

# FUTURE IN OUR HANDS THE GAMBIA

## NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2019



### **SPECIAL ISSUE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM FIOHTG'S AGM**

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## FIOHTG ORGANISES AGM; FULFILS A CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT



Future In Our Hands The Gambia organised its second Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 8th February 2020 at the Semaj Garden Marquee (the white tent opposite Boabab Resort). Items on the Agenda included the *Presentation of the 2019 Annual Report, Presentation of the Audit Report and FIOHTG Balance Sheet as at December 31st 2019* by Augustus Prom Audit Firm, *the Stepping Down of Board Chairperson having duly served two consecutive terms, Election of a New Board Members (and re-election of the remaining board members if congress desires), Any Other Business.*

Attendees included staff of the organisation including the Country Director Mr. Buba Faburay, Auditors from Augustus Prom Audit Firm, Board of Directors and the Board Chairperson, representative of The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations, NGO Affairs Agency representative, stakeholders, partners and delegates from the beneficiary communities (Village Development Programme centers). According to Article 10 of the Constitution, the General Assembly is the highest decision making body, hence their presence and participation. Article 10.1.1 further tasked the General Assembly with electing members of the Board of Directors as well.

According to Article 13.1 of the Constitution of FIOHTG, a General Assembly must be organized “not later than 15 months of the date the last Annual General Meeting was held”. Although the AGM was scheduled to take place in December 2019, the General Assembly thought it wise to postpone it until February 2020 in consideration of politi-

cal developments in the country. Madam Mam Kumba Sanneh chaired the first session of the event. Key activities during the session included a presentation of the 2019 *Annual Report* of the Organisation by Mr. Faburay, the Director of the organisation. Mr. Faburay explained key milestones that have been achieved during the period under review while explaining key challenges including Forum Syd’s shrinking funding to FIOHTG. Following this, the Board Chairperson also presented her report detailing major achievements during her tenure as Board Chairperson. She noted the numerous trainings that staff underwent during her tenure and the recruitment of the M&E Officer to fill the void left by the lack of an M&E Officer.

Following this, Augustus Prom Junior presented the *Balance Sheet of FIOHTG as at December 31st 2019*. Mr. Prom Jr. stated that the audits have been conducted according to best international practices and the audit found FIOHTG to be in compliance with its internal control regulations, National Laws and international practices. It is important to remind readers that Article 8 of FIOHTG’s Constitution states that:

*“As a statutory requirement, the Board of Directors of FIOH-TG shall cause proper books of Accounts and Audit to be kept and shall ensure that they are up to date and are of the required standard and quality. The Board of Directors shall contract competent audit firms to conduct regular audit exercises for FIOH-TG...”*

It was in this line that the audit firm was chosen. Essentially, FIOHTG as an organisation whose core values include transparency and accountability has not only promoted these principles across the nation but prides itself with compliance to National Laws, Internal Rules and Regulations as well as best practices.





## MAM KUMBA SANNEH STEPS DOWN AS FIOHTG BOARD CHAIRPERSON



If you have heard about FIOHTG, then you have heard our work in educating the girl child and empowering women. Our General Members know our commitment to women empowering, having recognized the abilities of women within our governance structures and all we do. That is why, our members continue to give us women to help guide our actions. Just as our members, our Board of Directors decided to elect Mam Kumba Sanneh to serve as the Chairperson of the Board of Directors for two consecutive terms (4 years). Having honourably served the organisation, and in adherence to the constitutional term limit, Madam Sanneh stepped down as the Chairperson of the Board of Directors at the 2020 AGM.

Madam Sanneh holds a MBA from Henley Business School which specializes in “Leadership development, Coaching, Finance, Strategic management, MBA, DBA”. Madam Sanneh is a Human Resources specialist and worked at the Ministry of Works as personnel officer, at ActionAid International The Gambia as Human Resources Development Coordinator and Human Resources/Organisational Development respectively; Madam Sanneh has been working at MRC as Administrative Head since October 2009.

With these wealth of professional experience, Madam Sanneh has spearheaded change and brought many innovations to FIOHTG. As Board Chairperson, she has regularly attended meetings and regulated business at the Board and at the FIOHTG Directorate. Her colleagues at the Board including Mr. Dan Mendy calls her the Iron Lady . Madam Sanneh has a good working relationship with staff, ensuring that there is compliance and adherence to policies.

Thanks to her tireless efforts, the staff of FIOHTG presented a surprise gift to Mam Kumba Sanneh Janneh to show appreciation for her services as the outgoing board chairperson. Mam Kumba has registered a lot of successes during her tenure. She was well known for visiting FIOHTG’s intervention sites despite her busy schedules. On behalf of the entire staff, beneficiaries and board members, we wish Mam Kumba Sanneh all the best.





## FIOHTG GETS NEW BOARD CHAIRPERSON, MADAM JOANNA MENDY

According to Article 12.1 of the FIOHTG Constitution, Board of Directors of FIOHTG “shall comprise members from the wider civil society and the public sector and are not directly staff of FIOHTG. They shall be male and female Gambians and non Gambians aged between 35 and 65 years.” In adherence to this Constitutional provision and Article 12.2 which limits the size of the Board to 7 full members 3 of whom shall be females, the General Assembly re-elected Professor Pierre Gomez and Professor Sidat Yaffa of the University of The Gambia, Mr. Daniel Mendy construction engineer and retired employee of FIOHTG, Mr. Ebou Seringe Gaye of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Madam Joanna Mendy of Catholic Relief Service, Madam Fanta Jatta of ActionAid International The Gambia to continue serving. The Board members have been nominated by the General Assembly and such nomination have been seconded by two full members of the Board as stated in Article 12.4.

The election was done in accordance with Article 12.3 which requires the General Assembly to elect Board members based on a simple majority. The Profiles of potential Board Members was earlier circulated for consideration by members. Following the election of the Board members, the elected Board members elected their Chairperson based on a simple majority.

The Board elected Madam Joanna Mendy who has served as a member of the Board. Madam Mendy is now eligible to serve for two consecutive terms (2 years per term). Madam Mendy is another Human Resources Specialist who works with the Catholic Relief Service as Programme Manager. She is well acquainted with the work of Civil Society Organisations in the Gambia. She is also well experienced in change management.

Madam Joanna Mendy has been fundamental as a Board member in providing guidance to the organisation. In 2019, she led the Holistic Organisational Comprehensive Assessment which revealed the weaknesses and strengths of the organisation and staff. Thanks to the assessment, many reforms were initiated by the Human Resources Unit leading to significant improvements in the performance of staff and the organisation.

The election of Madam Mendy as FIOHTG Board Chair is another testimony to FIOHTG’s commitment to giving women their rightful place in the development process. With her wealth of experience, and her seasoned team of academics and development practitioners, we are confident that Madam Mendy will help in propelling the organisation to higher heights. We wish Madam Mendy a fruitful and exciting tenure while assuring her FIOHTG’s staff support.

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## STAFF ASKED FOR SALARY REVIEW; BOARD PROMISES REVIEW; AGM OKAYS FIOHTG’S OPERATION



Meanwhile staff who were present at the AGM urged the Board to review the current salary scale. Responding to the concern, the newly elected Board stated that the outgoing chair had started looking into the issue and a comprehensive review will be completed by the Board. Staff are expecting that the review will lead to salary increment in the very near future.

Meanwhile delegates from the beneficiary communities have hailed the management and staff of the organisation for their dedication to poverty eradication. Delegates approved the operational strategy of FIOHTG saying that they understand that the organisation would want to do more but it is constraint with limitations of funding. Therefore, they are okay with the milestones achieved while praying for more funding.





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