

Republic of Guinea - Bissau

GROUP OF NGOs WORKING WITH CHILDREN

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**ALTERNATIVE REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION
ON THE RIGHTS ON THE CHILD IN GUINEA-BISSAU**

BISSAU

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1. Preamble

Guinea-Bissau is a country in West Africa, 36,125 square km, south of Senegal and north of the Republic of Guinea (Conakry), facing the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

The present population, according to 1991 census projections, is 1,200,000 with a growth rate of 2.2%.

The mortality rate is very high and the state of health infrastructures precarious.

Social indicators point to a country on the threshold of poverty.

Health and nutritional indicators are below the average for sub-Saharan Africa. In 1996, maternal mortality was around 7% per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate is 145 per thousand: live births: in urban areas 100-120 per thousand and in rural areas 150-175 per thousand. The principal causes of mortality are: malaria (responsible for 35% of deaths), followed by diarrhoeal diseases (15%) and acute respiratory infections (15%). While it is endemic, malaria accounts for 50% of medical consultations in all regions and age groups. It is the disease which bears the highest social costs, with heavy repercussions not only on mortality rates but also absenteeism and productivity.

Besides malaria, diarrhoeal and respiratory diseases, the diseases that affect the population most are complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, measles and tuberculosis.

Immunisation coverage has increased due to the Enlarged Programme of Immunisation, but much more needs to be done. According to data in 1994, 93% of under-twos were immunised against BCG, 45% against DPT3, 45% against polio and 46% against measles.

Access to medicine in quantity and quality is an important public health problem. The increase in the number of illegal vending outlets for pharmaceutical products from parallel circuits is a delicate problem. The weak coverage of the authorised pharmaceutical distribution network and the low and attractive prices offered by the parallel circuits make the problem even more complex.

There is 68% safe water coverage in rural areas. However, this coverage is inconsistent. The Bijagós archipelago has the lowest rural coverage.

The level of literacy is more or less 20% (projections). Adult illiteracy is 70%: males around 50% and females 83%. Before the war, overall primary school enrolment was 61%, school equipment remained insufficient and of variable quality. The rural population's access to education remained very low.

The document “National Strategy for the Reduction of Poverty” (“Estratégia Nacional Para a Redução da Pobreza”) (September 2000), in Points II.B-25 and 26, is an xray of the education sector and is quoted below because of its importance:

- In the initial years following national independence, the education system underwent an unprecedented expansion, but numbers began to drop soon afterwards. In the Nineties, thanks to an improved economic performance and Government intervention, as well as the private sector and NGOs, the school population was once more positive. Overall primary school enrolment went up from 42% in 1993 to 61% in 1998. However, this development in the school population masks high rates of exclusion of female children and youth, and serious regional imbalances. The overall school enrolment for girls during the same period went from 32% to 46%, while for boys it went up from 55% to 75%. Insufficient access to education is mainly the result of the low level of education and inadequate distribution of supply and, marginally, of weak demand by some groups of the rural population. In fact, 10% of rural schools only offer first grade and 23% only first and second grades.
- The approximately 20% repeaters and 18% school drop-out rate in 1998 attest to the internal inefficiency and low productivity of primary school education. In 1999, secondary school education supply was limited to 17 public and 10 private establishments, totalling some 26,000 pupils, 6% of the eligible age group, against an average of 18% in sub-Saharan Africa. There is hardly any vocational education. The numbers have stagnated in part due to weak diversity and relevance of the training offered, which has not kept up with trends in the labour market. There are four training centres presently in the whole country. There is hardly any pre-school education. There are only some 50 establishments in the main urban and semi-urban centres catering for 5,000 children, just above 1% of the respective age group. Adult illiteracy is 70%, while female illiteracy is 83%. There are three post-secondary school training centres offering degree courses in medicine, law and secondary school teacher training. All of them face serious financial and management problems and lack the conditions for sustainability. The quality of education is directly correlated to the qualification of the teachers, the relevance of the curricula in relation to the economic, social and cultural milieu, teaching manuals and materials, methodology and insertion of the school in the community.

Guinea-Bissau has 33 ethnic groups grupos according to the census (Recenseamento Geral da População e da Habitação, MCEP, 1979). The major groups include the Balanta (27%), Fula (23%), Mandinga (12%), Manjaco (11%) and Papel (10%).

However, the official language is Portuguese (spoken by 11%), inherited from a long colonial presence which ended after a hard-fought war of independence em 1974. Crioulo (spoken by 44%) is for all purposes the country's lingua franca.

Guinea-Bissau is an essentially agricultural country that since the Seventies has experienced effects characteristic of Sahelian countries.

The food shortage in 1980 was aggravated by growing financial difficulties linked to the constantly growing budgetary deficit and a permanent external payments imbalance.

In mid-1983, the National Bank of Guinea-Bissau used up its credit line totally.

The build-up of late external debt payments exceeded four years of exports. Imports were cut, officially commercialised agricultural products reached their lowest levels since the Fifties and development of the modern sector of the economy stagnated.

The GNP, which had gone down in real terms by 5% in 1983, was estimated at US\$ 160 per capita in 1984, placing Guinea-Bissau among the poorest countries on the planet. In 1991 it was calculated at US\$ 200 per capita and in 1998 this went down by 28%.

Food dependency is enormous, bearing in mind the archaic system of production and commercialisation due to a lack of distribution routes.

Although much less pronounced than in the countries of the region, the rural exodus is increasingly more significant (70% of the population still live in rural areas in worrying conditions of poverty).

The industrial tissue emerging after independence has disappeared or been privatised, leaving no visible results.

Despite its vast potential, fishing has contributed but \pm 6% GNP. Mining resources have not been exploited due to a lack of infrastructure and capital.

Most recent data points to a considerable increase in exports (particularly cashew nuts) but nonetheless imports are still three times more.

The two political and military crises of 7 June 1998 and 22 November 2000 have compounded these problems.

We are seeing therefore a steep decline in the social condition of the citizen both in urban and rural areas. The majority of the population of Guinea-Bissau today live on the edge of poverty and no prospects on the horizon.

Consequently, the difficult situation of the population, and in which Guinea-Bissau's children live, is worrying and rooted in its own economic context exacerbated by the political and military crises, migratory flows, new moral values, lifestyles and other external patterns of behaviour engendering deep social changes.

The principal causes of these changes are :

- a) bad governance the country has been subject to since independence;
- b) low buying power and shrinking budgets for social departments;
- c) a reduced labour force in the countryside;
- d) the introduction of consumer patterns that are incompatible with the income level of many families;
- e) destabilisation of the traditional family caused by the destruction of values governing behaviour and regulating social relations;
- f) the very situation of women, which is a determining factor in the life conditions of children;
- g) lack of relevance and insufficient education and training (including civil education);
- h) precarious conditions of medical assistance and medicines, and the inexistence of a policy of health prevention and education.

There have been various corrective attempts in Guinea-Bissau, ranging from privatisation of the economy as a factor of economic growth to the social and infrastructural action carried out in conjunction with UNICEF to reduce the negative impact of the Government's Structural Adjustment Programme (1987) and even the efforts to promote community-based development through NGOs in an attempt to enhance the human dimension in development activities.

We do not wish to be fatalistic, but we are critical and apprehensive with regard to the future of children.

Because, despite the fact that Guinea-Bissau has signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, having held "Provincial and National Summits on the Child" and participated in the World Summit for Children (1990), the reality is that the situation has not improved a lot since the whole thrust of economic and social activity is still solely directed at increasing income per capita, forgetting that children are the greatest element of all long-term development.

2. Introduction

Guinea-Bissau is a country which inherited from its national liberation struggle against Portuguese colonialism a strong political tradition of child protection translated in the famous phrase of Amilcar Cabral, founder of the Guinean nation, and whom we quote:

- *"Children are the flowers of our struggle and the main reason for our battle".*

Unfortunately, Guinea-Bissau has since independence undergone various political and military convulsions causing significant reverses in all areas of its economic, political, social and cultural life, reflecting negatively in the living conditions of children and

implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Resolution 6/90 of 18 April 1989).

When the “World Summit for Children” was held in 1990, the only national associative organisation working directly in the area of children in Guinea-Bissau was AMIC (Associação dos Amigos das Crianças – Association of the Friends of Children), an organisation for the defence and protection of children, especially the least privileged.

AMIC came into being as a result of Guinea-Bissau’s participation in the “International Conference on the Child” held in Moscow in 1979 (the International Year of the Child).

It was from the “International Year of the Child” that Guinean civil society became aware of the magnitude and implications of the “Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child” and the “Global Movement for Children”.

From 1984 to 1990 activities consisted of “Awareness and Information Campaigns on the Situation of the Child in Guinea-Bissau” and some specific or emergency support for orphaned or underprivileged children.

The components “Development, Promotion and Dissemination of the Rights of the Child” appeared with political and economic liberalisation, and the explosion of national NGOs in the most varied areas of political, social and economic life.

All the emerging NGOs, although not directly engaged in child-based activities, had as their main objective “Promoting Community-Based Development”, “Protecting the Environment” and “Promoting Human Rights”, which is the same thing as saying “Contributing to the Development of Communities and Protecting the Environment and Citizen”.

Theoretically, improving the living conditions of the community improves the living conditions of the family, which is the nucleus of the community, and therefore the child in the family will see its situation improved.

It is from the “World Summit for Children” held in 1990 that the whole of Guinean society (State and Civil Society) acquired a real awareness of the vulnerability of children and the need to implement actions in favour of their development and defence of their most vital and basic interests.

Parallel to this, the issue “Women” began to gain strength in all its facets in terms of political, social or economic participation and sharing.

These two movements ended up by fusing and merging in Guinea-Bissau since the woman is the first (if not only) person responsible for food, health, education and clothing of a child.

This is why we see the issue “Women and Children” being broached today by a sole State institution (Instituto da Mulher e da Criança – the Institute of Women and Children) and nearly all NGOs directly or indirectly include this dimension with particular emphasis in their programmes and activities.

The main strategic partners of the national NGOs in the area of children in Guinea-Bissau are the State, Radda Barnen (Save the Children Sweden), Plan International and UNICEF.

The NGOs have developed participative partnerships with the communities, where interests and responsibilities are shared in order to facilitate activities and actions and make them sustainable.

The main obstacle still lies in the fact that there is resistance and suspicion on the part of the “STATE” in collaborating and supporting, also in a participative and sustained manner, the activities and actions initiated by the NGOs.

Although there has been a certain evolution with regard to recognising the role and importance of the NGOs, much work still needs to be done with regard to “CONFIDENCE”.

Since the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by Guinea-Bissau on 20 August 1990, there have been various actions and contributions by different actors, particularly in civil society, for the protection, welfare and development of the child.

In September 1997, seven years after the ratification of the convention, the Government produced a document called “Report on the Applicability of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Guinea-Bissau”.

Owing to successive delays and the war that devastated the country from 7 June 1998 to 7 May 1999, this report was only sent to the Committee on the Rights of the Child after this period.

The Convention is the only international treaty on human rights which expressly gives the NGOs a monitoring role. To this end, the Committee on the Rights of the Child encourages NGOs to present reports, documentation and information contributing to giving a more precise idea of the application of the Convention in each country.

The present alternative report has been produced by the Guinean NGOs and Associations that have developed a range of activities aimed at improving the living conditions of children.

The objective is to specifically and as realistically as possible describe the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child since its ratification by Guinea-Bissau and complement the Government’s report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

3. General Measures of Implementation (art. 4, 42, e 44.6)

Since the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child only some specific measures have been taken to harmonise Guinean legislation with the Convention. The major part of the existing legislation dates back to the colonial period, which as is known, was discriminatory in terms of fundamental and civil rights for the indigenous populations.

Although our legislation allows recourse to international conventions ratified by the Guinean State, in practice its application is more often than not confused and conflicting, since there are no specialised judicial fora, legal diplomas or qualified personnel in this specific area (e.g. there is no juvenile court, no social workers to support and accompany minors with legal problems, there has been no change in Guinean legislation with a view to giving a “legal form” to the principles conveyed in the Convention).

To date there is no official translation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and therefore it has not been published in the Official Gazette.

Various Conventions signed by Guinea-Bissau (Forbidding the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Creating a TPI) and additional protocols on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Status of Children ‘During Armed Conflict, Trafficking, Prostitution and Child Pornography) have not yet been ratified. Only the convention on Anti-Personnel Mines has been ratified and published in the Official Gazette.

Apparently and even theoretically, our legislation protects the fundamental rights of the child enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but in practice we helplessly see the systematic violation of these same rights (particularly of girls) without justice done due to legal and practical incompatibilities (e.g. with traditional customs and practices) and the passivity of the authorities themselves who should react and take on child protection.

The sexual abuse and deviation of minors, domestic violence, abandonment, infanticide, practices harmful to the health of children, namely of girls, paternity, child labour, kidnapping and trafficking of minors, are practically taboo subjects in Guinean society and hard to get to the judicial forum because of the weakness of the pertinent institutions and organisations, and lack of preventative and reporting mechanisms.

The Government of Guinea-Bissau, in order to follow up on the World Summit for Children, created through a ministerial dispatch published in the Official Gazette B.O. no. 26, of 19 June 1990, a National Commission for the Child and its organs (Permanent Secretariat and Interministerial Technical Committee), tasked with implementing the decisions of the World Summit for the Child and submitting a National Action Plan to the Government as quickly as possible. The National Action Plan on Early Childhood was prepared and signed on November 1992 by the then President of Guinea-Bissau, General João Bernardo Vieira.

Unfortunately the law was not put into practice and the National Commission for Early Childhood practically ceased to exist after the 98/99 war. In order to fill the void, the Institute of Women and Children, which is still at an embryonic stage, was created.

The NGO activities to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been an important complement and have contributed to information, awareness and enlightenment of public opinion.

In this framework the NGOs have carried out the following:

- S Awareness and Dissemination of the Rights of the Child
- S Conferences and debates on the problems of the child
- S Conception, production and dissemination of posters on the 10 Fundamental Rights of the Child
- S Legal days of reflection on the contribution of NGOs to framing and applying rulings on the legal protection of children
- S Training field workers for disseminating the International Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- S Cartoon publications in Crioulo and Portuguese on the International Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- S Radio programmes to raise awareness and promote child rights
- S Creation of child theatre groups for social action
- S Building up a Dossier on Child Problems
- S Debates on juvenile delinquency (prostitution, drugs, alcohol) ;
- S Holding Child Parliaments at community, regional and national level.

However, harmonisation and the coordination of NGOs working in the field of child rights is weak, with isolated actions, which reduce the impact of the national civil movement for child rights.

4. Definition of the Child (art. 1)

As defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child in Guinea-Bissau is a human being under the age of 18.

This is the same as saying children constitute half the total population in Guinea-Bissau (in 1979, 43.9% for 0 – 15-year-olds - MCEP, Recenseamento Geral da População e da Habitação).

We can conclude that the population of Guinea-Bissau is relatively young (62.2% consisted of 0-24-year-olds in 1987).

Although military service is obligatory for those aged between 18 and 25, official recruitment of young men into the armed forces is rare.

However, particularly during the last war, minors were used in the military, namely on the battle front.

Setting aside the official definition of a child, we see that the concept of childhood varies in different ethnic groups and in fact poses contradictions with the Convention and National Legislation (e.g. forced marriages, female circumcision, traditionally after the “fanado” [circumcision] a child acquires the status of adulthood with all the respective rights and duties, which goes against the spirit of the Convention and National Legislation).

The Guinean child’s education, growth, responsibility, participation in the social and community life, as well as the role of the family and the community itself depend on the environment in which the child lives.

Thus, in a rural environment, a child represents certain values and feelings of solidarity, group culture, interpersonal exchanges and links with the whole community which disappear in an urban environment, where life is based on abstract, general knowledge, where the individual counts more than the group, where issues are merely technical, rational and hardly emotive.

Worsening poverty has contributed negatively to the behaviour of families, the community, individuals and even the authorities in relation to the child. There are increasingly more children abandoned or in the care of outsiders (meninos de criação), who are completely unprotected and at the mercy of chance.

5. General Principles (arts. 2, 3, 6, e 22)

NON-DISCRIMINATION (art. 2)

The present Constitution of Guinea-Bissau guarantees: “All citizens are equal in the eyes of the law, they enjoy the same rights and are subject to the same obligations without distinction of race, tribe, sex, social, intellectual or cultural level, religious belief or conviction.”

Despite the fact that women represent 52% of the Guinean population and their economic contribution is increasingly more significant, particularly in the rural world, where they participate actively alongside men in diverse primary sector activities, women’s interests still do not figure today in the most important decisions in the country’s political, social and cultural life.

For example, in the agricultural sector, women represent 49% of the active population and supply more than 55% of the sector's labour force.

They participate practically in a whole cycle of agricultural activities, namely in planting, harvesting, transporting, the sale of both cereals and market produce.

At the same time, women are involved in the transformation of agricultural products.

In the urban centres they dominate the informal sector and their participation is increasingly more significant in the formal sector.

Despite multiple campaigns and actions, women are still discriminated against in government and in decision-making.

The rural populations live in near total exclusion and do not have a democratically elected local government.

National economic, political and social development policies are adopted without finding out the interests and needs of the most underprivileged and vulnerable strata.

The peri-urban populations, namely in Bissau, suffer from basic chronic needs. There is no sign of medium and long-term measures to release them from this degrading situation.

Various types of discrimination (in health, education, work, the right of expression and to be heard, assistance and social security etc) still persist in relation to the child, above all girls and those with physical and mental disabilities.

BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD (art. 3)

One of the first steps taken by the new State when the colonialists withdrew was to abolish the discriminatory designations of legitimate and illegitimate children (art. 26 no 1 e no 2 of the Constitution and law no 4/76) and it is true that under the terms of article 32 of the Constitution, every citizen has the right to resort to the judicial organs, irrespective of his means.

Access to justice and defence of the interests of the child is guaranteed through the Attorney-General of the Republic.

But in reality it is rare for such cases to reach the courts and the outcome of the few that do get there lasts for months and years. Often other factors prevail over the best interests of the child, mainly due to corruption and a poor reading of the rights of minors.

In general what happens is that children are helpless when it comes to defending their best interests because society does not believe in the country's courts and therefore in the majority of cases they do not resort to this right.

Communities do not have mechanisms to protect and defend the best interests of the child.

Several cases have been denounced by ordinary people, NGOs, Associations and the media but impunity persists due to the passive and inoperative nature of the Guinean justice system (as in the case of the French national who in Mansoa, Oio Region, abused several children and despite being found guilty by a court ended up serving his sentence outside prison and finally left the country unpunished).

RIGHT TO LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT (art. 6)

Guinea-Bissau is a country where reality overrides the good intentions of both the State and Civil Society.

We see daily cases of infanticide, children abandoned and left to their own devices because of various taboos as well as negligence.

Despite legal dispositions guaranteeing the "Child's Right to Life and Development" the reality is that we are a very long way from doing so in practice.

Generalised poverty, hunger, the loss of authority and parents and the authorities giving up, the degrading state of health and education, and political and military instability have resulted into an environment unfavourable to the child's life and development.

RESPECT FOR THE VIEWS OF THE CHILD (art. 12)

In constitutional terms "every citizen has a right to freedom of expression and therefore the right to thought".

In practice this right is often repressed (as in the recent cases of politicians and journalists arrested or summoned by State Security Police)

In Guinea-Bissau the child is at the end of the social chain and for this reason is not heard or called on to give his/her opinion. Even when this does happen nobody respects that opinion.

Nevertheless some national NGOs have organised children's fora, namely the children's parliament, conferences and debates where children have played the lead role.

6. Civil Rights and Freedoms (arts 7, 8, 13-7 e 37a)

The Constitution guarantees the Civil Rights and Freedoms of all citizens and recognises the right to identity, civil capacity, citizenship, a name and reputation, image, expression, and to maintain personal relations in their private and family lives.

However, during the war and political conflict, these rights were purely and simply ignored.

There is a great lack of awareness of respect for the citizen's Civil Rights and Freedoms. To date the prevailing policy has been, to use the phrase, "I want, can and order".

We live in a state of law, but we live in fear. Insecurity is visible in our conversations, in our daily lives and even in our homes.

The Guinean child is traumatised, inarticulate, fearful and sometimes aggressive, the reflex of an existence which is unbalanced and in which s/he is cut off from her/his environment.

With poverty generalised, families have lost moral authority and the educational role of the past. Each individual grows up left to his own devices.

A large number of Guinean children, especially of single mothers and in rural areas, are not registered at birth. Only when it is time to go to school, aged six or seven (for those who have access to school), are they registered, and in many cases the fathers refuse to acknowledge paternity.

As there are no means of establishing paternity, a worrying number of children born after independence are children of unknown fathers. They only bear the name of the mother in the birth certificate (The space for the father's name has a stroke against it or is crossed out).

The result of the lack of birth registration is that there are many citizens who are deprived of their nationality and right to exercise their citizenship rights.

It is only now in 2001 that the State, with the support of UNICEF, has organised a large child registration campaign, with the NGOs making a substantial contribution in mobilising the population.

There was an explosion of Youth and Child Associations after the 7 June 1998 war. There are currently more than 200 in the whole country. They have different aims, but above all they have been a way of expressing the feelings and concerns of children, and demanding to be heard, since it is they who are most affected by the acute crisis affecting the country.

As mentioned, obligatory or forced marriage, circumcision of girls are still current practices against civil rights and freedoms of children. The State and Civil Society are still impotent in the face of these traditional practices.

7. Family Environment and Alternative Care (arts. 5, 18.1, 18.2, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20, 21, 29 , 25, 27.4 e 39)

The Constitution of Guinea-Bissau (art. 26) considers the family as the base of society. The family is responsible for the psychological balance and development of the child's personality.

Therefore, the family is considered the natural environment for the child who should not be separated from it except in special circumstances foreseen in the law.

At the present time, family insecurity (most parents do not earn enough to support the household), the loss of paternal authority, among other problems, have made the family environment concerning and inadequate for the balanced growth of the child.

After the closure of the boarding schools transferred from the national liberation struggle, only religious organisations have offered alternative care for children who have been orphaned, whose parents have no means to support them or abandoned children.

Presently, under the protection of the State, but because of the efforts of AMIC (Associação dos Amigos das Crianças), an "S.O.S. Village" of the Kinderdorf International has been set up and takes children into residential care, but only when the children are in need and in especially difficult circumstances, which is the case of hundreds.

In peri-urban Bissau, the majority of families live in degrading and squalid conditions. In most cases, 15 to 20 people live in one to two-bedroom houses, which favours promiscuity, sexual abuse, various contaminations and domestic violence.

8. Basic Health and Welfare (arts. 6.2, 18.3, 23, 24, 26, 27.1 a 27.3)

Health indicators in Guinea-Bissau remain alarming:

• Infant mortality rate	=	145/1000
• Maternal mortality rate	=	914/100,000 live births
• Fertility rate	=	5.4
• Attended births	=	42%

Malaria (responsible for 50% of medical consultations), diarrhoeal, acute respiratory and infectious-contagious diseases are responsible for most hospitalised cases and deaths among adults and children.

On a par with the high infant mortality rate, the worsening nutritional state of children is evident in low birth weight and in the first and second years of life. The birth weight of about ¼ of children born is under 2,500 grams and at least 16% of under-five children suffer from malnutrition, according to studies in the regions (Ministry of Health) and statistics from maternities.

The country's health network is in a precarious state and in most cases degraded with a lack of qualified staff and poor service.

The quality of maternity and child healthcare is hardly encouraging: reports in 1996 indicate a mortality rate of 914/100,000 live births in women of childbearing age, 540/100,000 in newborn babies who survive in the first six weeks after birth and those who survive in the four months after birth.

The rate of deliveries assisted by trained health staff is weak. In 1994, nationally, only 42% of women making a first visit underwent an assisted delivery. Regionally the rate varies from 86% in Bissau to 25% in Quinara. These rates reflect a resistance to attending antenatal services because of the population's lack of confidence in these services.

The low level of education is a factor negatively influencing the reproductive health of women. This limits their access to written information and stimulates the persistence of practices harmful to women's health, such as circumcision, beliefs and taboos linked to pregnancy, childbirth and breast feeding.

To the education factor one must add the weak buying power of women, which reduces demand for health services, therefore resulting in high mortality rates.

64% of the population does not have access to safe water, which makes the survival prospects of children in Guinea-Bissau alarming.

Pollution and microbial levels of contamination in water are harmful to health. 80% of children are affected in this way.

A high rate of gastrointestinal infections also affects a large part of the population, without forgetting typhoid, paratyphoid and sudden surges of meningitis, conjunctivitis and cholera. The last cholera epidemic lasted for nearly one year. It appears to have become endemic in the country.

There is no special assistance for children with disabilities or with problems. They are treated in the same establishments as other children.

Social security only exists for State employees and those joining the Social Security scheme.

Those who do not work do not enjoy any rights. Therefore the children of poor families do not have any possibility of using State social services.

The NGOs have contributed to this area in both urban and rural areas with:

- S emergency aid in cases of natural disasters and war, namely with medical assistance, distribution of medicines, treatment of victims, distribution of food, clothing and domestic items;
- S building sanitation infrastructure (Basic Health Centres, Latrines, Mother and Child Care Centres);
- S basic sanitation ;
- S campaign Against Practices Harmful to the health of women and children, particularly with regard to female genital mutilation through female circumcision (fanado). The actions focus above all on information campaigns and training on the subject and organisation of an alternative “fanado” not involving mutilation;
- S physical and mental rehabilitation of disabled and war victims through a research and support network, production of orthopaedic appliances for the most needy, mine awareness, consultations and physiotherapy, sport for the disabled, setting up Parents’ Associations and Friends of the Disabled, training etc;
- S community fruit and vegetable market gardens and school orchards;
- S food supplied by community child care and alternative primary schools ;
- S family planning and prevention of unwanted and early pregnancies etc reproductive health ;
- S mental health ;
- S AIDS awareness/information on sexually transmitted diseases and prevention;
- S Distribution of posters on cholera.

There are no programmes or planned and specific actions in the area of nutrition. Normally this is integrated as a component of health, education and agriculture.

9. Education, Leisure and Cultural Activities (arts. 28, 29 e 31)

Coverage is very weak and excludes a large number of children. During the 1994/95 school year, one in three pupils, aged between 7 and 10, making up a total of approximately 17,655, did not have access to school. Despite the efforts of the Government and its development partners, the education system is still very fragile and school enrolment went down from 56% in 1981 to 47% in 1995.

The enrolment rate is 69% for boys against 38% for girls. On the other hand, female enrolment declines the more advanced the level of education. So, in secondary schools girls represent only one-third of all those attending.

These low rates can be explained by the fact that school infrastructure for primary school education has not kept up with the growth rate of the school population, estimated at

2.8%, and which is greater than demographic growth, which stands at 2.2%. It is not only a problem of access since the quality of education is equally in question.

The poor quality of teaching is due to a series of factors ranging from the shortage of teaching material, the official language of instruction, the high level of repeaters and school drop-out, poorly qualified teachers and inadequate buildings.

Productivity in the system is very low with regard to the number of trained operational staff. That is to say, school does not open up prospects for effective participation by those attending school in active life. On the contrary, a negative idea on schooling is developing.

The drop-out rate is very high, reaching 14% in Bissau and 57% in Gabu Region in 1994/5. The situation has worsened in recent years.

The rate of illiteracy went down from 74.5% in 1979 to 71% in 1991, or, 50% for men and 76% for women. In 1995 it went up to 73.5%, or, 59% for men against 85% for women.

The precarious living conditions of teachers as well as low qualifications are factors intimately linked to the poor quality of teaching. Salaries are very low and virtually never paid on time. Even when they work centrally, teachers lack information, materials and face communication problems.

There are no places for leisure and cultural activities, forcing most children to spend their time in the street playing football or wandering around looking for adventure, exposing them to various dangers and vices, such as car accidents, adult violence, petty burglary, alcohol, drugs and anti-social behaviour.

NGO contribution in this area has been:

- S Alternative Basic Education in the urban and rural areas, including building and improving non-formal school infrastructures, teacher training, improving and producing teaching manuals, inclusion and follow-up of beneficiaries.
- S Community day care centres and creches in rural and urban areas;
- S Although little has been done in this area, some vocational training has been carried out with a specific target group of working children, which will be broached later, and the vocational training by priests (in Bula, CIFAP and the Youth Craft Centre)
- S Promoting literacy/school enrolment of girls in particular ;
- S Various religious NGO schools;
- S Courses on Child Primary Care;
- S Course on Organisation and Management of Child Centres;
- S Updating statistics on pre-school education;

- S Producing a Base Document and holding the 4th Meeting on Early Childhood Education;
- S Promoting Inclusive Education (for children with disabilities)

Private and non-formal education has been growing in importance in Guinea-Bissau as the state schools face acute and insoluble crises in the short and medium term: permanent teachers' strikes, non-payment of teachers' salaries and subsidies etc. Alternative schools today face the problems of overcrowding and precarious teaching conditions since the infrastructure available is generally small and modest.

10. Specific Protection Measures (Arts. 22, 38, 39, 40, 37.b, c, d, 32 to 36)

In terms of legislation, little exists other than the international treaties to which Guinea-Bissau is party. In any case during the 98/99 war neither of the belligerents showed any concern with regard to respecting these rights.

Relative to child labour, in the main, legislation reflects internationally accepted concepts and patterns. Legal dispositions protecting minors from labour feature in articles 146 to 154 of the General Labour Law, from which the following fundamental lines have been extracted:

- (The employment of minors under the age of 14 and those of that age or exceeding it, those not having attended compulsory school is forbidden (art. 146 and 147 L. 3/86).

This ban is consistent with the rules governing labour law competence.

Labour law competence only applies when two conditions are met: age equal to or exceeding the age of 14 and minimum school qualifications (art. 146 and 147 of L.3/86).

- (The employment of minors in certain types of work, namely heavy work, work in unhealthy or dangerous conditions, work underground (art. 148 L.3/86) is forbidden.

For this kind of work the minimum age established in art 146 is not enough. It is raised to 18 years, or in other words beyond the age of minority.

- (Night work is forbidden (art. 152). However, exceptionally, night work is authorised for minors above 16 years when the tasks to be carried out are not prejudicial to their physical and psychological development, and are proved to be indispensable to their vocational training (art. 152).
- (Minors are dispensed from overtime except when it is essential in cases of force majeure or the imminence of substantial damage to the company (art. 153).

- (Employers are duty-bound to offer minors in their service adequate conditions of work for their age and training, and vocational training (art. 150).
- (Minors should be offered work conditions adequate to their age so that their physical and psychological development takes place in the best way (art. 151).

A minimum age is required for access to the labour market, minors are banned from certain kinds of work, or work carried out under conditions susceptible to or exposing them to physical or psychological damage.

On the other hand, the law seeks to assure a minimum level of education for young people entering the labour market.

But if we infer from this that there are legal guarantees against the exploitation of child labour and possible abuses by employers, it remains to be seen if they are efficient in practice.

Child labour is a relatively unexplored area of research and there are no sociological studies or statistical indicators on the subject.

It is sometimes difficult to assess the legal system in order to judge the potential efficiency of its norms.

The increasing presence of children and young people in the labour market can be noted.

The worsening living conditions of many families, the exodus of youth from the countryside to the capital, the ageing of the active labour force in rural areas, are some factors that have impelled the growth of child labour in agriculture.

In urban centres, children do domestic work or work in informal commerce.

With regard to its regime of sanctions, the law provides for fines against employers violating the norms protecting minors and some monitoring mechanisms.

These mechanisms are translated into obliging employers to register the number, name and age of minors in their service.

However, the fines applicable to employers are presently insignificant. Furthermore, it is highly improbable that somebody will plead that a contract is invalid or even that a due inspection will be carried out.

One of the possible legal solutions would be to criminalise child labour when it does not meet the conditions imposed by the law and poses serious risks to the health of the child.

But what certainly would be much more efficient and would not prejudice an updating of fines, is serious and rigorous monitoring by the authorities concerned.

However, what mechanisms should be adopted to protect those children working in the informal sector or in industry or in households?

The NGOs have made an important contribution in the area of protecting working children with numerous activities and actions as follows:

- S conference on Working Children (1993) ;
- S Working Children's Project consisting of: Identifying some groups of working children (shoe shine boys, car washers, street vendors, domestic staff, garbage collectors and recyclers, tyre repairers etc),
- S apprenticeships ;
- S creating the Association of Working Children,
- S promoting school enrolment/literacy,
- S awareness and field work
- S health checks and medical assistance.

The results in this area did not meet anticipated targets, leading to reduced funding and the withdrawal of some partners.

11. Conclusions, Prospects and Recommendations

It is difficult to measure the results and impact of the NGO contribution in the area of children for the following reasons:

- S Programmes and actions depend on donor contributions,
- S the national NGOs suffer from institutional weakness due to the incapacity to mobilise internal resources for self-funding,
- S the national NGOs work voluntarily and are dependent on the availability and dynamism of the leader(s),
- S in most cases, objectives and results are confused because of a lack of clarity and conceptual principles,
- S weak State involvement and support.

However and despite some constraints, NGO activities have had an impact above all on public opinion and the beneficiaries.

Support for the child in Guinea-Bissau is still very much in the domain of theory and the spiritual and sociological desire of those committed to these tasks.

The activities which have had most impact were:

In health: “Construction of Sanitary Infrastructures”, “Campaign against Harmful Practices and Health of Women and Children”, “Physical and Mental Rehabilitation of Children with Disabilities and War Victims”.

In Education/Training: Without any doubt this is the area in which NGOs have performed most efficiently and in a planned manner. All the activities in this area clearly show that they are well established with beneficiaries and are durable.

The dynamic generated by the beneficiaries in relation to the NGOs and vice versa has created a basis of confidence and problem-solving that has endured despite the absence of funding.

The Alternative Basic Education and Community Child Care projects are success stories that deserve a study for future use and dissemination of the experiences from which many underprivileged children have benefitted.

In the field of Working Children: There is an impasse in this area and a danger that all the work in the years preceding the 1998/99 war may be lost. A new dynamic is needed and if necessary a new approach to the problem.

In the field of Promoting and Disseminating Child Rights: NGOs also showed themselves to be leaders in the process and in “Promoting and Disseminating Child Rights”. The impact of the actions has been great on the Government itself and public opinion, which may have contributed the emergence of a large number of Youth Associations.

We may conclude that in order to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child it is not enough to only legislate, review penal codes and create state super-structures and others, but to act in an objective, concerted and planned manner.

The State and the NGOs must mutually recognise their roles and limits and act to complement each other.

The involvement of the beneficiaries, child, family and community is the key factor of success or failure of all the measures and actions to protect and develop the child.

Guinea-Bissau is one of the countries with the lowest human development indices. (In 1997 the Global Report indicated 0.291 and the National Report 0.273). In these conditions the situation of the child is alarming, which is why practical mechanisms of prevention, protection and reporting in favour of the child are urgent.

The existence of more than a dozen NGOs (including Community Associations tied in with them) and hundreds of Youth Organizations acting in this sphere are more than

evident proof of a major awareness and mobilisation of civil society to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Having explained the vision of the NGOs on implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we now present some recommendations to improve their contribution in this sphere:

- a) That the NGOs and Associations working in the field of children after the 2001 Children's Summit work out and present an "Alternative Action Plan for Children",
- b) That the experiences of "Alternative Basic Education" and "Community Child Care" should be expanded to other NGOs and Associations in a studied manner to allow rapid national coverage of these alternatives to formal education, which has ceased to meet the expectations of parents and pupils;
- c) That in the area of physical and mental rehabilitation and the campaign against practices harmful to the health of women and children, specialised NGOs should be given priority while other NGOs support and refer cases needing specialist intervention. Likewise, assistance is sought for these NGOs which by their nature and moral value merit the special attention of Guinean civil society;
- d) That the Working Children's Project should be extended to other national partners and actors;
- e) That efforts are made to promote and disseminate child rights ;
- f) That Organisations are gradually encouraged to specialise in specific areas of early childhood.
- g) That a "children's" network be set up preferably within the "NGO Platform, PLACON-GB".
- h) That a new law on NGOs should be redefined, formulated and adopted ;
- i) That synergies between the NGOs working in the area of children should be implemented above all in thematic areas ;
- j) That dialogue and permanent reconciliation between the NGOs and Government should be stimulated and favoured (e.g. the creation of a reconciliation forum).

The State is recommended to :

- a) Adopt the official Portuguese translation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as soon as possible;
- b) Publish the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Official Gazette under the terms of its ratification ;
- c) Adopt an active role in fighting practices harmful to the health of children and women, and declare female circumcision, early and forced marriages of girls as being contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, human freedom and life, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Guinean legislation and civil rights, and that it promote legal ways of discouraging these practices ;
- d) Review and harmonise Guinean legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other conventions and international protocols on human rights ratified by the Guinean State ;

- e) Set up a court for minors and special detention and penal institutions for delinquent minors ;
- f) Promote through school and child parliaments the views of children to promote improvements in their living conditions and the defence of their most vital interests ;
- g) Reinforce the institutional capacity and intervention of the Institute of Women and Children with a view to better defending the lives and development of children ;
- h) Permanently promote the “civil register” of children and citizens, and decentralise the process if possible with the involvement of NGOs and Associations of Local Communities;
- i) Create structures or institutions specialised in social support and hosting of children with mental disabilities, orphans deprived of a family environment, abandoned or on their own ;
- j) Promote permanent campaigns to eliminate malaria and prevent other endemic diseases and AIDS ;
- k) The State must put an end to the construction of official schools using makeshift material (bamboo, branches, palm fronds) and encourage communities to build and manage schools themselves ;
- l) The State of Guinea-Bissau must support and promote the creation of leisure facilities, recreational activities to occupy the free time of children and youth ;
- m) The State must adopt special measures to protect children, victims of violence, sexual abuse, forced labour and exploitation, trafficking, the use of drugs and narcotics.

To complete this report we shall give voice to about 150 children meeting in Bissau (8 to 9 December 2000) in a “Community Children’s Parliament” under the auspices of AMIC (Associação dos Amigos das Crianças).

To map out the concerns of children with regard to the present problems most affecting them, we transcribe in full the recommendations of the parliament which met under the slogan “Listening to Children to Decide Better”:

IN RELATION TO THE FAMILY

- S Parents should assume greater responsibility in educating their children;
- S Put into practice laws banning early marriages;
- S Parents should have an adequate programme of children’s activities bearing in mind their overall development;
- S The Government should increase salaries to match the cost of living ;
- S Severe sentences for infanticide ;
- S Harsher sentences for rape of minors ;
- S Strengthen the awareness campaign on child rights aimed at parents;
- S Television should broadcast images bearing in mind the harmonious development of the child.

IN RELATION TO THE CHILD IN SCHOOL

- S Build more schools, particularly in the interior of the country ;
- S Review teaching programmes in the country;
- S Offer training and refresher courses for teachers;
- S Put into practice equality of opportunities for both sexes in education;
- S Timely payment of teachers' salaries and subsidies;
- S Setting up libraries and places for child literature.

IN RELATION TO THE WORKING CHILD

- S Set up vocational and craft training posts nationally;
- S Adopt severe punitive measures against exploitation of child labour;
- S Consider health, education and security in relation to working children.

IN RELATION TO THE STREET CHILD

- S Set up centres to rehabilitate and reorient minors ;
- S Set up a court specifically to deal with issues relating to minors;
- S Set up and refurbish boarding schools and homes to protect children in specially difficult circumstances;
- S Set up recreational sites specifically for children;
- S (children's parks and fields for various sports)

12. List of NGOs co-producing the Alternative Report

1. ALANSAR, Islamic NGO

Address of headquarters or office

Bairro d' Ajuda 1ª Fase (Frente a Rádio Pindjiguiti) – Bissau

Postal Address

- 1084 – Bissau

Telephone(s)

- 21 30 56 / 20 36 42

Fax

- 20 36 42

Name and Title of Contact

- Prof Malam Djassi, Secretary General

Organisation's Objectives

- To contribute to the socio-economic betterment of the Islamic community in Guinea-Bissau

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Promoting Informal Education (Koranic School - MADRASSA) and supporting the rural populations in the areas of agriculture and basic health
- ***Activities in the field of children***
- Community Fruticulture and Horticulture
- Against Practices Harmful to Health of Women and Children
- Training
- Support to Orphans
- Infrastructure
- Water

2. ALTERNAG (Associação Guineense de Estudos e Alternativas)

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Estrada da Granja - Bissau

Postal Address

- Nº 343 - Bissau

Telephone(s)

- 20 43 16 / 20 43 16

Fax

- 20 43 16

E-mail

+ alternag@hotmail.com,

Name and Title of Contact

- David Francisco Vera Cruz, Executive Secretary

Organisation's Objectives

- Contributing to creating the necessary conditions for endogenous development through the promotion of informed and aware public opinion on development and responsible citizenship.

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Studies on the problem of national development
- Implementation of appropriate programmes and promotion of activities

Child Rights Activities

- Alternative Primary School Education (Rural Community Schools) and Support to Private Schools in outlying areas of urban areas
- Protection and Development of Young Children in Exceptional Difficulties
- Working Children

3. AMIC (Associação dos Amigos das Crianças)

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Rua Vitorino Costa nº 46 – Bissau

Postal Address

43 – Bissau

+ amic@hotmail.com

Name and Title of Contact

- Laudolino Carlos Medina, Secretário Executivo a.i.

Organisation's Objectives

- Defending the rights of children and contributing to their social protection and development particularly those in especially difficult circumstances

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Media (disseminating the Convention on the Rights of the Child),
- Awareness and social mobilisation in favour of children
- Health (information on health, hygiene and basic sanitation)
- Education (nurseries)
- Child Rights (reporting violations, preventative positions, applying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and harmonising it with the law in force)
- Promoting studies and debates on the problems of the Guinean child
- Publications
- Djemberén Collection (issues 1,2 and 3) cartoons in Crioulo and in Portuguese (child rights)
- Survey/Study on the situation of children in Missirá, Bandim 1, Santa Luzia and Belém suburbs (Ano 2000)

Child Rights Activities

- Health/Nutrition, Education, employment/working children, professional training, young girls, infrastructure, social and recreative activities, theatre groups, economic activities, civic education campaigns and promotion and dissemination of child rights.

4. CNJ - Conselho Nacional da Juventude

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Next to the Instituto do Cinema– Bissau

Name of Contacto

- Policiano Monteiro Silva Gomes

Organisation's Objectives

- Promoting and defending the rights and interests of Guinean youth organisations belonging to it, promoting their harmonious social, cultural and professional integration in society.

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Developing activities to mobilise various recourses for actions to promote young people and their associative activities.

Child Rights Activities

- Street children
- Theatre, dance and music groups

5. Fórum Nacional da Juventude e População

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Praça "Titina Silá" - Instituto do Cinema Bissau

Telephone(s)

- 20 19 36

E-mail

+sedjassi@hotmail.com,

Name and Title of Contact

- Seco Djassi, Secretary General

Organisation's Objectives

- Promotion of quality reproductive health and involvement of youth in the conception and elaboration of reproductive health programmes

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Health,
- Education,
- Gender

Persons interviewed directly

Adolfo Martins Leal, Vice President

Child Rights Activities

- Health/contribution to reducing the rate of mother-child mortality
- Young girls and women (saving women's lives)

6. REJACA - Rede dos Jornalistas Amigos da Criança e dp Ambiente

Address of Headquarters or Office

- A/C Rádda Barnen - Bissau

Postal Address

- Nº 882 - Bissau

Telephone(s)

- 20 14 42

Fax

- 20 38 71

E-mail

«E-Mail.bi@sol.gtelecom.gn»

Name and Title of Contact

- Domingos Meta Camará, Coordinator

Organisation's Objectives

- Supporting and disseminating the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Environment and the situation of women

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Dissemination, awareness and publication

Publicações

- Sexual exploitation of women
- Child prostitution and drug use
- Working children
- Children and health
- Children and schools

Child Rights Activities

- Publications

7. **REIE - Rede de Jovens Educadores**

Address of Headquarters or Office

- A/C Rádda Barnen - Bissau

Postal Address

- 882 - Bissau

Telephone(s)

- 20 14 43

Fax

- 20 38 71

E-mail

[<aubra-sa@hotmail.com>](mailto:aubra-sa@hotmail.com)

Name and Title of Contact

- Augusto Braima de Sá, Coordinator

Organisation's Objectives

- Promoting and enhancing education initiatives in favour of children and young people in exceptionally difficult circumstances

Publicações

- Study on Watsan in Bandim I e II

Child Rights Activities

- Health/Nutrition,
- Education,
- Employment/working children,
- Training,
- Young girls
- Social and recreational activities
- Theatre groups, sports
- Promotion and dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Street children
- Children in exceptionally difficult circumstances
- Community development

7. **RENAJE (Rede Nacional das Associações Juvenis)**

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Complexo Escolar 14 de Novembro, Bairro de Ajuda 2ª fase) - Bissau

Postal Address

- Nº 945 - Bissau

E-mail

[<rederenaje@hotmail.com>](mailto:rederenaje@hotmail.com)

Name and Title of Contact

- Nelson Constantino Lopes, Presidente

Organisation's Objectives

- Promoting and developing social, cultural and economic of youth and children to allow thier social reinsertion in the community

- Support in education, training and employment
- Encouraging cultural integration
- Stimulating and spreading culture

Child Rights Activities

- Youth and children in exceptionally difficult circumstances and protection of the underprivileged

8. SINIM MIRA NASSEQUÉ (We think of tomorrow – in Mandinga language)

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Estrada da Granja - Bissau

Postal Address

- Nº 1134 Bissau

Telephone(s)

- 20 46 66

Name and Title of Contact

- Maria Augusta Baldé, Presidente

Organisation's Objectives

- Campaigning against harmful practices affecting women and children
- Defending child rights

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Campaigning against the negative consequences of female genital mutilation, or female circumcision
- Protecting the health of women and children
- Promoting the organisation's participation in international forums in its area of intervention

Child Rights Activities

- Working with "fanatecas" [circumcision practitioners] to raise awareness and adapt their roles
- Census and aid to war victims
- School enrolment
- Juvenile delinquency
- Alternative female circumcision camp "FANADO MODELO".

9. ANDES - Associação Nacional Para o Desenvolvimento Sanitário

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Bairro de Cuntum - Bissau

Name and Title of Contact

- José Augusto Lopes, Administrador

Organisation's Objectives

- Health development support

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Education, teaching
- Health, social solidarity and research

Child Rights Activities

- Support for people with disabilities
- Production of orthopedic equipment (support for the needy)
- Mine awareness
- Physiotherapy consultations and physiotherapy
- Sport for the disabled
- Film on "Children with Disabilities"

10. ANAPRODEM - Associação Nacional Para a Promoção de Deficientes Mentais

Address of Headquarters or Office

- Bissau

Organisation's Objectives

- Mental disability

Activities (in statutory terms)

- Support for children with mental disabilities and their families

Nome da Pessoa Contacto

- José Augusto Lopes

Child Rights Activities

- Association of parents and friends of the disabled
- Victims of war
- Distribution of clothing in hospitals
- Horticultural training
- Training in cooking, tailoring, carpentry, building
- Training of field workers and mothers
- Literacy classes for the mothers of children with disabilities
- Distribution of snacks on the International Day of the Child

13. List of Documents Consulted

- Guide Pour Les Organisations Non Gouvernementales Établissant Des Rapport Des Destinés Au Comité Des Droits De L'Enfant – Edition révisée (1998) – Groupe des ONG pour la Convention Relative aux Droits de l'Enfant.
- Relatório do Governo Sobre a Aplicabilidade da Convenção dos Direitos da Criança na Guiné-Bissau - Setembro de 1997.
- Relatório Sobre o Estado da Infância na Guiné-Bissau – Actividades das ONGs no Domínio da Infância – Dezembro de 2000.
- NGO Alternative Report to Gambia Government's Initial Report On The Implementation Of The Convention On The Right Of The Child – January 2001.
- Rapport Alternative Du Benin Sur La Mise En Oeuvre De La Convention Relative Aux Droits de L'Enfant - Dezembro de 2000.
- Guiné-Bissau a Protecção Jurídica da Criança No Direito Positivo – LGDH\RB.
- Guiné-Bissau : Relatório Nacional Do Seguimento da Cimeira Mundial da Infância – Dezembro 2000.Plano Nacional De Acção Para a Infância (resumo) – Novembro de 1992.
- Relatório Nacional de Desenvolvimento Humano – 1997.
- Inquérito\Estudo Sobre Os Direitos Das Crianças Nos Bairros de Missirá, Bandim 1, Santa Luzia e Belém em Bissau – Março de 2000.
- Note Sur la Situation Socio-Economique en Guinée-Bissau – PNUD - Setembro de 1999.

Bissau, 12 de Julho de 2001.

O Grupo das ONGs Para a Infância