

UN-IFI Partnership in The Gambia

In 2021, the World Bank Group (WBG) approved The Gambia's eligibility to IDA FCV Envelope's Turn Around Allocation (TAA), in a context characterized by the end of a 22-year authoritarian rule marked by low economic growth, limited access and confidence in the justice system, poor delivery of public services, and a high unemployment rate. Under the IDA TAA (supporting countries emerging from a period of conflict, social/political crisis, or disengagement and where there is a window of opportunity for IDA to either re-engage or intensify support to pursue reforms that can accelerate a transition out of fragility and build resilience.), the Government identified five strategic objectives in the TAA Strategy as part of the Government's efforts to turn around from conflict and consolidate the political transition : (1) security and political stability; (2) governance and transitional justice; (3) land management, environment, and climate change; (4) human capital development; and (5) inclusive growth and economic stability. Soon after eligibility was granted, PBSO's UN-IFI Partnership Facility approved a project in support of UN-WBG partnership in The Gambia. The UN and WBG drew on each other's comparative advantages, through the Partnership Facility, to support the implementation and monitoring of the Government's TAA Strategy, notably on Strategic Goals 1, 2, and 3. For the first time in the context of IDA FCV Envelope, the UN was formally included in the TAA Joint Steering Committee, contributing to the review of the TAA milestones, which allows for enhanced UN-WBG strategic support to national conflict prevention efforts. This joint mechanism also facilitated sharing information and data between the UN and WBG on the government's annual performance. The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund also contributed to the TAA milestones through its projects in The Gambia.

The UN-IFI Partnership Facility recently concluded its 2022-2025 project in The Gambia.

Before the project, UN and World Bank support in The Gambia often operated in parallel, leading to fragmentation, inefficiencies, and slower progress on security, justice, and economic reforms. The initiative restructured collaboration around two core objectives: supporting the government's TAA priorities and building a shared understanding of risks and opportunities, operationalized through three mechanisms: creating a "one-stop shop" for government engagement, assigning clear institutional responsibilities for monitoring progress, and pooling analytical resources. For instance, the Facility project supported joint analytical work, such as Conflict and Development and Political Economy Analyses, which shaped resilience strategies, while additional studies on climate-security, human rights, and disability inclusion expanded the evidence base. This approach aligned and harmonized IFI-supported interventions across governance, security sector reform, economic revitalization, and environmental resilience, while institutionalizing engagement mechanisms. Though the project closed in 2025, the UN remains fully integrated through all levels of the World Bank's TAA structures – from its Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Technical Working Groups. The participation of the UN in the TWGs helped the Bank gather data on the government's progress towards TAA milestones and, in turn, allowed the UN to fine-tune these milestones to make them more impactful thus influencing the Bank's policy towards the government and ultimately leading to a more aligned and strategic UN-WB support.