

**USAID/Mali Democratic Governance Strategic Objective  
Performance Measurement Survey II  
Data Analysis Report**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past four years, USAID/Mali has undergone a process of reengineering and the development of five strategic objectives and a new results-based framework. MSI consultants assisted the USAID/Mali Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (DGSO) Team in the design, execution, and analysis of last year's baseline study, as well as this second DGSO performance measurement survey. In these studies, enumerators interviewed leaders of USAID-partner community organizations (COs), federations, intermediary non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and local officials in order to operationalize indicators of organizational performance and provide the DGSO team, USAID/Mali, its Partners, and USAID/Washington with data on the effectiveness of DGSO programming activities.

The present report is intended as a comprehensive description of the methodology employed and results obtained in this "DGSO Performance Measurement Survey II." As such, it describes the process of operationalization and the methodology employed, provides results for the DGSO indicators, and presents analysis and recommendations.

The first section of the report provides background on civil society and democratization, as well as on USAID/Mali's DGSO and the methods the DGSO Team have chosen to measure its performance. The second section of the report describes the process of preparing for data collection, including the roles of the various personnel in the study, the training of data collection enumerators and supervisors, and details on the pre-test of the survey instruments.

The third section provides details on the sampling and data collection methodologies employed. Specifically, six principal types of data were collected:

1. A survey census of 25 intermediary NGOs collaborating with American NGO Partners.
2. A census of 15 federations that collaborate with USAID Partners.
3. A survey sample of over 137 community organizations (COs) which work with the 25 INGOs or directly with CARE-Mali.
4. A control group of 36 COs that are not partners with USAID or its Partners.
5. Qualitative interviews with local officials in all of the 41 arrondissements and communes where sample COs are located.
6. Qualitative interviews with officials at the Mission of Decentralization in order to gather information on the enabling environment.

The third section also describes the challenges encountered in compiling a complete sampling frame of the universe of DGSO-partner COs. Then, the sample design, control group innovation, and data collection supervision are explained. A disproportionate stratified sample was drawn in order to allow comparisons by international NGO Partner and CO gender type. The addition of a control group of non-target COs is the most significant difference between this year's study and last year's baseline. Because of time and resource constraints, as well as the non-existence of a non-target CO sampling frame, this control group methodology should be viewed simply as a pilot

attempt to show the sorts of comparisons possible were the necessary resources invested to build on this innovation.

Section four provides detailed information on the decision to conduct bivariate weighting of the results, followed by detailed analysis of those results. A summary of the findings by intermediate result is presented below.

***SUMMARY OF RESULTS:***

**Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (SO 3): "Community organizations in target communes are effective partners in democratic governance, including development decision making and planning."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Percent of COs which have affected 2 or more development decisions.**

We estimate that 19.16 percent of all USAID-partner COs but only 7.05 percent of women's COs have affected two or more development decisions in the past year (August-September 1997 to August-September 1998).

**2. Number of regional/national government decisions target intermediary NGOs and federations and their CO members and partners affected.**

As was reported last year, this is a difficult indicator on which to collect data. Because the unit of analysis in the present study is the organization, we reported on this as follows -- We estimate that 13.96 percent of target COs have affected decisions in collaboration with intermediary organizations such as NGOs and federations. Only 7.05 percent of women's COs report similar behavior.

**3. Percent of target COs forming a good partnership with local government in delivering public services.**

We estimate that 18.12 percent of all target COs can demonstrate evidence of high levels of cooperation, compared with only 8.69 percent of women's groups.

**4. Percent of target communes where USAID finances DG activities in which new COs have formed during the year.**

In 57.89 percent of jurisdictions surveyed where USAID finances DG activities, new COs had formed during the previous year.

**5. Percent of target communes in which non-target COs adopt civic action practices.**

Because this year's pilot control group is quite small in size, we remain unable to produce data for non-target COs which will be comparable with that for target COs, but we did seek anecdotal evidence of their civic action, as follows -- Exactly fifty percent of the non-target control group engaged in at least some civic action in the past year. This is somewhat less than the target sample, in which 62.98 percent of the COs engaged in some form of civic action.

**6. Percent of COs expanding their development services and activities.**

We estimate that 84.98 percent of target COs and 72.41 percent of women's COs expanded development services and activities in the twelve months preceding the survey.

**IR 3.1: "Target community organizations are engaged in democratic self-governance and civic action at the local level and beyond."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Target COs govern themselves democratically.**

First, we report on the individual items in the four-point democratic self-governance index:

- a. Exactly fifty percent of mixed groups and an astounding 84.85 percent of women's groups report that they are voluntary in membership.
- b. Among mixed groups, 20.19 percent elect leaders for a fixed period of time ensuring alternation. This procedure is followed by 27.27 percent of women's groups.
- c. The same amount of mixed groups and women's groups gave evidence of organizational by-laws -- 30.77 percent of mixed groups and 30.30 percent of women's groups.
- d. Only five of the 137 groups in the target sample (3.65 percent) were able to demonstrate proof of sixty percent rank-and-file membership general assembly attendance.

*Based on these criteria, none of the 137 target COs in the sample scored a perfect four out of four on the democratic self-governance index, and only 5.13 percent even scored three out of four. However, an encouraging 21.20 percent of women's groups scored three out of four.*

**2. Target COs have sound management practices.**

First, we report on the individual items in the four-point sound management index:

- a. Among mixed groups, 41.35 percent presented evidence of a formal financial system, as did 63.64 percent of women's groups.
- b. Target CO leaders were very articulate in describing their strategic planning. Among mixed groups, fully 75.00 percent named at least two concrete objectives benefiting their communities. Among women's groups, 69.70 percent met the same standard.
- c. Mixed groups were slightly more likely than women's groups to demonstrate at least fifty percent literacy among their officers. Specifically, 56.73 percent of the former and 45.45 percent of the latter met this standard.
- d. Only 4.81 percent of all target groups but an impressive 27.27 percent of women's COs can provide evidence of systematic dues collection.

*According to weighted calculations, less than one percent (0.65 percent) of all target groups score a perfect score of four on the sound management index. Impressively, however, among women's groups that probability rises to 12.27 percent.*

Because of interest on the DGSO Team, we continue to track two indicators that are no longer part of the sound management index:

No mixed groups and only 18.18 percent of women's groups showed evidence of legal recognition at the national level. When local recognition is included, however, 23.08 percent of mixed groups and 30.30 percent of women's groups meet the standard of legal recognition.

Half of all mixed COs (50.49 percent) showed evidence of performing gender analysis.

### **3. Percent of mixed-gender COs with women in leadership positions**

Significantly over half (62.50 percent) of mixed COs had women in leadership positions.

### **4. COs pursuing civic action (public advocacy).**

Well over half of all target COs (62.98 percent) and 40.01 percent of women's COs engaged in some form of civic action in the year preceding the survey.

### **5. Percent of COs pursuing issues with "systematic" (formerly "effective") civic action.**

Among all target COs engaging in civic action, 22.30 percent scored a perfect five on the systematic civic action index. Of women's groups, 19.55 percent met the same standard. We estimate that 51.60 percent of all target COs engaging in civic action pursue it in a systematic manner, as defined by scoring at least four out of five on the "systematic civic action" index. Among women's organizations engaging in civic action, 50.97 percent met this standard.

**6. Financial sustainability -- COs that mobilize resources from non-USAID, non-member sources.**

We estimate that 65.47 percent of all target COs and 68.56 percent of women's COs mobilized resources from at least one non-USAID, non-member source.

**IR 3.1.1: "Target intermediary NGOs and federations support community organizations' democratic self-governance and civic action."**

**Performance Indicator:**

**1. COs which report that they made organizational changes and/or used at least one of the new skills for which they were trained.**

We estimate that 92.06 percent of all target COs receiving training in the past year and 87.52 percent of women's COs have made use of the skills in which they were trained.

**IR 3.1.1.1 (also called 3.1.2.1) "The capacity of target NGOs and federations is strengthened."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Target intermediary NGOs and federations govern themselves democratically.**

Clearly, in terms of self-governance, intermediary NGOs and federations have very little in common -- over half of the federations (9 of 15) scored *zero* out of three on the democratic self-governance index while over half of the NGOs (13 of 25) received a *perfect* score.

**2. Target groups have sound management practices.**

Seven of 25 NGOs (28.00 percent) scored four of six on the sound management index. Only one federation out of fifteen even scored one point on the index.

**IR 3.1.2: "Target intermediary NGOs and federations effectively aggregate and represent community organization interests at the local level and beyond."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Number of target intermediary NGOs and federations for which 2 or more of their CO partners report that the organization in question effectively represents their interests.**

We estimate that 27.94 percent of all target COs and 29.02 percent of women's COs feel that at least one intermediary organization effectively represents their interests.

2. **Number of federations formed to address specific concerns related to government decisions.**
3. **Number of target federations whose membership is stable or increasing.**

There are still problems in

4. **Number of federations and intermediary NGOs engaged in sustained action on issues of mutual concern.**

Eight of the twenty-five INGOs (32 percent) presented written evidence of sustained collaboration with other NGOs or federations. None of the fifteen federations presented evidence of collaboration, though four reported to be involved in such collaboration .

#### **IR 3.1.2.2 "The civic action skills of target intermediary NGOs and federations are improved."**

##### **Performance Indicator:**

1. **Percentage of trained intermediary NGOs and federations using civic action techniques in a given year.**

When presented with a series of eight types of civic action, ranging from contacting public officials and organizing public meetings to using media, 23 of 25 NGO (92.00 percent) reported using at least four of these techniques. The remaining two NGOs used at least one technique. Two of the fifteen federations (13.33 percent) engaged in no civic action at all, but the remaining thirteen (86.67 percent) all used at least two different techniques.

#### **IR 3.2 "Effective Decentralization occurs by 1999."**

##### **Performance Indicators:**

1. **Percentage of communal boundaries decided.**

All communal boundaries were established under Law Number 96-059 of November 1996. Minor alterations may still occur, but have not since last year's survey.

2. **Percentage of elections of mayors, communal boards and councils decided.**

Only 2.71 percent of communal governments are in place, and the elections for 682 rural commune councils have been postponed to April 1999.

**3. Planned laws and regulations about communal councils, boards, and mayors' authority and resources decided by 1999.**

In 1997, Mission of Decentralization authorities reported to Info-Stat that "all texts and laws [concerning decentralization] have been voted upon." This year, they reiterated that position, without going into detail.

**4. The portion of total human and financial resources generated and dispersed by communes.**

Substantial legal ground has been traveled in ensuring that communes have the necessary resources to run effective programs, but the exact total breakdown of resources is not yet known.

**5. Frequency and number of public reporting on council and board meeting minutes and operations.**

The Mission of Decentralization reports that a system for public reporting is in place. Verification visits should be conducted to see whether or not this is in fact the case.

**IR 3.3 "Enabling environment empowers target COs and intermediary NGOs and federations."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Progress toward legal recognition of cooperatives, village associations and federations adapted to decentralization.**

A reform effort, initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Environment, has been underway since 1995. The proposed law was rejected by the Council of Ministers in May 1998, supposedly in order to allow further input by ministries before it is sent to the National Assembly.

**2. Number of enabling environment issues around which two or more NGOs and federations work together to alleviate constraints.**

Only 5 of 25 USAID-partner NGOs (20.00 percent) report collaboration with other NGOs or federations on such issues. Not a single federation reported this type of partnership.

**3. Number of COs knowledgeable about their rights and obligations vis-à-vis local governments.**

Two-thirds of both target COs and women's COs (67.26 percent and 66.23 percent, respectively) scored at least three out of four correct answers on a political rights quiz.

The final section of the report presents issues which must be addressed for the DGSO performance measurement system to continue to improve.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **Sampling Issues:** While the consultants encountered significant hurdles in constructing the target CO sampling frame, the frame that was ultimately constructed was significantly better than that which was available last year. The current plan is to update this data base at least every six months. **A complete data base which contains CO contact information, sectoral information, and length of collaboration with USAID will be indispensable for future rounds of DGSO performance measurement.**

In order to carry out rigorous **impact assessment**, however, a complete non-target CO sampling frame for USAID zones of operation and immediately adjoining zones will be necessary. The construction of such a sampling frame is, needless to say, a daunting task. Nevertheless, if rigorous impact assessment is to be done, **the DGSO Team must construct a non-target CO sampling frame well before the next round of data collection.**

2. **On Various Results:** Certain results point to areas which the DGSO Team may wish to explore in greater detail, either simply to better understand the current results or to examine possible promising avenues for future program resources. The following list is far from exhaustive but should be illustrative:

- a. In 42.10 percent of arrondissements and communes sampled, local officials were unable to report the creation of new COs in the previous year. **Further study of low-civil-society-activity arrondissements and communes** would enable the DGSO Team to explore the causes of the lack of organizational activity.
- b. While most COs in the sample choose their leaders by some sort of election or by consensus, in nearly one-fifth of the sample COs, officers were chosen directly by village elders. Another worthwhile avenue of further study would be to **determine the characteristics of COs in cases where village notables handpick CO leaders**, in order to encourage more inclusive leadership selection in these groups.
- c. For the purposes of the CO democratic self-governance index, only COs able to physically show their by-laws received credit for the “formal by-laws” criterion. If at some point the Team feels the standard was too rigorous, **the CO democracy index can be recalculated** including all those claiming formal by-laws, regardless of whether or not they offered proof.
- d. Also in the CO democratic self-governance index, most COs did not receive credit for the “general assembly attendance” criterion because of inadequate record keeping. The DGSO Team should examine whether they wish for formal record keeping to serve as a barrier to COs receiving credit for democratic procedures. They may also wish to **encourage Partners to promote more systematic record keeping among COs**, both as a means of monitoring other phenomena, as well as a desirable end in itself.

- e. This year, the dues collection standard was loosened to give credit to any CO showing formal written proof of a system for dues collection. Nevertheless, COs had no chance of meeting this standard if they did not collect dues. This year, for example, fully 78.83 percent of COs fell into this category. **The Team should therefore examine their programmatic goals as they concern sound management, as well as the relationship between programmatic goals and the DGSO indicators.** Specifically, do they consider the failure to collect dues as suggestive of a poorly-managed organization? If not, other indicators of sound management should be examined as possible replacements.
  - f. Exploratory analysis revealed seemingly systematic differences between COs working with different international NGO Partners. This was the primary impetus for the weighting decisions that were made. The priorities of the present study prevented us from delving too deeply into these issues, but **further analysis of Partner-by Partner results is warranted.**
3. **Gender Issues:** A number of interesting issues related to gender came up in the study. For example:
- a. On certain indicators, women's group results seemed to be biased upward because of the particular types of women's COs in the sample, particularly the high frequency of women's credit associations. Both among women's groups and in general, an interesting topic of further study would be to **examine the correlation between sector and the democratic self-governance criteria.**
  - b. A comfortable majority of mixed target community organizations reported having at least one female officer. Similarly, a slight majority of such organizations received credit for showing some evidence of gender analysis. These results give reason for cautious optimism concerning a sensitivity to women's issues among mixed CO leaders. These results are hardly conclusive, however. USAID may wish to engage in **further study on the role of women in mixed COs.** For example, do women have a real influence on decisions made by these groups, or do they simply serve as voiceless figureheads?
  - c. On a similar note, while civic action activity is generally rather low among the organizations studied, it is particularly low among women's groups. USAID may wish to **bolster programs promoting civic action** activity, especially that which is constructive and systematic. In particular, means of **promoting women's political efficacy** and consequent civic action activity would be well-advised.
  - d. While discussing gender issues, the following point must be made. The performance of women's COs is so important to the DGSO that we stratify by gender type. It is consequently puzzling that there are only 61 women's groups in this year's sampling frame of the 1279 COs in the USAID-partner universe (4.77 percent). The DGSO Team should **examine the apparent contradiction**

**between the program priority of promoting women's organizations and the low number of women's groups receiving assistance.**

4. *Control Group Results:* For most of the DGSO indicators there was little or no difference between target group and control group results. Where there were differences, the target groups often performed ever-so-slightly better than the control group. These are usually not statistically-significant differences by individual indicators. However, the fact that one consistently leads suggests that something systematic may be going on, but is masked. Even if a real difference exists, on the other hand, it could be a result of USAID Partners choosing to work with slightly more competent organizations. Differences will become clearer over time, as we **track changes in both target and control group COs.**

5. *Survey Accuracy Issues:* Because of the nature of DG indicators and the small sample size of the last two surveys, performance measurement specialists are confronted with topics that are difficult enough to measure without the complication of the large margins of error that come with small sample sizes. **Any effort to improve the precision of the DGSO survey results would be helped by increasing sample size. One way to accomplish this would be by encouraging collaborative performance measurement across strategic objective (SO) teams.**

One possible form that this could take would be to allow input from other SO teams for the DGSO annual survey. The target CO sample could be stratified into three groups, each a joint partner of DG and one other sectoral team. Each group would be administered a questionnaire consisting half of DG questions and half of questions written by another sectoral team. This would maximize economies of scale, benefiting all SO Teams. **The consultants encourage the Mission to seriously examine the option of conducting an annual multi-sectoral performance measurement survey.**

The results of the present study provide a useful snapshot of the current performance of community organizations working with USAID Partners. Moreover, the comparisons with last year's study and the control group provide the first steps toward genuinely tracking performance over time and striving for meaningful impact assessment.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

APE	Association des Parents d'Elèves
AV	Association Villageoise
ASACO	Association de Santé Communautaire
CLUSA	Cooperative League of the United States of America
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CO	Community Organization
DG	Democratic Governance
DGSO	Democratic Governance Strategic Objective
GIE	Groupement d'Intérêt Economique
GRM	Government of the Republic of Mali
INGO	Intermediary Non-Governmental Organization
IR	Intermediate Result
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ME&R	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
R4	Results Review and Resource Request
SEG	Sustainable Economic Growth
SEGSO	Sustainable Economic Growth Strategic Objective
SO	Strategic Objective
SpO2	Special Objective Two (The North)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WE	World Education

# I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Over the past four years, USAID/Mali has undergone a process of reengineering which has involved the development of five strategic objectives and a new results-based framework. Several previous consulting teams have assisted the Mission in the development of a performance monitoring and evaluation plan. Last year, consultants from Management Systems International (MSI), in collaboration with Info-Stat, a Malian data collection and statistical analysis firm, assisted the USAID/Mali Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (DGSO) Team in the design, execution, and analysis of a baseline performance measurement survey. That survey interviewed leaders of USAID-partner community organizations (COs) and intermediary non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in order to operationalize indicators of organizational performance and measure them in order to provide the DG team, USAID/Mali, and USAID/Washington with data on the effectiveness of DG activities in Mali. While that survey yielded fascinating data on the behavior of partner organizations, the consultants encountered numerous challenges in study design and execution. The present, second round of results-oriented DGSO data collection presents an opportunity to build on the substantial progress that was made last year and make real steps toward meaningful impact assessment of democratic governance programming.

The present report is intended as a comprehensive description of the methodology employed and results obtained in this “DGSO Performance Measurement Survey II.” As such, it describes the process of operationalization and the sampling methodology employed, provides results for the DGSO indicators, and presents analysis and recommendations. The remainder of the report is organized as follows. First, background is provided on civil society and democratization issues and performance measurement of the DGSO. Following this background, details of the data collection preparation are described, after which sampling and quality control issues are discussed, along with the implications of this methodology on the representativeness of the sample and weighting method adopted. Then, the results and analysis of the surveys are provided. The report concludes with recommendations on program implications of the analysis as well as future data collection and analysis needs.

## A. Civil Society and Democratization

Because of the fact that USAID/Mali’s DGSO is civil-society-based and is primarily concerned with strengthening the capacity of community organizations to be “effective partners in democratic governance, including development decision-making and planning,” a few comments on the role of civil society in emerging democracies are in order.

Civil society, as most often defined, refers to the public space between the household and the state. It consists of social networks based on affinity and cooperation, outside the realm of the state, and as such is considered to hold great potential for serving as a locus of free and independent social interaction in democratizing states. Indeed, civil society has also been viewed as holding great promise as a counterweight to authoritarian states. More recently, state-society relations have been held to be more than a zero-sum game -- civil society can provide services and

reinforce state capacity, to their mutual benefit. This is integral to the very concept of governance -- "the conscious management of regime structures with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm" (Hyden and Bratton, p. 7).

This evolution of cooperation and trust is often assumed to be a prerequisite for the long-term consolidation of democratic gains. Indeed, many believe that "The existence of an active civil society is crucial to the vitality of political democracy" (Hadenius and Ugglä, p. 1622). Civil society is a relational concept, both in terms of the horizontal ties between organizations and the vertical links that tie them to a national system.

The term civil society encompasses a vast array of types of organizations and has been used in a variety of different ways. In their conception, the DGSO Team excludes profit-making enterprises and organizations such as political parties which aim to take over state power rather than simply influencing it. A critical characteristic for our purposes is that the organizations concerned have as a primary purpose the influencing of public policy.

The primary tasks of civil society in the context of democracy are: 1. to aggregate interests and provide a context in which groups vie for power with other groups as well as the state. In order for the multifarious organizations in civil society to perform this pluralist function they must exhibit autonomy; 2. "The growth and preservation of democracy depend ultimately on the support this form of government has in the hearts and minds of the people" (Hadenius and Ugglä, p. 1622). The people have to buy into the democratic rules of the game. Civil society is believed to hold great potential to serve this educational role in the consolidation of democratic gains. These two functions of civil society are certainly intertwined, though USAID/Mali is most explicitly concerned with buttressing the pluralist function.

In considering the role of civil society in political development, two approaches exist which often limit the usefulness of the concept. First, there is the temptation to include the entire voluntary sector under the rubric of civil society. Consequently, there are those who unrealistically and idealistically assume that all organizations will necessarily have a positive impact on political development. In fact, undisciplined and undemocratic organizations can have a destabilizing effect. Second, in contrast, there is a tendency to set the normative standard for what constitutes civil society so high that few organizations qualify and the term has little analytical utility. In short, if the definition includes everything or nothing it is equally weak in analytical power.

In working to strengthen Malian civil society, USAID charts a practical middle path -- it recognizes the potential of local organizations to make a contribution to political and socio-economic development while simultaneously realizing that they need capacity-building support to better realize that potential and to serve as a constructive force. In engaging in systematic performance measurement, USAID leaves nothing to chance -- in striving to know the current performance of CO partners as well as their progress over time, we can ascertain their strengths and weaknesses, as well as what it will take to take advantage of and continue to improve upon these strengths.

## **B. USAID/Mali and its Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (DGSO)**

In the nearly four years that have passed since USAID/Mali embarked on its innovative reengineering process in December 1994, a conscious focus has developed on programming which yields concrete, measurable results. This particular focus necessitates a concern with systematic performance measurement to which the very existence of the present report attests.

The new, reengineered, results-oriented USAID/Mali aspires to the following goal for its program:

***That "Mali [achieve] a level of sustainable economic, social, and political development that eliminates the need for concessional foreign assistance."***

The current strategic plan is organized in such a manner as to work toward the realization of the program goal through the pursuit of five highly-interrelated strategic objectives. The substantive concentration of these objectives are sustainable economic growth, youth (health and education), information and communications, democratic governance, and a regional focus on the North of Mali which incorporates all of the afore-mentioned sectors. The Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (DGSO) Team aims at working toward the over-arching program goal by working for the day when:

***"Community organizations in target communes are effective partners in democratic governance, including development decision making and planning."***

This addition of an explicitly-political facet of Mission programming has been made possible by the unexpected flow of events in Mali since 1991. Mali's transition to a multi-party democracy makes observers more optimistic about the prospect of achieving sustainable (social, economic, and environmental) development than ever before. The promotion of democratic governance in which community organizations (COs) -- as the base unit of civil society -- participate as equal partners in sustainable national development efforts is viewed as a means to achieving the Mission program goal, as well as a desirable end in itself. The Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (DGSO) focuses on capacity-building among the constituent organizations of civil society. Rather than focusing on state institutions and other more conventional targets of governance initiatives, USAID/Mali has, consistent with the explosion of organizational activity since March 1991 and the current move toward decentralization, chosen for their work to be entirely civil society focused.

Implicit in the DGSO is a USAID contribution to promoting an enabling environment which facilitates this process of grassroots empowerment. A critical component of this strategy is support for meaningful decentralization through devolution of power and not simply deconcentration of the state apparatus. The recent postponement of municipal elections from November 1998 to April 1999 is cause for serious concern and support for meaningful decentralization should continue to be voiced.

USAID/Mali's activities, however, are indirectly concerned with the enabling environment and "rules of the game" and more directly involved with capacity-building among a hierarchy of

civil society organizations. They are engaging in projects aimed at promoting functional literacy, civic education, management techniques, organizational skills, promoting local finance institutions, etc. These activities are intended to build the necessary expertise and organizational confidence which will permit civil society organizations to become meaningful partners in sustainable development. An integral part of results-oriented programming is a coherent performance measurement approach. The current study builds on last year's study in order to work toward concrete measurement of the impact of DGSO programming.

Since September 1997, USAID/Mali has signed new, multi-sectoral, cooperative agreements with thirteen different international NGOs (and a total of sixteen cooperative agreements). Four of these cooperative agreements have a democratic governance programming component to them. These agreements are with the following Partners: CARE, The Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA), Save the Children-USA, and World Education (hereafter referred to as "the Partners"). These Partners, in turn, provide program support and training to twenty-five different Malian intermediary NGOs (INGOs) and a variety of federations. These INGOs -- "modern," formal organizations -- collaborate with community organizations (COs) at the village level. Most USAID support of the COs that are the centerpiece of the DGSO is thus channeled indirectly through international Partners and INGOs. The exception to this is CARE's program, which works directly with COs and does not act through intermediaries.

Each of the Partners has a unique approach to development. Consequently, the Partners work with a wide variety of different kinds of COs. Typical CO partners include Community Health Associations (ASACOs), Parent of Student Associations (APEs), cooperatives, Village Associations (AVs) and other producer organizations, women's groups, local credit unions, and civic groups, etc. This array of partner organizations makes for a rich array of programming possibilities but poses special challenges for making comparisons in the performance measurement process.

### **C. Performance Measurement of the DGSO**

To respond to USAID/Washington's reporting requirements, as well as to guide program improvement, the USAID/Mali DGSO Team measures its performance. Because the DGSO is integrally related to civil society, organizational performance indicators constitute the most important part of the performance measurement project at hand. The six-year plan for DGSO monitoring and evaluation aims to measure changes in performance of these organizations over time. The current study constitutes the most ambitious part of the DGSO performance measurement program, including as it does a full census of 40 DGSO-partner NGOs and federations and a survey of a sample of 137 DGSO-partner COs. Through hiring an independent firm to do a systematic study of this sort, USAID hopes to gain a broad overview of the effectiveness of DG programming.

At the same time, however, USAID recognizes that its international Partners -- CARE, CLUSA, Save the Children-USA, and World Education -- have their own monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and have considerable expertise and experience in this regard. The Partners are currently collecting their own data on the DGSO quantifiable indicators and report

these data to the Team. Where they have the most experience and have a comparative advantage in measurement, however, is in the sort of qualitative reporting that has long been included in the semestrial reports that USAID requires of them. In order to work toward a performance measurement system which serves to ensure accountability while drawing on the respective parties' strengths and edifying efforts at program amelioration for both USAID/Mali and the DGSO Team and their Partners, the DGSO Team recently held a Performance Measurement Workshop aimed at ensuring synergy and harmonization in data collection. The parties discussed precise operationalization of the quantifiable indicators while also working toward a systematic qualitative data collection system. In this prospective approach, the four Partners would each create detailed case studies of one very-successful CO and one less-successful CO in matters of democratic governance and civic action (see the report in Annex 1). This qualitative reporting will help put interpretive meat on the bones of the broad overview provided by quantitative measurement which remains the focus of the DGSO Team's performance measurement.

This measurement involves the operationalization of DGSO indicators which follow the logic of the strategic objective itself. The Mission has devoted a good deal of effort to developing a precise strategic objective, as well as the intermediate results necessary to achieve it. In brief, the strategy envisions management and civic action capacity-building for INGOs and federations in order to permit them to better aggregate the interests of and build the civic action capacities of their partner COs at the local level and beyond. INGOs and federations are viewed as critical intermediaries in the process of accomplishing the strategic objective, making "COs in target communes effective partners in democratic governance, including development decision making and planning."

The Mission has designated this as their third strategic objective among five. Strategic Objective Three has three principal intermediate results (IRs) on which it depends. IR 3.2 consists of *effective decentralization* occurring by the end of 1999. IR 3.3 envisions an *enabling environment* in Mali which empowers COs, INGOs, and federations. Results on these intermediate results are sought indirectly through questions in both surveys, as well as through qualitative interviews with local officials and the Mission of Decentralization.

IR 3.1, the principal focus of the CO and INGO/federation surveys, reads as follows:  
***"Target community organizations are engaged in democratic self-governance and civic action at the local level and beyond."***

IR 3.1 depends upon the successful achievement of IR 3.1.1 --  
***"Target intermediary NGOs and federations support community organizations' democratic self-governance and civic action"***  
-- and IR 3.1.1.1 --

***"The capacity of target NGOs and federations is strengthened."***

Equally important are IR 3.1.2 --

***"Target intermediary NGOs and federations effectively aggregate and represent community organization interests at the local level and beyond"***

-- as well as IR 3.1.2.2 --

***"The civic action skills of target intermediary NGOs and federations are improved."***

The DGSO baseline data collection operationalizes indicators of performance related to the DGSO and the intermediate results (See Annex 2 for a diagram illustrating the DGSO Strategic Plan). The next section goes into more detail on sampling issues arising during baseline data collection.

## **II. PREPARATION FOR THE DATA COLLECTION**

This year's DGSO performance measurement study was greatly facilitated by the groundwork laid in the 1997 baseline study. Nonetheless, numerous minor changes and a few major changes went into the study design. The present section describes practical steps taken in planning and undertaking DGSO Performance Measurement Survey II.

### **A. Personnel**

For this present second DGSO indicators survey, MSI consultants came to Mali to design and supervise the survey data collection. After his arrival in Mali on July 19, John Uniack Davis designed the sampling methodology, refined indicators and designed and revised a total of five questionnaires, designed a scope of work for a Malian data collection firm, and hired and trained that data collection firm, Info-Stat, with support from his assistant, Nicolas Sidibé. Where last year Davis supervised the firm but the firm sub-contracted directly with USAID, this year MSI was solely responsible for the sub-contract. The data were collected during the period August 18 to September 22, at which point the Malian firm, Info-Stat, turned over the data to MSI to be analyzed and reported on by Davis and his colleague, Michelle Kuenzi.

Principal among the concerns raised by consultants last year was the lack of time and personnel for supervision and oversight of the data collection. This was remedied this year by hiring Nicolas Sidibé, a decentralization/governance consultant and recent Ecole Nationale d'Administration law graduate. Sidibé had extensive responsibilities in the study, including assisting in the training of enumerators, developing an instruction manual for enumerators, supervising the Bambara translation of the CO questionnaire, and being present in the field both for oversight as well as to serve as a resource person for the data collection team.

MSI was fortunate to once again be able to count on the services of Info-Stat and its capable director, Bakary Doumbia, for field data collection and data entry and preliminary data analysis. Info-Stat put together an excellent, highly-trained data collection team consisting of three supervisors and nine enumerators. All three supervisors and one of the enumerators participated in last year's study, adding necessary experience and continuity.

### **B. Training**

A six-day training of the enumerators and supervisors on the survey instruments and specific issues in democracy and governance research began on August 10 at Info-Stat's Lafiabougou (Bamako) office. The training was conducted from August 10 to 15, with four and one-half days being devoted to training and practice interviews at Info-Stat headquarters and one and one-half days to practice interviews with organizational leaders. The field practice also served as a pre-test. This will be discussed in the following section.

The first morning was devoted to an introduction of the DG Strategic Objective (DGSO). Sékou Sidibé of the DGSO Team gave an overview of USAID's re-engineering process and results orientation and explained where the DGSO fit into the Mission strategy. The performance measurement function of the second-year study was explained as well. This provided important context, permitting the data collection team to understand the importance of their role in the process, as well as the point behind the study.

The afternoon of the first day was spent giving a logistical and substantive overview of the nature of the study and explaining the process of operationalizing USAID DG performance monitoring indicators, both for required reporting to USAID/Washington, but also to serve as management information permitting the DGSO Team and the Partners to improve programming. Trainees were given then copies of the CO and INGO questionnaires and asked to read them before the following days' sessions.

The entire second day was spent going over the CO questionnaire question by question in French. For each question, Davis would explain the concepts being measured and why a particular formulation was being used. He also explained how each question was coded and frequently employed role playing exercises to demonstrate how to respond to various coding scenarios. The data collection team appeared very engaged in the discussion, and numerous suggestions were made on how to render questions more precise or clear. Such suggestions often concerned the French translation of the questionnaire, but substantive issues of data collection strategy, as well as question formulation and order, were also raised.

All of the following (third) day was spent going over the CO questionnaire question by question and getting the data collection team involved in translating from French into Bambara (Bamanankan). The MSI consultants had already employed a Bambara-language expert to refine the previous year's translation. This was used as the starting point for a discussion of the appropriate translation in order to both ensure stimulus equivalence as well as that all enumerators became comfortable with the questionnaire and with administering it in Bambara. During this process, new definitional issues and clarifications were raised that had not come up the previous day. The training was very useful in identifying needed improvements in the questionnaire -- a complete revision was undertaken after the training, before the pre-test, and further revisions were made after the pre-test.

The fourth day of the training was devoted to familiarizing the data collection team with the INGO and the federation questionnaires, which did not differ much. Because these questionnaires were being administered exclusively in French, we simply went over them question by question to ensure complete comprehension of the questionnaire itself as well as its relation to the concepts measured in the CO questionnaire.

At the end of the fourth day, Davis went over the much-shorter local official survey with the entire team. While this questionnaire was to be administered primarily by the three supervisors, we discussed it with the enumerators for two reasons: First, to give them a holistic understanding of the entire data collection process. Second, to allow flexibility in switching supervisors in case Bakary Doumbia ever felt a supervisor was not living up to expectations.

During this entire process, discussion of the questionnaires was interspersed with role-playing in order to help the enumerators become comfortable with the subject matter. The morning of the fifth day was devoted entirely to practice interviews in Bambara, supervised by Bakary Doumbia and Nicolas Sidibé. That afternoon and the following day, the pre-test was conducted in Bamako and Ouelessebouyou.

### **C. The Pre-Test**

The 1997 baseline survey was very helpful in refining the quality of the various questionnaires. Nonetheless, to further test and validate the questionnaires, as well as to provide added experience for the data collection team, a one and one-half day pre-test was conducted on August 14 and 15, 1998.

We divided the data collection personnel into three groups of three enumerators, each with one supervisor. The afternoon of August 14 was spent interviewing INGO leaders in Bamako. Then, the following morning, Davis accompanied one team to two villages near Ouelessebouyou, while Doumbia and Nicolas Sidibé accompanied the other two teams for interviews in Bamako and in the nearby town of Kati. Each team conducted four interviews among the leadership of two COs. In total, therefore, each enumerator observed at least one CO interview, conducted one or two CO interviews, and either observed or conducted an INGO interview. For each interview, Davis, Doumbia, or Sidibé was present. These interviews provided essential experience for the data collection team, and the close supervision afforded them the opportunity to receive extensive feedback on their performance.

The pre-test also provided another opportunity to examine the questionnaires question by question and examine them for clarity and measurement precision. We were also able to examine some of the methodological decisions made and tasks expected of the enumerators to see whether they effectively served the purposes for which they were designed.

The Sunday and Monday immediately following the pre-test were left free for the data collection teams so that Davis and Doumbia could prepare for the field phase of the study. The morning of August 18 was devoted to meeting with the entire data collection team and discussing all issues raised by pre-test experience. Enumerators were able to benefit from favorable and constructively critical comments about their own and others' performance. Davis was able to incorporate suggestions from Info-Stat personnel into the questionnaires as well as the data collection logistical plan.

Careful, comprehensive enumerator training is absolutely essential to reducing non-sampling data collection error. Counting the pre-test and post-pre-test meeting, Davis spent over six days training the Info-Stat data collection team. It was time well-spent and the data collection team appeared to gain an intimate understanding of the objectives and methodology of the study as well as their role in the process.

After the de-briefing on the pre-test, Davis spent a couple of hours on August 18 briefing supervisors and enumerators on logistical issues that they would confront in the field. Foremost among these were instructions on how to draw a quota sample of non-target COs, as well as the procedures on replacing sample COs in cases of inaccessibility or refusal. The data collection teams headed out into the field shortly after noon on August 18, with the first data collection occurring in the Mopti, Sikasso, and Segou Regions.

### **III. SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION**

In order to understand the role of INGOs in aggregating interests, as well as the degree to which COs are active partners in sustainable development, we designed a study aimed at operationalizing indicators for both INGOs and COs. The present report describes the results of a census of all INGOs and federations working with the international Partners of the DG team. It also describes the results of a survey of target and non-target COs. Because of the subjective and qualitative nature of much of the information sought in this study, we added a set of qualitative interviews to supplement, confirm and otherwise shed light on the quantitative data collected.

#### **A. Data Types**

Six principal types of data were collected:

1. A survey census of 25 intermediary NGOs collaborating with American NGO Partners (CLUSA, Save the Children-USA, and World Education).
2. A census of 15 federations that collaborate with USAID partners.
3. A survey sample of over 137 community organizations which work with the 25 INGOs or CARE-Mali.
4. A control group of 36 COs that are not partners with USAID or its Partners.
5. Qualitative interviews with local officials in all of the 41 arrondissements and communes where sample COs are located.
6. Qualitative interviews with officials at the Mission of Decentralization in order to gather information on the enabling environment with which partner COs are confronted.

#### **B. The Sampling Frame**

In order to define a sampling frame, the list of every single member of a population, the population must first be defined. Because of the early stage at which DGSO programming presently finds itself, it was difficult to define the population exclusively in terms of COs receiving DGSO assistance. In the context of the new integrated cooperative agreements, it is often difficult to dis-integrate a holistic program to isolate cases of DG support. For this reason, after discussions with the Team, the decision was made to define the population of the CO study as follows:

“All community organizations collaborating with USAID DGSO partners under USAID financing as of 1 August 1998.”

This means that, as long as a CO collaborates with one of the four international DGSO Team partners, even if they have not engaged in specific DG activities, they are included in the sampling frame. Because different partners were at different stages in their DG programming, the minimum threshold level of collaboration in order to be included in the sampling frame was quite low -- All COs having undertaken a firm engagement to *definitely* work with USAID's international or Malian partners were included, even if work had yet to begin.

For the purpose of putting together the CO sampling frame and being able to contact them in the field, Partners were asked to provide lists of partner COs including the following information: CO name, contact person, complete address (including commune, cercle, and region), gender characteristics (i.e., exclusively women or not), date at which collaboration began between the Partner and this CO, extent of DG activities, and primary sector of activity.

For some organizations, additional information was needed. For example, CLUSA works with Groupements d'Intérêt Economique (GIEs) at both the local and intermediary level. GIEs, as profit-making enterprises, do not fit the classic definition of civil society. At the intermediary level, the DG Team Leader wanted GIEs to be included, but at the local level, they were not to be included in the sampling frame.

Another example of organizations not neatly fitting the USAID hierarchy of partners was given by CARE. Based on their experiences in promoting sustainable institutions at the local level, CARE has begun working primarily with multi-village organizations, particularly ASACOs. These are not federations, as each village is represented only by an individual or a committee, and they have little in common with the intermediary NGOs with which DG is accustomed to working. Given DG's general categories, the DG Team Leader thought it was most appropriate to include these "supra-village" organizations in the CO category. The decision was appropriate, though it has the effect of including organizations from different levels in a hierarchy, ASACOs and village health committees (CVSs), in the present CO data set.

Delays were encountered in getting the complete CO lists from each of the Partners. Though the Partner representatives were conscientious in responding to MSI's requests for lists, they were not always available immediately and, once available, often lacked critical details requested in order to facilitate sampling as well as field access to villages and organizations. Ultimately, only one of the four Partners provided systematic information on contact people in the COs, as well as which COs collaborated with which INGOs. None of the Partners provided data on length of collaboration with the COs. Most of the partners provided names of communes in which COs were located or names of arrondissements, but rarely both. Especially in light of the late date at which these lists became available, it created special challenges for the drawing of a sample and planning Info-Stat's data collection in Koulikoro, Mopti, Segou, and Sikasso. For the purposes of future data collection and other possible uses, the DGSO Team and the Partners should together endeavor to maintain up-to-date lists of local partners, including the following categories: CO name, contact person, complete address (including commune, cercle, and region), gender characteristics (i.e., exclusively women or not), date at which collaboration began between the PVO and this CO, extent of DG activities, and primary sector of activity. This said, the observation must be made that we are confident that we have established a very good sampling frame which constitutes an immense improvement over what was available last year. Clearly, as

the various parties to the process gain experience in results-oriented performance measurement, the quality and the precision of data collection improves.

### C. Sample Design

Given the concerns of the DGSO Team concerning the demographic factors of greatest interest, we drew a stratified random sample which ensured the inclusion of women's groups, mixed groups, and each of the Partners' partner COs in sufficient numbers to do sub-group analysis. This was a decision that was taken after careful reflection, and the consultants encountered numerous challenges in implementing it.

The most obvious pitfall with stratifying by international NGO Partner is that the Partners vary widely in the number of COs with which they work. Totals of CO partners range from 37 for CARE to well over 600 for Save the Children. Consequently, *prima facie*, any aggregate statistics for a sample which was weighted equally by Partner would overstate the importance of CARE and underestimate the other partners. When considering that the individual CO is the unit of analysis in this study, it stands to reason that each international NGO's partner COs should have an importance in the data analysis equal to their proportion of the total number of USAID partner COs.

At closer inspection, however, CARE's partner COs each represent multiple villages, while most of World Education's are single-village organizations. Any proportional sampling done exclusively by CO numbers without taking into account scale differences would underestimate the importance of CARE. Further, proportional sampling done in such a manner would result in an astronomical sample size if it was done in such a manner as to ensure a minimum sample size of thirty for all PVO partners, as the Mission desires. Consequently, we began examining the possibility of drawing a proportional sample according to "total number of villages served." The problems with this are two-fold. First, the village is not the unit of analysis. Second, we have no reliable data on the number of villages served by any COs except ASACOs.

In order to reduce overall sampling error, we made the decision to include all of CARE's COs in the sample. This reduces sampling error because, in using a census for one-fourth of the sample, error in that portion of the sample is entirely eliminated. Ultimately, however, two of CARE's 37 COs were inaccessible because of rainy season road conditions, so this biases the estimates slightly, considering that the only two CARE COs that were excluded were among their most remote, but this was a problem encountered with all of the Partners, given the season.

Given the disproportionate sampling employed for the reasons stated, any analysis attempting to present statistics representing the entire sample has to be weighted. This will be discussed in greater detail below.

A brief comment is in order on gender issues in sampling. Though the difference between women's organizations and all others is clear, the difference between men's and mixed organizations is far less so. For example, *associations villageoises* (AVs) in the cotton zone were formed as all-village organizations but, because cotton is a "man's crop," in practice, only men

participate in most AVs. Consequently, there is little reliability in measuring the distinction between men's and mixed organizations, because two different equally-informed CO leaders could often describe the same organization as either. For this reason, we retained last year's decision to distinguish between women's groups and all others, but not to provide a separate breakdown by men's and mixed groups.

The sample that was ultimately drawn was distributed as shown in Table 1.

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>CARE</b>	0	35	35
<b>CLUSA</b>	14	22	36
<b>Save-USA</b>	9	24	33
<b>World Education</b>	10	23	33
<b>None (Control)</b>	9	27	36
<b>Total</b>	42	131	173

The over-riding priority in the sampling design was to ensure that adequate sample sizes existed for women's groups, mixed groups, and for each of the four Partners in order to allow cautious analysis to be done for these sub-groups. There was also a concern that the sample be representative of the geographic distribution of DG activities, but the Team felt that stratification by Partner was more important than by region. In any case, because the various Partners have different geographic areas of focus, the consultants were confident that any random sample drawn would yield a reasonable distribution by region. The distribution of COs by region and Partner is displayed in Table 2. With the exception of the District of Bamako, the regional totals all approach or exceed thirty, making cautious statistical comparisons possible.

<b>Region</b>	<b>CARE</b>	<b>CLUSA</b>	<b>Save-USA</b>	<b>World Ed</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Bamako</b>	-	-	-	16	16
<b>Koulikoro</b>	-	14	-	17	31
<b>Mopti</b>	26	-	-	-	26
<b>Segou</b>	9	18	-	-	27
<b>Sikasso</b>	-	4	33	-	37
<b>Total</b>	35	36	33	33	137

The sub-group totals will therefore allow a range of interesting, if tentative, comparisons. A common misconception is that one absolutely needs large samples in order to perform statistical comparisons. All things being equal, larger samples are better because they narrow the margin of error. Nevertheless, carefully-drawn *random* samples of 30 or more can be almost as useful as very large samples. One should note the relationship between sample size and statistical power. For the t-test used in comparisons between small samples, the table stops at a sample size of 120, and increasing sample size beyond thirty has diminishing marginal returns. Our choice of sample size entailed reconciling statistical power with resource constraints. Given trade-offs between sampling error and data collection error, the consultants are confident that the present sampling methodology carefully balances these important considerations.

A few additional comments on sampling methodology are in order: Efficient sample size estimates assume a simple random sample without multiple stages or deliberate stratifications. Sampling variability increases when cluster sampling is used and decreases when stratification is used. Gains from stratification occur when the variability within a stratum is small (homogeneity) and the differences between strata are large. Preliminary analysis in the present sample shows consistent differences by Partner and by gender. We are therefore confident that we did everything possible under the circumstances to minimize sampling error. Nonetheless, the relatively small size of our sample makes it more difficult to discover statistically significant differences between groups, because fine-grained differences require larger samples to detect. Consequently, a relatively small sample allows us to trace general contours in the data while being unable to make definitive statements about finer nuances.

Constraints of time, season and resources affected our sample size. While this is not a serious problem, increasing sample size in the future would be desirable if quality data collection was not sacrificed, and assuming resources are available. One possibility worth exploring is trying to build on the DGSO Team's ample investment in performance monitoring by piggy-backing similar studies by other strategic objective teams. In devising multi-disciplinary questionnaires together, all teams could benefit from economies of scale created by collaborative data collection.

Non-response per se was not a problem in the study. However, given the fact that the study was conducted during the rainy season, village inaccessibility did pose a problem. Anticipating this, we had provided a back-up list of COs to contact in case of becoming "mired" in such a difficulty. Of course, being forced to substitute accessible COs for inaccessible ones is presumably a real source of bias in the results -- one would expect remote villages to differ from accessible villages. In fact, Info-Stat ultimately had to make 18 substitutions, 13 of them in the cercle of Kolondieba, because of inundations making certain areas inaccessible. One cannot ignore an inability to attain 13 percent of the organizations in the sample, but every effort was made to replace organizations in unattainable villages with organizations resembling them in every other characteristic possible. Intuitively, one would expect any resulting bias to be in an upward direction, but we do not believe it to be intolerably large. Info-Stat's report detailing specific replacements made can be found in Annex 3.

## D. Control Group

A principal innovation in the present study over the baseline study is the inclusion of a control group of non-target community organizations. This use of a control group should be viewed as very experimental and the results should be viewed with corresponding caution. Nothing resembling a reliable sampling frame of such organizations exists, so a purposeful quota selection of non-target organizations was drawn with approximately the same distribution of characteristics as in the target sample. Even excluding the sampling issues, results should be treated with caution, because the non-target sample size of 36 would result in large margins of error on estimates even under the best of circumstances.

Our quota sampling method for selecting a control group was conducted as follows. Eight arrondissements were chosen with the intention of approximating the geographic distribution of USAID Partners' zones of operation, while avoiding arrondissements where we would have a high probability of stumbling upon COs already collaborating with USAID Partners. The arrondissements chosen were as follows: In Mopti Region, Mopti central and Bandiagara central; in Segou Region, Farako and Tamani; in Koulikoro Region, Kangaba central, and in Sikasso Region, Keleya, Niena, and Finkolo.

In each arrondissement, enumerators were instructed to go to the chef d'arrondissement and ask for five COs meeting very specific criteria in terms of sector of operation and distance from paved roads or major non-paved roads. These criteria were developed in order to approximate the same distribution of sectors and remoteness in the target sample, both in general and by region. For example, because among the DGSO Partners only CARE operates in the Mopti Region, we instructed data collectors to identify and interview APEs and ASACOs in Mopti and Bandiagara because those are the predominant types of CO CARE works with. The selection criteria are shown in Annex 4.

To demonstrate the similarity of the control group to the target group sample, Table 3 displays their respective distributions by sector of operation.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Target COs</b>	<b>Control Group COs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Health</b>	28 20.44%	6 16.67%	34 19.65%
<b>Education</b>	39 28.47%	10 27.78%	49 28.32%
<b>Economic</b>	70 51.10%	20 55.55%	90 52.02%
<b>Total</b>	137 100%	36 100%	173 100%

As the reader can see, all three of the major sectors in which DGSO partner COs work match up very closely in terms of proportions of the target and non-target samples. All three sectors are within 4.45 percent in variation between the two groups.

Table 4, below, displays the distribution of control and target COs by geographic region.

<b>Table 4 Comparison of Target COs and Control Group COs, by Region</b>			
<b>Region</b>	<b>Target COs</b>	<b>Control Group COs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Bamako</b>	16 11.68%	0 0.00%	16 9.25%
<b>Koulikoro</b>	31 22.63%	5 13.89%	36 20.81%
<b>Mopti</b>	26 18.98%	7 19.44%	33 19.08%
<b>Segou</b>	27 19.71%	9 25.00%	36 20.81%
<b>Sikasso</b>	37 27.01%	15 41.67%	52 30.06%
<b>Total</b>	137 100%	36 100%	173 100%

Here again, the distributions are similar, though not as similar as by sector. This is for the following reasons. First, because the Koulikoro Region is saturated with World Education and CLUSA partner COs, we only chose five control group COs in that region, in the central arrondissement of Kangaba. To avoid a high probability of inadvertently selecting target groups, we chose five more control group COs in the arrondissement of Keleya, in the Sikasso Region but bordering Koulikoro. For this reason, the control group over samples Sikasso and under samples Koulikoro, but we do not believe it to be a source of significant bias. The other notable difference is the fact that the control group includes no organizations based in Bamako. Because Bamako is the smallest portion of the sample, and because the control group over samples Sikasso, the wealthiest region of the country (and thus, though not comparable to Bamako, it is the region closest in wealth to Bamako), we believe that serious threats to its usefulness are mitigated. In any case, this first attempt at a DGSO control group should be recognized as preliminary while we search for more rigorous non-target sampling methods.

The distribution of target COs by cercle and control group COs by arrondissement is displayed on the map in Annex 4.

## **E. Data Collection Supervision**

As noted earlier, a significant improvement of the present study over the baseline survey is in the area of data collection supervision. Sidibé and Davis accompanied Info-Stat personnel for much of the data collection in Mopti, Segou, and Koulikoro Regions. Towards the end of the month of data collection, they then performed spot-checks to verify that the work was done (and reliability checks to verify that it was done well) in six arrondissements across four cercles of the Sikasso and Segou Regions. In all, direct supervision or spot checks occurred for over one-third of the 173 COs in the total sample. These spotchecks were indispensable in alerting the consultants to possible sources of confusion in the data collection. For example, there was some misunderstanding of the difference between an APE primaire and an APE secteur which required one replacement interview to be done. Nonetheless, the supervision revealed that the Info-Stat enumerators were uniformly competent and conscientious in carrying out the data collection, even in the most remote zones.

## IV. PROGRAM INDICATOR DATA

This section provides the tools for a detailed understanding of the data analysis, as well as a description of the actual results. First, the weighting techniques used as well as other statistical techniques employed are described. This description provides background for the benefit of future evaluators or the curious layperson. Casual readers can get a basic grasp of data implications without reading section A. In section B, data analysis and results following the logic of the DGSO results framework is presented. For ease of access, results for the indicators are presented in italics at the appropriate location in the text.

### A. Weighting Digression

The present discussion is intended to assist the DGSO Team in understanding how the weights in the present survey are calculated and why they are necessary.

Sometimes disproportionate sampling is appropriate in order to ensure that sufficient numbers exist in each important sub-population in order to do statistical analysis. As long as the sub-populations are used for separate or comparative analysis, weighting is unnecessary. In such a case where certain sub-populations are over sampled and one wants to create a composite picture of the sample which is intended to accurately reflect the population, however, different elements must be weighted. Weighting permits the drawing of a relatively unbiased picture of the population and can be used for univariate (e.g., gender) or multivariate (e.g., gender and Partner) adjustments.

A probability sample is representative of a population if all elements have an equal chance of being selected for that sample. A proportionate stratified sample is a way of achieving a simplified approximation of a probability sample according to a characteristic deemed important.

In our case, we had a choice between doing a proportionate stratified sample and having too few cases in some strata (e.g., women's organizations, CARE partners) to do meaningful analysis or resolving the "too few cases" problem by doing a non-proportionate stratified sample. We chose the second approach, ensuring the possibility of making meaningful comparisons between Partners and types of organization, in spite of the fact that the proportions in our sample would be unrepresentative of the population as a whole.

This sample, in which different elements have different probabilities of selection, was made representative by effectively assigning each element a weight equal to the inverse of its probability of selection. This system allows the approximation of a representative probability sample. Some explanation is in order.

In a perfectly representative probability sample, every subgroup appears in exact proportion to its incidence in the population at large. Thus, every stratum is weighted equally in that its incidence in the sample equals its incidence in the population, so it has a weight of one (say, .25 percent of population/.25 percent of sample = 1.0). In a disproportionate sample,

sub-groups must be weighted in order to correct for over- or under-sampling. Weights are constructed very intuitively. For example, if a sub-group constitutes twenty percent of the population but only ten percent of the sample, its weight would be  $.20/.10$ , that is, two. Half as many of the sub-group were sampled as should have been, so the weighting system effectively doubles the stratum in order to correct for under sampling.

Because we wanted to ensure adequate representation in order to do analysis by region and gender, we intentionally engineered the stratified sample to over-include women's groups and under-include mixed groups. Similarly, CO partners of CARE and CLUSA are over-included while partners of Save the Children-USA and World Education are under-included. Therefore, any analysis that is done in order to describe the whole population, as most of the indicators do, will be weighted.

In theory, stratification is done because one thinks that there is reason to believe that the different strata have different characteristics. Therefore, disproportionate inclusion of strata can result in biased results. In the present study, preliminary data analysis revealed frequent differences between women's and mixed groups and between Partners. The consultants therefore felt that the presentation of unweighted results would yield a biased and therefore unrepresentative portrait of target-CO performance. The decision was consequently made to weight by Partner and gender. This results in eight possible sub-groups, each with different probabilities of selection and therefore requiring different weights. The figures used in the calculation of the weights used in the data analysis are shown in Table 5, below. The far right-hand column displays the weights used to estimate the results that would emerge from a representative cross-section of DGSO Team partners.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Population N =</b>	<b>Sample n =</b>	<b>Proportion in Pop.</b>	<b>Proportion in Sample</b>	<b>% in pop % in samp</b>
<b>Care-mixed</b>	37	35	.029	.256	.113
<b>Care-women</b>	0	0	.000	.000	-
<b>Clusa-mixed</b>	112	22	.088	.161	.547
<b>Clusa- women</b>	20	14	.016	.102	.157
<b>Save-mixed</b>	637	24	.498	.175	2.846
<b>Save-women</b>	22	9	.017	.066	.258
<b>World-mixed</b>	432	23	.338	.168	2.012
<b>World-women</b>	19	10	.015	.073	.206
<b>TOTAL</b>	$\Sigma = 1279$	$\Sigma = 137$	$\Sigma = 1.00$	$\Sigma = 1.00$	-

In order to demonstrate the process of weighting, we present the following example using the first strategic objective indicator. Table 6 presents the raw frequencies on amount of development decisions affected as reported by officers of the 137 COs studied. The right-hand "total" column shows the total frequencies at various levels of affecting development decisions and their percentages in the sample. The two middle columns show the breakdown of responses among women's groups and mixed groups as well as the percentage giving a given response *within that subgroup* (i.e., women or mixed). The bottom row shows the total frequency of women's groups and mixed groups and gives column percentage totals.

<b>Table 6 Percent of Target COs which Have Affected Local-Level Development Decisions (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No effort to contact authorities</b>	21 63.64%	39 37.50%	60 43.80%
<b>Contact, but no decisions affected</b>	7 21.21%	23 22.12%	30 21.90%
<b>One decision affected</b>	3 9.09%	28 26.92%	31 22.63%
<b>Two or more decisions affected</b>	2 6.06%	14 13.46%	16 11.68%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

In Table 7, we've estimated what the percentages in the table would be if we had done a proportionate sample by gender and Partner. It is presented in order to give the DG team an idea of the intuition behind weighting -- for good statistical reasons, some sub-groups (e.g., all women's groups, CARE-mixed groups) were over sampled and some (e.g., Save-mixed, World-mixed) were under sampled. Weighting corrects for giving a sub-group more or less importance than its incidence in the population warrants. When we weight sub-groups, we are operating under the premise that, for example, the percentages shown below are what we would expect to find had we drawn a proportionate sample.

	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>No effort to contact authorities</b>	59.99%	35.87%	37.02%	50.00%
<b>Contact, but no decisions affected</b>	22.78%	19.17%	19.34%	19.44%
<b>One decision affected</b>	10.18%	25.19%	24.47%	22.22%
<b>Two or more decisions affected</b>	7.05%	19.77%	19.16%	8.33%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100%

## **B. Chi-Square Statistic**

For many of the cross-tabulations presented in this study, a chi-square statistic and significance level is presented. The chi-square test is a test of statistical independence which allows us to demonstrate whether a non-random relationship exists between two variables. While it is not a measure of the strength of a relationship, it permits us to state the probability of a given relationship occurring by chance, or, conversely, our level of confidence in two variables being linked. Where the chi-square statistic does not show a relationship that is significant at the .05 level or better, it will not be reported, though the results by sub-group will still be reported.

A chi-square test is one of the most simple tests which allows us to make inferences about a population based on a sample. The significance level associated with this test gives us the probability of the particular configuration displayed by the sample arising if there is no relation between two variables in the underlying population. Therefore, the smaller the significance level, the more confident we are that the variables are linked. In statistical language, we are looking for evidence which tells us whether or not to reject the null hypothesis that, for example, women's groups and mixed groups engage in the same amount of civic action in the larger universe of COs.

## **C. Results**

In the present section (which constitutes the largest portion of this report), we present tables summarizing data collected to measure USAID/Mali's DGSO performance indicators. As much as possible, we specify the clarifications that were given to the enumerators in order to clearly define terms. Most indicators were measured closely following the instructions given by USAID/Mali and previous consulting teams. Where this was not possible, an explanation and description of alternative measures taken are provided. The analysis follows the logic of the DGSO and intermediate results.

Note that where frequencies do not add up to 137 for the target COs, 36 for the non-target CO control group, 40 for INGOs and federations, and 41 for local officials, the difference is the result of non-applicable categories or missing data.

*Key data are presented in italics for the reader's convenience.*

**Results, intermediate results, and indicators are presented in bold type.**

The DGSO Performance Measurement Survey II results are as follows:

**Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (SO 3): "Community organizations in target communes are effective partners in democratic governance, including development decision making and planning."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Percent of COs which have affected 2 or more development decisions.**

Ever since beginning the performance measurement process, we have been honing the precision of this indicator. The word "affected" originally used in the indicator was deemed vague. This year, the questionnaire employed the language "convinced authorities to change a decision or resulted in something concrete" (CO Question 37; see the questionnaires in Annex 5). This was a broader interpretation than was used last year, when it was defined as simply changing a decision. That definition raised the problem that areas where authorities are pro-active in seeking out the sentiment of the population would exhibit less organizational impact than was in fact occurring, which is why the interpretation was changed this year.

Table 8A provides the raw frequencies and percentages of CO-reported cases of influence on development decisions at the commune or arrondissement level, decisions made by development parastatals (such as the CMDT), and decisions made by deputies or other authorities.

<b>Table 8A Percent of Target COs Which Have Affected Development Decisions, 1998 (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No effort to contact authorities</b>	21 63.64%	39 37.50%	60 43.80%
<b>Contact, but no decisions affected</b>	7 21.21%	23 22.12%	30 21.90%
<b>One decision affected</b>	3 9.09%	28 26.92%	31 22.63%
<b>Two or more decisions affected</b>	2 6.06%	14 13.46%	16 11.68%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

Table 8B provides our best estimate as to what the population percentages are of women's and mixed groups having an impact upon development decisions. These percentages are

calculated using the raw frequencies by Partner and gender and the weights by sub-group calculated in Table 5, above.

*Note: The “women’s groups” and “mixed groups” and “total” column in “weighted” tables provide data on the DGSO target CO sample. “Control” refers to the non-target CO control group.*

<b>Table 8B Percent of COs Which Have Affected Development Decisions, 1998 (Weighted)</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>No effort to contact authorities</b>	59.99%	35.87%	37.02%	50.00%
<b>Contact, but no decisions affected</b>	22.78%	19.17%	19.34%	19.44%
<b>One decision affected</b>	10.18%	25.19%	24.47%	22.22%
<b>Two or more decisions affected</b>	7.05%	19.77%	19.16%	8.33%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*We estimate that 19.16 percent of all USAID-partner COs but only 7.05 percent of women's COs have affected two or more development decisions in the past year (August-September 1997 to August-September 1998).*

This is a slight improvement over last year, the results of which are shown in Table 8C, below. Last year we reported that only 12.18 percent of all COs and only 5.40 percent of women’s organizations reported influencing two or more decisions.

The reader will note that, this year, USAID partner COs reported influencing two or more decisions over twice as often as control group COs did (19.16 percent to 8.33 percent).

	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Weighted Percentages</b>
<b>No effort to contact authorities</b>	47 63.51%	44 46.81%	91 54.17%	50.08%
<b>Contact, but no decisions affected</b>	14 18.92%	21 22.34%	35 20.83%	21.67%
<b>One decision affected</b>	9 12.16%	16 17.02%	25 14.88%	16.07%
<b>Two or more decisions affected</b>	4 5.40%	13 13.83%	17 10.12%	12.18%
<b>Total</b>	74 100.00%	94 100.00%	168 100.00%	100.00%

**2. Number of regional/national government decisions target intermediary NGOs and federations and their CO members and partners affected.**

As was reported last year, this is a difficult indicator on which to collect data. We do not have data on aggregate decisions affected by USAID and its partners, but we can report on the percentage of target COs who report to have engaged in collaboration and affected decisions. These data are reported in Table 9A.

	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>“No collaboration” or “collaboration but no decisions affected”</b>	31 93.94%	90 86.54%	121 88.32%
<b>Decisions affected</b>	2 6.06%	14 13.46%	16 11.68%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

In Table 9B, we present the same data as above weighted by USAID international NGO Partner and by gender, compared with results for the control group of non-target COs.

<b>Table 9B Percent of Target COs Reporting Collaboration and Decisions Affected, 1998 (Weighted)</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>“No collaboration” or “collaboration but no decisions affected”</b>	92.95%	85.69%	86.04%	88.89%
<b>Decisions affected</b>	7.05%	14.31%	13.96%	11.11%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

We estimate that 13.96 percent of target COs have influenced decisions in collaboration with intermediary organizations such as NGOs and federations. Only 7.05 percent of women’s COs report similar behavior.

Table 9C displays comparable data from last year’s baseline survey. This year’s results give some reason for optimism, as twice the proportion of COs are affecting decisions collaboratively, but the numbers are still low.

<b>Table 9C Percent of Target COs Which Have Affected Any Development Decisions in Collaboration with Other Organizations, 1997</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Weighted Percentages</b>
<b>No collaborative civic action</b>	69 93.24%	80 85.11%	149 88.69%	86.70%
<b>Contact, but no decisions affected</b>	3 4.05%	8 8.51%	11 6.55%	7.64%
<b>At least one decision affected</b>	2 2.70%	6 6.38%	8 4.76%	5.66%
<b>Total</b>	74 100.00%	94 100.00%	168 100%	100%

We have reason to believe that the number of regional and national decisions affected by NGOs, federations and their CO partners is quite low. As shown in Table 10, below, in 70.59 percent of the *localities* surveyed in this year’s study, local officials reported that such groups had not affected even a single decision taken in the previous twelve months (ARR Question 8).

<b>Table 10 Number of Arrondissement or Commune-Level Decisions Influenced by NGOs, Federations, and COs, as Reported by Local Officials</b>		
<b>Decisions Affected</b>	<b>Arronds/Communes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Two or More</b>	3	8.82%
<b>One</b>	7	20.59%
<b>Zero</b>	24	70.59%
<b>Total</b>	34	100.00%

**3. Percent of target COs forming a good partnership with local government in delivering public services.**

Last year, this was defined as consisting of community organizations feeling they were receiving something in exchange for their tax contributions. This year, the standard was raised, asking CO leaders whether they had engaged with collaboration with the State (broadly construed, including officials, State services, and parastatals) in which they received a service and in return made a contribution in cash (above and beyond tax contributions), in kind, or in personnel (e.g., labor). The results for this indicator (operationalized in CO Question 49) are displayed in Table 11A, below.

<b>Table 11A Percent of Target COs Reporting a Partnership with the State (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No partnerships</b>	23 69.70%	54 51.92%	77 56.20%
<b>Report partnership, but no concrete examples provided</b>	7 21.21%	31 29.81%	38 27.74%
<b>Partnership reported and example(s) provided</b>	3 9.09%	19 18.27%	22 16.06%
<b>Total</b>	104 100.00%	33 100.00%	137 100.00%

The next table presents the same data weighted by international NGO partner and by gender type, along with comparisons with the control group of non-target COs.

	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>No partnerships</b>	69.30%	50.75%	51.64%	61.11%
<b>Report partnership, but no example provided</b>	22.01%	30.66%	30.25%	25.00%
<b>Partnership reported and example provided</b>	8.69%	18.59%	18.12%	13.89%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*We estimate that 18.12 percent of all target COs can demonstrate evidence of high levels of cooperation with the government in the provision of services, while only 8.69 percent of women's groups report this sort of cooperation.*

Interestingly, last year, at the lower standard of cooperation, only slightly more (20.73 percent) reported and demonstrated proof of a partnership. Among women's groups last year, the percentage reporting cooperation (5.41 percent) was actually lower than this year, even with the raising of the bar as to what is counted as cooperation. Also interesting to note is the fact that this year's control group reported fewer partnerships than the target group (13.89 percent versus 18.12 percent).

	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Weighted Percentages</b>
<b>No Verified Report of Partnership</b>	70 94.59%	71 75.53%	141 83.93%	79.27%
<b>Partnership Exists</b>	4 5.41%	23 24.47%	27 16.07%	20.73%
<b>Total</b>	74 100.00%	94 100.00%	168 100.00%	100.00%

#### **4. Percent of target communes where USAID finances DG activities in which new COs have formed during the year.**

In all 41 communes and arrondissements in which CO leaders were interviewed, Info-Stat supervisors also interviewed the chef d'arrondissement, commune mayor, or one of their assistants to ask general questions about organizational activity in the areas under their jurisdiction. As

shown in the Table 12A, in 22 of 38 jurisdictions (57.89 percent) for which there was usable data (out of 41 total jurisdictions sampled), officials reported the creation of new COs. Responses of "don't know" are included in the calculations because one expects that officials should be aware of active new organizations. If the "don't know" responses are treated as missing data, however, the percentage of jurisdictions reporting new COs rises to 73.33 percent, given the small sample size.

<b>Table 12A Target Communes and Arrondissements Sampled in Which Officials Report the Formation of New COs During the Previous Year, 1998</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Jurisdictions reporting new COs</b>	22	57.89%
<b>Jurisdictions reporting no new COs</b>	8	21.05%
<b>Officials "don't know" whether new COs have formed</b>	8	21.05%
<b>Total</b>	38	100.00%

*In 57.89 percent of jurisdictions surveyed where USAID finances DG activities, new COs had formed during the previous year.*

This is a slight drop from last year, as presented in Table 12B, below. Nevertheless, keeping in mind the small sample size and the resulting rough nature of the estimates, the most cogent observation to make is that in both years, significantly over half of the officials surveyed reported new COs being created in their communes or arrondissements.

<b>Table 12b Target Communes and Arrondissements Sampled in Which Officials Report the Formation of New COs During the Previous Year, 1997</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Jurisdictions reporting new COs</b>	15	68.18%
<b>Jurisdictions reporting no new COs</b>	3	13.64%
<b>Officials "don't know" whether new COs have formed</b>	4	18.18%
<b>Total</b>	22	100.00%

It would be useful for the DGSO Team to identify the localities in which no new COs have been reported over the course of the two surveys in order to identify activities that USAID and its Partners can support in order to promote the growth of vibrant civil society organizations in those areas.

For example, one zone in which associational life seemed particularly dormant was the Cercle of Koro in Mopti Region. This is one of the most economically-impooverished areas of the country. Further study would enable the DGSO Team to explore the causes of the lack of organizational activity. One hypothesis is that the young adults who stimulate the growth and dynamism of emerging organizations leave during the dry season to seek work in Bamako or neighboring countries, thus depriving civil society of a critical mass of potential leaders. In any case, further study is warranted.

**5. Percent of target communes in which non-target COs adopt civic action practices.**

Because we do not have a sampling frame for non-target COs and this year’s pilot control group is quite small in size (n = 36), we remain unable to produce data for non-target COs which will be comparable with that for target COs, but we do seek anecdotal evidence of civic action by non-target COs.

Because the control group of non-target COs consists of organizations in or bordering zones targeted by USAID and its partners, it is illustrative to compare target and non-target civic action behavior. The following table presents weighted percentages of target COs and non-target COs who have, in the previous twelve months, pursued civic action at the arrondissement, cercle, or parastatal (e.g., CMDT) level or have contacted their député (as operationalized in CO 33). The reader should note that these are simply reported instances of civic action -- we are not concerned here with the degree of success of the civic action in question.

	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Pursued action at all four levels</b>	0.00%	1.96%	1.87%	2.78%
<b>Pursued action at three levels</b>	0.00%	8.60%	8.19%	5.56%
<b>Pursued action at two levels</b>	10.18%	15.69%	15.42%	16.67%
<b>Pursued action at one level</b>	29.83%	37.89%	37.50%	25.00%
<b>No contact</b>	59.99%	35.87%	37.02%	50.00%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*Exactly fifty percent of the non-target control group engaged in at least some civic action in the past year. This is somewhat less than the target sample, in which 62.98 percent of the COs engaged in some form of civic action.*

The most notable differences in civic action behavior, however, are not between non-target and target groups, but between women’s groups and all others. For example, if we classify

all those pursuing civic action at three or four levels as “most active,” we find that 10.06 percent of all target groups and 8.34 percent of the non-target COs fit into that category, but *none* of the 33 women’s groups in the sample met that standard. Then, at the low end, in the two lowest civic action categories, we find that 74.57 percent of all target groups and 75.00 percent of non-target groups fall into that category, while 89.82 percent of women’s groups engage in little or no civic action, with *59.99 percent of women’s groups engaging in no civic action at all*.

While the low civic action activity of women’s groups is an important finding, it should be noted that the vast majority of all categories engaged in little or no civic action activity. In sum, we have only scanty evidence that USAID-partner COs are engaging in significantly more civic action than non-USAID-partner COs. Any effort by USAID to induce spread effects of civic action activity among non-target groups must first aim at raising civic action levels among target groups.

**6. Percent of COs expanding their development services and activities.**

The next table shows the proportions of COs contacted which reported expanded services and activities over the previous twelve months (as operationalized by CO 52-54).

<b>Table 14A Percent of Target COs Reporting Expanded Development Services and Activities, 1998 (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No new services or activities reported</b>	9 27.27%	20 19.23%	29 21.17%
<b>New services or activities reported, but none outside mandate</b>	12 36.36%	46 44.23%	58 42.34%
<b>New services outside mandate</b>	12 36.36%	38 36.54%	50 36.50%
<b>Total</b>	33 100%	104 100%	137 100%

Table 14B, below, weights the raw frequencies by gender and international Partner to present a representative portrait of the data. Based on this, we estimate that in the entire population 84.98 percent of all USAID-partner COs expanded development services and activities in the previous year.

<b>Table 14B Percent of COs Reporting Expanded Development Services and Activities, 1998 (Weighted)</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>New services or activities reported</b>	72.41%	85.61%	84.98%	63.89%
<b>No new services or activities</b>	27.59%	14.39%	15.02%	36.11%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*We estimate that 84.98 percent of target COs and 72.41 percent of women's COs expanded development services and activities in the twelve months preceding the survey.*

Table 14C displays the results on this indicator in the 1997 baseline survey. As one can see, the proportions of those reporting new services and activities and those not doing so have almost reversed in the last year. The level of new services and activities is significantly less among the non-target (control group) COs, but even this figure is considerably greater than last year's. This topic merits further investigation.

<b>Table 14C Percent of Target COs Reporting Expanded Development Services and Activities, 1997</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Weighted Percentages</b>
<b>No new services or activities reported</b>	40 54.05%	60 63.83%	100 59.52%	61.91%
<b>New services or activities reported, but none outside mandate</b>	13 17.57%	7 7.45%	20 11.90%	9.43%
<b>New services outside mandate</b>	21 28.38%	27 28.72%	48 28.57%	28.65%
<b>Total</b>	74 100.00%	94 100.00%	168 100%	100%

**IR 3.1: "Target community organizations are engaged in democratic self-governance and civic action at the local level and beyond."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Target COs govern themselves democratically.**

In order to measure the level of internal democracy in COs, previous consultants developed a four-point index according to commonly-accepted criteria. These criteria were as follows: First, is the CO voluntary in founding and membership or is it ascriptive? That is, do members automatically belong according to their membership in a social category such as gender or an age group? Second, is leadership elected and does alternation occur according to organizational by-laws? Third, are meetings held according to organizational by-laws? Finally, fourth, is attendance reasonably high at both board and general membership meetings (at least 75 percent board attendance, and at least 60 percent general membership attendance)?

Last year, the Team had substantial difficulties in using this index, for a variety of reasons. Most notably, organizations were doubly penalized for not having by-laws, and organizations not keeping attendance records were penalized. Further, the standard for “voluntariness” included both the membership status of the organization at its inception as well as at the present time. This was judged to unduly penalize organizations for a history that was usually beyond their control, so this sub-indicator was simplified to only judge current membership status. Ultimately, because of the low number of COs being able to show any record at all of attendance, the CO democratic governance index was shortened to three indicators, and the results were as follows:

<b>Table 15 Percent of Target COs Practicing Democratic Self-Governance, 1997</b> <b>[Index: voluntariness + leadership alternation + meetings/by-laws;</b> <b>one point for each index item;</b> <b>a score of 3 = "very democratic;" 0 = "not democratic" ]</b>				
<b>Democracy Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Weighted Percentages</b>
<b>Three</b>	0 00.00%	0 00.00%	0 00.00%	00.00%
<b>Two</b>	9 12.16%	1 1.06%	10 5.95%	3.24%
<b>One</b>	17 22.97%	31 32.98%	48 28.57%	30.94%
<b>Zero</b>	48 64.86%	62 65.96%	110 65.48%	65.75%
<b>Total</b>	74 100.00%	94 100.00%	168 100%	100%

Last year, even after dropping one criterion from the index and defining a democratic CO as one meeting all three of the retained criteria, not a single one of the 168 COs surveyed exhibited systematic democratic self governance as defined in the DGSO program indicators.

This year, because of concerns about doubly penalizing organizations for not having by-laws, as well as the fear of having overly complicated individual criteria, the “democratic self-governance index” was simplified as follows: COs were awarded one point each for meeting the following standards: 1. being voluntary in membership; 2. Practicing leadership alternation with fixed terms; 3. Possessing written by-laws; 4. Being able to demonstrate at least 60% attendance of rank-and-file members at their last general assembly. As the reader can see, this revised index measures all of the same phenomena as last year such as nature of membership, nature of leadership, level of participation, and possession of formal rules. At the same time, it also has the advantage of being greatly simplified.

Below, we present raw scores on each of the sub-indicators and then present the aggregate table in both raw and weighted form.

This year’s results on the first democratic self-governance indicator are shown in Table 16. Interestingly, in this year’s sample, well over half of the organizations surveyed described themselves as voluntary in membership (as measured by CO Question 18), while last year, fully 83.41 percent of the sample was described as ascriptive. A partial explanation for this result is the fact that 23 of the 33 women’s groups surveyed were women’s credit institutions, the predominant type of women’s group supported by World Education and Save the Children. These groups would be almost-certainly conceived as being voluntary, consequently dramatically increasing the percentage of voluntary women’s COs. Nonetheless, this does not explain the dramatic increase in numbers of voluntary *mixed* groups in the sample.

<b>Membership Type</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Ascriptive</b>	5 15.15%	52 50.00%	57 41.61%
<b>Voluntary</b>	28 84.85%	52 50.00%	80 58.39%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

Chi2(1)= 12.5219 Pr.=0.000

*This year, exactly fifty percent of mixed groups and an astounding 84.85 percent of women’s groups report that they are voluntary in membership.*

The reader will note the strongly-significant difference between women’s groups and mixed groups in membership type, as reflected by the Chi-square statistic. However, we would caution that this is a result of the particular type of women’s groups in our sample, and not necessarily anything characteristic of women’s groups in general.

The leadership selection data (as operationalized by CO 21) are displayed in Table 17, below.

<b>Table 17 Democratic Self-Governance Criterion 2: Percent of Target COs in Which Leadership Is Elected for a Specific Time Period Allowing Alternation (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
<b>Method of Leadership Selection</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Leadership elected for a specific time period</b>	9 27.27%	21 20.19%	30 21.90%
<b>Leadership elected for open period</b>	0 0%	12 11.54%	12 8.76%
<b>Consensus of members</b>	21 63.64%	50 48.08%	71 51.82%
<b>Selection by village notables</b>	3 9.09%	21 20.19%	24 17.52%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

Chi2(3) = 7.3138 Pr=0.063

*Among mixed groups, 20.19 percent elect leaders for a fixed period of time ensuring alternation. This procedure is also followed by 27.27 percent of women’s groups.*

These results are nearly identical to what was found last year. Last year, 29.12 percent of COs surveyed held elections of some sort to choose their leaders, compared with 30.66 percent (21.90% + 8.76%) this year. Also last year, 55.67 percent reported selecting their leaders by consensus, compared to 51.82 percent this year. Finally, last year, 15.70 percent of COs reported that their leaders were chosen by village notables, compared to 17.52 percent this year. Keep in mind that the results shown above are unweighted, but they convey a general idea of trends on this sub-indicator.

If we disaggregate elected leadership into those organizations with a precise term of office as compared with those who elect leaders for an indefinite period, we see a slight difference with more leaders being elected for a precise term this year than last (21.90 percent to 15.44 percent). Nevertheless, this difference is small enough for us to state that the data are roughly equivalent to last year’s.

While the DGSO Team’s normative preference is for organizations to formally elect their leaders, observers would be well-advised to view Western-style democracy as a continuum

ranging from elected leadership for a fixed period, through leadership elected for an open period, to consensus, and concluding with selection by village notables. Many self-professed Malian democrats would argue that consensus is the appropriate means of democratic selection at the village level and any type of formal election would be de-stabilizing. Viewed in this manner, fully 82.48 percent of the organizations surveyed engage in some form of democratic leadership selection, a statistic that should be somewhat encouraging. On the other hand, it would be worthwhile to determine the characteristics of COs where village notables handpick leaders, in order to encourage more inclusive leadership selection in these groups.

Table 18 shows the percentage of COs claiming to have formal organizational by-laws and those able to offer proof to that effect.

<b>Table 18 Democratic Self-Governance Criterion 3: Percent of Target COs Demonstrating Proof of Formal By-Laws (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Do not have by-laws</b>	9 27.27%	38 36.54%	47 34.31%
<b>Report by-laws but offered no confirmation</b>	14 42.42%	34 32.69%	48 35.04%
<b>Report and provide confirmation of by-laws</b>	10 30.30%	32 30.77%	42 30.66%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

*A virtually identical percentage of mixed groups and women’s groups offered evidence of the existence of organizational by-laws -- 30.77 percent of mixed groups and 30.30 percent of women’s groups.*

The reader can see that over half of the 90 COs claiming to possess formal by-laws were unable to present them for inspection. The consultants are very aware of the fact that conducting this study during the rainy season created serious obstacles to the sort of triangulation methods incorporated into the study. Specifically, certain indicators were operationalized using a filter question to determine whether a desired document existed, followed by a question requiring physical proof of that assertion. Given the fact that our data collection teams visited villages at one of their busiest work periods, at the height of the rainy season, they were often forced to conduct interviews in the farm fields of CO leaders. Consequently, in many cases, documents may have in fact existed, but they were not immediately accessible.

Nevertheless, the reason for establishing “proof of by-laws” as a stand-alone index item was to avoid double-penalizing organizations not possessing by-laws. This said, if we eliminated all standards of proof, we would be lowering the bar too low and it would be difficult to seriously

compare this year's data with last year's. Consequently, for the purposes of the democratic self-governance index, only COs showing written proof of by-laws will receive this point. If at some point the Team feels that the standard was too rigorous, the index can be recalculated including all those claiming formal by-laws, regardless of whether or not they offered proof.

Next we turn to **Democratic Self-Governance Criterion 4**, rank-and-file attendance at the most recent general assembly. Largely because of absence of attendance record keeping, only five of the 137 target COs were able to demonstrate proof of 60 percent rank-and-file membership attendance at their last general assembly. In other words, only five target groups received credit for the index point associated with this sub-indicator. The point of this sub-indicator appears to be primarily to measure broad-based organizational participation. Unfortunately, the lack of organizational record keeping on matters of attendance has the effect of preventing almost all of the DGSO Team's partners CO from meeting the standard. Consequently, their lack of formalized record keeping prevents USAID from measuring participation, which is what it is really trying to get at.

The DGSO Team may therefore wish to encourage its Partners to promote more systematic record keeping among COs, both as a means of monitoring other phenomena, as well as a desirable end in itself.

*Only five of the 137 groups in the target sample (3.65 percent) were able to demonstrate proof of sixty percent rank-and-file membership attendance at their most recent general assembly.*

Table 19A displays the raw data for target CO scores on the democratic self-governance scale, with all of the sub-indicators included.

<b>Table 19A Percent of Target COs Practicing Democratic Self-Governance, 1998</b> [Index: voluntariness + leadership alternation + written by-laws + <i>assemblée général</i> attendance; one point for each index item; a score of 4 = "very democratic;" 0 = "not democratic" ] (Raw Frequencies)			
<b>Democracy Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Four</b>	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
<b>Three</b>	7 21.21%	9 8.65%	16 11.68%
<b>Two</b>	5 15.15%	19 18.27%	24 17.52%
<b>One</b>	18 54.55%	43 41.35%	61 44.53%
<b>Zero</b>	3 9.09%	33 31.73%	36 26.28%
<b>Total</b>	33 100%	104 100%	137 100%

Table 19B presents these same democratic self-governance scores weighted by Partner and gender and compared to the control group.

<b>Table 19B Percent of COs Practicing Democratic Self-Governance, 1998</b> [Index: voluntariness + leadership alternation + written by-laws + <i>assemblée générale</i> attendance; one point for each index item; a score of 4 = "very democratic;" 0 = "not democratic" ] (Weighted)				
	Women's Groups	Mixed Groups	Total	Control
<b>Four</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.78%
<b>Three</b>	21.20%	4.32%	5.13%	5.56%
<b>Two</b>	14.96%	15.04%	15.04%	8.33%
<b>One</b>	55.15%	43.37%	43.93%	44.44%
<b>Zero</b>	8.69%	37.27%	35.90%	38.89%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*None of the 137 target COs in the sample scored a perfect four out of four on the democratic self-governance index, and only 5.13 percent even scored three out of four. However, an encouraging 21.20 percent of women's groups scored three out of four.*

Primarily because of the effect of the attendance sub-indicator, none of the target COs meet the four-point standard for democratic governance. One of the 36 control group COs, made the standard, however, as two of the control group COs were able to present evidence of 60 percent attendance at their last general assembly. If one looks at the general contours of the data, however, there is little difference between control group and target COs. For example, 20.17 percent of target COs scored two points or more, as compared to 16.67 percent in the control group. Similarly, 35.90 percent of target organizations did not meet any of the criteria at all, compared with 38.89 percent in the control group.

In order to provide results that are more closely comparable with last year's, Table 19C provides weighted results on a three-point index, excluding the attendance sub-indicator.

<b>Table 19C Percent of COs Practicing Democratic Self-Governance, 1998</b> [Index= voluntariness + leadership alternation + written by-laws; one point for each index item; a score of 3 = "very democratic;" 0 = "not democratic" ] (Weighted)				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Three</b>	21.20%	2.70%	3.58%	5.56%
<b>Two</b>	8.66%	16.67%	16.29%	8.33%
<b>One</b>	61.45%	42.95%	43.84%	44.44%
<b>Zero</b>	8.69%	37.69%	36.30%	41.67%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

One interesting anomaly in the data is the fact that, while the mixed, total, and control distributions are uni-modal with the bulk of the distribution being at the low end of the index, the distribution of women’s groups is bi-modal, with a high frequency at “one” and a dip and then a smaller peak at “three.” This undoubtedly has something to do with the specific types of women’s groups in the study, particularly the high frequency of women’s credit associations. An interesting topic of further study would be to examine the breakdown of organizations by sector and the various democratic self-governance criteria.

It is also worth noting that, while last year 96.69 percent of COs studied scored a disappointing zero or one on the index, this year that woeful percentage diminished to 80.14 percent. Among control group COs, 86.11 percent scored that low.

Next we examine the performance of COs on the sound management index.

## **2. Target COs have sound management practices.**

Both target and control group COs do slightly better when evaluated for the quality of their management practices.

This year, the sound management criteria employed include the following: 1. Evidence of formal financial systems; 2. Evidence of strategic planning; 3. board literacy exceeding fifty percent; and 4. Systematic collection of dues. This is a slight change from last year, when both a five- and a four-point index were calculated. The five-point index was biased in favor of women’s organizations, because they automatically received credit for the gender analysis component of the strategic planning sub-indicator. Both indices included legal recognition as a sub-indicator. Upon further examination, the DGSO Team decided that this criterion in itself was not a direct indicator of sound management, though it remains an important organizational characteristic to track. It was therefore dropped from the index, but will be reported separately. Similarly, the gender analysis component of strategic planning was dropped, though it also will be tracked separately. Finally, because by-laws are already a component of the democratic self-governance index, the

collection of dues was separated from “as required in by-laws” and was changed to “systematic collection of dues.” The new standard simply requires that organizations be able to demonstrate a formal system of dues collection.

The first criterion in this year’s sound management index required COs to present evidence of systematic, formal, financial systems. Results for this item are presented in Table 20.

<b>Table 20 Sound Management Criterion 1: Percent of Target COs Presenting Evidence of Formal Financial Systems (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Reported and provided evidence of formal financial system</b>	21 63.64%	43 41.35%	64 46.72%
<b>Reported formal financial system, but no evidence provided</b>	10 30.30%	43 41.35%	53 38.69%
<b>Do not have formal financial system</b>	2 6.06%	18 17.31%	20 14.60%
<b>Total</b>	104 100.00%	33 100.00%	137 100.00%

*Among mixed groups, 41.35 percent presented evidence of a formal financial system, as did 63.64 percent of women’s groups.*

Based on the raw, unweighted frequencies, 46.72 percent of target COs maintain systematic, formal, financial records. However, fully 63.64 percent of women’s COs meet the same standard. This is very similar to the pattern in the 1997 results, in which the global percentage of groups meeting the formal financial systems standard was 36.32, while exactly half (50.00 percent) of women’s groups met the standard.

Understanding the nascent nature of formal systems in many grassroots organizations, we gauged evidence of strategic planning as follows. CO leaders were asked whether they had set objectives for the five years to come and, if so, to name them. If they named at least two objectives for their CO or the larger community, they were judged as having met the standard. In general, CO leaders were very articulate in demonstrating evidence of strategic planning.

<b>Table 21 Sound Management Criterion 2: Percent of Target COs Showing Evidence of Strategic Planning (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>At least two concrete objectives benefiting community</b>	23 69.70%	78 75.00%	101 73.72%
<b>Claim to have organizational objectives, but mention zero or one concrete objective</b>	5 15.15%	9 8.65%	14 10.22%
<b>Do not have organizational objectives</b>	4 12.12%	17 16.35%	21 15.33%
<b>Don't know</b>	1 3.03%	0 0.00%	1 0.73%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

*Target CO leaders were very articulate in describing their strategic planning. Among mixed groups, fully 75.00 percent named at least two concrete objectives benefiting their communities. Among women's groups, 69.70 percent met the same standard.*

While the numbers on this indicator were strong, they were slightly inferior to those discovered last year. This year, we estimate that 73.72 percent of all target COs (87.09 percent last year) are able to demonstrate evidence of strategic planning. Women's organizations were slightly less likely than mixed groups to demonstrate evidence of strategic planning, but they were in the same ballpark, at 69.70 percent as compared to 75.00 percent.

A third sound management criterion concerns literacy rates on CO boards. Lacking concrete evidence of individual literacy levels, we asked respondents how many of their officers had completed four years of formal schooling (French or French-Arabic) *or* could read *and* write in a national language. Consultants then calculated literacy rates based on officer numbers provided by the organizations.

<b>Table 22 Sound Management Criterion 3: Literacy Rates on Target CO Boards (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>80-100% literacy</b>	7 21.21%	32 30.77%	39 28.47%
<b>60-79.99% literacy</b>	5 15.15%	14 13.46%	19 13.87%
<b>40-59.99% literacy</b>	6 18.18%	28 26.92%	34 24.82%
<b>20-39.99% literacy</b>	5 15.15%	20 19.23%	25 18.25%
<b>0-19.99% literacy</b>	10 30.30%	8 7.69%	18 13.14%
<b>Don't know</b>	0 0.00%	2 1.92%	2 1.46%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

Chi2(5) = 12.2374 Pr=0.032

The above table provides a table which can be compared to last year's literacy distribution. Given that last year's standard for officer literacy was eighty percent of the board, we estimated that 48.02 percent of all target COs and 30.99 percent of women's COs met that standard in 1997, though we commented that it seemed surprisingly high. This year, we tried to be more precise about what we meant by literacy, using as a proxy measure four years of "formal" schooling or the professed ability to read and write in Bambara or another national language. This year, we estimate that only 21.21 percent of women's groups have an eighty-percent-literate board under the new standard, as compared to 28.47 percent of all target groups. Because we lower the board literacy threshold to fifty percent, however, slightly more groups will meet this criterion than last year.

*Mixed groups were slightly more likely than women's groups to demonstrate at least fifty percent literacy among their officers. Specifically, 56.73 percent of the former and 45.45 percent of the latter met this standard.*

CO leaders were asked whether their members pay regular dues and, if so, to show a formal, written record keeping system for that purpose. Results are shown in Table 23.

<b>Table 23 Sound Management Criterion 4: Percent of Target COs Systematically Collecting Dues (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Confirmation provided of systematic dues collection</b>	9 27.27%	5 4.81%	14 10.22%
<b>Report that dues are collected systematically</b>	6 18.18%	9 8.65%	15 10.95%
<b>Do not have periodic dues collection</b>	18 54.55%	90 86.54%	108 78.83%
<b>Total</b>	33 100%	104 100%	137 100%

*Only 4.81 percent of all target groups but an impressive 27.27 percent of women's COs can provide evidence of systematic dues collection.*

The DGSO Team should note that fully 78.83 percent of all target groups do not even collect periodic dues. Consequently, most of the COs under study had no chance of being given credit for satisfying this sound management criterion. The Team should examine their programmatic goals as they concern sound management. Specifically, do they consider the failure to collect dues as suggestive of a poorly-managed organization? If not, other indicators of sound management should be examined as possible replacements.

Based on the above four criteria, an additive four-item sound management index has been calculated to paint a composite picture of management practices. Results for this index are presented below.

<b>Table 24A Percent of Target COs Practicing Sound Management Techniques, 1998</b> [Index: financial systems + strategic planning + functional literacy + systematic dues collection; one point for each item; a score of 4 = "sound management;" 0="unsound management"] (Raw Frequencies)			
<b>Sound Management Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Four</b>	4 12.50%	1 0.98%	5 3.73%
<b>Three</b>	7 21.88%	20 19.61%	27 20.15%
<b>Two</b>	10 31.25%	45 44.12%	55 41.04%
<b>One</b>	10 31.25%	31 30.39%	41 30.60%
<b>Zero</b>	1 3.12%	5 4.90%	6 4.48%
<b>Total</b>	32 100.00%	102 100.00%	134 100.00%

Chi2 (4) = 9.8851 Pr = 0.042

Women's groups are significantly more likely to score in the higher echelons of the sound management index than are mixed groups.

The next table presents weighted percentages for the sound management index and compares the target COs with the non-target control group.

<b>Table 24B Percent of COs Practicing Sound Management Techniques, 1998</b> [Index: financial systems + strategic planning + functional literacy + systematic dues collection; one point for each item; a score of 4 = "sound management;" 0="very unsound management"] (Weighted)				
<b>Sound Management Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Four</b>	12.27%	0.09%	0.65%	2.78%
<b>Three</b>	22.09%	17.89%	18.09%	13.89%
<b>Two</b>	28.78%	46.66%	45.83%	36.11%
<b>One</b>	32.78%	28.31%	28.52%	36.11%
<b>Zero</b>	4.07%	7.06%	6.92%	11.11%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*According to weighted calculations, less than one percent (0.65 percent) of all target groups score a perfect score of four on the sound management index. Impressively, however, among women's groups that probability rises to 12.27 percent.*

When comparing organizations scoring three points or better, target women's groups score by far the best, followed by mixed groups and the control group, which are roughly even. If, however, we compare percentages in each category which score two or better, mixed groups pull even with women's groups (at 64.64 percent and 63.14 percent, respectively), while the control group lags slightly behind, at 52.78 percent. In other words, women's groups have a small core that are very well-managed but apart from that do not distinguish themselves from mixed groups, which have few of their kind scoring in the highest tier but have many scoring in the middle rungs of the index.

Table 24C, below, shows results on last year's slightly different index.

<b>Table 24C Percent of Target COs Practicing Sound Management Techniques, 1997</b> [Index: legal recognition + financial systems + functional literacy + dues/by-laws one point for each scale item; a score of 4 = "sound management;" 0 = "unsound management"]				
Management Score	Women's Groups	Mixed Groups	Total	Weighted Percentages
<b>Four</b>	1 1.35%	3 3.19%	4 2.38%	2.83%
<b>Three</b>	6 8.11%	2 2.13%	8 4.76%	3.30%
<b>Two</b>	17 22.97%	20 21.28%	37 22.02%	21.61%
<b>One</b>	25 33.78%	43 45.74%	68 40.48%	43.39%
<b>Zero</b>	25 33.78%	26 27.66%	51 30.36%	28.86%
<b>Total</b>	74 100.00%	94 100.00%	168 100%	100%

*While noting that last year's index had slightly higher standards than this year's, it is encouraging that fully 18.74 percent of all target groups and 34.36 percent of women's groups scored at least three out of four on the sound management index, as compared to just 6.13 percent and 9.46 percent, respectively, last year.*

Two indicators were included in the sound management index last year but were removed this year because they were considered to be only tenuously linked to sound management.

Nevertheless, they were both considered important and the DGSO Team wished to continue to track them. These indicators are those concerning legal recognition and gender analysis.

Because of confusion in the past as to what constituted legal recognition, this sequence of questions (CO 24-25) included first a filter to determine whether or not the CO claimed to be legally recognized, followed by a second question asking to see an official document demonstrating recognition. Enumerators were then instructed to note whether it constituted “local” recognition (cercle- or arrondissement-level) or national recognition. The results are shown in Table 25.

<b>Table 25 Percent of Target COs Reporting and Presenting Proof of Legal Recognition (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Proof of recognition by national administration</b>	6 18.18%	0 0.00%	6 4.38%
<b>Proof of recognition by local administration</b>	4 12.12%	24 23.08%	28 20.44%
<b>Reported legal recognition, but no document shown</b>	18 54.55%	57 54.81%	75 54.74%
<b>No legal recognition reported</b>	5 15.15%	23 22.12%	28 20.44%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

Chi2 (3) = 20.9750 Pr=0.000

*No mixed groups and only 18.18 percent of women’s groups showed evidence of legal recognition at the national level. When local recognition is included in the mix, however, 23.08 percent of mixed groups and 30.30 percent of women’s groups meet the standard of legal recognition.*

These results are comparable but superior to last year’s. Last year, only 18.25 percent of target COs were able to show any kind of document proving legal recognition. This year, 24.82 percent (4.38 + 20.44) showed proof of either local or national recognition. A large portion of the remaining COs claimed legal recognition but were unable to produce documentation of that claim.

Interesting to note is the strongly-significant difference between women’s groups and mixed groups in legal recognition, particularly by national authorities. None of the mixed groups in the sample showed evidence of national legal recognition, while 18.18 percent of women’s groups did. Once local recognition is factored in, however, women’s groups and mixed groups are much closer in their characteristics.

The next table displays the results of CO Question 30, aimed at determining whether or not mixed CO leaders had given serious thought to the impact of their organization upon women. In order to avoid leading respondents by asking directly about their impact upon women, we asked them to describe their CO's impact on their community. Enumerators were then instructed to note whether or not respondents spoke directly of their impact on women.

<b>Table 26 Percent of Target Mixed COs Presenting Evidence of Gender Analysis (Raw frequencies)</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Evidence of gender analysis</b>	52	50.49%
<b>No evidence of gender analysis</b>	51	49.51%
<b>Total</b>	103	100.00%

*Almost exactly half of all mixed COs (50.49 percent) showed evidence of performing gender analysis.*

Here we see evidence of the impact of leading questions upon the data. Last year, mixed CO leaders were asked directly to describe the impact of their organization upon women. The designers of the survey felt that it was acceptable to pose the question directly and then allow skilled enumerators to discern which leaders had given the subject serious thought from those who had not. Nevertheless, fully 81.91 percent of mixed COs were given credit for gender analysis. Because the percentage was so high, the question was re-worded to seek the desired information in an indirect fashion. In the above table, we see the results of the change in question wording -- almost exactly half of the respondents (50.49 percent) exhibited evidence of having reflected over the impact of their organization upon women in their community. Given that the question was posed indirectly, the results are encouraging in that half of mixed organization leaders gave unsolicited commentary on issues important to women.

### **3. Percent of mixed-gender COs with women in leadership positions**

*Significantly over half (62.50 percent) of mixed COs had women in leadership positions.*

As a rough measure of representativeness, mixed gender COs are asked how many women they have in leadership positions (CO 5). While significantly over half (62.50 percent) of these groups had women officers, this is nevertheless a dramatic drop from last year, when 81.91 percent of mixed groups reported that their leadership board included at least one woman. Since last year's percentage seemed inordinately high, one wonders about the reliability of responses to this question. Presumably, local leaders know that most donors are sensitive to issues of gender equity. It is therefore plausible that leaders are tempted to report having female officers where none in fact exist. On the other hand, if this is the case, it could be considered dubious progress, though progress nonetheless, if leaders of unrepresentative organizations are at least aware of another point of view.

In any case, USAID and its Partners should conduct more detailed qualitative studies in order to begin to get a sense as to the degree to which women really participate on the boards of mixed COs as well as whether these women exercise real influence or are simply token board members for the outsiders' benefit.

#### **4. COs pursuing civic action (public advocacy).**

*Well over half of all target COs (62.98 percent) and 40.01 percent of women's COs engaged in some form of civic action in the year preceding the survey.*

Last year, we estimated that 42.86 percent of all target COs and 31.08 percent of women's COs pursued some form of civic action. This year, as shown in Table 13, above, we estimate that fully 62.98 percent of all target COs and 40.01 percent of women's target COs pursued some form of civic action.

Such a dramatic improvement should be taken with a grain of salt -- we are inclined to believe that the true level lies somewhere in between. A digression is warranted here: Around any population estimate drawn from a sample, there is a margin of error. With sample sizes this small, the margin of error is fairly large. Our "snapshot" of the data may actually be worse or better than the true character of the entire population under study. Consequently, it is possible that last year's data painted a portrait that was worse than the real distribution for all of USAID's partner COs (i.e., across the entire population, there was actually more civic action going on than was the case in the sample) and it is possible that this year's "snapshot" makes the population appear better than it really is (i.e., our sample is actually more active than the population at large).

#### **5. Percent of COs pursuing issues with "systematic" (formerly "effective") civic action.**

When asked to identify and describe an instance of working in collaboration with the authorities to resolve a problem, only 77 of the 137 target organizations surveyed were able to present such an example.

Respondents were asked to identify and describe the most complex problem over which their CO had interacted with authorities during the preceding twelve months. Enumerators were instructed to observe whether respondents mentioned analysis of the problem at hand, proposal of a solution, formulation of an action plan, collaboration with other organizations, and participation of rank and file members.

<b>Table 27A Percent of Target COs Pursuing Issues with Systematic Civic Action</b> [Index: Problem analyzed + position developed + action plan formulated + other entities contacted + rank-and-file members participating; one point for each index item; a score of 5 = "systematic civic action;" 0="unsystematic civic action"] (Raw Frequencies)			
<b>Systematic Civic Action Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Five</b>	2 16.67%	11 16.92%	13 16.88%
<b>Four</b>	4 33.33%	22 33.85%	26 33.77%
<b>Three</b>	5 41.67%	20 30.77%	25 32.47%
<b>Two</b>	0 0.00%	7 10.77%	7 9.09%
<b>One</b>	1 8.33%	4 6.15%	5 6.49%
<b>Zero</b>	0 0.00%	1 1.54%	1 1.30%
<b>Total</b>	12 100.00%	65 100.00%	77 100.00%

Table 27B, below, presents the same target group data, weighted by Partner and gender, and compares it with data for the control group of non-target COs.

<b>Table 27B Percent of COs Pursuing Issues with Systematic Civic Action</b> [Index: Problem analyzed + position developed + action plan formulated + other entities contacted + rank-and-file members participating; one point for each index item; a score of 5 = "systematic civic action;" 0="unsystematic civic action"] (Weighted)				
<b>Systematic Civic Action Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Five</b>	19.55%	22.38%	22.30%	16.67%
<b>Four</b>	31.42%	29.24%	29.30%	27.78%
<b>Three</b>	41.19%	29.88%	30.23%	22.22%
<b>Two</b>	0.00%	15.04%	14.58%	27.78%
<b>One</b>	7.84%	1.05%	1.26%	5.56%
<b>Zero</b>	0.00%	2.40%	2.33%	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*Among all target COs engaging in civic action, 22.30 percent scored a perfect five on the systematic civic action index. Of women's groups, 19.55 percent met the same standard. We estimate that 51.60 percent of all target COs engaging in civic action pursue it in a systematic manner, as defined by scoring at least four out of five on the "systematic civic action" index. Among women's organizations engaging in civic action, 50.97 percent met this standard.*

The reader should note that, in these two tables, percentages are calculated only from the subset of organizations which actually engage in civic action and can give an example of such activity. This is because we have separated level, quality, and effectiveness (i.e., result) of civic action as different issues, all deserving individual attention. It stands to reason, however, that making the initial step to engage in civic action at all can be related to feelings of efficacy, which may have something to do with the lower rates of women's groups participating in civic action.

Interestingly, though women's groups are less likely to engage in civic action, when they do it they are just as systematic as mixed groups. We remarked a similar phenomenon in last year's study.

**6. Financial sustainability -- COs that mobilize resources from non-USAID, non-member sources.**

In order to evaluate financial sustainability, we attempted to gather data on organizational effectiveness in diversifying revenue sources. To operationalize this, we asked CO leaders about non-member, non-USAID, revenue sources (CO 31-32). Their responses are summarized below.

<b>Table 28A Percent of Target COs Citing Revenue Sources Other Than Their Partner NGO and Member Dues (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No other sources confirmed</b>	10 30.30%	57 54.81%	67 48.91%
<b>Other sources confirmed</b>	23 69.70%	47 45.19%	70 51.09%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

It is startling how much more often women's groups reported outside sources of income than did mixed groups. At least in the USAID universe, women's groups are far less numerous than mixed groups. There may therefore simply be fewer women's groups competing for scarce outside resources. Another hypothesis is the previously-mentioned fact that the women's groups in the sample tend to be, disproportionately, women's credit institutions, which may be more plugged into alternative revenue sources than are other types of organizations.

<b>Table 28B Percent of COs Citing Revenue Sources Other Than Their Partner NGO and Member Dues (Weighted)</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>No other sources confirmed</b>	31.44%	34.68%	34.53%	38.89%
<b>Other sources confirmed</b>	68.56%	65.32%	65.47%	61.11%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*We estimate that 65.47 percent of all target COs and 68.56 percent of women's COs mobilized resources from at least one non-USAID, non-member source.*

It is interesting to note that control group COs are less likely to report outside revenue sources than are USAID target COs, though the difference is not marked. One should also note that this is one of the rare cases where the weighted survey results differ dramatically from the raw frequencies, particularly with regard to mixed groups.

**IR 3.1.1: "Target intermediary NGOs and federations support community organizations' democratic self-governance and civic action."**

**Performance Indicator:**

- 1. COs which report that they made organizational changes and/or used at least one of the new skills for which they were trained.**

Organizational leaders who reported that their members had received trainings of any sort in the previous twelve months were asked to describe the utility of these trainings to their organizations (CO 55-57). Enumerators recorded the frequency with which respondents mentioned organizational changes made or other ways in which they had used skills gained from trainings. Included in these calculations are only those COs reporting that they received training in the previous year (107 of 137 target COs, 78.10 percent; 20 of 36 non-target, 55.56 percent). The raw frequencies for this indicator are shown in Table 29A.

<b>Table 29A Percent of Target COs Reporting That They Made Organizational Changes or Used the New Skills for Which They Were Trained (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No evidence of change</b>	3 12.00%	8 9.76%	11 10.28%
<b>Training skills used</b>	22 88.00%	74 90.24%	96 89.72%
<b>Total</b>	25 100.00%	82 100.00%	107 100.00%

Table 29B displays the weighted percentages for this indicator.

<b>Table 29B Percent of COs Reporting That They Made Organizational Changes or Used the New Skills for Which They Were Trained (Weighted)</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>No evidence of change</b>	12.48%	7.72%	7.94%	25.00%
<b>Training skills used</b>	87.52%	92.28%	92.06%	75.00%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*We estimate that 92.06 percent of all target COs receiving training in the past year and 87.52 percent of women's COs have made use of the skills in which they were trained.*

These numbers are almost identical those from the baseline study, when 91.36 percent of all COs and 91.07 percent of women's COs reported making use of the skills in which they were trained. Interestingly, a lower percentage of control group COs received training, and those COs receiving training were significantly less likely to report making use of the skills learned.

Note that the results for women's and mixed groups for this indicator are very similar, the same trend as was remarked last year. Women's and mixed COs appear to use new knowledge gained from training in approximately the same proportions.

One caveat, however -- Because these data are based on reports by the organizations themselves, and there are clear incentives to create a favorable impression in order to attract future assistance, they may be biased upward.

**IR 3.1.1.1 (also called 3.1.2.1) "The capacity of target NGOs and federations is strengthened."**

## **Performance Indicators:**

**1. Target intermediary NGOs and federations govern themselves democratically.**

This was originally designed as a four-item index. Because of the same problems associated with the CO attendance measure, especially with respect to the federations in the sample, we dropped attendance from this index. The three criteria for NGO/federation democratic governance are therefore voluntary adherence, leadership alternation by regular elections, and holding regular meetings in accordance with organizational by-laws.

Seventy-five percent of the NGOs and federations surveyed considered themselves to be voluntary associations. There is a marked difference by type of intermediary organization, however. Of the 25 NGOs, all considered themselves to be voluntary, while only 5 of the 15 federations considered themselves to be voluntary. Presumably, because federation members automatically belong by virtue of their membership in constituent organizations, they classified their organizations as non-voluntary. Needless to say, this does not mean that they are ascriptive either, so the Team may wish to consider whether or not this particular criterion is appropriate for federations.

Of the forty intermediary organizations, 16 selected their officers in an election for a fixed term in accordance with their by-laws, while 24 did not. Again, the different intermediary organizations differed greatly in their distributions. Sixty percent of the NGOs (15 of 25) met the democratic alternation criterion, while only 6.67 percent (1 of 15) of the federations did.

The same pattern occurred in the criterion requiring that intermediary organizations hold meetings in accordance with the manner stipulated in their by-laws. Fifteen of 25 NGOs (60 percent) met this criterion while only 2 of 25 federations did (13.33 percent), for a combined rate of 42.50 percent (17 of 40).

The next table shows the composite scores of all intermediary organizations on a three-item democracy index.

<b>Table 30A Percent of Partner Intermediary NGOs and Federations Governing Themselves Democratically</b> <b>[Index: voluntariness + leadership alternation + meetings/by-laws; one point for each scale item; a score of 3 = "democratic;" 0 = "undemocratic"]</b>		
<b>Democracy Score</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Three</b>	13	32.50%
<b>Two</b>	6	15.00%
<b>One</b>	12	30.00%
<b>Zero</b>	9	22.50%
<b>Total</b>	40	100.00%

At first glance, these results are very similar to last year's, in which exactly one-third of the intermediary organizations surveyed scored three out of three on the democratic self-governance index. At closer inspection, however, the NGOs in our census of DGSO-partner intermediary organizations scored consistently higher than did the federations. It is therefore a useful exercise to disaggregate intermediary organizations by category.

<b>Table 30B Percent of Partner Intermediary NGOs and Federations Governing Themselves Democratically</b> [Index: voluntariness + leadership alternation + meetings/by-laws; one point for each scale item; a score of 3 = "very democratic;" 0 = "very undemocratic"]		
Democracy Score	NGOs	Federations
<b>Three</b>	13 52.00%	0 0.00%
<b>Two</b>	4 16.00%	2 13.33%
<b>One</b>	8 32.00%	4 26.67%
<b>Zero</b>	0 0.00%	9 60.00%
<b>Total</b>	25 100.00%	15 100.00%

Clearly, in terms of self-governance, intermediary NGOs and federations have very little in common --

*over half of the federations (9 of 15) scored zero out of three on the democratic self-governance index while over half of the NGOs (13 of 25) received a perfect score.*

The team may therefore wish to either dis-aggregate NGOs and federations in the indicators or find a different arrangement for doing their performance measurement. In terms of role, federations have much in common with NGOs as intermediaries between the local and national level in the development and interest-aggregation process. In terms of personnel and procedures, however, they often have more in common with the community organizations that constitute them.

## **2. Target groups have sound management practices.**

To evaluate management practices among INGOs, previous consultants devised a complex index with six criteria each of which had several sub-criteria.

The first of these criteria was "good financial management," which consisted of the publication of an annual report, the execution of an annual external audit, and the carrying out of corrective measures recommended by the audit. Eight of the 25 NGOs (32 percent) met all three of the sub-criteria, while not a single federation was able to satisfy all of them.

The second criterion was "good strategic planning practices," including evidence of gender analysis, a vision statement or concrete goals and objectives, a written or clearly explained strategic plan, and evidence of the implementation of this plan. Sixteen NGOs (64 percent) measured up, while, again, zero federations met the standard.

The third sound management criterion was "good training and facilitation practices." Thirteen NGOs (52 percent) and no federations received credit for satisfying this criterion.

Fourth, NGOs were evaluated for "good personnel practices," including the existence of an organizational chart, job descriptions for core staff, and at least one woman employed in a professional position. Fourteen NGOs (56 percent) and *one* federation (6.67 percent) satisfied the minimum standards for this criterion

"Ethical standards respected," the fifth criterion, is very difficult to measure. The indicators adopted by the DG team included the existence of a code of conduct, staff trained to respect the code of conduct, and evidence that the code of conduct had been implemented, as evidenced by the organization's annual audit. None of the intermediary organizations in either category met this standard, and only one did last year. Clearly, the DGSO Team should examine whether their standards in this area are too rigorous, whether they should devote additional resources to training in this area, or both.

The sixth and final good management criterion was "good conflict resolution skills," as judged by evidence of at least one staff member trained in conflict resolution skills and evidence that these skills had been used during the previous year. Eight of the NGOs (32 percent) were scored as meeting this criterion, while no federations did.

Clearly, the detail of formal records and the numbers of conditions to be satisfied to meet each criterion play a role in the low number of intermediary organizations scoring well. Nevertheless, failure to meet a standard does not appear to be a function of the number of sub-criteria. For example, 16 NGOs met the "strategic planning" criterion, which has four sub-criteria, while only 8 met the "conflict resolution" criterion, which has only two sub-criteria. While the complexity of this index makes it slightly unwieldy (six criteria, 18 sub-criteria), it seems reasonable to hold national NGOs to rigorous management standards. Federations, on the other hand, are an entirely different type of organization, and as the data in Table 31 show, there is little useful information to be gained from holding them to standards that they cannot meet.

<b>Table 31    Percent of Intermediary NGOs with Sound Management Practices</b> [Index: financial management + strategic planning + training + personnel practices + ethical standards + conflict resolution; one point for each scale item; a score of 4-6 = "sound management;" < 4 = "unsound management"]			
<b>Management Score</b>	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Federations</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Six</b>	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
<b>Five</b>	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
<b>Four</b>	7 28.00%	0 0.00%	7 17.50%
<b>Three</b>	5 20.00%	0 0.00%	5 12.50%
<b>Two</b>	6 24.00%	0 0.00%	6 15.00%
<b>One</b>	4 16.00%	1 6.67%	5 12.50%
<b>Zero</b>	3 12.00%	14 93.33%	17 42.50%
<b>Total</b>	25 100.00%	15 100.00%	40 100.00%

*Seven of 25 NGOs (28.00 percent) scored four of six on the sound management index. Only one federation out of fifteen even scored one point on the index.*

As the reader can see, only one of the fifteen federations scored even a single point out of six on the sound management index. What is impressive, however, is that the partner NGOs scores were high enough to offset the weakness of the federations for a slight improvement over last year, when only 13.33 percent (4 of 30) of intermediary organizations scored four or higher (and only NGOs were included), as compared to a global total of 17.50 percent (7 of 40) this year. Nevertheless, the consultants strongly recommend that indicators for federations be tracked separately from NGOs.

Moreover, we recommend that a different set of less-rigorous indicators be used for federations in order that variation be high enough to make interesting comparisons. One possibility would be to replicate the CO democratic self-governance and sound management indicators as closely as possible. Rather, then, than comparing federations with the very-different NGOs, they could be compared with their constituent organizations -- for example, are federations as inclusive in their leadership selection and decisionmaking processes as their constituent COs?

Now, concerning data directly comparable with last year's:

*Twenty-eight percent of the USAID partner NGOs were judged to have sound management practices as judged by meeting at least four of six of the criteria in the sound management index.*

This is double the 13.33 percent that met the standard last year. This is a quite encouraging result -- since most of the NGOs in the study have not changed from last year, we can confidently surmise that the capacity and management skills of USAID-partner Malian NGOs are improving. The news is especially encouraging when combined with the fact that the proportion of NGOs scoring three out of three on the democratic self-governance index rose this year to 52.00 percent from 33.33 percent.

One may be tempted to question the results, suggesting that NGOs are learning the information that USAID wants and are giving it to them. In fact, however, the number of sub-criteria and the fact that most of them require written documentation would make these results difficult to concoct artificially. At the very least, these results suggest that NGOs are keeping better records on their various activities, an altogether desirable state of affairs.

**IR 3.1.2: "Target intermediary NGOs and federations effectively aggregate and represent community organization interests at the local level and beyond."**

**Performance Indicators:**

- 1. Number of target intermediary NGOs and federations for which 2 or more of their CO partners report that the organization in question effectively represents their interests.**

As was stated last year, this indicator was impossible to measure exactly as it was written because it would have required stratifying by NGO, which would have enlarged the sample as well as survey costs astronomically. Nevertheless, we believe that we have measured the indicator as well as possible under the given constraints by asking each CO respondent to describe the nature of the representation they receive from their NGO partners to the national administration. Enumerators were then instructed to code the response to reflect whether or not the CO response reflected effective representation by the partner NGO.

Another stumbling block is presented, however, by the following information asymmetry. Due to the lack of detail in Partner sampling frame lists, as well as village-level unawareness of USAID and even of the international NGO partners, for many of the COs we do not have reliable information on the identity of their Malian NGO partner. Consequently, the responses reported in Table 32A reflect the estimations made by 137 different CO leaders regarding the nature of the representation they receive from intermediary NGOs or federations in general (based on CO 40a-41a).

<b>Table 32A Percent of Target COs Reporting that Collaborating NGOs and Federations Effectively Represent Their Interests (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No NGOs or federations represent interests</b>	20 60.61%	70 67.31%	90 65.69%
<b>Partner NGO does not effectively represent interests</b>	1 3.03%	6 5.77%	7 5.11%
<b>Partner NGO effectively represents interests</b>	9 27.27%	27 25.96%	36 26.28%
<b>Don't Know</b>	3 9.09%	1 0.96%	4 2.92%
<b>Total</b>	33 100%	104 100%	137 100%

Chi2(3) = 6.2257 Pr=0.101

These are very interesting results. Last year, when Malian NGOs directly provided the lists from which the sample was drawn (as international Partners did not possess adequate CO lists), 61.30 percent of all COs and 63.89 percent of women's COs reported a partner intermediary organization effectively represented their interests. This year, with insufficient information as to who was partnered with whom, only 26.28 percent of all target COs and 27.27 percent of women's COs report effective representation. Given anecdotal information on COs in the sample who had never heard of the USAID-partner Malian NGO with whom they were supposedly collaborating, and at least one other "target" CO which had been asked to collaborate but had refused, these results are not surprising.

In fact, because last year data collectors were able to ask about partner NGOs by name, it is possible that COs exaggerated the usefulness of the representation they were receiving in the interest of not jeopardizing the partnership. On the other hand, the question may have made more sense when placed in the context of a specific example. Nonetheless, we feel that this year's results are more representative of the true nature of representation received by COs. The weighted results for this indicator are presented in Table 32B.

<b>Table 32B Percent of Target COs Reporting that Collaborating NGOs and Federations Effectively Represent Their Interests (Weighted)</b>				
	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>No NGOs or federations represent interests or ineffective representation</b>	70.98%	72.11%	72.06%	73.72%
<b>Partner NGO effectively represents interests</b>	29.02%	27.89%	27.94%	26.28%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*We estimate that 27.94 percent of all target COs and 29.02 percent of women's COs feel that at least one intermediary organization effectively represents their interests.*

Perhaps most worrisome is the fact that there is no significant difference between the control group and the target group. In other words, *USAID-partner COs do not report any better representation than non-USAID partners.*

**2. Number of federations formed to address specific concerns related to government decisions.**

The NGO and federation data do not provide the means to obtain a comprehensive sense of the number of federations formed. However, ARR Questions 6-7 (Annex 5) ask local officials whether they are aware of federations formed in the previous 12 months to respond to a precise problem. These responses could be used to reformulate the indicator as “number of local officials reporting the creation of federations to address specific concerns related to government decisions.”

**3. Number of target federations whose membership is stable or increasing.**

This is a difficult indicator on which to gather data. Last year, we did not have a list of target federations. This year, we do have such a list, and we posed FED Question 23: “How many CO representatives are invited to your general assemblies?” If the same federations are included in next year’s study, we can track the size of partner federations. For the moment, however, we are unable to measure this indicator.

**4. Number of federations and intermediary NGOs engaged in sustained action on issues of mutual concern.**

This indicator was measured using NGO/FED Question 58.

*Eight of the twenty-five INGOs (32 percent) presented written evidence of sustained collaboration with other NGOs or federations. None of the fifteen federations presented evidence of collaboration, though four reported to be involved in such collaboration .*

The NGO figures are slightly lower than last year, when 13 of 30 (43.33 percent) reported such collaboration.

### **IR 3.1.2.2 "The civic action skills of target intermediary NGOs and federations are improved."**

#### **Performance Indicator:**

#### **1. Percentage of trained intermediary NGOs and federations using civic action techniques in a given year.**

This was operationalized through NGO/FED Questions 53a-53h.

*When presented with a series of eight different types of civic action, ranging from contacting public officials and organizing public meetings to using media outlets, 23 of 25 NGO (92.00 percent) reported using at least four different civic action techniques. The remaining two NGOs used at least one civic action technique. Two of the fifteen federations (13.33 percent) engaged in no civic action at all, but the remaining thirteen (86.67 percent) all used at least two different civic action techniques.*

While it is important for organizations to broaden their arsenal of possible civic action techniques, we should probably monitor quality in addition to quantity of results. We also need to collect data on NGOs, Federations, and COs that have participated in civic education programs -- this year and last, we interpreted "trained" liberally, as referring to all USAID-partner COs.

### **IR 3.2 "Effective Decentralization occurs by 1999."**

In addition to the surveys, USAID asked the consultants to collect information on the progress of Mali's ambitious decentralization process and other aspects of the enabling environment of democratic governance. The results of interviews conducted by the Malian data collection firm, Info-Stat, follow.

#### **Performance Indicators:**

#### **1. Percentage of communal boundaries decided.**

*All communal boundaries were established under Law Number 96-059 of November 1996. Minor alterations may still occur, but have not since last year's survey.*

Law number 96-059 of the Republic of Mali establishes 682 new communes across the eight regions of Mali. Adding in the nineteen urban communes of the District of Bamako, Mali has 701 communes. Law Number 93-08 permits modifications in which municipalities belong to which communes.

**2. Percentage of elections of mayors, communal boards and councils decided.**

*Only 2.71 percent of communal governments are in place, and the elections for 682 rural commune councils have been postponed to April 1999.*

Urban communal elections took place in June 1999. With the postponement of the rural commune municipal elections, this leaves 682 of 701 municipal councils (97.29 percent) as yet undecided.

**3. Planned laws and regulations about communal councils, boards, and mayors' authority and resources decided by 1999.**

*In 1997, Mission of Decentralization authorities reported to Info-Stat that "all texts and laws [concerning decentralization] have been voted upon." This year, they reiterated that position, without going into detail.*

USAID should nevertheless confirm that roles, rights, responsibilities are clear among localities and the national government.

**4. The portion of total human and financial resources generated and dispersed by communes.**

*Substantial legal ground has been traveled in ensuring that communes have the necessary human and financial resources to run effective programs, but the exact total breakdown of resources is not yet known.*

It is difficult to determine the division of revenues and expenses among localities and the national government. Decrees 95-210 (of 30 May 1995), 96-084 (of 20 March 1996), and 96-119 (of 11 April 1996) dictate how human resources will be deconcentrated under the new decentralized system.

Last year, we were told that "sixty percent of the TDRL tax will fund the communes in which it originates, but the system is not yet operational." This year, Info-Stat was told that the figure was *eighty* percent. The Mission should get a clarification on this.

In any case, this system is only conceivably in place in the nineteen communes which held elections in June.

**5. Frequency and number of public reporting on council and board meeting minutes and operations.**

*The Mission of Decentralization reports that a system for public reporting is in place. Verification visits should be conducted to see whether or not this is in fact the case.*

Interviews in existing communes in Bamako have revealed that officials are aware of the desire for transparency in the operations of communal administration, though systematic data on public reporting does not exist.

**IR 3.3 "Enabling environment empowers target COs and intermediary NGOs and federations."**

**Performance Indicators:**

**1. Progress toward legal recognition of cooperatives, village associations and federations adapted to decentralization.**

*A reform effort, initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Environment, has been underway since 1995. The proposed law was rejected by the Council of Ministers in May 1998, supposedly in order to allow further input by ministries before it is sent to the National Assembly.*

For more information, see Jesse C. Ribot’s report entitled “Political-Economic Analysis of Cooperatives Reform in Mali: `The State is the Best Hen,`” Report to USAID/Mali DGSO Team, 30 September 1998.

**2. Number of enabling environment issues around which two or more NGOs and federations work together to alleviate constraints.**

The nature of the data prevented effective cross-referencing of NGOs, federations, and individual enabling environment issues on which they collaborated. Nevertheless, to get a sense of the pervasiveness of such collaboration, we asked the respondents at each of the 25 NGOs and 15 federations to cite cases where there was sustained collaboration on issues involving the legal status of COs, cooperatives, or federations (NGO/FED 59). The results of this query follow.

<b>Table 33 USAID-Partner INGOs and Federations Reporting Collaboration on Enabling Environment Issues</b>			
	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>Federations</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Reporting collaboration</b>	5 20.00%	0 0.00%	5 12.50%
<b>Not reporting collaboration</b>	20 80.00%	15 100.00%	35 87.50%
<b>Total</b>	25 100.00%	15 100.00%	40 100.00%

*Only 5 of 25 USAID-partner NGOs (20.00 percent) report collaboration with other NGOs or federations on enabling environment issues. Not a single federation reported this type of partnership.*

The NGO result is almost exactly the same as last year, when 7 of 30 (23.33 Percent) reported such collaboration.

In order to have another source of data on this phenomenon, we asked arrondissement and commune officials whether they were aware of collaboration between Malian federations and NGOs in the interest of promoting a legal environment facilitating their activity (ARR 21-23, in annex). Only seven of 37 officials responding to this series of questions (18.92 percent) confirmed that they were aware of such collaboration. It is interesting that the numbers for these two measures are so close, even though the meaning is slightly different.

### **3. Number of COs knowledgeable about their rights and obligations vis-à-vis local governments.**

In order to evaluate CO leaders' awareness of their rights and obligations under the new decentralized system, we asked respondents four questions (CO 44-47), as follows (correct answer in brackets):

1. Even if my child meets all of the criteria for going to school, does the State have the right to refuse him/her entry? [No]
2. Does the State have the right to refuse legal recognition to an organization? [Yes]
3. May the State use the TDRL (local development tax) as it wishes? [No]
4. Do you have the right to attend ordinary sessions of the communal council? [Yes]

The raw results for this additive index of correct answers are shown in Table 34A, below.

<b>Table 34A Percent of Target CO Leaders Knowledgeable About Political Rights and Responsibilities [Index: Correct answers out of four] (Raw Frequencies)</b>			
<b>Knowledge Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Four</b>	1 3.03%	8 7.69%	9 6.57%
<b>Three</b>	22 66.67%	69 66.35%	91 66.42%
<b>Two</b>	10 30.30%	22 21.15%	32 23.36%
<b>One</b>	0 0.00%	5 4.81%	5 3.65%
<b>Zero</b>	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
<b>Total</b>	33 100.00%	104 100.00%	137 100.00%

The results are startling in their uniformity. Most notably, almost exactly the same percentage of women's groups and mixed groups scored three out of four points on the index. The only difference is in the spread of the two distributions -- slightly more mixed groups received a perfect score and more scored only one out of four (none in either category scored zero out of four). The reader should note that even the shape of the distributions is the same, disregarding the spread -- for each, the peak is at three, with the second most common score being two, followed by four.

While last year we only posed questions that were directly related to the decentralization process, this year we asked a greater diversity of questions on rights and responsibilities. While the answers are revealing, it seems as if we made the questions a little too easy.

Weighted percentages are presented in Table 34B.

<b>Table 34B Percent of CO Leaders Knowledgeable About Political Rights and Responsibilities [Index: Correct answers out of four] (Weighted)</b>				
<b>Knowledge Score</b>	<b>Women's Groups</b>	<b>Mixed Groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>Four</b>	2.39%	3.93%	3.86%	0.00%
<b>Three</b>	63.84%	63.38%	63.40%	69.44%
<b>Two</b>	33.77%	29.83%	30.02%	27.78%
<b>One</b>	0.00%	2.86%	2.72%	2.78%
<b>Zero</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

*Almost exactly two-thirds of both target COs in general as well as women's COs (67.26 percent and 66.23 percent, respectively) scored at least three out of four correct answers on a political rights quiz.*

Again, the differences from the raw table are not particularly great. One should note that the distribution of scores for the control group is quite similar to those for the target groups.

The next section presents conclusions and recommendations.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is one more step in the evolution toward meaningful performance measurement by USAID/Mali's Democratic Governance Strategic Objective (DGSO) Team. Using as a point of departure the baseline indicators survey and three years of work by a series of consultants, an effort was made to improve the performance measurement system and strive for a system with which the DGSO Team can conduct a rigorous assessment of its impact. The report provides analysis of the performance of a scientifically-drawn sample of USAID-partner community organizations (COs) working with all DGSO Team international Partners in all regions of Mali. It provides the opportunity to draw cautious conclusions about CO performance. This year's introduction of a control group also constitutes a step toward true impact assessment of the DGSO program. This final section of the report presents issues which must be addressed for the DGSO performance measurement system to continue to improve.

1. *Sampling Issues:* While the consultants encountered significant hurdles in constructing the **target CO sampling frame**, the frame that was ultimately constructed was significantly better than that which was available last year. The DGSO Team used its own lists as well as the lists compiled by the consultants to continue building a data base of all DGSO Team CO partners. The current plan is to update this data base at least every six months. A complete data base which contains contact information, sectoral information, and length of collaboration with USAID will be indispensable for future rounds of DGSO performance measurement.

The enormous strides that have been made in target CO sampling frame construction permit the drawing of generalizations about the performance of the population of partner COs. However, in order to do true impact assessment, performance measurement studies must include a control group consisting of non-target COs bearing similar characteristics to the USAID-partner COs. This year, very rudimentary steps were taken in this direction. In order to carry out rigorous impact assessment, however, a complete **non-target CO sampling frame** for USAID zones of operation and immediately adjoining zones will be necessary. The construction of such a sampling frame is, needless to say, a daunting task. Nevertheless, if rigorous impact assessment is to be done, the DGSO Team must hire local or international consultants to construct this frame well before the next round of data collection.

2. *Diverse Provocative Results:* Certain results point to areas which the DGSO Team may wish to explore in greater detail, either simply to better understand the current results or to examine possible promising avenues for future program resources. The following list is far from exhaustive but should be illustrative:

- a. In 42.10 percent of arrondissements and communes sampled, local officials were unable to report the creation of new COs in the previous year. Further study of these **low-civil-society-activity arrondissements and communes** would enable the DGSO Team to explore the causes of the lack of organizational activity. One hypothesis is that the young adults who stimulate the growth and dynamism of emerging organizations leave during the dry season to seek work in Bamako or

neighboring countries, thus depriving civil society of a critical mass of potential leaders. In any case, further study is warranted.

- b. While most COs in the sample choose their leaders by some sort of election or by consensus, in nearly one-fifth of the sample COs, officers were chosen directly by village elders. Another worthwhile avenue of further study would be to determine the characteristics of COs in **cases where village notables handpick CO leaders**, in order to encourage more inclusive leadership selection in these groups.
- c. For the purposes of the CO democratic self-governance index, only COs able to physically show their by-laws received credit for the “**formal by-laws**” criterion. If at some point the Team feels that the standard was too rigorous, the index can be recalculated including all those claiming formal by-laws, regardless of whether or not they offered proof.
- d. Also in the CO democratic self-governance index, most COs did not receive credit for the “**general assembly attendance**” criterion because of **inadequate record keeping**. The DGSO Team may therefore wish to examine whether they wish for formal record keeping to serve as a barrier to COs receiving credit for democratic procedures. They may also wish to encourage Partners to promote more systematic record keeping among COs, both as a means of monitoring other phenomena, as well as a desirable end in itself.
- e. Last year, COs only received credit for **systematic dues collection** if the dues were collected in accordance with their by-laws. This year, that standard was loosened to give credit to any CO showing formal written proof of a system for dues collection. Nevertheless, in both years, COs had no chance of meeting this standard if they did not collect dues. This year, for example, fully 78.83 percent of COs fell into this category. The Team should therefore examine their programmatic goals as they concern sound management, as well as **the relationship between programmatic goals and the DGSO indicators**. Specifically, do they consider the failure to collect dues as suggestive of a poorly-managed organization? If not, other indicators of sound management should be examined as possible replacements.
- f. Exploratory analysis revealed seemingly systematic differences between COs working with different international NGO Partners. This was the primary impetus for the weighting decisions that were made. The priorities of the present study prevented us from delving too deeply into these issues, but **further analysis of Partner-by-Partner results is warranted**. One caveat, however. Because Partners have very different intervention strategies and tend to specialize in different parts of the country, it will not be easy to isolate causes of different levels of performance. Nevertheless, this and other topics of interest would be productively explored through regression analysis and other techniques.

3. *Gender Issues:* A number of interesting issues related to gender came up in the study. For example:
  - a. On certain indicators, women's group results seemed to be biased upward because of the particular types of women's COs in the sample, particularly the high frequency of women's credit associations. Both among women's groups and in general, an interesting topic of further study would be to examine the **correlation between sector and the democratic self-governance criteria**.
  - b. A comfortable majority of mixed target community organizations reported having at least one female officer. Similarly, a slight majority of such organizations received credit for showing some evidence of gender analysis. That is, they volunteered unsolicited information concerning the impact of their organization upon women. These results give reason for cautious optimism concerning a sensitivity to women's issues among mixed CO leaders. These results are hardly conclusive, however. USAID may wish to engage in further study on the **role of women in mixed COs**. For example, do women have a real influence on decisions made by these groups, or do they simply serve as voiceless figureheads?
  - c. On a similar note, while civic action activity is generally rather low among the organizations studied, it is particularly low among women's groups. USAID may wish to bolster **programs promoting civic action** activity, especially that which is constructive and systematic. In particular, means of promoting **women's political efficacy** and consequent civic action activity would be well-advised.
  - d. While discussing gender issues, the following point must be made. The performance of women's COs is so important to the DGSO that we stratify by gender type. It is consequently puzzling that there are **only 61 women's groups** in this year's sampling frame of the 1279 COs **in the USAID-partner universe (4.77 percent)**. The DGSO Team should examine this apparent contradiction between program priorities and field reality.

4. *Control Group Results:* For most of the DGSO indicators there was little or no difference between target group and control group results. Where there were differences, the target groups often performed ever-so-slightly better than the control group. For example, in development decisions affected, partnerships with the State, and the sound management index, target groups lead the control group slightly. These are usually not statistically-significant differences by individual indicators. However, the fact that one consistently leads the other suggests that something systematic may be going on, but is masked when looking at individual indicators or because of the lower statistical power of a relatively small sample size. Even if a real difference exists, on the other hand, it could be a result of USAID Partners choosing to work with slightly more competent organizations. Differences will become clearer over time, as we **track changes in both target and control group COs**.

5. *Survey Accuracy Issues:* Because of the nature of DG indicators and the small sample size of the last two surveys, performance measurement specialists are confronted with topics that are difficult enough to measure without confronting the large margins of error that

come with small sample sizes. Any effort to improve the precision of the DGSO survey results would be helped by any possible **innovations increasing sample size**. Such measures would increase statistical power and the possibility of finding more nuanced differences among sub-groups of the population. One way to accomplish this would be by encouraging collaborative performance measurement across strategic objective (SO) teams.

One possible form that this could take would be that the DGSO Team continue to collect annual data from COs on an abbreviated list of indicators. They could encourage each of the other three SO Teams operating in the same geographic regions to contribute a short set of performance measurement questions for which CO leaders would be appropriate respondents. Then, the target CO sample would be stratified into three groups: Joint partners of SEG and DG, joint partners of Youth and DG, and joint partners of Info-Com and DG. Each group would be administered a questionnaire consisting half of DG questions and half of questions written by another sectoral team.

In this manner, with the DGSO Team contributing the same rough budget that it has devoted to the last two surveys, and the other three teams each contributing a significantly smaller sum, the DGSO Team could have a considerably more powerful annual survey. This survey would continue to serve as DG's principal performance measurement activity while the other teams could have useful survey data for a fraction of the resources they would commit if they mounted such a project alone. Conceivably, DG could triple its sample size without spending any more money while the other teams would have access to a sample size roughly equivalent to this year's for a third of the price that DG has been paying (based on the assumption that, because of economies of scale, the over-arching survey would cost twice as much for a sample size three times as large).

The increase in statistical power and economies of scale would make this **annual multi-sectoral performance measurement survey** appealing on all levels. The proportions used here, both in sample size and cost, are purely conjectural and illustrative. The consultants encourage the Mission to seriously examine the option of conducting such a multi-sectoral study.

The results of the present study provide a useful snapshot of the current performance of community organizations working with USAID Partners. Moreover, the comparisons with last year's study and the control group provide the first steps toward genuinely tracking performance over time and striving for meaningful impact assessment. We offer the present report in the hope that it contributes to programming which meets the needs and promotes the most sincere aspirations of Mali's people.

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