

CLOSE OUT REPORT

**PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND
EVALUATION PROJECT**

**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

REPUBLIC OF MALI

MACRO Technical Assistance Team (TAT):

October 1997 - 24 August 1999

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List of Acronyms

CDIE	Center for Development Information and Evaluation (of AID/W)
COTR	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
DG	Democratic Governance Objective
DRHE	Direction Regionale de l'Hydraulique et de l'Energie
GIS	Geographic Information System
GRM	Government of the Republic of Mali
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HQ	Headquarters
I/C	Info/Comm
IDA	International Development Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Info/Comm	Information and Communication Objective
/M	Mali
MACRO/HQ	MACRO International Inc. Headquarters
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MSU	Michigan State University
NGO	Non-governmental organization (usually a national-level PVO)
PM&E	Performance monitoring and evaluation
PVO	Private voluntary organization (international)
R4	Results Report and Resource Request
RCC	Results Coordinating Committee
REMADOC	Reseau Malien de la Documentation
RF	Results Framework
RPM	Results Package Manager
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SEG	Sustainable Economic growth objective
SO	Strategic Objective
SOAG	Strategic Objective Agreement (between USAID and the GRM)
SOT	Strategic Objective Team
SpO	Special Objective
TA	Technical Assistance
TAT	Technical Assistance Team
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development

CLOSE OUT REPORT

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROJECT

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I. Background

This is the Close Out report for the US Agency for International Development Mali (USAID/M) MACRO Technical Assistance Team (TAT) Project (Contract No. 624-C-97-00-00058-00 to Macro International, Inc.). It covers the 23 months of the project from October 1997 until August 1999, which corresponds to the length of the project.

The MACRO International Inc. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Project completed its 23rd month of operation on August 24th, 1999. Funded by USAID, it was managed through a cost reimbursement contract with MACRO International, Inc. The project provided technical assistance to the USAID/Mali mission in Performance Monitoring and Evaluation.

Originally designed to operate for three years the option period year two was not opted and the project closed out early. The mission absorbed two of the four professional staff from the unit. Mission staff now feel competent enough to perform their own Monitoring and Evaluation functions, thus guaranteeing the sustainability of this project.

As of August 24th, the project had expended approximately 79% of its total budget or \$936,849. The project's allocations and expenditures by item are presented in an Audit attached as Appendix A. Approximately \$25,000 in cost is expected above the amount stated, for a total of 81%.

Included in the pages that follow is a summary of project objectives and achievements, major lessons learned during project implementation and recommendations for the future.

The MACRO project concluded in August, 1999, having met with much success in a variety of areas, including but not limited to the transfer of M&E skills and capabilities to Mission personnel via workshops and individualized technical assistance, the development and implementation of user-friendly MIS and GIS systems for use in monitoring and evaluation activities, the creation and maintenance of an in-house M&E documentation center and website, provision of technical assistance in preparing the Mission's annual R4 submissions, and the production and dissemination of economic data and analyses.

II. Project and Contract Objectives

The objective of this project was to provide a full range of program planning, performance monitoring and evaluation, and communications support for the mission. This was to help achieve, measure report and communicate its development results. In terms of program planning the contract was to contribute to the realization of the following:

Program Planning

- Make recommendations to the Program Officer on program activities
- Make recommendations to staff on activity design and implementation based on the SOT results frameworks
- Maintain a Geographic Information System and make it useful for activity planning and decision making by USAID and its PVO partners
- Based on performance monitoring recommend any adjustments of the mission's strategic plan

Performance Monitoring

- Validate SOT indicators, baselines, targets, and results packages
- Assist in the development of activities to attain expected results
- Develop realistic performance monitoring plans
- Refine indicators as needed at all levels: SOT, results plans/packages, activities
- Analyze data to track progress toward program targets
- Track indicators at the sub goal, intermediate result and sub result level to: determine impact, and make sure monitoring can appropriately feed into the data necessary for the R4
- Coordinate collection for baseline and impact data for each team
- Improve links between activities and results
- Monitor Mali's political, social, and economic environment in order to judge: true impact of on-going activities, and expected impact of planned activities

Program Performance Evaluation

- Oversee development of evaluation systems, coordination of data and data gathering, analysis, and dissemination so as to prevent duplication and promote synergy with and across SO teams
- Design and ensure execution of an evaluation plan to USAID-funded activities based on monitoring findings
- Build a roster of Malian firms, organization or individuals available to do high-quality evaluations of USAID activities
- Advise on development of performance based SOs for evaluations and impact analyses

- Recommend methods that make for constructive, participatory evaluations, with lessons learned
- Develop analytic framework for M&E, impact assessment and progress toward Mission goals

Continuous Learning

- Build a system for documenting good practices that produce significant results (case studies, best practices, success stories)
- Recommend ways to improve USAID relations with customers while achieving desired results
- Document activity results and impacts (unanticipated as well as anticipated)
- Document factors that hinder or promote mission success, and lessons learned
- Document ad hoc USAID's "best practices" in an annual report for partners and stakeholders
- Participate in SO team planning retreats, discussions on best practices, etc.

Other

- Produce outreach materials for Malian consumption, as well as for the mission and Washington
- Provide general information about USAID/Mali program to partners, etc.
- Make regular contact with partners' technical staff for data collection for sharing of methods and analytic techniques and for customer feedback on applications and training
- Identify survey needs to collect M&E data
- Keep an archive of completed, ongoing and planned USAID/Mali evaluations for quick reference
- Report on whether evaluation recommendations were adopted or rejected
- With SO teams and their partners, establish an annual evaluation plan for activities and programs
- Attend trainings, seminars, etc. on M&E to bring current knowledge back to USAID
- Do economic analyses of existing and proposed programs for the RC, SOTs and PVO partners
- Liaise with the multilateral financial institutions financial institutions in Mali
- Gather and transmit information on existing and planned activities by other donors in Mali that are relevant to SOTs
- Serve as primary USAID/Mali contact for economics with other missions, and Washington

Option Period One

The role of the MACRO Technical Assistance Team changed in response to TA needs for Option Period One. Training became a more important function than direct Technical Assistance. Rather than providing direct services to the individual teams, the TAT staff concentrated on transferring that capacity to team members. As a result, TAT team members were no longer attached to individual SO Teams, instead the most appropriate person was tasked with assignments based on their technical expertise.

The project goals in the original contract were overly ambitious and very difficult to operationalize. These were changed to reflect USAID/Mali's request to transition from a Results Center to a Technical Assistance Team.

Option Period One results:

1. Format and structure for the Mission's Results Frameworks (RF) and Performance Monitoring Plan for all Strategic and Special Objectives developed and submitted to the Mission for comment.
2. Data collection systems, which provide the structure for measuring performance, as contained in the Results Frameworks, developed and recommendations made for making them operational.
3. Systems for gathering economic information on key elements within the Malian and neighboring West African economies developed and economic analyses performed on a periodic basis.
4. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping for locality, percentages, coverage, etc. for USAID and larger Mission needs in Mali and West Africa developed and disseminated as appropriate.
5. Based on the Mission's Policy Matrix and current agenda, a system is established for reporting and measuring progress.

A Results Coordinating Committee was formed to give the MACRO TAT overall guidance and oversight in terms of its roles and responsibilities, and to serve as the final decision-making body on matters requiring TAT input. The Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) chaired this Committee served as the decision-maker with respect to any requested ad hoc tasks that fell outside of the five results. The TAT was responsible for providing any needed assistance for the identified work, drawing expeditiously from MACRO's experience, support and guidance.

In October, 1998, the TAT prepared and submitted its workplan for the Project's second year (Option Period 1). This workplan paralleled the new results objectives for the project, as set forth in September, 1998 by USAID/Mali. Each of the TAT's quarterly reports and the Annual Report for Option Period 1 reflects the TAT's activities and progress toward meeting these objectives.

III. Project Methodology

The idea of creating a Technical Assistance Team in Mali arises from the United States Agency for International Development's efforts to transform itself into an organization guided by principles of performance management. This involves setting strategic and special objectives for what the Agency intends to accomplish, and then collecting, analyzing, and systematically reporting information on progress toward those objectives.

The MACRO TAT assists the USAID Mission in Mali with these tasks by informing and reviewing mission decisions about development activities, monitoring and measuring activity outcomes, investigating the validity and objectivity of reports on them, and disseminating the recommendations to their client USAID/Mali. The team is a part of the Mission's implementation of the US Government's National Performance Review recommendations.

In setting its objectives, the Mali Mission used a participatory planning process that involved a wide range of stakeholders vital to successful development: Malian government officials, private businesses in Mali, both national and international non-governmental or private voluntary organizations, other development agencies, and of course Malian citizens. Planning also meant gathering and interpreting data about the nation's current demographic situation, the state of health and education services, skills development, and economic and political trends. This performance planning exercise identified five objectives to guide USAID's work in Mali until the year 2002:

- *Youth.* Improve social and economic behaviors among youth ages 0–24 years (who constitute two-thirds of Mali's population) via increased services and enhanced policies in child survival, reproductive health, education, and skills development.
- *Sustainable Economic Growth.* Increase the value-added to products within the economic subsectors of staple food grains, livestock, and alternative crops, and improve financial services.
- *Democratic Governance.* Make community organizations more effective partners in democratic governance and local self-development.
- *Information and Communication.* Increase Malians' access to information resources and technology (e.g., community radio and the Internet) and fostering supportive information and communication policies and organizations.
- *Sustainable Development in the North of Mali.* Promote long-term economic, social, and political development instead of relief aid in Mali's desert-like North.

IV. Project Results

Between October 1997 and August 1999 the MACRO Team was able to help USAID/Mali mission staff define their needs for data management, analysis and monitoring and evaluation. Starting with the concept of increasing communication and presenting strategic objectives more clearly, the SOAG process was facilitated and completed. The mission staff was able to then concentrate more on their own personal development needs in order to meet the requirements for managing for results at USAID/Mali. After defining their needs for M&E and data management the second year of the contract concentrated on building human capacity and management information systems. Other services offered to complete this picture were in communicating these results via the Internet, and increased policy focus through macro economic analysis.

A. Result No. 1

Format and structure for the Mission's Results Frameworks (RF) and Performance Monitoring Plan for all Strategic and Special Objectives developed and submitted to the Mission for comment.

R4 Assistance

The TAT played a major role in reviewing, editing and producing each draft of the 1997 R4 providing feedback to SOTs and other USAID Mission staff. This involved examining the overall conceptual integrity of the document, checking figures cited in the text against those presented in the tables, checking all tables for internal statistical consistency, accuracy, data sources and calculation methods, systematizing results frameworks and indicator designations, and final layout and production of the overall document. These and other TAT services contributed to USAID/Mali being the only Africa Mission to submit its R4 to AID/W on time.

Following submission of the R4 to AID/W, the TAT assisted the PRM in organizing, facilitating, and recording a half-day R4 Retrospective & Prospective PROPS meeting on 19 March 1998. The TAT's Economics Advisor took the lead in drafting an R4 Guidance Package, a PRM decision taken during the R4 Retrospective and Prospective. The DRAFT *R4 Guidance package* was used as instructional material for the 1998 R4 warm up exercise. To supplement this Package, the TAT created and distributed pre-formatted discs for performance results tables and policy matrices for use by all SOTs for the 1998 R4

The TAT I/C Officer also generated a list of all data sources cited in the R4 in support of the results reported therein, and contacted each SOT to request the documents for archiving, future reference, and IG inspection.

The R4 Guidance Package was completed in collaboration with the Program Office. This Guidance Package is intended for use as a reference manual for writing R4 2001. In October 1998, in preparation for the R4 in March 1999, a MACRO core consultant professionally edited the R4 Guidance Package. It was completed when *FY 2001 R4 Guidance Cable*, State 236829, PPC, 12/28/98 was received and the instructions incorporated into the text. The Program Office combined the various teams' contributions into a master document and circulated the R4 2001 drafts. TAT staff reviewed Section II narratives and tables, and electronically submitted both technical and stylistic feedback and suggestions to the R4 authors.

The TAT arranged for a student from Michigan State University's Department of Agricultural Economics to create a methodology for SEG indicators showing human impact. The same consultant also created an annex to the R4 on behalf of SEG illustrating the "Human Face" of their programs.

The TAT I/C Officer and Economics Advisor reviewed a sampling of the text of USAID CAs with PVOs in order to analyze them for PM&E reporting requirements and guidance. Analysis revealed that the CAs contain virtually no such information. They call for biennial reports, but with no indication of what kinds of data should be reported in what format. At the Mission-wide retreat, the TAT recommended that USAID give clear directions as to what it wants to see in PVO reports.

Observational field trips were taken to the North, and Mopti to CARE and Plan International sites. TAT staff traveled to the CSCOM of the Sebenicoro-Kalabanbougou ASACO, which is assisted by Save the Children Fund (SCF) through Group Pivot Sante a national NGO. A similar observation was conducted with World Education concerning D&G indicators. The purpose of these visits was for the TAT to gain a firsthand understanding of how, and what types of, data are collected, managed, and reported from the field level on up to USAID's biennial report stage, as well as to the relevant GRM agencies.

Mission-wide PM&E Workshop.

The TAT organized and conducted a two-day, Mission-wide workshop on approaches and best practices for performance monitoring and evaluation of development-related results. To ensure that workshop design was responsive to Mission needs, an iterative series of meetings were held with the USAID Program Officer and SOT M&E Specialists. Two planning meetings and several individual sessions were organized by the MACRO TAT to define the teams' expectations for the M&E workshop.

The services of two consultants were used to assist with workshop organization and execution. The workshop was scheduled for a maximum of 35 participants, and was attended by 25 Mission personnel, including the Mission Director and Program Officer.

A tool introduced at the M&E Workshop was a form designed to help SOTs organize their M&E activities over a five-year period. The design breaks program planning into quarters by type of monitoring and evaluation activity. Each team was asked to begin an M&E plan based on this formula and to elaborate upon these plans within their teams as appropriate.

Following this initial workshop the TAT devised an M&E Workshop series that addressed each of the components of the USAID "system" for managing for results. The first was a 2-1/2 day workshop, held in March, 1999, addressing what mission personnel perceived as the most critical need at USAID, statistical analysis. Participants completed a questionnaire several weeks prior to the workshop. A Macro International staff member, prepared and conducted this workshop on selected sampling methods, descriptive statistics, and regression analysis. Thirteen USAID personnel (M&E Specialists and Results Package Managers) successfully completed the workshop and received certificates confirming their participation.

A Macro core consultant conducted training in Qualitative Data Analysis. The Macro TAT planned this workshop in response to requests for a better understanding of how to interpret Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) reports. Eleven Mission staff members received certificates for their participation in this extremely challenging workshop

The TAT Team Leader also conducted an Indicator Workshop along with a session on how to use the M&E Guide. The Workshop focused on the different types of indicators used in Managing for Results based on CDIE Tips #12.

The final workshop on M&E Plans was the culmination of all workshops conducted previously. The M&E Plan is a one-page form created by Macro's MEASURE Project. Participants were provided with comprehensive instructions on completing the form, as well as their role in working with their PVO partners. The form will also serve as a useful tool for creating evaluation plans, since it compliments the USAID Performance Monitoring Plan.

General PM&E Services Provided

A major accomplishment was the finalization of the North's Results Framework in October, 1988. The TAT met with both the Team Leader and M&E Specialist to refine the North's Draft Results Framework, and the TA Team Leader, Macro Economist and MIS/GIS Specialist worked with the North Team to identify potential indicators. The MIS/GIS Specialist accompanied a field trip to the North, where he worked with the Program Officer, North Team and PVO partners to define and refine indicators to be used in the North's Results Framework. The field team also reviewed PVO data collection systems for measuring performance as contained in the Results Frameworks, determined the potential for PVO harmonization with the USAID/Mali system, and provided recommendations for making them operational.

Another major accomplishment was the establishment and finalization of targets and denominators for the Education sub-sector in Youth. The Macro Economist and MIS/GIS Specialist were instrumental in assisting the Education Assistant Results Package Manager (RPM) to understand the formulas used by the Centre de Plannification et de Statistiques at the Ministry of Education. Monitoring activities revealed that Save the Children Fund (SCF) Kolondieba was having problems with these formulas. The MACRO Team Leader accompanied the Education Assistant RPM on a field trip to SCF Kolondieba to study their formulas for these indicators. After realizing that the formulas were a bad "fit" for the SCF Kolondieba system, it was recommended that the 6th grade attainment rate formula be revised to fit their program. The PVOs met with the Youth Education sub-sector RPMs and the Health Coordinator to discuss the formulas and to reach a common understanding of the indicators they could measure and provide to USAID/Mali. The result was a standard reporting form for PVOs to report community school data and a prototype database in Excel for data storage and retrieval. This spreadsheet served as the first step towards the Education sub-section of the mission wide MIS.

The MIS/GIS Specialist and the I/C Officer assisted the USAID Skills Development Advisor with a survey research plan being carried out by an independent contractor. Their input involved identifying activities; creating baselines, planning tools and methods for resources and time allocation; and pre-pilot program identification of potential indicators. The independent contractor's survey report was circulated and the information presented to the Youth SOT.

A student from Michigan State University's Agricultural Economics program was hired to assist the SEG Team in the creation of people-level indicators. His assignment involved assisting the SEG Team create a framework to monitor the impact of their interventions at the people-level. This objective was met, and a framework provided to the USAID/Mali SEG team. The SEG team met with their partners to begin the process for collecting and reporting the necessary information to monitor and update people-level indicators.

Technical assistance provided to individual teams in terms of refining indicators and results frameworks consisted of the following:

- Advised on a survey designed to measure attitudes and behavior changes attributed to radio messages broadcast in areas covered by development oriented radio stations.
- Analyzed the impact of female candidates in the results of the last municipal election in Mali.
- Assisted in the analysis of DG annual survey data.
- Reviewed the proposed M&E strategic plan for DG Team.
- Assisting the North SpO refine indicators, policy matrix, and their Results Framework for the R4,
- Calculating Education indicators for student:teacher ratio in community schools and number of new community schools registered in 1998 for the Youth Team,
- Anticipating the amount of financial support the PRODEC should expect to receive for secondary and post secondary schools as a percentage of the public budget for DG,
- Attending the PVO partner's meeting with the SEG team to facilitate discussion on the proposed framework for collecting and reporting people level indicators,

- Assisting Youth's health sector to identify the lowest geographic level they could use to account for a partner's activity when the partner moves from one location to the other.
- For a Skills Development program, assisted in setting up a Microsoft Project time manager for program start up, advised on survey procedures for creating baselines for the program, and identified and refined potential indicators to measure results, and provided on-the-job training in the use of Microsoft Project as a planning tool.
- For the *Bonjour Docteur* program supported by the Youth SOT, provided TA on measuring the impact of broadcasting activities in the radius of Bamako.
- The TAT also assisted the DG Team by creating commune level questions on behalf of the other teams to be included in the DG questionnaire to help determine Mission wide synergy.

The MIS/GIS Specialist was requested by the Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG) Team to participate in an M&E workshop sponsored by the Office du Niger. After 30 years, the Office du Niger still does not have an M&E system in place. The MIS/GIS Specialist assisted workshop participants in defining their M&E and data system needs. Two representatives from the Office du Niger participated in the M&E plans workshop. With the understanding that the creation of such a system is the responsibility of the Office du Niger and SEG, they are now on the right road to the development of a plan and a system.

M&E Guide

The "How To" M&E Guide was finalized during the fourth quarter of Option Year One. The Guide is composed of the nine modules listed below. The Guide and modules are designed to take staff through the Monitoring and Evaluation process to help them better Manage for Results at USAID. A training session was held for Mission personnel in June, 1999.

- Module One: Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation
- Module Two: Using a Results Framework and selecting appropriate indicators,
- Module Three: Framework For Planning Project Data Needs
- Module Four: Project Monitoring for Activity Managers
- Module Five: Using Case Studies to Illuminate Results
- Module Six: Issues In Grantee Evaluation And Self-Evaluation
- Module Seven: Creating a Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Module Eight: Using statistical analysis at USAID/Mali
- Module Nine: Reporting
- Appendix One, *AID Speak*, a Glossary of terms used at USAID in Managing for Results
- Appendix Two, the *R4 Guidance Package*, created by the MACRO TAT for USAID/Mali.

Appendix Three, *Revisions to USAID's Performance Planning, Monitoring and Reporting System*, MFR Revisions, 10/20/98

B. Result No. 2

Data collection systems, which provide the structure for measuring performance, as contained in the Results Frameworks, developed and recommendations made for making them operational.

Consultant Data Base

The first task accomplished by the Results Center was the creation of a consultant database. This database created in Paradox boasts 469 candidates with a range of skills that span 71 categories from Agro Forestry to Zoo Technology. Originally created as an M&E reference resource, this database houses CVs of persons with experience in working with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), and international and bi-lateral agencies, including USAID.

Develop Management Information System

The Mission-wide Management Information System (MIS) -- a user-friendly Access database -- was completed in the third quarter of Option Year One. Over a dozen pull down reports were completed for each team. Report format and indicator selection criteria were defined by the end users for each report.

In addition to the field trips mentioned in Section A the TAT staff attended a World Education (WE) workshop in Koulikoro, visited WE headquarters, and made a subsequent visit to a WE NGO in the field. The purpose of these activities were to enable the TAT to obtain firsthand knowledge of what types of data are collected for the two sectors with which World Education works (D&G and Youth), and to observe the data flow (from communities through local NGOs to World Education) to the reporting stage for USAID, and the relevant GRM agencies.

The form for PVO data collection and a spreadsheet for data management was one of the first steps towards harmonization of indicators with the PVOs through a common understanding of expected outputs, definitions and formulas. It also led to the creation of a database spreadsheet that serves as the Education subsection of the Youth Team component of the mission-wide MIS.

The first step was to make the M&E Specialists and Results Package Managers aware of the potential of such a system. The MIS/GIS Specialist and MIS consultant then met with the members of each team to create the basis for the system's preliminary design. Since the Youth and SEG SOT's are the largest, theirs were the first to be designed. Data entry panels and automatically generated reports were created for both of these SOTs, followed by the creation of data entry panels and automatically generated reports for the Health and Education sectors and the SEG team's Microfinance Results Package Manager.

For each team, tables, data entry forms and reports were developed according to the end user's needs. Once completed, the data entry panels, reports, their linkages and formulas were tested, and the system was made available to the teams for actual use.

Navigation and operation training sessions were provided to all teams using their respective database sections. Individual team members were coached and assisted during these sessions. After successful completion of the training, the MIS/GIS Specialist copied the respective data base section to each team member's computer.

An MIS User Guide for database operation elaborates each SO and SpO team's section of the MIS separately. The introduction covers basic features that are common to all sections of the

MIS as well as shared attributes when navigating the database, entering data, filtering and browsing records. The guide was tested for user friendliness.

The MIS follows the results framework's basic structure in terms of lumping indicators by intermediate and SO results. Standardized reports were created to draw information from the data generated by the database.

Prior to the project's conclusion, the TAT handed over the MIS to the USAID/Mali Mission. This was accomplished through a series of meetings with the Mission staff who will be responsible for system maintenance and data input. The MIS/GIS Specialist made a presentation outlining the responsibilities of all parties. He confirmed the data input responsibility of the Results Package Managers (or their delegated representatives) and the quality control issues of data management, especially where it concerns PVO data.

Operation of bibliographic database CDS ISIS for storage and retrieval of performance measurement information

In December, 1997 and working in tandem with a local MIS/GIS Consultant, the TAT's MIS/GIS Specialist began backing-up all computerized data and report files left behind over a year ago when the Mission's former expert departed Mali. These were first steps taken towards laying the foundation of a Mission-wide MIS, including interviews with each SOT to determine the current state, type, and uses of MIS in each. Findings revealed that only one SOT (Info/Comm) had a functioning MIS that was actively being used to track programmatic and financial indicators and to measure progress toward targets. All other SOTs expressed interest in mounting similar MISs, but noted that they had not had time to devote much thought to computerization of their indicators, and even less to measures of impact.

All hard-copy documents were transferred to the Documentation Center established within the TAT's office. The TAT was responsible for: Determining categories for cataloguing and archiving these and subsequent materials; beginning systematic collection within USAID of key strategic, program, and SOT documents missing from previous collections; subscribing to key sources of information on state-of-art thinking in M&E, and on current economic, political, and social trends in Mali and the West Africa region; investigating the current state and structure of internet and website plans and operations within USAID/Mali; and collecting promotional materials generated by USAID, other donors, and PVOs in conjunction with the development of a Mission Briefing Book. These tasks were primarily carried out by the TAT's Information/Communication Officer (I/C Officer).

Work began with the consultancy of a local expert in the bibliographic database Micro CDS/ISIS. The consultant trained the I/C Officer and other TAT staff in the use of this UNESCO freeware, and prepared a manual. The TAT also contracted a local library-science consultant to begin the computerized cataloguing and hard-copy filing of all documents collected within the Mission plus the inflow of new documents. The bibliographic database was fully functional by March 1998. In addition to referencing hard-copy documents, the database can identify the location of electronic or other items. The TAT is using it to keep track of all GIS maps produced and software that has been purchased for the project. Additionally, any specialized documents can be listed out at USAID's request.

The I/C Officer trained mission staff in the use of the Micro CDS ISIS database, updated key words to eliminate redundancies, checked for spelling errors and inconsistencies in similar definitions of documents, and tracked R4 supporting documents.

The TAT met with the IG, who recommended that documents be filed using a computer-coded number with a password-protected computer. The I/C Officer translated all titles from

French to English, and checked the database for reliability and conformity under the new coding system. She also designed and implemented a document-checkout ledger and a similar system for audiovisual materials, computer manuals and software.

R4 data, reports, and other results-related materials can be rapidly located on an SO basis, the TAT undertook a number of initiatives to garner information on how best to structure descriptors and R4-related searches. The TAT's I/C Officer conducted systematic reviews of the document holdings and filing systems of each SOT and Mission management units. She also visited various Bamako-based development libraries and archives to examine their archiving systems and holdings, and to collect pertinent documents and catalogs for the M&E Reference Center. The I/C Officer further researched AID/W guidance on document archiving, and identified and collected key documents on GRM policies and 10-year plans pertaining to USAID/Mali sectors of intervention (specifically, agriculture, education, and health).

USAID/Mali's SOTs have been using the TAT Documentation Center to inform and advance their M&E, and to locate unit documents that had previously been misplaced. In addition to the documents obtained by the I/C Officer, other TAT staff have made substantial additions to the Pocket M&E Reference Library. In this regard, they collected M&E literature from the Inter-American Foundation, OECD, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, World Bank, and multiple PVO sources, as well as from various professional associations, Internet sites, other documents and datasets. In preparation for the M&E Workshop, several new resources were added to the documentation center. A list of holdings was included in the workshop folders entitled *MACRO TAT Pocket Reference Library on Monitoring and Evaluation*. Finally, membership with the *American Evaluation Society* and standing subscriptions were entered to two M&E journals: *Evaluation and Program Planning*, and *Evaluation Review*.

Cross SOT annual commune level survey to measure impact

A Macro staff member, visited Mali to conduct preliminary research on the feasibility of a crosscutting survey. It was determined that such a survey was not a viable option for USAID/Mali. After interviewing the Results Package Managers, Team Leaders and M&E Specialists, it was clear that the USAID/Mali teams were happy with their data collection systems. During an RCC meeting, it was concluded that the study demonstrated that a crosscutting survey would prove complex and costly when compared to the DG survey. To implement the crosscutting survey, it would be necessary to have a properly defined set of indicators and an accurate list of target areas for each team. The budget, before finalizing either, was estimated at between U.S. \$164K and \$236K depending on the type of crosscutting survey. The DG survey costs approximately U.S. \$65K, therefore the idea of adding just a few questions to the DG questionnaires for the benefit of other teams the final decision. The Macro Economist was requested to formulate two or three questions per team to be added to the DG survey schedule for fall of 1999. These questions were recommended for inclusion in the DG annual survey. The Democracy Officer will collaborate with the teams on this in the future.

Website development

Another successful TAT activity was the creation of a prototype webpage for the Mission's new intranet. The TAT's I/C Officer, M&E Specialist, and a consultant conceptualized the logical organization and visual layout of the TAT Webpage and content, supplemented by maps generated by the MIS/GIS Specialist. Content included information on USAID/Mali, the TAT, Mali in general, a visitor's guide to Bamako, guidelines for managing computer

files, and other information. The I/C Officer developed a proposed website structure for the Youth team, and submitted some initial documents to the local firm for conversion to HTML. She continued to provide TA and advice on the design of the USAID/Mali Intranet pages in collaboration with the Business Center.

The I/C Officer created training descriptions for sub-webmasters in collaboration with the Mission's business center. She developed a training curriculum and provided individualized training to the sub-webmasters. The I/C Officer held a three-day workshop on web page design, the purpose of which was to provide training to the sub-webmasters on the use of basic web page development tools. Training focused on the use of various HTML and image editing software, as well as word functions for linking objects. Ten staff members, one from every team at USAID/M, attended this training.

The I/C Officer provided TA to the North SpO Team to update their web page. She also conducted refresher training for the North Team's sub-webmaster to follow up the three-day sub-webmaster workshop conducted previously.

The MACRO TAT web site with the 1998/99 workplan, training descriptions, the PowerPoint presentations generated for all workshops, mission-wide presentations such as the Euro, a glossary of M&E terms and definitions used by CDIE, and the TAT quarterly and annual reports may be found at the following address: <http://croco.usaid.gov/tathome/index.html>

C. Result No. 3

Systems for gathering economic information on key elements within the Malian and neighboring West African economies developed and economic analyses performed on a periodic basis.

The TAT's Economics Advisor prepared and delivered a policy briefing on the likely social, economic, and political implications of privatizing the CMDT during a March 1998 tour of the TAT's offices by the U.S. Ambassador and the Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission.

In May '98, at the request of the Acting Mission Director, the TAT's Economic Advisor provided a briefing paper on trends in Malian market-based reforms and poverty reduction. This paper served as input to a review of the World Bank's Country Strategy Paper in preparation for a late May meeting of Bank Executive Directors on the scheduled \$16.1 million "Mali Grassroots" (hunger/poverty) loan.

In preparation for the arrival of 20 US businessmen, the Macro Economist prepared a document on potential business opportunities in Mali.

Develop basic "how-to" manual or curriculum on economic analysis

The Macro Economist developed descriptions and themes for use as training topics for workshops on "how to conduct an economic analysis". These were used as the basis of a curriculum for participants to guide them in conducting such analyses in the future. A "How-To Guide" for conducting an economic analysis was also created and circulated as a checklist and information sheet. This guide serves as a resource and follow-up to the economic analysis workshops. These and the list of other documents that can be used as economic analysis resources were circulated to the list "Bamako everyone."

Conduct training on key economic development in national and regional economic arenas

Three workshops were organized and conducted by the Macro Economist with the aim of building capacity in economic analysis:

- Workshop #1: *Ajustements structurels et équilibres macroéconomiques*,
- Workshop #2: *Utilisation pratique des statistiques et évaluation d'impacts*,
- Workshop #3: *L'UEMOA et les instruments de la politique commerciale*.

These topics were selected based upon the Mission's needs, determined following the first M&E Statistical Analysis workshop, and informal consultations with the SO and SpO teams.

The objectives for workshop #1 were:

- To explain the theoretical and practical foundations of structural adjustments (process, policies, programs, and implications in terms of social programs like health and education),
- To explain the experience of Mali in the structural adjustment process, and
- To present and discuss the economic foundations of structural adjustments.

The objectives of workshop # 2 were:

- To make participants better familiar with statistics and their interpretations,
- To make them better understanding the concept of program impact evaluation,
- To demonstrate how to use regressions to evaluate program impacts.

The objectives of workshop # 3 were:

- To better understand the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) as an institution (its programs, objectives, policies, etc.),
- To underline WAEMU actions or activities towards the integration process of the west African countries,
- To examine and evaluate the costs and benefits of some trade policy tools like tariffs on imports, subsidies on exports, quotas, etc,
- To examine trade policy tools used in Mali and their conformity with GATT and WTO rules.

Produce economic information for web pages

The Macro Economist produced two informational journal publications entitled "Le Point Economique." The first of these addressed Mali's trade imbalance since 1980, the importance of Net exports in the expansion of an economy, major trading partners for Mali's import and export trade, and the "big picture" trade balance by country. The second publication was concerned with the effects of the G7 Summit on the Malian economy. Both publications were widely circulated within the USAID mission and the American Embassy, and can be found on the MACRO TAT Intranet web page at the following address:

<http://croco.usaid.gov/tathome/index.html>

D. Result No. 4

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping for locality, percentages, coverage, etc. for USAID and larger Mission needs in Mali and West Africa developed and disseminated as appropriate.

GIS activity involved the installation Atlas GIS software, and transfer of data files from the old GIS computer to the new one. In the process, all files were reorganized and duplicates of maps were deleted. A scanner and printer for color printing GIS maps was installed. GIS map archiving and inspecting the content of all existing maps pointed out the need to establish standard map titles, fonts, logos, legends, and icons.

Maps were produced of past and present development activities by PVOs or other development agencies and by sectoral activity-type in the North, for use in evaluating PVO applications for the North SpO. For this purpose, the TAT gathered considerable data from relevant PVOs and geo-referenced the data.

The work of the TAT resulted in a significant expansion in GIS capacities via the incorporation of many new features datasets. The new features responded to Info/Comm's move into a new phase of its Internet initiative, plus the North SpO's need for GIS information for proposal evaluation. The TAT reconfigured DG and other SOT data as per commune delineation. Finally, the TAT MIS/GIS Specialist attended meetings of the Informal GIS Users Group in Mali and added a substantial number of local GIS experts to the Consultant Database.

GIS-related Activities included:

- Produced maps indicating Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) activities along with United States Information Services (USIS) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) intervention areas in Mali for an Embassy presentation.
- Maps for the D&G team indicating locations of their partners in the 175-commune "triangle" of activities. Created maps of the 178 locations in which D&G's PVO partners are working, and assisted D&G team members to create presentations in PowerPoint using these maps to educate their partners and stakeholders.
- Providing CLUSA with information on population covered by community radios in the 175-commune "triangle" of activities to assist them in identifying future needs for their target beneficiaries in terms of radio messages broadcast.
- Providing technical advice to the National Group on Microfinance in conjunction with the SEG Microfinance Results Package Manager. The bulk of this was informing them how GIS technology can help them monitor activities and plan strategically.
- Providing the North team with maps indicating current PVO activities in the North, performed in conjunction with the drafting of the North Results Framework.
- Making regular updates to the community radio database for Info/Comm.
- Preparing maps for pilot Skills Development activities.
- Creating a GIS map for the 5km-population radius surrounding primary schools in the targeted zone of intervention.
- Creating a map for the Mission Director showing the synergies at USAID for a briefing presentation.

- Initiating collaboration with *Action Contre la Faim* and the *Direction Regionale de l'Hydraulique et de l'Energie* in conjunction with implementing a database on existing water points in the North.

The MIS/GIS specialist conducted a GIS awareness presentation for Mission personnel. This presentation focused on the system's potential for monitoring, and USAID staff members' responsibilities for acquiring recent data from their PVO partners in order to make the GIS maps more meaningful.

E. Result No. 5

Based on the Mission's Policy Matrix and current agenda, a system is established for reporting and measuring progress.

As part of the Mission's R4 preparation exercises, the TAT's Economics Advisor reviewed and advised on the document's policy matrices for all SOTs. The Economics Advisor also identified, accessed, and evaluated new sources of macroeconomic and other data for potential use in policy analysis, as well as in other domains of analytic interest to USAID/Mali.

Work towards this result in the first year of the project included: Meeting with D&G staff to discuss policy matrix framework and tracking systems, using input from the Democracy Officer on best practices gleaned from DG indicators in Guatemala. Participating in the close-out briefing on the 6-year, PRM-funded PRED (Policy Reform for Economic Development) Project, designed to promote and strengthen GRM budgetary reforms. Attending a regional workshop on the Policy Analysis Matrix (PAM) for West African countries.

The Macro Economist worked with the Mission Director and PROPS Committee to develop a new policy matrix, which is a framework based on best practice information. The first step in this process began in 1988 when the Macro Economist started researching best practices from other USAID Missions and other organizations. The new policy matrix framework was presented to the PROPS meeting in late April, 1999. PROPS Team members expressed the need for some concrete application(s) of the policy matrix to understand how to use this tool. Working with the DG Team, the Macro Economist applied the new policy matrix framework to the DG Cooperative Law reform and submitted examples to the DG Team Leader and Political Officer. Following discussions of the example with the DG Team, the first draft of the matrix was completed and submitted as an attachment to the July, 1999 Quarterly Report. It can also be found on the server as: U:/public/resdocs/policym. The matrix is an MS Word document with hyperlinks to other descriptive text. The final draft was submitted to the PROPS committee for approval prior to project closeout.

F. Cross Cutting and Mission-Wide Activities

Some services that the MACRO TAT provided over the last two years cannot be lumped into the categories listed above, that is why this and the following reporting categories were created. The cross cutting mission-wide activities include, among other things, participating in the Embassy's U.S. Mission Program Plan (MPP) for Mali, participation in the SOAG process and creating PowerPoint training session for presenting this SOAG information to the various line ministries.

Ad Hoc

During the fourth quarter of Option Year One, the TA Team Leader and MIS/GIS Specialist volunteered as observers for the May 2nd 1999, Communal elections. The Democratic Governance (DG) team organized this independent observation effort; the I/C Officer subsequently prepared a virtual report which was circulated throughout the Mission and Embassy. The report may be found on the DG web page at the following address:
<http://croco.usaid.gov/governance/inforeports/votes.html>

SOAGS

In the first quarter of Option Year One, the SOAG implementation plans were presented in the PROPS meetings. The MACRO TA Team Leader attended these presentations and provided feedback as appropriate.

Policy Analysis

During this Option Period, the Macro Economist attended a number of conferences on the West African Economic environment. These included:

- The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) conference (November, 1998), during which results of a two-week analysis of Mali's economic and financial situation were presented, followed by a discussion of Mali's performance that was generally viewed as positive.
- The Equity and Growth through Economic Research in Africa (EAGER) Roundtable in Bamako. The roundtable discussions centered around three studies funded by USAID on Manufacturing, Rice and Livestock.

The Macro Economist also participated in the Africa Trade and Investment Policy Program (ATRIP) presentations with the SEG Team. In addition, he attended strategic objective planning meetings with the Regional Strategy Team, and participated in the Mission Program Plan (MPP) process through document review and attendance at the MPP planning meeting. The MPP project for Mali aims to increase Mali's economic competitiveness in the West African region.

Cross cutting policy activities included a presentation to Mission staff on the Euro, covering three main themes: 1) definition of the Euroland, 2) presentation of the currency integration implications for the European economies in terms of growth, employment, trade development and the world economy, and 3) implications for the CFA zone economies, more specifically for the Malian economy in terms of trade development, and policy issues surrounding the CFA franc when the French franc is phased out in 2002. The Macro Economist researched this topic using resources available in the TAT documentation center. This presentation can be found in its entirety on the MACRO TAT Intranet web page at the following address:
<http://croco.usaid.gov/tathome/index.html>

Documentation And Information Dissemination

Major activities carried out by the I/C Officer during this Option Year included:

- Preparing a draft information plan to share with Mission teams.
- Introducing the Ecco Pro scheduling software to the Direction Core, and training the administrative assistant in its use. Installed Net Manage Ecco Pro on the Youth Team's computers and conducted individual training in the use of this scheduling software.

- Making MACRO TAT documents available on the local USAID/M intranet web page. These included all quarterly reports, the first year's annual report, workshop documents, and special presentations made by MACRO TAT staff.
- Creating a glossary of M&E "AID Speak" terminology from the CDIE web page to link to the USAID/M Intranet web page for quick reference by the M&E Specialists and RPMs.

M&E Reference Center

Reference Center activities included:

- Adding new resources to the Center in preparation for the M&E workshop.
- Coordinating documentation center services with REMADOC, a center involved in consolidating information from a consortium of documentation centers, including schools, university departments, and institutions which have similar documentation centers.
- Receiving, downloading, cataloging, and circulating documents from the World Bank, the *Banque Central des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*, and CDIE.
- Updating and searching the MICRO CDS/ISIS document database, including the conduct of keyword reviews to eliminate redundant entries, updating of catalogued entries, and addition of M&E and R4 support documents received by the MACRO TAT.
- Maintaining contact with the new coordinator for the Reseau Malien de la Documentation who is touching base with all major documentation centers in Bamako.
- Updating and circulating recent lists of M&E documents housed in the documentation center. The Center's bibliographic database currently boasts over 450 records.
- Updating a final version of the catalog to be turned over to the Program Office with the Micro CDS/ISIS database

TA in Information Presentation

In this area, the I/C Officer and other TAT team members:

- Provided the new webmaster with content for the Mission Intranet Web Page, including a brochure completed for D&G that became part of their start-up Web Page.
- Provided technical assistance and advice on the design of the USAID/Mali Intranet pages in collaboration with the Business Center.
- Created informative maps generated especially for the Intranet Web page to be included in each SOTs Information Outreach Plan.
- Trained Mission sub-webmasters in web page development.
- Assisted teams teams in updating their Intranet pages.
- Assisted the Economics Officer at the Embassy with presentation equipment for a workshop.
- Developed and conducted a presentation on Managing for Results to UNDP representatives from West Africa.

Assisted the Youth Team and the Food for Peace Office in setting up video equipment for their workshops.

G. Sustainability

As discussed earlier in this report, the USAID/Mali mission staff feel competent enough to perform their own Monitoring and Evaluation functions. They do not feel they require the services of a contract to do this for them now that an MIS is in place. This is a happy event and proactive on the part of the mission.

With the conclusion of the Macro contract at the end of Option Year One, the TAT prepared, submitted, and implemented a close-out plan incorporating the following activities: inventory of all software and equipment and recommendations for its disposal, audit of MACRO TAT's financial accounts, a timeline of events remaining in the 98/99 workplan and the reporting schedule.

The Information and Communication (I/C) Officer also prepared a project closeout Compact Disk (CD) which serves to supplement the hard copy information submitted for project closeout. The CD contains five categories of TAT reporting information based on the original contract objectives:

- Performance Monitoring reports
- Results Review and information
- Annual reports
- Short informational reports
- Annual workplans

All documents and deliverables (quarterly reports, annual reports, workplans, and various reports and presentations produced by TAT) were saved as HTML documents, edited and formatted for easy retrieval.

V. Project Operations - A Review of Project Experience

A. Evolution of Staff

The Chief of Party arrived in Mali two months after the contract was signed. She was removed from the project with the option year renewal. The reasons stated were that the mission did not appreciate her leadership style or work performance. The M&E Position originally scheduled to be contracted out to a local firm was filled by an expatriate who later became the Team Leader. The original team also included an Economist, which was changed to a Macro Economist at the request of the Mission Director. An appropriate candidate was then recruited and the position filled four months after project start up. The MIS/GIS Specialist remained the same and the Information and Communications Specialist was replaced by an I/C Officer six months after project start up. The Team Leader, Macro Economist, MIS/GIS Specialist and the I/C Officer remained in their respective positions up until the end of the project.

Two support staff positions, an office manager and an intern, provided both secretarial and administrative support to the professional staff. In addition to these posts were two drivers

one for each of the project vehicles. Personnel support was garnered from AMM, a local firm with a subsidiary in the United States.

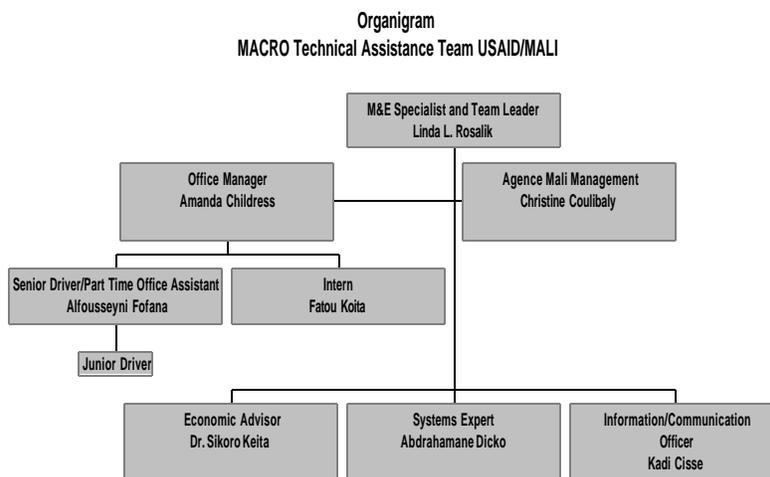


Figure 1. MACRO TAT Organigram

B. Technical Assistance

The project benefited from technical assistance provided by its staff from headquarters and consultants recruited from related MACRO projects. Technical assistance ranged from home office backstopping to consultants that conducted M&E workshops, to a long-term consultant contracted to construct an MIS. The consultants and staff are listed below:

- Patricia Haggerty
- Alfred Schultz
- Christopher Penders
- Raymond Gervais
- Paul Mundy
- Yvon Porcheron
- Clifton Franklin

Wherever possible, the project used technical assistance from available local talent and used its own management and technical staff to supervise and monitor the quality of assistance provided.

C. USAID Management

1. Relationship with the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative

The project strove to develop and maintain collegial and productive working relationships with USAID management staff at all levels. The key relationship was with the project's Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), since the COTR is involved directly and indirectly with all aspects of the MACRO Technical Assistance Team project. At a

critical point in the project the Mission Director became involved with the project thus lending support to MACRO International, Inc. in the replacement of the Chief of Party.

The turnover in staff created a different set of expectations by the mission of the team, therefore, the terms of the contract were re-evaluated. As mentioned above, the terms of the original contract were difficult to define and operationalize. Out of this new relationship, five results were agreed upon as the goals of the MACRO project and thus the Technical Assistance Team concept was born.

2. Contract Administration

Being housed in the mission itself helps in terms of contract turnaround time. The MACRO Technical Assistance Team has benefited greatly from the ability to communicate with the Contracting Officer on the USAID network. This made relations with the office in Abidjan convenient, and proximity in the mission to the new CO has greatly improved these relations.

Due to an error in faxing, the CO's office accidentally sent the letter opting not to extend the contract through option period to the wrong agency. The letter was sent to one of MACRO's competitors who then forwarded the letter to the appropriate person at MACRO.

D. Management Controls

1. Workplans

Each year a new work-plan and corresponding budget were developed. The first year's work plan corresponded to each of the specialists and what they were expected to achieve. The second year's work plan was based on the five results listed in section IV.

2. Project Accounting

The information necessary to satisfy USAID's project accounting needs was automatically generated by MACRO as part of the normal process of receiving and paying invoices. The invoices were disaggregated by charge code so that the COTR could differentiate between consultant, local staff and procurement charges. The costs associated with the MACRO accounting system were part of the project's overhead costs.

MACRO's financial specialist provided the Team Leader with monthly expense reports to monitor expenditures and cash flow. Errors were corrected and adjusted on subsequent expense reports and vouchers.

VI. Lessons Learned

A project with objectives as ambitious and varied as this project will, at its close out, have several lessons learned to share. The following list is by no means comprehensive, but includes the most pertinent points.

- Establish a unified voice between the mission director, deputy director and team leaders
- Set clear objectives and a defined timeline at the beginning of the project and revisit them regularly
- Define roles and responsibilities for each team member
- Set personal and team expectations and share them with the players

The MACRO Team had a difficult time trying to decide who should be served first, the largest contributor? Furthermore, how do you serve a client that reluctantly wants your help?

This is not the only project of its kind to experience these problems, and the lessons learned from this experience should be incorporated into the design of any future programs to prevent this situation.