



Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms within Guinea-Bissau's Access to Justice Landscape

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Abstract

Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms have long been integral to resolving conflicts within communities in Guinea-Bissau. A qualitative research approach was employed to explore how TDRMs operate within Guinea-Bissau's legal landscape. Interviews with traditional leaders, community members, and legal practitioners were conducted to gather insights. Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms are particularly effective in resolving minor conflicts but struggle when dealing with more complex or high-stakes disputes, highlighting a need for formal legal support. While TDRMs play a crucial role in addressing everyday grievances, their limitations necessitate complementary efforts to ensure comprehensive access to justice. Guinea-Bissau should consider integrating recognised traditional practices into its formal legal system while also developing specialized training programmes for traditional leaders and enhancing public awareness of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

Keywords: African, Customary, Mediation, Arbitration, Community, Jurisprudence, Anthropology

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