



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

**OPERATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDELINES TO FULFIL THE MANDATE
OF THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

Office of the Vice President

July 2025

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Foreword

It is with great pride and a strong sense of duty that I present this policy document of the Office of the Vice President of the Republic of The Gambia. This policy represents a strategic commitment to effective governance, inter-ministerial coordination, and the advancement of national development goals, in line with the broader vision and aspirations of the Recovery-focused National Development Plan (RF-NDP 2023-2027) of the Government of The Gambia.

As the principal institution supporting the Vice President in executing constitutional and delegated responsibilities, the Office plays a pivotal role in enhancing good governance, social inclusion, policy coherence, and institutional collaboration and coordination both within OVP and with the broader government institutions. This policy lays the foundation for achieving these objectives by defining clear priorities, setting standards for performance, and reinforcing accountability mechanisms. It also will spearhead institutional reforms mainly in the areas of data and information gathering, analysis and processing as well as policy level coordination of national Development planning processes. These two areas are crucial for the realisation of our national development aspirations, hence the need for coordination at the highest level of government.

The formulation of this policy is the result of extensive consultation, reflection, and collaboration both within the Office of the Vice President as well as with all other relevant government stakeholders. It embodies our shared resolve to improve liaison and coordination between the Executive and the Legislature, promote inclusive development, and uphold the principles of transparency, integrity, and responsiveness in all that we do.

I am confident that the implementation of this policy will strengthen the institutional capacity of the Office of the Vice President, foster a more coordinated approach to development policy execution, and contribute meaningfully to the national development agenda of our nation.

Let us all remain committed to the ideals outlined herein, as we continue to serve the people of The Gambia with dedication and honor.

Mohammed BS Jallow
Vice President
Republic of The Gambia

1. Introduction

1.1 Policy Rationale

The Vice President is appointed by the President in accordance with sections 71 (1) and 71 (3) of the 1997 constitution of the Republic of the Gambia. The Vice President is the principal assistant to the President and the responsibilities include:

- (i) Conducting in Cabinet and in the National Assembly, business relating to matters within the portfolio
- (ii) Putting into effect, in collaboration with the appropriate public officers and other Ministers, the decisions taken in cabinet relating to such matters
- (iii) Initiating policy on all matters within the portfolio

Thus, the Vice President has three main functions; Answering to the National Assembly both on behalf of the president as well as on its own behalf for matters that relate to matters within its portfolio. Regarding cabinet, the Vice President conducts business relating to its portfolio as well ensuring that action is taken on Cabinet decisions, the final one is policy guidance within its portfolio i.e. sectors under the Office of the Vice President. This policy will enable the office of the Vice President support the Vice President to effectively carry out these functions.

1.2 Alignment with Overarching Development Frameworks

The Overarching national development framework for the country is the Recovery Focused National Development Plan (RF-NDP 2023-2027) which mainstreams all international development frameworks such as the sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the AU Vision 2063 etc.. Policy coordination and supervision of the RF-NDP is vested in a Cabinet sub-committee chaired by the Vice President. This policy will ensure that the Office of the Vice President has in place structures and mechanisms to support the Vice President in effectively coordinating and supervising implementation of the RF-NDP.

1.3. Background

Though the Vice President has three main functions outlined in the duties and responsibilities above, the office holder serves as the main support to the President and therefore is often involved in taking high level decisions on his behalf. A key commitment of this government is its desire to uplift the socio-economic conditions of the population which can only be achieved through effective planning and implementation of national development strategies and actions. making this happen requires supervision and guidance at the highest level to ensure that development plans are aligned with the vision of the leadership of government as well as

availability of quality data to guide planning and ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of implementation of national development plans.

The Office of the Vice President also plays an advocacy role for government to promote its development agenda. The office also leads fundraising initiatives for major government programmes such as resource mobilization for the National Development Plan, the Census and other government programmes, either in its own capacity or on behalf of the President.

All these functions being undertaken in addition to its three core functions require that the office puts in place clear policy guidelines to ensure that it is adequately positioned to effectively carry out its duties and responsibilities. Also, it is imperative that the structure, organization and reporting lines of some key government institutions be revisited to ensure efficiency.

In addition, the policy will ensure that the Office of the Vice President performs the key function of coordinator of government including overseeing the planning and implementation of national development plans and programmes as well as production of national statistics and data for development. The office has the convening power and authority to rally the whole of government and such high-level oversight will ensure that the aims and aspirations of the leadership are adequately reflected in national development planning and implementation.

2. Policy Framework

3.1 Vision

An Office of the Vice President that leads and supports the rest of government in the effective delivery of service to the citizens of the Gambia

3.2 Mission

To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Office of the Vice President in carrying out its functions, duties and responsibilities.

3.3 Policy Objectives

- (i) Ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the handling of matters relating to Cabinet and the National Assembly
- (ii) Initiate sector policies and ensure effective coordination within the Office of the Vice President.
- (iii) Ensure a well-staffed OVP with relevant technical expertise
- (iv) Support advocacy and resource mobilization for sectors under OVP
- (v) Strengthen communication and consultative decision making within OVP

3.4 Guiding Principles

- a. Instituting an all-inclusive approach in administering the affairs of all sectors under OVP portfolio.
- b. Adherence to integrity, transparency, accountability and consultation in all its decision-making processes affecting or impacting sectors.
- c. Recognizing that the cross-cutting nature of sector mandates warrant an integrated approach wherein relevant MDAs will be included or consulted in the implementation of this policy.
- d. Promote data and evidence-based planning and smarter decision making using ICT.
- e. Efficient and effective coordination, monitoring and evaluation of sector policies and programmes.

3.5 Policy Scope

The policy covers the Office of the Vice President and all the sectors within the portfolio of the Vice President

3. Policy Priorities

3.1. Main Pillars and Principal components

The policy will be anchored on four main pillars:

- Liaison between the Executive and Cabinet and the National Assembly;
- Policy Coordination
- Capacity Development
- Resource Mobilization

3.2. Priority 1: Conduit between the Executive and Cabinet and the National Assembly

Preamble

Currently, the coordination and follow up of Cabinet decisions and issues raised by the National Assembly requires a review to ensure coherent policy coordination mechanism within government for effective service delivery. In collaboration with the Cabinet office, ensuring timely action on Cabinet decisions will also address the issue of duplication within sectors and ensure adequate response to the developmental needs at any given time. It will help to identify areas of weakness and to improve on them as well as enhance synergies within the sectors and ensure timely response to issues relating to the sectors. This will also strengthen communication within sectors.

Policy Actions

- 3.2.1. Cabinet decisions will be communicated to relevant sectors by the SC OVP within 24 hours of the decisions made in Cabinet.
- 3.2.2. The Permanent Secretary OVP in Liaison with the Cabinet Office shall follow up with Sectors within a week of the cabinet conclusion
- 3.2.3. Sectors to respond to issues raised by Cabinet within two weeks of receipt of the Cabinet decisions
- 3.2.4. Issues raised by the National Assembly with the Office of the Vice President shall be communicated to them within 24 hours of receipt of communication from the National Assembly
- 3.2.5. Sectors shall provide responses to National Assembly questions within 3 days of receipt of the communication from OVP
- 3.2.6. Responses by the Vice President to National Assembly questions shall be sent to the National Assembly at least 24 hours before the Vice President is due to appear before them
- 3.2.7. Sectors summoned by the National Assembly shall inform OVP of the summons priori to going to the National Assembly and shall provide feedback upon their return

3.3. Policy Priority 2: Coordination

Preamble

The coordination mechanism within OVP and the sectors within it is not adequate and requires review to enhance its effectiveness. The multi-sectors dimensional nature of the office necessitates the need to have coherent policy coordination mechanism in place. This will guide effective implementation of programs and ensure progress towards attaining policy objectives. Effective coordination will help to identify areas of weakness and to improve on them as well as enhance synergies within the sectors. It will also ensure timely response to issues relating to the sectors and strengthen communication within sectors.

Policy Actions

- 3.3.1 Monthly senior staff meeting and quarterly review meetings between OVP and the sectors will be conducted to review programme implementation and track progress
- 3.3.2 A functional communication strategy shall be developed and implemented to enhance public engagement
- 3.3.3 OVP shall undertake regular reviews of sectoral policies and programs to ensure that they are on track and undertake evaluation of policies and programmes at the end of their life span
- 3.3.4 All sectors within OVP will submit quarterly and annual progress reports within two weeks of the end of the quarter and end of the year respectively
- 3.3.5 There shall be quarterly field monitoring visits by a team consisting of personnel from OVP and the sectors
- 3.3.6 The Vice President will embark on a field visit to sector programmes at least once during the year
- 3.3.7 The Vice President shall conduct quarterly meetings of the Cabinet sub-committee on the NDP to review progress in implementation
- 3.3.8 The National Population Commission chaired by the Vice President shall review and approve annual plans of data for development needs

3.4. Policy Priority 3: Capacity Development

Preamble

Due to the rapidly changing global economic, climatic, social, and cultural dynamics, continuous capacity development is required to effectively address emerging trends. To ensure an effective and efficient functioning OVP, the requisite knowledge, skills and competencies of the personnel must be adequate. Over the years, high staff turnover has been registered often leaving the office with capacity deficiencies. In

addition, there is a growing need for oversight of sectors under OVP which are specialized and technical in nature.

Policy Actions

- 3.4.1. Staff training and capacity needs assessments shall be carried out annually for OVP and in all sectors within it
- 3.4.2. There shall be training committees established in OVP and in all sectors to coordinate and manage staff training and other capacity-building activities.
- 3.4.3. Staff capacity building shall be based on training needs identified in the capacity needs assessments of staff of OVP and implementing institutions
- 3.4.4. OVP and sectors shall allocate adequate financial resources for staff capacity development
- 3.4.5. Academic and professional exchange programmes will be initiated in all sectors and programmes within OVP

3.5. Policy Priority 4: Resource Mobilization

Preamble:

OVP and sectors are financed mainly from the government budget, but such funding mostly covers operational expenditures. Programmes are normally financed by development partners through programmes and projects but such programmes and projects have limited life spans at the end of which sectors face challenges in sustaining initiatives started under such projects. Thus, there is need to develop strategies for sustainable financing of programmes and projects of sectors under OVP.

Policy Actions

- 3.5.1. OVP shall develop and implement a resource mobilization plan which will support sectors to raise funds both locally and internationally for the sustainable financing of programmes and projects
- 3.5.2. Sectors will join the Vice President on missions relevant to the sectors for the purpose of resource mobilization for their respective sectors.
- 3.5.3. OVP shall advocate for resource allocation to sectors in the development budget for the financing of development activities of sectors.
- 3.5.4. OVP shall support sectors to develop project proposals and support them in mobilizing resources for those project proposals.

4. Policy Implementation Framework

4.1 Legal and Institutional Framework

Preamble

The goals and objectives of this policy are founded on principles and standards enunciated in the supreme law of the land, which is the 1997 Constitution and other national laws. Sections 71 (1) and 71 (3) of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of the Gambia explicitly details out the roles and responsibilities of The Vice President being the Principal Assistant to the President.

In addition to the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia, there exist national laws that established Institutions under the legal portfolio of The Vice President. These institutions for which the Office of the Vice President has oversight functions are:

- Food Safety and Quality Act 2011
- National Population Commission Secretariat ...
- Food Act 2005
- National Disaster Management Agency Act 2008
- National Social Protection Secretariat
- National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Coordinating Centre [Executive Order No.88]

Policy Actions

4.1.1 All institutions under the Office of the Vice President shall have legal frameworks; Acts which shall define their legal and governance frameworks and Regulations to operationalize them.

4.1.2 . All institutions under OVP shall have policies to guide their operations and develop strategic plans to operationalize those policies

4.1.3. All institutions shall have functional governance structures; Councils or Boards which shall be chaired by the Vice President

4.2 Governance Framework

The Senior Management Team which comprise of senior staff members of OVP meets on a weekly basis and discusses administrative and housekeeping issues that affect the functions of OVP and its satellite institutions. This will be further strengthened by initiating and operationalising a sector consultative meeting for effective service delivery as well as enhance the link between the sectors, Cabinet and the National Assembly. The Sector Consultative Meetings will compose of SMT of OVP and management teams of sectors and will meet quarterly to share experiences and lessons learnt and best practices in the implementation of programs. This forum will create

the enabling environment for synergy and complementarity amongst OVP and sectors.

The Committee on Office and Residential Accommodation (CORA) is mandated to allocate premises/office space for MDAs, Foreign Embassies, Ambassadors, international and regional cooperation institutions and international organizations on rent basis upon request. For consultative and inclusive decision making, this committee is a multisectoral body chaired by the permanent secretary OVP. All institutions under the Office of the Vice President have in place Councils and or Commissions which are statutory bodies mandated to facilitate, coordinate, monitor and advocate for the implementation of sectoral policies and plans.

Policy Actions

- 4.2.1 There shall be quarterly sector Consultative meetings between OVP and satellite institutions for effective governance.
- 4.2.2. There shall weekly meetings of OVP SMT to strengthen management coordination
- 4.2.3. Guidelines on rental accommodation, office allocation and upkeep of structures shall be developed and implemented by OVP
- 4.2.4. Commissions and Councils of institutions within OVP shall meet regularly as per their respective mandates and will be strengthened to perform their functions effectively.

4.3 Implementation Planning

The policy once finalised will be accompanied by a strategic plan which shall outline the mechanisms for implementation of the policy actions. The strategic plan shall be costed and resources for its implementation sourced from various sources. A policy and strategy implementation committee will oversee policy implementation and provide quarterly reports to SMT.

Policy Actions

- 4.3.1. A Strategic plan together with implementation strategies, action plans and annual workplans shall be developed and implemented.
- 4.3.2. The newly formulated communication strategy shall form part of the strategy plan
- 4.3.3. Quarterly monitoring visits will be undertaken and quarterly progress reports on policy implementation provided
- 4.3.4. Annual policy review meetings will be conducted to review policy implementation and recommend adjustments where needed

4.4. Monitoring and Evaluation

To realize the policy objectives, a robust and participatory monitoring and evaluation system will be developed to guide regular monitoring and evaluation of sectors and programs under the Office of the Vice President. This will enhance coordination across sectors. Such a system will include a robust Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, procedures and tools.

The M&E system will be based on MIS which will allow sectors to report on the progress of their programs/ projects/ activities. The development of the M&E system will involve the active participation of all sectors under OVP to ensure common understanding and ownership among stakeholders. The M&E data will help to improve planning and policy making.

Policy Actions

4.4.1 OVP will oversee monitoring, build necessary capacity, develop a harmonized reporting template as well as establish detailed organizational/ management structure for the M&E system.

4.4.2. Have in place dedicated M&E personnel at OVP working closely with sector M & E units.

4.4.3 Sectors will collect and report data and information to OVP on the implementation of their programs/projects/activities at regular intervals (quarterly).

4.4.4 A mid-term review/evaluation of the policy will be undertaken which will inform a revision of the policy.

4.5 Financing Framework (to be developed for the strategy plan)

Preamble

Policy Actions

4.5.1 In the form of policy statements, provide guide for funding sources, budgeting, and resource mobilization in the context of policy implementation.

4.5.2 Provide clear and comprehensive information on how financial resources will be obtained to support the successful execution of the policy.

4.6.Communication

Preamble

A communication strategy for the Office of the Vice president has just been completed. This strategy will ensure visibility of the office as well as enhance communication within OVP as well as between OVP and the wider government.

Policy Actions

4.6.1 Mobilise resources to implement the OVP Communication strategy and Action Plan

4.6.2. Requisite capacity, both human resources and equipment needs will be provided for the communications unit

Annexes A proposed M&E Framework for the related Strategy to the Policy is below.

Objective/Outcome	Indicator(s)	Target	Means of Verification/Data Source	Responsible Entity
Outcome 1:				
Activity/Output 1.1:				
Activity/Output 1.2:				
Etc				
Outcome 2:				
Activity/Output 1.1				
Activity/Output 1.2				

Annex B: Brief on Institutions under OVP

1) NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION SECRETARIAT (NPCS)

The main function of NPCS is to co-ordinate, facilitate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Population Policy and development issues such as HIV/AIDs are mainstreamed into sectoral planning at all levels. NPCS is also mandated to foster functional linkages among sectoral departments, institutions and agencies to harmonize the work of the National Population Commission (NPC).

2) THE NATIONAL NUTRITION AGENCY (NANA)

NaNA is charged with the responsibility of coordinating all nutrition and nutrition related activities in the country. Facilitating inter-sectoral collaboration in the area of nutrition, and implementing the National Nutrition Policy 2021 – 2025.

3) THE FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY AUTHORITY (FSQA)

The Authority's primary mission is the overall official control of the safety and quality of food including water, beverages and animal feed, along the food chain from production up to its supply to the final consumer. It is the sole National Competent Authority with powers of delegation mandated to officially control the safety and quality of food and animal feed whether locally produced, imported or destined for export.

4) THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NDMA)

NDMA was established through an Act of parliament in 2008 as the national agency responsible for the coordination of disaster management/emergency and related issues in the country.

5) NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SECRETARIAT (NSPS)

NSPS is responsible for setting up a comprehensive Social Registry – The Gambia Social Registry (GAMSR), comprising of information and data on all poor and vulnerable households in selected communities. It works with all providers of social protection services and programmes at national and local government levels.

6) National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Coordinating Centre (NCCRM)

The Centre is mandated to: alert the government of potential human security threats; propose appropriate responses; activate and coordinate national and sub-regional level response actors; and monitor the implementation of response related actions.