



# Guinea

## Guinea: Current Path

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Chart 2: Population structure in the Current Path, 1990-2043

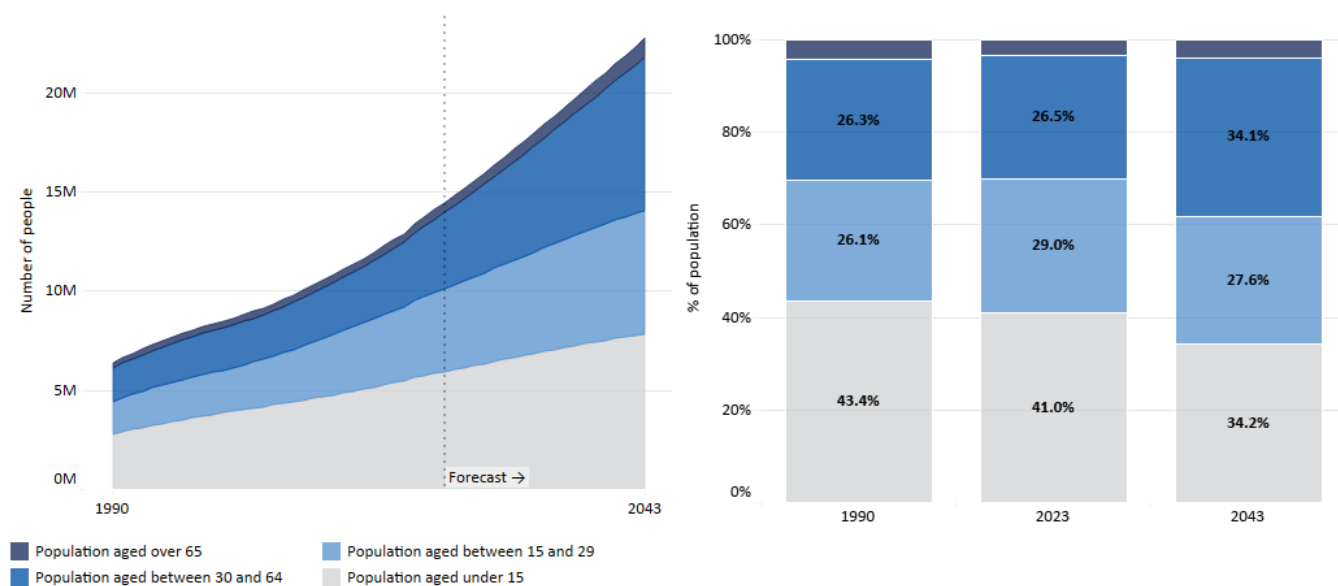


Chart 2 presents the Current Path of the population structure, from 2020 to 2043.

Guinea is home to three major ethnolinguistic groups: the Fulani (Peul), who make up approximately 41% of the population; the Mandinka (Malinké), accounting for around 33%; and the Soussou (Susu), comprising about 12%. French serves as Guinea's official language. Alongside French, several Indigenous languages, including Fula, Malinké and Susu, are widely spoken and recognised.

The country's population has been growing rapidly at about 2.5% per year since 2008. In 2023, the country's population was 14.4 million, and on the Current Path, it will reach 17.2 million by 2030 and 22.7 million by 2043—the end of the third 10-year implementation plan for the AU agenda 2063.

The country's fertility rate has declined from an average of 6.5 births per woman in the 1980s to 4.2 births per woman in 2023, still about 8.7% above the average for lower-middle-income African countries. On the Current Path, Guinea's fertility rate declines to 3.9 births per woman by 2030 and to about 3.1 by 2043.

Infant and maternal mortality rates in Guinea have also declined significantly, reflecting improvement in education and healthcare. Infant mortality has declined from 65.2 deaths per 1 000 live births in 2014 to 50.9 in 2023. On the Current Path, infant mortality will decline to 30 by 2030 and further to 25.2 by 2043. The rate will remain above average for lower-middle-income African countries until 2034.

Maternal mortality has declined from 661 deaths per 100 000 live births in 2005 to 502 in 2023. In the Current Path, rates will reach 412 deaths per 100 000 by 2030 and 236.8 by 2043. The rate will remain above average for lower-middle-income African countries until 2027.

Guinea's life expectancy has consistently improved since its independence due to efforts in public health and social

services. However, it remains below Africa's average due to challenges such as poverty, limited healthcare access, and a high prevalence of communicable diseases. Between 2000 and 2005, the average life expectancy for males and females was 55 years. By 2023, it has increased to 63 years. On the Current Path, Guinea's life expectancy will increase to 66 years (64.3 years for men and 67.8 for women) by 2030 and 70.5 years by 2043.

The country's population structure is characterised by a youthful demographic—with an estimated median age of 19.1 years in 2023. The rapidly growing and youthful population presents both opportunities and challenges. Currently, the country is faced with challenges related to poverty, healthcare and education. On the Current Path, the median age will increase to 20.3 by 2030 and to 23.2 by 2043.

As of 2023, about 41.1% of the country's population was under 15 years of age. With this youthful population structure, Guinea's dependency ratio is high, as a large portion of the population depends on a small workforce to provide for its needs—which contributes to rising poverty levels. However, the share of the population under 15 years of age will decrease slightly to 38.6% by 2030 and to 34.2% by 2043 as the total population size increases.

When the ratio of the working-age population (15-64 years of age) to dependants (children and elderly) is 1.7 to one or higher, countries often experience more rapid growth, known as the **demographic dividend**, provided the workforce is appropriately skilled and absorbed in the labour market. In 2023, Guinea's ratio of working-age population to dependants was at 1.2 working-age persons to every dependant. On the Current Path, Guinea is likely to only enter a potential demographic window of opportunity as from 2047.

Guinea also has a large youth bulge at 49.2% in 2023 – defined as the ratio of the population between 15 and 29 years to the total adult population (15+ years of age). In addition to the requirement for more spending on education, health services and job creation, a large number of young adults can lead to positive political change in a country through youth activism, but they can also carry the seeds for socio-political instability in the absence of economic opportunities. On the Current Path, Guinea's youth bulge will decline to 46.6% by 2030 and to 41.9% by 2043.

Similar to many other African countries, Guinea's persistently high fertility rate is attributed to various factors, including socio-cultural, knowledge-related (awareness of contraceptive methods), and healthcare service-related influences. Although recent efforts have been made to promote the use of modern contraceptives, the **unmet need** for contraception remains high among adolescents and young women in Guinea.



Chart 3: Population distribution map, 2023

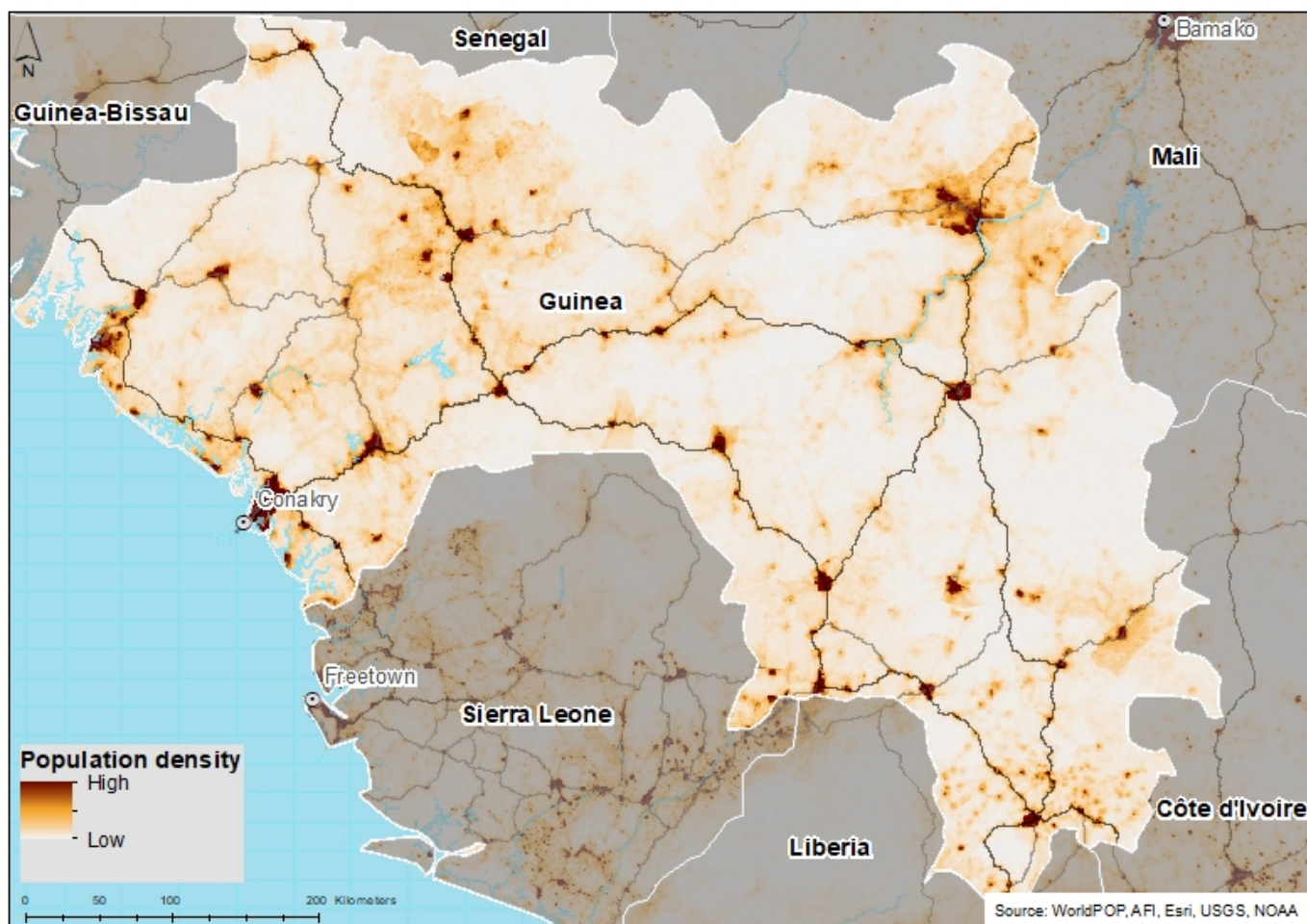


Chart 3 presents a population distribution map for 2023.

Guinea's population density is shaped by geographic, economic and demographic factors. In 2023, the country had an average population density of nearly 0.59 people per hectare. The total land area is 245 857 km<sup>2</sup> (2 458 700 hectares). Population density is unevenly distributed, with higher concentrations in and around capital areas such as Conakry and Kindia. Notably, a significant number of Sierra Leoneans reside in these two cities due to the region's proximity to Sierra Leone.

Labé and Mamou serve as the **administrative centers** of their respective regions and are characterised by high population densities. In the Boké region, near the Guinea-Bissau border, the port city of Kamsar is the most densely populated area, driven by its role in the bauxite supply chain, which attracts numerous workers. In contrast, Nzérékoré, located in the south near the Côte d'Ivoire border, is among the most sparsely populated regions.

Chart 4: Urban and rural population in the Current Path, 1990-2043

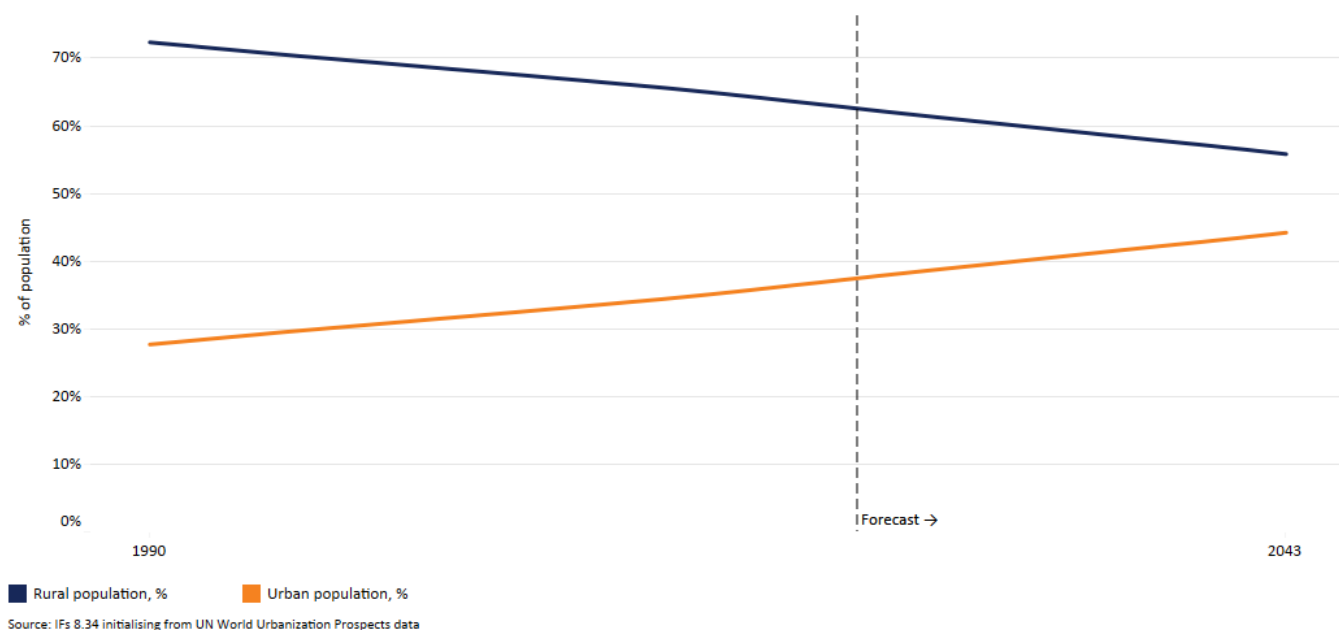


Chart 4 presents the urban and rural population in the Current Path, from 1990 to 2043.

The pace of rural-to-urban migration has been slow in Guinea. Between 2019 and 2023 Guinea's urban population grew by about 1% annually—0.3 percentage points below the average for lower-middle-income African countries over the same period. The slow rate of urbanisation presents significant opportunities for economic development and modernisation.

With proper planning, urbanisation can play a pivotal role in driving economic growth and development by accelerating the provision of a range of services (e.g., education and health), fostering entrepreneurship and boosting productivity. However, challenges such as energy shortages, infrastructure deficits, limited skills, inefficient business regulations, and restricted access to finance hinder the productivity potential of Guinea's urban areas. Addressing these issues should be a priority for the current government, specifically in Conakry and Kindia.

In the 1990s, about 70% of the Guinean total population lived in rural areas that declined to 62.5% in 2023. On the Current Path, the rate of urbanisation in Guinea will increase to about 39.8% by 2030 and 44.2% by 2043.

Chart 5: GDP (MER) and growth in the Current Path, 1990-2043

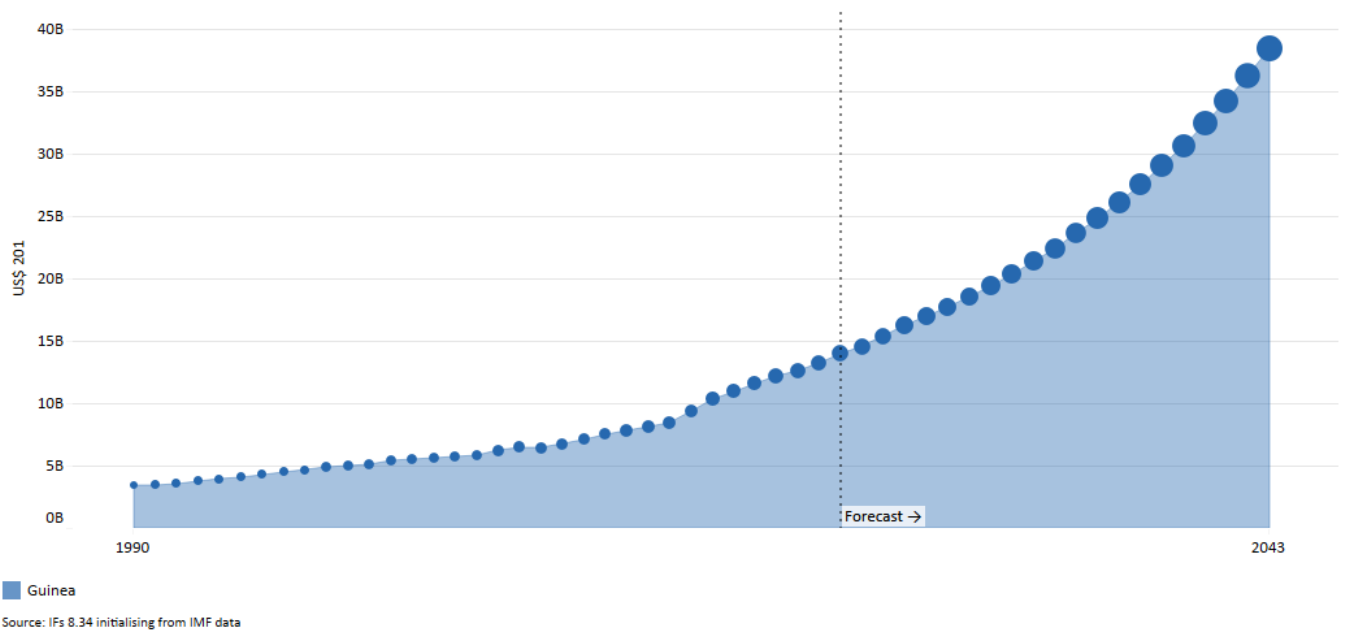


Chart 5 presents GDP in market exchange rates (MER) and growth rate in the Current Path, from 1990 to 2043.

Guinea's history of political transitions, fluctuating commodity prices, and the aftermath effects of the Ebola epidemic have had a significant impact on economic growth. The economy is primarily based on the mining and agriculture sectors. Since 1985, the country has made efforts to implement policies that liberalise the economy to allow private sector participation. The IMF and the World Bank were actively involved in various economic reform packages that contributed to notable economic growth, with an average growth rate of around 4% between 1985 and 2000 but, in 2002, the IMF suspended Guinea's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) due to the government's inability to meet the targets. This compelled the country to fund its policies through reliance on the central bank, a strategy that ultimately proved expensive.

In 2004 Guinea was re-admitted into the PRGF, growing at 3% in 2005 compared to 1.2% in 2003. Its GDP increased by nearly US\$3 million during the same period. By 2008, Guinea's GDP had grown by nearly 19% compared to its level in 2003.

In 2023, Guinea's GDP was US\$14 billion, with a growth rate of 5.7%, driven largely by the mining sector, with gold and aluminium ore extraction playing a pivotal role. While the GDP growth rate is encouraging, economic challenges persist. The mining sector's **weak linkages** to the domestic economy have limited its impact on job creation and poverty reduction.

Looking ahead, on the Current Path, Guinea's GDP growth will be 4.6% in 2030 and 5.9% by 2043, reaching a projected GDP of US\$19.4 billion in 2030 and US\$28.4 billion by 2043.

Chart 6: Size of the informal economy in the Current Path, 2020-2043

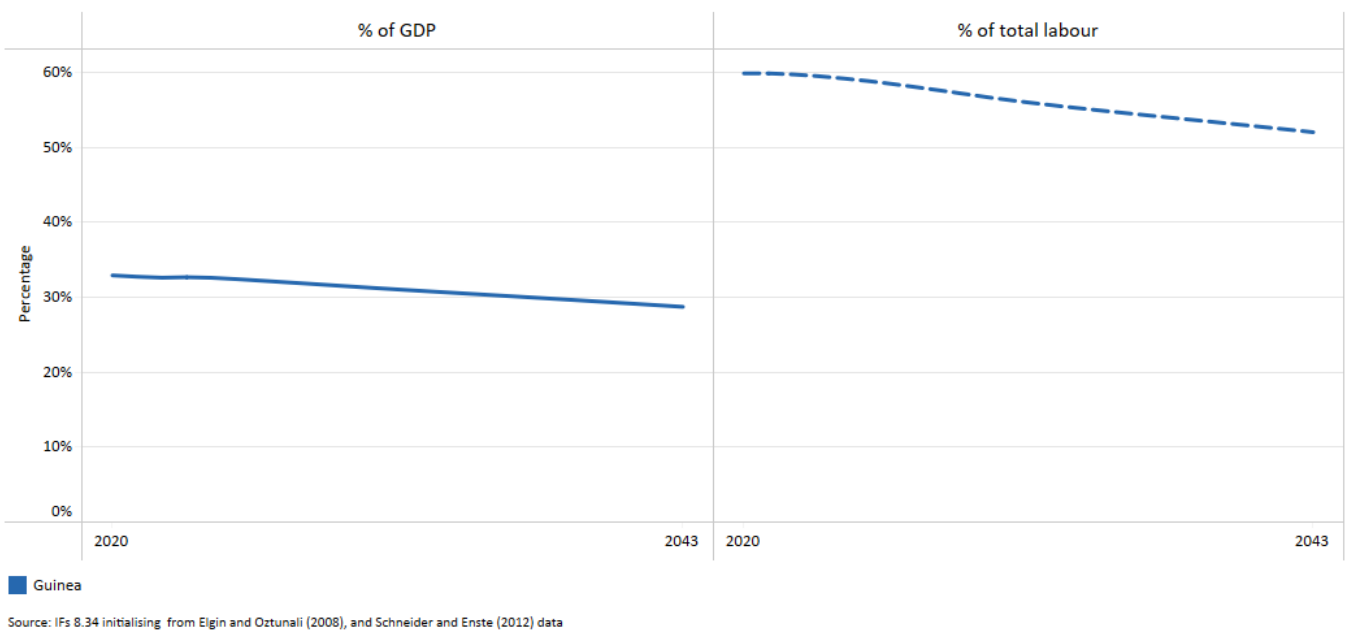


Chart 6 presents the size of the informal economy as per cent of GDP and per cent of total labour (non-agriculture), from 2020 to 2043. The data in our modelling are largely estimates and therefore may differ from other sources.

The informal economy comprises activities that have market value and would add to tax revenue and GDP, if they were recorded. Countries with high informality face a host of development challenges, including low revenue mobilisation, higher poverty, lower per capita incomes, greater inequality, and weaker productivity investment. Therefore, high levels of informality tend to constrain economic growth but often serves as a survival sector in poor countries.

With over 60% of Guineans residing in rural areas and relying on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods, the informal economy plays a crucial role in Guinea's economic landscape, significantly contributing to both GDP and employment.

The informal economy has helped Guinea reduce extreme poverty; in 2023, an estimated 59.5% (equivalent to 5.2 million people) of the total labour force (non-agriculture) was informally employed, and women constituted 42.1% of the total labour force in the informal economy.

Guinea's informal sector has experienced a gradual decline in its share of GDP over time. In 2023, the informal economy accounted for approximately 32.7% of Guinea's GDP, down from about 45% in the early 1980s. Despite this reduction, the size of Guinea's informal economy is above the 2023 averages of 30.6% for lower-middle-income countries in Africa and 26.2% for the continent as a whole.

On the Current Path, the informal sector's share of GDP in Guinea will decrease to 31.4% by 2030 and further to 28.7% by 2043, driven by anticipated development improvements reflected in rising GDP per capita. However, these levels will still exceed the forecast averages of 29.5% in 2030 and 27.1% in 2043 for lower-middle-income African countries.

Chart 7: GDP per capita in Current Path, 1990-2043

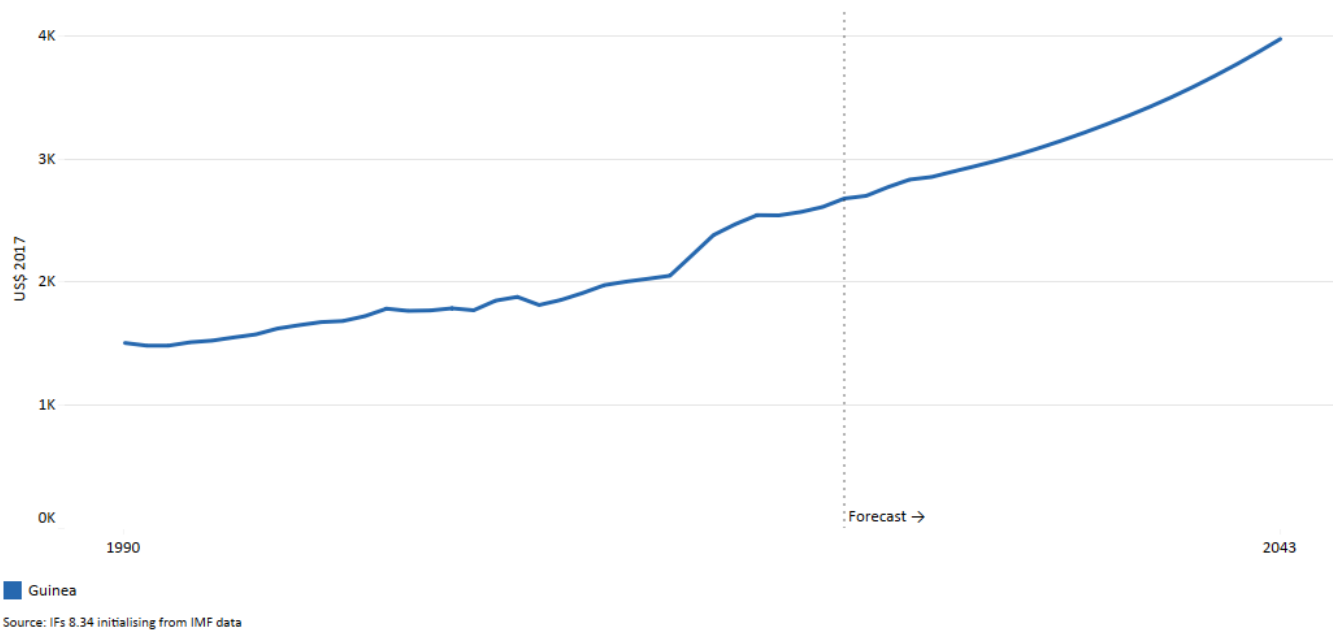


Chart 7 presents GDP per capita in the Current Path, from 1990 to 2043, compared with the average for the Africa income group.

In 2023, Guinea transitioned from a low-income to a lower-middle-income status as both Gross National Income (GNI) and GDP per capita had increased. Guinea's GNI per capita rose from **US\$1 018** in 2021 to **US\$1 180** in 2022, while its GDP per capita (at PPP) increased from US\$2 640 to US\$2 700 over the same period. This **reclassification** by the World Bank reflects the country's economic growth, driven notably by the mining sector, which has played a significant role in its improved income level.

Guinea's GDP per capita has steadily risen over time, even amid rapid population growth. This consistent upward trend in recent years highlights the country's strong GDP growth outpacing its population increase.

With an expected increase in GDP growth coupled with slower population growth, Guinea's Current Path shows a GDP per capita of US\$2 988 in 2030 and US\$3 975 by 2043—more than 45% below the projected averages for lower-middle-income African countries.



Chart 8: Extreme poverty in Current Path, 2020-2043

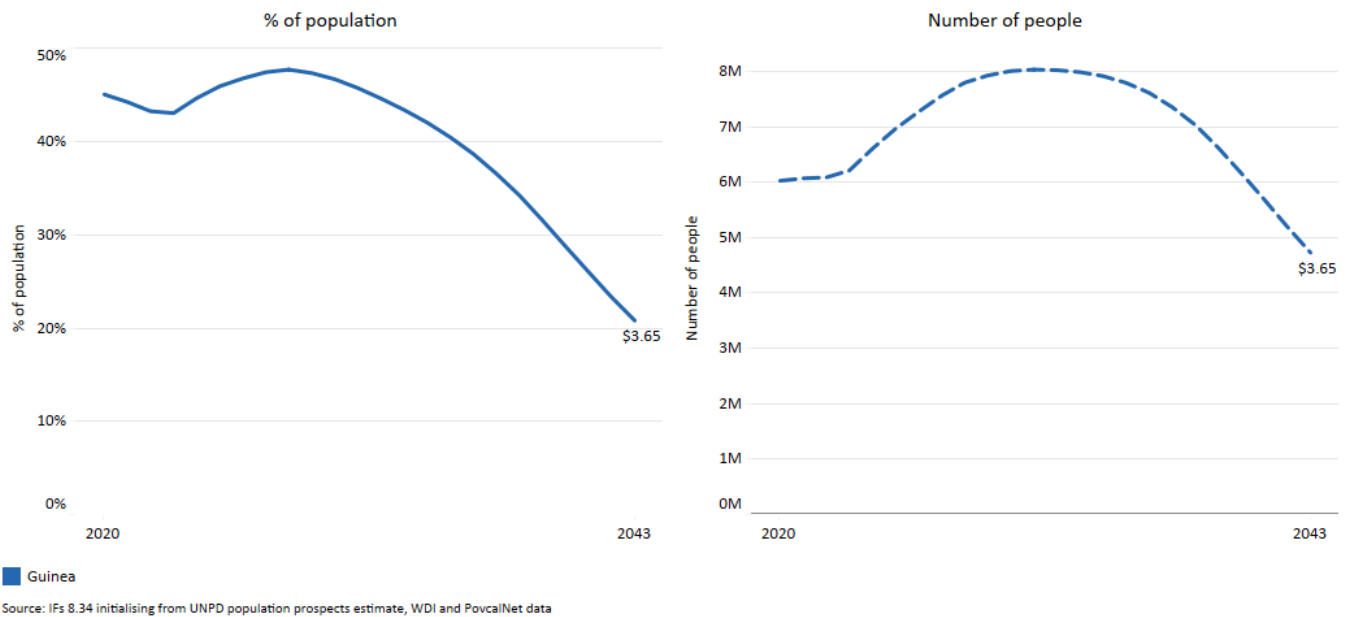


Chart 8 presents the rate and numbers of extremely poor people in the Current Path from 2020 to 2043.

In 2022, the World Bank updated the poverty lines to 2017 constant dollar values as follows:

- The previous US\$1.90 extreme poverty line is now set at US\$2.15, also for use with low-income countries.
- US\$3.20 for lower-middle-income countries, now US\$3.65 in 2017 values.
- US\$5.50 for upper-middle-income countries, now US\$6.85 in 2017 values.
- US\$22.70 for high-income countries. The Bank has not yet announced the new poverty line in 2017 US\$ prices for high-income countries.

Despite robust economic growth in recent years, extreme poverty is a major challenge in Guinea. Weak mining sector linkages to the rest of the economy, including through employment, has prevented this growth from translating into significant poverty reduction and shared prosperity. The global economic disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict following Russia's war in Ukraine have further hindered efforts to reduce poverty. Furthermore, high fertility rates trap Guinea in poverty.

In 2023, approximately 11.9% of the population, or around 1.72 million people, lived on less than US\$2.15 per day, a decrease from 13.4% in 2019. The poverty rate is far more prevalent in rural than in urban areas. The majority of the rural population depends on subsistence agriculture and has limited access to basic infrastructure, education and healthcare, resulting in a disproportionately higher share of people living below the international poverty line of US\$2.15 per day. Given that the majority of Guineans live in rural areas, this underscores significant regional disparities. And it emphasises the importance of focusing economic and social policy measures on rural areas to achieve a more significant impact on improving the population's well-being.

In 2024, extreme poverty was estimated at 12.5% and will continue increasing until 2027, reaching 13.7%. After 2027,

Guinea's poverty rate will gradually decline, reaching 12.7% by 2030. Thus, on the Current Path, Guinea is unlikely to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of reducing extreme poverty below 3% (at US\$2.15 per day) by 2030. By 2043, Guinea is expected to achieve a poverty rate of approximately 2.9%, representing about 6 600 individuals—a significant milestone, even as the population growth rate gradually increases.

As a lower-middle-income country, Guinea applies a poverty benchmark of US\$3.65 per day. Based on this standard, Guinea's poverty rate stood at 43.1% in 2023. On the Current Path, this rate will rise to 46.7% by 2030 before declining significantly to 20.8% by 2043.

However, monetary poverty provides only a partial view of the situation. The [global Multidimensional Poverty Index \(MPI\)](#) offers a broader perspective by assessing acute poverty through overlapping deprivations across 10 indicators, divided into three equally weighted dimensions: health, education and standard of living. The MPI complements the international US\$2.15 a day poverty rate by identifying who is multidimensionally poor and also shows the composition of multidimensional poverty. The headcount or incidence of multidimensional poverty is often several percentage points higher than that of monetary poverty. This implies that individuals living above the monetary poverty line may still suffer deprivations in health, education and/or standard of living.

In the [2024 Global MPI report](#), 66.2% of the population in Guinea was multidimensionally poor in 2018 (an increase from 61.9% in 2016), compared to the international monetary poverty of 14.5% at US\$2.15 per day in 2018 (a decrease from 18.4% in 2016).

#### Chart 9: National Development Plan of Guinea



### Vision 2040 pour une Guinée émergente et prospère

Chart 9 depicts the National Development Plan of Guinea.

Guinea's development plan is closely aligned with national and international frameworks, such as the UN SDGs and the AU's Agenda 2063. This alignment fosters coherence and synergy in advancing the country's development initiatives.

Guinea's long-term development strategy, "Vision 2040: For a Prosperous and Emerging Guinea," sets out the country's strategic priorities for sustainable development over the next two decades. It highlights key strategic directions and fosters a dialogue process that incorporates input from all sectors of society to envision potential future pathways. Guinea's Vision 2040 aims to achieve a diversified and competitive economy. To bring this vision to life, Guinea has developed successive

medium-term strategies, such as the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) 2016–2020 and the PNDES 2021–2025, which focus on building strong institutional foundations for economic, social and environmental progress while prioritising human capital development.

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## About the authors

Dr **Blessing Chipanda** joined the African Futures and Innovation (AFI) programme in January 2023. Before joining the ISS he worked as an assistant lecturer/ research assistant at the University of Pretoria, Department of Economics. He is particularly interested in tasks within the wider realm of international trade, development economics, public policy, monetary policy, and econometric modelling. Equally interested in economic and socio-economic activities that impact social welfare. Blessing has a PhD in economics from the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

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