REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

National Assembly, New Assembly Building, Reg. Pye Lane
Banjul, The Gambia

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ENTERPRISES TOUR TO NAWEC, SSHFC & GRTS SITES

10TH – 20TH JULY 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT 4

1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 5

2.0 INTRODUCTION 6

3.0 OBJECTIVES 6

4.0 METHODOLOGY 6

5.0 FINDINGS 7

5.1 KOTU POWER STATION 7

5.2 KOTU WATER TANK AND SUBSTATION 8

5.3 SUKUTA TREATMENT PLANT 9

5.4 FAJARA WATER TREATMENT PLANT 11

5.5 JABANG SUBSTATION 12

5.6 JAMBURR SOLAR PROJECT SITE 13

5.7 BRIKAMA WATER TREATMENT PLANT 14

5.8 BRIKAMA POWER PLANT 15

5.8.1 Brikama 1 15

5.8.2 Brikama 2 16

5.8.3 Brikama 3 16

5.9 KANUMA WATER TREATMENT PLANT 16

5.10 SAABA BOREHOLE 17

5.11 FARAFENNI WATER TREATMENT PLANT AND POWER PLANT 18

5.12 JANJANGBUREH WATER FACILITY 19

5.13 BANSANG BOREHOLE 20

5.14 BASSE WATER TREATMENT PLANT 21

5.15 BASSE POWER STATION 22

5.16 MANSAKONKO WATER TREATMENT PLANT 23

5.17 GAMBIA RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (OMVG), SOMA SUBSTATION 24

5.18 GUNJUR WATER TREATMENT PLANT 25

5.19 SOCIAL SECURITY AND HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION 26

5.20 GRTS HEAD OFFICE 29

5.21 GRTS RADIO 31

5.22 ABUKO GRTS STATION 32

5.23 MEETING WITH NAWEC MANAGEMENT 33

6.0 CONCLUSION 36
7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS 36
8.0 ANNEX I 38
DELEGATION 38
9.0 ANNEX II 38
WITNESSES 38

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Public Enterprises (PEC) hereby publishes the outcome of its tour held from the 10th to the 20th July 2023 on scrutiny and oversight on selected SoEs. This exercise was because of two Performance Audit reports by the National Audit Office on NAWEC and SSHFC on the Provision of water in Urban, Peri-urban and Provincial Growth Centres and the Management of Social Security Funds respectively. The said reports were presented, scrutinized, and considered by the Committee with recommendations. As a result, the Committee embarked on the tour to track the level of implementation of the recommendations that were made by the NAO and the Committee.

During the exercise, the Committee also took advantage of visiting the Jamburr Solar project, Farafenni and Basse Power plants, OMVG Soma Station and the Brikama Power Plants. Also, the team visited GRTS to gather first-hand information in guiding the Committee on scrutinizing their annual reports.

The sole objective of this statutory exercise is to enhance transparency and accountability, with a view to ensuring that the Government of The Gambia and all Public Institutions and Agencies are accountable to the Gambian people. The Standing Committee on Public Enterprises is determined to do whatever it takes to hold the SoEs accountable to the citizens by ensuring that proper Public Finance Management (PFM) policies are implemented.

It is imperative that as servants of the people, we all conform in our actions, words, and attitude to best Financial Management Practices. The aim of PEC's engagements is to ensure transparency, probity, and openness in all PEs financed with taxpayers' money. It is equally intended to hold Heads of PEs accountable for their actions and or omissions, thereby ensuring that they deliver valuable services to the populace in an effective and efficient manner.

Honourable Lamin J Sanneh

Chairperson, PEC

1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Standing Committee on Public Enterprises wishes to register its thanks and appreciation to the National Assembly Authority and the Office of the Clerk for their support in making this tour a success. This institutional support has invaluably contributed to enabling the Committee to perform its responsibilities as mandated by the 1997 Constitution and the Standing Orders of the National Assembly.

Equally, the Committee is indebted to the team that accompanied it throughout, the Management of the SOEs visited, and all the stakeholders who contributed to the success of this tour directly or indirectly. The Committee appreciates the time and the information that was provided by the people on the ground to all the sites visited during the tour.

In addition, the Committee appreciates the efforts of the support staff of the committee including the Subject Matter Specialist, Clerks, Research Officer, Communication Officer, and the Driver.

Finally, the Committee wishes to commend all the Honorable Members for demonstrating a high sense of commitment and dedication throughout the tour.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Public Enterprises is the portfolio Committee responsible for performing oversight on the activities of Public State Owned Enterprises (SOEs). This mandate is vested on the Committee by the National Assembly under Sections 109 and 175(4) and (5) of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia and Standing Orders 97 and 122 of the National Assembly.

The Committee has a responsibility to receive and scrutinize reports i.e., Audited Financial Statements (annual reports) and Performance audits (periodic reports) for consideration, and commissioning of site visits to gather information that is sufficient for it to render advice on how these SOEs should conduct their affairs to promote efficiency, transparency, and probity in all their undertakings.

It is in this regard that the Committee conducted a tour of some selected SOEs including NAWEC and SSHFC whose Performance Audit Reports were considered by the Committee. This has provided the Committee with firsthand information on the implementation of the recommendations made by the NAO. The exercise has also equipped the Committee with information on the current state of affairs of these SOEs.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

i. To gather first-hand information on the state of affairs of these institutions (NAWEC, SSHFC and GRTS);
ii. To be more guided on the scrutiny of these SOE reports;
iii. To establish the status of implementation on the recommendations made by NAO on the Performance Audits of NAWEC and SSHFC; and
iv. Prepare a Report to be tabled before Plenary for consideration and adoption;

4.0 METHODOLOGY

- Site visits/Observations
- Interviews/Questions and Answers
- Photography

5.0 FINDINGS

5.1 KOTU POWER STATION

This is the second oldest power station in the country commissioned in 1981. The installed capacity is 30 megawatts, and the generating capacity is 27 megawatts. The Committee was informed that currently, the load in this station is more concentrated than any other NAWEC station in the country.

The peak load within the Greater Banjul Area is 96 megawatts and this station constitutes 27 megawatts from this. This station is described as the load center and the stabilizing station for NAWEC.

During the Committee's visit, it was observed that engine number 5, 7, and 8 are operating and engine number 6 is under routine maintenance. Two generators that were said to be over forty years old were decommissioned after serving their useful lives and the scraps were sold.

In this regard, the Committee was interested to know whether the GPPA procurement processes were followed, and the Deputy MD responded positively and further indicated that all the documents included in the process are available.

This action was part of the recommendations made by the Committee to reduce the maintenance cost on assets that have served their useful lives, which is counterproductive and is affecting NAWEC in terms of cost.

The Committee conducted a tour of the entire facility including the Generators, the Control room, and the Distribution center.

Kotu Power Plant

5.2 KOTU WATER TANK AND SUBSTATION

The Committee inspected the facility, and the tank is in good order. The Committee was informed that the tank is supplied by the Sukuta Water Treatment plant but at the time of the visit, it was not in use. The water generated is distributed directly to the consumers. Small amounts of water are stored during the night when the demand is low. The water generated by NAWEC is not enough for supply and storage and for this reason, the water is distributed to the consumers directly without being stored in the tank.

From the audit report, water rationing is not in place, and this was confirmed by NAWEC, and it is since the demand is far more than the supply of water generated by the Corporation.

The Committee also inspected the Electricity primary substation which is under construction and nearing completion. The Committee was informed that it is part of the institution's Electricity modernization project. The station is a distribution center, and it is meant to reduce the load at the Kotu Power Station. This will improve the

quality of electricity produced and maintain the required voltage throughout the distribution process to the consumers.

5.3 SUKUTA TREATMENT PLANT

The Committee was informed that the plant is part of the Exim Bank project, and it is the biggest water treatment plant in the country. Currently, thirty-one boreholes are supplying the plant. The Committee conducted a tour of the facility, it comprises boreholes, Aerators, a Reservoir, a Chlorine plant, and a control room. There is also a functioning standby generator in the facility. During the tour, the Committee showed that there is algae on some of the Aerators but was informed by the NAWEC officials that these facilities are cleaned every two weeks. The Committee was also informed that water is not supplied to customers without being chlorinated.

The committee was informed that the control room is using the Qcell network, and they experienced network failures sometimes. The Committee questioned why NAWEC is using the Qcell network instead of Gamtel, the National Telecom Company. The DMD informed the Committee that this was a matter of coverage and reference based on availability. In the area where the plant is located, the Qcell network is better because there is no fiber available in the area, but the company always uses Gamtel fiber where it is available because it is more stable.

The Committee also asked whether NAWEC has an automated system that detects contaminated water within the chain, this system is not in place according to the Maintenance Manager.

Sukuta Water Treatment Plant, Aerators

According to the performance Audit report, some of the NAWEC facilities have served their recommended useful life i.e. twenty-five years. The Committee asked whether the institution has plans to replace these. The Committee was informed that most of these facilities were funded by projects, but NAWEC can maintain them properly and they are still serving their useful purpose.

The performance Audit report mentioned that most of the tanks within the GBA are not filled with water, instead consumers are supplied directly. The Committee enquired whether this still existed, and it was informed that this practice is still happening because the water supply is not enough for their customers. Some of these tanks are also faulty, and they are working on maintenance.

The Committee observed that this facility is secured by private security but there is no armed security present.

Sukuta Water Treatment Plant, Water Pumps

5.4 FAJARA WATER TREATMENT PLANT

This treatment plant is the oldest in the country and it dates to the colonial period according to NAWEC officials. There are five boreholes within the Fajara pipeline and eight boreholes from the Exim Bank project supplying the Fajara Water Treatment plant.

The Committee conducted a tour of the facility and discovered that the Aeration site is covered with algae and a lot of grass within the facility. There is a functional standby generator and the water tank in the facility is not in use. There were no armed security guards within the facility.

Fajara Water Treatment Plant

5.5 JABANG SUBSTATION

This is a 225000 volts primary substation, and it is part of the modernization of electricity generation and supply in the country according to the NAWEC MD. Most of the NAWEC primary substations are currently overloaded and this substation is meant to reduce the load from other stations, and it will interface with the OMVG. The project is jointly funded by the WB, EIB, and the EU and the contractor is TBEA a Chinese company.

According to the MD, the major challenge of this project is the compensation of property owners who are affected by the project. There is always a conflict between the property owners and the government on the value of their properties.

Jabang NAWEC Substation

5.6 JAMBURR SOLAR PROJECT SITE

This project is a 23 megawatts facility with eight hours of battery storage. It is entirely renewable energy (solar). It is part of NAWEC's efforts to increase power generation capacity and to venture into renewable energy. The project is funded by WB, EIB, and EU financed through the GERMP project at a tune of 28.4m USD. It is the first solar project of this magnitude in the Gambia. The project has different components including solar mounting, building of the control building, fencing, etc. and the physical work is 50% completed as of the time of the visit. The project is expected to be inaugurated in the first quarter of 2024.

The site comprises forty-one thousand (41,000) solar panels and each panel has a capacity of 540 watts. The Committee was also informed that some young Gambian female aspiring engineers are part of the project throughout.

After the completion of the project, it will decrease the cost of electricity generation and tariffs according to the MD.

Jamburr Solar Power Plant

5.7 BRIKAMA WATER TREATMENT PLANT

This project was commissioned in 2009 and it is the second largest water treatment plant in the country. The facility comprises nineteen boreholes with a capacity of 1200 cubic liters per hour. The facility has three lines under its scope i.e. Brikama town, Tabokoto, and the Tanji community.

According to the MD, there has never been any major investment in water in the area since 2009.

Brikama Water Treatment Plant

The Committee conducted a tour of the facility, which includes a Borehole, Chlorination plant, Aeration site, Reservoirs, Water pumps, and a Standby Generator. However, the generator is nonfunctional as reported by the Performance Audit report and confirmed by the Committee's visit.

5.8 BRIKAMA POWER PLANT

This power plant comprises Brikama 1, Brikama 2, and Brikama 3.

5.8.1 Brikama 1

This was the first to be commissioned and it was operated by Global Electrical Group which is a private business entity. This was a public-private partnership between the Government and this firm. The firm was producing and selling power to NAWEC until 2013 when this contract was terminated, and the plant was handed to NAWEC.

Brikama Power Plant

Currently, there are four generators in this plant. Two are operating and the other two are undergoing routine maintenance. According to the MD, this plant is mostly reserved for standby to take on emergencies that may arise.

5.8.2 Brikama 2

Brikama 2 has only one generator with a capacity of 8.9 megawatts. This generator was commissioned in 2011. As at the time of the Committee's visit, this generator was down and undergoing maintenance.

5.8.3 Brikama 3

Brikama 3 comprises two generators with a combined capacity of 20 megawatts. They were commissioned in 2020 and they have been operating since then. Currently, they are operating at maximum according to the senior mechanical engineer of the plant. The MD informed the Committee that Brikama 3 was a project funded by IDB to the tune of 22m USD.

5.9 KANUMA WATER TREATMENT PLANT

This plant was commissioned in 1984 according to NAWEC officials. This facility is a stand-alone treatment serving seven communities in the NBR. There are two production boreholes with a combined production capacity of 140 cubic liters per

hour. The tank has a capacity of 600 cubic liters in operation but is leaking. The Committee was informed that the procurement of materials for the repairs of this tank is already in progress. There is an operational standby generator on the site. Other facilities on the site are a borehole, a chlorination plant, and a tank.

Kanuma Water Treatment Plant

As indicated in the performance Audit report, part of the perimeter fence has collapsed. There is no night security according to the pump attendant on site.

The Committee asked whether NAWEC is working on land banking for their boreholes and other facilities for the future. The Committee was informed that NAWEC is currently working with UNDP on banking land. A consultant is already hired for the process according to the NAWEC officials.

5.10 SAABA BOREHOLE

This borehole has a production capacity of 60 cubic liters per hour. The borehole supplies two tanks i.e., the tank in Kerewan with a capacity of 80 cubic liters and the one in Saaba with a capacity of 60 cubic liters respectively. All the tanks are in operation, the borehole is serving four communities according to the pump attendant on site. There is no chlorination plant in this facility. There is also a functioning standby generator, and the facility is fully fenced.

Saaba Borehole Site

5.11 FARAFENNI WATER TREATMENT PLANT AND POWER PLANT

The water treatment plant was commissioned in 1992 and two boreholes are supplying Farafenni. Borehole one has a production capacity of 45 cubic liters per hour and borehole two has 77 cubic liters per hour. The tank is also located within the facility, and it has a capacity of 80 cubic liters and is in operation.

The Committee was informed that this water treatment plant only serves Farafenni town and that some areas of the town do not have water regularly due to the topography and the lack of pressure.

Farafenni Water Treatment Plant

The lack of a perimeter fence was raised in the performance Audit report. However, the process of fencing is ongoing.

The Committee also conducted a tour of the power plant and found two generators in the facility. Furthermore, the Committee was informed that both are in good shape and now serving as standby in case of emergency as NBR, CRR North, and URR are supplied by SENELEC in Senegal.

5.12 JANJANGBUREH WATER FACILITY

There is one borehole in this facility with a capacity of 70 cubic liters per hour. There is a functioning tank with a capacity of 300 cubic liters. The water in this facility is frequently tested to make sure it is within the standard as the borehole is close to the river. There is a functioning standby generator. The property is fenced but there is no security as at the time of the Committee's visit. There is no aerator or chlorination plant in the facility.

One of the issues raised in this facility is the need for another borehole as the population is increasing.

Janjangbureh NAWEC Water Facility

5.13 BANSANG BOREHOLE

There is one borehole in the site, and it is supplying the community of Bansang. It was commissioned in 2009. The facility is fully fenced and there is a functioning standby generator. There is no daylight security according to the operator of the borehole.

According to the operator on site, some of the challenges in the facility are lack of mobility, no toilet facility, and low voltage especially from March to June.

Sololo Borehole

5.14 BASSE WATER TREATMENT PLANT

There are two boreholes serving the Basse community. Borehole 1 with a capacity of 64 cubic liters per hour and borehole 2 with a capacity of 83 cubic liters per hour and these two boreholes are supplying a tank with a capacity of 600 cubic liters also located in Basse. The facility comprises two boreholes, a storage tank, a chlorination plant, and a functioning standby generator for borehole 2. This water facility serves Basse and its satellite villages.

Basse NAWEC Water Treatment Plant

There is no standby generator for borehole 1 but according to the NAWEC officials, they are working on a standby generator for it. There is a security guard for borehole 1 both day and night but there is none for borehole 2 and the tank.

The Committee was informed that there is a need for another borehole to cater to the growing population. There is also a dumpsite around borehole 1. The NAWEC officials indicated that this dumpsite was cleared at NAWEC's cost, but they do not have the power to stop the community from dumping there.

5.15 BASSE POWER STATION

The Basse power station was commissioned in 2016 and 2018, another generator was commissioned. The power station consists of two generators now i.e. engine number 1 with an installed capacity of 2.5 megawatts and engine number 2 with an installed capacity of 2.7 megawatts. This facility is supplying Basse to Koina, Basse to Jareng, and Basse to Wassu CRR North.

According to the operations manager, this area is covered by the contract for the supply of electricity between the Gambia and Senegal and for this reason, these generators are now serving as standby in case of emergency. Currently, both

generators are due for maintenance and the engineer informed the Committee that 70% of the parts needed for the maintenance are on the ground.

Basse Power Plant

5.16 MANSAKONKO WATER TREATMENT PLANT

This water facility was commissioned in 1990 and there are two boreholes with a combined capacity of 140 cubic liters per hour. There is a functioning water tank with a capacity of 600 cubic liters. There is also a functioning standby generator connected to both boreholes. The chlorination plant is down as the Committee's visit. The Committee was also informed that this water facility is serving seven communities.

Mansakonko Water Treatment Plant

As reported in the Performance Audit Report, part of the perimeter fence has collapsed and there is no security at the facility where the second borehole and the tank are located. The premises where the first borehole and the standby generator are located have daylight security but none during the night.

The Operator informed the Committee that due to low pressure, some of the villages within the network experienced inadequate water supply due to the topography of the area and low water pressure.

The NAWEC officials also indicated that the maintenance of their facilities is an ongoing project, and the team is already in the regions and this facility is part of it.

5.17 GAMBIA RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (OMVG), SOMA SUBSTATION

This facility was commissioned in October 2021 by the current Heads of State of the Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea Bissau. This facility is 225000 kv. The connection is coming from Tambacunda to Soma and then to Brikama.

The project involves four countries i.e. Gambia, Senegal, Guinea, and Guinea Bissau. The project was because of energy deficits in the region, its high dependence on imported oil, and the use of environmentally harmful hydrocarbons for energy

production. It consists of three components, and they are the Sambangalou Dam, the Kaleta Dam, and a transmission and interconnection line (Line T) connecting the two dams to the power grids of these countries.

At the Committee visit, the facility was operated by SENELEC of Senegal.

OMVG Soma Substation

5.18 GUNJUR WATER TREATMENT PLANT

This facility was inaugurated in October 2012, and it is only supplying the town of Gunjur. The two boreholes located in Gunjur that used to supply the town have been decommissioned due to high ion content in the water. Currently, borehole E13 in Busuranding is the one supplying the Gunjur treatment plant with a production capacity of 90 cubic liters per hour. There is a water tank in the facility, but it has not been in use since 2017 due to leakages according to the operator. The facility consists of an aerator, a reservoir, a chlorination plant, and two pumps.

Gunjur Water Treatment Plant

The Committee was informed that the maintenance of the tank was part of the AFD project which is in progress.

There is daylight security, but none at night. There is no outlet meter in the facility and the aerator also has some defects including the roof.

5.19 SOCIAL SECURITY AND HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION

The Committee was welcomed by the MD and his team. The Chairman of the Committee indicated that the purpose of the visit is to receive an update on issues and concerns raised in the Performance Audit Report, the level of implementation of these audit queries, and the challenges faced by the institution. Below is the presentation made by SSHFC Management.

Timeliness of benefit payment: This process has started and claims with gaps are processed and paid whilst gaps are being pursued. Review completed and implementation of project 59 is in progress.

Determination of Benefits for NPF Claimants: The new IT System is in the test phase and expected to be up and running by the end of 2023. Data cleansing is ongoing to ensure accurate data is migrated into the new system.

Contribution gaps identified during processing claims: The new IT system is expected to flag non-payment of contributions beyond the due date.

Determination of benefits for the Federated Pension Scheme Claimants is in progress. Supervisory level controls are being enhanced at the benefits processing levels. Supervisory-level controls have been enhanced to aid consistency in the application of the rules.

Pension increases for pensioners and Timeliness of pension increases: this will apply after the next Actuarial Valuation Report expected in 2024.

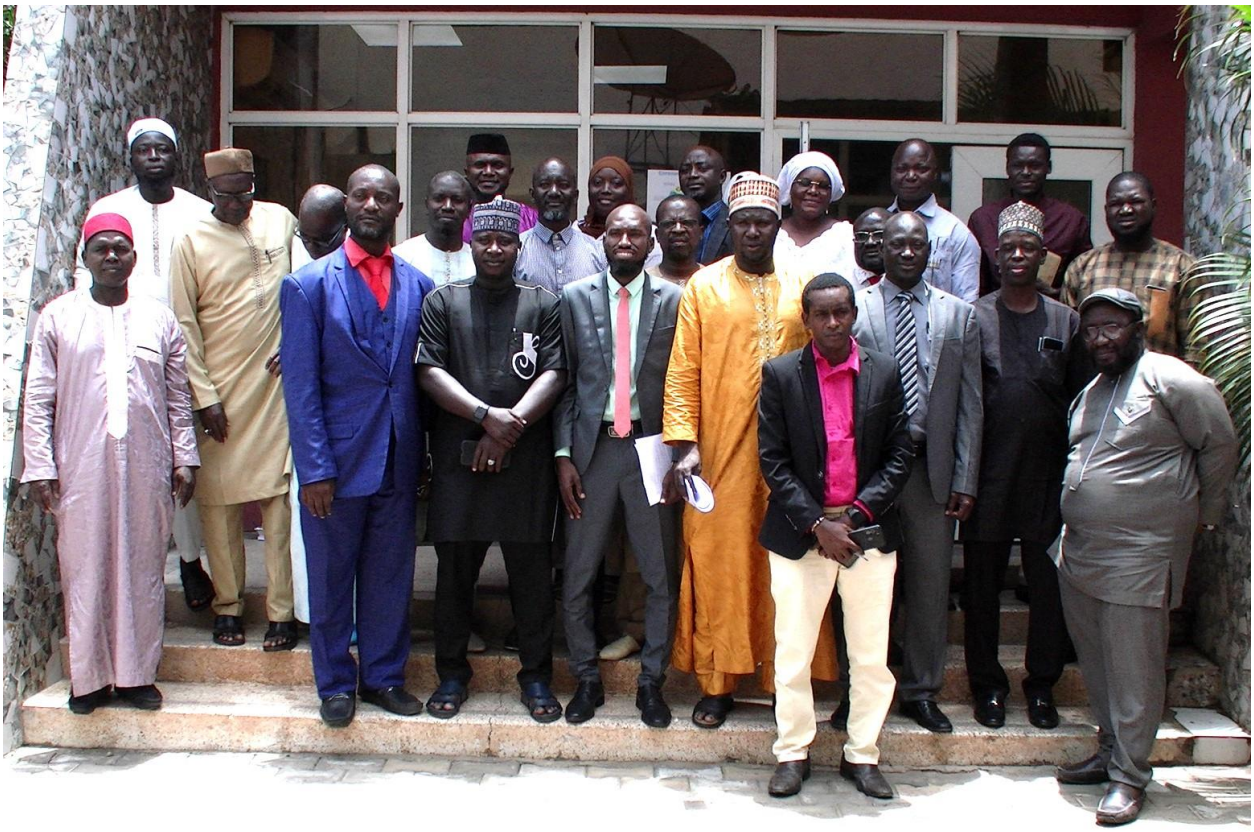
Interest payment to members of the National Provident Fund: Management is engaging MoFEA directly and through the Directorate of SOEs under MoFEA for the loans owed to SSHFC.

Administrative expenses of the NPF: Cost management has been intensified. The office of the MD manages costs by focusing on necessities. The compliance aspect is strengthened, and vehicles are made available by DHRA when required.

Monitoring delay factors in processing claims: The workflow system has been re-engineered and is now being monitored. The compliance function is being intensified. This process has started.

The implementation and monitoring of Project 59: A team has been set up for the proper implementation of Project 59.

The implementation and monitoring of the data cleansing exercise: Migration of cleansed data is in progress with 90% of the work completed.



SSHFC Head Office

SOME OF THE CHALLENGES OF THE SSHFC ARE;

- Some employers fail to pay their monthly obligations to the SSHFC, and this makes it exceedingly difficult for the corporation. The corporation is updating its Act to ensure that employers pay on time. Sometimes pensioners claim their benefits from the institution, only for the institution to realize that the employer is no longer existing.

- There is no adequate backing by the law to ensure that the employer pays or to have the power to reprimand the institution if they fail to pay. In this regard, the MD suggested that the SSHFC payments be linked or incorporated into the GRA clearance, single window registration as well as GPPA registration.

The Committee raised concerns about the amount of loans given to the government, its recovery rate, and implications on the corporation.

According to the MD, when government approaches based on social lines it becomes difficult for the corporation to resist. The Corporation also appealed to the Committee to help in recovering the monies owed by SOEs such as NAWEC, which

owes the institution 862 million as of the Committee's visit. MD further stated that there is an agreement between the two institutions for the settlement of this loan for 10 years, but NAWEC has defaulted in payment on two occasions.

The Committee also requested for an update on the state of the SSHFC's Guest Houses.

According to the MD, Ocean Bay is contracted to visit all the guest houses owned by SSHFC across the country and advise on their viability. The Management of the SSHFC is waiting for the report to finally decide on them. The MD also informed the committee that the acquisition of these guest houses was a directive from the former government, i.e. for the SSHFC to take over all government guest houses across the country. The title deeds of these properties were not handed to the institution.

The committee requested a list of all the institutions that owe the SSHFC and the contract documents between the SSHFC and the government for the purchase of the 70 buses.

5.20 GRTS HEAD OFFICE

The delegation was received at the GRTS premises by the DG and his team. The Head of the delegation informed the GRTS team that the Committee is performing one of its core mandates i.e. oversight. Sections 109, 125, and 175 of the 1997 Constitution mandate this Committee to perform oversight on all SOEs. He further informed the DG and his team that the Committee is interested in being updated on the status of the GRTS. The Committee is also interested to know the status of the implementation of the institution's migration from analog to digital been part of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (SAB) 2021 approved by Parliament and the 2020 Activity Report of GRTS.

According to the DG, the approval of these funds coincided with the 2021 Presidential Elections, and most of the funds were spent on this election's activities. This includes four pickup vehicles, a mobile studio, digital cameras, and nine transmitters. These transmitters are analog but convertible to digital. The digital migration in GRTS is not yet completed. He also indicated that part of the Gambian population is still using analog which warranted the purchase of this type of transmitter.

GRTS is revamping all its studios and in the future, all equipment to be procured by the institution will be digital. GRTS with the Ministry has started working with the Ministry of Information in Senegal and a Belgian Company (Studio Tech) to fully digitalize it but this initiative is not forthcoming for now.

GRTS Building Kanifing

DG further informed the Committee that it is an international recommendation for TV stations to operate digitally. GRTS is working towards this, and it has established an institution called Digital Gambia Limited (DGL) to support this process. Currently, it is fully funded and operated by GRTS. GRTS is seeking support from donors and partners to support DGL to be independent and fully operational. DGL was established to distribute and transmit signals for all TVs in the country if it is fully operational. This will reduce the burden of TV stations by only producing content and the rest will be handled by DGL.

The Committee conducted a tour of the whole facility including three studios, Control Rooms, and the library. Studio 5 was commissioned in 2006 with five cameras. Currently, there are four functioning cameras. Studio Four operates with four cameras but it is currently down. One of these studios is a virtual one but not yet operational due to the unavailability of some equipment and the Ahmadiyya is supporting this project. GRTS has also procured a mobile studio operating eight

cameras which can be upgraded to twelve cameras. This one is mostly used for covering life events and is part of the 36m dalasi from the SAB 2021.

The Committee enquired whether the board and the MOFEA were consulted on how the 36 million Dalasis were spent and the plans available for GRTS for digitalization.

DG informed the Committee that the entire SAB was spent on the 2021 presidential elections and the purchase of some digital equipment. This amount was not enough for the full digitalization of GRTS. The transmitters bought from the SAB were necessary at the time of the elections as most of the GRTS transmitters were down or partially working. The transmitters procured were able to help the institution to transmit and distribute its signals throughout the country. This also helps GRTS to cover all the Presidential candidates during the period. The purchase of the pickup vehicles was also informed as a matter of need based on the available funds.

The DG further stated that the plan of the institution is two-fold i.e. enhancing the human resource base of the institution and procurement of the needed equipment for full digitalization. The way forward for the digitalization of broadcasting in the country is DGL and should be empowered to enhance the process.

5.21 GRTS RADIO

This facility was commissioned on the 18th of February 1971 as part of the Gambia's 6th Independence celebration according to the General Manager. There are three studios, a control room, and a library in the facility. All the studios are using analog, and cassettes are still used. The committee was informed that almost all the equipment is obsolete as most of it has never been upgraded since the inauguration of the facility. There are two stations in the facility i.e. 98.6 and 107.6 and the station covers the whole country. According to the engineer, GRTS radio has transmitters in all the regions for smooth distribution and transmission.

Some of the challenges faced are;

1. Inadequate specialized training for staff
2. Inadequate mobility

GRTS Radio Mile 7, Bakau

5.22 ABUKO GRTS STATION

This is the transmission center for the Gambia Radio and Television services, and it receives signals from the studios in Mile 7. The center transmits and distributes signals through satellite and fiber throughout the country. The Committee was informed that the TV Transmitter in the station has been down since last year due to lightning. This is why GRTS TV is not tuned locally, it is only available on the channel. The transmitters used in this station are all analog according to the officers.

The officers also informed the Committee that there are a lot of unused antennas owned by various institutions attached to the mass and this attracts lightning. There are no UPS and standby generators in this station. All the transmitters of GRTS throughout the country are manned by DGL staff according to the Acting Director of Engineering.

5.23 MEETING WITH NAWEC MANAGEMENT

The meeting was attended by the Committee and the Management of NAWEC, and it took the form of a questions and answers session as follows.

1. The committee observed that most of the NAWEC facilities are without armed security. Is NAWEC ready to engage the security forces to secure these facilities?

   The MD indicated that his institution is open to collaboration with armed security to protect NAWEC properties throughout the country especially the water treatment plants, power plants, and the Jambur Solar plant.

2. The Committee noted that the chlorination plant at the Mansakonko water treatment plant is down, the perimeter fence is also low, and part of the fence collapsed as highlighted in the NAO audit report. What is NAWEC doing to address this as an urgent need, especially the chlorination?

   The MD informed the Committee that the injector at the Mansakonko treatment plant is currently under repairs and NAWEC has also ordered a new injector for this facility. Plans are in place for NAWEC to fence all its facilities. There is already a team in the regions and Basse and Farafenni are already fenced from the current budget and some other facilities will be covered in the 2024 budget.

3. What is NAWEC doing to make sure the ion content in the Bansang borehole is within the WHO guidelines?

   According to the MD, this community has an environmental issue. NAWEC has been struggling with how to contain the ions in this area. Whenever a borehole is dug in the area for a period, the ion content increases. Currently, NAWEC is working on an experiment in the area. A borehole is dug around the riverside and has been monitored for a period to ascertain whether it is within the WHO guidelines and so far, it is within that standard.

4. The Committee observed that the number of boreholes operated by Nawec currently is on the low side considering the water demand. What is NAWEC doing for the addition of more boreholes?

Currently, there is a project funded by the WB that will be drilling eleven boreholes i.e. five in the GBA and six in the provinces. The OIC project is also planning to establish a new water treatment plant and storage tanks within the GBA. NAWEC is also working with the AFD on a project that will erect a new water treatment plant and boreholes. According to the MD, donors are mostly focused on energy generation as a driver of socioeconomic development but now NAWEC is convincing donors to support the water sector and there is progress in these efforts.

5. Is there a need for the separation of water and electricity components?

   MD informed the committee that there is a planned study on this matter under the Millenium Challenge Corporation project to establish the facts of whether there is a need and if there is, what will be the modalities.

6. The Committee also observed that the generators at both the Farafenni and Basse power plants are currently down and NAWEC is solely dependent on Senelec for electricity. How soon is NAWEC planning to repair these generators?

   Most of these generators are due for their routine maintenance. The delay in the repairs is mostly due to the unavailability of parts as all these parts are ordered from outside of the country. NAWEC has already procured most of the parts needed for the repairs of these generators and it is preparing the engineers to be on the ground for this routine maintenance according to the MD.

7. During the tour, the Committee observed that some of the NAWEC facilities, especially in the provinces are understaffed. What is NAWEC doing to address this issue?

   The Committee was informed that this is not captured in the current budget, but it is addressed in the 2024 budget, especially the provincial stations which are already highlighted.

8. The Committee is aware that NAWEC does not have all the title deeds of its properties around the country. What are the steps being taken by the institution to address this?

According to the management of NAWEC, some of their properties, only have the allocation letter from the Ministry of Local Government and Lands or the Alkalo. The Committee was also informed that there is currently a project that is working on identifying all the properties of the institution and regularizing their status.

9. The Committee also observed that the Fajara water treatment plant is not maintained properly. The property is bushy, and the structure of the aerator is dilapidated. How soon is NAWEC going to address this matter?

   The materials for the works are already in place and work will start soon according to the MD. He also told the Committee that this work would be done before the end of the rainy season.

10. What plans does NAWEC have for major capital investment projects, especially in the water sector?

    According to the MD, NAWEC does not have the cash flow to venture into any major investment. The current tariff increment is only able to cater to the operational cost of the institution. He informed the Committee that currently NAWEC is administering a portfolio of USD200m. There is a masterplan for the electricity sector but there is none for water in the meantime.

11. The Committee was informed that most of the vehicles used by NAWEC in the provinces are hired. What is the reason behind this?

    According to the MD, this has been happening since 2008 when the institution was not able to buy enough vehicles for its operations. The practice is done on a need basis, but it is also cost-effective to the institution as all these vehicles are maintained by the owners and they also provide their drivers. The Committee was informed that the Government vehicle control unit always commandeers their vehicles, and they always take the ones that are in exceptionally good condition. Before it only happens when the President is embarking on a countrywide tour but now it is done throughout the year.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee successfully conducted the tour of all the selected SOEs. The exercise gave the Committee up-to-date information on the implementation of the recommendations made by the NAO in the Performance Audits of NAWEC and SSHFC. The Committee was able to establish that some of the recommendations have been implemented but some are still pending.

The Committee noted that most of NAWEC's properties are not secured with armed security, and some do not even have security at all. The Committee was also informed that GRTS is not digitalized in terms of its operations. Some of their operations are still done through analog. For SSHFC, most of the recommendations made by the NAO on the Performance Audit are in progress.

Finally, the tour also gave the Committee the chance to generate firsthand information on the current state and infrastructure of the SOEs visited. This will adequately guide the Committee during the consideration of the annual reports of these institutions.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends the following:

7.1 Proper fencing and leasing of all NAWEC properties and update the Committee on the progress made end December 2024.

7.2 Going forward, NAWEC to ensure that there are functional chlorination plants in all their water treatment facilities.

7.3 NAWEC provides basic operational training for technical staff, especially those in the provinces. This will equip them with basic skills and the ability to do basic maintenance when the need arises.

7.4 Where applicable, there should be a clause for step down training of knowledge transfer to NAWEC staff in all contract documents that the institution undertakes going forward.

7.5 Ministry of Petroleum and Energy to work with the Ministry of Regional Government and Lands to secure properties (land banking) for borehole drilling in the future.

7.6 The commandeering of NAWEC vehicles by the Government vehicle controller to seize immediately and return all impounded vehicles as this hinders company operations.

7.7 SSHFC to ensure that employers pay their monthly contribution on time for timely payment of benefits to employees.

7.8 SSHFC to make periodic assessment of new businesses to make sure they are registered with them to ensure they are registered with the relevant scheme.

7.9 SSHFC to fast track the implementation of the Social Security Management Information System (SSMIS) system to ensure timely, accurate and assessment of contributions and payment of benefits.

7.10 Going forward, GRTS should only procure digital equipment to fast track the digitalisation process.

7.11 Board and Management of GRTS to come up with strategies and innovative business ideas to maintain their relevance and viability in the digital era.

8.0 ANNEX I

DELEGATION

Hon. Members

1. Hon. Lamin J Sanneh - Chairperson
2. Hon. Billay G Tunkara - Vice Chairperson
3. Hon. Salifu Jawo - Member
4. Hon. Samba Jallow - Member
5. Hon. Lamin Ceesay - Member
6. Hon. Almameh Gibba - Member
7. Hon. Sheriff Sarr - Member
8. Hon. Abdouie Njai - Member
9. Hon. Ebrima Jaiteh - Member

Support Staff

1. Ahaji O Taal - SMS
2. Ebrima Jawo - Assistant Senior Committee Clerk
3. Fatoumata Keita - Committee Clerk
4. Halimatou Tamba - Assistant Senior Committee Clerk
5. Fatoumata K Sisawo - Researcher
6. Cherno Darboe - Communications unit

9.0 ANNEX II

WITNESSES

1. Nani Juwara — MD, NAWEC
2. Edrisa Jarju — DMD, NAWEC
3. Bai Sering Colley — PR, COMM. UNIT, NAWEC
4. Buba Badjie — COMM. UNIT, NAWEC
5. Babucarr Faal — HEAD OF GENERATION, NAWEC
6. Aminata Jobe Chatty — SNR. ADMIN. OFFICER
7. Benedict Jarju — MGR. QUALITY &STANDARDS, NAWEC
8. Sillah Ndongo — MAINTENANCE MANAGER, NAWEC
9. Mustapha Camara — NAWEC
10. Momodou Manneh — NAWEC
11. Bakery LM Kanteh — NAWEC

12.Tijan A Williams	NAWEC
13.Ousman Njie	NAWEC
14.Betty Marong	NAWEC
15.Mustapha Choi	NAWEC
16.Ngoneh Jallow	NAWEC
17.Momodou Dampha	NAWEC
18.Ebrima Secka	NAWEC
19.Mbakeh Jaiteh	NAWEC
20.Pierre Manneh	ENVIRONMENT HEALTH &SAFETY SUPERVISOR, NAWEC
21.Sheriff Camara	EHS MANAGER, NAWEC
22.Haddy Njie	PROJECT COORDINATOR, NAWEC
23.Edward Jatta	SENIOR GENERATION MANAGER AND PROJECT MANAGER JAMBUR SOLAR SITE
24.Jia Saisai	SITE MANAGER, JAMBUR SOLAR SITE
25.Ebrima Sanyang	SITE SUPERVISOR, JAMBUR SOLAR SITE
26.Sorrie Trawally	PLANT MANAGER, BRIKAMA 1
27.Gabriel Joiner	SENIOR MECHANICAL ENGINEER, BRIKAMA
28.Karim Jarju	PLANT MANAGER, BRIKAMA 2
29.Ousainou A Joof	SNR. RURAL OPTS. MANAGER, NAWEC
30.Edrissa Njie	STATION OPERATOR, KANUMA TREATMENT PLANT
31.Musa Jarju	OPERATOR, SAABA BOREHOLE
32.Abdoulie K Saho	SITE SUPERVISOR FOR LRR OVERSEEING NBR
33.Ousman Sowe	WATER PROD. SUPERVISOR, FARAFENNI
34.Muhammed John	ENGINE OPERATOR, FARAFENNI
35.Foday Jawara	ENGINE OPERATOR, FARAFENNI
36.Muhammed Lamin Jarju	STATION OPERATOR, JANJANGBUREH BOREHOLE
37.Momodou Habib Jallow	STATION OPERATOR, BANSANG

38.Bubacarr Manneh	SUPERVISOR MAINT. OPTS. URR & CRR, NAWEC
39.Lamin Janha	REGIONAL SUPERVISOR FOR ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION URR & CRR NORTH
40.Tijan Ceesay	STATION OPERATOR BOREHOLE 1 & 2, BASSE
41.Modou Lamin Jobe	OPTS. MANAGER CRR & URR, NAWEC
42.Lamin Fatajo	PLANT MANAGER, BASSE
43.Modou Lamin Camara	STATION OPERATOR, MANSAKONKO TREATMENT PLANT
44.Sarjo Bojang	STATION OFFICER, GUNJUR TREATMENT PLANT
45.Haruna Bajo	STATION OPERATOR, GUNJUR
46.Abdoulie Sey	DG, GRTS
47.Jamo Sowe	SENIOR MANAGER PROCUREMENT, GRTS
48.Yamundow Gai	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, GRTS
49.Musa Sanneh	SENIOR MANAGER INTERNAL AUDIT, GRTS
50.Fatoumatta Sanneh Ceesay	DIRECTOR PROGRAMS, GRTS
51.Kemo Jatta	DIRECTOR MARKETING, GRTS
52.Sering Mass Senghore	AG. DIRECTOR ENGINEERING, GRTS
53.Yankuba Jatta	AG. DIRECTOR HR, GRTS
54.Alhaji Modou M Joof	DDG, GRTS
55.Lamin N Ceesay	AG. DRP, GRTS
56.Omar M Jatta	MANAGER TV TRANSMITTERS, GRTS
57.Lamin Mass	SNR. ENG. TV TRANSMITTERS, GRTS
58.Saloum Malang	MD, SSHFC
59.Ansumana Touray	DMD, SSHFC
60.Pierre FM Gomez	DRPP, SSHFC
61.Edward Gomez	DO, SSHFC
62.Abdou Sillah	DH, SSHFC
63.Dodou Jain	DIT, SSHFC

64. Dawda Kaira	SFMI, SSHFC
65. Baboucarr Nyang	SSHFC
66. Momodou Bah	DR. INT. CRL., SSHFC
67. Fabuka Njaay	DR. CORPORATE AFFAIRS, SSHFC
68. Haddy Sallah	DFI, SSHFC