

Annual Report

2023

Delivering on the ICPD for the
people of **Guinea-Bissau**



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Jocelyn Fenard
Resident Representative
Guinea Bissau

2023 was the second year of implementation of the 7th country program 2022-2026, elaborated jointly by UNFPA and the Government of Guinea Bissau and approved by the UNFPA Executive Board in 2021.

2023 was a year of significant change, with the operationalization of the innovations initiated in 2022, both in terms of partnership, with the introduction of a biannual work plan with implementing partners to ensure continuity and sustainability of actions, and programmatically, with greater integration of activities contributing to the 3 transformative results: ending unmet need for family planning, ending preventable maternal deaths, and ending Gender-Based Violence, particularly harmful practices such as Female Genital Mutilation and early marriage.

The new strategic positioning with both the government and financial partners has enabled us to increase the level of resources mobilized and the technical capacity of the office.

In line with UNFPA's Strategic Plan, the office has invested in programmatic innovation and rights-based and gender transformative approaches to accelerate the change of social norms so that no one is left behind. These innovations have also been carried out with greater inclusion of youth networks and associations in the definition of activities so that the 2023-2024 program is co-created with young people, for young people and implemented with the systematic involvement of young people.

In 2023, Guinea Bissau initiated the preparatory phase of the 4th General Population Census, a highly strategic exercise to provide essential data and evidence for long-term development planning and investment.

The strengthening of South-South cooperation, with other countries in the region and with Brazil, together with the development of a partnership with the World Bank, are the ingredients for a successful implementation of the census.

The 2023 annual report presents the main results and impacts of interventions carried out with our partners in the 6 administrative regions covered by the program. These still insufficient results are a call to step up our efforts and investments in order to accelerate the necessary transformation towards achieving the sustainable development goals in Guinea Bissau.

Jocelyn Fenard

UNFPA in Guinea-Bissau



Sexual and
Reproductive
Health



Adolescents
and Youth



Gender Equality
and Women
Empowerment



Population
Dynamics

Our interventions will have an impact across the entire country, but our focus is where the indicators require special attention.

Country context

Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights



Prevalence of modern contraceptive methods (Women aged 15 to 49) **



Unmet need for contraception (Women married from 15 to 49 years old) **



Maternal mortality rate (national estimate, per 100,000 live births) ***



Fertility rate, total (births per woman) **



Births attended by qualified healthcare professionals **



Decision-making on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights**



Proportion of demand satisfied with modern contraceptive methods (Women aged 15 to 49) **

Adolescents and Youth



Adolescent fertility rate (Women aged 15 to 19)**

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment



Prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation **



Women who were first married by age 15 (Women aged 20 to 24) **



Women who were first married by age 18 (Women aged 20 to 24) **

Population Demographic Change



Average annual population growth rate ****



Population aged 0 to 14 years ****



Population aged 10 to 14 years ****



Population aged 0 to 19 years ****



Population aged 10 to 24 years ****



Population aged 10 to 64 years ****



Population aged 65 years and over ****



Total population ****

Source
 * MICS 5
 ** MICS 6
 *** INASA
 **** INS (Demographic Projections in Guinea-Bissau)

Main results from 2023



The UNFPA's caravan initiative made a significant impact during the 16 days of activism in Guinea-Bissau. By reaching over **7,000 people** with key messages, the caravan has contributed to changing social norms, particularly regarding Female Genital Mutilation and child marriage. The testimonials from girls who are determined to choose their own husbands and women who will not tolerate abuse demonstrate the tangible influence of the initiative. This success highlights the importance of community engagement and education in addressing harmful practices. The caravan's approach, which involved direct interaction and dialogue with community members, was effective in raising awareness and empowering individuals to challenge existing norms.



The 2 rounds of Family planning campaigns carried out in 2023 in Guinea-Bissau were a success, with **27,754 new users** adopting family planning methods. This is a significant step towards reducing the unmet need for family planning across the country, including urban, peri-urban, and rural areas.





OUT COME

1

Reduction in the unmet
need for Family Planning
accelerated

output | 1

Strengthened national capacity to promote quality demand of family planning for men, women, adolescents, and young people, including the most vulnerable, disabled, and marginalized people, to claim their rights to access sexual and reproductive health and rights services, and wellbeing, including in humanitarian settings.



40 Peer Educators from 4 youth networks were trained on SRH, PF, Gender-Based Violence and HIV-AIDS and conducted awareness campaigns in 3 regions (Bafata, Gabu and Bissau),



reaching **3,571 young people**, across locations such as Gabu, Sonaco, Contuboel, Cosse, Banbadica, Pitche, and Bissau.



6 men's club were created in 4 regions (two in Bissau, two in Gabu, 1 Bafata and one 1 Mansoa -Oio), and **239 youth** trained in the new approach to eliminate Gender-Based Violence (GBV).



Reaching out to their communities to conduct awareness raising campaigns to change behavior towards ending Female Genital Mutilation and harmful practices and promote Family Planning.



65 teachers and 22 inspectors were trained on Comprehensive Sexuality Education, with a focus on Gender-Based Violence and Gender Equality, as part of the Integral Education program for sexuality in the school and extra-school environment.



1045 teacher's guides for the 6th, 7th 8th and 9th school year were edited and made available helping teachers to reach out to about **6000 pupils** in 57 schools country wide.



14 youth-friendly health centers

have been established in the Bafata, Gabu, and Bissau regions. The piloting phase allowed **140 youths** to access youth friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health services (family planning, Sexually Transmissible Infections/HIV), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) counselling services free of charge.



This contributed to strengthening national capacity to promote and deliver quality services for the **61% of the population,** adolescent and youth, who represent the major part of the population, and also the most vulnerable.



300 condom dispensers were designed, built and placed in strategic locations countrywide, ensuring adequate levels of response to the demand of the population to access free contraceptives. The installation of these dispensers across Guinea-Bissau is a significant step towards improving access to free contraceptives and promoting sexual health. The strategic placement of these dispensers demonstrates a thoughtful approach to meeting the population's demand for accessible and discreet family planning options.



25 animators from youth networks were trained on prevention of drug use, sexually transmissible infections/HIV.



As a result they conducted an awareness campaign, reaching **5,148 young people** in 5 regions out of 8 in the country. This is a promising example of how youth engagement can be leveraged to address critical public health issues.



output | 2

Strengthened capacity of health facilities to provide quality gender-responsive integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights services that include comprehensive family planning and sexually transmitted infections/HIV services to men, women, adolescents, and youth, especially the marginalized and furthest behind, including in humanitarian settings.



13 women received free fistula repair surgeries during the 2023 obstetric fistula campaign, decreasing the number of women living with this disease in the country. UNFPA led this campaign in partnership with the government of Guinea-Bissau.



The UNFPA's investment in the Buba health centre has significantly improved healthcare access for over **3,000 women** in Buba, by offering **3,232 obstetric** ultrasounds and **85 gynaecological scans.**



2078 women came to the Buba health centre for prenatal consultation (CPN). The UNFPA's intervention has empowered the Buba health centre to deliver quality healthcare services, specifically tailored to the needs of women in the community. This has not only improved the lives of individual women but also contributed to the broader goal of achieving universal health coverage in the region.



Development of training modules in leadership and bioethics which contributed to capacitate 29 managers and teachers at the National School of Health (ENS), improving the quality of health care education and consequently their professional activity as midwives and nurses.



38 midwives completed their training in midwifery and acquired their bachelor's degree at the National School of Health increasing the number of qualified midwives in the country.



13 awareness raising sessions on the prevention and screening of breast cancer were conducted in 7 out of 8 regions, during the 16 days of activism. By increasing awareness of breast cancer prevention and screening, more women will be empowered to take proactive steps towards their health. Early detection and timely treatment are crucial in improving survival rates and ensuring better outcomes for those affected by breast cancer.



3367 out of 3481 (97%) Community Health Workers (2184 men and 1183 women), from all regions countrywide, were trained on family planning, contributing to their vital role in reducing unmet need for Family Planning, which is a crucial step towards achieving Guinea-Bissau's family planning goals and promoting overall health and well-being in the country.



The Strategic Plan for the securitisation of reproductive health products was developed and validated, which will allow the government co-financing the purchase of reproductive health medicines under the Commitment Pact for the Supply of reproductive health Products in Guinea-Bissau.



In 2023 UNFPA distributed more than **700,000 condoms**, a significant contribution to sexual and reproductive health in Guinea-Bissau towards achieving the reduction in the unmet need for Family Planning and Sexually Transmissible Infections.

Key Achievements

OUT COME | 2

Reduction in Gender-Based
Violence and Harmful
Practices accelerated

output | 3

Strengthened national capacity to stimulate and induce human rights and gender equality, prevent and respond to Gender-Based Violence and harmful practices, and promote empowerment of women and girls, especially the most vulnerable and left behind, including in humanitarian settings.



UNFPA and the National Committee for the Abandonment of Harmful Practices organized community dialogues reaching out to **9433 community members from 40 communities** of Bafata and Gabu regions to promote the end of Female Genital Mutilation and child marriage, as well as other types of gender-based violence against girls, particularly in rural areas where girls protection services are inadequate and, are a way of empowering and preparing communities for the declaration of abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation.



11,422 girls aged 0-5 years have been saved from FGM through the community-level surveillance system to monitor compliance supported by the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme to End FGM.



175 communtiy leaders were trained on FGM to have more information about it's consequences on women's health and be more prepared to accept the end of FGM. They have committed to work in their communities to advocate social and behaviour change regarding the practice.



A Youth Movement to end Gender-Based Violence compound by **7 youth networks,** held meetings with their fellow young people to discuss FGM and harmful practices.



Around **1,400 people** (from Bissau, Bafata, Gabu, Buba and Mansoa) participated in debates as a way of contributing to raising awareness in society about the consequences of FGM.



100 young people (26 young girls and 21 young boys from the Bafata region and 48 young girls and 5 young boys from the Quinara region) were trained by the Leadership Academy UBUNTU in Female Leadership.



This training provided women with the tools and knowledge necessary to excel in leadership positions in their communities or organisations. UNFPA is contributing to the promotion of young girls and their empowerment through training on leadership so that they can expand their voices and assert their rights.



100 security and defense forces (50 women and 50 men) were trained on the promotion of human rights, with focus on human rights promotion, with a particular emphasis on preventing and combating gender-based and child violence.



The training specifically addressed harmful practices like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. This allowed the integration of the gender and human rights perspective into the defense and security forces group and contributed for this specific group to increase knowledge on the need to protect women and girls against all types of violence including FGM.



15 health professionals and 15 migration and border agents

of Bafata and Gabu were trained on GBV/FGM and other harmful practices, existing legal mechanisms, and control, to prevent and respond to FGM cases, particularly border cases. This training will enhance Guinea-Bissau's ability to address FGM, particularly in border areas.




155 people participated in a

Intersectoral and intercommunity gathering on the promotion of human rights and cross-border actions to advocate on the elimination of FGM, GBV, Early and Forced Marriage, with participation of representatives of the national and regional authorities of Guinea-Bissau, The Gambia (Basse District) and Senegal (Kolda Province).



26 radio programs were produced and broadcasted to raise awareness and drive behavioral change on various topics including obstetric fistula, FGM, child and forced marriage, GBV, Human Rights, gender equality. These programs are used as a tool for social change. By providing information, raising awareness, and promoting dialogue, these radio programs have the potential to create lasting positive change for women and children in the communities.





**Empowering
young people
to attain their
full potential**

Social innovation in Guinea-Bissau with the organisation of the first youth summer camps under the theme: “Empowering Young People to Take a Leading Role in Their Development”



Four summer camps united over 1,000 youth from 8 regions to address critical challenges facing their generation.



Over 15 days, participants engaged with experts and peers to discuss conflict management, universal access to safe abortion, family planning, climate change, and the threats of terrorism and organised crime.



The camps also provided training on leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial management, equipping youth with the skills and knowledge to create a brighter future.

African Youth Day (AYD) celebration



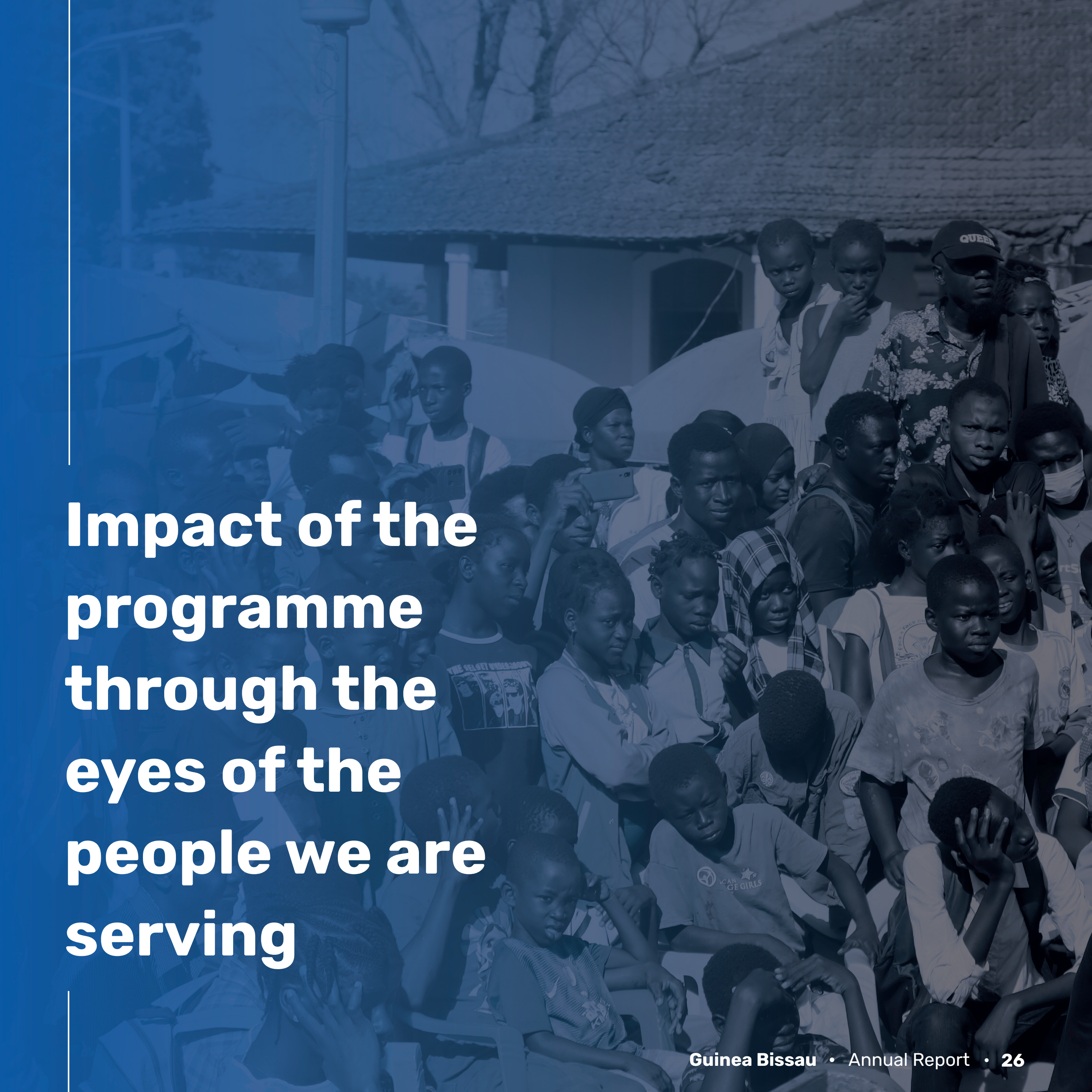
On November 1st, 2023, 100 youths from across Guinea-Bissau, including Bissau gathered under the auspices of UNFPA and the Government of Guinea-Bissau to commemorate the African Youth Day. The event celebrated the nation's youth while focusing on critical development issues.



Discussions centred on implementing the African Union (AU) Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth, specifically addressing the four key pillars of the roadmap.



The event also facilitated a dialogue between youth and experts to assess the current progress of the roadmap's implementation in Guinea-Bissau, through which participants collaboratively identified key actions needed to further propel youth development in the country.



**Impact of the
programme
through the
eyes of the
people we are
serving**

Women in Guinea-Bissau speak out against Female Genital Mutilation: *“I’m lucky to be alive”*

In Buruntuma, in Guinea-Bissau’s far eastern region of Gabu, Ms. Sano is leading her community’s efforts to abolish Female Genital Mutilation. Gabu has one of the highest rates in the country – some 96 per cent of the female population have been subjected to it – so Ms. Sano talks with neighbors and religious and traditional leaders to raise awareness of the dangers of the practice.



Although criminalized in Guinea-Bissau since 2018, it continues to be practised in many communities, mainly for cultural and religious reasons often rooted in the lower status of women and girls, such as the idea that their bodies need to be “fixed” to be marriageable.

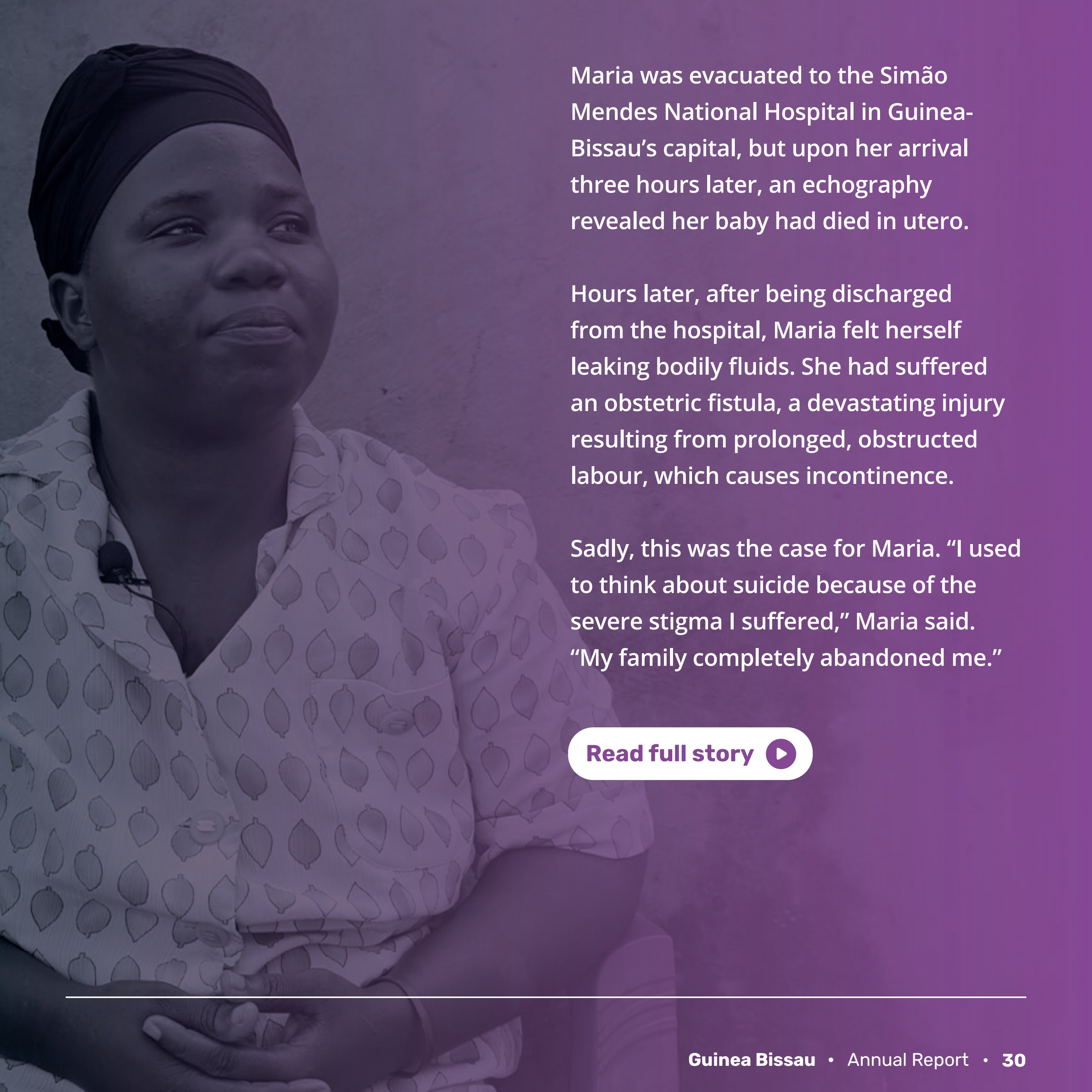
Her approach is not to reprimand. It is to listen. She hosts community dialogues supported by the UNFPA and UNICEF joint programme to eliminate Female Genital Mutilation, paying particular attention to religious and tribal elders, who are often key to winning over other members of the community.

[Read full story](#) 

“My life completely changed”: Treating bodies, minds and lives affected by obstetric fistula in Guinea-Bissau

Maria’s dream of expanding her family took a tragic turn in 2016. She was in eastern Guinea-Bissau, in Batafa region, when her labour pains began; but after more than 12 hours, she remained unable to deliver.





Maria was evacuated to the Simão Mendes National Hospital in Guinea-Bissau's capital, but upon her arrival three hours later, an echography revealed her baby had died in utero.

Hours later, after being discharged from the hospital, Maria felt herself leaking bodily fluids. She had suffered an obstetric fistula, a devastating injury resulting from prolonged, obstructed labour, which causes incontinence.

Sadly, this was the case for Maria. "I used to think about suicide because of the severe stigma I suffered," Maria said. "My family completely abandoned me."

[Read full story](#) 

A travelling theatre in Guinea-Bissau sparks conversations and changes minds about Gender-Based Violence

The travelling theatre is part of a recent nationwide campaign to raise awareness about the damage that forms of Gender-Based Violence can do to young girls' physical and mental health, and to their ability to fulfil their potential.

To help counter practices such as Female Genital Mutilation and child marriage, 25 actors from the National Ballet, the Nossa Patria Amada, performed three plays

at local markets. Known as Lumos, the markets bring people together from all sectors of society, and are a good forum for sparking conversations and spreading awareness about the need for social and behavioural change. Each play is between 30 and 45 minutes and incorporates a mix of theatre, dance and music. They are followed by an interactive session, during which audience members can engage in discussions with the actors.

The Ministry of Social Action, Family and Promotion of Women ran the initiative, in collaboration with UNFPA and partners. The performances ran from 25 November to 10 December 2023, in line with the 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. More than 500 people watched the plays each day, totalling some 7,000 throughout the caravan's journey.

[Read full story](#) 

[Watch the video](#) 



Harnessing Data for Development

Supporting successful census operations



The fourth General Population and Housing Census is the 1st fully digital census to be conducted in Guinea-Bissau. It is being implemented by the government, through the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Integration/National Institute of Statistics, with financial support from the World Bank, and technical assistance from UNFPA. The technical assistance provided by UNFPA aims to ensure that the census is carried out effectively, according to the international norms and standards of quality, and respond to the data needs of the country.



More specifically, in 2023, UNFPA contributed to the National Institute of Statistics' technical capacity strengthening through the provision of essential equipment to support the data collection, processing and storage (1 Server, 10 Computers, 50 geographic information systems licences and 120 Tablets), and the training of 10 technicians to develop the digital cartography. In addition, the national census questionnaires were successfully developed and endorsed during a collaborative workshop with stakeholders.

Ensuring Guinea Bissau's participation in high level processes on Population and Development

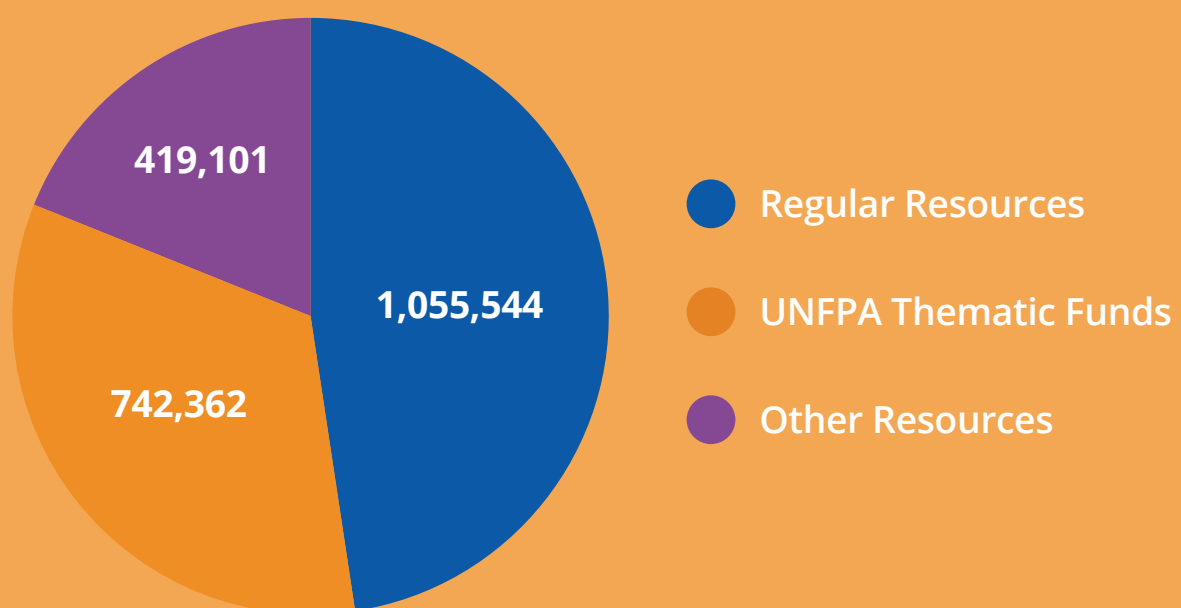


UNFPA supported strengthening the capacity of the General Directorate of the Plan for leadership and production of data on population dynamics in relation to the preparation of the country report on the 30th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD30), the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD), which contains data on the current state of fulfilment of the 88 Nairobi summit commitments and development indicators and the use of the Demographic Dividend.

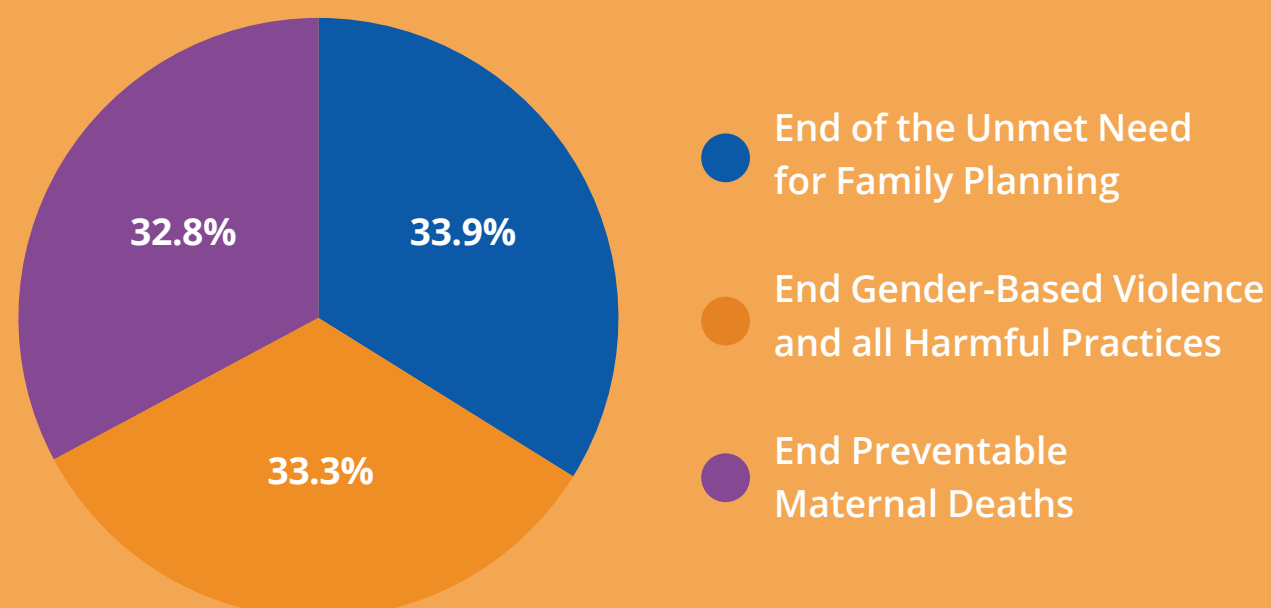


Resources for Impact

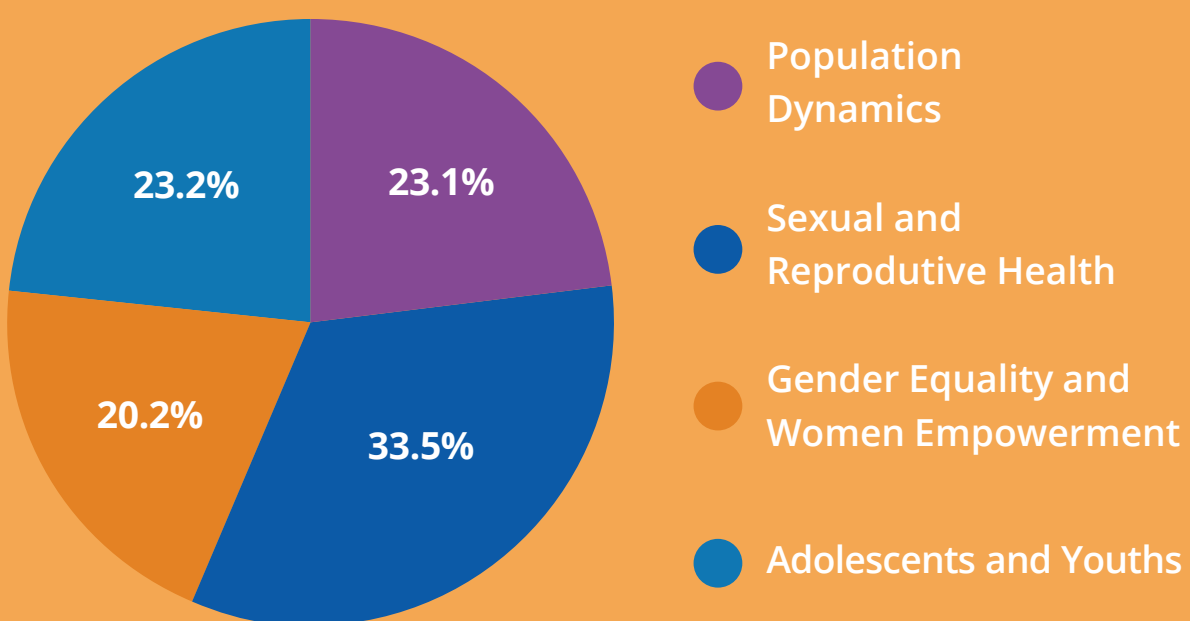
Resources available in 2023



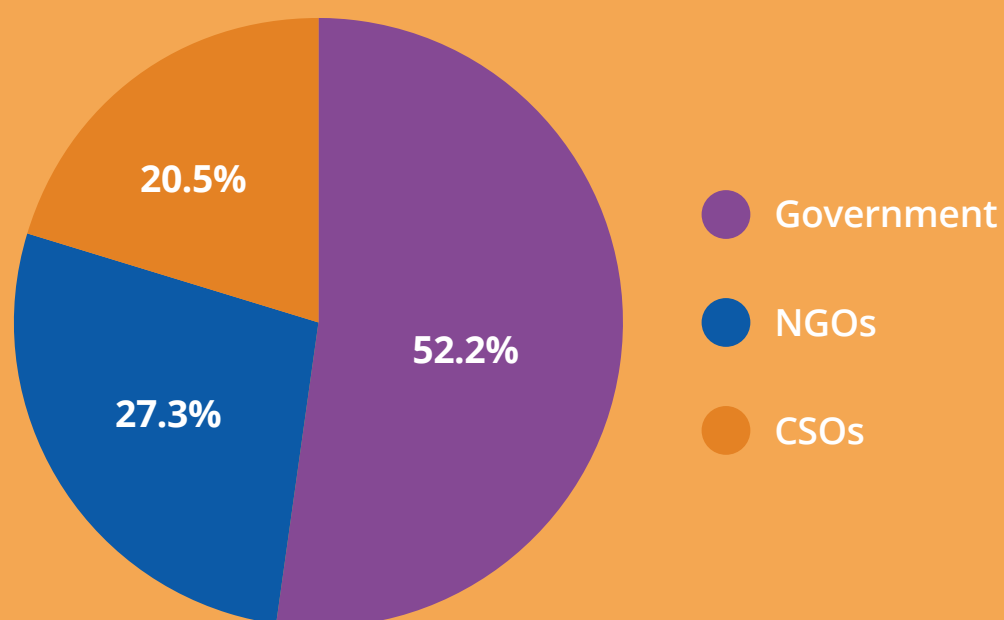
Distribution of investments in the 3 Transformative Results



Distribution of funds per Output

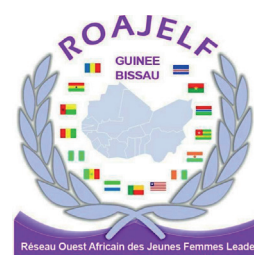


Distribution of funds per type of partner





Partners





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