



# The Gambia – 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey

Enhancing Governance, Peace and Justice:

Tracking Progress Toward the SDGs, and the  
Recovery-Focused National Development Plan



**SDG 16 Survey Series**

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## Abstract

Monitoring the SDGs, particularly SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, is essential to advancing the global 2030 Agenda. Recognizing the centrality of governance, peace, and justice to sustainable development, the Government of the Gambia, through the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS), conducted two rounds of national surveys to generate evidence-based data for SDG 16 indicators. By generating disaggregated data at the national level, the data can support evidence-based policymaking and promote accountability in line with international commitments.

This report presents data and findings from the second SDG Monitoring Survey conducted in April-May 2025 in The Gambia to track progress and promote evidence-informed policy responses. This marks the first publication in the SDG 16 Survey Series that aims to highlight country-led efforts to generate high-quality governance data and foster learning across contexts to advance the implementation and monitoring of SDG 16.

## Acknowledgements

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The GBoS/HISWACA Project funded the listing exercise, **UNDP** provided financial support through the Funding Windows, which includes donations from Luxembourg, Denmark, and South Korea. UNDP also provided technical support during the various phases through the UNDP Global Policy Centre for Governance. The implementation further benefited from technical contributions by **UNODC** and **OHCHR**.

Strategic guidance was provided by the 2025 Voluntary National Review (VNR) Steering Committee, which included stakeholders from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA) and other national partners under the leadership of the Chairman of the Statistics Council, **Falu Njie**. The Committee met periodically at the Office of the Vice President to ensure that the survey aligned with national priorities and global development frameworks.

The technical design of the survey was led by **Mr. Sanna Manjang**, Director of Coordination, Statistical Methods, Quality Assurance, and Dissemination, in close collaboration with **Sina Smid**, UNDP technical expert. The implementation team benefited from the strong support of **Mr. Ebrima Suso**, Director of Social Statistics, **Mr. Abdou Sanyang**, and **Mr. Lamin Dibba**, whose technical contributions were critical during field operations. GBoS also acknowledges the efforts of data editors, GIS experts, ICT officers, data managers, and field supervisors who worked tirelessly to uphold data quality standards. Special recognition goes to **Dr. Muhammed Bittaye**, who supervised the data editing and validation processes.

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## List of Acronyms

AU	African Union
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
GBoS	Gambia Bureau of Statistics
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
HISWACA	Harmonizing and Improving Statistics in West and Central Africa (project under GBoS)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LGA	Local Government Area
MoFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VNR	Voluntary National Review

# 1 Introduction

Monitoring the SDGs, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) on peace, justice, and strong institutions, is essential to advancing the global 2030 Agenda. SDG 16 focuses on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. SDG 16 plays a critical role in strengthening inclusive governance. Recognizing the centrality of governance, peace, and justice to sustainable development, the Government of the Gambia, through the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS), conducted two rounds of national surveys in 2021 and 2025 to generate evidence-based data for SDG 16 and related indicators. By generating disaggregated data at the national level, the data can support evidence-based policymaking and promote accountability in line with international commitments.

**This report presents data and findings from the second SDG Monitoring Survey (2025) conducted by The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS) to track progress compared to the first SDG Monitoring Survey (2021) and promote evidence-informed policy responses. While the report primarily focuses on SDG 16, it also includes data on other SDG indicators, which are presented here as well.**

The main fieldwork of the 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey was conducted from 13th April to 7th May 2025 (See report: Survey Methodology). This survey round was designed to generate updated, high-quality, and disaggregated data for monitoring national progress on selected SDG indicators – with a focus on SDG 16 - and informing the implementation of The Gambia's Recovery-Focused National Development Plan (2023–2027), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the African Union Agenda 2063.

The 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey shows a mixed picture of progress in advancing peace, justice, and strong institutions in The Gambia (see Table 1.1). On a positive note, the prevalence of discrimination has declined between 2021 and 2025. Similarly, the use of dispute resolution mechanisms increased, underscoring the relevance of community-based approaches to justice. However, several indicators suggest that persistent and emerging challenges persist. The prevalence of physical violence and non-sexual harassment has increased, raising concerns especially among women and vulnerable groups. Perceptions of safety when walking alone after dark also declined slightly, reinforcing the need for targeted community safety interventions. The continued low reporting of violence indicates barriers to justice that require attention. Additionally, fewer than one-third of respondents view decision-making processes as inclusive or responsive, highlighting a broader gap in inclusive governance. These findings highlight the need for renewed efforts to strengthen access to justice, increase institutional accountability, and enhance citizen engagement to ensure that no one is left behind in advancing the global 2030 Agenda.



Table 1.1: Main findings and key actions on SDG indicators

Main findings	Recommendations
<b>16.1.3 Experience of violence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the past year, 15.5 per cent report having experienced psychological, 12.9 per cent physical violence, while 2.4 per cent people reported having experienced sexual violence.</li> <li>Experiences of physical violence increased by 9 percentage points between 2021 and 2025 (12.9%).</li> <li>Women (19.9%) were twice as likely to experience psychological violence as men (10.5%).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen violence prevention programmes.</li> <li>Conduct nationwide public awareness campaigns to increase knowledge about rights and legal protection and enhance sector collaboration.</li> <li>Integrate training into existing school curricula and clubs and implement gender-norm interventions.</li> </ul>
<b>16.3.1 Reporting of violence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 per cent of victims of physical violence, 22 per cent of sexual violence victims, and 6 per cent of those experiencing psychological violence reported the incidents to competent authorities or officially recognized mechanisms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen access to official reporting channels and remove barriers to reporting of victimization.</li> <li>Build public trust in reporting mechanisms and strengthen institutional response capacity.</li> </ul>
<b>11.7.2 Harassment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On average, 1 in 10 people reported experiencing sexual or non-sexual harassment in the past 12 months.</li> <li>Women face higher risks of harassment.</li> <li>Prevalence of non-sexual harassment increased between 2021 and 2025.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement public awareness campaigns on harassment and legal protection.</li> <li>Improve safety in public spaces, including better street lighting and transport security, with a focus on areas frequently used by women.</li> </ul>
<b>16.1.4 Feeling of safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About half of the population felt safe walking alone at home after dark, with a slight decline between 2021 and 2025.</li> <li>The difference between men and women feeling safe is 24 percentage points.</li> <li>The most cited reasons for feeling unsafe were a high crime rate and poor street lighting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the perceived lack of safety over time, disaggregated by gender, age, region, and other relevant characteristics to identify vulnerable population groups.</li> <li>Introduce targeted and preventive interventions building on community policy to improve community safety in areas with high levels of crime, especially for women and other groups who report lower feelings of safety in public spaces.</li> </ul>
<b>16.5.1 Prevalence of bribery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2025, 14.6 per cent of people who had contact with public officials were either asked for or had to pay a bribe.</li> <li>Bribery was most common when interacting with police officers (24.8%) and immigration officers (10.6%).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce bribery risks or incentives.</li> <li>Operationalize the anti-corruption commission and strengthen both internal and external oversight mechanisms.</li> <li>Implement and scale integrity training for public officials, focusing on police and immigration officers.</li> </ul>

<p><b>10.3.1 Experience of discrimination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A positive trend between 2021 (23.6%) and 2025 (15.7%), with a decline in the share of the population who felt discriminated against or harassed.</li> <li>• Rural respondents were nearly twice as likely to say they were subject to discrimination compared to those living in urban areas.</li> <li>• Age and socio-economic status were the most frequently cited grounds of discrimination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further reduce experiences of exclusion and unfair treatment by enforcing legal and institutional protection. Focus efforts on enforcing anti-discrimination mechanisms in rural areas.</li> <li>• Mainstream the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principle across all SDG implementation efforts, ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities, in line with existing legal provisions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>16.3.3 Access to dispute resolution mechanisms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 per cent of the population said they experienced a dispute during the last 12 months.</li> <li>• 66 per cent who experienced a dispute, accessed dispute resolution mechanisms. However, access to justice is lower among women.</li> <li>• The most common dispute resolution mechanism in 2021 and in 2025 is informal, in the form of community authorities.</li> <li>• Most of the disputes were dropped or resolved informally.</li> </ul>	<p>The findings show the critical role of informal resolution pathways in The Gambia and the limited reach of formal judicial systems in everyday disputes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support informal mechanisms, while strengthening links to formal dispute resolution mechanisms, including enforcement of outcomes.</li> <li>• Increase women's access and build trust in formal institutions.</li> <li>• Raise public awareness of available dispute resolution options -both formal and informal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>16.6.2 Satisfaction with public services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around 90 per cent are satisfied with education and 80 per cent with health services.</li> <li>• Despite these overall positive findings in satisfaction with education services, accessibility and affordability of both primary and secondary education lag behind.</li> <li>• Lower overall satisfaction with government services – timeliness and fairness matter most for satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<p>The data show important areas of improvement about how people evaluate their interaction with essential public services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in improving education affordability and physical access.</li> <li>• Improve fairness and timeliness in government services, for example by decentralizing service provision by expanding beyond mobile services.</li> <li>• Promote public sector efficiency by exploring a comprehensive digitalisation framework.</li> </ul>
<p><b>16.7.2 Responsiveness of government to people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only about 1/3 perceived decision-making processes to be inclusive and responsive.</li> <li>• Men and people living in urban areas are on average more positive.</li> </ul>	<p>Low perceived responsiveness highlights the need for more inclusive and participatory governance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalize inclusive participation mechanisms.</li> <li>• Target rural populations and women for civic engagement.</li> </ul>

### The SDG 16 Survey

The [SDG 16 Survey](#) is a crucial instrument in the global effort to promote peace, justice, and inclusive institutions. Jointly developed by the UNDP, UNODC, and OHCHR (The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), this initiative offers countries comprehensive and tested population survey questions to gather data on various indicators related to justice, governance, violence, and discrimination. The survey informs evidence-based policies and programmes on the prevention and fight against corruption, discrimination, trafficking in persons, violence, as well as in promoting governance and access to justice. This Survey contributes to monitoring the 11 out of 24 indicators under Goal 16, which rely on nationally representative population surveys to produce reliable and robust data at national and local levels. Perception-based indicators, such as satisfaction with public services (16.6.2), provide important outcome measures of laws, policies, and practices.

- By implementing the SDG 16 Survey, countries can **better understand and address the persistent challenges** of inequality, discrimination, and barriers to justice, creating a clearer path toward sustainable development.
- One of the survey's unique features is its **flexibility**, as it can be implemented as a stand-alone survey, or survey modules can be integrated into ongoing national data collection efforts depending on data gaps and national priorities. The survey questionnaire acknowledges national differences in institutions, while maintaining global comparability, allowing countries with limited data availability to effectively monitor their progress toward SDG 16 goals.
- The Survey Questionnaire has undergone **extensive development and testing**, including quality assessment by experts, cognitive and pilot testing. The SDG 16 Survey Initiative has been widely recognized by the global community and was welcomed by the 53rd United Nations Statistical Commission, urging Member States to implement the survey, particularly where there is a shortage of robust data.

The **2025 SDG Monitoring Survey in The Gambia** offers a unique opportunity to track progress on SDG 16 and several other survey-based SDG indicators. Survey-based data collected from nationally representative samples on SDG 16 have been challenging due to limited data availability and national monitoring systems. To support more consistent and comparable measurement, the harmonized SDG 16 survey instrument helps countries, such as The Gambia, build the necessary evidence base to monitor governance-related targets and inform national and global policy efforts.

## The 2020/2021 and 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey in the Gambia

The 2025 survey on monitoring of the SDGs builds on the methodological foundations established in 2021 during the implementation of the first survey – implementing the full standardized SDG 16 Survey, including a few additional survey modules. In 2025, minor adjustments were implemented in the sampling strategy to reflect updated census data (2024) and incorporate lessons learned from the previous survey round. Despite minor constraints, one of the key advantages of the survey is its ability to track changes over time, providing valuable insights into trends and disparities across population groups. Some indicators in the 2025 survey were newly added or updated regarding the calculation methods, which means that no comparable data is available for 2021. The survey follows a comprehensive methodology (See report: Survey Methodology), combining field-tested instruments, interviewer training, and digital data collection systems to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and policy relevance.

## The Gambia implemented the standardized Survey Modules, including a few others



- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Access to Justice                          |  Physical violence        |
|  Bribery                                   |  Sexual violence         |
|  Discrimination                           |  Psychological violence |
|  Effectiveness of service delivery        |  Sexual harassment      |
|  Responsive and inclusive decision-making |  Non-sexual harassment  |



### 2025 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Monitoring Survey – The Gambia

*Tracking progress toward the SDGs, the Recovery-Focused National Development Plan (2023–2027), and Agenda 2063*

#### Other Modules

- + Access to Infrastructure, Basic Services, and Clean Energy (SDG 1.4.1, 11.1.1, 9.1.1, 7.1.1-2)
- + Participation in Education and Training

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

## 2 16.1.3 & 16.3.1- Prevalence and Patterns of Violence and Harassment

**SDG Target 16.1** states to *significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere*. Non-lethal violence can have far-reaching consequences, yet the true scale and impact often remain hidden due to low reporting rates, making household surveys an important source for capturing the prevalence of physical, sexual, and psychological violence. Measuring the lived experiences of violence and harassment is essential to inform efforts to prevent and respond to it. **SDG 16.1.3** measures the prevalence of victimization from (a) physical violence<sup>1</sup>, (b) psychological violence<sup>2</sup> and/or (c) sexual violence<sup>3</sup> in the previous 12 months.

While the 2025 survey results for The Gambia suggest that many Gambians continue to face different forms of violence and harassment, women and rural residents remain especially vulnerable. However, overall, the data suggest that 15.5 per cent say they have experienced psychological violence and 12.9 per cent physical violence – and 2.4 per cent state they have experienced sexual violence (see Figure 2.1). In 2025, women (19.9%) were more likely to experience psychological violence than men (10.5%), while men experienced slightly more physical violence (14.1%) compared to women (11.8%). Although sexual violence is less frequently experienced than other types of violence, it disproportionately affects women (3.3%) more than men (1.4%). Additionally, rural residents experience, on average, more physical (15.2%) and psychological violence (17.6%) than urban residents (11.6% and 14.4%, respectively) during the 12 months prior to the survey.

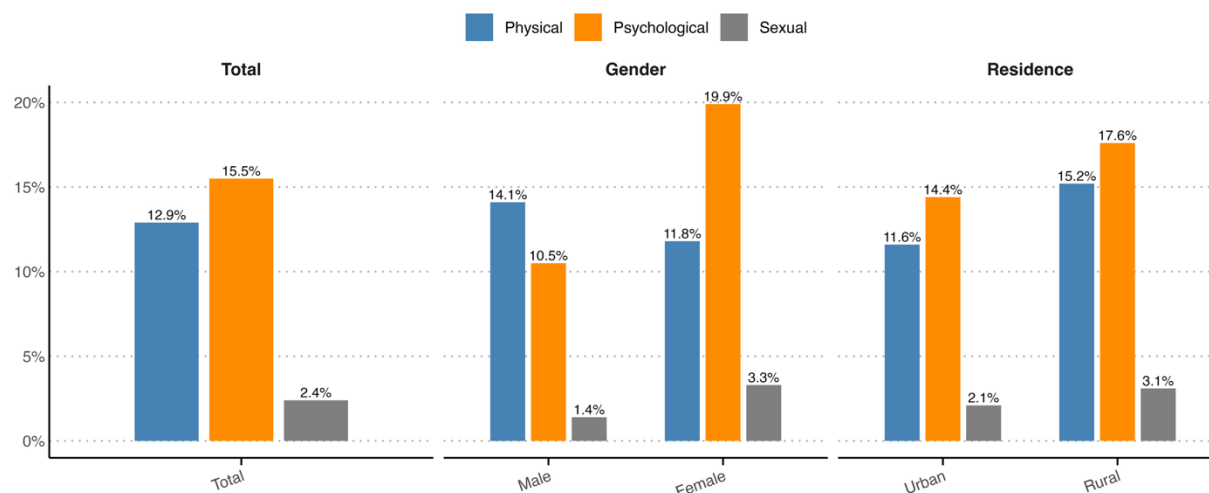
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<sup>1</sup> *Intentional or reckless application of physical force inflicted upon the body of a person (ICCS 02011)* ([UNODC 2015](#))

<sup>2</sup> *Any act intended to induce fear or emotional distress (ICCS 0208)* ([UNODC 2015](#))

<sup>3</sup> *Unwanted sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act without valid consent or with consent as a result of intimidation, force, fraud, coercion, threat, deception, abuse of power or position, use of drugs or alcohol, or position of vulnerability (ICCS 0301)* ([UNODC 2015](#))

**Figure 2.1:** Proportion of population who experienced physical, psychological and sexual violence during the last 12 months, by sex and residence (2025)

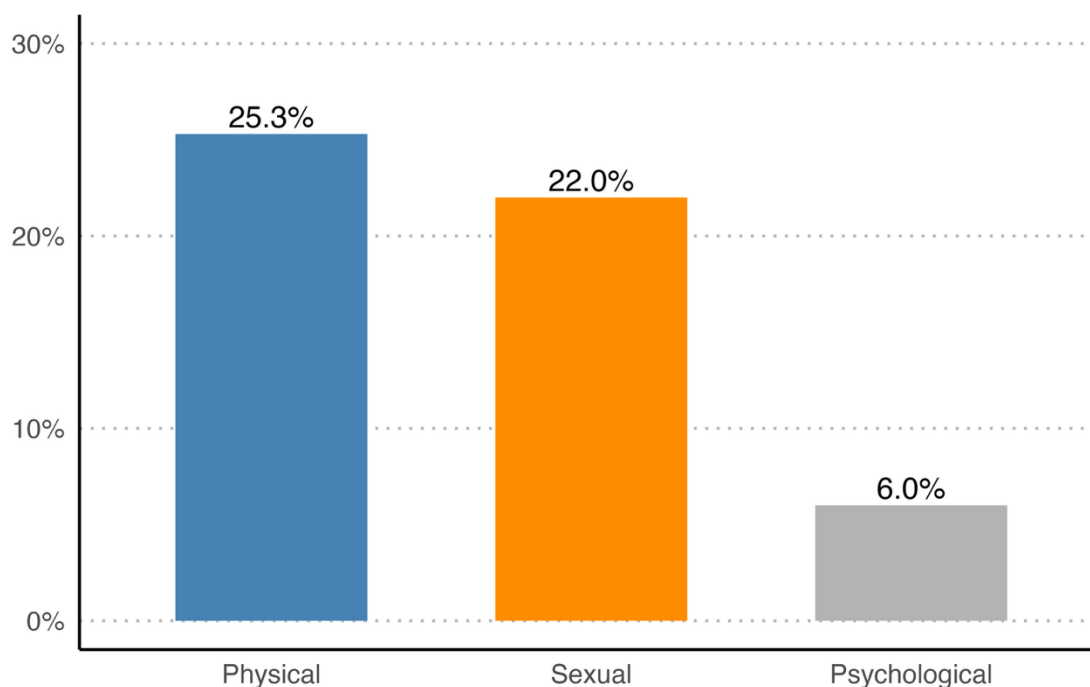


**Note:** The figure shows the proportion of the population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and/or (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months (SDG 16.1.3).

Experiences of violence remain largely unreported to official authorities across the world, which is also referred to as the ‘dark figure of crime’. Similar findings emerge in The Gambia, where the share of victims who reported their victimization (violence reporting) remains low (see Figure 2.2): 25 per cent of victims of physical violence, 22 per cent of sexual violence, and 6 per cent of victims of psychological violence reported their cases. On average, women were more likely to report physical and sexual violence than men. As such, reporting rates measured in indicator **SDG Target 16.3.1** (*proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms*)<sup>4</sup> reflect victims' confidence in authorities to provide justice, revealing the extent of unreported incidents.

<sup>4</sup> UNDP (2024). 2nd Global Progress Report on SDG 16 Indicators. <https://www.undp.org/publications/2nd-global-progress-report-sdg-16-indicators>.

**Figure 2.2:** Proportion of victims who reported physical, sexual and psychological violence to competent authorities (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of victims in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms, as a percentage of all victims of violence in the previous 12 months. Reporting rates are computed separately for physical, psychological and sexual violence.

## 2.1 11.7.2 - Harassment

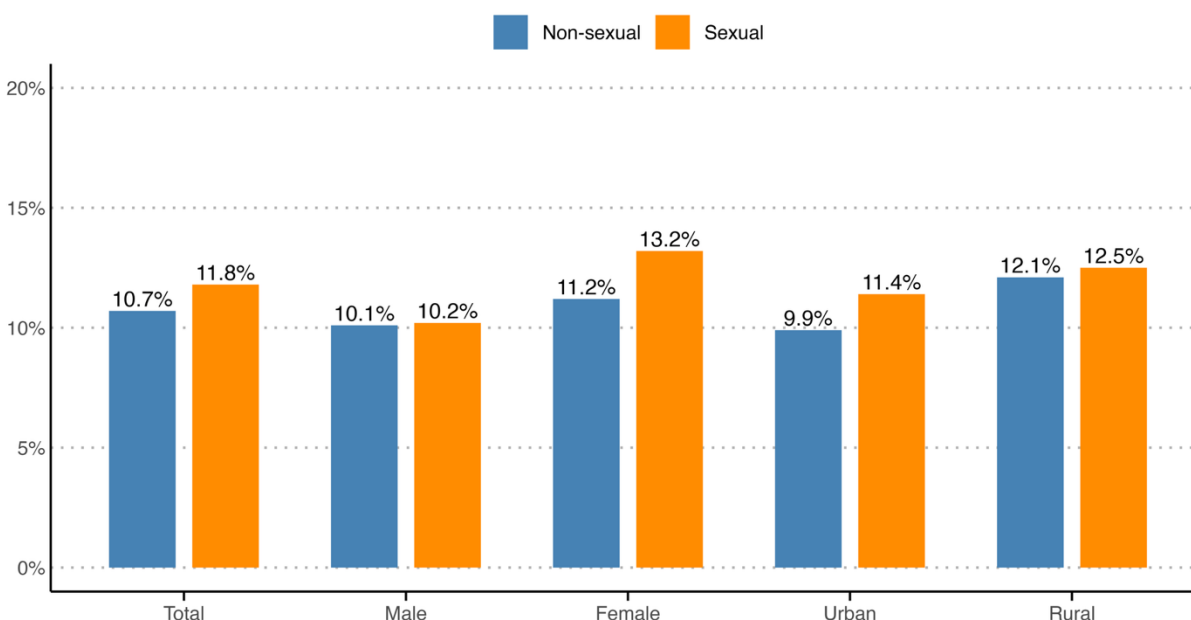
In addition to physical, psychological, and sexual violence, many individuals also experience forms of harassment, which can have significant emotional and psychological impacts. **SDG Indicator 11.7.2** represents the proportion of victims of non-sexual or sexual harassment in the previous 12 months, reported under **Target 11.7** to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces. *Harassment*, at minimum, is improper behaviour directed at and which is offensive to a person by another person who reasonably knew the behaviour was offensive. *Sexual harassment* refers to behaviours with a sexual connotation that can intimidate victims. In contrast, *non-sexual harassment* refers to all harassing behaviours (non-sexual in nature) that can cause fear for physical integrity and/or emotional distress.<sup>5</sup>

On average, 10.7 per cent of the respondents in The Gambia said they experienced non-sexual and 11.8 per cent said they experienced sexual harassment over the last 12 months (see Figure 2.3). Women face higher risks of harassment. However, the non-sexual harassment rate was only slightly higher among women (11.2%) than men (10.1%), while sexual harassment shows an even larger gender gap, affecting

<sup>5</sup> Based on the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes ICCS (UNODC 2015). For more information, visit: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/iccs.html>

13.2 per cent of women compared to 10.2 per cent of men. People living in rural areas report higher levels of both non-sexual (12.1%) and sexual (12.5%) harassment than people living in urban areas, where 9.9 per cent and 11.4 per cent said they experienced non-sexual and sexual harassment, respectively.

**Figure 2.3:** Proportion of population who experienced harassment by type, sex and residence (2025)

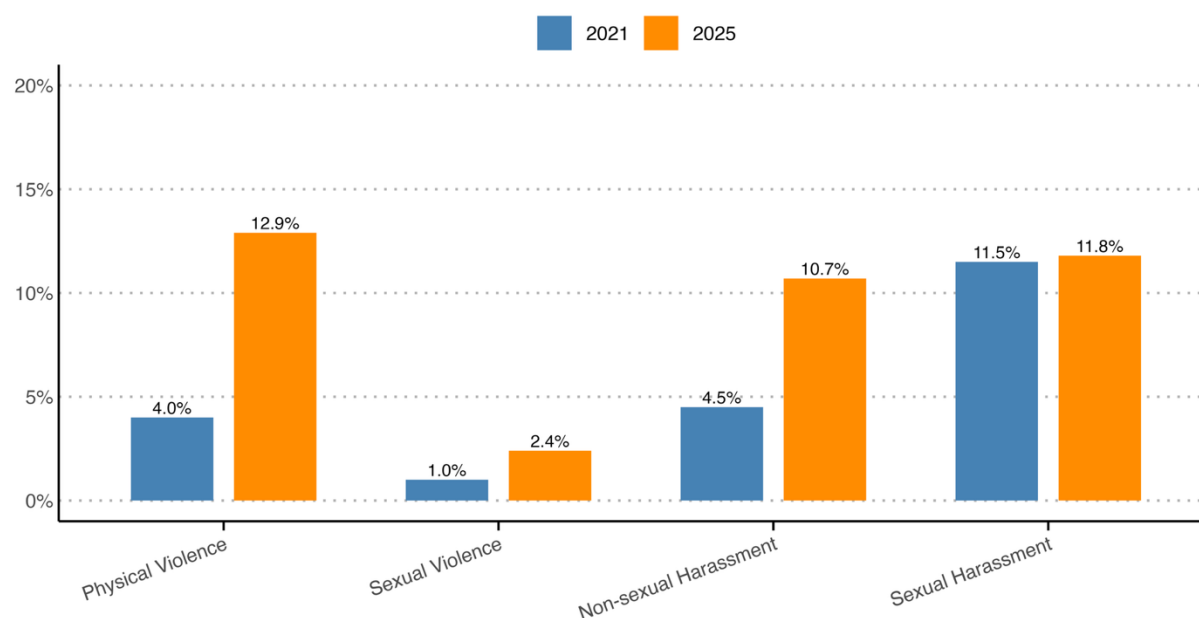


**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who experienced non-sexual and sexual harassment in the previous 12 months, disaggregated by male/female and urban/rural residence (SDG 11.7.2).

A concerning trend emerges from comparing the findings from the two survey rounds in The Gambia, which show an increase in experiences of violence and harassment between 2021 and 2025 (see Figure 2.4). The share of respondents reporting physical violence rose significantly, from 4.0 per cent in 2021 to 12.9 per cent in 2025. Reports of sexual violence also increased, from 1.0 per cent to 2.4 per cent. Overall harassment experience increased from 14.3 per cent to 17.8 per cent, driven in large part by a more than twofold increase in non-sexual harassment, which rose from 4.5 per cent to 10.7 per cent.



**Figure 2.4:** Time trends of violence and harassment (2021 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure compares the share of the population who experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months between the 2021 and 2025 survey reporting. The share of the population who experienced psychological violence was not measured in 2021.

## 2.2 Breakdown of Violence and Harassment Behaviour

A breakdown of the most recent incidents - covering specific acts, settings, and whether an intimate partner was involved - provides important context for understanding the experienced rise in violence and harassment between the 2021 and 2025 survey rounds and is critical for designing targeted policy responses.

### Most Recent Physical Violence in the past 12 Months and Place of Occurrence

The most reported acts (see Table 2.1) were threats without a weapon (22.7%), followed by slapping or punching (20.8%) and pushing or shoving (20.6%). While severe acts such as stabbing (0.4%) or burning (0.6%) were less frequent, their presence signals ongoing risks.

**Table 2.1:** Most recent physical violence in the past 12 months

Physical violence type	Per cent
Threatened to hurt you physically with a weapon (stick, knife, firearm, etc.)	16.3
Threatened to hurt you physically without a weapon, but in a way that really frightened you	22.7
Pushed you, shoved you or shook you	20.6
Slapped you or punched you	20.8
Threw a hard object at you	6.1
Grabbed you, pulled your hair or dragged you.	3.5
Beat you with their fist or a hard object, or kicked you	2.9
Burned you	0.6

Tried to suffocate or strangle you	1.1
Cut or stabbed you	0.4
Shot at you	3.3
Beat your head against something	1.4
Did something else to physically hurt you, not counting sexual attacks	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Physical violence most frequently occurred in public places (43.9%) and private homes (37.5%) (see Table 2.2). Educational institutions accounted for 8.4 per cent, indicating that younger populations are more vulnerable. The data indicate that 3.5 per cent of victims of physical violence reported that the most recent incident involved a current or former partner. The prominence of violence in public spaces reflects the need for enhanced community policing and public safety mechanisms, while domestic settings call for expanded support for survivors of household or intimate-partner violence.

**Table 2.2:** Place of occurrence for the most recent physical violence in the past 12 months

Place of occurrence	Per cent
Private home/dwelling	37.5
Commercial indoor premises such as restaurants, bars, shopping malls, shops, etc.	2.6
Business premises not open to the public such as office buildings, factories, warehouses, etc.	3.0
Educational establishments such as schools, universities, etc.	8.4
Care establishments such as hospitals, retirement homes, etc.	0.5
Public places such as streets, markets, parks, public transportation, etc.	43.9
Elsewhere (specify)	3.8
Prefer not to say	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Most Recent Psychological Violence in the past 12 Months and Place of Occurrence

Psychological violence most frequently involved controlling behaviours such as monitoring or restricting movements (36.2%), as well as expecting permission to see a doctor (13.3%) or deciding clothing choices (22.3%) (see Table 2.3). 8.6 per cent of respondents reported that a current or former partner was the perpetrator of psychological violence. Awareness campaigns and training for healthcare and legal professionals are essential for early detection and support.

**Table 2.3:** Most recent psychological violence in the past 12 months

Psychological violence type	Per cent
Family member or intimate partner hurt, threatened to hurt or threatened to take away your children	3.4
Family member or intimate partner forbade you to use contraception or otherwise limited your choices about family planning	4.7
Family member or intimate partner expected you to ask permission to see a doctor	13.3
Family member or intimate partner was jealous or otherwise tried to prevent you from talking to other men/women, or insisted on knowing your whereabouts at all times	36.2
Family member or intimate partner wanted to decide what clothes you wore and how you dressed	22.3
Somebody did something to scare or intimidate you on purpose, for example, by yelling and smashing things	9.4
Somebody damaged or destroyed your possessions or property, including pets	2.6
Somebody harmed, or threatened to harm, someone close to you	3.2
Somebody restricted your freedom of movement, for example, by locking you up somewhere or taking away your ID or passport	0.6

Somebody tried to limit your contact with family or friends or restrict your use of social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram or twitter	3.3
Other	0.6
Don't know	0.0
Prefer not to say	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Most Recent Sexual Violence in the past 12 Months and Place of Occurrence

The most reported sexual violation was unwanted touching or kissing (34.7%), followed by attempted forced intercourse (22.3%) (see Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4:** Most Recent Sexual Violence in the past 12 months

Sexual violence type	Per cent
Someone anyone forced you to have sexual intercourse by threatening you, holding you down or hurting you in any way i.e. vaginal or anal penetration including with objects, or oral sex.	17.0
Someone attempted to force you to have sexual intercourse by threatening you, holding you down or hurting you in any way, but intercourse did not occur	22.3
Someone made you have sexual intercourse when you could not refuse owing to the influence of alcohol or drugs	2.6
Someone attempted to force you or threatened you or blackmailed you to have sexual intercourse with someone else? Please include being forced to have sex in exchange for money, goods or favours.	3.3
Someone had sexual intercourse that you did not want to have because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	2.3
Someone stripped you, touched your intimate parts (genitals, breasts, or kissed you when you did not want them to	34.7
Someone forced you to do anything else of a sexual nature that was degrading or humiliating	12.3
Someone threatened you with violent sexual acts, such as rape or forced pregnancy, in a way that really frightened you	2.5
Other	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sexual violence was most reported in private homes (45.1%), followed by public places (28.4%) (see Table 2.5). The data further indicates that 12.6 per cent occurred in unspecified “other” settings. The high proportion of incidents at home suggests a need to address risks within familiar or intimate environments.

**Table 2.5:** Place of occurrence for the most recent sexual violence in the past 12 months

Place of occurrence	Per cent
Private home/dwelling	45.1
Commercial indoor premises such as restaurants, bars, shopping malls, shops, etc.	3.8
Business premises not open to the public such as office buildings, factories, warehouses, etc.	3.7
Educational establishments such as schools, universities, etc.	5.0
Care establishments such as hospitals, retirement homes, etc.	0.9
Public places such as streets, markets, parks, public transportation, etc.	28.4
Elsewhere (specify)	12.6
Prefer not to say	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Most Recent Form of Sexual Harassment in the past 12 Months and Place of Occurrence

The most common forms of sexual harassment involved unwanted messages, emails, or calls of a sexual nature (33.5%), followed by unwanted sexual propositions or pressure for a date (29.1%) (see Table 2.6). Other frequently cited acts included unwanted comments about physical appearance (14.9%) and indecent exposure (9.1%). Less common but still notable were unwanted sexual gestures or inappropriate proximity (8.4%), unauthorized sharing of explicit content (2.9%), and receipt of unwanted sexual gifts (1.3%). These findings highlight a shifting pattern toward online and digital spaces, underscoring the need for preventive measures, digital safety protocols, and responsive support systems. This is further confirmed by evidence indicating that online spaces are now the primary environment where harassment occurs.

**Table 2.6:** Most recent form of sexual harassment in the past 12 months

Sexual harassment type	Per cent
Unwanted sexual proposition or pressure for a date	29.1
Unwanted messages, e-mails, calls of a sexual nature that offended you	33.5
Embarrassing and sexually explicit messages and/or photos or videos of you posted online or sent to anyone without your consent	2.9
Unwanted sexual comments about your physical appearance or body	14.9
Unwanted sexual gestures, whistling and leering or anyone stood inappropriately close to you	8.4
Somebody indecently exposed themselves to you	9.1
Receiving unwanted gifts of a sexual nature such as toys, accessories or underwear.	1.3
Someone did something else to sexually harass you (specify)	0.7
Prefer not to say	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Online spaces were the leading setting for recent harassment (35.7%), followed by public places (27.9%) and homes (20.3%) (see Table 2.7). The dominance of digital platforms reveals the shifting landscape of harassment, pointing to the importance of cybersecurity policies and digital reporting tools.

**Table 2.7:** Place of occurrence for the most recent sexual harassment in the past 12 months

Place of occurrence	Per cent
Private home/dwelling	20.3
Commercial indoor premises such as restaurants, bars, shopping malls, shops, etc.	5.3
Business premises not open to the public such as office buildings, factories, warehouses, etc.	2.0
Educational establishments such as schools, universities, etc.	5.0
Care establishments such as hospitals, retirement homes, etc.	0.3
Public places such as streets, markets, parks, public transportation, etc.	27.9
Online / mobile device	35.7
Elsewhere (specify)	2.7
Prefer not to say	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Most Recent Form of Non-Sexual Harassment in the past 12 Months and Place of Occurrence

The most commonly reported non-sexual harassment experience was offensive or threatening comments made in person, affecting 41.3 per cent of those who had experienced such incidents (see Table 2.8). Threatening or offensive messages, emails, or calls followed at 24.2 per cent, highlighting the persistent role of verbal harassment in daily interactions. Another 19.7 per cent of respondents reported being followed against their will, either physically or online, while 10.8 per cent were subjected to offensive or threatening gestures. Although less frequent, online harassment through the posting of demeaning content was experienced by 3.7 per cent of respondents.

**Table 2.8:** Most recent form of non-sexual harassment experienced in the past 12 months

Non-sexual harassment type	Per cent
Have you received non-sexual threatening or offensive messages, e-mails or calls	24.2
Has anyone made offensive, threatening or humiliating comments to you in person, such as insulting you or calling you names	41.3
Has anyone made offensive or threatening gestures to demean, insult or humiliate you	10.8
Has anyone posted offensive, demeaning or embarrassing content, including for example comments, chat messages, photos or videos of you online	3.7
Has anyone followed you against your will, either physically – for example, on the street – or online in a way that made you feel uncomfortable	19.7
Prefer not to say	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The locations where the most recent non-sexual harassment incidents occurred were public places such as streets, markets, parks, and public transportation (35.1%), followed by online or mobile device platforms (27.7%) (see Table 2.9). This points to a dual landscape of risk, both in physical public spaces and virtual environments. Private homes were the third most common setting, reported by 22.5 per cent of victims, underscoring that harassment also occurs in intimate or domestic settings. Educational institutions (6.3%) and business premises (2.5%) were also cited, while other formal venues such as care establishments (1.5%) and commercial indoor premises (1.3%) were less frequently mentioned. The results show that 1.9 per cent of respondents reported experiencing non-sexual harassment from a current or former intimate partner in the past 12 months (Intimate-Partner Sexual Violence).

**Table 2.9:** Place of occurrence of the most recent non-sexual harassment

Place of occurrence	Per cent
Private home/dwelling	22.5
Commercial indoor premises such as restaurants, bars, shopping malls, shops, etc.	1.3
Business premises not open to the public such as office buildings, factories, warehouses, etc.	2.5
Educational establishments such as schools, universities, etc.	6.3
Care establishments such as hospitals, retirement homes, etc.	1.5
Public places such as streets, markets, parks, public transportation, etc.	35.1
Online / mobile device	27.7
Elsewhere (specify)	2.0
Don't know	0.0

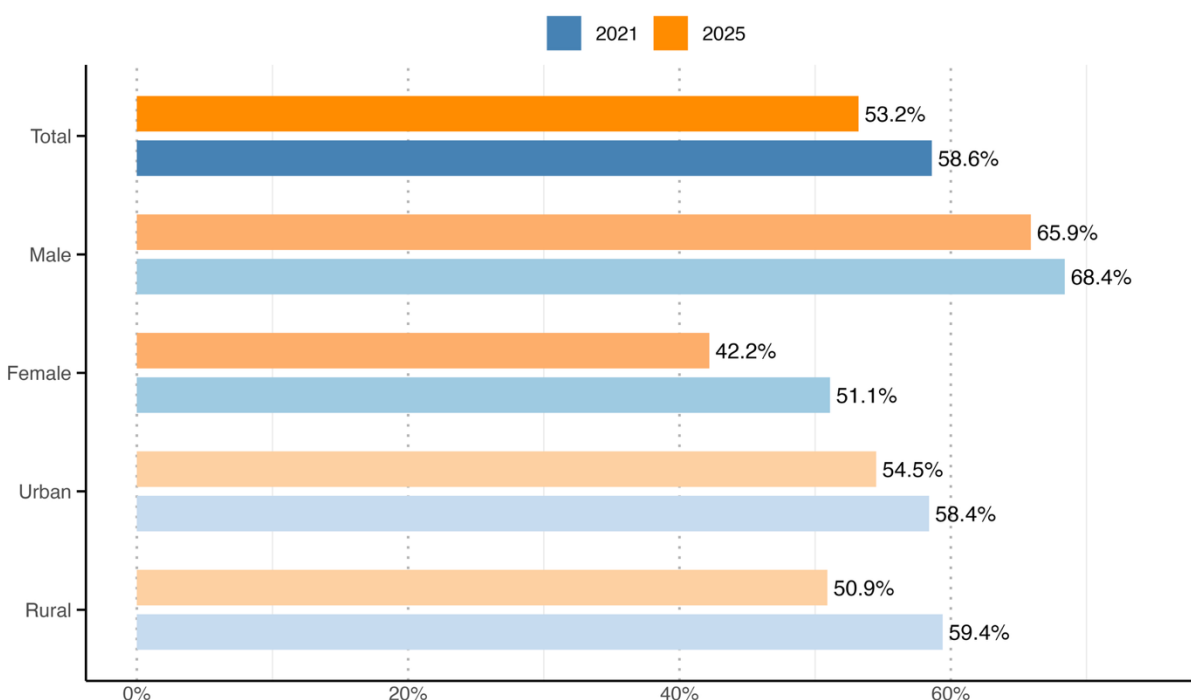
Prefer not to say	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3 16.1.4 - Perception of Safety

**SDG Indicator 16.1.4** measures the proportion of the population who feel *safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark*. This indicator captures individuals' perceptions of safety in their daily environment, which may differ from actual crime rates or objective measures of security. It provides important insights into fear of crime and perceived vulnerability, both of which can significantly affect people's well-being.

In 2025, just over half of the population (53.2%) reported feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (see Figure 3.1). However, the data show a large gender gap in safety perceptions. Men (65.9%) were significantly more likely to report feeling safe than women (42.2%). Urban residents (54.5%) were only slightly more likely to feel safe compared to rural residents (50.9%).

**Figure 3.1:** Proportion of population who felt safe, by sex and residence (2021 and 2025)



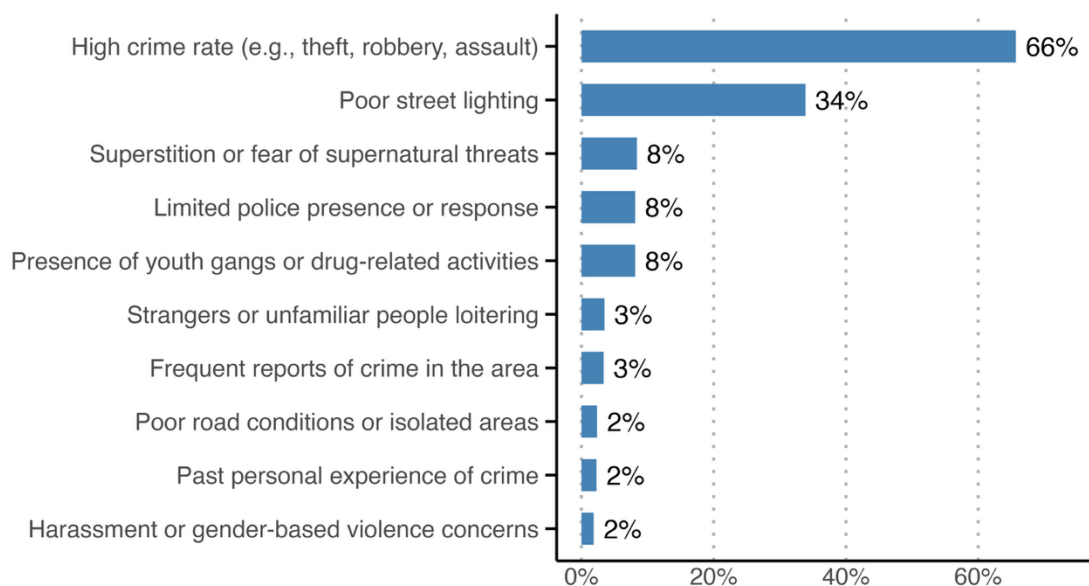
**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, disaggregated by male/female and urban/rural residence (SDG 16.1.4). The survey question is: *How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark?*

On average, the proportion of the population feeling safe declined slightly between the two survey rounds, from 58.6 per cent in 2021 to 53.2 per cent in 2025. While the majority of respondents report feeling safe

in 2025, these findings point to a continuous need for targeted interventions to improve community safety, especially for women and other groups who report lower feelings of security in public spaces.

The most cited reason for feeling unsafe when walking alone after dark was a high crime rate, selected by 66 per cent of those who reported feeling unsafe (see Figure 3.2). This was followed by poor street lighting (34%). Other reasons were mentioned less frequently: 8 per cent mentioned superstition, limited police presence, or the presence of gangs and drug-related activities.

**Figure 3.2:** Proportion of population who felt unsafe, by reasons (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of responses to reasons for feeling unsafe. The survey question was only asked to respondents who said they felt unsafe: *Why do you feel unsafe walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark?*

## 4 16.5.1 - Bribery and Corruption

**SDG Indicator 16.5.1** – or the *prevalence of bribery* - measures the proportion of people who had at least one contact with a public official in the past 12 months and who either paid a bribe or were asked to pay one. This indicator provides insight into the level of integrity in public service delivery and helps track progress toward reducing corruption and bribery in all forms as outlined under **SDG Target 16.5**. Understanding who is more likely to encounter bribery by disaggregating the data by population groups – as well as by sectors/types of public officials - is essential for shaping anti-corruption reforms, improving transparency, and building public trust. For this indicator, no comparable data is available for 2021 as the calculation was adjusted to align with the SDG global reporting methodology.

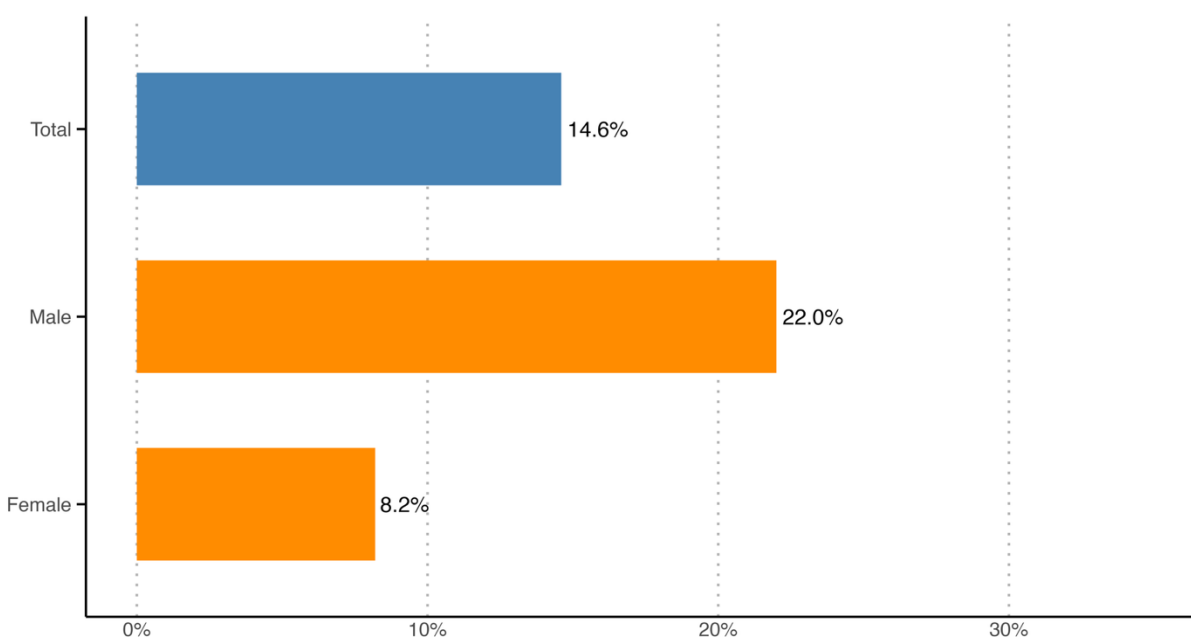
The extent to which people report being asked for a bribe is dependent on who interacts with which public services (or the service users), how frequently, and in what settings. An important concept for the measurement of this indicator is the interaction with public officials, or the so-called *contact rate*, which is the share of the adult population who interacted with a public official at least once in the past 12

months. In 2025 in The Gambia, 44 per cent of respondents answered that they had contact with a public official at least once during the last year. Doctors or personnel in the healthcare sector were the public officials that people interacted the most with during the last 12 months (32.5%), followed by the education sector, such as teachers (13.2%) and immigration officers (11.7%) (see Figure 4.2).

In 2025, 14.6 per cent of those who had at least one contact with public officials in the past year reported either being asked for a bribe or having paid one (see Figure 4.1). Bribery was most common when interacting with police officers (24.8%), immigration officers (10.6%) and public utilities officers (8.2%).

The burden of bribery remains unevenly distributed across population groups. Men were almost three times more likely than women to experience bribery, 22.0 per cent compared to 8.2 per cent, respectively (see Figure 4.1).

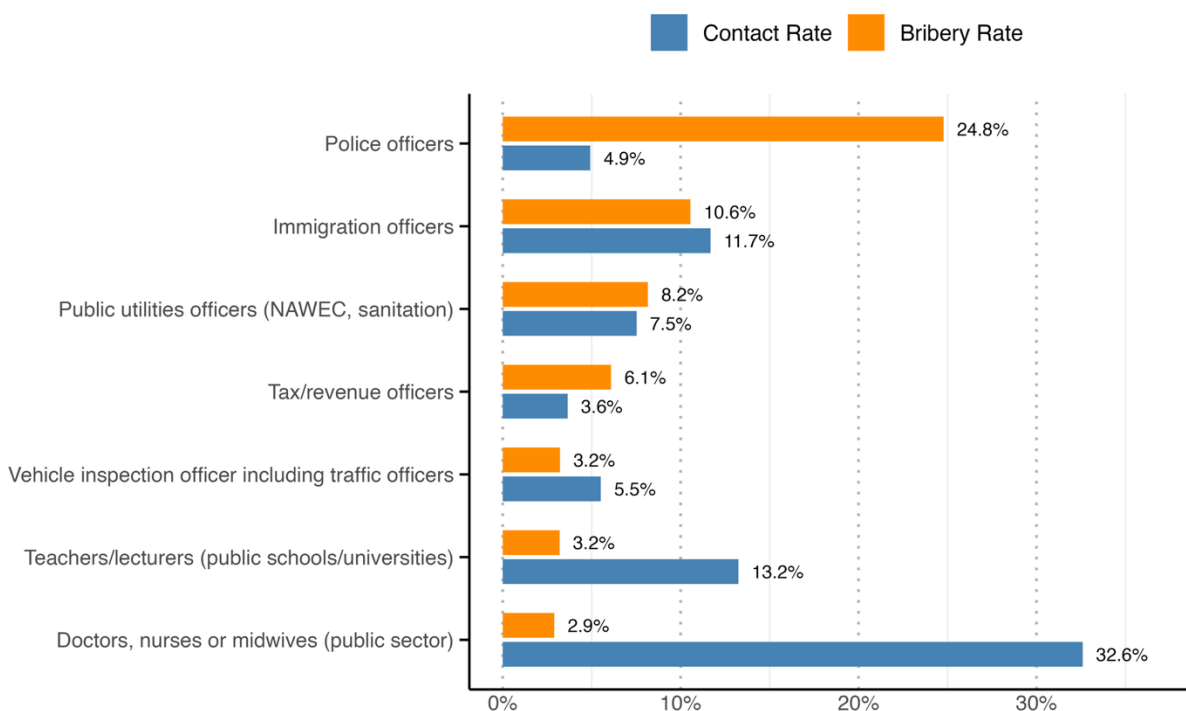
**Figure 4.1:** Proportion of population in contact with a public official who were asked or paid a bribe, by sex (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who had at least one contact with a public official in the past 12 months and who either paid a bribe or were asked to pay one (SDG 16.5.1), disaggregated by sex.



**Figure 4.2:** Proportion of population in contact with a public official, by type (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of respondents reporting that they had contact and were asked for a bribe by public officials. Only categories with N>25 are shown. The survey question for **contact rate** is: ‘In the last 12 months, have you had contact, either by yourself or through someone else, with <CATEGORY>? By contact I mean official rather than private communication with these officials.’ And for the **bribery rate**: ‘In the last 12 months, have you had to give <CATEGORY> a gift or money in addition to any official fee, or done them a favour in return for a service, including through someone else.’

## 5 10.3.1- Discrimination

**SDG Indicator 10.3.1** measures the proportion of the population who reported feeling personally discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of characteristics prohibited under international human rights law.<sup>6</sup> These include sex, age, disability or health status, ethnicity, language, religion, socio-economic status, geographic location, migration status, marital or family status, sexual orientation or gender identity, and political opinion.

The indicator captures an important dimension of discrimination and harassment: individuals’ self-reported experiences of discrimination or harassment, rather than incidents that are objectively verified

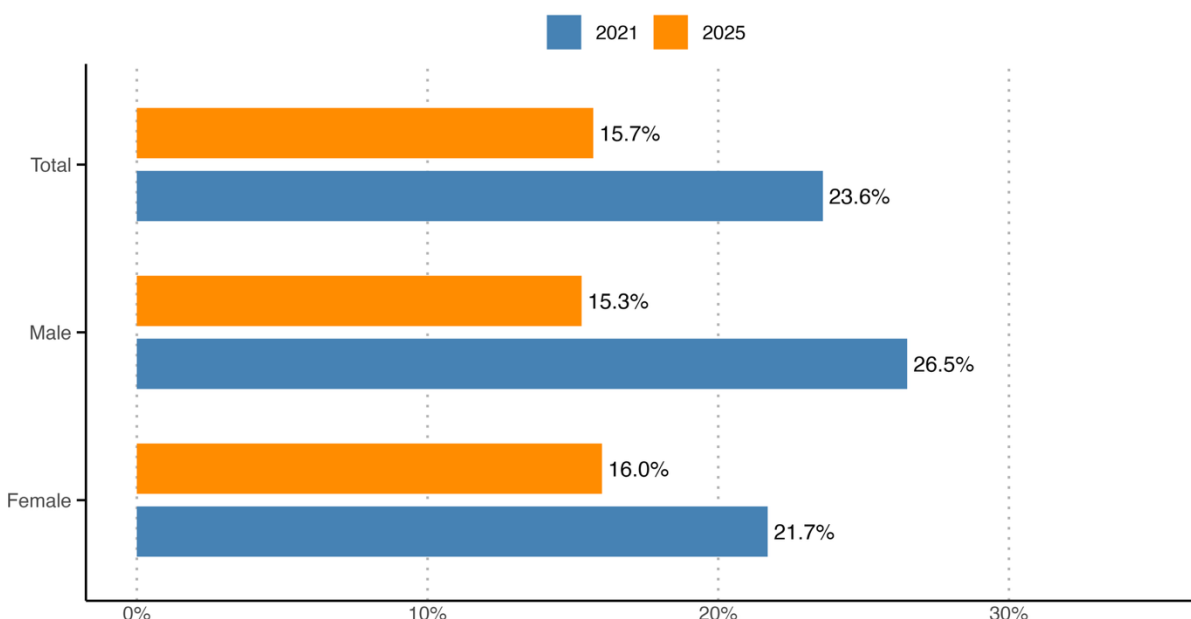
<sup>6</sup> Discrimination is defined as: “...any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference or other differential treatment that is directly or indirectly based on the prohibited grounds of discrimination, and which has the intention or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life” (UN, 2018).

or formally reported. The results provide a critical foundation for monitoring progress toward reducing inequality (**SDG 10**), advancing equal treatment under the law, and identifying groups most affected by exclusion, bias, or unequal access to rights and opportunities.

The data show a decline in the share of the population who felt discriminated against from 23.6 per cent in 2021 to 15.7 per cent in 2025. While the decline may reflect important progress in reducing experiences of exclusion and unfair treatment across the population, it could also reflect changes in perceptions, reporting behaviour, or other contextual factors. However, experiences vary across population groups. The proportion of Gambians who reported having felt discriminated against or harassed in the past 12 months in 2025 was 15.7 per cent, with slightly more women (16.0%) compared to men (15.3%) stating that they felt discriminated against (see Figure 5.1).

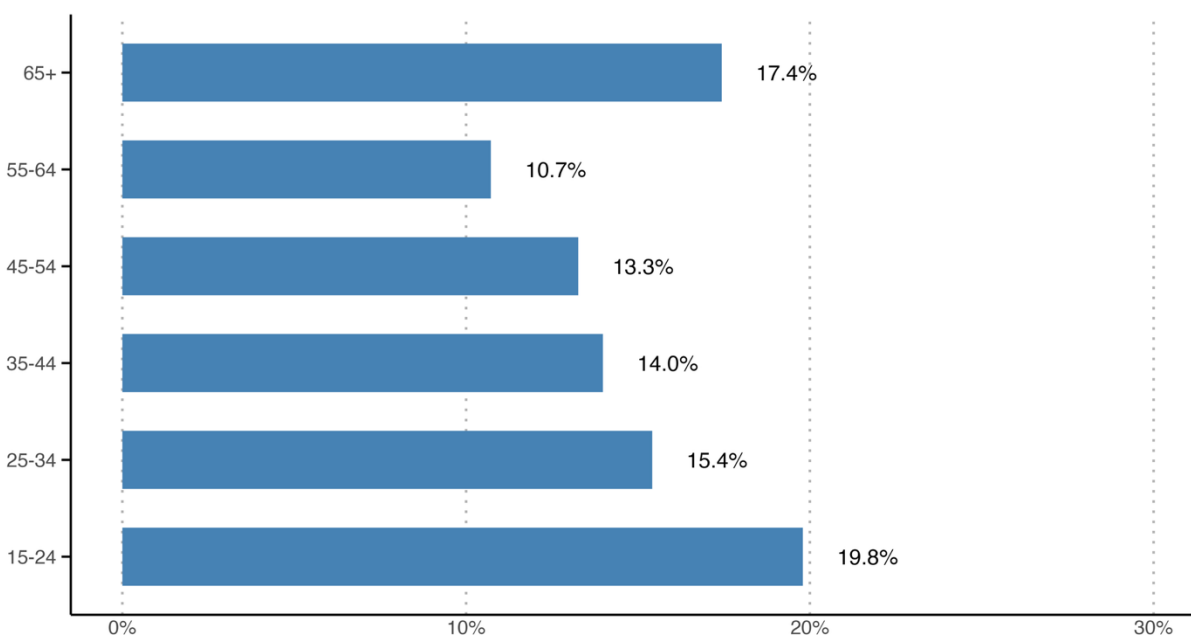
However, the most striking differences appear by place of residence. Rural respondents (22.4%) were nearly twice as likely to say they were subject to discrimination compared to those living in urban areas (12.0%). Additionally, both younger and older people felt more discriminated against or harassed (see Figure 5.2). For example, 19.8 per cent of 15-24 year olds said so, but only 10.7 per cent of 55-64 year olds.

**Figure 5.1:** Proportion of population who felt discriminated against or harassed, by sex (2021 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population having felt discriminated against or harassed during the last 12 months, disaggregated **by sex and time** (SDG 16.b.1/10.3.1). The survey question is: *During the past 12 months, do you feel that you personally experienced any form of discrimination or harassment based on your ...?*

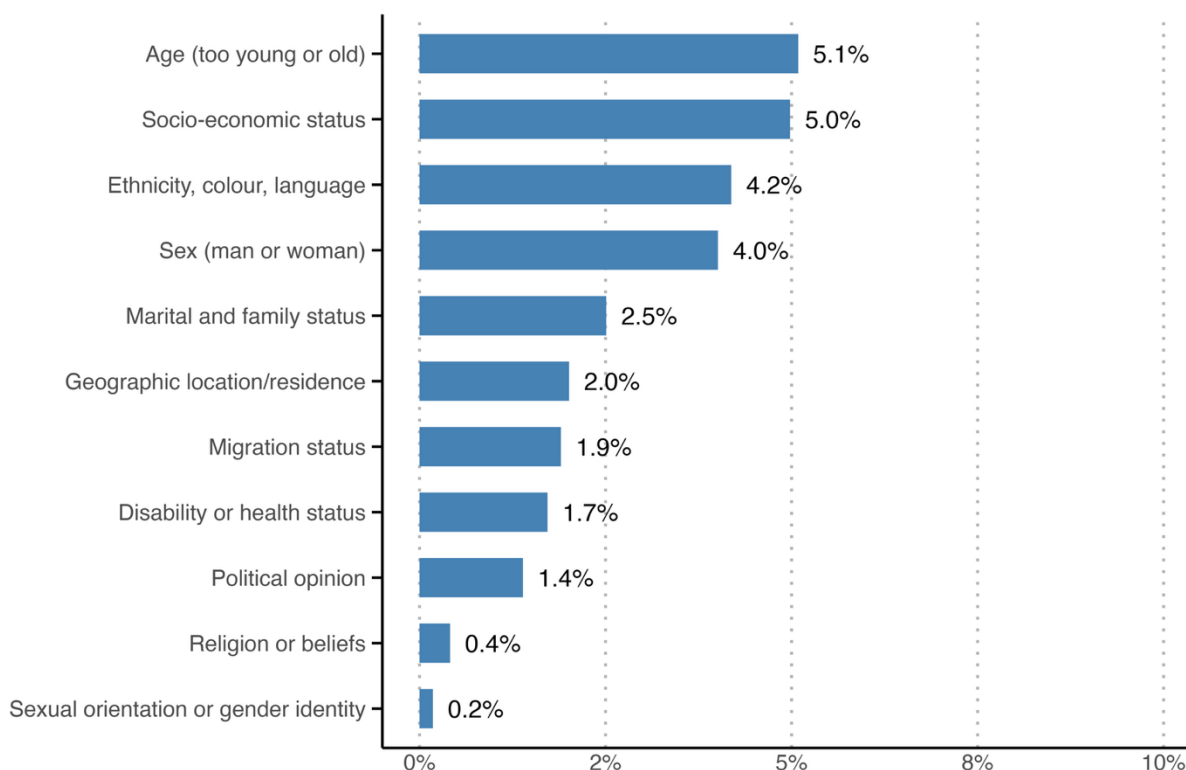
**Figure 5.2:** Proportion of population who felt discriminated against or harassed, by age groups (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population having felt discriminated against or harassed during the last 12 months, disaggregated **by age group** (SDG 16.b.1/10.3.1). The survey question is: *During the past 12 months, do you feel that you personally experienced any form of discrimination or harassment based on your ...?*

Age and socio-economic status were the most frequently cited grounds for discrimination. 5 per cent of the population reported feeling discriminated against or harassed based on their age or socio-economic status in the past 12 months (see Figure 5.3). This was followed by 4 per cent who reported discrimination based on their ethnicity or sex. On public transportation, on the street, or in other public places as well as at home were the most commonly mentioned settings where these experiences occurred.

**Figure 5.3:** Proportion of population reporting being a victim of discrimination, by selected grounds and sex (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of grounds for feeling discriminated against or harassed during the last 12 months. The survey question is: *During the past 12 months, do you feel that you personally experienced any form of discrimination or harassment based on your ...?*

## 6 16.6.2- Satisfaction with Public Services

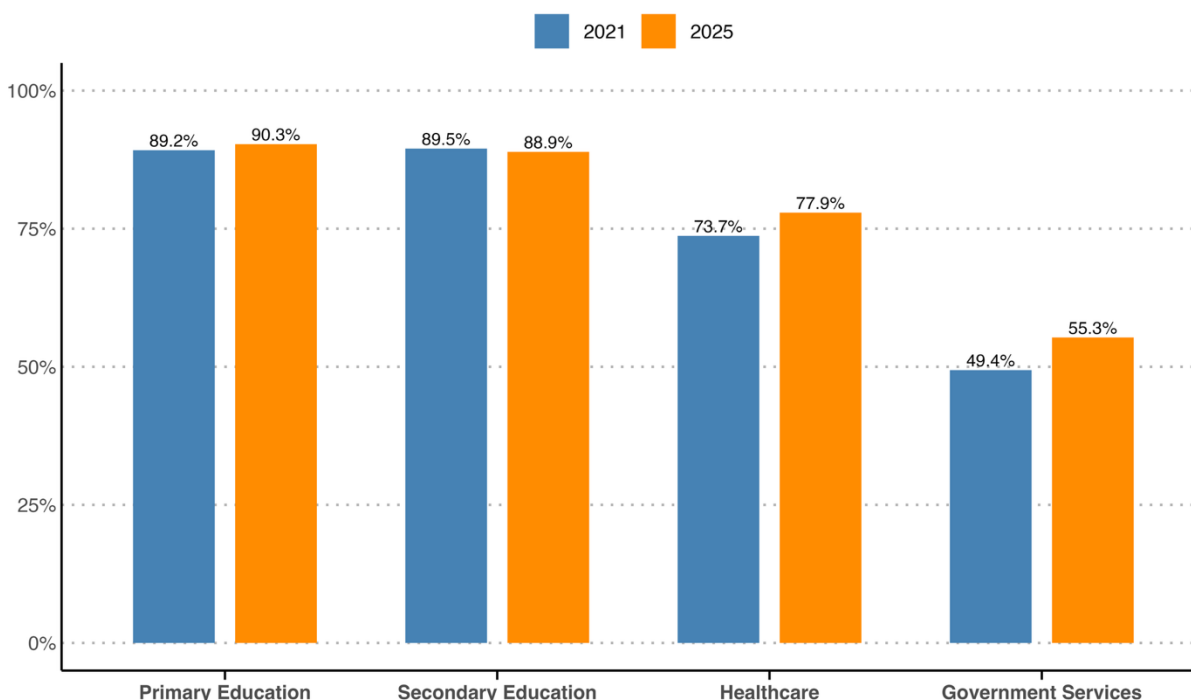
Public services remain one of the most direct ways people interact with government institutions and provide an important assessment of institutional performance and responsiveness. **SDG Indicator 16.6.2<sup>7</sup>** measures user satisfaction with essential public services, including perceptions of service quality attributes. The indicator captures people's experiences and evaluations of primary and secondary education, healthcare, and government administrative services, which provide important guidance on how well public services meet people's needs and expectations for improving interactions between citizens and public institutions.

Overall, satisfaction with public services remained relatively stable across the two survey rounds in The Gambia (see Figure 6.1). Similarly, positive evaluations of service quality attributes were also consistent

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (2023). *SDG 16.6.2: Understanding satisfaction with public services for more effective, accountable and inclusive public institutions*. <http://undp.org/policy-centre/governance/publications/sdg-1662-understanding-satisfaction-public-services-more-effective-accountable-and-inclusive-public>.

over time. While satisfaction with primary and secondary education was already high in 2021, satisfaction with healthcare and government services increased slightly. For example, in 2021, 49.4 per cent of the population reported being satisfied with government services; in 2025, satisfaction increased by six percentage points to 55.3 per cent.

**Figure 6.1:** Proportion of users satisfied with public services (2021 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of users satisfied with primary and secondary education, healthcare and government services in 2021 and 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*).

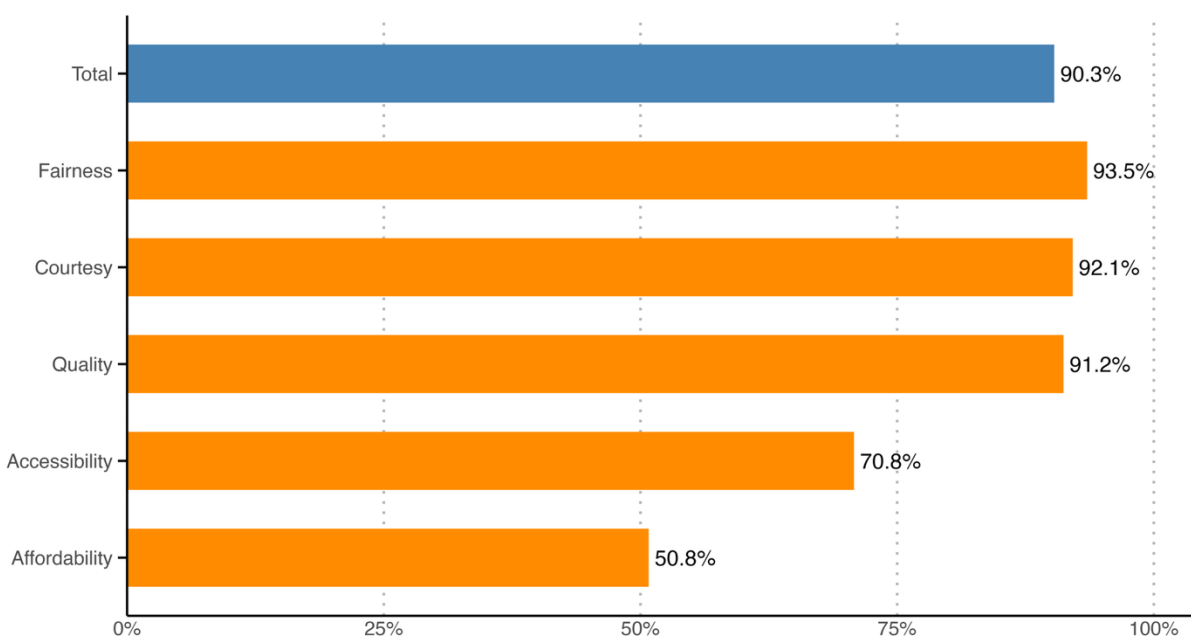
Indicator 16.6.2 goes beyond measuring overall satisfaction with essential public services. Including indicators on **service quality attributes** shows which aspects of public service delivery matter most to citizens and where policymakers can focus efforts to improve quality. These attributes help unpack the average satisfaction levels and point to concrete drivers of user perceptions. In The Gambia, courtesy and quality were identified as the most important factors influencing satisfaction with both primary and secondary education. For healthcare, satisfaction was most strongly associated with courtesy and fairness, while for government administrative services, timeliness, fairness and effectiveness played the most significant role.

## 6.1 Satisfaction with Education Services

Satisfaction with **primary education** services in The Gambia is generally high, with 90.3 per cent saying they were satisfied (see Figure 6.2). A closer look at the service attributes, which give an indication of the service quality, reveals particularly positive perceptions of fairness (93.5%), courtesy (92.1%) and quality (91.2%). However, people were on average less satisfied with the accessibility (70.8%) and affordability

(50.8%) of primary education services. This suggests that despite high overall satisfaction levels, financial and physical barriers to access remain important, showing room for improvement to ensure accessible and affordable primary education.

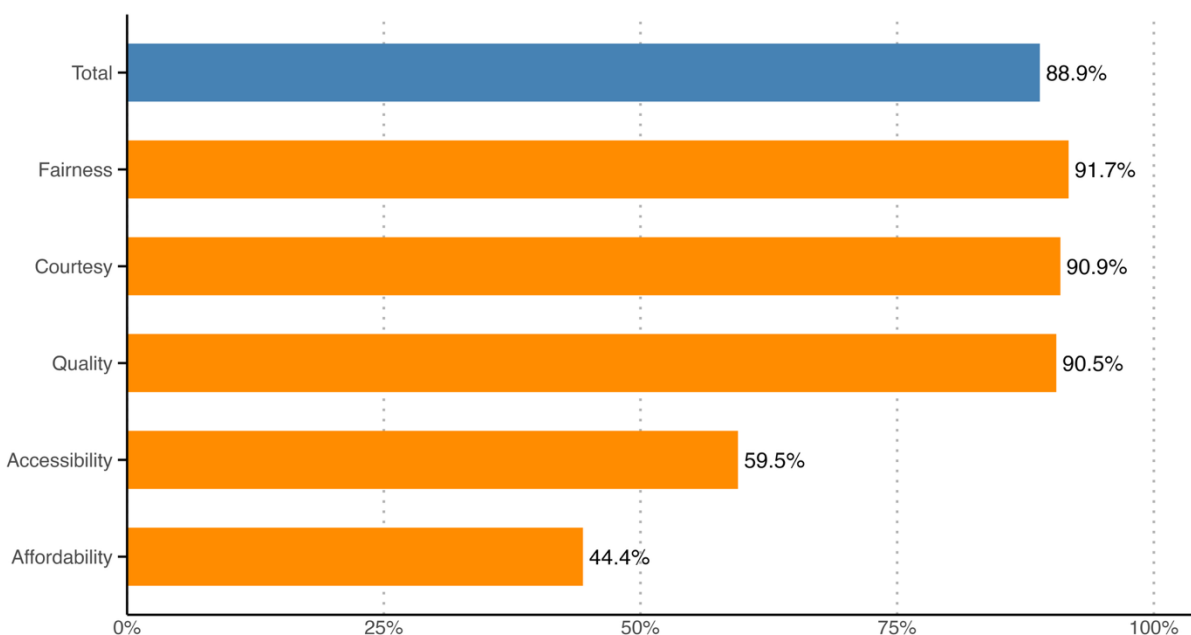
**Figure 6.2:** Proportion of users satisfied with primary education services (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of users **satisfied with primary education** in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*). The survey question for quality attributes is: *How much do you agree with the following statements?*

Satisfaction with **secondary education** was similarly high, with 88.9 per cent of respondents reporting a positive experience with their most recent interaction (see Figure 6.3). Among the quality attributes, users rated fairness (91.7%), quality (90.5%), and courtesy (90.9%) most positively. However, as with primary education, satisfaction with accessibility (59.5%) and affordability (44.4%) was lower, indicating that financial and physical barriers are equally pronounced at the secondary level.

**Figure 6.3:** Proportion of users satisfied with secondary education services (2025)

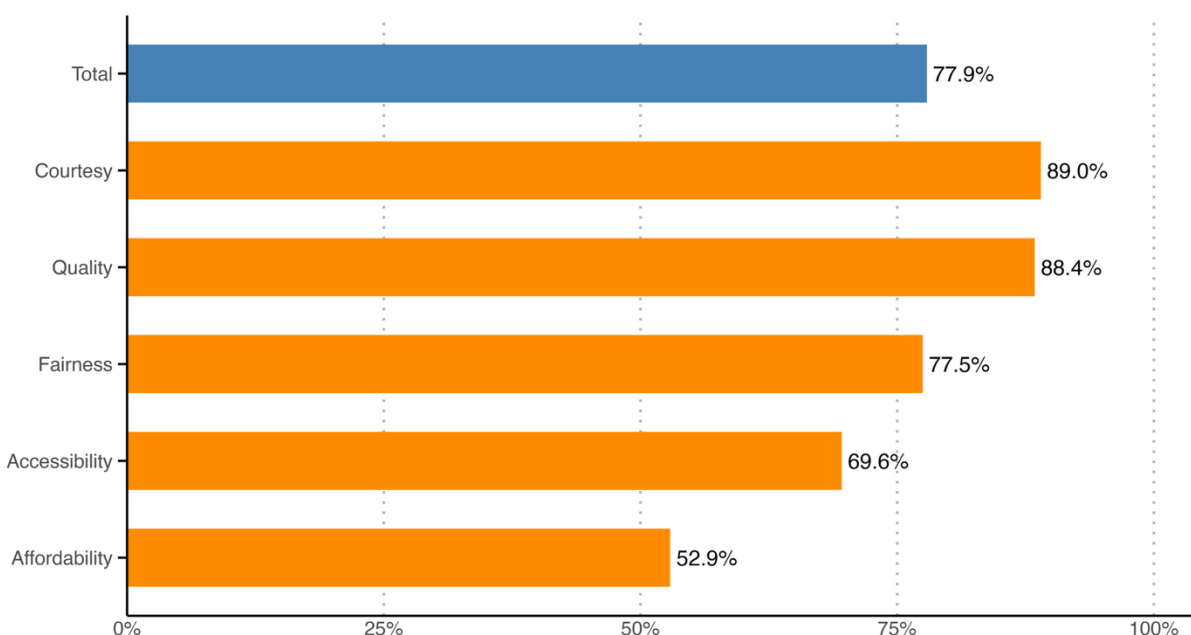


**Note:** The figure shows the share of users **satisfied with secondary education** in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*). The survey question for quality attributes is: *How much do you agree with the following statements?*

## 6.2 Satisfaction with Health Services

On average, users had high satisfaction levels with their **health services** (see Figure 6.4), which was 77.9 per cent in 2025. Across the service dimensions, courtesy (89.0%), quality (88.4%), and fairness (77.5%) received particularly positive feedback. Accessibility (69.6%) and affordability (52.9%), however, continued to fall behind, reinforcing broader issues related to cost burdens and uneven distribution – similarly to the feedback about primary and secondary education services.

**Figure 6.4:** Proportion of users satisfied with health services (2025)



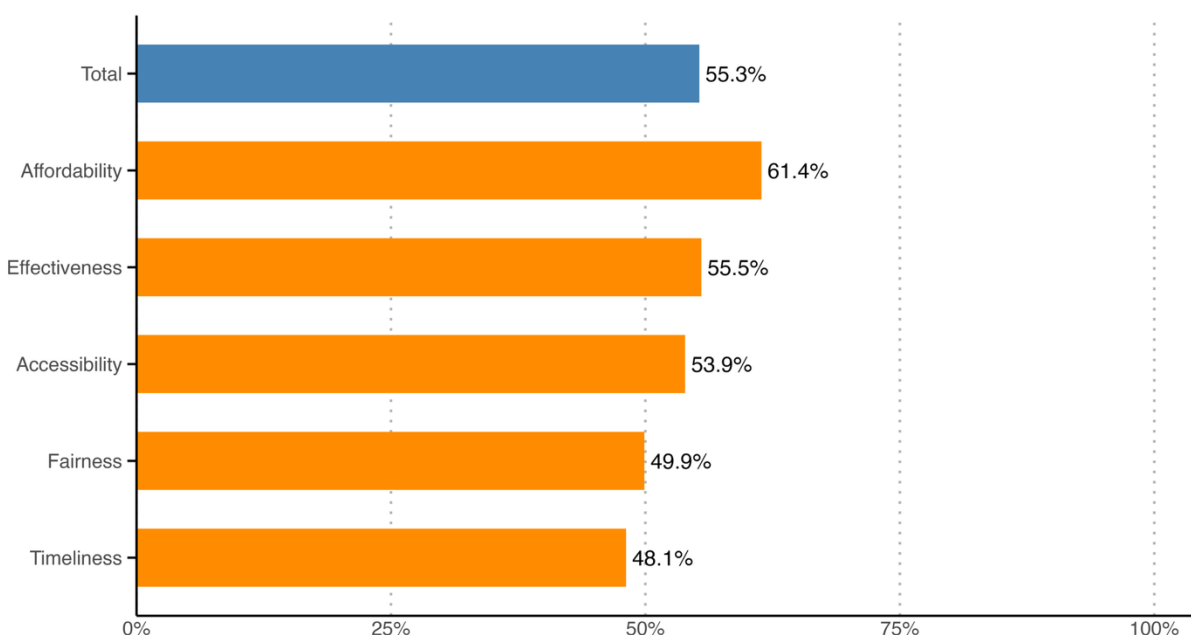
**Note:** The figure shows the share of users **satisfied with healthcare** in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*). The survey question for quality attributes is: *How much do you agree with the following statements?*

## 6.3 Satisfaction with Government Services

Satisfaction with **government administrative services** was the lowest among all public services in 2025 at 55.3 per cent (see Figure 6.5). Within this, users were more satisfied with the affordability (61.4%) and effectiveness (55.5%), than with the timeliness (48.1%), fairness (49.9%), and accessibility (53.9%).



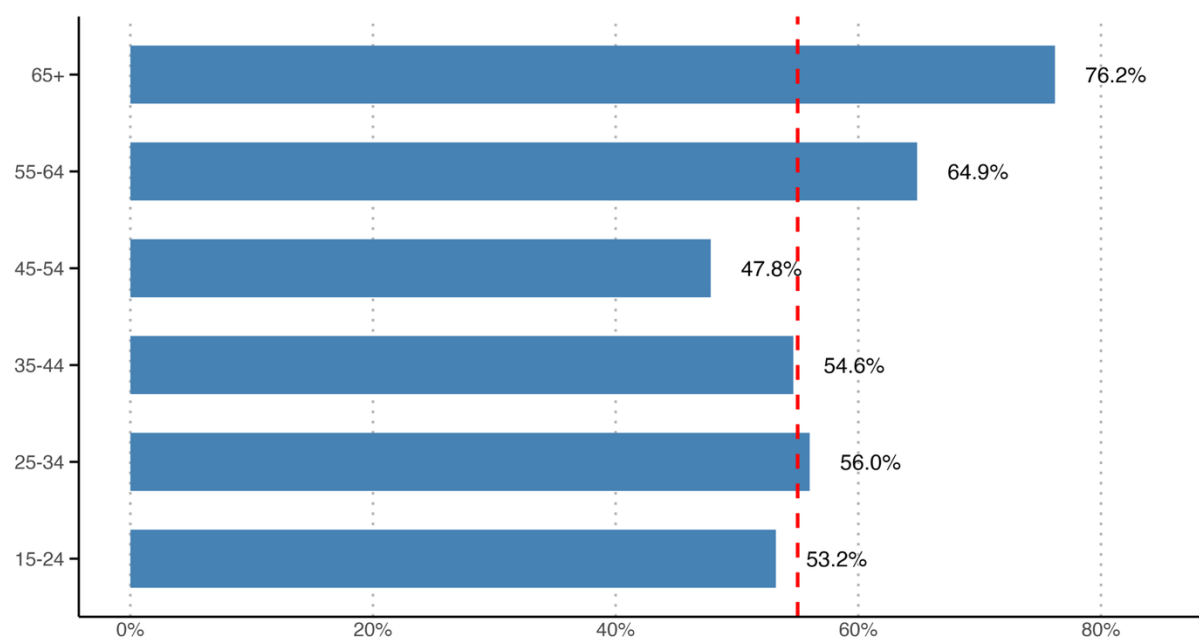
**Figure 6.5:** Proportion of users satisfied with government services (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of users **satisfied with government services** in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*). The survey question for quality attributes is: *How much do you agree with the following statements?*

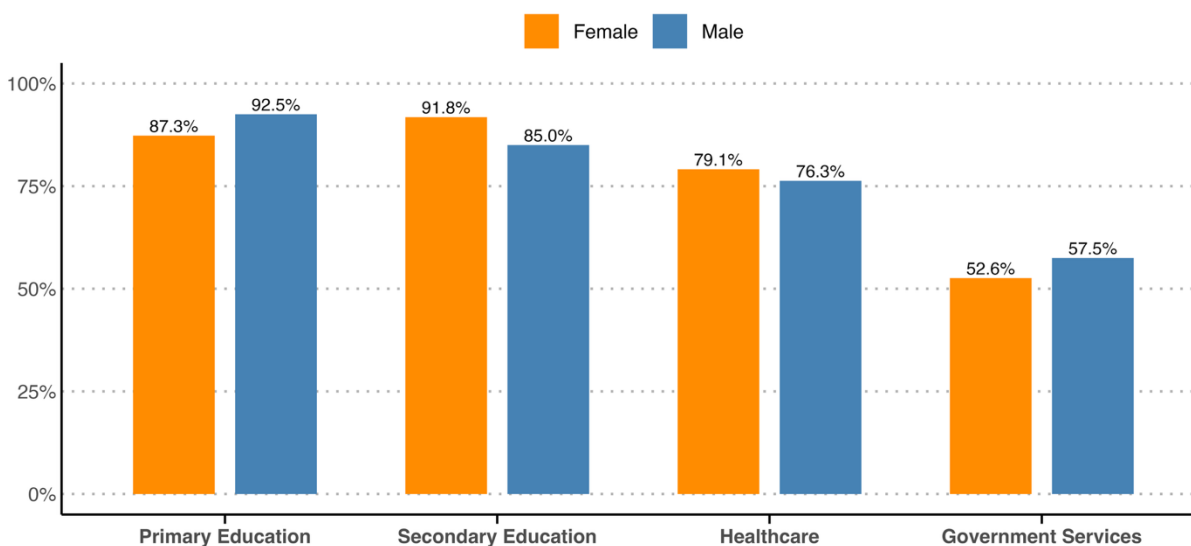
Satisfaction with government services in The Gambia is lower among the younger population (see Figure 6.6). Just over half (53.0%) of those aged 15–24 said they were satisfied, compared to more than three-quarters (76.0%) among those aged 65 and older. Overall, the data suggest that younger and middle-aged adults are less likely to express satisfaction with government services than older respondents. Overall, satisfaction with services varies by gender. Men have on average higher satisfaction with primary education services (92.5%), compared to women (87.3%) (see Figure 6.7).

**Figure 6.6:** Proportion of users satisfied with government services, by age groups (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of government service users satisfied with their last experience of accessing government services (SDG 16.6.2), disaggregated by age group. The red dashed line represents the share of the population who is satisfied with government services (55%).

**Figure 6.7:** Proportion of users satisfied with government services, by gender (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of users satisfied with their last experience of accessing primary and secondary education, healthcare and government services (SDG 16.6.2), disaggregated by sex.

## 7 16.7.2- Inclusive and Responsive Decision-Making

**SDG Indicator 16.7.2**<sup>8</sup> measures people’s perceptions of public decision-making - or the proportion of the population who believe that decision-making processes at all levels are inclusive and responsive. This reflects the level of external political efficacy— or political voice —whether individuals feel that their views are heard and that institutions are accountable to citizens. SDG 16.7.2 measures both the *inclusiveness* – whether people feel they can have a say in what the government does, and the *responsiveness*, whether they feel they can have an influence on politics. This falls under **Target 16.7**, which strives towards *responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels*, helping to assess trust in public institutions and the perceived fairness of governance - essential for promoting participation, transparency, and social cohesion.

The results from the 2025 survey (see Figure 7.1) show that 31.1 per cent of The Gambians believe that decision-making in the country is inclusive and responsive. While this indicates that about 1/3 of the population recognizes efforts toward inclusive governance and making people’s voices heard, there remains significant room for improvement to increase citizens’ political engagement and government responsiveness. Since this indicator was not measured in the 2021 survey round, there are no baseline results available for comparison, but the SDG Global Database shows similar perception levels of inclusive and responsive decision-making across countries around the world.

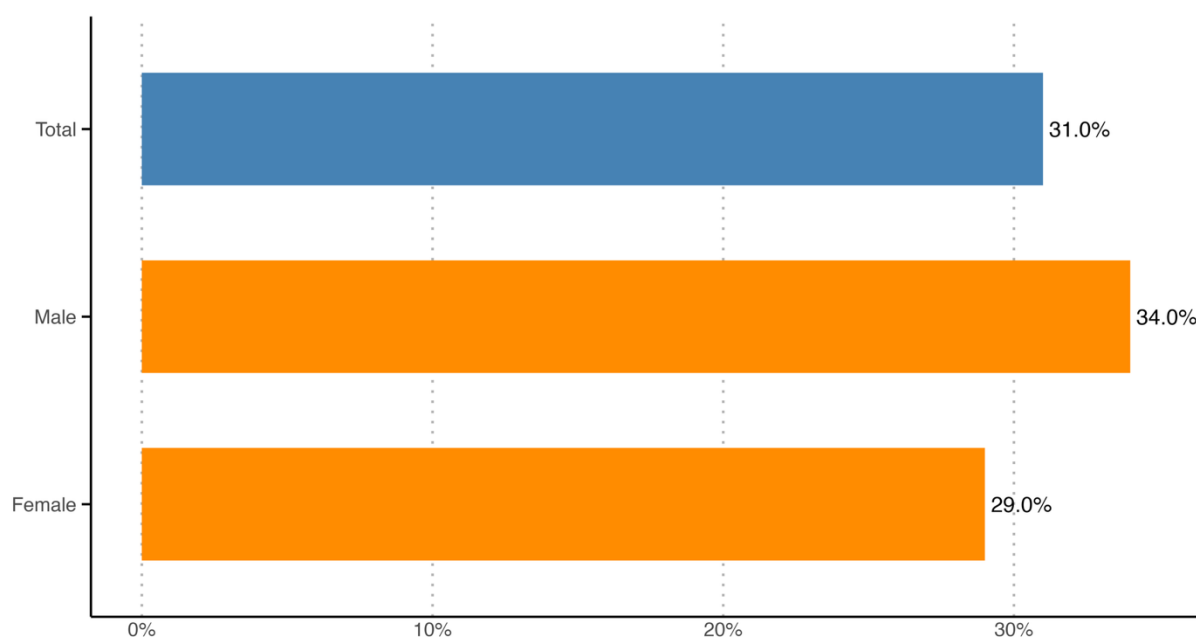
Disaggregated findings show that men (34.0%) are more likely than women (28.6%) to view decision-making as inclusive and responsive. Perceptions are more negative among the younger population (ages 15–24), with only 27 per cent indicating that they feel decision-making is inclusive and responsive (see Figure 7.2). In contrast, the 55–64 age group is the most positive across all age groups, with nearly 40 per cent expressing this view. The two survey indicators that make up SDG 16.7.2—feeling of having a say and feeling of influence in politics—tend to elicit similar responses across age groups (see Figure 7.3). For example, among youth (15-24 age group), 21.3 per cent feel they have a say, while 23.7 per cent feel they have an influence.

Lastly, the act of voting in national and local elections helps to build a strong foundation for people’s perception of how inclusive the political system is, and whether their voice is being heard. At the same time, people under 18 are not allowed to vote (the survey included everyone above the age of 15), and they may feel that their voices do not count – similar to people who do not hold citizenship. In The Gambia, only 22 per cent of respondents who are legally allowed to vote in national elections feel that decision-making is inclusive and responsive, compared to 34 per cent of those who are not allowed to vote.

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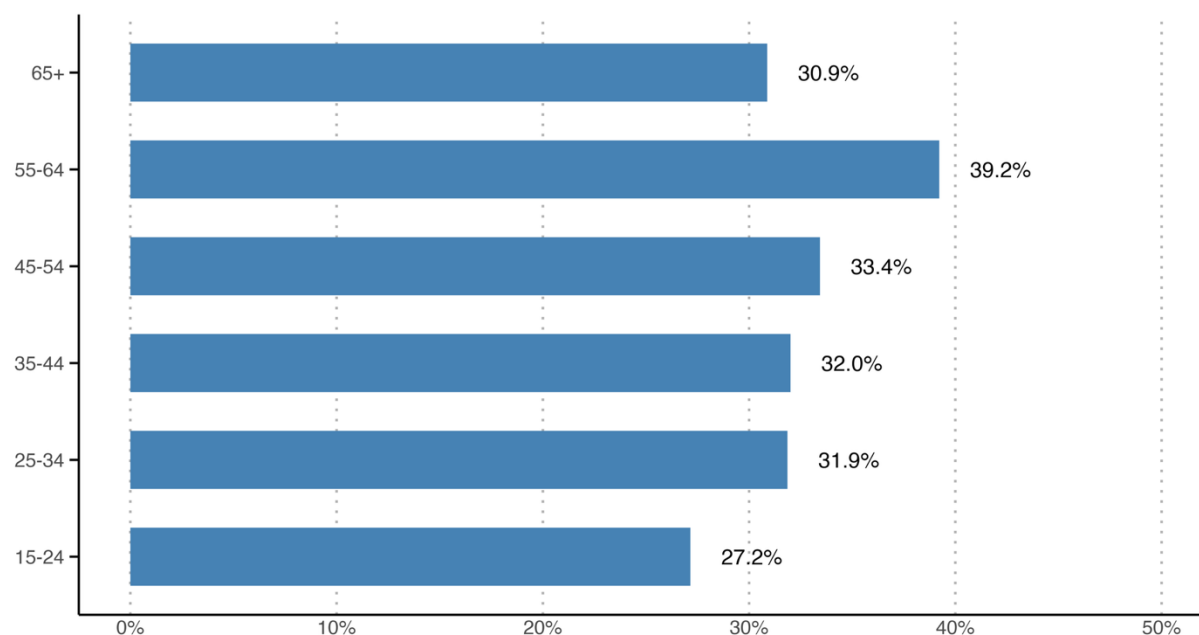
<sup>8</sup> UNDP (2022), *SDG 16.7.2: Ensuring Inclusive and Responsive Decision-Making for Sustainable Development*, <https://www.undp.org/publications/sdg-1672-ensuring-inclusive-and-responsive-decision-making-sustainable-development>.

**Figure 7.1:** Proportion of population who perceives decision making as inclusive and responsive, by sex (2025)



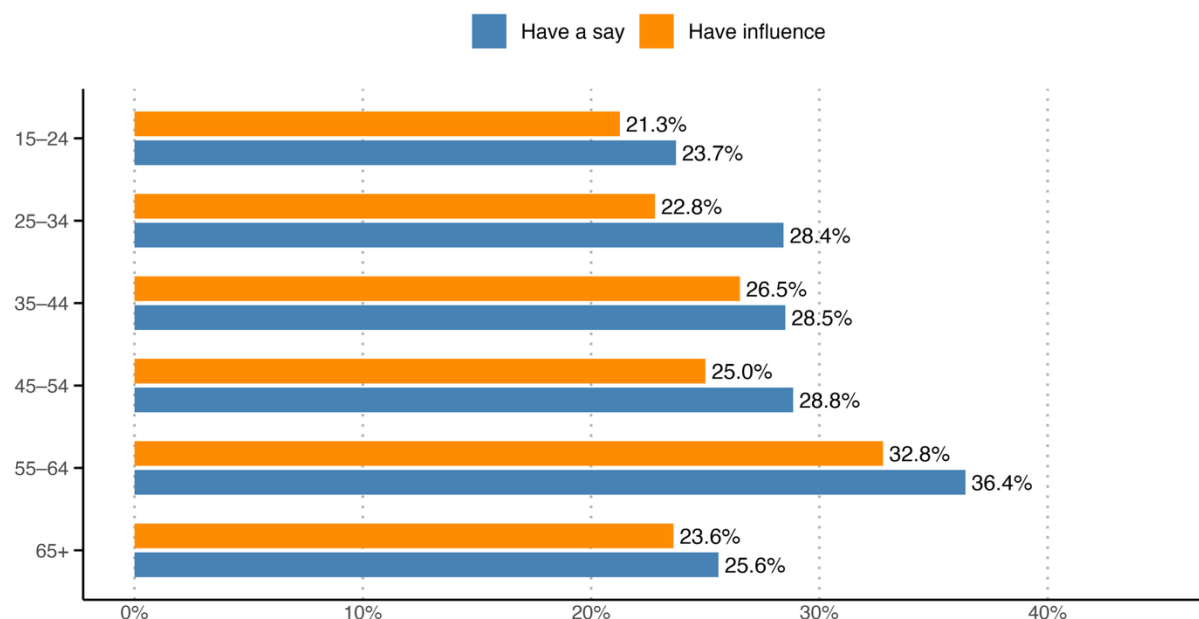
**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who perceives decision making as **inclusive** (*How much would you say the political system in The Gambia allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?*) and **responsive** (*And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?*), by sex (SDG 16.7.2).

**Figure 7.2:** Proportion of population who perceives decision making as inclusive and responsive, by age groups (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who perceives decision making as **inclusive** (*How much would you say the political system in The Gambia allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?*) and **responsive** (*And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?*), by age group (SDG 16.7.2).

**Figure 7.3:** Proportion of population who perceives decision making as inclusive and responsive, by age groups (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who perceives decision making as **inclusive** (*How much would you say the political system in The Gambia allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?*) and **responsive** (*And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?*), by age group (SDG 16.7.2).

## 8 16.3.3- Access to Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

**SDG Indicator 16.3.3**<sup>9</sup> measures the proportion of individuals who experienced a dispute in the past two years and subsequently accessed a formal or informal mechanism for resolution. As part of **target 16.3**, countries have committed to *promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all*.

### **Types of Disputes Captured Under SDG Indicator 16.3.3**

The SDG Indicator 16.3.3 covers a wide range of civil, administrative, and socio-economic disputes experienced by the population in the past two years. These include:

- **Land or property disputes** such as disagreement over land titles, access routes, or illegal occupation.
- **Housing-related issues** including landlord-tenant conflicts, eviction, or disputes over repairs and maintenance.
- **Family matters** including divorce, child custody, child support, and inheritance (e.g., wills).
- **Injury or illness claims** — arising from workplace accidents, medical malpractice, or unsafe conditions.
- **Employment or labour disputes** such as wrongful dismissal, wage claims, denial of benefits, or workplace harassment.
- **Government payments** including problems accessing pensions, cash transfers, education grants, or disability benefits.
- **Public services access** such as challenges obtaining ID documents, accessing healthcare or education, or utilities like water and electricity.
- **Goods and services** disputes involving faulty products or unsatisfactory professional services.
- **Financial and debt-related issues** including unpaid debts, bills, or difficulty collecting owed money.
- **Environmental problems** such as land or water pollution, illegal dumping, or related community-level hazards.
- **Neighbourhood conflicts** — including disputes over noise, vandalism, or public disturbances like drug or alcohol misuse.

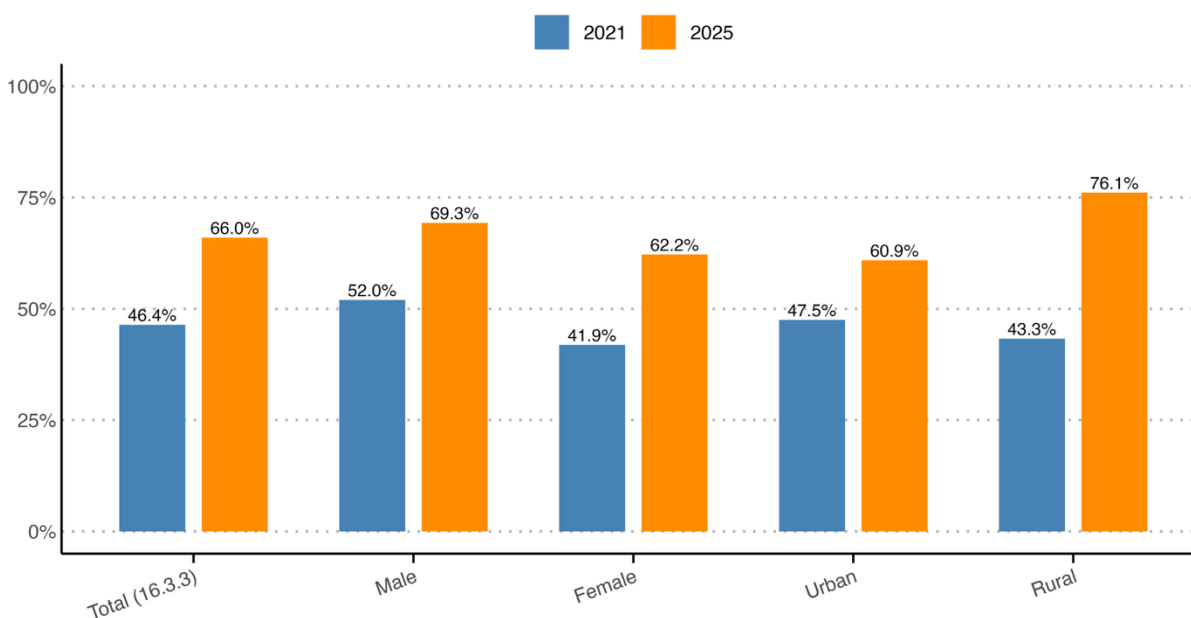
<sup>9</sup> UNDP (2025). From Data to Action: Strengthening Civil Justice with SDG 16.3.3 <https://www.undp.org/publications/data-action-strengthening-civil-justice-sdg-1633>

Access to justice is a multidimensional concept broadly concerned with *the ability of people to defend and enforce their rights and obtain just resolution of justiciable problems in compliance with human rights standards; if necessary, through impartial formal or informal institutions of justice and with appropriate legal support*. Measuring people’s access to civil justice offers insights into the justice system and available services, examining how individuals engage with dispute resolution services.

The 2025 survey showed that 15 per cent of the population experienced a civil dispute during the past two years – and 66 per cent of those who experienced a dispute accessed a dispute resolution mechanism, excluding those that voluntarily chose not to do so<sup>10</sup>, up from 46.4 per cent in 2021—a 20 percentage point improvement (see Figure 8.1). This upward trend is consistent across all subgroups.

Access to dispute resolution mechanisms increased the most for people in rural areas – from 43.3 per cent in 2021 to 76.1 per cent in 2025. This suggests a significant expansion of services or improved awareness in rural areas. People living in urban areas saw a smaller, but still quite significant increase, from 47.5 per cent to 60.9 per cent. Male respondents reported higher access than females in both survey rounds, 2021 and 2025. However, access among women improved from 41.9 per cent in 2021 to 62.2 per cent in 2025, narrowing the gender gap.

**Figure 8.1:** Proportion of population with access to dispute resolution mechanisms by sex and residence (2021 and 2025)

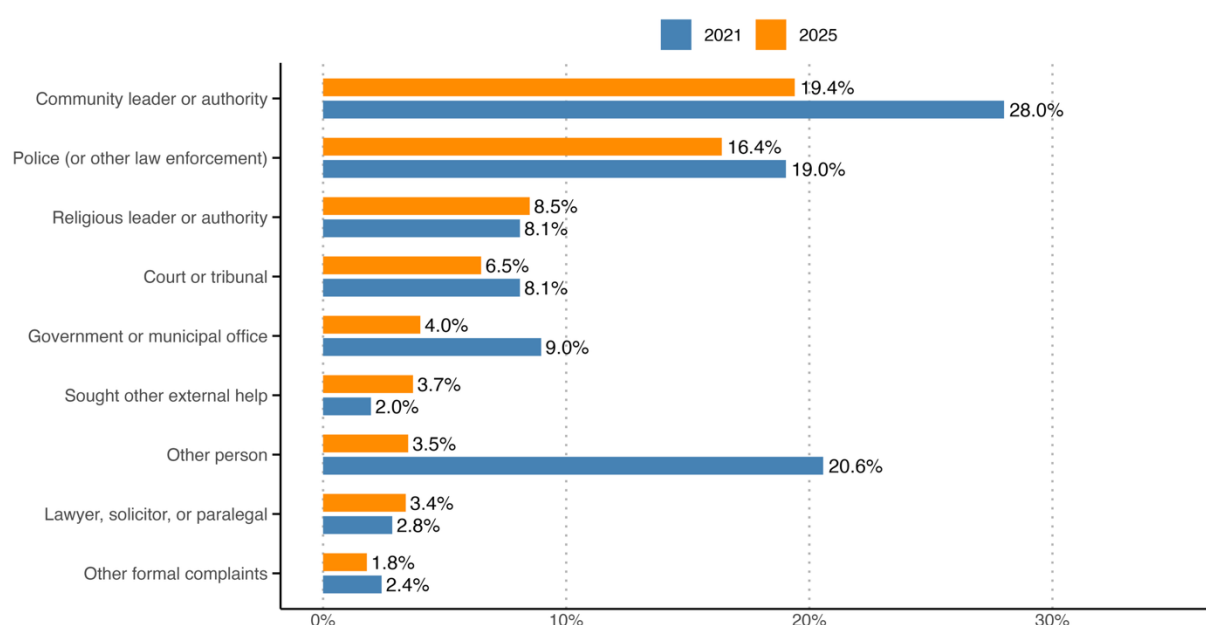


**Note:** The figure shows the share of those that experienced a dispute in the past 2 years and who accessed a dispute resolution mechanism (16.3.3), in 2021 and 2025, disaggregated by sex and urban/rural residence.

<sup>10</sup> 29.0 per cent of individuals who experienced a dispute in the past two years did not attempt to resolve it due to voluntary non-resolution reasons in 2025.

In the last two years, 66 per cent of those who experienced a dispute accessed a dispute resolution mechanism. The types of mechanisms accessed were broadly similar between 2021 and 2025 (see Figure 8.2). Almost 1 in 5 reported turning to an *informal mechanism*, such as a community leader or local authority, followed by the police as the most common *formal mechanism*. In contrast, very few reported using a lawyer, solicitor, or paralegal. The biggest difference between the two surveys was that 20.6 per cent in 2021 said they contacted another person (e.g. friend or family member) to resolve the dispute.<sup>11</sup> In 2025, this share dropped to 3.5 per cent.

**Figure 8.2:** Proportion of population who accessed various dispute resolution mechanisms (2021 and 2025)



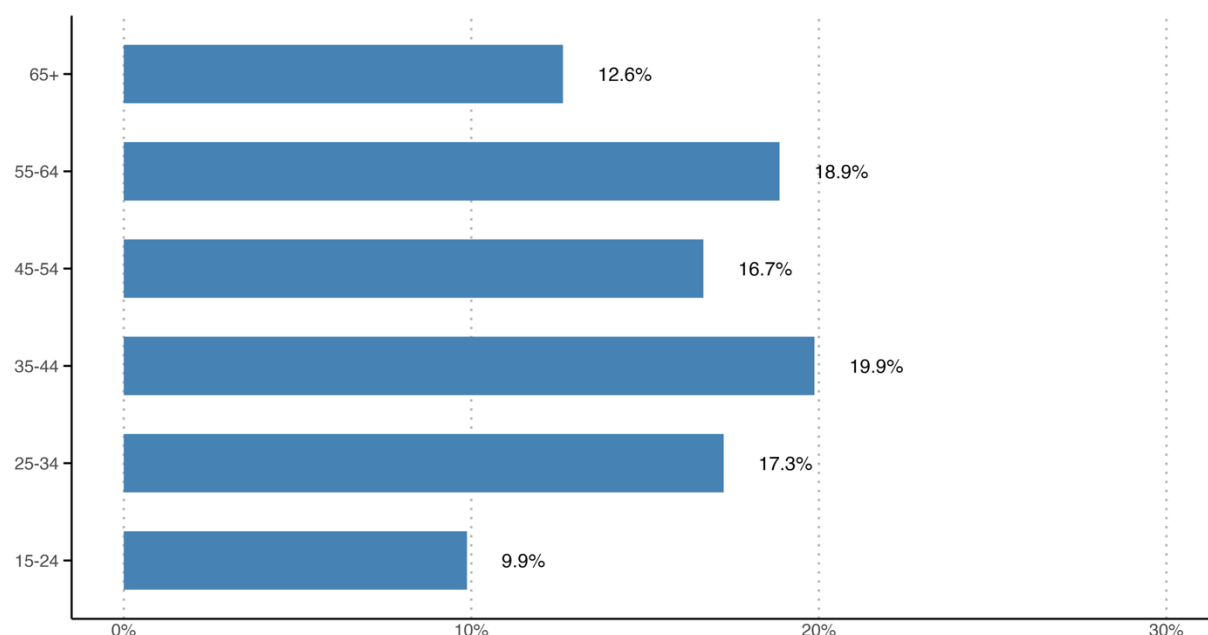
**Note:** The figure shows the share of dispute resolution mechanisms accessed by those that experienced a dispute in the past 2 years (16.3.3), in 2021 and 2025. Respondents could choose multiple dispute resolution mechanisms.

Not only does access to justice vary across population groups, but so does the likelihood of experiencing a dispute in the first place (see Figure 8.3). In 2025, 15 per cent of the population in The Gambia reported having experienced at least one dispute in the past 12 months. The youngest age group (15–24) reported the fewest disputes, while those aged 35–44 and 55–64 were the most likely to report having experienced at least one. In contrast, respondents aged 65 and older also reported relatively few disputes.

<sup>11</sup> The significant larger share in 2021 of respondents who selected ‘other person’ could be due to misclassification by enumerators (putting responses under ‘other specify’ when categories already exist).



**Figure 8.3:** Proportion of population who experienced a dispute, by age groups (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of those that experienced a dispute in the past 2 years in 2025, disaggregated by age group

In the majority of disputes (59.6%), no formal decision was reached, either because the issue was dropped or resolved informally (see Table 8.1). Only 1.9 per cent of cases were decided in a court or tribunal, while 9.8 per cent were resolved through police involvement. Community leaders (10.8%) and religious authorities (3.9%) played more prominent roles than formal government institutions (1.3%). These findings reinforce the critical role of informal resolution pathways in The Gambia and the limited reach of formal judicial systems in everyday disputes.

**Table 8.1: Institution that took the final decision in the dispute, 2025**

	Per cent
No decision was taken: the dispute was dropped, or was resolved otherwise	59.6
No decision was taken, because the case still ongoing	5.8
Court or tribunal	1.9
Police (or other law enforcement)	9.8
A government or municipal office or other formal designated authority or agency	1.3
Religious leader or authority	3.9
Community leader or authority (such as village elder, or local leader)	10.8
Other external help, such as mediation, conciliation, arbitration	1.4
Other person or organisation (specify)	1.6
Don't know	0.9
Prefer not to say	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Voluntary non-resolution was one of the main reasons why some disputes were not pursued (see Table 8.2): 31.4 per cent felt the issue was not important enough, and 21.9 per cent believed they could handle it themselves. Lack of awareness also emerged as a major barrier, 7.7 per cent did not know resolution was possible, and 8.2 per cent didn't know where to go. Cost (2.7%), distance (0.6%), fear (3.8%), and lack of trust (1.5%) further highlight persistent access-to-justice challenges.

**Table 8.2: Reasons for not trying to resolve disputes, 2025**

Reason for not trying to resolve the dispute	Per cent
I think/thought the problem is/was not important enough	31.4
I was/am confident that I could/can easily resolve it by myself	21.9
I caused the problem / up to the other party	1.3
I did not know where to go to	8.2
I could not obtain legal assistance	3.6
It was too far away or hard to get to	0.6
It was too expensive or inconvenient	2.7
I did not trust the authorities	1.5
I did not think they could help	4.9
I was afraid of the consequences for me or my family	3.8
I did not know it was possible to turn to somewhere to resolve the issue	7.7
Other reason	5.9
Don't know	0.8
Prefer not to say	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 9 How are SDG 16 indicators interconnected?

Identifying and analyzing the connections among survey-based SDG 16 indicators is an important step to support integrated policy responses and ensure coherent monitoring. Experience of discrimination, bribery and lack of access to justice and quality public services are not isolated issues, often reinforce one another and undermine development outcomes. This section explores how the SDG 16 indicators in the latest The Gambia Monitoring Survey relate to one another and how this understanding can strengthen national strategies for achieving peaceful, just, and inclusive societies.

### 9.1 Satisfaction with public services

Delivering public services is a core responsibility of governments and one of the main pathways through which people engage with public institutions. Section 6 showed that overall levels of satisfaction with education and healthcare services in The Gambia were high. However, people perceived certain quality aspects of these services less positively, such as accessibility and affordability. In contrast to these services, satisfaction with government services was overall less positive.

An important factor influencing perceptions of public services is the extent to which people perceive them as corrupt or have to pay bribes themselves to access them. Ultimately, understanding the quality of service delivery must go beyond satisfaction levels to include people's ability to access services without facing corruption, an essential aspect for rebuilding public trust and strengthening government legitimacy.

In The Gambia, people who have not experienced bribery when interacting with public officials report significantly higher satisfaction with public services than those who have (see Figure 9.1). For example, 63.9 per cent of those who have not experienced bribery are satisfied with healthcare services, compared to 77.7 per cent among those who have not.

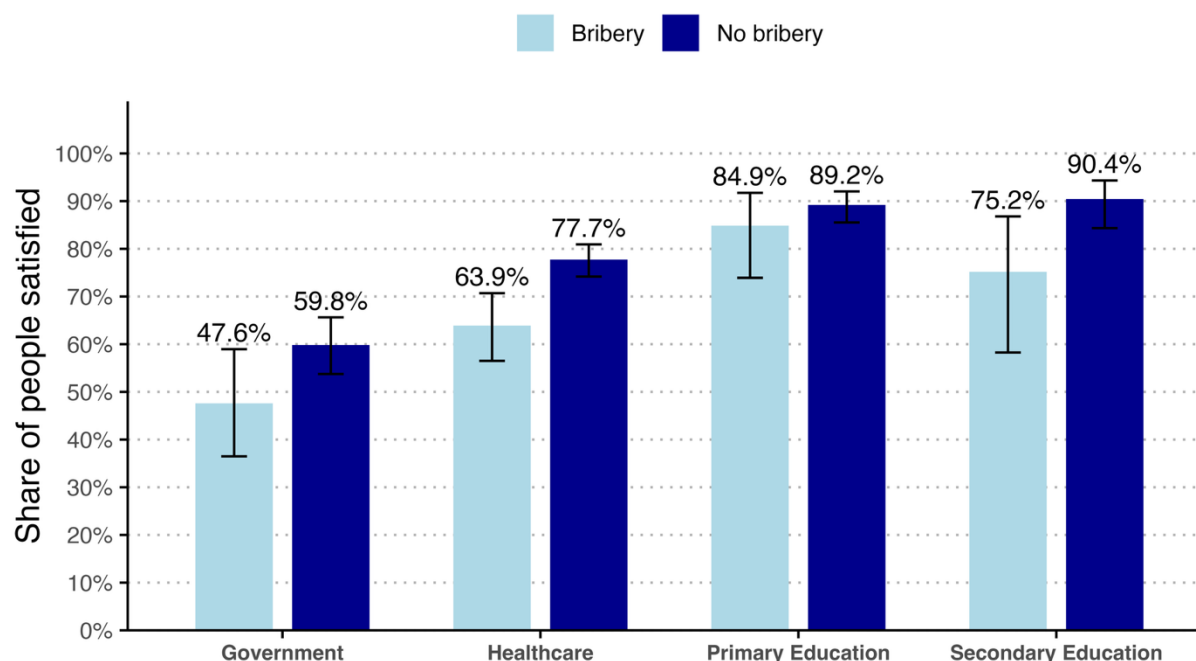
Additionally, people's surroundings and lived experiences matter for their satisfaction with public services. People who do not have access to basic services, such as sanitation, report significantly lower satisfaction with healthcare services than those with access (see Figure 9.2). Similar findings can be seen with perceptions of safety: individuals who feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods report lower levels of satisfaction with government services, however, not significantly with education and healthcare services (see Figure 9.3).

These findings highlight the broader socio-institutional context shaping people's interactions with public services. Satisfaction is not only driven by the performance or delivery of the service itself but also by people's everyday realities — whether they live in secure environments, have access to basic infrastructure, or face informal barriers such as bribery when accessing services.

Understanding these intersecting factors related to SDG 16 — perceived safety, access to basic services, and corruption — is essential for designing inclusive, responsive, and user-centred public services. These findings show the relationship between people's perceptions of public services in relation to their social conditions, such as perceptions of safety and access to basic services, as well as their experience when interacting with public institutions through bribery. They also underline the need for governments to

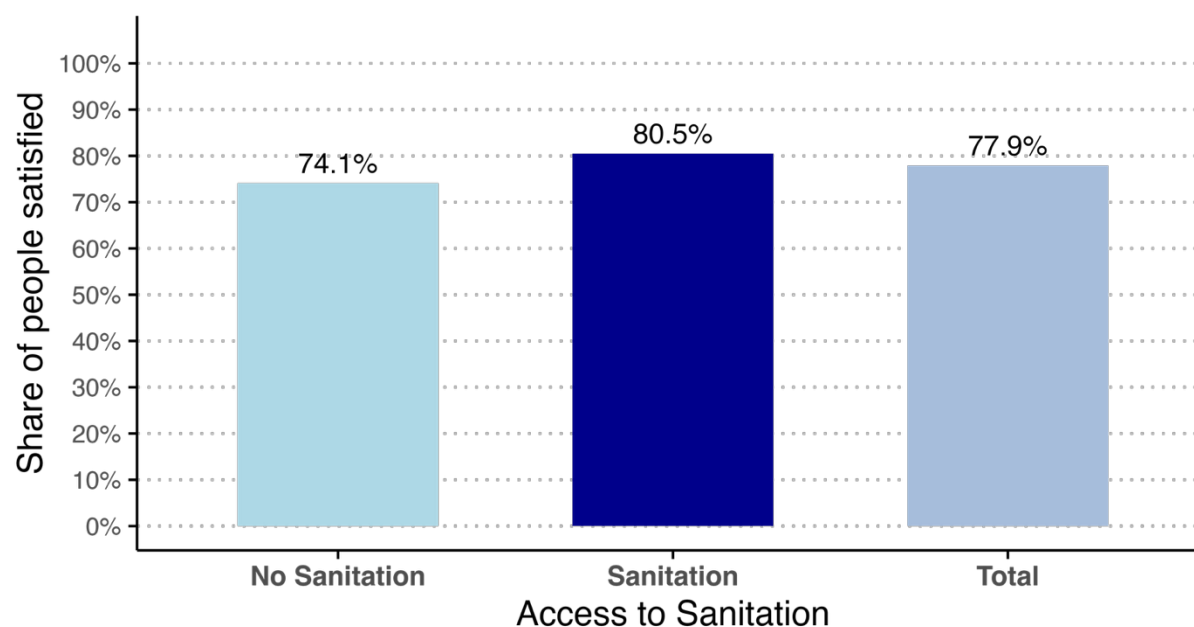
tackle not only service-level improvements but also the broader inequalities and vulnerabilities that affect how people experience and evaluate public services.

**Figure 9.1:** Proportion of users satisfied with government services, by experience of bribery (2025)



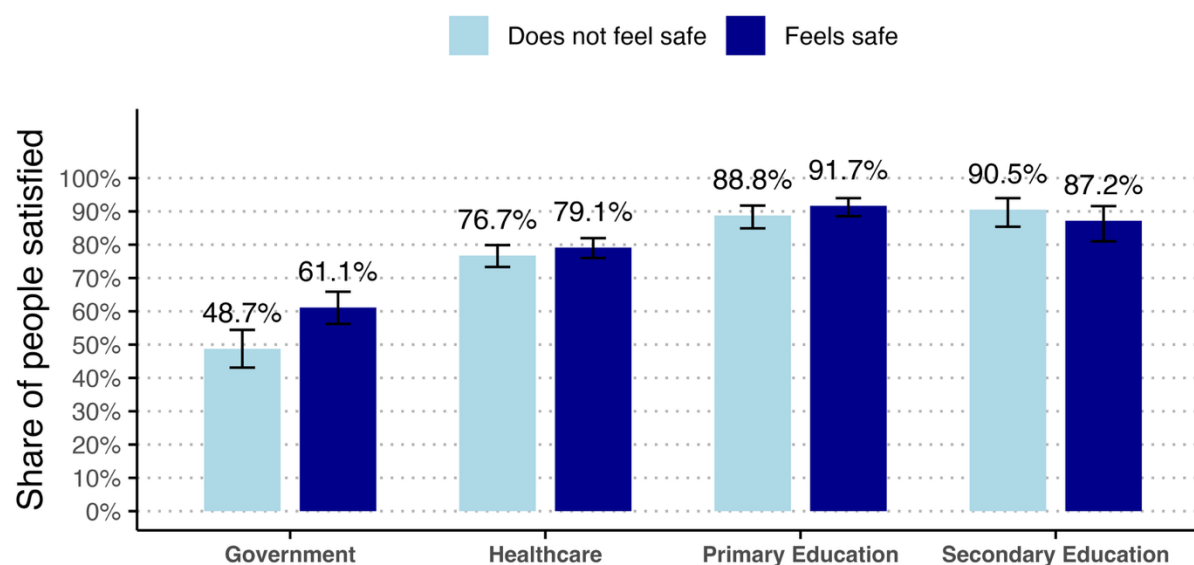
**Note:** The figure shows the share of users satisfied with primary and secondary education, healthcare and government services in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*), disaggregated by those who did and did not experience a bribe, out of all of those respondents who had contact with a public official. The black bars indicate confidence intervals at the 95 per cent confidence level.

**Figure 9.2:** Proportion of users satisfied with healthcare services, by access to sanitation (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of users **satisfied with healthcare** in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*), disaggregated by the households' level of access to basic services – more specifically, improved sanitation.

**Figure 9.3:** Proportion of population satisfied with public services, by perception of safety (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of users satisfied with primary and secondary education, healthcare and government services in 2025 (*Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of...?*), disaggregated by the respondents' perceptions of feeling safe while walking alone after dark. The black bars indicate confidence intervals at the 95% confidence level.

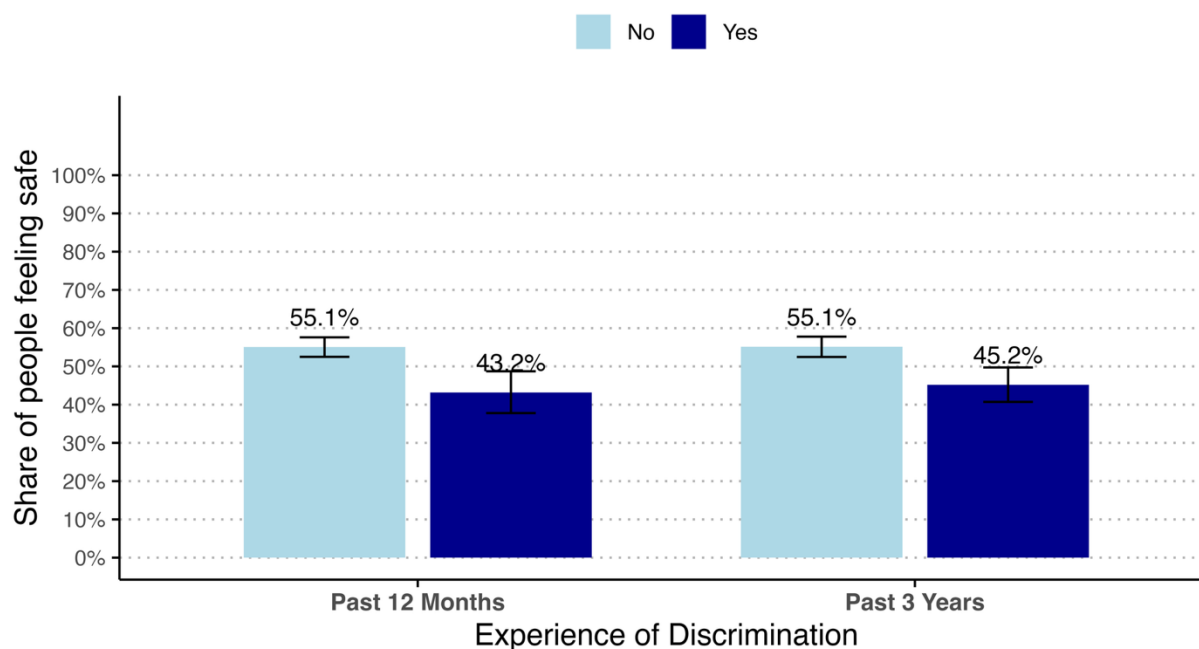
## 9.2 Feeling of Safety

Feeling unsafe when walking alone at night gives important insights into a person's well-being and sense of security within their community.

Experiences of violence, harassment or discrimination can contribute to this sense of insecurity, as individuals may fear being targeted again. In The Gambia, 55 per cent of people who had not experienced discrimination in the past 12 months reported feeling safe walking alone at night. In contrast, only 43 per cent of those who had experienced discrimination during the same period felt safe (see Figure 9.4). The same findings are confirmed when examining experiences of discrimination over the past three years. Similarly, people who have been victims of non-sexual or sexual harassment in the previous 12 months report slightly lower feelings of safety, compared to those without any harassment experience (see Figure 9.5).

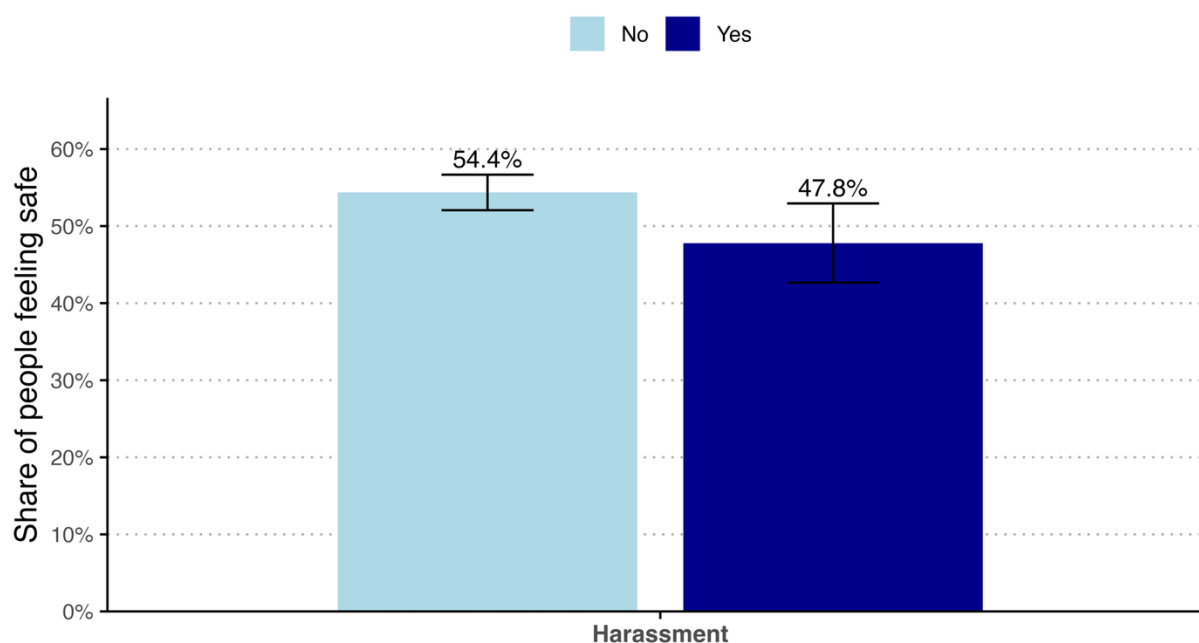
These results highlight how discrimination is not only a violation of equal treatment but also a factor that undermines public safety and social cohesion. When individuals feel singled out or excluded, it can erode their trust in institutions and reduce their sense of belonging within society. Addressing discrimination is therefore critical not only for promoting equality, but also for improving people's lived experience of safety and inclusion.

**Figure 9.4:** Proportion of population feeling safe walking at night, by experience of discrimination (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, by experience of discrimination or harassment during the past 12 months and 3 years. The black bars indicate confidence intervals at the 95 per cent confidence level.

**Figure 9.5:** Proportion of population feeling safe walking at night, by experience of harassment (2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population who feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, by experience of sexual or non-sexual harassment (11.7.2). The black bars indicate confidence intervals at the 95 per cent confidence level.

## 10 Conclusion

The 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey in The Gambia provides several insights on trends and progress since the baseline SDG Monitoring Survey that was conducted in 2021.

- **Leverage the evidence-base:** Use disaggregated data to identify geographic and demographic groups at highest risk (e.g. rural women experiencing violence or exclusion).
- **Promote trust:** Implement reforms to increase public trust in police, courts, and public institutions—foundational to improving violence reporting, safety, and responsiveness.
- **Leverage digital tools:** Expand use of mobile and online tools for reporting violence, accessing services, and citizen feedback.
- **Sustain monitoring:** Institutionalize SDG Monitoring Surveys within national statistical plans, ensuring that results feed into policy.
  - Continuous monitoring of the SDGs is essential to track progress and identify gaps, particularly in light of the 2030 Agenda.
  - Both surveys have contributed to The Gambia’s Voluntary National Review (VNR) and national development plans; it is important to build on and follow up on these efforts.

## 11 Other SDG Indicators included in the 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey in The Gambia

Apart from the SDG 16 related survey questions, both the 2021 and the 2025 SDG Monitoring Survey included additional SDG survey indicators, which allow to help track progress toward the 2030 Agenda.

### 11.1 5.a.1- Land Ownership and Gender Equity in Agriculture

**SDG Indicator 5.a.1** defines gender and geographic disparities in land ownership and tenure security within the agricultural population. The analysis focuses on two sub-indicators:

- **5.a.1 (a)**: the proportion of the total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land
- **5.a.1 (b)**: the share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land

Data from the 2025 SDGs Survey is compared with the 2021 baseline to assess progress toward more equitable access to land, particularly for women and rural dwellers.

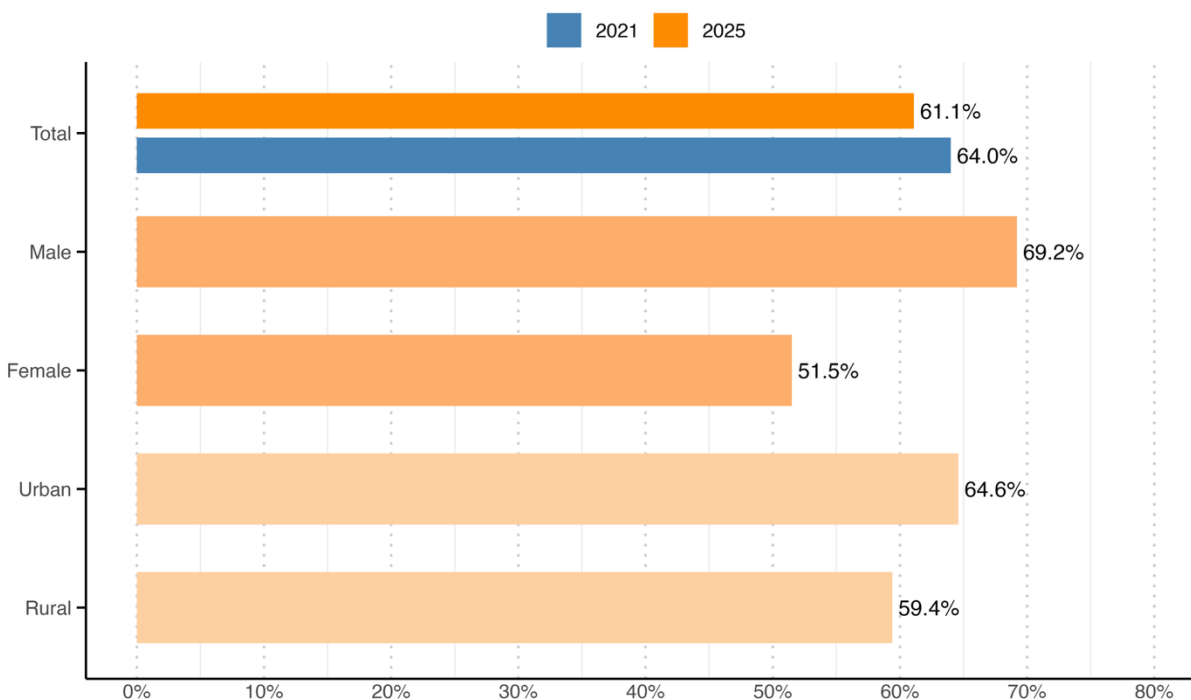
61.1 per cent of the agricultural population in The Gambia reported ownership or secure rights over agricultural land (see Figure 11.1). This marks a slight decline from 64.0 per cent in 2021. The gender gap remains substantial, with 69.2 per cent of men reporting secure land rights compared to only 51.5 per cent of women. Urban residents (64.6%) were more likely to report secure land tenure than rural residents (59.4%), though the rural population still forms the majority of agricultural households.

The data highlight ongoing challenges in achieving equitable land ownership. While tenure security among men remains high, the relatively low rate among women underscores the need for policies promoting gender-equitable land access.

The share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land stood at 53.6 per cent in 2025, down from 65.2 per cent in 2021 (see Figure 11.2). This reversal suggests a decline in women's representation among those with legal or secure tenure over agricultural land.

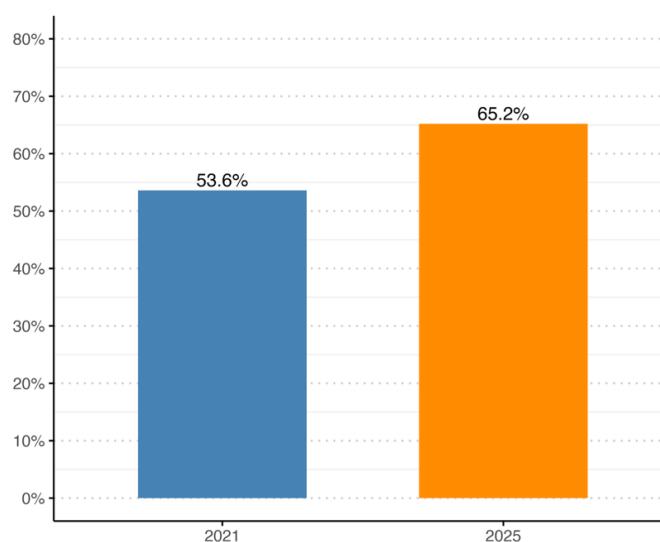


**Figure 11.1:** Proportion of population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land (2021 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land.

**Figure 11.2:** Proportion of women among rights-bearers of agricultural land (2021 and 2025)



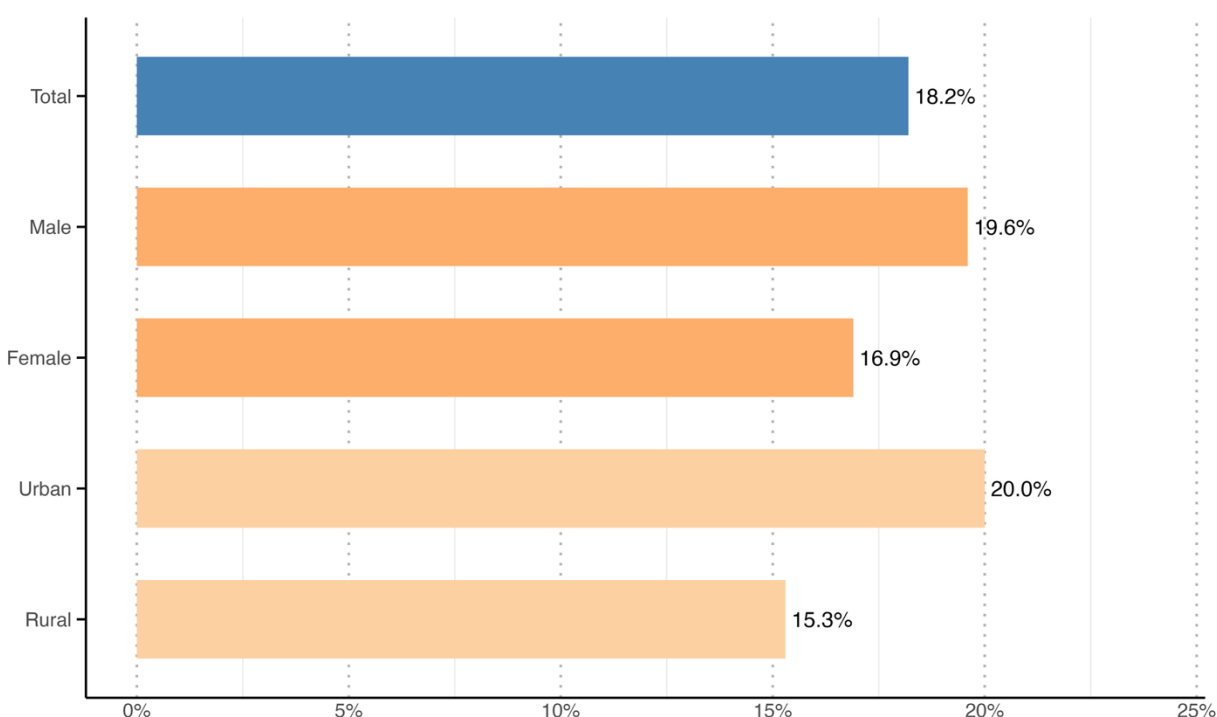
**Note:** The figure shows the share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land.

## 11.2 4.3.1- Participation in Formal and Non-Formal Education and Training

**SDG Indicator 4.3.1** analyses the participation of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training over the previous 12 months. The indicator helps assess access to lifelong learning opportunities, with data disaggregated by age group (youth aged 15–24 and adults aged 25–64), sex, and residence.

Results show that 18.2 per cent of the population aged 15 to 64 participated in some form of education or training. Participation was slightly higher among men (19.6%) than women (16.9%), and among urban (20.0%) compared to rural residents (15.3%). These disparities suggest persistent inequalities in access to learning opportunities based on sex and location (see Figure 11.3).

**Figure 11.3:** Proportion of population participating in education and training (2025)

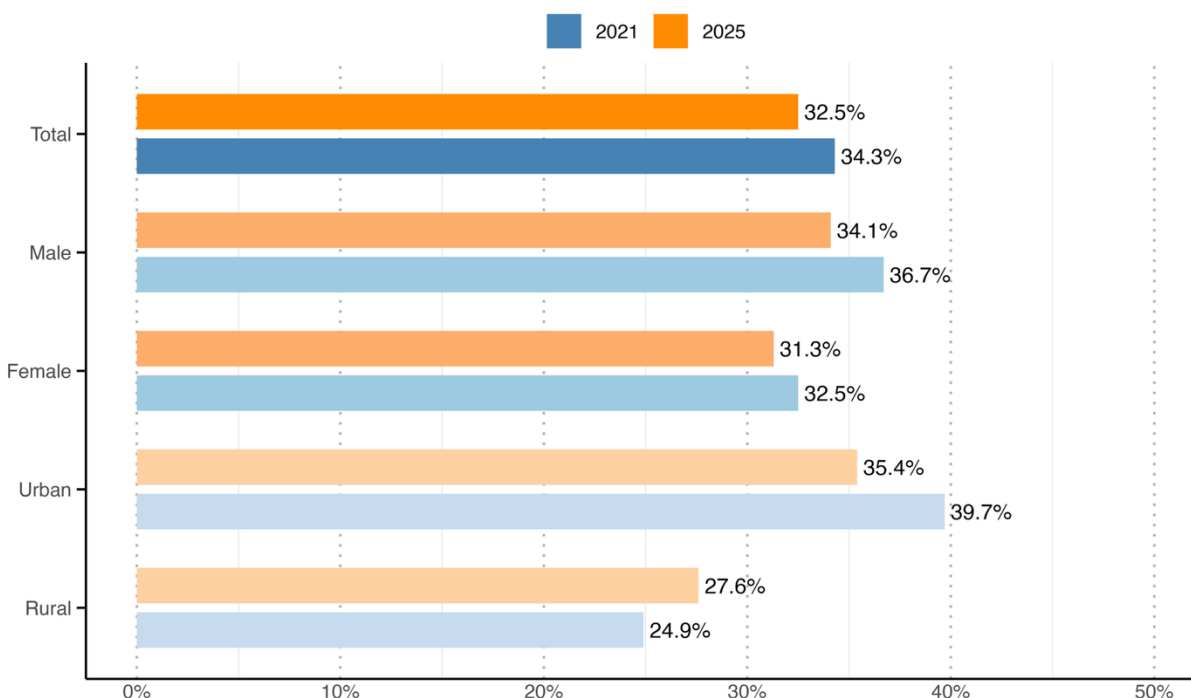


**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population in formal and non-formal education and training over the previous 12 months.

Among youth (15–24), 32.5 per cent reported participating in education or training in 2025, compared to 34.3 per cent in 2021 (see Figure 11.4). While participation declined slightly overall, male youth participation decreased from 36.7 per cent to 34.1 per cent, and female youth participation declined from 32.5 per cent to 31.3 per cent.

The urban-rural gap remains evident, with 35.4 per cent of urban youth participating compared to 27.6 per cent in rural areas. This indicates stronger engagement in training or educational programmes among youth in urban areas, possibly due to better access to facilities and opportunities.

**Figure 11.4:** Proportion of youth participating in education and training (2021 and 2025)

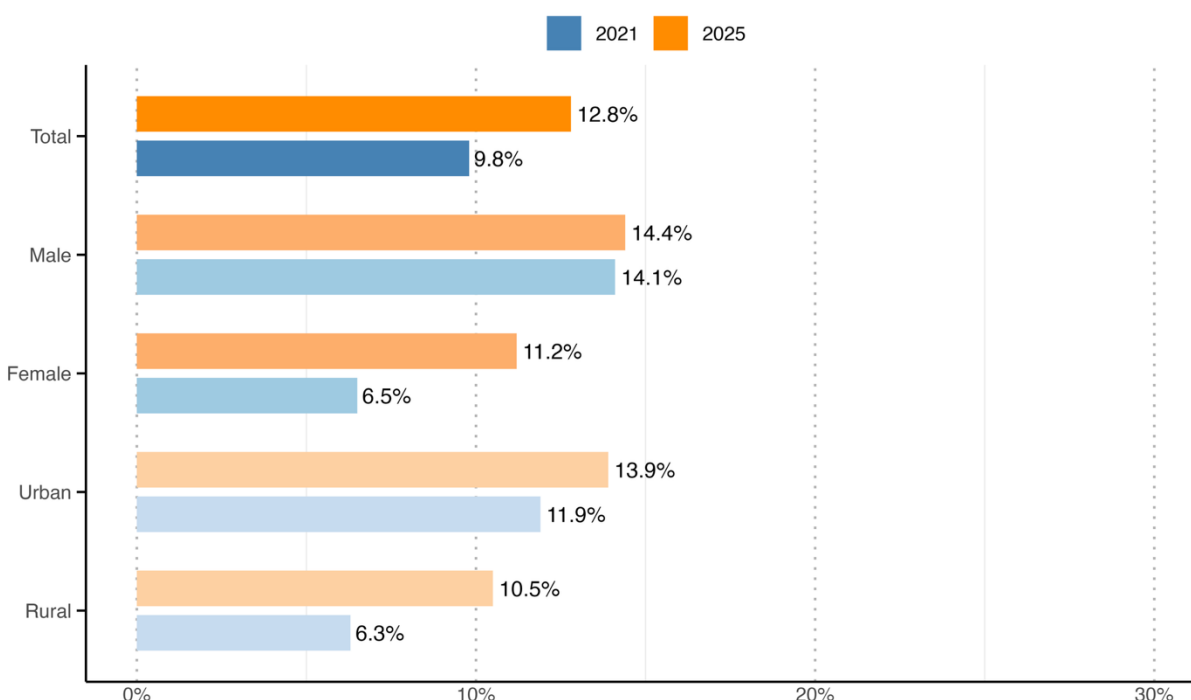


**Note:** The figure shows the share of the youth population (age 15-24) in formal and non-formal education and training over the previous 12 months.

For adults aged 25 to 64, participation increased from 9.8 per cent in 2021 to 12.8 per cent in 2025 (see Figure 11.5). Male adult participation remained stable (14.1% in 2021 vs. 14.4% in 2025), while female participation rose markedly from 6.5 per cent to 11.2 per cent, indicating a positive trend toward closing the gender gap in adult learning.

Urban adults (13.9%) participated more than rural adults (10.5%), reflecting urban advantages in terms of access to learning institutions, information, and flexible training options.

**Figure 11.5:** Proportion of adults participating in education and training (2021 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the youth population (age 25-64) in formal and non-formal education and training over the previous 12 months.

### 11.3 Access to Infrastructure, Basic Services, and Clean Energy

This chapter presents progress on selected SDG indicators related to basic infrastructure and essential services in The Gambia, using data from the 2025 SDGs Survey and the 2019–20 Gambia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). It covers access to basic services, housing adequacy, rural mobility, electricity, and clean energy. These indicators provide insights into spatial inequalities and help track national progress toward inclusive, sustainable development.

**SDG indicator 1.4.1** measures the proportion of the population living in households with access to all basic services. In 2025, only 0.2 per cent of households in The Gambia had access to all basic services covered under this indicator, compared to 1.2 per cent in 2019–20. While this appears to be a decline, it reflects a stricter and more comprehensive measurement framework adopted in the 2025 SDG Survey.

The updated 2025 definition requires households to simultaneously meet multiple conditions, including access to:

- Basic drinking water
- Improved sanitation
- Handwashing facilities
- Clean cooking fuel
- Waste disposal systems

- Healthcare services
- Road or transport infrastructure
- Education services (at least one household member attaining basic education—a new criterion introduced in 2025)
- Information services, including broadband internet

This expanded and multidimensional definition presents a more holistic view of what constitutes access to basic services. The significantly lower figure for 2025, therefore, reflects the higher bar set for service adequacy, rather than a deterioration in conditions. It highlights critical service gaps and underscores the importance of integrated approaches to infrastructure and human development.

**SDG indicator 11.1.1** covers the proportion of the urban population living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing. In 2025, 94.3 per cent of the urban population in The Gambia was classified as living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing, down slightly from 98.4 per cent in 2021.

The 2025 definition applied for this indicator is comprehensive (same criteria used in 2021). A household is classified as living in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing if any of the following conditions apply:

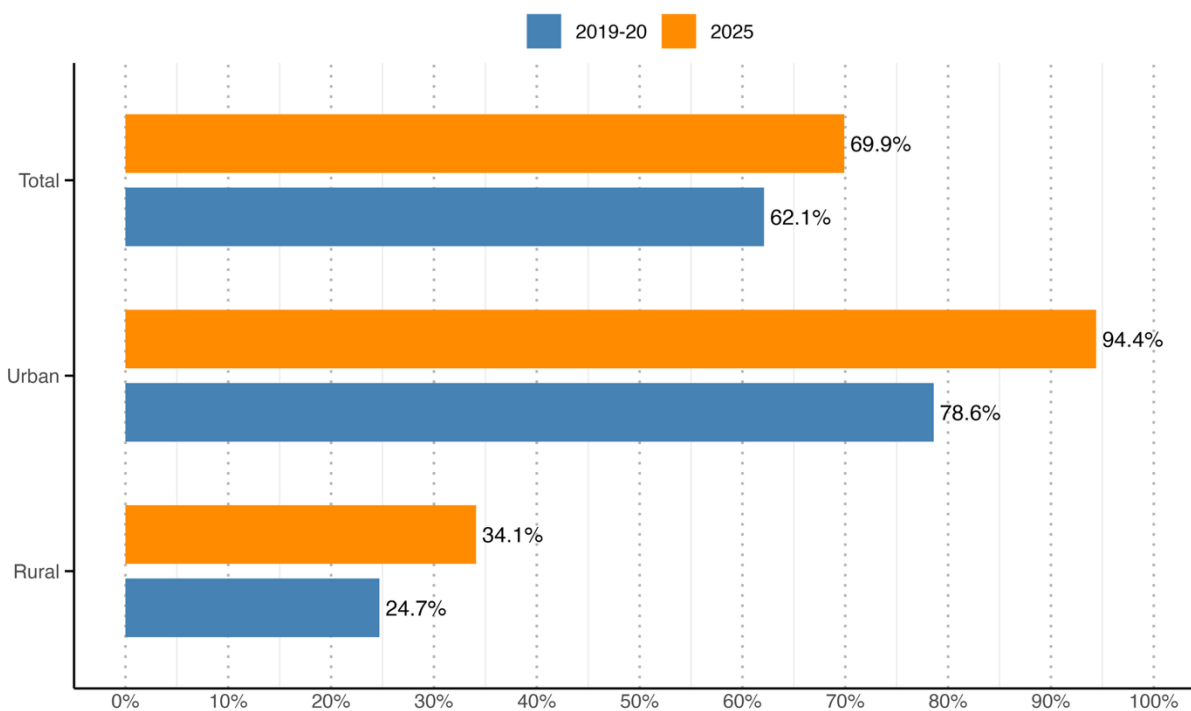
- Slum/Informal Settlement Criteria:
  - Lack of access to improved water
  - Lack of access to improved sanitation
  - Insufficient living area (more than three people per habitable room)
  - Non-durable construction or location in a hazardous area
  - Insecure tenure (risk of eviction or lack of legal ownership)
- Inadequate Housing Criteria:
  - Housing is unaffordable (costs exceed affordability thresholds)
  - Dwelling is inaccessible to marginalized groups
  - Housing is culturally inadequate

This multidimensional approach captures not only physical deficiencies but also issues of affordability, legal security, and social inclusion.

Access to all-season roads among the rural population within 2 km (**SDG indicator 9.1.1**) improved from 63.4 per cent in 2021 to 72.4 per cent in 2025. This suggests an expansion in rural road infrastructure, which can contribute significantly to market access, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

Electricity access (**SDG indicator 7.1.1**) rose nationally from 62.1 per cent in 2019-20 to 69.9 per cent in 2025 (see Figure 11.6). Urban access increased from 78.6 per cent to 94.4 per cent, while rural access improved from 24.7 per cent to 34.1 per cent. Although the rural gap remains wide, the gains are promising for efforts aimed at equitable electrification.

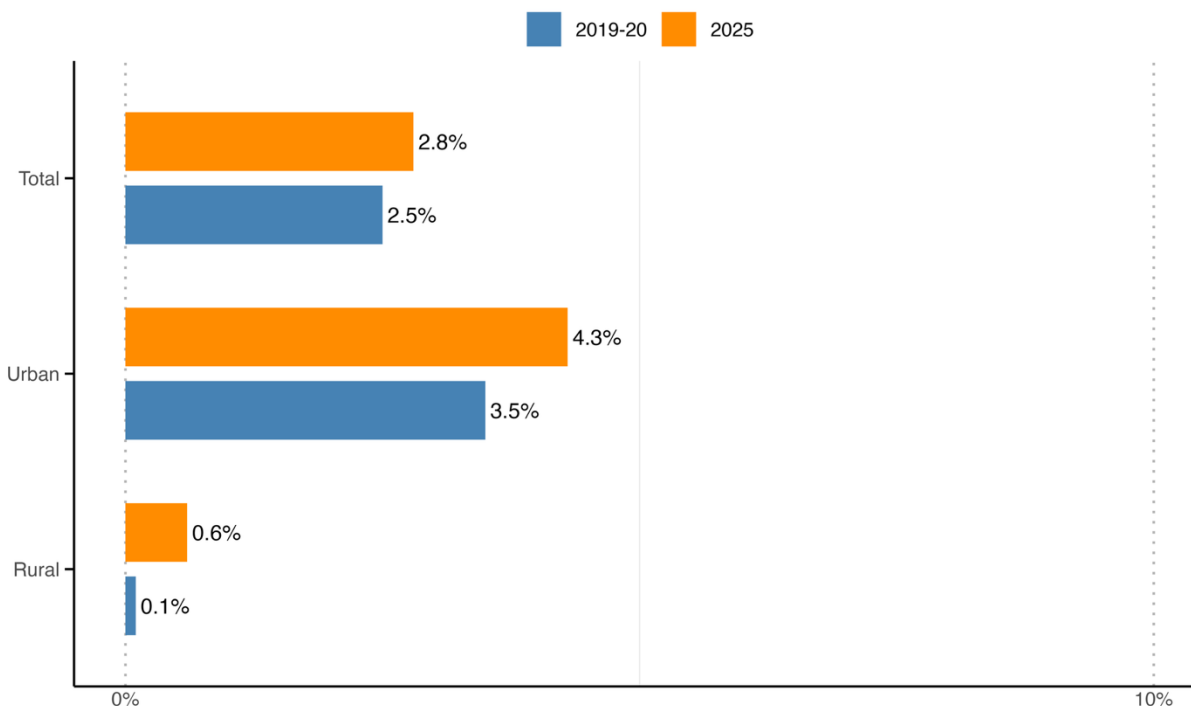
**Figure 11.6:** Proportion of population with electricity access (2019-20 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population with access to electricity (SDG 7.1.1).

The proportion of the population relying primarily on clean fuels and technology (**SDG indicator 7.1.2**) remained low, increasing slightly from 2.5 per cent in 2019-20 to 2.8 per cent in 2025. Rural reliance is almost non-existent but improved slightly from 0.1 per cent to 0.6 per cent, while urban use increased from 3.5 per cent to 4.3 per cent (see Figure 11.7). These figures reflect the high dependence of The Gambia's households on traditional cooking fuels, with implications for health and environmental sustainability.

**Figure 11.7:** Proportion of population with clean fuels and technology (2019-20 and 2025)



**Note:** The figure shows the share of the population relying primarily on clean fuels and technology (SDG 7.1.2).

## **UN disclaimer**

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