

GUINEA

Risk and Resilience Assessment

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Contents

Acknowledgments	i
Abbreviations	v
Executive Summary	1
I. Introduction	6
II. Current Context	8
III. Structural Factors of Fragility	11
A proud historical legacy but a challenging postindependence period	11
Legacy of socialist governance, fairness, and the concept of “turn-taking”	12
Winner-take-all politics and the significance of ethnicity	13
Rural poverty reinforces structural inequalities	15
IV. Arenas of Contestation	17
Power, economics, and governance	17
Power and governance	17
Demand for greater accountability and transparency at the core of popular grievances	17
Youth’s aspirations and grievances with the political establishment	19
Attempts to improve macroeconomic stability and fiscal governance have had some negative consequences	19
The double-edged sword of mining’s potential	20
A vibrant but underdeveloped and underutilized domestic private sector creates additional tensions	21
“Le panier de la ménagère” and fuel costs—at the core of popular grievances	22
Land, natural resources, and climate change	23
The two sides of mining	23
Land tenure and use at the heart of contestation	25
Service delivery	30
Improvements in service delivery have not met citizens’ demands	30
Service provision, trust, and the social contract	32
Security and justice	33
Security Sector Reform (SSR)	33

Drugs and crime	35
Justice	35
Structural issues impede the effective delivery of justice	35
Recourse to alternative forms of justice and vigilantism	36
The Dadis trial, a major milestone in the fight against impunity	36
V. Drivers of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence	39
VI. Sources of Resilience	43
A strong sense of national identity and pride	43
Sanankuya or “joking relations”	44
Vivid experience and lingering fear of war	44
The role played by matriarchs	44
An energetic and active youth cohort that sees itself as an agent of change	45
Religious tolerance and intermarriage	45
The dual role of coordinations régionales	46
Strategic patience in expressing dissent	46
VII. Risks	48
Widespread revolt based on the outcome of the transition, or the stalling thereof	48
Another coup	48
Violence within the security forces	48
Return of drug trafficking	49
Sabotage of mining operations	49
Continual outbreaks of interethnic violence, especially in the Forest Region	49
Jihadi groups exploit Guinea’s many risk factors	50
Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities	50
A tipping point finally comes	51
VIII. Portfolio Analysis	52
The nonlinear trajectory of WBG programming in Guinea: Addressing existing and new challenges	52
Structural constraints that impede the implementation and effectiveness of WBG programming	52
Multiples crises have led the WBG to reconfigure its program and adapt its priorities	54

COVID-19	54
From transitioning out of fragility to staying engaged with a “people-centered” approach	54
Lessons learned: Establishing systems that outlast crisis	56
The importance of staying engaged	56
Building institutional foundation as part of WBG engagement	56
The importance of cross-fertilization and coordination—the example of the grievance mechanism	56
A targeted capacity-building framework	57
Emphasis on FCV drivers and resilience factors	57
IX. Recommendations	60
Overarching principles of engagement	60
Maintain a strong policy dialogue on critical governance reforms	61
Adopt a more targeted approach to capacity building and technical assistance	61
Harmonize benefits across PIUs	62
Enhance coordination and synergies across the portfolio with a shared strategic vision	62
Operational recommendations	62
Improve transparency, governance, and citizen engagement	63
Support continued investments in people	64
Improve connectivity and infrastructure for better economic development outcomes	64
Urban interventions	65
Rural interventions	65
Expand the geographical scope of WBG engagement	65
Operational flexibility	66
Explore the use of Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support	66
Enhance the use of GEMS for informed decision-making	66
Annex 1. An Overview of Situations That Trigger OP 7.30	67
Annex 2. Mapping Donor Interventions in Guinea	69
Annex 3. The Risk Mitigation Regime in Guinea	71
References	73
Endnotes	82

Abbreviations

AF	additional financing
AFD	Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)
ANAFIC	Agence Nationale de Financement des Collectivités Locales (National Agency for Local Government Financing)
ANLC	Agence nationale de lutte contre la corruption (National Agency for the Fight Against Corruption)
ASA	Advisory Services and Analytics
ASM	artisanal and small-scale mining
CEN	Country Engagement Note
CNRD	Comité national du rassemblement pour le développement (National Committee of Reconciliation and Development)
CNT	Conseil National de la Transition (National Transition Council)
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CRIEF	Cour de répression des infractions économiques et financières (Court to Repress Economic and Financial Crimes)
CSO	civil society organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCV	fragility, conflict, and violence
FNDC	Front national pour la défense de la Constitution (National Front for the Defense of the Constitution)
FNDL	Fond National de Développement Local (National Local Development Fund)
FNDT	Front National pour la Défense de la Transition (National Front for the Defense of the Transition)
FODEL	Fonds de Développement Economique Local (Local Economic Development Fund)
GAC	Guinea Alumina Corporation
GBV	gender-based violence
GDP	gross domestic product

GEMS	Geo-Enabling Initiative for Monitoring and Supervision
GP	Global Practice
GRM	grievance redress mechanism
HEIS	Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support
IDA	International Development Association
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MPI	multidimensional poverty index
OP	Operational Policy
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAGL	Guinea Support to Local Governance Project
PBA	performance-based allocation
PFM	Public Financial Management
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PLR	Performance and Learning Review
RMR	Risk Mitigation Regime
RRA	Risk and Resilience Assessment
SEG	Société des Eaux de Guinée
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TTL	task team leader
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UFDG	Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée (Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea)
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WBG	World Bank Group
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Guinea presents a double paradox. It is a rich country whose people are extremely poor. Its people are united and not prone to communal conflict, but political elites have used a rhetoric of “winner-take-all,” turn-taking politics to permeate public discourse with intercommunal strife that has occasionally exploded into violence, and risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. These two dynamics are linked, as Guinea’s stalled development is largely a result of these politics, and at times political actors have used the rhetoric of intercommunal enmity as a smokescreen for poor governance. However, despite years of mismanagement, state suppression of civilian dissent, and outside threats, including serious pressures from civil wars in neighboring countries,¹ Guinea has held firm. All six of its neighbors have experienced civil war, jihadi violence, separatist insurgency, or some combination of the three.² Guinea has avoided all of these traps, sometimes narrowly. Although it is considered a country at peace, it has often experienced violence, and thus stability has been tumultuous—and questions remain as to whether Guinea’s resilience can hold through another transition.

After 50 years of autocratic rule, Guinea embarked on a new path toward democratic consolidation, as the country held its first free and fair multiparty elections in 2010. The accession of Alpha Conde to the presidency in December 2010 raised hopes that a new era of democracy would be ushered in, especially as the country faced many development challenges.³ The Conde government embarked on a series of reforms⁴ and public works⁵ to improve the population’s living conditions. However, despite some positive developments, the government did not entirely manage to deliver on its promises and over time, frustrations accumulated (Al Jazeera 2020). The process around the change of the Guinean Constitution that led to President Conde’s reelection for a third mandate in October 2020 crystallized tensions and grievances; these fueled political mobilization and spurred demonstrations that were marred by violence from security forces (Châtelot 2020b), illustrating that many Guineans were deeply supportive of their country’s nascent democracy, while at the same time believing that democracy had thus far delivered too little.

On September 5, 2021, a military junta seized power in a coup, dissolving the government, invalidating the constitution, and arresting the former president. The coup was initially welcomed by many Guineans who supported the new emphasis on improved governance that would allow Guineans to finally enjoy their share of the country’s potential and wealth. However, this initial euphoria has been progressively replaced by growing discontent. The new government, led by the Comité national du rassemblement pour le développement (CNRD), has embarked on a high-profile program of reforms, some of which have been widely lauded, but others which have questionable motivations. After 16 months in power, the CNRD has finally agreed to a 24-month transition but with an ambitious agenda of activities to complete, including writing a new, consultative constitution, conducting a national census, remaking the electoral rolls, and holding separate communal, regional, legislative, and presidential elections. While at the time of this writing there remains goodwill and much hope that the transition process will progress as promised, it is clear that the coming months will be pivotal for determining the next phase of Guinea’s trajectory.

In this context, the World Bank Group (WBG) has developed a Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA) for Guinea. The objectives of the RRA are to (i) strengthen the WBG’s understanding

of fragility drivers and resilience sources in Guinea; (ii) feed into and shape analytics, programming, dialogue, and partnerships, which includes informing the Country Engagement Note (CEN) under preparation; and (iii) explore the WBG's potential role to address these drivers and build on sources of resilience.

Analyzing the relationship between Guinea's unique structural factors and more current arenas of contestation, the RRA identifies five drivers of fragility:

DRIVER 1

A sophisticated program of activities by the CNRD currently appeals to an expectant population, but a lack of transparency could steadily undermine governance and sow local divisions.

Since taking power, the CNRD has made many bold, politically popular, and significantly visible decisions that go straight to the heart of many Guineans' grievances with the previous government. However, there remains a considerable lack of transparency on important aspects of the CNRD's agenda and its vision for the country, not least of which is who the members of the CNRD are. There are also serious questions about whether extensions of the transition timeline will be requested, and whether a constitution and elections delivered by an unelected military junta will be considered legitimate. It is along this delicate tightrope of uncertainty which the country currently balances, with the biggest short-term indicator of stability being whether the CNRD adheres to its promises regarding the transition, both in terms of timeline and inclusivity.

DRIVER 2

Guinea's political system has thus far delivered few dividends to the population and instead has served as a vehicle for ethnicization, corruption, and rent-seeking, rendering the country vulnerable to potential democratic backsliding and future contestation.

Instead of relying on substantive political programs, political parties are oriented toward the single goal of getting their leader elected, as one of the few things they can offer in the winner-take-all logic of multiparty democracy in Guinea is to redistribute the spoils of captured power to their constituents. Increasingly, these constituents have become defined by their ethnicity, and as a corollary, by the marginalization of other ethnic groups. Many Guineans are also acutely aware of and resent the fact that citizens have predominantly been mobilized for political purposes that result only in benefits for the few and increasingly have clear demands, and youth especially so, for a system that they have felt largely disenfranchised from up until this point.

DRIVER 3

Weak private sector development has resulted in a lack of economic diversification and an overreliance on mining for the foreseeable future, which continues to fuel grievances while failing to offer most Guineans job opportunities.

Guineans are both profoundly aware and fiercely proud of their country's enormous development potential, which is what makes the current lack of its capitalization so frustrating. The country's natural capital per capita is about US\$7,300 which is more than six times its current GDP per capita (IFC 2020). But as of 2018, 43.7 percent of the population, or 5.8 million people, still lived below the national poverty line (World Bank 2020a). The transformational potential of these assets, as well as the cascade of additional economic impacts from mining that have consistently been promised, have not yet materialized for the average Guinean.

For a large proportion of the youthful population, a future beyond subsistence agriculture or survivalist entrepreneurship will not be possible unless the private sector develops. Until it does, there will continue to be large segments of the population who are not invested in the country's stability and progress because they have been economically disenfranchised.

DRIVER 4

Insecure land tenure and the multiple ways it builds upon and reinforces existing historical, economic, and societal fault lines, and spurs most of the country's intercommunal violence.

The lack of secure land tenure and use rights has made it difficult to convince Guineans to invest in higher productivity agriculture, when the possibility exists that someone else can come and take the land after investments are made. As a particularly evocative and valuable commodity, demands for land, whether from larger scale economic interests (such as agribusiness) or smaller scale community interests, can continue to provoke sensitivities, and in the worst cases spark violence, especially where norms or mechanisms for dealing with disputes have evolved/changed over time or where they are yet undefined.

DRIVER 5

A fundamental mistrust in state institutions to effectively, equitably, and accountably deliver continues to justify widespread perceptions of exclusion and marginalization and has damaged the social contract.

The legacies of slavery and slave raiding, colonial divide-and-rule policies, and of violence directed at the population by a series of postcolonial governments have left Guineans deeply mistrustful of government, and sometimes of one another. Through their actions or inaction, successive governments have reinforced the perception that state institutions are there to serve elites and their interests, rather than those of the population writ large. The state is conspicuously absent on many issues that affect people's everyday lives. Without a framework or point of reference for a peaceful exchange of expectations between the population and the authorities, violence has been the most common means of communicating grievances.

Guinea's unique combination of resilience factors is often credited in terms of explaining how the country has been able to face extraordinary challenges and pressures thus far. The RRA identified the following sources of resilience, noting, however, that not all of them have a consistently positive influence, nor will they necessarily continue to remain durable over time:

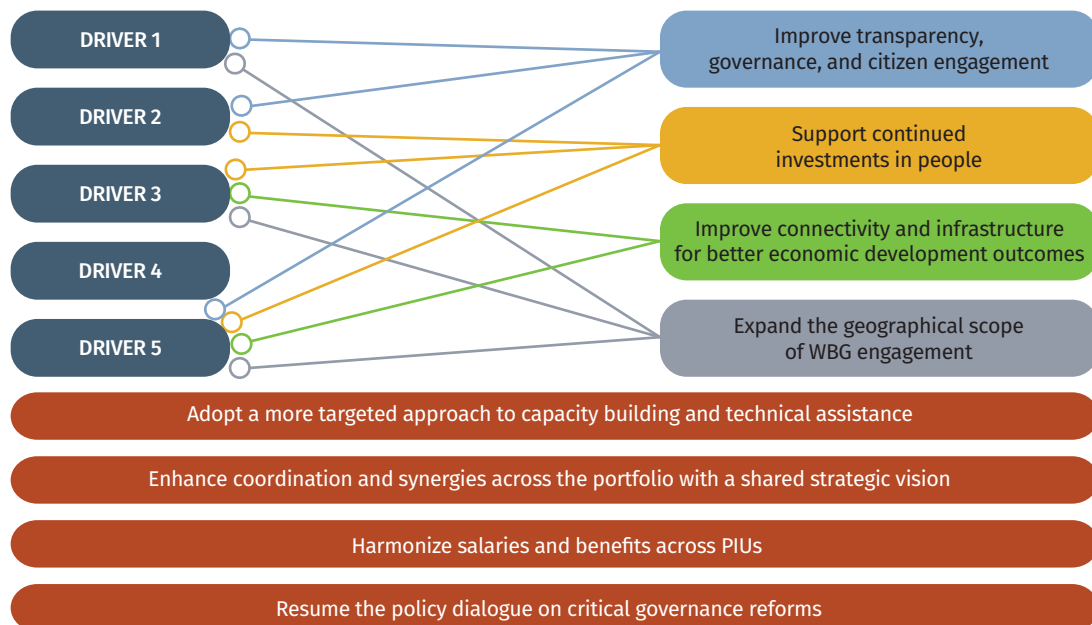
- A strong sense of national identity and pride
- *Sanankuya*, or "joking relations"
- Vivid experience and lingering fear of war
- The role played by matriarchs
- An energetic and active youth cohort that sees itself as an agent of change
- Religious tolerance and intermarriage
- The dual role of *coordinations régionales*
- Strategic patience in expressing dissent

Given the precarious situation the country currently faces, the RRA also identified the following potential risks:

- Widespread revolt based on the outcome of the transition, or the stalling thereof
- Another coup
- Violence within the security forces
- Return of drug trafficking
- Sabotage of mining operations
- Continual outbreaks of interethnic violence, especially in the Forest Region
- Jihadi groups exploit Guinea’s many risk factors
- Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities
- A tipping point finally comes

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WBG

Figure ES-1: Programming areas in response to fragility drivers



Source: Developed by authors of the RRA.

Overarching principles of engagement

- Resume the policy dialogue on critical governance reforms.
- Adopt a more targeted approach to capacity building and technical assistance.
- Harmonize salaries and benefits across PIUs.
- Enhance coordination and synergies across the portfolio with a shared strategic vision.

Operational recommendations

Recognizing that the operating environment in Guinea is extremely challenging, as well as the importance of being realistic, WBG interventions should adopt an approach that mixes short-term interventions with a medium- to long-term vision. This would entail (i) focusing on quick results and gains (short term) that are visible to the population, with the goal of demonstrating tangible improvements in citizens' daily lives. This is key in a context of diminished trust and a damaged social contract; (ii) remaining focused on addressing structural factors of fragility (medium to long term) that cannot be addressed within one CEN/CPF cycle alone, but instead should be embedded within a strategic vision and investments, aimed at building capacity, supporting key governance reforms, addressing patterns of exclusion, and strengthening client relationships, over a sustained period. Priorities should include the following:

- Improve transparency, governance, and citizen engagement.
- Support continued investments in people.
- Improve connectivity and infrastructure for better economic development outcomes.
- Expand the geographical scope of WBG engagement.

Operational flexibility

- Explore the use of Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support (HEIS).
- Enhance the use of GEMS for informed decision-making.

I. Introduction

Guinea presents a double paradox. It is a rich country whose people are extremely poor. Its people are united and not prone to communal conflict, but political elites have used a rhetoric of “winner-take-all,” turn-taking politics to permeate public discourse with intercommunal strife that has occasionally exploded into violence, and risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. These two dynamics are linked, as Guinea’s stalled development is largely a result of these politics, and at times political actors have used the rhetoric of intercommunal enmity as a smokescreen for mismanagement and poor governance. Despite the positive aspects of the paradox, the risks of several types of large-scale violence are significant.

Sixty-four years after independence, Guinea is currently ruled by a transitional government, led by Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, who took power in a September 2021 coup. Three of the four heads of state since Guinea’s first president, Sékou Touré, have come to power in coups. The most recent one was ostensibly catalyzed by constitutional changes perceived to have prepared the way for elected president Alpha Condé to become a president-for-life, as two of his three predecessors had been. Many considered that change, rammed through during the COVID-19 pandemic, a constitutional coup.

Despite years of mismanagement, state suppression of civilian dissent, and outside threats, including serious pressures from civil wars in neighboring countries,⁶ Guinea has held firm. All six of its neighbors have experienced civil war, jihadi violence, separatist insurgency, or some combination of the three.⁷ Guinea has avoided all of these traps, sometimes narrowly. Yet although it is considered a country at peace, the peace has often been quite violent, and thus stability has been tumultuous. Guineans have a strong sense of national identity and understand that achieving long-term goals requires near-term sacrifices. These two dispositions were drilled into the population during the long socialist period (1958–84) and have had an unexpected afterlife as founts of resilience, although questions remain as to whether this resilience can see the country through another transition.

This Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA) is intended to diagnose the key factors of fragility and resilience in Guinea and provide the World Bank Group (WBG) with strategic and operational recommendations for addressing and mitigating fragility and supporting resilience. The objectives of the RRA are to (i) strengthen the WBG’s understanding of fragility drivers and resilience sources in Guinea; (ii) feed into and shape analytics, programming, dialogue, and partnerships, which includes informing the Country Engagement Note (CEN) under preparation; and (iii) explore the WBG’s potential role in addressing these drivers and building on resilience sources. The RRA is in line with the WBG’s Fragility, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) Strategy and uses an analytical framework drawn from seminal work such as the 2018 *Pathways for Peace* report as well as the 2011 *World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development*. It also builds upon the 2017 Guinea RRA. The RRA has been informed by an extensive consultative and participatory approach with a range of external and internal stakeholders, including task team leaders (TTLs) and the Country Management Unit (CMU). Given the complexity and multifaceted nature of FCV dynamics in Guinea, consultations have been essential to draw on a diversity of perspectives, develop an informed analysis of fragility

drivers and sources of resilience, learn lessons from past engagements, and help identify a series of recommendations on how to address FCV drivers through the WBG's development mandate.⁸

The RRA is organized as follows. Part 2 sets the scene for fragility in Guinea today by examining its historical and geographic characteristics and the nature of its political arrangements. Part 3 examines the structural factors of FCV. Part 4 unpacks the key FCV challenges and tensions that manifest in the arenas of power, economics, and governance; environment, land, natural resources, and extractives; access to basic services; and security and justice. Part 5 summarizes the drivers of FCV that emerge from the interplay of the context and challenges. Part 6 outlines the factors of resilience that can help mitigate the FCV drivers. Part 7 identifies the risks to peace and stability going forward, and shocks that might catalyze them. Part 8 proposes recommendations for the WBG and the government to address the FCV challenges and drivers and build on resilience factors.

II. Current Context

After 50 years of autocratic rule, Guinea embarked on a new path toward democratic consolidation, as the country held its first free and fair multiparty elections in 2010.

In the role of historic opponent (Châtelot 2020a), having been on the outside of government for many years, the accession of Alpha Conde to the presidency in December 2010 raised hopes that a new era of democracy would be ushered in, especially as the country faced many development challenges.⁹ The Conde government embarked on a series of reforms¹⁰ and public works¹¹ to improve the population's living conditions. However, despite some positive developments, the government did not entirely manage to deliver on its promises and still exhibited some neo-patrimonial and authoritarian tendencies (Al Jazeera 2020). As the dividends of democracy did not lead to demonstrable changes in Guineans' daily lives, popular expectations increasingly faded. Frustrations accumulated around limited progress with regards to transparency and accountability, as well as issues related to the delivery of services, especially access to electricity. The process around the change of the Guinean Constitution that led to President Conde's reelection for a third mandate in October 2020 crystallized tensions and grievances in the country; these fueled political mobilization and spurred demonstrations that were marred by violence from security forces (Châtelot 2020b), illustrating that many Guineans were deeply supportive of their country's nascent democracy at the same time as believing that democracy had thus far delivered too little.

The seizure of power by a military junta on September 5, 2021, marked another milestone in Guinea's bumpy trajectory toward democratization.

After the coup, the government was dissolved, the constitution was declared invalid, and ministers, governors, and prefects were replaced by administrators and soldiers. Former President Conde was arrested.¹² A transitional charter was established, which outlines the missions and duties of the transitional government, including the drafting of a new constitution and the organization of elections. The charter identifies four institutions and figures in charge of the civilian transition: the Comité national du rassemblement pour le développement (CNRD); the president of the transition, who will also be the head of the CNRD, head of state and armed forces chief; a transitional government with a civilian prime minister; and a legislative body, the Conseil National de Transition (CNT).

The new government has embarked on an ambitious program of reforms, but the process is not without warning signs nor is their overall strategic direction or vision evident.¹³

With its overarching objective to "refound" the State (*Refondation de l'Etat*), the current government has taken major steps to rein in corruption and bring people to account for past violence and embezzlement. The creation of the Cour de répression des infractions économiques et financières (CRIEF) in December 2021 to investigate economic and financial offences committed by previous administrations has led to the investigation and prosecution of corruption cases, targeting former members of the Conde regime, including the former President himself, several ministers, and Guinean opposition leader and former Prime Minister Cellou Dalein Diallo, who has since remained outside the country. Even though Guineans welcome those initiatives, there are perceptions in Guinea that the court might be politically motivated and a convenient way to disqualify potential competitors for national office. The trial of former President Dadis Camara, accused of orchestrating the 2009 stadium massacre (Négoce and

Macaulay 2022), has been a strong signal against impunity and symbolizes a break with the past. However, while this sensitive trial so far appears to have broad public support, it could still spark latent conflict dynamics.

Following the coup, Guinea is at a critical crossroads. After a period of popular euphoria, followed by tensions with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the country now seems to have reached a semblance of appeasement, even though considerable risks remain. The coup was initially embraced by many Guineans,¹⁴ who welcomed the release of 79 political prisoners who had been jailed by the previous government and supported the transition government's emphasis on improved governance that would allow Guineans to finally enjoy their share of the country's potential and wealth. However, this initial euphoria was progressively replaced by growing discontent. The CNRD has failed to bring together the *forces vives* of the nation. The main opposition parties of Alpha Conde, Cellou Dallein Diallo, and Sidya Touré have boycotted the nationwide *Assises Nationales*,¹⁵ the April 2022 inclusive concertation framework (*Cadre de Concertation*) between political parties and civil society, and the inclusive national dialogue initiative.¹⁶ These missed opportunities to build trust and dialogue show the uncompromising nature of the CNRD¹⁷ and the tendency of traditional parties to resort to old party politics, thus undermining the reconciliation process. Finally, tensions with ECOWAS over the transition timeline¹⁸ crystallized the CNRD's own contradictions and after 16 months in power, the CNRD finally agreed to a 24-month transition plan in December 2022. Even though this paved the way for a semblance of appeasement and has brought a moment of calm, the transition process still must embark on a challenging—and perhaps overly ambitious—agenda. This will include writing a new, consultative constitution (see box 1), conducting a national census, remaking the electoral rolls, and holding separate communal, regional, legislative, and presidential elections—in a context where any one of these activities typically takes longer than 24 months. Although the CNRD has gestured in the direction of democratic governance, the opacity of its inner workings (including the fact that the group's composition is unknown) and the fact that it is not yet bound by a constitution, mean that it is fundamentally unfree. The CNRD has banned demonstrations and arrested the leaders of opposition groups such as the Front national pour la défense de la Constitution (FNDC). In addition, another group has recently emerged, named the Front National pour la Défense de la Transition (FNDT), which seeks to cultivate street-level support for the CNRD (L'Express Guinée 2022). It is led by Kéamou Bogola Haba, who led the *Dadis Doit Rester* group that similarly organized young people to take to the streets of Conakry in 2009, “begging” Dadis, seen as their savior, to remain in power.¹⁹

Both Guinean civil society as well as international actors are supportive of and extremely diplomatic in discussing the current situation; for now, there appears to be goodwill that the CNRD will keep its word. Even though the CNRD has suspended all republican institutions, it has gained a veneer of legitimacy. Most development partners²⁰ seem very supportive of the current government and only refer to the “24-month transition,” leaving out the 15-month period prior to the start of the 24-month period in January 2023. State-owned media refers to Colonel Mamady Doumbouya as the “President of the Republic.” For its part, civil society has expressed cautious optimism and a degree of relief that after many years of stagnation, this is a “government of action,” and that the CNRD appears to be cognizant of the importance of signaling to the people that their concerns are being heard.²¹ With that said, many concerns have also been voiced, and both domestic as well as international actors express that whilst hopeful, they are remaining vigilant and closely observing how and if the transition process progresses as promised. With this in mind, it is clear that 2023 will be a pivotal year for determining the next phase of Guinea's trajectory.

Box One

A New Constitution for Guinea in Its Transition to Democratization

The 2020 change to the constitution triggered a political crisis in Guinea that served as one argument to justify the September 2021 coup. While there were some positive elements to the new constitution—such as youth inclusion, abolition of the death penalty, and prohibition of female genital mutilation—the concerns centered around changes that were seen to undermine democratic checks and balances, including the contentious revision to term limits that allowed then-President Condé to run for a third mandate. Therefore, the adoption of a new constitution is seen as a symbolic key priority of the CNRD, instead of reverting to an amended previous version. A three-to-four-month timetable has been established for the development and adoption of a new constitution. A symposium took place over 30 days with legalists for a preliminary draft constitution, followed by plenary debates with the CNT, which associated several actors. The objective was to feed into the vision for the new constitution. In July 2023, the preliminary draft will be submitted to the government, which will have eight days to issue comments. The text will then be submitted to the vote of the CNT. If it is adopted by two-thirds, the draft constitution will be submitted to referendum. Questions have been raised about whether this timetable is realistic.

III. Structural Factors of Fragility

Guinea has several structural factors that are essential to understanding how fragility and resilience dynamics have or will play out in the country's past, present, and future. These are issues that tend to either not change or change very slowly, and thus underpin the fragility and resilience landscape, as well as influence how well the country can weather its drivers and risks.

Guinea's tumultuous political history has yielded several legacies that create fragility.

First, every administration—from the colonial period through Sékou Touré's to the present—has persecuted dissidents and actively used the justice sector (courts, security forces, prisons) to crack down on them. Second, the unilateral nature of the exercise of power has contributed to a “winner-take-all” political culture, especially since the 1990s, which makes capture of the state apparatus equivalent to a series of opportunities for self-enrichment. This has seriously undermined the ability of and incentives for the state to provide services to the population, and international development and emergency aid organizations have stepped in to play this role in ways that have yielded important short-term benefits but have also likely contributed to poor governance practices and mismanagement in the long term. Thirdly, the unpredictable nature of Guinean politics all the way down to the village level has led to a conservative “safety first” approach in all things, including risk-averse economic decision making. The types of hedging that result from such high levels of uncertainty are as economically and socially rational as they are suboptimal for pushing past subsistence.

A proud historical legacy but a challenging postindependence period

Guinea has a proud history as the seat of several precolonial empires and is one of the poles from which conversion to Islam in West Africa emanated.

The territory that became Guinea was affected by the Atlantic Slave Trade, which caused significant depopulation of some areas and fueled regional warfare. Many precolonial Guinean societies also featured domestic slave-raiding and enslavement. Alongside the existence of occupational endogamous (in-marrying) groups sometimes described as castes, relations between free, unfree, and caste groups formed some of the hierarchies of precolonial societies. Like ethnic identities, many of these statuses were fluid and negotiable according to the social setting, but colonial rule tended to fix ethnic, religious, and status identities as French administrators sought to identify the people and groups through whom they would construct the architecture of indirect colonial rule.

2017 RRA

Politically, there were numerous attempts to overthrow the Guinean government, some of which were backed by French secret forces. These experiences induced a siege mentality at the heart of the young Guinean state.

Guineans remained critical of and resistant to colonial rule throughout its history. Their rejection of colonial second-class citizenship accelerated after Guinean soldiers who had fought in World War II and been held in the same Nazi prisoner of war camps as their French comrades returned. In 1958, with the Algerian war becoming increasingly divisive and African independence visible on the horizon, President Charles De Gaulle returned to the French presidency, inaugurating the fifth republic with a new constitution and a vote for all of France’s colonies (except Algeria) for immediate independence or continued membership as colonies in the French Community. Only Guinea voted for independence—on September 28, 1958. Sékou Touré, a trade unionist and former postal clerk with tremendous charisma and oratorical skills, led the organization of the “No” vote, and as a result took his place in the pantheon of pan-Africanist “fathers of independence,” alongside Nkrumah, Lumumba, Nyerere, and Kenyatta.

While Guinea’s political independence went unchallenged, its economic takeoff was undercut by France’s retaliatory reaction to the vote, emptying all cash and gold from the Central Bank and isolating Guinea economically and diplomatically. With only eight university graduates at the time of independence, Guinea had to craft economic policy and establish its ministries from scratch, all while balancing the promises and threats of Cold War competition between the communist and capitalist blocs. Guinea’s nonaligned socialist pan-Africanist line navigated this balance, but President Touré and those closest to him became increasingly paranoid, denouncing real and concocted “plots” to overthrow the government, and jailing and killing thousands of real and perceived “enemies of the revolution.” The effects of the persistent surveillance, suppression of dissent, and physical violence from this period are relevant to today’s conflict dynamics, even while they have become muted and refracted with the passage of time.

Legacy of socialist governance, fairness, and the concept of “turn-taking”

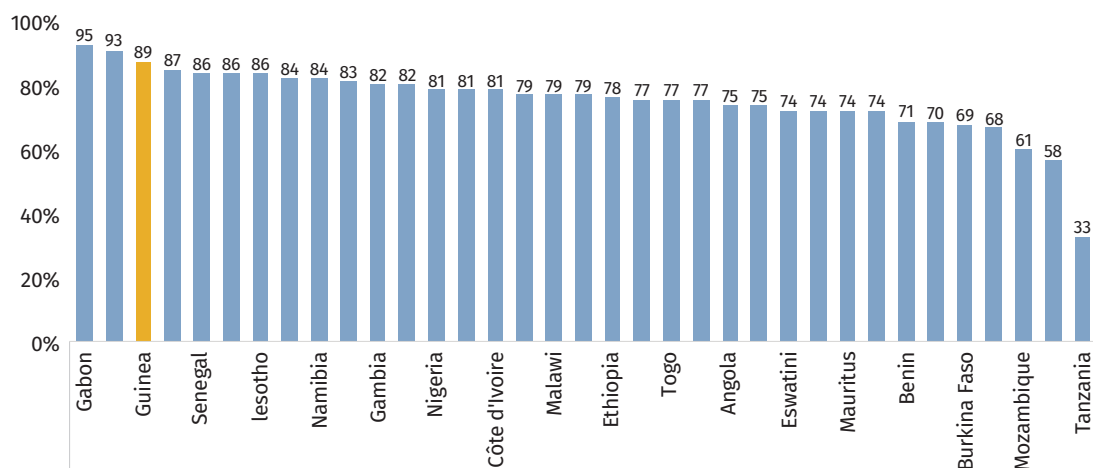
Guineans’ broad support for the revolutionary pan-Africanist state, as well as the state’s ideological coherence, did not lead to rapid economic development. It did, however, produce a certain degree of social cohesion and a widely understood theory of the kinds of collective sacrifices both citizens and governing elites would have to make to achieve both intangible (dignity, psychological decolonization, pan-African solidarity) and material goals.

While interethnic politics are a familiar dynamic in political economies in which scarce resources are inequitably distributed, it is crucial to highlight the fact that Guineans have experience with a different form of governance. Under socialism, Guinea was poorer than it is now, but that poverty was shared quite equally across the population. During socialism, civil servants who bought a car or metal roofing for their house were frequently investigated by the economic police and made to justify how they had managed to afford such luxuries on their modest salaries. With this in mind, Guineans have low tolerance for the persistence of inequality and are highly dissatisfied with the level of economic stratification that currently exists in the country; as Figure 1 shows, 89 percent of respondents felt that the government is handing economic inequality “fairly badly” or “very badly.”

2017 RRA

Ethnicity is a political problem in Guinea, not a social one.

Figure 1: Poor government performance on economic inequality, 2019/2021



Notes: Respondents were asked: “How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough to say: Narrowing gaps between rich and poor?” (% who say “fairly badly” or “very badly”).

President Touré committed many abuses against dissidents, and this era was extremely harsh for Guineans. However, this period and its politics should be understood as the origin of some very powerful dynamics (strong national identity, for instance), and these can still be catalyzed today.²² Indeed, while it may be a counterintuitive comparison, it can be argued that Guinea’s trajectory looks less like its African neighbors and more like the shift from a coercive command economy to the oligarchic self-enrichment that the Soviet Union/Russia underwent during the 1990s.

Winner-take-all politics and the significance of ethnicity

A norm of “turn-taking” has developed as a “least bad” model of allowing different groups to benefit from their time in office. Even as it has become normalized, it is still a model many deplore. However, it has become a structural factor that can give rise to violence and conflict when one or several groups see themselves as being systematically excluded from the economic spoils of politics. During the 2010 elections, ethnic Peuhls openly used the rallying cry, “It’s our turn!” in support of the *Union des forces démocratiques de Guinée* (UFDG) and its candidate Cellou Dalein Diallo. Using the (flawed) model of the four “natural” regions of Guinea and the ethnic groups that predominated in each,²³ UFDG supporters counted Guinea’s presidents as having been first Maninka, then Susu, then Forestier, leaving only Peuhls without a turn. Now that the subsequent two heads of government have both been Maninka, those who subscribe to the turn-taking ideal see the system as out of balance. It is worth noting that many Guineans also do informal calculations of the ethnic breakdown of ministerial and secretary generals posts, and ethnic Peuhls feel that their ethnic group has been underrepresented in that regard, too.

Guinea is sometimes described as a country with deep ethnic rifts; however, Guineans most often talk about ethnicity as being a nonissue. While this is seemingly contradictory, it is an effective example of the complex role that ethnicity plays in Guinean society; mobilized in some ways and not in others. Large swathes of Guinea’s territory are and have been ethnically

intermixed for several hundred years, with intermarriage common. This is true of the Forest Region, large portions of Upper Guinea, where Fulbe and Maninka are intermixed, and the Fouta, where a small population of Fulbe nobles have incorporated people from all over present-day Guinea, many of them the descendants of those formerly enslaved by the Fulbe and subsequently intermixed with them. Guinea's coast is a region where the longstanding Baga, Nalou, and Landuma populations have become a minority, outnumbered by relatively new coming Susu, Peuhl, and others. In this context of hundreds of years of migration and movement, many Guineans can legitimately claim to be members of several ethnicities, depending on the situation.

And yet, there is a pervasive discourse of ethnic division and even violence, often promoted by elites and sometimes embraced by ordinary citizens, especially during electoral periods.

Ethnic Peuhls refer to systematic discrimination and persecution, dating from the socialist period when President Sékou Touré spoke frequently of “Le complot Peuhl,” (the Peuhl plot) “Peuhl nepotism,” and “Peuhl racism.” There have been violent clashes between Peuhls and Susus, between Peuhls and Maninkas, and also between Forestiers and Maninkas in Guinea's southeastern Forest Region. While the former clashes have claimed dozens or even several hundred lives over the past three decades, Maninka-Forestier violence has probably killed approximately 2,000 people (McGovern 2017). Clearly, interethnic competition and enmity exist, and the strong sense of a national identity does not always allow for conflict mitigation. Several authors have addressed this paradox directly (Arieff 2009; Arieff and McGovern 2013; McGovern 2013, 2017). Others have treated it indirectly, as in Philipps' 2013 analysis of violent street gangs. While they are often described as being ethnically organized, Philipps makes clear that they are violent entrepreneurs, well organized to sow disorder. Most often they will throw rocks and burn tires for the highest bidder, seemingly displaying their attachment to a political party or ethnic constituency, but actually treating street violence as one of several informal occupations available to young men without much education or job skills.²⁴

The divisive face of ethnicized politics since multiparty democracy began in the early 1990s is to a large extent fueled by politicians and other elites.

Since the middle of the Lansana Conté period in the mid-1990s, control of the state apparatus has allowed presidents, ministers, and businesspeople close to them to become extremely rich. Political parties and their leaders have been quick to decry these practices amongst their competitors,²⁵ and to promise that they would eradicate corruption and self-dealing. Indeed, this has been a central pillar of the governments of both Dadis Camara and Mamadi Doumbouya, both of which set up mechanisms to prosecute (real or perceived) corrupt members of the prior

2017 RRA

The Peuhl are largely left with a mixed sense of perpetual victimhood and isolation vis-à-vis the other main groups—Malinké, Forestiers, and Soussou. The other groups, in turn, entertain fears that the Peuhl may become too powerful in Guinea. Peuhl businesses have trading networks across West Africa, and have been influential in Guinea ever since Conté's economic liberalization. Many of Guinea's intellectuals are Peuhl, and given their numbers and what is often perceived as an exaggerated ethnic solidarity, the Peuhl continue to be politically sidelined.

2017 RRA

These conflicts are not necessarily “ethnic” in nature, as they comprise a multitude of grievances, including political and socioeconomic ones; however, their ethnic constitutes a threat for social cohesion in Guinea.

government. At the same time, political parties have had little to say about how they would deliver services and opportunities to most Guineans. Party platforms, when they exist, are remarkably vague and thin. During elections, the ethnic card is often one of the few modes of distinction and justification parties have available to them. Politicians are therefore often perceived to be the primary drivers of division amongst an otherwise solidary Guinean population.²⁶

Especially in Conakry, ordinary Guineans are fluent in the language of ethnic enmity, isolation, and nepotism, but it is important to distinguish underlying causes of frustration from the rhetoric used to express them. For instance, the greatest frustrations often stem from elsewhere, such as lack of service delivery, unpredictable land tenure and use, and an abusive/neglectful justice sector. Moreover, Guineans have consistently seen enormous wealth being created around mining deals and other government activities, with the proceeds not being shared with most of the population. The dream of becoming close to a high-level member of government thus becomes analogous to buying a winning lottery ticket, and the means to such a connection is usually understood to be family or ethnic connections and the moral requirements for reciprocity and wealth-sharing that can be brought to bear in such relationships.

Rural poverty reinforces structural inequalities

Most Guineans are poor, but Guinean poverty exhibits some clear patterns and has entrenched a significant urban-rural gap. In addition to being far more prevalent and deeper in rural areas, it also varies considerably across regions. Approximately 43.7 percent of Guineans experience monetary poverty, with 22.4 percent in urban areas and 55.4 percent in rural areas. Although 64.6 percent of the population lives in rural Guinea, 81.8 percent of the monetary poor are in rural areas.²⁷ As this discrepancy suggests, poverty rates are considerably lower in Conakry than in the regions, but they vary significantly between region, with poverty four times as prevalent in Labé as in Conakry (see figure 2). Multidimensional poverty²⁸ varies somewhat by region, but while the seven interior and more rural regions range from a 36.4 percent to a 49.4 percent prevalence of multidimensional poverty, Conakry stands at 6.3 percent, bringing the national average to 37.3 percent. This follows a decline in multidimensional poverty index (MPI) incidence from 36 percent in 2012 to 32 percent in 2018, so the 2021 numbers demonstrate a significant increase in poverty. Moreover, although poverty rates fell slightly between 2014 and 2018, they increased for the poorest quintile.²⁹ When measured as multidimensional poverty, 54.3 percent of Guineans are poor. Guinea's MPI measures are slightly higher than Guinea-Bissau's and Benin's, and significantly higher than Senegal's, Côte d'Ivoire's, and Togo's.

Two examples help to measure the urban rural gap and point to patterns that suggest the persistence of legacies of inequality. While poverty incidence in Conakry is 15.7 percent, it ranges from twice that (30.5 percent in Kankan region) to four times that rate of poverty (66.1 percent in Labe) in the regions. However, even within the regions, there are stark disparities between the poverty rates in the regional capitals, all small cities, and the surrounding rural areas. In Labé region, for instance, the urban poverty incidence is 17.8 percent, while the region's rural area has a poverty incidence of 72.4 percent, more than four times the urban rate (World Bank 2021a). The spatial patterns of social inequality in Labé and Mamou regions, the country's most rural areas, are linked to the legacy of domestic slavery,

in which nobles lived in central *miiside* villages surrounded by *rundé* hamlets inhabited by enslaved people. This pattern persists to this day, though the passage of time, interventions of subsequent state policies, and the modern dictates of etiquette that render certain topics taboo, have obscured the clear-cut distinctions between such spaces. Yet these inequalities are apparent both in terms of land tenure as well as in the religious prerogatives of people of noble and unfree descent. The dynamics that arise from these persisting inequalities, though somewhat hidden to outside observers, are important to understand as they contribute to the country's fragility.

Figure 2: Poverty Incidence

Region	Urban	Rural	Total
Boké	26.4	53.5	46.4
Conakry	15.7	—	15.7
Faranah	46.3	68.9	63.8
Kankan	16.1	34.2	30.5
Kindia	30.4	75.8	59.5
Labé	17.8	72.4	66.1
Mamou	21.2	48.6	44.7
N'Zérékoré	32.3	49.9	45.6
Guinée	22.4	55.4	43.7

Source: World Bank 2021a, 21.

IV. Arenas of Contestation

The concept of “arenas of contestation” captures critical spaces where risks accumulate and intensify. The four arenas represent issues that exemplify what people and groups care about most in their relationships with each other and with the state, and where they bargain for what matters to them: livelihoods, fairness, aspirations for a better future for themselves and their families, and overall well-being.

Power, economics, and governance

As discussed, the winner-take-all perception of the link between politics and economic gain, and the ways ethnicity cuts across it, feeds contestation around power and how it manifests, with the potential to inspire violence.

This emerges from a system of governance overshadowed by a president with unchecked powers, a legacy of authoritarian and clientelist rule, and from which, as patterns are repeated, it becomes more challenging to break. In this context, economic progress has failed to trickle down to the poorest, while the lack of inclusive growth and poor resources management have undermined a fair distribution of the mining endowment. Contestation thus far has come from the inability of the governance system to reform and build sustainable democratic institutions, to be accountable to citizens, and to foster social cohesion.

2017 RRA

President Alpha Condé, after winning Guinea's 2010 presidential elections, said he inherited a country without a state.

Power and governance

Demand for greater accountability and transparency at the core of popular grievances

Alpha Conde was first elected in 2010 with a mandate to reform institutions and improve economic prospects after decades of contestation about governance. President Condé's first mandate allowed progress in terms of economic governance, transparency, and institutional reforms. His economic reforms were welcomed by international actors, particularly efforts to modernize the private sector and improve economic competitiveness.³⁰ Several initiatives allowed improving transparency and business practices in the mining sector, the main source of foreign direct investment and state revenues: the adoption of a new mining code, the revision of several mining contracts, the online publication of contracts, and Guinea's readmission to the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) in 2014 (Mosaïque Guinée 2021).

Since 2010, a new impetus was given to the decentralization agenda with the objective to improve service delivery and the social contract.³¹ Even though the process to build all

institutions required by law was slow (Sacko 2019), noticeable progress was made. In 2016, the country established the National Local Development Fund (Fond National de Développement Local; FNDL) and the National Agency for Local Governments Financing (Agence Nationale de Financement des Collectivités Locales; ANAFIC). An additional fund, the Local Economic Development Fund (Fonds de Développement Economique Local; FODEL) was established to channel additional resources derived from mining revenues to communes most affected by extractive activity. The contribution of the FNDL and FODEL to a more equitable redistribution of resources positioned Guinea as an often-cited example of positive local governance reform in the region (République de Guinée 2017). In addition, a new code for local collectivities was adopted in 2017, strengthening local democracy through a reform of the local electoral code, creating new communes, and deepening local jurisdiction over several fields, including social services and education (République de Guinée 2017). Still, lack of resources and capacity issues at the local level impede the implementation of a fully effective decentralization agenda (World Bank 2019).

However, improvement in good governance remained modest. Since 2011, several bodies were created, notably the National Agency for the Fight Against Corruption (Agence nationale de lutte contre la corruption; ANLC). These efforts were limited, as the ANLC lacked application decrees as well as stable funding (Guinée 2020). At the time, the creation of the ANLC and the adoption of several anti-corruption measures were welcomed, but implementation highlights the difficulty of establishing checks and balances over an overly centralized government (Guinée 2020). Guinea modestly improved its Mo Ibrahim Index of Governance score from 41.2 percent in 2010 to 42,5 percent in 2019, while remaining below the regional average of 54 (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2021). Poor governance remains pervasive. Guinea ranks 137 of 180 countries in the 2019 Index of Corruption, with a score of 28 percent.³² Still, 62 percent of Guineans believe that corruption increased in 2019, and 42 percent of public service users said that they had paid a bribe to receive services.³³

President Condé put frail Guinean institutions into a stress test during the 2020 elections.

The 2020 elections and referendum left the president virtually unopposable: the national assembly and the courts could not offer concrete checks and balances, and the president named only allies in the government and in positions of power (Diop 2015). The removal in 2018 of Kéléfa Sall, the head of the Constitutional Court who asked Condé not to seek a third mandate and respect the constitution, can be interpreted as a direct attack on the independence of justice.³⁴ The opposition's boycott of the legislative elections left the president and his allies unchallenged in formal political institutions. The FNDC³⁵ became the main umbrella that opposed the constitutional change and Condé's third mandate (Fofana and Philipps 2020). The opposition had participated in previous presidential and legislative elections, despite criticizing the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), but the 2020 elections and the opposition's electoral boycott fragilized their position, highlighting the widespread disillusionment with Guinea's democracy among potential opposition voters and the level of popular mistrust of political elites.

It is against this background that the CNRD attempts to “refound the State,” with a focus on greater accountability. The establishment of the CRIEF shows the CNRD's willingness to tackle poor governance practices and impunity. In addition, issues regarding accountability prompted the CNRD to conduct an audit and freeze the account of local governments suspected of misgovernance to be replaced by *Délégations Spéciales*.³⁶ Mayors who were elected in the 2018 local elections but whose seating was delayed to early 2019³⁷ will see their mandate expire in February 2023, and will also be replaced by *Délégations Spéciales*. Many Guineans hesitate at the fact that the Ministry of Territorial Administration and

Decentralization (MATD) has hand-picked these officials' replacements, rather than running a local election or otherwise allowing local citizens to choose their new representative. The main concern is that these newly appointed officials, who will be running the census and electoral list processes as well as the elections that follow, will influence those processes in a politically biased manner, which was a recurrent practice under the Condé government, one that challenged the legitimacy of the state and was a key source of popular grievances.

Youth's aspirations and grievances with the political establishment

Recent governments have not adequately listened to the aspirations and voice of young people, who have subsequently turned to the streets to make their voices heard in the absence of official communication channels. High youth unemployment and limited economic opportunities were at the core of their disapproval of the Condé government, as they perceived important barriers to moving further into adulthood. One survey found that as high as 76 percent of young people had not seen any improvement during Condé's decade in power, and 73 percent stated that they face increasing marginalization from governmental policies, judging that President Condé had failed to empower the youth and be inclusive, instead favoring his own political elite (Bangura 2019). Several youth protests on education, employment, and political empowerment were violently suppressed during Condé's presidency, building a sense of uneasiness toward security forces: 69 percent of 232 interviewees between the ages of 18 and 35 indicated that they felt unsafe and could not trust state security actors, whose goal was perceived as solely focusing on protecting a government unwilling to constructively engage with youth (Bangura 2019). Youth voices have increasingly relied on social media for civic engagement, which became an important tool for mobilization prior to the 2020 campaign (Bergère 2020).

This backdrop explains why many young people were jubilant when President Condé was overthrown. As one young leader proclaimed, "Before 5 September I had no hope, now there is hope."³⁸ However, it is also not lost on youth activists that those who were killed or hurt in the demonstrations in July and October 2022 were predominantly young men. Another youth civil society member noted that even if only one or two people are killed at a time, those numbers add up, and young people are keeping score.³⁹ At the same time, there has been a vast appreciation, after years of stagnation, that the CNRD is taking visible action on many issues; moreover, their communication of these actions to the population makes citizens feel involved and indicates that the CNRD also cares about winning their approval (see box 2). Nonetheless, they are under no illusions; young people consulted for this RRA were unanimous in their expression of patience up until a point, and made clear that they had higher expectations than ever that the authorities' promises will be kept.⁴⁰

Attempts to improve macroeconomic stability and fiscal governance have had some negative consequences

The transition government has launched several economic and human resources reforms, aimed at stabilizing the macroeconomic situation. In an effort to depart from past ill-advised economic policy reforms, the authorities have instituted a stable monetary policy, settled payment arrears, and consolidated public finances. The CNRD also forced 8,000 civil servants and military staff to retire, as they had all passed the mandatory retirement age. This move was especially welcomed by youth representatives, even though it created capacity problems in almost every ministry, as people with scant experience took over jobs with significant responsibility. Attempts to bring the diaspora back to key positions in ministries have also

had some unintended consequences. Even though these new officials are well trained, they do not know the Guinean administration well, which has led to inefficiencies.⁴¹ A more gradual phasing out period would have been more advisable, especially in light of remaining economic challenges. Indeed, Guinea's fiscal receipts remain extremely low. At only 12 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), Guinea's tax income is just two-thirds of the West African average of 18 percent.⁴² Like other postcolonial states, Guinea suffers from the legacy of colonial illegitimacy (Frankema and Waijenburg 2022), but the broad perception that tax payments do not result in social spending means that Guineans invest much energy in avoiding these payments, starving the government of resources and also feeding into exactly the system of government bribery that is the source of the hesitation to pay taxes in the first place.⁴³

Box Two

A Role for Women in the Transitional Government?

Women in Guinea have typically faced significant disadvantages in terms of political participation. Several barriers remain to women's social, political, and economic participation, including customary laws that often take precedence over national law.^a Women's representation has tended to be weak: 14 percent of members at the National Assembly and 30 percent of Condé's last cabinet were women.^b However, the transitional government is giving more agency to women, even though their participation within the CNT remains low. (As of July 2022, out of 81 CNT members, only 25 were women.) The three mediators, who were chosen to facilitate inclusive dialogue framework, were all female.^c In order to increase the qualitative participation of women in the legislative sphere, a Women's Caucus (CF-CNT) of Guinea was established within the CNT.^d

Sources:

a, b. Consultations, January 23–27, 2023, Conakry.

c. Consultations, January 2023, Conakry; Zaima.info 2022.

d. Bah 2022.

The double-edged sword of mining's potential

Mining has long been the motor of Guinea's economy, and as the world's top bauxite producer and holder of large iron, gold, and diamond reserves, the country's mineral wealth has attracted serious international interest. Many characteristics of the Dutch disease⁴⁴ exist in Guinea. The absence of diversification in the country's economy presents a structural risk of violence and destabilization. The top of the political pyramid presents the allure of capturing lucrative mining contracts and at the bottom of the same socioeconomic pyramid, populations with increasing access to information have become angry and restive at the fact their lives have not sufficiently improved, and have even seriously degraded in mining areas, especially as they realize that economic activities are creating massive wealth for a few (Bah et al. 2020).

The CNRD closed a major loophole by installing a price floor on bauxite ore. The national government is the main recipient of mining royalties, and tax collection increased by

46 percent between 2016 and 2017. The implementation of the new mining code and a new licensing process has increased transparency (NRGI 2020). Yet while mining constitutes 90 percent of Guinea's total exports and 21 percent of its GDP, the mining sector only generated 2 percent of GDP in revenues in 2021 due to bauxite mispricing (IMF 2023). Because there is no smelting taking place in Guinea and because there is a worldwide market price for aluminum but not for the bauxite ore from which it comes, companies with close ties to national governments were selling ore at artificially low prices, preventing the Guinean state from benefitting from the full royalties they were owed. In July 2022, the government set a reference price formula, which would determine the minimum price that bauxite should be sold, with the obligation for companies that intend to sell at a lower price to justify their decision to the tax authority (IMF 2023). This has been welcomed by those pushing for anticorruption and good governance. In addition, the Guinea Alumina Corporation (GAC) has agreed to build an alumina refinery by 2027, which would allow Guinea to make more profits by refining aluminum in-country, rather than exporting raw material and bauxite, and to control more of the value chain.

A vibrant but underdeveloped and underutilized domestic private sector creates additional tensions

Beyond mining, Guinea has much economic potential—but the private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, still face considerable constraints. The exact rate of informality is difficult to determine, but it is estimated to account for 42 percent of GDP and at least two-thirds of employment (IFC 2020; Bertelsmann Stiftung 2022). While the business climate has improved in recent years, the private sector suffers from many of the same elements of fragility that afflict the rest of the country, with hindered poverty reduction meaning that a significant proportion of the labor force lacks the skills to meet the technical competencies required by certain elements of the private sector, and limited infrastructure and transport further hamper development (IMF 2021). Related to these challenges, there is also a strong preference for imports, which affects domestic demand. The lack of localization is a major grievance of the domestic private sector; more than 75 percent of firms use material inputs or supplies from abroad, and nearly 70 percent of total inputs are also from abroad (IFC 2020).

Survivalist entrepreneurship is the most common, meaning that most informal entrepreneurs just barely make ends meet, with Guinea ranking 131 out of 138 countries in the Global Entrepreneurship Index (IFC 2020). The lack of incentives to transition to the formal economy will continue to challenge the collection of revenues from most of the private sector. Likewise, remaining informal will cap the size of enterprises and their access to finance, technical accompaniment, and export potential. Credit to the private sector was around 9.3 percent in 2018, with commercial banks understandably reluctant to extend loans to potential borrowers who do not meet certain international standards and who do not have credit history (U.S. Department of State 2021). Even for firms that can access credit, it is extremely expensive, with the average interest rate of 22 percent in Guinea, compared with an average of between 14 and 16 percent in neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the West African and Monetary Union (WAEMU) average of about 7 percent (IFC 2020). While the international private sector faces its own set of challenges in terms of operating in Guinea, the local private sector tends to be more comfortable with the country's political economy, and better equipped to navigate certain aspects of the business environment. However, in consultations for the RRA, the latter repeatedly emphasized that the lack of access to finance/credit was the biggest constraint to the sector's ability to transform itself and exponentially increase its positive contribution to the economy.⁴⁵

Box Three

The COVID-19 Pandemic or the *Épidémie Tournevis*

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted Guineans in various ways. As of December 2, 2022, there were 38,153 confirmed cases in Guinea, with 464 deaths,^a though those numbers are likely to be underestimates. On the economic front, the pandemic affected real growth, with about 30 percent of households having reported a reduction in their income of more than 50 percent. COVID-19 also contributed to a sharp rise in food and fuel prices. The percentage of Guineans vulnerable to poverty rose from 63^b in 2018–19 to 74 percent in 2020.^c Given the pandemic-wide dispersion, COVID-19 related shocks were experienced at similar rates in urban and rural settings.^d Nearly 600,000 people were pushed into food insecurity during the first six months of the pandemic.^e Female-headed households and households in rural areas were disproportionately affected by the economic impacts. According to the Guinean National Institute of Statistics, year-on-year consumer price index prices rose 8.5 percent from August 2021 to August 2022, with the greatest increases (32.6 percent) coming in the housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels sectors.^f

COVID-19 measures (such as restrictions on people's movement) have increased hardship and exacerbated social discontent. Many Guineans called COVID-19 the *épidémie tournevis*, or the screwdriver epidemic, to refer to the way the Condé government used it as a pretext to ban opposition gatherings in 2020 as Condé was preparing to change the constitution, and before the elections.^g Deadly clashes between security forces and commuters over road blockages in Conakry, Kindia, and Dubreka were reported in July 2020 and early September 2020.

Sources:

- a. Guinea WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard with Vaccination Data, World Health Organization, Geneva, <https://covid19.who.int/region/afro/country/gn>.
- b. INS 2020.
- c. World Bank, High Frequency Phone Survey, September/October 2020.
- d, e. World Bank 2021a.
- f. World Bank weekly economic update, November 28, 2022.
- g. Interview, December 1, 2022.

“Le panier de la ménagère” and fuel costs—at the core of popular grievances

Rising fuel and food prices pose a high risk of widespread dissatisfaction and have fomented moments of violent upheaval. Guinean governments have always subsidized the cost of gasoline, and Guineans have been particularly sensitive of and protective about this issue. Decisions to raise the cost of fuel are extremely unpopular among the population⁴⁶ and have led to demonstrations, sometimes violent, as occurred along the route Le Prince in June 2022 (Guineematin.com 2022a). Similarly, since June 2022, food prices have sharply risen from 5,200 GF/kilo to 6,400 GF/kilo, and the soaring prices of basic necessities (*“le panier de la ménagère”*) is a main source of worry among the population,⁴⁷ as the country already experiences high food insecurity. Indeed, it is estimated that 21.8 percent of households are food insecure, and malnutrition remains alarmingly high.⁴⁸ The situation is particularly

dire for rural populations, especially smallholder farmers, who also comprise the majority of the country's poor.⁴⁹ This shows a clear correlation between poverty and food insecurity, particularly for women,⁵⁰ who constitute 60 percent of people suffering from chronic hunger.

The current government has tried to respond to citizens' expectations regarding food and fuel prices, but this policy choice comes with tradeoffs, with short-term satisfaction potentially leading to longer term problems. In November 2022, the Guinean government reached an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the latter to release US\$69 million in emergency financing to cover its balance of payments gap,⁵¹ which had primarily resulted from the government's expenditures to dampen the suffering created by rising food and fuel prices. In March 2022, the government fixed the cost of a 50kg bag of rice at 300,000 GF. The politically motivated setting of prices may provide some short-term benefits to an administration, but the funds required for such subsidies come out of budgets that would otherwise be available for other types of government spending. Guinea is certainly capable of being self-sufficient in rice production. However, the short-term stability that can come from setting fixed prices and the decision to import rice and other goods has appeared to be more attractive to successive governments than focusing on growing those sectors that would enable Guinea to be more self-sufficient in key food staples.⁵²

Land, natural resources, and climate change

Land tenure and usage is the intersection of almost every other factor discussed in this assessment, from governance to interethnic strife, to economic inequality between urban and rural areas, to problems in the justice sector, governance, and service provision; it is therefore a major focus of this section. Around 60 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture, most of it extremely low yield, using few inputs and little irrigation or technology. Despite this high percentage, many development strategies revolve around either spreading a small portion of mining proceeds around to adjacent communities that have lost their land by eminent domain (rather than employing people from those communities), or by agribusiness projects that risk dispossessing a proportion of rural smallholders. This section will first discuss the mining sector and the effects of climate change before turning to the vitally important issues surrounding local micropolitics of land ownership and use rights that determine who can cultivate land, for how long, and under what circumstances in different regions of Guinea.

The two sides of mining

Mining is a flashpoint for several reasons. While it has been an essential source of revenue and has boosted the country's overall economic prospects, it has also made extremely limited contributions to supporting social development gaps or developing economic opportunities for average Guineans. Employment in the mining sector accounts for 6.5 percent of overall employment, with only 0.4 percent in industrial mining (NRGI 2021). In Fria, local investments have created newly built enclaves—with electricity and amenities—that are disconnected from the wider realities and deprivations elsewhere in the country, increasing tensions between local communities and newcomers and raising questions about sustainability, as no alternative livelihoods are being developed, and locals will likely remain in extreme poverty once the resource has been fully exploited (Diallo 2017). In mining communities, the population's economic situation remains precarious, and expectations for employment and improved quality of life have thus far remained unfulfilled (Bah et al. 2020). There is also

significant evidence that the sector has been the site of high-level corruption, with multiple incidents reinforcing citizens' perceptions that mining only benefits a select few⁵³ and stoking frustration that the sector is unjust.⁵⁴

Added to this, in the area around Boke, there has been a rapid expansion of bauxite mining.⁵⁵

Complaints are rampant that farmland is taken with insufficient compensation, water has become scarce (and often undrinkable), and that dust created by mining covers whole villages and causes respiratory illness (Bah et al. 2020). As the title of a Human Rights Watch report on mining in the Boké region succinctly asks, “What do we get out of it?” (HRW 2018). Even when mining companies live up to the commitments they have made with the government, expectations always outstrip reality, and adjacent communities especially resent the fact that their own inhabitants are not employed more in mining operations, which can create tensions with other more highly trained or educated Guineans coming from other parts of the country (see box 4) (Bah et al. 2020).

Box Four

Mining Triggers Multiple Grievances that Can Turn Violent

Uprisings linked to mining in April and September 2017 killed three people and led to the burning or attacks of trucks, warehouses, and administrative buildings. While the first uprising was sparked by the death of a motorcycle taxi driver by a bauxite truck, the second resulted from a lack of electricity and water in the town. Protesters removed railway tracks, preventing bauxite ore from being transported to the port. This type of sabotage echoed 2012 community attacks on mining equipment in the Forest Region village of Zogota over anger that local inhabitants had not been hired, even for low-skilled jobs.^a In 2020, several violent protesters were killed by security forces while they demonstrated against COVID-19 roadblocks. While this violence was not caused by anger about mining, the mining regions are primed for violence that can emerge suddenly around multiple claims. This type of disruption will remain a risk in the Boké/Kamsar region.

Source:

a. HRW 2013.

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) also represents an important resource for Guinea but remains largely unregulated, creating important risks for the population.

More than 200 gold mining sites have been recorded in Guinea, in 5 prefectures in the east of the country, near the border with Mali,⁵⁶ providing income to more than 200,000 people. Artisanal mining represents a third of the country's gold exports with nearly 12 tons, against 18 tons for industrial mining (Deveaux 2021). According to the Ministry of Mines, the country has potential reserves estimated at 700 tons of gold. In 2021, in the Kounsitel region, near the border with Senegal, the discovery of gold caused a rush in the area, just as it did in Siguiri in the 2010s. It is estimated that the number of artisanal gold miners has grown by a factor of five. Gold mining is a traditional and lucrative activity that attracts many youth who are seeking to improve their living conditions. However, the consequences are dire.⁵⁷ Mass school

dropouts of children, abandonment of agricultural crops, delinquency, and consumption of narcotics have been recorded. Accidents and landslides are recurrent (BBC 2021), and there have been negative environmental impacts, including degradation of arable land and pollution of water resources (Cissé 2022). In addition, the arrival of many foreign gold miners and the abandonment of agriculture have increased the pressure on gold mining, which used to be a subsidiary and seasonal activity. This new rush has strongly affected the traditional and customary structures of artisanal gold mining, which has now become a lucrative year-round activity that attracts new populations to the area. Finally, an overlap between permits held by mining companies and artisanal mining areas have led to conflicts, as artisanal miners encroach on industrial sites (Jeune Afrique 2021).

Land tenure and use at the heart of contestation

Land ownership is a key and cross-cutting source of contestation. The Guinean state initiated several reforms to modernize property titles.⁵⁸ In November 2022, the government organized the “*États généraux du foncier*” to take stock of Guinea’s land tenure situation and build a common roadmap for land governance (see box 5). Land ownership, especially in rural areas, still faces problematic institutional frameworks and lacks a dispute settlement process: in several cases, particularly in Forested Guinea, the inability to recognize traditional collective rights and the absence of fair arbitration has allowed individuals to infringe on community rights and use the law against those it is supposed to protect (Diallo, Grovogui, and Soumaoro 2021). It is estimated that fewer than 25 percent of land plots and public lands are secured through a land title in Guinea, whereas secure and accessible land titles are essential to both public and private investors (FAO 2023). As a result, 70 percent of the disputes at the courts and tribunals are related to land (FAO 2023). Finally, the system leaves those most vulnerable, especially women and youth who are discriminated against in the inheritance system, unable to claim their rights, while informal practices perceived as legitimate by communities are not recognized (USAID 2016).

Box Five

New Impetus on Land Reforms

On November 2022, a high-level forum known as *États Généraux du Foncier* was organized with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), with the objective to take stock of Guinea’s land tenure situation and propose a solution. *États Généraux* brought together more than 350 participants from all sectors and regions of the country to build a common roadmap for land governance. *États Généraux* led to a consensus on the following main recommendations: (i) revise the land code in a participatory manner and popularize it; (ii) elaborate an agricultural land law built around a coherent and inclusive agricultural land policy, taking into account all shortcomings of the land code with regard to the specifics of agro-sylvo-pastoral and halieutic land issues; and (iii) make the national multistakeholder platform on land governance the responsible body for following up on the recommendations of the *Etats Généraux du Foncier*. In terms of next steps, FAO will work with the government to implement those recommendations and translate the action plan into concrete planning.

Land tenure conflicts are sometimes overlooked because they often appear to have other explanations or be about different sources of tension. Therefore, the rest of this section will present three mini-case studies (in the following boxes) taken from field-based research that demonstrate the various manifestations that conflicts over land can take in different parts of Guinea. These include (i) competition over artisanal mining rights; (ii) conflict between Salafi converts and “moderate” Muslims; and (iii) interethnic conflict. What they have in common is that a significant portion of each conflict has to do with the uncertainties that surround land ownership and use rights, and the ways in which individuals and groups attempt to exploit the many ambiguities in Guinean law, policy, and practice to pursue their own interests. This results in violence, uncertainty, and inefficient use of the most basic form of capital available to Guineans in rural regions: land.

Box Six

Gold Mining, Upper Guinea

The region where present-day Guinea and Mali meet has been a site of gold mining for roughly 1,000 years. Since the 1990s, a subsidiary of South Africa-based AngloGold Ashanti began mining at an industrial level alongside the thousands of artisanal miners who were already there. From 2010, Russian multinational NordGold also began industrial gold mining operations in the region. Unlike the coastal bauxite mining region which can only be exploited via large-scale industrial mining, gold and diamond mining in Guinea have been practiced by small groups of men, both from gold-producing communities and from further away, who come to seek their fortunes in the hand-dug gold-mining tunnels.

In October 2018, violence broke out in Kintinian sous-préfecture in Siguiri, near the Malian border. Angry residents attacked vehicles and the offices of Alpha Condé’s Rally of the Guinean People (Rassemblement du Peuple Guinéen) party, and security forces responded with force. Some 100 people were injured, and 2 cars and around 20 motorcycles were set aflame.^a Locals objected in particular to the forced eviction of about 400 households involved in mining so that SAG, the AngloGold Ashanti subsidiary, could expand its operations. Artisanal miners were working legally but had been turned into illegal interlopers overnight, without a legal process.

Industrial mining companies operated within a framework of corporate social responsibility (CSR), but as is also the case in coastal bauxite mining areas, local communities see few benefits. As one researcher who has worked in the Kintinian area for a decade writes: “From the perspective of the population, this [CSR] reciprocity is perceived as their due, since they are the historic owners of the land. These interpretive slippages or even conflicts of interest between expectations of development, “*tutorat*” relations between owners of the land and newcomers, and standard CSR practices end up in a confusion between the state and the mining companies.”^b

From the perspective of the local residents, it is the mining companies that are the sovereign political actors, and Guinean security forces and local officials such as the

Box Six Cont'd

Préfet and sous-préfet are seen as their subcontracted staff. The Guinean state is thus doubly delegitimized, first for seeming to privilege the interests of foreign actors above those of their own citizens, and secondly by appearing to have neither the interest nor the ability to even provide the illusion of economic activities that contribute to the communal good of the nation for whom they ostensibly work.

Sources:

- a. Moro 201.
- b. Dessertine 2019a.

Note:

The information and framing of the perspective presented in this box is based on previous anthropological fieldwork and research throughout Guinea.

Box Seven

Friday Prayers and Farmland, Futa Jalon

From its founding in the 1730s, the Fulbe state in the Futa Jallon was based on the prestige of its noble cleric-warriors who alternated leadership between Labe and Timbo (near present-day Mamou). Society in the Futa Jallon was organized around a system in which warrior-clerics of noble Fulbe descent lived in central villages with a mosque, called *misiidés*. Enslaved captives of many different ethnicities did the work of farming and herding cattle, based in satellite villages called *rundés*. Over many years, the *rundé* inhabitants took on Peuhl ethnicity, spoke Pular as their mother tongue, converted to Islam, and became culturally Peuhl. Nevertheless, the distinction between the descendants of noble Fulbe and *jyaabe*, or descendants of slaves, can still be pertinent today, in arenas ranging from marriage to religious conversion to land ownership. There is much that could be said about the many subtle transformations that have taken place in this relationship over the course of the 20th century, as French colonizers and then the socialist government tried to reengineer these relations without risking too much political destabilization for themselves.

Since the 1990s, an increasing number of people in Guinea have converted to Salafi forms of reformist Islam as proselytized by Saudi and other missionaries. There are many theories in Guinea about who converts and why, many of them claiming that reformist converts (also called *Wahabbite*, *intégriste*, and “*les bras croisés*” for the way they pray) are paid to assume the dress and comportment of Saudi-style Muslims. Such talk often sidesteps the sociological pattern involved: most Salafi converts are people of lower status. Being of lower status does not, however, mean that *jyaabe* converts are necessarily poor.

Box Seven Cont'd

Many have travelled to Senegal and other countries and become wealthy. As Furth (2005) has described, there are often good reasons for relatively poorer noble Fulbe to want to establish marriage alliances with richer men who have returned from abroad. For those who have converted to Salafi Islam, however, status differences are placed to one side if not erased, and inter-status marriages can then be justified as morally just.

Prayer is another way in which this historical lineage plays out. Traditionally, only noble *misiidé* villages would have mosques, and the imam would be an elder of the dominant noble Fulbe lineage. With the arrival of both money from abroad and a new religious ideology of equality, men in *rundé* villages began building mosques in their villages and holding Friday prayers there. This has become a quiet but hard-fought battle, with each side trying to recruit the National Secretariat of Religious Affairs to their side.^a When Alpha Condé became president, a significant minority of voters in *rundé* villages voted for him, contradicting the simplistic picture of Guinean politics as being organized strictly by ethnicity. Condé's government in turn sided with the Salafi imams and their supporters both in rural areas and in places such as Labé's Tata 1 neighborhood, home to one of the reformist "Sunni" mosques.

The legacy of domestic slavery, patterns of religious conversion, and the friction between those who have money and those who have status is often kept hidden from general view, but sometimes rise to the surface in the form of violence, often over land. Two prefectures where these land disputes have become especially pointed are Dalaba and Mamou. In Mamou's Poredaka sous-préfecture, there have been violent clashes over land between a *misiidé* and a *rundé*, resulting in burned fields, destroyed houses, and injuries. In Dalaba, there have been several clashes between villages, such as that between Kétiguiya and Djinkoya.^b Mining, land claimed to make way for hydroelectric dams, and the possibility of industrial scale agriculture have all compounded the pressure created by population growth to make land speculation in the Futa Jallon a potential source of violence. This contestation does not, however, play out in a vacuum, but rather through the prism of a deep history of inequality.

Sources:

a. Andre 2023.

b. Cissé 2022.

Note:

The information and framing of the perspective presented in this box this is based on previous anthropological fieldwork and research throughout Guinea.

Box Eight

Internal Colonization, Forest Region

The greatest numbers of casualties from violent conflict in Guinea have taken place in the Forest Region. Since 1991, there have been several large-scale massacres of 500 or more people. Much of the journalistic coverage of this violence treats this interethnic conflict as a naturally occurring fact, rather than asking why this violence did not exist before the 1990s, and why the scale of the violence is so much higher than anywhere else in Guinea. Conflicts had long existed between Kpelle (Guerze) or Loma (Toma), often lumped together as “Forestiers,” and those who speak a variety of Maninkakan and are called Konianke, Manya, or Mandingo (in Liberia). But they had not jumped to the level of large-scale massacres. However, it is important to underline the fact that the number of people killed in these clashes in the Forest Region probably outstrips all other communal conflict-related deaths in Guinea and is likely to do so for the foreseeable future.

The reasons for this violence are anchored in the resentments of Forestiers toward newer arrivals from the Guinean savanna. People have been moving from the drier savanna toward the rainforest and the Atlantic coast for at least 500 years, but the social mechanisms used to incorporate and assimilate newcomers into lineages and villages changed radically in the 20th century. First with hardening of ethnic labels under French colonial rule, and then with socialist policies around land, Konianke/Manya people were empowered to move into Forest Region villages without giving deference or making any cultural concessions to their hosts.

The most important element of this festering resentment was the socialist government’s *mise en valeur* (land to the tiller) land tenure policy. Under this policy, although all land belonged to the state, whoever cultivated land and continued to do so had de facto land use rights until they ceased working the land. The policy was intended to break the often-despotic power exercised by elder men from landowning lineages, and to inject dynamism by allowing women, young men, and recent arrivals to stand on an equal footing with these elders. In practice, local women and young men, and even Forestiers moving from one village to another, continued traditional practices of offering cola nuts and perhaps food or drink as a sign of deference and respect. They also followed rules that allowed the use of such “borrowed” land for annual, rotating crops such as rice, manioc or even plantain banana, but not for permanent tree crops such as coffee, cola, or cocoa. Manya/Koniyanke newcomers increasingly disregarded these customs, and when they planted permanent tree crops, often took disputes to state officials who backed their “rational” use of the Forest Region’s rich soil. This was contrasted, in particular, against the “irrational” practice of slash-and-burn rotating agriculture, which was outlawed by the socialist government and punishable (in principle) by death.

Over several decades, Manya/Koniyanke migrants became increasingly richer, involved in cash crop cultivation, transport, and commerce in the Forest Region’s towns, while Forestiers often retreated further into the forest, avoiding the encroachment of both the state and the population they experienced as a kind of occupying force that did not respect their culture or local rules around land tenure and use. This all changed with Sékou Touré’s death in 1984 and the arrival of the Conté government. Conté gained great support in the Forest first by doing away with the in-kind taxes known as *normes*, and also by allowing the initiatory societies to resume their activities, which had been banned

Box Eight Cont'd

under socialism. Lansana Conté set the scene for intercommunal violence, however, when he publicly renounced the logic of *mise en valeur* in a 1991 speech. Speaking to the Forest Region's Koniyanke and Manya populations, he said, "you have your own native villages, and if you want land, you can go back there." By introducing the logic of autochthony that had been explicitly renounced by the socialist government, Conté aimed to solidify his support in the Forest on the eve of the country's first municipal and mayoral democratic elections. Several weeks later, in the wake of the mayoral elections, the first massacre took place, and a new logic of eliminationist violence was born in the region.^a

Sources:

a. McGovern 2013, 2017.

Note:

The information and framing of the perspective presented in this box this is based on previous anthropological fieldwork and research throughout Guinea.

Insecure land tenure constitutes a major constraint to rural income growth. Many challenges contribute to low agriculture productivity in Guinea.⁵⁹ However, uncertainty over land tenure is a central reason why Guinea appears to be resistant to poverty-reducing interventions, whether they be technical (education on higher-yield techniques), financial (access to rural credit schemes), or focused on inputs (new seed varieties, use of fertilizers, use of pesticides). After investing much time and labor to construct berms and irrigation channels for paddy rice, farmers with insecure land tenure could find their improved land taken away by someone else who exercises customary and/or statutory ownership over the land. But the fundamental problem is not intransigence, it is the inability to predict who will benefit from the labor and financial risk involved in making these shifts toward higher productivity agriculture. Therefore, making land use and ownership more predictable and legible for farmers and pastoralists is critical to improving and accelerating rural income growth.⁶⁰

Service delivery

Improvements in service delivery have not met citizens' demands

Even amongst the world's poorest countries, Guinea is underperforming on human development indicators relative to its wealth. Guinea is ranked 163rd of 173 countries on the WBG's 2019 Human Capital Index, meaning that a child in Guinea will only achieve 37 percent of her or his potential had they received maximum health, education, and other support. On the Human Development Index Guinea ranks 182 out of 191 nations.⁶¹

Key indicators including maternal and child mortality and primary school enrollment have improved, yet both education and health provision remain weak. The Guinean government increased the number of schools by one-third between 2006 and 2016, and some improvements during the last back-to-school period were reported, including the readiness of schools to welcome pupils.⁶² However, the out-of-school rate for children ages

5–16 stands at 44 percent (World Bank 2019). Almost 90 percent of children in grades two and three cannot read (World Bank 2019). Similarly, health for women and children has improved. A woman's lifetime risk of death in childbirth was 1 in 16 in 2003, and has been cut in less than half, to 1 in 35 in 2017.⁶³ Infant mortality has similarly continued a steady decline⁶⁴ (see box 9).

Yet despite some improvements, strong regional disparities and imbalances between rural and urban areas persist.

Net primary school enrollment ratios reach 82.8 percent in urban areas compared to only 55.6 percent in rural areas.⁶⁵ Approximately 33 percent of Guineans have access to electricity, but the figure for rural Guineans is under 9 percent. N'Zérékoré and Labé regions have the lowest provision of electricity of any regions, at 6.6 and 6.8 percent respectively. This is a major source of dissatisfaction in Guinea, as unscheduled interruptions in the power supply as well as sudden electrical blackouts in the country and the capital city prompt regular demonstrations to protest against ongoing power cuts.⁶⁶ Overall, Conakry dwellers have better access to almost all services. This is especially noticeable in the health sector, where Conakry receives 60 percent of all spending dedicated to primary health services. Fast urbanization and rural-urban migration create important challenges, with peripheral neighborhoods seeing their capacities strained with the arrival of newcomers. In urban areas, internal migrants must move further away from the center, main roads, and infrastructure, thus affecting their ability to access service in areas where sanitation, electricity, and education are problematic (Traore and Watanabe 2017).

Guinean youth face a barely functioning education system and exceedingly high levels of structural unemployment and underemployment.

Young people are not sufficiently educated when they enter the job market. More than half are illiterate. One specialist in the bauxite mining area around Kamsar described the deep cynicism of Baga people regarding education. "They mistrust the government, and the education system. "Why do it?" they ask, 'when education never leads to jobs?"⁶⁷ The issue of access to employment in the mining region of Boke is especially prevalent. Local populations, especially youth, harbor high expectations about employment opportunities that mining companies should provide. A survey showed that almost 70 percent of young men have expressed their wish to seek or have already sought employment with a mining company (COGINTA 2020). These unfulfilled expectations cause widespread frustrations, particularly around mining, as companies are perceived to generate significant returns from the exploitation of mining resources, with no or very limited trickledown effect. This also shows that local populations expect mining companies to step in for the state to provide employment opportunities and access to services (Bah et al. 2020). Even though improvements have been made, it is not clear that Guineans believe in education as a pathway to upward mobility. In a society where only 7 percent of people pursue tertiary education,⁶⁸ most highly educated Guineans already come from privileged families, neighborhoods, and social milieux. Therefore, pursuit of education to the highest level possible may be as much a result as a cause of socioeconomic differences.

2017 RRA

It was not until 2007, when an economic crisis and galloping inflation had made even basic foodstuffs unaffordable, that the Guinean population collectively protested against the Conté government and finally overcame its long-held fearfulness vis-à-vis the Guinean state dating back to the Touré era. During a general strike incited by the worker's unions in early 2007, all regions of the country protested for radical political changes, much earlier than the subsequent Arab Spring and its offshoots in sub-Saharan Africa.

Box Nine

Structural Issues in the Health Sector: The Case of the Donka Hospital

Capacity issues are widespread and affect many aspects of service delivery in Guinea. The case of the Donka Hospital is a good illustration. The renovation and management of Donka Hospital, Conakry's biggest CHU teaching hospital, is indicative of the structural problems within the health sector. After renovating the building and equipment with Islamic Development Bank funds, the new Canadian management revisited the hospital's staffing. After administering an exam to judge the competence of staff, the new management let go many staff members, particularly the c. 50 percent who were interns, and did not receive a salary. These medical personnel had to charge patients for their services in a "pay as you go" fashion. Meanwhile, most of the *titulaire* salaried staff had second jobs in private clinics, as they were poorly paid by the state. Although the logic of the reforms was sound, they revealed a double deficit: there were not enough well-trained staff to provide the necessary services in Guinea's hospitals, and even amongst the most highly skilled, they were not paid enough, and so spread themselves too thin undertaking second and third jobs. This basic problem of capacity can be extended to most sectors of Guinean government. In RRA consultations, capacity constraints were frequently cited as one of the major challenges, that held back real transformation. In addition, concerns were also voiced about the issue of sustainability; even where initial projects or programs existed and had positive impact, they were not always able to be maintained or carried forward.

Source:

Consultations for the RRA, January 23–27, 2023, Conakry.

Customary and religious traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), child marriage, and polygamy are widespread in Guinea, which shows the poor status and weak agency of women and girls. Patriarchal gender and social norms have dire consequences for women, as it limits their decision-making power, voice, and choices, while affecting their educational and health outcomes (World Bank 2012). Challenges experienced by women have worsened since the 2013 Ebola outbreak and have likely further deteriorated in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Guinea has a high prevalence of and wide social tolerance for gender-based violence (GBV). More than one in two women living (or having lived) in a union have been affected by GBV at least once during their married life and nearly 29.3 percent of women have experienced at least one form of sexual violence since the age of 15.⁶⁹ Recent cases of sexual violence against very young girls have also been reported (Amnesty International 2021). Almost 1 in 2 girls (INS 2019) are married before the age of 18 each year. Furthermore, the prevalence of excision is still high, with 95 percent of women aged 15–49 in 2018 and 39 percent among girls under 15 years old (UNFPA 2023).

Service provision, trust, and the social contract

Service provision plays a critical role in either reinforcing or weakening the social contract⁷⁰ and trust in authorities. In particular, it can heighten tensions and perceptions that the government is unconcerned with the welfare of its citizens. In terms of FCV, there have been

recent uprisings over lack of electricity and water. When asked about the reasons for poverty in Guinea (INS 2020), 65.3 percent of respondents blamed lack of jobs, 57.4 percent cited the cost of living, and 45 percent identified mismanagement and corruption. These responses provide a window into the ways in which poor service provision may become a flashpoint for conflict and violence, even though frustrations also accumulate around broader labor market and governance issues. Furthermore, it is not clear that the smaller marginal gains that may be achieved in the health and education sectors in the future will have a major effect on risks of violence. The deeper rifts between the Guinean government and its people showed up in the context of the Ebola epidemic,⁷¹ where most citizens disregarded public health advice, and in several instances both menaced and attacked Guinean and expatriate health staff.⁷²

Security and justice

Security Sector Reform (SSR)

Guinea's army has been a central actor in its politics since 1984. Three of the four governments that have come to power in the last 38 years did so via a coup d'état, and even under Alpha Condé's elected government, the military played a central role in the country's political economy. The military itself has been riven by factionalism. Most analysts considered attempts to reform the military and assert civilian control over it to have succeeded (see box 10) (World Bank 2017), but the most recent coup showed that was not entirely the case. The current administration is continuing some of the reforms launched by the Condé government, including the retirement of more than 40 senior officials, close to the previous head of state (TV5 Monde 2021).

Box Ten

SSR Has Had Mixed Results Thus Far

The September 2021 coup raised several questions related to the institutionalization and professionalism of the armed forces.

The transformation of the Guinean armed forces was hailed as a major success in 2010 and an important step toward stronger civilian control of an unruly army, which had retained all powers for almost three decades.^a President Condé spearheaded reforms, retiring 4,000 troops^b and twice increasing soldiers' salaries.^c Furthermore, the 2020 Constitution emphasized the apolitical role of armed forces and civilian oversight of security forces.^d However, their role has gone beyond the securitization of electoral processes; armed forces have transported ballots and material and have brought some of the ballot boxes into Mairies, Prefectures, and, in some cases, into military bases for a recount.^e Likewise, security forces have continuously used disproportionate force against civilians, particularly during protests.^f

Some argue that these SSR efforts have remained theoretical.^g Indeed, even after some reform successes, important structural issues remained. Security forces faced important funding issues,^h despite a considerable budget share of 8.4 percent government expenditure for 2020.ⁱ President Condé's efforts to curtail salaries were also revealed to be insufficient to curb overinflated security forces, estimated at 45,000 in 2011.^j Efforts to limit

Box Ten Cont'd

the presence of soldiers on the streets and ensure more discipline had mixed success, with instances of racketeering still reported. Recruitment and promotion were frequently not based on merit, with soldiers relying more on their ethnic connections rather than a proper diploma.^k The relationship between civilians and security forces has remained strained, and many Guineans still do not trust their security forces^l and believe that they must pay a fee to file a complaint.^m Finally, similar to other reforms discussed in this RRA, security experts highlight the fact that a rather comprehensive legal and planning framework that was developed during the SSR process remains largely unimplemented.ⁿ

Sources:

- a. Clarke 2021.
- b. Boucher 2020.
- c. Akimbono 2020.
- d. Boucher 2020.
- e. Barry 2020.
- f. HRW 2020.
- g. h. Bangoura 2015.
- i. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Stockholm (accessed October 2021), <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>.
- j. Touchard 2017; k. Barry 2020; l. Faye 2019; m. Interview, June 2021; n. World Bank 2017.

While the coup could be interpreted as a blanket failure of previous SSR efforts, that is not necessarily the case. On one hand, the mere existence of a coup d'état in 2021 indicates that training offered by international partners aimed at instilling civilian control of the military or respect for the republican institutions was not a complete success. On the other, the coup does not mean that all the positive changes rendered during previous SSR efforts have been wiped out. For instance, during consultations for the RRA, civil society specifically remarked that they perceived improvements in both the professionalization and feminization of the army, and that recruitment is more based on competency than before.⁷³ In addition, there are hardly any uniformed military walking around the streets, and they are almost never armed. This practice ended early in the Condé administration, but it is notable that it has held, even with a military government currently in power. As one diplomat put it, "The initial goal of the SSR was to create disparate seats of power within the military so they could not exercise total control over all sectors of Guinean society. That effort succeeded, it's just that one of those disparate groups took power."⁷⁴ Following from this logic, if the CNRD is able to maintain internal cohesion within the military, this would mean that some aspects of the reforms were durable, in as much as they have instituted a degree of discipline and respect for the current hierarchy.

However, it is not clear that Colonel Doumbouya has the full allegiance of all members of the military. The aforementioned retirement of senior officers could, because of their allegiance to the previous government, appear to be politically motivated and not win new allies. The current trial of Dadis Camara has also angered many Forestiers, who feel themselves to have been scapegoated by the regime. While it is very difficult to speculate about the inner workings of the CNRD, it is notable that when Colonel Doumbouya travels outside the presidential palace, he is accompanied by a large, heavily armed convoy that

demonstrates overwhelming force to the population (and perhaps to his adversaries) and that, even when he is within the presidential compound, he is also heavily guarded.⁷⁵

Many observers also noted that since Colonel Doumbouya was formerly a member of the French Foreign Legion, he is somewhat of an outsider to the Guinean military.⁷⁶ While his tactical training may have helped him at the moment of the coup, the months since then have required different negotiations, many of them based on activating personal and social networks in which he has confidence. Several of those interviewed for the RRA noted that he has brought a significant number of his friends and associates from his time in France to fill key roles, and many others are filled by members of his own Maninka ethnic group. Past experience, under former Presidents Sékou Touré, Lansana Conté, Dadis Camara, and Alpha Condé all showed that such ethnic and family affiliations have tended to create information bubbles around presidents, feeding them information selectively and creating a disconnect between their lived reality and that of the population.

Drugs and crime

Concerns that drug production⁷⁷ and transshipment⁷⁸ trades may have returned to Guinea have been raised. Guinea has long been an important transit route for drugs, with Conakry as its entry point. Recent seizures of drug have been reported (Celestin 2022; Xinhua News Agency 2022) and it seems that flows have increased over the last few years (ENACT 2019). However, there is nothing that indicates transshipment at the scale of what took place in the period around 2007–09.

While the possibility of drugs transshipment remains more a risk than a current threat, Guinean officials and the general population are alarmed by the arrival of Kush, a street drug made from mixing various chemicals, including formaldehyde. Because the chemical formula varies, Kush has a wide variety of effects on its users, causing some to become violent and unpredictable, while others become sedated (Anthony and Kamara 2023). In all cases, the drug is highly addictive. In 2022, Kush made its appearance in Conakry, and youth groups interviewed during the RRA process stated that the drug was coming from Sierra Leone, following the same route as tramadol, a synthetic opiate consumed as a street drug in Sierra Leone and more recently in Guinea.

Crime in Guinea is not as high as in some neighboring countries, but it is a daily concern. According to a 2017 survey, 22 percent of Guineans were victims of theft from their homes in the prior 12 months, an 8 percent increase from 2015 (Kaba 2019). Along with other measures of insecurity, these numbers did not vary much by gender or between urban and rural areas, but they did increase with the respondent's poverty level.⁷⁹ Similarly the number who responded that they or a family member had experienced physical aggression rose from three percent in 2015 to 6 percent in 2017 (Kaba 2019). Regional insecurity and conflicts in the neighborhood have increased weapon trafficking, especially in the Forest Region, which has become a significant site of weapon caches (Desmarais 2019). According to the Guinean authorities, most of the smuggled weapons are artisanal or hunting weapons, and few are automatic weapons (Desmarais 2019).

Justice

Structural issues impede the effective delivery of justice

Guinea's state justice system, from police forces to courthouses, face important institutional gaps, with repercussions on assuring fair and equitable justice to the entire territory. Lack

of funding, personnel, infrastructure, and coordination between police forces and judiciary institutions, a legacy of the Conté years, creates challenges in delivering justice, including a significant backlog in treatment of complaints as well as overcrowded prisons (Gürler and Philipps 2019). While the previous government improved the allocation of resources along with the reach of services, notably building a new courthouse in Boké and a prison in Coyah, rural areas remain disadvantaged, and few services are offered (USAID 2016). In several remote areas, there are no mechanisms to ensure that the state justice system records requests or enforces rights.⁸⁰ As such, locals have no recourse against local administrators and mayors who can interpret public laws in their favor, without any options to contest arbitrary decisions in courthouses hundreds of kilometers from their localities.⁸¹

Fees as well as a lack of knowledge about legal mechanisms both make it expensive for citizens to access state justice. In addition, pretrial detention disproportionately targets poorer and socially marginalized populations due to a lack of knowledge of the law and the inability to pay bribes (Angliviel 2021). Citizens are expected to pay several illegal fees for a range of actions, from having a complaint registered at the tribunal to something like obtaining a suppletive judgment in lieu of a birth certificate.⁸² In the Forest Region, these fees quadruple the legal price of the suppletive judgment.⁸³ According to a recent poll, judges and magistrates are perceived as the state's most corruptible representatives, with 56 percent of respondents pointing at them, compared to 50 percent for tax agents and 49 percent for police forces (Guinée360 2020).

Recourse to alternative forms of justice and vigilantism

The lack of meaningful access and cost barriers to the statutory system means that informal justice is the only available option to settle conflicts in several areas. Informal justice mechanisms, relying on a combination of religious codes and customary rights, complement formal justice in offering arbitration, often based on consensual settlement, ensuring that “none of the conflict parties must lose face” for peaceful cohabitation (Gürler and Philipps 2019). Local authorities face constituents who see traditional and religious leaders as more legitimate, often asking for their involvement to settle disputes despite a lack of transparency and accountability (Balde 2018). Traditional and religious laws, which often take precedence over national laws, have often played against women's emancipation and rights (Balde 2018). Erosion of social capital and migration has diminished the ability of informal institutions to play a role in conflict settlement, as their legitimacy is more likely to be contested (Bangura 2019).

Distrust in the police's capacity and will to protect have pressured populations to resort to vigilantism and self-defense groups to protect themselves. These practices remain uncontrolled and controversial, with a real potential to fuel violence. Police forces are perceived as incapable of protecting local populations, which continue to rely on various vigilante groups, both in urban and rural areas (COGINTA 2018). Such groups take several forms and often have the approval of public authorities: security brigades organized by local chiefs and mayors, self-organized youth vigilante groups, or customary police active in rural areas known as “tomboloma” (COGINTA 2018). Informal police forces rely on preexisting norms for asserting social control to pursue their mission and are generally welcome by communities (Grätz 2004), but the lack of a clear legal framework has led to abuses and several public lynchings around the country (COGINTA 2018).

The Dadis trial, a major milestone in the fight against impunity

Putting an end to impunity has been at the core of the CNRD's reform agenda; this is exemplified by the long-awaited Dadis trial, which many thought would never happen, and has sparked

a broader conversation about justice and reconciliation. Bringing to justice those responsible for the notorious stadium massacre had long been a key demand for many Guineans. But the 2020 Constitution had thwarted this hope, as it removed accountability measures related to security forces, which meant that the trial of the security forces responsible for the 2009 stadium massacre was unlikely, thus increasing the distrust of the population toward security apparatus and belief that impunity was the norm. Therefore, the trial that opened in September 2022 is a landmark for the country; Guineans have been utterly captivated by it and have high expectations that it will be fair (Raynal 2022). While there is much appreciation that the CNRD has embarked upon this process, it is not without risks for them. The intentions behind it are ambiguous; it could be a show of the CNRD's desire to set rule of law on a solid footing, an attempt to disqualify potential competitors, or possibly both. The fact that two of the leading defendants—Moussa Dadis Camara and Claude Coplan Pivi—are from the Forest Region may mean that Colonel Doumbouya undercuts his support in that region of the country. Furthermore, the trial has opened up a broader conversation about the importance of equitable and transparent justice writ large, as well as the need for broader reconciliation. Many Guineans hope that this trial advances justice for other past crimes, such as Camp Boiro,⁸⁴ with organizations asking the CNRD to declassify Camp Boiro files (Ledjely.com 2023).

Box Eleven

Good Laws, and Appetite for Reform, but Weak Application: Another Side to the Guinean Paradox

Both the Condé administration and the CNRD have shown a proactive willingness to undertake reforms in multiple areas. However, while the general opinion is that Guinea has good new and reformed laws, the challenge lies with the weak or nonapplication of those laws.^a One example is the mining code. Completely rewritten in 2012 and 2013, everyone consulted agreed that Guinea's mining code is exemplary and compares favorably to other mining codes internationally. Unfortunately, many of the recent agreements between the government and international mining companies do not meet many of the standards of Guinea's mining code. One-off conventions were drafted by many of the more recently arrived companies and the government, allowing them to avoid the more onerous aspects of the mining code. These conventions had to be passed into law by a majority vote of the National Assembly, making them difficult to revisit, even though many Guineans ask how it is that their own executive and legislative representatives agreed to deals that abrogated the country's own law.

Similarly, there is a mosaic of different laws regulating mining companies around issues of social and environmental accountability. At the Simandou mine, for instance, one half of the mountain will be mined by Rio Tinto, a multinational corporation with both legal and reputational exposure abroad if it does not adhere to internationally agreed standards. They are voluntarily adhering to those standards. The other half of the mountain, mined by the China-based Winning Consortium, is not using international standards. Around the bauxite mines in the Boke, Kindia and Boffa areas, civil society actors and researchers note radically different approaches by the different companies. Rusal, operating in the Kindia and Boffa areas, would not even meet with villagers who had complaints, according

Box Eleven Cont'd

to one researcher.^b By contrast, British-owned Alufer has a public commitment register posted in French and English on its website, and has clear protocols for hearing and acting on community complaints.^c

This uneven and haphazard application of the law, and the lack of capacity to consistently enforce it, is a dynamic that repeats itself across sectors. For instance, leaders in the private sector consulted by the RRA team repeatedly stressed that they face multiple disincentives to operate in the formal sector of the economy. One entrepreneur active in the construction sector said that when she had materials arrive at the port, she had to go through ten different government representatives, paying each along the way. Others noted that while they paid all applicable official taxes, government officials used to dealing with the 90+ percent of the countries businesses that operate in informality come to them to pay the same informal “fees” they pay in lieu of taxes. They are thus doubly taxed in comparison to competitors who are sometimes working in the same sector. Some described being targets for spurious lawsuits that they tended to lose in the context of a justice system that often rule in favor of whoever paid the most for the desired decision.^d

Sources:

- a. Consultations in Conakry with civil society actors, human rights activists, mining experts, and diplomats.
- b. Interview with researcher on mining and culture, January 29, 2023, Conakry.
- c. Alufer Mining 2021; d. Group meeting with representatives of the formal private sector.

V. Drivers of Fragility, Conflict, and Violence

DRIVER 1

A sophisticated program of activities by the CNRD currently appeals to an expectant population, but a lack of transparency could steadily undermine governance and sow local divisions.

Since taking power, the CNRD has made many bold moves and politically popular—as well as significantly visible—decisions that go straight to the heart of many Guineans’ grievances with the previous government. By courageously confronting sensitive issues like poor governance practices, fiscal mismanagement, and impunity in relation to the September 2009 trial, the CNRD is sending a strong message that it no longer intends to follow business as usual. Through these actions, it has bought a considerable amount of patience and goodwill on behalf of many facets of Guinean society, as well as the international community.

However, beneath the surface of some of the flashier initiatives⁸⁵ there remains a considerable lack of transparency on important aspects of the CNRD’s agenda and its vision for the country, not least of which is who is in the CNRD.

There are also serious questions about what this portends for the near future—whether extensions of the transition timeline will be requested, and whether a constitution and elections delivered by an unelected military junta will be considered legitimate. And while many of the initiatives they have undertaken are widely appreciated, the motivation behind them can also be questioned, with many equally able to be interpreted through a more cynical lens. It is along this delicate tightrope of uncertainty and interpretation of intentions along which the country currently balances, with the biggest indicator of stability in the short term depending on the CNRD adhering to its promises regarding the transition, both timeline and inclusivity.⁸⁶

2017 RRA

Such political discourse in turn reduces the relationship between political parties and their electorate to abstract and yet highly emotional issues: a diffuse pride in a mystified leader among the ruling coalition, and a bitter frustration projected onto a political bogeyman (the president) in the case of the opposition. If this is further infused with equally emotional questions of ethnic and national belonging, politics become toxic.

DRIVER 2

Guinea’s political system has thus far delivered few dividends to the population and instead has served as a vehicle for ethnicization, corruption, and rent-seeking, rendering the country vulnerable to potential democratic backsliding and future contestation.

The patience and goodwill described in Driver 1 is there, in large part, due to the accumulation of many years of frustration with politicians and their seemingly self-interested motivations.⁸⁷ However, it is essential to note that this patience is not infinite. Guineans have clear demands, and youth especially so, for a system that they have felt

largely disenfranchised from up until this point. Many Guineans are also acutely aware of and resent the fact that citizens have predominantly been mobilized for political purposes that result only in benefits for the few.

Since independence, Guinea has been ruled by a series of charismatic strongmen who have portrayed themselves as the only solution to the many challenges that faced the nation, including those created by their predecessors.

Such personalization not only questions the value of democratic consultation and its messy participative process, but it has also colored the way that democratic practice itself plays out in Guinea, with political parties seen as little more than vehicles for their leaders, who control the parties in a despotic manner. Political parties, being oriented toward the single goal of getting their leader elected, have almost no substantive political programs. One of the few things they can offer in the winner-take-all logic of multiparty democracy in Guinea is to redistribute the spoils of captured power to their constituents. Increasingly, these constituents have become defined by their ethnicity, and as a corollary, by the marginalization of other ethnic groups. There is a genuine thirst for change but an unclear conduit for that change, given that politics firmly remains the domain of the “old guard” and there is little appetite for intergenerational inclusion nor a vision for succession of the next generation. One long-term observer of West African politics agreed that “the leaders of the main parties are politically finished, but they refuse to leave the scene⁸⁸ which is fundamentally incompatible with the views of politically active young people who feel they have a right to decide their own future, and that future is now.⁸⁹

2017 RRA

With the privatization of previously state-owned land, the commercialization of agriculture and the onset of multiparty politics, socioeconomic inequalities between wealthy Konianké landowners and humble Forestier subsistence farmers increased, notably in a context of rising regional poverty since the 1990s.

2017 RRA

An institutional pattern that remains from [the Touré] era is the widespread confusion between state institutions and the presidential party, and the subsequent politicization of the administration and its human resources.

2017 RRA

Exclusion and inclusion dynamics thus oscillate in Guinea, which makes political positions and alliances inherently unstable.

DRIVER 3

Weak private sector development has resulted in a lack of economic diversification and an overreliance on mining for the foreseeable future, which continues to fuel grievances while failing to offer most Guineans job opportunities.

Guinea has enormous development potential, through both its considerable natural and human assets. Guineans are both profoundly aware and fiercely proud of this potential. Guinea’s natural capital per capita is about US\$7,300 which is more than six times its current GDP per capita (IFC 2020). But as of 2018, 43.7 percent of the population, or 5.8 million people, lived below the national poverty line (World Bank 2020a). The transformational potential of these assets, as well as the cascade of additional economic impacts from mining that have consistently been promised, have not yet materialized for the average Guinean. In addition to the environmental and broader social grievances around mining, the sector employs fewer than 200,000 people (including those in artisanal mining) (IFC 2020). While agriculture employs far more (60.7 percent of total employment 2019), multiple obstacles exist to unleashing its full potential, including the reliance on land which, as discussed in Driver 4, is itself one of the most salient FCV issues (World Bank 2022a).

For Guinea, awareness of the country's vast potential combined with the current lack of its capitalization makes this development challenge a driver of FCV. For a large proportion of the 64.9 percent of the population that is under 25 years old (World Bank 2022a), a future beyond subsistence agriculture or survivalist entrepreneurship will not be possible unless the private sector develops. The sector itself is a coiled spring of possibility—with the requisite innovative ideas, contextualized business savvy, networks, and entrepreneurial spirit—but faces reinforcing challenges that prevent it from launching. Until this happens, Guinea will continue to lose some of its best and brightest who would prefer to migrate and start their businesses elsewhere; it will not be able to maximize its domestic markets and opportunities for localization; it will continue to be dependent on imports for things it can produce at home; and it will continue to be vulnerable to global price fluctuations and food insecurity. Most of all, it will continue to have large segments of the population that are not invested in the country's stability and progress because they have been economically disenfranchised.

DRIVER 4

Insecure land tenure and the multiple ways it builds upon and reinforces existing historical, economic, and societal fault lines, and spurs most of the country's intercommunal violence.

Land is the issue around which the sources of Guinea's rural poverty, gender inequalities, and most of the country's intercommunal violence intersect. The lack of secure land tenure and use rights has made it difficult to convince Guineans to invest in higher productivity agriculture, as investing time and energy into creating systems of irrigation and drainage, or taking out a loan to buy fertilizer, does not make sense if someone else can come and take the land immediately after the investments are made.

The RRA has also discussed the profound yet unspoken legacy of slavery in the Fouta, which is still mapped onto the landscape in the form of landowning *misiidé* central villages, and *roundé* satellite hamlets, where people do not own the land. This marginalization has led to both patterns in Salafi conversion (though not jihadi recruitment) and to intervillage violence. As a particularly evocative and valuable commodity, demands for land, whether from larger scale economic interests (such as agribusiness) or smaller scale community interests, can continue to provoke sensitivities and in worst cases spark violence, especially where norms or mechanisms for dealing with disputes have evolved/changed over time or where they are yet undefined.

DRIVER 5

A fundamental mistrust in state institutions to effectively, equitably, and accountably deliver continues to justify widespread perceptions of exclusion and marginalization and has damaged the social contract.

The legacies of slavery and slave raiding, colonial divide-and-rule policies, and of violence directed at the population by a series of postcolonial governments have left Guineans deeply mistrustful of government, and sometimes of one another. The past three governments, going back to 2008, have marginalized ethnic Peuhl from the state institutions. Many non-Peuhl Guineans speak of a mistrust of Peuhl as being so numerous in business, education, and the Guinean diaspora that if they were to capture political power, they would dominate every facet of Guinean society. Political leaders like Alpha Condé cultivated this mistrust for his own ends.

However, such lack of trust in institutions and the government is not at all limited to ethnic issues, and through their actions or inaction, successive governments have reinforced the perception that state institutions are there to serve elites and their interests, rather than those of the population writ large. Significant challenges exist around public service provision, domestic resource mobilization, access to justice, and the fact that benefits from the country's vast natural resources have not placed the country on a path of accelerated development—many of which are conspicuous issues that affect people's everyday lives. In the absence of a framework or point of reference for a peaceful exchange of expectations between the population and the authorities, violence has been the most common means of communicating grievances and discontent.

The state's legitimacy is further challenged by the number of regime changes over the years, resulting in a “multiplicity of disparate norms, priorities, institutions, and internal logics that are impossible to accommodate” (World Bank 2017). While it is true that recent administrations have shown an appetite to pursue various reforms, the fact that these have had few visible impacts for the common citizen also leads to frustration. The CNRD's most recent reforms, while welcomed, add an additional layer of complexity, as will the reforms of an eventual new government; the constitution under preparation will be Guinea's fifth in 65 years.⁹⁰ All of this continues to hamper the functioning of a healthy social contract and perpetuates the impression that where alternatives to the state exist, they are most likely more efficient and less costly.

2017 RRA

The main link between the young protesters and ethnic party politics is ... a shared experience of stigmatization and shared sense of injustice and victimhood. Though these senses of victimhood originate from different histories...ethnic and generational grievances merge during the process of political contestation.

VI. Sources of Resilience

Guinea exhibits all the elements of fragility that would lead many to predict a civil war or similarly disastrous outcome in the country. However, it is notable that Guinea has experienced two Ebola epidemics in eight years and the COVID-19 pandemic, yet even these have not led to widespread social unrest. Nor have two coups d'état in 13 years caused the people to revolt against the state, or one group of the population to attack another or to attempt secession, despite the manipulation of ethnicity and political divisions. There has also been significant conversion to Salafi Islam in Guinea, but no cases of jihadi violence.

With this track record, it is understandable that both Guineans and foreigners have been predicting the imminent collapse of Guinea into civil war for close to two decades, and yet this outcome has not yet materialized. It is impossible to give a definitive explanation for a counterfactual, but Guinea's ability to avoid civil war, separatist insurgency, and jihadi violence is notable and, given the circumstances, remarkable. There is no reason to assume, however, that Guinea's unstable stability and violent peace will hold indefinitely. Stalled development, problematic governance, and quick recourse to violence by the state to quell dissent have all had a corrosive effect on the social contract between rulers and ruled. Guinea's unique situation raises important questions around its resilience in terms of how it has been able to face extraordinary challenges and pressures thus far, whether it always has a positive influence on Guineans' lives, and, looking ahead, its prospects for remaining durable.

A strong sense of national identity and pride

One of the key legacies of the socialist period is the extent to which Guineans have a fully formed sense of national identity and pride. At key times of stress, Guineans have fallen back on this identity as a bulwark against the temptation to use ethnic, religious, or regional identities as wedge issues that might feed conflict (McGovern 2017). Surveys in 32 countries by Afrobarometer yielded findings that reinforce what an outlier Guinea is in this respect, with Guinea leading the list for its population feeling more bound to national identity than that of an ethnic group (81 percent), with second place going to Senegal at 74 percent and the average for all the countries surveyed being 39 percent (Logan and Torsu 2022).

At the same time, Guineans also insist that expressing ethnic identity is not a source of discomfort, with only 1 percent saying they feel uncomfortable speaking a mother tongue or wearing traditional dress in public (Logan and Torsu 2022). This suggests that the vast majority of Guineans see no opposition between embracing their ethnic languages, cultures, and religions, and at the same time identifying as Guineans first and foremost. As one interviewee put it, Guinea's brutal and abrupt rupture with France in 1958 led to a thorough decolonization unlike that found elsewhere.⁹¹ Guineans are thus comfortable expressing ethnic identities and differences while understanding that these are subsumed under their more important national identity. There is a healthy relationship between communal identity and broader national cultural citizenship, and one that has recently come under attack in many other countries, both in Africa and beyond. This is not, however, the way that Guinean

cultural or political life are portrayed in the press or by political party leaders, which has led to Guinea's relative stability seeming like a mystery.

Sanankuya or “joking relations”

Joking relations (*sanankuya*) or *La parenté à plaisanterie* (joking kinship) is an important element of many West African cultures.

It can confer special rights and responsibilities between grandparents and grandchildren, uncles and nephews, brothers- and sisters-in-law, and even whole ethnic groups. In Guinea, the kinds of insults, extravagant demands, and other license people can take with their joking partners can lower tensions and facilitate nonjoking dialogue. When asked about the element of Guinean culture that promotes resilience, *sanankuya* comes first to mind for many Guineans, even though it exists in many of the neighboring countries that have experienced war. This indicates the importance of understanding the contextual specificity of resilience as well as the way different forms of resilience in each country interact.

2017 RRA

Joking kin are even expected “to show special willingness to support or provide material resources when their ‘cousins’ are in need” and to intervene in the “internal conflicts of the group with whom they are paired as cousins.”

Vivid experience and lingering fear of war

Guineans saw the destruction wrought by the wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d’Ivoire in the 1990s and 2000s.

They see what insurgency and jihad have done to Mali since 2012 and what is happening around the subregion. Many Guineans consulted for this RRA stated unequivocally that Guineans are careful not to fall into the trap of thinking that violence is a solution to social, economic, and political problems. As they have seen from the experiences of the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have lived in Guinea for more than 30 years, war has yielded just the opposite: extreme human suffering and destruction of human and material capital that take decades to rebuild.

2017 RRA

Regional “outside” conflicts fostered a specific national unity and self-understanding among Guineans...the conflicts are often seen as evidence for some grave error in other countries’ political path... the absence of civil war and its hospitality for strangers remain a source of pride.

The role played by matriarchs

The constructive role of women, *nos mamans*, came up repeatedly in consultations as reducing tensions and being uniquely able to mediate between groups.

One interviewee described a scene from a decade ago in which a Peuhl woman married to a Susu man intervened in a conflict between the two groups in which her husband was about to become involved. She placed a knife in his hand, saying, “If you have decided to kill the Peuhls in our

neighborhood, then begin with me and then our 12 children, since they were all born to me, a Peuhl woman.”⁹² This dramatic challenge had the desired effect and deescalated the situation.

Guinea has historical networks of women, which, despite setbacks in the last decades, have played an important role in shaping society positively, notably as promoters of social justice and as peacemakers (Dessertine 2019b). For example, *Fédération des Mutuelles de Croissance Communautaire* (MC2) and *Mutuelles Financières des Femmes Africaines* (MUFFA) empowers more than 1 million women by providing microcredit, a network possibility, and a lobby capable of framing women’s interests, as well as ensuring fairer developmental strategies.⁹³

An energetic and active youth cohort that sees itself as an agent of change

Throughout consultations with young people, whether grassroots civil society or leaders of more prominent national youth networks, the takeaway was one of positivity and proactivity. That is not to imply that youth were fully satisfied with the current situation, or that they did not also have high expectations; but they spoke of having hope for Guinea’s future and their role in it. In particular, they expressed they feel more cohesive than their parents’ generation and, in part thanks to social media, also more engaged and aware of attempts to be manipulated and divided, ethnically or otherwise.⁹⁴ One example of youth taking it upon themselves to act involved two communities near Pita with animosity toward one another; young people originally from that region but now living in Conakry organized a “delegation” to travel back and discuss with their counterparts in those communities the importance of dialogue.⁹⁵ Young people are also proud of their “family values” and belief systems, and the fact they feel solidarity with their extended family and communities regardless of where they now live (World Bank 2017, 33).

Whether today’s young people are actually more unified or active than their parents is beside the point—most important is that they *feel* empowered, and act accordingly. Young people repeated the refrain heard during other consultations: that politics is the only thing that tries to divide them. However, these divisions are only so deep because when they switch gears to play football, attend music performances or go dancing, bonds of friendship and affinity exist, regardless of ethnicity or political party affiliation.

Religious tolerance and intermarriage

Many of those consulted for the RRA mentioned religious education and tolerance, as well as intermarriage, as being sources of resilience. Religious leaders have worked hard to make peace between religions, despite the fact that religious difference has sometimes characterized intercommunal violence, especially in the N’Zérékoré area. As the 2017 RRA discussed, “Islam provides an important spiritual, normative, and cultural framework to which most Guineans, with the critical exception of the Forestiers, can commonly relate” (World Bank 2017, 34). Intermarriage was also frequently discussed as creating a linked social fabric that binds people from different communities and creates shared cross-cutting commonalities. There have been many high-profile relationships that indicate the extent to which religion is a relative nonissue for Guineans.⁹⁶

The ease with which Guineans can talk about the centrality of ethnicity in politics further makes them an outlier in comparison to other African countries. In the same Afrobarometer survey referenced above, Guinea tops the list of 34 countries polled in terms of their views on the value of a diverse society, with 82 percent agreeing that diversity makes communities stronger, tying with Kenya.

The dual role of coordinations régionales

The *coordinations régionales* have played an increasing role in Guinean politics as conflict and mediation mechanisms since 2010, and yet their contribution to resilience is not straightforward, as they can also be a source of tension and political interference. Their mission, as a set of regional institutions, is mostly moral and social, to foster the maintenance and consolidation of peace, based on the values, culture, and history of the country's different communities. These regional groups gather different nonstate authorities in a council of the wise that, depending on the region, might also include additional representatives; for instance, from the business community, women, and youth.⁹⁷ There are four different coordinations régionales, whose role changes according to the region: (i) Coordination Nationale des Fulbhe et Haali-Pular de Guinée (CNFHPG), an ethnolinguistic association that focuses on Peuhl culture and language; (ii) Union de la Basse Guinée, representing all the native ethnic groups of Maritime Guinea; (iii) Union du Manding, based in Upper Guinea but represents populations who share the Maninka language and culture; and (iv) Coordination de la Guinée forestière, which gathers all groups from Forested Guinea (Diallo 2018). Depending on the coordination, their activities can range between smoothing out local conflicts that risk escalation; acting as a lobby; attempting to influence state nominations or public policy; providing voting instructions; or facilitating networking among members of the same community (Diallo 2018).

Strategic patience in expressing dissent

One way to read the types and patterns of violence during the last 20 years is as a means of signaling between the population (when their tolerance has reached a limit) and the government (when it is unwilling to accept further dissent). This has been an elastic calculus, and it is important to recognize that the violent dynamics involved can quickly spin out of control. However, it is also important to note the significance of the Touré years in shaping Guinean notions about how much to risk in the context of such “signaling” violence. During that time, tens and possibly hundreds of thousands of Guineans were jailed, with many tortured and executed in prison camps like Camp Boiro in Conakry. In retrospect, Guineans came to learn that this violence was often arbitrary or even organized around personal grudges. In 2006 and 2007, a series of general strikes and a large demonstration that resulted in more civilian deaths than the 2009 stadium massacre marked a watershed moment in Guinean political history, equaled only, perhaps, by the 1977 market women's revolt and the 2009 march that culminated in the stadium massacre. In subsequent years, Guineans have been extremely cautious in pushing forward as security forces began to retaliate with lethal violence.

Given the legacy of state-sponsored violence directed at the population, people have learned to choose their moments carefully. While sometimes characterized as timidity or fatalism, this cautious, experimental style of expressing dissent has also been a source of

resilience. A greater willingness to oppose their government with force might have resulted in a more responsive government, but it is likely that it would also have resulted in much more bloodshed and instability. By prudently deciding when to challenge the status quo, Guineans have often succeeded in achieving their desired goals, such as ending socialist price controls in 1977, the beginning of the end of the Conté regime in 2007, and the ouster of Dadis Camara in 2009. Today, Guineans are in wait-and-see mode—but that could change.

VII. Risks

As per the RRA Methodology, whereas drivers capture the current state-of-play, risks look ahead to consider the potential that these drivers might worsen in the future. This worsening can take place through the onset of specific risks or the compounding of multiple risks; due to a weakening of resilience or the strengthening of negative forms of resilience; because of certain shocks to the system; from the interaction of the various drivers themselves; or also as a result of not addressing those drivers of FCV. While it is impossible to accurately determine the probability of future risks, an attempt has been made to sequence the below by time frame and potential likelihood.

Widespread revolt based on the outcome of the transition, or the stalling thereof

The greatest short-term risk is that the political process—and either the outcome of the transition period or stalling thereof—sparks an organized revolt against the government by a significant fraction of the population, perhaps defined by ethnicity, generation, or location.

Guineans have accepted a political settlement over the past three decades in which almost all ordinary Guineans have been losers at the mercy of interests of the small political, military, and economic elite. Having seen the extent to which things could still get worse, Guineans have mostly refrained from violent opposition to the state. However, diffuse anger at poor living conditions and lack of improvement over several decades and multiple administrations can be compounded by the winner-take-all approach of many Guinean elites. Despite all the resilience around ethnic, religious, and regional identity that has been described, persistent attempts by elites to focus on ethnicity seriously risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. Until now, Guineans' deep distrust of their leaders has prevented this from happening, but prior outbursts of violence usually have had an intercommunal aspect, if only because this is the site of small quotidian frictions and the path of least resistance for violence to organize around.

Another coup

The examples of Mali and Burkina Faso may act as incentives to enterprising middle-ranks or senior officers, to stage another coup, just as the Mali and Burkina coups may originally have served as models for Colonel Doumbouya. International actors' increasingly indifferent reaction to illegal transfers of power means that the perceived disincentives to new coups has now become ever lower (Foreign Policy 2021).

Violence within the security forces

Violence could be sparked based on anger at purges or prosecutions seen as targeting certain groups. The September 2009 trial, while hailed outside Guinea and greeted with

initial enthusiasm and interest, also presents considerable risks of being used for political mobilization. Like the prosecutions undertaken by the CRIEF and the reclamation of property belonging to the state where former Prime Ministers and opposition leaders lived, much of the justice-related activity undertaken by the CNRD is admirable in theory but can also appear politically motivated. Given the large number of Forestier officers prosecuted in the September 2009 trial, there is a risk that Forestier soldiers currently in the security forces would become restive. Conversely, going too easy on Dadis Camara and other Forestiers could prompt anger among Peuhl soldiers, as Peuhl consider themselves to have been most viciously targeted during the stadium massacre and rapes.

Return of drug trafficking

Several news reports indicate an uptick in seizures of drugs including cocaine and hashish.

According to one report, at least seven police officers and gendarmes were arrested and accused of involvement in the trade (Condé 2021). Drug production and transshipment were rampant in Guinea between 2004 and 2010. Members of Lansana Conté's family were implicated, and multiple parts of the security forces were said to compete over control of the trade and its proceeds. Moussa Dadis Camara came into power decrying the drug trade, which was very unpopular with the Guinean public, and some of his early "Dadis Show" performances centered on extracting public confessions from various people from the prior administration. However, before long, most analysts understood that the Conseil National de la Démocratie et du Développement (CNDD) junta was in fact moving out those who had controlled the trade in order to control it themselves. When the junta collapsed at the end of 2009, Guinea's drug trade dissipated. While there does not seem to be strong evidence of the CNRD's involvement in trafficking, some consulted for the RRA believed there had been an increase in circulation.⁹⁸ Lessons from Guinea's past vulnerability are clear indicators that this remains a future risk, one that will become escalated if there is a breakdown in governance or stability—in addition to the associated knock-on effects it could have on political processes, elite incentives, as well as further deterioration of governance and stability.

Sabotage of mining operations

The environmental degradation that has accompanied mining, the inequitable sharing of mining wealth with populations in mining areas, and the absence of employment for people from these areas have caused resentment and volatility to accumulate.

Prior instances of sabotage in the Forest Region could be a predictor of future violence, as mine-adjacent populations have few other means to command the attention of the companies and the state.

Continual outbreaks of interethnic violence, especially in the Forest Region

Guinea has a legacy of interethnic violence leading to further outbreaks, especially in the Forest Region and Conakry. In 2012–13, about 525 people were killed in intercommunal violence in N'Zérékoré and Yomou prefectures. This vastly outstrips the number killed by the

state in the Conakry region since Alpha Condé's election in 2010, although the latter gets more attention.⁹⁹ Violence in towns and villages far from Conakry receives less media attention but can be far more deadly. In the N'Zérékoré region, more recent violence is enacted in the shadow of a 1991 massacre in N'Zérékoré town following its first mayoral election. Tit-for-tat beatings escalated into killings and into an organized massacre of nearly 500 (McGovern 2017). This violence both fed into and resulted from dynamics from the civil wars in neighboring countries, especially the 1989–97 and 1999–2003 wars in Liberia. Most recently, at least 32 people were killed and 90 injured in intercommunal violence in March 2020 at the time of legislative elections (HRW 2021). At different moments, local political and community leaders have been sometimes more, sometimes less proactive in managing intercommunal tensions, and it is unclear how much influence the Coordination de la Guinée forestière exercise in N'Zérékoré town, where the risks of further violence remain highest, will have.

Jihadi groups exploit Guinea's many risk factors

While Guinea has thus far not experienced any jihadist attacks, it was noted that many of the same risk factors exist in Guinea as in its neighbors.¹⁰⁰ Incursions by jihadi groups are likely to begin as forays that look like banditry and smuggling, especially from the Malian and northern Ivorian border regions. This has been a characteristic of jihadi strategy in West Africa and the Sahel for 20 years, and the technique of recruiting local villages' petty criminals and smugglers into a principled political-military movement has worked in West Africa and beyond. Dissatisfaction with governmental performance is a necessary but not sufficient ingredient, as is a sense of ethnic or regional resentment at political or economic marginalization. Both of these factors exist in Guinea, even if they have been counterbalanced so far by Guinea's strong nationalist sentiment. Diplomats and well-informed Guineans suggested that there are no operational cells yet, and that jihadis might be interested in Guinea more as a source of income and resupply rather than for operations. One respondent noted an important nuance, that he did not yet see a real risk of extremism (as in leading to violence) but did see a risk of (nonviolent) youth radicalization.¹⁰¹ However, given the region's trends, one diplomat suggested it was "a matter of when, not if" jihadis would stage an attack in the country.¹⁰²

Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities

Climate change is already affecting Guinea and is likely to play an increasing role in coming years, exacerbating many of the other fragility dynamics discussed in this assessment. The alternating threats of drought and flooding particularly threaten farmers' livelihoods. Annual rainfall has averaged about 1800 mm each year for the last century, and after a dry period from the late 1970s to the early 1990s, it has stabilized again. Because most parts of Guinea receive torrential rain during the rainy season (June through October), both farmers and city dwellers are used to managing inundations. But climate change is making rainfall harder to predict, and this is especially a problem for the majority of Guinean farmers whose crops rely on rain for all of their water input. For this reason, water management will become increasingly important for Guineans who will need to conserve abundant water for (sometimes unexpected) dry periods, direct it where it is needed through irrigation schemes, and drain it away when it threatens to destroy crops.

Although drought has not been a problem country-wide, it is likely that it will become a greater issue in drier parts of the country, such as the Futa Jallon and Upper Guinea. These are also the areas with most of Guinea's livestock herds, and the paucity of available pasture during the dry season is likely to lead to increasing conflict between pastoralists and farmers, as has happened throughout the West African savanna. Another threat is sea level rise. As in Guinea-Bissau and Senegal's Casamance region, this will make coastal rice cultivation near-impossible due to increasing salinization of the soil and water sources.¹⁰³ It will also cause more flooding along the Guinean coast, including in Conakry, much of which is built on reclaimed land. Mean temperatures have risen by about 1 degree Celsius in the last 20 years, compared to the 80 years before that. They are projected to rise by another +/- 0.5 degrees Celsius by 2100.¹⁰⁴

A tipping point finally comes

Most Guineans have been under tremendous pressure during the past 25 years, and the current situation presents additional risks, particularly around whether there might be a forthcoming "tipping point," whether patience will finally expire, or if resilience has finally eroded. In recent years, Guinea has experienced cross-border attacks, faced the difficulties of hosting several hundred thousand refugees, weathered coups, Ebola, and COVID-19, and endured systematic use of the security forces and courts to stymie dissent. This is on top of food insecurity, poor infrastructure, and poor provision of services. Guineans have long since grown weary of governance mismanagement and the slow pace of development and socioeconomic progress. The overarching risk is one of further disillusionment and the effects it would have on continuing to break down the social contract, with people wondering, "Why engage the state for education, for health, for economic well-being; why stay in Guinea instead of trying to migrate; why participate in electoral processes that simply swap one self-interested actor or party for another; why stay peaceful?" Guinea's unique history should not result in complacency that just because it has not yet happened here, it never will, and thus this remains an omnipresent if, hopefully unlikely, risk.

As the 2017 RRA stated, "Given the socioeconomic precariousness and widespread frustrations over increasing poverty and deficient state institutions across the country, popular protests are likely to happen again in Guinea" (World Bank 2017, 37). Most deadly clashes have taken place during either protests against living conditions or immediately after elections. These are well-established patterns that often begin with some violence on both sides (between civilians and security forces or between two groups of civilians). Regardless of who casts the first stone, these events typically escalate in such a way that the better armed group and/or the group that has prepared for large-scale violence beforehand quickly begins to exercise overwhelming and disproportionate force. The clearest example of this dynamic was in the 2009 stadium massacre.

VIII. Portfolio Analysis¹⁰⁵

Since 2018, WBG engagement has focused on helping Guinea transition out of fragility.¹⁰⁶

Since 2013, Guinea is no longer on the WBG's List of Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations. Nonetheless, recognizing that deep-rooted fragility persists in the country, the WBG has scaled up its contribution to mitigating fragility risks. First, Guinea was one of only four countries eligible to draw on the IDA18 Risk Mitigation Regime (RMR), which provided eligible countries enhanced support to reduce FCV drivers, as identified in the 2017 RRA, and incentivized investments in prevention (see Annex 3).¹⁰⁷ Second, as a result, the FY18–FY23 Country Partnership Framework (CPF) included a strong emphasis on addressing FCV issues, with an active portfolio of US\$624.53 million¹⁰⁸ that integrated operations related to natural resources management, economic diversification, safety nets, governance, agriculture development, and service delivery—all key sectors, from an FCV perspective. In addition, the WBG had a strong policy dialogue with the government on critical governance reforms and developed a solid analytical base on fragility issues in Guinea.¹⁰⁹

The nonlinear trajectory of WBG programming in Guinea: Addressing existing and new challenges

The trajectory of the WBG program in Guinea has been far from linear. The WBG had to constantly adapt its approach to continue to operate in a challenging and politically volatile environment. A set of structural implementation constraints, compounded by a mix of mutually reinforcing challenges, has forced the WBG to revise its priorities and engagement model. The following sections highlight the structural constraints that impede the WBG program's implementation and effectiveness.

Structural constraints that impede the implementation and effectiveness of WBG programming

Low capacity is a systemic issue in Guinea. Weak institutional capacity and poor technical skills have been highlighted as key operational and implementation challenges. There was broad consensus on the weak capacity of Project Implementation Units (PIUs) to understand WBG procedures (safeguards instruments, procurement, and financial management), as well as the lack of locally available capacity and expertise. Misalignments between the skills and institutional capacities required to support ambitious projects and reforms negatively affected the speed and effectiveness of delivery, leading to a significant capacity gap.¹¹⁰

Low levels of ownership and motivation have also been highlighted as a key bottleneck. The government's overreliance on external assistance means that the WBG has had to step in on various occasions to provide equipment to allow ministry staff to perform basic coordination tasks. Differences in salaries and benefits between PIUs explain the frequent turnover of

staff and the low level of motivation of some PIU staff, especially when they do not receive additional benefits.¹¹¹ In addition, it has been reported that PIU staff often mention “their TTLs” with the idea that they work for the WBG, while projects are referred to as “World Bank projects,” showing the lack of government ownership.

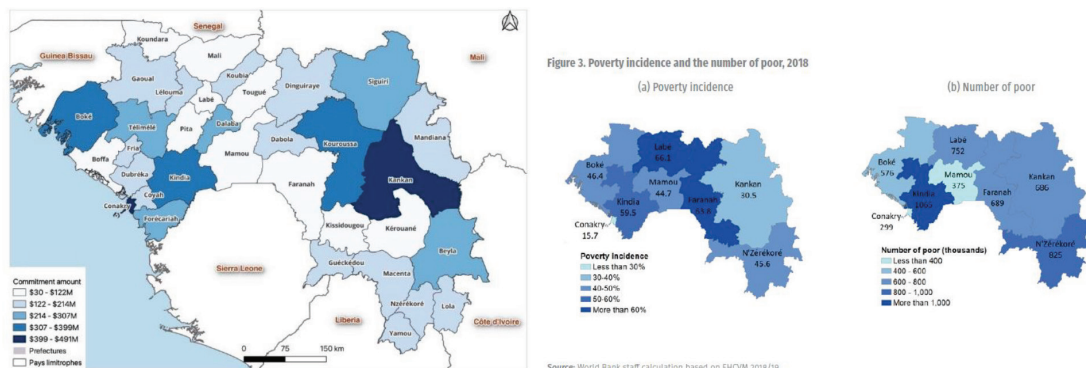
Access constraints remain a key issue in implementing programs and delivering services to the population outside of Conakry.

Projects have a much lighter footprint in more remote and rural areas¹¹² due to (i) poor road condition (especially during the rainy season), limited connectivity infrastructures, and lack of electricity; and (ii) lack of qualified local contractors with the capacity to implement project activities outside the capital city. Even when the project calls for national coverage, in practice, activities remain concentrated in Conakry.¹¹³ When efforts have been made to implement project activities outside of Conakry, TTLs report experiencing sharp rises in prices and challenging implementation and supervision, as travel distance to project sites increases significantly, leading to stretched timelines. As a result, most WBG-supported activities are concentrated in the Conakry area (see figure 3).

A TTL’s Perspective

“There is high disparity in the way poverty is distributed in the country. Projects tend to go where access is easy and the population that should be targeted is left out. If we are not careful, we risk exacerbating exclusion.”

Figure 3: WBG footprint and poverty trends in Guinea



Source: World Bank 2021a.

Note: The map to the left represents the concentration of WBG commitments per administrative region in Guinea, mostly in the Conakry area and Kankan. The poverty map, on the other hand, shows that extreme poverty is mostly present in areas outside of Conakry and Kankan.

The lack of coordination across the portfolio remains an issue. Several TTLs have acknowledged they do not have a clear sense of the overall strategic vision. Efforts have been made to improve coordination. For instance, the CMU organized a Country Team retreat in October 2021 to share information and perspectives about the September coup, reflect on the implications for WBG programming and build on similar experiences to mitigate the risks of setback. However, WBG task teams have a tendency to work in silos, resulting in missed opportunities to leverage synergies across projects and avoid duplication of efforts.

Poor governance practices and risks of capture remain key challenges for the implementation of WBG programs. Procurement remains highly vulnerable to poor governance practices that can lead to conflict of interest in awarding contracts.¹¹⁴ In addition, some TTLs mentioned concerns regarding previous government politically motivated attempts to influence the design or scope of projects.¹¹⁵ Finally, the ethnic dimension also plays a role in hiring processes, to the detriment of transparent and performance-based recruitment.

Multiples crises have led the WBG to reconfigure its program and adapt its priorities

COVID-19

To respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the WBG had to adjust its program in Guinea.

The impact of COVID-19, at the same time as 2020 pre-electoral tensions, compounded Guinea's fragility by impeding the government's and the WBG's ability to focus and implement priority areas identified in the CPF, hence delaying some key reforms and project activities important for the country. As indicated in the Performance and Learning Review (PLR), several adjustments to the portfolio were made,¹¹⁶ including additional financing (AF) and restructuring of existing projects,¹¹⁷ as the WBG shifted its program to respond to COVID-19.¹¹⁸

Many projects experienced significant delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Disbursement rates, which reached 32.6 percent in 2019, fell to 16.4 percent in 2020 then bounced back to 21 percent in FY21, reflecting the disruptive impact of COVID-19 and associated measures¹¹⁹ on the overall operating environment. Several issues were reported: (i) shutdowns and disruptions to the supply chain drove up prices for contractors in the infrastructure sector, making construction material harder to find and more expensive, stretching budgets and implementation timelines; (ii) social distancing and lockdown measures also contributed to slowing down implementation, as contractors and workers left the country. In addition, the suspension of mission travels has made project supervision and the provision of international technical assistance more challenging; and (iii) the lack of an adequate crisis response infrastructure in Guinea, limited internet connectivity, electricity cuts and lack of equipment significantly impeded the capacity of institutions and private sector to respond to the crisis and coordinate effectively.

From transitioning out of fragility to staying engaged with a "people-centered" approach

In response to the September military takeover, the WBG triggered Operational Policy (OP) 7.30 on dealing with de facto governments.¹²⁰ As a result, all new disbursements to PIUs' designated accounts were paused. However, the WBG remained engaged in Guinea

and at the request of the new authorities, delivered a set of strategic policy notes to support the transition. In addition, some activities could still be undertaken, as PIUs were authorized to use resources already in their accounts to cover their operating costs¹²¹ and carry out critical activities. The implementation of procurement contracts signed before September 5 was also allowed. Therefore, contractors could continue implementation in the field, transmit invoices, and be paid—always conditional to the availability of funds in the accounts, as new disbursements were not permitted. In the health sector, disbursement under the COVID-19 emergency response project was an exception to the OP 7.30 freeze, due to its emergency nature.

The military takeover and OP 7.30 impacted the WBG portfolio in several ways, exacerbating existing constraints and creating new challenges. Even though the OP 7.30 pause only lasted

six months, and some activities could continue, delays in project implementation increased significantly, halting some projects that had just been approved, launched, or had barely begun implementation.¹²² In addition, the change of government counterpart had two major consequences: (i) the policy dialogue on major reforms that the WBG had initiated with the Condé government was stalled, and this considerably disrupted the reform agenda the WBG had been promoting; and (ii) the strong technical dialogue that WBG task teams had built over the years had to be restarted, which also led to considerable delays.

The WBG shifted its approach, emphasizing the need to stay engaged with a people-centered lens.¹²³ In February 2022, the WBG completed its OP 7.30 assessment,¹²⁴ which concluded that the transition plan was appropriate, and approved to lift OP 7.30 restrictions on February 23, 2022. Since March 2022, disbursements on existing projects in the portfolio have been reinitiated after having confirmed they were aligned with the WBG “people-centered” approach. In addition, the WBG allowed new operations on supporting vulnerable people,¹²⁵ upon the CNRD’s adoption of a transition timeline and roadmap.

Challenges in the new operating environment were manifold. Several issues have been raised by TTLs, in particular regarding the impact of some governance reforms launched by the new government:

- i. *The strict (and abrupt) application of the mandatory retirement age* has led to the departure of several ministry and PIU staff (including project coordinators), but without the necessary accompaniment measures and clear communication that would have ensured a smooth handover. New staff have been hired but without the required knowledge and experience. This lack of continuity has caused significant delays in project implementation.¹²⁶
- ii. *Addressing poor governance practices.* Several government officials, including ministers, have been fired. Several TTLs reported the need to restart technical work and dialogue, sometimes several times, due to frequent turnover.¹²⁷ In addition, TTLs reported delays, as in some ministries, processes have become cumbersome, requiring multiple steps of approval, involving several ministries and officials.¹²⁸
- iii. *Freeze on local governments’ accounts.* Following the 2021 coup, the Ministry for Territorial Administration and Decentralization ordered a freeze and systematic audit of the accounts of municipalities, voicing concerns over their management of public funds. The freeze lasted for all of 2022 and resulted in the inability of municipalities to execute their development investment plans for that year. It also delayed the implementation of activities planned under the Guinea Support to Local Governance Project (PAGL). By the end of December 2022, the MATD lifted the freeze of almost all municipalities. However, the process delayed municipal development investments by an entire year and pointed to the lack of a more efficient mechanism for the auditing of local governments’ accounts. Additional challenges remain, including the risk of (i) disrupting fiscal transfer; (ii) lost legitimacy if the FNDL is not used; (iii) blind spots, as basic infrastructure work had to stop because of the freeze, with risks to create grievances in local communities; and (iv) discontent among local development agents (ADLs), who had not been paid since December 2021.¹²⁹
- iv. *New momentum to deliver results.* TTLs have reported a changed management style from their new counterparts, both hands-on and hands-off. Some ministers have become extremely hands-on, sometimes in a detrimental way, pressuring PIUs to deliver, interfering in project activities, and trying to influence project decisions. In addition, for some projects, TTLs reported that PIUs now include ministry focal points, but their role remains unclear.

While renewed interest and engagement have been applauded by several TTLs as a welcome change of pace and a good incentive for PIUs to perform and deliver, the interference in PIUs' day-to-day work has also been deemed extremely counterproductive by some TTLs.

Lessons learned: Establishing systems that outlast crisis

As implementation remains fraught with challenges in a volatile environment, the WBG had to adjust and adapt its operating model to keep delivering on its ambitious program. The priority should therefore be to set up systems that can last, instead of focusing on delivering single activities. As one TTL mentioned, systems “that the WBG has built [over the years] are not broken.”

The importance of staying engaged

It is essential to ensure the continuity of WBG engagement. As several TTLs highlighted, the WBG needs to find ways to operate, including under OP 7.30, to avoid discontinuity in WBG engagement. In Guinea, the WBG has remained engaged during the OP7.30 pause of disbursement and has maintained its dialogue with the authorities, through the delivery of policy notes. Indeed, it is critical to maintain some level of engagement and keep an open channel of communication with counterparts at the technical level.

Building institutional foundation as part of WBG engagement

In Guinea, the WBG has invested in supporting the establishment of core national agencies. For instance, the PAGL contributed to the creation of the FNDL and the establishment of ANAFIC to manage it. These were the result of a decade of engagement and dialogue around decentralization and local governance reform, building on a community-driven development (CDD) project to incrementally institutionalize its participatory mechanisms and transition from donor funding to fiscal transfers derived from mining revenues. The PAGL helped establish ANAFIC as the go-to government agency for local development, leading to the expansion of the agency's mandate to also include the management of FODEL and Conakry Development Fund (FODECCON) in 2022. The PAGL and now PAGL2 have incrementally introduced more complexity into local development planning and project design, including climate resilience filters and performance-based conditions.

In addition, investing more at the local level is critical to restore trust in the state, strengthen the social contract, and enhance frontline service delivery. Several TTLs have emphasized the importance of strengthening WBG engagement at the local level, with activities aimed at supporting local development plans using participatory approaches and tools.¹³⁰ In that regard, the WBG-supported local governance programs have invested in establishing core systems at the local level, as part of the decentralization reform agenda and citizen engagement activities that other WBG-supported projects can leverage. Finally, strengthening community engagement in WBG programs empowers communities to have a say, as evidenced by the NAFA project, which modified its targeting criteria from proxy means testing (PMT) to community validation.

The importance of cross-fertilization and coordination—the example of the grievance mechanism

Collaboration between projects is key to promote synergies and improve the effectiveness of WBG operations. One example is worth mentioning. The PAGL uses the existing grievance

redress mechanism (GRM) developed for the Third Village Community Support Project (PACV3). This system consists of a national-level call center, with a toll-free number, and local level committees in charge of handling complaints across 337 communes. Several WBG-supported projects, including SPJ, Environment (ENB), and Health, are planning to leverage the existing system. As part of the Guinea Natural Resources, Mining and Environmental Management Project, the ENB project is working closely with the Social Sustainability and Inclusion team to introduce climate resilience and sustainable environmental practices in local development planning, starting with municipalities that include Protected Areas. This cross-fertilization between GPs is an efficient use of resources, while creating opportunities to be more effective.

A targeted capacity-building framework

To remedy the lack of qualified personnel, the WBG has adopted a somewhat ad hoc approach to capacity building. WBG-supported projects have made extensive use of consultants (generally from the subregion) and international contractors to compensate the lack of technical skills in-country. The WBG has also invested in training PIU staff; however, several TTLs have flagged that those trainings were often seen as a way to earn per diems and led to opportunistic behavior. Therefore, TTLs have advocated for a more longer-term and targeted approach to capacity building, recognizing that expectations may be too high. In addition, as the successful implementation of projects depends a lot on the capacity and engagement of PIUs as a whole, TTLs have recognized the importance of investing in continued training, mentoring, and knowledge-sharing to avoid an overreliance on selected individuals.¹³¹ Finally, TTLs have highlighted the importance of the project coordinator function, which is key to ensure a smooth implementation and promote a work culture based on integrity and transparency.

Emphasis on FCV drivers and resilience factors

Overall, the WBG portfolio in Guinea is tailored to address the drivers of fragility, within its comparative advantage and taking into account existing implementation constraints. Through its country program, the WBG has shifted its engagement to address key drivers of fragility. Nonetheless, this should not be interpreted to mean that all fragility drivers have been equally or fully addressed.

DRIVER 1

A sophisticated program of activities by the CNRD currently appeals to an expectant population, but a lack of transparency could steadily undermine governance and sow local divisions.

The CNRD is pushing reforms that focus on improved governance that would enable Guinea to fully benefit from its huge mineral wealth and achieve positive development outcomes. Lack of transparency and poor governance are pervasive and constitute a source of resentment for many Guineans. To mitigate this risk, the WBG has leveraged its comparative advantage to improve the management of public expenditures, modernize public financial management (PFM), and build the capacity of civil servants, with the Economic Governance, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Public Project (now closed). In addition, early on, the WBG leveraged its portfolio to focus on institution-building efforts, providing building blocks for power sharing and dispute resolution, as well as involving citizens at the community level.

The series of WBG-funded Village Community Support Projects (PACV) as well as the PAGL have been critical operations aimed at strengthening local governance and enhancing trust in formal institutions. Through these projects, the WBG has supported the creation of ANAFIC and the FNDL to ensure this approach is embedded in Guinea's governance system and reinforced the capacity of local institutions to prevent and manage local conflicts, with the piloting of an early warning and early response system in the Boke region. Promoting citizen engagement has also been a key pillar of WBG engagement in Guinea, reinforcing community institutions and developing citizen engagement mechanisms such as participatory planning budgeting, participatory monitoring, and feedback loops. These are important efforts to strengthen relationships between communities and local authorities.

DRIVER 2

Guinea's political system has thus far delivered few dividends to the population and instead has served as a vehicle for ethnicization, corruption, and rent-seeking, rendering the country vulnerable to potential democratic backsliding and future contestation.

The WBG does not have the mandate to directly address this driver. However, the WBG can help address disillusionment with democracy by restoring trust in state institutions (see driver 5). In addition, and related to driver 1, the WBG has invested in supporting the transparency of PFM systems and processes, including by supporting budget preparation and execution, with the Economic Governance, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Public Project. This was an important endeavor to mitigate the risks of rent-seeking and poor governance practices.

DRIVER 3

Weak private sector development has resulted in a lack of economic diversification and an overreliance on mining for the foreseeable future, which continues to fuel grievances while failing to offer most Guineans job opportunities.

Guinea's overreliance on mining resources and the expectations that this sector creates among the population fans tensions and exacerbates the country's vulnerability to shocks.

The lack of transparency and accountability in the management of mining resources increases popular frustrations. The WBG has scaled up its engagement to enhance governance in the mining sector with the Guinea Natural Resources, Mining and Environmental Management project and the Mineral Governance Support Project (closed in 2020). The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Finance Cooperation (IFC) have scaled up their engagement to enhance the impact of mining investments on local communities with the GAC. The project aims to develop a greenfield open-pit bauxite mine to create around 1,000 permanent jobs and a further 9,800 jobs through the project's local supply chain.

To some extent, the WBG has sought to address the lack of economic diversification and weak private sector development.

To drive economic diversification, job creation, poverty reduction, and rural development, the WBG has invested in the agriculture sector, with the Commercial Agriculture Development Project for Guinea (with IFC co-financing) and the Guinea Integrated Agricultural Development Project. To remove constraints to productivity and improve market linkages, the WBG has adopted a multisectoral approach that includes (i) improving farmers' access to markets with the Rural Mobility and Connectivity Project that focuses on production areas with high development potential and (ii) the Guinea Electricity Access Scale Up Project to address the energy deficit in these areas. Finally, the WBG, with IFC co-financing, is providing support to private sector development, with the MSME Growth Competitiveness and Access

to Finance project. The IFC is also scaling up its support to local businesses, including to the Société Nouvelle de Commerce S.A., a leading Guinean diversified family business group.

Guinea also suffers from a learning gap, which leads to a mismatch between job market needs and skills. Underemployment and unemployment rates are high, and the education system does not provide adequate skills and qualifications to young people when they enter the job market. As a result, Guineans, especially youth, have low socioeconomic prospects, which fuels discontent. With the Stepping Up Skills project, the WBG has invested in creating economic opportunities, with a focus on improving youth employability through a targeted skills program and by involving the private sector.

DRIVER 4

Insecure land tenure and the multiple ways it builds upon and reinforces existing historical, economic, and societal fault lines, and spurs most of the country's intercommunal violence.

Tensions over land remain a key factor of intercommunal conflict. However, so far, the WBG has no engagement on land, even though there is a growing emphasis on the importance of addressing this driver both by the government and partners. The WBG has invested in the agriculture sector but does not include specific land activities. However, WBG interventions recognize the need to put in place appropriate measures in relation to land. For instance, the Guinea Integrated Agricultural Development Project highlights that the project will build on and respect existing land tenure system for the selection of irrigation schemes that the project will rehabilitate.

DRIVER 5

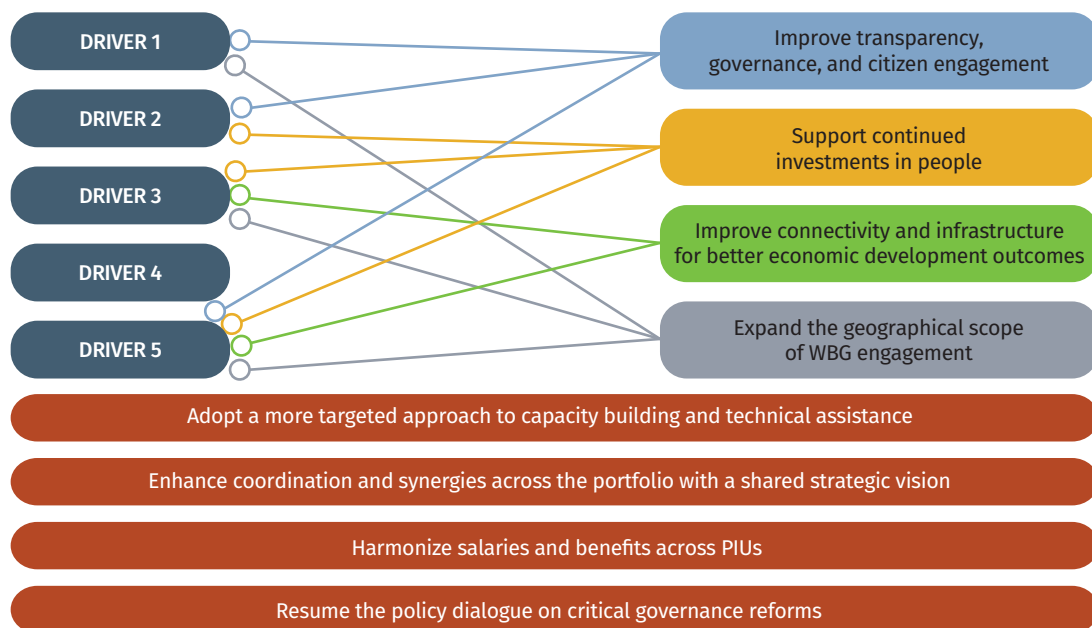
A fundamental mistrust in state institutions to effectively, equitably, and accountably deliver continues to justify widespread perceptions of exclusion and marginalization and has damaged the social contract.

Poor service delivery and the concomitant exclusion of a large segment of the population contribute to mistrust of state institutions. As a result, popular grievances and frustration over electricity and water shortages, inadequacy of the health and education system, and insufficient public services remain high. These tensions, which at times have turned violent, have undermined the legitimacy and credibility of the state. To mitigate those risks, the WBG has therefore invested in improving the provision of basic services in Guinea. The energy sector has much potential to address the high expectations of both the population and the private sector relative to access to electricity and electricity production. The Guinea Electricity Access Scale Up Project supports Electricité de Guinée to increase electricity access in Conakry, secondary cities, and rural areas, while the WBG supports increased access to water services in Conakry, through the Guinea Urban Water project. The need to close gaps in access to services and rebuild citizen-state relations have led the WBG to scale up its support in sectors like health, education, and social protection.¹³² Through the Emergency Response and NAFA Program Support Project, the WBG focuses on the poor and most vulnerable households to mitigate the impact of shocks. Finally, given the importance of better connecting citizens to markets and services, the WBG has invested in improving rural road access, with the Guinea Rural Mobility and Connectivity Project.

IX. Recommendations

The recommendations below have been formulated considering Guinea’s fragility challenges and resilience sources. This section sets out how the WBG can better respond to and address FCV issues and dynamics, using its convening power and overall perceptions of its effectiveness and impact in country. Indeed, according to the FY23 WBG Country Opinion Surveys, the WBG is the most trusted institution in Guinea, followed by donors and the United Nations. This section includes recommendations for strategic direction, operational focus, and operational effectiveness (see figure 4). It also considers the findings of the portfolio analysis that was carried out as part of the RRA process as well as the review of operational challenges and opportunities based on interviews and external consultations with the WBG country team and development partners. Not only does this section consider the sectors that make up the WBG portfolio, but it also takes into account project activities the WBG supports, to ensure that their scope is adequate and responds to the fragility challenges that Guinea faces. Finally, this section also recognizes that the WBG will need to adapt its portfolio to the new operating environment and adjust to the current transition to be fully fit for purpose.

Figure 4: Programming areas in response to fragility drivers



Source: Developed by authors of the RRA.

Overarching principles of engagement

This section outlines overarching recommendations that can be applied to all sectors and across the portfolio. These are foundational building blocks and long-term initiatives needed to tackle structural fragility drivers, support resilience, and enhance the effectiveness of WBG operations.

Maintain a strong policy dialogue on critical governance reforms

The September military takeover interrupted the ongoing dialogue on reforms the WBG had initiated with the previous government. Consultations with TTLs highlighted the need to resume this dialogue, without necessarily waiting for the next elections, and push for an ambitious reform program, including on tax reform in the mining sector, digitization of the tax system, and improvement of treasury management. Supporting these reforms to improve governance and enhance the accountability of the public sector would help to (i) rehabilitate the social contract in a context of depleted trust between citizens and the state; (ii) promote transparency in PFM and procurement, which is centrally featured in citizens' grievances; and (iii) promote a healthy business environment to entice investments.

The WBG could leverage its convening power and financing around a common set of important priorities. This would entail remaining engaged alongside donors (see Annex 2) on policy dialogue around (i) land reforms; and (ii) justice, accountability, and the fight against impunity. This could be achieved through the strategic use of advisory services and analytics in sectors where the WBG has no active/pipeline operations to inform the development of lending projects and/or sustain a more active dialogue with government and development partners.

Adopt a more targeted approach to capacity building and technical assistance

Despite investment in capacity building and technical assistance, challenges remain. Low capacities remain a key constraint across all sectors and impede the effective delivery of WBG programs, calling for more targeted capacity-building initiatives at all staff levels, which would entail the following:

- Better understanding the client's type of capacity deficit (weak technical capacity or lack of understanding of WBG procedures/processes) to provide support targeting specific needs while adopting a systematic approach to capacity building and prioritizing in-country training
- Keeping a strong focus on technical assistance (TA) and providing hands-on support; recognizing that some projects will need greater/closer accompaniment, the strategic use and sequencing of WBG-funded TA with lending operations can help mitigate some operational bottlenecks, such as slow procurement

In addition, taking into account context specificities, the WBG could explore the following:

- Be more realistic regarding hiring processes and adjust expectations, with more flexibility, but without lowering qualifications standards; for instance, lowering education requirements and increasing the number of years' experience required in TORs, with the objective of building a pool of experienced and qualified local staff. As one TTL mentioned, "master's degrees in Guinea do not exist." Focusing on practical experience would allow to incrementally strengthen staff capacities, who would then be incentivized by the possibility of being promoted, with the goal of internalizing capacities.
- Organize peer-to-peer exchanges, create communities of practice in the region, and organize working groups with PIUs, especially for PFM and procurement, to promote knowledge-sharing, lessons learned, and best practices.
- Consider organizing local trainings to train more staff and save costs, as well as mitigate risks of opportunistic behavior. In addition, invest in specialized and technical training (and not theoretical) in line with projects' requirements and scope.

Harmonize benefits across PIUs

High turnover remains an issue, and TTLs struggle to retain talented and high-performing PIU staff. If salary scales tend to be uniform across PIUs, better benefits from one PIU to another contribute to high PIU staff mobility. Some internal rules have been established by WBG procurement and financial management (FM) specialists to mitigate risks of staff turnover, which TTLs should abide by, including ensuring that salaries across PIUs are equivalent (see box 12).

Box Twelve

Good Practices

In Guinea-Bissau, salary harmonization was done through an agreement between the WBG and Ministry of Finance, which instituted (i) the same salary grid for all the positions; (ii) yearly promotions; and (iii) yearly salary increases every year based on performance. This approach mitigated the risks of staff turnover. In Côte d'Ivoire, the government published salary scales, and in Niger, authorities not only published salaries but also harmonized them across the donor community.

Enhance coordination and synergies across the portfolio with a shared strategic vision

Enhancing collaboration and leveraging synergies with a clear strategic vision would strengthen WBG overall program effectiveness. As one TTL said, “poverty is multidimensional; this calls for a cross-GPs approach.” Therefore, it appears critical that internally, the WBG country team has a shared vision and common strategy. For instance, given the potential of “green jobs,”¹³³ the WBG could explore a multisectoral approach that would include several GPs (ENB, education, and private sector). TTLs from the transport, health, agriculture, and energy GPs have all stressed the importance of good connectivity to improve access to health care, markets, and opportunities. Fostering exchanges on projects, challenges, lessons learned, and adaptation strategies would improve coordination, synergies, and the overall effectiveness of WBG engagement.

Operational recommendations

The section below presents some sector-specific recommendations. These reflect discussions with the country team and lessons shared by TTLs about their experiences working in Guinea. Recognizing that the operating environment in Guinea is extremely challenging, as well as the importance of being realistic, WBG interventions should adopt an approach that mixes short-term interventions with a medium- to long-term vision. This would entail (i) focusing on quick results and gains (short term) that are visible to the population, with the goal of demonstrating tangible improvements in citizens' daily lives. This is key in a context of diminished trust and

a damaged social contract; (ii) remaining focused on addressing structural factors of fragility (medium to long term) that cannot be addressed within one CEN/CPF cycle alone, but instead should be embedded within a strategic vision and investments, aimed at building capacity, supporting key governance reforms, addressing patterns of exclusion, and strengthening client relationships, over a sustained period. In addition, emphasis should be placed on investments (the “what”), geographic scope (the “where”), beneficiaries (the “who”), and decision-making and implementation processes (the “how”).

Improve transparency, governance, and citizen engagement

Support the government’s efforts to improve governance and bolster the accountability of the public sector, specifically focusing on enhancing transparency, participation, and inclusion to restore trust in the state.

- Support a public administration reform that focuses on ethics and accountability and includes the following actions: (i) revise the salary grid; (ii) reduce the mass of civil servants; (iii) define clearer career paths based on performance for an improved and more incentivized HR management system; and (iv) introduce gender equality measures to encourage women’s participation in public administration (medium term).
- Continue to support citizen engagement to promote local ownership by
 - continuing to support government initiatives on public budgets, with mechanisms such as participatory budgeting and participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as part of local development processes (short to medium term); and
 - leveraging digital tools (e-Governance) to provide an evidence base for timely decision making and to facilitate citizens’ access to public services by reducing information and transparency gaps (medium term).
- Improve the quality of the citizen-institution links, including continued/strengthened use of GRMs at project level, citizen-state feedback loops for service delivery (short term).
- Deepen engagement with local actors, such as civil society, nongovernmental, community-based organizations, and mediators to allow them to play an oversight/watchdog role, with the objective of increasing accountability and citizen engagement with government decision making (short term).

Focus on enhancing transparency and accountability in the management of public funds.

- Support PFM reforms: (i) review the PFM system, including improved budget planning and allocation of resources; (ii) improve treasury management; (iii) set up an information system to enhance accounting system; and (iv) strengthen the capacity of the *Cour des Comptes* (medium term).
- Support investment in the PFM capacity of municipalities and the deployment in municipalities of a sufficient number of public accountants by the Directorate of Treasury (DGTCP) (short to medium term).
- Position the WBG in the ongoing dialogue with the government for the technical and financial autonomy of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (ARMP), including support to capacity building (short term).

Continue to support the decentralization reform agenda.

- Continued emphasis on participatory local development processes and strengthened subnational governance: (i) increased fiscal transfers, while ensuring that existing mechanisms function properly;¹³⁴ (ii) enhanced capacity building to empower local governments for improved performance in areas such as public financial management, procurement, and to address human resource, material, logistical, and institutional constraints; and (iii) ensure that decentralization is accompanied by the devolution of funds and authority of technical ministries (short to medium term).
- Support ongoing reforms, including leveraging PAGL2 to set up a mechanism to audit local governments' accounts that is transparent and accountable (short term).
- Support a territorial development approach that is endogenous (mobilizing resources within the territory and promoted by local institutions), spatially integrated, and linked to national development efforts (long term).

Improve the overall business environment to entice investments, including by facilitating access to credit for small and medium enterprises with the development of a basic credit infrastructure.

Support continued investments in people

Continue to invest in human capital development (education, health, social protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene) to demonstrate tangible progress and change Guineans' daily lives (short to medium term).

- Support better access to and quality of basic services, focusing on inclusive access, which could also help address youth unemployment, in a context of low-quality education and skills shortage. This would entail a specific focus on addressing regional disparities, as well as bridging the gap between urban and rural areas to ensure that WBG engagement supports the most vulnerable segments of the population.
- Support the inclusion of youth and women. To reap Guinea's demographic dividend, focus needs to be on creating opportunities for employment, livelihoods, and training, emphasizing geographic and economic disparities, including through skills development, on-the-job training programs, apprenticeship/entrepreneurship programs for vulnerable youth, out-of-school youth, women, youth with disabilities, and lower-skilled workers. This could also be achieved by exploring the potential of "green jobs," and opportunities in aquaculture and agroforestry, to support economic diversification (beyond mining).
- Enhance WBG support to address GBV by strengthening first-line response (both medical service provision and referral processes).
- Support the water sector, including (i) improving sanitation, clean water, and solid waste management; (ii) investing more in water production and water treatment (medium-term); and (iii) supporting ongoing reforms and capacity-building initiatives to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the water utility Société des Eaux de Guinée (SEG).

Improve connectivity and infrastructure for better economic development outcomes

Connect citizens to markets, opportunities, and services, and tackle patterns of exclusion, through enhanced transport infrastructure. Weak capacity, lack of contractors, and access

constraints have undermined the effectiveness of WBG engagement in the transport sector. Therefore, investments should focus first on realistic and sustainable interventions in urban settings (short term), while keeping in mind the need to engage in rural areas for enhanced impact from an FCV perspective (long term).

Urban interventions

- Improve urban mobility with a focus on urban transportation in Conakry, as a quick win to demonstrate visible results to the population (short term).
- Support the ongoing momentum around institutional reforms in the transport sector, including support to the Transport Authority (short term), and provide capacity building to newly created agencies (Road Agency, Road Safety Agency, Urban Transport Authority) (short term).

Rural interventions

- Rethink WBG engagement for rural connectivity, with a network and holistic approach. A lot of investment has been made in rural roads, but WBG interventions have not worked well. Rural roads also tend to deteriorate rapidly, and maintenance remains challenging, particularly due to poor strategic planning. Therefore, potential interventions could include the following:
 - Focus on sustainable investments and key infrastructures, such as bridges, hydraulic structures, and culverts (medium to long term).
 - Focus on improving infrastructure in the agriculture sector:
 - Invest in the durability and maintenance of key infrastructure (markets). This is critical, given the scale of postharvest losses (60 percent) (short term).
 - Improve logistics in rural areas (covered under transport recommendation).
 - Support the implementation of land reforms, alongside the FAO (medium term).
 - Support hydropower production in the energy sector, including with the construction of new hydroelectric dams. This is a sector where the WBG could invest more and over time.
 - Adopt a more holistic approach to mining:
 - Pursue efforts to promote transparency in the management of mining resources (formal sector), including better coordination between sector ministries (short term). Investing more in communication around mining appears critical, as mining revenues cannot be channeled directly to communities, but instead support governments in providing better and quality services to citizens (medium to long term).
 - Explore a new area of engagement around ASM. Recognizing that this is challenging, the WBG could explore the use of advisory services and analytics as a first step (short term), which could pave the way for more comprehensive engagement in ASM areas (long term).

Expand the geographical scope of WBG engagement

Given current fragility dynamics and risks in Guinea, there is a need to expand the geographical scope of WBG engagement. As highlighted in the portfolio analysis, the majority

of WBG interventions are concentrated in Conakry and surrounding areas, as it is more cost effective and pragmatic, given existing implementation constraints. From an FCV perspective, it would be critical to geographically enhance WBG capacity for intervention, especially in at-risk regions (Nzérékoré, Kankan) but also in ASM areas, which concentrate all grievances and tensions, and could constitute a hotspot in Guinea. This should not be seen as simply bridging the gap between urban and rural areas. Instead, WBG engagement should focus more on at-risk regions, including the Sahelian part of Guinea and border regions with Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, and Guinea-Bissau. UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flights could be a useful tool for accessing hard-to-reach areas.

Operational flexibility

Drawing on lessons learned from other contexts, this section outlines recommendations that could support WBG engagement in Guinea and enhance operational flexibility.

Explore the use of Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support

Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support (HEIS)¹³⁵ is a WBG flexibility for FCV contexts that could be applied to Guinea. Even though it remains expensive and often time-consuming, emerging evidence indicates that HEIS can be effective in mitigating project implementation delays and facilitating knowledge transfer to client countries. Given the lack of capacity in Guinea, it could be relevant to (i) explore the use of HEIS and (ii) focus on central capacity building (beyond PIUs) and facilitating knowledge exchange with clients and external partners.

Enhance the use of GEMS for informed decision-making

The WBG has rolled out Geo-Enabling Initiative for Monitoring and Supervision (GEMS) methodology in Guinea for more than three years, but implementation gaps remain due to low capacity, with limited M&E and ICT skills. Therefore, there is a need to continue ongoing efforts. However, in Guinea, the emphasis should not only be on the use of GEMS; it would be more impactful to focus on how GEMS is being used and for what purpose. As such, it is recommended that the WBG takes the following steps:

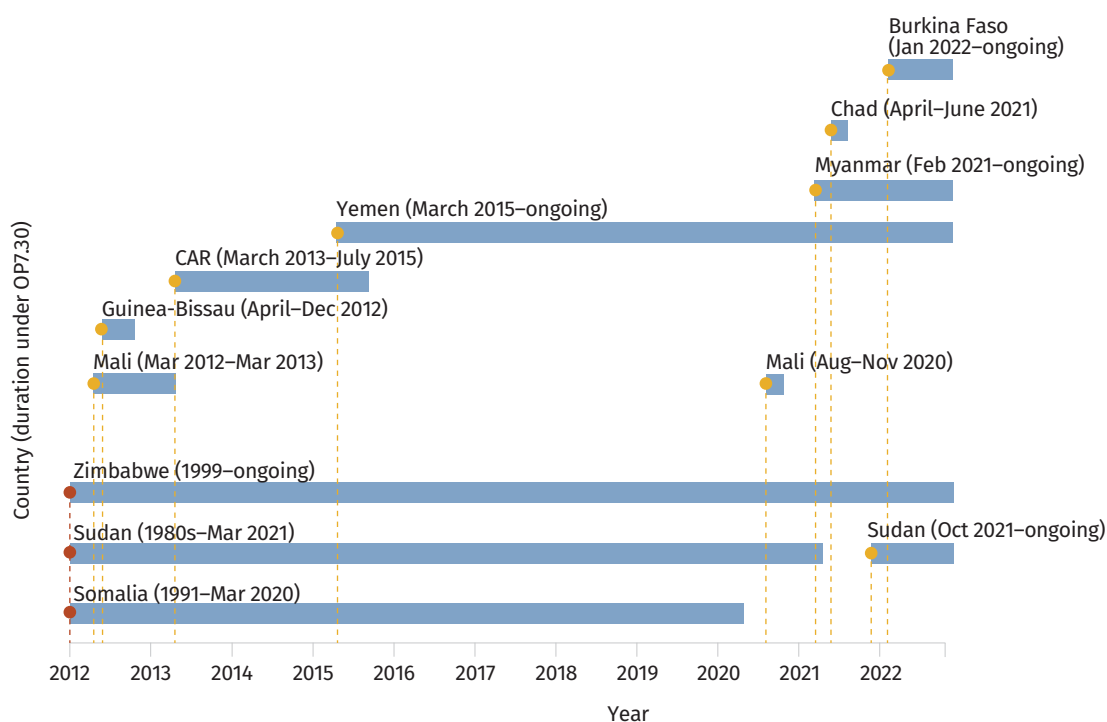
- Continue capacity-building in the use of GEMS, including methodology and associated tools.
- Ensure that the entire portfolio implements the GEMS methodology for monitoring and supervision. GEMS allows projects to customize M&E platforms, improve results in real time, and centralize access to data for the government, the WBG, and partners. This is a critical aspect of WBG engagement, given the importance of transparency and accountability.
- Use the existing portfolio mapping to its full potential for operational planning and supervision.
- Explore the expansion of the existing portfolio mapping to develop a cross-agency monitoring platform and foster partners' coordination.
- Develop a dashboard that would allow for a more dynamic country portfolio review.

Annex 1.

An Overview of Situations That Trigger OP 7.30

OP 7.30¹³⁶ provides an operational context for the WBG to respond to the emergence of a de facto government. When the policy is triggered, it prescribes that the WBG follow specific rules to continue disbursements on existing loans in the country portfolio and to prepare and process new operations in the country. Since the facts and circumstances of each de facto situation vary, the policy framework gives WBG management considerable flexibility. In each case, the WBG has interpreted and applied the policy pragmatically, taking into account all relevant operational factors and after close consultation with LEG. In determining its attitude toward a de facto government, the WBG is concerned with the establishment or maintenance of an effective legal framework for its lending program (Chelsky, Lattanavong, and van der Werf 2022).

Figure A1.1: Countries under the World Bank's OP 7.30 in the past decade



Note: Red circles represent countries in arrears.

When a country is under OP 7.30, the WBG does not usually approve new operations, but exceptions can be made. In Sudan, for instance, while the country is currently under OP 7.30 following the military takeover of October 2021, the WBG has responded to the urgent needs of the population by working through third parties to deliver much-needed support without being seen as legitimizing the current de facto government. The suspension of disbursements under OP 7.30 can last from several months, as in Chad (April 2021 to July 2021), to years, as in Madagascar (2009–14). In recent years, OP 7.30 has been triggered for countries such as the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Sudan, Yemen, and most recently, Burkina Faso. Likewise, when countries are in arrears on loan repayments to the WBG, long pauses can ensue, as was the case for Somalia and Sudan and remains such for Zimbabwe.

Exiting from OP 7.30 status is often referred to as reengagement. However, it is rare for the WBG to entirely disengage from countries under OP 7.30 or countries in arrear status. Analytical and diagnostic work usually continues, even during the suspension of new disbursements, and can play a critical role in identifying priorities and bottlenecks. Since OP 7.30 or arrears restricts the number of resources that the WBG can commit for long-term initiatives, alternative sources of funds such as trust funds can provide important flexibility for the WBG to remain “engaged.”

Although there are serious reputational risks associated with reengagement, these must be weighed against the risks of inaction or delayed reengagement, which in turn can also pose reputational risks. In the past, working with de facto governments during political transitions has enabled the WBG to contribute to the preservation of hard-won development gains, including by protecting essential institutions and services. Most of the WBG’s emergency operations approved during these transitions were highly effective at maintaining critical service delivery like in the CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, and Yemen, while delaying reengagement had steep costs in the case of the partial (financial) disengagement in Madagascar between 2009–14.¹³⁷

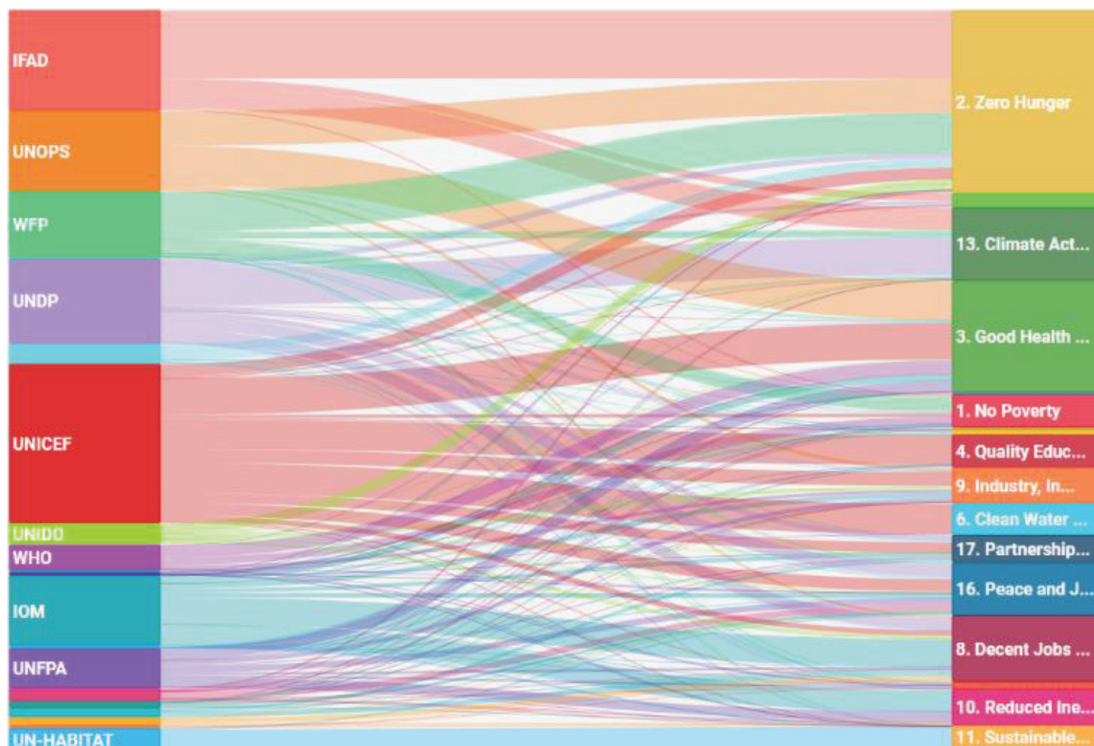
These other countries’ experiences with OP 7.30 all reflect a common lesson learned, which is the importance of remaining engaged through analytics or trust-funded activities during periods of forced pauses under OP 7.30. With the timing of that resumption by its very nature uncertain, investing in ongoing monitoring and well-targeted diagnostics has a potentially high return (World Bank 2021b).

Annex 2.

Mapping Donor Interventions in Guinea

As part of the portfolio analysis, a quick mapping of donors' interventions in Guinea has been conducted. Partners' areas of focus in Guinea include Human Development, Governance, Infrastructures, Private Sector Development, and Jobs. Here is a brief overview of the main programs that are currently under implementation in Guinea.

Figure A2.1: UN Agencies in Guinea



The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Guinea is composed of 24 funds, programs, and agencies working together, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, to implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF 2018–22). The support provided by the United Nations system is helping Guinea initiate a socioeconomic development that is more resilient to risks and disasters of all kinds. This work is being carried out through interventions aimed at (i) establishing and strengthening prevention, controlling, warning and rapid response mechanisms and systems to address emergencies; (ii) improving the quality of basic social services and making the minimum emergency package available for people;

and (iii) strengthening governance (management, coordination and accountability support) and community capacity. The main UN entities operating in Guinea are IFAD (with a portfolio of US\$39.8 million), UNICEF (US\$53.7 million), WHO (US\$9.9 million), FAO (US\$5.4 million), WFP (US\$23.7 million), UNFPA (US\$13.3 million), UNDP (US\$19.6 million) and IOM (US\$19.9 million) with UNOPS supporting implementation (US\$31.8 million) (UNSDG 2023).

L'Agence française de développement (AFD) is currently implementing a portfolio of 420 million euros (approximately US\$443 million). AFD is focusing its efforts in five areas to (i) develop and increase access to electricity and urban services (transport, water, waste management); (ii) develop an environmentally sustainable agriculture sector while ensuring food security; (iii) promote quality education, access to Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and jobs; (iv) strengthen access to social services (health) and cultural services; and finally (v) strengthen governance and institutions.

The portfolio of GIZ (the German development agency) in Guinea includes 10 active projects for a total commitment of 55 million euros (approximately US\$58 million) (GIZ 2021). GIZ main priorities include (i) rural development while promoting efficient and sustainable management of the country's natural resources; (ii) sustainable infrastructure; (iii) social development, with the agency currently implementing a program on basic education and another aimed at improving health care and health education; and finally (iv) economic development and employment, working on digital skills for employment.

Enabel, the Belgian development agency, has 7 active projects in the country for a portfolio of 43,800,000 euros (approximately US\$46,200,000) (Enabel 2022). Enabel's main areas of focus in the country include (i) entrepreneurship, with the specific purpose to improve the economic, technical and social performance of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); (ii) sexual and reproductive rights, to improve access to sexual and reproductive rights for women and youth while also tackling GBV issues; (iii) capacity development of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), small enterprises and civil society; (iv) waste management (Conakry and Kindia), to improve door-to-door collection, sorting and recycling of waste, while also improving road management and gutter cleaning to better deal with rainwater runoff; and (v) socioeconomic opportunities for youth, by supporting work floor training schemes, to help them subsequently find jobs and become integrated in society.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has currently a portfolio of US\$47,450,299 in the country (USAID, n.d.). USAID's main interventions in Guinea focus on three macro areas: (i) global health, helping to build a health system that is prepared to respond to public health threats; (ii) democracy, human rights, and governance, working at the grassroots level to strengthen civil society organizations (CSOs) and media capacity, as well as at the national level to improve transparency by increasing the ability of government officials and the public to access and understand government budget information; and (iii) economic growth, engaging with the private sector at the local level to advance economic opportunities in the country, while also working to increase access to electricity in the country.

Annex 3.

The Risk Mitigation Regime in Guinea

IDA18 marked a strategic shift in the WBG’s agenda on addressing FCV by explicitly recognizing that fragility exists beyond countries on the Harmonized List and by emphasizing the need for a risk-based approach. The Risk and Mitigation Regime (RMR) was a financing instrument that provided additional financing under IDA18 to client countries for development interventions that targeted FCV risks and reinforced sources of resilience to manage them. As part of the eligibility process, an RRA was produced to provide an in-depth understanding of the underlying drivers and proximate causes of fragility and conflict. An implementation note provided the background and rationale for granting countries access to the IDA18 Risk Mitigation Regime, including a discussion on the government’s commitment in addressing FCV risk factors.

Guinea was selected with three other countries (Niger, Tajikistan, and Nepal) to benefit from the RMR. The RMR allowed an additional allocation of funds equal to one-third of Guinea’s yearly performance-based allocation (PBA) and amounting to US\$32.5 million, specifically designated to address the FCV drivers identified in the 2017 Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA).¹³⁸

The RMR was meant to leverage a greater focus of the overall WBG program in Guinea on fragility and conflict risks. Specific projects with a stronger focus on FCV risks benefitted from additional funding from the RMR to support a scale-up of activities or the coverage of geographic areas that face stronger risks. The RMR also supported ASAs and policy dialogue on FCV risks. Three strategic priority areas were identified to support reduction of FCV-related risks: (i) inclusive institutions, (ii) strengthening accountability and transparency in the extractives sector; and (iii) improving resilience to shocks and access to employment opportunities for youth, to support reduction of FCV-related risks.

RMR’s lessons learned stressed that accessing and committing RMR resources takes time compared to regular core PBA resources because of the need to familiarize country teams and clients with the purpose of the regime and the more rigorous requirements (i.e., RRA, policy dialogue, Implementation Note) to ensure that resources are used for the intended objective. Moreover, other feedback suggests that the predetermination of RMR countries at the beginning of the International Development Association (IDA) cycle could end up being counterproductive as FCV risks can emerge faster than a three-year IDA cycle. In addition, the lessons learned also highlighted that while most projects were aligned on paper (in PADs) with principles of selectivity, simplicity, and flexibility, in practice, several project designs were reported to be exceedingly ambitious, and complex given the challenging and dynamic operating conditions. The global pandemic of COVID-19 as well as the political instability prior to the presidential election in October 2020 have affected the implementation of the RMR. The country declared a state of emergency in March 2020, and various planned activities and events had to be postponed, and were eventually cancelled, while funds were redirected toward COVID-19 emergency response projects.

Figure A3.1: Distribution of the RMR allocation

Program	Amount from RMR Allocation (US\$ millions)	Total Project Size (US\$ millions)
1. Local Governance and Local Delivery of Services		
Improving Institutional Capacity and Local Governance	27.5	40.0
Health Service and Capacity Strengthening	20.0	45.0
Education Program for Results	20.0	50.0
Electricity Access Scale Up	20.0	50.0
2. Transparency of the Extractives Sector		
Mining Governance Support Additional Financing	15.0	25.0
3. Resilience to Shocks and Economic Opportunities for Youth		
Social Protection System	15.0	40.0
Rural Mobility and Connectivity Project	15.0	40.0

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Endnotes

- 1 During the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, there was crossing of armed groups into Guinean territory.
- 2 Cote d'Ivoire (from 2002–07 and then from 2010–11), Liberia (from 1989–97 and then from 1999–03), Sierra Leone (from 1991–2002), Guinea-Bissau (from 1998–99), Mali (insurgency that started in 2002), and Senegal (low intensity conflict in Casamance that started in 1982).
- 3 In particular, popular grievances were focused on the lack of electricity and running water, deficit in basic infrastructure, broken roads.
- 4 For instance, a new impetus to the decentralization process, a new mining code and the reform of the security and judicial sectors.
- 5 The electricity situation, particularly in Conakry, considerably improved, with construction of the 240-megawatt Kaleta Dam, completed in 2015, as well as the new Souapiti Dam. In order to enable the country to achieve food self-sufficiency, the country invested in the agriculture sector. Since 2011, farmers have access to fertilizers at subsidized prices, and, since 2016, the government has focused on two cash crops: Arabica coffee and cashew to allow Guinean farmers to make a living from their production and the Treasury to receive more foreign currency (FX). In the area of basic services, the government has invested in the extension of public universities, has increased the number of schools by one third and strengthened health structures, with for example the large-scale renovation and extension of the Donka hospital.
- 6 During the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, there was crossing of armed groups into Guinean territory.
- 7 Cote d'Ivoire (from 2002–07 and then from 2010–11), Liberia (from 1989–97 and then from 1999–03), Sierra Leone (from 1991–2002), Guinea-Bissau (from 1998–99), Mali (insurgency that started in 2002), and Senegal (low intensity conflict in Casamance that started in 1982).
- 8 Consultations have included bilateral interviews as well as roundtables with a range of different participants, including external experts and partners, such as those from the think tank and academic community, international partners, the private sector, civil society, and other interlocutors focused on political economy and FCV-related issues.
- 9 In particular, popular grievances were focused on the lack of electricity and running water, deficit in basic infrastructure, broken roads.
- 10 For instance, a new impetus to the decentralization process, a new mining code and the reform of the security and judicial sectors.
- 11 The electricity situation, particularly in Conakry, considerably improved, with construction of the 240-megawatt Kaleta Dam, completed in 2015, as well as the

- new Souapiti Dam. In order to enable the country to achieve food self-sufficiency, the country invested in the agriculture sector. Since 2011, farmers have access to fertilizers at subsidized prices, and, since 2016, the government has focused on two cash crops: Arabica coffee and cashew to allow Guinean farmers to make a living from their production and the Treasury to receive more foreign currency (FX). In the area of basic services, the government has invested in the extension of public universities, has increased the number of schools by one third and strengthened health structures, with for example the large-scale renovation and extension of the Donka hospital.
- 12** President Alpha Conde was released from house arrest in April 2022.
 - 13** As one specialist who has resided in Guinea for many years noted, “It is extremely difficult to read the intentions of the junta. Some decisions self-consciously use the nationalist language of Sékou Touré while others seem to show the government doing exactly what the French or Americans want them to do” (Interview, December 1, 2022).
 - 14** The general perception among Guineans was that the Condé government had become unacceptably corrupt, ethnocentric, and violent in defense of its authoritarian power. Therefore, regardless of how they felt about the coup, many Guineans felt relieved that the Condé administration was over (consultations, January 2023, Conakry).
 - 15** The national reconciliation conference “Assises Nationales” took place March 22–April 29, 2022. Called “Days of Truth and Forgiveness,” these Assises were meant to reconcile all Guineans.
 - 16** The national dialogue initiative from November 24 to December 15, 2022, was the opportunity to discuss upcoming elections and benefitted from the support of three female facilitators.
 - 17** As political parties push for a return to civilian rule, the other issue at hand is the return of Cellou Dallein Diallo to Conakry. Under investigation by the CRIEF, he is seeking reassurances from the CNRD that he will not be arrested upon his return to Conakry—a compromise the CNRD has not been willing to accept.
 - 18** The heart of the dispute was the failure of the CNRD to hand over power to civilian rule. In April 2022, an “inclusive consultation framework,” was created to come up with a timeline for the transition period (although largely boycotted by several political groups) it proposed a transition period of between 18 and 52 months. On Saturday, April 30, Colonel Doumbouya announced in a speech broadcast on television that he was envisioning a 39-month transition period—a “median proposal” that would be put to Parliament. Several opposition leaders condemned this announcement, deeming this proposal as illegitimate and asking for the return of the rule of law, including the FNDC and the Rally of the Guinean People (Rassemblement du Peuple Guinéen), Conde’s former party.
 - 19** Haba was one of the political prisoners jailed by Alpha Condé’s government for his work on behalf of the FNDC movement that opposed the third mandate. He was released on September 8, 2021, shortly after the coup.
 - 20** Consultations, January 2023, Conakry.
 - 21** Consultations with civil society, January 24 and 26, 2023, Conakry.

- 22** As Kelsall et al. argue, some of the most rapid and inclusive development periods in South Africa (1994–2009) and China (1979–88) built upon social and institutional structures created during periods of massive suffering and exploitation (Kelsall et al. 2022, 65). The authors also choose Guinea to exemplify one of their four typologies of political settlement, noting such “narrow foundation-dispersed configuration” states often encounter poverty traps, a dynamic that is reinforced in Guinea by the country’s reliance on mining receipts for 80 percent of its exports and the “Dutch disease” dynamics that accompany that lack of diversification (Kelsall et al. 2022, 59).
- 23** As academic study has shown, the imaginary division of the country into four distinct ethno-linguistic quadrants is the product of a colonial-era simplification (Goerg 2011; McGovern 2013).
- 24** See Christensen and Utas (2008) for an analysis of similar dynamics in postwar Sierra Leone.
- 25** Take this quote from Alpha Condé as he was becoming president of Guinea: “You know, things are clear. I fought for 50 years for democracy in this country, and I have no lessons to learn about that from those who were on the other side of the line [i.e., part of the previous government]” (Soudan 2011).
- 26** Consultations, January 2023, Conakry.
- 27** World Bank 2021a.
- 28** Multidimensional poverty combines measures of nonmonetary poverty and measures nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, access to electricity, housing, and assets.
- 29** World Bank 2021a.
- 30** In the 2019 Global Competitiveness Index, Guinea gained four ranks to reach the 122nd position out of 141 countries, scoring well in terms of institution and business environment but lower for infrastructure and capital development. See WEF (2019).
- 31** The 2012 National Policy Letter on Decentralization and Local Development (LPN/DDL) provided a clear roadmap for decentralization and local development, while the 2013 amendment to the Mining Code laid the foundations for using mining revenues to create earmarked funds for local development and the 2017 revision of the Local Government Code established a sound legal framework for the devolution of resources and authority.
- 32** Global Corruption Barometer (database), Transparency International, Berlin (accessed April 30, 2021), <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/guinea>.
- 33** Global Corruption Barometer (database), Transparency International, Berlin (accessed April 30, 2021), <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/guinea>.
- 34** Africa Integrity Indicators (database), Global Integrity, Washington, DC, <https://www.africaintegrityindicators.org/data>.
- 35** The FNDC is a broad coalition of several civil society organizations and opposition parties.
- 36** For instance, in Mamou, Garoual, or Siguiri. In addition, more than 20 municipal councils were disbanded following the audit by the MATD.

- 37** The following February 2018 local elections were highly contested along national party lines, with local issues disappearing over alignment and support of the central government: disputes broke up in about 6 percent of the 342 communes delaying the councilors' seating to early 2019. See OFPRA (2020) and Balde (2018).
- 38** Consultation with youth civil society leaders, January 27, 2023, Conakry.
- 39** Consultation with youth civil society organizations, January 25, 2023, Conakry.
- 40** Consultations, January 23–27, 2023, Conakry.
- 41** Consultations, January 2023, Conakry.
- 42** World Bank and IMF economists, January 23 and 26, 2023, Conakry.
- 43** The real estate tax (contribution foncière unique) could be a massive fiscal resource for municipalities (as they are supposed to retrieve 80 percent of it after collection by the Direction Générale des Impôts). However, this faces massive resistance from property owners.
- 44** Dutch disease is a term coined in 1977 by The Economist. This concept describes situations in which large resource discoveries can actually be harmful to economies in the long term.
- 45** Consultation with private sector, January 26, 2023, Conakry.
- 46** For instance, in August 2021, the Condé government took the unpopular decision to raise the cost of fuel by over 20 percent from 9,000 GF/liter to 11,000 GF/liter. Shortly after taking power, the CNRD lowered the cost of fuel from 11,000 GF/liter to 10,000GF/liter. Similarly, in June 2022, the transitional government raised the cost of fuel from 10,000 to 12,000 GF/liter (US\$1.38). See Investigator (2022).
- 47** Consultations with CSOs, January 2023, Conakry.
- 48** According to recent estimates by WFP, 6.1 percent of children under 5 are affected by global acute malnutrition, 24.4 percent are stunted and 12 percent are underweight. See WFP (2023).
- 49** This is also exacerbated by the fact that smallholder farmers have poor access to seeds, fertilizers, basic infrastructure, equipment, and financial services.
- 50** Especially as they also face constraints in accessing land, economic opportunities, and basic services.
- 51** World Bank weekly economic update, November 28, 2022.
- 52** The critical importance of food sovereignty is swiftly gaining traction given elevated food prices and uncertainty due to climate change, inflation, and the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The urgency of this was recently affirmed at the "Dakar2" summit in Senegal (Hammerschlag 2023).
- 53** For instance, the conviction in a Swiss court of Beny Steinmetz for bribing Lansana Conté's wife to secure a mining concession for his company at Simandou; as well as Alpha Condé's only son allegedly receiving payments from French companies to facilitate business deals in Guinea. In addition, France24 revealed that Rio Tonto had paid over US\$10m to Condé's advisor François de Combret (France 24 2016; Global Witness 2014; Le Parisien 2015).

- 54 Note that in Afrobarometer’s 2019 survey, 63 percent of respondents said they thought that corruption had increased in the past year (Essima and Sambou 2020).
- 55 There was one mining company working in Boké prefecture in 2015, and 14 in 2018.
- 56 In Dinguiraye, Kankan, Kouroussa, Mandiana and Siguiri.
- 57 See, for instance, the documentary entitled *The Terrible Consequences of the Gold Rush in the Guinean Far West*, by Fodé Kouyaté (2014).
- 58 The land code was reformed in 2010 so that customary rights had to be registered by local administrations, but authorities lack the capacity and resources to support the registration process of customary land titles, and struggle to implement existing laws and programs. See USAID (2016).
- 59 For instance, the lack of capital or credit to invest in fertilizer is a very important contributing factor.
- 60 Consultations, January 2023, Conakry.
- 61 Guinea is one of only 17 territories with a HDI score below 0.5. Notable among the constituent parts of its HDI score is slightly lower life expectancy than most of its low human development peers (58.9 years), and extremely low mean years of schooling (2.2 years), even compared to its peers.
- 62 Consultations with CSOs, January 2023, Conakry. See also *Guineematin.com* (2022c) and *Kalenews* (2022).
- 63 Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death (1 in: Rate Varies by Country)—Guinea (database), World Bank, Washington, DC (accessed February 4, 2023), <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MMR.RISK?locations=GN>. This places Guinea roughly even with Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tanzania.
- 64 From 208 per 1,000 live births in 1960 to 166 in 1980, 100 in 2000, 74 in 2010, and 62 in 2020.
- 65 At the secondary level, urban enrollment rate reaches 44.4 percent, while in rural areas, it is only 14.2 percent. See World Bank (2021a, 61).
- 66 See, for example, the latest demonstration to protest power cuts in Kankan, July 2020 (Barry 2020).
- 67 Ramon Sarro, interview, September 5, 2022.
- 68 This figure (from 2019) is down from a high of 11.5 percent in 2014 and has declined every year since (Global Economy 2022).
- 69 This share is higher in urban (35.4 percent) than in rural (25.8 percent) areas. See World Bank (2022b).
- 70 Social contracts can be understood as “a dynamic agreement between state and society on their mutual roles and responsibilities” (quoted in Cloutier et al. 2021, 23). Service delivery is one of the most visible ways in which populations experience the role of government in their everyday lives and can hold them to account for progress or lack thereof.
- 71 During the 2014–15 height of the Ebola epidemic, many more Guineans resisted public health advice than did Sierra Leoneans or Liberians. In several cases

- international and Guinean public health officials were rebuffed by force, and in at least one case, killed by people in the villages they intended to educate/help.
- 72** In the village of Womey, north of N’Zérékoré, a delegation of regional officials, public health educators, journalists and a local pastor announced a “sensibilization” visit on short notice. The September 2014 visit coincided with the coming out ceremony of the women’s initiation society, and the village chief asked them to postpone their visit. They insisted, arrived in the village, and were initially well-received. About an hour into their visit things turned violent, and eight members of the delegation were killed, while the rest were able to escape. This was one of several attacks on teams involved in Ebola education and collection of the bodies of those who had died of the disease (author’s interviews, May 2015, Womey; Dixon 2014; Gander 2014).
- 73** Consultation with civil society, January 24, Conakry.
- 74** Interview, January 31, 2023, Conakry.
- 75** Several people interviewed for the RRA noted that even during audiences inside the presidential palace, Doumbouya is surrounded by around 40 heavily armed men, with snipers positioned on the roof.
- 76** Interviews, January 23, 24, 29, and 31, 2023, Conakry.
- 77** This refers to methamphetamine.
- 78** This refers to cocaine.
- 79** From 17 percent incidence among working/middle class to 25 percent among the very poor. See Kaba (2019).
- 80** Africa Integrity Indicators (database), Global Integrity, Washington, DC, <https://www.africaintegrityindicators.org/data>.
- 81** Africa Integrity Indicators (database), Global Integrity, Washington, DC, <https://www.africaintegrityindicators.org/data>.
- 82** Africa Integrity Indicators (database), Global Integrity, Washington, DC, <https://www.africaintegrityindicators.org/data>.
- 83** Africa Integrity Indicators (database), Global Integrity, Washington, DC, <https://www.africaintegrityindicators.org/data>.
- 84** Camp Boiro, also dubbed the “Guinean Auschwitz,” was a prison camp established by first president Sékou Touré for opposition figures and the country’s intelligentsia. It is estimated that 5,000 were executed or died from torture and starvation. See Monénembo (2019).
- 85** One of the most impressive of which is the Magazine of the State House, a slickly produced magazine that is full of well-articulated articles about the CNRDs achievements thus far, as well as many photos of Colonel Doumbouya glad-handing a tellingly representational cross-section of Guinean society, including different minority groups. The magazine, produced in both English and French, was distributed to members of the international community.
- 86** These were two issues on which nearly all Guineans consulted for the RRA repeatedly emphasized would be considered red lines.

- 87** Almost all Guineans consulted for the RRA expressed frustration that politicians only appear during electoral periods, “before they are nowhere, after they are nowhere.”
- 88** Interview, January 27, 2023, Conakry.
- 89** This sentiment was best summed up by the simple statement of a youth leader: “It is us who decide our future” (interview, January 27, 2023, Conakry).
- 90** Those consulted for the RRA discussed that even where impressive laws or policies exist on paper, the lack of enforcement capacity render them almost nonexistent.
- 91** Diplomat, January 24, 2023, Conakry.
- 92** Guinean government official, January 26, 2023, Conakry.
- 93** Interviews, June 2021.
- 94** Consultations, January 24–27, 2023, Conakry.
- 95** Consultations with three grassroots youth activists, January 25, 2023, Conakry.
- 96** Guinea’s first two presidents were Muslims who married Catholics. Sékou Touré’s wife was the daughter of a French father and a Guinean mother and converted to Islam after her marriage to Touré; Lansana Conté’s wife was a Catholic of Baga ethnicity; and Moussa Dadis Camara is a Christian born to a Muslim father and Christian mother.
- 97** Interview with regional coordination leaders, June 17, 2017.
- 98** Consultations, January 23–27, 2023, and interview, February 16, 2023, Conakry.
- 99** Using Human Rights Watch’s numbers for the years 2011 through 2021 (excepting 2017), the total number killed by security forces during Condé’s time in office is 170. By year: 2011 (5), 2012 (9), 2013–14 (63), 2015 (10), 2016 (0), 2017 (no data), 2018 (14), 2019 (18), 2020 (51), and 2021 (0).
- 100** Consultations, January 23–27, 2023, Conakry.
- 101** Interview, February 16, 2023.
- 102** Interview, January 29, 2023, Conakry.
- 103** Climate Change Knowledge Portal: Guinea (database), World Bank, Washington, DC (accessed February 4, 2023), <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/guinea/climate-data-projections>.
- 104** Climate Change Knowledge Portal: Guinea (database), World Bank, Washington, DC (accessed February 4, 2023), <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/guinea/climate-data-projections>.
- 105** The FCV Portfolio Analysis (PA) examines the World Bank portfolio in Guinea from an FCV-sensitive perspective by (i) analyzing the extent to which the country program in Guinea already addresses FCV drivers and supports factors of resilience; and (ii) identifying operational and implementation challenges as well as adaptation mechanisms and lessons learned from implementation. The purpose of the PA is not to evaluate the country program. The analysis and findings of this section act as a bridge between the RRA’s analysis of the drivers of FCV and sources of risk

and resilience (RRA Section 1) and its operational recommendations (RRA Section 3). The analysis is based on an initial desk review of strategic documents (Systemic Country Diagnostic, Country Partnership Framework, Performance and Learning Review) and projects documents of active operations as well as a selection of recently closed ones (Project Appraisal Document, Implementation Completion Report, Aide Memoires, independent evaluations, etc.). Initial findings from the desk review were corroborated, nuanced, and further explored by consultations with Task Team Leaders (TTLs), Financial Management and Procurement Specialists, the country economist and IFC colleagues. The analysis of this portfolio is guided by the FCV Sensitive Program and Portfolio Analysis Guidance Note developed as part of the 2021 revised RRA methodology and draws from the main FCV Drivers Resilience sources, and Risks for Guinea identified in the previous chapter of the RRA.

- 106** Recently closed and pipeline projects, as well as the IFC portfolio, have been considered in this analysis to broaden the understanding and the evolution of WBG and IFC's portfolio in Guinea.
- 107** The RMR provided countries with additional financing of up to one-third of their indicative IDA18 allocation.
- 108** WBG portfolio includes 12 Investment Project Financing (IPF) projects in sectors such as health, agriculture, social protection, transport, and energy. It also includes 6 ASA products, the majority of which focus on finance, competitiveness and innovation, and 12 trust-funded activities, mainly Bank Executed activities focusing on natural resource management and the environment, with one Recipient Executed grant in the health sector. Source: Guinea Country Dashboard (database), World Bank, Washington, DC (accessed February 2, 2023), <https://onespace.worldbank.org/ctrDashboard>.
- 109** Including World Bank (2017) and World Bank (2020b).
- 110** Task team leaders (TTLs) have reported (i) delays in meeting effectiveness conditions; (ii) weak coordination and overlapping responsibilities among government agencies; and (iii) challenges for PIUs to perform basic tasks, such as drafting Terms of Reference (TORs) or processing contracts, requiring a lot of supervision and hand-holding from TTLs, who often rely on international consultants to be embedded within ministries and PIUs. As an example, in the Water sector as well, the lack of capacity and technical skills within the water utility SEG led the TTL to hire a full-time consultant for technical assistance and is now considering adding an engineering firm for extra support to and scrutiny of SEG.
- 111** See the 2016 survey done with PIU staff, which showed that the low level of motivation came from low salaries.
- 112** The WBG health team, for instance, noted that some regions (Kankan, Labé, Nzérékoré) were very difficult to reach, due to the poor road condition, and therefore, did not receive adequate health care. Similarly other sectors like energy and water have also reported difficulties to access certain areas outside of Conakry, especially during the rainy seasons.
- 113** For instance, the education project Stepping Up Skills had a national scope, however, only 3 out of the 15 institutes the project supported were outside of Conakry (2 in N'Zerekore and 1 in Faranah).

- 114** For instance, this was an issue with the previous finance, competitiveness, and innovation (FCI) project.
- 115** For instance, for the SPJ project, the current authorities have expressed concerns that targeting might have been politically motivated under the previous government. In the transport sector, a project aimed at rehabilitating a road in Kankan had been pushed by the previous government, even though this was not a priority for the sector.
- 116** For instance, recognizing that COVID-19 disproportionately affected women, the pillar Human Development was adjusted and included a specific focus for women and girls.
- 117** For instance, Guinea COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Project, the Guinea COVID-19 Crisis Response Development Policy Financing and the Additional Financing for COVID-19 Emergency Response and System Preparedness Strengthening Project launched in 2021.
- 118** The WBG designed various programs to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic (new additional financing in June 2022) and leveraged synergies with the WHO, the IMF, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the Belgian Cooperation Agency Enabel, Agence Francaise de Développement, USAID, and collected donations from China and the Jack Ma Foundation/Alibaba. In addition, some projects shifted their primary focus to address other FCV drivers: Social Protection and Jobs (SPJ) initially targeted urban youths, in line with the RMR, but shifted its focus on women and response to the impact of COVID-19.
- 119** Including the closure of borders and confinement measures.
- 120** Operational Policy (OP) 7.30 applies to all situations to which there is a de facto government that has not been legitimately elected. A de facto government comes into, or remains in, power by means not provided for in the country's constitution, such as a coup d'état, revolution, usurpation, abrogation, or suspension of the constitution. When the policy is triggered, it prescribes that the Bank follow specific rules to continue disbursements on existing loans in the country portfolio and to prepare and process new operations in the country. Since the facts and circumstances of each de facto situation vary, the policy framework gives Bank management considerable flexibility.
- 121** At the time of the coup, the majority of the accounts had available liquidity. In addition, the WBG also authorized the payment of PIUs' salaries.
- 122** This was the case for several projects, including Guinea Commercial Agriculture Development Project that had just been launched by the regional Vice President when the military takeover took place.
- 123** The WBG "people-centered" approach aims at placing the population at the center of WBG investments in the country with a strong focus not to jeopardize, interfere or take any part in supporting any political faction during the transition process in preparation for the general elections.
- 124** An OP 7.30 assessment mission took place in December 2021 with the objective to set out the conditions for lifting the policy, including the publication by the Guinean authorities of a roadmap for transition to civilian government.
- 125** As of February 2023, these included the following: Second Additional Financing to Guinea COVID-19 Emergency Response and System Preparedness; Guinea Support

- to Local Governance Project 2; AF for the Emergency Response and NAFA Program Support Project AF for COVID-19 response, an AF for the Safety Net program, and a new phase of the Local Governance program.
- 126** The health care sector, in particular, was severely impacted by the forced retirement plan as some 40 percent of the personnel at the Ministry of Health were (lawfully) retired.
- 127** One TTL interacted with three different Ministers, two central bank governors and two Prime Ministers.
- 128** For instance, the Support to MSME Growth Competitiveness and Access to Finance project has not progressed due to the low capacity of the PIU to effectively manage relationships between institutions since the MSME Ministry, the Central Bank and office of the PM must all be involved at some level in the project, especially on the grant awarding and processing activities. Moreover, instances of territorialism and lack of collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture in charge of rural roads and the Ministry of Transportation, have added another layer of challenges to the effective implementation of the Guinea Rural Mobility and Connectivity Project.
- 129** The implementing agency, ANAFIC, took advantage of the situation to carry out a performance assessment of ADLs. Eighty percent of existing ADLs were kept and salaries for work performed in 2022 will be paid.
- 130** For instance, participatory budgeting and participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E).
- 131** This was the case for the PAGL, for instance.
- 132** Guinea Health Service and Capacity Strengthening Project, Emergency Response and NAFA Program Support Project, and Guinea Education Project for Results in Early Childhood and Basic Education.
- 133** Guinea's natural areas play a major role for the livelihoods of Guineans, who rely on the goods and services provided by these areas, including green jobs to the communities.
- 134** There have been issues with the replenishment of the FNDL, caused by the lack of predictability of mining revenues but also by administrative bottlenecks. If the municipalities did receive every year at least 70 percent of the FNDL allocation as announced in the Finance Bill at the beginning of the year, this would already constitute an important achievement.
- 135** Through HEIS the WBG provides direct support to borrowing countries. This has helped cut the average processing time of procurement actions by two-thirds. It has also increased transparency and enabled the WBG to address complaints faster. All contract awards, including for contracts subject to post review, are now published on the UN Development Business and Bank websites. HEIS also allows for Bank-facilitated procurement (BFP), through which the WBG can aggregate demand across countries and use its convening power to gain better market access, as well as leverage a stronger bargaining position with suppliers. Countries remain responsible for signing and entering into contracts, as well as logistics and administration, but they receive substantial WBG support as needed, including with needs assessments, delivery, and contract completion. HEIS does not mean that the WBG executes

procurements on behalf of the Borrower, rather it means the WBG gives more physical help to the Borrower to advance a procurement.

- 136** OP 7.30 applies to all situations to which there is a de facto government which has not been legitimately elected. A de facto government comes into, or remains in, power by means not provided for in the country's constitution, such as a coup d'état, revolution, usurpation, abrogation, or suspension of the constitution. A legitimately elected de jure government may turn de facto if it remains in power in violation of applicable constitutional provisions.
- 137** The World Bank's disengagement contributed to the marked deterioration in economic and human development outcomes. According to the World Bank's analysis, over the course of the political crisis (2009–13), the poverty rate increased by 10 points, the number of out-of-school children soared by 600,000, child malnutrition increased in some areas by 50 percent, and several health care centers closed due to lack of funding.
- 138** WBG Guinea RMR implementation note, 2018.



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