



## Gambia

Fatou Lamin Faye  
**Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education**



*Ms Fatou Lamin Faye is a Gambian educationist of high renown. She was born on 10th February 1954. She holds a Master's Degree in Education and specialized in Management and Vocational Education. Prior to her appointment as Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education in 2004, she was the Director of the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI). Under her leadership, the Gambia has recorded a number of success stories in various domains related to education especially the formulation of the 2006-2015 Education Master Plan and the Education Sector Medium Term Plan 2008-2011. Fatou Lamin Faye is a member of a number of Boards of Governors and Committee. She is currently the Chairperson of the National Women's Council.*

### **Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future**

In The Gambia, all inclusive education which forms part of a broader framework of special needs education, has been at the core of a wider reform which has been directed at enhancing the system's effectiveness. It is in this regard that the Government of this country treats it as an essential precondition for bringing about quality education for all. As reflected in our policy documents, special needs education is not something additional to or separate from the mainstream education provision but an alternative way of looking into educational development and responding to the diversity of learners' needs.

Our policy, therefore on all inclusive education is fundamentally guided by the following propositions:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning;
- Children with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting their needs;
- Children with profound and severe disabilities must have access to special schools devoid of segregation and discrimination in quality basic education provision;
- The participation of parents, communities and organization of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes concerning provision for special needs education must be encouraged and facilitated;
- Greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in the vocational aspects of special needs education must be invested;
- In the context of a systemic change, teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, must address the provision of special needs education.

As a government, therefore, we remain committed to providing nine years of uninterrupted basic education of good quality to every child, everywhere and in all circumstances.