sustainable development. Preparation of the Project Document was lead by Dr. Sibanda with final editing undertaken on a fee-basis by Mr. David Bourn, an international consultant who had also been involved in the UNDP NEYC Project in Lesotho.

As noted above, the design of the NEYC Project in The Gambia is very much based on the experience of key agents who were previously involved in the NEYC Project in Lesotho. It is important to note that what may have worked well in Lesotho would not necessarily work well in The Gambia and it would seem that other than identifying environmental and youth unemployment issues there was insufficient attention given to contextualizing the project to the conditions of The Gambia. There is no indication of

any pre-feasibility or baseline studies being performed to support the design of the project and to ensure that its intended activities are suitable for The Gambia. Following the initial completion of the Project Document a Project Appraisal Committee was held in accordance with UNDP guidelines to assess the PD. Relevant agencies of the GoTG participated in this appraisal meeting and offered suggestions on minor amendments to the PD. However, as this was an opportunity for the GoTG to provide input on ensuring the project adequately responds to the environmental and youth unemployment situation of the country, it is wished that Government had been more critical of the project design and how the project could be best implemented in The Gambia.

The involvement of Dr. Sibanda in preparing the Project Document and particularly in designing the personnel inputs and budget for the Chief Technical Adviser is problematic. The project design has excessive operational costs, primarily in relation to personnel costs. The initial project budget plan A indicates that the fee and costs budgeted for the CTA was US\$ 195,800 or 30% of the available project budget. The budget for the CTA is by far the most expensive line item in the project budget A. The fees and expenses designated for the CTA exceed the combined equipment costs and micro capital grants for the youth groups to be able to undertake their IGAs by US\$ 12,100. A conflict of interest clearly arises when an individual designing a project becomes the primary financial beneficiary of the project once it is approved. Other development agencies including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have procurement guidelines in place which disallows individuals and firms involved in project preparation and design from participating in downstream implementation contracts once the project is approved. This should be a consideration for the UNDP as well in guarding against conflicts of interest in the designing of projects.

### **2.1.3 Appropriateness of Project Management Arrangements**

The NEYC Project was to be executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services in Senegal based on their experience in managing similar projects in Africa. UNOPS would have the responsibility in forming the project team for managing the implementation of the project. The National Environment Agency (NEA) was identified as the Government Implementing Agency and a secretariat was to be established within the NEA to coordinate the activities of the implementing institutions. A multi-agency Technical Consultative Committee, consisting of the National Youth Council, Department of State for Youth and Sports, the National Environment Agency, The Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Office of the President, the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs, and the UNDP, was to be established to coordinate and manage the project. Environment and employment related activities were to be conducted in close association with various government bodies including the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry, Works and Communication, Local Government Lands and Religious Affairs, municipal, city, town village councils and the media.

In terms of the intended project design, the TE Consultants finds the management arrangements outlined in the PD appropriate for implementing the NEYC project.



UNOPS, which specializes in providing project management services, was deemed capable of providing sufficient management back-stopping and serving as a control point for the financial aspects of the project. Government was to be directly involved in managing the project and coordinating the activities of the project. The project's environment and employment activities were to be implemented in conjunction with existing government agencies already providing these types of services.

As such, the project was to be directly involved with government agencies charged with environment and youth employment initiatives. Additionally, in implementing the environment and employment activities, the project would make effective use of existing government resources and not create unsustainable project specific systems that would dissolve upon the completion of the project. Interaction between international and national experts with their government counterparts would promote knowledge transfer and the development of capacity within the government agencies.

The project management design arrangements could have been strengthened, however, if a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) sub-committee had been established within the TCC. The M&E sub-committee would have been in position to report back to the TCC as a whole on the effectiveness of the project.

In terms of the day to day management functions of the project it is not immediately evident why a full-time international CTA is required as well as a National Project Coordinator. As discussed above, the cost of employing a CTA on a full-time basis is prohibitive and the majority of the NEYC Project management functions could have been handled by a well-qualified National Project Coordinator. The inclusion of a CTA does add value to a project, particularly in its early stages when project management mechanisms are being put in place; however, the inputs should be limited to critical phases of the project and in-line with the project budget.

## 2.2 Review of Institutional Arrangements and Project Implementation

### 2.2.1 Institutional Arrangements

As discussed above in Section 2.1.3 Appropriateness of Project Management Arrangements, the TE Consultants would express the design of the project management arrangements was quite suitable for the management of the NEYC Project. However, very soon after the NEYC Project was implemented the intended institutional arrangements and project management structures began to unravel.

#### Role of Technical Consultative Committee

A key feature of the NEYC Project's institutional arrangements was to be the role of the Technical Consultative Committee in coordinating and reviewing proposals and plans and managing the project. As the project progressed a distancing occurred between the Project Management Unit led by the CTA and the NEA and the TCC. In interviews with the NEA and member organizations of the TCC, the TE Consultants were informed that there was a significant lack of consultation between the PMU and the TCC. Decisions on project management activities were made by the CTA with little or no consultation with the TCC. It was reported that the TCC was never provided with a copy of the project budget and that it had no input or oversight on project expenditures. In areas where the TCC, as representative of Government, should have been directly involved, such as negotiating land allocations for the youth groups with the village councils, these types of activities were undertaken directly by the PMU without involving the TCC.

The NEA and members of the TCC expressed that they began the NEYC Project with a full commitment to the objectives and the management responsibility of the project. But as the project progressed and consultation from the PMU with the TCC on project activities became infrequent, the initial enthusiasm from members of the TCC began to diminish. Official TCC meetings became less frequent and the number of members attending the TCC meetings that did occur declined.

**Table One: NEYC Project Technical Consultative Committee Meetings**

<b>No. of TCC Meetings per annum</b>	<b>Year</b>
9	2002
4	2003
2	2004
3	2005

The lack of consultation between the PMU and the UNDP with their government counterparts becomes evident with the extension of the project beyond its original lifespan. Feeling that there were significant problems with the NEYC Project, the GoTG did not endorse the extension of the project. However, UNDP moved forward with the extension without Government's endorsement and committed additional funding to the project.

An issue that may have affected the infrequency of TCC meetings is the provision of seating allowances for the TCC members. In accordance with UNDP policy TCC members were not provided with seating allowances in support of their work on the committee. It is noted that some development projects in The Gambia do provide government counterparts with seating allowance to compensate their members for working on their personal time to review documents and prepare reports in preparation for meetings. The NEA and the members of the TCC expressed however that the fundamental reason for the decline in the number of TCC meetings was the lack of consultation that was occurring between the PMU and the TCC. The number of TCC meetings held during the first year of project implementation would support the position of the TCC. If seating allowances were really the motivating factor for the members of the TCC to meet it would be expected there would not have been so many meetings organized during the first year. However, if the members of the TCC were growing disillusioned with the lack of consultation as the project progressed this would explain the subsequent decline in the number of TCC meetings in years two, three and four.

Another issue which contributed to the isolation between the PMU and the NEA and the TCC was the relocation of the PMU to separate office facilities outside of the NEA compound. NEA housed the NEYC Project from (DATE) to (DATE), but as the number of personnel in the PMU began to expand the provided office space at the NEA became insufficient. The intended capacity building effect of having international project personnel working alongside their counterparts within the NEA consequently declined with the relocation of the PMU.

As much as the NEA and members of the TCC may have been disillusioned by the usurpation of their management responsibility by the PMU and the lack of consultation that occurred, as representative of the Government in the role of Government Implementing Agency the NEA and the TCC should have been more proactive and assertive in demanding information from the PMU and in managing project activities. The Project Document which formally binds the partners to the agreement is quite clear that it was the responsibility of the TCC to coordinate and review proposals and plans and manage the project. If the PMU as the project staff of the executing agency UNOPS were over-stepping their responsibilities, the NEA should have made a formal complaint through the Office of the President to UNOPS and to the UNDP. The TCC may have been dissatisfied with the performance of the PMU and the CTA, but as late as October 27, 2004 the Office of the President endorsed the extension of the CTAs contract for an additional year. Rather than accept being isolated from its project management responsibility, it would have been a more appropriate course of action for the TCC to take a more proactive and, if necessary, assertive stance.

#### Coordination with Government Agencies for Implementation of Activities

The intention to implement the NEYC Project's environment and employment activities in conjunction with government agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry, Works and Communication, Local Government Lands and Religious Affairs and municipal councils also largely seems to have been disregarded.

There are some examples where collaboration with government agencies did occur. Youth groups in the area of the Jalokeh Forest Park did collaborate with the Forestry Department to establish and maintain 30 kilometers of fire belts and walking trails. Additionally, some training exercises were provided by government bodies such as the National Agriculture Research Institute and the International Trypanotolerance Centre to some youth groups. However, the responsibility for the implementation of environmental and employment activities largely shifted to the UNV specialists employed directly by the project.

UNV specialists were recruited for managing activities in apiculture, eco-tourism, floriculture, horticulture, and waste management. The responsibilities of the various UNV specialists included training the youth groups, designing project activities for the groups, supervising the implementation of their activities and performing monitoring and evaluation functions. In a very significant way, the project implementation strategy shifted from working in conjunction with government agencies concerned with environmental and employment initiatives and making effective use of existing government resources and structures to one of a project specific implementation system. The reliance on UNVs for delivering core activities of the project greatly reduced the sustainability of the project's efforts as a gap develops upon the completion of the UNV contracts and no agency designated to take over the management of the youth group activities. It was also reported to the TE Consultants that the UNVs often did not involve their national counterparts in undertaking project activities, thus nullifying the knowledge transfer and capacity building aspects of the project. Closer cooperation would also have ensured the local contextualization of the project's activities as the national counterparts would have been able to provide advice to their UNV counterparts on local conditions that could affect the implementation of activities.

#### Linkages, Partnerships and Collaboration

Another limitation of the NEYC Project's institutional arrangements is the lack of linkages that were developed with other government initiatives and other development projects focusing on environmental preservation and youth employment. Effective linkages and partnerships with other government and donor initiatives allows for more efficient resource sharing and cost-effectiveness while promoting harmonization of initiatives. While the NEYC Project did form some partnerships with some organizations such as Concern Universal, Future in Our Hands, the Kanifing Municipal Council, WABSA these were not followed through or expanded in any meaningful way.

A positive element of the NEYC Project's partnership efforts has been the revitalization of the National Bee-keepers Association which was dormant at the time of the project start-up. The Bee-keepers Association and bee-keeping enterprises were revamped through two national workshops of bee-keepers and a task force that developed the detailed structure and constitution of the Association.

Collaboration with government initiatives such as the National Youth Service Scheme was not pursued although there is a congruence of objectives as well as activities

between the two programs. Parallel activities include training and supporting youth in income generating activities such as bee-keeping, horticulture, sheep and goat fattening, and fruit tree production. Funding restrictions of the NYSS limit annual enrollment in the two-year program to 200 youth but if the NEYC Project had funded a limited number of placements in relevant areas of the project by the time the Corps<sup>6</sup> had graduated the NEYC Project would have well-trained youth available for assuming the management of several of the IGAs. A promising opportunity for collaboration between the NEYC Project and government's NYSS initiative was clearly missed.

The exit strategy that begins to emerge as the NEYC Project neared its completion was targeted to linkages with other organizations and partners. The 2005 Annual Progress Report notes,

It is vital that an exit strategy be implemented prior to the closure of project activities thereby ensuring that equipment and materials provided are effectively used....The linkage with partners will be enhanced and new ones initiated, providing opportunities for technical, financial support and marketing outlets thus sustainability of activities. (p. 18).

It is disappointing that a project which extended so little effort in forming partnerships and linkages identifies these as the basis of its exit strategy in the final year of its execution.

#### Involvement of Private Sector

One of the ways to build sustainability into a project concerned with youth employment is to involve the private sector in a meaningful way. The private sector has an appreciation of its recruitment requirements and it can provide projects and programmes with information on expected labour market needs. Although the PD states that "Resource mobilization and partnership building strategies will be employed to ensure the participation of CBOs [community based organizations] and the private sector," the involvement of the private sector in the NEYC project was limited. (Project Document, p. 12). Examples of private sector involvement include partnering with a private sector individual for collection of solid waste in Farafeni and a partnership agreement with the proprietor of the farm site where the floriculture component of the project was to be situated. These individual partnerships do not really constitute involving the private sector in the project. Industries such as tourism which cross the environment / employment nexus should have received greater emphasis. Tourism resorts which are concerned with coastal zone erosion and the cleanliness of their beaches could have entered into agreements with youth groups to provide these services. Additionally, the eco-tourism component could have been marketed to the traditional tourism (sun, sand, surf) providers as interesting day trips and visits for their tourists. A move forward in this direction is noted with the Kartong youth group entering into the Kartong Association for Responsible Tourism but this initiative could be considerably expanded.

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<sup>6</sup> Youth participants in the National Youth Service Scheme are termed "Corps".

Involvement of the private sector in the project would have required some sensitization campaigns for promoting youth employment by the private sector. In discussions with the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry it was indicated that some Gambian companies preferred not to hire Gambian youth as they feel the Gambian youth lack motivation and work discipline. As the NEYC Project is directly concerned with youth employment some sensitization efforts on this issue would have been valuable, perhaps high-lighting some of the successes of youth employment resulting from the project.

#### The Role of UNOPS as Executing Agency

As identified in the PD, UNOPS was tasked as the executing agency of the NEYC Project. It is difficult to identify the specific responsibilities of UNOPS for executing the project as no formal executing agreement was entered into between UNOPS and UNDP for the NEYC Project. However, it can be expected that UNOPS had the responsibility for recruiting and managing the project team which were selected for undertaking the project on the ground and delivering the project in such a way as it would meet its objectives.

UNOPS, however, provided insufficient over-sight of the project personnel and did not provide due diligence in ensuring that the project team members were under-taking their responsibilities in line with their terms of reference. Issues of financial improprieties were raised by Government in relation to project personnel contracts such as the payment of fees for overseas courses for dependants of the CTA having been met from project funds.<sup>7</sup> Government also rated the performance of the CTA contracted by UNOPS as “poor” and requested that a management audit take place.

It is also noted that UNOPS did not perform sufficient monitoring and evaluation of project activities to determine if the project was meeting its objectives.

#### Role of the UNDP

The NEYC Project was a very significant and expensive component of the UNDPs programming efforts in The Gambia. However, there is no indication that the UNDP attempted to provide any effective oversight of the project to ensure that the funding that it had committed was being effectively used to achieve the project’s objectives. The PD clearly states that the M&E function was to be the responsibility of the project team (UNOPS contractors) and UNDP officials who were expected to “inspect all projects regularly to monitor progress.” Monitoring and evaluation by UNDP largely seems to have been ignored. Field visit reports to project sites and monitoring and evaluation reports<sup>8</sup> were undertaken by project stakeholders from the GoTG and members of the PMU but representatives of the UNDP were absent from these missions.

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<sup>7</sup> Office of the President. “Re: Decision Points Reached at on the Matter of Chief Technical Advisers (CTAs) in NEYC, EMCBP-III, and National Governance.” November 1, 2005. p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Two M&E reports were found in the project documentation provided to the TE Consultants: (1) Project Management Unit. “NEYC Project: Monitoring and Evaluation Report, September 30-October 01, 2003”; and (2) Office of the President. Field Visit Report of UNDP-Funded Projects.” August 27, 2003.

It is largely perceived by Government that the project was championed by the Resident Representative (RR) in place during the period of project implementation. It is noted that it was the RR who introduced the floriculture component of the project and who promoted this component to the highest levels of Government. There was also a very close association between the Chief Technical Adviser and the UNDP Resident Representative as they had both previously been involved in the NEYC Lesotho project in the same roles. Government felt it difficult to criticize the CTA during the early stages of the project because of this close association with the RR.

Financial oversight of the project by the UNDP is particularly troublesome. The NEYC Project went through numerous budget revisions during its initial phase (A through H) and its subsequent extension. As new IGA components were added more UNDP funds were committed without a proper cost-benefit analysis. With the authorization of the RR, the UNDP also continued to significantly add to the size of the project budget over its duration with the hope that additional funding would lead to observable project results. No analytical attempts were made to understand the reasons for the project's non-performance and improper assumptions were made that problems with the project's implementation could be resolved with more funding. As UNDP TRAC 1 resources are limited, the large amounts of funding that were added to the NEYC Project budget would consequently have an effect on other elements of the country programming efforts.

#### Government of The Gambia Contribution to the Project

As part of the tri-partite agreement formed in the Project Document, the Government of the Gambia committed to contributing US\$ 50,000 to the budget of the NEYC Project. The GoTG contribution was to be used for "providing basic allowances to young people participating in environmental rehabilitation and income generation projects, during their initial start-up phase." (Project Document, p. 17). The actual contribution of the Government to the project was equivalent to US\$ 30,000. The decision to cancel the remaining contribution was made on the basis of a quarterly field visit undertaken by the Policy Analysis Unit which determined that the implementation of the project activities was not occurring at a sufficient level in the field. The TE Consultants would concur with the GoTGs decision to suspend its contribution but would suggest that its response should have been formalized to UNDP through the removal of the GoTGs endorsement for the project

#### **2.2.2 Cost Effectiveness of the Project's Components and Outputs**

By the time of the project close out in March 2006 the total project budget had been revised from an initial US\$ 660,000 to a final US\$ 1,676,350 with an actual disbursement of US\$ 1,432,995.58. Of the intended 2000 project youth beneficiaries only 441 youths became engaged in the project. (CTA End of Assignment Report, p. 11).



As of July 2005<sup>9</sup> only 306 youths remained active in their groups. As such, US\$ 1,432,995.88 had been spent to train 441 youths of whom only 306 remain active at the period of the last status assessment.

It is not correct to say however that the majority of this US\$ 1,432,995.88 was expended for development costs to train the youth beneficiaries and to equip them for their income generating activities. By far, the biggest expense area of the NEYC Project was operational costs and, in particular, personnel costs. According to project budget revisions A through H<sup>10</sup>, which extends from the project start-up in 2002 through until its initially expected close out in 2004, project personnel costs were designated as US\$ 497,541 out of a total budget of US\$ 771,918 or 64.4% of the total budget. Of the personnel costs, US\$ 339,645 were designated for the CTA alone which is 68.4% of the total personnel costs and 44% of the total project budget. The breakdown of planned project expenditures is shown in Table Two below

**Table Two: Planned NEYC Project Expenditures 2002-2004<sup>11</sup>**

<b>Expense Item</b>	<b>Amount (US\$)</b>	<b>% of Project Budget</b>
Personnel	497,541	64.45
Contracts	26,070	3.37
Training	44,523	5.76
Equipment	102,628	13.29
Miscellaneous	13,656	1.76
Micro-Capital Grants	87,500	11.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>771,918</b>	<b>100</b>

As can be noted from the information above, funds allocated for improving the capabilities of the youth beneficiaries, notably training, equipment, and micro-capital grants, only constitutes 30.38% of the project budget. Clearly, the ratio of operational costs to development costs is seriously misaligned.

There is also a lack of proportion in the amounts expended for the different types of income generating activities the youths were participating in. Table Three below provides information on costs associated with each of the IGAs in comparison with the number of youths involved in these types of IGAs.

<sup>9</sup> July 2005 is the most recent status assessment of the activity or dormancy of the youth groups. It is expected that there has been a greater decline in the number of youths that remain active in their groups following the close out of the project in March 2006.

<sup>10</sup> At the time of preparing the Terminal Evaluation Draft Final Report itemized information on expenditures was not available to the TE Consultants. UNOPS is in the process of extracting this information from their financial management system and this will be incorporated in the Terminal Evaluation Final Report.

<sup>11</sup> Information extracted from GAM 01/002 Establishment of National Environment Youth Corps Project. Budget Revision "H".

**Table Three: Income Generation Activities Disbursements as compared with Number of Participating Youths**

IGA Component	Disbursements <sup>12</sup> (US\$)	No. of Participating Youths <sup>13</sup>
Floriculture	160,780.35	48
Horticulture	40,725.20	420
Bee-keeping	33,792.87	412
Eco-tourism	20,812.40	40
Waste Management	10,435.91	19

As indicated from the information above, the expense for the floriculture component was nearly four times that of the next most expensive component horticulture. Yet, floriculture involved only slightly over 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the youth participating in the project. As the objective of the project was to involve 2000 youths in sustainable income generating activities the inclusion of this component in the project makes little sense in light of this objective. Floriculture, which is site-specific because of the expense involved in starting-up the enterprise and its need to be located close to its distribution point (the Banjul International Airport), could not have been expanded to other sites and involved a greater number of youths. Although floriculture was viewed as a great potential source of revenue, in fact no income was earned from this component from commencement in 2002 to close-out in 2006. The expense of this component greatly diluted funds available for the other IGA components which not being site-specific had the opportunity to involve far more youths in the project.

A final consideration in terms of cost-effectiveness is the fee paid to UNOPS as executing agency for managing this project. In accordance with UNDP policy, UNOPS was paid 10% of the project budget for administrative and operational services in executing the NEYC Project. From a financial perspective the 10% fee is reasonable and in-line with the executing agency recovering some of its costs for managing the project and earning some operational income. However, the question of the quality of the services UNOPS provided for this project arises. As the project did not meet its objectives under UNOPS execution the 10% AOS fee would not seem to be justified.

### 2.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

A fundamental flaw of the NEYC Project implementation is the absence of a formal monitoring and evaluation system. According to the Project Document, the M&E function was to be tasked to the project team and UNDP officials who were expected to “inspect all projects regularly to monitor progress.” (Project Document, p. 18). Monitoring and evaluation, however, never became institutionalized within the project.

<sup>12</sup> Information extracted from GAM 01/002 Establishment of National Environment Youth Corps Project: UNOPS Terminal Report.

<sup>13</sup> Source: Project Management Unit. “Registered Groups Participating in NEYC.” July, 2005. pp. 1-2.

M&E reporting forms were developed but the attempt to capture information was limited to ad hoc reporting on the problems encountered by the youth groups. Information that was collected from the monitoring forms remained static and did not feedback into project management applications. These reports remained in hard copy and no M&E database was created to monitor the project's results.

The development of a M&E system was hindered by the lack of a results framework in the Project Document. As noted earlier the PD put forward a very basic list of objectives and outputs which was well short of an effective results framework. Consequently, as the project progressed, new objectives were added and previously identified output indicators were transformed which seriously hindered accurate M&E of the project outputs and outcomes.

#### **2.2.4 Financial Management and Accountability**

Financial management and accountability for the NEYC Project was lax at all levels and there was insufficient oversight of financial matters by the CTA, UNOPS and the UNDP. As noted from the PD, US\$ 2,340,000 of the expected project cost was to be mobilized from unidentified sources. But as no other donors materialized during the lifespan of the project, the UNDP continued to commit funds to the project in the hope of seeing some results. As the UNDP country office has finite financial resources, the additional funds committed to the NEYC Project would have had an effect on other components of the UNDPs country programming portfolio. Although the funding allocations for the country's programming efforts are the responsibility of the Resident Representative, the TE Consultants would express that the Cluster Evaluation undertaken during May 2005 should have commented on the ratio of the resources being committed to one project in relation to the total TRAC 1 resources available. Institutionally, the TE Consultants would also recommend that the UNDP develops a review mechanism at either the headquarters or regional level which annually examines the funding designations of TRAC 1 resources to ensure that they are balanced in line with the Country Cooperation Frameworks.

In 2004 several UN agencies including the UNDP and UNOPS modified their financial management systems to introduce a new software operating system known as Atlas. It is only with the transition to this new software system did it become apparent how far over-budget the NEYC project had become. This is a clear indication that no effective financial safeguards had been developed within the project to control spending in-line with the budget. The TE Consultants would express that UNOPS and the project personnel that it had appointed failed in their management responsibility to keep expenditures in line with the project budgets provided by the UNDP. Annual financial reports should have been prepared by UNOPS against which both UNOPS and UNDP should have reviewed the expenditures to ensure that they were within the project budget. When the issue of serious financial mismanagement became evident in 2004, UNDP should have required the executing agency to commission either an internal or external financial audit of the project. Instead, the UNDP extended the project and committed more funding. At the time of this terminal evaluation, no financial audit has

been undertaken and the UNDP and UNOPS remain in dispute as to the amount of unfunded over-expenditures and the responsibility for paying for these expenses.

## **2.3 Review of Project Activities and Results**

This section examines the project activities and results of the interventions. The TE team undertook field visits to various project sites in the interventions areas, namely, Western, North Bank and Upper River divisions. Interviews were held with beneficiaries to determine the extent to which the project had succeeded in providing employment to unemployed youth through the introduction of income generating activities which promote/contribute to environmental rehabilitation and protection.

The NEYC project engaged young people around the country in a variety of activities, namely, horticulture/orchard, beekeeping, ram fattening, ecotourism, rabbitry, solid waste disposal, afforestation, reforestation, and creation of fire belts. In the twelve project villages visited, young people had been engaged in 35 operations in total. Of the 35 operations, 43 percent were ongoing. With these, groups have earned and banked some income. The rest of the groups were dormant or closed. In general, the ongoing income generating activities were found to be plagued with a range of difficulties including marketing problems, insecurity of land tenure and socio-cultural factors. In the case of the environmental rehabilitation and protection activities, difficulties ranged from dampened youth enthusiasm arising primarily from limited supervision by project technical staff, the collapse of remuneration arrangements to a host of other issues, including the scale of the activity in relation to the number of young people in some of the groups.

### **2.3.1 Environmental Rehabilitation and Protection**

Environmental rehabilitation and protection activities of the NEYC project centre around five main areas, namely, afforestation / forest rehabilitation, bee-keeping, eco-tourism, creation of fire belts, and solid waste disposal.

#### ***Afforestation / Forest Rehabilitation***

Afforestation / forest rehabilitation activities or their traces were observed in Essau-Sameh and Farafenni (Site 2). In Essau-Sameh, some tree seedlings were transplanted in the existing vegetation undergrowth and although the seedlings were alive they are too few and too widely spaced to have any significant effect on vegetation density. The idea was to increase vegetation density in order to reinforce ecological integrity and reduce desertification. It is difficult to see how this could be achieved with the few planted tree seedlings. In the case of Farafenni (Site 2), the afforestation / forest rehabilitation activities had ceased some years ago as evidenced by the absence of any visible transplanted cashew tree species in the designated area. Figure 2.1 below shows overgrown tree seedlings in the garden in small polythene bags supplied by the project for afforestation. These had overgrown (up to 2 meters in height) in situ, where they were assembled for transplanting in the orchard and the nearby area. The youth group is dysfunctional and some have since left for other areas including the urban areas, one phenomenon the project intended to arrest.



Figure 2.1 Overgrown cashew seedlings in garden supplied for Afforestation, Farafenni, NBD

The issues raised with regard to the status of the afforestation / forest rehabilitation activities in Farafenni and Essau-Sameh included group dysfunction and limited resources respectively. The departure of the President and Secretary of the Farafenni group to pursue further studies at Gambia College (paid for by the NEYC project) left a vacuum. The group disbanded and work ceased. For Essau-Sameh, the paucity of the intervention in the afforestation / forest rehabilitation activities was a major obstacle to the achievement of the objectives related to this component. In addition, it was reported at both sites that the termination of the monthly allowance of D300 (three hundred dalasis) paid to members of the group for participating in project activities created difficulties.

### ***Bee-keeping***

To categorise bee-keeping as an environmental activity is based on the symbiotic link between bees and the pollination of vegetation species. The bees need flowers for food and the tree species need the bees to disperse the species. As a result of this relationship, one must protect or conserve the environment to be able to engage in bee-keeping. Bee-keeping offers a unique way for people to generate income from natural resources without damaging them. In working to retain the natural environment, bee-keeping contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity.

Almost all the youth groups visited were engaged in bee-keeping, although, more as an income generating activity than an environmental one. Attempts have been made to transplant some seedlings in bushes where beehives are kept. The environmental value of these attempts is hard to determine.



### ***Eco-tourism***

Like bee-keeping, the essence of eco-tourism lies in the conservation of natural environments. One of the most important factors in the successful operation of an eco-tourism enterprise is protection of the environment. The TE Consultants visited two eco-tourism sites in Kartong (on the coast) and Limbambulu (inland).



Figure 2.2 Eco-tourism camp site, Limbambulu, URD

The buildings at Limbambulu site were incomplete (Figure 2.2) and operations had not started. There was no evidence of any deliberate effort by the community to maintain the buildings let alone the environment.

### ***Creation of Fire Belts***

This is one of the relatively successful components of the project. Some of the groups visited undertook the construction and maintenance of fire belts around protected forest parks to prevent bushfires from spreading to the forest park. Groups in Toubu Bureng, Diabugu, Limbambulu and Drammaney have been involved in this activity for some years now. It is important to note however, that four other villages in the area were reported to have refused to participate in the NEYC project as a result of experiences with earlier projects.





Figure 2.3 Fire belt at Jalokeh Forest Park,  
Touba Bureng Sector, URD

Groups attributed to the absence of bushfires in the Touba Bureng, Limbambulu and Drammaney sectors of the Jalokeh Forest Park for two years as a sign of success. It is important to note nonetheless, that the quality of the fire belts in some parts, in terms of the presence of grasses and other debris on the belt that can serve as fuel, could make it less effective in preventing the spread of bush fires. Figure 2.3 above shows the fire belt in the Touba Bureng sector.

One of the main issues identified with regard to the fire belt component was the scale of the work involved. The group members were far too small for the work required. As a result, they join the larger community's fire prevention activities. While it could be said that this component has contributed to the protection of the environment, the extent of this contribution is not clear.

### ***Solid Waste Disposal***

This component was expected to contribute to environmental quality by reducing the amount of solid waste. The NEYC project envisaged the recycling of brewery waste for animal feed in the Kanifing Municipality (KMC) and the collection and disposal of solid waste in Farafenni, NBD.

In the KMC the recycling of brewery waste into animal feed never took off, while in Farafenni the equipment (horses, carts, bins, etc.) supplied to the youth group was taken over by a private individual after the youth abandoned the component.



Figure 2.4 Solid waste disposal team, Farafenni, NBD

Solid waste disposal activity initiated by the project was ongoing in Farafenni and the residents of the town ward where it is piloted consider it a success in keeping the compounds clean. Above (Figure 2.4) shows the solid waste disposal team on one of its routes.

The main issues regarding the solid waste disposal operation in Farafenni included the perceived (or real?) social pressure of being involved in waste collection, an activity culturally held in low esteem and confined to foreigners.

### **2.3.2 Income Generating Activities**

Objective two of the project intended to ensure poverty reduction within the youth sector through the creation of employment opportunities and income generating activities. The project therefore introduced a wide range of activities, namely, Horticulture, Beekeeping, Ecotourism, Ram Fattening, Solid Waste Management, Floriculture and Animal Feed Production. These activities are disconnected and for some it is hard to see their environmental protection value.

#### ***Horticulture***

This component was by far the most popular activity with nearly all groups engaged in it. The experience of the groups varied in terms of the income realized from horticulture. The returns from horticulture ranged from D2000 (two thousand dalasis) to D9,000 (nine thousand dalasis) for the period of the project.

The horticulture component was plagued with a variety of problems, chief among them being marketing, water availability and disillusionment of the youth with the project. The

apparent absence of a marketing strategy to support the groups, difficulty with transportation of produce to markets and ignorance of price regimes resulted in ad hoc marketing arrangements. The water problem is so acute that none of the horticultural sites visited had any activity going on during the time of the visit (dry season). Where there is a well, the youth are either de-motivated, need technical advice to proceed or do not see themselves as owning the IGA. In addition, the withdrawal of the monthly allowances aggravated the frustrations causing a lot of young people to desert the group. In some case land ownership was a major issue as the potential benefits of the activity became apparent. One of the groups was served an eviction notice.

### ***Bee-keeping***

Bee-keeping was the second most popular activity among the groups. While this activity also has potential to generate respectable levels of income for the groups, it was also beset by numerous problems including marketing, small number of hives issued to some of the groups and destruction of hives by bushfires and termites. The ad hoc marketing of honey to UNDP and NEYC project staff through visiting technical staff is not sustainable. It is important to work out firm marketing arrangements. Similarly, it is hard to see how groups with two or four hives could engage in bee-keeping in any sustainable way. Some groups have no protective gear which is crucial to the running of the enterprise. While these have together undermined the realization of the full revenue generation potentials of the beekeeping component, most of the groups engaged in this activity were producing honey at the time of the visit.

### ***Ram Fattening***

Ram fattening was another IGA which has potential. Although Ram fattening has little, if any, relation with protection of the environment, several groups were involved in this component. Because profits were very low it was difficult to justify the energy and time expended in the activity. As a result of this, none of the groups was involved in the activity at the time of the visit.

The early repayment of the initial loan (D10,000) to the project left youth groups with little money as profits, unable to purchase more animals. Indeed, one group realized D200 (two hundred dalasis) as profit. The loan amount for the second year was half that of the first year further limiting the groups capacity to continue the activity. Perhaps the loan principal needed to be paid over the project period.

### ***Eco-tourism***

While eco-tourism has not worked at Limbambulu, URD, Kartong, WD has been in operation for two to three years generating considerable income to the youth group and community and protecting the environment. The eco-tourism camp at Kartong (figure 2.5 below) could be termed one of the few successful components of the IGAs demonstrating the potential of eco-tourism, even on a small scale. Income levels as high as D18,000 (eighteen thousand dalasis) over a two to three year period were realized at Kartong with very basic facilities.





Figure 2.5 The Ecotourism Camp, Kartong, WD

Notable issues regarding the Kartong camp however, were the need for electricity and water, strengthening of the bird watchtower, and completion of the reception and new guesthouses.

### ***Solid Waste Disposal***

As stated earlier, the solid waste disposal component was still operating at the time of the visit. Having been abandoned by the youth, a private operator had moved in and it would be safe to state that he is at least covering his costs. Issues related to the successful operation of the solid waste disposal service included the need to raise the monthly collection fee from D35 (thirty-five dalasis) per compound to keep up with operational costs and support to expand the services to other wards in the town.

### ***Rabbitry***

Perhaps the most environmentally friendly income generating activity was rabbitry. This component was started in Essau-Sameh in June 2005 with a few pair and by May 2006, there were 36 animals. A pair was sold earlier for D375 (three hundred and seventy-five dalasis). The rabbit house was constructed out of clay bricks from local sources molded by the youth and the rabbit droppings are used as manure on the horticulture garden. Figure 2.6 below shows a few animals in cages in the rabbitry house.

Like most other IGAs, the most formidable challenge for the activity was marketing. Rabbitry is a relatively new endeavour and as a result, requires publicity and awareness raising.



Figure 2.6 Rabbitry in Essau-Sameh, NBD

### ***Floriculture***

The floriculture component was also one that never saw the light of day during the project period despite the colossal amount of project funds already expended on it. The green houses and the supporting infrastructure are incomplete at this point generating no revenue to the youth group or the private sector operator.

For heavy financial investments like these, a feasibility study needed to be conducted to determine its viability in The Gambia. Such a study would necessarily include examining the earlier failed attempt at floriculture by a private sector operator in The Gambia to determine the factors responsible. It also appears that the involvement of the private sector was a disaster. The private sector in the Gambia is still weak in terms of financial muscle and generally averse to taking risks.

### ***Animal Feed Production***

The animal feed component of the NEYC project was based on the processing or recycling of brewery waste into animal feed for sale to ram fattening operations. This component also did not take off. Socio-cultural pressures could be overwhelming, and in a predominantly Muslim country, it would be unthinkable for parents to permit or endorse their children to work in a brewery let alone work with brewery waste. It is hardly surprising therefore, that the KMC waste recycling activity using brewery waste never started. Perhaps much more thought needed to go into the selection of IGAs.

### **2.3.3 Performance Assessment of Output and Outcome Indicators Identified in the Project Document and Annual Work-Plans**

The main justification of the NEYC project was to provide employment for unemployed young people through the introduction of income generating activities that protect or rehabilitate the environment. A performance assessment of project output and outcome indicators from the project document and annual work plans (Annex Five) reveals mixed results.

The establishment of the Project Management Unit (PMU) saw the recruitment of a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), a Project Coordinator and support staff and the purchase of equipment and vehicles. The recruitment of the technical staff of the project through the UNV system delayed their arrival and by the end of the project, the Aquaculture and Coastal Zone Specialists had not been recruited.

Young people were identified, recruited and trained in environmental management and income generation and the groups provided project inputs. The project recruited and trained 441 young people well short of the overall project recruitment target of 2000. During the course of the project, Management prepared semi-annual and annual progress reports but production of monthly monitoring reports was not consistent and linkages with major stakeholders was weak.

A variety of IGAs were introduced including Horticulture, Orchard Development, Beekeeping, Ram Fattening, Solid Waste Disposal, Ecotourism, Floriculture, Rabbitry and Animal Feed Production. Some of these IGAs, notably, Ecotourism, Beekeeping and Rabbitry were ongoing, engaging young people and generating some income, while others such as Ram fattening, Animal feed production and Horticulture were on hold waiting for the project or the rainy season). In Drammaney, URD, the horticulture garden has dried out even though a functioning shallow borehole with a wheel pump was on the land. In the case of Orchard Development, the picture was similar. All the orchards visited, were overgrown with weeds or the seedlings had died for lack water or proper care, except for Daranka (WD),.

As can be observed in Table Four below, bee-keeping was practiced in almost all the villages visited. While some groups such as at Essau-Sameh (NBD) and Daranka (WD) produce large quantities of honey, others like Limbambulu (URD) and Touba Bureng (URD) realize very small quantities. The hives at Diabugu were destroyed by bushfire. In general, the groups appear to have difficulty marketing the honey, as a result, consume at home, that which could not be sold at the weekly local market (Loumo). Worn out or damaged protective gear also inhibited the beekeeping operations.

The Eco-tourism site at Kartung (WD) is in operation and has great revenue generation potential for both the youth and the community. By contrast, the Eco-tourism site at Limbambulu, URD has an uncompleted roofed building and a rain-damaged mud hut without a roof.

# Terminal Evaluation of The National Environment Youth Corps (NEYC) Project

**Table Four**

**THE STATUS OF ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT YOUTH CORPS (NEYC) PROJECT  
IN SELECTED VILLAGES AS OF MAY 2006**

DIVISION	VILLAGE GROUP	NO. OF YOUTH	ACTIVITIES	STATUS	T.E. ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE	ISSUES
Western	Kembujeh	48	Floriculture Horticulture Beekeeping	Dormant	Not achieved	Green houses & others not complete
				Dormant	Not achieved	Awaiting erection of green houses; completion of reservoir & pack-house
				Ongoing	Achieved	
	Kartong	6	Ecotourism,  Beekeeping	Ongoing	Achieved	Camp earning revenue; Needs electricity & water and complete new Guest Houses & reception.
				Ongoing	Achieved	Could sell pure Gambian honey to tourists/campers
	Daranka	9	Horticulture Orchard Beekeeping	Dormant	Not achieved	Water; marketing problems
				Ongoing	Achieved	Water; marketing challenges
				Ongoing	Achieved	Marketing challenges
KMC	Kanifing	10	Horticulture Waste Management Animal Feed	Dormant	Not achieved	
				Dormant	Not achieved	Socio-cultural pressures
				Dormant	Not achieved	Socio-cultural pressures
North Bank	Kerr Jarga	17	Horticulture Beekeeping Ram Fattening	Dormant	Not achieved	Water, borehole needed
				Dormant	Not achieved	Too few hives
				Dormant	Not achieved	Insufficient funds to continue
	Farafeni (1)	14	Horticulture Afforestation	Dormant	Not achieved	Group leadership crises
				Dormant	Not achieved	Tree seedlings overgrown in black polythene bags
	Farafeni (2)	9	Solid Waste Management	Ongoing	Achieved	Youth abandoned component; Component in private hands; Need support to expand
	Essau-Sameh	14	Horticulture Beekeeping Rabbitry Reforestation	Ongoing	Partially achieved	Land tenure problem; water
				Ongoing	Achieved	Marketing problems
				Ongoing	Achieved	Marketing problems
				Ongoing	Achieved	Too few tree; group dynamics
Upper River	Touba Bureng	9	Horticulture Beekeeping	Dormant	Not achieved	Water; No borehole for garden
				Ongoing	Achieved	Marketing problems; Hives removed by opponents of the project
			Ram Fattening Fire belting	Dormant		Insufficient funds to continue
				Ongoing	Achieved	Scope of work is too big for group; Joins with community Fire belt activity
	Limbambulu	10	Horticulture Beekeeping Ram Fattening Ecotourism Fire belting	Dormant	Not achieved	Fencing & borehole received too late
				Dormant	Not achieved	Marketing problems; protective gear
				Dormant	Not achieved	Insufficient funds to continue
				Dormant	Not achieved	Buildings incomplete
				Ongoing	Partial	Joins community fire belt activity
	Diabugu	25	Horticulture Beekeeping Fire belting	Dormant	Not achieved	Fencing materials
				Dormant	Not achieved	Too few beehives
				Ongoing	Partial	Joins community Fire belt activity
	Drammaney	16	Horticulture Beekeeping Ram Fattening Fire belting	Dormant	Not achieved	Marketing problems; transportation
				Ongoing	Achieved	Marketing problems; low prices
				Dormant	Not achieved	Insufficient funds to continue
				Ongoing	Achieved	Joins community Fire belt activity

Source: Field visits and interviews, May 8-11, 2006



Operations therefore had not started and tourists had not visited by the end of the project. Ecotourism at Essau-Sameh was earlier abandoned by the youth. While the Kartong (WD) site was generating respectable income, the 2005 project output targets appear to have been ambitious.

Rabbitry, a relatively new activity was doing well at Essau-Sameh but not yet generating any significant income. Out of 36 animals, the majority of which are mature, only two (a pair) have been sold. The Floriculture component has not taken off the ground yet as the green houses are still not complete. It is therefore not generating any income or providing any employment.

In the area of environmental management, a range of environment-related activities were also introduced including Afforestation and Firebelt construction and maintenance. In the intervention sites visited, the most successful was the Firebelt construction and maintenance. All four villages in the URD bordering Jalokeh Forest Park take part in the maintenance of the Firebelts with the community in their respective sectors. Conversely, in the case of Afforestation, the TE team could not be shown a healthy cluster of planted trees arising from the activity. The few cashew and gmalina seedlings that were seen were either stunted, overpowered by weeds or overgrown in gardens where they were assembled for transportation to the Afforestation site. The output target of planting 25 Hectares with trees with 65 percent of out planted trees surviving at the end of the dry sea could not be observed.

While there were some notable successes, it appears that when the project was at the peak of operation, many youth groups around the country were engaged in a variety of IGAs and EMAs. As the project wound down however, the activities started to suffer, highlighting the difficult issue of sustainability.

### **2.3.4 Socio-Economic Impacts of the NEYC Project**

The NEYC project generated a great deal of interest during the early stages mobilizing young people from all around the country. Participation was high and relatively equal across the gender division. Up to fifty percent of the participants were female.

The socioeconomic impacts of the NEYC project, however, would be difficult to measure now especially given that many of the IGAs were at a standstill even before the project formally closed. The increased consumption of honey and vegetables could positively impact on the nutritional status of the group members and those of their family. The degree of this impact could only be determined by a study specifically designed for the purpose.

Some IGAs have the potential to become successful small business enterprises creating other opportunities for the groups involved and their respective communities. This is true for those IGAs that hold promise but stronger linkages with the private sector and appropriate business orientation of the youth is required.

The income generated by the various IGAs at the time of the TE is small and as a result it is banked and has limited impact on moving the IGA forward or on the lives of the group members. The income share arrangements between project and community as in the Kartong (WD) Ecotourism Camp, (70:30) could spread the benefits of the project to the wider community beyond.

It is however important to note that in some communities the project had generated some considerable tension between the youth and the rest of the community regarding ownership when the potentials of the IGAs became apparent. Field interviews with beneficiaries have indicated that at least in two intervention sites (Kerr Jarga and Diabugu), some IGAs were imposed on the group. This did not foster sustainability as the IGAs were not perceived as needs felt by the community.

### **2.3.5 Sustainability of Project Results**

The TE Consultants would express that there is little indication of sustainability of the project's results. The numbers of youths involved in the project declined from a high of 441 to just 306 at the time of the last status assessment in July 2005. As project activities have been dormant for some time since this period, it is expected that the number of active youths has declined considerably and will continue to do so unless some new project activity emerges. A number of the environmental and employment activities have also become dormant or were never initiated.

The TE Consultants would suggest that the absence of sustainability has been directly affected by the lack of an exit strategy in the original project design. As noted earlier, the PDs exit vision was that "2,000 youth group members will have been trained and equipped in environmental management techniques, and be engaged in a range of sustainable, income generating activities" such as afforestation, mechanical soil conservation, solid waste management, waste materials recycling, bee-keeping, eco-tourism, mushroom and livestock feed production, clay brick and block making, and bamboo furniture making. Very few of the IGAs would seem to be able to provide a sufficient income on their own that would be capable of supporting the youth. The overall poverty line for The Gambia is estimated at D5538.78 per adult equivalent unit (AEU) per annum in the Greater Banjul Area, D3898.15 per AEU per annum in other urban areas and D3087.55 per AEU in rural areas.<sup>14</sup> This would indicate that for a youth group of ten members operating in a rural area the group would need to earn a profit of 38,982 Dalasis beyond operating expenses and reinvestment costs to even allow the individual members of the group to reach the poverty level. As the highest level of income reached by any group was 18,000 Dalasi over four years by the eco-tourism site in Kartong, income from the IGAs is well-short of creating sustainable employment. Most other IGAs earned only a few thousand Dalasis over the four years of the project.

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<sup>14</sup> The information on the overall poverty line in The Gambia is from a paper on "Poverty Measurement in The Gambia by Mr. Lamin Fatty presented at the *Workshop on Poverty Statistics in the region of the Economic Community of West African States* in Abuja, Nigeria on 26-30 July 2004.

The durability of project results beyond the project period was also adversely affected by the project not being integrated with existing structures. Some stakeholders have described the NEYC as a “stand alone project” or an “island by itself”. Project results could have been more sustainable, for instance, had the project actively engaged the extension services of the Department of State for Agriculture and the Departments of Forestry and Community Development for IGAs such as horticulture, ram fattening, bee-keeping, afforestation and other IGAs and EMAs.

## 2.4 Overall Findings of Evaluation

This section of the report respond to the specific questions raised in the TORs of the Terminal Evaluation. A number of the questions raised in the TORs have been addressed in the above sections of this report including:

- Assessment of the design of the project, as well as its management and implementation arrangements in relation to project objectives;
- Assessment of the performance, specific outputs and outcomes, and overall impact of the project in relation to its stated target objectives;
- Determining the cost-effectiveness of project implementation in relation to the management and implementation arrangements;
- Determining whether the disbursement of project funds and the implementation of project activities were in line with project objectives;
- Examining whether there were adequate checks and balances regarding the use of project funds and implementation of project activities;
- Determining whether the requirements and procedures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project activities were adhered to;
- Determining what sustainability measures were put in place, and their effectiveness, to consolidate on project gains and ensure continuity

The remaining questions can be best addressed in this section.

### Feasibility of the Floriculture Component

As noted earlier, the concept of including a floriculture component to the NEYC Project was introduced and championed by the former UNDP Resident Representative. Floriculture was marketed to the GoTG as having a significant revenue potential based on the notion that The Gambia, being closer to Europe, could market floriculture products more competitively than producers in East Africa. Additionally, as the NEYC Project was significantly under-resourced, a further justification for the introduction of floriculture was that it would earn revenue to cross-fund other project activities. It is noted that the introduction of floriculture required the UNDP to add an additional US\$ 101,200 to the budget.

Although floriculture was proposed as a significant revenue generating IGA a number of considerations were not significantly addressed in determining the feasibility and viability of this component. Despite the optimism with which this activity was promoted, it should have been noted that an earlier attempt by the private sector to establish floriculture in The Gambia failed. The cost-benefit analysis undertaken in support of establishing the floriculture component estimated gross income of 2,334,720 Euro, an over-optimistic and unrealistically high estimation. Insufficient consideration was given to export issues such as sanitary and phytosanitary trade restrictions, cold chain logistics and sufficient air cargo capacity.

The relevance of floriculture to an environmental management and youth employment project was also not adequately considered. Floriculture, which is site specific due to export requirements, is contrary to the project objective to involve a large number of

youths in sustainable employment. Beyond employing a finite number of youths at the floriculture site, this component could not be expanded to other areas to address youth unemployment in other parts of the country.

A number of irregularities about the floriculture component of the project should also be noted. As the cost of the equipment associated with this component was approximately US\$ 160,000 an international procurement process should have taken place to competitively purchase the equipment. This did not occur and the equipment was sourced from individual providers in South Africa through the assistance of the UNDP South Africa. Additionally, the NEYC Project entered into a contract as a legal entity to form a partnership with a private sector individual to situate the floriculture component. The NEYC Project, which was of a three-year duration, would not have had the proper legal standing to enter into a contract for a period of five years. The contract to provide a location for the site should have been entered into by the Government Implementing Agency (the NEA) and the land owner, and the contract for the floriculture enterprise should have been executed between the Government and the UNDP.

Reference should be made that after five years and over US\$ 160,000 in investment, no income has been earned from floriculture, the site is non-operational, and the equipment is stacked in boxes on the floors of the empty buildings.

#### Most Viable Income Generating Activities

The IGAs with the potential for financial viability are indicated below.

##### Ecotourism (Kartong, WD)

- ❑ Ecotourism camp in Kartong was impressive in terms of infrastructure and levels of income generated. It has great potential.
- ❑ Some links with tourism related organizations like ASSET, GTA.

##### Issues that need to be resolved

- ❑ Needs to further develop the infrastructure – guestrooms, water and sanitary systems.
- ❑ Stronger links with Tourism industry operators for financial support, collaboration in mutually beneficial environment-friendly activities and publicity in tourist magazines.

##### Bee-keeping

- ❑ Beekeeping is practised by almost all the groups visited and were generating some income.
- ❑ Although income levels are currently moderate ranging from D650/year at Limbambulu to D1300/year at Drammanney.
- ❑ Technical expertise present in country.

Issues that need to be resolved

- ❑ Sufficient level of inputs in the form of beehives and associated materials and protective gear.
- ❑ Firmer marketing arrangements

Rabbitry (Essau-Sameh NBD)

- ❑ Relatively new IGA in The Gambia, but within one year and practised by only one group. Rabbits are prolific breeders, the litter has increased from about 7 rabbits to 36.
- ❑ Income realized is small at the moment, D375 for one pair sold.
- ❑ Symbiotic relationship with horticulture as rabbit droppings are used as manure on vegetable garden

Issues that need to be resolved

- ❑ Marketing, specifically publicity, as Essau-Sameh is relatively close to the urban area.

Horticulture

- ❑ The most common IGA, practised by almost all groups in all the divisions. IGA was dormant during the visit probably because of the dry season
- ❑ Income generated between D6000 and D9000 over period of 2 to 3 years

Issues that need to be resolved

- ❑ Permanent and reliable water supply
- ❑ Firm marketing structures and arrangements especially for distant locations
- ❑ Secure fencing materials

Solid Waste Management (Farafenni, NBD) (Private Individual)

- ❑ This activity in Farafenni was taken over by a private individual after the youth abandoned the activity.
- ❑ Activity still functioning with three donkeys and carts, collecting waste from door to door in the Mauritanie ward of the town.
- ❑ Charges D35 per compound per month.
- ❑ Some of the metal bins however require replacement.

Issues that need to be resolved

- ❑ Individual needs help to expand to other wards of the town

### Factors Responsible for Project Performance or Non-performance

It is unfortunate that most of the factors affecting the project are related to its non-performance as the project generally lacks success stories. These factors are as follows.

#### 1. Poor Project Design

The NEYC Project was very poorly designed as far too much of the financial resources were designated for operational rather than development costs. Personnel costs, which consumed two-thirds of the project budget, could have been greatly trimmed by using national personnel and limiting the term of the CTA to periods when he would be most needed. If a pre-feasibility study had been conducted this would have provided an opportunity for determining the availability of local expertise in The Gambia for filling the specialist roles in the project personnel.

#### 2. Modality of Execution

The agency execution modality that was used for the delivery of the NEYC Project is very outdated and not in-line with current UNDP policy to support the development of national capacity through national execution of projects. National execution in the case of the NEYC Project would have greatly reduced project operational expenses while building sustainability into the project by having a permanent government agency executing the project.

#### 3. Intended Scope and Scale of Project Activities

The intended scope and scale of the project activities of the NEYC Project was very broad and not realistic given the size of the project team. Activities to be delivered included afforestation, mechanical soil conservation, solid waste management, waste materials recycling, bee-keeping, eco-tourism, mushroom and livestock feed production, clay brick and block making, and bamboo furniture making. As the NEYC Project was agency executed and used project specific delivery systems, the project could not have sufficient personnel with expertise in all of these areas to train and manage the youth groups. Activities should have been limited to core areas of environmental management and viable income generation activities.

The intended scale of the project to involve 2000 youth in six administrative divisions across the country was also unrealistic. The scale of the project should have been designed in accordance only with the committed funding and not the expected project cost.

#### 4. Production Focus versus Market Needs

The NEYC Project focused on training youth to produce goods such as clay bricks, honey and rabbits and services such as solid waste collection and soil conservation without determining if there was a sufficient market need for these goods and services. The activities selected for the project were largely not financially viable as the products and services being delivered had low market value and could not have generated enough income to support a group. Emphasis should have been given during the inception period of the project to determining the types of products and services the market needed and which would have sufficient financial value for creating sustainable

employment for the youth groups. Once these medium and high value products and services were identified then training should have been provided to the youth on how to establish market linkages and successfully sell their goods and services.

#### 5. Youth Allowances

The provision of youth allowances created a sense of dependency for the youths and caused them to view themselves as “employees” of the project rather than as entrepreneurs engaged in income generation activities. Youth allowances also created tensions in the communities between members of the project receiving allowances and other youths who were not part of the project and not receiving allowances. The project was also insufficiently resourced to provide youth allowances and if youth allowances were to be provided on the scale intended it would have consumed a significant portion of the project budget.



## **Section Three: Recommendations**

### **3.1 Lessons Learned**

The under-performance of the NEYC Project provides an opportunity for learning important lessons on project design and implementation. The most important lessons to be learned are identified below.

#### **1. Good project design supports effective project implementation**

In order for a project to be successfully implemented and to achieve its project development objective considerable effort needs to be put into project design. It is not sufficient to have a relevant concept that is responsive to the country needs and the donor agency's strategy. The concept must be duly supported through a well thought-out and well-designed implementation strategy. Sufficient pre-feasibility must be undertaken to determine the viability of the intended project activities. The project design must also be contextualized to the locations where the project is to be implemented.

#### **2. Government review of offered support**

Government needs to critically review the projects that are offered by donor agencies. A project concept may be aligned with government strategies but if its design and implementation strategy is limited, Government needs to point out the potential flaws that would affect project performance. Government is in the position to have the best understanding of the country context and can provide important suggestions on how to successfully implement the intended project. Government should not endorse a project until it is certain that the intended project is viable.

#### **3. Budgets need to be aligned with available resources**

Project budgets for supporting project activities need to be directly aligned with committed funding. If the expected project cost exceeds the amount of committed resources then the project activities need to be scaled down to the actual level of available resources. If a project is successful in either attracting additional donor support or generating revenue to support itself, the project can then be scaled up to accommodate the additional resources that become available.

#### **4. The importance of monitoring and evaluation**

The ability to assess whether a project is on track to achieve its objectives requires a functional and usable monitoring and evaluation strategy. M&E is a core component of project design and it is intended to concisely map out the desired outcomes, outcome indicators and outputs to be produced through the project and related activities and inputs. During implementation M&E needs to be a dynamic exercise with the monitoring and evaluation of results feeding back into project management strategies for achieving the project objectives.

#### **5. Developing sustainability**

In order for a project to achieve sustainability it must be aligned with drawing on existing services from permanent agencies rather than using project specific delivery systems

that will expire upon the completion of the project. Through the use of these services the project will have the opportunity to support knowledge transfer and capacity building of these agencies which will further support the sustainability of the project results.

6. Exit strategy

Projects need to be designed and implemented with a clear exit strategy in mind for when the funding support will cease. The exit strategy needs to be well-thought out during the pre-feasibility stage of the project design. Annual and mid-term evaluations need to assess whether the outcomes of the project remain aligned with the exit strategy.

### **3.2 Recommendations**

The Termination Evaluation Consultants would like to offer the following recommendations in relation to the closing out of the NEYC Project.

#### **1. Transitioning and Sensitizing the Remaining Active Youth Groups**

As discussed throughout this report the results of the NEYC Project are non-sustainable and the current end of project situation is that a limited number of youths remain active in income generating activities that are incapable of providing them with sufficient income for their personal sustainability. These remaining active youth need to be sensitized that the project has largely proved unsuccessful to the factors discussed above and that the project needs to be closed out and new considerations how to address The Gambia's environmental management and youth employment problems need to be developed. The UNDP and the Government of The Gambia are developing a new country cooperation framework for the period of 2007 – 2011 and this will provide an opportunity for new activities to be developed which can better respond to the environmental management and youth unemployment conditions. Through this new country cooperation framework more viable projects can be developed which can lead to sustainable improvements in the environment and the conditions of the youth. The remaining active youth groups should be sensitized that there is the potential for them to be involved in new projects which will better serve their personal needs as well as the needs of the country. It is recommended further that programming design within the new country cooperation framework will bear in mind the youths that have been committed to the NEYC Project and hopefully can be transitioned into new, more successful projects.

#### **2. Floriculture Component**

The floriculture component of the NEYC Project has become a complex situation. As suggested earlier, the floriculture component of the project is non-viable and should be abandoned. However, an extensive amount of equipment procured for the project that is the property of the UNDP and the GoTG is currently situated on the property of the proprietor of the floriculture site. As this issue raises legal questions well beyond the expertise of the TE Consultants, we would limit our recommendation to requesting the GoTG to facilitate the transfer of the equipment back to either the UNDP or to the Government Implementing Agency. We would further recommend that this matter be referred to the UNDP legal department at its headquarters to safeguard the interests of all those involved in this matter.

#### **3. National Execution Modality**

Future projects concerning the environment should be executed through national GoTG agencies. In working with the government agencies to gather information for this terminal evaluation report, the TE Consultants were impressed with the high level of competence and support provided by the government agencies. We feel confident that national execution would further support the capacity development of these agencies.

4. Development of more viable projects to address environment and youth unemployment issues

The development of the new country cooperation framework provides the UNDP and the GoTG with the opportunity to develop new and more viable projects to address environment and youth unemployment issues. A number of successful environment projects that create employment have been developed in other countries and these should be reviewed for their relevance and replicability in The Gambia. Potential projects that are identified will need to be modified in such a way that they are fully contextualized to respond to the situation and conditions of The Gambia.

5. Greater Private Sector Involvement

In order to build sustainability into both environment and youth unemployment projects more extensive cooperation needs to be developed with the private sector. The assistance of the private sector should be drawn on during project design to ensure that the projects will be more viable and their outcomes more sustainable. This will foster greater private sector linkages during project delivery which particularly in the case of youth unemployment projects should lead to a quicker realization of results.

## **Annex One: Terms of Reference of the Assignment**

### **Terms of Reference for the Conduct of a Terminal Evaluation of The National Environment Youth Corps (NEYC) Project**

#### **Background**

Two of the major problems facing The Gambia are high youth unemployment, and the injudicious management of the environment and natural resources. The National Environment Youth Corps (NEYC) Project commenced in January 2002, following an agreement among The Government of The Gambia, UNDP and UNOPS (the Executing Agency). The project's main objective is to reduce unemployment among the youth population while at the same time conserving the environment, through the establishment of a National Environment Youth Corps. It was due to finish in December 2004, but was extended to March 2006. The project operates in Kanifing Municipality, Western, North Bank, and Upper River Divisions and its thematic intervention areas include horticulture, floriculture, waste management, rabbitry, beekeeping, forest conservation, small ruminants and ecotourism.

#### **Objectives**

The overall objective of the terminal evaluation exercise is to assess project performance in relation to the objectives as stated in the Project Document, assess the outputs and development outcomes of the project, as well as determine the sustainability of benefits accrued. Specifically, the terminal evaluation is expected to address the following:

- ✓ Assess the design of the project, as well as its management and implementation arrangements in relation to project objectives;
- ✓ Assess the performance, specific outputs and outcomes, and overall impact of the project in relation to its stated target objectives;
- ✓ Determine the cost-effectiveness of project implementation in relation to the management and implementation arrangements;
- ✓ Determine whether the disbursement of project funds and the implementation of project activities were in line with project objectives;
- ✓ Examine whether there were adequate checks and balances regarding the use of project funds and implementation of project activities;
- ✓ Determine whether the requirements and procedures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project activities were adhered to;
- ✓ Determine what sustainability measures were put in place, and their effectiveness, to consolidate on project gains and ensure continuity;
- ✓ Determine the agronomic, financial and marketing feasibility of the floriculture component;

- ✓ Determine which Income Generating Activities and youth groups have the best prospects for success, as well as the requirements for consolidation of project gains;
- ✓ Identify the factors responsible for the performance or non-performance of the project in relation to its objectives, and make recommendations for the future; and,
- ✓ Determine the aspects and areas that were successfully implemented (or otherwise), identify the contributory factors, and make recommendations for the future, including a project exit strategy.

## **Scope**

A team comprising one international and one local consultant will carry out the terminal evaluation. It is expected to be a comprehensive exercise covering all facets of the project – design, relevance, implementation, and overall development results achieved. It will cover the implementation of project activities from 2002 to date, and will examine the roles of the various stakeholders (project beneficiaries, management, Local Government Authorities, the Technical Coordinating Committee, Gambia Government, UNOPS and UNDP). It will also examine in detail financial disbursement records to assess cost effectiveness of the project design and its implementation. The evaluation will cover all areas of project intervention, namely Kanifing Municipality, North Bank, Western, and Upper River Divisions.

## **Approach and Methodology**

The evaluation exercise is expected to include the following activities:

- a. Review of relevant documents and reports.
- b. In-depth interviews with project management and staff, as well as relevant UNOPS officials.
- c. Conduct of field visits to project sites and in-depth interviews with intended beneficiaries.
- d. In-depth interviews with members of the Technical Coordinating Committee, Local Government Authorities and relevant Government officials.
- e. In-depth interviews with other actors in the youth and environment sector.
- f. In-depth interviews with relevant UNDP staff.
- g. Preparation of a report on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation exercise.

## **Expected Outputs**

1. Methodology and work plan for the assignment, agreed with the Country Office prior to the start of the evaluation.
2. Briefing updates and one page summaries of progress to the Country Office on a weekly basis, covering progress, issues, and next steps.
3. A soft copy and 4 hard copies of the draft report.

4. Presentation of the preliminary findings and recommendations to the Government and the Country Office, based on the draft report.
5. A soft copy and 4 hard copies of the final report, 20 – 30 pages long (excluding annexes), containing the findings and recommendations regarding the objectives of the evaluation, using the format provided in the UNDP M&E Handbook.

### **Duration and Timing**

The evaluation exercise is expected to take six weeks, commencing end-March 2006. The Consultant will submit a draft report after four weeks (by end-April), and the final report is expected no later than 10 working days after comments on the draft report have been provided.

### **Qualifications and Experience Required**

- ✓ A Masters degree in agricultural economics, agronomy, natural resources management, waste management. Knowledge of floriculture is a requirement.
- ✓ Minimum of 10 years post-graduate experience
- ✓ Familiarity with UN policies and procedures
- ✓ Computer literacy
- ✓ Demonstrated experience in conducting evaluations of a similar nature

**Annex Two: Schedule of the Terminal Evaluation**

<b>Day (2006)</b>	<b>Activity</b>
April 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial NEYC Project briefing from UNDP Programme Officer and Programme Associate</li> <li>Introductory meeting with NEYC Project Management Unit</li> <li>Welcome and briefing meeting with UNDP Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative</li> <li>Review of project documentation</li> </ul>
April 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documentation</li> <li>Preparation of Background and Context sections of Terminal Evaluation Draft Final Report</li> </ul>
April 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with UNDP Assistant Resident Representative (former Programme Officer for NEYC Project)</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
April 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the Permanent Secretary for the Department of State Forestry and the Environment</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
April 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with NEYC National Project Coordinator</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
April 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documentation</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
April 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documentation</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documentation</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
May 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Floriculture site field visit</li> <li>Meeting with the National Environment Agency</li> </ul>
May 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with UNDP Senior Programme / Operations Adviser</li> <li>Meeting with Director of GHE, proprietor of floriculture site</li> <li>Meeting with the Policy Analysis Unit, Office of the President</li> <li>Meeting with UNDP former Acting in Charge Resident Representative</li> </ul>
May 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with former Head of the Policy Analysis Unit</li> <li>General meeting with members of the Technical Consultative Committee</li> </ul>
May 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> </ul>
May 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documentation</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>
May 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documentation</li> <li>Report preparation</li> </ul>



May 8	• field project sites	TE National Consultant departs for
May 9	• • Agriculture Services • Service Scheme	Field visit Meeting with Department of Meeting with the National Youth
May 10	• •	Field visit Report preparation
May 11	• •	Field visit Report preparation
May 12	• •	Field visit Report preparation
May 13	• •	Validation workshop preparation Report preparation
May 14	• •	Validation workshop preparation Report preparation
May 15	• •	Validation workshop preparation Report preparation
May 16	• •	Validation workshop preparation Report preparation
May 17	• •	Validation workshop preparation Report preparation
May 18	• •	Validation workshop preparation Report preparation
May 19	• • home base	Validation workshop International consultant returns to
May 20	•	Travel day
May 21	•	Travel day
May 22	• home base •	International consultant arrival at Refinements to draft final report
May 23	•	Refinements to draft final report
May 24	•	Refinements to draft final report
May 25	•	Refinements to draft final report
May 26	•	Submission of final report

**Annex Three: List of Persons Met**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Position</b>
UNDP The Gambia	Fadzai Gwaradzimba	Resident Representative
	Vitalie Montean	Deputy Resident Representative
	Neil Boyer	Economic Adviser
	Ernest Aubee	Senior Programmes Adviser
	Haddijatou Lamin	Assistant Resident Representative
	Mamour Jagne	Programme Officer
	Omar Njaie	Programme Associate
Department of State for Forestry & Environment	Momodou Kotu Cham	Permanent Secretary
Policy Analysis Unit, Office of the President	Abdoulie Jarra	Director, PAU
	Ebrima Camara	Former Director, PAU
National Environment Agency	Momodou B. Sarr	Executive Director, NEA
NEYC Project Management Unit	Ida Sissoho	National Project Coordinator
	Stanley Kemmerah	UNV Floriculture Specialist
	Lamin Tamba	Beekeeping Specialist
Gambia Chamber of Commerce & Industry	Mam Chernio Jallow	Chief Executive Officer
Gambia Horticultural Enterprise (GHE)	Momodou Ceesay	Proprietor, GHE
Youth Group Contact Persons	Adama Jallow	Kembujeh, WD
	Omar Sambou	Kartong, WD
	Daniel Gomez	Daranka, WD
	Bakary Bojang	KMC
	Alhajie Jassey	Kerr Jarga, NBD
	Adama Mbye	Farafenni (1), NBD

		Alhajie Sait Secka	Farafenni (2), NBD
		Chief Sambujang Jagne	Chief of Illiassa??, NBD
		Modou Sowe	Essau-Sameh, NBD
		Sana Sabally	Touba Bureng, URD
		Lamin Drammeh	Limbambulu, URD
		Shiekhu Trawalleh	Diabugu, URD
		Dukumeh Drammeh	Drammenney, URD
Technical Coordinating Committee	Represented by:	Saikou Njie (Deputised for Executive Director, NEA)	NEA
		Momodou Suwareh	NEA
		Ebrima Corr	PAU
		Baboucarr HM Jallow	Department of State for Finance & Economic Affairs
		Hassan Sillah	Department of State for Agriculture
		<b>XXX</b>	National Youth Service Scheme (NYSS)
		Mamour Jagne	UNDP

#### **Annex Four: List of Documents Reviewed**

- Akande, M.O. *Africa Environmental Salvage Project, The Gambia: Project Plan.*
- Akpata, S.S.O. *The Gambia Country Programme Review (2002-2006): The Second Country Cooperation Framework.* May 2005.
- Akpata, S.S.O. *Cluster Evaluation of The Gambia's Second Country Cooperation Framework (2002-2006): Review of the National Environment Youth Corps.* May 2005.
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- Project Management Unit GAM/01/02. *The National Environment Youth Corps Project – GAM/01/02: Semi-Annual Progress Report July 2003.* July 2003.
- Project Management Unit GAM/01/02. *The National Environment Youth Corps Project – GAM/01/02: Annual Progress Report December 2003.* December 2003.
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- Project Management Unit GAM/01/02. *The National Environment Youth Corps Project – GAM/01/02: Annual Progress Report 2004.* January 2005.
- Project Management Unit GAM/01/02. *GAM/01/02 Establishment of a National Environment Youth Corps: Plan of Operation January-December 2005.* January 2005.
- Project Management Unit GAM/01/02. *The National Environment Youth Corps Project – GAM/01/02: Semi-Annual Progress Report July 2005.* July 2005.
- Project Management Unit GAM/01/02. *The National Environment Youth Corps Project – GAM/01/02: Annual Progress Report 2005.* January 2006.
- The Gambia National Environment Agency. *Workshop on Youth and the Environment. Palm Grove Hotel, Banjul.* October 5-6, 2001.
- UNDP The Gambia. *Project Concept Note for Discussion: Establishment of a National Environmental Youth Project in the Gambia.* November 2001.
- UNDP The Gambia. *GAM/01/02 The National Environment Youth Corps (NEYC) Project: Project Document.* November 2001.