

Stronger Together Initiative: A Three Steps Approach to Heal the Hearts, Empower Women & Youths, and Unite Guinea.

Project Leaders: Souleymane Diallo (Guinea) and Abdoul Rasmane Maiga (Burkina Faso)

Country of Project Implementation: Guinea | School: University of Rochester

I. Background:

Since 1958, Guinea's repeated socio-political crises have led to thousands of deaths, the rape of hundreds of women, youth illegal immigration, and the rise of ethnocentrism. Under Guinea's first President, Ahmed Sékou Touré, 5,000 to 50,000 people were killed¹ at Camp Boiro, a concentration camp within Guinea's capital, Conakry. Following President Touré's death, General Lansana Conté seized power through a military coup and ruled for 24 years. In the 2007 protests against Conté's regime, 200 people were killed, hundreds injured, many women raped, and hundreds reported missing². In 2008, Captain Dadis Camara seized power in a coup after General Conté's death. In response to political opposition to Dadis's decision to run for Presidency, 150+ people were killed, 1,319 injured, and nearly 109 women raped by the military³ in Conakry's main stadium on September 28, 2009. In 2010, Alpha Condé became Guinea's first democratically elected President after 52 years of independence, raising much hope for justice, reconciliation, and peace for victims of crimes under previous regimes. However, 10 years later, little effort was made to try the perpetrators and support the victims. One year before the end of his second and last term (as per the 2010 Constitution), the Constitution was amended, opening the door to a third term for President Condé. Demonstrations against the amendment were repressed, killing at least 50 people and injuring dozens⁴. Almost a year after the start of his controversial third term, President Condé was overthrown by Colonel Mamady Doumbouya on September 5, 2021. Colonel Doumbouya pledged to hold presidential elections and hand over power to civilians. He also initiated an inclusive dialogue with all political parties and members of civil society and released hundreds of political prisoners. Today, most victims and their families are still demanding justice, and peoples' hearts are torn in an already deeply divided country. While one cannot predict where the military would lead Guinea in the long term, we must acknowledge their current efforts for peace and reconciliation. It is in this context we believe that the Davis Projects for Peace can play a positive role in creating sustainable tools and mechanisms for peacebuilding in Guinea.

II. Approach/Solution statement:

Through the Davis Projects for Peace, we propose starting the **Stronger Together Initiative: A Three Steps Approach to Heal the Hearts, Empower Women & Youths, and Unite Guinea**. To achieve this, three main activities will be run from May 16 to June 10, 2022. **(I) A conference** that will serve as a venue for Guineans of all ages and backgrounds to have an inclusive and open dialogue on the history of Guinea and the country's direction for the future; **(II) an Entrepreneurship Camp** that will empower youths aged 15 to 25 to become proactive changemakers in their respective communities through people-centered entrepreneurship; **(III) Uniting the Guinean people around the first annual 5 to 7 KM Race for Peace & Reconciliation** to reiterate our commitment to make Guinea a stable and prosperous country

III. Project Description & Partnerships

The National Coalition of Support for Reconciliation in Guinea (CONAREG), an umbrella organization that brings together several civil society organizations, victims' associations and social actors in Guinea will help us throughout the process in identifying and selecting participants and guest speakers, running the day-to-day project, and ensuring its sustainability. We aim to diversify our event attendees with special attention to gender inclusivity, socio-economic backgrounds, accommodation for people with disabilities, and a diversity of geographical origins. Entrepreneur Cafe Conakry, a youth entrepreneurship hub, will help us specifically for Part II of our project. They will help us select and train 30 youths aged 15-25 from diverse backgrounds on how to address the socio-economic challenges faced by their communities using BUILD, a people-driven entrepreneurial leadership model by the African Leadership Academy(ALA). Finally, ALA will help us with a toolkit that provides content and teaching materials to run a professional youth empowerment project.

IV. Project Implementation Timeline, Activities, and Potential Guest Speakers

Part I — Conference: A Colloquium on Guinea's History and the State of the Nation from 1958 to Today — Monday, May 16, 2022

- Introducing the Davis Project for Peace (purpose and impact)
- A brief history of Guinea from 1958 to today. The State of the Nation: What Would it Take to Reconcile the People of Guinea?

- Dr. Mohamed Saliou Camara, Professor and Chair African Studies Department, Howard University
- Pr. Manga KEITA, Rector University General Lansana Conté Guinea
- Mr. Mamadou Diallo, Economic Counselor Guinea Embassy in the USA

¹Baldé, Rouguiatou. "Lutte Contre l'impunité : Nécessité de Rendre Justice Aux Victimes En Guinée." *IntLawGrrls*, 22 Nov. 2016, <https://ilg2.org/2016/11/22/lutte-contre-limpunite-necessite-de-rendre-justice-aux-victimes-en-guinee/>.

²Baldé, "Lutte Contre l'impunité : Nécessité de Rendre Justice Aux Victimes En Guinée."

³Baldé, "Lutte Contre l'impunité : Nécessité de Rendre Justice Aux Victimes En Guinée."

⁴Amnesty International. "Guinée. Au moins 50 personnes tuées en toute impunité dans des manifestations en moins d'un an." *Amnesty International*, 1 Oct. 2020.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guinean Woman: History & Perspective on Leadership & Peace • The Guinean Youth in perspective: Between Challenges & Opportunities for Peace and Development • Wrapping Up & Closing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Souleymane Camara, Program Manager CONAREG • More Speakers to be added.
<p>Part II — Entrepreneurship camp: Peace building & Youth Empowerment through Entrepreneurship & Leadership Development — Monday, May 23, 2022, to Friday, May 27, 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Mountaga Keita, Founder, Tulip Industries Ltd • Mr. Mamadou Diallo, Economic Counselor Guinea Embassy in the USA, and social entrepreneur • More Speakers to be added.
<p>Part III — When Each Step Counts: a Race for Peace & Reconciliation in Guinea — Monday, May 30, 2022, to Wednesday, Jun 8, 2022 (Preparation for the race with training and logistics). Friday, Jun 1, 2022 (Race Day)</p>	<p>Local authorities such as the mayor will be invited to sponsor the event.</p>

V. Key Performance Indicator & Sustainability

- Expected attendance for Part I: 50-100 people. Part I is successful if attendees leave with a better understanding of Guinea's history and can clearly articulate the challenges and opportunities to Guinea's reconciliation. A survey will be shared for this purpose.
- Expected attendance for Part II: 30 selected youths from diverse backgrounds. Part II is successful if students leave the Entrepreneurship Camp with a clear plan of how they will address a specific socio-economic problem within their community using the BUILD model.
 - Grading and a pitch for a small grant will be made on the last day of the Camp.
 - Participants will be held accountable for implementing their projects through the supervision of CONAREG representatives.
- Expected attendance for Part III: at least 50 people. Part III is successful if people make the effort to run at least 5KM together in pairs.
- We would like to see this project repeated every year with innovation to what will be offered as activities and resources to continue fostering a sense of community and peace among Guineans not only in Conakry but also across the country, especially among youths. As such we have launched this January 2022 the Guinean Young Leaders Initiative (GYLI) a youth-led organization that seeks to build the most innovative, and scalable educational and entrepreneurial programs that will identify, develop, and connect Guinea's most promising young leaders who will drive positive change in their communities.⁵

VI. About Us

Abdoul Rasmane MAIGA and Souleymane DIALLO have both been affected by conflicts which shaped the persons they became and their interests in peace and youth empowerment. **Abdoul** is a freshman majoring in Computer Science. He is from Burkina Faso, a country that has since 2015 been on the scene of regular terrorist attacks. His hometown, Kaya, has been at the forefront of welcoming internally displaced people fleeing the terror and insecurity in the North. In 2018, Abdoul started a social enterprise at school that focuses on helping vulnerable students meet their basic needs (books, tutoring sessions) and championing youth empowerment and entrepreneurship. With the US Embassy's support, his team led two entrepreneurship camps, empowering 100+ students. Finally, Abdoul studied African Studies and Entrepreneurship for two years at the African Leadership Academy, which gives him a solid understanding of Africa's socio-political landscape and challenges towards peace and sustainable development.

Souleymane is a sophomore studying Politics, Philosophy, and Economics. He is an African Leadership Academy alumnus, and a 2018 Winner of the Ivorian National Public Speaking Competition for High Schools. Due to the 2004 political volatility in Guinea, Souleymane and his family were forced to flee the country and take refuge in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. During the 2011 Ivorian civil war, Souleymane experienced first-hand the atrocities of war seeing one of his best friends instantly killed by a stray bullet, and his parents losing everything with rebels looting their neighborhood. Once again, Souleymane and his family were forced to flee, this time reverting to his home country. These experiences shaped Souleymane's interests in ethical leadership and education which he believes are key in building a peaceful and prosperous nation. Souleymane has a background in youth empowerment, project management, and social entrepreneurship. He is the Co-Founder of the Guinean Young Leaders Initiative, whose mission is to empower Guinea's most promising young leaders to be agents of positive change through people-driven entrepreneurship and ethical leadership teachings.

⁵ <https://guineanyoungleadersinitiative.org/>

Projects for Peace Budget Template

Name: Souleymane Diallo and Abdoul Rasmane Maiga
Project Name: Stronger Together Initiative: A Three Steps Approach to Heal the Hearts, Empower Women & Youths, and Unite Guinea.
School: University of Rochester

TOTAL FUNDS REMAINING:
0

TOTAL EXPENDITURES:
10000

Total Additional Funding:		
---------------------------	--	--

Student Expenses					Project Expenses				
Travel (Including Airfare)	Lodging	Communications	Food (Biweekly)	Miscellaneous	Non-Student Travel and Lodging	Direct Equipment and Supplies	Marketing and Event Support	Staffing Costs	Miscellaneous
3200	0	500	300	800	400	2100	800	800	800
300	0								
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
3500	0	500	300	800	400	2100	800	800	800

Total Student Expenses:
5100

Total Project Expenses:
4900