Capacity Development and Consultation Workshop on
Public Service Management and Data Governance Framework

4-5 February 2025

UNDESA Data Governance Framework Baseline Study Preliminary Findings The Gambia
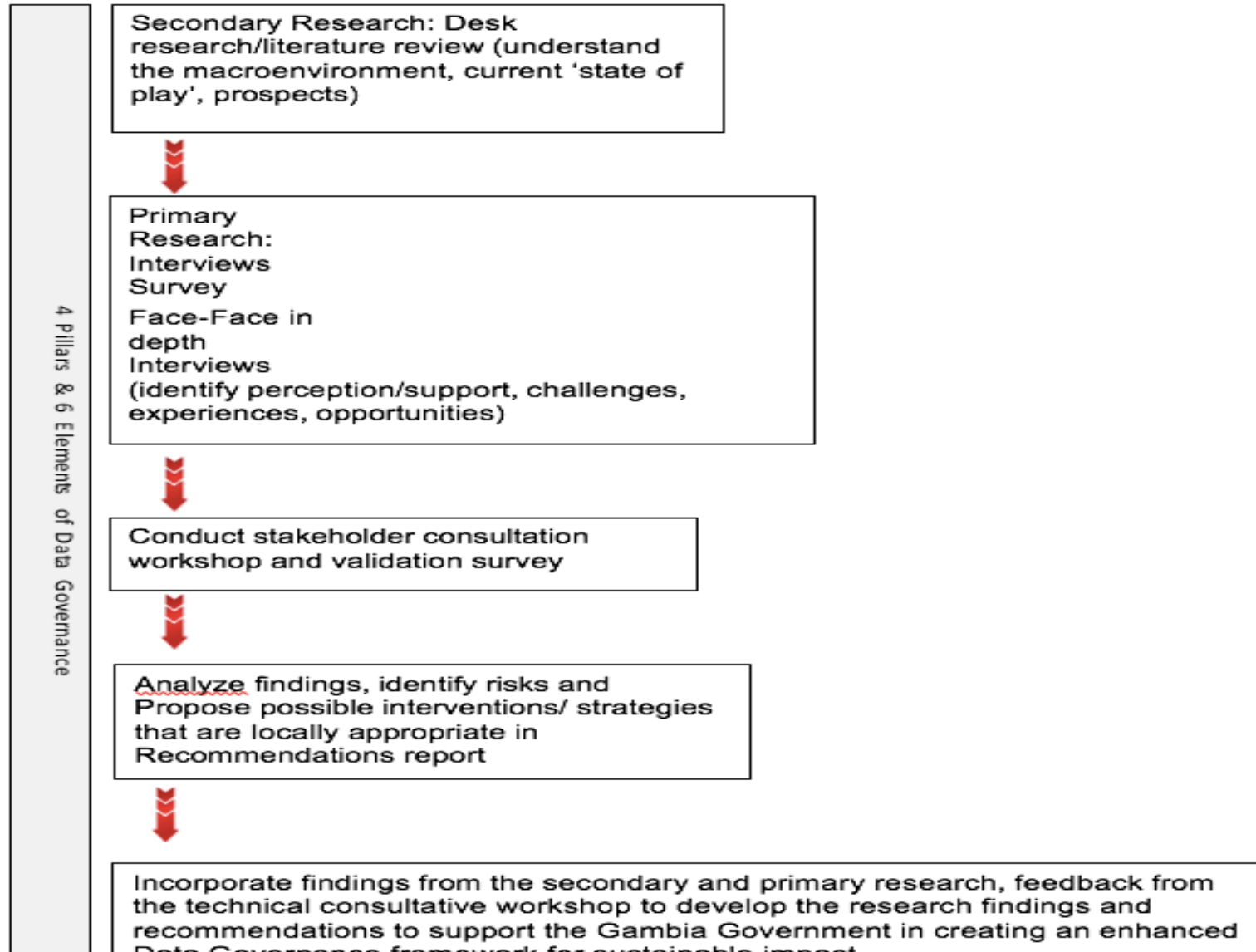
Dr Jorjoh Ndure-Tambedou
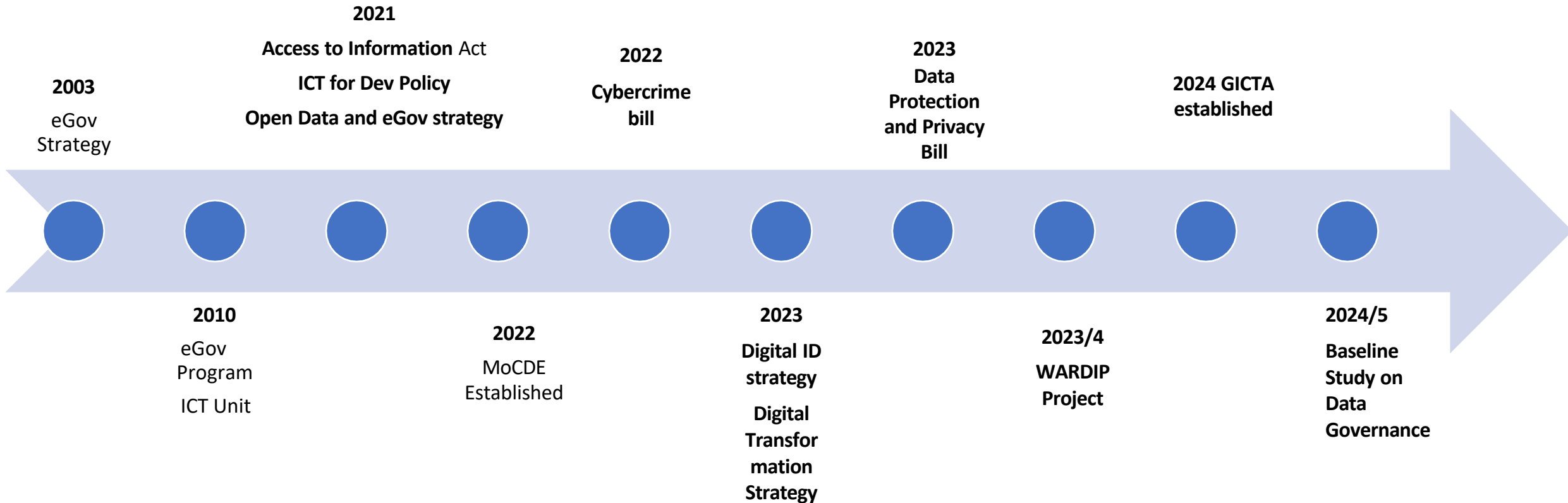
UN DESA National Consultant
The Gambia

Day Two: Baseline Study Preliminary Findings

- The **preliminary findings** from desk review, in depth interviews, survey questionnaires

- Presentation of the **SWOT** analysis from collected data

4 Pillars & 6 Elements of Data Governance

Secondary Research: Desk research/literature review (understand the macroenvironment, current 'state of play', prospects)

↓

Primary Research:
Interviews
Survey

Face-Face in depth
Interviews
(identify perception/support, challenges, experiences, opportunities)

↓

Conduct stakeholder consultation workshop and validation survey

↓

Analyze findings, identify risks and Propose possible interventions/ strategies that are locally appropriate in Recommendations report

↓

Incorporate findings from the secondary and primary research, feedback from the technical consultative workshop to develop the research findings and recommendations to support the Gambia Government in creating an enhanced Data Governance framework for sustainable impact

Gambia's Digital and Open Data Journey so far

2021
Access to Information Act
ICT for Dev Policy
Open Data and eGov strategy

2022
Cybercrime bill

2023
Data Protection and Privacy Bill

2024 GICTA established

2003
eGov Strategy

2010
eGov Program
ICT Unit

2022
MoCDE Established

2023
Digital ID strategy

Digital Transformation Strategy

2023/4
WARDIP Project

2024/5
Baseline Study on Data Governance

'Yiriwaa'

Digitalisation is at the core of the country's national development plan and this is further underscored by the Government's recent creation of an entire ministry of Digital Economy

Yiriwaa Core Pillars

The Pillars

Governance Reforms

Human Capital Development

Digital Connectivity

Macroeconomic Stability

The 4 Main Pillars

Policies
- The foundational element of data governance
- Provides _legitimacy_ of the system
- strategies, directives, and regulatory documents across all levels of government,
- Answers the question 'why'

Institutions
- Defines means of institutionalising data governance
- Provides _evidence_ of the system
- establishment of institutional organs and bodies that have mandates to lead, coordinate, enforce, standardize; ensuring compliance
- Answers the question 'what'

People
- Defines means of capacitating data governance
- Knowledge/skill level required for their roles/responsibilities in data governance.
- Also highlights the importance of public engagement and participation in operationalizing policies and institutional frameworks.
- Provides _embodiment_ of the system
- Answers the question 'who'

Processes
- Defines means of operationalization, providing the practical mechanisms allowing for policies and institutional arrangements to be implemented across government efficiently with consistency
- Provides _mechanics_ of the system
- Answers the question 'how'

Pillars/Elements Matirx

Elements → Pillars ↓	Data standards & classification	Data sharing, interoperability, and open government data	Data security	Data privacy (and ethics)	National data infrastructure	Link with digital identity
Policy						
Institutions						
People						
Processes						

Country SWOT Analysis

Internal factors	Strengths	Weaknesses

	• **Comprehensive Policy Framework:** The Gambia has developed a broad array of policies and legislative frameworks, which lay a strong foundation for data governance. Such as the Open Data Strategy, The Data Protection and Privacy strategy and the National Cybersecurity Strategy.
	• **Aligns with National development plans:** The country's National Development Yiriwaa Plan highlights harnessing ICT to spur economic growth and striving to become an Inclusive digitat nation
	• **Complement Digital Transformation efforts: The Ministry's Digital Economy masterplan is anchored on 10 pillars, pillar two focuses on** Digital government, services, data, and data management, And Pillar 7 is on Cybersecurity and Data Security. Both are key in Data Governance
	• **Institutional Support:** Key institutions such as the Ministry of Communications & Digital Economy (MOCDE), Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS), and the National Cybersecurity Agency (NCA) play crucial roles in managing and enhancing the data governance landscape.
	• **Focus on Capacity Building:** Numerous programs aimed at training and enhancing the skills of government officials, IT professionals, and other stakeholders in data management and cybersecurity.
	• **Data Infrastructure Establishment:** Development of data infrastructure, like national data centers, laying a solid foundation for data collection, exchange and utilization.
	• **Strong Political Will:** With the political situation gradually stabilizing, The Gambian authorities have a strong desire to develop data governance, as evidenced by a number of policies in recent years.
	• **Accelerated Economic Development:** The Gambia gradually recovering from the impact of the epidemic, and the social economy is showing a positive development trend.
		• **Uncompleted Policy Frameworks and Lack of Detailed Guidelines:** Many policies mention data governance aspects broadly without providing detailed guidelines or specific implementation strategies.
		• **Long Implementation Timelines:** Many policies have long implementation timelines without clear task planning for each phase, making it difficult to monitor progress and evaluate performance effectively.
		• **Coordination Issues:** There are potential overlaps and inefficiencies due to a lack of cohesive coordination among various institutions and policies and a dedicated data governance department.
		• **Fragmented Processes:** The data governance processes are fragmented, lacking integrated institutions or projects to comprehensively manage the entire lifecycle of data governance.
		• **Resource Constraints:** Insufficient financial and technical resource with weak industrial base, limit the implementation of data governance initiatives.
		• **Capacity Constraints:** Insufficient number of skilled data governance professionals.
		  • Inaccessibility of Data: There are data silos as there is no central repository for data. This hinders accessibility between different insitutions and by the public.
		  • **Data Privacy, Protection, Consent:** It is currently not clear how the general public can access information collected that concerns then, how it is being use and how to consent for its use and/or request for it to be deleted/removed
		  • **Limited connectivity in certain areas:** a robust internet and data connectivity network is lacking in certain regions. This can compromise efforts on data collection and dissemination in certain regions especially isolated communities in the rural areas.
		  • **Unclear methodologies/tools being used to ensure data standards, integrity and quality.**
		  • **Absence of a data team and data stewards :** having a designated data team and stewards is a critical enabler for data governance, which is not in place currently.

External factors	Opportunities	Threats
	• **Development of Unified Framework:** Establishing a unified framework or central body to coordinate data governance efforts can streamline processes and enhance effectiveness. • **Expansion of International Partnerships:** Robust international collaboration with countries like Estonia and Belgium, and organizations such as UNECA, ITU, and AfDB, provide significant technical, financial, and expertise assistance. • **Technological Advancements:** Advancements in technology, like artificial intelligence provide opportunities to The Gambia to adopt innovative solutions for data management and governance. • **Huge Potential for value creation:** as most of data collection is digitized and data volumes increase exponentially, data held by the government can be a strategic national resource with potential stimulate economic growth, shape policy outcomes, drive innovation and improve service delivery. • **Digital and data sovereignty:** A robust data governance framework will allow the governments to have better control over the citizen's data,	• **Sustainability of International Support:** Reliance on international partnerships may pose a risk if external support diminishes, impacting the continuity of initiatives. • **Cybersecurity Risks:** Growing digital infrastructure increases vulnerability to cyber threats, necessitating robust and continuously updated security measures. • **International Political Instability:** The international situation is complex and changing, and West Africa, The Gambia's development platform, is also facing many challenges in its development. • **Considerations for Cultural information assets':** There is a need for robust data security measures to prevent unauthorised access of indigenous knowledge, preventing its misuse but also respecting indigenous communities' cultural values and practices.

In-Depth Interviews

What have you observed regarding the current data governance system in The Gambia?

Policies	Institutions
Ongoing efforts but still a lot to be done **Slow implementation of strategies** **Getting Cybercrime and Data Protection/Privacy bills enacted is a priority and process should move at a faster pace** **Policies: efforts although lacking behind, catch up**	- Formation of information commission conflicting mandate - No designated institution for data governance - Limited digital infrastructure in public instituions - Working in silos, not aligning efforts
People	**Processes**
Limited data governance experts **Growing awareness, open data strategy, steps being taken** **Increased adoption/presence of digital governance academia, private sector** **There's a lot of work to be done to have well trained personnel**	- Data sovereignty is lacking, data localization should be prioritized - Difficult without digitization, still using paper based data collection methods - Data access, data storage challenges - Operating in silos

In your view, what are the strengths and weakness of the existing data governance system in The Gambia?

Policies	Institutions
Bill passed for data privacy and protection **Lack of comprehensive and required legal framework** **Lack of enforcement of policies** **Absence of a National Data Governance policy**	- Increased investment in digital infrastructure and data security- GRA, CBG, NAWEC, GPA - No institution to enforce
People	Processes
lot of advocacy and awareness raising by CSOs, collaborating with CSOs on activities **Digital ecosystem has grown, demand for better data governance, may drive initiatives to accelerate** **Shift towards a data-driven economy due to change in culture, seeing other countries using data as an asset** **Limited understanding on rights for public** **Few data experts in the Gambia, limited capacity**	- limited PPP to participate in developing effective data governance - Gaps identified, policies in place but implementation/enforcement is lacking - No centralized repository - Lack of data standardization in public institutions and private sector - Fragmentation and lack of standardization makes sharing difficult

In your view, what opportunities and threats are there in relating to data governance at national level?

Opportunities:

To harmonize data across institutions, policies in place, growth in digital economy, demand for better quality data, to collaborate , better data governance provides opportunity to benefit from our dataand add value, public trust

Threats:

limited M and E for policy implementation, lack of data standards, accountability, cyber attacks, mistrust/fear of data misus, data dafe?, delay in enacting/enforcing policies/taking too much time may frustrate key stakeholders

Are there things to be considered and/or act to improve the current situation at national level?

- Digital transformation of public institutions
- Clear legal regulatory framework
- Put in place mechanisms to enforce
- Put in place an authority to monitor and provide oversight
- Nationwide data governance strategy- caters for all stakeholders and not separate entities
- Capacitating local experts
- Raise awareness on data governance in public space
- Invest in infrastructure to allow for seamless management of data, securing it making sure it's sustainable
- Strengthen institutional capacities- clear roles and responsibilities

What could be the role of the private sector and civil society in strengthening and advancing the data governance system in The Gambia?

CSO- public engagement, advocacy, participation in policy development, advocacy and engagement, independent entity advocating for implementation and enforcing policies, monitoring data misuse, highlight need to have good data governance practices, raising public awareness, highlight gaps in a positive light

Private- support with capacity development and project implementation
Private institutions have a responsibility to align with data governance best practices, building innovative digital solutions to drive effective data governance, contribute to policy formulation, help enhance security, more PPPs, bring onboard much-needed expertise

Survey Questionnaires
(18 responses)

Survey Questionnaires

Educational Level?
18 responses

Copy chart

- Diploma
- Degree
- Masters
- PhD

22.2% — Masters
11.1% — PhD
11.1% — Diploma
55.6% — Degree
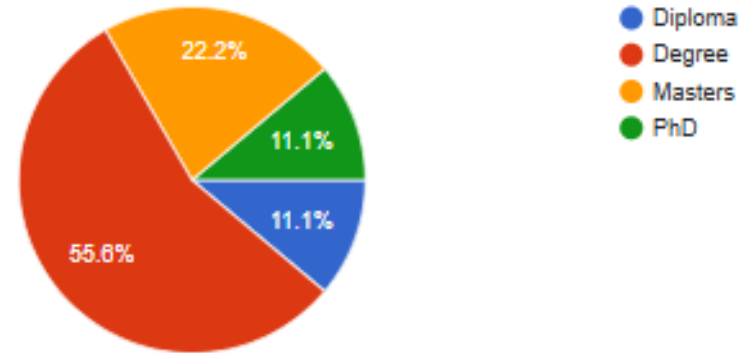
Field of Study?
18 responses

Copy chart

- Information Systems
- Computer Science
- Computer Engineering
- Information Technology
- Software Engineering
- Economics
- Network Management and Cloud Co...
- MA Economics & Econometrics

1/2

27.8%
16.7%
11.1%
11.1%

Job Title
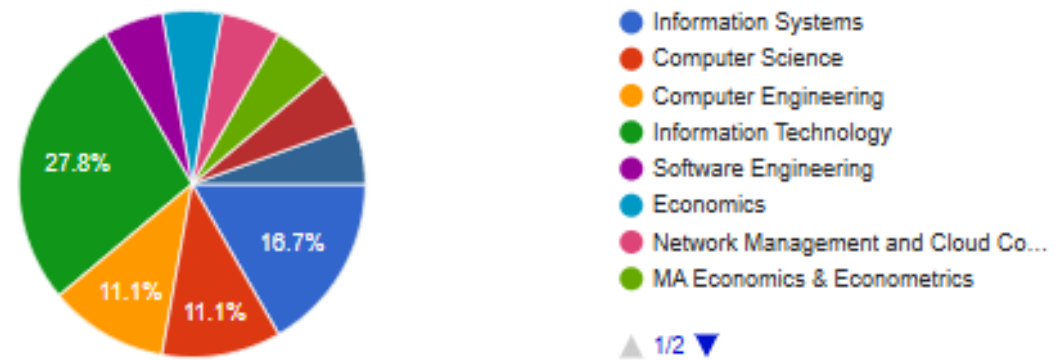
18 responses

Years of work experience (overall)

18 responses

- <=2 years
- 3 - 5 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 11 - 15 years
- More than 15 years

33.3%
11.1%
22.2%
27.8%
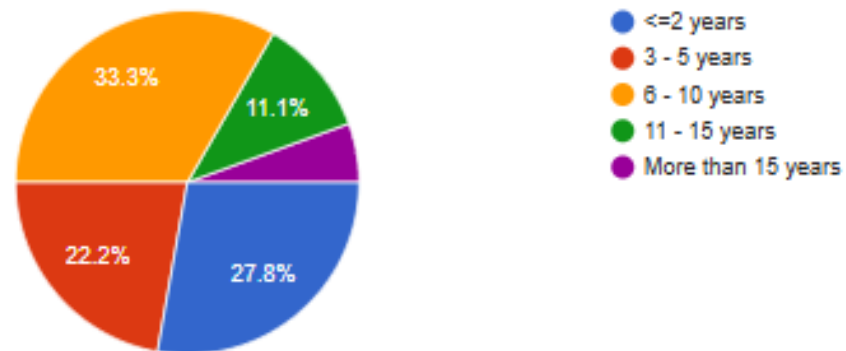
Institution type?

18 responses

- ministry
- parastatal
- agency
- Academic
- Judiciary
- National Population Commission Secretariat

16.7%
61.1%
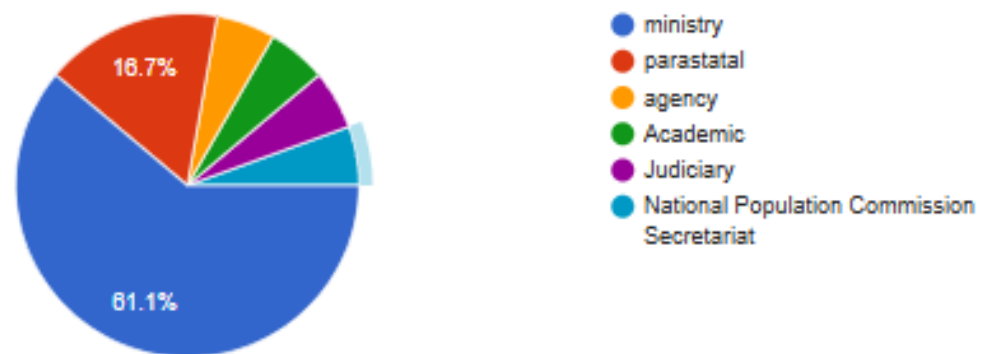
Status of the Gambia's National Data Governance Practice

General — chart with legend: Yes, Partially, No, I don't know

1. Data Standardization and Classification — chart with legend: Yes, Partially, No, I don't know
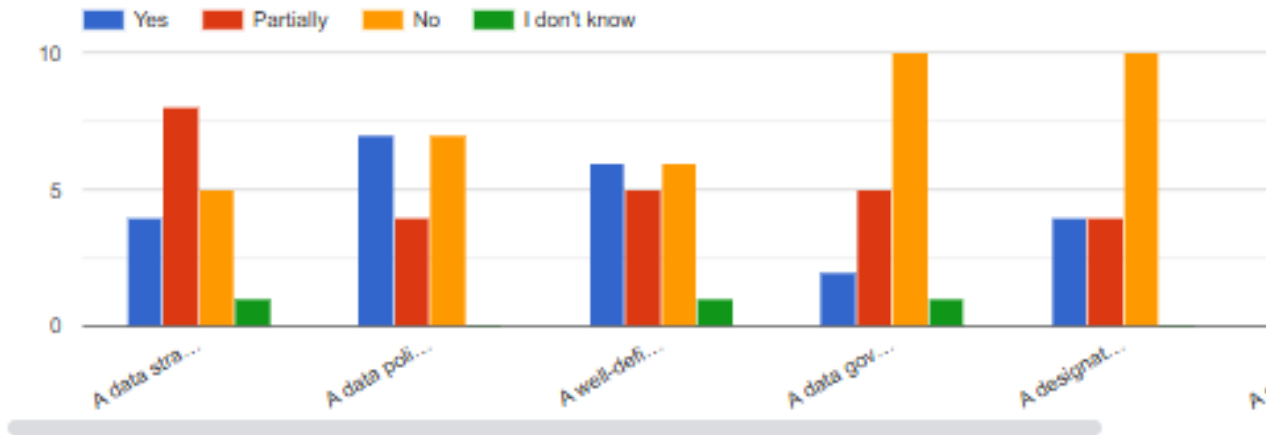
- *Developed data strategy*

- *Designated personnel?*

- *Well defined work processes*
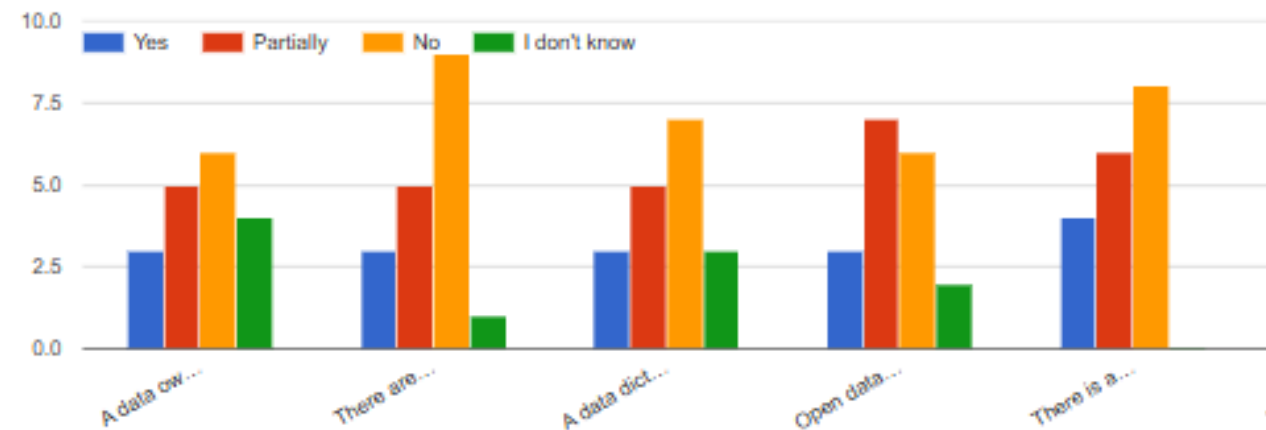
2. Data Sharing and Interoperability (including open data)

Copy chart

Legend: Yes (blue), Partially (red), No (orange), I don't know (green)
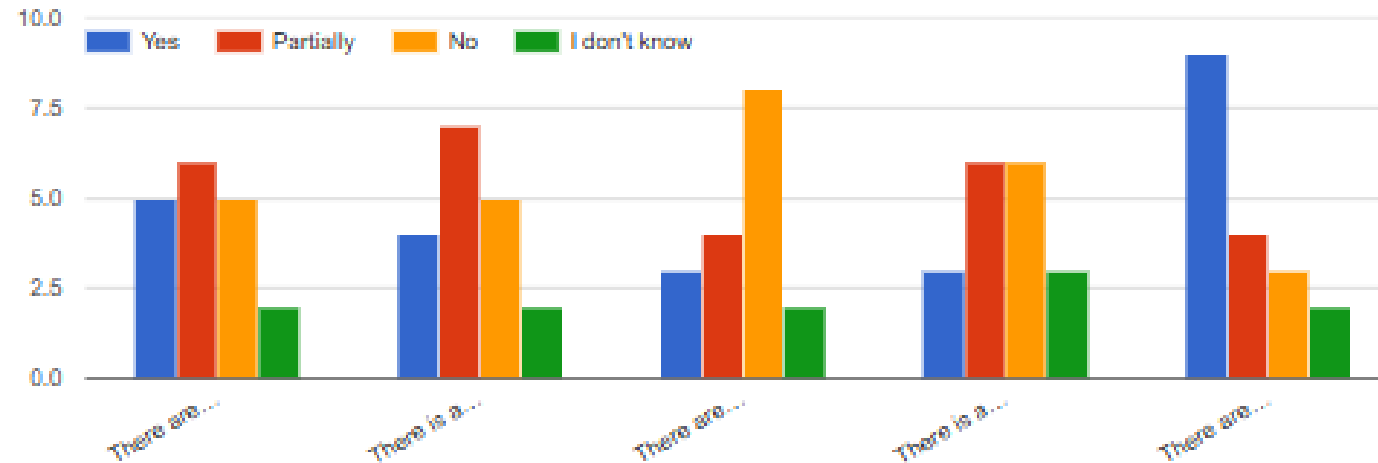
- *Sufficiently trained personnel?*

- *Several challenges*

If you have any comments related to the Data sharing and Interoperability practice at your institution, please specify them below
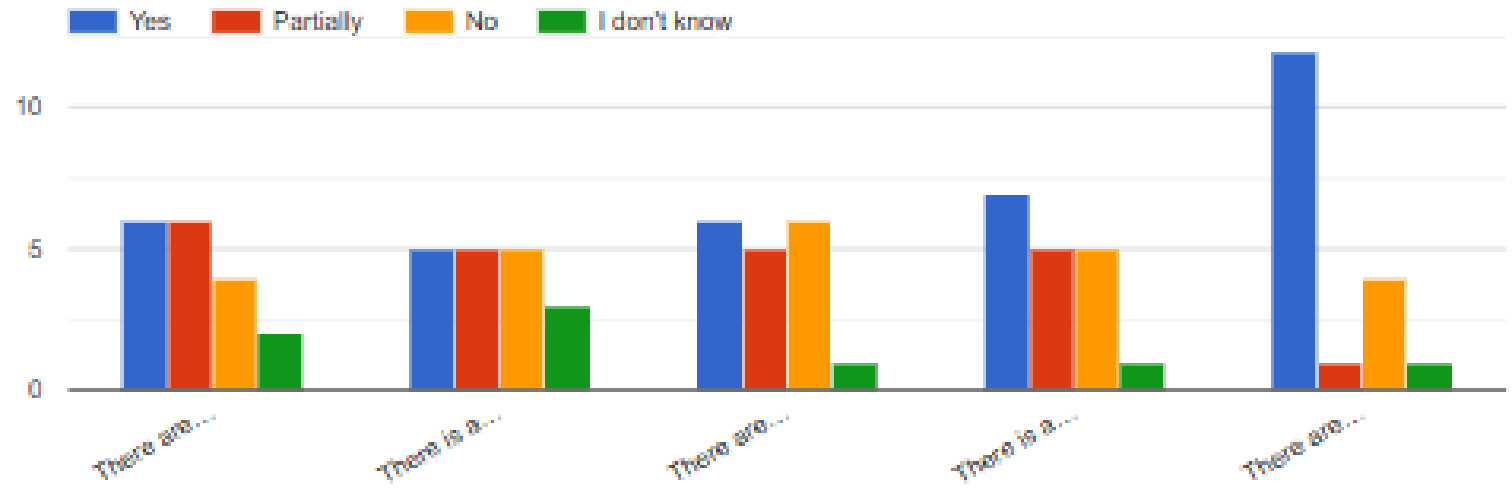
2 responses

Ensure we enterprise architecture to guide us in adopting and implementing interoperability

Train designated personnel for data handling, management and interoperability among systems across the institutions.

3. Data Security

Legend: Yes | Partially | No | I don't know

Several challenges

If you have any comments related to the data security practice at your institution, please specify them below

2 responses
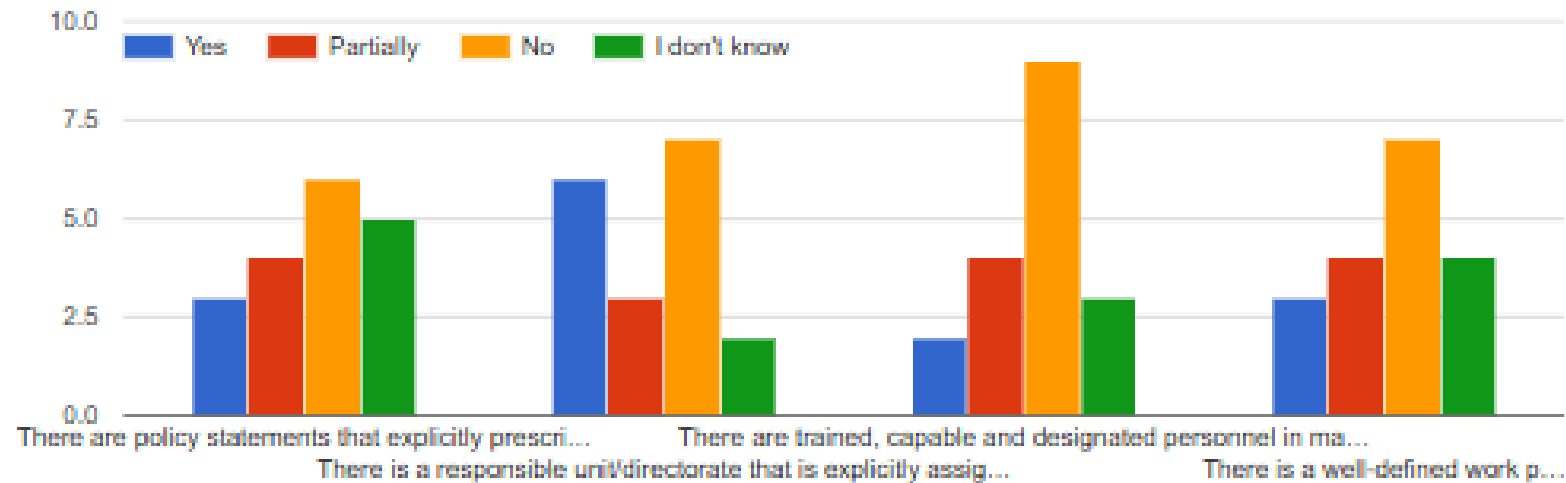
Needs to expedite the process

6. Linking data with digital identity

Chart legend: Yes (blue), Partially (red), No (orange), I don't know (green)

Y-axis: 0.0, 2.5, 5.0, 7.5, 10.0

Categories:
- There are policy statements that explicitly prescri...
- There is a responsible unit/directorate that is explicitly assig...
- There are trained, capable and designated personnel in ma...
- There is a well-defined work p...

Copy chart

- *Responsible unit/directorate?*
- *Trained personnel?*
- *Defined work processes?*

If you have any comments related to the practice of linking data with digital identity at your institution, please specify them below

0 responses

No responses yet for this question.

Way Forward:

- *Stakeholder Mandate Analysis*
- *Final Data Analysis*
- *Recommendations*
- *Submit report*

Jerelen jef
Abaraka
Thank You