Guinea

Country Overview

Politics

Guinea is a presidential republic in West Africa that had been ruled by authoritarian military figures from its independence in 1958, until an attempted assassination forced then-president Captain Moussa Dadis Camara into exile in 2009. Most recently, President Alpha Conde was re-elected in 2015 after a disputed election.\(^1\)

According to Human Rights Watch, security forces have a history of violence against civilians, and continued to use excessive force, theft and extortion around the 2015 elections but violations reportedly declined overall in the 2015 reporting year.\(^2\)

Economy

Guinea is classified by the World Bank as having a low income economy. The county's economy is currently recovering from two major shocks: low commodity prices coupled with the Ebola crisis in 2014 and 2015. GDP growth was 5.2 percent in 2016. This growth has largely been driven by increased production in the extractive sector, particularly in bauxite and gold mining.\(^3\)

Social/Human Development

Guinea is home to approximately 12,093,349 people and is comprised of six main ethnic groups: the Fulani (33.9 percent), the Malinke (31.1 percent), the Susu (19.1 percent), the Guerze (6 percent), the Kissi (4.7 percent), and the Toma (2.6 percent). Importantly, these ethnic groups use separate languages.\(^4\)

Poverty in Guinea is still prevalent, particularly in rural areas. On average, the poverty rate for rural Guineans in 2012 was around 65 percent, but only 35 percent for their urban counterparts.\(^5\)

There are approximately 8,696 refugees currently residing in Guinea, and many have come to the country fleeing conflict in neighboring countries. There is also an unspecified population of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within the country due to the Ebola crisis of 2014.\(^6\)

Guinea scores a 0.414 on the Human Development Index (HDI), ranking it 183 out of 188. Guinea’s HDI drops dramatically to a score of 0.270 when adjusted for inequality.\(^7\)

U.S. Department of State TIP Ranking: Tier 3

Trafficking was reported in potentially exported supply chains including agriculture, gold and diamond mines.

Read the full TIP Report at: https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2017/271197.htm

Migrant and Other Vulnerable Populations

As of 2012, Guinea had a migration rate of approximately -10,000 individuals.8 1.82 percent of the population were migrants.9 The top sending countries were Mali, Liberia and Senegal.10 There were an estimated 9,037 persons of concern in Guinea at the end of 2015. Of this population, 8,839 individuals were refugees.11 Although there is no definitive data, the U.S. Department of State reports that as of 2016, “there were a few hundred effectively stateless persons, who originally came from Sierra Leone.”12 There are reports that sporadic interethnic violence occasionally creates small populations of IDPs.13
The top destination countries for migrants from Guinea are Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Senegal, the Gambia and Liberia.¹⁴
Exports and Trade

Guinea’s top exports are aluminum ores, gold, mineral fuels, fruit and nuts, cocoa and fish.\textsuperscript{15}

Top Commodity Exports (USD/Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Value (USD Thousands)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ores</td>
<td>1,159,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Fuels</td>
<td>218,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Machinery</td>
<td>485,326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top importers of goods from Guinea are China, India, Switzerland, Spain, Ireland, Jordan, France and Germany.\textsuperscript{16}
Guinea Export Partners (USD/Thousands)
Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors Analysis

Legal/Policy Risk Factors

Level of Legal Protection for Civil Liberties and Workers’ Rights

Freedom of Association

The Guinean legal code allows for workers to organize and join unions, use collective bargaining, carry out strikes, but it also places restrictions on workers’ rights to engage in all of the aforementioned activities. For a union to be recognized it must represent at least 20 percent of workers in a workplace and a 10-day notice must also be provided to the Ministry of Labor in order for a union to legally carry out a strike. Government employees and members of the military are prohibited by law from engaging in a strike. According to the U.S. Department of State 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report, the Guinean government did not effectively enforce existing legal codes pertaining to workers’ rights, mostly due to lack of resources to ensure compliance. It also states that “authorities did not always respect freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.”

Working Conditions

There is no minimum wage for most sectors, although a 2013 law stipulates a minimum wage of USD 48 a month for domestic workers. Guinean law stipulates that the workweek should not exceed 10-hour days or 48-hour weeks. All workers, regardless of nationality or immigration status, are permitted by law to refuse to work in unsafe conditions without penalty.

Discrimination

Guinean labor law prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion, political opinion, disability, or ethnicity, but it does not address discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin or citizenship, social origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, language, or HIV-positive status. Although the law does require equal pay for equal work, women often received lower salaries than their male counterparts.

Forced Labor

Guinean law prohibits some forms of forced labor, but does not explicitly outlaw debt bondage. Guinean authorities reportedly do not effectively enforce the laws prohibiting forced labor across sectors.
Child Labor

Guinean law prohibits child labor in formal sectors of the economy, but there are no laws governing the use of child labor in informal sectors of the economy.\(^{21}\)

Civil Society Organizations

Domestic and international human rights associations are permitted to operate freely within Guinea with little interference from governmental bodies. However, the Guinean government rarely (if ever) acts on the concerns of such groups, regardless of evidence presented.\(^{22}\)

Ratification of ILO Conventions Related to Human Trafficking or Rights of Workers and Migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventions</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILO 29 Forced Labor</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 100 Equal Remuneration</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 105 Abolition of Forced Labor</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 111 Discrimination</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 138 Minimum Age</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 181 Private Employment Agencies</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 182 Worst Forms of Child Labor</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 97 Migration for Employment</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Political Risk Factors

Political Instability or Conflict

Guinea scores a 102.4 in the 2016 Fragile States Index (FSI), placing it in the “alert” category and ranking the country 12 out of 178. The FSI scale goes from 0 (indicating a “sustainable” political system), to 120 (indicating a political system on “high alert”).

Level of Crime and Violence

The U.S. Department of State rates the crime threat in Guinea as “high,” with “poverty and desperation” being the primary drivers of criminal behavior. Guinea had a homicide rate of 8.9 homicides per 100,000 people in 2012.

State Persecution

State security forces in Guinea often act with impunity, and there are widespread reports of violence against civilians and political demonstrators which included arbitrary detentions, killings, and rape.

Consensual same-sex relationships are prohibited by law in the country.

Level of Corruption

The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2016 scores Guinea as a 27 out of 100, where a 0 signals “Highly Corrupt” and 100 signals “Very Clean.” Guinea ranks 142 out of 176 on that index. The World Economic Forum rates corruption as a 19.4 on their index for rating the most problematic factors for doing business, ranking Guinea 135th out of 140. Corruption within state security forces is especially rampant.

Socio-Economic Risk Factors

Level of National Economic Development

Guinea scores a 0.414 on the Human Development Index (HDI), ranking it 183 out of 188. Importantly, Guinea’s HDI drops dramatically to a score of 0.270 when adjusted for inequality.
Level and Extent of Poverty

Guinea has a systemic level of poverty, with 73.8 percent of the population deemed to be living in multidimensional poverty, according to the United Nations (2016).31 The country’s reliance on its mineral extraction industry and the prevalence of artisanal extractive operations continue to keep much of the population in poverty. There is also a heavy reliance on subsistence farming, and crumbling nationwide infrastructure has led to regular electrical outages and lack of access to clean water.32

Degree of Gender Inequality

Women reportedly face discrimination in employment, pay, and education. Women also report difficulties securing loans and owning property, which is prohibited under certain forms of customary law. 33

Environmental Factors

Guinea’s environmental risk factors largely affect the agricultural industry, with deforestation, desertification, and soil contamination/erosion being key issues affecting that sector. The extractive and mining industries also have pollution risks associated with them that affect workers in those sectors and the communities in which they are present. Overfishing is also an issue in coastal regions of the country.34

Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Key Commodity Supply Chains

Bauxite

Bauxite Overview

Guinea is Africa’s largest producer and the world’s fifth largest producer of bauxite, a mineral which is used in aluminum ores.35 Half of the global reserves of bauxite are located in Guinea.36 Bauxite mining is primarily carried out by multinational mining companies, with the Guinean government holding sizable shares in the country’s top bauxite exporting company. 37 Bauxite production is concentrated in the northeast.38 Most bauxite is mined via a strip mining method.39
Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Bauxite

Although there have been previous reports of child labor in Bauxite mining, recent reports are lacking.40 In 2017, local communities rioted against Bauxite mining activity, in part due to the attendant pollution from mining operations.41 Pollution from Bauxite mining has impacted community ability to grow agricultural crops and has contributed to water pollution.42 Bauxite mining has also been blamed for water shortages and power cuts.43

Although mining companies are required to pay taxes to landowners, there are reportedly issues with underpayment and corruption, depriving local communities of potential income.44

Gold

Gold Overview

Gold mining is concentrated in northern regions in Guinea.45 Mining activities include large-scale commercial mines46 as well as significant artisanal gold mining.47 The Central Bank of Guinea controls gold exports, but a significant amount is reportedly smuggled through neighboring countries such as Mali.48

Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Gold

According to the U.S. Department of State, boys are reportedly trafficked into forced labor in gold mines.49

Studies suggest there are approximately 200,000 – 300,000 artisanal miners in Guinea, a significant percentage of whom are women and children.50 Children are reportedly heavily involved in processing activities and may also participate in shaft-mining.51 Miners reportedly earned the equivalent of USD 1.30 – 2.00 per day. Shaft owners control access to mining and therefore garner a large share of profits.52 As in other regions, artisanal gold mining is highly hazardous, and can lead to serious injuries and even death in the case of shaft collapse.

A significant number of artisanal gold miners in Guinea are reportedly migrants from Mali who live in informal mining camps around mining sites.53

Fishing

Fishing Overview

The Guinean fishing sector includes both an artisanal and industrial fleet. The artisanal fleet is primarily composed of canoes, about half of which are motorized.54 Shrimp, whitefish and other small pelagics are caught in Guinea’s waters.55 Offshore species include sea bass, flounder, catfish, shrimp, sardines

Trafficking Risk in Sub-Saharan African Supply Chains
and mackerel. Approximately 70 percent of documented catch is sold in local markets although there has been a significant issue of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and most stocks are reportedly overexploited. An estimated USD 100 million worth of fisheries products are reportedly caught in Guinean water every year, primarily by international vessels.

The high rates of illegal fishing led the EU to ban imports from Guinea in 2013, although the ban was lifted in 2016 due to increased government efforts at monitoring and a revised legal framework. However, up to 500 Chinese trawlers were reportedly still operating illegally in these waters in 2016. Some analysis has noted that during and following the Ebola outbreak, the government had depleted resources for monitoring fishing activities. Further, the satellite tracking systems required by the EU are reportedly too expensive for widespread implementation.

**Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Fishing**

In 2010, the Environmental Justice Foundation and Greenpeace found that workers on foreign vessels off the coast of Guinea experienced indicators of forced labor including recruitment deception, document retention, and abusive working conditions. Crews were kept on the boat for up to two years as transshipment was used to ferry catch back to port. Crew members included both African and Asian workers.

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Endnotes

25 UNODC Homicide Rates


