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China Donates \$1 Million in Medical Supplies to Strengthen Gambia's Healthcare System



 The Chinese Ambassador Liu Jin, HE President Adama Barrow and Hon Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmadou Lamin Samateh at a handing over ceremony at State House

China Donates \$1 Million in Medical Supplies to Strengthen Gambia's Healthcare System

On December 23, 2024, the Ministry of Health (MoH) supplies and equipment valued at one million USD from the People's Republic of China. The significant contribution includes four fully equipped ambulances and a wide range of essential medical tools, aimed at improving the healthcare delivery services in the country.

The donated resources, which consist of diagnostic tools, surgical instruments, and patient care devices, are expected to assist healthcare professionals in providing more effective and efficient medical care throughout The Gambia. This donation will have a profound impact on the country's efforts to improve access to quality healthcare and work towards achieving universal health coverage.

The Ministry of Health has expressed gratitude to the Chinese government for this life-changing gesture, which will help enhance the well-being of all Gambians. This partnership represents a crucial step in Gambia's ongoing efforts to bolster its healthcare infrastructure and provide better services to its population.



 Photo of the Donated Ambulance by the Chinese Government to the Ministry of Health



 Permanent Secretary Dr Yusupha Touray and the Senior Management Team of MoH on tour of health facilities.

The tour was expected to provide valuable insights into the strengths and challenges facing healthcare services in various parts of the nation.

By directly engaging with health professionals and visiting healthcare facilities, the Ministry aims to foster stronger communication and collaboration with regional health teams and identify areas that require attention to improve service delivery.

During the tour, the delegation will visit hospitals, health centers, and other medical facilities, with a focus on understanding the needs of both the healthcare providers and the communities they serve.

This initiative reflects the Ministry's commitment to improving healthcare services and ensuring equitable access to quality care for all Gambians, regardless of their location.

The five-day tour lead by PS Touray was a significant step in enhancing the overall healthcare infrastructure in The Gambia.

Ministry of Health Launches Nationwide Familiarization Tour to Assess Healthcare Delivery

On February 26, 2025, a high-level delegation, led by Permanent Secretary Yusupha Touray, along with all Directors from the Ministry of Health, departed from Banjul for a five-day nationwide familiarization tour.

The primary objective of the tour is to assess healthcare delivery across the country, engage with regional health teams, and inspect healthcare facilities in all regions of The Gambia.



 Permanent Secretary and senior management team of MoH on tour of health facilities.

Chinese Embassy and UK Health Security Agency Donate Critical Medical Equipment to Enhance the Country's Healthcare System

On the 7th of March 2025, a significant ceremony took place in Kotu, where the Chinese Embassy in The Gambia, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) The Gambia, made a generous donation of essential medical equipment to the Ministry of Health.

The donated supplies include 60 delivery beds, 5 anesthetics machines, 10 oxygen concentrators, and 1,000 dignity kits. This gesture marks a pivotal contribution to the Gambia's healthcare system, supporting efforts to improve maternal and child health services.

Hon. Minister receiving donations from the UK health Security

In a separate event in Kotu, the UK Health Security Agency also made an important donation of biomedical equipment to the National Public Health Laboratory as part of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Strengthening Project. This donation aims to strengthen public health security and preparedness in The Gambia.

The Honorable Minister of Health expressed heartfelt gratitude to the governments of China, the UNFPA, and the UK Health Security Agency for their invaluable support. The Minister assured that the donated equipment and supplies would be effectively utilized to enhance healthcare services and improve health outcomes for all Gambians.



Hon. Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmadou Lamin Samateh receiving donated items from UK Health Security Agency

These donations reinforce the commitment of international partners to strengthen the Gambia's healthcare infrastructure and ensure essential health services are accessible to all citizens. The contributions are expected to make a significant impact on the country's ability to provide quality healthcare, particularly in maternal and public health.

Ministry of Health Launches Digital Communication Training to Combat Health Misinformation

The Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) of the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and UNICEF Gambia, has kicked off a three-day training workshop focused on digital communication across all health regions in The Gambia. The initiative aims to provide health professionals with vital skills to counter the growing issue of misinformation and rumors, which pose significant challenges to public health initiatives.



Hon. Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmadou Lamin Samateh, UNFPA Country Representative, Ms. Ndeye Rose Sarr and The Chinese Ambassador Liu Jin

This comprehensive training program, which spans all regions of the country, is designed to equip the workforce with the tools necessary to navigate an increasingly complex information environment.

As the sessions progress, health professionals will be empowered to deliver accurate, evidence-based information to the public, ensuring that health messages reach communities effectively and efficiently.

The initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen public health communication in the face of emerging digital threats. By focusing on digital literacy, the training aims to create a more informed and resilient health workforce, better prepared to combat misinformation and safeguard public health efforts.



Digital Communication Training to Combat Health Misinformation in CRR



Digital Communication Training to Combat Health Misinformation in LRR

NPHL Celebrates Successful Graduation of First Cohort of Lab Assistants, Advancing Healthcare Workforce Training

The National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL), under the Ministry of Health, has achieved a significant milestone with the graduation of its first cohort of 21 Lab Assistants on February 13th, 2025, in Kotu. This event marks a pivotal step in the institution's efforts to enhance the country's healthcare system and improve public health outcomes.

The NPHL recognized the need for comprehensive skill development within its workforce and launched a robust training program aimed at strengthening the laboratory sector.

The training, which ran from October 2022 to September 2023, covered a wide range of crucial subjects, including Hematology, Clinical Microbiology (with a focus on Parasitology, Bacteriology, Mycology, and Virology), Basic Biomedical Equipment and Techniques, Clinical Chemistry, Histopathology, Cytology, Transfusion Medicine, Medical Terminology, Laboratory Code of Conduct, and Immunology. The curriculum was designed to ensure both theoretical knowledge and practical skills for the lab assistants.

The graduation ceremony not only recognized the achievements of the graduates but also underscored the NPHL's dedication to enhancing the quality of laboratory services. With this newly trained workforce, the NPHL is set to contribute to improved health management and more effective disease prevention strategies across the region.

This achievement was made possible thanks to generous funding from The Global Fund and the development of a standardized curriculum by an esteemed international organization. The successful training program highlights the critical importance of ongoing professional development in the healthcare sector, ensuring that the nation is equipped with skilled personnel to face future public health challenges.



Deputy Director of NPHL, Mr. Bakary Sanneh awarding certificates to the first cohort of 21 Lab Assistants at a ceremony held in NPHL, Kotu

The graduation ceremony not only recognized the achievements of the graduates but also underscored the NPHL's dedication to enhancing the quality of laboratory services. With this newly trained workforce, the NPHL is set to contribute to improved health management and more effective disease prevention strategies across the region.

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Genomics and Public Health Impacts on Public Health Laboratory

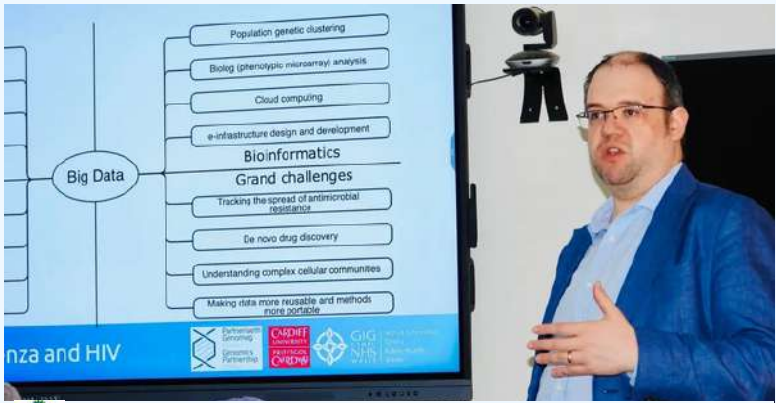
On the 28th of February, 2025, The Gambia had the distinct honor of hosting Professor Thomas Connor, a renowned genomic scientist and head of Public Health Genomics at Public Health Wales, at the National Public Health Laboratory. Prof. Connor delivered an enlightening presentation on "Genomics and Public Health," which left a profound impact on the Ministry of Health's team, including laboratory experts, surveillance officers, and data management professionals.

During his presentation, Prof. Connor emphasized the transformative role genomics plays in advancing public health initiatives. He highlighted how genomic research is revolutionizing patient care and deepening our understanding of population health trends.

His innovative approaches and the real-world applications of genomic science are poised to inspire continued improvements in health systems across The Gambia

The Ministry of Health extends its sincere gratitude to Prof. Connor for sharing his expertise and insights. Moving forward, the Gambia aims to leverage genomic science to tackle public health challenges and improve health outcomes for all citizens. This collaboration underscores the importance of scientific innovation in strengthening the nation's healthcare systems.

Prof. Thomas Connor's Insightful Presentation on Genomics and Public Health Impacts on Public Health Laboratory



 Presentation on Genomics and Public Health Impacts by Prof. Thomas

Second Cohort of Intermediate Field Epidemiology Training Program Launched in Tendaba with World Bank Support

On the 7th of March 2025, the Epidemiology and Disease Control Unit officially launched the second cohort of the Intermediate Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) in Tendaba, with the support of the World Bank.

This crucial capacity-building program is designed to equip public health professionals from various institutions with advanced skills in disease surveillance, early warning systems, and emergency response to public health threats.



 Mentors at the intermediate FETP training in Tendaba



 Dr Anna Jammeh, intermediate FETP Coordinator, cohort II presenting

The FETP Intermediate training plays a key role in safeguarding public health and strengthening the healthcare system in The Gambia. Through this initiative, public health experts will be empowered with the necessary tools to effectively respond to public health emergencies and mitigate potential threats, thereby ensuring a more resilient healthcare system.

This training program marks a significant step forward in enhancing The Gambia's preparedness against emerging health challenges, ultimately contributing to the protection and well-being of local communities. It underscores the country's commitment to building a robust public health workforce that can effectively manage public health

West African Health Experts Assess The Gambia's Readiness to Prevent and Respond to Mpox (Monkeypox)



29th January 2025 – A team of experts from the West African Health Organization (WAHO-OOAS) has arrived in The Gambia for a crucial mission aimed at evaluating the country's preparedness to prevent and respond to Mpox (Monkeypox). Over the course of their visit, the team has engaged with a variety of key institutions, including local hospitals, the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), the Epidemiology and Disease Control (EDC) Unit, the World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office, UNICEF Gambia, and The Gambia Red Cross Society.

The focus of the mission is to assess coordination efforts, strengthen surveillance systems, evaluate response strategies, and ensure the overall health infrastructure is ready for any potential Mpox outbreaks. Through these comprehensive evaluations, The Gambia is working towards building a more resilient health system, enhancing its ability to protect its population from emerging infectious diseases like Mpox.



 WAHO Experts in the Gambia to assess the country's readiness to prevent and respond to Mpox, a visit to The Gambia Red Cross Society

With collaborative efforts and the support of regional and international partners, The Gambia is reinforcing its commitment to ensuring public health safety and effective disease management in the future.

Minister of Health Addresses National Assembly on Availability of Essential Drugs in Public Health Facilities

On the 3rd February, 2025, the Honorable Minister of Health, alongside senior officials from the Ministry, appeared before the National Assembly to respond to concerns surrounding the availability of essential drugs in public health facilities nationwide.



Hon. Minister of Health Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh and the SMT at the National Assembly Select Committee hearing

The meeting provided a platform for the Minister to shed light on the challenges impacting the supply chain of medications and to reassure lawmakers and citizens that efforts are underway to resolve the situation.

During the engagement, the Hon. Minister emphasized the ongoing measures being taken to strengthen procurement systems, improve distribution networks, and foster stronger collaborations with key stakeholders.

These actions, the Minister noted, are vital to ensuring that essential drugs remain consistently available in public health facilities across the country.

Reaffirming the Ministry's commitment to ensuring uninterrupted access to life-saving medications, the Honourable Minister assured that every effort would be made to safeguard the health and well-being of citizens.

The Ministry of Health remains steadfast in its dedication to addressing these challenges and improving the delivery of healthcare

NHIS Successfully Rolled Out Across 67 Health Facilities Nationwide

The National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) has successfully rolled out National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) across 67 health facilities in all regions, ensuring that a larger segment of the population has improved access to healthcare services. The rollout, which spans all regions of the country, marks a significant step toward universal healthcare coverage and aims to alleviate the financial burden on Gambians seeking medical treatment.



NHIA Chief Executive Officer, Bia Mass Saine at the Contract signing for the roll out of NHIS

The announcement was made during a press conference, where health officials emphasized the importance of expanding healthcare access to ensure that every Gambian, regardless of their socio-economic status, can receive necessary medical care.

The NHIS is expected to reduce the gap in healthcare access, particularly in rural areas, and provide more affordable health services to the people of The Gambia.

This initiative is part of the government's ongoing efforts to improve the nation's healthcare infrastructure and services.

The NHIS will allow beneficiaries to access a range of medical services without incurring high out-of-pocket costs, offering coverage for both primary and secondary healthcare needs.

Officials also noted that the system would be regularly evaluated to ensure its effectiveness and to address any potential challenges that may arise during the implementation phase. The successful expansion of the NHIS is seen as a milestone in The Gambia's efforts to build a more equitable and sustainable healthcare system.



NHIA TEAM at the Contract signing for the roll out of NHIS

Health Communication Unit (HCU) Conducts GM Monitoring to All Regions

As part of its quarterly oversight activities, the Health Communication Unit has completed an eight-day monitoring visit aimed at evaluating the functionality of Grievance Mechanism (GM) committees, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) case management, and the implementation of a World Bank-funded project. The mission, which took place from February 4th to 10th, 2024, covered communities, construction sites, and health facilities across the North Bank West, North Bank East, and Lower River Regions.



HCU on Quarterly Monitoring on Grievance Management

Officials emphasized that the visit underscores the government's commitment to strengthening accountability, promoting gender equity, and improving service delivery under the World Bank-supported initiative. Recommendations and findings from the monitoring mission are expected to inform future interventions and capacity-building efforts across the targeted regions



HCU on Quarterly Monitoring on Grievance Management in NBER

The monitoring exercise involved systematic record reviews, on-site mentoring, and coaching of key personnel to address knowledge gaps and strengthen operational capacity.

Through this process, the Unit sought to ensure consistent and transparent grievance handling and enhance the response to GBV cases at the community and institutional levels.

Key objectives of the visit included assessing trends related to grievances, particularly GBV incidents; analyzing reports and data from GM committees and relevant structures; supporting and mentoring local teams to foster fair and effective procedures; identifying capacity gaps for future training; and evaluating the implementation of action plans over the reporting period.

Riders for Health Handed over 38 Ambulances and 6 Supervisory Vehicles to The Gambia's Ministry of Health



Newly Commission Ambulances by Riders for Health

February 22, 2025 – In a significant gesture aimed at bolstering the country’s healthcare system, Riders for Health – The Gambia has officially handed over 38 fully equipped ambulances and 6 supervisory pickup vehicles to the Ministry of Health. The ceremony took place at McCarthy Square in Banjul and was attended by several high-ranking officials, including the Vice President of The Gambia, the Hon. Minister of Health, Hon. Minister of Fisheries and Water Resources, Hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, alongside other key government representatives and partners. This is part of Riders for Health’s ongoing commitment to enhancing healthcare transport asset management, is expected to play a pivotal role in improving emergency medical response and access to healthcare services across the country.

The newly donated vehicles are equipped to handle a range of medical emergencies and will significantly contribute to saving lives by ensuring timely access to medical care, especially in remote and underserved regions.

"We extend our deepest gratitude to Riders for Health for their continued support and dedication to the well-being of the people of The Gambia," said the Minister of Health during the ceremony. "These vehicles are a crucial addition to our healthcare infrastructure and will undoubtedly strengthen our emergency response capabilities."

The handing over is a testament to the strong collaboration between Riders for Health and the Gambian government in improving healthcare delivery through better transport systems.



National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) Handed Over 18 Motorcycles to Surveillance Officers in NBWR

Banjul, The Gambia – January 9, 2025 – The National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) under the Ministry of Health has handed over 18 motorcycles to Surveillance Officers in the North Bank Region. This initiative is part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen malaria case-based surveillance and support The Gambia’s goal of malaria elimination.

The handover ceremony, which took place in the region, was attended by key stakeholders, including regional health officials, program coordinators, and Ministry of Health representatives. These motorcycles are intended to empower healthcare workers to reach remote areas more efficiently, ensuring timely reporting and rapid responses to malaria cases.

This strategic move underscores the government's commitment to enhancing the capacity of healthcare workers to engage with communities and drive forward the country’s malaria elimination efforts.

By improving access and mobility, the program aims to ensure better surveillance, quicker interventions, and a significant reduction in malaria transmission.



 **A Public Health Officer from North Bank Region**



 **Handing Over of 18 Motorcycles to Surveillance Officers in NBWR by NMCP**

Ministry of Health attends Cross-Border Meeting to Boost Malaria Elimination Efforts



 **Dr. Momodou T Nyassi, Director of Health Services speaking on behalf of the Gambian delegation**

On January 27, 2025, the Ministry of Health attended a significant five-day cross-border meeting in Dakar, Senegal, aimed at enhancing malaria control efforts in the region. Health officials from MoH, Senegal, the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), PATH, and JHPIEGO gathered to coordinate the distribution of long-lasting Insecticide-Treated Mosquito Nets (LLINs) scheduled for April and May 2025.

The meeting, supported by The Global Fund's Malaria Grant Cycle Seven (GC7), focused on key malaria elimination strategies, including Case-Based Surveillance, Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention, and health data digitization.

This collaborative effort builds on strong partnerships between The Gambia and Senegal that have been ongoing since 2018, and follows a planning session held in The Gambia in December 2024.

The initiative is part of a broader commitment to eliminate malaria by 2030, with the cross-border collaboration aimed at strengthening public health surveillance systems and ensuring the efficient delivery of malaria prevention measures.

Participants emphasized the importance of continued cooperation in tackling malaria, with the goal of achieving a malaria-free future for both nations.

The Gambia welcomes new WHO Country Rep Dr Nathan Nsubuga Bakyaïta



Dr Nathan Nsubuga Bakyaïta is the WHO Representative in The Gambia since 25 January 2025, leading over 26 personnel to provide high quality policy advice and technical support to The Gambia. He is a medical doctor with over 35 years of extensive experience in public health practice and management. Having worked in diverse duty stations, he has built relationships with partners in the health space, is results-driven manager and motivator of staff. He has a long and distinguished career in infectious disease control, disease surveillance, epidemic preparedness and response and Health Systems Strengthening. He has provided strategic and programmatic guidance to priority health programs including Reproductive Maternal Child Adolescent and Nutrition; HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria, Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), Immunization Programmes, etc. He is a keen reader, writer and researcher and has published in peer-reviewed journals and contributed to development of guidelines.

Ministry of Health Completes Training on National Health Observatory to Strengthen Health Data Management

The Ministry of Health, through its Health Management Information System (HMIS) under the Directorate of Planning and Information, has successfully concluded a comprehensive five-day training session for members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) from various departments within the Ministry.



The training, held from December 30, 2024, to January 3, 2025, focused on the National Health Observatory and aimed to enhance participants' ability to collect, analyze, and interpret health data.

The workshop, which brought together a diverse group of participants including staff from the Ministry of Health, as well as key partners such as Action Aid, The Gambia, the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS), the National Nutrition Agency, and the World Health Organization (WHO), was designed to empower participants with the skills needed to improve health service delivery.

This training initiative is an essential part of the Ministry's broader strategy to strengthen health systems, improve access to care, and enhance the overall well-being of the population by ensuring better data-driven decision-making in the health sector.

Through these efforts, the Ministry aims to continue advancing the health infrastructure and improve service delivery nationwide.



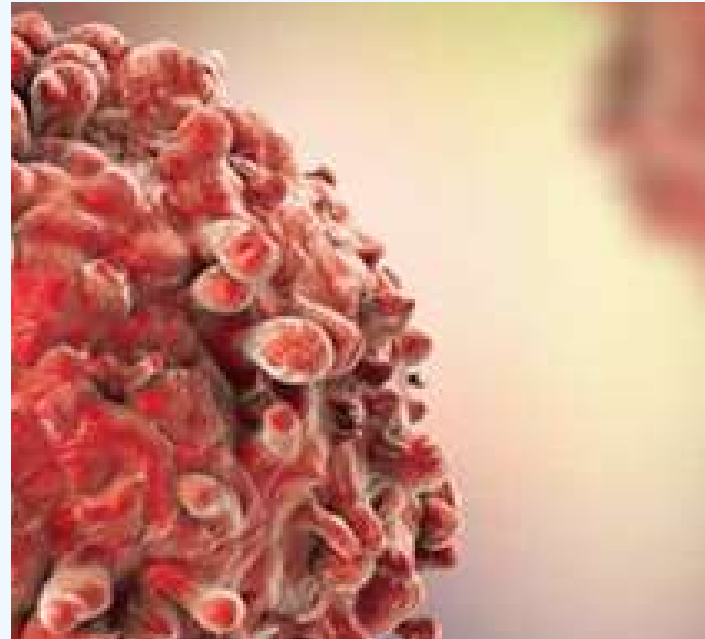
 **Hon. Minister of Health Dr. Ahmadou Lamin Samateh delivering a Statement on World Cancer Day 2025**

Dr. Samateh reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving cancer prevention, early detection, and access to quality care for all citizens. He acknowledged the continuing impact of cancer, which affects countless lives across the globe, but pointed to the vital role of awareness, early screening, and robust healthcare systems in saving lives.

The Minister's statement also called for increased collaboration from all sectors of society, including health professionals, policymakers, civil society organizations, communities, and patient support groups. "Together, let's build a future where prevention, treatment, and care reach every person, leaving no one behind," Dr. Samateh urged, emphasizing the importance of screening, staying informed, and supporting those affected by cancer.

Minister's Statement on World Cancer Day 2025: "United by Unique" in the Fight Against Cancer

In a heartfelt statement on World Cancer Day 2025, Hon. Dr. Ahmadou Lamin Samateh, Minister of Health, emphasized the importance of unity in the global fight against cancer. Speaking under the theme "United by Unique," the Minister highlighted the significance of recognizing each individual's unique journey with cancer while stressing that collective strength is key in overcoming the disease.



MoH Strengthens Public Health Capacities with WHO-Supported IHR/eSPAR Workshop

The MoH has taken a significant step toward enhancing its public health emergency response with a three-day workshop on the International Health Regulations (IHR) and eSPAR. Held from February 10th to 12th, 2025, at Kaira Konko in the Lower River Region, the workshop brought together key stakeholders to discuss and implement strategies for strengthening the country's public health capabilities.

The IHR (2005), a legally binding framework involving 196 Member States, requires nations to detect, assess, and report potential public health threats. As part of its commitment to these regulations, The Gambia is obligated to submit an annual report to the World Health Organization (WHO), outlining its public health activities and progress.

The workshop, funded by the WHO, aimed to ensure that activities are accurately documented using the eSPAR template, a tool designed to help countries assess their preparedness for health emergencies. The event attracted relevant stakeholders, including health professionals and public health experts, who actively participated in strengthening the country's public health infrastructure and ensuring compliance with IHR requirements.



 **Participants at the WHO-Supported IHR/eSPAR Workshop**



 **Participants at the WHO-Supported IHR/eSPAR Workshop**

Training of Healthcare Workers on Social Behaviour Change Communication Manual for Obstetric Fistula

From February 10th to 15th, 2025, sixty healthcare workers, primarily midwives from RMNCAH clinics and community health nurses from village health services, participated in an intensive training program focused on the Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) Manual for Obstetric Fistula. This initiative is part of a larger effort to improve the prevention and management of obstetric fistula (OF), a debilitating condition caused by prolonged obstructed labor.

Obstetric fistula is a preventable childbirth injury that often results in chronic incontinence, leading to social isolation, stigma, and psychological trauma for affected women. It remains one of the most severe consequences of neglected childbirth, with an estimated 100,000 new cases annually worldwide.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reports that more than two million women are living with untreated fistulas. In The Gambia, a 2020 situation analysis revealed a prevalence of 0.46 to 1.45 per 1,000 women, underscoring the importance of raising awareness and enhancing healthcare responses to the condition.

This achievement was made possible thanks to generous funding from The Global Fund and the development of a standardized curriculum by an esteemed international organization. The successful training program highlights the critical importance of ongoing professional development in the

The RMNCAH program developed the SBCC manual as a tool to increase the knowledge and skills of healthcare providers in effectively addressing obstetric fistula. The training program, which utilized this manual, was aimed at equipping participants with the ability to conduct step-down training for other service providers at both the health facility and community levels. This collaborative effort is designed to strengthen the capacity of health professionals to prevent and manage obstetric fistula and support affected women in their recovery.



Training of Healthcare Workers on SBCC Manual for Obstetric Fistula

The initiative is expected to have a significant impact on improving healthcare delivery for women at risk or living with obstetric fistula, enhancing both the clinical and social support needed to address the condition effectively.

WASH Under Directorate of Public Health Services Conducted Climate Risk Assessment for WASH Session with Focus on Climate-Resilient Solutions

The Climate Risk Assessment for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services, organized by the WASH Unit under the Directorate of Public Health Services with technical support from UNICEF, successfully concluded on February 21, 2025, at Sindola Safari Lodge in Kanilai.

Over a span of three days, the session brought together key stakeholders from the government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to assess the hazards, exposures, vulnerabilities, and climate risks that affect WASH services in The Gambia.

The primary objective of the gathering was to develop a comprehensive Climate-Resilient WASH document that will aid in resource mobilization and inform sustainable sector planning



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90 Health Care Workers Trained Nationwide on Malaria Case Management

The Ministry of Health (MoH), through the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP), has successfully conducted in-service training for 87 clinicians across the country, representing 96% of its original target of 90 health care workers. The training was delivered in three batches and forms part of ongoing efforts to enhance malaria case management nationwide.

This capacity-building initiative responds to the critical need for improved diagnosis and treatment of both uncomplicated and severe malaria at all levels of the health care system. The training was guided by The National Malaria Treatment Guidelines, focusing on strengthening the ability of frontline health workers to detect malaria cases early and manage them appropriately.

The programme is aligned with the country’s broader malaria elimination strategy and emphasizes the shift from a syndromic approach under the Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses (IMNCI) to a confirmatory diagnosis-based approach. By improving clinical practices at the health facility level, the training aims to reduce malaria-related morbidity and mortality across the country.



Nationwide Training on Malaria Case Management by NMCP

Officials from the NMCP expressed satisfaction with the high turnout and engagement during the sessions and reaffirmed the Ministry’s commitment to equipping health professionals with the necessary tools and knowledge to combat malaria effectively.



Nationwide Training on Malaria Case Management by NMCP

WASH Unit and United Purpose/Self-help Africa Conduct Joint Monitoring of Sanitation Projects in Five Communities

March 4, 2025 – The WASH Unit, in collaboration with United Purpose/Self-help Africa, carried out a two-day comprehensive joint monitoring exercise across five key locations to assess ongoing sanitation facility construction efforts. The field visits, conducted in Kartong, Bullock, Kemoto, Tankulari, and the Tambana Oyster land site, focused on the progress and quality of ecological sanitation (Ecosan) toilet projects.

The two-day assessment aimed to ensure the construction of the Ecosan toilets adhered to both structural and environmental standards. The joint monitoring team conducted physical site inspections to observe the stage of completion of each facility, with particular attention to materials used, construction methods, and compliance with design specifications.



WASH Unit and United Purpose/Self-help Africa on Joint Monitoring of Sanitation Projects



WASH Unit and United Purpose/Self-help Africa on Joint Monitoring of Sanitation Projects

Further evaluations assessed the alignment of the projects with environmental safety measures and the effective implementation of Ecosan principles. These principles include urine diversion, composting capabilities, and proper ventilation to promote sustainable and hygienic sanitation solutions.

The collaborative monitoring effort reflects a continued commitment to improving sanitation infrastructure in rural communities through sustainable and environmentally conscious approaches. Recommendations from the visit will guide ongoing construction activities and help address any gaps to ensure the successful completion of the facilities.

The monitoring team expressed satisfaction with the overall progress while emphasizing the need for continued quality control to uphold standards and meet the sanitation needs of the targeted communities.

Public Health Office Conducts Crucial Bakery Inspections in Sami District During Ramadan

During the month of Ramadan (March 1st to 5th, 2025), the Public Health Office of Sami Karantaba carried out essential inspections of 15 bakeries in the Sami district, a key effort to safeguard public health amid increased bread consumption during the holy month.

The inspections targeted several communities including Jallubeh, Banta Koto, Pachonki, Bayaba, Demfai, and Karantaba Toro.

The primary focus of the inspections was to assess the bakeries' compliance with health and safety standards. Inspectors thoroughly examined the physical environment, including ventilation, ceiling conditions, and personal hygiene practices of the bakers.

The proximity of the bakeries to toilets, as well as the availability and quality of water supply, were also scrutinized.



Bakery Inspections in Sami District, CRR During the holy month of Ramadan

Following the assessments, bakers were given a list of recommended improvements to address any identified deficiencies within a specified timeline. Follow-up visits were scheduled to ensure compliance. Additionally, the inspections concluded with a series of health education sessions, highlighting the importance of Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in bread production.

Bakers were reminded of the critical need to adhere to hygienic practices and occupational health and safety standards to maintain a healthy population, especially during this busy season. This initiative underscores the commitment to ensuring that food safety and hygiene standards are upheld during the high-demand period of Ramadan.



81 Community Signal Detectors Trained to Boost Event-Based Disease Surveillance In URR



Participants at the Community Signal Detectors Training to Boost Event-Based Disease Surveillance In URR



Participants at the Community Signal Detectors Training to Boost Event-Based Disease Surveillance In URR

In a bid to strengthen community-level disease monitoring and early detection, the EDC Program Office, in collaboration with the Regional Health Directorate, has conducted a comprehensive training session on Community Event-Based Surveillance (CEBS) for local signal detectors.

The training, aimed at enhancing active case detection and prompt reporting of notifiable diseases, brought together 81 participants from the grassroots. Among those trained were 79 Village Health Workers (VHWs), one Red Cross volunteer, and one member of the Village Surveillance Group (VSG).

Officials noted that empowering local signal detectors with the necessary skills and knowledge plays a crucial role in early warning systems and helps to improve the health response to potential outbreaks. The initiative forms part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the region's public health surveillance system and ensure that health threats are detected and addressed in a timely manner.

The newly trained detectors are expected to serve as the first line of alert in their communities, identifying and reporting unusual health events that may signal the onset of an outbreak.

Dear Readers,

As we reflect on our shared progress and look ahead with determination, I am pleased to share with you key developments from the Ministry of Health in our ongoing journey to strengthen The Gambia's health system.

One of our top priorities remains the development of robust healthcare infrastructure that meets the needs of our growing population. Across the country, we are investing in the construction and rehabilitation of health facilities to ensure Gambians have access to quality services closer to where they live. Recent projects include the upgrading of our RCH sites into fully functional Primary Health Post and the establishment of modern diagnostic units in our General Hospitals.

At the same time, we are intensifying efforts to strengthen service delivery. This includes improving essential drug availability, expanding the health workforce, and upgrading our emergency response systems. These efforts are already bearing fruit, with more communities reporting improved access to maternal, child, and emergency health services.

Equally important is our commitment to implementing sound health policies that guide sustainable progress. The Ministry is actively operationalizing key strategic documents, including the National Health Policy and the Essential Health Services Package, aligning them with our universal health coverage goals. These policies provide a clear roadmap for equity, quality, and accountability in health service delivery.

These achievements are not possible without the dedication of our healthcare workers, the collaboration of our development partners, and the trust of the Gambian people. Together, we are building a health system that is resilient, responsive, and ready to meet the future.

Yours in service,

Dr. Ahmadou Lamin Samateh
Honorable Minister of Health



Hon. Minister of Health, Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh

HEALTH - TIPS

Ending Child Marriage for a Brighter Future

Every child has the fundamental right to grow, learn, and determine their own future. Yet, countless children, particularly girls are still being forced into marriage before they are physically, emotionally, or mentally ready. This deeply harmful practice can result in:

- Teenage pregnancy, significantly increasing the risk of both maternal and newborn mortality
- Interrupted education, curtailing lifelong opportunities and independence
- Exposure to domestic violence and abuse, jeopardizing their safety and well-being
- Children belong in classrooms, not in marriages.

Let's work together to build a world where every child is free to grow, free to learn, and free to choose their own path.

Caring for Your Mind and Body Through Illness

Being diagnosed with a life-threatening illness whether it's hypertension, cancer, HIV/AIDS, or Tuberculosis can feel overwhelming. It's normal to experience fear, stress, or even moments of hopelessness. But remember this: you are not alone.

- Consult a healthcare professional for proper guidance and treatment
- Lean on support—confide in a trusted family member, friend, or spiritual leader
- Nurture your well-being—get enough rest, eat nourishing foods, pray or meditate, and engage in uplifting activities

Your mental health is just as vital as your physical recovery. Stay strong. Speak up. Support is just one call away.

Call 1025—we're here for you.

HEALTH JOKES

In the heart of Serekunda, a man named Demba had a problem—he kept feeling dizzy every morning after breakfast. Concerned, he went to the local clinic. The nurse, Awa, looked him over and asked, “What do you eat every morning?” Demba proudly replied, “Tapalapa bread, attaya, and sometimes a whole mango.” The nurse nodded wisely and said, “Ahh, you're just overdosing on sweetness—too much sugar, too much pride!” Demba blinked. “Pride?” Awa laughed, “Yes, because only someone with a big ego thinks they can eat all that and still walk straight!”

Later, Demba was sent to Doctor Ceesay, who decided to run some tests. He checked Demba's blood pressure, heart rate, and even asked if he had stress. “Doctor, I'm only stressed when the attaya pot finishes,” Demba said seriously. Dr. Ceesay chuckled, “Well, that's a national emergency, not a health condition!” He prescribed Demba a healthier breakfast—millet porridge and one mango slice. “Just one?” Demba gasped. “You want me to make the mango cry?”

On his way home, Demba stopped at the local market and told his friend Binta, “Doctor says I must respect the mango now.” Binta laughed so hard she nearly dropped her tomatoes. “Tell the mango it's now a VIP!” she said. From that day on, Demba became known as **Mango Man** in the neighbourhood, and every time someone felt dizzy, they'd say, “Careful! That's how Mango Man started!”

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

We are pleased to welcome you to this edition of the Ministry of Health newsletter—your trusted source for timely updates, policy highlights, and inspiring stories from across our health system.

As we continue working towards building a healthier nation, this issue brings to light the critical efforts being made in areas such as immunization, maternal and child health, mental health reform, and the fight against infectious diseases. You will also find spotlights on key campaigns, community outreach programmes, and innovative health initiatives driving real impact in the lives of our people.

This newsletter is more than just a bulletin, it's a platform to celebrate progress, acknowledge challenges, and amplify the voices of health workers, partners, and communities making a difference every day.

We thank you for your continued engagement and invite you to share your feedback, stories, and ideas for future editions. Together, let's stay informed, inspired, and united in our mission to improve health and well-being for all.

Warm regards,

The Editorial Team

Committed to a Healthier Future



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