



## COI QUERY

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>GUINEA</b>
<b>Main subject</b>	<a href="#"><u>Access to services for (single) women</u></a>
<b>Question(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <a href="#"><u>Access to basic services for single women without a support network in Conakry city (2019-2021)</u></a></li><li>2. <a href="#"><u>Treatment of single women by society in Conakry city</u></a></li></ol>
<b>Date of completion</b>	10 December 2021
<b>Query Code</b>	Q49-2021
<b>Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)</b>	N/A

---

### Disclaimer

This response to a COI query has been elaborated according to the [EASO COI Report Methodology](#) and [EASO Writing and Referencing Guide](#).

The information provided in this response has been researched, evaluated and processed with utmost care within a limited time frame. All sources used are referenced. A quality review has been performed in line with the above mentioned methodology. This document does not claim to be exhaustive neither conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. If a certain event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

The information in the response does not necessarily reflect the opinion of EASO and makes no political statement whatsoever.

The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on 10 December 2021. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.

---

# COI QUERY RESPONSE - GUINEA

## Access to services for (single) women

### 1. Access to basic services for single women without a support network in Conakry city (2019-2021)

Information on access to basic services for single women without a support network in Conakry city, between 2019-2021, could not be found among the sources consulted by EASO within time constraints. However, the following information provides a brief overview on the general situation of women and access to basic services for women (including single women) in Guinea.

#### General situation of women in Guinea

Guinean women do not have the same legal status and rights as men, including in employment, divorce, inheritance, credit and property. For instance, the law regulating divorce generally favour men regarding communal assets or awarding custody of children. In addition, the 2021 USDOS noted that 'traditional practices historically discriminate against women and sometimes took precedence over the law, particularly in rural areas.' For instance, legal testimony by women carries less weight than testimony by men according to the Islamic principles and customary law.<sup>1</sup>

#### Access to housing

Information regarding access to housing for single women could not be found among the sources consulted by EASO within the time constraint of this COI Query Response.

Although not referring exclusively to women, Human Rights Watch reported in 2019 on the situation of 'more than 20 000 people' that were displaced between February and May of that year by the government, and who allegedly were not provided with any 'alternative accommodation or compensation to those displaced, in contravention of international human rights law'.<sup>2</sup> In a 2020 report, the UN similarly highlighted 'difficulties faced by the most vulnerable persons in obtaining access to adequate housing', and expressed concern about the fact that 'many forced evictions carried out by the State party have left many people without shelter, and that these people have been unable to claim their rights and often do not receive adequate compensation or even humanitarian support'.<sup>3</sup> No other details were presented by the source.

#### Access to employment

The 2021 USDOS report noted that, although the law prohibits gender discrimination in hiring, the government did not effectively enforce this provision during 2020. The law restricts the employment of women from occupations and tasks deemed hazardous and from industries such as mining and construction.<sup>4</sup> A 2020 report by Bertelsmann foundation, however, stated that 'women are relatively well-represented in the workforce' and 'have consistently made up 45 % of the workforce'.<sup>5</sup> In a 2021 report, the World Bank did not find negative aspects regarding issues such as 'constraints on

---

<sup>1</sup> USDOS, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Watch, Guinea: Draconian Forced Evictions, 18 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Guinea, 30 March 2020, [url](#), para. 41

<sup>4</sup> USDOS, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>5</sup> BTI, Guinea Country Report 2020, 5 October 2020, [url](#)

freedom of movement, laws affecting women's decisions to work, constraints on women's starting and running a business, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension'. However, the same source also highlighted that, 'when it comes to laws affecting women's pay, constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women's work after having children, and gender differences in property and inheritance, Guinea could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women'.<sup>6</sup> The World Bank also noted that Guinean women in formal employment earn 38 % less than men. Additionally, married women in employment 'face a substantial earnings disadvantage. This might reflect legal restrictions which establish that a woman cannot get a job or pursue a trade or profession if her husband objects based on the interests of the family'.<sup>7</sup>

### **Access to healthcare**

In December 2018, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Committee reported on the 'continued high rates' of maternal mortality in Guinea, and noted that 'unsafe abortion [was] a major cause of maternal mortality'.<sup>8</sup> In 2020, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN CESCR) expressed concern regarding the high rates of maternal and infant mortality,<sup>9</sup> while further noting Guinea's 'high rates of early and unwanted pregnancies, the low level of sexual and reproductive health education, the low level of access to contraceptives and the very restrictive conditions under which abortions can be performed'.<sup>10</sup> With regards to the country's maternal mortality rate, USDOS noted that the '[l]ack of accessible, quality health services, discrimination, gender inequalities, early marriage, and adolescent pregnancy' were among contributing factors.<sup>11</sup>

Referring to access to conception, USDOS reported that while there were no legal provisions affecting such access, there existed barriers in practice such as 'low accessibility and poor quality of family planning services as well as limited contraception choices'. The source also highlighted cultural barriers, such as the 'lack of male partner engagement or support for a woman's decision to use family planning services' as well as the 'lack of decision-making power for women, as women in many cases needed approval from their husbands before using health services'. The same source also noted societal 'expectations for newlywed couples to have children', while highlighting that 'religious beliefs also hindered access'.<sup>12</sup>

A further issue highlighted by sources was the prevalence of female genital mutilation/excision (FGM/E). In 2019, the World Bank reported that Guinea had, at that time, the second highest rate of FGM/E in the world, and pointed out that FGM/E is 'associated with higher maternal mortality'.<sup>13</sup> A September 2021 report by non-governmental organisation 28 Too Many stated that 'the prevalence of FGM in women aged 15-49 is 94.5 %', and pointed out that, while 'about 78% of women are cut by traditional practitioners', the practice of 'medicalised FGM is rising rapidly'.<sup>14</sup> As noted by the World Bank, the practice 'is culturally linked to marriageability, as it serves as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood, making it difficult to separate from the practice of child marriage'.<sup>15</sup> According to activists quoted in a 2019 article by France24, FGM/E 'is often performed on girls during the summer break to give them time to recover before school resumes'. The same source

---

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, Women, Business and the Law 2021, 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>7</sup> World Bank, Guinea: The Economic Benefits of a Gender Inclusive Society, 2019, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>8</sup> UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Guinea, 7 December 2018, [url](#), para. 25

<sup>9</sup> UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Guinea, 30 March 2020, [url](#), para. 43

<sup>10</sup> UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Guinea, 30 March 2020, [url](#), para. 45

<sup>11</sup> USDOS, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>12</sup> USDOS, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>13</sup> World Bank, Guinea: The Economic Benefits of a Gender Inclusive Society, 2019, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>14</sup> 28 Too Many, FGM In Guinea: Short Report, September 2021, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>15</sup> World Bank, Guinea: The Economic Benefits of a Gender Inclusive Society, 2019, [url](#), p. 8

stated that ‘some women think that genital mutilation is a religious requirement’.<sup>16</sup>

### **Access to education**

In 2019, the World Bank reported that, in Guinea, some 19 % of girls younger than 15 years were married, as were around 51 % of women between 20-24 years old. According to the report, child marriage is associated ‘with a higher rate of early childbearing and school dropout’.<sup>17</sup> In 2020, the UN CESCR highlighted the ‘high illiteracy rate, especially in rural areas and in particular among women’.<sup>18</sup> The 2021 USDOS report noted that ‘while girls and boys had equal access to all levels of primary and secondary education, approximately 56 percent of girls attended primary school, compared with 66 percent of boys. Government figures indicated 11 percent of girls obtained a secondary education, compared with 21 percent of boys’.<sup>19</sup> In 2020, the UN CESCR highlighted among the reasons for the high dropout rate of girls in primary and secondary schools the practice of early marriage, as well as the ‘perception that girls’ education is a burden on families’.<sup>20</sup> For more information on early/child marriage, it is possible to consult the [EASO COI Query Response Guinea, Forced marriage, 10 December 2021](#).

## **2. Treatment of single women by society in Conakry city**

In 2015 the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) conducted an interview with the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), which reported that ‘single women in Conakry do not encounter any particular problems, other than social pressure to marry and receiving very little social recognition as women living on their own’. Nevertheless, ‘most often a young woman remains with her parents if she is not married’, as for her to live alone would be ‘unacceptable for her family, often for reasons of honour, and it is frowned upon by the community to live alone as a woman’. The source further noted that a young single woman living alone could lose ‘her chances of getting married because she might be perceived as a poor prospect: being from a bad family or being too liberated’. Also, ‘single women who are divorced can live alone if they have stable financial means, but, like women who have never married, the accepted practice is to live with the family’.<sup>21</sup>

The same source added that, ‘it is easier for a single woman to find housing if she has sufficient financial means’, although ‘a man’s support can make it easier for a single woman to obtain housing because some landlords are reluctant to have them as tenants due to their social status and because they perceive them as being unable to fend for themselves’.<sup>22</sup>

Information on the treatment of single women by society in Conakry city, between 2019-2021, could not be found among the sources consulted by EASO within time constraints for drafting this COI Query Response.

---

<sup>16</sup> France24, Young Guinean activists want to end FGM during summer break, 4 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>17</sup> World Bank, Guinea: The Economic Benefits of a Gender Inclusive Society, 2019, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>18</sup> UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Guinea, 30 March 2020, [url](#), para. 47(f)

<sup>19</sup> USDOS, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2021, [url](#)

<sup>20</sup> UN Committee on ESC Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Guinea, 30 March 2020, [url](#), para. 47(c)

<sup>21</sup> Canada, IRB, Guinea: Single women without family support; their ability to live on their own and find housing and employment without requiring a man’s approval (2013-March 2015), 24 April 2015, [url](#)

<sup>22</sup> Canada, IRB, Guinea: Single women without family support; their ability to live on their own and find housing and employment without requiring a man’s approval (2013-March 2015), 24 April 2015, [url](#)

## SOURCES USED

28 Too Many, FGM In Guinea: Short Report, September 2021, [https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/Guinea/guinea\\_short\\_report\\_v1\\_\(september\\_2021\).pdf](https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/Guinea/guinea_short_report_v1_(september_2021).pdf), accessed 1 December 2021

Bertelsmann Stiftung, BTI Guinea Country Report 2020, 5 October 2020, <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/GIN>, accessed 1 December 2021

Human Rights Watch, Guinea: Draconian Forced Evictions, 18 June 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/06/18/guinea-draconian-forced-evictions>, accessed 1 December 2021

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB), Guinea: Single women without family support; their ability to live on their own and find housing and employment without requiring a man's approval (2013-March 2015), 24 April 2015, <https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/country-information/rir/Pages/index.aspx?doc=456173&pls=1>, accessed 7 December 2021

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), SIGI 2019 Guinea, 2019, <https://www.genderindex.org/wp-content/uploads/files/datasheets/2019/GN.pdf>, accessed 1 December 2021

UN (United Nations) Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the initial report of Guinea, 30 March 2020, <https://undocs.org/E/C.12/GIN/CO/1>, accessed 1 December 2021

UN (United Nations) Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Guinea, 7 December 2018, <https://undocs.org/CCPR/C/GIN/CO/3>, accessed 1 December 2021

USDOS (United States Department of State), 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2020, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/guinea/>, accessed 1 December 2021

USDOS (United States Department of State), 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Guinea, 11 March 2021, <https://www.state.gov/report/custom/f6419fedec-2/>, accessed 1 December 2021

World Bank, Guinea: The Economic Benefits of a Gender Inclusive Society, 2019, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32507/Guinea-The-Economic-Benefits-of-a-Gender-Inclusive-Society.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, accessed 1 December 2021

World Bank, Women, Business and the Law 2021: Guinea, 2021, <https://wbl.worldbank.org/content/dam/documents/wbl/2021/snapshots/Guinea.pdf>, accessed 1 December 2021

## SOURCES CONSULTED

Borgen Project (The), Top 10 Facts About Girls' Education In Guinea, 29 January 2019, <https://borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-girls-education-in-guinea/>, accessed 1 December 2021

Family Planning 2020, Measuring Contraceptive Use Among All Women: Advances and Challenges, n.d., [https://fp2030.org/sites/default/files/Data-Hub/allwomen/MLS\\_allwomen\\_6\\_20.pdf](https://fp2030.org/sites/default/files/Data-Hub/allwomen/MLS_allwomen_6_20.pdf), accessed 1 December 2021

Plan International, Girls' And Young Women's Activism And Organising In West Africa, June 2020, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/girls\\_and\\_young\\_womens\\_activism\\_and\\_organising\\_in\\_west\\_africa\\_-\\_eng.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/girls_and_young_womens_activism_and_organising_in_west_africa_-_eng.pdf), accessed 1 December 2021

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), Statistical Profile On Female Genital Mutilation, January 2019, [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Guinea/FGM\\_GIN.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Guinea/FGM_GIN.pdf), accessed 1 December 2021

UN (United Nations) Human Rights Council, Compilation on Guinea, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 11 November 2019, <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/WG.6/35/GIN/2>, accessed 1 December 2021

UN (United Nations) Human Rights Council, Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Guinea, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 5 November 2019, <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/WG.6/35/GIN/3>, accessed 1 December 2021

UN (United Nations) Women, Supporting Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Fragile States, 22 March 2016, [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2016/fge\\_fragile\\_states\\_research\\_brief\\_guinea.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2016/fge_fragile_states_research_brief_guinea.pdf), accessed 1 December 2021

UN CEDAW (United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women), Concluding observations on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Guinea, 14 November 2014, <https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhslidCrOIUTvLRFDjh6%2fx1pWAZn%2fmiA2aPA7XCj3BVgmbS%2fJFlrGm5c0G3LW96jr8u7PZZ5u4lfP5m%2feCBgWsWFi9oFzU5GIZHgoRd%2bc6wJuFF>, accessed 1 December 2021

UN CEDAW (United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women), Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Guinea, 10 August 2007, <https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhslidCrOIUTvLRFDjh6%2fx1pWBfHu70AvXVpPvPsOLV8411X418puUe80W61FEUqyfg6vvprjaBRmfRLtC1GdrizzEHQWTiZm mhZLurA8aSdO78>, accessed 1 December 2021