



In partnership with



Local Conflict Bulletin

Conflict dynamics in Guinea-Bissau

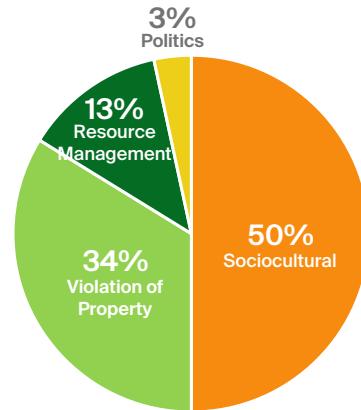


This bulletin displays conflict occurrence data, collected monthly by a network of local mediators, the Regional Spaces for Dialogue (RSD, ERD in Portuguese), present in all administrative sectors of the country (except Caravela and Uno). The data analysis presented here was prepared by the Voz di Paz team and its partner Interpeace, with contributions from the OHCHR and validation by relevant partners.

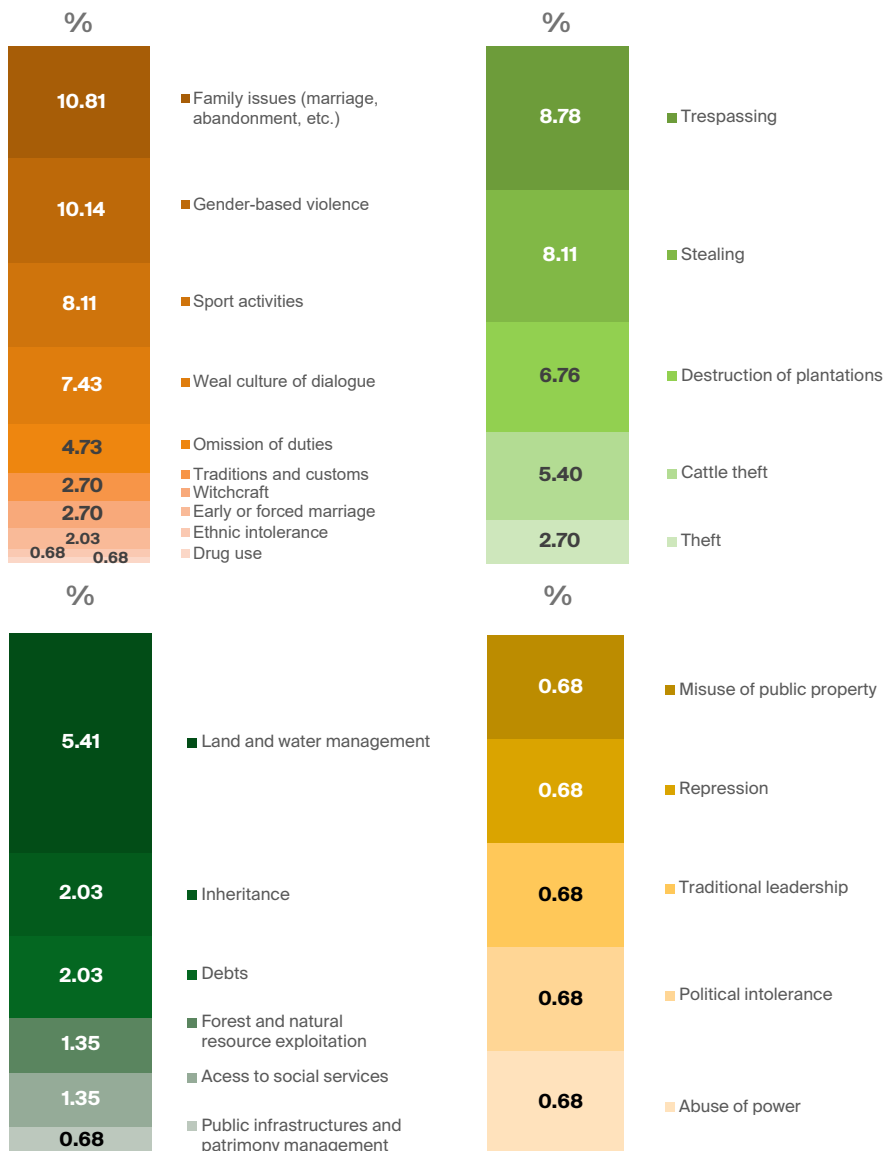
Conflict themes and subthemes

To better synthesize information on conflicts reported at the national level, 4 main conflict themes were established, each divided into several subthemes. Recognizing that conflicts are complex and often arise from multiple causes, data collection allows the identification of up to 2 subthemes with which a conflict is related, highlighting which of them was the main motivator of the conflict and which was secondary. Below are the main themes and sub-themes of the 148 conflicts reported between September and December 2023, presented as percentages of total conflicts.

Percentages of conflict per main theme



Main themes and subthemes



These themes and sub-themes have been drawn based on human rights categorizations, namely those present in two International Covenants¹, to also cover this dimension. Some of the reported conflicts may correspond to human rights violations in different areas (civil and political, right to life, protection and physical integrity, among others). If they are not investigated or resolved in a timely manner, they may lead to further human rights violations - such as cases of theft and stealing, and cases of early and forced marriage or domestic violence.



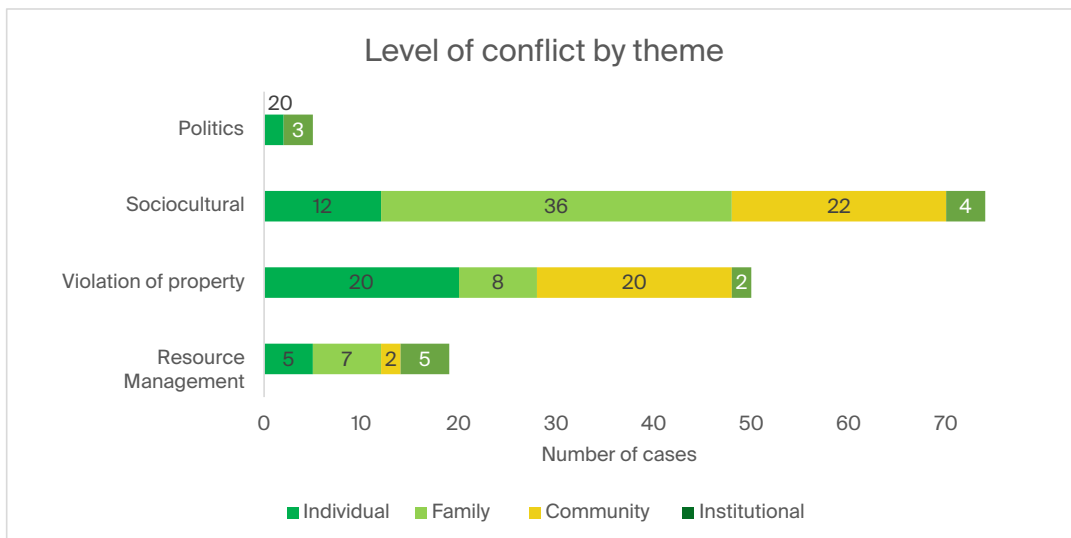
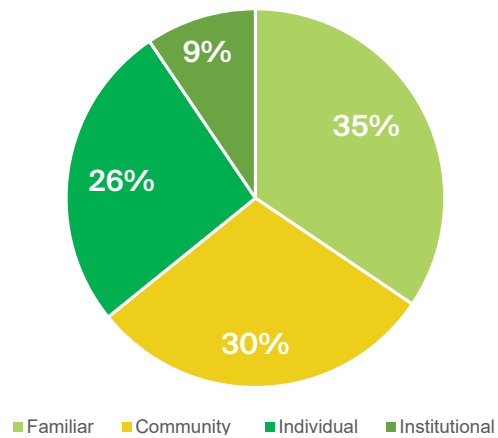
Level of conflict by theme

Conflict level is categorized according to the themes and spheres it involves, rather than the number of people affected.

Although institutional conflicts are more difficult to report, this period saw an increase in these cases, which can be read in light of changes in public institutions between August and December.

There has been a slight increase in conflicts at the individual level, with a prevalence of conflicts linked to violation of property.

Percentage of conflicts by level



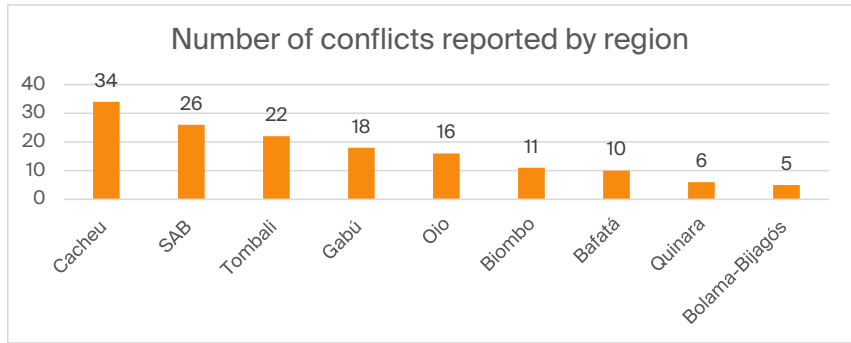
In terms of violation of property, there has been an increase in conflicts at the individual level (from 26% to 40%), with the main sub-themes being theft and stealing, where 10 of the 20 cases recorded occurred in the Cacheu region.

In conflicts related to Resource Management, the community dimension decreased considerably (from 43% to 10.5%).

¹ ICCPR - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, both rectified by the State of Guinea-Bissau.

Conflict location

The number of conflicts reported depends on the local monitors (RSD) activity.



Level of violence & types of incidents

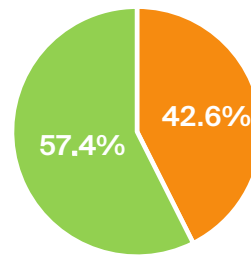
Overall, the degree of violence in the conflicts identified has increased significantly compared to the previous reporting period.

There has been an increase in the degree of violence in conflicts at all levels, with the exception of the institutional level.

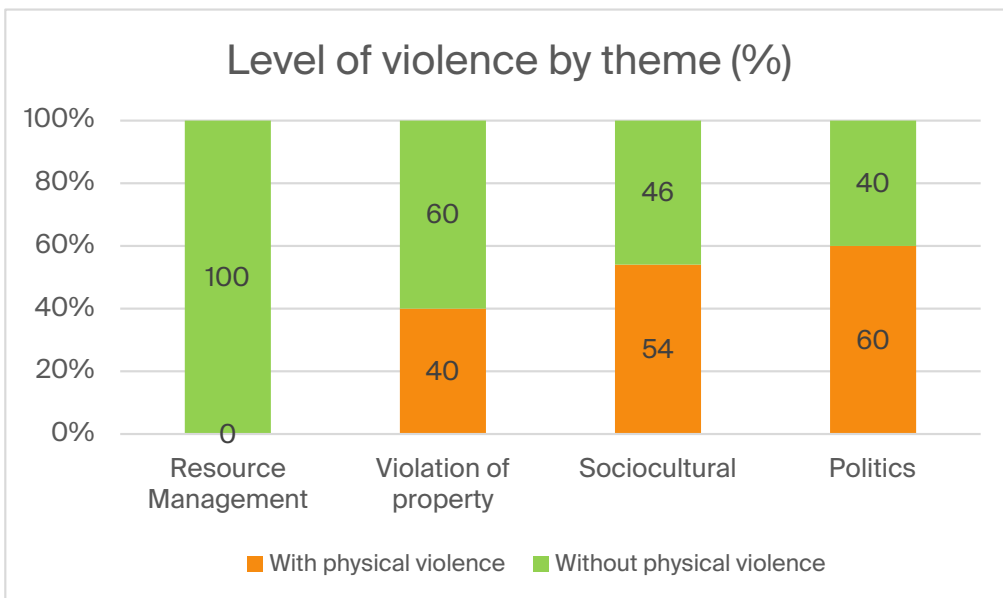
In this period, conflicts related to resource management occurred without violence.

Property violation constitutes a 13% increase in conflicts with violence compared to the previous bulletin.

Percentage of violence & types of incidents



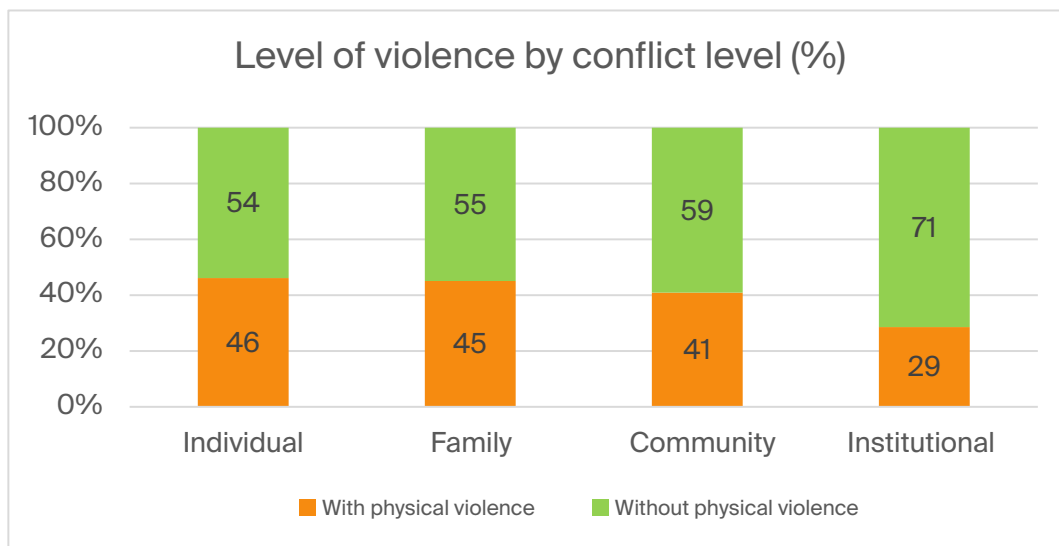
With physical violence (orange) Without physical violence (green)



Political and social tensions can become violent in a context of political and institutional instability. This can also lead to a greater number of human rights violations.

The literature on human rights and conflict shows that the occurrence of these types of violations can be a trigger for increased violence.

Furthermore, as Voz di Paz has previously found, the lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms² contributes to individuals resorting to violence to resolve conflicts.



Regarding types of incidents, between September and December 2023 the following were reported:

	<p>45 strong arguments with insults 20 threats</p>		<p>5 murders</p>
	<p>22 grave bodily harm incidents</p>		<p>5 torture incidents</p>
	<p>26 bodily harm incidents</p>		<p>4 sexual violence incidents</p>

Compared to the previous period (eight months, from January to August), in the last four months of 2023 there was a general increase in the number of incidents reported, following the visible trend of an increase in the degree of violence.

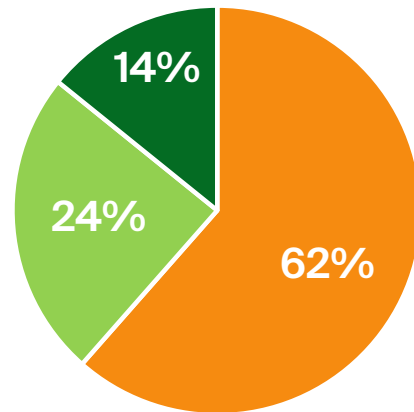
² The results of Barometer on the Governance of Justice in Guinea-Bissau are available at <http://justicapapaz.org> and the final report at <https://www.vozdipaz.org/estudos-e-publicacoes>.

Conflict scale

The scale of the conflict relates to the number of people that the conflict impacts or involves, even if they are not directly engaged in it.

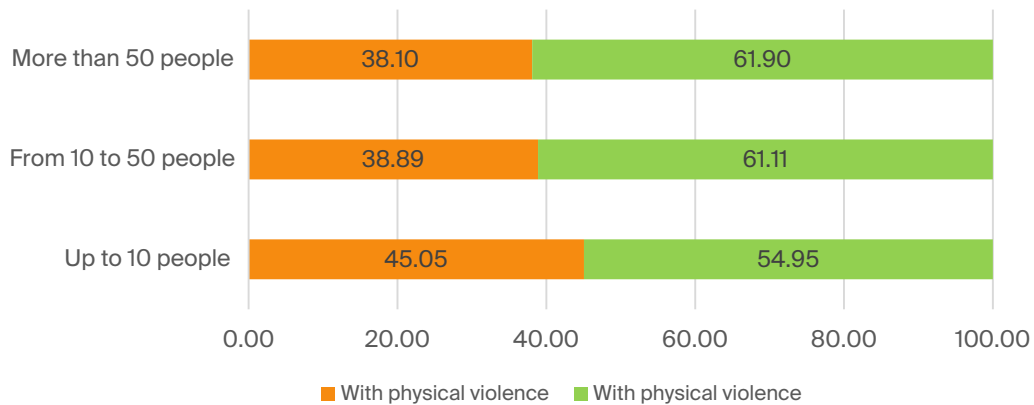
In general, most conflicts continue to be small-scale, but the degree of violence tends to increase across all scales, especially in conflicts involving more than 50 people.

Conflict scale



■ Up to 10 people ■ More than 50 people
■ From 10 to 50 people

Level of violence by number of people involved in the conflict (%)



In these four months of data collection, there are eight conflicts that stand out for involving more than 100 people and registering physical violence, in 5 different sectors of the country: 1 trespassing and 1 destruction of plantations in Mansoa, 1 issue linked to the abuse of power in Cacine, 1 occurrence related to a sports event, 1 case linked to a weak culture of dialogue and 1 theft in Bissau and finally 1 issue linked to witchcraft and 1 theft of cattle in Farim.



Conflict resolution and duration

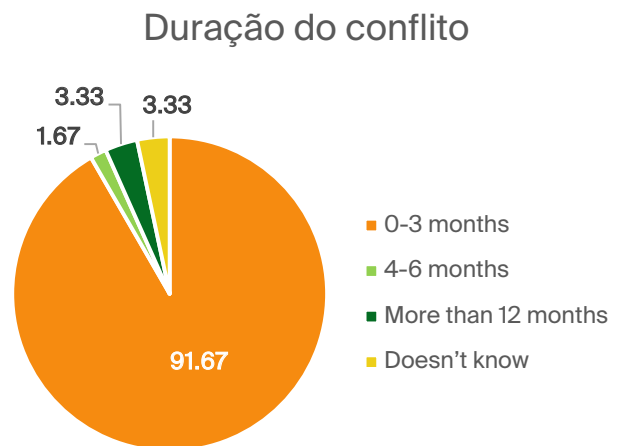
40,5% of conflicts were reported when they had already been solved.

About 32% of conflicts were reported when there had been resolution attempts, or the resolution was undergoing.

27% of conflicts were ongoing at the time of reporting.

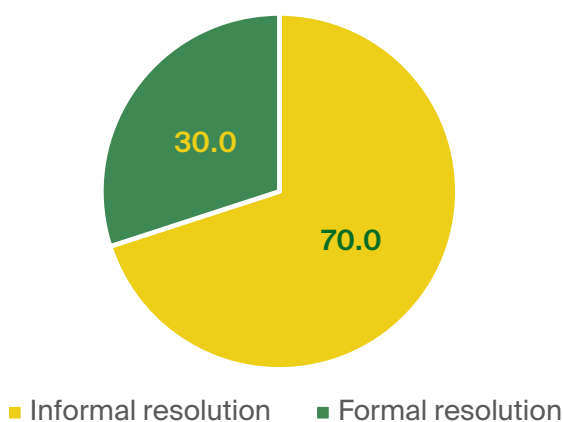
Compared to the previous bulletin, there was an increase in ongoing conflicts at the time of the report and a significant decrease in the percentage of conflicts solved by the reporting (14.5% less).

The vast majority of resolved conflicts that were reported, lasted a maximum of 3 months. However, there was a small percentage (3%) of conflicts that lasted more than a year before being resolved and others where resolution attempts failed (5%).



Methods of conflict resolution

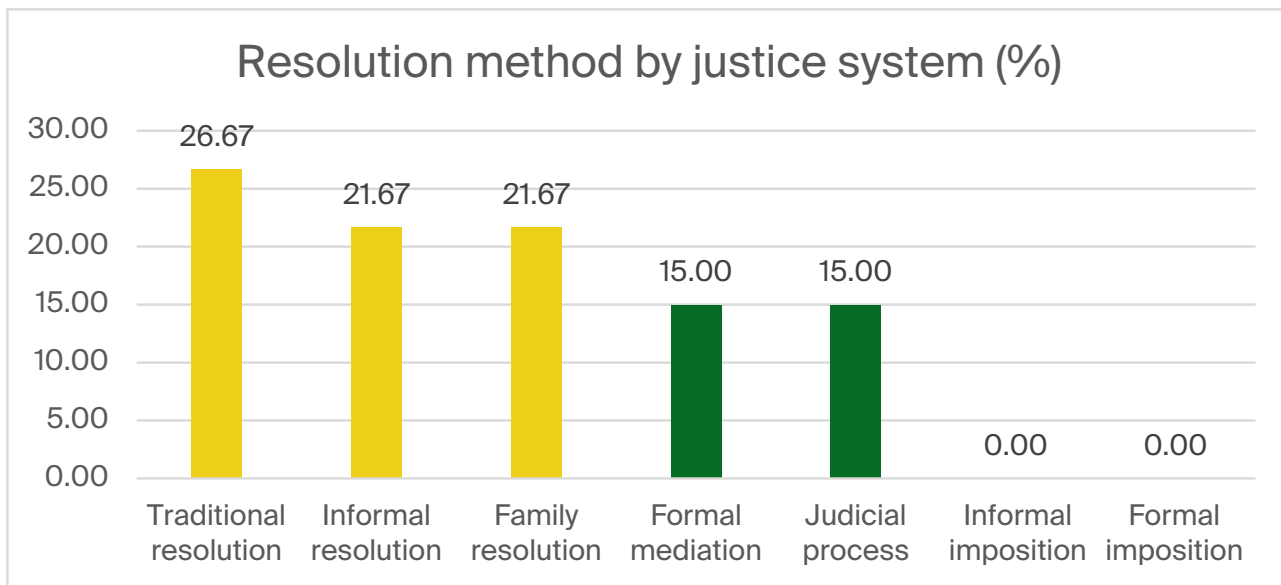
Resolution method by justice system (%)



The majority of resolved conflicts reported were solved using traditional or informal mechanisms, continuing the trend seen in the previous bulletin.

The population's preference for this type of mechanisms was previously found with the *Barometer on the Governance of Justice in Guinea-Bissau*, the results of which are available at <https://justicapapaz.org/>.

Although the distribution between traditional and formal resolution does not change compared to the previous bulletin, there is a clear increase in reports of cases that were resolved through family resolution (7%) and court proceedings (5%).



For the purpose of this analysis, these resolution methods are understood as:

- “Traditional resolution” and “Family resolution” are the cases in which the conflict is considered to have ended based on the intervention of traditional or religious leaders or family heads, respectively.
- “Informal mediation” and “Formal mediation” are the cases in which the resolution is made with a mediation approach, respectively by informal actors (leaders or influential people in the community, civil society structures, etc.) or by formal actors (members of state institutions, for example).
- “Informal imposition” and “Formal imposition” are the cases in which the conflict is considered to have ended based on an imposition made respectively by informal actors (community leaders, heads of families, etc.) or formal actors (members of Defense and Security Forces or state institutions, for example).

The team recognizes that when conflicts are resolved in an imposing manner, tensions can still simmer, as this type of resolution doesn't always satisfy all parties.

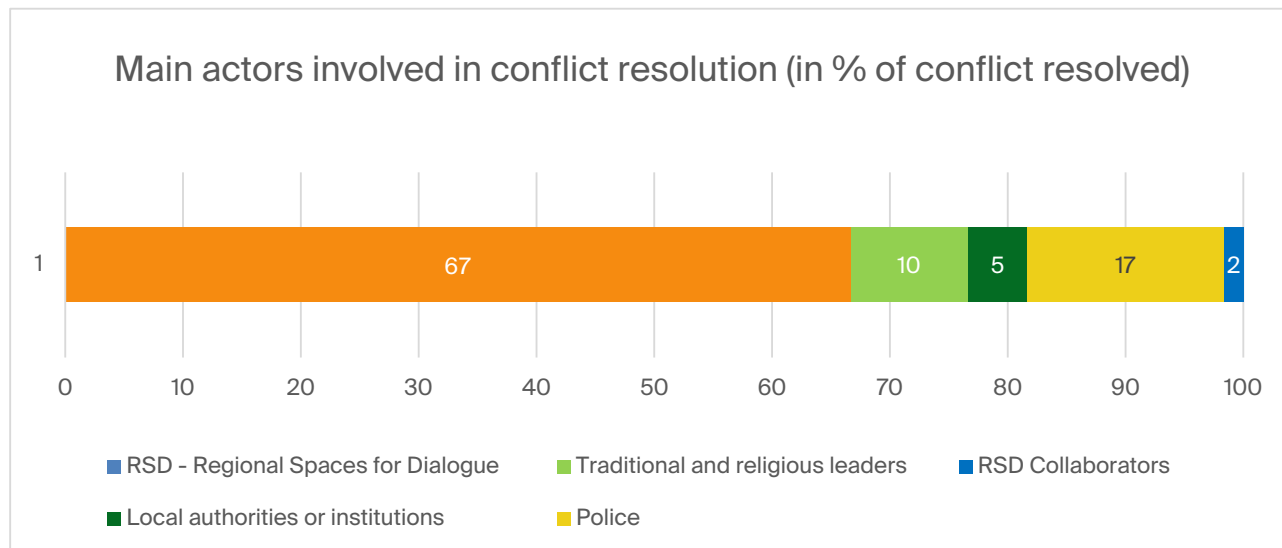
These unresolved tensions can, in turn, lead to new human rights violations in some cases, such as cases of gender-based violence where appropriate protection measures are not taken.



It is also important to note that informal conflict resolution can sometimes indicate human rights violations (such as access to justice and legal protection). However, the team recognizes that individual preference for one method of resolution or another is complex and conditioned by multiple factors, and that the Bissau-Guinean population tends to see positive and negative elements in both the formal and informal justice systems.³

³ *Barometer on the Governance of Justice in Guinea-Bissau*, the results of which are available at <http://justicapapaz.org> and the final report at <https://www.vozdipaz.org/estudos-e-publicacoes>.

The main actors contributing to conflict resolution

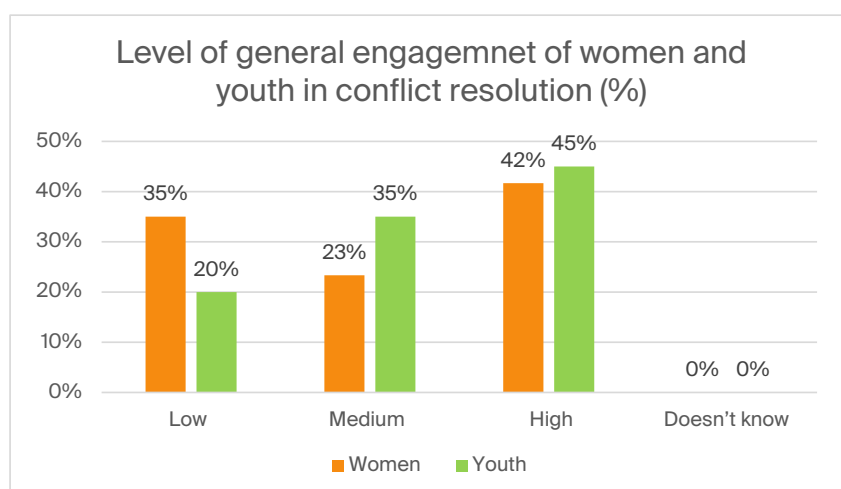


In this 4-month period, the level of collaboration has increased, where:

In **92%** of the cases, conflicts were resolved through multi-actor collaboration.

Around **60%** involved at least three different types of actors.

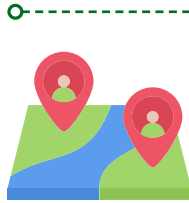
Women and youth involvement in conflict resolution



There are no significant variations in youth and female participation in conflict resolution. However, there is greater participation by young people, while women continue to be more excluded from decision-making in general.



There is less female involvement in **resource management and violation of property conflicts (58% and 40% "Low" involvement in resolution)**



Geography-wise, young people are more involved in the Tombali and Bissau regions (**46% and 45% "High" involvement in the resolution**).

The regions of Bolama/Bijagós (**100%**) and Gabu (**33%**) saw the highest participation of women in the resolution.

The complete data on the reported conflicts is available for consultation in English, French and Portuguese in the following interactive website:

<http://www.conflilocalgb.org>

HTTP://



Interpeace
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR PEACEBUILDING

Interpeace Guiné-Bissau

Escritório da Voz di Paz,
Bairro de Enterramento CP588
Bissau, Guiné-Bissau
ferrati@interpeace.org



Voz di Paz

Bairro de Enterramento CP588
Bissau, Guiné-Bissau
vozdipazgb@gmail.com
<https://www.vozdipaz.org/>



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