



ESCOLA-FORESTA / FOREST-SCHOOL

Djalikunda, Guinea-Bissau

An Overview

Prepared by Dr. Silvia Bedito (OficinaAcademy) and
NGO-KAFO

03.07.2025 (update)



- I
- II
- III
- IV
- V

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What is the “Forest-School”?

I

Where?

II

Why?

III

For whom/ with whom?

IV

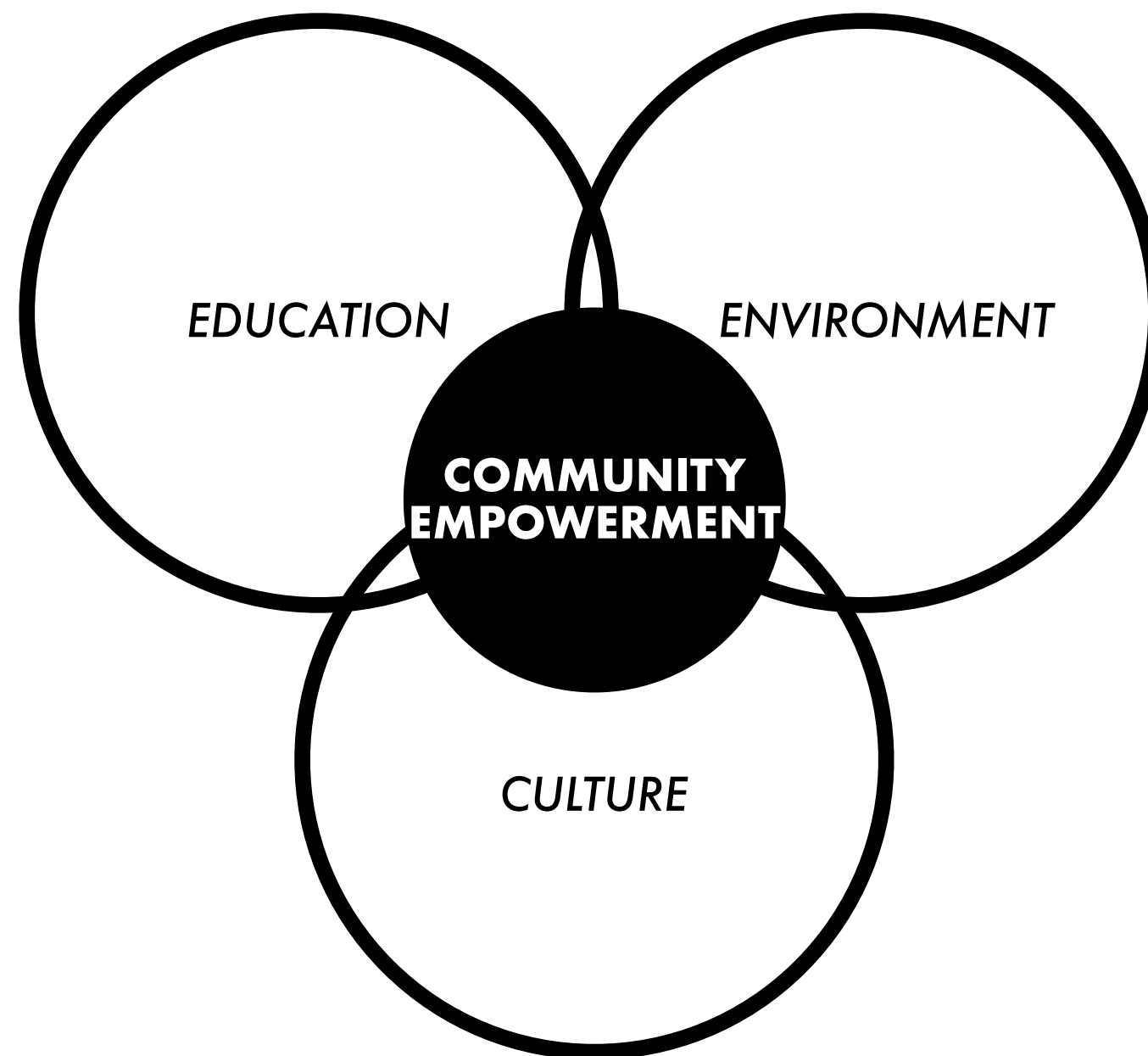
How?

V

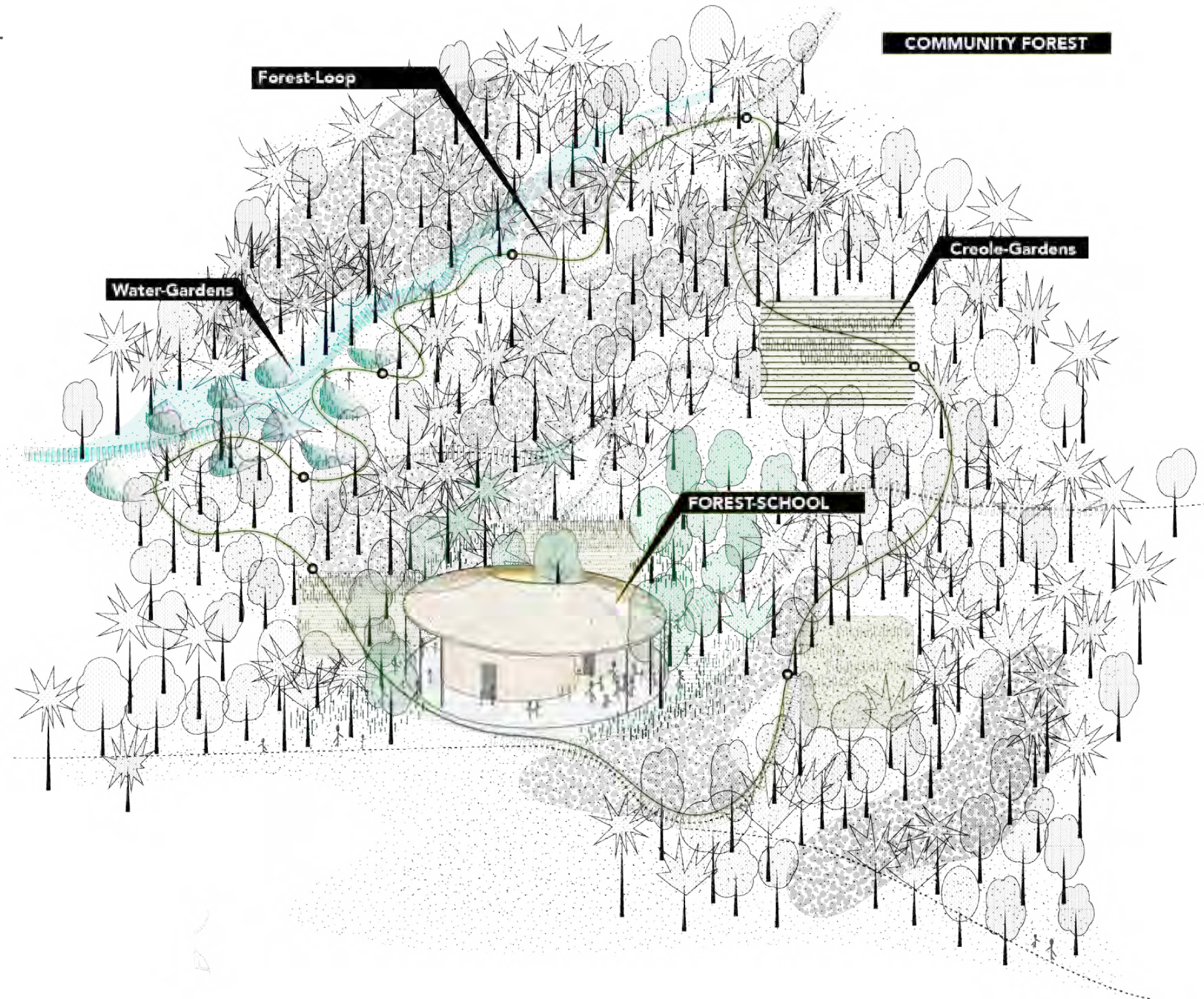
What is a Forest-School?

The FOREST-SCHOOL is a school for children between 6-12 yrs old incorporating environmental education focused on nature conservation, cultural sovereignty and food security.

3 Objectives in 1



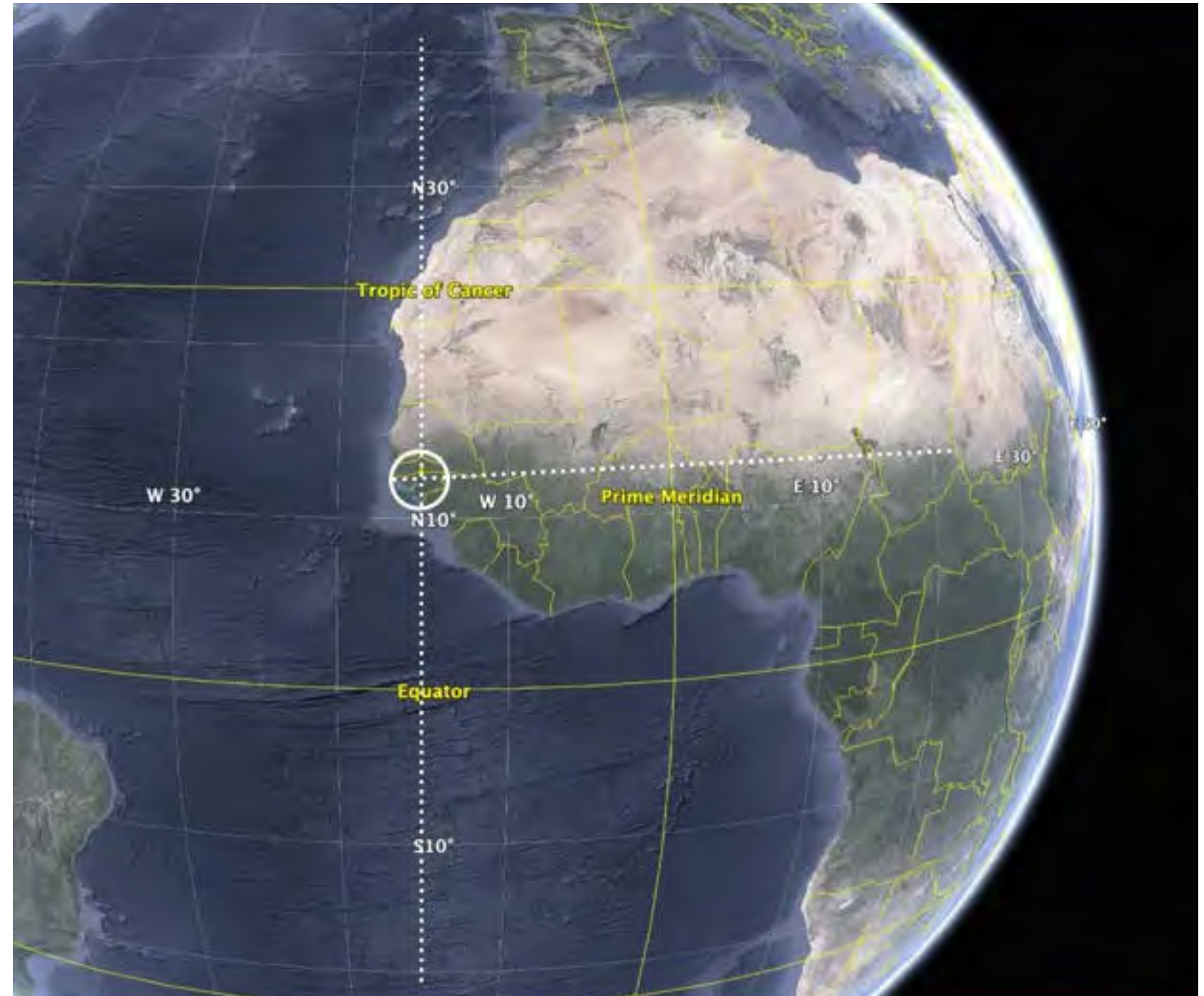
The FOREST-SCHOOL is a space for
nature + learning + play
(A possible illustration...)



Where?

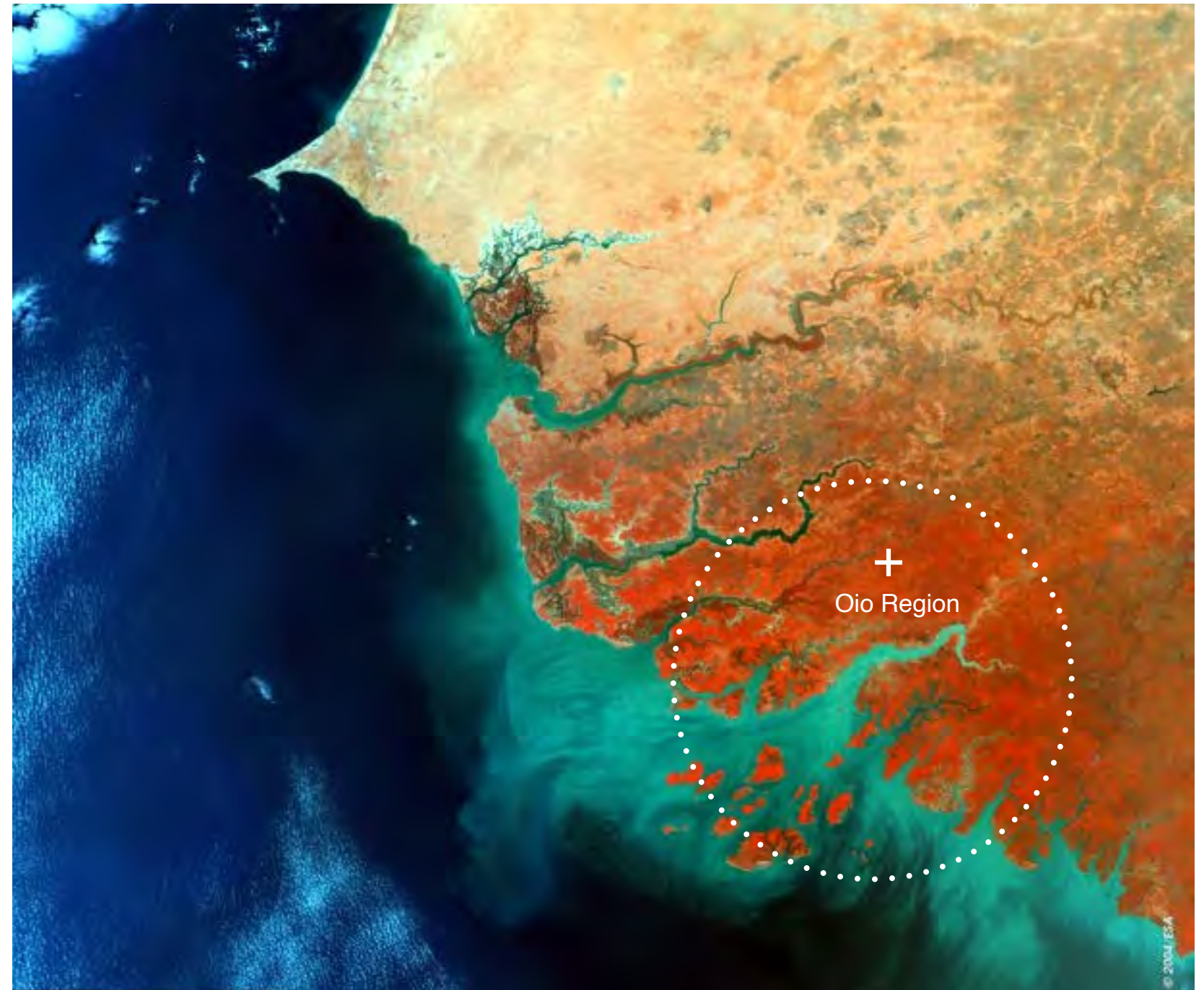
The FOREST-SCHOOL is located in the Oio Region of Guinea-Bissau (north) along the **Sahel frontier of West Africa** experiencing the acceleration of desertification and ecosystem deterioration. There are 7 villages (Tabancas) integral to this local initiative: Ionfarim, Cabaceira, Demba-so, Baite, Colombato, Manecunda, and Damicunda. With a total of 112 children.

Guinea-Bissau is part of the Sahel region, a transitional zone between the desert Sahara to the north and the belt of humid savannas/ forests to the south. This region is currently experiencing the expansion of droughts and accelerating desertification. Despite these challenges, the Sahel countries “holds significant human, cultural, and natural resources” (UN)



<https://earth.google.com/web/>

Is estimated that increasing temperatures and rising droughts in West-Africa will affect significantly the Oio province in the northern region of Guinea-Bissau and its rural communities.



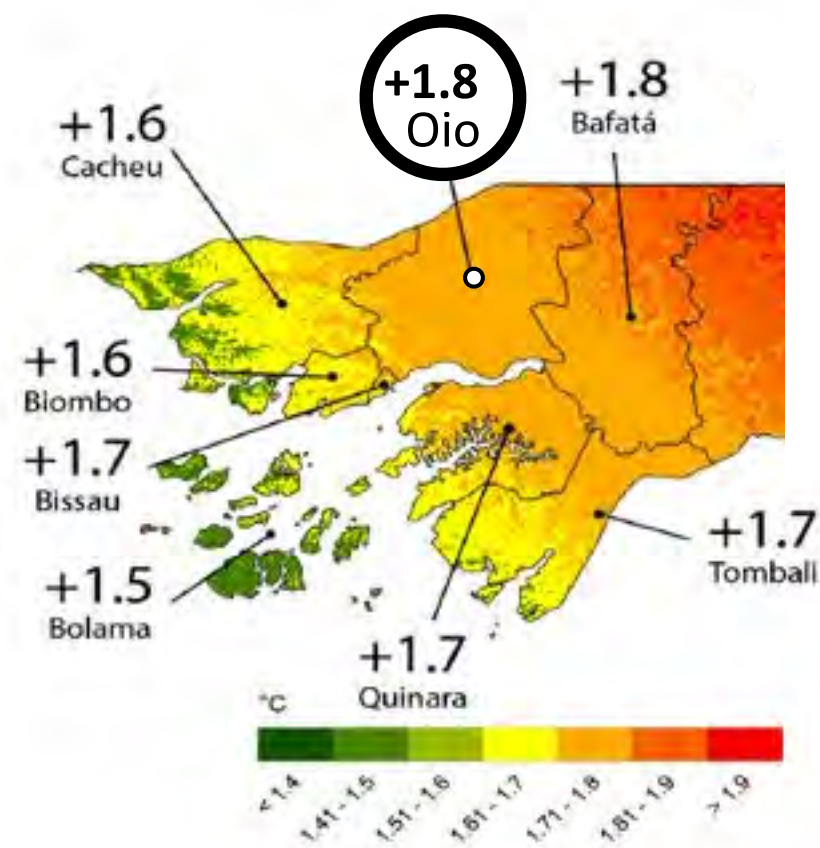
Source: https://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/Coast-mapping_satellites_will_follow_the_tides

Guinea-Bissau climate degradation impacts:

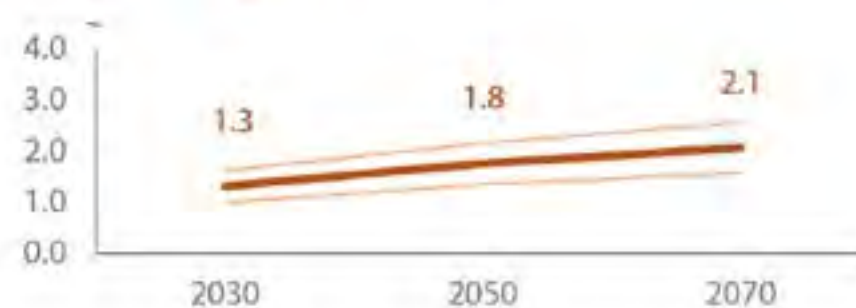
Two diagrams portraying Guinea-Bissau's (and Oio Region) estimates on:

- (1) Changes in the annual mean T°C
- (2) Changes in total precipitation.

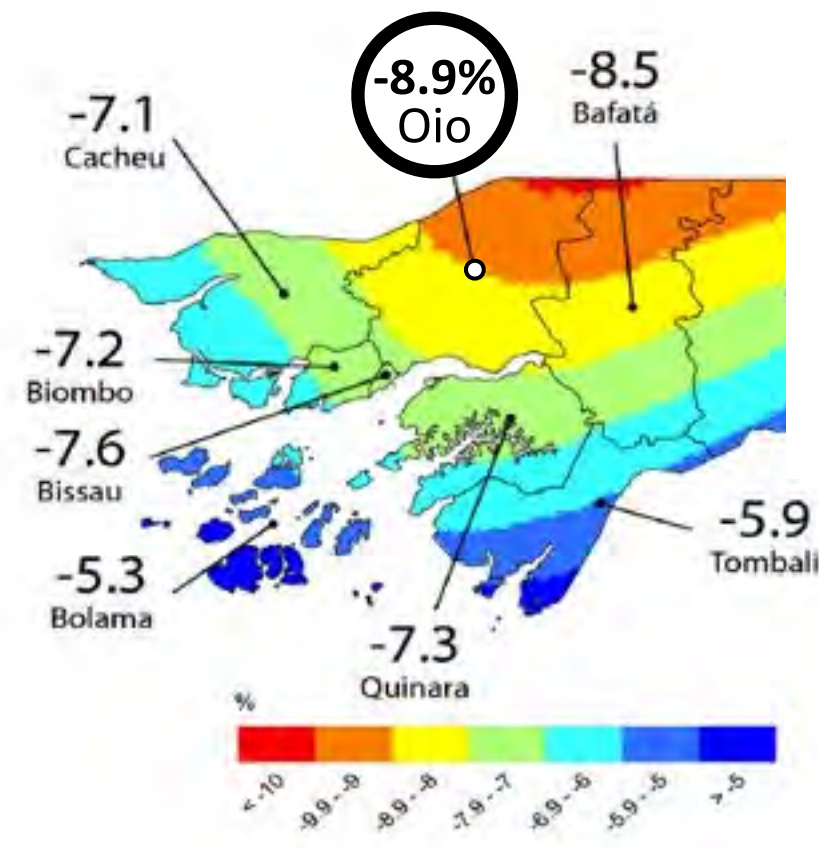
1) Changes in annual mean T°C



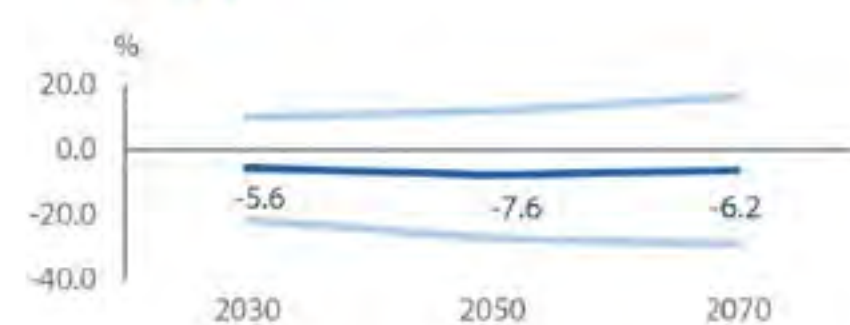
Average temperature (°C)



2) Changes in total precipitation (%)



Average precipitation (%)



Source: Guinea-Bissau, FAO and ICRISAT. 2019. Climate-Smart Agriculture

Villages Location:



Villages Location: Ionfarim, Cabaceira, Demba-so, Baite, Colombato, Manecunda, and Damicunda



Why?

Promoting social empowerment through the emancipation of **education** focused on nature protection and restoration becomes increasingly vital in the face of escalating ecological pressures, especially with the expansion of the Sahel from the North.

Given the desire expressed by the local communities,
the Forest-School is structured in 9 axes:

1. Strengthening	2. Reinforcing	3. Integrating	4. Facilitating	5. Establishing	6. Ensuring	7. Identifying	8. Disseminating	9. Expanding
the role of the KAFO Peasant Federation in the empowerment and consolidation of rural communities through educational and environmental programs focused on children and young adults rooted in the community forests of Oio, more precisely, the Djalikunda community forest;	the role of the community forest as a strategic resource and a local learning/ safeguarding site in a context of growing social, climate, and ecological vulnerability (as a "living laboratory");	into the current curriculum a creative and educational component associated with environment, culture, and natural resource management;	access for children and young adults to programs based on traditional ecological knowledge as a means of safeguarding and enhance local landscapes/ habitats;	educational monitoring systems and exchanges between children from various tabancas and/or regions in the protection and management of the forest and its resources (e.g., dissemination and safeguarding of native seeds, fauna, soil fertility, etc.);	the transmission of local knowledge through the participation of older generations in recreational- educational activities;	landscapes of cultural, economic, and ecological interest for beckoning programs focused on nature conservation and rural entrepreneurship;	the scientific, technological, and economic potentials of Oio's community forests as hotspots for biodiversity and strongholds against expanding desertification (with medicinal, cultural, symbolic, and ecological significance)	opportunities in local markets systems addressing emerging "green" economies regarding ecosystem services.

In the context of...



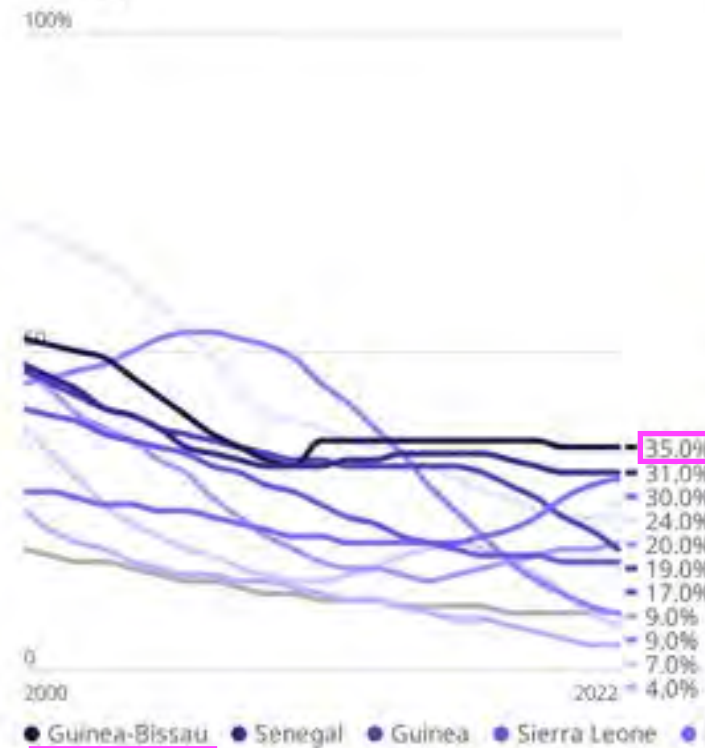
Out-of-School rates have been declining...

Out-of-School Children rates in Guinea-Bissau

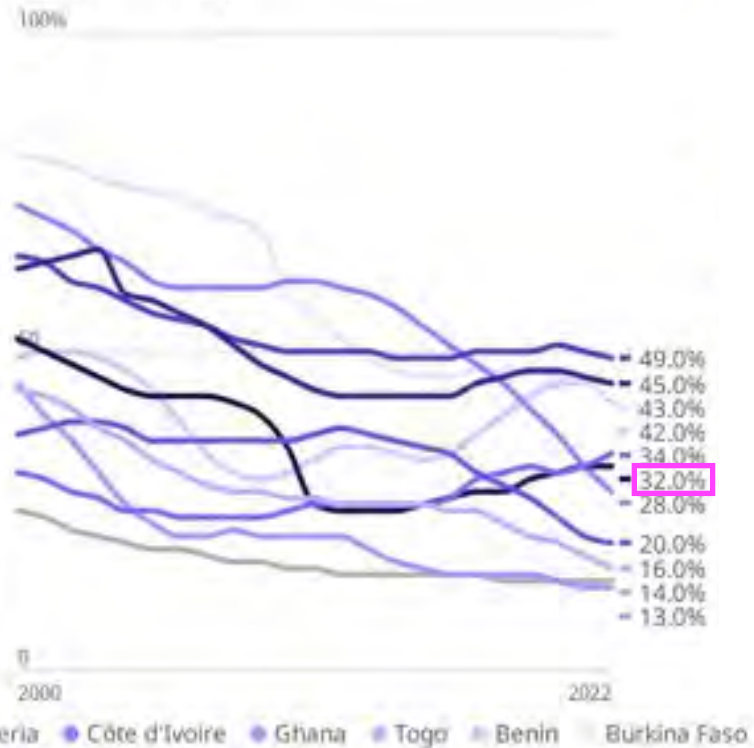
A recent study conducted by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics in collaboration with the Global Education Monitoring Report reveals that Guinea-Bissau boasts the **highest** rates of "Out-of-School" children in the Primary Cycle (ages 6-12) among West African nations, especially in rural areas and among female children.

Out-of-school rate by level

Primary



Lower-Secondary



This graphic was designed for the GEM Report SCOPE website: www.education-progress.org
Selection: Countries: GNB, SEN, GIN, SLE, LBR, CIV, GHA, TGO, BEN, BFA...
Source: UIS database, 2022. Accessed: Mar 27, 2024

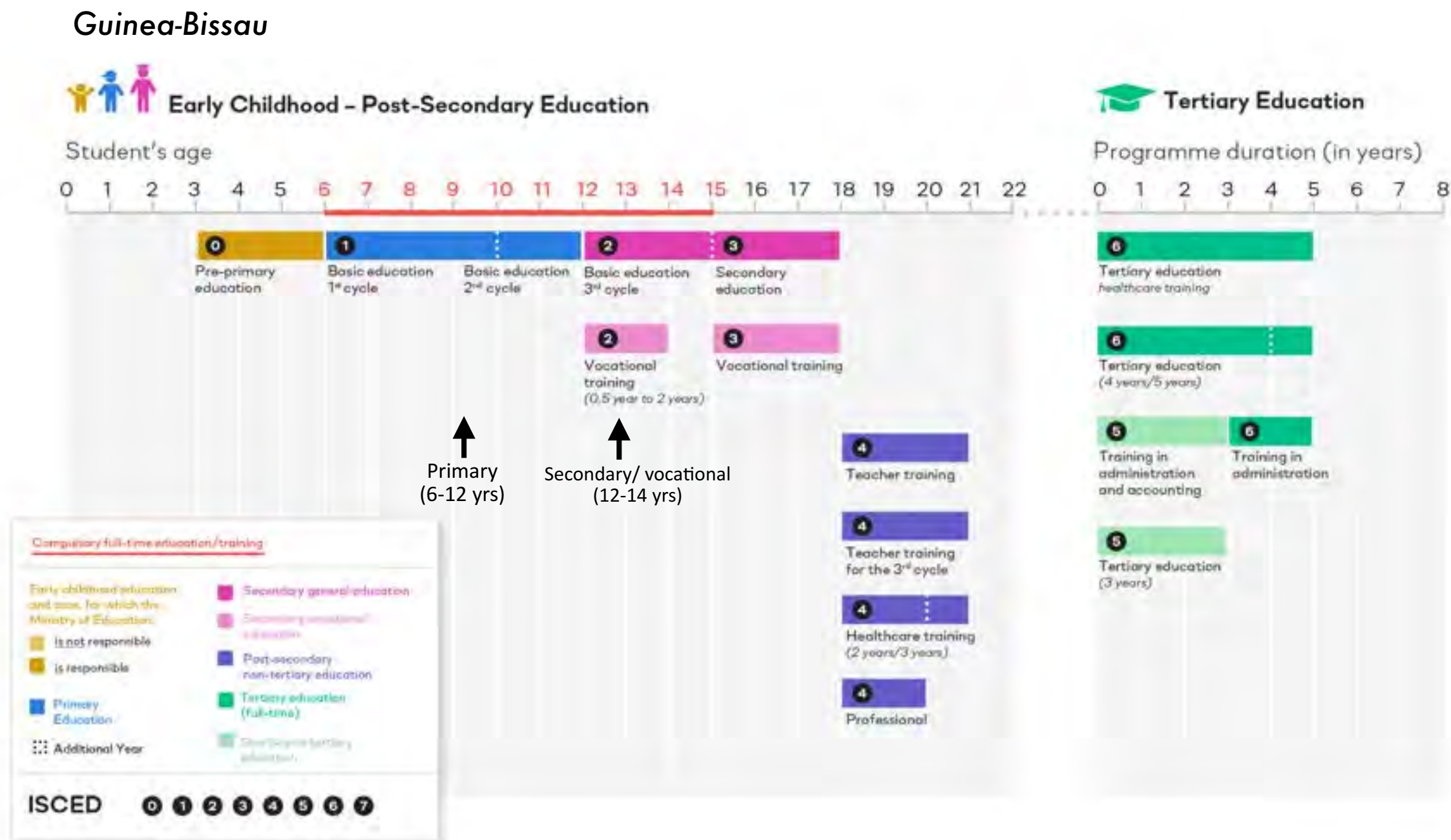


<https://www.education-progress.org/en/articles/access>

Educational structure in Guinea-Bissau

The “Forest-School” targets the Basic Education Cycles, respectively:

- 6-12 yrs old (Primary);
- 12-14 yrs old
(Secondary Vocational training)



<https://www.education-progress.org/en/articles/access>

For whom/ with whom?

KAFO Federation is a rural non-profit organization, one of the largest peasant organizations in Guinea-Bissau and sub-Saharan Africa. KAFO is the result of the genuine will of more than 25,000 peasants (62% women, 25% young people and 13% men) to actively define and implement their options for socio-economic, cultural and environmental development in rural areas.

KAFO Peasant Federation, 20 years of projects' development in core areas.

The deep rooting of the KAFO Peasant Federation in rural communities in the North and East of the country (Oio, Cacheu and Bafata) provided the emergence of a distinct and well-established participatory peasant leadership at the service of agricultural and rural development. The popular base conquered over the years has given an effective capacity for mobilization and congregation of peasants, in favor of local philanthropic and rural initiatives, integrated and sustainable. Partners on the multiple projects includes: SWISSAID, EU, AFD, CFSI, AECID, New-Field, PAM, FAO, PRSPDA-BM

<https://kafobissau.org>



KAFO Peasant Federation,
20 years of projects (examples):

1) "Community-Forest"

Partners: Institute of Bio-diversity and Protected Areas (IBAP) + Communities of Kamkebo and Djalikunda

2) The Juices of the Forest

Partners: Institute of Bio-diversity and Protected Areas (IBAP) + Communities of Kamkebo and Djalikunda



The "Community-Forests" in Oio (Kamkebo)



The Juices of the Forest

3) Tradicional Medicine Exchange

Partners: Institute of Bio-diversity and Protected Areas (IBAP) + Communities of Kamkebo and Djalikunda

4) The Forest Honey/ Bees Project

Partners: Institute of Bio-diversity and Protected Areas (IBAP) + Communities of Kamkebo and Djalikunda



Traditional Medicine Workshop exchange



The Forest Honey/ Bees project

Engagement Sessions with the communities

In 2021, the NGO-KAFO and Prof. Silvia Benedito (Harvard University) started a collaboration to discuss the impacts of the ecological degradation in the social and cultural domains amongst the rural communities of the Djalikunda area (Oio Region). During this time, KAFO identified 3 communities interested to work in this initiative: Bironki (Mandinga), Indamikunda (Balanta), and Nemanako (Fula).

During the engagement sessions, the communities shared their motivation in supporting the development of a **School for children** between (6-12 years).





Engagement Sessions with the communities

The “idealized” School, through its curriculum including environmental education, is linked to the protection and conservation of the local forests—today, vulnerable sites due to extraction threats and droughts. These local forests are a resource for food, with cultural, medicinal and spiritual significance.

How ?

The **KAFO Federation** together with a selected local **Committee** formed by the parents of the partnering villages (Tabancas) will lead the process of development, implementation and monitoring. This process will be coordinated with the National Office of Education.

Villages Location:

Indamicunda

Ionfarim

Cabaceira

Demba Só

Colon Bato

Baite

Canchungo-Zinho

Manécunda

Simbor

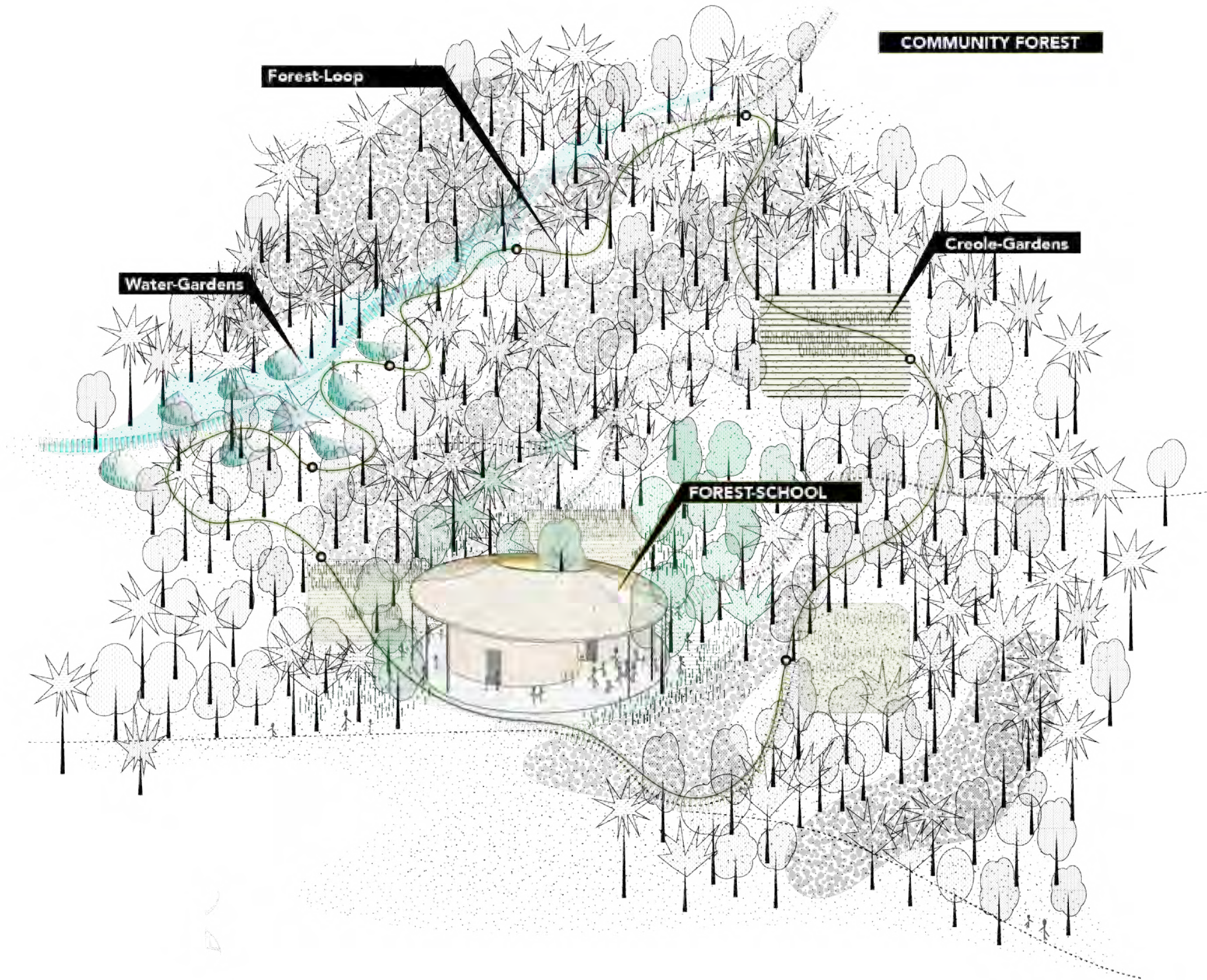
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The FOREST-SCHOOL:
Location (Zoom-in)



The FOREST-SCHOOL: a space for
nature + learning + play in the
Djalikunda Community Forest
(A possible illustration...)



Koran reading in the village of Bironki
January 2022



Koran reading in the village of Bironki
January 2022



Koran reading in the village of Bironki
January 2022



Koran reading in the village of Bironki
January 2022



Community engagement in Bironki
January 2022



Indamikunda
January 2022



Nemanako
September 2023



Nemanako
September 2023



Camkebo
September 2023



Nemanako
September 2023



Bironki

September 2023





Nemanako
January 2022



Nemanako
September 2023



Nemanako
September 2023



Nemanako
September 2023



Bironki
January 2022



Sacred Forest, Bironki (with Bironki Chef)

January 2022



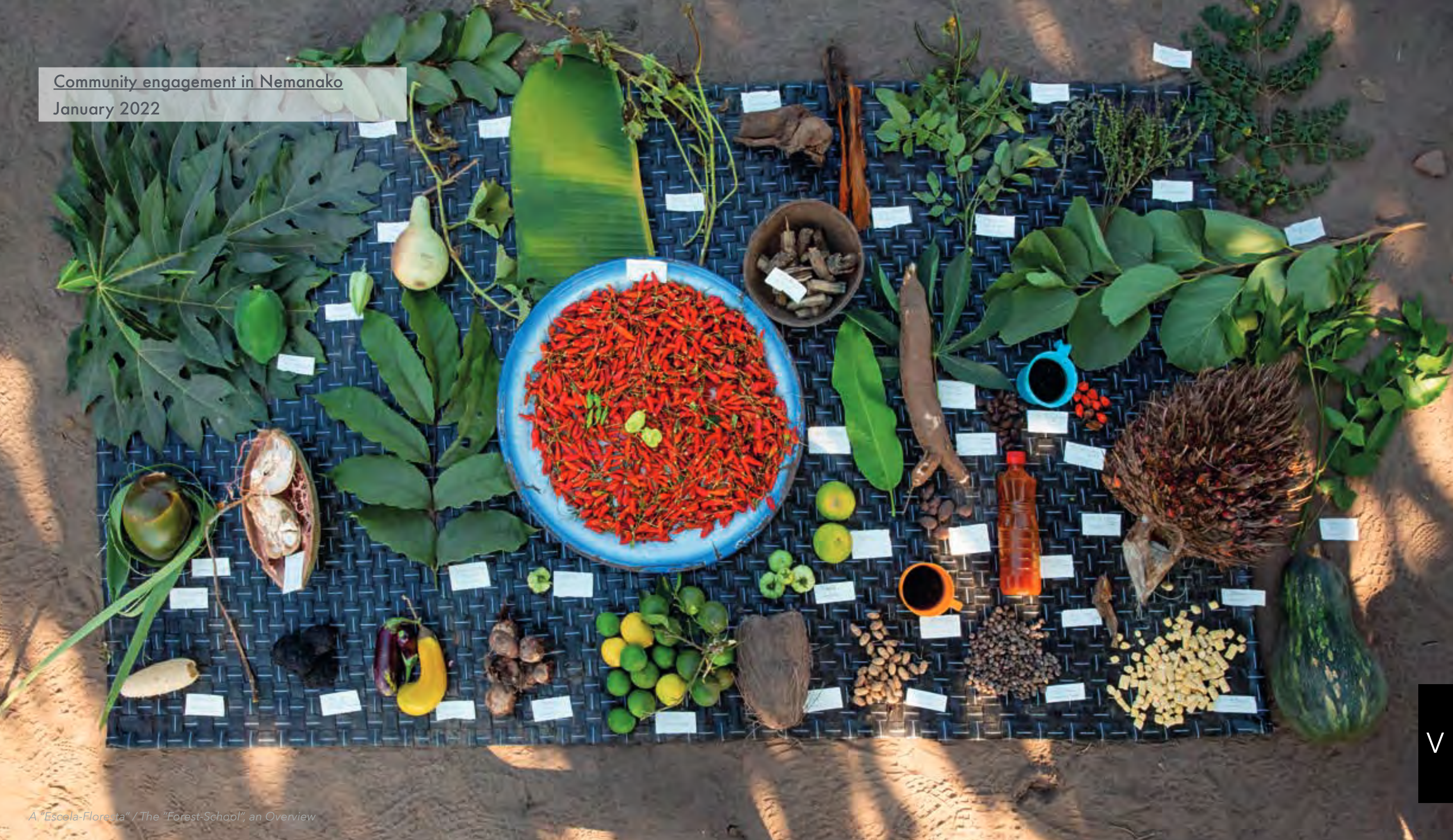
Community engagement in Bironki
January 2022







Community engagement in Nemanako
January 2022



The Forest and the Bolanhas
January 2022



Tabanca Indamikunda
January 2022



Tabanca Nemanako
January 2022





The House in Indamikunda
January 2022



Community engagement in Camkebo
With Students from Harvard University, September 2023



Working Session with Prof. Raúl Fernandes (Uni. Bissau)
Djalikunda, Septemebr 2023



An architectural rendering of a school courtyard. The scene is set in a warm, sunny environment. In the foreground, several young children are playing; one boy is kicking a small orange ball. The courtyard is paved and surrounded by lush greenery, including large trees and various tropical plants. In the background, a long, single-story building with a thatched roof and open sides serves as the school. A woman is standing near a chalkboard on the left, and another person is pushing a red stroller on the right. The overall atmosphere is bright and lively.

A sketch...

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FOREST-SCHOOL
Djalikunda, Guinea-Bissau

An Overview

Prepared by Prof. Arch. Silvia Benedito (OficinaAcademy)
and NGO-KAFO
10.10.2024 (update)

Preparado: 10.07. 2024
Revisto 24.10. 2024

COLLABORATORS/ PARTNERS
 Martinho Pina (Arquitetura e Processo de concertação)
 Prof. Luis Catarino (Botânica)
 Bucar Indjai (Florestas Comunitárias)

Calendar (Draft) May 2025

The estimated Budget (Draft)

The implementation and the monitoring of the Forest-School includes 3 components:

- I. Infrastructure, Design and Construction;
- II. Engagement and Management (short and longer-term)
- III. Documentation and Dissemination

It is estimated a total cost of approximately **131,000.00 Euros (*)**. Detailed preliminary budget:

(*) This includes 10% contingency and the Project’s Documentation and Dissemination

FOREST-SCHOOL: ESTIMATED COSTS							
I. DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION	Item	Description	Quantities	Unitary Cost (XOF)	Cost (XOF)	Cost (Euro)	Cost (Dollar)
	I-Building Construction						
	1.1	Construction materials	08 Lotes	625,000.00 XOF	5,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 7,500.00	USD 8,100.00
	1.2	Local Labor and Specialities	08 Comprts	225,000.00 XOF	1,800,000.00 XOF	EUR 2,700.00	USD 2,916.00
	Sub-Total				6,800,000.00 XOF	EUR 10,200.00	USD 11,016.00
	II-Equipment and Furniture						
	2.1	Electrical infrastructure	8	100,000.00 XOF	800,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,200.00	USD 1,296.00
	2.2	Water infrastructure (Well)	8	150,000.00 XOF	1,200,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,800.00	USD 1,944.00
	2.3	Toillet materials	3	175,000.00 XOF	525,000.00 XOF	EUR 787.50	USD 850.50
	2.4	Teaching materials and Rooms' furniture	8	250,000.00 XOF	2,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 3,000.00	USD 3,240.00
	2.5	Local Labor and Specialities for installation	8	125,000.00 XOF	1,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,500.00	USD 1,620.00
	2.6	Equipment and documentation material for the library	1	500,000.00 XOF	500,000.00 XOF	EUR 750.00	USD 810.00
	2.7	Fence around the school	1	850,000.00 XOF	850,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,275.00	USD 1,377.00
	Sub-Total				6,875,000.00 XOF	EUR 10,312.50	USD 11,137.50
	III-Drinking water infrastructure						
	3.1	Well of fresh water (Furo profundo)	1	10,200,000.00 XOF	10,200,000.00 XOF	EUR 15,300.00	USD 16,524.00
	3.2	Installation of Water Pump	1	2,500,000.00 XOF	2,500,000.00 XOF	EUR 3,750.00	USD 4,050.00
	3.3	Water reservoir (10.000 L)	1	2,000,000.00 XOF	2,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 3,000.00	USD 3,240.00
	3.4	Materials and installation of water infrastructure	1	350,000.00 XOF	350,000.00 XOF	EUR 525.00	USD 567.00
	Sub-Total				15,050,000.00 XOF	EUR 22,575.00	USD 24,381.00
	IV-Solar Energy & Landscape/ Garden Equipment						
	4.1	Solar panels, Bateries, transformers, and installation materials	10	350,000.00 XOF	3,500,000.00 XOF	EUR 5,250.00	USD 5,670.00
	4.2	Equipment for the Agro-forest educational activities & maintenance (tools)	3	250,000.00 XOF	750,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,125.00	USD 1,215.00
	4.3	School Bee Hives for honey	5	100,000.00 XOF	500,000.00 XOF	EUR 750.00	USD 810.00
	Sub-Total				4,750,000.00 XOF	EUR 7,125.00	USD 7,695.00
	V-Landscape Gardens (learning outside)						
	5.1	Gardens (Creole+Water)	6	150,000.00 XOF	900,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,350.00	USD 1,458.00
	5.2	Nursery	1	500,000.00 XOF	500,000.00 XOF	EUR 750.00	USD 810.00
	5.3	Forest-Loop	1	100,000.00 XOF	100,000.00 XOF	EUR 150.00	USD 162.00
	Sub-Total				1,500,000.00 XOF	EUR 2,250.00	USD 2,430.00
	VI-Project Development (Architecture+Landscape)						
	6.1	Site Survey + Documentation (1 travel)	1	500,000.00 XOF	500,000.00 XOF	EUR 750.00	USD 810.00
	6.2	Architectural+Landscape Project (Design+Monotoring + 3 Travels)	1	9,500,000.00 XOF	9,500,000.00 XOF	EUR 14,250.00	USD 15,390.00
	6.3	Fauna/ Fauna specialist (1 travel)	1	1,200,000.00 XOF	1,200,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,800.00	USD 1,944.00
	6.4	Construction supervision (with Local Architect)	1	2,500,000.00 XOF	2,500,000.00 XOF	EUR 3,750.00	USD 4,050.00
	Sub-Total				13,700,000.00 XOF	EUR 20,550.00	USD 22,194.00
	DESIGN + CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL				48,675,000.00 XOF	EUR 73,012.50	USD 78,853.50
II. ENGAGEMENT & MANAGEMENT (SHORT/ LONG TERM)	VII-Project Preparation: Engagement & Participation						
	7.1	Workshops and engagement sessions with the Communities (2x Travels)	2	900,000.00 XOF	1,800,000.00 XOF	EUR 2,700.00	USD 2,916.00
	7.2	Construction workshops w local techniques and materials (focused on woman and young adults)	1	300,000.00 XOF	300,000.00 XOF	EUR 450.00	USD 486.00
	Sub-Total				2,100,000.00 XOF	EUR 3,150.00	USD 3,402.00
	VIII-Managing and Operational Budget for the Forest-School						
	8.1	Seed fund for the beginning of the Forest-School activities	1	450,000.00 XOF	450,000.00 XOF	EUR 675.00	USD 729.00
	8.2	Monotoring of the Forest-School activities (5-Year plan - to be included in Annual Report - item 9.3)	5	90,000.00 XOF	450,000.00 XOF	EUR 675.00	USD 729.00
	8.3	Teachers' Long-Term Perspective Plan (salary, promotion & network activities 5-Year plan)	5	2,000,000.00 XOF	10,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 15,000.00	USD 16,200.00
	Sub-Total				10,900,000.00 XOF	EUR 16,350.00	USD 17,658.00
	II. ENGAGEMENT + MANAGEMENT (SHORT/ LONG TERM) SUB-TOTAL				13,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 19,500.00	USD 21,060.00
	TOTAL COSTS: I + II					EUR 92,512.50	USD 99,913.50
	CONTINGENCY					10%	10%
	TOTAL COSTS: I + II (with 10% Contingency)					EUR 101,763.75	USD 109,904.85
III. DOCUMENTATION + DISSEMINATION	IX- Project Documentation & Dessimation material						
	9.1	Photo Documentation (3 week process documentation- Phase 1, 2 and final)	3	1,500,000.00 XOF	4,500,000.00 XOF	EUR 6,750.00	USD 7,290.00
	9.2	Film Documentation (3 week process documentation- Phase 1, 2 and final. Editing)	1	12,000,000.00 XOF	12,000,000.00 XOF	EUR 18,000.00	USD 19,440.00
	9.3	Annual Report (5 years)	5	250,000.00 XOF	1,250,000.00 XOF	EUR 1,875.00	USD 2,025.00
	III. DOCUMENTATION + DISSEMINATION SUB-TOTAL				17,750,000.00 XOF	EUR 26,625.00	USD 28,755.00
	TOTAL COSTS: I + II + III					EUR 119,137.50	USD 128,668.50
	CONTINGENCY					10%	10%
	TOTAL COSTS: I + II + III					EUR 131,051.25	USD 141,535.35