The Country Gender Profile for Guinea Bissau is the product of strong collaboration between the Government of Guinea Bissau, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the UN Women-Bissau. The publication was prepared under the guidance of the Director of the Department of Quality Assurance and Results on the Bank side. Marc Kouakou and Yannis Arvanitis (from the AfDB), and Laetitia Kayisire (from UN Women) were co-task managers of this report.

We especially acknowledge the contributions of chief writer Kathleen Barnett (International consultant funded by the Portuguese Trust Fund). We would like to recognise the special role of Caterina Gomes Viegas from UNIOGBIS and Samba Tenem Camara national consultant.

For questions about this document, please contact:

Mr. Simon Mizrahi
Director ORQR, AfDB

Mr. Ndongo Mamadou Lamine
Resident Representative SNFO, AfDB

Mr. Koffi Marc Kouakou
Principal Statistician-Economist on Gender, ORQR.4, AfDB

Mr. Yannis Arvanitis
Principal Country Economist SNFO, AfDB

Ms. Kathleen Barnett
Consultant, AfDB

Ms. Marie Laetitia Kayisire
Program Coordinator UN Women-Bissau

Copyright © 2015 African Development Bank Group

All rights reserved. Edited November 2014 Published October 2015.

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
COUNTRY GENDER PROFILE: GUINEA-BISSAU

This document was prepared by the Quality Assurance and Results Department at the African Development Bank. Designations employed in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the African Development Bank concerning the legal status of any country or territory

African Development Bank
Immeuble CCIA - Avenue Jean-Paul II - 01 B.P. 1387 Abidjan 01, Côte d’Ivoire Téléphone: (225) 20 26 36 56 • Fax: (225) 20 21 31 00

www.afdb.org
CONTENTS

Preface vi
Executive summary 1
Guinea-Bissau gender profile: Quick facts 3

Introduction 5
   Gender in Guinea-Bissau: political, economic and social context 5
   Objectives and methodology for the Guinea-Bissau gender profile 5
   Structure of the gender profile for Guinea-Bissau 6

Gender in Guinea-Bissau: Political, structural and socio-demographic context 7
   Political context 7
   Government structure and political parties 8
   National gender machinery 8
   Gender and civil society 9
   Gender and socio-demographic characteristics 9
   Poverty 11
   Human development 11
   Family structures 12

Gender and the economy 13
   Overview 13
   Agriculture 13
   Fishing 14
   Support for women’s economic Roles 14

Gender and legal rights 17
   Existing Laws: Implementation, enforcement and public dissemination 17
   Gender-discriminatory laws: Legal reform 17
   Justice Services: Accessible and gender-sensitive 18
   Summary 18

Gender and social development 19
   Health 19
   Education 20
   Gender-specific abuses 20
   Summary 21

Potential for action on gender equality 23

Recommendations 25

Conclusion 29

Bibliography 31
List of abbreviations

AFDB  African Development Bank
AMAE  Association of Economically Active Women (Associação das Mulheres com Actividades Económicas)
ANP   National Assembly (Assembleia Nacional Popular)
APALCOF Association of Women Agricultural Producers and for Empowerment against Hunger (Associação das Produtoras Agrícolas e para a Luta contra o Fome)
CNI   National Islamic Council (Conselho Nacional Islâmico)
CNMT  National Council of Working Women (Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Trabalhadoras)
DENARP II National Strategy for Poverty Reduction II (Segundo Documento de Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza)
ECOWAS (CEDEAO) Economic Community of West African States (Communauté Économique des États de l’Afrique de l’Ouest)
EU    European Union
FGM   Female Genital Mutilation
GBV   Gender-based Violence
GTG   Gender Thematic Group of the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau
ILAP2 Household Survey for Poverty Evaluation (Inquérito Ligeiro para Avaliação da Pobreza), 2011
IMC   Institute for Women and Children (Instituto de Mulher e Criança)
INASA National Institute for Public Health (Instituto Nacional de Saúde Pública)
LGDH  Bissau-Guinean League for Human Rights (Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos)
MDGs  Millennium Development Goals
MICS4 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 4, Government of Guinea-Bissau and UNICEF, 2010
MMFCS Ministry of Women, Family and Social Cohesion (Ministério da Mulher, Família e Coesão Social; previously Ministério da Mulher, da Família e da Solidariedade Social)
PAIGC  African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde)
PNIEG National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity (Política Nacional para a Promoção da Igualdade e Equidade de Género), 2014
PPM   Women’s Political Platform (Plataforma Política das Mulheres)
PRS   Party for Social Renewal (Partido para a Renovação Social)
REMSECAO Rede Paz e Segurança para as Mulheres do Espaço da CEDEAO
RENLUV-GC National Network against GBV and Violence against Children (Rede Nacional de Luta contra Violência Baseada no Gênero e na Criança)
UNIOGBIS United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau
Preface

Background of the Gender Profile

In preparation for the renewal of discussions with the Government of Guinea-Bissau for the first time since the military coup of April 12, 2012, the African Development Bank (AfDB) country economist for Guinea-Bissau approached UN Women-Bissau and the two organizations formed a partnership with the Government to produce a country gender profile. The AfDB initiated the Gender Profile in the context of two events: the inauguration on June 23, 2014 of a new democratically-elected government in Guinea-Bissau and the return of international funding partners; and the publication in January 2014 of the Bank’s new Gender Strategy for 2014–2018.

For the government and civil society of Guinea-Bissau, the Gender Profile can help to set priorities for implementation of the country’s new national gender strategy, Política Nacional para a Promoção da Igualdade e Equidade de Género (PNIEG), with assistance from funding and technical partners. For the African Development Bank, the Gender Profile provides inputs to its country strategy and its dialogue with the government, and ensures that Bank interventions will support gender-inclusive and sustainable poverty reduction and economic growth. The Gender Profile will support the work of the United Nations System, in particular the Gender Thematic Group (GTG) with partners and stakeholders in advancing gender equity.

Acknowledgements

The Gender Profile technical team was composed of the AfDB Gender Division’s Statistician-Economist Koffi Marc Kouakou (team lead); the UN Women-Bissau Program Coordinator Marie Laetitia Kayisire guided by the UN Women Regional Office for West and Central Africa (WCARO); the AfDB country economist Yannis Arvanitis; AfDB staff in Bissau, Albino Jose Chemo Embalo and Alfredo Domingos Lopes; an international consultant funded with assistance from the Portuguese Trust Fund, Kathleen Barnett; and a local consultant funded by UN Women, Samba Tenem Camará. Special thanks and Acknowledgment to Ms. Barnett as Lead Author.

The key government partner for the mission was the Ministry of Women, Family and Social Cohesion (Ministério da Mulher, Família, e Coesão Social), headed by Minister Bilony Nhama Nantamba Nhassé. Minister Nhassé provided important inputs as well as official sponsorship for the mission, and presided at the final workshop for stakeholders.

The Gender Unit of the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) provided critical information and contacts in advance of, and during, the mission. The UNIOGBIS Gender Program Officer, Caterina Gomes Viegas worked tirelessly to facilitate meetings with key government and civil society stakeholders, personally accompanying the team in Bissau and arranging for accompaniment by other UNIOGBIS staff Bubacar Turé, Midana Gomes Indi and Roberto Fernandes for meetings in Bafatá, Contubuel and Gabú. Gilda Mendes provided expert translation services for the mission final workshop in Bissau, and Braimaq served as rapporteur.

Special thanks to all people met during the mission including Government members, representatives of civil society organizations, and national resource-persons on gender issues, and to the Portuguese Trust Fund and UN Women which funded the international and national consultants, respectively. The mission team benefitted from the generosity of all Bissau-Guineans and international development partners who shared their time, ideas, reports and recommendations.

The report was prepared by Koffi Marc Kouakou, Yannis Arvanitis, Kathleen Barnett, Marie Laetitia Kayisire and Samba Tenem Camará with comments and suggestions from the following AfDB staff: Gisela Geisler (Chief Gender Specialist); Alice Nabalamba (Chief Statistician); Zénéb Touré (Gender Specialist and Principal Civil Society Engagement Officer); Rachel Aron (Principal Social Development Specialist); Linet Miriti and Egidia Rukundo (Senior Gender Specialists).
Limitations of the Report

The mission could not interview all key people or cover all relevant issues due to the limits of time and resources, and the report suggests areas for further research. Due to the years of crisis in Guinea-Bissau, there are large data gaps and many relevant statistics were unavailable or out of date. The last reliable population surveys in Guinea-Bissau were the country demographic census in 2009; the UNDP-assisted census on poverty ILAP2 (Inquérito Ligeiro para Avaliação da Pobreza) in 2010; and the UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS4) on the situation of children and women also in 2010. In light of the severe negative socio-economic impact of the 2012 coup, new data are a priority for an accurate profile of current conditions of gender in Guinea-Bissau, and to monitor future progress on gender equitable growth.

Corrections of errors of fact, omissions, or mistaken interpretations are welcome.
Over 30 years of repeated military coups and political instability in Guinea-Bissau, and especially the consequences of the most recent coup in April 2012, have undermined socio-economic progress and the institutions needed for gender-equitable development. Conditions today for the majority of women as well as men in Guinea-Bissau are marked by poverty, lack of basic infrastructure, and absence of basic services of health, education and justice.

Against the background of government instability and crisis, women’s associations and civil society have worked to address women’s needs, and provided recommendations and advocacy on gender issues for the 2013-14 transition government, including the formulation of a National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity, PNIEG (Política Nacional para a Promoção da Igualdade e Equidade de Género). These organizations received critical support for their efforts from United Nations (UN) agencies which remained in the country after the coup as part of the UN Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), and also from the European Union and a few other partners after the withdrawal of most international donors.

The PNIEG finds that women and girls have been especially disadvantaged by the years of crisis since they are allocated by gender to a secondary status in all spheres of household, community and national life (p.12). They face gender-based restrictions on their access to scarce resources and to education, and the double burden of household work to care for and feed their families along with market work to contribute to family income. Additionally, girls and women in Guinea-Bissau face the gender-specific risk of maternal mortality, and gender-specific abuses such as domestic violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), and early/forced marriage (PNIEG, p. 57).

With a new government democratically elected in June 2014, strong civil society women’s organizations supported by committed international donors, and a national gender policy developed through a participatory process involving government and civil society, there is a unique opportunity to incorporate a gender perspective in the new policies and priorities.

Guinea-Bissau women’s groups have detailed knowledge and expertise in specific gender areas and have produced many useful reports and recommendations on specific issues, as well as providing substantial inputs to the PNIEG and the Second National Strategy for Poverty Reduction, DENARP II (Segundo Documento de Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza, 2011). Civil society and government reports were an invaluable resource for the Gender Profile.

Interviews with Bissau-Guinean women and women’s associations, government officials, other civil society groups, and international donors, and the review of documents and reports, indicate that women have many needs, as is true for women in other low-income countries of Africa and elsewhere, including: income, opportunity, legal rights, literacy and education, reproductive and maternal health, freedom from violence and harmful traditional practices, and changes in patriarchal norms and customs. The new government is committed to gender equality but it faces daunting development challenges in every sector, weak institutions, and lack of resources. With limited government resources – financial, institutional and human capital/personnel – it is essential to prioritize among the many gender needs.

This Gender Profile suggests that the priority should be to target actions which can bring the greatest benefit to the largest number of poor women, and to choose a few areas where investments can produce an immediate benefit as well as a spillover effect on other areas of need. Based on interviews with stakeholders in Bissau and a review of available data and reports, the following are three sector priorities and two overarching priorities recommended to advance gender equitable development in Guinea-Bissau.

---

1. It is noted that at the time of publishing, the government’s new overall strategic document is the Strategic and operational plan « Terra Ranka », presented to the international community at the end of March 2015. This new strategic document is a synthesis of the DENARP II and the new government’s medium-term priorities. With this in mind, it should be noted that (i) the DENARP II is still technically valid as the “Terra Ranka” vision gives overarching priorities based on the DENARP II, and (ii) the analysis here presented is aligned with the « Terra Ranka » plan.
Sector priorities

Economic: Empower women’s economic roles and productivity

- Create a special fund for loans and micro-credit for women agricultural workers and small-business owners;
- Provide extension services to women’s cooperatives, associations and small/medium-businesses, and technical training schools for both girls and boys in rural areas;
- Ensure basic infrastructure - rural roads, water, sanitation and electricity - to increase efficiencies and productivity of women’s market and domestic work.

Legal: Ensure women’s human and legal rights

- Implement a new Land Law (Lei da Terra) ensuring women’s property rights;
- Implement, disseminate and enforce existing laws against domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM);
- Establish locally accessible justice services for women, with gender training for local police and justice officials, to strengthen civil law over traditional/customary law.

Social: Invest in girls’ and women’s human capital

- Expand efforts to reduce maternal mortality, and use these to also educate both women and men about laws against FGM and GBV;
- Establish locally accessible adult literacy programs for women, especially in rural areas;
- Improve rural access to quality primary and secondary education with priority efforts to increase girls’ school enrolment and completion rates.

Priorities

- Ensure participation of women in the design, implementation, oversight and management of policies and programs through recruitment, hiring and promotion policies in all government agencies and the private sector, and quotas for party electoral lists.
- Ensure nationwide knowledge and awareness of women’s human and legal rights and the importance of gender equality to Guinea-Bissau’s social and economic development through a national education campaign with messages tailored to women, men, girls and boys.

Once the government determines its gender priorities and identifies the needed funding, it can negotiate with the African Development Bank, UN Women, and other donor partners to ensure that all development assistance can support gender-equitable growth in Guinea-Bissau.
Guinea-Bissau gender profile: Quick facts

The data below are for the latest years available, as indicated. Given the severe economic contraction in Guinea-Bissau since the April 12, 2012 coup, it is likely that many of the socio-economic indicators have worsened.

Box 1: Quick Facts

- **Population (2014 est.):** 1.7 million; 50.3% women; 49.7% men
- **Share of population (1/2 women) outside capital city of Bissau:** 76% b)
- **Share of rural population (1/2 women) below poverty line (2010):** 75.6% c)
- **Share of women engaged in agricultural work:** 80% d)
- **Mean years of schooling women and men (2001–12):** 1.4 women; 3.4 men
e)
- **Illiteracy women and men (2012 est.):** 58% women; 31% men
e)
- **Mean years of schooling women and men (2001–12):** 55.8 yrs. women; 52.8 yrs. men c)
- **Experience of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C):** 50% of women aged 15-49 e)
- **Fertility rate (2012):** 5.0 g)
- **Maternal Mortality Rate (2010):** 790 per 100,000 live births h)
- **Risk of Maternal Mortality:** 1 in 25 women h)
- **Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (2010):** 14% c)
- **HIV/AIDS prevalence among pregnant women:** 5% i)
- **Human Development Index rating (2013):** 177 out of 187 countries e)

**Sources:**

- a. African Development Bank, Guinea-Bissau country statistics
- b. Guinea-Bissau population census 2009
- c. World Bank, *World Development Indicators* Guinea-Bissau
- e. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2014*
Introduction

Gender in Guinea-Bissau: political, economic and social context

Guinea-Bissau has had more than 30 years of military coups, attempted coups, and political assassinations in repeated struggles between military and political elites, resulting in poverty and food insecurity, lack of basic infrastructure, absence of government services, and extremely weak state institutions and capacity. Guinea-Bissau is currently one of the least-developed countries in Africa, despite natural resources and a favorable climate and location.

These negative socio-economic conditions fall more heavily on women than on men because of gender bias. Their gender-specific triple roles in market labor, household labor, and reproductive labor are more onerous, and they are the last to access scarce resources. Traditional gender discrimination in all spheres of life - social, economic and political - and gender-specific abuses such as gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, and early/forced marriage, have persisted without a viable state committed to the rule of law and human rights.

With a new democratically elected government in June 2014 and strong civil society women's organizations supported by committed international donors, there is an opportunity to incorporate a gender perspective in new policies and priorities. The roles of women since the coup of April 2012 highlight the potential for women's contributions to peace, stability, and socio-economic growth under the new government.

The years of coups and counter-coups in Guinea-Bissau, including the last one, reflected struggles for power in and between the military and political elites which, due to gender inequities, were male. In contrast, women in Guinea-Bissau are “viewed as more able to resolve conflict (than men)...and as peace-brokers” (Boiro, 2014, p.22). A United Nations Peacebuilding Commission report in March 2014 stressed the value to the country of “women's ability to bring together different ethnic groups and religious denominations and work for common agendas that are strategic to peacebuilding efforts” (p.4).

Women’s organizations provided services, produced reports and ensured a participatory process for drafting of legislation and the formulation of a major new national gender strategy, the National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity, PNIEG (Política Nacional para a Promoção da Igualdade e Equidade de Género) finalized in 2014. Women’s groups also worked to disseminate information about the new elections of April/May 2014, ensuring a voter turnout of both women and men of almost 90% according to the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and served as election monitors.

Women expanded their income-producing efforts in agriculture, horticulture, fish-vending, market-selling, small trade, and the formation of small and medium-businesses in order to sustain their families, becoming principal breadwinners for many households as men lost formal sector jobs and/or their salaries went unpaid.

Objectives and methodology for the Guinea-Bissau gender profile

The objectives of the Gender Profile, as defined in the Terms of Reference were to perform the following tasks, in close collaboration with UN Women:

- “Identify gender inequalities, constraints, progress and challenges in all sectors, and recommend strategies in key areas to advance gender equality;
- Provide inputs for the new African Development Bank (AfDB) country strategy for Guinea-Bissau, as well as the design and implementation of its projects, in order to ensure that its development investments have a gender-equitable impact;
- Serve as the basis for discussion by the AfDB with the Guinea-Bissau government and other development partners about specific gender policies and programs that are needed in order to advance women's ability to contribute to, and benefit from, stable and sustainable development in Guinea-Bissau.”
Structure of the gender profile for Guinea-Bissau

The following chapters provide information and data to create a gender profile of Guinea-Bissau. Chapter 2 provides background on the country’s political history, government structure, and socio-economic conditions with gender implications; Chapter 3 provides a gender perspective on the country’s economy; Chapter 4 reviews gender inequities in legal rights and access to justice; and Chapter 5 discusses gender and social development indicators. Chapter 6 assesses the opportunities and risks for progress on gender equality in Guinea-Bissau, and Chapter 7 provides priority recommendations. Chapter 8 contains the conclusion of the report.
Gender in Guinea-Bissau: Political, structural and socio-demographic context

The many years of military coups and conflicts in Guinea-Bissau, most recently in April 2012, and the consequent failure of government institutions are the background for the country’s current gender conditions. Peace, stability and representative government are essential for progress on gender equality in Guinea-Bissau. With the inauguration of a democratically-elected multi-party government in June 2014, the basic conditions may finally have been met, and strong Bissau-Guinean women leaders and organizations which remained active during the absence of government institutions have ensured that the new government is publically committed to gender equality. It will be essential for the government and civil society to agree on key gender priorities and monitor progress, with support from technical and funding partners.

Political context

From 1962-1974, Guinea-Bissau fought a long and bitter independence battle against Portugal, led by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC). Many women participated as combatants and as PAIGC leaders and in 1966 the party formed a Women’s Commission and began mobilizing women on an equal basis with men. The PAIGC took early positions in support of women’s rights and gender equality and in opposition to female genital mutilation (FGM) even though the population at the time was even more traditional than today, with strongly defined sex roles. After independence in 1974, various PAIGC women leaders held positions in the National Assembly and government.

However, struggles for economic and political power within the PAIGC and between the military and the PAIGC led to repeated military coups and government fragility, stalling socio-economic development as well as progress on gender equality. In 1980 a military coup led by João Bernardo (Nino) Vieira ousted the country’s first president Luis Cabral, both of the PAIGC, followed by several unsuccessful military attempts to unseat Vieira. In 1995 the country held its first free elections and Vieira was elected president. In 1998, the military again rebelled against Vieira, launching a full-scale civil war which destroyed much of the already weak economic and social infrastructure. New elections in 1999 ended the PAIGC hegemony and brought the Party for Social Renewal (PRS) to power, but in 2003 the military acted again to depose the PRS government. With new elections in 2005, Nino Vieira returned from exile to run as an independent and won the presidency in the second round of voting.

From 2005-09 there was a brief period of peace, donor assistance resumed, and the country experienced stability and some economic and social progress which benefitted women as well as men. GDP grew by 3.2% in 2008 and 3% in 2009. However, underlying political-military tensions continued and in March 2009, elements of the military assassinated Vieira and in April 2010 forcibly removed the Prime Minister, Carlos Gomes Jr. (PAIGC). With renewed promises of democratic elections, some donors and international organizations remained in the country, permitting another brief period of stability. GDP grew 3.5% in 2010 and 5.3% in 2011. Then on April 12, 2012, the military again staged a coup, halting the second round of elections to prevent the projected winner, ex-Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Jr., from becoming...
Government structure and political parties

Strong and stable government institutions are essential to peace and stability and provide the mechanisms for realization of national and international commitments to human rights and gender equality. Through its internal policies of hiring and promotion of women at all levels, the government can also show its commitment to gender equality. The structure of the Guinea-Bissau government, and the representation of women in each branch, are described in Annex 1.

In the new government there are 16 Ministers including five women who head the Ministries of Defense, Education, Justice, Public Health, and Women, Family and Social Cohesion. There are 15 Secretaries of State one of whom is a woman, the Secretary for Budget and Fiscal Affairs. Bissau-Guinean women activists expressed sharp dissatisfaction that the share of women ministers was not closer to 50%, especially after the significant role that women’s groups played in ensuring the high voter turnout and in monitoring the polls. Fourteen women were elected to the new National Assembly, out of 102 seats. Recently, the Justice Minister announced the appointment of a woman as head of the Judicial Police, and two of the nine recently appointed regional governors are women. The President announced in October 2014 the creation of a new position of Assistant to the President for Human Rights and Gender, to which he appointed Indira Cabral, the daughter of Amílcar Cabral.

There are two principal political parties in Guinea-Bissau: the PAIGC (Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) with 52 seats in the National Assembly; and the PRS (Party for Social Renewal) with 41 seats. There are four smaller parties: the PCD (Democratic Convergence Party); PRD (New Democracy Party); PRD (Republican Party for Independence and Development); and UM (Union for Change). Candidates are elected from party lists. Women interviewed said that a candidate’s position on the list is dependent on the ability to gain support from other party members through use of one’s personal wealth and power, so women - who generally have neither of these - are disadvantaged in their ability to run for office. They said that in the recent elections, qualified women candidates were either not on the party lists or were at the very bottom as alternates, and stressed that a gender quota requirement would help to address this issue.

Women representation at the sub-national level is less significant than at national level. This is partly due to the fact that decentralization is limited in the country. For instance, municipal elections have not taken place and are constantly being postponed since they were first planned in 1994. This leaves a political vacuum filled in by local/traditional power structures which tend to be male dominated. At the same time, state-appointed governors head the country’s nine regions, of which two are women.

National gender machinery

The 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) Platform for Action called for all governments to create a “national machinery” as the central policy-coordinating unit for the advancement of women. In Guinea-Bissau, the Institute for Women and Children, IMC (Instituto da Mulher e Criança) is the lead agency for government actions to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment (DENARPII, 2011, p.105, translation by the author), with oversight and guidance from the Ministry of Women, Family and Social Cohesion.

The critical government documents guiding the gender agenda in Guinea-Bissau are the national gender policy PNIEG (Política Nacional para a Promoção da Igualdade e Equidade de Género 2012–2015) and the poverty strategy DENARP II (Segundo Documento de Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza) in which gender is integrated. With the government in the process of consolidating its mandate and new discussions with international technical and funding partners, the responsibility and resources for implementation of gender commitments remain to be clarified.
Gender and civil society

There is a strong network of non-governmental organizations involved in women's issues, as well as other civil society organizations working on human rights and the environment, who continued their work during the crisis years with support principally from UNIOGBIS and the European Union.

Examples of organizations working on gender issues in Guinea-Bissau are the following: Plataforma Política das Mulheres (PPM); Rede Paz e Segurança para as Mulheres do Espaço da CEDEAO (REMSECAO); Rede Nacional de Luta contra Violência Baseada no Gênero e na Criança (RENLUV); Associação das Mulheres com Actividades Económicas (AMAE); Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Trabalhadoras (CNMT); Plataforma de Organização de Sociedade Civil (Bafatá); Intervenção Feminina (Gabú); Associação das Produtores Agrícolas e para a Luta Contra o Fome (APALCOF, Contubuel); Comite Nacional para o Abandono das Práticas Nefastas (CNPN); Djinopi; Sining Mira Nassiquê; and Voz di Paz. There are also associations for specific areas of women's work such as women fish-vendors, who are linked as members of the umbrella association of economically active women AMAE.

The Women's Political Platform, PPM (Plataforma Política das Mulheres) was created in 2008 and has acted since then as the key mechanism for dissemination of information and of advocacy for women's political participation without restriction of political party. The PPM has 11 affiliated member organizations, is a focal point of attention by all political parties, and has been essential to the success of actions on women’s rights.

Other civil society organizations such as the Bissau-Guinean League for Human Rights, LGDH (Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos) and Tiniguena have strong gender components in their work. There are also business and professional organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Association of Women Jurists, and religious organizations such as National Islamic Council.

International organizations such as the UN agencies of the UNIOGBIS Gender Thematic Group and the European Union continued to provide critical support to civil society organizations working on women’s issues after the 2012 coup caused the withdrawal of official donors. The partners are: the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, the European Union, the World Food Program (WFP) as well as the African Development Bank and the support focus mostly on economic empowerment (mostly through agriculture), access to basic social services (including water & sanitation), health and gender based right (including political empowerment through projects around electoral monitoring & rights).

Gender and socio-demographic characteristics

Key socio-demographic characteristics in Guinea-Bissau such as region of residence, ethnic groups, languages and religions are important to an understanding of women's lives and gender conditions, especially in the context of the many years of lack of a viable centralized state. The following is a brief description of the gender relevance of these characteristics.

Regional structure

According to the African Development Bank, the estimated population for 2014 is 1.7 million of which 50.3% are women. There are significant socio-economic differences and conditions for women among the regions and especially between the regions outside of Bissau and the capital. Box 1 below shows Guinea-Bissau’s regional structure. According to the 2009 census, approximately ¾ of the population (74%) live outside of the capital of Bissau which is an autonomous sector. The four largest regions by area as well as population are Bafatá and Gabú in the East, and Oio and Cacheu in the North, each with 13-15% of the total population/women. The other regions - Biombo in the North and Tombali, Quinara and Bolama in the South – each have 2-6% of the population/women.

Sixty percent of the population/women are considered rural and 40% urban (2009 census) but statistics on conditions for women by rural-urban categories need to be interpreted carefully since 26 percentage points of the 40% urban share are attributable to Bissau, which has a population of 400,000. The next largest city has a population of 23,000 (Bafatá, the capital of Bafatá region), and other cities range from 2,000 -7,000. A deeper analysis of rural-urban conditions for women would be warranted.

Religions

As is true around the world, gender roles in Guinea-Bissau are strongly influenced by religious beliefs. Animism was the original religion in the territory of Guinea-Bissau and its spiritual influences and beliefs remain strong today, both as the stated religion of many (40%) and through its influence on the two other religions with which people identify: Islam (50%) and Christianity (10%, primarily Catholic). Some Bissau-Guinean men as well as women use religious beliefs to justify the inferior status of women, including
acceptance of violence against women and the harmful practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). The National Committee to End Harmful Traditional Practices, CNPN (Comité Nacional para o Abandono de Práticas Nefastas) found that many Muslims who support the practice of FGM justify it as a requirement of Islam (CNPN, 2010, p.12). The Guinea-Bissau National Islamic Council, however, found no Islamic requirement for FGM, issued a “fatwa” against the practice, and was a key supporter of the 2011 law banning it (CNPN, 2010, p.12). According to mission interviews, there is a collaborative effort of Muslim and Christian leaders to disseminate information in rural areas about the lack of religious justification for FGM and the need to end this harmful practice.

**Ethnic groups & languages**

With the majority of Bissau-Guineans and of women living a rural, agricultural lifestyle without education or services, ethnic group traditions have an especially strong hold, and all ethnic groups have traditional beliefs and practices that restrict women’s roles and rights. The principal ethnic groups are Balanta, Fula, Mandinga, Manjaco and Papel. The Bijagó are a sub-group of Fula who are located in the Bijagos Archipelago in the Bolama region and have a uniquely matrilineal structure. The Balanta are the largest single ethnic group (30%) primarily located in the south and coastal regions. The Balanta have an acephalous political tradition without political leaders or hierarchies and they were strong resisters to Portuguese colonization, joining the PAIGC and the liberation army in large numbers. They have remained dominant in the armed forces although many now support the country’s second party, the Party for Social Renewal, PRS (Partido para a Renovação Social). The Fula and sub-groups (30%) and Mandinga (13%) make up the Moslem majority of the country located primarily in the north and northeast, and were traditionally the most politically centralized. The Manjaco (14%) live in the central and northern coastal regions, and the Papel (7%) in the south and coastal regions.

Most Guinea-Bissau ethnic groups maintain a traditional initiation ceremony of “fanado” which has involved circumcision of boys and female genital mutilation (FGM) of girls. Activist women’s organizations have long worked to change the custom for girls so that it is done without FGM and in 2011 they achieved passage of a law banning the practice, but according to mission interviews, the law has not been disseminated or enforced. Other harmful traditional practices include polygamy, early marriage of young girls, and forced marriages in the form of levirate – marriage of a widow to a brother of her deceased husband; or sororate – marriage of a deceased woman’s sister to the surviving husband/widower.

On the positive side, a unifying factor across all ethnic groups and among women as well as men is a strong

---

3. As of the time of writing, no cases of FGM has been brought for.In January 2015, Bissau-Guinean judicial police announced the arrest of 8 persons in the Bafata region on charges of FGM. http://jornaldigital.com/noticias.php?noticia=44443
Increasing poverty and malnutrition increased. A 2013 poverty and malnutrition increased. A 2013 report by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Program (WFP) and Plan International on food security found that 58% of the population of the country, and the majority of the population, are concentrated. The FAO, WFP and Plan International 2013 report characterized the entire region of Oio as an area of “urgency” due to severe food insecurity, and the regions of Bafatá, Quinhara, Cacheu and Biombo as areas of “crisis”. The remaining three regions – Gabú, Tombali and Bolama - were characterized as “under pressure.” Although both women and men suffer from the effects of poverty, gender bias means that men control whatever scarce resources are available and women’s income-producing labor becomes more arduous and less productive. Women’s gender-specific roles are also more burdensome under poverty: domestic labor, which keeps women from income-producing activities and girls from school; and women’s reproductive roles, for which poverty increases risks of malnutrition, illness and maternal mortality. Young girls are also at greater risk of early/forced marriage to relieve family economic burdens. According to the PNIEG, “Throughout the country, women bear the responsibility for the care of the household and the family and 89% of their households are in precarious condition, 80% rely on candles for light, 96% cook with wood or charcoal, 91% get their water from sources outside the house, and 65% use latrines in precarious condition. These conditions signify more hours of work for women and more sacrifices by wives and mothers” (p.25, translation by the author).

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report 2014 estimates that 58% of the Guinea-Bissau population are living in severe multi-dimensional poverty, and 49% live on less than US$1.25 per day. All regions are poor and lack resources, but poverty is especially marked in the northern regions where the majority of the population, and the majority of women, are concentrated. The FAO, WFP and Plan International 2013 report characterized the entire region of Oio as an area of “urgency” due to severe food insecurity, and the regions of Bafatá, Quinhara, Cacheu and Biombo as areas of “crisis”. The remaining three regions – Gabú, Tombali and Bolama - were characterized as “under pressure.”

Although both women and men suffer from the effects of poverty, gender bias means that men control whatever scarce resources are available and women’s income-producing labor becomes more arduous and less productive. Women’s gender-specific roles are also more burdensome under poverty: domestic labor, which keeps women from income-producing activities and girls from school; and women’s reproductive roles, for which poverty increases risks of malnutrition, illness and maternal mortality. Young girls are also at greater risk of early/forced marriage to relieve family economic burdens. According to the PNIEG, “Throughout the country, women bear the responsibility for the care of the household and the family and 89% of their households are in precarious condition, 80% rely on candles for light, 96% cook with wood or charcoal, 91% get their water from sources outside the house, and 65% use latrines in precarious condition. These conditions signify more hours of work for women and more sacrifices by wives and mothers” (p.25, translation by the author).

Human development

The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) 2014 ranks Guinea-Bissau as 177th out of 187 countries. The components of the index are life expectancy, mean years of schooling, and gross national income per capita (not disaggregated by sex). Life expectancy at birth (2013) in Guinea-Bissau is 54.3 years, compared to 61 in Senegal. Mean years of schooling (2012) are 2.3 based on MICS4 data; and expected years of schooling are 9.0. Gross national income (GNI) per capita is US$ 1,090 (2013).
Family structures

According to the country’s laws (article 1674 of the civil code), family structure is based on a patriarchal model, whereby the husband is the head of the household and can in effect ‘represent’ the wife in public life. This power is extended over economic activities as exemplified by article 1686 of the civil code which impedes the wife from engaging in trading activities without the husband’s consent. To a large extent, such provisions are contradictory to the constitutional provisions as detailed in section IV. Traditions and customary laws also greatly influence family structures. In some ethnic groups customary laws do not allow women from inheriting property, which is rather passed on to a male heir. Similarly, some groups practice widow inheritance, forcing the widowed women to marry a male relative of the deceased husband. Regarding polygamy, 2010 MICS data show that almost half of women in unions are de facto in polygamous marriages.
Gender and the economy

Overview

A key characteristic of gender roles in the economy of Guinea-Bissau is the high percentage of women engaged in economic activity. The ILAP2 2010 survey on poverty showed that of household members over age 15, approximately 80% of women were economically active (79% in Bissau and 81% in regions outside Bissau), and 90% of men. Women were heads of 31% of households surveyed in Bissau, and 20% of households surveyed in the other regions (ILAP2 Apresentação Powerpoint, 2011, Slide 3, Quadro 1.9).

The economy of Guinea-Bissau is based on rural agriculture by small farmers – women and men - with cashew as the key crop involving 80% of the country’s labor force and providing 90% of exports, as well as the main source of household income (World Bank and other sources, 2014). Work in the fields is oftentimes wearisome and is undertaken in difficult conditions.

A very small portion of the total labor force, estimated at about 10 percent and primarily male, are salaried employees in the private or public sector according to interviews with the Chamber of Commerce. The few women who are educated hold government positions, own small businesses, work in hotels or restaurants, head local non-profit organizations; or work for international development technical or funding partners.

The private sector is composed of a few finance, trade, transport and service enterprises, primarily in Bissau. Industrial production is small-scale and largely limited to the processing of agricultural products, with men as owners and managers and women at the bottom of the value chain. Tourism is also small and currently focused on sport fishing in the Bijagós archipelago although there is potential for nature tourism given the country’s as yet unspoiled reserves and parks classified as national assets. The government has applied to UNESCO to designate the Bijagós arquipelago as a World Heritage site which could spur tourism, and it recently announced a plan to focus on biodiversity development (Novas da Guiné-Bissau, 19 October 2014). If this sector is developed with a gender perspective, it could add important opportunities for women.

The public sector is composed of government employment in the executive, legislative or judicial branches, with principal jobs in the military or as public school teachers. The PNIEG finds that men hold 69% of government positions and are over-represented in key ministries related to women such as Agriculture and Education, where women hold just 14% and 26% of positions, respectively (p.32).

According to interviews, the informal sector grew substantially during the 2012-14 economic crisis, as more and more women engaged in market activities to sustain their households. Although rigorous data are lacking, the informal sector of the economy is very large, with women in both Bissau and the regions engaged in small-scale trade, market sales, and services. The PNIEG estimates that women are 51.6% of those engaged in the informal sector, and that 52.3% of all working women, and 62.2% of women heads of households, are engaged in informal sector activities (p.32). Women are also involved in cross-border trade with Guinea and Senegal, and Buckner (2013) provides evidence of women’s sex work both locally and in resorts of the neighboring Casamance region of Senegal. A full analysis of women’s roles in the informal sector merits further research, in particular regarding the degree of hardship induced by the type of work undertaken in the informal sector combined with the pressures linked to their household duties.

The sections below discuss Guinea-Bissau’s principal economic activities of agriculture and fishing, respectively, and gender roles in each activity.

Agriculture

Guinea-Bissau has a favorable climate, good land, and year-round crops, principally cashew, rice and horticulture. Cashew is grown for export, and rice and horticulture crops (vegetables and fruit) are grown for consumption and market sales. Despite the importance of agriculture to the economy, the majority of farmers – especially women – work at primitive levels, with little or no tools, equipment, training, access to water or decent roads. Women farmers are especially disadvantaged since men control decisions over land and resources and allocate these first to their own work.
Cashew is key to Guinea-Bissau’s economy. The crop represents the main source of labor and income of Bissau-Guinean households, and the main share of national GDP. As in many sectors, women’s roles are concentrated at the low end of the value chain. Farming and harvesting of the cashew nuts is done largely by women on land owned by their husbands or fathers during the peak cashew season of March to May. Women also work at peeling and sorting nuts (Dasanayake, 2011). The nuts are sold by male farmers to a trader, exporter or processor (also male), or stored for later sale or exchange for family income and consumption items as decided by men. The cashew stem or fruit (“apple”) is also processed on a very small scale (less than 1%) into products such as wine, juice, jams and jelly, almost entirely by women. The more valued cashew nut is viewed as belonging to men, and the lower valued fruit to women. The Chair of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission’s Guinea-Bissau Country Specific Configuration reported after his country visit that “economic empowerment of women, who represent over 80% of the work force in cashew nuts harvesting is essential” (2014a).

Rice is the country’s second crop and the base of household consumption, and is farmed by both women and men. Rice farming is labor intensive and increasingly families have converted fields to the low-labor-intensive cashew crop, trading cashews for rice rather than producing it, with the result that families often do not have enough rice throughout the year.

So far this year, the cashew crop is doing well, with exports reaching 70,000 tons by July 2014 as reported by Reuters Africa (2014), but there is economic and food security risk in the continued reliance on cashew. The government is committed to increasing cashew commodity transformation in order to create and retain added-value, and donors such as the World Bank are investing in aid to diversify and strengthen the agricultural sector (World Bank, 2014a). If this is done with a gender perspective, it could provide opportunities for women to advance in the value chain, with greater economic returns for women’s work.

**Fishing**

Guinea-Bissau has highly productive fishing waters, and fish and other seafood are a second principal export. Fishing is also the second leading occupation after agriculture although the civil conflict and political instability since 2012 reduced fishing activity and increased illegal fishing and corruption, cutting household income as well as employment. It is an important source of economic activity for women in Bissau who work cleaning and selling fish. Women also do some small fishing for shellfish. Fish-vending women, like women in other sectors, work long hours without infrastructure support to make the labor more productive and less onerous, such as roads and transport to take goods to other markets, or cooling machinery for storage, and they are at the bottom of the value chain.

The government receives revenues from selling commercial fishing licenses and from payments for access agreements. In 2006 revenues from the commercial fishing sectors ($19 million) were almost half of total own state income ($47 million). The World Bank estimated that well-managed commercial fisheries in Guinea-Bissau’s could provide fish catches with an annual gross value of production of $191 million, yielding potential annual public revenues of almost $30 million. In a gender-inclusive approach is taken, the expansion of the fishing sector could provide important new opportunities for women as well as men.

**Support for women’s economic Roles**

Among interviews for the Gender Profile, the mission team spoke with individuals and associations of women engaged in small businesses, agriculture and horticulture, fish-vending, market sales, and informal sector activities in Bissau, Bafatá, Contubuel and Gabú. When asked about gender conditions and problems and what were the most important issues, women in all locations highlighted a priority need for support for their economic roles and labor productivity. They described their hard work and difficult conditions and the basic help they need to make their work efforts more efficient, productive and profitable. They named three key areas of need: access to financing; extension services and training to improve production and sales; and provision of basic infrastructure (rural roads, water, sanitation, electricity) to ease time burdens and increase efficiencies of market work and domestic work as well. The three areas are discussed in the sections below: Access to Financing; Extension Services and Training, and Infrastructure. It should be noted that all of the women interviewed were in some form of work associations or cooperatives, and encouragement of this form of organization should be a fundamental aspect of support for women’s economic empowerment.

**Access to financing**

According to the National Program for Investment in Agriculture, PNIA (Programa Nacional de Investimento Agrícola), there is no formal financing mechanism from banking institutions for the agricultural sector (p.70). Financing for small farmers is available in a dispersed and disorganized way through some international
projects or organizations which operate in rural areas, with very low impact. On the rare occasions that credit is available through financial mechanisms, the conditions, guarantees and interest rates are prohibitive. The PNIA called for the creation of a network of agricultural credit and training on good management of credit. Women agricultural and horticultural workers interviewed during the mission in Bafatá, Contubuel and Gabú are poor and illiterate but they have achieved economic gains and a sense of empowerment through their associations or cooperatives. They considered the creation of a microcredit fund for women their most basic need, as did women vendors and small business owners in Bissau.

**Extension services, and training**

A second priority defined by women in interviews and discussion groups in regions outside Bissau is for agricultural extension services to provide training and supplies to improve efficiencies and productivity. They said that with training as well as equipment and tools, women’s labor could be much more productive.

**Infrastructure**

The average Bissau-Guinean woman works long hours in agricultural or other market work, is responsible for cooking and domestic tasks for her household, and bears on average five children (6.8 in rural areas, according to UNICEF country statistics) for whom she cares - all without access to basic infrastructure of water, sanitation, electricity or transport to save time, ease physical burdens, and increase productivity. Seventy-five percent of households do not have on-site drinking water, and women over 15 years old typically spend at least 30 minutes per day to get water, according to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS4). Only 18% of the population has improved sanitation facilities for human waste, and in rural areas it was only 3%. The ILAP 2 survey found that a majority of Bissau-Guinean households (65%) used candles for light at night, and rural roads are often almost impassable. Women interviewed especially stressed the need for accessible water for horticultural gardening, and for roads to connect rural areas with market towns.

**Summary**

Investment in the three areas above to support women’s economic roles: financing, extension services, and infrastructure, especially in rural areas, can have a triple effect of improving productivity and household income and reducing poverty, increasing women’s economic empowerment, and adding to the country’s social and economic development. Programs should encourage and strengthen women’s work associations and cooperatives. The results of a previous project to support women’s work, “Quick and Multi-level Impact for Women’s Economic Empowerment and Working Conditions in Guinea-Bissau,” funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund and coordinated by UN Women-Bissau with implementation by FAO and UNICEF and local partners AMAE and CNMT, can provide guidelines for future programs.

All investments should be undertaken with a participatory approach that consults with women’s associations and cooperatives as policies and programs are being designed, to ensure that women contribute to and benefit from the initiative. Women fish-vendors in Bissau cited an example of a project intended to improve their conditions of work but designed and implemented without their consultation or inputs, which in the end did not meet their needs. It is also important to hire, recruit, mentor and train women to design, implement and manage outreach policies and programs.
Gender and legal rights

In Guinea-Bissau, the Constitution of 1984 in Articles 24 and 25 states that “all citizens are equal before the law, enjoy the same rights and are subject to the same duties, without distinction of race, sex, social, intellectual or cultural level, religious belief or philosophical conviction;” and, “a man and a woman are equal before the law, in all domains of political, economic, social and cultural life” (Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos LGDH, 2013, p.24; translation by the author.) As shown in Annex 2, Guinea-Bissau is also a signatory to key international and regional conventions on gender equality.

According to the Guinea-Bissau League for Human Rights (LGDH), the Constitutional provisions, along with the country’s commitments to international and regional conventions, “convey a formal commitment to the principle of gender equality, with the consequent obligation to adopt measures to protect women’s rights” (p.24). However, despite formal commitments to women’s equality under the law, the LGDH finds in its 2013 report “Relatório sobre a Situação dos Direitos Humanos na Guiné-Bissau 2010/2012” (Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Guinea-Bissau 2010/2012) that: “In practice, the human rights of (Bissau-Guinean) women are violated across the board... Basic rights and judicial support have always been denied to women and continue to be so in all aspects of Bissau-Guinean society, namely in access to education, health, justice services, inheritance, land, etc.” (p.24, translation by the author.)

A review of documents and interviews with stakeholders suggest three key problems with regard to ensuring women’s legal rights: 1) there are existing laws that provide guarantees of rights and protection but which are not implemented, disseminated or enforced; 2) there are legal gaps which require new laws or revision of existing ones; 3) there is a lack of judicial presence and gender-sensitive services at the local level which are needed for women to exercise their rights. The following three sections discuss these issues.

Gender-discriminatory laws: Legal reform

According to interviews, many laws in Guinea-Bissau date to the Portuguese colonial era and do not reflect current realities, including the goal of gender equality. An especially important area for reform is legal authority for women to own and inherit land and other assets in their own names. According to the PNIEG, the existing Land Law (Lei da Terra) guarantees the right to use of land without discrimination but in fact, among all ethnic groups in the country, land is controlled and managed by men – landowners, elders or family heads. Women farmers who are the primary cashew labor force and also farm rice and horticulture for family consumption and market sales work on land that is allocated to them for use by male relatives. If a woman’s husband or father dies, she has no right to inherit family property (PNIEG, 2014, p.29). All other factors of production – credit, training, equipment and resources – are also allocated to women by decisions...
of men. Thus women are constrained in their ability to increase their productivity.

The government is in the process of drafting, with the participation of civil society, a new Land Law with provisions to ensure women’s property rights. Work on the new legislation has been supported by UN agencies, principally UN Women and FAO, through the United Nations Peacebuilding Gender Promotion Initiative, according to UN Women-Bissau.

Laws relating to age of marriage also need reform. The legal age for marriage is 18, but child marriage is common, even of girls below 14 years of age.

Justice Services: Accessible and gender-sensitive

In 2010-11, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Ministry of Justice undertook a study of access to justice in Cacheu, Oio, and Bissau, aided by UNICEF, UN Women, UNOGBIS and the European Union. The final report, “Estudo sobre o Acesso à Justiça em Três Regiões da Guiné-Bissau” includes a chapter specifically on access to justice by women (Chapter 15, p.103-123). Among the Chapter findings is that women’s lack of access to the formal justice system, and/or their experience of discrimination or indifference, results in the dominance of traditional systems of justice. The report states that, in traditional justice, “the general rule is to never disrespect male authority over a woman.....Traditional authorities recognize that women face greater burdens and obstacles, ... (but they) view these as inherent to women’s lives and a weight that women must bear” (p.124; translation by the author). This valuable report also includes detailed recommendations to improve access to justice for the population as a whole (p.176-182).

In 2013, Afroteste Lda, a Bissau market and opinion research group, undertook a study for UNICEF of knowledge, attitudes and practices on a range of issues relevant to women’s rights in four rural regions - Bafatá, Gabú, Oio, and Bolama/Bijagós. The study included a few questions on access to justice, including police, courts and administrative authorities, and traditional justice although the results are not disaggregated by sex. Of principal note is that of 80 localities visited, 62.5% had no justice services, and 58% said that justice was determined by the community.

Summary

Legal rights for women are the essential foundation for gender equality. Women’s human rights must be recognized and guaranteed by law, and then the next step is implementation and enforcement by the justice system, with mechanisms to ensure women’s access, gender-sensitive training of officials, and penalties for violations. The new government has committed in the DENARP II to action on human and legal rights which should include the three areas described above: implementation and enforcement of current laws to promote gender equality, especially the law against domestic violence and the law against FGM; passage of new laws to protect women’s rights, especially with regard to ownership and inheritance of land and other assets; and development of institutions for local justice that are accessible and gender-sensitive.

---

4. www.genderindex.org/sites/default/files/datasheets/GW.pdf
In Guinea-Bissau, as in other countries, health and education are essential for social development and access by girls and women to these services is essential for gender equality. A third social development requirement for gender equality in Guinea-Bissau and other countries is an end to the prevalence of domestic violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. These three social development requirements are discussed in the sections below.

Health

The Ministry of Health has virtually no presence in rural areas according to mission interviews, and lacks resources. The PNIEG states that with regard to basic health units (USB, Unidade de Saúde de Base) at the local level of tabancas, "it is almost impossible to find a functioning USB in any locality throughout the country" (p.24). The country’s one fully functioning hospital has little equipment, and in most parts of the country there is no electricity. The few health facilities that exist and have generators, often cannot afford the fuel to run them. Roads in rural areas and in regional/sectoral cities are unpaved and pot-holed and transport is limited, making access to any health facilities that exist all but impossible, especially for pregnant women. The absence of health facilities and services, especially in the regions outside Bissau, contributes to high rates of maternal mortality, infant mortality and the prevalence of diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis.

Despite progress in reducing the prevalence of malaria, it remains the main cause of absenteeism from schools and work, with a negative impact on household incomes as well as the national economy (Republique de la Guinee-Bissau, Ministere de la Santé, 2010, p.10). Data on the impact of malaria on women are not available, but several programs have reduced the rate among pregnant women who are especially vulnerable, according to the PNIEG, because of the low status of women and their low priority for receiving services of protection, prevention or treatment (p.36). Special donor-funded programs have also reduced the rate of HIV/AIDS but Ebola poses a new threat. In Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, deaths have been disproportionately of women due to their gender role of caretakers of the sick. According to the UN Peacebuilding Commission, the new government has included in its short-term priorities the preparation of the national health system against the threat (2014b), and the Guinea-Bissau news reported that the Portuguese have provided Ebola training assistance.

Gender-specific health issues are: the high fertility rate of 5 live births per woman (6.8 in rural areas); the lack of education about reproductive health, access to services, and contraceptive use (86% of women aged 15-49 with a spouse/regular partner do not use contraception); the high rate of pregnancy among girls 15-19 (30%) due to early marriage; and the high rate of maternal mortality (790 per 100,000 live births). According to the PNIEG, “the high rate of maternal mortality (constitutes) the largest problem with respect to gender in the country” (p.57). This issue merits special focus in the section below, since women cannot achieve other rights and opportunities if they die in childbirth.

Maternal mortality

At 790 deaths per 100,000 live births (WHO et al., 2010, p.32), the maternal mortality rate in Guinea-Bissau is the 7th highest in the world. The risk of death in childbirth in Guinea-Bissau is more than twice that of near-neighbors Senegal (370) and Gambia (360), and significantly higher than for other Lusophone African countries: Angola (450); and Mozambique (490). The MICS4 data show that three-quarters of these deaths occur during delivery or immediately thereafter. Global evidence from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) shows that the presence of a skilled birth attendant is the most effective measure to prevent deaths. In rural areas of Guinea-Bissau where the majority of women live, only 28% of women in labor have trained assistance and 72% of births take place at home or in the home of family members, most of which are without water, sanitation or electricity (UNICEF, 2010). A Ministry of Health report on prevention of infant and maternal deaths (2010) cites the following as problems that contribute to Guinea-Bissau’s high maternal mortality rate, in addition to the high fertility rate and the lack of a skilled birth attendant: poverty; high rate of illiteracy among women; the inferior social status of women; inadequate nutrition; and lack of transport to health centers (p.14).

The government had pledged to meet the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing
maternal mortality by 75 percent from its 1990 rate (900 per 100,000 live births) by 2015, and with committed effort and support by international donors, the rate is now 790. However, the Ministry of Health 2010 report finds that at the current the rate of reduction of 0.6 percent a year, it would take 100 years to reach the MDG target, with more women dying in childbirth every year (p.14). By contrast, two countries in Africa have accomplished the MDG target 75% reduction from 1990 rates, showing that it is possible to prevent women’s deaths in childbirth: Cabo Verde with a current maternal mortality rate of 79 and Rwanda with a rate of 340 per 100,000 live births (WHO, 2014).

Education

Girls’ schooling

Statistics on education from the MICS4 survey of 2010 showed improvement in both girls and boys school enrollment and completion rates, but there were still serious problems. In 2010, primary enrollment overall was at 70 percent, indicating that almost 1/3 (30%) of children of primary school age did not attend school. In the eastern province regions of Bafatá and Gabú more than half of young children (53%) were not in school. Among the poorest two quintiles, 56% were not in school (p.107). These data are not disaggregated by sex but other evidence suggests that the rate of non-enrollment of girl children would be much higher than the overall statistic.

According to MICS4, primary school completion rates in 2010 increased to 64%, from 29% in 2000. The rate for girls’ completion of primary school increased to 57% from 21% in 2000. This is a significant improvement but it shows that 43%, or almost half, of girls who were enrolled in primary school dropped out before completing. Among reasons for girls leaving primary school early, cited by respondents in background surveys for the PNIEG, are: early marriage (33%); pregnancy (20%); lack of money (17%); and responsibilities at home (4%). UNICEF Guinea-Bissau country statistics (2014) show the average net ratio of age cohort attending secondary school for the period 2008-12 as 27.3% for boys and 19.9% for girls.

A study in rural villages and schools of Guinea-Bissau undertaken by Boone et al. (2010) from the London School of Economics Centre for Economic Performance suggests that national enrollment and completion rates “mask extremely poor educational outcomes in rural regions” (p.1). The authors found that parents have a very high desire to send their children to school and 72% of children were enrolled, but of 1,169 10-yr-olds surveyed who were enrolled and attending school, only one child was capable of completing basic numeracy and literacy tests. Very few schools had adequate textbooks and many teachers had a poor grasp of spoken Portuguese and little training, were isolated, underequipped and received salaries only after long delays. Overall, the study found “a comprehensive picture of a dysfunctional school system... with the result that one more generation of children is growing up without even basic numeracy and literacy skills” (p.3).

After the April 2012 coup, there was upheaval in the education system and frequent teacher strikes for lack of payment of salaries. A World Bank report by the Global Partnership in Education found that 62% of schools were closed, and many primary school students were facing a lost year. The consequences of these losses for the future generation, especially girls who are statistically at lower levels of school enrollment and completion, are very serious.

Women’s literacy

Fifty-eight percent of adult women aged 15-49 are illiterate according to the UNDP Human Development Report 2014. MICS4 2010 data show that among young women 15-24 years of age, 60 percent were illiterate, and in rural areas 84% of young women were illiterate. Given the post-coup decline in socio-economic conditions and the educational problems discussed above, it is likely that women’s illiteracy will remain extremely high, especially in rural areas.

Rural women agricultural workers who participated in focus group discussions in Bafatá, Contubuel and Gabú cited adult literacy programs as a key need. Literacy for adult Bissau-Guinean women is a critical input that can improve labor productivity and income, awareness of rights, and management of household and resources. Global studies show that women’s literacy is also statistically correlated with better health and education outcomes for children, and improves women’s leverage in domestic relations and options for leaving abusive domestic relationships.

Gender-specific abuses

Interviews with government and women’s organizations highlighted the following gender-specific abuses against Bissau-Guinean women which are also violations of women’s human rights: gender-based violence (GBV), female genital mutilation (FGM) and early or forced marriage. These are discussed in the three sections below.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Reports by the Guinea-Bissau government and civil society document the prevalence of violence against
men (PNIEG 2014; Plano Nacional de Acção 2011; Roque 2011). Although rigorous survey data are lacking and further research is needed, Guinea-Bissau women’s organizations and technical and funding partners interviewed also attest to wide-spread and socially-accepted violence against women, principally domestic violence in the home by spouses and intimate partners. A study by Sylvia Roque (2011) indicates that reported cases are highest Bissau, Bafatá, Gabú and Oio (p.14), with a steady increase in complaints from 2006 through 2009 which it interprets as a positive sign of women’s increased willingness to report rather than an increase in violence (p.21). Among women surveyed, 44% of women said they had been victims of physical violence, and 43% of sexual violence (21% rape and 22% unwanted touching). The respondents gave the following as factors (non-exclusive) contributing to their experience of violence: 49% - women are considered inferior to men; 34% - the government does not defend or protect victims; 33% - women do not have economic assets (p.21). Despite the 2013 passage of a law against domestic violence, according to the PNIEG there are three factors that dissuade women from registering complaints: i) lack of knowledge of laws against violence and of women’s legal rights; ii) lack of competency of state structures especially the police to deal with violence against women; and iii) lack of capacity of state, traditional or non-profit organizations to advise and protect victims (p.46).

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) consists of the total or partial removal of the external female genitals or other damage to female genitals, and has been declared a fundamental violation of human rights by international protocols. In Guinea-Bissau, MICS4 data show that 50% of all women 15-49 had experienced FGM, and that the procedure as practiced in Guinea-Bissau involves the worst form of FGM: excision with mutilation. In Guinea-Bissau, FGM is rooted in the custom of “fanado” – a traditional initiation ceremony of many ethnic groups which marks the passage of both boys and girls into the adult community and involves circumcision of boys and female genital mutilation of girls. According to mission interviews, efforts to end the fanado practice of FGM for girls have had some success through programs of alternative fanado rituals without excision, and alternative sources of income for excisers (fanatecas).

The National Committee to End Harmful Traditional Practices CNPN (Comité Nacional para o Abandono de Práticas Nefastas) found that in Muslim communities, the practice is also rooted in what many believe to be a requirement of Islam. MICS4 data show that in the predominantly Muslim regions of Bafatá and Gabú almost 100% of adult women have experienced FGM: 93% in Bafatá and 95% in Gabú (Quadro CP.8). The National Islamic Council and groups such as CNPN argue that FGM is a practice that pre-dated Islam in Guinea-Bissau and has nothing to do with Koranic recommendations (CNPN, 2013, p.12).

The MICS4 2010 survey showed that a larger percentage of women without education had experienced FGM as a child (65%) than those with education (28%), but the practice is common across all income groups: 40% of the richest quintile; approximately 60% of the three middle quintiles; and 50% of the poorest (MICS4, Quadro CP.8). Women who have experienced FGM themselves are highly likely to have at least one daughter who has been excised (72%). Although opinions are changing about the practice, 51% of women without education, who are the majority of women 15-49, thought the practice should continue (MICS4, Quadro CP.10), indicating the challenges facing efforts to eliminate the practice. In 2011, activists finally secured passage of legislation banning after initially introducing it sixteen years before. However, since 2011 the law has not been disseminated or implemented and according to the PNIEG and mission interviews, FGM is still widely practiced.

Early/Forced Marriage

According to international protocols, marriage should not occur before age 18. MICS4 data show that 29% of women aged 20-49 were married before age 18, and 8% before age 15. Of women 15-49, 7% were married before age 15. The legal age of marriage is 18 years in the country. The MICS4 study also showed that 48% of married women aged 15-49 in Guinea-Bissau are in a polygamous relationship. Prevalence of both early marriage and polygamous marriages are higher in rural areas. Other traditional marriage practices which violate women's rights are levirate (forced marriage to a brother-in-law on death of one's husband) and sororate (forced marriage to a sister's widower), although statistics are not available.

Summary

The fundamental social investments needed to “level the playing field” so that women can have equal opportunities with men in Guinea-Bissau are: preventing maternal mortality; ensuring adult women's literacy and girls’ education; and ending the country’s principal gender-specific abuses of domestic violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and early/forced marriage. ■
Potential for action on gender equality

Strengths:

- Gender equality requires peace and political stability, and the government, civil society, and the private sector are now united in the desire for Guinea-Bissau to move forward, away from its history of military coups and counter-coups, to become a peaceful, stable and productive country.

- There is a strong, experienced and committed civil society of women’s organizations, which mobilized in the absence of government to provide needed services and work for positive change. There is also evidence of collaboration and support on gender issues by men in civil society organizations working on social, health, and environment issues.

- Guinea-Bissau religious organizations, including the National Islamic Council, supported the laws against female genital mutilation and domestic violence. A survey of attitudes in the Islamic community of Guinea-Bissau found that “although) some men think that the promotion of gender equality is a means to pervert society, others recognize that gender equality is the only solution if the country is to develop” (Boiro, 2014, p.2).

- The new government, through the gender strategy PNIEG (2014) and the poverty reduction strategy DENARP II (2011) has made clear commitments to gender equality.

- The United Nations agencies which remained in the country after the 2012 coup under the UN Integrated Office (UNIOGBIS), and especially its Gender Thematic Group (GTG), played a critical role in sustaining women activists in their efforts and achievements towards gender equality, and these agencies are committed to helping the new government to fulfill its regional and international agreements on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Weaknesses:

- Government institutions which are critical to the advancement of gender equality - the Institute for Women and Children (IMC), and the Ministries of Health; Education; Justice; and Women, Family and Social Cohesion - lack resources and capacity.

- Despite the government’s commitment to gender equality, there is as yet no strong and visible male leadership on the issue – one or more male “champions” at a high level of government to join women’s advocacy efforts.

- Women’s groups and associations are strong and committed but they work on different issues, and there is as yet no united national advocacy organization with an agreed umbrella agenda.

- Existing laws with regard to women’s rights are not disseminated, implemented or enforced, creating a climate of impunity which undermines the rule of law.

- Corruption and rent-seeking remain entrenched among powerful forces including in the military, with misuse of national resources and disregard for the rights and needs of the rural poor especially women and potential destruction of their livelihoods (e.g. from the lucrative business of illegal deforestation).

Risks:

- The country needs everything, and there is a risk that political leaders will consider gender equality to be a non-priority “women’s issue.” There is also a risk that the gender needs are so extensive that scarce gender resources will be diffused over the many needs and issues, minimizing impact.

- Guinea-Bissau civil society women’s organizations have worked extremely hard on
services, issues and on the elections, but civil society activism which has advanced the agenda on gender equality could weaken if activists do not see change.

- The army remains powerful as do some with political vested interests, with continued risk to the stability of government institutions. Steps taken by the new government may have reduced this risk, including the September 2014 removal of Antonio Indjai, who had led the military coup in April 2012, as Chief of the Armed Forces.

- Some of those interviewed expressed concern that new democratic processes and elections are swayed by money, and women candidates do not have resources with which to compete, with the consequent risk of undermining democratic participation especially by women. There was also a concern expressed regarding the potential manipulation of ethnic and religious differences for political gain with risks for civil instability.

- Another risk mentioned is increasing Islamic fundamentalism, especially in the regions where rural poverty is endemic and women’s opportunities are limited. A recent National Islamic Council report (Boiro, 2014) mentions concerns about an influx of fundamentalist proselytizers from other countries. Interviews confirmed that the incidence of women in niqab, leaving only the eyes clear, which was never previously seen, is increasing.

- There is a risk of Ebola spreading from neighboring countries, challenging weak health systems and with serious health and economic consequences especially for women who are primary care-givers for family members.

**Opportunities:**

- The new government can give a strong signal of major change from the past by endorsing a gender-equality agenda including: implementation of the PNIEG with defined priority actions; an increase in the resources for the Institute for Women and Children (IMC), and the Ministries of Justice, Health, Education, and Women, Family and Social Cohesion; and pro-active measures to increase the participation of women at all levels of government.

- The active promotion of women in political life through required party quotas, and throughout government agencies including the police and defense forces, can both empower women and help to reduce the power of entrenched political factions which remain capable of creating political instability.

- Women are perceived as able to communicate and interact across ethnic and religious differences (Boiro 2014, and UN Peacebuilding Report 2014a), and there is an opportunity to promote and train women as peace-brokers for communities.
There are many urgent needs for gender-equitable development in Guinea-Bissau, and reports by government agencies, civil society and international partners have resulted in many recommendations, all important and all valid. The most important roadmap for gender equality in Guinea-Bissau is the gender strategy PNIEG, which provides a thorough and comprehensive analysis and recommendations, developed with participation of all stakeholders over a period of two years. The PNIEG now needs to be operationalized and prioritized, with resources and targets, as soon as possible. With limited government resources – financial, institutional and human capital/personnel - it is essential to prioritize among the many needs. This Gender Profile suggests that the priority should be to target actions which can bring the greatest benefit to the largest number of poor women, and to choose a few areas where investments can produce an immediate benefit as well as a spillover effect on other areas of need.

Based on that criteria and the preceding analysis of Sections 2-6, the following are three sector recommendations and two overarching recommendations for advancing women’s rights and gender equality in Guinea-Bissau.

**Sector recommendations**

**Economic - Empower Women’s Economic Roles and Productivity:**

- Create a special fund for loans and micro-credit for women agricultural workers and small-business owners;

- Provide extension services to women’s cooperatives, associations and small/medium-businesses, and technical training schools for both girls and boys in rural areas;

- Ensure basic infrastructure - rural roads, water, sanitation and electricity - to increase efficiencies and productivity of women’s market and domestic work.

**Legal - ensure women’s human and legal rights:**

- Implement a new Land Law (Lei da Terra) ensuring women’s property rights;

- Implement, disseminate and enforce existing laws against domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM);

- Establish locally accessible justice services for women, with gender training for local police and justice officials, to strengthen civil law over traditional/customary law.

**Social - Invest in girls’ and women’s social conditions:**

- Expand efforts to reduce maternal mortality, and use these to also educate both women and men about laws against FGM and GBV;

- Establish locally accessible adult literacy programs for women, especially in rural areas;

- Improve rural access to quality primary and secondary education with priority efforts to increase girls’ school enrollment and completion rates.

**Overarching recommendations**

- Ensure participation of women in the design, implementation, oversight and management of policies and programs through recruitment, hiring and promotion policies in all government agencies and the private sector, and quotas for party electoral lists;

- Ensure nation-wide knowledge and awareness of women’s human and legal rights and the importance of gender equality to Guinea-Bissau’s social and economic development through a national education campaign with messages tailored to women, men, girls and boys.

The following four sections provide specific recommendations for the African Development Bank,
the government of Guinea-Bissau, civil society, and international funding partners.

**Recommendations for the African Development Bank**

The three priorities recommended in this Gender Profile - support for women’s economic roles, legal rights, and investments in the reduction of maternal mortality and in educational opportunities for women and girls - are consistent with the three pillars of the African Development Bank new Gender Strategy for 2014-2018: legal status and property rights; economic empowerment; and knowledge management and capacity building, and with the two pillars of its draft country economic strategy: reinforcement of state institutions; and infrastructure investments to unlock internal regions.

The AfDB can support gender goals in Guinea-Bissau by prioritizing investments in roads to connect women to markets and health clinics, and in rural infrastructure systems of water, sanitation and electricity to improve women’s labor productivity and health and ease the time burdens of household work. The key is to ensure attention to rural needs and the involvement of women’s associations in the design and planning of projects. It will also be critical to keep in mind the very low income of the population, especially women, and to plan for public provision of services and/or subsidized pricing. Another avenue worth supporting is the set-up of social safety net or social protection programs in general. These however would require starting with aggregate studies on their feasibility and best way to roll-out, with a specific gender focus.

The AfDB can also support, directly or in coordination with other donors, the strengthening of the Ministries of Justice, Education, Health, and Women, Family and Social Cohesion through increased resources and technical support. It can help the Government of Guinea-Bissau to collect gender-relevant data and to establish statistical indicators which can be monitored over time. It can also help the government to design and report on strategies for recruitment, training and mentoring of women at all levels of relevant government ministries, and require involvement of Bissau-Guinean women in program design, implementation, management and evaluation of AfDB-financed projects.

Finally, the AfDB, through its West Africa regional structure, can facilitate joint strategies in the region to advance gender equality, especially with regard to the elimination of gender abuses (GBV, FGM and early marriage) and the creation of programs to train and support women as community peace-keepers. The African Development Bank is also ideally positioned to facilitate recognition and dissemination of best practices in the region, and to provide funding for replication and scaling up.

**Recommendations for the government of Guinea-Bissau**

According to the DENARP II, the new government’s overall goal is to reduce poverty by: reinforcement of the state; acceleration of growth; and achievement of its Millennium Development Goal targets (MDGs). Specific priorities are to: a) reinforce the rule of law and democratic institutions; b) ensure a stable and supportive macro-economic environment; c) promote sustainable economic development; and d) increase the level of human capital. In the short-term, the DENARP II defines the urgent needs as: payment of back salaries; reestablishment of a minimal level of electrical service; reestablishment of health and education services; and oversight of a successful agricultural season.

The recommended priorities of this Gender Profile for Guinea-Bissau - investments in women’s economic roles including rural infrastructure; ensuring women’s legal rights especially with regard to property ownership and access to justice; and reducing maternal mortality and increasing educational access - are directly compatible with the government’s DENARP II goals, with integration of a gender perspective. The recommendations also are consistent with implementation of the national gender policy PNIEG which highlights the gender constraints on women’s economic productivity despite dual jobs in market and household work; their lack of legal rights and justice services; and their need for essential services of maternal health and education.

Once the government determines its gender priorities and identifies the needed funding, it can negotiate with donor partners to ensure the needed resources, and create appropriate mechanisms for management and monitoring of impact both of gender actions and between these and other government investments. The government should also operationalize internal government policies to increase gender balance in all ministries and agencies, at all levels, and with all contractors, with requirements for annual data reporting. From an operational viewpoint, it would be
important for the government to develop a system of monitoring towards gender equality.

**Recommendations for Civil Society**

Guinea-Bissau has an impressive and dynamic civil society, especially with regard to gender issues, and strong, experienced and committed leaders who have made important contributions to national gender legislation and policies on their specific areas such as: women’s work and labor issues (AMAE, CNMT), civic and political participation (PPM), gender-based violence (RENLUV), female genital mutilation (Comité para o Abandono das Praticas Nefastas), Peace-Building (REMSECAO; Voz di Paz) and agricultural associations (APALCOF). These and other civil society groups working on gender issues would benefit from forming a united national association to coordinate their respective efforts, monitor and influence government policy, expand sensitization of communities, and support the efforts of women Ministers and Parliamentarians. One possible common issue is the proposal for a gender quota on electoral party lists.

**Recommendations for technical and funding partners**

The Gender Thematic Group (GTG) of the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) coordinates and shares gender programs and strategies by the various UN agencies such as UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women. It is an excellent example of effective donor organization to coordinate program priorities and share information, thereby increasing impact. The degree to which these organizations have supported and sustained superb work by Bissau-Guinean gender organizations and activists is impressive.

The World Bank has initiated/expanded two key programs with gender impacts: the Private Sector Rehabilitation and Agribusiness Development Project, and the rural Community-Driven Development Project. There are innumerable other international programs and partners in Guinea-Bissau, and a gender coordinating mechanism among them, similar to that of the UNIOGBIS Gender Thematic Group, could ensure greater impact.
Guinea-Bissau women face many forms of gender discrimination, bias and denial of human rights, and the country faces daunting development challenges as it emerges from years of government instability and institutional failure. With a new democratically-elected government, strong civil society women’s organizations, and an agreed government gender plan of action, the PNIEG, there is tremendous potential for significant advances in gender equality, and a boost to socio-economic development for the country as a whole, if women - 50% of the population - are liberated to contribute to and benefit from the country’s progress. Implementation of the government’s commitment to the priority of gender equality, and support for this priority by funding partners, will be critical. A participatory process that fully involves civil society and especially women has already begun in Guinea-Bissau, as seen in the development of the PNIEG and the DENARP II, and it can be further institutionalized and strengthened with support from the African Development Bank, UN Women and other development partners.


Annex 1: Guinea-Bissau government* structure and women’s representations

Executive Branch

The Guinea-Bissau government has an executive branch with a president elected for a five-year term as head of state, and a Prime Minister appointed by the president who is the head of government. Following the recent elections, Jose Mario Vaz ("Jomov") of PAIGC is the new president and Domingos Simões Pereira, also of PAIGC, is the new Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister appoints the Cabinet and Secretaries of State. In the current government there are 16 Ministers including five women who head the Ministries of Defense, Education, Justice, Public Health, and Women, Family and Social Cohesion. There are 15 Secretaries of State of whom one is a woman, the Secretary for Budget and Fiscal Affairs. Bissau-Guinean women activists expressed sharp dissatisfaction that the share of women ministers was not closer to 50%, especially after the significant role that women’s groups played in ensuring the high voter turnout and in monitoring the polls.

Legislative Branch

Guinea-Bissau has a unicameral National People’s Assembly, ANP (Assembleia Nacional Popular) with 102 seats elected by popular vote for four-year terms, including 2 seats reserved for diaspora Bissau-Guineans. Fourteen women were elected in the recent elections.

Judicial Branch

There is a Supreme Court of Justice with both appellate and constitutional jurisdiction, consisting of 9 judges, organized into Civil, Criminal, Social and Administrative Chambers. Of 79 total judges in 2010, 16% (13) were women; among 203 judiciary court staff, 12% (25) were women; and in the office of the Prosecutor, 12 of 80 prosecutors (15%) were women (Cardoso and Sjöberg, 2010, p.136). The Minister of Justice recently announced the appointment of a woman to head the Judicial Police (Novas da Guiné Bissau, September 21 2014).

Regional Governments

Guinea-Bissau is divided into eight administrative regions and the autonomous sector of Bissau (Sector Autonomo de Bissau, SAB). The regions are sub-divided into 37 sectors and these are further sub-divided into tabancas. Each region has a Governor, appointed by the President. On October 25, 2014, eight new regional governors took office, including two women as governors of Oio and Quinara (Novas da Guiné Bissau, October 25 2014).

* The field mission in Guinea-Bissau was conducted in July 2014 and the report was edited in November 2014 based on the information provided by the Government in that period.
## Annex 2: Guinea-Bissau accordance with international and regional gender protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº</th>
<th>CARTAS, CONVENÇÕES E PROTOCOLOS FAVORÁVEIS À IEG</th>
<th>Data da assinatura</th>
<th>Data da ratificação</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internacionais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Convenções de Genebra</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>21.02.1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Convenção sobre o consentimento do casamento (idade mínima e registo) [1962]</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Convenção sobre a eliminação de todas as formas de discriminação contra a mulher [1979]</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>23.08.1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Protocolo adicional às Convenções de Genebra</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>21.10.1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pacto internacional sobre os direitos económicos, sociais e culturais [1966]</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>02.10.1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pacto sobre a eliminação de todas as formas de discriminação racial [1965]</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>01.11.2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Convenção sobre a maternidade [1952]</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Convenção sobre os Direitos políticos da mulher [1952]</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pacto internacional sobre os direitos civis e políticos [1966]</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>01.11.2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Convenção contra a tortura e outro tratamento ou sanção cruel, desumano ou degradante [1984]</td>
<td>12.09.2000</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Protocolo opcional ao Convenção internacional sobre os direitos da Criança respeitante ao envolvimento das crianças nos conflitos armados [2000]</td>
<td>08.09.2000</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Protocolo opcional ao Convenção internacional sobre os direitos da Criança respeitante a venda de crianças, prostituição da criança e a pornografia com criança [2000]</td>
<td>08.09.2000</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Convenção internacional sobre a protecção dos direitos de todos os trabalhadores migrantes e dos membros das suas famílias [1990]</td>
<td>08.09.2000</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Protocolo opcional à Convenção contra a tortura e outro tratamento ou sanção cruel, desumano ou degradante [2002]</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Convenção sobre os direitos das pessoas com deficiências [2006]</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Convenção internacional para a protecção de todas as pessoas forçadas a desaparecer</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Resolução 1325 /Mulher, Paz, Segurança</td>
<td>31.10.2000</td>
<td>08.03.2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Resolução 1820 / Mulher, Paz, Segurança</td>
<td>18.06.2008</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Resolução 1888 / Mulher, Paz, Segurança</td>
<td>30.09.2009</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### GENDER PROFILE: Guinea-Bissau

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº</th>
<th>CARTAS, CONVENÇÕES E PROTOCOLOS FAVORÁVEIS À IEG</th>
<th>Data da assinatura</th>
<th>Data da ratificação</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Carta Africana sobre os Direitos do Homem e dos Povos [1981]</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Protocolo à Carta Africana sobre os Direitos do Homem e dos Povos criando o Tribunal Africana sobre a os Direitos do Homem e dos Povos [1998]</td>
<td>09.06.1998</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Protocolo sobre o Tribunal de Justiça da União Africana [2003]</td>
<td>08.03.2005</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Carta Africana sobre a Democracia, as eleições e a Governação [2007]</td>
<td>17.06.2008</td>
<td>NR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PNIEG 2014