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**Decentralization, Service Provision,
and User Involvement:
Local-Level Options in the Republic of Mali**

**Volume II
October 1991**

Final Report

**Studies on Decentralization in the Sahel
(OECD Contract No. 90/52)**

**Sponsored by Club du Sahel
with the Cooperation of CILSS**

***Managed by:*
Associates in Rural Development, Inc.**

***Prepared by:*
Robert E. Hall
Hamidou Magassa
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Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Definitions

APE	local parents' association
<i>arrondissement</i>	local geopolitical jurisdiction of Mali below the <i>cercle</i> level
BEC	executive bureau of the UDPM
CAC	cooperative extension service
<i>chef d'arrondissement</i>	<i>arrondissement</i> administrative officer
CLD	local development committee
<i>cercle</i>	local geopolitical jurisdiction of Mali below the regional level
CNRA	National Commission for Administrative Reform
<i>commandant de cercle</i>	head administrator of the <i>cercle</i>
CRD	regional development committee
DEG	German Financial Association for Developing Country Support
<i>fraction</i>	nomadic equivalent of a village
<i>fraction nomade</i>	nomadic group
FAEF	Support Fund for Primary Education
FDRL	Local and Regional Development Fund
GTZ	German Technical Assistance Society
ha	hectare(s)
IAS	Impôts sur les Affaires et Services (a sales tax levied primarily on wholesale buyers)
IGR	general income tax
km	kilometer(s)
<i>medersas</i>	private schools which teach standard subjects in Arabic
MATDB	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Development
<i>matrone</i>	traditional midwife
MEN	Ministry of National Education

MF	minimal fiscal head tax
NGO	nongovernmental organization
ODEM	Operation for the Development of Livestock in the Mopti Region
ODR	rural development parastatal
<i>ordonnateur</i>	local government controller
<i>percepteur</i>	<i>cercle</i> treasury agent
<i>poste administratif</i>	local geopolitical jurisdiction of Mali below the <i>arrondissement</i> level
PPM	Pharmacie Populaire du Mali
TDRL	local and regional development tax
<i>ton</i>	a formally organized and officially recognized village organization
UDPM	Democratic Union of the Malian People
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFM	Union of Malian Women
UNJM	Union of Malian Youth
WHO	World Health Organization

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Preface

The following study represents one of a series of activities to be conducted on the theme of local-level options for natural resource management and public service provision and production in the Sahel. These activities are sponsored by the Club du Sahel and C.I.L.S.S., the leading institutions dedicated to the economic, social, and cultural development of the countries making up the Sahel region.

This activity began in September 1990 with review of existing documents and data on public service organization and finance in Mali and the Sahel region in general. A four-person team was fielded in early October, and field research commenced on October 7, 1990 in Mali. The team was composed of Hamidou Magassa, specialist in rural social organization; Aliou Ba, institutional analyst; Jeremy Hodson, economist; and Robert Hall, team leader and public service specialist. Interviews with senior ministry officials and technical specialists were conducted during the initial stage of the study. Field visits were then conducted, beginning October 17, in the region of Mopti. The field research program was structured to include data collection at each level of the hierarchy of territorial administration as well as in village and semi-urban communities. Sites visited in the region of Mopti included: regional administration, the commune of Mopti, the urban community of Sévaré, the *cercle* of Bandiagara, *arrondissements* (local geopolitical jurisdictions of Mali below the *cercle* level) of Goundaga and Kani-Gogouna, and four villages. The field research program continued in the region of Koulikoro, where the following sites were visited: the *cercle* of Kati, the commune of Kati, the *arrondissement* of Siby, and three villages. The study concluded in Bamako on November 8, 1990.

The central objective of this study was to provide a comprehensive overview of critical aspects of service provision and production in Mali with the intent of identifying measures to improve the delivery of public services in rural and urban communities. Attention was given to a broad array of services in the field research although no attempt was made to provide a comprehensive service-by-service review in this report. The services examined included: primary education, health care, livestock, general (territorial) administration, road maintenance, and rural water supply. The study design also addressed the role of local institutions and local people in the organization, finance, and management of public services, the mechanisms for vocalizing local preferences, and the extent to which they influenced service design and delivery. Finally, critical issues in local public finance were investigated.

I. Executive Summary

This study is part of a series of activities sponsored by the Club du Sahel and C.I.L.S.S. on the theme of local level options for improving natural resource management and public service delivery in Sahelian countries. The government of the Republic of Mali agreed to participate in this study and a four-person team conducted research on public services in two regions during the period of October 7 to November 8, 1990. Eleven separate sites were visited, representing the full range of administrative levels and a range of urban and rural communities.

The central objective of this study was to provide a comprehensive overview of critical aspects of service provision and production in Mali with the intent of identifying measures to improve the delivery of public services in rural and urban communities. Attention was given to a range of public services, including general (territorial) administration, primary education, health, livestock health and production, road maintenance, and rural water supply. No attempt was made to provide a detailed review of each service; instead, key issues in service organization, finance, and management common to many services were highlighted. The research program also focused on the analysis of local institutions and organizations, popular involvement in service provision and production, community-initiated services, and the role of preference-aggregating bodies such as local councils and development committees in tapping and making use of local capacities, priorities, and preferences in public service design and delivery. Local public finance issues were also reviewed.

From its inception in the colonial system, the nascent state looked first to the consolidation of its own authority while maintaining the system of control it had inherited. The socialist option selected by the national leadership during the early independence period required the strengthening of central institutions, the development of central planning and administrative capabilities, and the focusing of development activities through the mechanism of national strategies and programs. Local populations were asked to organize themselves in accordance with the needs of the implementing structures. Territorial administration was restructured into regions, *cercles*, *arrondissements*, and *villages/fractions* (the nomadic equivalent of villages). This reorganization reduced further the sphere of traditional authority and circumscribed further the role of local people in making, implementing, and enforcing rules governing the institutions that most affected them.

In the rush to transform society and spur economic and social development, the government of Modibo Keita paid little attention to the development of popular capabilities or to the restitution of local authority to make and implement local decisions. The *coup d'état* of November 1968 effectively ended the socialist experiment of the First Republic without changing the character of the national institutions that had assumed responsibility for the economic and social development of the country. The economic, social, and political liberalization promised by the military government was achieved slowly. Not until 1977 did the efforts of the Commission for the Reform of Public Administration, created in 1969, lead to the adoption in law of a series of important administrative reforms. As many as ten years passed before some of the key reform provisions were implemented.

Public services in Mali reflect the hierarchical character of government organization. Although local and regional services are in principle under the administrative authority of the relevant territorial administrator, decisions regarding the provision of public services, such as the type of service, service

quantity and quality, service mix, staffing, and financing, are made by central authorities with little or no involvement from service users and local communities. Decisions about the distribution and localization of services are also approved centrally, although local preferences may have been consulted. Most services in Mali are also produced by central agencies with little involvement from local jurisdictions or the private sector.

The influence of central authority over the primary issues involved in the provision of public services seriously stifles innovation and greatly limits local initiatives. Public services can operate only within a very standardized and restrictive framework. Local time-and-place information is not systematically collected and utilized in the design, implementation, or execution of public services, creating a serious source of inefficiency. Access to and utilization of public services is further limited by factors such as the size of intervention zones, the scarcity of service facilities, the distance from users, and the lack of adequate technical and material resources.

The state of primary education in Mali, both in urban and in rural areas, is a cause of legitimate concern. Contrary to the experience in countries with similar development characteristics, primary school enrollment in Mali is falling. The reasons for this are complex and merit further analysis; however, the following issues appear to be central to the problem: lack of access to and poor physical quality of facilities; unpopular curriculum, especially, *ruralisation*; and concern that public school values weaken the force of popular (traditional) institutions. Added to these concerns is the high level of unemployment of graduates, which (may) act as a disincentive at post and primary levels of education in particular.

Local communities have virtually no means of influencing education policy or practice. Local parents' associations (APEs) are largely nonfunctional and ineffective when they attempt to act. Their role is clearly subordinate to education functionaries and local administrators and amounts to little more than assisting with the mobilization of human and material resources. With the fusion of the APE levy into the TDRL, even the APE lever for local influence has been removed.

The relative success of literacy centers at the village level should be looked to for lessons in public education. Literacy centers visited were constructed entirely by local effort and with local funds, were furnished with locally made tables and benches, and were equipped with petrol lights, black boards, and basic pedagogic material. Public primary schools, on the other hand, were devoid of furnishings, had poor physical maintenance, and lacked the basic materials for instructors and students. The population was in charge of the literacy centers, and the state in charge of primary schools.

The two most recent program initiatives in primary education-- the establishment of private, community-supported schools (*écoles de village, écoles de base*) and the Support Fund for Primary Education (FAEF)--do not respond fully to the underlying forces that have resulted in the disaffection of the population. The private school option, in particular, represents a renunciation of public responsibility more than a willingness to liberalize educational options and raises serious equity issues for communities that must either pay their own way or forego access to education for their children.

The requirement imposed by the World Bank that 30 percent of the FDRL be allocated for education appears to be economically inefficient, impractical to implement, and contradictory to the government of Mali's intention to increase local control over the issues that most affect the lives of local people. This requirement, and a similar one in the area of health care, denies local institutions and populations the opportunity to determine their own priorities and circumvents the intention and

value of decentralization initiatives. This type of conditionality in development assistance should be avoided.

The village health care projects, widespread throughout the country, support the recommendation for a reinforcement of community authority over and responsibility for local health care policy and practice. The medicine depot (*magasins santé*) program under execution in the Mopti region should be carefully assessed. The ability to meet a significant portion of total recurrent costs through profits on medicine sales and user fees is demonstrated in some areas and should be systematically analyzed.

Critical to the expansion of local responsibility in health care finance and management is the revitalization of local management committees. As is the case in education, these local institutions can only be effective if they are granted concrete authority and responsibility for management and finance. A program of training and information will also be necessary to strengthen these committees.

In health and education, the issue of jurisdiction for effective management is important. The possibility of creating special districts should be carefully reviewed. Experience in other countries has demonstrated some clear advantages, as well as costs, of creating special jurisdictions for the finance and management of public services.

Development committees at the *arrondissement*, *cercle*, and regional level form a type of technical bureau for the development of annual and multi-year development plans. Comprised of technical service chiefs and representatives of public organizations, these committees assist the administrative officer of the jurisdiction with the design and implementation of development programs. These programs reflect local priorities as well as national plan objectives. Until 1988 and the creation of the Local and Regional Development Fund (FDRL), little public funding was available for executing these programs.

The development committee presents its development program to an elected body, the local council of the same administrative level, for review and approval. Both institutions were initiated by the landmark legislation on territorial administration in 1977, but the council system remains largely non-operational and devoid of any real decision-making authority. Development committees, presided over by the local territorial official, tend to be the dominant partners in the committee-council relationship.

The absence of accountability to local constituencies is a problem common to centralized service systems. The lack of an effective institution for aggregating and vocalizing local priorities and user preferences virtually assures the dominance of central priorities and procedural rules, regardless of the costs to efficiency, equity, effectiveness, and sustainability. Nevertheless, the council system offers great promise for the development of effective local institutions and the decentralization of public service organization, finance, and management.

The government of Mali has made significant improvements in the national revenue system through the liberalization of grain prices, the removal of most export taxes, the restructuring of import taxation, and rate restructuring on business taxes. However, serious equity questions remain regarding the relative burden of rural taxpayers who pay for most of the cost of service delivery and administrative operations outside of Bamako while receiving fewer and lesser quality services than are available in urban areas where revenue collection rates are quite low, producing a low tax rate.

Public expenditure is consumed primarily by the public sector wage bill and the costs of administrative operations. Relatively little funding is available to provide the supplies and materials necessary for service delivery. The result is a widespread decline in the quality of services at the point of delivery. Approximately five percent of the national budget goes toward supplies and materials for the operation of all central ministries; a corresponding amount is allocated from regional budgets. The services that are able to function effectively typically receive substantial financing from other sources including international projects, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), user fees, and local taxes (especially from the FDRL).

Mali's municipalities, the only decentralized jurisdictions with legal standing and limited fiscal autonomy, are virtually inoperational as providers of public services. Municipal budgets are consumed primarily by the cost of administrative operation; municipal taxes pay for the existence of city hall, not for services to municipal residents. A major effort is needed to improve municipal administration, increase tax assessment and recovery, and provide basic services.

The FDRL, created in 1988, is in many respects the cornerstone of the Malian decentralization program. Established as a means of financing local development initiatives, the fund has fallen far short of expectations. The distribution of funds among jurisdictions was skewed toward the higher levels of the system and away from the *arrondissements*. The objective of respecting the general priorities of the national plan was ignored and funds were allocated, instead, to administrative uses and the human resources sector, especially education. The orientation of spending was heavily influenced by centrally determined priorities, notably the president's declaration that 30 percent of the fund should go to education (as required under a World Bank funding conditionality). Other central authorities also weighed in to garner funds for their programs and services, reducing the level of authority local bodies could exercise over the allocation process.

Cercle and regional officials further influenced the utilization of the fund by giving priority to funding party organizations, construction of public buildings and lodgings, and "operating costs." The category of operating costs alone far exceeded the proportion of spending for agriculture, water and forestry, and livestock combined in the two regions studied. At present, it appears that monies raised by taxing rural producers are being used to benefit urban populations and, more specifically, to advance the spending priorities of the administrative authorities in charge of managing the fund. These problems were raised during the course of the National Seminar on Decentralization, and the authorities have developed measures to correct the situation.

The analysis of local institutions and popular involvement in service organization and finance produced a number of important findings. Local institutions continue to give direction and meaning to the lives of the population. Local institutions such as the traditional authority structure, age sets, reciprocity-based forms of collective action, and systems of land tenure and resource management are particularly strong in rural and semi-urban areas with counterparts in urban centers. Local communities have extensive experience mobilizing and managing resources for the construction and operation of public services. Local innovations in service organization, such as the increasing importance of paraprofessional workers, offer improved access to services while reducing the cost to government.

While local communities struggle to meet their own needs, often in the absence of government services, little is done to inform the population of the role and function of decision-making bodies such as the councils or of the existence of the FDRL. Indeed, local taxpayers are largely ignorant of the

composition of their tax bill or the use to which receipts are put. This asymmetrical distribution of information operates to the advantage of public officials while reducing the efficacy of the institutions created to serve the population.

The international community should be willing to offer assistance to the government of Mali in the development and execution of its decentralization program. At this point, the primary objective of such assistance should be to supply government policymakers and local communities with the information and technical means required to implement decentralization initiatives. A program of carefully organized action research is the preferred mechanism for accomplishing this objective.

Although decentralization is a national goal and its costs and benefits will be felt throughout the country, there is good reason to start translating these policies into action in a limited area. Experience acquired during this phase would be used in working out rules and procedures for applying such policies in all parts of the country. The Malian government's recent decision to convert exemplary *arrondissements* into rural communes in the near future supports the action research program proposed here, which focuses on a number of clearly localized case studies and pilot development interventions.

The following three themes for action research offer the greatest prospects for significant improvement in service delivery:

- analysis of local fiscal and parafiscal systems for financing public services and local government operation;
- assessment of alternative models of organization for service delivery, including community-based services, mixed systems, and private sector contracting; and
- investigation of municipal organization and finance emphasizing municipal fiscal policy, revenue mobilization, and options for providing municipal services.

Action research on the first theme would focus on analyzing the efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and administrative capacity of the tax and fee system as it applies to rural taxpayers and to financing necessary services with the objective of providing concrete recommendations to improve the assessment and collection of taxes and the use of service charges and fees. Pilot interventions to improve revenue performance and service finance should be undertaken as part of the action program.

Comparative studies of public service organization and finance should be undertaken as rapidly as possible in ten sites per service. Priority should be given to primary health, literacy, primary education, and agricultural services (road maintenance and input/product marketing). A variety of institutional arrangements in service provision and production should be selected for case studies, including:

- community-initiated and -managed services,
- local services with substantial community participation in finance and management, and
- public services financed and managed predominantly by deconcentrated technical administrations.

The third area of action research will require both a nation-wide review of municipal fiscal policy and financial standing and a commune-specific, in-depth program of research in one or more municipi-

palities. Action should focus on measures to improve the fiscal performance of municipalities through improved tax assessment, revenue collection, and the use of service charges. Improving fiscal performance will also require improvements in service delivery and the establishment of clear links between taxes (and fees) and services (provided).

The expansion of the number and type of decentralized collectivities (local governments) through the conversion of *arrondissements* into rural communes called for in pending legislation represents a critical departure toward democratization and local governance in Mali. Measures to monitor and support these new jurisdictions should be established as soon as possible. Specifically, this will require the establishment of a system for monitoring local policy decisions and resource mobilization and management practices and for collecting baseline data prior to the conversion of *arrondissements* into rural communes.

Assistance should also be provided in the area of training and information. A training program for council members, local development committee (CLD) members, and territorial administrators may also be recommended. A training curriculum and program that reflects local experiences, problems, and approaches to solutions found in various parts of the country should be developed as an integral part of the action research program. At the national level, it is recommended that a limited number of Malians be selected for long-term training in institutional analysis and design and in public finance issues.

II. Introduction

The citizens and leaders of West Africa's Sahelian states have witnessed many changes during the past three decades of independence. National political, administrative, economic, and social institutions have evolved rapidly. Although distances may be great and access difficult, even the most isolated populations have been touched, if not fully incorporated into these institutions. The state has taken hold as both a national symbol and as the central repository of authority. Administrative systems have developed to manage the affairs of government, raise taxes, manage public resources, organize and deliver critical public services, maintain domestic security, and ensure national sovereignty. With but a few exceptions, the range and depth of technical skills available to the public sector has improved dramatically and is now adequate to meet the most pressing needs of the modern state.

Due in part to the substantial advances made in state capabilities, there is a growing willingness among Sahelian leaders to acknowledge and seek solutions for the serious problems that continue to constrain social and economic development. Priority areas of concern include:

- the inability of state revenues to keep pace with the costs of an expanding bureaucracy;
- the lack of adequate public services to meet the needs and increasingly vocal demands of rural and urban populations;
- the inefficient management of the renewable natural resource base upon which agricultural and economic development depend; and
- the persistence of institutions and policies which discourage or prohibit private entrepreneurship and local initiative.

A. Background

In response to these concerns, the Club du Sahel decided to sponsor this study on public service organization and finance. The study is part of a series of activities to be carried out in the Sahel under the theme of "Decentralization, Service Provision, and User Involvement: A Process to Identify Local-Level Options in the Sahel." The proposal was discussed with representatives of C.I.L.S.S. countries, and the Republic of Mali agreed to serve as the site for an initial investigation of local-level options for public service provision and natural resource management. Two teams were fielded, one to focus on public service options, and the other to conduct research on natural resource management issues. This report deals exclusively with the results of the public service options study.

B. Objectives

This initial study was exploratory in nature and had two primary objectives. The first was to identify the formal constitutional, legislative, and operational rules regarding: (a) the legal ability of local-level institutions to provide various public services such as health, education, road maintenance, potable water, and dispute resolution; and (b) the legal authority of these units to mobilize and expend resources to provide public services.

The second objective was to determine the effective practices of local institutions in relation to public service organization and finance. This involved both the objective or observable rules and practices involved in the provision and production of public services as well as the subjective or cognitive perceptions of these rules and practices by service users, service providers, and local and national authorities.

The overall goal of the study was to provide an information base capable of generating recommendations for a program of applied research and action to improve public service provision systems in the Sahel.

C. Approach

A four-person team made up of two Sahelian and two American specialists conducted research in the Republic of Mali from October 8 to November 9, 1990. The team included a specialist in public service decentralization, an economist, an institutional analyst, and a rural sociologist. Prior to the start up of field activities in Mali, team members reviewed published documents, collected data, and conducted interviews with senior officials of the key ministries concerned with the study--Territorial Administration and Local Development, Finance and Commerce, Health and Social Affairs, Education, Plan, and Public Works.

Field research outside of Bamako was conducted in the fifth (Mopti) and second (Koulikoro) regions. A total of one regional capital, two *cercles*, three *arrondissements*, two communes, one urban community, and seven villages (including the three *arrondissement* seats) were visited. The team attempted to select sites that were broadly representative of the country according to the following criteria: ecology, production systems (especially agricultural), the level of economic activity, and the importance of NGO activities.

A series of interviews and group meetings were scheduled at each site, and team members used local guides to orient discussions. As a general rule, site visits commenced with an official visit with the local executive or administrative authority. Formal meetings were also organized with representatives of local development committees and councils. Meetings were then held with public service agents and officials, administrative and finance personnel, representatives of youth and women organizations, parent-student associations, and members and leaders of traditional associations.

III. Institutional Context

The existing systems of administrative action, public finance, service organization, and territorial administration bear testimony to the depth of their roots in the colonial period yet reflect as well the changing currents of thought and priorities of post-independence leaders. A primary characteristic of both the colonial administration and post-independence governments has been the primacy accorded to state action in the design, implementation, and execution of social, economic, and political development programs. Although the objectives of post-independence governments may have been more clearly oriented to the economic and social betterment of the masses, the locus of authority and decision-making responsibility has remained at the center.

The institutional context at the local level, however, has a very different character. It is here that central structures and popular institutions, associations, and preferences must seek some form of accommodation. The success of this effort is measured by the degree of support local people provide to the service system in question and by the effectiveness of the particular service in meeting its objectives.

A. The Evolution of Administrative Structures

It is important to note from the outset that there is but one government in Mali--the national government. Mali is a unitary state divided into administrative jurisdictions and administered by national government employees. The state is the sole sovereign constitutional entity; all other levels exist by virtue of state decision and enjoy only the powers and authority conferred by delegation or directly devolved to them by law. The commune, an urban community recognized by the state as a decentralized jurisdiction, has been accorded legal status (*personnalité morale*) and granted limited fiscal authority. It remains subject to strict control by the *cercle* level territorial administrator, as well as by central officials.

During the colonial period, the hierarchy of political authority that linked local populations organically with intermediate and higher levels of authority throughout a kingdom were fundamentally transformed. Central power no longer drew its force from the popular base but existed apart from it and was sustained externally. Local authority structures were truncated, no longer receiving their authority from the central authority nor according legitimacy to the power that had installed itself as such.

Of the five hierarchical levels of administration, only the two most local levels--the *canton* (or tribe, for nomadic peoples) and the village (or *fraction*, for nomadic peoples)--were headed by Africans with claims to legitimacy through traditional institutions. The *cercle*, subdivision, and *poste administratif* (a local geopolitical jurisdiction of Mali below the *arrondissement* level), were staffed by outsiders, generally Europeans, designated by the central power. The title of *commandant* was officially given to the *cercle* administrator and clearly conveyed the essential characteristics of his role vis à vis the population in his jurisdiction. The military style of colonial administration emphasized maintaining order, settling disputes, and raising resources through taxation. Later in the colonial period, economic and social development objectives were added to the duties of territorial administration; however, they were clearly of secondary importance to the primary duties of ensuring order and collecting taxes. Although historical records and various studies indicate that the colonial government

would occasionally intervene in the process of selection for village and *canton* chiefs, these positions generally retained a high level of legitimacy and authority in the eyes of local people.

Independence brought many changes to how central power was organized and exercised. From its inception in the colonial system, the nascent state looked first to the consolidation of its own authority while maintaining the system of control it had inherited. The socialist option selected by the national leadership during the early independence period required strengthening central institutions, developing central planning and administrative capabilities, and coordinating development activities through the mechanism of national strategies and programs. Local populations were asked to organize themselves in accordance with the needs of the implementing structures. Thus, the cooperative movement began, a movement inspired, defined, implemented, and supported by central authorities. A highly centralized party system was created to accelerate the integration of local populations into the life of the nation, that is, national institutions.

Territorial administration was restructured into regions, *cercles*, *arrondissements*, and villages/*fractions*. The *canton* was abolished as an administrative jurisdiction to precipitate the loss of authority of *canton* chiefs who the new national authorities had identified as an anti-progressive force. State structures were thereby extended to more local levels, and all authorities above the village chief became *commandants*.¹ One result of this reorganization was to reduce further the sphere of traditional authority and to circumscribe further the role of local people in making, implementing, and enforcing rules governing the institutions that most affected them.

The democratic aspirations of the socialist government of Modibo Keita were largely unrealized. In the rush to transform society and to spur economic and social development, little attention was paid to developing popular capabilities or to restoring local authority's power to make and implement local decisions. Although regions were to be decentralized jurisdictions, they were held tightly under the control of centrally appointed officials. The regional assemblies were not operational, nor were communes given the full measure of legal and fiscal authority required to become autonomous government units.

The coup d'état of November 1968 effectively ended the socialist experiment of the First Republic without changing the character of the national institutions that had assumed responsibility for the economic and social development of the country. The economic, social, and political liberalization promised by the military government was achieved slowly. In 1969 the Commission for the Reform of Public Administration was created. (It later became the National Commission for Administrative Reform, the CNRA.) This commission received technical and financial support from the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) during the 1970s, but not until 1977 did the commission's efforts lead to the adoption in law of a series of important administrative reforms.

¹ The custom of referring to all administrative officers--*arrondissement* heads, their deputies and those at the *cercle*--as *commandant* remains widespread. Indeed, local forestry agents are sometimes called *commandants*, due to the authority of their position and reinforced by military dress and a rifle. For local people, any outsider who wields power is a *commandant*. In local dialects, the word used for a local official and for a white visitor may be the same. For example, among the Gourmantché, *bonpiano* is used when referring to a non-African as well as to a government official. Both are regarded as strange by the local community.

The key piece of legislation of the period, which remains as the foundation of today's territorial administration, was Ordonnance No. 77-44/CMLN of July 12, 1977. The various reforms instituted by this executive order reflect the growing concern for the creation of a development-oriented administrative system. It established the region as the key level of deconcentrated authority and gave its governor responsibility for economic development. The region was to serve as the focal point for decentralized planning and for the coordination and management of public services within its domain. The same order created the district of Bamako as a deconcentrated administrative unit of the state and as a decentralized entity composed of six communes. The boundaries of the district and the communes were not codified in law until August 1978. Article 4 of the executive order allowed for the eventual transformation of deconcentrated administrative jurisdictions into decentralized entities—that is, *arrondissements* into rural communes.

Ordonnance No. 77-44 also established development committees composed of public service heads and representatives of public organizations at the *arrondissement*, *cercle*, and regional level. These committees were to serve as a local planning and technical office for the territorial administrator at each level, ensuring that the objectives of the national development plan were respected while programming development activities in their jurisdiction. The development committee formalized the relationship between administrator and technical agent while further rationalizing the planning system for national economic and social development.

Perhaps the most promising element of the reforms of 1977 was the creation of the legal basis for elected councils at the village, *arrondissement*, *cercle*, and regional levels. Although the councils were primarily consultative and, until 1982, were presided over by the corresponding administrative officer at each level, their creation in statutes represents an important step toward the institutionalized involvement of local people in decisions that affect their economic and social well-being.

Implementation of the reforms enacted in 1977 was slow and partial. The enabling legislation or texts needed to clarify the specific attributions, powers, and responsibilities of the development committees and councils appeared in August 1981 and January 1982. The development committees' mission was two-fold:

- to execute the instructions received from national authorities with regard to the preparation and execution of the national plan, and
- to develop a local development program based on the needs and priorities of the population.

These two tasks were to be harmonized by respecting national objectives and priorities. The source of funding for the local development program is not specified in the texts. Nor is the financing of the national plan activities to be carried out in the regions, *cercles*, and *arrondissements* explicit. The only mention of a budget appears in reference to the development program proposed by the *arrondissement* councils and prepared by the *commandant* and the development committee for submission to the *cercle* council. The *cercle* council is to approve the development program, vote on the budget, and examine the accounts of the budget.² The existence of the *cercle* development program and

² Ordonnance No. 77-44/CMLN—portant réorganisation territoriale et administrative de la République du Mali. Title II,

budget is referred to in other statutes from 1977 and in Décret No. 193/PG-RM of August 10, 1981 regarding attributions and operating procedures for the development committees.

Four and one-half years after their creation in law, the rules for constituting and operating the regional and local councils were finally issued. During the interim, only isolated attempts were made to establish them. The development committees, which existed informally as groups of technical service chiefs working in a jurisdiction, quickly became operational though not necessarily capable of carrying out the technical requirements of their mandate. Décret No. 14/PG-RM, which determined the composition and operational rules of regional and local councils, contained a very significant change in the structure of the councils. Title II, Chapter II, Article 40 specifies the election of the president and the vice-president of the council from among the elected members of the council. No longer did the territorial administrator preside over council meetings. This change laid the foundation for the development of an independent popular institution for the expression and defense of local preferences.

Of course, statutory existence and operational reality are two different things. Despite the new constitution drafted in 1979, the return to civilian rule, and the creation of a single party to focus popular aspirations (*Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien*--UDPM), the momentum of efforts toward greater local participation appeared lost. It was not until February 1987 at the National Seminar on Decentralized Planning in Gao organized by the Ministry of Planning that new wind was blown into the sails of decentralization efforts. National political and administrative leaders, technicians, and public service officials agreed that something must be done to resuscitate the objectives of the 1977 reforms. The discussions and ideas generated during the seminar provided the foundation for the government's decentralization program.

A number of recommendations were produced at the seminar, most of which encouraged further deconcentration of administrative responsibility and strengthening local development capacity by transferring agents and resources. The creation of effective local governments through a devolution of decision-making authority and fiscal autonomy was not on the agenda. Nevertheless, a number of significant actions were proposed. Seminar participants called for the revitalization of local development committees and councils, the creation of a local and regional development fund for financing local development initiatives, and a greater role for party representatives in committees and councils.

The FDRL was created on March 15, 1988. The legislation established the FDRL as a special account of the state budget to "...support the policy of decentralization undertaken by the government; simplify and harmonize the administrative procedures relative to financing economic and social development projects initiated at the local level; [and] aid with the balancing of regional and local budgets."³ The law clearly specifies that the fund is to be used to finance projects initiated by the population, not to finance national or regional budgets. Article 11 of Title V states that in no case may expenditures for transfer (of monies) or for the count of the region exceed 20 percent of projected expenditures. Nor is the fund to be used to pay the salaries, benefits, or allowances of state employees, local administrative agents, or public enterprise employees (Article 12). The head admin-

Chapter II, Articles 23 and 24.

³ Loi No. 88-65/AN-RM, Title I, Article 2. March 15, 1988.

istrator of the *cercle* (*commandant de cercle*) was named local government controller (*ordonnateur*) and was granted authority to obligate funds from the FDRL, while responsibility for revenue collection and accounting for receipts and expenditures was assigned to the *cercle* treasury agent (*percepteur*) and to the regional treasury official (*trésorier payeur régional*).

In many respects, the FDRL represents the cornerstone of the Malian decentralization program. In a country facing chronic revenue shortfalls, expanding expenditures, and a heavy international debt burden, the FDRL is often perceived as the panacea for local development woes. Indeed, the spirit of the recommendations from the Gao seminar was that the FDRL would be "local money for local problems," a mechanism for self-financing of local development initiatives. But by establishing the fund as a special account of the state budget and thereby submitting it to the full financial regime for national revenues, the FDRL was effectively removed from local control. Others see the FDRL as a type of cornucopia offering unlimited possibilities for supporting pet programs and policy initiatives. Instructions from high government officials claiming a share of FDRL revenue for their programs have flooded regional authorities. Over 50 percent of the fund has been prioritized by presidential instructions for specific uses. Even the World Bank, an institution not known for its interest in decentralized finance, has weighed in by linking a component of its Educational Sector Consolidation Project and its health sector assistance to suggested levels of allocation from the FDRL.

Of course, the FDRL is neither a panacea nor a cornucopia. It is simply a fund created by merging some existing taxes and levies, which previously financed local organizations and services, into one tax--the local and regional development tax (TDRL). The first three years of implementation have been instructive and have resulted in a number of revisions to the original legislation. The FDRL will be discussed in greater detail in the public finance section of this report.

Since the Gao seminar, the UDPM has assumed responsibility for the government's decentralization program. In 1989, the executive bureau of the UDPM (BEC) instructed the MATDB to organize a series of regional seminars on decentralization. These seminars culminated in the National Seminar on Decentralization held May 4 to 7, 1990 in Bamako under the leadership of the president of the republic. Relevant ministries and organizations were considering recommendations approved during the national seminar when the Club du Sahel team arrived. The National Committee for the Review of Legislative and Statutory Texts was created under the MATDB to prepare necessary revisions for presentation to the national council in December 1990.

B. The Political Context of Decentralization Initiatives

The sustained emphasis on decentralization by the highest authorities of the country has surprised outside observers and Malian citizens alike. The regime which came to power in 1968 and the governments that have followed with its conversion to civilian rule, are generally considered highly centralized and even authoritarian with regard to the use and maintenance of power. At present, there is no reason to question officials' wish to bring the state and citizens together to give local populations greater management authority over matters that concern them most directly. No less important an authority than the secretary general of the party and president of the republic, Moussa Traore (rumored to be the force behind the decentralization initiative), stated at the national seminar that the objective of the decentralization program was "...to satisfy the need to give our hard-working and willing populations the direct management of their most immediate concerns and real decision-making power in the areas of local interest that determine their standard of living."⁴

Other political factors are important. First, there are serious disagreements with regard to the character of the decentralization program. National bureaucrats led by officials in the Ministry of Territorial Administration and the Ministry of Finance and Commerce prefer a more gradual approach emphasizing further deconcentration of state authority to intermediate (*cercle* and region) levels rather than a transfer of actual decision-making authority to local governing bodies. Supporters of this position maintain that delegation of select responsibilities and corresponding authority to local agents of the central state, and, to a more limited degree, to decentralized jurisdictions, along with the deconcentration of technical capabilities will accomplish the stated objectives of decentralization without risking the inefficiencies and failures to be expected from a premature transfer of authority to people and institutions that are not technically competent. Some high-level central officials have openly stated that local people are "mentally incompetent" to assume the responsibilities of government. This latter opinion is extreme and would not be shared to the same degree by others preferring the deconcentration/delegation option.

Others view decentralization as a positive force and call for strengthening local institutions--development committees and councils in particular--and the planned transfer of substantive responsibilities, authority, and financial resources to local bodies. Proponents of this approach believe the risks of local decision-making manageable, especially if attention is given to training and transferring technical personnel at more local levels (*cercle* and *arrondissement*). They maintain that the traditional control and oversight functions assured by the state through the system of hierarchical authority (*tutelle*) are adequate to avoid the more grievous problems while local bodies learn to carry out their functions. This is often the position favored by party officials, local leaders, and many public employees.

Differences in opinion often arise over what powers and resources to transfer. High officials in the Ministry of Finance and Commerce are understandably concerned about the potential loss of revenue, no matter how slight, to the central budget given national budgetary constraints. Similarly, officials in some technical ministries are willing to devolve responsibility for financing the services they provide but are unwilling to discuss the transfer of authority to determine the nature of the service, the type of personnel, and the program for delivery of the service. Even supporters of local decision-making tend to stop short of allowing local people to participate in making rules that determine the institutional arrangements involved in the provision and production of public services. Both sides concur that "technical decisions" are the realm of technical personnel who are and would remain state employees.

The role of the UDPM in the decentralization discourse is also important to understanding options for local public services. The UDPM is the dominant formal institution in Malian political life in that the party is the leading force in the relationship between the party and government. This fusion of party and government was created by the central authority and has been slow to develop a sound foundation since its creation in 1979. The party presents itself as the defender of the public interest and, in particular, assumes the role of watchdog for the prevention of excesses and abuses by the government and government agents. Party documents declare democratic centralism is the guiding principle--opinions are passed up the hierarchy to where binding decisions are made and are then

⁴ Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien. "Actes du Séminaire National sur La Décentralisation", Mai 1990, p.13.

passed back down. The party hierarchy is comprised of committees, subsections, and sections that operate at the village, *arrondissement*, and *cercle* levels, respectively. Elections are indirect, and representatives to superior levels are elected by and from among members of the subordinate level. The BEC is the central organ of the party and acts as a form of parallel government responsible for policy decisions, which are then transmitted to the relevant ministers for execution.

The UDPM, the only constitutionally recognized party, is supported by the state administration. At the local level, UDPM representatives are usually retired or active government employees and its party members (*militants*) are drawn heavily from the public sector. The lack of a widespread popular base is a concern to party leaders and may in part explain their partiality toward decentralization. Party officials must reward *militants*, especially at the local level where government sinecures are not available. Local governing bodies, with their own finances and discretionary use of resources, provide potential opportunities for faithful party workers. Indeed, as illustrated in the section on public finance, the FDR/L has already provided substantial support to local party organizations. Party activists would like to see an expansion of their role at the local level and have called for an expansion of the number of party officials on the local development committees and for voting rights for party representatives on the local councils. Recommendations from both the Gao seminar and the recent National Seminar on Decentralization call for submitting development programs and budgets by the development committee to section (*cercle*) and subsection (*arrondissement*) party officials prior to presenting the same to the relevant council for review and approval.

Other forces have emerged to sharpen the debate about the character and timetable for decentralization. The changes in Eastern Europe have affected Africa as elsewhere, and Mali is no exception. Many view these events with hope and attempt to apply the lessons to their own situation. There are increasingly vocal and uninhibited calls for the establishment of a multi-party democracy in Mali. The concept of a multiparty system (*le multipartisme*) seems to have fired the imagination of common citizens and government employees alike. Key BEC members favor opening the political system to other parties.

Another significant development has been the appearance of nongovernment newspapers and papers of opinion. A relaxation of controls on the press since 1988 has allowed four or five regular publications to emerge that address political, social, and economic issues. Decentralization is one of the issues discussed at length in *CAURIS*, a high-quality journal of current issues.

C. Popular Institutions, Associations, and Preferences

Although the integrating power of national social, political, and economic institutions is far reaching, the dynamism of local institutions remains the guiding force of daily life. Inhabitants of the Republic of Mali consider themselves Malians, but they are also residents of a particular place--a specific village or town. They are citizens, but they are also members of a specific family, clan, and lineage. They are party members, but they also consider themselves under the authority of the head of their family, their village, or their religious community. They belong to cooperatives and village associations to purchase inputs for farming and to market their produce, but they also adhere to the traditional land tenure system.

Local institutions, in Mali as in all societies, have their own compelling realities and are a critical element in the provision and production of public services. The truncation of the traditional political

structure removed the top but left the roots largely intact, and these roots have continued to grow and evolve in many ways independently of the state. Traditional authority is respected and local communities effectively mobilize and manage labor and money for collective goods. Customary rules of land tenure and use are followed in the management of local agricultural, pastoral, and forest resources. Local people provide public services in areas such as midwifery and primary health care, literacy instruction, agricultural services, and road maintenance. Local associations such as village health committees, village associations, cooperatives, and APEs have emerged to provide local support and serve as an interface between local institutions and central service systems.

Local people and communities are also service users, and, as such, their preferences will determine in large part how much a service is used, the ability of the service to be self-financing, the material and financial support the community will provide for the operation and maintenance of the service, and, ultimately, the effectiveness and sustainability of the service itself.

IV. Public Service Organization and Operation

A. Regional and Sub-Regional Services

1. Organizational Structure and Distribution of Powers

Public service systems in Mali are inspired by a strongly hierarchical sectoral organization resulting in a pyramid-shaped structure controlled by central ministry departments. The level of specialization of technical capacity and of responsibility and authority also follow this hierarchy, with decision-making power and greater technical capacity at higher levels. In general, there are three levels of administrative divisions below the national level¹: regions, *cercles*, and *arrondissements*.

The first level corresponds to the regional directorates (*directions régionales*). These are located in the regional administrative centers and are subject to the governor's administrative authority as well as to the corresponding central offices' technical authority. Policies, strategies, standards, and regulations concerning the organization of services, as well as the means at their disposal, are defined by the central departments.

The regional directorates ensure that central directives are respected in the design and programming of sectoral activities at the regional level. They are also in charge of inspecting and supervising the corresponding sub-regional services' application of standards and regulations in the execution of their duties. Regional directorates are also responsible for coordinating and supporting personnel and activities of the sub-regional services, and intervene in conceiving and programming sectoral activities at the regional level.

The second level is comprised of the *cercle* services. These are located in the *cercle* administrative centers and have various titles, including inspectorates, subdivisions, *cantonnements*, and centers. They are subject to the administrative authority of the *commandant de cercle* and to the technical authority of their regional directorates. Funding decisions and *cercle* work programs are approved by the regional directorates.

Cercle service leaders transmit and enforce directives from superior authorities and coordinate and inspect field activities of the *arrondissement* services. The *cercle* services provide a relay function, particularly in terms of supporting *arrondissement* services. For some services, such as secondary education and higher-level health services, the *cercle* administrative seat is the most local source of service delivery.

The third level of the service hierarchy is composed of *arrondissement* services, including posts, centers, and bureaus. These services are subject to the administrative authority of the *arrondissement* administrative officer (*chef d'arrondissement*) and to the technical authority of corresponding *cercle* service chiefs. Most public services are located in the *arrondissement* seat or at the level of one of

¹ The territorial and administrative organization of the Republic of Mali is governed by Ordinance No. 77-44/CMLN of July 12, 1977.

the development sectors² within its territorial jurisdiction. This is really the system's operational center; at this level, the delivery of public services to benefit the population is generally accomplished. Also at this level, the dialogue between service providers and service users is instituted. It is rare to find services located in villages that are not administrative centers.

2. Spatial Distribution of Services

The description above merely presents the organizational framework of the sectoral structures. In reality, the geographical distribution of services is quite variable, especially at the sub-regional level. What is most striking from the local community perspective, especially rural communities, is how inadequately formal public service agencies provide services. As one moves to the local level, service presence dwindles, and some services may be totally absent.

The variation in spatial distribution and effective local presence is best illustrated by discussing a number of key economic and social development services. Mali's fifth region includes eight *cercles* and 55 *arrondissements*, with an area of 78,635 km², and 1,261,583 inhabitants. With regard to primary education, the *cercles* are grouped into three education districts each controlled by an inspectorate of primary education. The inspectorate of Mopti covers three *cercles* with a total of 70 first-cycle³ and 10 second-cycle schools for 21 *arrondissements* and the commune of Mopti. The inspectorate of Bandiagara covers three *cercles* with 58 first-cycle schools and 10 second-cycle schools for 22 *arrondissements*. The third inspectorate, in Ténenkou, covers two *cercles* with 28 first-cycle and five second-cycle schools for 12 *arrondissements*.

By far the greatest number of classes and school facilities are found at the *cercle* level with relatively little infrastructure in the *arrondissements*. The Goundaga and Kani-Gougou *arrondissements* in the Bandiagara Cercle have two Cycle I schools for a cumulative population of about 30,000 living in 95 villages. As a result of this school shortage in rural areas, there is a very low rate of school enrollment--an estimated 13 percent of the children of eligible age attend school. Very few village children have the opportunity to receive a primary education.

The vast area covered by the inspectorate poses serious logistical problems, particularly since the necessary funding is not properly allocated. Distances to schools can exceed 200 km one way. Technical follow-up, training, and teacher-skill upgrading are hard to implement because of the limited availability of fuel for travel.

In the Mopti region, there are also eight *cercle* health centers, 47 *arrondissement* health centers, and a few rural health clinics and maternities. Geographical coverage (basically, the population that has access to services within a 5 km radius) of this health sector is estimated at 32.8 percent. A recent report by the Regional Directorate of Public Health states that this estimate of coverage is diminishing because local clinics have closed following the reduction of junior personnel. Medicine stocks are

² The development sector is not an official administrative level. It is comprised of a set of villages and nomadic groups (*fractions nomades*) whose populations have common rural interests. Arrêté No. 491/MI-CAB définissant la notion de Secteur de Développement.

³ Primary education in Mali is divided into two cycles or sections. The first cycle consists of the initial six years of instruction, and the second cycle of the next three years of instruction.

available to 14 percent of the population, according to the same report. Out of a total of 41 pharmaceutical *depôts*, 37 are in *arrondissement* and *cercle* administrative centers compared to four at the level of the development sector.

In contrast, the public works ministry is represented by the regional directorate and two subdivisions responsible for road maintenance in one of the largest regions in the country. These service units are unable to ensure adequate coverage of the classified roads of the national network totaling 13,004 km in the region, distributed as follows:

- 5,696 km of national roads, 2,483 km of which are asphalt;
- 5,595 km of regional roads; and
- 1,713 km of local roads.

The Ministry of Public Works rarely gets involved with interior roads where the needs are staggering: areas are inaccessible due to the absence of road infrastructure, there is a lack of passable agricultural feeder roads and trails, and some roads are impassable due to a lack of bridges or maintenance. Most of the current maintenance for secondary and local roads is done spontaneously by the populations they serve with little or no organizational or material input from the responsible service.

The livestock service has many of the same problems. Although the Mopti Region benefits from the presence of Operation for the Development of Livestock in the Mopti Region (ODEM--a public organization endowed with financial autonomy and strongly supported by international donors), very little infrastructure is available in terms of animal health care at the local level. For instance, the Kani-Gogouna Arrondissement of the Bandiagara Cercle has only one vaccination corral for 50 villages. Shortages of water and forage at this pen often cause sickness and even death at vaccination time when animal numbers overwhelm corral capacity.

In summary, despite efforts authorities have agreed upon to move toward decentralization, the regional and sub-regional services system remains very rigid. The following list represents powers that fall within the jurisdiction of the central departments:

- general regulations;
- types of services;
- methods used to deliver services;
- instructions concerning the distribution, location, and conditions for access to services;
- the decision to transfer a given function or to open a given activity to local initiatives; and
- determination of the number and technical level of personnel available to lower levels.

The centralization of authority over the primary issues involved in the provision of public services seriously stifles innovation and greatly limits local initiatives. Public services can operate only within a very standardized and restrictive framework. Local time-and-place information is not systematically collected and utilized in the design, implementation, or execution of public services, creating a serious source of inefficiency. Access to and utilization of public services is further limited by factors such as the size of intervention zones, scarcity of service facilities, distance from users, and a lack of adequate technical and material resources.

However, several measures have been undertaken in recent years that could improve the system for coordinating field activities and reinforce the operational capacities of basic services. These measures include the creation and revitalization of administrative participatory organizations, notably the development committees and councils.

3. The Development Committees and Popular Councils

The regional, *cercle*, and *arrondissement* development committees were established by Ordonnance No. 77-44/CMLN of July 12, 1977. They are presided over by the regional governor, the *commandant de cercle*, and the *arrondissement* administrative officer, respectively. At each level, the development committee includes the technical leaders of public services, the administrative officers of subordinate administrative levels, and a representative of each public organization of the jurisdiction.⁴ As laid out by the mandates and operating rules set for them, their main goal is to help the local territorial administrators with the harmonious socioeconomic development of their jurisdictions. The development committee, at least conceptually, is the equivalent of a local planning office. It assists with executing programs listed in the national plan and is responsible for formulating and designing projects and programs to be submitted for review and approval to the council at the corresponding administrative level. In addition, each committee must work on coordinating and harmonizing local initiatives and priorities with those of the national plan under the authority of the presiding territorial administrator.

On the conceptual level, the development committees represent an improvement for solving problems of sectoral activities coordination at the field level--an important objective in many Sahelian countries. However, in practice they are hindered by several institutional and technical difficulties. At the institutional level, development committees were designed based on the same hierarchical structure as the regional and sub-regional services. Consequently, they are more inclined to satisfy the central and territorial administrations' requirements than those of the population.

The absence of accountability to local constituencies is a problem common to centralized service systems. The lack of an effective institution for aggregating and vocalizing local priorities and user preferences virtually assures the dominance of central priorities and procedural rules, regardless of the costs to efficiency, equity, effectiveness, and sustainability.

The elected councils initiated by the 1977 ordinance and further defined in subsequent statutes in 1982 are largely inoperational. Indeed, relatively few councils existed prior to 1988 and the creation of the FDRL. Formal meetings with local councils and discussions with council members during the course of field visits revealed a surprising lack of information regarding the reason for the council's creation, the role and responsibilities of the council, the procedures to be followed in deliberations, or the appropriate and legal position of the local territorial administrator vis à vis the council. In a number of cases, including at the regional council level, council members acknowledged that they did not understand their duties or had just recently (after the study team's arrival, perhaps) been effectively informed. Nevertheless, council members generally believed that they could fulfill their responsibilities if provided with the opportunity to learn and with technical assistance or training.

4

Revisions of the composition and attributions of committees and councils are in progress and will be presented to the national council.

In contrast, the local development committees have been operational since shortly after their creation. However, members' levels of technical competence and mastery of tasks varies considerably. Technicians recognize that the powers bestowed upon the committees are such that at each succeeding level as programs are altered, they become less and less consistent with their initial focus and content. From a technical perspective, the difficulties encountered by the development committees, especially at the *arrondissement* level, relate to the shortage of technical data on the local environment and to the members' poor knowledge of socioeconomic planning. In addition, there is a shortage of specialists in some fields, and most of the available personnel have a low level of technical competence.

4. Popular Participation and the Transfer of Functions

Rural and urban residents have consistently played an important role in the production of public services. While the most important decisions regarding service provision are made at the center, the population has generally been responsible for a number of essential production activities, including constructing physical infrastructure, maintenance and improvements, and financing and even staffing some aspects of service delivery. Local communities have been responsible for building primary schools and health centers since the colonial period. This practice has been maintained in the post-independence period and even intensified because community members are now often expected to pay for the cost of construction; this is true in rural areas, in particular. Such construction in urban centers may receive government assistance, but more likely, will receive assistance from NGOs or other donors.

Many local people participate voluntarily. Voluntary contributions may be in kind and in cash as well as in labor to construct dams, clean out ponds, build literacy centers, provide training, and compensate individuals. For volunteer projects, the community typically determines the amount of work to be done and the method used to mobilize the necessary resources. The institutional bases and organizational forms that local mobilization may take is discussed in greater detail in a later section.

Local people also participate in more routine ways. In some cases, Mali has been an innovator in the use of user fees and charges for financing public services. A fee system has long been used for some health services, and other services have charged fees for essential supplies, officially or unofficially, to make up for shortages in budgetary allocations. Certain services, such as primary health care in villages, maternity services, functional literacy, marketing of agricultural inputs and produce, and infrastructure maintenance have been shifted to or voluntarily assumed by local people and communities to improve access, responsiveness, or acceptability.

As in many centralized systems, Mali's decentralization began long ago with the decentralization of financial responsibility. The corresponding devolution of authority to make the rules, to determine the character of services, and to manage collective goods has not yet occurred.

B. Primary Education

It is useful to illustrate the system-wide observations made in preceding sections by applying them to a specific public service. Education is a service critical to developing the human resource capacity of a society and economy and is generally, along with health care, among the very highest priorities expressed by local people.

1. Problems with Declining Enrollments

Despite the allocation of a relatively large proportion of national resources to education, Mali ranks among the lowest countries in the region on key social indicators, such as the literacy rate (15 percent in 1987), the school enrollment ratio, and the number of girls in primary education. Approximately 30 percent of the Malian civil service is employed by the Ministry of National Education (MEN), yet school enrollment ratios were estimated by the National Directorate of Primary Education at 25 percent in 1990, down from 28 percent in 1979. Primary school enrollment stagnated during the 1980s, and enrollment ratios actually declined.

Reasons for this decline are complex and multiple. Central officials prefer to attribute lowering enrollments to the drought and adult migration. It has become widely accepted among education officials that rural children are kept out of school by their parents who, they claim, prefer to have children herding livestock or working in the fields. The increasing numbers of school drop-outs and secondary and higher education graduates unable to find employment also reduce the demand for public education. The decision in 1983 to discontinue automatic recruitment of secondary and higher education graduates into government service, though an essential and positive policy decision, was not accompanied by a planned contraction in enrollment by these institutions, and the numbers of young graduates (*jeunes diplômés*) unable to find work has created a near-crisis situation for government. The link between graduates' unemployment and declining enrollment and retention of students at the Cycle II level may be intellectually appealing but has not been objectively demonstrated.

2. Local Perspectives on Public Schooling

Community leaders, parents, and young people in towns and villages visited during this study offered a range of explanations for the low school enrollment ratios. The most common sentiments are that education is a high priority, that literacy is highly desirable for boys and girls as well as for adults, and that parents--and children--want children to receive a good education. Community members identified the following obstacles to achieving these goals through the existing public school system:

- the lack of accessible facilities and/or how difficult it is to find and compensate people with whom children may lodge in neighboring towns;
- the unacceptable physical conditions children must endure due to the lack of classroom furnishings;
- the belief that children are exploited by instructors who supposedly make them work in the instructors' fields and do manual labor for the school;
- the fear of possible sexual exploitation of girls by instructors;
- the disrespectful attitude school drop-outs have toward adults and traditional institutions; and
- recruitment, which does not reach all the children wishing to attend school.

The first and last items cited reflect the relative lack of infrastructure discussed earlier. Kani-Gogouna in the Bandiagara Cercle of the Mopti Region exemplifies the situation confronting the majority of Malian citizens. The *arrondissement* of Kani-Gogouna has two schools with three instructors each for its 50 villages and 17,000 inhabitants. At the time of this study, there were over 90 students

enrolled in grades one and two, all of whom shared one classroom. Furniture for the entire school consisted of three metal tables for instructors and three functional desks in the fifth- and sixth-grade classroom. The only chair in sight was the personal property of the director of the school. First- and second-grade students used piles of small rocks arranged in rows--two rocks to write on and one to sit on. A representative of the Canadian bilateral aid program, on a study evaluating school needs, affirmed that the Kani-Gogouna school was in "good condition" compared to others in the region because it has solid walls, and all but one classroom has a sound roof.

The intent in providing this information is not to attack the efforts of educational officials and the central authority but to illustrate the conditions children and teachers face each day. The evidence presented is anecdotal, but the facts have been accepted as generally accurate for rural and urban schools throughout the country. Other problems mentioned above are also widespread. The program of ruralization is soundly disliked by rural parents who object to having their children "farm for the teachers" rather than learn skills they cannot learn at home. Similarly, urban parents see little value in taking time away from academic pursuits to develop skills their children are not expected to use later in life. A study supported by the Institut Malien de Recherches Appliquées au Développement and reported in the journal *CAURIS* strengthens the validity of obstacles perceived by local people in the region of Kayes.⁵

3. State Financing: National and Regional Allocations

Financing for primary education comes from several sources: national and regional budget allocations, local tax monies (the FDRL), local communities, parents, and external assistance. As noted above, roughly 25 percent of government resources are allocated to education. This proportion is average for the region and represents an important commitment by the state given the demand for available resources. It is less the amount of national funding for education and more the structure of allocations within education that raise concern and explain, in large part, the problems within Mali's primary education system. In 1989, the MEN devoted slightly more than one-third of its operating budget to primary education. However, enrollments in Cycle I comprise over 80 percent of total enrollments in all levels of education. Cycle II and secondary education, with less than 20 percent of enrollment, received close to 40 percent of total MEN funding.

Of even greater consequence to the quality of primary education is the virtual lack of funding for material costs. Seventy-four percent of the 1988 MEN budget was allocated for personnel costs, yet 98 percent of total MEN funding was actually used for personnel. In the national MEN budget, allocations for materials amounted to only 1.97 percent of the total allocations approved for 1989. According to official budget documents, actual expenditures as of December 31, 1991 for materials amounted to 1.6 percent of total MEN funds.

Regional budgetary allocations for personnel and materials are similar: 98 percent of combined regional budget expenditures (actual 1989 expenditures) covered personnel costs while only 1.16 percent paid for materials. In absolute terms, the total national expenditure for materials amounted to 197,035,353 CFAF; for all regions, material expenditures amounted to 35,062,080 CFAF. The US

⁵ Adama Sidibe, "L'Ecole Malienne en Question", *CAURIS*, No. 3, October 1990. This issue reports on a number of important educational issues, including the private school approach under experimentation in Bamako.

dollar value of total state financing for material costs of primary education in the Republic of Mali came to \$763,478.⁶ Using 1988-89 enrollment data provided by the Directorate of Primary Education, this amount provided expenditures for materials of \$2.10 per student.

For example, the amount of the budget total received by the inspectorate and primary schools of the second region (Koulikoro) came to 626,389,000 CFAF, allocated as follows in Table IV.1.

**Table IV.1 State Budgetary Allocations for Primary Education, Second Region, 1989
(In CFAF)**

Category	Inspectorate	Schools	Total
Personnel	53,137,000	572,262,000	625,399,000
Supplies	390,000	-----	390,000
Transport	600,000	-----	600,000
TOTAL	54,127,000	572,262,000	626,389,000

Characteristics of the financial situation for public primary education are:

- the national budget finances only salaries, and only the salaries of inspectorate staff, Cycle II, and secondary instructors in the regions;
- there is no national financial support for materials for primary schools, only for the inspectorate;
- regional budgets pay all personnel costs for Cycle I education; and
- regional budgets provide very limited material support primarily for the inspectorate and some urban schools.

The public education system continues to function despite these obstacles. Additional resources are made available to the education system, and are critical to the continued operation of most public schools. The single most important source of funding for primary education is provided by local communities, parents, and local taxpayers. Other material and financial support is provided by the international donor community and NGOs.

4. Local Communities

Local communities play a very important role in developing primary education. As discussed, most service infrastructure in the regions is constructed using local labor. Since independence, the responsibility for school construction has been transferred to the population. According to a recent World Bank report, the value of local investments in education are four times the investment provided by the state. A community may build a school after it receives approval from the minister of national education--the final authority for school organization, instructor assignment, and program design and execution.

⁶ Official exchange rate, December 1989, of 304 CFAF to US \$1.

Once the school is operational, community support is channeled through the local APE. APE organization starts at the grassroots level centering around a neighborhood school (in urban centers) or a development sector school (in rural areas). Following the same structure as the UDPM, locally elected members meet with their colleagues from other neighborhood or development sector schools to elect members for the Arrondissement APE Board. This process is repeated at the *cercle* level culminating with the constitution of the Federal APE Board at the regional level. Observations suggest that few of the APEs in rural areas are functional, and, even at the *cercle* level, the ability of APE leaders to represent the needs of primary education is sometimes questionable. Until the recent election of a new APE president in Mopti, the communal APE leadership, which is responsible for 16 schools, was considered nonfunctional by education authorities. Within local communities, the APE is often considered an accessory to the government, rather than an institution representing local preferences and priorities.

Prior to the APE's integration in the TDRL, an APE tax (*cotisation*) was levied on local taxpayers along with other national taxes. APEs had the latitude to make decisions concerning managing and using revenues in schools. According to some local authorities, this arrangement was successful with regard to timely disbursements, the procurement of needed supplies, and getting concrete results. With the fusion of the APE tax into the regional and local development tax, APEs no longer have their own resources to maintain schools' operations. After two years of operation within the new system using the FDRL, schools have experienced difficulties, including:

- irregular delivery of school supplies,
- a lack of funds for supplies, maintenance, and infrastructure repair, and
- the inability to program the use of funds at the local level.

Most of the schools visited in the second and fifth regions had these difficulties. Some of them were experiencing an acute shortage of supplies. Others operated without desks or benches for students or desks, chairs, and storage cabinets for teachers. The study team noted that many schools were in need of repairs but lacked the means to maintain existing structures.

Students' parents contribute in other ways to the development of the schools. They are responsible for their children's school supplies, including pencils, pens, notebooks, and other educational needs. Because of the shortage of school furniture, parents pay for constructing desks and benches for their children if they can. In some cases, they pay registration fees and a contribution to the school cooperative. Sums paid vary greatly from one school to another, even within a single inspectorate. In the Mopti communal schools, the subscription rate for the school cooperative is 100 CFAF per month; in the Bandiagara Cercle, it varies from 25 to 5 CFAF per student per month. According to the authorities, this variation is due to the different financial capabilities of cities and rural areas and to the minimal value people attribute to public education. One official said, "some parents would take their children out of school even if it only cost five francs. They are looking for a reason to do so." Parents themselves underscore the difficulties they experience making ends meet due to drought-related crop failures and to the high cost of clothing and outfitting their school children. Parents also make contributions in kind for school canteen operations or contribute bricks and other materials for maintaining classrooms and building walls.

5. Private Educational Options

Primary schools are also financed by the private sector. Catholic and Franco-Arab schools have existed for many years. More recently, schools which teach the standard subjects in Arabic, called *medersas*, have emerged (often with backing from Islamic countries). Although *medersas* are private institutions and receive little to no supervision from the national public school system, their integration into the national school system was called for in a decision announced in 1985.

The situation of the *medersas* would justify in an in-depth study. Since *medersas'* integration into the national educational system in 1985, they have been expected to follow the official educational curriculum. Primary education diplomas are to be granted to *medersa* graduates starting in 1993. Sometimes confused with centers called Koranic schools, which restrict their instruction to the Koran, *medersas* attempt to provide a full educational curriculum. However, they often cannot attract qualified instructors and have difficulty respecting pedagogical norms. Few of these schools have the financial means to hire personnel capable of offering the entire range of school subjects.

There is little reliable data available concerning *medersas*. Data provided by the MEN for the 1988-89 school year indicated a total of 318 schools with 1,744 classes. According to the same source, there were 1,816 instructors and 68,445 students, of which 59,636 were in Cycle I. However, national and local authorities state that enrollment in these schools is increasing and that an unknown proportion of their students come from a public-school background. Parents, or the students themselves, chose to switch from public primary education to *medersas*.

Reasons for this preference are numerous and complex. Because they are private schools, the choice to go to a *medersa* is not explained solely by financial considerations. There is still a deep distrust of "government" schools viewed by a significant portion of the population as being poorly adapted, foreign, and hostile to cultural values and religious practices. The *medersas*, on the other hand, reinforce the Islamic beliefs of the majority of the population and reflect local community practices in their organization and disciplinary standards. Furthermore, *medersa* staff often come from the same economic and social background as the students' parents.

The relative success of *medersas* will force the government to rethink its approach to primary education. The drop in the school enrollment ratio in Mali since 1979 is only partially offset by the increase in students at *medersas*. Currently, it is estimated that students at *medersas* comprise about five to six percent of school enrollment. If these schools are to contribute to the economic development of the country by providing able trained workers and technicians, it will be necessary to establish bridges at the intermediate level between them and the public school system.

6. Recent Initiatives

The government and its development partners are searching for solutions to improve the condition of education in Mali. Among the strategies adopted are several measures which may well improve the viability of primary education.

Private community schools

Ecoles de base in urban areas and *ecoles de village* in rural areas have begun to appear. All costs are supported entirely from local funds, including construction or rental of the school, teachers' salaries, and all related expenses. Due to the high cost of constructing classrooms, the state has agreed to relax standards. There are approximately 15 of these private schools, most of which are in Bamako and the Ségou Region.

Support fund for primary education

The FAEF has been established with financing from various donors and has been incorporated into the Fourth Educational Project of the MEN with financing from the World Bank. The FAEF helps communities build new classrooms, repair existing schools, and equip classrooms with school furniture (desks and benches). To benefit from the FAEF's support, the community must provide 50 percent of the financing for classroom construction or renovation. This money may come from local contributions, the FDRL, NGOs, or other sources. The program currently operates in the Ségou and Sikasso Regions and in the municipalities of the District of Bamako.

C. Public Health Services

The public health system in Mali is structured based on the system of territorial administration with national directorates at the center, a regional directorate located in each regional capital, and *cercle* health centers at the *cercle* level which supervise *arrondissement*-level health centers. Some health posts and rural maternities exist as well at the level of the development sector. National, regional, *cercle*, and *arrondissement* facilities are staffed primarily with central government employees assisted in some cases, and especially at more local levels, by workers paid from communal budgets, from locally generated funds, or by FDRL allocations.

Mali was an early innovator in village-level health care programs, the results of which are still evident today. Focusing on primary health care, the typical village program has a first aid worker (*hygiénist-secourist*), a village midwife, and a small supply of basic medicines. The midwife is generally recruited from among the community's traditional birth attendants--often women who have reached the end of their childbearing years. Both locally recruited paraprofessionals receive rudimentary training ranging from one day to a month or more at the *arrondissement* or *cercle* health center. Village health workers are generally unsalaried receiving compensation in kind through dispensation from collective responsibilities and/or from fees and medicine sales.

The number of villages with functioning village health care programs is not known, nor has the quality of services rendered been the subject of careful study. Many village efforts were not sustained due to various factors, particularly the unsalaried status of the health workers, especially the first aid worker who is often male. A strong demand persists for village-level health care services. A significant number of communities visited during the course of this study either had active village health care programs or described plans to build and staff a village health post.

1. Staffing

Staffing patterns for health services in a region, the Mopti Region, are presented in the table below. Staff are organized by category for the Regional Directorate of Public Health, the eight *cercles* in this region, and the commune of Mopti. The regional hospital of Mopti is not included in the table. Personnel with most technical training are concentrated at the regional and *cercle* levels. Thus, 44 percent of all licensed midwives residing in the Mopti region are located in the commune of Mopti, while 73 traditional midwives (*matrones*) are distributed throughout the *cercle* and *arrondissement* facilities. The Ministry of Health has successfully met its objective of locating physicians at the *cercle* level, at least in this region. The health system at the *cercle* level is administered by the chief medical officer of the *cercle* (*médecin chef de cercle*) while the *cercle* health center is managed by an assistant physician.

Arrondissement health centers are generally staffed by a licensed practical nurse (*infirmier du 1er cycle*) and one or more *marones* and health assistants. The goal of placing at least one registered nurse (*infirmier d'état*) in each *arrondissement* center has not been met. After subtracting the registered nurses assigned to the regional directorate and to Mopti commune, there remain only 40 registered nurses for the eight *cercle* and 55 *arrondissement* centers in the region. According to the regional director of public health, the ongoing process of staff reduction and rationalization (*cadre organique*) has severely weakened technical capacity at the local level. For example, the *cercle* of Bandiagara with a population of 168,000 inhabitants has only five registered nurses, six licensed nurses, and two *midwives* for its *cercle* health center and eight *arrondissement* centers. The commune of Mopti with only 54,000 inhabitants has seven registered nurses, 15 licensed nurses, and eight *midwives* in addition to the staff and facilities of the regional hospital and the regional directorate.

2. Financing Public Health Services

A thorough review of health sector finance is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, a general overview of funding sources and relative contributions to health care at the regional and subregional levels follows. As with education and other sectors, there are multiple sources of funding for health care. National budgets provide funds primarily for the central services, specialized institutes and centers, training and research, and the national and regional hospitals. In 1990, roughly five percent of noninvestment expenditure for all ministries was allocated in the national budget to the Ministry of Public Health and Social Affairs. Of this amount, 59 percent covered personnel costs, 28 percent covered materials, and the rest covered transportation, scholarships, and other expenditures. Budget allocation for the ministry includes nonmedical expenditures for social affairs but does not include all health sector costs covered by the national budget.

Regional budgets fund the recurrent operating costs for health services located outside of Bamako (not including the regional hospitals). Ninety-seven percent of health expenditures from all regional budgets in 1989 paid for personnel costs and only two percent for materials. According to information provided by the regional directorate in Mopti, state budget funding for personnel in the region amounted to approximately 154,000,000 CFAF in 1989. The level of state budgetary support (national plus regional) for operating expenses other than salaries is quite low resulting in chronic shortages of basic supplies and equipment, low morale, and poor performance. In the region of Mopti, funding for operating expenses other than personnel amounted to only 3,620,000 CFAF, or approximately US \$12,000 for the regional directorate and 63 *cercle* and *arrondissement* health centers.

To meet their recurrent cost needs, health services rely on two forms of financing, subsidies, and self-financing. Subsidies include human investment in construction, maintenance, and operations; allocations from local governments (particularly the FDRL since its creation in 1988); and assistance from international organizations and NGOs. Excluding communes and the regional and secondary hospitals, most local health facilities are constructed by the population often with some financial assistance from NGOs or international organizations. Local territorial administrators may raise funds for specific purposes through imposing special *cotisations*. Because no popular institutions exist to aggregate and vocalize public preferences, such efforts typically reflect the priorities of local administrators and technical agents. The lack of a popular role in establishing the need, determining the amount of financing required, the method and timing of collecting, and management of receipts have led to low collection rates and occasional use of receipts for purposes other than those intended.

Table IV.2: Staffing of Health Services by Category and Administrative Level, Region of Mopti, 1989

Personnel	Administrative Level and Jurisdiction										Total
	DRSP	Bandiagara	Bankass	Djenné	Douentza	Koro	Mopti Commune	Mopti cercle	Tenerkou	Youwarou	
Physician	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	18
Pharmacist	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Reg. Nurse	4	5	5	8	4	5	7	2	5	6	51
Lic. Nurse	2	6	3	5	5	10	15	6	4	2	58
Midwife	1	2	0	2	2	2	8	0	1	0	18
Lab Tech.	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	4
Aides/Labor	2	16	13	10	10	12	24	13	9	9	118
Matrone	0	8	12	8	13	9	1	8	8	6	73
Comm. Tech.	0	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	13
Health Tech.	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	8
Engineer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Daycare	0	1	0	0	1	1	7	0	0	0	10
Gardener	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Chauffeur	4	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	14
Other	6	2	0	4	2	2	10	0	0	1	27
Total Pers.	23	49	39	43	41	46	82	30	33	29	415
Percent Pers. by location	6	12	9	10	10	11	20	7	8	7	100

Source: Direction Régionale de la Santé Publique

With the creation of the FDRL, these arbitrary and poorly managed methods of generating revenue stopped. Allocations from the FDRL vary considerably from year to year and among jurisdictions, but the central government has requested (with pressure from the World Bank) that a minimum of seven percent of FDRL funding be allocated to the health sector. Again, it is not clear if the seven percent will be applied at all levels (*arrondissement*, *cercle*, and region) or to what purposes the funds are intended. The personnel costs of some health staff, especially *matrones* and nurse's aides, are paid with FDRL funds.

Self-financing takes the form of user fees and charges and benefits made from the sale of medicines. User fees for selected health services were authorized by Decree No. 243/PGRM of September 19, 1983, and further specifications were provided in Arrêté No. 1943/MF.MSPAS of April 16, 1984. The initial legislation limited the use of fees to the national and regional hospitals while excluding *cercle* and *arrondissement* facilities from the fee schedules dictated by statute. These lower-level health centers are allowed to charge fees at the direction of their management committees as long as rates do not exceed those established at the national level. At the same time the statutes state that primary health care will continue to be free. The texts' lack of clarity has resulted in great variability in fee levels for the same services and poor financial control of fee receipts. Fees charged for surgical interventions are particularly high, especially outside of Bamako, and appear to be one of the main sources of self-financing at the *cercle* level. Receipts at the *arrondissement* level are barely enough for kerosene for lamps and burners, dressings, pens, and writing paper. Local health centers do not have financial management authority over fee receipts they collect. As of January 1989, only three national hospitals and the regional hospital at Ségou were authorized to deposit receipts in a bank ac-

count; control over expenditures was exercised by requiring central approval of quarterly plans. In all other areas, 75 percent of fee receipts are deposited in the public treasury and only 25 percent remain to support the health facility.

A more important source of financing in areas where it has been implemented is the sale of medicines. An internationally funded project in the sixth and seventh regions and in three *cercles* in the Mopti Region demonstrated that essential medicines could be purchased by open bids on the international market and resold for one-half to one-third the cost of medicines available through the Pharmacie Populaire du Mali (PPM), the national pharmaceutical purchasing and distribution company. The PPM has a legal monopoly on drug importing allowing it to obtain favorable prices for large orders. However, due in part to its poor payment record, the PPM has resorted to noncompetitive contracts with drug suppliers thereby losing the advantage of bulk purchasing. The PPM also imported a large number of specialty medicines. By restricting purchases to nonspecialty and generic (common international denomination) drugs and by opening contracting to competitive bidding, the cost of drugs to the health system has been greatly reduced. These medicines are resold with a sufficient mark-up to generate funds for meeting the recurrent costs of health services. According to central health officials, this project has reduced the level of subsidy to health services in the Gao and Timbuktu areas from 100 to 50 percent.

The *magasins santé* system in the Mopti region is based on the creation of *cercle*-level pharmaceutical *depôts* that serve as distributors to *arrondissement* facilities and patients. The management of the pharmacy system is separate from the operation of the health clinic itself, thereby separating the role of prescribing medications from that of managing the drug *depôt* or resale pharmacy. The regional directorate places strong emphasis on training the pharmacy managers in sound business practices. Receipts from the sale of medicines are used to pay the manager, resupply the system through the competitive bid system, and support some of the recurrent costs of the health care system. This program of self-financing merits close study and further experimentation.

Table IV.3 below presents a breakdown of health-sector funding from various sources for the region of Mopti in 1989. The Autonomous Budget category refers to the total receipts generated from the self-financing activities described above. The important level of funding allocated for medicines in the state budget appears to contradict statements made by regional officials regarding the discontinuation of national funding for medicines and supplies.

Salaries alone account for 61.5 percent of total regional health financing and almost 80 percent of the state budgetary allocations. Self-financing activities account for 20 percent of total resources. Of that, receipts from the sale of medicines account for the lion's share (87 percent). The funds grouped under the category Subsidies are composed primarily of bilateral and international donor assistance and NGO financing. Almost 300,000 CFAF from Koro and Mopti *cercle* FDRL receipts are also listed. The amount listed under Medicine Sales reflects gross receipts, not the profit net of resupply and operating costs for the pharmaceutical *depôts* and local retail points.

**Table IV.3 Health Sector Funding by Source,
Region of Mopti, 1989 (In CFAF)**

Source of Funding	Amount	Percentage
National and Regional Budgets		
Salaries	154,000,000	61.5
Operating Costs	3,619,600	2
Medicines	36,000,000	14
Autonomous Budgets		
Medicine Sales	42,792,625	17
Fee Receipts	6,164,094	2.5
Subsidies	7,719,780	3
TOTAL	250,295,099	100

Source: DRSP Mopti

The costs for health care extend well beyond those mentioned here. A recent World Health Organization (WHO) study suggests that three-fourths of medical costs are borne by families and only one-fourth by the state. Costs supported by the population include fees and charges, unauthorized gratuities to health care personnel for services, and health-related transport. The most significant cost factor is the purchase of modern pharmaceutical products, and to a lesser extent, traditional medicine. The experience gained in the Gao, Timbuktu, and Mopti Regions regarding the sale of drugs purchased by competitive bid suggests that patients and the health care system benefit from a system which provides improved access to low-cost drugs while generating profits to cover part of the recurrent-cost burden of the service.

3. Local Options in Health Care Provision and Production

Since the early 1970s, Mali has had considerable experience with village-level primary health care projects. These projects were typically localized in a specific zone, organized and financed by external aid, and only marginally integrated into the formal public health system. Many of the early experiences failed over time for a variety of reasons, including the rupture of pharmaceutical stock; lack of funds to pay for basic supplies such as alcohol, kerosene, iodine, and bandages; and loss of personnel. These village paraprofessionals often left in search of wage-paying employment or due to the lack of monetary rewards. Inadequate support and supervision from the local management committee (*comité de gestion*) also contributed to problems of morale and misuse of funds.⁷ Nevertheless, many communities continue to be served by locally recruited and compensated village health care workers.

⁷ These problems are common to village health care projects. For a detailed analysis of this approach in a Sahelian country see Hall, Robert E. *The Village Health Worker Approach to Rural Health Care: The Case of Senegal*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Special Series on Paraprofessionals #5, 1981.

Local communities can and do provide their own public services, but local capabilities and the knowledge gained from such experiences have not been incorporated into the design and operation of health services provided by central authorities. Government health services remain highly centralized, standardized, and unresponsive to local preferences and priorities. The self-financing mechanisms recently initiated by central authorities, though important and positive measures, were implemented independently of any form of organized local involvement.

Local health centers are governed by a board of representatives from the population and special interest groups. However, these *cercle* and *arrondissement* health center management committees are generally ineffective and inoperational. The committees are supposed to oversee the operation of health centers, discuss health care policy issues and priorities, and ensure the proper management of health center resources. Regional and national health officials acknowledge that the committees are ineffective and cite the following two reasons:

- the composition of the committee, which tends to favor retired civil servants and is heavily influenced by the local service chief and territorial administrator; and
- the fact that the committee has virtually no authority to manage resources or influence policy decisions.

Exceptions exist in areas experimenting with the pharmaceutical *depôt* system where management committees control the operation of the pharmacy or *depôt* and are responsible for managing personnel and receipts.

National health officials are aware of the deficiencies of the public health system and of the progress made in specific areas. The possibility of decentralizing certain functions to lower levels within the system is received with interest. The recommendations generated during the 1987 meeting of the Regional Commission for Africa referred to as the Bamako Initiative are being studied and, in some cases, implemented in Mali. The Bamako Initiative called for:

- encouragement of social mobilization initiatives aimed at promoting collective participation in decisions regarding essential medicines and maternal and child health care at the district level;
- maintenance of a regular supply of good quality essential medicines at the lowest possible price to support implementation of the primary health care strategy; and
- the design and implementation of a self-financing mechanism for primary health care at the district level based primarily on the creation of a revolving fund for essential medicines.

The central tenets of the Bamako Initiative are at the heart of the pharmaceutical *depôt* system in the region of Mopti. Pharmaceutical products are purchased on the international market with competitive bids and resold to consumers at a price lower than that charged by the PPM but netting a profit to reinvest in operating the health system. The Bamako Initiative calls for social mobilization to achieve its objectives, not administrative control. It encourages each district to take charge of primary health care and to make services self-financing to the extent possible through selling medicines.

For districts to be effective, management committees must be granted effective financial management responsibility and decision-making authority over the local health care program. The composition of management committees should be more representative of the population and its priorities and less a creation of the administration. For management responsibility to be credible, fees and other receipts should be deposited in a bank account rather than the public treasury. In addition, state oversight should be *a posteriori*, and full legal recourse should be exercised for infractions.

The emphasis on the district as the appropriate management level should not be viewed necessarily as an endorsement of decentralization to the *cercle* level of the territorial administration system. Other decentralized health care systems, such as in the Republic of Zaire, have preferred to create a special health zone or district rather than adopt existing territorial boundaries. This practice allows systems to be more responsive to demographic and ecological realities than can existing administrative jurisdictions while giving them a beneficial distance from the severe resource competition that often characterizes local administrative or governmental jurisdictions. A decision about the type or level of health care jurisdiction should be based on further study.

Mechanisms of self-financing should also be studied carefully. Experience to date with profits generated from medicine sales is promising. However, a similar experiment using medicines procured through the PPM in the first region (Kayes) failed due to the high cost of medicines. A combined approach using both fees and profits from medicine sales may prove the most equitable and reliable approach for sustained self-financing.

Providing health care services through the private sector is also an option for the public health care system. Private practitioners have always existed in the areas of traditional medicine and obstetrics. Pharmaceutical products are also widely available in local markets. These drugs are often brought across national borders or purchased from pharmacies in major cities for resale in rural areas and on the street. The practice of modern medicine, on the other hand, was reserved exclusively for the public sector until 1985. Law No. 85-41/AN.RM authorized the establishment of private medical practices for physicians, oral surgeons, and licensed midwives. A number of implementing texts followed in 1985 and 1986. However, the equipment, facilities, personnel, and capital required to establish a practice are prohibitive. These constraints prevent private practices from developing outside major urban centers, and the few practices that have been established are located in the capital. The statutes governing private medical practices should be studied.

D. Municipalities as Decentralized Entities

1. Organization

Each *cercle* is divided into *arrondissements*, and in urban areas the *cercle* may also include one or more municipalities. The municipality is a decentralized jurisdiction with legal status and financial autonomy.⁸ It exists at the same level as the *arrondissement* in the territorial administration hierarchy. The *commandant de cercle* is responsible for supervising and monitoring activities involving

⁸ Legislative dispositions concerning urban municipalities and rural communes not covered by the communal code are included in Ordinance No. 77-44/CMLN of July 12, 1977.

communal management. Due to their political importance, the municipalities are also subject to the direct supervision of the MATDB.

The executive branch of the municipality includes the mayor and deputy mayors elected from among members of the municipal council. Each deputy mayor is the president of a sectoral commission responsible for studying specific municipal concerns.

The mayor is assisted by a secretary general named by the MATDB. The secretary general is the administrative head of the commune and, until 1989, was paid by the national budget. Technical divisions provide public services such as refuse collection, public records, market management, and property.

2. Authority and Functions

In theory, the municipality has all the necessary authority and responsibility to ensure the delivery of public services. In practice, municipal administrations offer few public services. To ensure the delivery of essential services, municipalities must appeal to governmental technical services located at the *cercle* or regional level. Existing municipal services are generally modest and function poorly.

In the commune of Mopti, for example, refuse collection is the only public service provided entirely by the municipal authority. However, most service vehicles are no longer in operating condition nor have they been for over four years in some cases. Some of the equipment, provided by the World-Bank-financed Urban Project, was too wide to circulate in the narrow streets of the commune. In Kati, though it is on the flow chart, the refuse collection service exists in name only. The unit had no equipment or materials available at the time of this study, and the few agents who were connected with it had been idle for a long before. The municipality is forced to turn to the military engineering services of Bamako for sanitation. For environmental hygiene services, the municipality relies on the public hygiene service under the authority of the *cercle* health center.

The deplorable situation of the municipalities in Mali stems largely from the lack of available revenues. In 1988, total municipal revenues, including those of the Bamako District, represented less than 4 percent of public revenues.⁹ Municipalities face many constraints which greatly contribute to weakening their resources and which hinder their administrative, budgetary, and fiscal autonomy. Communal taxpayers are generally unwilling to pay taxes, and the municipal authorities appear incapable of or unwilling to enforce the laws regarding tax evasion. The fiscal issues of Malian communes will be reviewed in the following sections.

⁹

Hall, Robert, Sheldon Gellar, Jean McNeil, and Louis Siegel. *Decentralization in Mali: An Assessment of Government Initiatives and Options*. Burlington, VT: Associates in Rural Development, January 1990.

V. Issues in Public Finance and Service Delivery

The effective provision and production of public services requires routine, adequate, and dependable budgetary support. In addition, the structure of budgetary allocations should reflect the complete requirements for the sustained delivery of services, that is, adequate levels of financing must be available for the primary categories of personnel, materials, maintenance, and investment. Sources of funding may include central government budgets, deconcentrated and decentralized regional and subregional governments, special districts with revenue and expenditure authority, user fees, and popular contributions of money, labor, and material.

Services of public utility may also be provided by the private sector with financial or technical assistance from the state in some cases. Services currently provided by the private sector include education, health care, veterinary services, and some agricultural services. The government of Mali has been making progress in encouraging private-sector involvement in the production of public services through liberalizing certain professions, such as health care and veterinary medicine, and by transferring functions previously performed by public entities to the private sector. Nevertheless, government is by far the dominant contributor in the provision and production of public services. After a brief description of the structure of the public finance system in Mali, discussion will focus on key issues national and local initiatives face in improving public services.

A. General Overview: The Malian Fiscal System

There are three public budgets of importance to financing public services: the national budget, regional budgets, and municipal budgets. The regional budgets are combined with the national budget to form the state budget (*budget de l'état*). Regions, as deconcentrated units of state authority, do not have corporate legal status (*personnalité morale*) nor fiscal autonomy. Their budgets come from central revenues that are transferred for financing specific central functions or expenditures. Municipal budgets, on the other hand, are separate from central budgets and are supposed to reflect the revenue and expenditure activities and priorities of these decentralized governments, which have the legal status of local governments in the Anglo-Saxon system. The FDRL is also an important source of service finance. Given its importance in the development of local level initiatives, it is discussed separately.

1. Public Sector Revenues

Table V.1 provides the distribution of public revenues by type and budget destination using official budget nomenclature.¹

¹ The following assessment of public sector revenues is from data presented in Hall, Gellar, McNeil, and Siegel, *Decentralization in Mali: An Assessment of Government Initiatives and Options*, Burlington, VT: Associates in Rural Development, January 1990.

Table V.1 Distribution of Public Revenues by Type and Budget, Republic of Mali, 1988 (In millions CFAF)

Revenues	National	Regional	Municipal	Total
Direct Taxes	6398	2219	1349	9966
Indirect Taxes	11448	119	0	11567
Customs	19651	0	0	19651
Public Property	4098	2	373	4473
Miscellaneous	12855	174	407	13436
Total	54450	2514	2129	59093

SOURCE: Ministry of Finance and Commerce; Municipal financial statements.

A number of important scale observations are evident in the table. Central budgetary revenues comprise approximately 96 percent of total public revenues. Revenues produced by the municipalities account for the other four percent. The combined monetary value of the seven regional budgets is also modest, only slightly larger than that of the municipalities. The central authority is clearly the dominant force in the public sector.

The structure of revenues within budgets is also quite distinct. The national budget relies heavily on import and export taxes (36 percent) as well as on consumption taxes (21 percent), such as the *Impôts sur les Affaires et Services* (IAS--a sales tax levied primarily on wholesale buyers), and relies only moderately on direct taxes (12 percent), such as the general income tax (IGR), the minimum fiscal head tax (MF), and business taxes such as the *patente* and *licence*. While major reforms in import taxation are underway, by 1991 Mali should have largely eliminated export taxes. In addition, the IAS will be reduced in importance through the creation of a value-added tax to be implemented progressively over the next few years.

Regional budgets, on the other hand, depend heavily on direct taxes such as the MF, livestock tax, and the IGR. The MF is a shared tax; 60 percent of receipts go to the regional budget and the remainder to the national budget. Other taxes of special significance for regional budgets are taxes on firearms, bicycles, and animal-drawn carts. According to actual receipts from 1989 (versus projected receipts), the MF and livestock tax constituted 75 percent of total regional revenues and 88 percent of the direct tax category. Receipts from firearms, bicycles, and carts constituted five percent of the total, and taxes on businesses (*patente* and *licence*) constituted only 4.4 percent of total regional receipts.

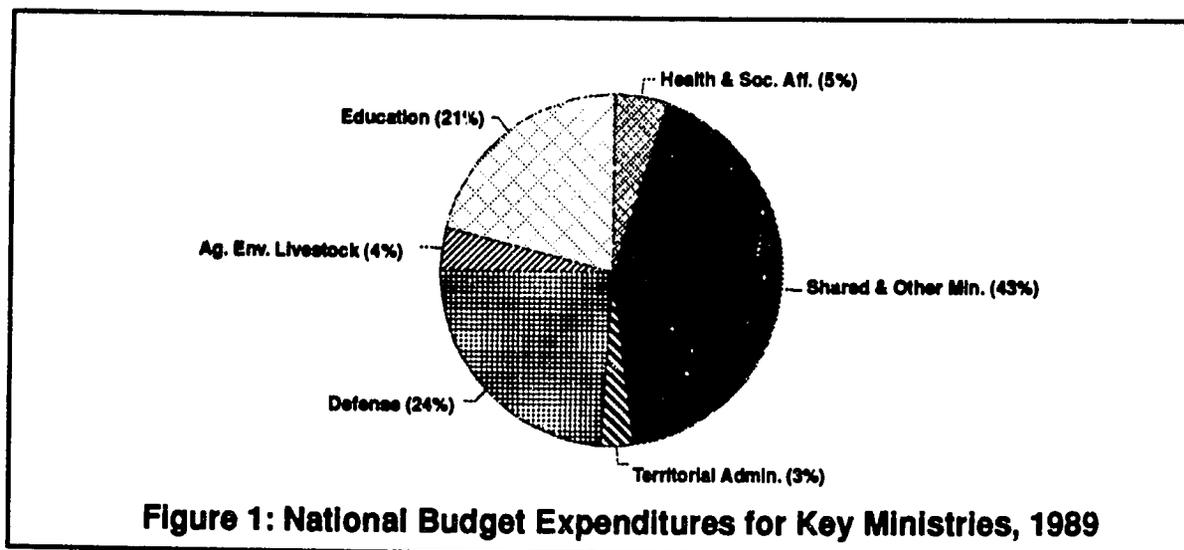
Business and professional taxes account for a small portion of regional revenues due to a number of factors, but primarily because these taxes are assigned as municipal revenues when collected in the jurisdiction of the commune. Since most business owners reside in urban areas, receipts from these taxes fund municipal budgets. There are less than 20 communes in Mali, including the six communes of the district of Bamako, and not all commerce or merchants are located in these communes. Agents of the National Tax Directorate assess business taxes, and *percepteurs* collect them; neither group has the resources to carry out their functions effectively. In 1989, while recovery rates for the MF and livestock tax were approximately 90 and 80 percent, respectively, the rate for the *patente* was only 50 percent and for the *licence* only 31 percent.

Over 95 percent of the tax receipts attributed to regional budgets are drawn directly from rural taxpayers. Inasmuch as business taxes are passed on to consumers who, in the case of businesses outside communal jurisdictions, are also rural, these business taxes may also be considered part of the rural taxpayers' burden. This tax structure is discussed in more detail in the following section on expenditures.

2. Public Sector Expenditures

National budget expenditures for 1989 amounted to 66 billion CFAF, approximately 10 percent of which were categorized as equipment and investment. Of the remaining 59 billion, 26.4 percent went for shared government expenses, 24 percent for defense, 21 percent for education, and 4.7 percent for health and social affairs.

The graph in Figure 1 provides the breakdown for key development ministries. The Ministry of Agriculture (2 percent) and the Ministry of Environment and Livestock (1.8 percent) were combined in the graph. Other ministries not shown include Finance and Commerce (3.8 percent), Justice (1.2 percent), and Plan (0.6 percent). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs received 3.8 percent of total noninvestment spending for 1989. Other than the Ministry of Defense, the MEN receives the largest percentage of national budgetary expenditures. As discussed in the section on primary education finance, national expenditures for education finance Cycle II, secondary, and higher education, while Cycle I costs are born largely by the population and regional budgets.



The structure of budgetary expenditure is also of interest. Despite efforts to reverse the growth of personnel costs, 1989 data show that 57 percent of total national expenditures went directly to personnel. Ministerial budgets averaged 69 percent for personnel costs. Though material expenditures accounted for almost 15 percent of the total budget, ministries spent only 30 percent of those funds on materials. In 1989, regional budgetary expenditures clearly favored wage costs, which accounted for 92.5 percent of combined regional expenditures.

The distribution of regional budgetary expenditure for 1989 favored primary education (51 percent). Only 1.2 percent of education funding from regional budgets paid for materials. The graph in Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of expenditures by functional area. Health and primary education account for over three-fourths of total regional budgetary outlays. The relatively small percentage

spent on agriculture, water and forestry (*eaux et forêts*), and livestock is cause for concern in a country where 90 percent of the population is considered dependent on the agricultural sector, particularly in light of extremely modest expenditures recorded from the national budget.

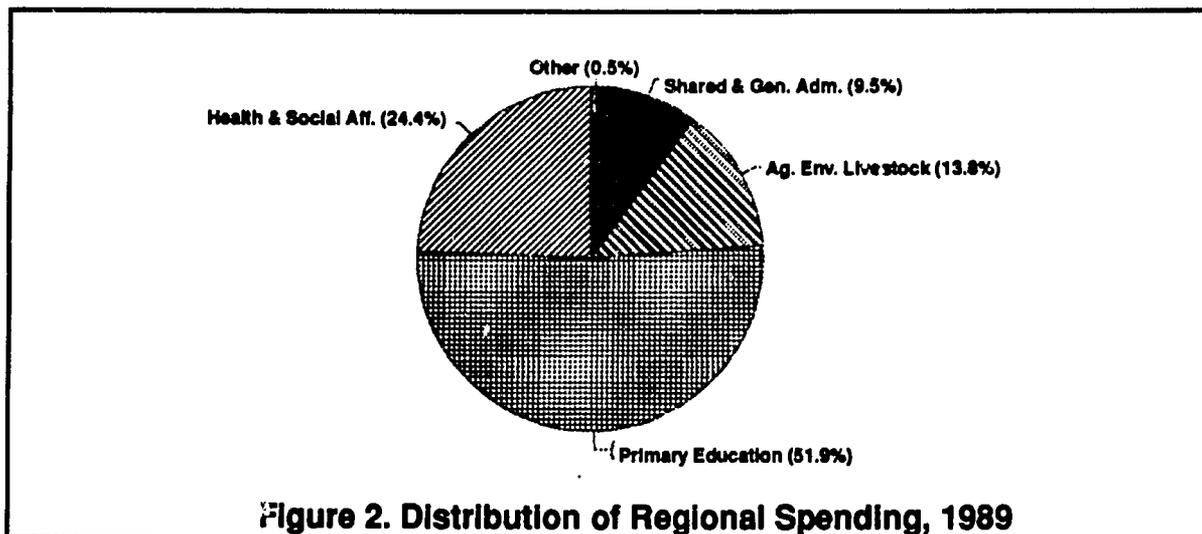


Figure 2. Distribution of Regional Spending, 1989

B. Municipal Finance

The mayor is the executive of the Malian municipality assisted by a variable number of deputy mayors. The mayor and his deputies are elected from among the elected membership of the municipal council. A secretary general, named by the MATDB, is the mayor's chief administrative officer and advisor on technical matters. The secretary general oversees the operation of administrative and technical services, such as market administration, tax collection, finance and accounting, civil affairs, street maintenance, and sanitation. Although communes have agents responsible for collecting and accounting for revenues, the senior treasury official functioning within the municipality serves as the municipal treasurer. In Mopti, the regional treasurer is also the municipal treasurer (the administrative position of the region); and in Kati (the seat of the *cercle* administration), the *percepteur* is also the municipal treasurer.

Hierarchical authority (*tutelle*) is maintained by the *commandant de cercle* in which the commune is located. He has the authority to nullify decisions made by the municipal council and to return budgets for revision if they are not balanced or if they do not respect established budgetary norms. The central authorities may decide to dissolve the council. The most recent case of dissolved elected councils was in 1989 when the councils of the six communes of the district of Bamako were dissolved by the president of the republic. Financial matters are also under the authority of the line superiors of the treasury agent, *percepteur*, or regional treasurer.

1. Municipal Revenues

The principal sources of municipal revenue are the business taxes--the *patente* and *licence*. These taxes and the IGR (withheld from municipal employees' salaries) are referred to in budget documents as "taxes and charges of the state collected for the benefit of the communal budget." *Patente* and *licence* receipts typically comprise over 50 percent of total municipal revenues. Other major

sources of revenue are market fees, charges for using public taxi and transport stations, the bicycle tax, and fines. The major categories of receipts for Kati are presented in Table V.2.

Tax collection is the single most critical problem in urban areas. Recovery rates for direct taxes, other than business taxes, are extremely low. Treasury officials for the district of Bamako acknowledged that a collection rate of 10 percent is not unusual. Recovery rates are moderate to high only for taxes for which a receipt of payment is required for other commercial purposes, such as obtaining import licenses. Revenues generated by fees and charges for public services or rental of public facilities are substantial part of municipal resources, yet rates are generally undervalued and facilities underexploited due in part to a lack of investment and maintenance.

The low earnings of the street tax (less than \$7,000) and the lack of income from garbage removal services are indicative of the unrealized revenue possibilities found in most municipalities. The city is not permitted to assess the garbage removal tax (*taxe d'enlèvement des ordures ménagères*) because it does not provide that service. Municipalities are empowered by law to create taxes for services rendered on the condition that revenues not exceed a reasonable estimation of the cost of the service. More striking yet is the relative insignificance of the municipal head tax (*taxe municipale*) which produced only 204,674 CFAF in 1988, less than 10 percent of projected revenues. Not cited in Table V.2 are receipts attributed to the "extraordinary" budget. Although budgetary sources are unclear, a comparison of documents suggests that this section of the budget amounted to over 11 million CFAF, or almost half of the total "ordinary" budget. Extraordinary receipts were generated from the sale of lots within communal borders. With Bamako roughly 15 km away, there is an active land market in Kati. Other communes will not benefit from this revenue source to the same degree.

2. Municipal Expenditures

Details of Kati Commune's actual 1988 expenditures are presented in Table V.3. The most striking feature of the budget is the relative weight of general administration compared to service financing. Chapter I represents 61 percent of total outlays. The primary outputs of these services are ceremonial occasions, receptions, meetings, various documents required by the state and the commune, revenue administration, property records, and police. Other than police, which accounted for only 3 percent of expenditures, the rest of the general administration budget essentially represents the cost of operating the communal administration.

Personnel costs dwarf spending for supplies and equipment; and there is heavy expenditure on vehicle operation and maintenance despite the lack of funding for supplies and materials with which to work. Finally, the structure of spending suggests strongly that few services are actually provided. This point was clear in on-site observations. The municipality does not provide public lighting, water, garbage removal, environmental hygiene, health services, educational services, or street repair. Indeed, roughly 24 million CFAF is owed to the electric utility for arrears dating before 1988. The service responsible for street repair and drainage received only 250,000 CFAF for supplies and equipment. What services are provided are generally contracted from *cercle*-level public services. Lots have been sold to generate revenue without a development plan for areas involved. No provisions have been made for basic utilities, including water and electricity.

Kati Commune's personnel costs were 9.9 million CFAF, 35 percent of 28.3 million in total spending in 1988. Of that, 73 percent went to administration (municipal authorities, general administra-

tion, financial and domain administration, and civil registry) and only 27 percent went to public services.

Table V.2: Kati Commune Actual Receipts by Category, Ordinary Budget, 1988 (CFAF 000s)

Source	Amount	Percent of Total
Chapter I: Total general fiscal receipts	12,760	55
1. National and regional taxes; patent; licence (IGR 103,285)	6,843	29
2. Fiscal and not related to a service of which fines--1,616; bicycles--1,352	3,431	15
3. Taxes on administrative services	1,627	7
4. Revenue from government buildings and properties		
a. Rent of storage space and stores	764	3.3
b. Rent of garden plots	95	0.4
Chapter II: Total revenues from economic services	8,744	37
1. Street tax (<i>taxe de voirie</i>)	2,140	9
2. Markets; fairs; expositions; publicity	3,675	16
3. Slaughter/inspection fee	286	1.2
4. Taxes on parking; taxi stations; carts	2,643	11.3
Chapter III: Total revenues from community services	462	2
1. Tax for garbage removal	0	0
2. Public hygiene	57	0.2
3. Sanitation and ambulance rental	0	0
4. Youth and sports	0	0
5. Education	0	0
6. Fee for boundary determination and architectural services	305	1.6
Chapter IV: Total misc; unforeseen transfers	1,385	6
1. Accidental receipts	203	0.9
2. Receipts from the municipal snackbar	1,183	5
TOTAL	23,351	100

SOURCE: Commune de Kati, Compte Administratif, Exercice 1989.

However, municipal authorities are not overpaid. The Kati mayor's annual honorarium is 150,000 CFAF (US\$600); he receives no salary. His deputies receive US\$180 annually, and the chiefs of the urban quarters (*chefs du quartiers*) receive US\$84. Salaried municipal employees receive from 150,000 to 300,000 CFAF annually (US\$600-1,200), plus benefits. By contrast, the resident MATDB official--the municipal secretary general--receives 705,149 CFAF in salary (US\$2,821) plus 181,128 in benefits (US\$724) for a total of 886,277 CFAF (US\$3,545). The local municipal managers are virtually volunteers.

Table V.3: Kati Commune Actual Expenditures, 1988 (CFAF 000s)

	Object	Percent of Total Amount
Chapter I: Total general administration	17,347	61
1. Mayor, administrative costs, personnel, ceremonies, elections, main items: vehicle operation by authorities--2,925, elections--1,064	5,307	19
2. General administration (vehicle operation--1,064)	5,598	20
3. Financial and property administration	4,505	16
4. Civil registry service	1,072	4
5. Police (supplies and operation only, personnel paid by state budget)	709	3
6. Fire	0	0
Chapter II: Total economic services	4,611	16
1. Maintenance of public ways: personnel--1,050, equipment operation, and maintenance--1,763, materials and other operating--500	3,313	8
2. Public markets	83	0.3
3. Slaughterhouse and meat transport (all for transport)	1,215	4.3
4. Public parking and public transport stations	0	0
5. Public water supply, water bills from utility	0	0
Chapter III: Total community and social services	3,542	12.5
1. Garbage and trash removal, maintenance of public areas	1,672	6
2. Ceremonies and cemeteries	138	0.5
3. Public hygiene (100% personnel)	649	2.3
4. Social and medical assistance	743	2.7
5. Youth and sports	0	0
6. Education (maintenance)	50	0.2
7. Religious and cultural (subsidies to cults--300)	300	1
8. Urbanism	0	0
Chapter IV: Total conveyances and miscellaneous	2,797	9
1. Diverse subsidies	310	1
2. Miscellaneous	2,487	8
TOTAL	28,297	100%

Note: Several important categories above are omitted because no funding was provided, such as maintenance of public buildings, supplies for the infirmary, lighting of public spaces, materials/supplies for public hygiene, hospitalization of the indigent, contributions to the Twin-City Committee, and contribution to reserves of capital projects fund.

3. Institutional Constraints to Municipal Autonomy

The question arises as to whether municipalities are local governments. Technically, they are because they're decentralized jurisdictions with recognized legal status and some degree of fiscal authority. In practical terms, however, the communes are inoperational. The services that exist are provided by the central public service system, not by communal service agents. According to central Ministry of Finance and Commerce officials, all Malian communes receive subsidies to make up for revenue shortfalls. The situation is critical and appears to be worsening.

A key institutional problem for municipalities is that most of them do not function as local governments. The commune is not perceived as a legitimate source of authority in its own right and in the domains over which it has been granted responsibility. Legitimate authority is withheld by the state (which has refused to give communes the authority to raise and spend revenues) and by central administrations obliged to provide services in the territory of the commune due to the latter's inability to do so.

Most importantly, the population denies the commune's legitimacy and sees it merely as an appendage of the state rather than a distinct local authority. Tax evasion is the norm, collective infrastructure is left to deteriorate, and local politicians refuse to raise tax and fee rates due to public opposition. As one municipal leader explained, the mayor and his deputies are incapable of improving tax assessment, enforcing tax payment, or raising tax rates. To do so would be to jeopardize their electoral future.

Three factors contribute to the population's unwillingness to pay taxes and to grant legitimacy to the municipal authority. First and foremost, there is a profound lack of information at the community level regarding the range of services that could be made available, the options in organizing service delivery, the costs of these options, and the reciprocity that should exist between the local government and citizens as service users. Second, there is no visible link between services rendered and the taxes, fees, or charges paid to the municipality. The sole exception may be administrative fees for drawing up or notarizing documents, but from a citizen's perspective, it is difficult to see this as a service since the government requires this document for meeting government regulations. Third, lax enforcement in cases of non-payment of taxes reinforces taxpayers' tendency to evade their obligations.

C. The FDRL and Financing Local Initiatives

Background on the creation of the FDRL, its objectives, and the general role of the CLD and council were discussed in preceding sections. This section discusses the system for tax recovery and management, issues regarding the system of programming and budgeting, and the experience to date with execution of FDRL programs.

1. Tax Recovery and Revenue Management

The TDRL--the tax which provides receipts for the FDRL--combined a number of existing levies and taxes in one tax. The merged items, assessed on a per capita basis, include:

- contributions for the APE;
- levies for the UNJM (Union of Malian Youth), the UNFM (Union for Malian Women) and the UDPM;

- the development tax;
- and the tax for the CAC (cooperative extension service).

The rate of the newly created TDRL was allowed to vary according to the economic conditions of the locality and, at its creation, ranged from a low of 875 CFAF for the *cercles* and commune of Timbuktu to a high of 2,600 in the *cercle* of Yanfolila in the region of Sikasso. The initial legislation did not cite the amount for the district of Bamako, currently 3,000 CFAF. The *cercle*, district, or municipal council may amend rates within 25 percent of the original rate.

The TDRL is collected in rural areas at the same time and in the same manner as the MF, livestock tax, and assimilated taxes. Numeric rolls stating the total number of taxpayers, the tax rate, other tax liabilities such as livestock and firearms, and the total amount due are drawn up by the *chef d'arrondissement* and presented to the village chiefs in his jurisdiction for collection. Thus, the tax bill is not broken down by taxpayer, nuclear family, or household. Often assisted by a literate member of the community, the village chief receives the tax payments from extended family heads and eventually deposits the lump sum with the *chef d'arrondissement*. The amount collected is then divided among the revenue categories and deposited with copies of explanatory revenue documents for the *cercle* treasury official and the *commandant de cercle*.

It is critical that the local administrator has no objective basis by which to determine how to allocate receipts among revenue categories. The entire amount could be assigned to one item, such as the MF, or divided equally among the taxes due. Nevertheless, there is a slight tendency to attribute receipts first to the minimum fiscal and assimilated taxes, and then to the TDRL. Table V.4 presents assessment and collection data for the *cercles* of Kati and Bandiagara.

Table V.4: Assessment and Collection of MF, Assimilated Taxes, and the TDRL (in millions CFAF)

Year	MF and Assimilated			TDRL		
	Assessed	Collected	C/A%	Assessed	Collected	C/A%
Eight <i>arrondissements</i> of Kati Cercle						
1988	129.7	121.4	93.5	121.4	121.4	100.0
1989	130.0	115.8	88.4	170.0	139.4	82.0
1990*	150.1	122.6	81.7	166.8	150.7	80.7
Eight <i>arrondissements</i> of Bandiagara Cercle						
1988	94.7	79.5	83.9	114.2	17.5	15.3
1989	98.0	96.7	88.7	129.2	89.7	69.4
1990*	98.9	77.6	78.5	130.6	57.2	43.8
Total	291.6	253.8	87.0	373.9	164.4	43.9

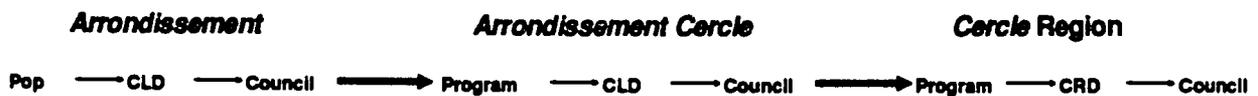
* January to September

Such allocation may be the result of one or both of two factors. As demonstrated above, the MF and assimilated taxes are by far the most important source of financing for regional expenditures, over 92 percent of which are for salaries of government employees working in the regions. By attributing

receipts first to the MF, the *chef d'arrondissement* is simply ensuring that his salary is paid. The second factor relates to the experience of local authorities who have lost control over FDRL funds. During the first year of implementation, some localities were able to keep and use a large portion of TDRL receipts collected in their area. By the second and third year, receipts were being centralized (especially by *cercle commandants*), and local administrators had little to show for their collection efforts.

2. Programming and Budgeting

The model for developing and approving FDRL programs was as follows.



According to this theoretical model, local preferences and priorities were announced to or identified by the *arrondissement* development committee, made into a rudimentary program, and submitted to the *arrondissement* council. Once approved, the program was sent to the *cercle* CLD for review. At this level, more definite budgetary figures were added. The *cercle* CLD reviewed all *arrondissement* programs and developed its own *cercle* program which was presented to the *cercle* council for review and approval. All *cercle* programs were sent to the regional development committee (CRD) where they were reviewed for technical accuracy and conformity to the objectives of the national plan. The CRD also developed its own FDRL program and presented it to the regional council for approval. The system was designed to work from the bottom up with only technical corrections made at higher levels in the system. Each level was responsible for executing its own program.

In practice, however, the model fell apart for two interrelated reasons. First, *arrondissements* do not have a local treasury agent nor is the *chef d'arrondissement* authorized to approve expenditures. The *percepteur* and the *commandant*, who has the authority to obligate funds, are at the *cercle* level. Thus, the model was inconsistent with administrative practice and regulations. Second, pressure was exerted from the center to prioritize particular sectors or objectives. The president of the republic, with strong encouragement from the World Bank, declared that 30 percent of FDRL funds were to go to education and seven percent to health care. Other interests followed suit and additional demands were made to reserve part of the FDRL for special purposes. According to the governor of Mopti, demands for a share of the fund had already exceeded 120 percent of revenues. Therefore, the initial objective of the FDRL (to serve as a means to finance local priorities) was threatened, first by the lack of necessary structures and attributions for managing funds at the *arrondissement* level, and second, by the impact of central priorities on fund allocation.

3. Execution of Programs

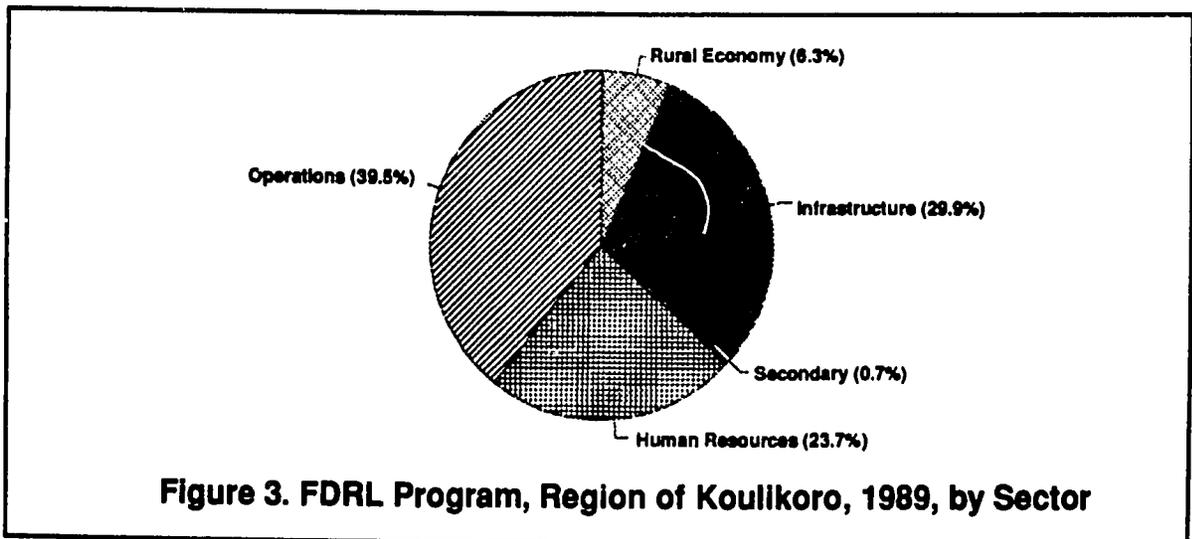
The accomplishments of the first three years of implementation are just becoming clear. Though funds were programmed in great detail and with copious and accessible documentation, execution of the funding programs remains unclear. It is extremely difficult if not impossible to determine exactly how much was spent in each *arrondissement* by category or project. In the areas visited during the course of this study, it was clear that FDRL expenditures at the local level did not come close to the amounts programmed, nor did expenditures represent the population's priorities, in most instances.

The study team made three general observations. First, the allocation formula for the distribution of funds by jurisdiction was not respected in program execution. This was due in part to the lack of clear guidelines during the first year of implementation and to the natural tendency for resources to rise to higher levels of authority. The allocation formula for the 1990 FDRL program in the region of Mopti allocated 20 percent to the region, 22 percent to the *cercle*, and only 58 percent to the *arrondissement*. The average distribution, according to reports from the regional seminars, was between 60 and 65 percent for the *arrondissement*, 20 and 25 percent for the *cercle*, and 10 and 15 percent for the region. By 1991, the formula had been standardized at its present levels: 70 percent for the *arrondissement*, 20 percent for the *cercle*, and 10 percent for the region.

The second observation was that the objective of respecting the general priorities of the national plan by emphasizing the rural economy sector including infrastructure and the secondary sector was quickly forgotten. In part, this was unavoidable due to the president's decision to give priority to health and education, both of which are in the human resources sector. However, the growth of administrative expenditures, the construction of government lodgings and offices, and the high level of spending for party organizations were an obvious deviation from the spirit of the fund and the preferences of the population.

In 1989, the Region of Koulikoro's pattern of allocating expenditures from the FDRL clearly illustrates the preponderant influence of political priorities and administrative feather-bedding. Operating and associated costs represented almost two-thirds of the total program. This expenditure category included 62,945,310 CFAF for support to party organizations--the UDPM, the UNJM, and the UNFM. The same category also included 74,918,945 CFAF for the CRD and local CLDs and councils. The allocation for party organizations represented 10.5 percent of the global FDRL program and was 24 percent greater than the total allocations for the rural economy sector (comprised of agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and forestry), the secondary sector (rural water, industry, crafts, commerce), and roads and river transport infrastructure combined. Budgeted support for the CRD and CLDs alone was 50 percent greater than these economic development expenditures. The unusually high amount of funding allocated for infrastructure included 61 million CFAF for the construction of a presidential residence outside of Kati and other official *pied à terres*.

The category of administration/planning/finance, called Operating Costs in the graph in Figure 3, averaged 24 percent of the *cercle* FDRL budgets in the region of Mopti for the 1990 program. The re-



gional FDRL component included major expenditures for public services in the commune of Mopti (67 million CFAF). Indeed, over 40 percent of the CRD program will go to what may be viewed as communal services, including some expenditures for services such as secondary education, which are considered national responsibilities.

The third observation is that monies raised by taxing rural producers is being used to benefit urban populations and, more specifically, the administrative authorities in charge of managing the fund. Rural taxpayers are already financing the bulk of government personnel located outside of Bamako without receiving access to the services these agents provide. There is a clear lack of equity in the financing of public services, with the greatest burden placed on the rural taxpayer. The fact that few rural adults interviewed during the course of the study were aware of the existence and purposes of the TDRL illustrates the inequities of asymmetrical information distribution. The rural taxpayer, faced with certain enforcement, must pay taxes without knowing how they will be used.

VI. Local Populations and Decentralization

The effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and acceptability of public service systems is dependent on the success with which they are able to accommodate and mobilize local institutions and resources. Service systems that do not reflect local preferences will not be capable of garnering the support and attracting the level of resources required to assure sustainability. The costs of ignoring local institutional arrangements for the development and management of public goods are high both in terms of inefficiencies in service delivery and in terms of opportunities to reduce the public charge of services by transferring provision and production responsibilities and the corresponding authority to local communities and private service providers. In the following section, the basis of local organization and institutions are examined as they relate to the provision and production of public services.

A. Sociocultural Authorities and Heritage

Through native or foreign interlocutors, traditional authorities on the various sites of this study manifested a great capacity for organizing individuals, thus showing strong community vitality capable of dealing with ecological, economic, social, and cultural contingencies.

1. Organization of Power

The customary organization of power on the Dogon Plateau, in Macina, and in Mandé country has its origin in the same basic elements, including paternal authority, ancestor worship, and the economic resources of the locality. Far from being rigid, customary power surpasses the simple physical and material constraints on an offending individual or group and achieves the socioeconomic unity of a given space by means other than war. To do this, it builds and maintains in the collective consciousness a type of power based on lineage which respects the rules of lineage and primogeniture according to which only the oldest member of the group can ensure effective leadership as head of a large family (*fasokounda*), village chief (*dougoutigui*), or, more recently, *canton chef* (*kafotigui*).

Annex A provides an overview of the history of human settlements in the 11 sites visited during the course of this study. Recounting personages, events and places still holds a strong evocative power in local communities. Institutions have evolved along with the socioeconomic realities of people's lives, yet there remains a continuity in values and beliefs which continues to provide social cohesion and allows for a certain degree of innovation in meeting new challenges.

The overviews in Annex A invite readers to view the organization of village power structures in terms of a religious and cultural collective memory that maintains its moral identification with an historical value system--a tradition which ensures the distribution of authority through a complex network of family exchanges represented by initiation stages of both the masculine and feminine age sets.

The village chief ensures the primacy of the residential group as the guardian of the religious pact linking the founding ancestor and the genies, the real masters of the village land and bush. The village council is the decision-making forum; it maintains general security, which is essential to the execution of duties assigned to different groups based on kinship or age set. The vertical family order

and the horizontal social order combine authority and camaraderie which constantly seek a balance between age and reason.

From the agrarian and religious perspective, the village chief authorizes settling somewhere as a resident, clearing new lands, and cultivating them. As master of the land and religious intermediary between people and genies, he manages the village community, arbitrates conflicts, and coordinates the socioeconomic activities of the heads of extended families. Between the village chief and the council members, power is wielded with subtleties characteristic of a situation where the decisions of one age set will be executed by younger age sets of the village.

As an auxiliary unit for administration and rural development activities, the village council operates as a public service in charge of:

- welcoming and taking in strangers;
- collecting taxes;
- transmitting administrative orders and policies;
- maintaining public order;
- settling land tenure disputes;
- establishing rules of livestock grazing;
- determining the agricultural calendar--dates for planting, harvesting, and threshing;
- setting the rates of fines for customary offenses, including adultery, lack of respect, or petty larceny;
- maintaining the calendar of major ritual holidays--for example, Animist and Muslim holidays;
- delegating public tasks to various families; and
- managing the collective patrimony, including fields, roads, and wells.

Despite all these prerogatives and public responsibilities, the village does not yet have legal standing though its chief is nominated by the *commandant de cercle* at the suggestion of the administrative head of the *arrondissement* and with the approval of the village council.

2. Community Solidarity

The community rationale derived from this system of occupying and managing space daily draws all individuals into tacit and customary involvement with each other, an involvement upon which their food, physical, and even spiritual security depends. Ties of blood, kinship, and labor-intensive production encourage a community response and an individual search for social legitimacy by providing the benefit of collective service in the fields, villages, and family residences.

From the economic point of view, the system of self-sufficiency that exemplifies this form of community solidarity facilitates mobilizing the entire agro-pastoral labor force by forming associations of men, women, and youth. These associations coordinate and undertake specialized interventions while consolidating the collective basis for the unity of village life.

This rural mode of production has created a spirit of community solidarity based on reciprocal obligations; time and interpersonal relations have solidified this spirit in everyone as each person fulfills obligations to those upon whom he or she depends for physical survival in a precarious ecosystem. With gifts and counter-gifts, this principle of reciprocity is the entire social fabric of an economy of nonmonetary exchanges, energized mainly by autonomous collective actions. Supporting the principle of reciprocity are the fear of symbolic or real fines and the desire to be praised and rewarded socially. Local social institutions effectively prevent the emergence of threats to the processes underlying the production of collective goods, such as free riding and shirking reciprocal responsibilities.

With the introduction of monetary exchange during the colonial period, this idyllic situation deteriorated, and local people increasingly needed money for access to the means of production and to goods and services. The present crisis in the self-sufficient economy directly affects the able-bodied workers of the family and community who must now find financial solutions to local shortages in new places. Because of transformations of the production system caused by the increased use of agricultural equipment, the self-sufficient economy no longer allows people to maintain their own labor force within the limits of a narrow market. Agricultural equipment has become indispensable for cash crops, such as cotton, and even for food crops, such as millet, which often become commercial products due to consecutive droughts and the need to build up stores of food for security that are not necessarily produced locally.

Under these difficult conditions, the unity of village residence is often shaken by the strong tendency to migrate and by social differentiation. Village unity is becoming problematic in Goundaga where land tenure problems have erupted around the pond shared by lake-side residents of Bandiougou and by the new rural farmers, market gardeners, and breeders near the urban agglomeration of Sévaré about twenty kilometers away.

3. Age Sets

Organizing the active labor force into operational age sets is an original and defining feature of the rural production system and the rules that support it. The village of Bandiougou offers a clear example of this through the level of organization and economic interventions achieved by the young producers, who are between 15 and 45 years old. These producers are divided into four age sets which only include initiated and circumcised boys. The first age set is comprised of 40 to 45 year-olds, the second of 30 to 40 year-olds, the third of 25 to 30 year-olds, and the fourth of 15 to 25 year-olds.

It is said that "the village belongs to its chief, but the responsibility for production belongs to the young people and their youth chief (*kamalenkountigui* or *sagalage amili*)." Each age set has a leader, and the youth leaders have three deputies ranked as first, second, and third according to their age set seniority.

In each of the four neighborhood wards of Bandiougou there are one or more special houses used exclusively as dormitories for a maximum of twenty boys each. One chief, elected from among them, is responsible for each house. In addition, each age set has its own dormitory.

Jobs requiring little manpower (transporting cereals on the backs of donkeys or in carts) are delegated to the youngest age set (15 year-olds) who are required to get along and be pleasant with each other while doing their task. The major jobs requiring more manpower (including collective fields, digging wells, building dams, and agricultural services to in-laws) involve the three older groups.

This traditional, structured organization of age sets directs the dynamic village association of Bandiougou. This allows efficient control and rapid mobilization of any young person of Bandiougou for community needs which require a ready work force. This level of organization, discipline, and work is rarely reached and maintained by other rural societies whose structures are being dismantled under the burden of economic pressures and the loss of cultural identification with a patrilineal norm. Popular willingness and the ability to organize and manage their own affairs with the human resources still available is evident in the effectiveness of the age set system. All local initiatives formulated within the community or introduced by development partners are based on it.

B. Autonomous Popular Organizations and Affiliated Associations

The rural communities visited are organized in varying degrees to take charge of their own individual and collective concerns. To do so, they define a public or secret associative framework which is autonomous or affiliated with some other structure. This framework is linked to an ancient tradition of mutual aid and solidarity which may have been the origin of numerous local means of exercising power, a type of power with implications that extend beyond the village or a given cultural area.

1. Rural Producer Groups (farmers, herders, market gardeners, artisans, cooperatives, village associations, and tons)

All agro-pastoral activities are subject to rural groupings formed for jointly resolving individual or collective issues. This community tradition continues with varying degrees of success with groups of farmers, livestock owners, market gardeners, and artisans who become active members of cooperatives, village associations, or *tons*.¹

For farmers, this may involve providing labor in collective fields or for individuals. Collective fields allow the youth and sometimes women to have a source of agricultural revenue used for community expenditures, such as the payment of forestry fines, capital costs for local infrastructure facilities, hosting visitors, the village fund for youth or women, and grain stocks for food security. Every week, the group of young farmers is expected to do one day of community work, paid in kind and/or in cash on the spot, for an individual who requests it. This individual may be a future father-in-law who is entitled to the labor as part of the dowry. In return, he must provide the workers with food throughout the period in which they work for him.

At the *arrondissement* level, the herders' association:

- digs wells;
- builds watering troughs, vaccination corrals, and traditional stock corrals;
- watches the health and safety of the stock;

¹ The *ton* in this context refers to a formally organized and officially recognized village community. The idea of the *ton* as the motor of rural development began in 1982 with its establishment as a legal entity. Its creation is supported by the UDPM, although to date the *ton* system appears to have remained nonpolitical. Village associations, on the other hand, are formally recognized as socioeconomic associations but have not been granted legal status. A village must have demonstrated successful actions previously as a village association before it may become a *ton*.

- protects the area from over-cutting of trees; and
- imposes sanctions when animals stray into fields.

These nascent associations are primarily concerned with pastoral water supply and management of watering holes in relation to vaccination campaigns. These campaigns often take place under very precarious conditions, which may even be life-threatening for the stock. The associations' recovery of recurrent expenditures for vaccines, which cost 75 CFAF per head of cattle annually, is an important component of financial resource mobilization. The breeders' associations may have an important potential role in the general pastoral economy at and beyond the issues of animal health. At present, they generally do not have a fund as such that would allow them to make community expenditures.

Market gardening, generally a women's activity, is only practiced by men near the large urban center. Before becoming members of a cooperative, the market gardeners and planters of Kati supplied the military camp, the hospital of Point G, and the big schools of Bamako with fresh vegetables. Members of the dynamic cooperative of market gardeners and planters of Kati became interested in food processing and preservation; their products, such as dried mangos processed in a solar dryer, are now sold in the local market and exported to Europe.

Traditionally from lower castes, the rural artisans, notably the iron workers, organize into groups starting at the level of the household workshop. Rural artisans come from families who have been in the business for generations and have developed very special, exclusive relationships, which now are providing them with more jobs in the primary maintenance of small rural structures like dams and wells equipped with pumps.

In the *cercle* of Bandiagara alone, which also includes nine *tons*, 80 percent of the 75 village associations benefit from training by local NGOs and the Catholic mission. These pre-cooperative structures (the village associations) actually represent "an original form of rural development essentially based on the traditional systems of village solidarity through which collective and voluntary participation of the community may easily be obtained."²

On the Dogon Plateau, the association of 83 village groups called Molibémo ("Let's Unite") is an original form of federative response to the problems that exceed the human and financial means of a single village. Molibémo was formed in 1984 in response to the severe drought of the preceding year as a cereals marketing operation with its own fund of 5,000,000 CFAF raised through group subscriptions. This sum was increased to 35,000,000 CFAF with the support of local sponsors (the NGOs, the Catholic mission, German cooperation with the Germany Technical Assistance Society [GTZ] and the German Financial Association for Developing Country Support [DEG], and the Association Française des Volontaires du Progrès). The local community effort became a structure that reflects the traditional organization of the basic family unit (*guinne gonno*) while Molibémo represents the extended family (*guinne*). Molibémo, both a traditional and a modern organization, has been headquartered in Bandiagara since February 1990; the headquarters was established with

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Compendium of legislative and regulatory documents governing the cooperative movement in the Republic of Mali, MATDB, DNACoop, May 1989, p. 11.

Molibémo's resources at a total cost of 7,500,000 CFAF. From its headquarters, Molibémo manages its activities, including training/research in the Dogon language, supplying member groups with cereals or agricultural materials, managing funds and access to credit, maintaining relationships with other organizations for farmer self-promotion, and coordinating activities with outsiders on the Dogon plateau. At the level of Molibémo village groups, activities involve collective fields, collective work projects on Tuesdays, erosion control through bunding, market gardening (onions), constructing, and repairing village access roads, rock crushing, brick production, digging wells, building literacy centers and storage warehouses, maintaining village shops, reforestation and managing village land, and repairing dams and other community infrastructure.

Each village group pays an annual subscription of 10,000 CFAF to replenish the Molibémo fund. Molibémo has considerable credibility in the countryside. In Kansongo, the village Molibémo group has assets of 190,000 CFAF generated by marketing millet; from this sum, 90,000 CFAF is available for loans to needy villagers who pay it back in kind and/or in cash. In 1986, this local ONG had access to 150,000 CFAF in credit from the Catholic mission in Bandiagara, 57 percent of which has been reimbursed with a new payment delay.

According to the Malian government, the final objective of village associations is the *ton*, which was designed as a local development enterprise based on individual and group motivation. There can only be a single *ton* per village or nomadic group (*fraction nomade*). In Dogon areas, the traditional structure corresponding to the *ton* is the *kandu*, which is responsible for organizing collective activities and settling legal issues. *Kandu* officials are elected within the same age set (about 35 to 40 years old) and their decisions are legally binding as long as they comply with village traditions as decided by the *alagalou*, who always has the last word. At the risk of being excluded from the village by the elders, an individual cannot ignore the decisions of the *kandu*.

2. Specialized Associations

Specialized associations are created through the initiative of governmental and nongovernmental technical services to support specific activities in the fields of education, health, rural and pastoral water supply, and other collective facilities which require the participation of local populations for implementation.

The APE is the best illustration of this top-down organizational approach. Previously, the APE commanded significant financial resources in the form of a capitation tax which has since been integrated into the FDRL. The APE is a structure halfway between the school administrations and the political committees of the UDPM which manage APE elections. The APE would like to be the principal interlocutor of Malian schools in terms of supervising their physical resources and pedagogical quality. Currently, the educational system suffers from the following:

- very poor work conditions and low output;
- defective classrooms;
- a lack of school furniture;
- a shortage of school equipment;
- a lack of teaching personnel;

- very low school attendance linked to the inadequate accommodations, cafeteria, and dormitory conditions; and
- some hostility toward the schools viewed as poorly adapted to the local environment.

Faced with these constraints, many APEs attempt to collect dues in addition to what is reallocated to them from the FDRL. Despite its problems, the APE could become a very useful institution for the promotion of Malian schools. To do so, it must develop a clear local identity, improve its financial resources and its organizational capacities, and remain independent of any political party and of state control.

In the field of public health, rural populations have undertaken numerous initiatives, including the finance and construction of infirmaries, rural maternities, and village pharmacies. Personnel for these services are generally recruited locally and paid in kind or in cash as a user fee. The roles of hygienist/first-aid worker, midwife, and village pharmacist are new and are filled by people starting to get directly involved in their own primary health care. In addition, public health committees are being formed to manage local primary health care programs, educate local residents, and even impose fines on those who do not respect public hygiene rules. Traditional healers are consulted in areas where they have proven effective, and their skills are often integrated with those offered through village health care services.

The most important feature of specialized associations is their involvement in fields that exceed the technical competence or financial capacities of the villagers. Through the quality of their services, these specialized associations represent the new institutional form of participatory development often required by external organizations. These associations and their management committees often operate long enough to implement a project but are not always able to routinize participation and generate revenues capable of covering recurrent expenditures, no matter how small the project.

3. The National Union of Mallan Women (UNFM) and the National Union of Mallan Youth (UNJM)

The UNFM and the UNJM are organizations affiliated with the UDPM. As such, they work toward promoting the party among women and youth considered the target audiences to mobilize for UDPM ideals and interests, which are viewed as indistinguishable from those of the state.

The UNFM and the UNJM have experienced difficulty in expanding their popular base, so they attempt to attach themselves to traditional women's and youth organizations with the internal autonomy and cohesiveness they generally lack. Consequently, they operate on the local level as governmental appendages without a real hold on the people. At the *arrondissement* level, the major activity of a subsection office of the UNFM is food preparation for public visitors and the promotion of improved wood stoves. The UNFM also tries to generate funds through selling membership cards, with little success. At the level of its commune or *cercle* sections, the UNFM is more involved in soapmaking, dyeing, sewing, the extension of improved stoves and functional literacy activities, and organizing public health days. The UNFM rarely directs activities that generate enough revenue to maintain its heavy operating and social representation costs.

When women are organized in other ways, generally based on their units of residence and more or less directed by the UNFM, they often achieve significant results. In Siby, women work on a collective field of 10 ha, work for individuals, are engaged in market gardening and literacy training, and

help men in all of the collective work. In fact, they raised enough funds to build a maternity in 1987 and to recruit a midwife who is paid with user fees.

The UNJM is even less successful and more financially strapped. The sports and cultural activities it organizes in the communes do not pay for themselves. The sale of membership cards is slow because young people are not interested in an organization so far removed from their daily concerns. In rural areas, the UNJM is involved in the traditional organizations of age sets but does not really influence them. All UNJM programs are, therefore, subject to these age sets who meet, approve, and implement them with their own means, which they mobilize and make available to the UNJM. The UNJM then acts as the executive agency.

In principle, both organizations are designed to be self-financing through selling membership cards and special revenue-generating projects. In practice, they are entirely dependent on tax monies to sustain their activities and the loyalty of their members. Both the UNFM and the UNJM receive funds from the FDRL and are officially members of the CLD, which is responsible for the development of the local FDRL program. In Siby, the UNJM sub-section at the *arrondissement* level receives 125,000 CFAF per year for operating expenses.

4. Development Committees and Popular Councils

The internal composition of the *arrondissement*, *cercle*, and regional councils and the imbalance between their elected members and the representatives of socioprofessional groups within them have a negative influence on operations. The technical incompetence of the elected council members is often cited as an obstacle, which justifies the present domination of these consultative bodies by the LDCs, which are more technically oriented. However, according to the council members, this is more a question of poor collaboration than of low educational level.

The development council at the *arrondissement*, *cercle*, and regional levels has reached an impasse because of the pressure of representatives of socioprofessional organizations and the CLD's domination over its operation. The development council only meets when convened by the president of the committee, who convenes it for budgetary and planning sessions and to draw up balance sheets. Many local observers and more than a few council members believe "The council is directed by the *commandant of the cercle*." Although the council has an elected president, his authority has no substance. The council does not have its own resources nor the right to influence the disbursements of funds for programs it has approved. Council members often do not receive travelling expenses (controlled by the territorial authorities) which are allocated for this purpose. Too often, the significance of council members' work is limited to assisting the local administrator with his tax collection duties.

Voters do not understand the role of the councils, and local council members are not informed about development issues facing the community. Information does not circulate between council members and the CLD since the latter believes the often illiterate council members unable to grasp technical details. The uninformed council member communicates little with his constituents about the results of the physical implementation of programs he votes on and approves. Therefore, he cannot defend program legitimacy for his constituents from whom he must, nevertheless, continue to request cash and in-kind contributions. This unrewarding role makes him the administration's scapegoat, responsible for justifying events after the fact.

With the creation of the FDRL in 1988, administrative authorities have shown renewed interest in the council. This interest will grow with the application of the recommendations of the National Seminar on Decentralization, including the recommendation that the president of the council be empowered to obligate funds. For this to be effective, the council must be a committed development promoter as it chooses projects, follows financial procedures, implements programs, and follows-up and evaluates their execution. The council will only be able to do this if the beneficiaries of these programs support it and if the taxpayers who pay the regional and local development tax are satisfied.

C. The Mobilization of Human and Financial Resources

At the beginning and end of any development activity, there are human problems with solutions that are not merely technical.

1. Human Resources

Considering the necessity for development and adaptation to the modern world, the village community organizes and mobilizes its own human resources to achieve new socioeconomic objectives in the fields of health, education, food security, and collective facilities. To do so, a balanced relationship must be established between decentralized programs and the level of mobilization of collective and individual human resources. This relationship may best be achieved through the collaboration of local and external development agents whose technical influence will enable the village community to accomplish its objectives.

Increasingly, service agencies and programs are seeking a local partner in the form of a trained or ready-to-train resource person. The decision to recruit a development agent from within the community also depends on the community's level of motivation and on community members' evaluation of the program's desirability. Rural people have already taken action to ensure that specialized tasks are executed in the fields of agro-pastoral production, health, education, water supply, food stocks, and the essential goods trade. Profiles of rural service roles are increasingly defined by the villagers who internally recruit traditional midwives, pharmacy managers, auxiliary nurses, hygienists and first-aid workers, extension agents, literacy instructors, marketing agents for cereals and essential goods, pump repairmen, food security reserves managers, various local administrative positions, and nursery school teachers.

These new rural paraprofessionals are often referred to as *animateurs* or promoters, but they regularly deliver public services on demand to the villagers themselves. Since *animateurs* are truly local operators, their activities tend to be fully in line with local concerns, and, therefore, their work is increasingly requested as an alternative to absent or inaccessible government services.

Each time a development theme spreads to rural areas, such as the idea of decentralization, the question arises as to which local or external agent will be its bearer. A privileged village spokesperson, the *animateur* in literacy instruction, primary health care, or rural water supply will most often serve as the assistant of a technical agent who will have created and initiated his or her intervention within the framework of a specific project. Unlike the organizer--an exogenous employee--the village *animateur* can be paid in kind for his or her delivery of public services (through dispensation from public works or cultivation of his or her fields) or paid in cash, as with midwives, who are paid from

user fee receipts. The danger lies in keeping this person in an unrewarding, subordinate, one-way role as an assistant to the organizer for a range of bureaucratic tasks.

With regard to labor-intensive work, the mobilization of village human resources follows the classic pattern--the council orders the families and youth to execute a community task. The young people must then apply their labor to activities approved by the elders. The youth groups take turns at the work site under the guidance of an elder.

Training human resources is a central village concern and is divided among several systems. Several pedagogical approaches are juxtaposed without ever meeting, and each has specific limits to its mode of intervention. The centrally organized French language schools have enormous adaptation difficulties. Arabic-based *medersas* develop in isolation. Functional literacy training is a good alternative but lacks institutional support. However, on November 4, 1990, the president of the republic announced a national program to provide functional literacy to one million Malians per year. The strategy and funding for implementing this program were not announced.

In summary, mobilization of the human resources of a rural community takes place at three levels: first, at the level of participatory organization of activities; second, at the level (and mode) of recruitment and remuneration of the village agent; and finally, at the training level. Mobilizing human resources increasingly becomes a matter of training village paraprofessionals.

2. Financial and Material Resources

Since the level of monetization of a self-sufficient economy in transition to a market economy is not high, it is hard for rural communities to honor the financial and material charges incumbent upon them. Taxes are always obtained as if by plunder from those who owe them. The main resources for village public funds traditionally are community activities involving the sale of crops from collective fields, remunerated labor services to individuals, dues levied on the spot, and fines imposed on recalcitrants. Where village associations exist, the opportunities to generate revenues increase due to improved marketing of cereals and garden produce, access to credit and equipment, and loans granted to members. In areas with cash crops such as cotton, rural producers have financial resources well beyond those of farmers in food-crop-producing areas.

However, the mobilization of financial resources and the access to cash are so irregular that rural producers often have trouble routinely paying for services even though they may be willing to contribute to collective projects when they arise.

The lack of local financial resources is sometimes resolved through external sources derived from temporary or long-term migration. Much of the local financial dynamism comes from outside through the remittances of workers who organize outside the village to address economic problems which they could not solve at home. These financial arrangements are limited by their origins and they may well accentuate the difficulties of mobilizing rural savings; such savings immediately vanish into the prestige expenditures which compensate the worker's absence.

When villagers are truly interested in the implementation of a nonimposed project, they always find the human and financial means to mobilize the necessary resources, as in the case of drilling for drinking water for humans and animals, building water-retention works, and constructing roads.

3. Conflict Resolution

Conflicts exist at several levels. First, there are internal village conflicts when a resident refuses to participate in collective work projects. There are also external conflicts when one or several villages cannot agree on how to manage a common property (including ponds, land, or forests) or on the type of physical and financial contribution to provide for implementing a rural infrastructure (including roads or water retention works).

The village does not have the visible repressive means, such as a police force, of resolving any these issues. Instead, it applies moral group pressure on the individual who is invited to make amends in kind or in cash for the infraction committed. The age hierarchy engages in arbitration activities to make the sanction effective according to customary obligations for the particular case. The most severe sanction is social isolation, but this does not mean breaking off physical communication with the recalcitrant, as interacting with the group on other matters gives him or her the chance to make amends honorably. Persons who are known for their wisdom are in charge of resolving conflicts. They bring before the village council only conflicts they were unable to resolve. In most civil disputes, these persons succeed in ending disagreements through their own prestige and through the occult means they use on these occasions. Among the young people, the older age set inflicts the punishment, which may be corporal.

Conflicts between villages are much more complex and, therefore, hard to resolve because of the vigor and persistence of sociocultural antagonisms. The need for extra-village intervention is most intense at this level; the administrative head of the *arrondissement* or of the *cercle* usually intervenes and must use imagination and patience to bring two or more communities to an agreement. In the past, these conflicts were often resolved through wars. Currently, the central government's authorities deal with these problems by maintaining law and order, but this is not necessarily a definitive solution to a problem generally based on land tenure. With the loss of traditional centralized authorities at the level of cultural and demographic zones (e.g., the Wadouba--the rural Dogon that includes Kansongo), one of the internal means of solving these conflicts disappeared. However, the memory of such collective effort allows several villages to regroup to address collective problems. With regard to constructing road infrastructures, all the villages concerned do not have the same capacity for mobilization. Sometimes a single village will show up at the roadworks maintenance site without any recourse against those who didn't show.

D. Popular Prospects for Decentralization

The profound institutional breach between public powers and the civil society poses a double question about the concrete political will to move toward decentralization, on one hand, and the capacity of local populations to generate new human and financial resources to officially manage their own affairs, on the other.

There are numerous and diverse constraints that make decentralization initiatives difficult to translate into the delivery of public services in the field. First, one must take into account the weight of sociocultural attitudes and the notion of public property; for example, "there is nothing to say if the public cow eats the millet in the collective field" because one day the cow will be consumed by the whole village. This concept of a public good contrasts sharply with the modern western judicial appraisal of an individual's civil responsibility, especially in acts damaging a community or another individual. In effect, it is as if the concept that "no one can ignore the law," which is generally rigid

and impersonal, was erased by the influence of an orally-based civilization that strongly prefers personalized relationships over the anonymity and neutrality recommended for matters of public administration. In the Sahel and in Mali, western anonymity and neutrality is far from the norm.

Second, paying taxes rarely creates a right to receive an amount of a public service in accord with the tax effort of the willing taxpayer. A "good taxpayer" living in rural Mali will receive little benefit from the services for which he has paid. An urban taxpayer who has successfully avoided paying any taxes may still drive on public streets, benefit from public street lighting, send his children to school, and be treated for medical complaints in public hospitals. The logic of the current system penalizes taxpayers who face high tax rates in favor of others, invisible, who avoid taxes. The question is to know who pays and who benefits from it.

A final but significant constraint exists in the form of centrally imposed requirements that must be met before an individual or community can exercise any degree of sovereignty. In the Sahel and in Mali, the state wants to control everything despite its obvious inability to do so effectively. The state will always be artificial if it does not correspond to the civil society it claims to represent.

On the other hand, the opportunities for decentralization are as open as they are specific to a locality with resources and human and financial potential that vary according to ecological, economic, and social conditions. Ecological micro-spaces define human behaviors appropriate to the mode of community and individual property management. Their identification as such allows the design of an institutional response which corresponds to a well-diagnosed demand.

Economically, the opportunities for decentralization occur today through the promotion of rural entrepreneurs (including agro-pastoral producers, merchants, artisans, and para-professionals), the development of production, storage and processing systems, the formalization of village land and rural land management, access to credit, and the mobilization of savings.

Socially and institutionally, the opportunities for decentralization involve the whole organizational dynamic of village organizations, associations, and *tons* supported by the Sahelian heritage of community life. The development of suitable legal forms and standing for these popular associations is a step toward effective decentralization.

VII. Future Initiatives for Decentralization

The Malian government and people have embarked on an historic mission. Although the objectives have been clearly enunciated by the president of the republic, the journey will be long and the specific destination is not fully known. The experiences in decentralization gained to date are instructive, and they and those to come will be of great interest and utility to Mali and other countries in the region.

The Malian government must be commended on the accomplishments made since 1977 in an area of particular sensitivity for systems that have inherited and further intensified the structures of centralized action, decisionmaking, and power. The creation of the *ton* in 1982 as a village economic development organization with full legal standing and the continued encouragement of village associations by local authorities, NGOs, rural development parastatals (ODRs), and the state are two critical steps toward developing the organizational experience and technical capacity required for effectively assuming the responsibilities of local self-governance. Resuscitation of the development committee and the council, the two cornerstones of the Malian decentralization program, has begun due to the president of the republic's direct involvement and the UDPM's leadership.

Organization of a series of regional seminars in 1989 and of the National Seminar on Decentralization in May 1990 underscored the state's commitment to developing a new model of government, one in which authority and responsibility are shared, local bodies are empowered to act to resolve local issues that most concern them, and a new, organic relationship between local institutions and political organization and state structures is allowed to evolve. Debate on the fundamental issues of power, authority, and responsibility has been opened to a wide audience of central government officials, regional and subregional authorities, technicians, and party members. It is now time to include the larger public, not through oratory alone, but through information and education reinforced with practical demonstrations of how local decision-making institutions such as the *arrondissement*, *cercle*, and regional councils are relevant to the lives and wellbeing of local people.

A. Options for State Action

The move toward greater decentralization of state structures has gained considerable momentum. Indeed, even supporters of local action and authority may wish to slow the process to allow for more careful reflection and study. There are a number of critical points facing national policymakers in the short and medium term which require careful consideration.

1. Recommendations from the National Seminar

Recommendations from the May 1990 national seminar were to be further developed and then presented for action, some as early as the national council's December meeting. Among the numerous recommendations approved during the seminar, three are of direct relevance to this study. Due to the difficulties in accounting for funds, the perceived loss of control by local organizations of their development programs, and the institutional impotence of the development councils, it was recommended that the power to obligate funds (*ordonnancement*) be accorded to the president of the council at each level of the system. This recommendation, if approved and incorporated into law,

would effectively transfer authority for the expenditure of funds (and, hence, implementation of development initiatives in the approved program) from the representative of territorial administration to the popularly elected head of the council. This transfer is of great consequence inasmuch as it will allow a local body to establish development priorities and assume responsibility for their effective execution.

Given their low level of involvement in such matters to date and the nonfunctional status of most local councils, the transition will not be accomplished without difficulty. It is essential that the pace of transfer be consistent with the demonstrated capacity of each council to carry out its responsibilities. Information and education will be critical to the success of this transfer, and a need for specific forms of technical assistance may be anticipated.

The second important recommendation from the national seminar calls for a greater role for party officials in the councils by granting two party representatives full membership and voting privileges in each council. This recommendation reflects the UDPM's interest in the process of decentralization, while it apparently ignores the democratic principles underlying self-governance. The existing procedures for electing council members allow for electing party members if they are respected by the population they will serve. It is important that central institutions, including the party, avoid the temptation to stack the councils with members who do not represent local priorities and preferences. The party's involvement in reviewing local development programs prior to their presentation to the council for deliberation should also be terminated.

Finally, it has been recommended that the FDRL be assigned receipts from public revenues in addition to the TDRL. Notably, receipts from the slaughter tax, Forestry Fund, and road transit tax (*droit de traversée routière*) are to be deposited in the FDRL. Currently, it is unclear on what basis the transfer would occur, if all receipts or a proportion of receipts would be transferred, or to which FDRL account--municipal, *arrondissement*, *cercle*, or regional--the funds would be transferred. Adding monies to a system which already suffers from poor administration, centralization, and misappropriation (or at least misdirection of funds) does not seem beneficial to the objective of creating effective local authorities.

2. Specific Issues in Service Organization and Finance

National authorities should be encouraged to continue supporting the type of natural experiments in service organization being carried out by local communities and service providers. Organizational innovations, such as the use of village or neighborhood-based paraprofessionals, and the development of private options to public services offer great promise. Communities have demonstrated both the willingness and the ability to mobilize resources for public services, including constructing facilities, staffing, and managing the operational aspects of the service. This local capacity is distributed unevenly; not all communities are able to assume full or even significant responsibility for service provision and production. Careful assessment of the conditions underlying community capacity, the practices and procedures being used to mobilize resources and provide services, and the measures required to develop and expand this capacity is required.

In education, the experience of the *ecoles de base* and *ecoles de village* should be carefully studied. Promoting community-financed and community-managed schools may appear a way to increase access and school enrollment, but the state must be sensitive to the serious equity issues involved when communities that have operating public schools continue to receive public funds for salaries

and other needs while communities that hope to create their first school are obliged to support the entire burden. This is a matter of particular concern in rural areas where tax payment is high and access to services is already low.

Educational alternatives in the Sahelian rural environment such as *medersas* and functional literacy programs should also be explored. As it is now organized, public education is not meeting the needs of the population. The existence of soundly constructed, well-equipped, and locally staffed literacy centers paid for entirely through local efforts attests to the value of education and the willingness of the population to assume responsibility for the service when convinced that it reflects their needs, interests, and preferences. Clearly, this lesson is of critical importance to policymakers as they seek ways to expand access to services under stringent budgetary constraints.

Attention should also be given to the feasibility of creating special districts for managing and financing specific service functions or resources. Education and natural resources are the most obvious areas in which special jurisdictions could play a valuable role. The existence of a multiplicity of jurisdictions need not weaken the effectiveness of local government and administration. Special districts with clear mandates and specialized attributes can contribute to the efficiency of service delivery by permitting a more direct relationship between service users and administrators and by limiting the effects of shifting political priorities on service finance and management.

The government of Mali must be recognized for the important improvements in national fiscal policy made during the last five years. It is now necessary to focus the same attention on local fiscal concerns. The nation's municipalities, in particular, are in serious need of assistance. Continued high rates of urbanization will only exacerbate difficulties which presently afflict urban government and municipal service delivery. At the same time, it is necessary to assess the overall effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and administrative capacity of the tax system, especially as they apply to rural taxpayers.

Finally, attention should also be given to establishing popular confidence in government at all levels. This will require a major effort to inform the population of: the role and decision-making authority of institutions such as the council and CLD, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, the composition and purpose of specific taxes, and the programming and utilization of public revenues.

B. Opportunities for Collaboration

The international community should be willing to offer assistance to the government of Mali in developing and executing its decentralization program. At this point, the primary objective of such assistance should be to supply government policymakers and local communities with the information and technical means required to implement decentralization initiatives. A program of carefully organized action research is the preferred mechanism for accomplishing this objective. The options presented below provide a general research strategy and a number of critical research domains. Details of the action research program must be worked out carefully with national and local authorities.

Although decentralization is a national objective and its eventual benefits and costs will be felt nation-wide, there is good reason to begin implementing initiatives in a limited area. Efforts to manage country-wide decentralization from the center will encounter all the efficiency and effectiveness problems that currently handicap existing systems of service delivery, public finance, and territorial administration. Important lessons are available from carefully assessing what works in a locality--vil-

lage, *arrondissement*, or *cercle*--and why, and from designing systems that benefit from and accommodate these local capacities, procedures, and practices. The government of Mali's recent decision to convert exemplary *arrondissements* into rural communes in the near future supports the action research program proposed here, which focuses on a number of clearly localized case studies and pilot development interventions.

1. Action Research Themes

Three themes of investigation and planned intervention offer the greatest prospects for significant improvement in service delivery:

- analyzing local fiscal and parafiscal systems for financing public services and local government operation;
- assessing alternative models of organization for service delivery, including community-based services, mixed systems, and private sector contracting; and
- investigating municipal organization and finance, emphasizing municipal fiscal policy, revenue mobilization, and options for providing municipal services.

Action research on the first theme would focus on analyzing the efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and administrative capacity of the tax system as it applies to rural taxpayers and to financing necessary services with the objective of providing concrete recommendations for improving tax assessment and collection. The use of and potential for expanding user fees and service charges would also be studied. An integral part of this activity would be a study of the grants economy within Mali with the objective of identifying the impact of diverse financing arrangements (pure and matching grants) on the efforts of local communities to mobilize resources to finance or co-finance their own development activities.

Finally, the expenditure side of the equation would be evaluated, concentrating on obstacles to the efficient use and management of public expenditures and programming and budgeting problems. Pilot interventions to improve revenue performance and service finance should be undertaken as part of the action program.

The area of focused investigation which may well bear the most fruit in the short and long term is the assessment of alternative models of service delivery. Malian public services have been recognized as innovators in some areas of service organization; local communities have done even more to meet service needs in innovative ways. The research program should include an assessment of organizations and communities that have demonstrated an ability to mobilize resources and manage community services. The village associations and *tons* would provide a good source of information. Molibémo and similar popular organizations should also be studied.

The use of locally recruited paraprofessionals to complement national service personnel (and in some cases to provide services directly) may provide a mechanism for quickly expanding access to services while decreasing the personnel needs supported by national resources. The local employment-generation effect of recruiting paraprofessionals as well as the possible consequences for service acceptability should be assessed. Finally, the present and potential role of the private sector in the production of services of public utility should be assessed. To date, this option has not been given great attention in Mali, yet it offers important possibilities in areas such as education, medical care, road maintenance, and the installation of rural water systems.

Comparative studies of public service organization and finance should be undertaken as rapidly as possible in 10 sites per service. Priority should be given to primary health, literacy, primary education, and agricultural services (including road maintenance and input/product marketing). A variety of institutional arrangements in service provision and production should be selected for case studies, including:

- community-initiated and -managed services,
- local services with substantial community participation in finance and management, and
- public services financed and managed predominantly by deconcentrated technical administrations.

The third area of action research will require both a nation-wide review of municipal fiscal policy and financial standing and a commune-specific, in-depth program of research in one or more municipalities. Action should focus on measures to improve the fiscal performance of municipalities through improved tax assessment, revenue collection, and the use of service charges. Improving fiscal performance will also require improvements in service delivery and the establishment of clear links between taxes (and fees) and services (provided).

Pending legislation's call to expand the number and type of decentralized collectivities (local governments) through the conversion of *arrondissements* to rural communes represents a critical move toward democratization and local governance in Mali. Measures to monitor and support these new jurisdictions should be established as soon as possible. Specifically, this will require establishing a system for monitoring local policy decisions and resource mobilization and management practices and for collecting baseline data prior to the conversion of *arrondissements* into rural communes. The proposed monitoring system is not a control structure but a means of providing timely assistance while collecting information to be used to facilitate converting other administrative units in the future.

2. Training

Assistance may also be provided in the area of training and information. Prior to and as an integral part of the decentralization program, an information campaign should be conducted in selected villages and towns in the target zone. This will require the development of a clear communication program and the logistical means for its implementation. The content of such a campaign would include (in addition to the components of the government's decentralization program) the role and authority of local councils, the nature and composition of tax assessments, the utilization of tax monies, the duties and rights of local citizens, and the range of options available for generating and spending local resources. The range of service options should be communicated, including the role of service users and local communities in service provision and production.

A training program for council members, CLD members, and territorial administrators may also be recommended. A training curriculum and program should be developed as an integral part of the research program. The point of departure for developing a training program should be the assessment of local capabilities, procedures, and practices for mobilizing and managing resources. Training materials should reflect local experiences, problems, and approaches to solutions found in various parts of the country. The development of a standardized curriculum by Bamako specialists should be avoided. For the councils and CLDs, training might include the elements of public administration,

budgeting and accounting, programming techniques, and approaches to issue identification and decisionmaking.

At the national level, it is recommended that a limited number of Malians be selected for long-term training in institutional analysis and design and in public finance issues.

Appendix A: Oral Histories of Communities Visited

In Komouguel I, a ward or *quartier* of the city of Mopti with 6,700 residents, the structure of the customary power held by the head of a village or ward passes through a traditional council composed of seven to eight large founding families who currently manage public affairs. Despite the continued force of traditional leadership and social organization, this city ward no longer controls a village fund stemming from collective fishing and collective fields managed by age sets.

Sévaré I, a new city composed of government employees and its district head, presents another profile of power organized around the chiefs of the Peul, Dogon, Sonrhai, or Bambara ethnic communities grouped by natives of administrative districts or by corporative associations.

In spite of Gueladio Ambodedio's legendary personality, (he was considered a Peul by the Bambara of Ségou and a Bambara by the Peul of Kounari in the 18th Century) and the presence of a large pond fed by the river, the village of Goundaga, the administrative center of the *arrondissement*, lost its traditional Peul powers in the course of the twists and turns of ethnic recomposition dominated by the Bella (new migrants from the 1974 drought), the Dogon (who were attracted to the plain), and the Soninké (who were searching for rural markets).

By contrast, in Bandiougou (a Dogon village perched on a hill) the customary powers are almost intact and have been since the very remote migratory period which led its Karambé inhabitants, who call themselves Keita and are of Mandé origin, through several periods of war. The vitality of the past is manifested by its age sets, which are quite active in production. They give the village chief great authority, which has not been weakened by the religious conversion of the animist cults to the Islamic beliefs of those literate in Arabic and of their prestigious spiritual leader, Sékou Salah Karambé, known as Siby, who is considered a saint by his Muslim followers.

Bandiagara, "the big bowl," was founded in the 18th Century when the Dogon hunter, Nangabanou Tembley, discovered a zone abounding with game and containing the river system of the Yamé, a tributary of the Niger. This classic encounter is evoked in various stories of the village people of Mali, and Bandiagara has peacefully taken in many Dogon descendants, notably the Ouologuem.

A century later, the Toucouleurs arrived, led by Tidiani Amadou and Amadou Amadou (the nephew and oldest son, respectively, of El Hadj Omar Tall) who were driven from Ségou in 1890 by French troops. On May 4, 1903, Archinard, in the name of France, invested Aguibou, the sixth son of El Hadj Omar Tall, King of Macina, with residency in Bandiagara, which had become the administrative center of the *cercle* in 1903 under Mr. De La Bretesche.

The expansion of the village or Kanigogouna, the administrative center of the *arrondissement*, is the work of the great warrior Kansaye whose influence extended to Bandiagara and who named the village in memory of his son, Kani. He was joined by other Dogons--the Kansaye, who are presently the village chiefs; they had conquered the Sigipili, the original founders, in a war. In spite of the presence of Islam, traditional cults are still venerated in this village, and the age sets are initiated separately according to sex.

Not far from there, two Tembinè brothers decided, after a long series of migrations, to found the village of Kansongo. It is composed of two *quartiers*, each containing five large Dogon families, where Muslims, Protestants, Catholics, and Animists mix freely. Kansongo maintains old convivial relations with numerous neighboring villagers from Woudouba, and the residents of these two villages get together in Kansongo and other places during the annual festivities commemorating the creation of the village, as well as for hunts, libations of millet beer, nocturnal dances, and weekly offerings in the market places to beseech the heavens to grant them a good harvest.

Fifteen km from Bamako, the little town of Kati is rather famous as a colonial military camp at the entrance of the Bambara region called Bédougou. Its strategic position on a hill protects the residence and offices of the principal official, while leaving the town open to the abundant agricultural and market garden potential of the surrounding villages.

The main leaders of this semi-rural community, district, and administrative center of the *cercle*, are either active in the military or retired from it.

Dioulafondo, a village stop-over point for the Dioula merchants, was founded by members of the family of Keita of Kobala, who had come to seek refuge from war on a hill with difficult access. Islam has been practiced here for a generation, and various traditional cults are currently practiced in this Keita village with 516 inhabitants divided among four village *quartiers*. Only two of the 17 families in this village are Traore.

Kalassa-village is the product of a matrimonial alliance between Kamara and Konaté people searching for a favorable place together. Kalassa, the "place where the torch goes out," also practices a religious combination of Islam and traditional cults; its 503 inhabitants are divided into four village quarters.

Siby, the administrative center of the *arrondissement* with the same name, has 3,632 inhabitants occupying four wards. It was founded by Djomakan Kamara, who was joined by the Coulibaly, the Kone, and the Traore when they ended up "spending the night" there ("ka si bi" in bambara). The Kamara, the village chiefs, invoke their ancestor Kamadjan; legend has it that he is the one who split a neighboring hill into an arch-like formation which is now a tourist attraction.

Appendix B: List of People and Groups Contacted from October 1, 1990 to November 17, 1990

<u>Location/Name</u>	<u>Title and/or Organisation</u>
Bamako	
Souleyman DOUCOURÉ	Conseiller Technique/MATDB
Dr. J.A.B. Brière de l'ISLE	Directeur Nat. de la Santé Publique
Ario MAIGA	Directeur Nat. Ens.Fond.
Souleymane KONE	Directeur National du Trésor
Ousmane A. TOURE	Directeur Nat. Adj. Impôt
Alhacoum MAIGA	Receveur Général District
Amadou S. TOURE	Direction Nat. du Budget
Karim DEMBELE	Direction Nat. Hydraulique
Sekou KONE	Directeur Gén.Adj. TP.
Dramane O. TRAORE	DAF/MEN
Fatogoma BERTHE	Dir. Gen. Adj. du Budget
Fangatigui DOUMBIA	Conseiller Technique/MFC
Bouillé SIBY	Sec. Administratif/BEC
Henrich HANSON	Economist/World Bank
Jon BRESLAR	Program Office/USAID
Victor DUARTE	Program Economist/USAID
Mopti	
Tiefolo TOGOLA	Gouverneur, Région de Mopti
Illalkamar Ag GUMAR	Conseiller au Développement
President and Members	Comité de Dév. Régional
Members	Conseil Régional
Lassana Mouké SACKO	Trésorier-Payeur Régional
Seydou TRAORE	Directeur Régl des Impôts

Location/Name	Title and/or Organisation
Kasseri MOUKORO	Directeur Rég. Adj. du Budget
Dr. Paul DIARRA	Directeur Rég. de la Santé Publique
Ahmed R. DICKO	Direction Rég. Ens. Fond.
El Hadj MAIGA	Inspecteur Circ. Ens. Fond.
Issa SIDIBE	Directeur Rég. T.P.
Adama KEITA	Subdivision Centrale T.P.
Sévaré	
Oumar TEMBELY	Maire de la Commune de Mopti
Mary BALLO	Percepteur Communal
Ousmane SAMASSEKOU	Chef, Section de la Comptabilité
Members	Conseil Municipal
Ibrahima TIMBELY	Président de l'APE de la Commune
Tah DJENEPO	Sécretaire Générale UNFM, Mopti
Oumar TAPO	Membre du bureau UNJM, Mopti
Oumar TOURE	Agent Voyer Commune
Hama Youssouf TOURE	Chef de Quartier Komouguel I
Members	Conseil de Quartier
Hamadoun M. CISSE	Chef de Quartier Sévaré I
Aïssa BÂ	UNFM, Sévaré I
Mountaga SY	Sécretaire Général UNJM Sévaré I
Goundaga	
Amadou KEITA	Chef d'Arrondissement
Members	Comité Local de Développement
Mamadou Baba DABO	Chef de village de Goundaga
Yaya SAMAKAN	Chef Centre Santé/Prés. APE
Aguibou TALL	Directeur de l'Ecole de Goundaga
Hamapâté Balla DICKO	Prés. Conseil d'Arrondissement

Location/Name	Title and/or Organisation
Ibrahima TAMBOURA	Sec-Gen de l'UNJM de Goundaga
Abdramane SOUMA	Sécretaire de l'Arrondissement
Dramane DEMBELE	Chef de Poste Forestier
Ahmadou KOUMBA NIARE	Chef de Poste Vétérinaire
Tarata TAMBOURA	Prés. de l'UNJM de Goundaga
Bandiougou	
Chief and Elders	Village de Bandiougou
Ousmane KARABME	Chef de l'Association Traditionnelle
Fatoumata KARAMBE	Présidente UNFM de Bandiougou
Bandiagara	
Mamadou Issa TAPO	Commandant de Cercle
President and Members	Comité de Développement du Cercle
Ibrahima GUINDO	Président APE du Cercle
Souleymane AWANDE	Médecin Chef Centre de Santé
Mahamadine I. MAIGA	Inspecteur Circ. Ens. Fond.
Bakary G. BALLO	Chef du Centre des Impôts
Amadou B. BALLO	Percepteur
Omar SENOU	Premier Adj. au Commandant du Cercle
Seydou K. TRAORE	Deuxième Adj. au Commandant
Rokia TEMBELY	Présidente section UNFM de Bandiagara
Abdoulaye OUOLOGUEM	Sécretaire Général section UNJM
Abel TIMBELY	Principal Animateur du "Molibémo"
Dr. Abdoulaye DOLO	Centre Régl de Medecine Traditionnelle
Djibril BARRY	Prés. Jumelage Coopération Rennes-Bandiagara et Historien
Amadou DIALLO	Vice-Prés. du Conseil du Cercle
Madiaké DIAWARA	Chef de Secteur, Operation Puits

Location/Name	Title and/or Organisation
Bouaré DIAWARE	Chef de Projet Brigade Hydraulique
Abdou D. MAIGA	Chef, Projet Réhabilitation Barrages et Piste
Kaniogo	
Dédiou MAIGA	Chef d'Arrondissement
Representatives	seven villages
Artbacane KANSAYE	Chef de Village
Members	Conseil de Village
Moctar TAPILY	President APE/Sec-Gen s/s UDPM
Hamadoun KONTA	Centre de Santé Arrondissement
Dissou KONE	Directeur Ecole
Biéma TAMBINE	Présidente de l'UNFM
Aly KANSAYE	Président du Conseil d'Arrond.
Tabanindjou GUINDO	Secrétaire Général s/s UNJM
Kansongo	
Séguemo TEMBINE	Chef de Village de Kansongo
Members	AV et UNJM
Seydou TEMBINE	Prés. Groupement Villageois du "Molibémo"
Kati	
Bassili COULIBALY	Commandant de Cercle
Ibrahim HAMMA	1er Adj. au Commandant du Cercle
President and Members	Conseil du Cercle
Saiba A. SISSOKO	Inspecteur I.E.F.
Mamby DIABATE	Maire de la Commune de Kati
Mme Nagnouma D. OUEDRAOGO	Secrétaire Général
Cheickna A. DIARRA	Agent Voyer
Amadou KONATE	Chef Service Hygiène
Mama DIARASSOUBA	Chef de quartier de Katikoura

Location/Name	Title and/or Organisation
Cheick KEITA	Conseiller municipal de Kati
Diakité MARIAM	Séc-Gén section UNFM de Kati
Modibo TAMBOURA	Séc. à l'organisation section UNJM
Vincent TRAORE	Prés. Comité de surveillance de la "Coopérative des Maraîchers et Planteurs de Kati"
Issa TRAORE	Président de l'A.P.E. du Camp Soundiata
President and Members	Comité de Dév. du Cercle
Mme Fatimata SISSOKO	Centre de Santé
Siby	
Seydou DE	Chef d'Arrondissement
Abdoulaye SIDIBE	Secrétaire d'Arrondissement
Mamoudou MACINA	Chef de Poste Vétérinaire
Ko KAMARA	Président du Conseil d'Arrond.
Members	Conseil d'Arrondissement
Boubacary TOURE	Directeur Ecole Fondamentale
President and Members	C L D
Awa KAMARA	Présidente de la s/s UNFM de Siby
Manfa COULIBALY	Président de l'APE de l'Arrond.
Lassana SOUNTERA	Président s/s UNJM de Siby
KEITA	Chef de Village de Dioulafondo
Ségui KEITA	Chef de travaux collectifs de Dioulafondo
Dantouma KONATE	Chef de Village de Kalassa
Adama KONATE	Chef des Jeunes de Kalassa
Baba KAMARA	Chef de Village de Siby
Massaman KAMARA	Président du Conseil du Village
Ninténé MACALOU et Fadima KEITA	Matrones Djoulafondo