

the justice and security system – and provides recommendations for reforms of some security and justice institutions. The Government shall publish a white paper by 25 May 2022, identifying the measures that will be taken to implement the TRRC recommendations.

In relation to SSR, key milestones include the development of an overarching framework, comprising of the National Security Policy (2019), the National Security Strategy (2020), the Security Sector Reform Strategy (2020) and the Defence Policy (2021). Overall, however, the implementation of the SSR process has progressed at a slow pace. Among many factors, this situation is attributed to the political environment focused on the election cycle of 2021-2022, the limited institutional capacity and the lack of strong political engagement. The challenge of engaging political and security sector institutions' leadership in this process is significant, when considered against institutional capacity, vested interests, legacy issues, and the political sensitivity of rightsizing reforms. Security reform should address the needs of all from a gender sensitive and human rights based approach. Moreover, frustration at the pace of change is evident both within the security sector institutions and among The Gambian public, where significant challenges remain if The Gambia's population is to enjoy greater human security. The Gambia is a signatory to many conventions at global and regional level to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Unfortunately, discriminatory practices and Gender Based Violence are still present in the country.

In relation to migration management, The Gambia launched its National Migration Policy in December 2020 and has endorsed the United Nation's Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Gambia Immigration Department (GID), as one of the security forces, is part and parcel of the above mentioned security strategies and policies, and it is currently drafting its Reforms Agenda 2021-2024. The Gambia is also a signatory of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. The country's borders are porous, blighted by frequent localized land disputes and exploited by sustained irregular migratory trends and criminal networks on land and at sea, as well as transnational crime including drug trafficking demonstrated by several substantial drug seizures over the last years. While the overall security situation remains stable, the border has experienced an increase of violence with the confrontations between the ECOMIG and then Senegalese forces and the Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (MFDC). These generate flows of internally displaced persons and increasing numbers of Senegalese refugees from the regions affected and thereby impact security and stability at the border regions in The Gambia. Furthermore, in recent years, The Gambia has become a country of transit and return for migrants.

Against this background, the EU's interest is that The Gambia remains a stable country where democracy is entrenched, and that it maintains good relations with its neighbours. As illustrated in other countries of the region, setbacks coming from the security forces are not uncommon and, therefore, engaging in security sector reform is a way to mitigate this risk. This action will help maintain the EU as a key partner in the security sector in direct continuity of EU support to the ECOMIG mission and EDF projects on SSR. With a focus on security, the action will primarily support the Gambian Police Force (GPF) and focus on human – and in particular women – rights. After two decades of dictatorship, the Gambian population still has to learn to trust security services, while the latter need to earn this trust by professionalising into service provision to the benefit of the population. The GID will also be supported by reinforcing border management and countering migrant smuggling.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

Five years following the transition in The Gambia and the launch of the SSR process, there is a continued need to strengthen support dedicated to the promotion of good governance of the security sector. Security forces are a central focus of the democratic transition due to history of past abuses; this demand is even more acute in light of the findings of the TRRC report. Yet, while SSR strategic framework (NSP, SSRS) and the TRRC report point to accountability deficits in the security sector, much of the international support focus on training and operational capability of security institutions, as opposed to management and accountability focused reforms which are yet to be fully realised. From the outset of the democratic transition, supporting the government in the promotion of good governance of the security sector has been, and continues to be, a key priority for the EU.