



# **National development strategies, STI roadmaps and R&D policies**

**STI4SDGs ROADMAP Sharing Gambia's Experience**

**By Samba Sowe**

# Mainstreaming SDGs in development plans

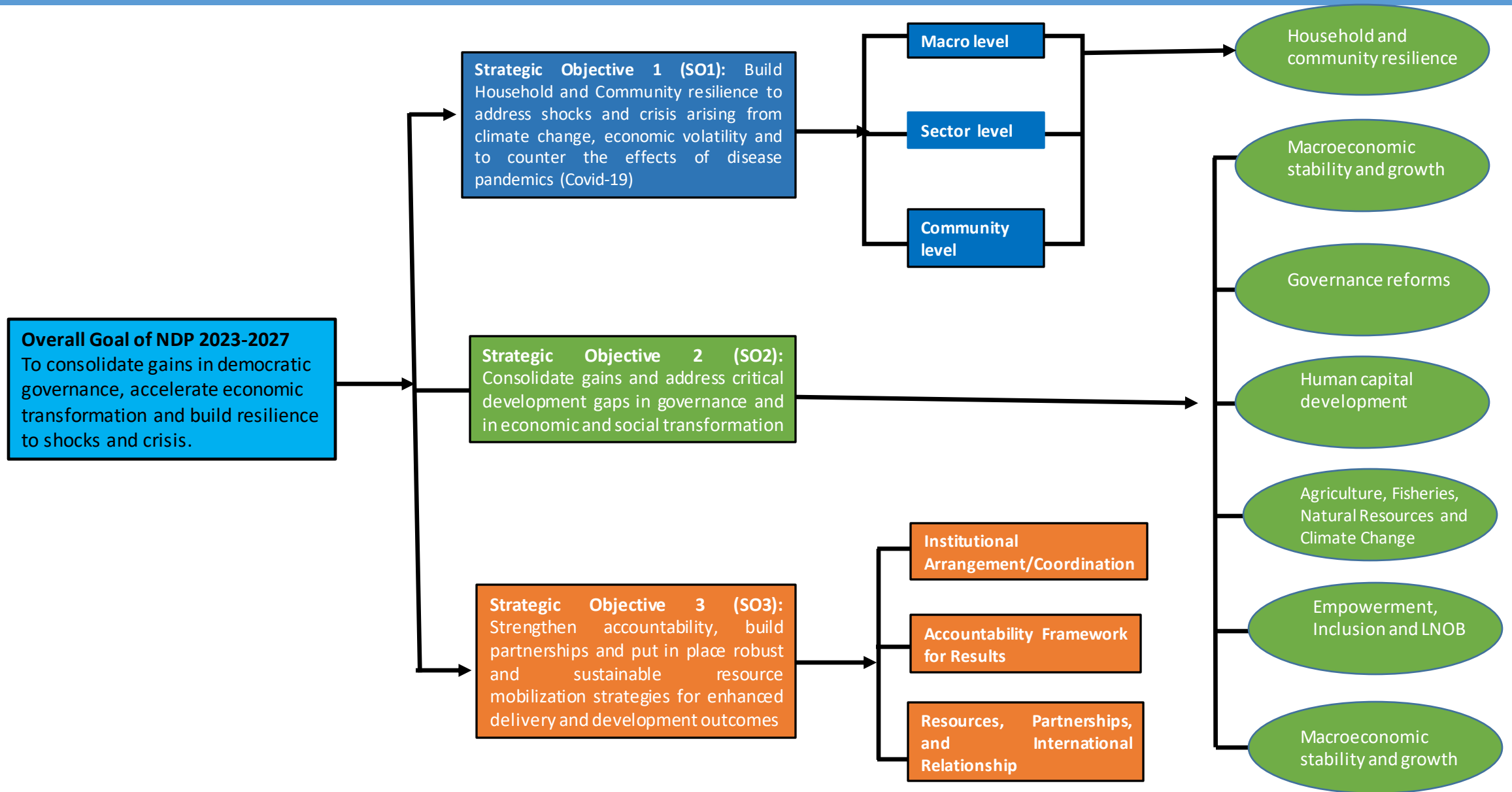
Ministry of finance and Economic Affairs is responsible of Mainstreaming STI in National Development Plans and also assessment SDGs Implementations

The Gambia national development plan (RF-NDP, 2023-2027) emphasises the importance of science, technology and innovation for sustainable growth and development

Drawing upon the extensive stakeholder consultations and comprehensive analysis of the global, regional and national development context, seven overarching imperatives identified:

- **Imperative 1:** Address fragility, vulnerability and build resilience of households and communities to shocks and crisis;
- **Imperative 2:** Consolidate gains made in democratic governance and address the outstanding gaps;
- **Imperative 3:** Vigorously pursue macroeconomic reforms to ensure stability and inclusive growth;
- **Imperative 4:** Prioritize Human Capital Development for economic and social transformation;
- **Imperative 5:** Strengthen productivity of, and integration and linkages within the agriculture and natural resources (ANR) sector for enhanced economic growth and productivity, increased incomes, jobs and climate action;
- **Imperative 6:** Act to advance the empowerment and social inclusion of women, girls, children, youth, persons with disabilities and older persons for a more productive, better and fairer society; and
- **Imperative 7:** Build our infrastructure to boost connectivity, promote growth and render The Gambia more competitive, especially in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

# RF-NDP Strategic Framework ...



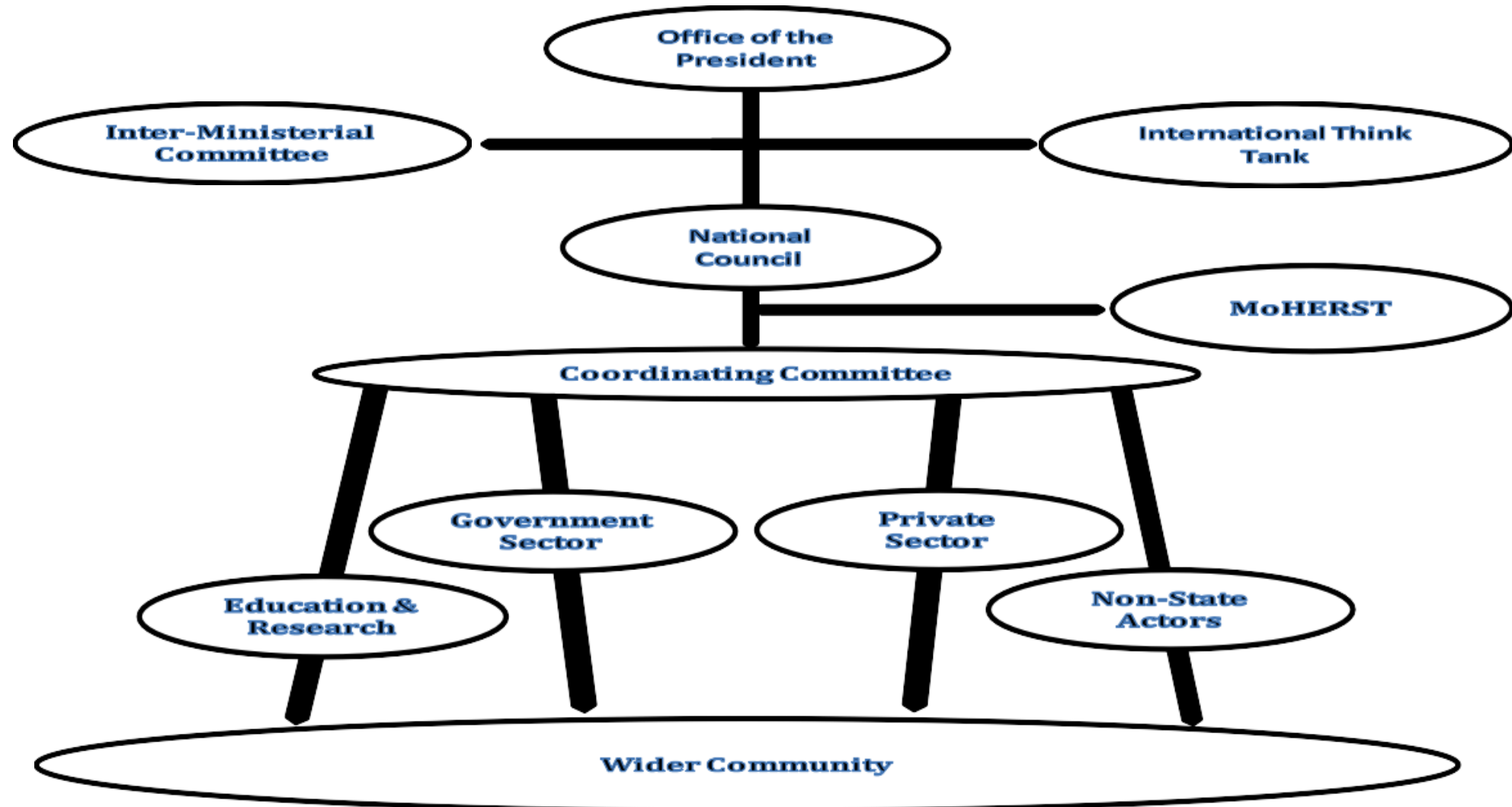
# Ministry in charge of STI roadmaps and R&D policies

- The Government of The Gambia (GoTG) prioritized the development of STI by establishing MoHERST in 2007 and then developed the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy NSTIP (2015-2024).
- This challenge underscores the important role of STI in our national development agenda. Realizing that STI is critical in propelling the socio-economic landscape of the nation, it is imperative that it be strengthened and mainstreamed into all sectors such as health, transport, education and training, agriculture and tourism
- NSTIP intends to move The Gambia into a more vibrant and sustainable socio-economic development-oriented nation by effectively utilizing Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for improved quality of life
- Ensuring that STI features effectively in the country's overall development agenda.
- Provide the coordinating and supporting mechanisms to train, attract and retain a high-quality critical mass of scientists, engineers, researchers and innovators as well as develop and maintain an appropriate and efficient national STI ecosystem
- Enhance education and research for capacity building in STI and related domains through funding, provision of grants, transmission and diffusion of STI knowledge into active economic sectors, industry and communities for continued and sustained socio-economic growth

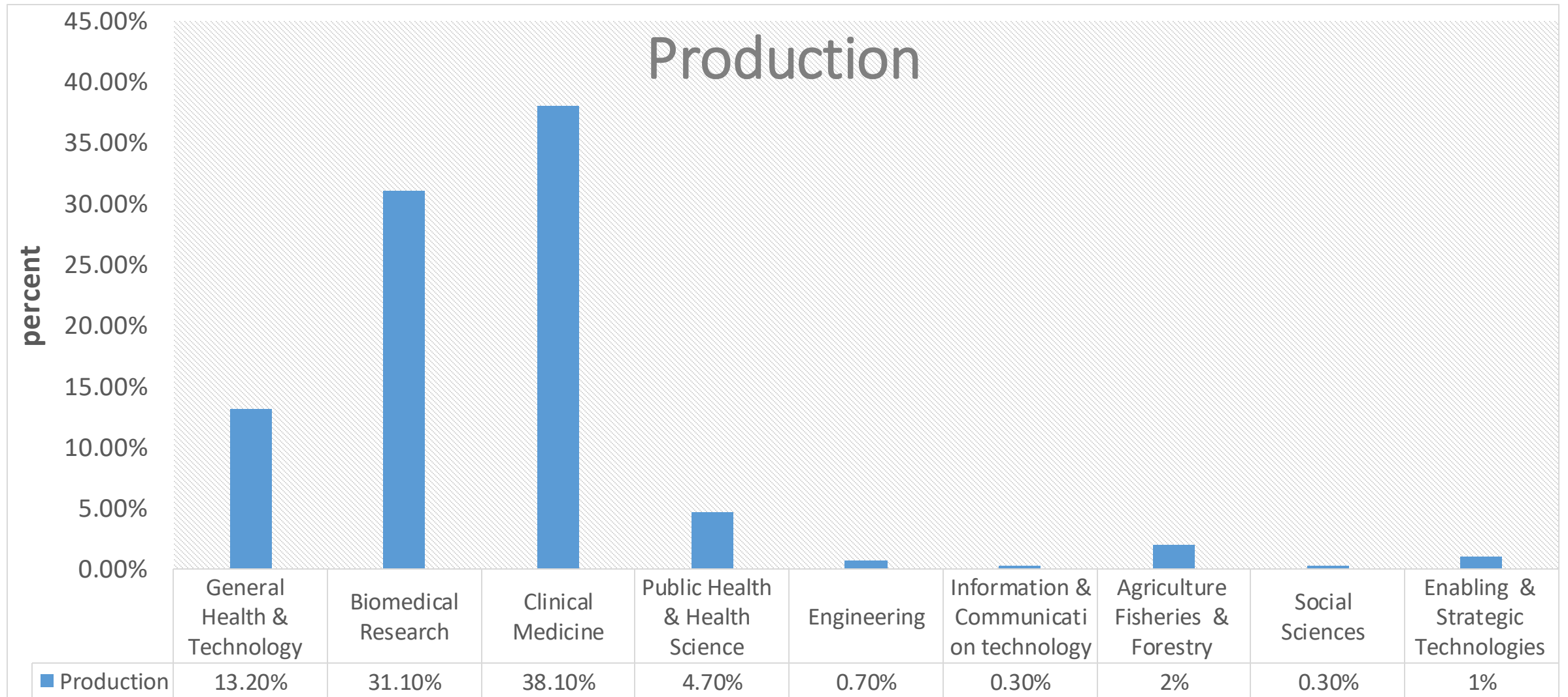
# KEY STI POLICY STRATEGIC PILLARS

- **1** Education and Training
- **2** Elaboration of Indicators and Data Management
- **3** Research and Development
- **4** Information and Communication Technologies
- **5** STI Infrastructure
- **6** Legal and Regulatory Framework
- **7** Science, Technology and Society
- **8** STI Governance
- **9** Funding and Sustainability

# STI Governance Framework



# Assessing Field of science production



source: STI data, MoHERST,2020

# STI Funding

- Currently, the funding of R&I programmes in The Gambia is mainly through development partners, with low levels of government funding.
- The Gambia Government Budget Allocation for R&D (GBARD) is only 0.37 % and its Gross Expenditure on Research & Development GERD is 0.07%, amongst the lowest in the world
- To enhance the national environment for the growth of entrepreneurship, investment opportunities, business, and the well-being of civil society, government developed a National Innovation Fund (NIF) to support and address critical challenges in all sectors.
- However, more national investments and donor support are required to assist The Gambia in enhancing its innovation capacities and performance.



# National Research Policy (2023 – 2028)

- Seeks to support government's goal of institutionalising the use of evidence in governance programmes design and implementation
- This policy document recommends the establishment of a National Research Development and Innovation Council (NaRDIC) as the main research governance institution in The Gambia.
- The Gambia's research system is small compared to other African countries.
- With regard to researchers by sector of employment, according to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), about 30 % are employed at government level and nearly 70 % in the private non-profit sector.
- Gender gap remains significant among the country's researchers, with women representing only around 27 % of the total number of researchers.
- In addition, most researchers are employed in the medical and health sciences (58.4 %) and agriculture (26.4 %), while only a few researchers are involved in the natural sciences (12.8 %), and engineering and technology (0.8 %).

# CHALLENGES

- The lack of basic infrastructure, low investment in R&I and weak coordination mechanisms are also major impediments to the development of the national R&I ecosystem.
- Emerging threats to the R&I ecosystem include the COVID-19 pandemic and its long-term impacts,
- Inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks, and climate change.
- The current financing schemes and products at high interest rates, provided by banks and micro-finance institutions to SMEs and R&I initiatives, are also inadequate and create a gap between the offer of the financial sector and the demand from the private sector.
- Mistrust of R&I, competing priorities, barriers to accumulating physical and human capital, low firm capabilities and weak government capacity.
- The Gambia's innovation ecosystem does not function optimally for three main reasons:
  - (1) Inadequate financial incentives to support innovation,**
  - (2) Inadequate credit or private equity to support SMEs and R&D and,**
  - (3) Inadequate specialised technical skills.**

# Recommendation

- The Government of The Gambia to improve economic environment by providing basic infrastructure (electricity, good road networks, internet connectivity) to support local businesses and innovation, and promote youth employment
- The need for the Government of The Gambia to continue enhancing the national research and innovation (R&I) system, improve its policy-making capabilities, as well as welldefined policy instruments that can guide R&I efforts where they are most needed.
- A requirement for building an efficient national Innovation system is also adequate government funding at different levels to support R&I development

# Outline of STI-SDGs Policy review Roadmap

The Gambia NSTIP review will be conducted various stages and factoring lessons learnt and international best practices

**1. Establishment of the National STI Core Team**

**2. National Stakeholders' Consultative Meetings**

**3. National STI Conference and Exhibition**

**4. National & International Reviews**

**5. Data and Statistics**

**6. Financing for Development**

**7. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

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THANK YOU