

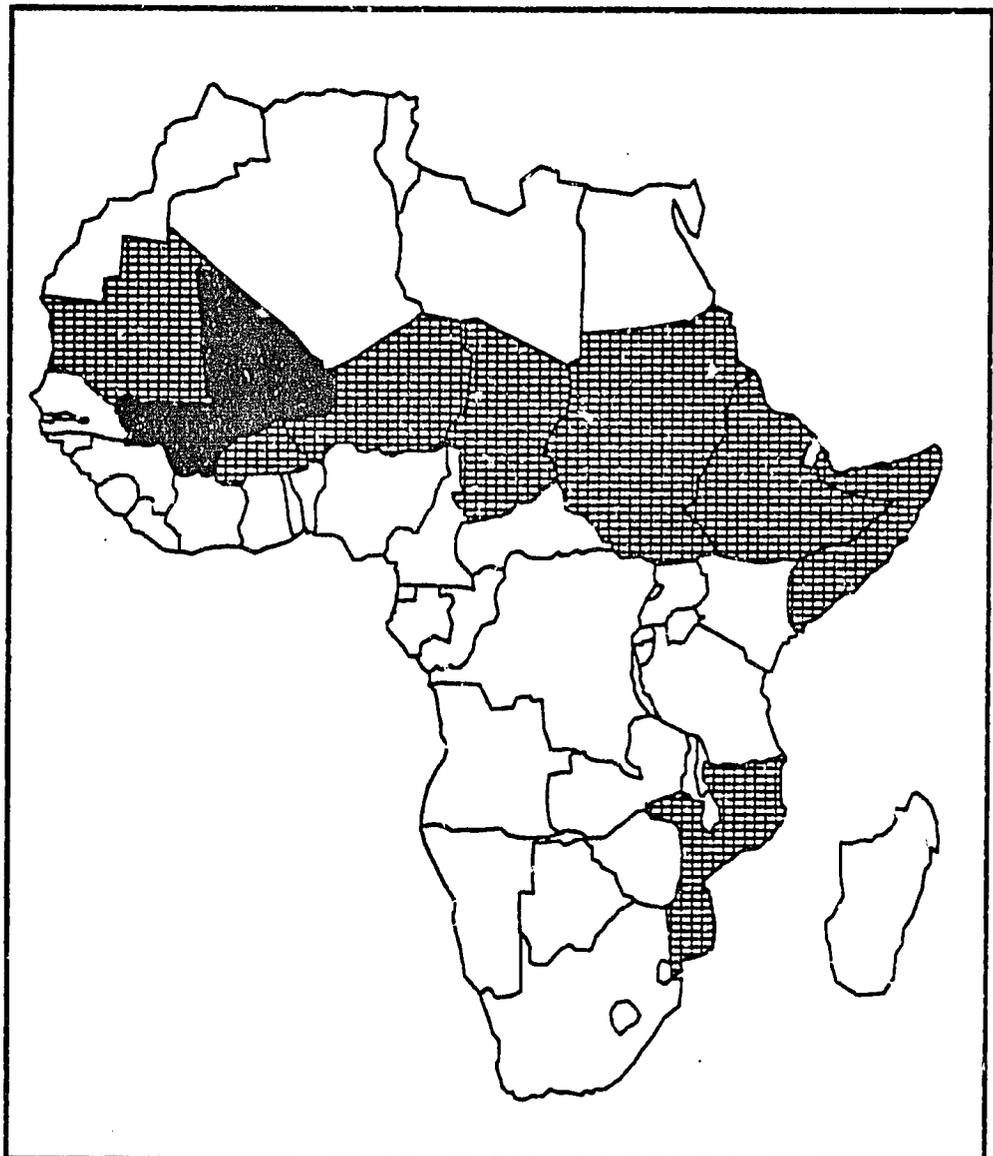
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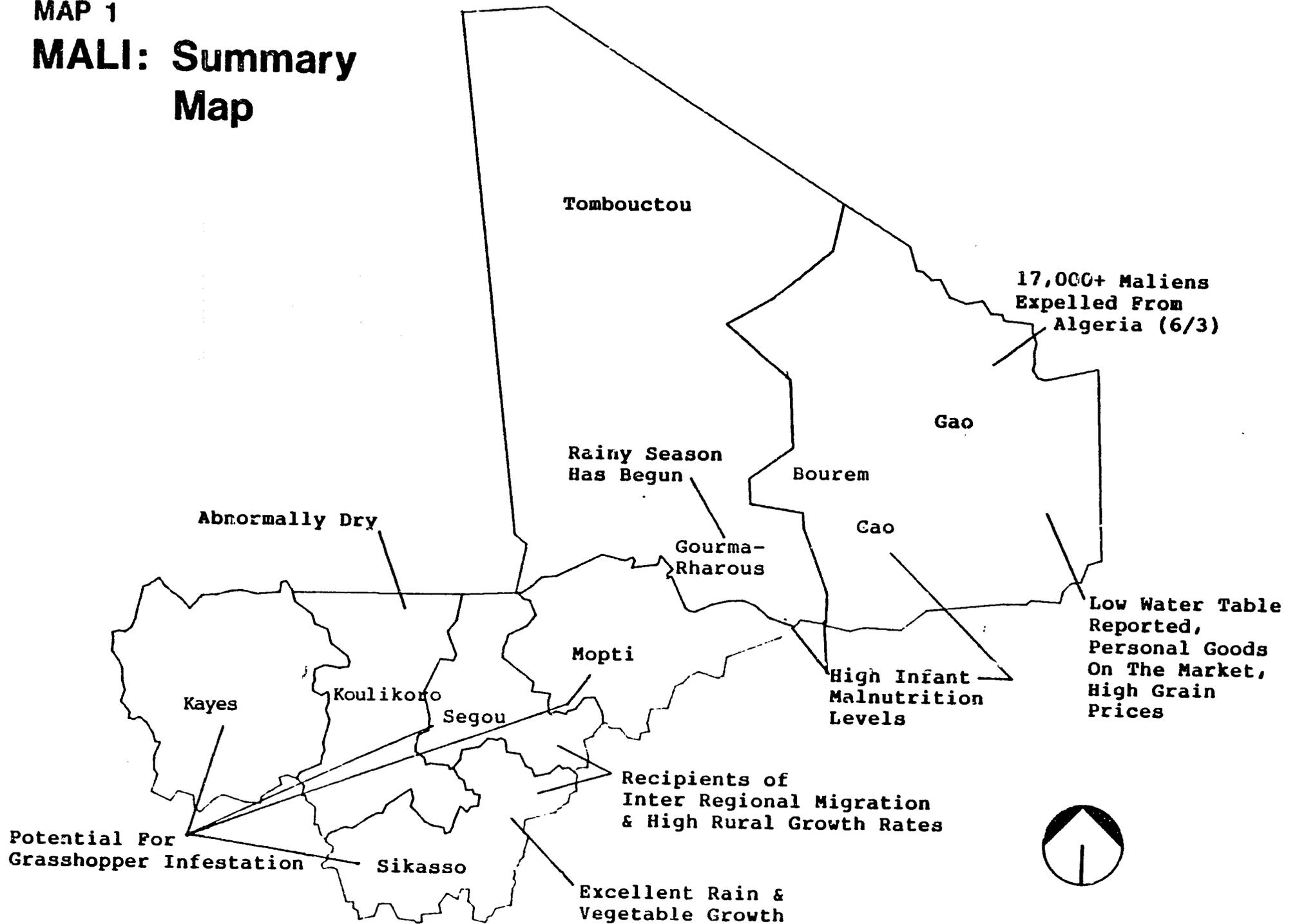
FEWS Country Report

MALI



Africa Bureau
U.S. Agency
for International
Development

MAP 1
MALI: Summary
Map



Famine Early Warning System Country Report

MALI

Recovery and Risk

Prepared for the
Africa Bureau of the
U.S. Agency for
International Development

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INTRODUCTION

This is the second of a series of monthly reports issued by the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) on Mali. It is designed to provide decisionmakers with current information and analysis on existing and potential nutrition emergency situations. Each situation identified is described in terms of geographical extent and the number of people involved, or at-risk, and the proximate causes insofar as they have been discerned.

Use of the term "at-risk" to identify vulnerable populations is problematical since no generally agreed upon definition exists. Yet it is necessary to identify or "target" populations in-need or "at-risk" in order to determine appropriate forms and levels of intervention. Thus for the present, until a better usage can be found, FEWS reports will employ the term "at-risk" to mean...

...those persons lacking sufficient food, or resources to acquire sufficient food, to avert a nutritional crisis, i.e., a progressive deterioration in their health or nutritional condition below the status quo and who, as a result, require specific intervention to avoid a life-threatening situation.

Perhaps of most importance to decisionmakers, the process underlying the deteriorating situation is highlighted by the FEWS effort, hopefully with enough specificity and forewarning to permit alternative intervention strategies to be examined and implemented. Food assistance strategies are key to famine avoidance. However, other types of intervention can be of major importance both in the short-term and in the long-run, including medical, transport, storage, economic development policy change, etc.

Where possible, food needs estimates are included in the FEWS reports. It is important to understand, however, that no direct relation exists between numbers of persons at-risk and the quantity of food assistance needed. This is because famines are the culmination of slow-onset disaster processes which can be complex in the extreme.

The food needs of individual populations at-risk depend upon when in the disaster process identification is made and the extent of its cumulative impact on the individuals concerned. Further, the amount of food assistance required, whether from internal or external sources, depends upon a host of considerations. Thus the food needs estimates presented periodically in FEWS reports should not be interpreted to mean food aid needs, e.g., as under PL480 or other donor programs.

FEWS is operated by AID's Office of Technical Resources in the Bureau for Africa in cooperation with numerous USG and other organizations.

SUMMARY

There are 420,000 people at-risk in Mali. As Mali prepares to enter the "soudure" period (the normal pre-harvest period of food shortages), there are mixed signals concerning post-famine recovery. To the south, food prices appear to have rebounded from famine-period levels, and planting and land preparation appear to be proceeding normally. June and July rains have been very good and satellite images show far more vegetation than in 1985. By contrast, the north still has water problems, particularly a low water table, personal assets are still being liquidated, and out-migration continues. Two new situations have also arisen: A grasshopper infestation threat (particularly in the Senegal River Basin and Tri-State areas) and the expulsion of "refugees" from Algeria.

Issues

- o A severe infestation of grasshoppers may occur this year. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has accepted responsibility for insect control; however, the situation should be closely monitored until a successful eradication campaign is completed.
- o Some 7,000 displaced Malians have been expelled from Algeria and the number is expected to grow to 17,000. To date, no food or transportation problems have been reported.
- o Northern Mali still appears to have significant drought/famine related problems.

Key July Events

- o The volume of rains will determine germination and early plant development, particularly in western and central Mali.

AGRICULTURAL

The rains in Mali progressed northward in June to include central and southern Mali, and in early July had reached areas as far north as the city of Tombouctou. The rainfall for June and early July has been better than average. The satellite vegetation imagery shows far more growth in the south than was seen last year. Northern Kayes, on the other hand, has been drier than expected. A problem could develop in this region if rainfall does not improve.

Although the prognosis for this year's agricultural production is favorable so far, there is concern about the possibility of another grasshopper infestation. There are reports of grasshoppers in high numbers along the Senegal River and in the Tri-State area. Rains favorable for grasshopper hatching started early in Mali

this year. The FAO is assuming responsibility for insect control in Mali through its pan-Sahelian campaign. Due to high levels of pesticide residue from previous years, the FAO and USAID are testing alternatives.

Tombouctou is better prepared for the agricultural season than last year. Abundant livestock are reported grazing in the inland delta of the Niger River. Cultivation is taking place at Lake Faguibine to the west.

POPULATION AT-RISK

The population at-risk in Mali is estimated at 420,000, of which 98,000 are displaced people. The months before the harvest are the most difficult for this population; this is the period during which they are most in need of food assistance. Nomads and farmers are better prepared this year than last for this period of "soudure". There is also an abundance of food aid available for distribution and large amounts are being pre-positioned.

The situation in the northern region of Gao, however, is reported to have worsened and greater detail is being sought. Additional food assistance is required there for the nomadic and sedentary populations. LICROSS is operating feeding centers in the Gao Region and is implementing the emergency assistance. USAID has requested an additional 400MT of vegetable oil and 500MT of nonfat dried milk in addition to the 7700MT of corn, 420MT of nonfat dried milk and 62MT of vegetable oil already programmed. World Vision is distributing 2700MT of the corn and the remaining 5000MT of corn are for security stocks.

Problems in the north might abate if current rainfall trends continue. The latest reports describe water tables as very low, with wells drying up one to two months earlier than anticipated; the number of displaced people has increased; cereal prices are high; the sale of personal items in the market indicates a lack of purchasing power among the local population. Transport within the region of Gao is limited e.g. Between Gao and Ansongo, an area requiring food aid, there is only a dirt track that will deteriorate rapidly during the rainy season.). Flooding of the Niger River has destroyed one-third of the rice crop in Ansongo and Bourem.

In Tombouctou, CARE has been distributing corn and sorghum as part of its free distribution and food-for-work programs. Medecins Sans Frontieres and UNICEF are also operating supplemental feeding programs in the region with USAID assistance.

Other areas began receiving food assistance in May and June to enable the residents to farm during the period when they are most vulnerable, the "soudure". SECAMA, a Protestant organization, is distributing food aid in the region of Mopti, where the population of the Dogon plateau is considered especially at-risk due to limited soil and water resources to feed itself. CARE is distributing food aid in Segou and Koulikoro. The cercles of Nara and Kolokani, in Koulikoro Region experienced a grasshopper plague last year that destroyed half their crop leaving them with limited resources. Stromme, a Norwegian organization, is distributing food assistance in Kayes.

DISPLACED PEOPLE

FEWS estimates on displaced people remain unchanged from FEWS Country Report #1, except for an increase in the Cercle of Kidal. On May 15th, the National Committee for Assistance to Drought Victims (CNAVS) announced that 4000 Malians (80% men and 20% women and children), mostly Toureg nomads, had been expelled from Algeria and were temporarily stranded in the Cercle. The Government of Mali (GRM) expected the number to grow to 17,000 soon after the Muslim holiday of Ramadan (June 9 or 10). A June 3rd report notes that by then the number of "refugees" had risen to 7,000; however, only 2000 were still in Kidal. UNDP and UNICEF are providing assistance and transport and food is not reported to be a problem for the "refugees". Even so, childhood nutritional surveys in Kidal show that 15% of children, between 6 months and 6 years of age, are malnourished.

A survey on displaced people by the GRM (January 1985) identifies those populations most affected by the drought. The largest number of displaced people were found in the region of Mopti (60,863), then Gao (13,748), Sikasso (8,351), Segou (8,134) and Tombouctou (6,905). (See Map 1 for locations.) The predominant age group of this population 41% was found to be elderly men (more than 45 years of age). Furthermore, as many as one-third of the women were female heads-of-households, a larger proportion than in the population at-large.

The survey found that a majority of the displaced people were nomadic pastoralists and fishermen; not surprising since these two livelihoods were severely affected by the drought. Some 36% were nomadic pastoralists of Toureg and Peulh ethnicity. The Bozos, who earn their livelihood by fishing, represented 11% of the total. The rest of the displaced people were farmers -- Bambaras (3%), Sonrais (12%) from the northern Gao region, Dogons (7%) and Sarakoles (1%).

PRICES

The effect of the drought on real prices for food items in Bamako appears to be over. Meat and fish prices fell significantly toward the end of 1984, reflecting the sale of livestock at low prices due to the high levels of animal mortality and lack of available pasture (see Graph 1). After rising in early 1984, the prices of grain and milk, butter and oil dropped again in late 1984 and early 1985. The price of grain, in Mali as a whole, is reported (FEWS/Tulane, 6/15/86) to be abnormally low for this time of year due to underestimation of production and subsequent high levels of grain imports into the country. (See Graphs 2 and 3.) The GRM has instituted an import tax on rice to support domestic prices.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION

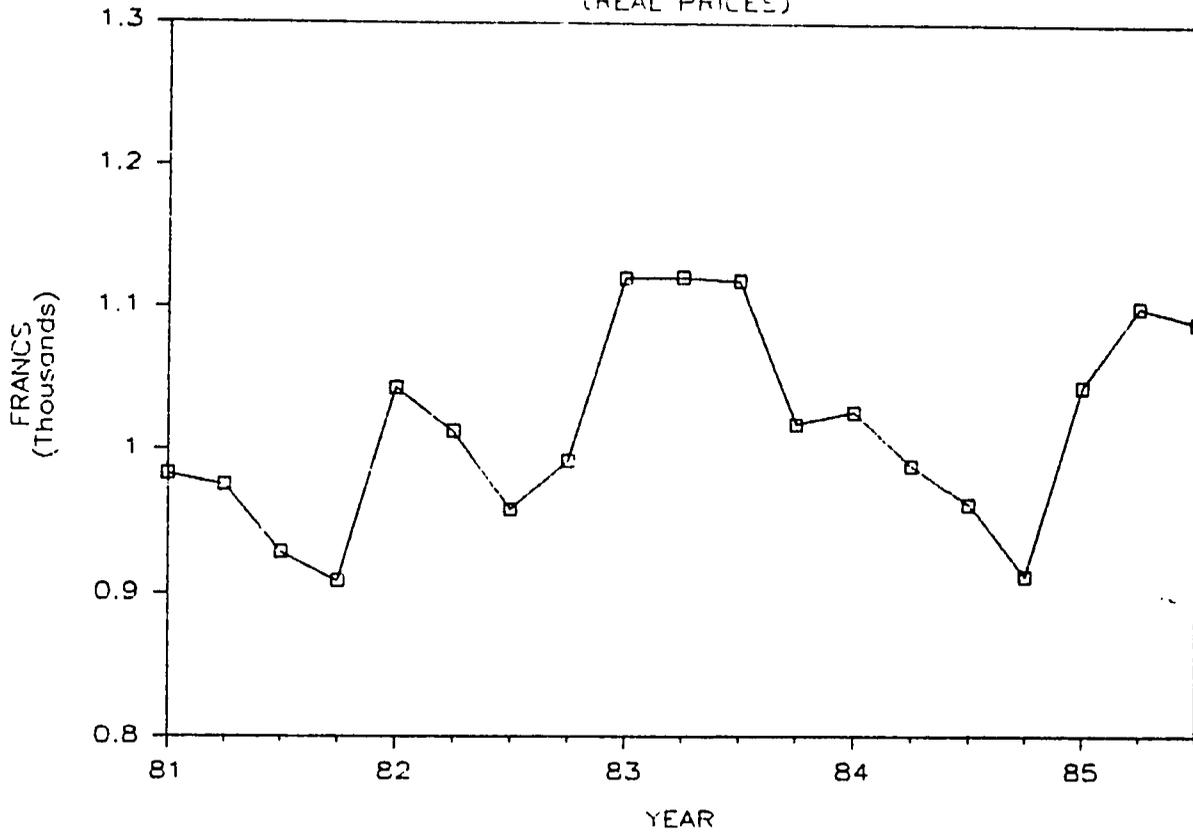
Some long-term effects of drought and desertification are occurring in the north, particularly in the Tombouctou area -- effects which have important implications for relief and rehabilitation. Mali recently has been a food deficit country. Its per capita grain production has been declining for some time. In 1980, per capita grain production was 189 kilograms as compared to 122 in 1985. Additional environmental constraints will exacerbate the problem. A Washington Post article (May 25, 1986) reports that satellite pictures show 75% of the lakes, ponds, and swamps in Mali mapped as permanent bodies of water in the 1950s are now dry.

The situation is most serious in the Tombouctou region where the contrast between 1979 and 1985 is particularly evident. In 1979, the cereal production was 27,000MT, but only 6,000MT in 1985; the livestock mortality rate between 1982 and 1985 is estimated as being between 50 and 80%; agricultural productivity is decreasing even in productive farming lands as a result of out-migration and the general population's weakened state (as a result of health problems and the lack of sufficient food). If desertification and drought continue in the north, careful research will be needed on whether any rehabilitation is possible in those northern regions or whether it is likely to cause further erosion and damage to the environment.

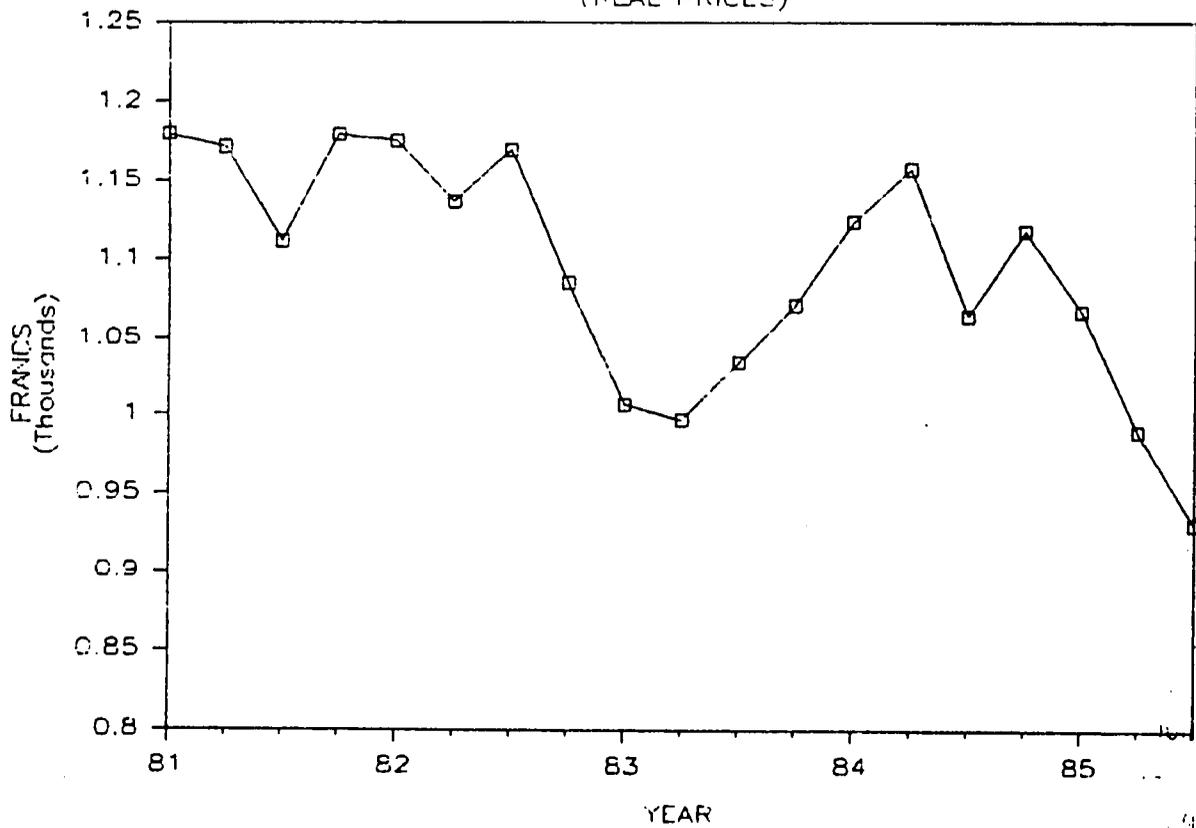
Inter-regional migration is an adaptive coping strategy for Malians. There is a major re-distribution of the population from the northern regions (in particular Kayes, Tombouctou and Gao) into the south (Bamako and the regions of Sikasso or Segou) due to desertification and drought. Some 417,000 people migrated to the rural areas of Sikasso and Segou regions between 1976 and 1985 (see Table 1), while 1,044,000 people have left the rural areas of the other regions.

Another migration trend is for people to leave rural areas and move to their regional capitals, or larger towns in their region, or to move to the cities in the southern regions. (See Table 2.) Growth rates in rural areas are close to zero or negative, except for the Sikasso and Segou regions. In Segou and Sikasso, the growth rates for the rural areas are 4.5% and 4.1% respectively, and are well above the national average growth rate. These figures reflect both in-migration and internal growth rates. Urban areas (with the exception of Kayes and Segou Regions) show very high growth rates of 6-11%.

Graph 1
BAMAKO MEAT AND FISH PRICES
(REAL PRICES)



Graph 2
BAMAKO GRAIN PRICES
(REAL PRICES)



Graph 3
BAMAKO MILK, BUTTER AND OIL PRICES
(REAL PRICES)

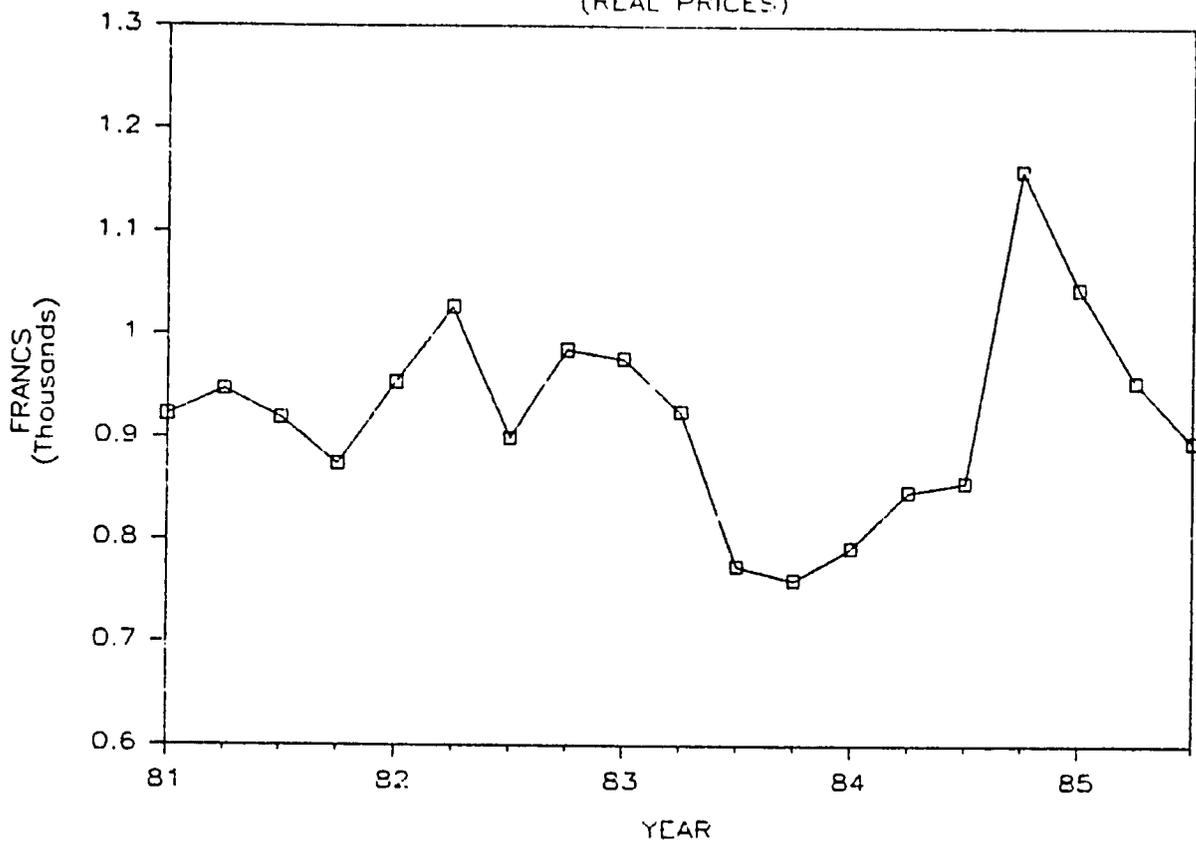


Table 1
Rural Population Estimates and Migration

Region	1976 Census ('000)	1985 Survey ('000)	Growth Rate r (%)	"Migrants" ('000)	1986 Est. ('000)
Kayes	787.79	833.89	0.669%	-174.1	839.49
Koulikoro	875.66	970.21	1.206%	-144.6	981.98
Sikasso	995.89	1,410.71	4.097%	188.4	1,469.70
Segou	938.55	1,373.45	4.479%	228.8	1,436.37
Mopti	1,032.62	1,036.98	0.050%	-291.1	1,037.49
Tombouctou	453.33	398.47	-1.518%	-190.8	392.47
Gao	332.88	196.45	-6.204%	-243.6	184.63
Bamako	-	-	-	-	-
Mali	5,416.72	6,220.16	1.627%	.0	6,322.20

Table 2
Urban Population Estimates and Migration

Region	1976 Census ('000)	1985 Survey ('000)	Growth Rate r (%)	"Migrants" ('000)	1986 Est. ('000)
Kayes	101.65	89.69	-1.473%	-42.4	88.38
Koulikoro	74.43	124.50	6.052%	36.5	132.27
Sikasso	116.56	262.07	9.532%	138.3	288.28
Segou	162.64	209.07	2.954%	6.1	215.34
Mopti	125.52	319.43	10.989%	195.0	356.53
Tombouctou	51.69	127.14	10.589%	74.8	141.34
Gao	45.93	111.07	10.389%	64.1	123.23
Bamako	429.51	702.33	5.785%	191.6	744.16
Mali	1,107.93	1,945.30	6.623%	.0	2,078.49