



IFES

**Improved Electoral Processes and Increased
Participation by Women in Mali**

Final Report

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Abbreviations

| | French | English |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| CAF | Commission Administration et Formation | Administration and Training Commission |
| CAPE | Cellule d'Appui au Processus Électoral | Electoral Process Support Unit |
| CENI | Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante | Independent National Electoral Commission |
| MATCL | Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale et des Collectivités Locales | Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Collectivities |
| DNI | Direction National de l'Intérieur | National Directorate of the Interior |
| NDI | - | National Democratic Institute for International Affairs |
| USAID | - | United States Agency for International Development |
| MPFEF | Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille | Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family |
| UNDP | Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement | United Nations Development Program |
| DGE | Délégation Générale des Élections | General Delegation for Elections |
| Steering Committee | Comité de pilotage d'organisation des élections | Elections Organization Steering Committee |
| Inter-ministerial Committee | Comité Interministériel de Suivi du Processus Électoral | Inter-ministerial Committee for the Supervision of the Electoral Process |

I. Executive Summary

The strengthening of Mali's democracy through a process of decentralization has been a principal goal of successive national governments since Mali's democratic transition started in 1991. Each new election has brought progress in correcting previous election problems. Notably, a reliable voter list in 2002 contributed to the improved credibility of that year's legislative elections. In 2004, with the communal elections of May 30, Malians took an important step toward decentralization and the development of a government that is responsive and accountable to its citizens at all levels. USAID and the Malian government identified a number of challenges to address in the 2004 elections: these included a low level of participation by women in the process and a shortage of skilled poll-workers.

IFES launched its program in Mali in response to a Task Order issued by USAID through IFES' Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) for Elections and Political Processes to support the Malian government in the organization of communal elections. This support consisted of the following two sets of activities:

1. The provision of technical assistance to Malian election authorities, including the training of poll-workers, with the aim of improving Mali's electoral management capacity.
2. The provision of training and small grants to twelve selected women's organizations, enabling them to implement civic education projects designed to improve women's understanding of their roles and responsibilities in a democratic society and thereby promoting women's participation in the process.

Upon establishing its presence in Bamako in January 2004, IFES worked with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Collectivities (MATCL) to organize a poll-worker training session in each of Mali's eight regions and published 15,000 copies of a poll-worker training manual. IFES also participated actively in the weekly meetings of the MATCL's Elections Organization Steering Committee throughout the pre-election period, providing technical advice as necessary.

In implementing its second set of activities, IFES built upon the Malian government's national civic education campaign. While the government's campaign did not focus specifically on encouraging women's participation, it produced educational tools that could be used for such programs. IFES selected and trained twelve non-governmental organizations to undertake civic education activities through grant expenditures of \$141,737 and produced a mission-authorized documenting DVD at \$7,000 for a total of \$150,000. These projects were conducted in all eight of Mali's regions and the district of Bamako. IFES conducted a three-week monitoring mission that observed effective project implementation and a high level of interest from target audiences; many participants indicated these outreach efforts included the first detailed explanations that they had received on the concepts of democratic rights and responsibilities.

II. Introduction: Political Context

Mali's democratic transition began with the overthrow of former military dictator Moussa Traoré by the army on March 26, 1991. A transitional administration was quickly installed to prepare the country for elections the following year. A series of presidential, legislative, and communal elections have since taken place; these have been accomplished with less than uniform success. In particular, the legislative and presidential elections of 1997 proved contentious. Controversies surrounding the creation of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), the reliability of electoral lists, and confusion over the technical details of organizing elections caused a number of key political parties to boycott the polls. In 2000-01 the Malian government established a new electoral management structure which helped contribute to successful presidential and legislative elections later that year. Nevertheless, significant challenges remained. In particular, low participation rates meant that a majority of Mali's eligible population had yet to partake in the country's democratic transition. This was especially true among Malian women.

Moussa Traoré's dictatorship was characterized by an overwhelming concentration of political power in Bamako. As a result, successive Malian governments made decentralization a central issue on the national agenda. The ultimate objectives of the decentralization process are to strengthen Mali's democracy, reinforce peace and stability in the north, and promote local development. The May 2004 communal elections represented yet another important step toward the development of a government that is both accountable to its citizens and capable of responding to their needs on the local, regional, and national levels.

The 2004 elections saw the highest level of voter participation in a Malian election since 1992, with 2,408,713 (43.1%) of the 5,592,450 registered voters participating.¹ This compares favorably to the presidential and legislative elections of 2002, in which 38% and 25% of registered voters participated, respectively. The increase in voter participation was a result of a significant increase in turnout in Mali's rural areas. The Timbuktu region led the way with 53.6% participation. Weighing down the national numbers was the poor turnout in the district of Bamako, where a mere 23.3% of registered voters participated in the election.

III. Summary of Program Activities and Objectives

IFES responded to a Task Order issued by USAID/Mali in October 2003. IFES received USAID's final approval to proceed with the implementation of Task Order #810 in January 2004.

A four-person IFES team began operations upon the arrival in Bamako of Project Director Gisèle Poirier (Canadian national) on January 24, 2004. Ms. Poirier led a team

¹ The CIA World Factbook 2004 estimates that Mali's total population is 11,956,788 as of July 2004.

of three Malian nationals, including Assalim Yattara (Grants Manager), Seydou Keita (Project Accountant), and Soumalia Maiga (Driver).

The USAID-funded program that IFES undertook in the run-up to Mali's communal elections consisted of two **principal activities**. These can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The provision of technical assistance to Malian election authorities, including the training of poll-workers.
- 2) The provision of training and small grants to twelve women's organizations in order for them to undertake civic education projects designed to promote the active participation of women in the electoral process.

These projects were designed to attain the following specific **objectives**:

- 1) The improvement of Mali's elections management systems, including an increased emphasis on transparency in election management.
- 2) An improved understanding among women of their roles and responsibilities in Mali's democratic society and, subsequently, an increase in female voter turnout.

At the time that IFES initiated its project, the MATCL had financed a \$180,000 civic education campaign and was seeking an additional \$30,000 to complete its plans. The MATCL projects provided a variety of creative civic education programs that achieved broad coverage. These projects, however, did not specifically target women. Poll-worker training plans and the electoral calendar had not yet been announced.

IV. Technical Assistance to Malian Election Authorities

The IFES team moved into an office in the DNI section of the MATCL on February 9, giving IFES an ideal location for providing technical assistance to key Malian election authorities. The project director's frequent contact with MATCL officials allowed her to make timely recommendations regarding the handling of technical challenges as they arose. Similarly, active participation in the weekly meetings of the Steering Committee gave the project director a regular venue both for evaluating the election authorities' technical needs and for advising them on how to meet those needs.

IFES' support to the Malian electoral authorities sought to achieve the following **two primary objectives**:

- Increase the capacity of the MATCL staff to train poll-workers on the electoral process; and
- Increase the capacity of the MATCL's Steering Committee, commissions and the CAPE to organize and execute free, fair, and credible elections.

A. Poll-worker Training

The successful administration of the balloting and vote count required Mali's poll-workers to receive organized training, not least in order to reduce the number

of voided ballots. A further expected benefit of well-trained poll-workers is their potential contribution to building the electorate's trust in the transparency and non-partisan nature of the elections.

IFES' initial vision for the poll-worker training required modification after consultation with the MATCL. IFES foresaw four training sessions, two in Bamako and two outside Bamako, with the training carried out by IFES in coordination with the MATCL. On February 25, the MATCL Steering Committee decided to undertake poll-worker training itself, with the prefects and sub-prefects of each region of Mali as recipients of the "training of trainers." These individuals were subsequently tasked with training the presidents of the polling stations in their areas. Despite IFES' preference for a two-day training session, the MATCL decided that a single day would be sufficient to convey the necessary training components, with a morning session focused on technical training and an afternoon session weighted toward the practical application of the morning's lessons. A comprehensive question-and-answer session at the end of the session would ensure that the participants gained a sufficient mastery of the material. Despite these changes, the training program retained most of the key components envisioned by IFES. Topics covered in the first half of the day included the electoral law, the contents of the poll-worker guide, the electoral list, the role of the president of the polling station and poll-workers, the operation of the polling station, and the compilation and transmission of voting results for calculation by the central commission. The second half of the day included a simulated operation of a polling station, role-playing, vote counting, and the calculation of mock results followed by a question and answer session.

The MATCL initially considered holding the training in conjunction with a conference in late March, at which nearly 500 government and civil society representatives were to meet in Bamako. IFES proposed to extend the meeting for one day to allow for the training of many of those individuals. Subsequent discussions, with frequent input from IFES' project director, convinced the MATCL that this would not provide the most effective venue for the training of trainers program. IFES' interaction with the MATCL was somewhat limited during mid-March due to the MATCL's involvement with the aforementioned conference, but at a Steering Committee meeting on March 24 IFES learned that the training of trainers would be held as a series of one-day sessions in each of the eight regional capitals on March 30 and 31. IFES' project director immediately ensured her presence at two of the training sessions, in the regions of Ségou and Koulikouro, and thereafter traveled to Ségou on March 30. However, the date of the training session had been changed following delays in implementation. The Steering Committee then announced during its March 31 meeting that the training sessions would finally be held on April 3 and 4. IFES provided a grant of \$20,100 to the MATCL in support of the training sessions.

The IFES project director and grants manager thus proceeded to the region of Koulikouro on April 3 to assist the MATCL representatives with the full-day training. The IFES team met with representatives of USAID/Mali on April 6 to provide a debriefing on the content and methodology. Based on its observations of the Koulikouro session, IFES found that the training succeeded in addressing the most pressing technical needs of poll-workers. Fourteen prefects and sub-prefects participated in the Koulikouro session, which was led by three MATCL trainers. This low trainee-to-trainer ratio helped make the session a success. The session included the following topics:

- The importance of training poll-workers, and the prefects and sub-prefects responsibilities in this task;
- The importance of maintaining impartiality among poll-workers;
- The management of voting materials (including voter lists, ballots, ballot boxes, voting booths, etc.) and polling stations—before, during and after Election Day;
- Vote-counting and the process of compiling results;
- A practical exercise focused on vote tallying; and
- The relationship between poll-workers and the CENI and the General Delegation for Elections (DGE).

The MATCL's trainers presented the results of their regional training sessions during the April 7th Steering Committee meeting, thus providing IFES with an opportunity to compare its experience in Koulikouro with the training conducted in other regions. The methodology and content used was identical throughout the country, and provided ample opportunity for feedback and questions from the participants. The MATCL's participatory approach to the training allowed its trainers to address as many of the participants' concerns as possible.

Following the training sessions, IFES consulted with the MATCL on the best method for complementing the training. It was decided that the poll-worker training guide could be enhanced through the insertion of those electoral documents that would be distributed in the polling stations on Election Day (as annexes to the guide). This provided poll-workers with a valuable reference tool.

B. Poll-worker Training: Evaluation

Objective 1: Increase the capacity of MATCL staff to train poll-workers on the electoral process.

| Indicators | Observations |
|--|--|
| <i>At least 4 training sessions for electoral staff conducted</i> | IFES worked closely with the MATCL to set up the training program based on a training-of-trainers model. The MATCL subsequently organized training sessions in each of the 8 regions on April 3-4. IFES attended one session and worked with the Steering Committee to ensure that the training was equally successful at all sites. |
| <i>At least 120 electoral staff members trained</i> | IFES supported the training of 118 officials, all of whom were responsible for training electoral agents in their areas. |
| <i>90% of trainees express a clear understanding of the core issues addressed at the trainings</i> | Based on the comprehensive question-and-answer sessions that were held at the end of each training session, the participants displayed a strong command of the core issues addressed during the training sessions. |

C. Institutional Capacity Building (MATCL, Steering Committee, Commissions, CAPE)

As noted above, the location of the IFES/Mali office within the MATCL building greatly facilitated IFES' efforts to provide technical assistance to the MATCL, both during the weekly Steering Committee meetings and in less formal circumstances. Although some meetings were held with representatives of the CAPE, the majority of IFES' technical assistance was provided through interaction with the MATCL and its commissions. This was a function of the MATCL's primary role in the organization of the elections.

The IFES team's technical assistance to the MATCL began immediately after the project director's arrival in Mali in late January. The project director first attended a weekly meeting of the Steering Committee on February 4, when she began the process of building trust with the committee members while studying the status of the government's electoral plans. This was followed by consultations with Mr. Sissoko of the CAPE on budgetary matters. IFES provided a \$3,000 grant to the CAPE for logistical support.

The IFES project director actively participated in fifteen of the twenty Steering Committee meetings that were held to discuss the 2004 communal elections. Two meetings occurred prior to her arrival in Mali, while three took place during her visits to the civic education projects in April and May.

On February 19, IFES participated in a MATCL meeting with the donor community where copies of an electoral calendar were distributed. IFES' project director met with all four members of the MATCL's Training and Administration Commission on February 23 to establish a list of electoral priorities, with a preliminary activity plan and budget. Top priority was given to the publication of a practical guide for poll-workers, addressing topics including the distribution of voter cards, the operations of polling stations on Election Day, and the compilation and follow-up of voting results. The commission assigned these tasks and agreed to meet again on March 8 to review its progress; prior to that time the commission members were to pass their documents to the IFES project director for possible modifications or editing.

IFES' project director received several of these draft documents at the beginning of March and proceeded with the analysis and modification of the material, as appropriate, throughout the first week of the month. The remaining topics were divided among the MATCL representatives for further review. The final documents were then presented at the March 10 Steering Committee meeting. After further evaluation, the final version was distributed during the Steering Committee meeting of March 24.

During the week ending March 13, before the distribution of the final text, IFES' project director asked MATCL's financial director to get price estimates for printing the poll-worker guide, with the understanding that IFES would be involved in the selection of the printer and printing process. Initial estimates were received on April 1 and although the format of the guide was somewhat altered to include several electoral documents as annexes after the MATCL poll-worker training sessions of April 3 and 4, this did not significantly alter pricing estimates.

President Amadou Toumani Touré announced on April 7 that the elections would be postponed a second time, from May 23 to May 30. This gave IFES more time to print and distribute the guide while continuing to provide technical assistance to the election authorities as needed. After selecting a printer, IFES submitted the guide and annexes on April 15 and reviewed a first copy on April 19. The second version was subjected to further review on April 20 by the IFES project director and several members of the MATCL, including the Secretary-General, Mr. Mamadou Seydou Traoré, the financial director, Colonel Sangaré, and the president of the Training Commission, Mr. Boubacar Sow. The corrected copy was submitted to the printer on April 21 for a final print run of 15,000 copies.

IFES focused primarily on the civic education activities of the twelve sub-grantees during the month of May, thus limiting the opportunities for the IFES team to provide technical assistance. This was particularly true during the team's comprehensive project evaluation mission, which included visits to all eight provinces outside Bamako during the end of April and the first two weeks of

May. Nevertheless, the IFES project director continued to work with the election authorities as much as possible. The Steering Committee meeting of May 28 had as its subject an overview of the preparatory work done by all the MATCL commissions for the elections and final organizational tactics for the MATCL agents during the actual elections.

On Election Day itself, IFES' project director and grants manager joined the electoral observer team of the United States embassy, while maintaining close contact with the MATCL representatives to inform them of all observations and anomalies that could help improve future voting processes. The two IFES team members observed voting in the District of Bamako's six *communes*, visiting two polling stations in each *commune*, with the exception of *commune IV*, where a single station was visited. IFES observed that voting in Bamako proceeded with few major problems. The polling stations were organized in appropriate locations, with no political propaganda in the interior of the stations or nearby. The poll-workers were present and appeared to be processing voters and performing their other duties correctly. Some problems were observed, however, including disturbances outside of two polling stations that interrupted voting. Problems were also experienced with the distribution of ballots and other material to some of the polling stations.

The last Steering Committee meeting attended by the IFES project director, on June 4, provided an overview of Election Day and procedural preparations for the submission of the MATCL's final report on the entire process of holding communal elections. Due to budget shortfalls caused by the election delay, IFES ended its presence in Mali before the formal announcement of the electoral results and was unable to participate in the MATCL's final report on the elections.

D. Institutional Capacity Building: Evaluation

Objective 2: Increase the capacity of the MATCL's Steering Committee, commissions, and the CAPE.

| Indicators | Observations |
|---|---|
| <i>Detailed work plan developed in collaboration with the MATCL</i> | <p>The IFES staff in Mali cooperated closely with MATCL officials from the start of the project, identifying priority areas requiring technical assistance and discussing a timeline for meeting those needs.</p> <p>Participation in the Steering Committee meetings allowed IFES to discuss its work with the MATCL on a regular basis.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Technical guidance provided to the Steering Committee in strategic planning</i></p> | <p>The IFES project director participated actively in 15 of the 20 Steering Committee meetings, offering support and advice to the Malian authorities. IFES worked especially closely with the Administration and Training Commission on the revision of the electoral guide and the training of election workers.</p> |
| <p><i>Technical assistance provided to the CAPE upon request</i></p> | <p>IFES provided a \$3,000 grant to the CAPE to enable it to meet its logistical needs. IFES consulted with Mr. Sissoko of the CAPE on aspects of the civic education program, but in general the CAPE was less active than in past IFES projects. Most of IFES' technical assistance was coordinated concentrated in the MATCL.</p> |
| <p><i>Number of consultations among political parties, MATCL, and civil society organizations organized through the "cadres de concertation"</i></p> | <p>The IFES team did not participate in any meetings of the formal "cadres de concertation," and was not made aware of any that occurred during the project period. A number of meetings were held prior to the IFES project director's arrival in Mali. Meetings between the political parties and the Steering Committee occurred regularly, but were kept confidential. Nevertheless, in addition to its regular presence at the MATCL/Steering Committee meetings, IFES met with civil society organizations (both sub-grantees and others), the international donor community, and other concerned groups to strengthen its efforts to support Mali's electoral process.</p> |
| <p><i>Approximately 15,000 copies of the electoral guides produced</i></p> | <p>In close collaboration with the MATCL, especially the Administration and Training Commission, IFES prepared an improved practical guide for election workers. IFES printed 15,000 copies of the guide.</p> |

V. Civic Education Program

As noted above, the MATCL had financed a \$180,000 civic education campaign and was seeking an additional \$30,000 to complete its plans when IFES launched its project in late January 2004. The MATCL projects provided a variety of creative civic education programs that achieved broad coverage. Missing from these efforts, however, was any program specifically aimed at increasing civic education activities among women and

encouraging their participation in the electoral process. The USAID-funded IFES program was designed to help broaden the target audience.

A. Project Selection

Mr. Mamadou Sissoko, coordinator of CAPE, issued a request for grant proposals to several dozen Malian women's organizations prior to the arrival of IFES in Mali. USAID and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) subsequently submitted a total of fifteen (15) proposals to IFES at the end of January. The IFES team analyzed these initial proposals during the second week of February, finding significant problems with all. The proposals generally failed to address USAID's objectives, ignored budgetary restrictions, and exceeded the allowable project duration. IFES, along with representatives of the CAPE/MATCL and MPFEF (Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family), therefore met with representatives of the NGOs on February 20, in order to present the criteria by which projects would be selected and to request that the NGOs adjust their proposals to fulfill these criteria. It was unanimously agreed that the NGOs would be accorded one week to adjust and resubmit their proposals to the MATCL, which subsequently transmitted them to IFES.

Each NGO was required to meet the following conditions:

- To be a local NGO, officially recognized by the local authorities;
- To agree to the financial requirements of IFES, as well as the management procedures of IFES and USAID; and
- To submit a project proposal relating to the civic education campaign for the 2004 communal elections with an implementation period that does not go beyond the end of April 2004.

Each proposal had to indicate the following:

- Electoral experience, or equivalent;
- Project impact;
- Budget;
- Methodology;
- Capacity to implement the project;
- Compatibility with the civic education strategy of the MATCL;
- Originality;
- Target group(s); and
- Geographic coverage.

Finally, each project must:

- Contribute to the civic education of women for the 2004 communal elections, in order to increase their participation and engagement;
- Take into account the work already undertaken by the MATCL and its partners in the area of civic education (e.g. the support documents and

tools already conceived, tested, validated, and applied throughout the country);

- Take into account the geographic coverage of the national civic education campaign (i.e. whether it has been strong, average, weak, or non-existent); and
- Not include in the budget any administrative expenses, salaries of NGO members, or the production costs of special cloth or t-shirts.

Upon receipt of 44 revised proposals, the IFES project director and grants manager proceeded to analyze each one during the first week of March. Once again the majority of NGOs failed to respect the criteria and objectives put forth by IFES. Seven proposals were rejected due to their non-conformity to the specified objectives or implementation period, or for their excessive budgetary requests. The analyses of the remaining 37 projects showed that the vast majority of revised proposals were simple recapitulations of the original proposals with modifications to the budgets and implementation periods. The suggestion that NGOs utilize tools developed by the national civic education campaign was followed in only one case.

Other observations regarding the revised proposals included the following:

- Honoraria, transport, per diem expenses, salaries, and other administrative costs absorbed the bulk of the proposed budgets;
- No justification was given for the selection of targeted geographic zones, and the population that would be reached was generally not defined;
- The amount requested for a single *commune* was often equal to the amount requested for multiple *communes* or *circles*; and
- Some proposals covered locations that were widely dispersed and far from each other, to the extent that following up and reviewing the projects would have been extremely expensive and difficult to do in the available time frame.

Following an evaluation based on the criteria presented in Table 1 below, twenty proposals were pre-selected as candidates for the final project selection phase. The above observations meant that only two projects actually fulfilled the criteria at this stage of the selection process. Despite being pre-selected, the other projects still required further adjustments prior to the final selection. A half-day workshop was held in the MATCL conference hall on March 10 in order to train the remaining twenty NGOs in project design and to help them address their other weaknesses.

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Pertinence, clearness, and objectivity of the project's goals and objectives vis-à-vis those of IFES-USAID-MATCL |
| 2 | Clearness, precision, and objectivity of anticipated results |
| 3 | Cost-benefit analysis |
| 4 | Evidence of target groups |
| 5 | Geographic distribution and relevance of the zones to be covered |
| 6 | Population affected (directly and indirectly) |
| 7 | Requested budget and NGO's contribution |
| 8 | Nature of the NGO (organizations run by women preferred but not required) |
| 9 | Consistency between the resources to be applied and the expected results |
| 10 | Tools and supporting material to be used |
| 11 | Prior experience of the NGO in the implementation of such projects |
| 12 | Procedures and norms for the management and administration of the NGO |

Following the March 10 workshop, the pre-selected organizations were given until March 15 to submit their final proposals. The final selection of twelve projects was subsequently based upon the same criteria as had been applied in the pre-selection stage, with extra weight being given to geographic distribution. The chosen projects thus covered all eight regions of the country plus the district of Bamako.

B. Training of NGOs

IFES organized a workshop in Bamako on March 29 to improve the technical skills of the sub-grantees. IFES hired an experienced trainer, Ms. Mahamadu Ahmadu Maiga, to review the entire process of project implementation, with an emphasis on financial management. Two representatives from each NGO attended the workshop, including those individuals responsible for the financial management of the projects. Ms. Maiga employed a participatory methodology to stimulate the active participation of the attendees, whose evaluations indicated that they deemed the workshop a success.

Representatives from nine NGOs attended a second training seminar in Bamako on April 17. Due to time constraints for the implementation of their projects, these NGOs had previously indicated a desire to use tools previously developed by the National Civic Education Campaign. These included a video recording of an educational play, a cassette with ten ten-minute episodes of an educational radio drama, texts of public conferences/debates, a picture box, and a cassette of songs with a campaign/elections theme. The MATCL endorsed this use of its material and provided sufficient quantities to IFES and the sub-grantees. IFES hired Ms. Mariam Touré Keita, a training specialist with considerable experience working on the National Civic Education Campaign, to demonstrate the proper and effective use of this material to the NGO trainers/animators who would subsequently be implementing the civic education projects in the field. The training covered a significant amount of information in a short time, but the

participants were able to acquire and demonstrate a strong command of the educational tools.

C. Implementation and Monitoring: General Comments

Sub-grants totaling 55,767,207 CFA francs (US\$103,213) were released to the Malian NGOs on April 15, thus launching the project implementation stage. Initial payment to one sub-recipient, Appui à la Femme, à la Jeunesse et à la Décentralisation (AFJD), had to be made directly in the field on May 5 for the amount of 2,696,928 CFA francs (US\$4,970) following problems with a bank transfer. The balance of 17,932,234 CFA (US\$33,554), or 20% of each sub-grant, was disbursed at the end of June and in July following successful reconciliation of subrecipient narrative and financial reports.

The IFES project director and grants manager undertook a monitoring mission between April 25 and May 14; visits to all twelve sub-grantees were planned. The IFES team covered a total of 6,786 kilometers (4,217 miles) during its nationwide tour, including visits to all of Mali's eight regions. The objective of the mission was to investigate the progress made by the Malian NGOs in implementing their projects, as well as to observe and evaluate these ongoing civic education efforts in the field.

The project visits showed that all of the projects were progressing according to the relevant timelines for implementation. Furthermore, the communities and authorities with whom the NGOs had engaged expressed their satisfaction with the programs. The IFES team's meetings with target populations indicated that they were able to demonstrate a considerable understanding of the core themes addressed by the civic education campaign, thanks to the participatory training and education sessions, as well as the audio and visual tools being employed. These themes included decentralization; democracy; citizenship; the electoral process and its opportunities and challenges; the roles, responsibilities, rights, and duties of citizenship; voting; women's electoral participation; and the importance of involving women and youth in the elections. Participants manifested a high level of interest in these themes; this was the first time that most of them had received detailed explanations allowing them to understand the significance of these topics.

The sub-grantees used local and national radio programs, video projections, national television, panels, posters, cultural and sporting events, conferences, debates, and music to educate their target groups. According to the estimates of IFES' Malian partners, at least one quarter of the national population was reached directly or indirectly by these numerous civic education efforts. Crucial to this success was the use of local languages in the campaign. These included Bambara (Bamanan), Bozo, Dogon, Fulfulde (Peulh), Sonrhail, and Tamacheq. Please see Table 2 below for a list of activities by each sub-grantee.

| Table 2: Sub-Grantee Activities | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Organization | Principal Activities |
| AADEC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadcast 42 hours of civic education programming on the local radio station in the town of Kati, reaching an estimated 6,000-7,000 listeners. Organized 49 public meetings to encourage voter participation, including fifteen sessions at which a video was shown, followed by discussion, and 34 sessions using audio cassettes and discussion. These events were organized in a total of 38 villages. |
| AFJD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFJD used audio-visual materials and participatory discussions to educate women in four <i>communes</i>. Approximately 200 women participated in the workshops that lasted two to four days. These participants were trained to share their knowledge with women's groups and others in their home communities. |
| AMAN-DPS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used theater to present civic education themes on four occasions, and traditional drumming to support ten civic education events. Hired a small caravan of camels that were used to mobilize the population and attract attention to the project. Broadcast 96 educational messages and 24 longer educational on two local radio stations. |
| APEF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APEF's project coordinator led a debate about women's electoral participation. This was broadcast on three radio stations broadcasting in the <i>cercle</i> of Dioila. These stations also broadcast a total of 60 shorter civic education messages during the course of the project. Organized six days of training-of-trainers sessions during which two experts from Bamako led a series of discussions about decentralization, citizenship, elections, and the role of women. The participants included 50 locally recruited trainers and seven trainers from Bamako. These 57 trainers then provided civic education training to the populations of 25 villages, using many of the tools developed by the national civic education campaign. APEF used traditional dancing and singing, as well as other cultural and sporting events, to reach a large share of the region's population. |
| ASM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After training four facilitators from the local radio station, ASM sent the facilitators to 25 villages. |

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| | <p>where they led women's and youth groups in discussions on the upcoming elections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized nine conferences (one in each of the nine largest villages) to promote women's electoral participation, the process of voting, etc. • Organized and broadcast ten debates on the local radio station. • Organized 60 viewings of an educational video, followed by debates about decentralization and the electoral process. |
| CAFO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized six general assemblies (one in each of Bamako's <i>communes</i>), at which folklore, music, and other tools were used to encourage women to vote. • Organized a march to encourage women to become involved in the political process; this drew an estimated 1,000 women, as well as political party representatives, candidates, media, and international partners. • Organized and participated in a nationally televised discussion program on the communal elections. |
| CEPROCIDE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast the national civic education campaign's educational drama on the three local radio stations throughout the 40-day project implementation period, reaching listeners in 23 out of 26 <i>communes</i> in the <i>cercle</i>. • Presented educational video in all 26 <i>communes</i>, followed by public discussions of the relevant issues. |
| CEFAAR | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized thirteen 3-day participatory training seminars (in three local languages) that addressed a wide variety of civic education issues. An average of 40 women participated in each session (560 total). • Trained the participants to educate the women in their communities about the importance of voting and the role of women in the political process. |
| FDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast four educational messages per day for 26 days on local radio—a total of 104 messages. • Organized two debates that were broadcast on local radio. • Five teams of trainers brought the civic education message to 20 villages, using educational videos followed by public discussions, a cultural event that included education based on the use of a picture box, and debates/conferences. All three of the educational approaches were used in each village. |

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| Association Gakassineye | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized a training-of-trainers workshop that produced 100 civic education trainers for four <i>communes</i>. 56 participatory discussions were organized in fourteen different villages (four sessions per village). In collaboration with a local radio station, the NGO recorded an educational program designed to promote electoral participation. This was broadcast repeatedly and fourteen cassette recordings of the program were distributed in the area. |
| Golé Siré | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized general assemblies in eight neighborhoods (<i>quartiers</i>) in Bamako's <i>Commune V</i>, during which 50-200 people attended discussions of the main themes of the civic education campaign, with a focus on women and youth. Trained facilitators for each of the eight neighborhoods, who subsequently led a series of discussions with women's and youth groups. Organized ten radio programs on two radio stations in Bamako. |
| Woïye Kondeye | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized general assemblies in the <i>communes</i> of N'Gorkou and Soumpi, with attendance totaling at least 314 people. The assemblies focused on the importance of women's participation in the communal elections and the role of women in Mali's democracy. Delegates from each of the 76 villages in the <i>communes</i> participated; these delegates were subsequently tasked with sharing their new knowledge with their village assemblies. Organized three radio programs on the following themes: the mobilization of women and support for female candidates during the 2004 elections, the role of women in local government, and the obstacles facing women as they seek to exercise their rights as citizens. Each show was broadcast twice per day for seven days. |

The monitoring mission found that the implementation of all the projects proceeded satisfactorily relative to the approved timelines, with the exception of the AFJD project near Kayes. Problems caused by a stalled wire transfer delayed the start of the AFJD project. The successful implementation of the projects by the sub-grantees occurred despite considerable logistical and other challenges, including the following:

- An absence of roads leading to some villages and towns complicated travel.
- Transport difficulties made it impossible to reach certain villages with the video equipment; project animators were consequently required to be flexible in their presentation methods.
- High rates of illiteracy meant that some populations were unable to benefit from available supporting documents.
- A majority of the training activities occurred in the evening, since most members of the targeted populations worked during the day (in the fields, at home, etc.). Evening sessions thus allowed the NGOs to reach the largest number of people possible. Nevertheless, this created additional time constraints for the NGO facilitators.
- Non-existent means of communication in most villages made it impossible for project staff to contact their colleagues in the field and at headquarters.

While the beneficiary communities expressed considerable interest in and satisfaction with the civic education projects, certain problems were raised during the monitoring mission. Several participants expressed the opinion that the projects, although highly relevant to their needs and generally well-designed, arrived too late in the electoral process for the full benefits to be felt. In particular, some of the projects helped educate participants regarding candidacies and the procedures required of those who wished to stand in the elections, with an emphasis on the participation of women and youth. Unfortunately, the registration of candidates had already closed prior to the project implementation. Those individuals who were motivated by the civic education campaign to become candidates in the communal elections were therefore unable to do so.

IFES' civic education program, while active in all regions of Mali, could not directly cover all of Mali's 703 *communes*. Many *communes* were nonetheless aware of IFES' programs in neighboring areas; these *communes* repeatedly expressed a desire to be included in future projects. The IFES sub-grantees reported further that many local populations (and the NGOs themselves) hoped that these programs would become regular activities instead of just taking place immediately prior to elections. There is clearly a demand for more civic education at the grassroots level.

The civic education campaign pursued by IFES and its twelve Malian partners received significant coverage in local and national media. The activities of Golé Siré and CAFO, IFES' partners in the district of Bamako, gained the attention of radio, television, and newspapers. Similarly, the work of AMAN-DPS in Mali's northern eighth region was the subject of an article in the national newspaper *L'Essor*.

D. Civic Education Program: Evaluation

Objective 3: Increase the capacity of select women's organizations to conduct civic education activities.

| Indicators | Observations |
|--|---|
| <i>At least two training sessions targeting women's organizations organized in rural and urban areas</i> | IFES organized two workshops for the 12 selected Malian NGOs (March 29 and April 17). The first reviewed the entire process of project implementation, while the second focused specifically on the skills and techniques required for the civic education campaign (e.g. facilitation skills, etc.). |
| <i>At least 10 women's organizations trained on civic education programming</i> | As noted above, the second of the two workshops organized by IFES for the Malian NGOs focused on training for civic education programming. |
| <i>80% of surveyed trainees express an increased understanding in core issues addressed</i> | Through their active and enthusiastic participation in the training sessions, representatives of the NGOs demonstrated that they had gained and could utilize the skills necessary for the successful implementation of their projects. |
| <i>At least 10 women's organizations carry out civic education programs</i> | Twelve Malian NGOs carried out civic education programs; these efforts were spread across all 8 regions and the district of Bamako. |

Objective 4: Encourage the participation of Malian women in the political process.

| Indicators | Observations |
|--|--|
| <i>At least 10 civic education programs conducted by local women's organizations in five local languages</i> | Twelve Malian NGOs carried out civic education programs; these efforts were spread across all 8 regions and the district of Bamako. These projects employed local languages including Bambara (Bamanan), Bozo, Dogon, Fulfulde (Peulh), Sonrhai, and Tamacheq. |
| <i>At least 60 radio stations in the regions broadcast civic education messages</i> | Messages were broadcast on at least 26 local, regional, and national radio stations. This represents the number of stations broadcasting in the areas covered by IFES' Malian partners. |
| <i>Number of civic education materials developed</i> | After consultations with USAID and the MATCL, IFES and 9 of its Malian partners decided to use the materials produced by the Malian government's National Civic |

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| | Education Campaign. This was supplemented by other educational material developed by the twelve NGOs according to the needs of their target populations. |
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VI. Conclusions

A. Technical Assistance

Despite beginning a few weeks late, the IFES-Mali project was quickly established to support the pre-existing election management structure. The MATCL's generous provision of office space within its buildings greatly facilitated IFES' efforts to provide technical assistance throughout the project. IFES believes that this report of its activities in Mali indicates that it attained its objectives, and that it used all the means at its disposal to increase the capacities of Mali's electoral authorities.

In the beginning, through direct collaboration with the training commission, IFES contributed to the conception and verification of various technical support tools employed during the different stages of the electoral process, on both a formal and informal basis. IFES' participation in the Steering Committee meetings allowed IFES to be informed about the progress of electoral preparations at all levels.

IFES must salute the efforts of the MATCL, which put everything to work toward the creation of propitious conditions for the success of the 2004 elections. The heads of each of the electoral commissions were recruited on the basis of their competencies. The Steering Committee was directed in a rigorous, yet diplomatic, manner. The tasks of each commission were assigned during the weekly sessions; diligent follow-up on these tasks assured that progress in the preparations occurred on all levels simultaneously.

The Finance Commission efficiently fulfilled its responsibilities in the acquisition of material and oversaw the quick distribution of electoral funds. The Communications Commission ensured that there was media coverage of the different steps of the process by employing many diverse and original methods for reaching the public. The live production of a television show focused on the electoral night, shown the day after the elections, is also worth mentioning. The Logistics Commission distinguished itself through its sense of organization and its rapid method of distributing election material.

As for the Training and Administration Commission, it fulfilled its responsibility in the production of all the forms, guides, and directives. Nevertheless, it was unable to provide adequate follow-up for the training program throughout the country. IFES believes that the tasks assigned to this commission are too numerous for a four-person team whose members also retain their respective positions within the MATCL. The commission is responsible for the

implementation of the MATCL's legal and administrative decisions: the conception, supervision, and control of the tasks and responsibilities assigned to regional, local, and communal administrative authorities; as well as the conception and execution of relevant training programs for election authorities. IFES recommends that the activities of this commission be reconsidered in order to ensure that the commission can successfully fulfill its mission in future elections.

On numerous occasions, representatives of the MATCL and the CAPE demonstrated their appreciation for IFES' work in Mali, on the technical side as much as for its financial support. The monetary contribution supported the strengthening of existing electoral institutions and the national training program. IFES' project director benefited from an excellent collaboration with all her interlocutors and from the constant support of the MATCL and USAID, which greatly facilitated her work in Mali.

IFES believes that Mali has taken a giant step toward strengthening and enhancing its democracy, yet it nevertheless recommends the consideration of a permanent independent body charged with supervising all aspects of the electoral process. A permanent CENI would be an important step toward institutionalizing democracy in Mali. Among the CENI's responsibilities is supervising the revision and establishment of voter lists. According to Article 31 of the Electoral Law of Mali, however, the annual updating of the voter list occurs between September 1 and December 31. The fifteen CENI members who were charged with supervising the 2004 communal elections were not nominated until February 13, 2004, meaning that the CENI did not exist at the time that the voter list was revised. The creation of a permanent CENI would avoid a repeat of this situation in which a body is charged with supervising something that took place prior to its creation.

Finally, there was a sense of some unfinished business when IFES closed its on-site presence, budget constraints having prevented the extension of the mission long enough to allow for a detailed analysis of the entire electoral process and the compilation of results.

B. Civic Education Projects

IFES' twelve partners expressed their satisfaction and demonstrated their appreciation for the financial assistance from which they benefited. Despite the constraints of time and Mali's limited infrastructure, the projects aroused great enthusiasm among the local populations and provoked a desire to learn more, particularly among the inhabitants of very distant regions.

The aid that was accorded to the twelve selected Malian NGOs assisted the implementation of projects chosen in order to cover all eight of Mali's administrative regions plus the district of Bamako. The chosen tools permitted

the projects to address aspects of democracy, citizenship, the stakes in an election, the impact of decentralization, and the process of voting. Authorities in the affected communities appreciated and welcomed the projects, demonstrating this support through their personal interest and engagement in the implementation of the programs. Even if women were the original target population, entire communities actively participated in the programs, as IFES clearly observed during its visits to the field.

IFES believes that the activities pursued in conjunction with the civic education projects had a tangible impact upon the communities in which they took place, including contributing to a substantial increase in voter participation rates, and that it would be advisable to continue financial support for such projects, with consideration given to longer-term projects.

IFES received considerable feedback from the sub-grantees, who unanimously concluded that projects of longer duration must be implemented in order to build a real understanding of decentralization and an appreciation for the role of women in Mali's democracy. When Malian women are well informed and educated about their rights and duties, their roles and responsibilities, the electoral process, and decentralization, they are as capable of mobilizing themselves and engaging in the management of their local affairs as Malian men. For this to be achieved, **sustained action is required**, in the form of continuing civic education programs. Such programs do more than educate women; they help men to understand the importance of women's involvement in decision-making. This contributes to a growing appreciation for women's roles and increases the likelihood that men will make space for women in the decision-making process. **The effectiveness of civic education projects in achieving this long-term outcome depends on their duration and scope.** Longer-lasting and wider-reaching programs naturally have a more sustained impact upon target populations.

It is important that sufficient time and resources be allocated to the evaluation of civic education projects after their implementation, in order to analyze their impact and to extract lessons for future programs. The slightly more than four-month period during which IFES operated in Mali proved insufficient for a full evaluation of the civic education projects.

VII. Recommendations

A. Recommendations for the Continued Improvement of Electoral Processes

Short term measures:

- 1) The Malian government and the international community should continue to provide support to the MATCL officials responsible for organizing elections and collaborate closely with them.
- 2) It is necessary to maintain support mechanisms such as the CAPE, the Steering Committee, and its commissions. Representatives of the CAPE, however, acknowledged to IFES that for the CAPE to be effective, and to

avoid overlap with the MATCL, the DGE, and the CENI, the division of labor between it and the other units needs to be reviewed and more clearly defined. IFES recommends that the Malian government perform a reevaluation of this division of labor in order to identify areas of potential improvement.

- 3) The government and donor community should employ the services of civil society to conduct the training of election workers.

Long term measures:

- 1) The Malian government should consider the creation of a permanent CENI to supervise the organization and execution of elections. This commission should be truly independent of the government and political parties, with full control over its own budget. The CENI that supervised the 2004 elections was not appointed until February 13, 2004, and as such was unable to supervise earlier aspects of the election organization process, including the revision of the voter list. Making the CENI permanent would allow for greater supervision of the electoral process.
- 2) The Malian government, with the support of the donor community, should consider the continued development of a pool of well-trained electoral agents who will be available for the administration of polling stations.
- 3) The Malian government and the donor community should allow the implementation of long-term civic education projects; this will contribute to a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the importance of women's participation in local, regional, and national decision-making. As noted in the conclusions section above, projects of longer duration and greater scope are likelier to produce a permanent change in the behaviors that presently reduce women's participation in elections and decision-making.

Measures to be taken during electoral periods:

- 1) The Malian government should relieve those officials responsible for the various commissions from their regular duties at the MATCL.
- 2) The Malian government should lighten the task load of the Administration and Training Commission by creating two separate commissions, one of which would have as its sole mandate "the conception and implementation of training programs for the entire country," while the other would concentrate on the remaining administrative tasks.
- 3) The Malian government with the financial support of the donor community should intensify the training of all electoral agents through training sessions emphasizing practical role-playing with adapted learning materials.
- 4) The Malian government should standardize the per diem compensation paid to the presidents of the polling stations and to sections of the CENI in order to avoid last-minute withdrawals of key personnel. A number of presidents of polling stations reportedly resigned in order to work with CENI, which offered a higher per diem.

B. Recommendations for the Support of Civic Education Projects

- 1) The Malian government and the donor community should regularly make use of NGOs for promoting the education of the general population on a wide variety of matters.
- 2) During electoral periods, the donor community should confirm the initiation of civic education projects during the four months prior to the elections.
- 3) Donors should attempt to meet with potential sub-grantees prior to the submission of civic education project proposals, as it can help save all parties from the unnecessary work that results from proposals that do not meet or address the selection criteria.
- 4) When operating in a situation of scarce resources, and when time is insufficient for a drawn-out project selection process, donors should look for opportunities to leverage earlier efforts. For example, if useful educational materials are available from an external source such as the Ministry, potential sub-grantees should be encouraged to work them into their proposals.

Annex I - IFES in Mali

IFES' work in Mali dates back to 1991, when it organized a pre-election technical assessment prior to Mali's first competitive multi-party elections in January 1992. Following the assessment, IFES established its first African field office in Mali to provide support for five national elections held in 1992. In 1997-98, IFES conducted poll-worker training, election observation, and voter education programs. It also worked with the election commission to design and establish a centralized candidate and results database for the June 1998 communal elections. In 1999, IFES returned to Mali to conduct a joint voter education/media training program. During 2001 and 2002, IFES undertook a multi-faceted program involving election training and civic education to support Mali's 2002 presidential elections.

The 2001-02 technical assistance program received USAID funding through the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPPS). CEPPS includes IFES, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), and the International Republican Institute (IRI). IFES' work on women's electoral participation in 2004 was complemented by NDI's work with Mali's political parties to promote the candidacies of women. These efforts combined to promote the full participation of women in the Malian democracy, as voters and as candidates. This contributed to a larger number of women running for elected office in May 2004 vis-à-vis earlier elections; twelve percent of the 74,672 candidates seeking office were female. This increase occurred in all regions of the country and resulted in a greater number of women being elected than in any prior election

Annex II – IFES Partners in Mali

The following table presents the twelve Malian organizations that received civic education grants from IFES in 2004.

| Acronym | Name | Location of Project |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| AADEC | Association d'Appui à l'Auto Développement Communautaire | Koulikoro (4 rural <i>communes</i> in the <i>cercle</i> of Kati) |
| AFJD | Appui à la Femme, à la Jeunesse et à la Décentralisation | Kayes (Toukoto, Kita, Nioro) |
| AMAN-DPS | Association Malienne des Amis de la Nature – Dynamique pour le Progrès Social | Kidal (4 <i>cercles</i>) |
| APEF | Association pour la Promotion Économique de la Femme | Koulikoro (25 villages in the <i>cercle</i> of Dioila) |
| ASM | Aide au Sahel Mali | Mopti (22 villages in the rural <i>commune</i> of Diallassagou, <i>cercle</i> of Bankass) |
| CAFO | Coordination des Associations et ONG Féminines | 6 <i>communes</i> in the district of Bamako |
| CEPROCIDE | Centre de Promotion de la Citoyenneté pour le Développement Durable à la Base | Sikasso (26 <i>communes</i> in the <i>cercle</i> of Bougouni) |
| CEFAAR | Centre d'Étude, de Formation et d'Appui à l'Auto-Promotion Rurale | Mopti (rural <i>communes</i> of Dandoufagala and Madiama in the <i>cercle</i> of Djenné) |
| FDS | Fondation pour le Développement au Sahel | Ségou (20 villages in 4 <i>communes</i> in the <i>cercle</i> of San) |
| Association Gakassineye | Société Coopérative des Femmes d'Ansongo Gakassineye | Gao (<i>Communes</i> of Ansongo, Bara, Bourra, and Ouattagouna in the <i>cercle</i> of Ansongo) |
| Golé Siré | ONG Golé Siré | Bamako (<i>Commune V</i>) |
| Woïye Kondeye | ONG Woïye Kondeye | Tombouctou (<i>communes</i> of N'Gorkou and Soumpi, <i>cercle</i> of Niafunké) |

Annex III –Mali’s Electoral Infrastructure

Election administration in Mali involves a number of state and non-state institutions. The principal authority responsible for the organization and implementation of elections is the **Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Collectivities (MATCL)**. Its work is supported by the **General Delegation for Elections (DGE)** and the **Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)**, with the process and results verified by the CENI.

I. Inter-ministerial Committee for the Supervision of the Electoral Process

The MATCL presides over the Inter-ministerial Committee, which the Malian government created by decree on March 1, 2004.² The Electoral Process Support Unit (CAPE) serves as the Committee’s secretariat. The Inter-ministerial Committee’s purpose is to ensure the successful organization of elections, to coordinate the efforts of the many ministerial departments involved in the preparations for elections, and to propose to the government actions and ideas contributing to the smooth conduct of elections. The ten-person committee consists of the Prime Minister (President of the Inter-ministerial Committee), the Minister of Territorial Administration and Local Collectivities (Vice-President), and eight other ministers. It meets at least once per month.

II. The Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Collectivities (MATCL)

The MATCL plays the central role in the organization and execution of Malian elections. Chapter 1, Section 3, Article 17 of the electoral law confers upon the MATCL the responsibility for preparing and implementing presidential, legislative, and communal elections, as well as constitutional referenda. This includes technical arrangements, material preparations, and the actual organization of the polls. To fulfill these responsibilities, the MATCL employs two entities under its direct supervision—the Elections Organization Steering Committee (Steering Committee) and the National Directorate of the Interior (DNI).

A. Elections Organization Steering Committee (Steering Committee)

Chaired by the Secretary General of the MATCL, the Steering Committee is made up of councilors and high-ranking officials from the MATCL, representatives from the ministries of foreign affairs, security, justice, defense, finance, transport, and communication. The National Directorate for the Interior serves as the secretariat for the Steering Committee. Regional, communal, and embassy/consulate technical committees support the Steering Committee’s efforts.

Five commissions were created by ministerial decree on February 13, 2004.³ They were set up to support the Steering Committee in its role as the primary

² Decree No. 00-055/P-RM, March 1, 2004. Earlier decrees created similar committees for prior elections.

³ MATCL Note de Service No. 0253/MATCL-SG.

institution responsible for the successful conduct of the communal elections. All reported directly to the Steering Committee. These commissions are as follows:

1. Administration and Training Commission (CAF)

The CAF is responsible for:

- The preparation of legal and administrative election activities that fall under the jurisdiction of the MATCL;
- Conceiving actions for regional, local, and communal authorities;
- Supervising and controlling the activities of these administrative authorities in the preparation and execution of elections;
- Conceiving and implementing training activities for poll-workers and other electoral officials;
- Coordinating the actions of other partners involved in the electoral process;
- Managing election observers.

The CAF is the commission responsible for the most crucial aspects of Mali's democratic elections. It is led by Mr. Boubacar Sow, National Director of the Interior (i.e. the head of DNI).

2. Finance Commission

The Finance Commission is responsible for the financial management of the election process. This includes the management of procurement and expenditures, administering the budget for the electoral process, and accounting for all material acquired during the electoral process. The MATCL's Administrative and Financial Director leads a six-member commission that includes professionals from the Economics and Finance Ministry and the DNI.

3. Logistics Commission

The Logistics Commission is responsible for identifying and meeting logistical challenges, including the nationwide distribution of registration and election materials. It also manages material acquired during the electoral process. The MATCL uses both state and private transportation resources to accomplish these tasks. The Assistant National Director of the Interior presides over this 12-member commission.

4. Communications Commission

The Communications Commission oversees voter education, informing the population of the various steps of the election process. Representatives of the broadcast and print media sit on the eight-person commission to facilitate smooth communications between the MATCL and the press. MATCL maintains daily contact with its administrative sub-units nationwide via radio, telephone, and fax.

The Communications Commission is responsible for:

- Conceiving and implementing a communications strategy;
- Managing relations with the Committee for the Equal Access to State Media and other press organizations;
- Organizing the transmission of information between the MATCL and local administrative authorities;
- The centralized gathering of information from Mali's many voting districts;
- Media relations.

5. Security Commission

The Security Commission is responsible for creating a plan to ensure the security of the communal elections, including preparatory activities, the vote itself, and the security of ballots and other election material. This principally involves the coordination of administrative authorities and security forces. The six-member commission consists of experienced professionals from Mali's police, constabulary (*gendarmerie*), and military forces.

B. National Directorate of the Interior

The recent reorganization and decentralization of the Malian administration has made the DNI the central point of contact between the MATCL and all directly and indirectly elected bodies nationwide. Consequently, the DNI exists as the primary interface between the central administration and appointed Malian government representatives at the regional, *cercle*, and communal/local levels. As such it is the principal operational branch involved in the organization and management of elections. The DNI serves as the secretariat for the Steering Committee, of which the DNI director is also a member. The director is also president of the Administration and Training Commission. Key DNI staff members serve on each of the Steering Committee's five commissions.

C. General Delegation for Elections (DGE)

Chapter 2, Section 2, Article 16 of the electoral law outlines the DGE's structure and authority. The president of Mali appoints the delegate and deputy delegate who head the DGE. The DGE assists the CENI in the accomplishment of its mission; its principal entity responsible for the elaboration and management of the electoral list, the production of voter cards, and the public financing of political parties. Decree 00620/P-RM, issued December 14, 2000, establishes the DGE's terms of reference, details its personnel structure, and forecasts its annual growth through 2006 (62 staff members). The DGE has neither rule-making nor enforcement authority.⁴

⁴ Presidential Decree No. 00620/P-RM of December 14, 2000. *Fixant l'Organisation et les Modalites de Fonctionnement de la Delegation Générale aux Elections.*

D. Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)

The electoral law defines the structure and responsibilities of the CENI.⁵ The commission consists of fifteen members appointed according to the following formula:

- Ten members designated by political parties, divided fairly between majority and opposition parties⁶;
- One member designated by the country's religious bodies;
- One member designated by the Independent Magistrates' Union;
- One member designated by the Council of Lawyers;
- One member designated by the Associations for the Defense of Human Rights;
- One member designated by the Association of Women's Organizations.

The members of the CENI for the 2004 communal elections were appointed by presidential decree on February 13, 2004; the commission included three women and twelve men.⁷

The CENI's principal responsibility is the supervision and verification of presidential, legislative, and communal election operations, as well as national referenda. This includes supervising the proper execution of the following operations:

- The revision of the electoral list;
- The preparation and management of the candidate lists;
- The production and distribution of voter cards;
- The distribution of election materials;
- The conduct of the electoral campaign;
- Voting operations;
- Vote-counting and the proclamation of results.

It also manages national and international election observation.

The CENI's branches in the District of Bamako and Mali's *cercles* and *communes* are each composed of six members; each Malian embassy or consulate also has three CENI representatives. Once established, the CENI and its branch offices can function for up to three months following the proclamation of the final results of the election.

The CENI is empowered to propose the official sanctioning of administrative authorities if they fail to follow election laws, regulations, and instructions.

⁵ Chapter 2, Section 1, Articles 3-15.

⁶ The Electoral Law earlier specified that five members were to be designated by the majority parties and five by the opposition; this was amended in January 2004 to reflect Mali's current consensus-driven domestic politics.

⁷ Presidential Decree No. 04-032_/P-RM of February 13, 2004

The CENI receives its funding from the national budget of Mali. Any material or financial resources that remain at the completion of the CENI's mandate are transferred to the MATCL.

E. CAPE (Electoral Process Support Unit)

The CAPE was established by the MATCL in an effort to ensure that it successfully fulfills its responsibilities in the management of elections and electoral processes. It serves as an advisory body and is organized as part of the Minister's staff. The CAPE was conceived as a tool to help the Minister reflect upon the wider electoral process, to help the Minister make sound decisions, and to serve as an early warning system for any problems that arise during the process.

The CAPE's three-person nucleus is responsible for bolstering the MATCL's technical capacity in elections planning and organization. Mr. Mamadou Sissoko, a former justice minister, serves as Coordinator of the CAPE. Mr. Mohammed Traoré, formerly a civil society representative and head of training and administration in the 1997 CENI, leads the CAPE's legal division. Mr. Mamadou Seydou Traoré, a career MATCL administrator, heads the electoral operations division. The original staff design for the CAPE included a fourth position for a communications specialist, although the position remains vacant. A small staff supports the CAPE office.

The MATCL consults with the CAPE for the research of legal or procedural questions pertaining to voter registration and the electoral process. The CAPE serves as the secretariat for the Inter-ministerial Committee.