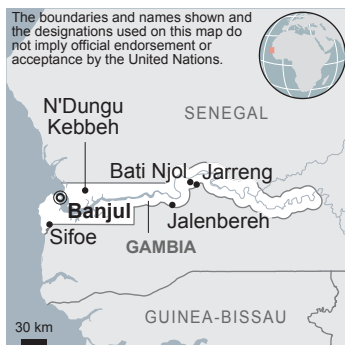


# Managing water and energy services for poverty eradication in rural Gambia



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



## Fast Facts

**Country:** The Gambia

**Duration:** July 2003 to March 2008

**Implementing UN Agencies:** DESA

**Other Implementing Partners:** Departments of Water Resources and Community Development

**Budget:** \$1,335,000.48

**Key Words:** Rural development; capacity building; access to basic services

## BACKGROUND

In early 2003, human security for rural Gambians was in a poor state. Poverty was widespread and the agricultural and economic sectors were struggling due to lack of access to water and electricity. Although sufficient groundwater existed to support the expansion of rural agriculture, the energy to tap this water for irrigation was insufficient. As a result, what little agriculture there was tended to focus almost

exclusively on a single crop, groundnuts, with communities struggling to meet the high costs of imported food. At the same time, electricity through power lines was difficult to secure outside of urban areas. For most rural communities, the only power source was through burning of native biomass, the supply of which was rapidly dwindling due to deforestation and overgrazing.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To reduce rural poverty through integrated and decentralized management of water and energy services, the project aimed to provide increased access to reliable, affordable and sustainable water and energy services to the communities of Sifoe, N'Dungu Kebbeh, Bati Njol, Jarreng and Jalenbereh. To allow beneficiaries to maximize the social and economic

benefits from access to these new services, the project trained beneficiaries in business planning, bookkeeping and loan management. The project also focused on strengthening the capacities of decentralized Government structures and service providers to plan and administer these services.

### BENEFICIARIES

Over the five communities 15 savings groups were established while around 125 individuals, both men and women, received loans. Meanwhile, entrepreneurs

were trained in business planning skills and village development councils were trained in community fund management techniques.