

Knowledge Institutions in Africa and their development 1960-2020

The Gambia

Introduction

This report about the development of the knowledge institutions in The Gambia was made as part of the preparations for the AfricaKnows! Conference (2 December 2020 – late February 2021) in Leiden and elsewhere, see www.africaknows.eu.



Reports like these can never be complete, and there might also be mistakes. Additions and corrections are welcome! Please send those to dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl

Highlights

- 1 The Gambia is a small country, with not many inhabitants. Its population increased from 0.4 million in 1960 via 1 million in 1990 to 2.4 million at the moment.
- 2 The Gambia's literacy rate stood at 51% in 2015, with women much behind men.
- 3 The net primary enrolment rate for primary education was 81% in 2019 and has improved a lot recently. Gross enrolment rates for secondary and tertiary levels were 50% (in 2010) and only 3% (in 2012) respectively.
- 4 The education index, part of the human development index, increased from .183 to .386 (its range is between 0 and 1), and it improved between 1990 and 2018, but not consistently everywhere. Regional inequality slightly increased in The Gambia, but is not very high.
- 5 The figures for Mean Years of Education for Adults increased from 1.2 to 3.7 and they did so consistently and everywhere. Particularly after 2000 regional inequality decreased. The Expected Years of Education for Children increased from 5.1 to 9.5, but the increase is not consistent everywhere. Also here regional inequality decreased after 2000.
- 6 Currently there are 3 public and 6 private tertiary knowledge institutions. The first ones started in 1979/1980. Most can be found in and around the capital city Banjul. There are ca 6,000 students in the country's higher education institutions.
- 7 The situation around think tanks is unclear, and we counted eight museums in The Gambia, of which the first one only started in 1985.

Part 1: The Story

Introduction: The Gambia's demographic and education development

The Gambia, officially the Republic of the Gambia, is located in West Africa. It is surrounded by Senegal except for its western coast on the Atlantic Ocean.

The Gambia gained independence in 1965. Before that, it was partly a British colony and partly a British protectorate from 1821 to 1965¹. Following the Gambia becoming a republic in 1970, presidents were Sir Dawda Jawara, Yayja Jammeh after a coup d' état in 1994, and Adama Barrow after protests and elections in 2016².

The Gambia has a population of over 2,400,000 people, on an area of 10,120 square kilometers of land. Its population has increased to this number from 365,047 in 1960, and the people are scattered around the Gambia River, with major cities around the mouth of the river along the Atlantic coast³. 59% of the population lives in cities, which is an increase from the 12% it was in 1960. The Gambia's capital is Banjul (current population: 34,589), while its largest city is Serekunda, which has a current population of 340,000. The life expectancy in the Gambia went from an average of 32.9 in 1960 to 63.3 in 2020, while the total fertility rate dropped from 6.3 births per woman in 1960 to 5.3 births per woman in 2020. Despite this drop in fertility, youth still make up most of the Gambia's population, with 44% (or 1.062.130 people) being in the age group of 0-14 years old and an additional 20.1% of 15-24 year-olds⁴.

¹ Wikipedia (2019). 'Kolonie en Protectorate Gambia' https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kolonie_en_Protectoraat_Gambia, accessed 17-01-2020.

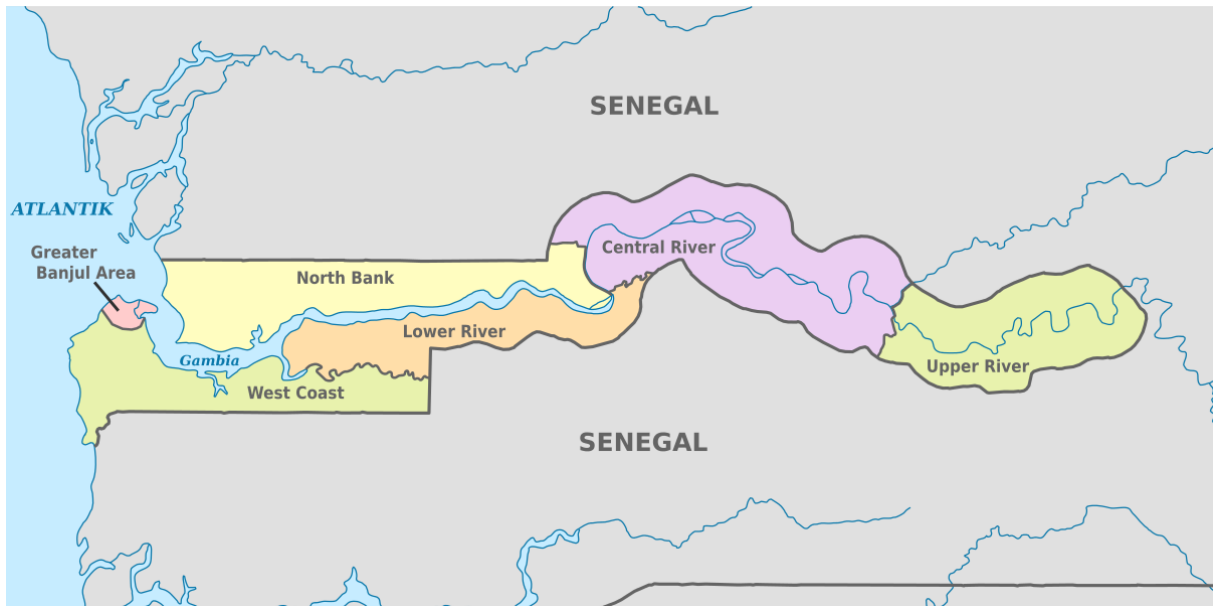
² Wikipedia (2020). 'The Gambia Presidency' https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gambia#Presidency, accessed 17-01-2020.

³ CIA Factbook (n.d.). 'The Gambia' <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ga.html>, accessed 19-01-2020.

⁴ All data in this paragraph (unless otherwise mentioned) from: Worldometer (n.d.). 'The Gambia Population' <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/gambia-population/>, accessed 18-01-2020.



Source: <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/pictures/maps/thegambia.html>



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a8/Gambia%2C_administrative_divisions_-_de_-_colored.svg/1205px-Gambia%2C_administrative_divisions_-_de_-_colored.svg.png

Literacy and enrolment

According to UNESCO⁵, the literacy rate in The Gambia was 51% in 2015, and much higher for men (62%) than for women (42%), In total the assessment is that 560,000 people were illiterate in that year, of which 220,000 men and 340,000 women.

In 2019 the net enrolment rate for 370,000 primary-school-age children (7-12 in the Gambia) was 81%; in 2010 it was only 63%. The gross enrolment rate for 300,000 secondary-school-age children (13-18) was 50% in 2010 (women 49% and men 51%, so not much difference

⁵ <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/gm>

here; later figures are not yet available). For tertiary education (200,000 people in the 19-23 age bracket) the gross enrolment rate was only 3% in 2012, with a dominance of men. This would mean only 6,000 students in higher education institutions in the country.

Regional differentiation of education results in The Gambia, 1990-2018

The information provided by the Globaldatalab about the subregional human development index, its components and its indicators (<https://globaldatalab.org/shdi>) provides data for the period between 1990 and 2018, and uses eight regions. Between 1990 and 2018 the population of The Gambia as a whole increased with 238%, but regional differences are considerable: but partly based on major administrative and hence population changes during this period. See table 1 in part 2: “the data”.

The Globaldatalab provides data about the education index (one of the three indexes that together form the Human Development Index), and about two relevant indicators: mean years of schooling, showing the average education level of the adult population per region, and expected years of education, showing the expected number of years current children will attend schools. This excludes the religious, koranic schools and only deals with the official, state-based, school system.

We present the data for the years 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2018 (the latest year available at the moment). Please see tables 2-4 in part 2.

Education index

For the education index as a whole, The Gambia shows gradual progress of education conditions, but with deteriorations between 2000 and 2010 for Basse (Upper River, in the East), and Kuntaur (part of Central River, towards the East), and for Janjabureh between 2010 and 2018 (the other part of Central River). However, the fastest improvements for the period as a whole can be seen in Janjabureh, that started at the lowest level in 1990. In 2010 and 2018 Kuntaur has the lowest level, and improvements have been slow there if we compare 1990 and 2018. However, the slowest improvements took place in Basse, the most eastern part of The Gambia. Banjul, the capital city, by far has the best education conditions in all years, followed by Kenifing and Brikama, all close to Banjul. Regional inequality in The Gambia slightly increased between 1990 and 2018.

Mean Years of Education for Adults

For adults in The Gambia, the results of education efforts are still rather poor, although with major improvements throughout the period, and everywhere, to some degree. Banjul has the best results, and Kuntaur always the worst, but this position was shared with Basse in 2018. Basse also was the area with the slowest improvements (and with only one year of formal education for an average adult there one of the worst regions in Africa). The fastest improvements can be noted for Mansakonko, the Lower River District, but from a very low level. For adults the regional inequality of education results has somewhat diminished.

Expected Years of Education for Children

Children’s education prospects have improved consistently for The Gambia as a whole and for all its regions, with the exception of Kuntaur and Basse between 2000 and 2010. The best situation exists in Banjul throughout the period, and the worst one first in Janjabureh, and that has shifted to Kuntaur, also the area with the slowest improvements. The fastest improvements have taken place in Janjabureh. Regional inequality has slightly improved. There is still a long way to go, particularly towards the east of the country.

The Gambia’s tertiary knowledge development

There are currently three officially recognized universities in the Gambia, two of which are public and one is private (foreign). In addition, there are museums and think tanks. First, information will be given about the public and private universities and other tertiary education institutions, and then on the think tanks, and museums.

In the table below the historical development of universities is shown.

The Gambia’s universities, and other tertiary education institutions, 1960-2019

Type	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
public	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
Private	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	6
total	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	7	9

Public universities and other tertiary education institutions in The Gambia

Tertiary education in The Gambia only started during the 1980s. The Gambia currently has two acknowledged public universities, one of which is a predominantly online university (EUCLID university) that is an intergovernmental institution under the United Nations Treaty and which appears to only offer master and doctorate levels. The other, the University of the Gambia, offers bachelors and masters courses in all fields and a PhD in some. The Gambia also has several other institutions for tertiary education, of which one is also public, we think.



The (Public) University of the Gambia: <https://s3.eu-north-1.amazonaws.com/images.free-apply.com/uni/gallery/lg/1027000003/7e72ccd08c21d16c280abedefa08e711f24a7b35.jpg>

While 4ICU is not completely trustworthy in reporting student numbers, according to the website, the University of the Gambia has between 2,000 and 2,999 students. For an age

group (15-24) of 485,220⁶, this means that the percentage of people attending university is quite low. Earlier we saw that the total number of students was ca 6,000 (in 2012), which would mean that the University of the Gambia caters for many of them.

Private universities and other tertiary education institutions in The Gambia

The Gambia has only one official private university, which is a campus of the American International University West Africa, which focuses on medicine and health but offers some degree programs in other fields (such as business administration and computer science). Tuition fees are between 3500 and 4900 euro per semester⁷, while The Gambia's GDP per capita adjusted by purchasing power parity was around 1500 dollars, or around 1300 euro⁸.



The (Private) American International University in West Africa:

<https://www.aiu.edu.gm/images/university-building-hero.jpg>

The Gambia also has several other private institutes for tertiary education though often it is uncertain whether these institutions are still operational. See table 6.

Note on the geography of higher education institutions in The Gambia

If we combine the geographical information in tables 5 and 6 we get the following result. With only few inhabitants in 2018 (40,000) the administrative area of the capital city Banjul stands out as the region with by far the most tertiary institutions per million inhabitants, followed by nearby Brikama (particularly in the biggest city of the country Serekunda), and Mansakonko. Four regions do not have any tertiary institutions yet.

Think tanks in The Gambia

⁶ All data in this paragraph (unless otherwise mentioned) from: Worldometer (n.d.). 'The Gambia Population' <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/gambia-population/>, accessed 18-01-2020.

⁷ American International University West Africa (n.d.). 'Tuition Fees' <http://www.aiu.edu.gm/tuitions-fees.html>. Accessed 21-01-2020.

⁸ TradingEconomics (n.d.). 'Gambia GDP per capita PPP' <https://tradingeconomics.com/gambia/gdp-per-capita-ppp>, accessed 21-01-2020.

Information about think tanks in The Gambia is sparse and very unclear. One national think tank was found, but there might be others as well. See table 8.

Museums in the Gambia

There are several museums in The Gambia that were found more or less online (we found eight museums). Most museums are under the National Centre of Arts And Culture (NCAC), which is a semi-autonomous institution, established by an Act of Parliament⁹. As far as we know, the first museum only started in the 1980s. See table 9.

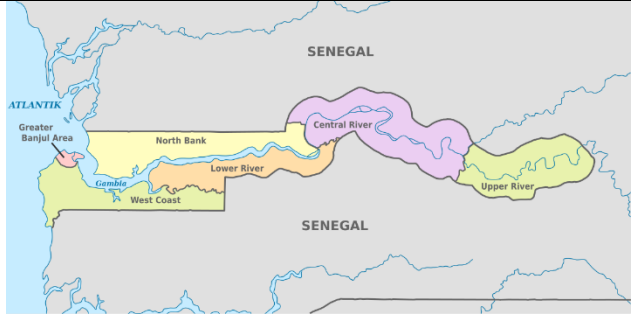


The Gambia National Museum: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gambia_National_Museum

⁹ NCAC (n.d.). 'About Us' <http://ncac.gm/about-us/>, accessed 21-01-2020.

Part 2: the data

Map and Table 1: Regions in The Gambia, and population in 1990 and 2018

Map	Region / Région	Population x 1000		'18/'90
		1990	2018	
	1 Banjul	170	40	0.24
	2 Basse	100	300	3.00
	3 Brikama	110	790	7.18
	4 Janjabureh	110	180	1.64
	5 Kenifing	120	440	3.67
	6 Kerewan	110	270	2.45
	7 Kuntaur	120	140	1.17
	8 Mansakonko	110	120	1.09
Total The Gambia		960	2280	2.38

Source for tables 1-4: Globaldatalab, version 4.0 <https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/shdi/>

Map:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a8/Gambia%2C_administrative_divisions_-_de_-_colored.svg/1205px-Gambia%2C_administrative_divisions_-_de_-_colored.svg.png

Globaldata lab uses eight regions, where all available administrative maps only show six, with different names. This is the connection:

- 1 Banjul = part of Greater Banjul (and with a major reduction in the 1990s, no longer with the city of Serekunda)
- 2 Basse = Upper River
- 3 Brikama = West Coast (or Western) (with a major extension in the 1990s, now including the city of Serekunda)
- 4 Janjabureh = part of Central River
- 5 Kanifeng = part of Greater Banjul
- 6 Kerewan = North Bank
- 7 Kuntaur = part of Central River
- 8 Mansakonko = Lower River

Table 2: The Gambia: Education index 1990-2018¹⁰

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
1 Banjul	279	394	437	518	1.86
2 Basse	145	196	187	213	1.47
3 Brikama	202	279	389	460	2.28
4 Janjabureh	110	152	290	276	2.51
5 Kenifing	265	372	437	499	1.88
6 Kerewan	125	171	248	305	2.44
7 Kuntaur	128	173	166	189	1.48

¹⁰ The HDI data, and its components go from 0 (worst level) to 1 (best level). We present the figures x 1000. The inequality figure is the highest value divided by the lowest value in a particular year.

8 Mansakonko	150	203	357	373	2.49
Total	183	254	335	386	2.11
Inequality	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	

Table 3: The Gambia, Regional data for 'mean years of schooling'

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
1 Banjul	2.6	4.2	4.5	6.0	2.31
2 Basse	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.0	2.00
3 Brikama	1.1	1.7	3.3	4.8	4.36
4 Janjasureh	0.7	1.2	2.4	1.9	2.71
5 Kenifing	2.3	3.7	4.4	5.7	2.48
6 Kerewan	0.6	1.0	1.4	2.0	3.33
7 Kuntaur	0.3	0.5	0.7	1.0	3.33
8 Mansakonko	0.5	0.8	2.3	2.5	5.00
Total	1.2	2.0	2.8	3.7	3.08
Inequality	8.7	8.4	6.4	6.0	

Table 4: The Gambia, Regional data for 'expected years of schooling'

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
1 Banjul	6.9	9.2	10.3	11.4	1.65
2 Basse	4.7	6.2	5.7	6.5	1.38
3 Brikama	6.0	8.0	10.1	10.9	1.82
4 Janjasureh	3.1	4.1	7.5	7.6	2.45
5 Kenifing	6.7	8.9	10.1	11.1	1.66
6 Kerewan	3.8	5.0	7.3	8.6	2.26
7 Kuntaur	4.2	5.6	5.1	5.6	1.33
8 Mansakonko	4.8	6.4	10.1	10.4	2.17
Total	5.1	6.8	8.7	9.5	1.86
Inequality	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.0	

Table 5: Public universities, and other tertiary education institutions in The Gambia (4ICU World Rank between brackets).

University	Year of establishment	(current) location of campus(es)
The Gambia College since 1980. Presumably public. Founded in 1952 as Yundum Teachers Training College. In 1955 it split in to the Yundum College, the Gambia School of Nursing and Midwifery, the School of Agriculture, and the School of Public Health. In 1978 these separate institutions merged to form	1980 (1952, 1955, 1978)	Banjul, Brikama

The Gambia College. It newly opened in 1980. It closed in March 1981 due to major disturbances by students but reopened in October 1982. After the Gambia College Act was passed in 1989 ,which required the college to provide further education, it expanded in the 1990s.		
The University of the Gambia (UTG) (https://www.utg.edu.gm/) since 1999. (4ICU rank: 2 in The Gambia, 10001 worldwide)	1999	Serekunda
EUCLID University https://www.euclid.int/	In The Gambia since 2013	Brufut Greater Banjul Online; one of its headquarters in The Gambia, see: https://www.euclid.int/contact.asp

Sources: Wikipedia, university websites and 4ICU. The WHED website does not provide any information for The Gambia, except that there is one higher education institution. See: <https://www.whed.net/home.php>

Table 6: Private universities in the Gambia (4ICU World Rank between brackets).

University	Year of establishment	(current) location of campus (es)	Religious affiliation
Rural Development Institute (RDI) (https://www.facebook.com/RURAL-Development-Institute-RDI-247279335452087/) since 1979	1979	Soma	No
Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) (http://gtti.gm/) since 1980. Interesting: GTTI as part of its mandate continues to complement government’s efforts in the attainment of its various development blueprints such as the National Development Plan (2018 – 2021). It is against this backdrop that the government of the Gambia recognizes the need to transform GTTI into a University of Science, Engineering and Technology (USET). The Emerging Centre will be mentored by Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana and De Montfort University (DMU) in the United Kingdom.	1980	Serekunda	
Gambia Hotel School (GHS) / Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI)	1981	Banjul	No

(https://www.gthi.gm/) between 1979 and 1981.			
Management Development Institute (MDI) (https://www.mdi.edu.gm/) since 1982	1982	Serekunda	No
International Open University (IOU) (https://iou.edu.gm/) Established in 2007 as the Islamic Online University. In 2020 the name changed to the current one.	2007	Kanifing (HQ) (Distance learning)	Yes
American International University West Africa (AIUWA) (http://www.aiu.edu.gm/) (4ICU rank: 1 in The Gambia, 9350 worldwide)	In The Gambia since 2011	Banjul	No
Suna Institute of Science and Technology (SIST) (http://suna.edu.gm/) since 2013	2013	Brikama	No
Legacy University (https://legacyuniversitygm.org/) Offers bilingual education. Not sure which other language besides English.	Unknown (Facebook page dates from 2017, website dates from 2020)	Banjul	No
International Business College, The Gambia (IBC) (https://ibcgambia.wordpress.com/about/)	Unknown	Bakau	No

Sources: Wikipedia, University websites and 4ICU

Table 7: Geographical distribution of The Gambia's higher education institutions

Region	Public tertiary institutions	Private tertiary institutions	Total tertiary institutions	Number of tertiary institutions per million inhabitants
1 Banjul	1	3	4	100.0
2 Basse			0	0
3 Brikama (Serekunda, Bakau, Brikama, Brufut)	3	4	7	8.9
4 Janjabureh			0	0
5 Kenifing		1	1	2.3
6 Kerewan			0	0
7 Kuntaur			0	0
8 Mansakonko		1	1	8.3
Total	4	9	13	5.7

For population numbers in 2018 (needed for the calculation of the last column) see table 1. Table 7 includes all locations of tertiary institutions, including subsidiaries. Regions: see map and table 1, earlier in part 2.

Table 8: Think tanks in The Gambia

Think Tank	Year established	Where
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Gambia National Think Tank (GAMNATT). <i>Might not be operational any longer. Website account has been suspended.</i>	X	X
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Table 9: Museums in The Gambia

Name	Year established and ownership	Where
The Gambia National Museum (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gambia_National_Museum)	1985 (NCAC)	Banjul
National Museum of Albreda & Juffureh Village (https://www.lonelyplanet.com/the-gambia/albreda-juffureh-kunta-kinteh-island/attractions/national-museum-of-albreda/a/poi-sig/1303048/1327769) (https://www.accessgambia.com/information/jufure-village.html)	1996 (NCAC)	Juffureh
Tanji Village Museum (https://www.accessgambia.com/information/tanje-village-museum.html)	1997, private	Tanji
Kachikally Museum and Crocodile Pool (https://www.accessgambia.com/information/bakau-kachikally.html)	2004 private	Bakau
Arch 22 Museum (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arch_22)	NCAC	Banjul
African Heritage Museum/Centre (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Heritage_Museum)	?	Bakau
Gunjur Village Museum Gambia (http://gunjurmuseum.com/)	initiated by Lamin M. Bojang	Gunjur
Kerr Batch Ethnographic Museum & Stone Circles (http://www.world-guides.com/africa/western-africa/the-gambia/the_gambia_museums.html) & (https://ncac.gm/cultural-heritage/)	NCAC	Nyanga Bantang

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