



**NHRC COMPLEMENTARY REPORT ON THE INITIAL REPORT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL MIGRANT WORKERS AND
MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES**

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NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION-THE GAMBIA

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ACRONYMS

GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
GCM	Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GID	Gambia Immigration Department
ICRMW	International Covenant on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MoGCSW	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad
MoTIE	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment
MWMF	Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
NAATIP	National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons
NCM	National Coordination Mechanism on Migration
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
SoM	Smuggling of Migrants
TIP	Trafficking in Persons

INTRODUCTION

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has a mandate to promote and protect human rights in The Gambia. In the preparation of this report, the NHRC consulted government and non-government stakeholders through a working group it established.

A. Positive Aspects

The NHRC commends the State for taking concrete and measurable steps to protect migrant workers and members of their families (MWMF), including:

- a. Enactment of the Labour Act 2023, Persons with Disabilities Act 2021, and Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act 2023.
- b. Adoption of policy frameworks such as the National Migration Policy (2020–2030), the Labour Migration Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2026), the National Plan of Action on Trafficking in Persons (2021–2025), the National Return and Reintegration Strategy, and the Migration Communication Strategy (2021–2025).
- c. Establishing and operationalising the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM).
- d. Promoting safe labour migration and protection of Gambian migrant workers abroad through the ECOWAS Free Movement framework and bilateral labour agreements (BLA) with Spain and Saudi Arabia.

B. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

General measures of implementation

Legislation and application

There is no standalone legislation for the protection of MWMF. The 1997 Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms of all individuals in the country, including MWMF. The Immigration Act 1965, which regulates migration management, is archaic and Part 6 contains arbitrary and rights-deficient provisions. The Children's Act 2005, Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 and Women's Act 2010 provide protection applicable to MWMF, although these also require significant reform.

The Constitution and the Children's Act guarantee compulsory basic education for all children, including non-citizens. However, there is no policy guidance on how migrant children and children without regular status can access basic education.¹

¹ UNESCO, The Gambia: Education Country Brief <https://www.iicba.unesco.org/en/gambia>

The National Health Policy (2021–2030) provides equitable access to health services for non-nationals. However, as eligibility for the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) is dependent on documentation, MWMF cannot access health services.²

The Labour Migration Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2026) extends social protection coverage, including access to social security, to migrant workers. However, as these measures are not effectively implemented, most migrants, who are predominantly found in the informal sector, have no access to social security.³

Comprehensive policy and strategy

There exist policies such as the National Migration Policy (2020–2030), Labour Migration Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2026) and National Return and Reintegration Strategy that incorporate key principles of dignity, non-discrimination and protection of vulnerable migrants. However, they neither have clearly defined human rights-based and gender responsive implementation frameworks that explicitly operationalise the ICRMW nor detailed information on resource allocation for implementation.

Coordination

There exist Government-led migration coordination mechanisms such as the NCM, the Technical Committee on BLA and the Taskforce on Missing Migrants. However, these mechanisms have no legislative mandate and rely heavily on donor support, which raises concerns about their sustainability and independence.

Data Collection

Data collection on migration is conducted by multiple institutions, including the Gambia Immigration Department (GID) and Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS). However, it is fragmented, systematically unconsolidated, and inconsistently disaggregated. There is also a data gap on migrant workers abroad and their employment.³ These constraints limit effective monitoring of ICRMW implementation.

Independent monitoring

The NHRC is an independent body with the mandate to protect human rights, including receiving, monitoring and investigating human rights complaints. Since its operation in 2019, it has received 45 complaints from migrants. However, limited finances and inclusion in key coordination bodies continue to affect its work.

Training on and dissemination of the Convention

The GID, in collaboration with partners, has undergone training on humane and rights-based approaches to migration management, including reception of returnees, screening, and protection

² Section 2, National Health Insurance Act 2021 <https://nhia.gm/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Gambia-NHIS-Act-2021-Final-Nov-29-2021-2.pdf>

³ IOM Migration Governance Indicators <https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/MGI-Gambia-2021.pdf>

of vulnerable migrants.⁴ The NHRC also provides training and sensitisation on the ICRMW for law students, law enforcement personnel, legislative members on human rights standards and gender-sensitive approaches.⁵ While training and dissemination activities relating to migration and human rights are ongoing, training and dissemination of the ICRMW are embedded within broader migration awareness or protection initiatives rather than through targeted dissemination of the ICRMW. Additionally, they are mainly donor-driven and not structured.

General principles (arts. 7 and 83)

Non-Discrimination

The 1997 Constitution and other national legislation prohibit discrimination against all persons, without distinction. Despite these guarantees, migrant workers, especially those in irregular situations, face discriminatory treatment from immigration and law enforcement authorities during arrests, immigration checks, detention and removal procedures.⁶

Labour laws are weakly enforced, with inspections under-resourced and largely confined to the formal sector, leaving informal-sector workers with limited protection.⁷ These gaps disproportionately affect migrants in irregular situations and women migrant workers. NHRC research indicates that migrants are frequently stereotyped as criminals or job-takers, reinforcing discriminatory attitudes and social exclusion against them.⁸

Right to an effective remedy

The right to an effective remedy is guaranteed to all persons under the Constitution, including non-nationals. MWMF can lodge complaints before courts and relevant authorities, including the police, labour bodies, and the NHRC. However, migrants, particularly those in irregular situations, rarely do so due to limited awareness of procedures, low confidence in law enforcement, and fear of immigration-related consequences.

⁴<https://gambia.iom.int/news/iom-facilitates-training-100-law-enforcement-officers-humane-and-rights-based-approaches-during-reception-and-post-arrival-assistance>; <https://www.voicegambia.com/2024/07/15/iom-wraps-up-joint-training-for-border-officials-from-gambia-senegal/>

⁵ <https://gamna.gov.gm/law-enforcement-officers-trained-human-rights-international-humanitarian-law>; <https://voiceoutdigital.com/nhrc-concludes-training-of-25-members-on-access-to-justice-for-migrants/>

⁶ The U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report on The Gambia (2022 and 2024)

⁷ As above

⁸ NHRC Research on Hate Speech in The Gambia (2024) <https://www.gm-nhrc.org/download-file/cbe44e88-b647-11ef-98c6-02a8a26af761>

Human rights of all migrant workers and members of their families [Both regular and irregular migrant workers]

Border management and migrants in transit

The Gambia cooperates with neighbouring States and the EU on migration control and readmission, including formal and informal return arrangements. Concerns persist about limited transparency and insufficiently articulated human rights safeguards and remedies for persons affected in these cooperations.⁹ Additionally, expedited processing following interception can limit time for legal advice and appeals, especially where removals occur shortly after interception.

Labour Exploitation and Other Forms of Ill-Treatment

Enforcement of labour regulations remains weak, with labour inspections primarily concentrated in the formal sector, whereas migrant workers are predominantly employed in the informal sector (agriculture, construction, and informal trade), where oversight is minimal. Consequently, migrant workers are exposed to exploitative conditions, including long working hours, non-payment or delayed payment of wages, restriction of movement and seizure of identity documents.¹⁰ Migrant domestic workers, particularly from neighbouring West African countries, frequently work without written contracts.¹¹ Reports indicate that Gambian women recruited for domestic work in the Middle East often receive wages as low as D4,000 (US\$ 45) per month and are subjected to the exploitative kafala sponsorship system¹².

Reports highlight voluntary returns or NGO-facilitated repatriations of Gambian domestic workers from countries such as Saudi Arabia¹³ and Lebanon¹⁴, often due to exploitation, rather than formal requests for return. Gambian domestic workers in Saudi Arabia pleaded for government-assisted repatriation amid exploitation, but no confirmed numbers of returnees.¹⁵

Due Process, Detention, and Access to Justice

Migrant workers face significant barriers to justice, including a lack of information in understandable language and limited access to legal aid. The National Agency for Legal Aid (NALA) provides legal representation mainly to persons charged with capital offences. Consequently, migrants who face deportation, civil cases and other criminal offences can only receive legal advice from NALA, not representation. Furthermore, there is insufficient

⁹ Making an example of The Gambia? : a human rights assessment of the EU's (informal) readmission policy <https://repository.gchumanrights.org/items/e48a962c-3a66-4c58-96e8-426d809b0257>

¹⁰ <https://www.ecoi.net/en/document/2130591.html>

¹¹ <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/domestic-workers-rights-freedoms-are-violated-in-gambia-report-says>

¹² Gambia becomes latest African country to send domestic workers to Saudi Arabia | Business Insider Africa <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/lifestyle/gambia-becomes-latest-african-country-to-send-domestic-workers-to-saudi-arabia/3y1w750>

¹³ <https://www.voicegambia.com/2025/09/25/absconded-workers-threaten-circular-migration-agreement-minister-joof/>

¹⁴ <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/lebanon-gambia-stranded-migrant-workers-repatriation-beirut-kafala>

¹⁵ <https://alkambatimes.com/gambian-migrant-workers-in-saudi-arabia-plead-for-government-rescue-amid-harsh-conditions/>

transparency regarding the duration and conditions of immigration detention, and it remains unclear whether an irregular stay is treated as an administrative or criminal matter. Criminal defence constitutes the bulk of its caseload as of April 2026, with the number involving migrant workers shown below:

- **1 Malian national:** robbery and murder
- **1 Senegalese national:** murder
- **2 Nigerian nationals:** rape and trafficking in persons
- **1 Cameroonian national:** murder

These cases reflect the presence of migrant workers within the criminal justice system, particularly in relation to serious offences requiring legal representation and adherence to due process safeguards.

Expulsion Procedures

Expulsion decisions under the Immigration Act lack evidence of consistent due process. There is no available data on expulsion cases, nor is it clear if affected individuals are provided judicial review in a language they understand.

Consular Assistance

There are numerous capacity and financial constraints in consular services. The 2026 evacuation of 10 Gambians from Iran was led by the IOM due to the absence of a Gambian Embassy or Consulate and the inability of the State.¹⁶ There are currently no published evaluations of consular performance or systematic efforts to register migrants in high-risk destination countries.

Conditions of Work and Recruitment

The lack of clear guidance on whether labour inspectors must report migrants in an irregular situation may deter affected workers from coming forward to report abuses. There is insufficient information on the working conditions of migrant workers in irregular situations, as labour inspectors do not cover households and local agricultural farms. No State hotline or shelter also exists for exploited workers. It is unclear how the protective clauses in the Government's BLA with Saudi Arabia and Spain are enforced. The State has not yet ratified ILO Convention 187.

While the 2019 MoU on labour cooperation between The Gambia and the UAE establishes safeguards around recruitment, contracts and worker protection, its effectiveness is limited by weak implementation and monitoring mechanisms. Gambian migrant workers, especially domestic workers, remain vulnerable to exploitation, contract substitution, and poor working conditions despite these formal protections.¹⁷ Many migrants lack awareness of their rights under these agreements, further undermining their ability to seek redress when abuses occur.¹⁸

¹⁶ [IOM, Government of The Gambia Facilitate Safe Evacuation of Gambians from Iran | International Organization for Migration](#)

¹⁷ (International Labour Organization, *Bilateral Labour Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding on Migration of Low Skilled Workers*, 2015)

¹⁸ International Organization for Migration, *World Migration Report 2022*

Freedom to Join Trade Unions

The Labour Act 2023 places no restrictions on union membership. In principle, a migrant worker can join a union. However, the extent to which this happens is unknown due to poor data collection. The law still denies union rights to civil servants, members of the security and discipline force and domestic servants¹⁹.

Social Security, Health, and Education

The current social security system primarily benefits the formal sector, effectively excluding 75.71% of workers largely consisted of migrants in informal employment.²⁰ The social security scheme is contributory and covers formal-sector workers only. Employers pay 15% of wages into pension and health funds.²¹ This benefits individuals in formal jobs, while irregular migrants receive none, since they neither contribute nor qualify.

In healthcare, undocumented migrants often avoid seeking care due to a lack of 'firewalls' between medical providers and immigration enforcement.²²

Medical Care

There are no laws that expressly prohibit MWMF from accessing healthcare services. Migrant workers in irregular situations may avoid seeking medical care due to fear of immigration enforcement, cost, or proximity issues.

Migrants may face barriers accessing emergency medical care services, particularly where they lack valid residence or identity documentation. In most instances, healthcare facilities require proof of identity or legal status before providing full admission or follow-up care, which can lead to delays in receiving urgent medical treatment.²³

Birth Registration and Nationality

The law requires at least one Gambian parent for a child born in The Gambia to gain citizenship.²⁴ Thus, children of migrants born in The Gambia are not automatically Gambian. There is no data on the number of such children or how many are registered. Likewise, children of Gambian parents born abroad need consular registration to gain Gambian citizenship.²⁵

The circumstances of individuals of Ghanaian descent resident in “Ghana Town” underpin the issue of citizenship affecting migrants settled in the country.²⁶ A 2024–2025 assessment by

¹⁹ ^1 International Trade Union Confederation, *Internationally Recognised Core Labour Standards in The Gambia* (n.d.), 5, https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Microsoft_Word_-final_CLS_report-_the_Gambia.pdf.

²⁰ <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/domestic-workers-rights-freedoms-are-violated-in-gambia-report-says>

²¹ Government of The Gambia, *Initial Report under the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* (2024)

²² <https://factcheckgambia.org/2022/12/30/irregular-migration-health-concerns/>

²³ Vandenbroeck et al. (2025), *Exploring barriers to healthcare among internal and international female migrants in The Gambia* (African Journal of Primary Health Care & Family Medicine)

²⁴ 1997 Constitution of The Gambia s 9

²⁵ 1997 Constitution of The Gambia s 10

²⁶ <https://citizenshiprightsafrika.org/en/gambia-gid-presents-assessment-report-to-address-statelessness-at-ghana-town/>

the Gambia Commission for Refugees (GCR), GAFNA and UNHCR (Senegal-MCO) found that 87% of Ghana Town residents have no documentation, heightening their risk of statelessness.²⁷ Despite their deep social and economic ties in Gambian society, they remain legally invisible, with limited access to basic rights and services tied to citizenship. This situation has prompted increasing concern and advocacy from lawmakers, civil society actors and the National Assembly of The Gambia, with calls for the Government to either grant them citizenship or establish clear mechanisms to regularise their legal status.

Education

Documentation requirements (birth certificates/IDs) act as a barrier to enrolment for children in irregular situations. There is also concern regarding children in irregular migration accommodated in Majalis, considering the limited child protection safeguards and monitoring.

Transfer of Earnings and Savings

High transaction costs remain a barrier to the affordable transfer of earnings (remittances). Migrants with expired or irregular documentation often face barriers accessing formal financial services, including bank accounts and regulated money transfer systems, due to compliance requirements and anti-money laundering regulations.²⁸ Consequently, migrants may rely on informal remittance channels, which are less secure and expose them to fraud, loss of funds and exploitation.²⁹

Right to Be Informed and Dissemination

Information is not consistently provided in accessible formats or languages understood by migrant workers, limiting awareness and access to rights.

Pre-Departure and Right to Be Informed

The Pre-Departure Training for Labour Migrants in The Gambia is a commendable step under the labour migration framework, supported in the Labour Migration Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2026) developed in collaboration with partners such as IOM. It provides pre-departure information to prospective migrants on labour rights, contract awareness, safe migration practices and available support mechanisms abroad. However, its effectiveness is constrained by inconsistent application, variations in delivery quality and limited post-departure follow-up once migrants are abroad.

Right to Form and Join Trade Unions

Practical and administrative barriers appear to limit the full participation of migrant workers in union leadership, thereby restricting their ability to advocate for better working conditions.

Right to Vote and Political Participation

While the right to vote is constitutionally recognised, the practical mechanisms to enable Gambians abroad to vote remain unavailable.

²⁷ <https://standard.gm/nams-called-for-ghana-town-residents-to-be-granted-nationality/>

²⁸ <https://www.uncdf.org/download/file/127/4271/study-on-kyc-requirements-revised-15-09pdf>

²⁹ World Bank, *Migration and Development Brief* (latest edition); International Organization for Migration (IOM), *World Migration Report* (latest edition); Financial Action Task Force (FATF), *International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation* (guidance on customer due diligence and financial exclusion risks)

Family Reunification

High financial requirements and complex administrative procedures continue to act as barriers for migrant workers seeking to reunite with their families.

Exemption from Duties and Taxes

There is a lack of clarity regarding duty exemptions for returning migrants. National customs regulations apply generally, with no specific law found that grants automatic exemptions for the personal and household effects of returning migrants, as required by Article 46.

There is no discriminatory tax treatment against foreign workers; however, a limited number of Double Taxation Agreements remains a gap that may expose migrant workers to double taxation. Beyond a long-standing agreement with the United Kingdom³⁰, no comparable protections exist for Gambians in other major destination countries, such as the UAE or EU member states.

Work Permits and Residency

Work permits in The Gambia are employer-specific. Losing a job effectively invalidates a migrant's residency status, forcing immediate departure without a grace period.³¹

Frontier and Seasonal Workers

ECOWAS protocols are implemented regarding frontier workers. The 2024 circular migration agreement with Spain represents a positive step for seasonal labour migration.³² As this scheme is in its infancy, it is difficult to indicate how the State is monitoring the rights of the Gambian agricultural workers.

Children in situations of international migration

Migration creates multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities for children, with those left behind by migrating parents sometimes facing neglect, abuse, and exploitation, including child labour and early marriage, while also experiencing emotional and psychological distress despite receiving remittances. Returning migrant workers frequently encounter challenges such as stigma and economic hardship, which can strain family reunification and affect children's well-being; although organisations like the IOM provide support, coverage remains limited. Unaccompanied children are particularly at risk along migration routes and in destination countries, where they face trafficking, violence, discrimination, and inadequate protection systems. At the same time, children in street situations in urban areas are exposed to daily risks of abuse and exploitation, with insufficient access to support services.

International cooperation with countries of transit and destination

The Gambia has signed bilateral labour agreements with countries such as United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Spain to regulate recruitment and working conditions of migrant workers through formal, contract-based systems. These agreements aim to protect workers' rights and reduce irregular migration, but their impact is limited by weak enforcement, especially in some

³⁰ [Gambia: tax treaties - GOV.UK](#)

³¹ <https://factcheckgambia.org/2024/08/27/explainer-how-to-acquire-a-residence-permit-in-gambia/>

³² <https://standard.gm/spain-to-accept-gambian-migrant-workers-on-seasonal-basis/#:~:text=During%20his%20imminent%20visit%20to,needs%20and%20then%20return%20home>

Gulf countries, leaving them open to exploitation. Strict return conditions in circular migration schemes can increase vulnerability and restrict long-term opportunities.

Migration services and policies

Through IOM, GID operates Migration Information Centres that provide migrants and returnees with guidance, resources, and support. These centres focus on promoting safe migration, assisting reintegration, and raising awareness about the risks of irregular migration.

Migration laws, policies and programmes are ineffectively implemented due to limited institutional capacity, including within the GID. Coordination among institutions is fragmented, leading to inefficiencies and duplication of efforts. There are also major data gaps, making it difficult to track migration trends and assess programme impact. Many initiatives rely on donor funding, raising concerns about sustainability.

Recruitment agencies

The Labour Act 2023 requires private recruitment agencies to obtain and annually renew licenses. Due to weak enforcement and oversight, many of these agencies operate without valid licenses. Anecdotal evidence indicates that some workers are subject to inhumane treatment and exploitation upon arrival, including poor working/living conditions and lower wages than initially promised.

Return and reintegration

Return and reintegration are constrained mainly by limited job opportunities, which make it difficult for returnees to rebuild their lives, increasing the risk of re-migration. Support programmes, including IOM-supported interventions, are often short-term and insufficient. Returnees also face barriers, including a lack of access to finance, skills training, and psychosocial support, as well as social stigma in some communities.

Trafficking in Persons

The US Department of State recently published the 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report, with The Gambia classified under Tier 2, meaning that the minimum standards to combat trafficking have not been fully met. The Report highlighted that 22 TIP cases were initiated by the State, including at least one alleged fraudulent labour recruitment. The State initiated prosecution of six alleged sex traffickers. Two traffickers were convicted and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment and a fine, and one was ordered to pay D500,000 in restitution.

As part of its protection efforts, the State identified 38 victims, majority of whom were Nigerians. NAATIP continues to implement the National Referral Mechanism and the Standard Operating Procedures and provide continuous training to frontline officers.

Smuggling of migrants and irregular migration

SoM remains a serious and evolving challenge, particularly for individuals attempting to migrate irregularly to Europe through the “backway” routes. This is largely driven by organised smuggling

networks that facilitate irregular departures for profit, often exposing migrants to life-threatening conditions. Evidence shows that structured criminal networks are actively involved, charging significant sums and organising departures by sea using unsafe boats.³³ Deadly incidents such as boats capsizing off the Gambian coast and along the Atlantic route highlight the extreme risks faced by migrants. Many of those attempting the journey are young men, but also include women and children, reflecting growing vulnerability among different population groups.³⁴

In response, the State has strengthened enforcement through GID by increasing border patrols and surveillance, especially in coastal departure points like Tanji and Kartong. Authorities regularly intercept migrants and disrupt smuggling networks, including operations that led to the interception of over 120 migrants in April 2026 and the arrest of 173 migrants and 8 suspected smugglers in December 2025.³⁵

Although the State has taken steps to combat SoM, the tragic incidents at sea highlight the need for stronger and more effective measures. A major challenge remains the legal gap in fully criminalising SoM, which restricts the ability of authorities to prosecute offenders. While suspects may be arrested and charged under related offences such as fraud or attempted felony, the effective prosecution of entire smuggling networks continues to be limited.

State of transit and destination

Migrants who transit through or make The Gambia their destination face several challenges. A major issue is exposure to exploitation by smugglers and traffickers, including high fees, deception about routes, and dangerous travel conditions. Many migrants also face risks of arrest, detention, or deportation due to irregular migration status.

Measures to address migrant workers in an irregular situation

While the State highlights initiatives such as Tekki Fii and the Youth Empowerment Project as evidence of progress in addressing irregular migration, these interventions remain limited in scope and are donor driven. Despite claims of reaching thousands of young people, unemployment and underemployment among youth remain high, with many still perceiving migration as the only viable path to economic security. Reliance on external funding, particularly from the European Union, raises questions about sustainability once donor support diminishes. Furthermore, structured labour migration programmes with countries like Spain and Saudi Arabia benefit only a small fraction of Gambians, leaving the majority without access to safe and legal migration channels. Irregular migration continues at significant levels, suggesting current interventions are

³³ T Adrian Corish, *Founder, African Migration Advisory Centre (AMAC)* testing the Law in a Humanitarian Emergency: Can Gambian Law Hold Migrant Smuggling Networks Accountable? available << <https://www.voicegambia.com/2026/01/08/testing-the-law-in-a-humanitarian-emergency-can-gambian-law-hold-migrant-smuggling-networks-accountable/>>> (accessed 20 April 2026).

³⁴ Reuters *Seven bodies recovered, 96 rescued after migrant boat capsizes, Gambia says* available << <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/seven-bodies-recovered-96-rescued-after-migrant-boat-capsizes-gambia-says-2026-01-01/>>> (accessed 20 April 2026).

³⁵ Africa Press: *Gambia Intercepts over 120 Migrants in Crackdown* available << <https://www.africa-press.net/gambia/all-news/gid-and-partners-intercept-over-120-irregular-migrants-facilitate-return-of-27-gambians-from-mauritania>>> (accessed 20 April 2026).

insufficient to tackle root causes. The emphasis on migration control appears more aligned with external pressures from European partners than genuine empowerment of Gambian youths.

Recommendations:

The NHRC recommends that the State:

- Domesticate and effectively implement the ICRMW.
- Ratify and domesticate ILO Convention No. 189.
- Strengthen the Labour Act by adopting the required regulations to enhance migrant protection.
- Expedite amendment of the TIP Act and the Children's Act.
- Expedite amendment of the Immigration Bill, which criminalises SoM and ensure it is human rights compliant.
- Regulate recruitment agencies and strengthen labour inspections.
- Guarantee migrant workers' access to justice, healthcare, education and basic services without discrimination.
- Urgently address statelessness, such as the residents of Ghanatown.
- Enhance institutional coordination and data systems through better cooperation among institutions.
- Strengthen monitoring of detention centres by independent oversight bodies.
- Ensure sustainable national funding for migration governance and improved migration data collection and analysis.
- Strengthen counsellor support for Gambian migrants abroad.
- Ensure BLAs are human rights compliant.
- Address the high cost of remittance charges
- Enhance awareness-raising on the ICRMW and irregular migration,
- Urgently implement sustainable national reintegration programmes.
- Promote regional cooperation to combat SoM and TIP networks effectively.