

Country Context Report - Mali

General Country Information

Africa Education Initiative Program Component(s)

Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program
Teacher Training

Primary Language(s)

French: National, Official, Instruction Grades 1-4, Instruction Grades 5-7/8

The main primary languages are Bambara 80%, Songhai, Tuareg and Arabic.

French:

Sources

CIA World factbook-Mali:May 2004 - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/>

Population

	Total	Male	Female
Total	11,626,219	5,693,317	5,932,902
Under 14	5,487,028	2,759,802	2,727,226

Sources

CIA World factbook-Mali:May 2004 - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/>

Ministry of Education Officials

Minister of Education

Ministry of National Education

Mamadou Lamine Troare

B.P. 71

Bamako, Mali

Phone: +223-2-212126

Fax: +223-2-227767

USAID Liaison

Director

Roger Bloom

Immeuble Dotembougou,

Rue Raymond Poincare & Rue 319,

Quartier du Fleuve

B.P.14, Bamako

Mali

Phone: +223-2-23602

Fax: +223-2-23933

Primary Education Coordinator

MOE Coordinator
Michael Teltelman

U.S. Embassy

Ambassador
US Embassy
Vicki Huddleston
Rue Rochester NY & Rue Mohamed V
Bamako, Mali
Phone: +223-2-223833
Fax: +223-2-223712

Basic Education General Information

Breadth of Basic Education Activities

Length of Primary School Cycle: 6 Years

Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education is provided.

Sources

Education System: Institution Types and Credentials - <http://www.unesco.org/iau/cd-data/>

National Curriculum

A national curriculum exists.

Mali's introduction of experimental "convergent pedagogy" in 1987 was prompted by a steady decline in the quality of primary education where the repetition rates were 29% and the drop-out rates 16%. This is an active pedagogy that is more child-centered than traditional approaches and uses mother tongue instruction in the first three years of primary school. French is the language of instruction for the subsequent grades, after which the pupil moves towards functional bilingualism. One objective of this new pedagogy is to facilitate a more natural transition into the use of French. Four strategies are used in its implementation: community sensitization; teacher training; production and use of appropriate teaching materials; and employment of active, learner-centered teaching methods.

Sources

Association for the Development of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt

National exams - At what level are national exams written?

There is only one national exam for all final year students. At the end of six years of education, the learners write the Certificat de Fin d'Etudes du premier Cycle de l'Enseignement Fondamental (CFEPCEF).

Sources

Association for the Development of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt

What are the key basic education challenges?

- Financing
- A society dealing with competing and complex value driven education system, such as, Koranic, merdersa, public and catholic
- Severe teacher shortage (2,500/year needed)
- Few female teachers (20%) and low rate of girls' enrollment.
- Choosing the language of instruction (out of the eight primary languages) in Grades 1 and 2 for primary education often creates a serious problem.
- Teachers are untrained in the new curriculum which is a more progressive and participatory teaching methodology.
- No policy for pre-service or in-service training
- Poor female participation in schools (44% gross enrollment rate (GER))
- Poor book-to-student ratio (1:30)
- Heavy financial burden on rural communities
- Limited financial and human resources on the part of the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Sources

Association for the Development of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt
usaid.org - www.usaid.org/ml/cgi-bin/view_article2004/02/12

Is primary education 'free' (legally)?

Free primary education is provided.

In principle it is free, but in practice, parents contribute for the day-to-day running of schools including security, construction and rehabilitation of classrooms, the purchase of school furniture, and in some rural areas, in the payment of teachers' salaries.

Sources

Association for the Development of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt

What are the barriers to student access and participation in basic education?

- The poor quality of education
- An enormous digital divide, exacerbated by weak telecommunications infrastructure and poor access to electricity.
- Long distance from schools, poor sanitation, household chores and farm work
- Poor pedagogic materials
- Lack of trained teachers
- Formal education's irrelevancy to the lives of boys and girls and their different learning needs.

Sources

usaid.org - www.usaid.org/ml/cgi-bn/view_article.pl

In what ways is the education system addressing the needs of marginalized groups? Are there special schools?

Special schools exist.

The activities of Local Alliances for girls' education that advocate for greater gender equity were instrumental in the achievement of an impressive enrollment of girls in primary education.

The needs of the poor, minority groups and special needs children are being addressed by Save the Children and the Catholic Relief Services.

As far as working children are concerned in June 1998, the government of Mali signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO-IPEC). Since signing the MOU, the government has cooperated with the ILO-IPEC in launching direct interventions to assist children working in mines, wood working and metal working, as mechanics, in service sector establishments, and as domestic workers. The Malian government is also working with Winrock International (WI) through Community-based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor through Education (CIRCLE) for the abolition of child labor. This project has had some notable success.

With regard to the hearing impaired, blind and physically handicapped, there are National Institutes for the Blind in Bamako, the Regional Institute for the Blind in Gao, the Center for the Physically Handicapped in Bamako, the Center for the Readaptation of the Physically Handicapped in Segou, the Center for Medico-psychotherapy in Amaldeme and the Pilot Center for the training of the hearing impaired of Ampson.

Sources

Développement de l'Education - <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Databanks/Dossiers/rmali.htm>

dol.gov - www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/Advancing1/html/mali.htm

Name

usaid.gov - www.usaid.gov/gn/education/background/2004/01/08

Winrock - www.winrock.org/circle/UACRFPfi

What is the stage of development of the education system?

Since the adoption of the Ten-Year Guideline Policy for Educational Reform (PRODEC) by the Malian government in 1998, considerable progress has been made in the development of the education system. The gross enrollment rate in basic education has increased as follows: 50.0% in 1998, 55.6% in 1999, 60.9% in 2000. Girls' enrollment rate also experienced much progress as follows: 40.3% in 1998, 46.0% in 1999, 50.0% in 2000. School-based teacher education improved, curriculum relevant to the lives of students and their families was established and implemented, parents and community involvement in school increased and the use of education information system data increased.

Sources

Curriculum in the Republic of Mali. Final Report (Phase II) - www.widtech.org/publications/publications.htm

Enrollment Age

Year	General	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
2004 (1)	7				

(1) - The enrollment age is the same irrespective of sex or region.

Drop Out Rates

Year	General	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
1998	16				

Are there alternatives to traditional schools?

World Education in collaboration with the MOE and NGOs, is embarking on the development of community institutions. The main goal is to strengthen civil society and encourage civil action in many communities throughout the country and in a variety of sectors. Through developing Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and community schools in an effort to improve the quality of primary school education, this program promotes greater involvement of communities in the management and creation of schools. Training activities focus on the PTA election process, planning and conducting meetings, conflict resolution, needs prioritization, and fundraising. Emphasis is also placed on learning management skills to support activities such as school renovation, construction, student enrollment, recruitment of teachers, and in some cases paying the salaries of teachers.

Sources

World Education report - http://www.worlded.org/projects_topics_6_html

Which approaches is the country taking to combat HIV/AIDS?

The national response to HIV/AIDS of Mali's government has been weak thus far, mainly due to poor management and leadership in the National AIDS Program, or Programme National de Lutte Contre le SIDA (PNLS). However, recent changes in the Ministry of Health and PNLS leadership signal a stronger commitment to fighting the pandemic.

In December 1999, the PNLS developed its third HIV/AIDS Strategy (2001-2005). This strategy, delineates the following objectives:

- Promote a multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS through the active participation of political and civil society leaders at all levels (government institutions and community organizations)
- Promote behavior change among vulnerable populations and the general population to decrease

the risk of HIV infection

- Improve the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS
- Decrease or minimize mother-to-child transmission of HIV
- Ensure diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infection in all health facilities
- Alleviate the burdens of the impact of HIV/AIDS on families and communities
- Develop standards and laws that respect the dignity and rights of infected persons
- Expand health coverage and develop local community capacity
- Ensure blood transfusion safety
- Collect and disseminate epidemiological data on the general population, vulnerable population, and the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in urban and rural areas.

The PNLS, with the help of other local and international NGOs support the following country programs:

- Advocacy
- Behavior Change communication
- Capacity building
- Care and support
- Condom social marketing
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Surveillance
- Voluntary counseling and testing.

Sources

USAID:Country profile-Mali - www.synergyaids.com/summaries_PDF/Mali_profile_2003

Are there political conflicts and what is the impact of these conflicts on education?

There is no political conflict.

Are there on-going, recently completed projects relating to the following areas?

Girls' Education

The Strategies for Advancing Girls Education (SAGE)/Mali Project began its activities in the first quarter of 1999 staffed by a girls' education specialist and an assistant. The Project was designed to provide technical assistance on girls' education to three NGOs—World Education, Save the Children/USA and Africa—that work in rural areas primarily with community schools. SAGE/Mali was to implement at least four of the following six activities by the end of 2000:

- The design of life skills from a gender perspective modules to be included in the basic education curriculum
- Leadership training for female APE (Associations de Parents d'Elèves—

Community Parent Teacher Organizations)

- Girls' mentoring and life skills program
- Girl friendly classroom practices
- Female teacher support
- Community action plans to support schools and promote gender equity.

Six activity clusters were selected as priorities based on a series of meetings with several groups working in the education sector, including the Ministry of Basic Education (MEB), the community school grantees, numerous Malian NGOs, and other donors, who consistently identified particular constraints and opportunities. The activities were designed to complement each other, so that each activity is linked to and reinforced by another.

- Life Skills Materials using interactive teaching methodologies
- Girl-friendly classroom practices
- Leadership training for Association des Parents d' Eleves (APE) members
- Community action plans
- Girls' mentoring program
- Fundraising in non-traditional sectors to assist community support of girls' education.

Sources

GEMS Website - <http://www.educategirls.com/>
SAGE Website - <http://sage.aed.org/>

What is the status of Muslim education?

For the past ten years, Muslim Education has been in full expansion and the number of Koranic schools, and medersas (private schools providing combined religious and secular education) have quadrupled. Nearly half of the learners receive private Muslim Education (in medersas and Koranic schools. Parents opt for Muslim Education because they consider it an element of social integration. It is also considered as an integral part of Islamization among Malians and to avoid exclusion from the village community.

Sources

ird.fr - www.ird.fr/us/actualites/fiches/1997/41.htm2004/03/26

Additional Basic Education General Information

Donor Information

USAID - 2002

US\$ 3,000,000

- HIV/AIDS activities

- Establish about 13 Communities Learning and Information Centers (CLICs) in underserved Malian communities.

USAID - 2001

US\$ 5,000,000

Basic education

USAID - 2000

US\$ 5,000,000

Basic education

USAID - 1999

US\$ 5,000,000

Basic education

Sources

Global March: An overview of Education Spending- 1 - <http://www.globalmarch.org/education-campaign/educ>
Overview of USAID Basic Education Programs 2000-2001 - www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABX925.pdf

Teacher Training

What are the barriers to teacher sufficiency?

The following factors constitute barriers to teacher sufficiency:

- The inability of the national government to mobilize, motivate and pay the salaries-at civil service rates of the increased number of teachers needed to staff schools
- There are not enough incentives to retain teachers in rural areas.
- Teachers dying of AIDS-related diseases are not being replaced
- Teachers training and pedagogic activities are yet to meet the demands of the new curriculum especially in the domain of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- There is a dire need to strengthen teacher management and support system with a view to promoting the quality of teaching. These include recruitment, pre-service training and in-service training
- There is the need to strengthen intra-African synergies among countries and promote the establishment of a network of experts, with a view to sharing practical experiences in the areas of teacher training by rotation, decentralization and innovative teacher recruitment processes.

Sources

Association for the Developmant of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt

What is the design of pre-service teacher training programs?

Students train for one year at one of the Ecoles Normales Intégrées (ENI). Applicants have to have their high school diploma and pass an entrance examination.

The teacher trainers general education, pedagogy and child psychology and have to complete a practicum, during which they are recruited to a school and teach. The new curriculum has harmonized the education system country-wide. Consequently, all the teacher-trainees write one national exam at the end of the year.

Sources

L'Evaluation de l'Education pour tous à l'an 2000: Rapport des Pays - www.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/benin

Minimum Requirements for Teacher Training Recruitment

General

The Baccalauréat Certificate, (high school diploma).

Science

Baccalauréat Certificate, (high school diploma).

Sources

Mali-Education Syatem: Institute Types and Credentials - www.unesco.org/iau/cd-data/

Are alternative routes to teacher certification available?

Alternative routes for teacher training exist.

The Institut Pedagogique National (IPN) offers distance learning courses for teacher trainees.

Sources

icdl.open - www.icdl.open.ac.uk/insResult.ihtml?inst_id2004/03

Terms and Working Conditions for Teachers

Working conditions are not favorable for teachers because the central government lacks the financial capabilities to mobilize, train, motivate and pay teachers' salaries at civil service rates. Consequently, many teachers are drawn to other fields, where work is less demanding and the pay is higher.

Sources

Association for the Developmant of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt

Are there programs for the professional development and support of head teachers and school administrators?

Programs for the professional development of teachers exist.

The Institut Pédagogique National du Mali (IPN) and the Institut Supérieur de Formation et de la Recherche (ISFR) offer programs aimed at qualitatively and quantitatively improving the education system in Mali through the training of trainers, head teachers and school administrators and it also organizes in-service training for teachers.

Sources

icdl.open - www.icdl.open.ac.uk/insResult.ihtml?inst_id2004/03

Girls' Education

What are the primary reasons for girls' low enrollment and completion rates?

Many parents are culturally intransigent and do not believe that the kind of education on offer is appropriate for their daughters. Some parents cannot afford the cost of education. The cost of voluntary contributions, such as, uniforms, books, and bus fares make even free education expensive. In cases where there are many children, parents prefer sending their sons to school and rather keeping their daughters at home. Traditionally, it is believed that sons should be educated because they will be the breadwinners of their future families, and the supporters of their aging parents.

Schools are unsafe for girls as they face the danger of being sexually harassed, sometimes raped, by their fellow students, teachers, and sometimes by strangers as they walk to school. If classes are overcrowded and children are poorly supervised male students may become unruly and violent. This leads to girls feeling threatened and many parents fear for their safety. If no single-sex schools or classes are available and there are no female teachers, and the school is far from the home or the community, then female attendance tends to drop.

Poverty also plays its part. If their uniforms are torn or inadequate, girls from poor families, constrained by the demands of modesty and propriety, will stay at home. If the schools do not have adequate sanitary facilities or if their schools do not have separate toilets, then the beginning of menstruation can mean the end of a girl's education-this unfortunately is a big problem for poor girls in Africa.

Sources
Commentary: Keeping Girls at School - www.unicef.org/pon96/edgirls.htm

What is the policy on pregnancy?

For Girls

The government of Mali established a special unit to promote girls' education within the Ministry of Basic Education in 1998. This unit is implementing policies whereby pregnant schoolgirls are allowed to continue their education.

For Teachers

Under the same policy, pregnant teacher trainees are allowed to continue their education.

Sources
dol.gov - www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/Advancing1/html/mali.htm

Is there evidence of curriculum revision?

Life Skills

Mali's strategy of Local Alliances consists of a school level initiative to improve the quality and relevance of education for girls. A group of Malian educators worked closely with consultants of the Strategy for the Advancement of Girls' Education (SAGE) to develop the Life Skills Curriculum. Ninety-seven modules, teacher guides, student reading passages, and posters were developed, and more than 100 copies were distributed in community schools. The Life Skills Curriculum consists of modules to enhance basic knowledge of hygiene, nutrition, first aid, environment, children's rights, sex education, and reproductive health issues for students in upper primary grades.

Sources
GEMS - www.schoolnet africa.net/fileadmin/resources/GEMS_01.pdf

What are the reforms most likely to stimulate the enrollment and persistence of girls in school?

- Schools should be built close to homes especially in rural areas
- Sanitary conditions should be improved
- Parents should be sensitized on the importance of girls' education
- Basic education for girls should be made completely free
- Local communities and parents should become more involved in the running of schools.
- More female teachers should be trained
- Cash incentives should be offered to families who keep their daughters in school up to specific grades.
- Non-formal education should be expanded to give more girls basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills.
- Information campaigns about the importance of girls' education, flexible schedules (to allow girls to meet domestic responsibilities), and more preschool education both as a means of reducing later drop-outs and as a way of making it possible for girls to attend school while their siblings are being cared for.

Sources

dol.gov - www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/Advancing1/html/mali.htm
UNICEF - www.unicef.org/pon96/edgirls.htm

Are schools safe for girls? What is the most common threat to the safety of schoolgirls?

Schools are not safe for girls. Girls are sexually harassed, sometimes raped, by their fellow students, or their teachers, or sometimes by strangers as they walk to school. Girls become pregnant and in some cases are forced to drop out of school.

Sources

UNICEF - www.unicef.org/pon96/edgirls.htm

Is there evidence of reforms to reduce the cost of schooling?

Evidence of reforms to reduce the cost of schooling exist.

The major evidence aimed at reducing the cost of education is the creation of Local Alliances composed of key community, school, business, and religious leaders. Local alliances serve as the community representatives to the Strategy for the Advancement of Girls' Education (SAGE) program, the National Alliance, and the Girls' Education Working Group. Together, stakeholders have created action plans to help communities devise low-cost, feasible solutions to overcome some of the constraints girls face in accessing and completing primary schooling. These action plans identify the responsibilities of key players and sectors within the community for implementing activities. Lastly, a monitoring and evaluation system has been developed to assess progress and measure program results.

Sources

TECH: A Woman in Development Technical Assistance Project - www.schoolnet africa.net/fileadmin/resources/GEMS_01.pdf

Textbooks and Other Learning Materials

Description of Transportation Systems and Projected Improvements

Mali's transportation system is still underdeveloped. According to a 2002 estimate, Mali has 729 kilometers of railway line, 15,100 kilometers of highways of which 1,827 was paved and 13,273 kilometers unpaved, 1,815 kilometers of waterways, one seaport at Koulikoro, 26 airports of which seven have paved runways and 19 unpaved runways.

Sources

CIA World factbook-Mali:May 2004 - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/>

Community Participation in Basic Education

In what ways is the community involved in basic education?

Paying fees

Parents pay fees for their children.

Serving in committees for school development, Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

In Mali, international NGOs have worked directly with communities to help create a fabric of local associations created to promote and manage their schools. World Education Mali has a firm niche in the education sector through its well-established relationships with Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). These community-based institutions serve as a perfect vehicle for the dissemination of AIDS awareness information. The integration of AIDS awareness education into the training curriculum for PTAs is a strategic move designed to both reinforce World Education's expertise as a force in local capacity building and enable civil society to proactively address the expanding issues of HIV/AIDS prevention in Mali.

Sources

World Education: World Education Staff Present at CIES Annual Meeting in New Orleans - www.worlded.co.za/hiv_world.htm

What is the level of community participation vs. government share of social and financial responsibility for basic education?

In Mali, rural and urban community associations create and manage schools. They are responsible for :

- Recruiting and paying teachers.
- Recruiting students, and constructing, equipping and maintaining the schools.

Sources

Association for the Development of Education in Af - http://www.adeanet.org/programs/biennial99/en_synt

Are NGOs and civil society involved in education? What role do they play? Who are they?

NGOs and civil society are involved in education.

The following NGOs are involved in education in Mali: UNICEF, World Education, World Bank, African Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and JICA, UNICEF provides financial support either by directly financing projects and programs or by supporting the MOE budgetarily through the government. In 1998, UNICEF's quinquennial program had a particular focus on girls' education. The program aimed at advancing the education of young girls, in terms of both quantity and quality, and targeted areas which have some of the lowest education rates in the country.

Save the Children and Catholic Relief Services take care of vulnerable children and orphans.

World Education has firm niche in the education sector through its well established relationships with

PTAs. These community-based institutions serve as a perfect vehicle for the dissemination of AIDS awareness information. The integration of AIDS awareness education into the training curriculum for PTAs is a strategic move designed to enable the civil society to proactively address the expanding issues of HIV/AIDS prevention in Mali.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on Basic Education

How is HIV/AIDS affecting the supply and quality of education, the number of teachers dying each year of HIV/AIDS and the educational management's ability to plan long-term?

Number of Teachers Dying each Year of HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS erodes the supply of education by increasing teacher illness, absenteeism and teacher mortality.

Sources

synergyaids.com - www.synergyaids.com/aids_linkshmt_57k

Educational Management's Ability to Plan Long-Term

HIV/AIDS also affects educational management's ability to plan long-term by decimating the ranks of technical managers, curriculum designers, information specialists and planners whereby eroding the quality of education. Morale among education professionals is also eroded by the toll of HIV/AIDS. Attrition among education professionals increases as they are drawn to other fields where work is less demanding and the pay is higher.

Sources

synergyaids.com - www.synergyaids.com/aids_linkshmt_57k

Is there provision for the education of orphans and vulnerable children?

There is provision for the education of orphans and vulnerable children.

Save the Children (SC) formed and trained two village school committees in Douentza, the poorest district within Mali. Ordinary people from the community were selected as teachers. The community agreed to build two classrooms in the first year and then one a year until there were six classrooms. Parents contributed to teachers' salaries. Equal places for girls and the inclusion of orphans and disabled children were presented as non-negotiable by SC.

Sources

Overcoming barriers to inclusion in Douentza, Mali. - www.eenet.org.uk/news4/p8.shtml