



Ministère de l'Éducation
de l'Alphabétisation et
des Langues Nationales



MEDERSAS IN MALI

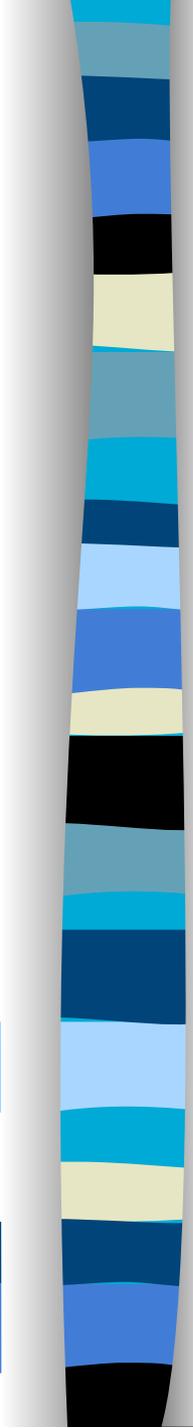
Context and environment

A qualitative research study of the
USAID/PHARE Program

What are medersas?

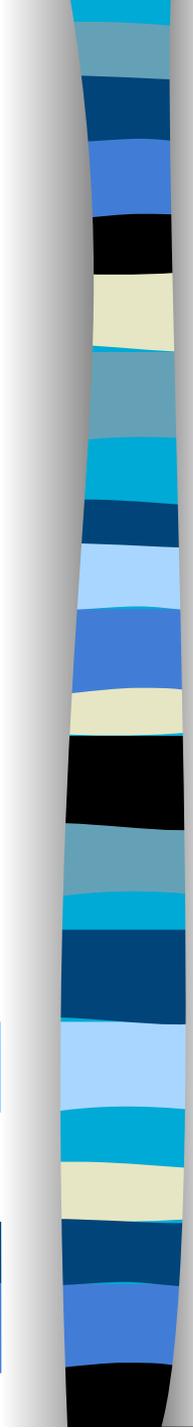
- Medersas are educational institutions offering religious instruction and core secular subjects
- In Mali, medersas are registered by the Ministry of Education and follow a curriculum mandated by the Ministry.
- Currently 1840 medersas are registered in Mali
- The primary language of instruction is Arabic, with French instruction beginning in 3rd grade.





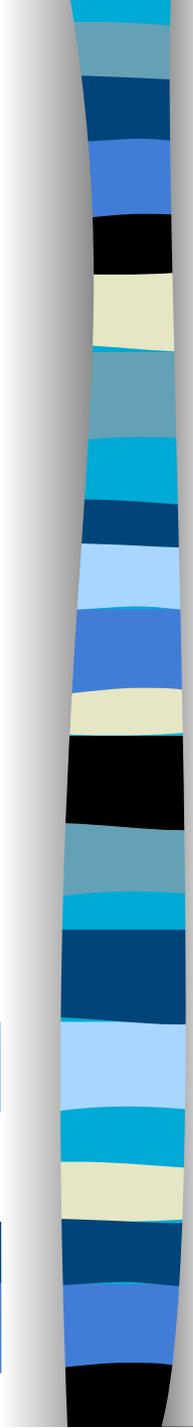
Why are we interested in them?

- The majority of pupils in the medersas come from families in the lower socio-economic levels.
- Parents of medersa students are education-minded but want a religious education for their children.
- There are often (incorrectly) associated with religious fundamentalism and foreign funding and are therefore seen as a threat.
- Faith in education is high among parents and children in medersas but pedagogical quality is low, French instruction is lacking in particular and resources are extremely lean and even nonexistent in places.
- They might be sources of support in the push to get all children reading.
- The sub-sector is growing extremely quickly; their annual growth rate in enrollment is 15.2%.



Scope of USAID Mali PHARE Study

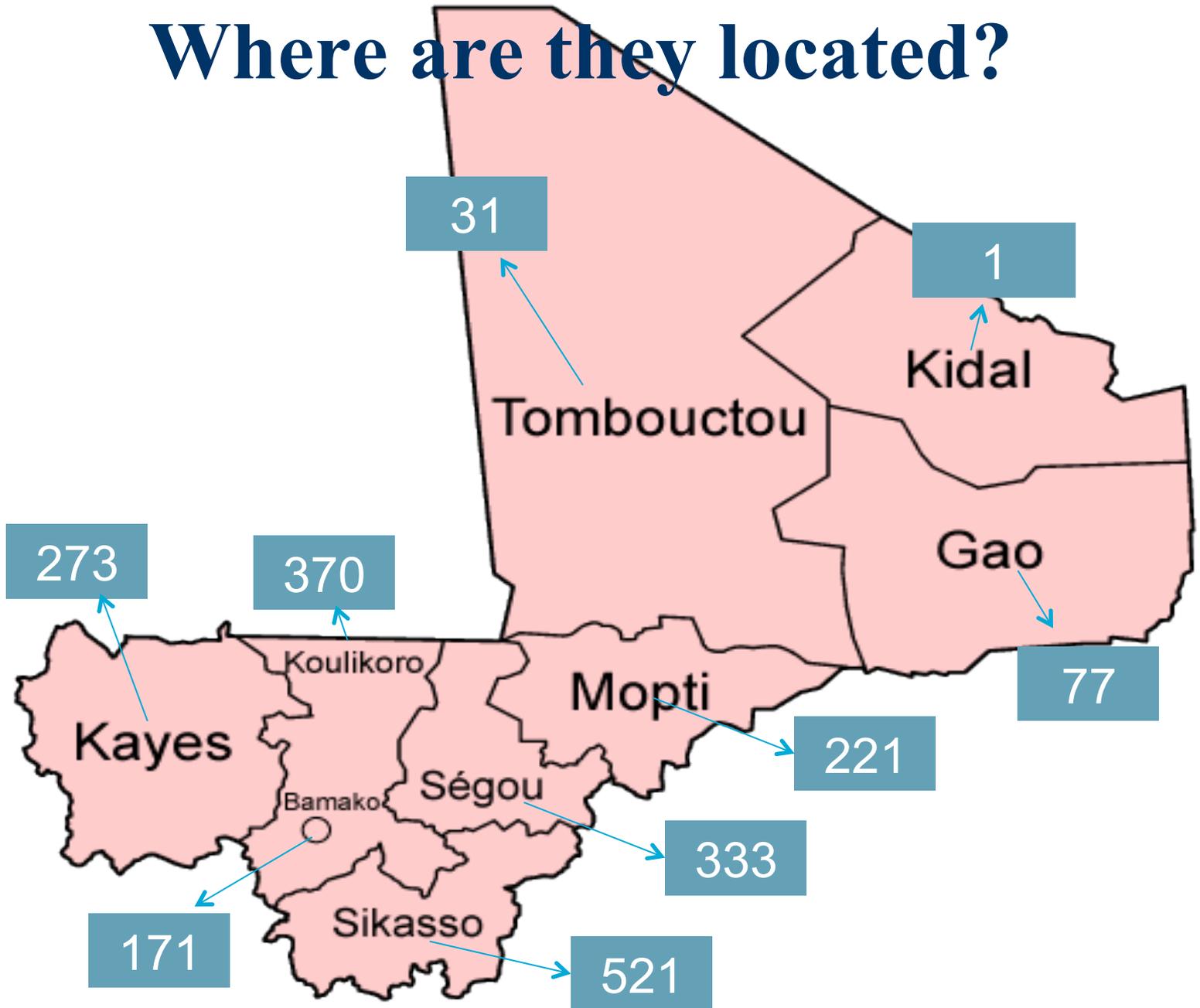
- Nationwide Sample:
 - 14 /15 education regions
 - 39 / 70 education districts stratified based on the number of medersas
 - 98 medersas randomly selected
 - 242 Medersa Teachers
 - 98 Medersa Principals
 - 36 Medersa Owners
 - 11 Islamic Religious Leaders (Ulema)
 - 27 Medersa Pedagogical Counselors
 - 52 Parent Focus Groups
 - 70 Student Focus Groups
 - 345 Classroom observations



Findings from Study

**BASIC INFORMATION ON
MALI' S MEDERSAS**

Where are they located?



Population Served

Cycle	% of medersas with these levels
Pre-kindergarten	13,3%
Cycle 1 (Grades 1 – 6)	96,9%
Cycle 2 (Grade 7-9)	41,8%
Secondary	10,2%

- The medersas offer all levels of pre-university education, though the majority are found in the first and second cycles of the fundamental level.
- The average student/teacher ratio is a reasonable 31/1.

- The average number of pupils in a medersa is 250 with 45% of the students girls.
- Nonetheless, this gender average hides a significant disparity between the regions. (ex. 35% in Kati and 60% in Bamako)
- The majority of students come from the immediate environment of the medersa.
- The average number of personnel found in each medersa is one director and 8 teachers.



Medersa Personnel



- The majority of directors hold the BAC (35%) or the DEF (31%).
- The majority of teachers hold the 9th grade certificate (DEF 41%), and the 12th grade BAC (37%); 7% hold higher education degrees.
- Teachers at the junior high level seem to be more qualified in terms of education.
- 90% of the medersa teachers are male; only 10% are female.
- Salaries are quite low (an average of 23 000 CFA per month).

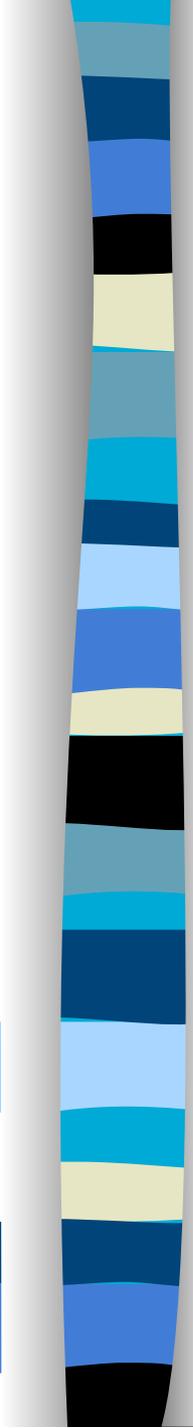
Teaching

- High use of the blackboard (70.6%)
- Adequate subject matter mastery (68.4%)
- Equal attention to gender (66.5%)
- Appropriate behavior of teacher in class (60.9%)



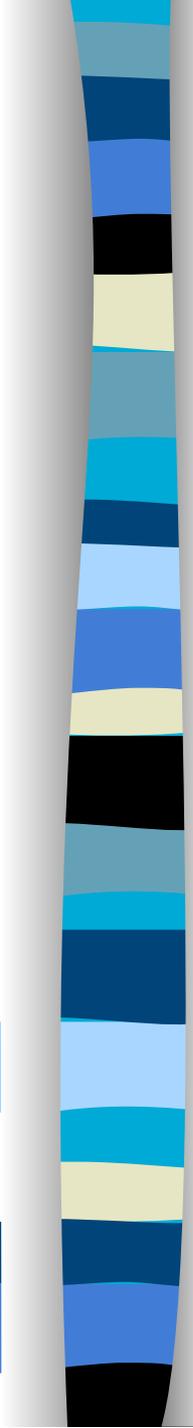


- Low levels of giving individual feedback to students (29.7%)
- Limited or no availability of instructional material in class (28.7%)
- Ineffective use of instructional material (16.1%)
- Absence of purposeful interactions between students (12.8 %)



Finance and governance

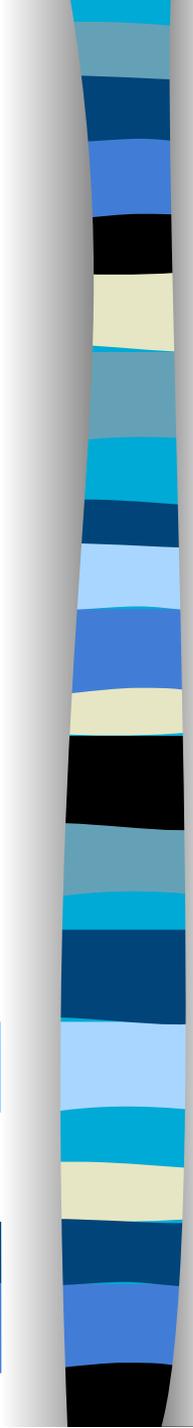
- Student fees are the principal source of financing for the medersas.
- About 20% of resources are received from external donors, either Malian or from abroad:
 - Local donors
 - Charitable associations
 - CAP or CGS (for community medersas / « école communautaire »)
 - Maliens abroad
 - International NGOs
- In most instances, decisions are made by the director. (72% declared they were the sole decision maker).
- 2/3 of the medersas in the study had an APE and or CGS.
- According to the directors, almost half of the CGS and APEs are non-functional



Positive Signs from USAID Mali

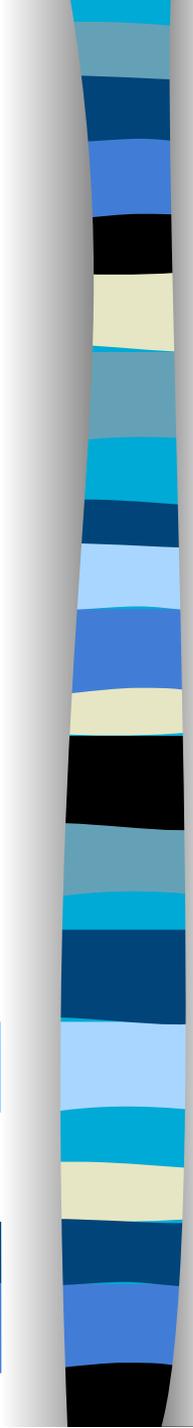
PHARE's work with medersas

- Establishment of a positive working relationship with a broad range of actors in the medersa sub-sector
- Enthusiastic response from medersa directors and teachers to the opportunities for training and support
- Existence of a climate of openness and eagerness to work with the Americans
- The medersas have, by and large, been surprisingly good adopters of the IRI; only a very few in the end have raised any religious objections to its use
- The medersas had some of the best scores on our classroom practice tools of any group, and surpassed the indicator set for them (a level of 2 or better) in the end of 2011



Next Steps for USAID/PHARE

- Continue providing support to improved instruction for 1,100 targeted medersas nation-wide via interactive radio instruction, teacher training, and instructional materials
- Continue to liaise with a wide variety of actors to determine how best the medersas can benefit from PHARE's assistance
- Continue to strengthen already-established relationships and build new relationships on behalf of the medersas
- Participate in initiatives to expand or strengthen outreach and support to medersas



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