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MALI TRANSITION INITIATIVE (MTI)

QUARTERLY REPORT

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Prepared by:

AECOM International Development
2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22201

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFISAM	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
A&E	Architectural and Engineering
APEM	Network for the Electoral Process in Mali <i>(Réseau d'Appui au Processus Electoral au Mali)</i>
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
ATT	Amadou Toumani Touré
COP	Chief of Party
CR	Country Representative (OTI)
DDGS	Direct Distribution of Goods and Services
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GUC	Grant Under Contract
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IRI	International Republican Institute
JCI	International Youth Chamber <i>Jeune Chambre International</i>
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali <i>Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation au Mali</i>
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad <i>Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad</i>
MTI	Mali Transition Initiative
MUJAO	Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa <i>(Mouvement pour le Tawhîd et du Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest)</i>
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
SOM	Senior Operations Manager
SRS	Strategic Review Session
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the Mali Transition Initiative (MTI) in June of 2013. The first quarter of Fiscal Year 2014 was important MTI because a significant number of staff came on board, programming expanded considerably, and the program held its first Strategy Review Session (SRS). MTI made significant contributions to the November 2013 legislative elections, while expanding its support for reconciliation in northern communities affected by conflict.

TOTAL GRANTS CLEARED

MTI cleared 30 activities valued at \$1,088,936 during the October to December 2013 period. A total of \$1,969,690 TAP funds have been committed through December 2013, broken down by funding source in the table at right.

FUNDING SOURCE	EST GRANT AMOUNT USD	DISBURSEMENTS ¹
CCF	\$653,531	\$334,384
DA	\$450,364	\$104,221
TI	\$865,795	\$634,562
Total	\$1,969,690	\$1,073,167

Of the activities cleared during the quarter, one-third contributed to the governance program objective, and two-thirds contributed to the reconciliation objective but the total dollar amount was nearly even as indicated in the table at right. A detailed list of grants is included in Annex A.

OBJECTIVE	NUMBER	AMOUNT USD
To increase citizen confidence in and information about the democratic process and governance	10	\$566,439.76
To promote reconciliation and social cohesion aimed at addressing drivers of conflict	20	\$522,496.12
Total	30	\$1,088,935.88

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

OBJECTIVE 1: TO INCREASE CITIZEN CONFIDENCE IN AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND GOVERNANCE

MTI provided considerable support to the legislative elections through nine activities valued at \$528,664. Successful legislative elections were an important step towards reestablishing a representative, internationally recognized democracy in Mali. The National Assembly provides a forum for peaceful, legitimate opposition, an important part of any stable society. MTI supported voter mobilization campaigns, dissemination of important information on voting procedures, and support to the Direction General des Elections (DGE), the Malian Government Elections Directorate.

To facilitate voter access to voting booth locations and support a robust turnout during the first and second round of the legislative elections (MTI050 and MTI065 respectively), MTI supported the Elections Directorate (*Direction General des Elections* or DGE) through a Direct Distribution of Goods and Services (DDGS) to deploy technicians—130 in the first round and 65 in the second round—to carry electronic scanners used to identify the correct voting locations for Malian voters by scanning NINA voting cards. MTI provided the technicians with stipends and transportation reimbursements to deploy to polling stations nationwide where voter turnout was low and where voters experienced difficulties in finding their polling stations.

Many voters, displaced by fighting in the North, changed their polling stations to vote in the 2013 Presidential elections. Displaced persons that have subsequently returned to their homes or settled elsewhere were required to transfer their voter registration. MTI launched MTI047 on October 23, 2013, to send nationwide SMS blasts that informed Orange and Malitel mobile phone subscribers of the October 30, 2013, voter registration transfer deadline. On the October 28 ORTM evening news, mayors from all six communes in Bamako testified that citizens in these districts had started to either

¹ Includes grant disbursements for both MRO and MTI, as reported in the activity database through December 30.

withdraw their voter cards (NINA) or to transfer their polling stations. Those interviewed indicated that there had been a large increase in registration in recent days, and mentioned specifically the SMS blasts that had been sent out. The DGE reported that 160,000 people were approved to transfer their polling stations following the SMS blast.

Several activities supported civic education during the election through radio, television and roving caravans. Under MTI046, Chamady Comedie produced and performed three short dramas. Under MTI048, SOS Democratie trained youth mobilizers to increase the youth vote and continued the operation of their very successful telephone hotline that allowed citizens to report incidents of electoral irregularities.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION AND SOCIAL COHESION AIMED AT ADDRESSING DRIVERS OF CONFLICT

The safe return of Malian refugees and displaced people is a priority of the newly elected government, and a key dimension of the reconciliation process and stabilization efforts – particularly in areas formerly occupied by armed insurgent groups. MTI chose Niafunke and Timbuktu as launching pads for work in the North because they were occupied during the conflict and are relatively accessible from Mopti. All are *cercle*² capitals, each comprising several communes, while Timbuktu is also a regional capital. MTI uses this approach to test methodologies and approaches for replication elsewhere, complemented by initiatives organized in Bamako.

Under MTI037, the Prefect's office in Niafunke held conflict resolution talks between divided local community leaders. The 2012 occupation by armed groups caused a deep rift among Niafunke's community leaders, particularly between those who fled and others who remained in place to manage the commune's affairs. This conflict divided the population of the whole cercle of Niafunke due to the political and social importance of these leaders and its resolution was critical to social cohesion in the area. The activity supported the Prefect in organizing and facilitating reconciliation talks, which were held on October 29, 2013, and lasted over eight hours. The talks concluded with the Mayor of Niafunke shaking hands with every member of the crisis committee, and asking for pardon for harsh words and accusations he had made against some committee members. The activity helped the Prefect reestablish his authority and legitimacy within the community through this reconciliation with its leaders. The Prefect is now intending to form a commission comprised of the Mayor and members of the crisis committee to work on a plan of action and specific recommendations for further reconciliation and social cohesion efforts in Niafunke Cercle.

MTI launched MTI062, Inter-community Dialogue to Prepare for Refugee Return to Douentza, to mobilize a delegation comprised of representatives of each of Douentza's ethnic groups, civil society and religious leaders as well as a local elected official and the Prefect himself. This delegation toured 14 of Douentza's 15 communes and held public assemblies to establish a dialogue on the safe return of refugees and the necessity of peaceful coexistence with the resident population. The activity successfully fostered important and substantive exchanges between different ethnic groups, as well as between government representatives and the community leaders. The Prefect found the discussions and exchanges productive, and asked the members to propose recommendations to achieve mutually shared goals of reconciliation between and within communities, as well as laying the foundation for the future return of refugees and displaced persons. The Dogon community representative was impressed by how other communities have already initiated the process of dialogue and reconciliation within their municipality. A women's representative noted that this mission allowed populations to 'vomit what they have on their heart,' a Songrai way of saying that participants expressed the pain and suffering they had experienced in ways they hadn't felt comfortable doing to date, which she rightly saw as a big step in the reconciliation process.

² The first level administrative units in Mali are the eight regions and one capital district. The second level administrative sub-division is the cercle and the third is the commune. Mali currently has 49 cercles and 703 communes.

Under MTI067, nine Malian youth leaders traveled to Rwanda from December 17-22, 2013, to participate in the international youth forum's iHOPE Conference in Kigali. The purpose of the activity was to give them the opportunity to exchange with youth from other African countries that have experienced or are experiencing conflict. Malian participants were impressed by what they saw in Rwanda, especially its infrastructure and security. They concluded that if Rwandans can forgive each other after genocide, there is opportunity for Malians to forgive each other after civil war and communal violence.

On 3 December 2013, the state discovered a mass grave believed to hold the remains of soldiers allegedly executed by forces supporting the former coup leader General Sanogo. The Prosecuting Judge requested outside expert forensic assistance to ascertain their identity and cause of death. To support the quest for accountability, MTI rapidly deployed experts—three pathologists, one forensic anthropologist, and one forensic geneticist—to Mali to collect samples from the grave site.

UPCOMING AND ONGOING ACTIVITIES

During the 2012 conflict, Douentza's public lycee (high school) was used as a base of operations for armed rebel groups, and was the target of airstrikes during the January 2013 French military offensive. Many of its campus buildings sustained significant damage, and local authorities have had no choice but to halt classes on campus. In order to restore the lycee's original functionality, MTI will support reconstruction of 13 campus buildings. This activity will provide a tangible symbol of the return of stability in the area, as well as create a positive venue for engaging youth ages 15-20 who are highly vulnerable to radicalization by extremist groups. With a budget exceeding \$900,000, it will most certainly be MTI's largest and highest profile activity. The entire bidding and construction process will last more than a year, but a signing ceremony with the Ambassador is expected in the coming quarter along with the issuance of an RFQ for construction.

The second highest priority for the next quarter will be launching activities and beginning to lay the groundwork for opening an office in Gao, a key area of instability and insecurity. AECOM will proceed with prudent consideration of the security environment and work closely with MINUSMA, the U.S. Embassy, and AECOM corporate security as it implements MTI activities in this area of Mali.

Other activities that are in the pipeline include rehabilitating the Harber Maiga Cultural Center in Niafunke, the main venue for artistic performances and community life in the Cercle. The cultural center was an important gathering point for the population and the youth in particular. During the occupation, the cultural center was looted and vandalized by armed insurgent groups, and today remains abandoned. Other pending activities include: recording and diffusion of peace and reconciliation messages in Timbuktu; a poetry, literature and cinema caravan on the Niger river; a youth conflict mediation delegation for Niafunke Cercle; repairing and equipping the Timbuktu lycee computer lab, library, and recreation area; and rehabilitation of the principal court house in the Timbuktu Region.

At the national level, MTI will collaborate with USAID's Governance team, as well as other US Embassy colleagues, to support initiatives that will set the foundation for a transfer from transition programming to long term development. In addition, MTI will provide strategic and targeted support to national level reconciliation efforts by the Government of Mali when appropriate. Finally, the mayoral elections will complete the process of reestablishing Mali's representative republican government. As in the past, MTI will collaborate with USAID and State Department-funded rule of law, democracy, governance and communications programs to identify where it can best contribute to on-going programs and find niche areas to provide support.

SECURITY

No security incidents affected MTI staff or program activities during the quarter, though security continued to be of great concern, especially in Kidal and Gao. Two French radio journalists were assassinated in Kidal on November 2, 2013, after being kidnapped by gunmen. The assassination garnered considerable national and international media attention, prompting an extensive discussion on Malian social media regarding the negative influence of both the French military and the armed insurgent groups. The *Mouvement pour le Tawhîd et du Jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest* (MUJAO) claimed responsibility for a bomb attack that destroyed a bridge near Gao on October 8, 2013. Thousands of residents in Gao rioted and participated in protest over talks aimed at healing divisions in the north on November 1, 2013. Demonstrators accused local officials of making last-minute changes to the list of delegates to be sent to talks in Bamako. The demonstration escalated to a street battle, and police fired tear gas at protesters who torched the mayor's house. Protests in Kidal on November 28, 2013, resulted in Malian troops firing on civilian protesters.

STAFF MOVEMENT

The single largest staff movement in the quarter came when the Strategy Review Session (SRS) was held from November 4-7, 2013, in Mopti, bringing all staff together for the first time. The facilitation team, consisting of Aurora Deuss and Leah Werchick, conducted 33 data-gathering interviews prior to the event, including most PAT-M staff in Bamako, Mopti and Timbuktu, as well as key staff from OTI/ Washington and AECOM. All participants considered the SRS a great success because it forged relationships among staff across three offices; provided a clear understanding as to how OTI programming is different from traditional development assistance; and created the opportunity to participate in group activities that simulated team-building and reflection on the MTI program. Cultural and team-building activities also included a boat trip on the Niger River, team dinner, and a visit to the ancient Djenne Mosque.

Staff movements during the quarter supported program implementation and expanding operations. Chief of Party (COP) Amanda Willett and Regional Program Manager Olivier Gerard conducted several field missions to Timbuktu to launch and further develop programming in Timbuktu Region. Four CCN staff formally transferred from Mopti to Timbuktu in recognition of the need to expand engagement with local and international actors, communities, and local groups. The Timbuktu Office now has a total of six professional staff members and is fully operational.

The following missions occurred during the quarter:

- November 19-23, Procurement and Logistics Specialist Abdoul Kassim Fomba traveled to Sikasso, Koumantou, Koutiala and Segou to monitor the implementation of the legislative elections activity cluster.
- December 2-11, Projects Specialist Andre Tanguy accompanied the Douentza Prefect on a tour of 14 of Douentza Cercle's 15 communes to report on the talks with the population on the issue of safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons.
- December 17-23, Timbuktu-based Logistics Assistant Abdoulaye Ahmadou Touré traveled to Rwanda to participate in the iHOPE week conference in Rwanda, in order to share his unique experience of the occupation by armed insurgent groups in Timbuktu.

OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

In December, MTI deployed Senior Finance and Administration Manager Alpha Koroma and received CO approval to promote Laguerre Rutare from Procurement, Logistics and Subcontracts Manager to Senior Operations Manager, a Key Personnel position. The Information & Reporting Specialist resigned in December and recruitment for her replacement is underway. Sixteen staff joined MTI in October and two in November, bringing the MTI team to a total of 35 staff – 31 CCN and four expatriate.

MTI received the requisite approvals to purchase eight vehicles for MTI's three offices. The approval process that was initiated in August 2013 was not formally completed until late October, leading AECOM to re-launch its RFQ because the quotes it had received had expired while waiting for the necessary waiver.

AECOM continued the security upgrades on its office in Timbuktu, and completed the upgrades on both the COP and Senior Operations Manager (SOM) residences, allowing them to leave their temporary quarters.

ANNEX A: GRANTS CLEARED BY COUNTRY OBJECTIVE

To increase citizen confidence in and information about the democratic process and governance

GRANT NUMBER	GRANT TITLE	AWARDEE	EST GRANT AMOUNT USD	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
MTI050	DDGS for Technical Support to Find Voting Booths	DDGS for Election Support	\$42,508.33	Completed	25-Nov-13	20-Jan-14
MTI052	Improving voter turnout and empowering women candidates	Youth Chamber of Mali	\$67,650.13	Completed	01-Nov-13	20-Jan-14
MTI047	SMS Text Message for Voter Education in the Legislative Election	DDGS for Election Support	\$62,500.00	Completed	23-Oct-13	10-Nov-13
MTI046	Comedy Dramas to promote the Role of Members of Parliament and Voter Turnout	Chamady Comedie	\$40,609.67	Closed	25-Oct-13	15-Nov-13
MTI048	Mobilization for legislative elections	SOS-DEMOCRATIE	\$64,159.37	Completed	28-Oct-13	20-Jan-14
MTI049	Increasing Information on Parliamentary Elections	DDGS for Election Support	\$60,000.00	Completed	25-Oct-13	20-Jan-14
MTI061	SMS Technology Solution to Increasing Voter Turnout	DDGS for Election Support	\$90,632.00	Completed	21-Nov-13	31-Dec-13
MTI064	Expanding CEPPS Partner Support for the Second Round Legislative Election	DDGS for Election Support	\$60,000.00	Completed	02-Dec-13	31-Dec-13
MTI065	DDGS for Technical Support to Find Voting Booths	DDGS for Election Support	\$40,604.26	Completed	02-Dec-13	15-Dec-13
MTI039	Rehabilitation of the Issaber Radio Station in Lere	Issaber Radio Station	\$37,776.00	Cleared	25-Nov-13	31-Jan-14
Total			\$566,439.76			

To promote reconciliation and social cohesion aimed at addressing drivers of conflict

GRANT NUMBER	GRANT TITLE	AWARDEE	EST GRANT AMOUNT USD	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
MTI073	Timbuktu Clean-up Campaign and Revival of Community Sanitation Organization	GIE Tamaha	\$3,569.00	Cleared	18-Dec-13	31-Jan-14
MTI071	Timbuktu Clean-up Campaign and Revival of Community Sanitation Organization	GIE Hinaine	\$3,569.00	Cleared	18-Dec-13	31-Jan-14
MTI044	Douentza High School Equipment Support	Lycee de Douentza	\$542.61	Closed	14-Oct-13	28-Oct-13
MTI045	Commemorative Ceremony for Douentza Crisis committee members	Douentza Prefet	\$2,409.09	Closed	26-Oct-13	27-Oct-13
MTI036	Feasibility Study : Rehabilitation of Cultural Center, Lycee and Court, Timbuktu	DDGS : Architecture and Engineering Services	\$13,344.00	Cleared	28-Oct-13	31-Jan-14
MTI037	Community leaders conflict resolution and reconciliation talks-Niafunke	Préfecture de Niafunke	\$1,602.61	Closed	28-Oct-13	15-Dec-13
MTI054	Engaging Timbuktu Youth through Theater Competition	Timbuktu Communal Youth Council	\$20,549.00	Cleared	18-Nov-13	20-Jan-14

To promote reconciliation and social cohesion aimed at addressing drivers of conflict

GRANT NUMBER	GRANT TITLE	AWARDEE	EST GRANT AMOUNT USD	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
MTI072	Timbuktu Clean-up Campaign and Revival of Community Sanitation Organization	GIE Kel Tamasheq	\$3,569.00	Cleared	18-Dec-13	31-Jan-14
MTI055	Mobilization and Reconciliation of Women across Niafunke	Préfecture de Niafunke	\$15,634.00	Cleared	25-Nov-13	28-Feb-14
MTI051	Rapid Radio Technical Assessment in Lere	Abdrmane Ba	\$2,610.36	Closed	24-Oct-13	05-Dec-13
MTI058	STTA Support for Coordination of Reconciliation Initiatives in Niafunke	Mohamed Alhousseiny Maiga	\$13,056.00	Cleared	02-Dec-13	31-Mar-14
MTI066	Timbuktu Clean-up Campaign and Revival of Community Sanitation Organization	GIE Bani Laoutoun Service	\$3,569.00	Cleared	18-Dec-13	31-Jan-14
MTI067	Youth Participation in iHOPE week in Rwanda	DDGS - Youth participation in the Rwanda iHope week	\$23,457.45	Completed	17-Dec-13	31-Dec-13
MTI043	Open Source Analysis Program in Support of DG, Civil Society and CVE Programs	DDGS for Open Source Atmospherics	\$194,252.00	Cleared	01-Nov-13	30-Apr-14
MTI041	Workshop of Reconciliation through art in Mopti	Groupe Bogolan Kasobane	\$50,000.00	Cleared	09-Dec-13	15-Apr-14
MTI078	Emergency Repairs to Gossi Water Supply System	Commune rurale de Gossi	\$20,713.00	Cleared	03-Jan-14	28-Feb-14
MTI062	Inter-community Dialogue to Prepare for Refugee Return to Douentza	Douentza Prefect	\$6,560.00	Completed	01-Dec-13	15-Dec-13
MTI063	Peace and Reconciliation Theater Caravan in Timbuktu Region	Association Lassalterey-Horey	\$49,921.00	Cleared	03-Dec-13	15-Feb-14
MTI068	Technical assistance to the Ministry of Justice	DDGS - Ministry of Justice	\$90,000.00	Cleared	07-Dec-13	10-Jan-14
MTI074	Timbuktu Clean-up Campaign and Revival of Community Sanitation Organization	GIE Groupe 05 de Kabara	\$3,569.00	Cleared	18-Dec-13	31-Jan-14
		Total	\$522,496.12			