

## **CHAPTER 2: PRESENTATION OF THE SURVEY**

### **2.1 Context and Justification**

Information has emerged as an essential tool in the development process, leading to an implicit creation of what is today called “the information society”. However, the development of our economies and societies relying on information and cannot progress with out use information communication technology.

It is for these reasons, among others, that today there is a high demand for information and communication technologies and information society statistics to help lay foundation for the monitoring of progress in the aforementioned areas. However, there cannot be a jump into monitoring progress in the information society

Having realized this, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) closely working with her International Partner Institutions, took it upon themselves to prepare the ground and lead the process of setting up a mechanism for the establishment of benchmarks and monitoring systems in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). This has lead to an international consensus in developing and agreeing of indicators to help establish benchmark and to monitor progress in the area of ICT development, access, usage and exploitation. Not also loosing sight of the need for having common and standardized methodologies for comparison purpose.

In the African region, ECA established a project that is helping spearhead the process in the region as a result of which countries like The Gambia benefited to conduct baseline studies in the area of ICT and, to also look into modalities to incorporate the continuous production of ICT statistics within the National Statistics System. The project helped African countries discussed and agreed on sixty-two indicators that all should endeavour to collect the necessary data for their production regularly. The Scan-ICT Baseline Project is the resultant programme of activities in the African region, the second phase of

which is being implemented in nine African countries – including Gambia, geared towards the realization of these objectives in the region.

The implementation of the project in The Gambia is being coordinated by a National Technical Committee under the Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs (DoSFEA) and, technically spearheaded by the Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS) formally Central Statistics Department, has taken the lead role in the technical implementation of the project which includes methodological design, coordination of the desk research, design of instruments and implementation, among others.