



**Talib Ahmed Bensouda - Profile**

### **Personal History:**

Talib Ahmed Bensouda is the third son of Ahmed Bensouda, former Permanent Secretary (retired) and Amie Ndoungou Drammeh Bensouda, a lawyer (former Solicitor General) and currently managing partner of a law firm – Amie Bensouda & Co. He was born in 1986 at West Field Clinic, Serekunda.

Talib's Father Ahmed Bensouda, the son of Seedy Omar Bensouda a Moroccan trader who immigrated to the Gambia in 1910 (world war one). He became friends with Almami Jawara the father of former president Sir Dawda. He married Nanonding Jawara, daughter of Almami Jawara in Kuntaur, Niani and they were blessed with 6 children including Ahmed Bensouda, Talib's father. Ahmed later joined the government and rose to the ranks of Permanent Secretary in Finance. Another son, Talib Bensouda was the MP for Niani for 2 terms in the PPP Government. Seedy Bensouda another son is currently the alkalo of Kuntaur.

Talib's Mother Amie Ndoungou Drammeh is the daughter of Alagie Seihou Drammeh, and Aji Mariama Jammeh. Alagie Seihou Drammeh was born at No. 10 Dobson Street Banjul to a trader from Sabegi and later settled in Bakau. Mariama Jammeh was born and raised in Bakindik, Niumi, North Bank. Amie grew up in Bakau Sanchaba where her parents settled. Amie joined the former government as a lawyer in the Ministry of Justice and rose to the rank of Solicitor General. She later started her own law practice. She is currently Lead Counsel to the Janneh Commission of Inquiry.

### **Family life:**

Talib is Married to Salimatou Jallow, a financial Analyst and they have one child together Ahmed Tijan Bensouda. He has three brothers Seedy Omar (software engineer), Aziz (lawyer) and Abubakar Bensouda (property developer).

**Education:**

Talib attended Marina International School where he graduated in 2003. He began his international journey in 2003 in the city of Hamilton (ON), Canada where he completed his OSSD (college diploma) in 2004. He then moved to the city of Mississauga (ON) within the Greater Toronto Area where he enrolled in the University of Toronto earning his Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Communications Technology in 2007. He also simultaneously completed a degree in Digital Communications at the Sheridan Institute of Technology. Talib completed his Insurance Foundation Diploma from WAI (west African insurance institute) in 2012.

He also took the opportunity to study electives in the fields of sociology, political science and anthropology –“These courses broadened my horizons in regard to the larger world out there and made me understand how history has shaped our present day and how so many of our collective choices will lead to many potential futures”.

**Work History:**

While going to school Talib worked as a Maintenance Technician from 2006-2007 within the campus of the school. He also worked in stints as an Insurance Salesperson with Grey Power Insurance and later joined 1800-GOT-JUNK, a junk collection company as a Sales Lead in 2009 where he sold recycles to the Toronto municipal waste management company. In 2010 he joined Millennium Research Group as a Market Research Analyst where he analyzed medical equipment usage by hospitals in the USA and Canada.

Talib returned to the Gambia late in 2010 where he worked for a startup called Takaful Gambia limited an Islamic Insurance Company as a marketing manager. Talib was instrumental in making the concept of Islamic insurance well known in the Gambia. He later became Operations Director and Secretary to the board and resigned in 2013 to pursue his own business.

Talib is still a member of the risk committee on the board of Takaful Insurance.

**Entrepreneurship:****College Pro Painters – Partner Franchisee/Production Manager**

Talib is an entrepreneur at heart; at just age 19, while studying in Canada, Talib started painting to pay his bills and worked his way up to a partner franchisee at College Pro Painter, a seasonal painting business. He also doubled as the production manager (operation), hiring and managing 12 staff and 3 job site managers. At the close of 2 summers (10months), he oversaw the painting of over 150homes within the Greater Toronto Area.

### **RCUBED (reduce, reuse, recycle) – Owner/General Manager**

While working as a maintenance technician in the university of Toronto, Talib was privy to the mounting waste problem within the university and further more within the Mississauga Municipal Council. Talib discovered an opportunity in recyclables and convinced the University of Toronto and The Mississauga Municipal School district board to work with him to reduce the cost of waste disposal by finding a home for recyclables. Given the green light he formed RCUBED, wherein he was able to recycle several tonnes of school furniture and appliances by repairing and selling them.

### **Safaro Trading – General Manager/Owner**

While working in Takaful at their former Banjul Headquarters, Talib was in close proximity to the trading hub of the Gambia. This is when he realized the vast opportunity in trade. He decided to resign from his position in Takaful and began developing his concept of a successful trading business. Talib realized the benefit in owning one's brand (trademark). He then embarked on a journey of designing his own brands (naming them after family members) and bringing them to market. With the distinctive trading formula, with a little over 3 years in business Safaro has grown to 40 fulltime staff members and over 5 market-leading brands.

**General Business Philosophy** – Talib's business philosophy is the realization that human resources are the most valuable resource in a company. He therefore shuns the title of CEO and prefers the more modest and functional role of General Manager. He likes to be hands on and is proud to have worked in all units of the companies he setup. He believes in the concept of mutual benefit for all stakeholders and also believes in moderation of benefits to all.

“a successful enterprise is one in which all stakeholders benefit when the enterprise profits and lose when the enterprise makes a loss – this ties together the fate of all stakeholders and ensures they all have a connection with the companies welfare - in insurance it's called mutual guaranty”.

### **Politics, Charity, Volunteerism**

#### **Gambia Has Decided**

After 22 years of Jammeh rule, Talib frustrated by the lack of vision, lack of opportunity and the repressive nature of the Jammeh Regime. He supported the Campaign of then Candidate Adama Barrow representing the coalition. The euphoria that followed was quickly squashed by Jammehs announcement rejecting the result a week later. In frustration, Talib banded with fellow like-minded youth and became one of the founding members of The Gambia Has Decided Movement. In the cloud of uncertainty and fear of arrest that pervaded, the group forged ahead, using their skillsets and resources to mount pressure on Jammeh to step down. By the time Jammeh was able to infiltrate the group and force some members into exile the movement had spread and was in the hands of Gambians.

## **UDP for KMC**

Given the birth of the NewGambia, Talib decided to never again sit on the sidelines. He decided to help fund and provide assistance to aspiring NAM candidates from his party the UDP. All six of them won their elections.

## **GamSense**

Talib recently formed an NGO called Gamsense, which aspires to promote the concept of self-help amongst communities. The campaign has recently been engaged in Ramadan sugar donations to Gambians, installation of public taps in areas without water, repair of septic tanks in markets, provision of 100s of waste bins and repair of school toilets. Gamsense main focus is to inspire Gambians to fix their own problems by pooling their resources together.