



THE GAMBIA PRISONS SERVICE





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted inmates playing soccer.

*Cover photo: Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
An inmate inside a shared cell.*

Photo Credits: ©UNDP/Diego Ibarra



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Member of the Riot Squad watching the prison perimeter from the tower.

PREFACE

The Prisons Service of the Gambia has been in existence since the Colonial period. In a country of approximately 1,882,450 (2013 census), the three prisons are responsible for about 600 detainees. With the new government, the Prisons Service aspires to meet the Mandela Rules and transform the Prisons Service from an institution centered on punishment to one focused on rehabilitation. After decades of neglect and misuse, the infrastructure and assets of the Prisons Service are in a state of dilapidation. In order to improve inmate care, the Prisons Service must invest in infrastructure, assets and asset management and most importantly, in the training and skills development of our Prison personnel. The Prisons Service is hopeful in this endeavor. On 3 May 2019, the Prisons Service entered into

a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Authority for Legal Aid (NALA) and the Gambia Bar Association (GBA) to establish Prisons Legal Aid Desks. With support from UNDP's Strengthening Rule of Law and Enhancing Justice and Security Service Delivery in the Gambia (UNDP RoL), an office in Mile 2 and one in Jeshwang were renovated and furnished to provide a confidential space for inmates to meet with pro bono attorneys. A training center in Mile 2 provides skills development for some inmates but such initiatives should be expanded to mitigate against recidivism.

The Prisons Service offers the Rapid Assessment Report, Photobook and Documentary to fully illustrate the needs but also opportunities for transformation.

Ansumana Manneh
Director General,
Gambia Prisons Service



Mile2, Central Prison, Banjul: Dilapidated abandoned prison car.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: The picture shows Janjanbureh Prison during colonial days.

FOREWORD

It is with pleasure that I write this foreword for the Rapid Prisons Assessment Report which seeks to highlight the current conditions of our Prisons and Prisons Service. This report provides a detailed understanding of not only the challenges but the opportunities for the reform of the Prisons Service. The Gambia Prisons Service has gone through an immense struggle over the past few years but has started its work toward meeting the UN's Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules).

Towards the effort to ensure that prisoners' rights are respected, the Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Prisons Service, has made some progress in the renovation of the security wing by increasing the size and allocation of cells. The expansion program has been extended to Janjanbureh Prison which is in the Central River Region of the Gambia. Infrastructure work for Jeshwang Prison commenced in 2014 but have stalled due to lack of funding.

This Rapid Prisons Assessment Report, the accompanying Photobook and short video documentary vividly illustrate the urgent need for support. Currently, the Prisons Service is trying to provide prisoner care and security amidst dilapidated

infrastructure, insufficient training and meager resources including the lack of basic office furniture. In order to meet the minimum standard of care to detainees, the Prisons Service must have the resources, training and tools to meet its duty. The government of the Gambia is committed to working with stakeholders and development partners in reforming the Prisons Service into rehabilitative rather than punitive institution.


The United Nations Development Programme's project on Strengthening Rule of Law and Enhancing Justice and Security Service Delivery in The Gambia has been a vital partner of the Ministry's and the Prisons Service. I am pleased to see the positive collaboration and effort to engage international and development partners to our reform work.

It is against this background that I fully endorse the Rapid Prisons Assessment Report 2019, the accompanying Photobook and short video documentary developed in partnership with the UNDP. The RPA Report and the supporting work illustrates a new era in prisons management. An era that is open, transparent and ready to evolve putting the care of prisoners and prisons personnel at the forefront.

Thank you



Honourable Ebrima Mballow
Minister of Interior



*"It is said that no one truly knows
a nation until one has been inside
its jails. A nation should not be
judged by how it treats its highest
citizens, but its lowest ones."*

– Nelson Mandela

*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An inmate in
solitary confinement at the Security Wing.*

INTRODUCTION

The Gambian prison system has suffered from years of neglect and under-investment. Conditions of detention are poor and the Remand Wing of Mile 2 is seriously overcrowded. During the previous government of President Yahya Jammeh, the prison system suffered from a poor reputation with allegations of human rights abuses, deteriorating prison facilities and overcrowding. The human rights climate in The Gambia improved as the new president, Adama Barrow, and his government took steps to reverse the arbitrary arrests and detention of citizens by adopting human rights principles and pardoning about 300 prisoners.

The UNDP Strengthening Rule of Law and Enhancing Justice and Security Service Delivery in The Gambia (UNDP RoL), in partnership with the Gambia Prisons Service, has developed a Rapid Prisons Assessment Report (RPA Report) with this accompanying Photobook and a shot documentary video. The purpose of the exercise is to document the dire needs of the prisons facilities, personnel and environment for the detained at the three prisons: Mile 2 Central Prison in Banjul, Juvenile Justice Wing in Jeshwang (Extension of Mile 2 Prison known as Jeshwang Prison Camp) and Janjanbureh Prison in Janjanbureh.

This Photobook depicts the current conditions of the 3 prisons' infrastructure, electrical system, kitchens, water, hygiene and sanitation; medical facilities, overcrowding, juveniles in detention, women in detention and rehabilitation programs. From July to August 2019, there were approximately 686 incarcerated persons with 315 of them on remand. Many of the facilities were constructed during the colonial era in 1920 and are in poor condition. The Prison Personnel facilities are likewise in a dilapidated state. Currently there are 808 Prisons Personnel servicing the 3 prisons. On average there are 62 male juveniles in detention with 60 on remand as of August 2019. The women in detention are 18 as of August 2019 and of those, 10 are on remand. Women are detained at both Mile 2 and Janjanbureh.

The Rapid Prisons Assessment 2019, conducted by The Gambia Prison Service in partnership with UNDP, has been developed to better identify key areas for support needed to enable the Prisons Service to meet international minimum standards for the care of detained persons. There is a strong commitment from the Prisons Service to reform the institution and transform its care of detainees towards a rehabilitative service.



Mile2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison Officer at the corridor of the Male Remand Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted inmate inside the toilet of the cell block.

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Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Member of the Riot Squad patrolling the perimeter from the roof.

SECURITY

- All 3 prisons, their perimeters, personnel and detainees are guarded 24/7 by 108 personnel called the Riot Squad.
- They guard the prisons' perimeter, protect the prisoners and themselves.
- Out of the five watchtowers in Mile 2 Prison, only two are operating which are monitored by the Riot Squad on 24/7 basis.
- The Riot Squad is trained by the Police Intervention Unit however lack of enough equipment such as body protective gears, tear gas, helmet, knee guards, seal, baton and respirators for riot control inhibits their ability to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
Prison Guard screening a visitor.*



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Member of the Riot Squad monitors the Remand Wing



Janjanbureh Prison: Central River Region.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Member of the Riot Squad in the watch tower.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison fence.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate visited by his sister.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Visitor's screening office.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison Officer guards the corridor to the cells.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison Officer looking through the main entrance gate of the prison.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: A sister visits her brother.



Jeshwang Prison: Member of the Riot Squad with a security vest in the Juvenile Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Member of the Riot Squad patrolling inside the prison compound.

ADMINISTRATION

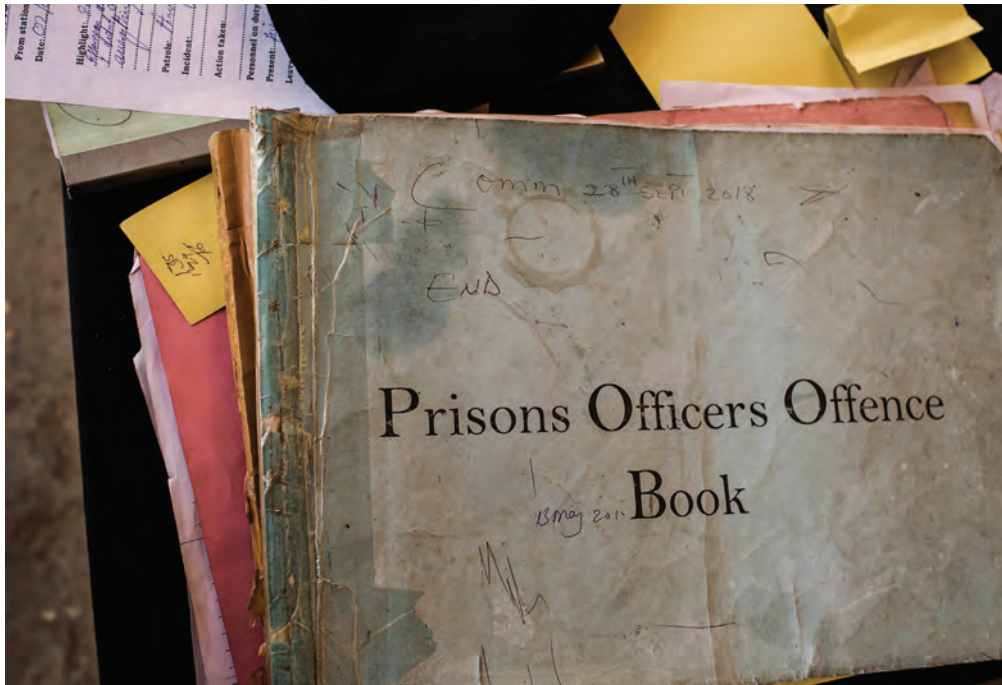
- The administration of the Prisons is tasked to the Reception Office, which houses all the records for prisoners and personnel.
- The record keeping mechanism is entirely manual and as such there is no data base to store the information of personnel and prisoners.
- There are no computers or digital devices used in offices for storing information.
- Records offices are very tight with limited desks and poor furniture.



Janjanbureh Prison:
Prison records.



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
Records Office.*



Jeshwang Prison: Prisons Officers' Offence Book at the Reception Gate.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Female Officers' registration point of the Remand Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: : Chief of Staff working in his office.

JESHWANG PRISON CAMP 10/7/2019

DAILY DISTRIBUTION		SHELTER O/C	
FARM:	00	FIREWOOD:	00
GARDEN:	00	HOSPITAL:	00
KITCHEN:	10	SICK REPORT:	04
MESSEBOYS:	04	CIP PRISONERS:	64
GENERAL CLEANERS:	03	RIP PRISONERS:	58
WOODCHOPPERS:	03	BREAK-DOWN:	122
OTHER PARTY:	102	CIP PRISONERS:	64
SEPARATE CELL:	00	RIP PRISONERS:	58
JUVENILE WING:	13	CIP PRISONERS:	04
SECURITY WING:	00	JIP PRISONERS:	09
	135		135

CELL ALLOCATION

Cell	Prisoners
1	55
2	03
3	31
4	33
5	00
SEPARATE CELL	00
SECURITY WING	00

Jeshwang Prison: Daily record of prisoners and activities.

LIBRARY
KEY

TOWER
(2)
KEY

LOCKING
UP HOUSE
KEY

SHIFT
OFFICERS
STORE KEY

BACK
GATE
KEY

WORK SHOP
KEY

KITCHEN
KEYS

PO's office
KEY

REMAND
WING
KEY

INFIRMARY
KEY

GEN'S KEY

FEMALE
WING KEY

Mile2, Central Prison, Banjul: Keys on the wall in the Reception Office.



Janjanbureh Prison: Administrative Officers in the Reception Office.



Janjanbureh Prison: Administrative Officers in the Reception Office.

DETAILS	NO. 1	NO. 5	NO. 7	TOTAL
R/PRS	02	03	07	00
C/PRS	07	12	10	21
D/PRS	00	00	00	00
TOTAL	09	15	17	27

Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Daily record of prisoners at the gate of the Confinement Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Female administrative staff taking notes in the Reception Office.

PRISON PERSONNEL

- The Prison Service is headed by the Director General of Prison with approximately 857 staff members.
- The Riot Squad, which provides security services to the Prisons, personnel and inmates, became operational in 2017.
- The staff quarter has 6 blocks with each block having 12 rooms.
- Most of the staff rooms and toilets are in are in a dilapidated condition and some facilities are out of use.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Director General Ansumana Manneh of the Gambia Prisons Service.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: A rundown unused structure in the Staff Quarters.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison Officer on phone in the Reception Office.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Personnel houses in the Staff Quarters.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Lamin Sowe, Commissioner of Operations.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Kitchen in the Staff Quarters.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison personnel during the daily morning parade.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: A duck at the Staff Quarters.



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison Officer
fetching water from the Staff Quarters.*



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison personnel during the daily morning parade shift.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- The cells in Mile 2 were constructed in 1920 and are very tight and small.
- Prisoners spread coverings on damp concretes and wooden planks to lay their heads on due to insufficient beds and tiny spaces.
- Structures are dilapidated with crumbling walls and broken fans.
- Staff quarters are sometimes desolate, very archaic and very low standards for a working professional.
- Construction of new infrastructure (Kitchen) is currently underway in Mile 2. Some unfinished structures in Jeshwang prisons dating back to 2014 are still incomplete due to inadequate resources.



Jeshwang Prison: Bricks laid at the derelict basketball lawn.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An abandoned broken telephone booth at the Staff Dormitory.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Damaged ceiling of a prison cell.



Janjanbureh Prison: Personnel resting room with dilapidated ceiling and poor furniture.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Broken bench, still in use, in front of the personnel resting room.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Cell room
in the Confinement Facility.



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
An Inmate within the Security Wing.*



Jeshwang Prison: Empty confinement cell with damaged mattress.



Jeshwang Prison: New cell block under construction.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Ongoing renovation work for the kitchen.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Derelict resting room with worn-out beds.



Mile2, Central Prison, Banjul: One of only two functioning Watchtowers.

KITCHEN & NUTRITION

- Kitchens are tight with little or no ventilation making it difficult for smoke to pass out while prisoners in Mile 2 cook in the open under canopies.
- There is a food store stuffed with basic cooking ingredients for the daily meals.
- The food is cooked by specific convicts and most of the foods are not consumed by the inmates due to the nature of preparation.
- Fresh vegetables also come from the prison garden, which is being cultivated by the prisoners themselves mainly for their consumption.
- The local bakery meant for baking bread in the prison is operated by the prisoners.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Cooked rice ready to be served with local stew for lunch.



Janjanbureh Prison: Dark and poorly ventilated kitchen during lunch preparation.



Janjanbureh Prison: Inmates preparing food in the kitchen.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Cabbage stored in the food pantry.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Food store.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An inmate cleaning the kitchen after cooking.



Janjanbureh Prison: Inmate cleaning the kitchen.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Fish being prepared by female inmates.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate preparing stew.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate working in prison bakery.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Traditional fish stew prepared using firewood in the kitchen.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Tables in the bakery.



Janjanbureh Prison: Inmates pound groundnut using mortar and pestle at the back of the kitchen.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An inmate cooking.



Jeshwang Prison: Inmate eating lunch in his cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Cauldrons carried by inmates after cleaning.



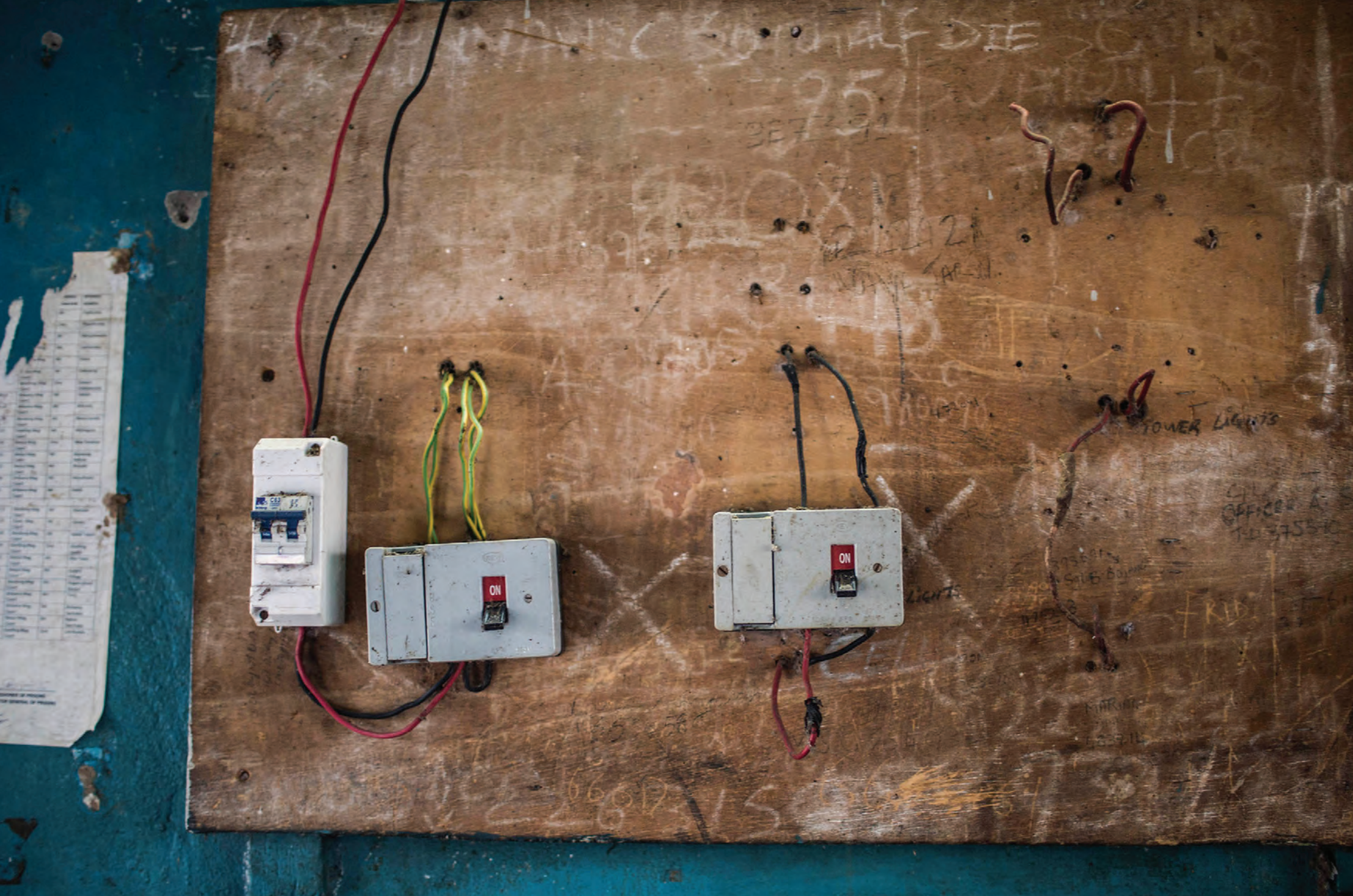
Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Food brought by relatives in the visiting room.

ELECTRICITY & WATER

- Electricity and water are supplied to the 3 prisons by the National Water & Electricity Company (NAWEC).
- Janjanbureh's water supply is dependent on electricity. When the power is off, there is no access to water.
- Mile 2 uses its 2 generators to supply power when there is a shortage.
- Boreholes have been dug to improve the water supply.
- Janjanbureh, which does not have boreholes, relies on prisoners to fetch water from nearby ponds.



Janjanbureh Prison: The batteries supplying electricity for the prison.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An electric panel inside one of the Administrative Offices.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An inmate washes dirty pots at a tap surrounded by stagnant water.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Television inside a female cell.



Janjanbureh Prison: Inmates using tap water.



Jeshwang Prison: Gallons of water stored inside a cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Remand prisoners filling gallons of water.



Jeshwang Prison: A juvenile washing his face at the tap beside the toilet.



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
Prisoners inside a shared bathroom.*

HYGIENE & SANITATION

- Sanitation facilities, particularly in Mile 2, are in ruins with run down toilets.
- Female inmates are provided with sanitary pads, however, toiletries become unavailable when there are delivery delays. Soap is delivered every 1-2 weeks.
- Running and stagnant water can be seen in and around the Remand Wing. This creates a breeding ground for pests which in turn sting and cause discomfort to inmates.



Jeshwang Prison: Inmate taking leftover food to garbage dump within the prison.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate washes dirty pots at a tap surrounded by stagnant water.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Dilapidated toilet in shared bathroom in the Remand Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Infirmery Facility.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Bucket Inside shared toilet in the Staff Quarters.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Toilet inside female Remand Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate in wheelchair using the shared bathroom.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmates putting leftover food into a garbage bin in the main yard.



Janjanbureh Prison: Inmate doing laundry at the tap.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Leftover food seen in a bin at the Main Yard.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: A broken sewage pipe behind the latrines.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Remand prisoner washes in a shared bathroom.



*Janjanbureh Prison: Toilet
for Staff Quarters.*

MEDICAL FACILITIES

- Jeshwang does not have a medical clinic. A nurse waits in the tailoring room for any patients.
- Janjanbureh does not have a clinic but uses a hospital located across the road.
- Mile 2 has a medical clinic and laboratory. The lab is underequipped and small but able to conduct malaria, HIV, tuberculosis, hemoglobin and spit tests.
- Mile 2 has one refrigerator to store blood tests which is currently not in use.



*Jeshwang Prison: First Aid Kits
for emergency medical needs.*



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Wooden vision testing board at the Clinic.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Beds with mosquito nets at the Infirmary.



Jeshwang Prison: The tailoring workshop is also used as a waiting room for the prison's nurse.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Broken chair inside the Clinic waiting room.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Toilet facility for tuberculosis patients inside the Confinement Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Nurse with Prison Officers in the Clinic.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Injured inmate in the Infirmary.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Derelict Clinic Room with Nurse's desk.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Wheelchair in the Infirmary.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Lab technician runs a test in the Clinic Laboratory.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate inside his Cell.

OVERCROWDING

- Remand cells have a maximum capacity of 5 persons, in Mile 2, they can contain more than a dozen.
- Overcrowding in the Remand Wing led to new construction at Jeshwang, however, the congested conditions persist.
- Remand prisoners can be found sleeping on their sides to allow others more space to rest.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmates in their cellblock after lockdown.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Remand prisoners inside shared cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Remand prisoner in a small sleeping space without a mattress.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted male inmates in their cell.



Jeshwang Prison: Inmate in shared cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmates in the Female Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: The inmates are in their cell in the Security Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Remand prisoners in a cellblock of Remand Wing.



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
Remand prisoners in shared cell.*

JUVENILES IN DETENTION

- Juveniles are detained in a segregated area within Jeshwang Prison.
- Only basic primary education is available and proper sanitation and toilets are lacking.
- Jeshwang does not have any recreational or rehabilitation facilities.
- The prison is suffering from a mosquito and bed bug infestation which is impacting the health of the juveniles and adult inmates.



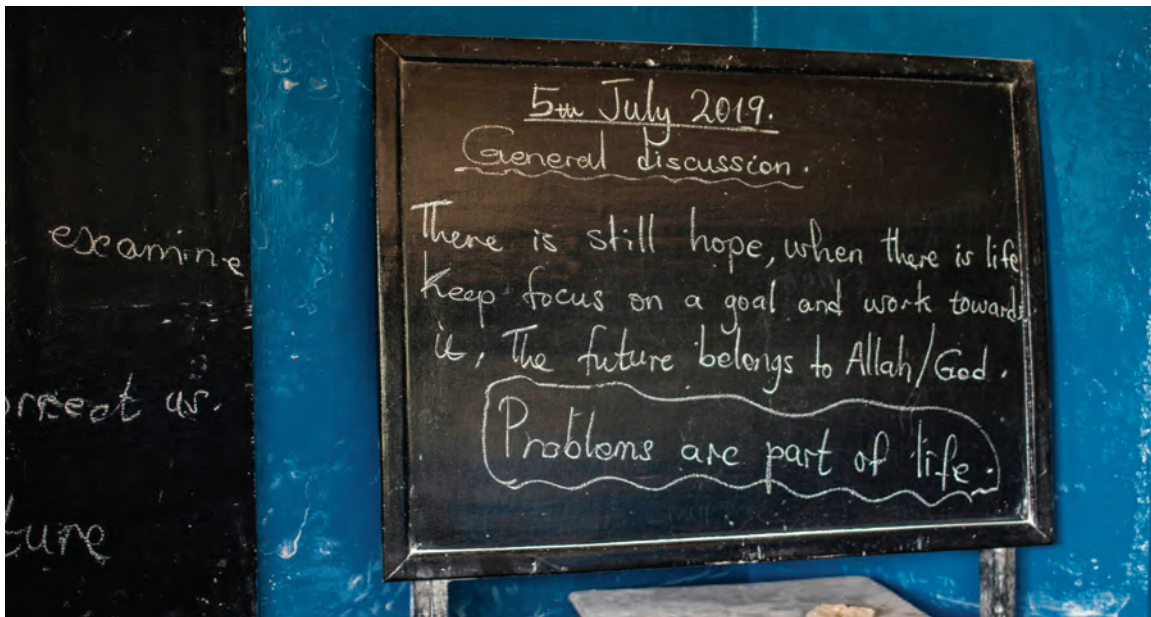
*Jeshwang Prison: Juvenile
studying in the classroom.*



Jeshwang Prison: Juveniles carrying a bucket of water.



Jeshwang Prison: Prison teacher giving a lesson to juvenile students.



Jeshwang Prison: Classroom blackboard.



Jeshwang Prison: Juvenile Remand inmates in their dormitory.



Jeshwang Rehabilitation Centre

Changing minds : Changing lifestyles

Maintaining a therapeutic environment for the rehabilitation of young offenders providing them with the skills in order to change and become responsible members of society

Jeshwang Prison: Juvenile dormitory.



Jeshwang Prison: Juvenile dormitory.



Jeshwang Prison: Juveniles attending lessons in the classroom.

WOMEN IN DETENTION

- Female inmates are detained in Mile 2 or Janjanbureh.
- Both female remand and convicted inmates are held in the Female Wing segregated from male prisoners.
- There are no cases of children accompanying their mothers in detention.
- Female inmates are not permitted to leave the Female Wing without escort from prison personnel. This is very rarely done.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Female prisoner at the gate of the Female Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted female in her cell.



Janjanbureh Prison: Convicted female shares cell with female on remand.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Female convict (in blue) beside female convict (in black) under death sentence in the Female Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison officer and inmate in the Female Wing.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted female inmate sitting beside a female cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted and Remand female inmates washing dishes at the tap.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Convicted inmate in her cell.



Janjanbureh Prison: Female inmate in her cell.

RECREATION

- The prisons lack recreational facilities. The ones that are currently in place are damaged and out of use.
- Inmates enjoy engaging with each other during their limited time outside their cells.
- As only convicted inmates are accepted to the limited rehabilitation programs, recreational activities for inmates becomes more important.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmates playing football in the Main Yard.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Two inmates play checkers inside their cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Rusted weights in the Staff Quarters.



Janjanbureh Prison: Calendars and inscriptions drawn on a cell wall.



Jeshwang Prison: Inmate reading a book inside a shared cell at the Remand Wing.



Jeshwang Prison: The basketball court.



Janjanbureh Prison: Inmate praying inside his shared cell.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An Inmate in solitary confinement reading a book.



Janjanbureh Prison: Remand prisoners playing checkers.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate weightlifting inside the old kitchen.

REHABILITATION

- Rehabilitation programs are only for convicted prisoners. Plumbing, ICT, electrical installation and tailoring are provided in Mile 2 by the Insight Training Institute.
- Literate inmates volunteer to teach other inmates.
- Janjanbureh and Jeshwang lack rehabilitation programs.
- Some prisoners are selected to work in prison farms or gather firewood.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Skills trainer teaching ICT to an inmate.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate working on prison farm.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate reading in the classroom.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmates taking ICT lessons.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate sewing in the tailoring workshop.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate studying inside the prison classroom.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Inmate chopping wood for cooking.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Prison Officer cutting cloth in the tailoring workshop.



Jeshwang Prison: Garden cultivated by juvenile inmates.



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: An inmate reading a book in the library.

*"The greatest glory in living is not in
falling, but in rising every time we fall."*

– Nelson Mandela



*Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul:
A prisoner with a death sentence.*



Mile 2, Central Prison, Banjul: Confinement Facility.

