



Integrated Country Strategy

Guinea-Bissau

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

In Guinea-Bissau, the United States works to enhance security, foster economic growth and trade, bolster democratic institutions, and spread American values. Partnering with the government and the people of Guinea-Bissau where possible, the USG can help integrate Guinea-Bissau into the greater regional and global economy and promote institutional governance and the rule of law within its borders.

The United States has interests in Guinea-Bissau despite the country's small size. Our first concern is enabling Guinea-Bissau to respond to transnational threats that endanger the country, its regional neighbors, and greater American interests in West Africa. Our second interest lies in promoting democratic values by helping a fragile but democratically-elected government govern justly and efficiently. Finally, we seek to develop a mature diplomatic and economic partnership with Guinea-Bissau.

Corruption, poverty, and the lack of control over borders and territory undermine both U.S. and Bissau-Guinean security. Guinea-Bissau lacks the capacity to respond to drug trafficking, infectious diseases and violent extremism at its frontiers or internally, leading to concern from its neighbors over contamination from these threats spilling across international boundaries.

The weakness of government authority in some parts of the country and feeble law enforcement and justice systems are a magnet for transnational crime. In a region susceptible to epidemics, poor public health infrastructure and personnel leave Guinea-Bissau vulnerable to emergencies. Limited access to quality education anywhere in the country hampers economic growth, limits opportunities for American and other foreign investment, and renders the population more susceptible to extreme Islamist ideologies.

With untapped energy, mining, and tourism sectors, Guinea-Bissau has the potential for economic development and the establishment of bilateral trade. However, political instability impedes growth and erodes confidence in government and private sector institutions, blemishing the country's appeal to investors.

The lack of a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Guinea-Bissau, constrains the promotion of our interests there. Our small Bissau Liaison Office has 14 local staff in Bissau (including seven security guards and two drivers), one FSO and one EFM in Dakar, and is hard-pressed to approximate full diplomatic representation and reporting in the country. USAID, CDC, DoD, DOS, USCG and USDA each manage programs in Guinea-Bissau from Dakar. A permanent diplomatic presence would improve existing programs and open avenues for new engagement.

Guinea-Bissau is a small country, where small efforts have a big public diplomacy impact. Bissau-Guineans aspire to partnership with the United States and want to see us more engaged. Our public diplomacy efforts build the people-to-people relationships that endure even when official engagement is difficult. We invest in the future by sending the best and brightest young Bissau-Guineans to the United States via the International Visitor Leadership Programs and Young African Leaders Initiative and inviting the public to attend events at our popular American Corner at the teachers college in Bissau.

U.S. public diplomacy in Bissau supports civil society and the active and relatively free media through training and tools that help them check arbitrary power and strengthen the foundations of democracy. Finally, we can partner with larger actors such as the United Nations, the multilateral development banks, the European Union and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries to leverage their efforts to promote democracy and mitigate transnational threats.

To succeed, our policies and actions should (1) strengthen democratic governance and the rule of law, (2) promote economic development, (3) improve the population's health and educational status and (4) build public awareness of U.S. policy and trust in our partnership. These priorities help to stabilize Guinea-Bissau and enhance regional cooperation and security.

The single most effective action the USG could take to advance our goals of promoting democracy and reducing vulnerability to transnational threats would be to re-open Embassy Bissau. Short of this step, continued incremental growth in resources will allow us to continue to advance our interests and increase our influence as the country develops. Adding an entry-level FSO to our Bissau Unit in Dakar would allow us to much more closely approximate the functions of a full Embassy. We have requested this position in this year's Mission Resource Request. In concert with our partners, limited external USG engagement and visible support for multilateral programs will allow Bissau-Guineans themselves to keep their country on a positive trajectory.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Goal 1: Advance Peace and Security

- Mission Objective 1.1: Increase Capacity to Counter Transnational Threats
- Mission Objective 1.2: Advance Regional Security Cooperation and Security Sector Reforms

Goal 2: Strengthen Democratic Governance

- Mission Objective 2.1: Spread and Support Democratic Norms
- Mission Objective 2.2: Promote Increased Transparency in Government

Goal 3: Spur Economic Growth and Development

- Mission Objective 3.1: Encourage a Positive Investment Climate
- Mission Objective 3.2: Improve Health of Population
- Mission Objective 3.3: Improve Education, Training, and Leadership for Bissau-Guinean Children and Youth

Management Objectives:

- Mgmt. Objective 1: Institute and Utilize an ICASS Lite Platform
- Mgmt. Objective 2: Modify Existing Office Space
- Mgmt. Objective 3: Invest in Human Resources

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Advance Peace and Security

Description and Linkages: This goal reflects the first Pillar of the 2017 National Security Strategy, as well as its wider priorities regarding the African continent. It furthers the pursuit of the State-USAID 2018-2022 Joint Strategic Plan, Goal 1, Objectives 1.3 and 1.4, as well as the 2018 AF/AFR Joint Regional Strategy, Goal 1, Objectives 1.2 and 1.3. Beyond that, it strengthens alignment with State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Objective 1.5's priorities of U.S. border security and protection of U.S. citizens abroad. In concert with AFRICOM's 2018 Theater Posture Plan and the National Security Strategy's priority actions for Africa, the Mission will seek to combat transnational threats that threaten to disrupt regional security and endanger United States' interests at home and in West Africa. We will work with Guinea-Bissau and its regional partners to promote meaningful security sector reforms, combat the scourge of human, drug, and wildlife trafficking, bolster the rule of law, strengthen epidemic and disease preparedness, and build lasting stability in the country and the region alike.

Objective 1.1: Increase Capacity to Counter Trans-National Threats

Guinea-Bissau is an under-governed space open to all forms of trans-national security threats. Bolstering GoGB authority and capacity will help reduce opportunities for drug trafficking, terrorism, trafficking in persons, trade in endangered flora and fauna, and mitigate the risk of pandemic disease.

Justification: Guinea-Bissau has undergone cycles of political instability resulting in a deterioration of the government's capacity to enforce its laws. The consequent climate of impunity threatens to undermine any efforts to counter trans-national threats in the region. Increasing the capacity of GoGB authorities to control land borders and maritime access will enhance their ability to interdict criminal activities, detect and prevent disease, and to collect taxes and duties. The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), the European Union, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) can be expected to contribute to these efforts and is supported by AFRICOM Lines of Effort (LOEs) LOE 4 and LOE 5.

Objective 1.2: Advance Regional Security Cooperation and Security Sector Reforms

The GoGB is unable to control its own borders and maritime spaces, damaging regional efforts to increase security. The lack of control limits the GoGB's ability to generate revenues necessary

for further reforms. Improving this capacity is critical for the nation if it is to begin developing a vibrant economy and a durable polity.

Justification: The inability of Guinea-Bissau to control its own borders and maritime space has an impact on regional efforts to coordinate cross-border activities. It also inhibits the ability of the government to collect necessary revenues to fund its own operations. Establishing the viability of the government is key to promoting USG interests in countering trans-national activity and creating a climate for sustainable economic development.

Goal 2: Strengthen Democratic Governance

Description and Linkages: This goal supports Pillars I and IV of the 2017 National Security Strategy, as well as its priorities for Africa. It reflects the State-USAID 2018-2022 Joint Strategic Plan, including but not limited to Goal 3, Objectives 3.1 and 3.2, the 2015-2019 USAID Regional Cooperation Strategy for West Africa, Development Objective 1, and AF/AFR Joint Regional Strategy, Goal 3. In accordance with the 2017 National Security Strategy and the aforementioned regional strategies, the Mission will work to spread American values by way of cultivating strong democratic governance in Guinea-Bissau. Through support for democratic norms and reforms aimed at increasing transparency in government, we will reinforce the country's nascent foundations of democracy.

Objective 2.1: Spread and Support Democratic Norms

Guinea-Bissau has yet to have a president who serves an entire term of office. This is a result of underlying political conflict and the weakness of the nation's institutions.

Justification: While frequent elections in Guinea-Bissau are pronounced "free and fair" by observers, post-election formation of a stable, functioning government has proven challenging due to political infighting among a small group of elites. The resultant instability leads to disruptions in the political system. Supporting a reconciliation process that addresses conflicts and grievances dating from the independence war until the present would foster a more stable polity and temper the "winner-take-all" attitude that currently prevails among elites. In particular, we should increase engagement with youth to encourage their constructive and active role in shaping the future of Bissau Guinean democracy. We can do this by leveraging the alumni of the different parts of Young African Leaders Initiative, by hosting dialogue on democracy and governance through our English teaching programs and expanding access to information through a revitalized American Corner.

Objective 2.2: Promote Increased Transparency in Government

The climate of impunity affecting Guinea-Bissau affects the willingness of political actors to place the nation's good ahead of their own. Ending impunity is the foundation of reforms to improve government services and expand transparency.

Justification: Establishing transparency and ending the climate of impunity are key elements of any solution that enables Guinea-Bissau to develop strong institutions. To address impunity, law enforcement capabilities must expand.

Goal 3: Spur Economic Growth and Development

Description and Linkages: This goal upholds Pillars II and IV of the 2017 National Security Strategy, as well as its wider priorities for the African continent. It undergirds the State-USAID 2019-2022 Joint Strategic Plan, including, but not limited to, Goal 2, Objectives 2.1 and 2.2, the 2015-2019 USAID Regional Cooperation Strategy for West Africa, Development Objective 2, and the AF/AFR Joint Regional Strategy, Goal 2. Furthermore, this goal facilitates achieving the regional goals of agencies, such as the USTDA and OPIC, and initiatives, such as Power Africa and the Young African Leaders Initiative. By encouraging the growth of a positive investment climate and cultivating and safeguarding industrial and human capacity, the Mission will establish in Guinea-Bissau economic growth and development consistent with the 2017 National Security Strategy and its priorities for Africa. We will endeavor to sow the seeds of infrastructure and education necessary for the healthy development of Guinea-Bissau with the goal of gaining a reliable trading partner in West Africa.

Objective 3.1: Encourage a Positive Investment Climate

Economic growth and development can create a stable environment that will alleviate poverty and support political stability through the creation of jobs and opportunities.

Justification: Guinea-Bissau is on the verge of having three new sectors emerge in the national economy: oil and gas, phosphates, and internet communications technology (ICT). When combined with the already existing fishing, cashew and mango sectors, the Bissau-Guinean economy could, finally, be an engine for growth for the country. We will focus on the creation of an investment climate that encourages foreign investment through a welcoming and predictable business climate. The economic & commercial section leads the effort for this objective, with support from USAID, USDA, OPIC, the Treasury Department, the political section, the public affairs section, and the executive office. The primary measure of progress toward this objective is the growth of the economy overall, as well as the specific sectors noted above.

Objective 3.2: Improve Health of Population

Broad USG engagement in the health sector with public (Ministry of Health, National Institute of Public Health-INASA) and private (e.g., NGOs, the media) stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels within GoGB would strengthen healthcare delivery and increase GoGB health security capability to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats that could severely impact the GB population and spread to neighboring countries or globally.

Justification: Despite ongoing efforts to implement health development programs by international, bi-lateral, and non-governmental organizations, Guinea-Bissau continues to be near the bottom of global health indicator scales. Guinea Bissau has an under 5-year old child mortality rate (U5MR) of 92.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015, falling short of health milestones set by the Millennium Development Goals. As a comparison, the Senegal U5MR for 2015 was 47.2 per 1,000 live births. Independent assessments of GoGB capacity to meet International Health Regulations (IHR) standards for detecting and reporting public health threats illustrates a number of weaknesses in the areas of workforce capacity, laboratory capability, and routine surveillance of infectious disease events. As the region emerges from the impact of the 2014-2015 Ebola epidemic, Guinea Bissau remains a high risk country for new outbreaks and cross-border spread of disease.

Objective 3.3: Improve Education, Training, and Leadership for Bissau-Guinean Children and Youth

Guinea-Bissau is unlikely to exit the circle of poverty without vastly improving education opportunities and outcomes for its population. Nearly half of the children aged 6-11 were out of school in 2015, with large disparities between regions and gender. Infrastructure is very limited, teachers are often not well-trained, text books and other materials are often lacking, and the entire system is very dependent on donor funding. University students and young professionals lack the leadership training needed to prepare themselves as the next generation of leaders. More resources for our American Corner, including a move to a more capable partner institution, will allow us to reach more youth and to provide them the access to information they need to learn and grow. The Young African Leadership Initiative Mandela Washington Fellowship, Regional Leadership Center and Network can play a role in developing the capabilities in the fields of civil society, entrepreneurship and public administration. Our English Language Fellow program will provide training to English teachers in both teaching skills and in thematic content that reflect American society and values relevant to the needs of Bissau Guineans.

Justification: Access to a primary school education plays a key role in efforts to reduce poverty. Primary school education in Guinea-Bissau is generally of poor quality and characterized by low attendance, especially in rural areas. While the national average of attendance is 67%, less than half of children in eastern regions of the country attend primary school. The education sector is constantly affected by prolonged teacher strikes due to systematic arrears in the payment of

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teacher salaries. In addition, it is critical that we enhance our relations with the rising generation and provide them with the skills they will need to successfully govern and lead in the future.

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Approved: September 13, 2018

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Institute and Utilize an ICASS Lite Platform

Justification: Currently, there are 14 LE Staff positions, of which seven are guards and two are drivers. The five remaining LE Staff cover all political, economic, public diplomacy, protocol, security and management issues. While Mission Dakar has regional officers (FMO, HRO, FM, MED), all other support services to Bissau (i.e. GSO, IRM, Management) are lent on an as-needed basis. As a result, Management personnel are stretched thin, exposing the vulnerabilities of not having a viable means to capturing the real costs of administrative support services in Bissau.

Embassy Dakar needs to continue to seek ways to recoup costs from the increasing number of non-State agencies, namely CDC, DOD, DEA, and USDA, utilizing administrative support services in Bissau. While we replaced old vehicles and added one additional driver, the cost of doing business has not been factored proportionately against the increased levels of agency interest and engagement in Bissau. Management made significant progress in upgrading its vehicle fleet, building relationships with hotels/businesses and local contractors, and establishing a mechanism for purchasing and receiving pre-exonerated fuel coupons but all costs are born by the Department of State. The costs of services continuously provided to various agencies should be accurately captured and accounted for through an ICASS Lite platform.

Management Objective 2: Modify Existing Office Space

Justification: Our ability to represent USG interests in Guinea-Bissau is hampered by the lack of a permanent USDH presence in the country. Having adequate physical space from which to operate is critical for the USG to be effective in bringing stability, reform, and development to Guinea-Bissau.

To this end, we will continue to improve our rented office space for the Bissau Liaison Office, and we will continue to pursue options to improve the habitability of Bissau for our frequent TDY visitors. We will also improve the retained Embassy compound, where in 2018 OBO completed the destruction of the old chancery building, damaged in the civil war of 1998-1999. The intent is to improve and utilize any existing structures and landscaping to allow us to hold the Independence Day party on our property. This potentially includes the construction of a permanent, high-quality wall around the former residential portion of our property, if funds are available. This will provide a signal to the Bissau-Guinean public that the United States retains possession of its diplomatic compound and its interest in Guinea-Bissau.

Management Objective 3: Invest in Human Resources

Justification: Embassy Dakar should be equipped to support the Department's agenda in Bissau. While AF/EX has been responsive to Embassy Dakar's requests for more resources, it is impossible for the small office in Bissau to sustain steady increases in workload without additional personnel. The first stage to solving this problem is to add one USDH Portuguese-speaking position in Dakar and one LES administrative assistant position in Bissau. This step would not give us continuous diplomatic presence in Bissau, but it would substantially reduce our absences and expand our political and economic engagement efforts. The second step would be to add two more USDH positions, one of them an Ambassador resident in Dakar, and maintain the EFM position. This stage would allow Embassy Dakar to establish a Bissau Unit, following the model used for Somalia at Embassy Nairobi and for the Central African Republic at Embassy Yaounde. The final stage and ultimate goal would be to re-open Embassy Bissau.