



Country Sheet

**Guinea-Bissau**

**(ACO programme)**





# HI's team and areas of intervention

There are three people on HI's team in Guinea-Bissau.

Guinea-Bissau





# General Country Data

## General data

Country	Guinea Bissau	Neighbouring country: Senegal	France
Population	2,015,490	17,196,308	67,499,343
IHDI	0.3	0.348	0.82
Gender development index	X	0.87	0.99
Maternal mortality	898	440	4
GINI index	34.8	38.1	32.4
Population under UNHCR mandate	1,876,000	16,524,000	580,898
INFORM index	4.8	4.5	2.3
Fragile states index	91.3	72.1	30.9
Public social protection	0.90	?	100
Official development assistance received (in \$m)	120.51	1443.88	0

## b. Humanitarian law instruments ratified by the country

Humanitarian law instruments	Status
Mine ban treaty	Ratified in 1997
Convention on Cluster Munitions	Ratified in 2008
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Ratified in 2010



### c. Geopolitical analysis

Guinea-Bissau is a West African country on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, bordered to the north by Senegal, and to the east and south by the Republic of Guinea. Guinea-Bissau has a surface area of 36,120 sq.km, of which 28,000 sq.km is land and 8,120 sq.km is sea. The main cities are Bissau (the capital), Cacheu, Bafata and Gabu.

After several aborted elections, José Mario Vaz became president in the presidential election of 13 April 2014, marking a return to constitutional order. However, instability persisted due to President Vaz's disagreements over the appointment of a prime minister. After a long political crisis between the PAIGC and President Vaz lasting almost three years, Aristide Gomes was finally appointed Prime Minister in April 2018. He thus became the seventh prime minister of the Vaz era. In March 2019, legislative elections were held, which were won by the PAIGC and its allies. An important recent event in the country is the departure of the ECOMIB (ECOWAS armed forces) in July 2020.

Trafficking in wood, drugs, weapons and other items is widespread in Guinea-Bissau. This activity has long been a cause of political instability, although less visible since 2012. Trafficking is facilitated by the proximity of Casamance in southern Senegal – the theatre of armed conflict for more than thirty years – and by the possible involvement of politicians and law enforcement agents.

Political instability has had a serious impact on the Guinea-Bissau economy. The country's growth is driven by the food-producing agricultural sector and by cashew nut production, which remains the cornerstone of the economy. This economic concentration has direct consequences on the inclusion and food security of the poorest members of the population. The secondary sector suffers from a lack of infrastructure, particularly outside the capital. The tertiary sector is based on trade and the activities of public bodies.

According to the population and housing census (RGPH) conducted in 2009, 0.94% of the population is living with a disability, of whom 53.9% were men and 46.1% were women. This percentage is largely underestimated due to a lack of training for census staff and the formulation of the questions. Most of the people with disabilities recorded in the census live in rural areas (59.4%), against 40.6% in urban environments.

Because of past conflicts, weapons circulate in large numbers in Guinea-Bissau and each household owns at least one firearm. Initiatives to reduce the number of weapons in circulation have had little success so far.

Guinea Bissau is prone to natural disasters. Floods on low-lying land threaten to reduce the amount of land available to grow rice and vegetables, while rising sea levels and the lack of anti-salt dikes threaten the country's mangrove crops. Cashew nut yields, the country's main source of wealth, could also be hit by phytosanitary risks and the reduction in farmland caused by climate change.



## Summary of HI's work in the country

HI first worked in Guinea-Bissau from 2000 to 2006. Its actions were focused on functional rehabilitation, with the creation of an orthopaedic centre, the economic inclusion of people with disabilities and the fight against mines and explosive remnants of war.

In 2015, HI resumed its activities in Guinea-Bissau in 2015, with a particular focus on civil society support, inclusive education and HIV and disability. These activities were implemented in the regions of Bissau, Cacheu, Oio, Bafatá and Biombo until March 2022.