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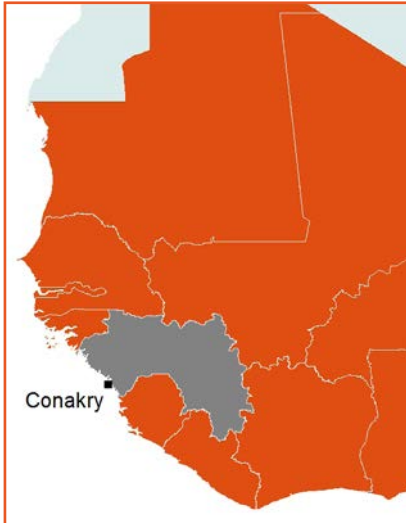
Investing in rural people in **Guinea**

Despite its great mineral wealth, Guinea is one of the poorest countries in the world. In 2018, the country ranked 175th of the 189 countries classified by the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index. More than half of the 11.5 million inhabitants live below the poverty line, and about 20 per cent live in extreme poverty.

Food insecurity affects around 1.9 million people in Guinea, which corresponds to 17.6 per cent of the country's population, compared with an average of 10 per cent in West Africa. Guinea is ranked 102 out of 113 countries by the 2018 Global Food Security Index published by The Economist Intelligence Unit. Nearly one third of Guinean children under 5 years of age suffer from chronic malnutrition, according to 2015 data from the World Health Organization.

Since 2000, Guinea has been hit by a series of political, social and governance crises, resulting in a deteriorating socio-economic situation. Rising food insecurity and poverty fuelled social tensions in the country from 2006 to 2008. In 2014, an Ebola virus outbreak caused more than 2,500 deaths and made already vulnerable people in Guinea even more susceptible to poverty and hunger.

About 64 per cent of Guineans live in rural areas, and most practice subsistence farming on very small plots that are highly dependent on rainfall and vulnerable to climatic hazards. Productivity is low, as farmers have little access to basic services and



information. Poverty is especially marked in these areas, where about 65 per cent of people are poor, compared with 35 per cent of the urban population.

Women and young people are among the most vulnerable members of the rural population. Women take on various roles within agriculture, from production and processing to small-scale commerce. But while they are legally recognized as equal to men, rural women are still disadvantaged. They have limited access to agricultural inputs, technical advice, improved technologies, land ownership and decision-making.

Only 22 per cent of adult women are literate, compared with 44 per cent of men.

This low level of education among rural women directly affects their ability to access information, agricultural extension services and other production needs.

Where ownership or usage of land is concerned, men habitually claim priority and hereditary rights.

Young people make up almost half the population of Guinea, forming a marginalized group that is particularly vulnerable to poverty. They are severely affected by unemployment and underemployment, which push them to leave rural areas and, in some cases, into delinquency. Traditional subsistence farming offers little incentive for rural youth to stay and pursue the same livelihoods as their parents.

Eradicating rural poverty in Guinea

Guinea is in the process of updating its public policies. The country's "Guinea Vision 2040" document was adopted in April 2017 and sets out the country's development guidelines, accompanied by the 2016-2020 National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES) and the National Agricultural Development Policy (PNDA).

PNDES lays the foundation for the structural transformation of the national economy to create wealth and jobs. The Plan is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and takes into account the main regional agendas, namely, Vision 2020 by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

PNDA, in turn, focuses on agriculture and has three main goals:

- increased access to growing markets, including those in the subregion and the continent
- high productivity
- effective governance of the agricultural sector.

Building on a regional push for Zero Hunger, the government has also adopted the National Agricultural Investment and Food and Nutrition Security Plan (PNIASAN) Vision 2018-2025. It aims to strengthen the resilience of the agricultural sector, improve the food and nutritional security of vulnerable populations, develop human capital, and promote youth and women in agriculture.

A 50 per cent increase in the contribution of the agricultural sector to the national economy is expected. The government has committed to allocating 12.5 per cent of its budget to agriculture, compared with the current 7.3 per cent.

IFAD's strategy in Guinea

IFAD began operations in Guinea in 1980. Since then, it has invested US\$244 million in 14 projects for a total cost of US\$469.6 million, directly benefiting 651,450 rural households. In the period since 2000, the socio-economic and political situation in Guinea has degenerated, and poor people have been particularly affected by the

downturn. IFAD's operations have succeeded in increasing incomes and improving food security and living conditions for participants in its programmes and projects.

The current country strategy note aims to provide the Government of Guinea and IFAD with a medium-term strategic and operational framework, which is especially needed to identify and shape IFAD's future operations in the country in partnership with other stakeholders (public and private). In line with the country's political calendar (legislative elections in 2019 and presidential election in 2020, to be confirmed), IFAD plans the preparation of a country strategic opportunities programme (COSOP) for Guinea.

IFAD's strategic objectives for Guinea are:

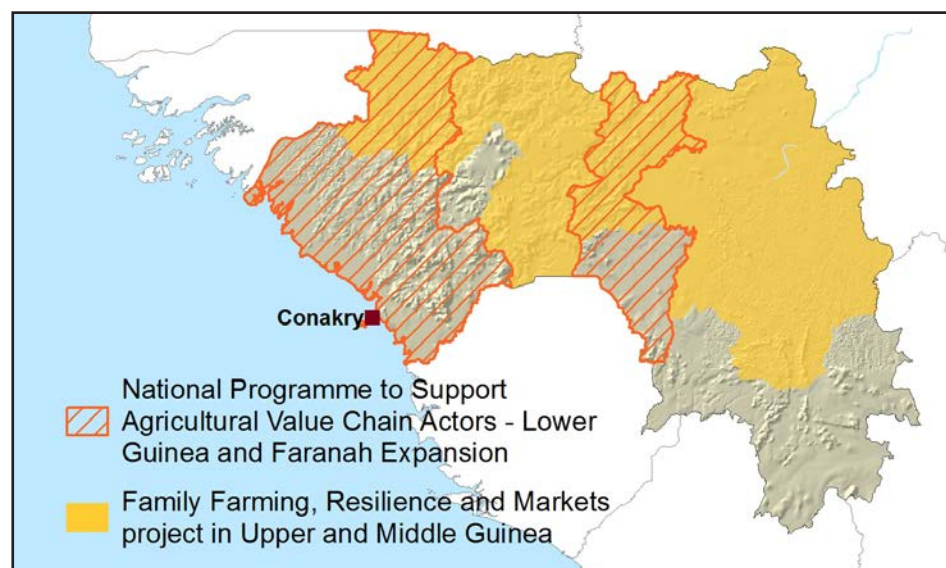
- Production of family farmers is increased sustainably.
- Producers hold more equitable market conditions.
- Organizations (farmer associations, cooperatives and federations) and microfinance institutions providing services to farmers are professional and capable of responding to the demands of their members.

IFAD's operations in Guinea aim to contribute in a cross-cutting way to:

- strengthen environmental sustainability and increase the resilience to climate change of the economic activities of rural people
- focus activities on young people, and more particularly on young women, especially by facilitating their access to the labour market, fostering entrepreneurship and providing capacity-building
- systematically integrate aspects of food and nutrition security (e.g. nutrition education, product promotion/high nutritional value chains, processing of high nutritional value products/meals) into the component activities of the operations.

Given the number of poor people living in rural areas, meeting the poverty reduction challenge in Guinea means accelerating the growth of agricultural value chains where market opportunities exist, and focusing on rural value addition and income generation. IFAD works to develop selected value chains by helping agricultural producers, small entrepreneurs and artisans to organize their own associations. It also supports input supply, marketing systems and agricultural research.

Ongoing operations



National Programme to Support Agricultural Value Chain Actors – Lower Guinea and Faranah expansion (PNAFA-LGF)

PNAFA-LGF is aimed at building the capacity of farmer organizations and developing value chains for small-scale farmers in subsectors with good economic potential. The programme operates within the Lower Guinea and Faranah areas, paying particular attention to involving women and young people in its activities. Youth constitute about 30 per cent of its target group. This programme was created as an expansion of the preceding nationwide PNAFA programme (2002-2015), focusing also on farmer organizations and a more participatory approach.

The programme helps farmer organizations offer better services to their members. It contributes to improving the structure of federations, unions and other groupings of farmer organizations, provides capacity-building for members, and extends financial assistance for the development of specific value chains. At a total cost of US\$40.06 million, it is cofinanced by Saudi Arabia (US\$10 million).

Family Farming, Resilience and Markets Project in Upper and Middle Guinea (AgriFARM)

AgriFARM aims to improve the contribution of family farming to inclusive national economic development, while ensuring household food and nutrition security as well as resilience to climate change.

The project targets 65,000 households involved in family farming in 15 prefectures of the Upper Guinea and Middle Guinea regions. These are the poorest parts of the country, with poverty rates of 67.5 per cent and 55.4 per cent, respectively. Critical target groups are women and young people. At a total cost of US\$97.09 million, it is cofinanced by the OPEC Fund for International Development (US\$25 million) and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (US\$15 million).



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IFAD invests in rural people, empowering them to reduce poverty, increase food security, improve nutrition and strengthen resilience. Since 1978, we have provided US\$20.9 billion in grants and low-interest loans to projects that have reached about 483 million people. IFAD is an international financial institution and a United Nations specialized agency based in Rome – the United Nations' food and agriculture hub.

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