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# MALI YOUTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Final: May 18, 2010**

**Submitted in response to:**

LWA NO. GDG-A-00-03-00010-00 Equip 3:

*Earning, Learning and Skill Development Opportunities for Out-of-School Children and Youth*

**Submitted by:**

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

**April 30, 2010**

**Revised May 18, 2010**

**Educational Quality  
Improvement Program 3**

Engaging and Preparing  
Youth for Work, Civil Society,  
and Family Life

## List of Acronyms

**AJA**- Association Jeunesse Action Mali  
**ANPE**- Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi  
**APEJ**- Agence pour la Promotion d'Emploi des Jeunes  
**CAF**- Centre d'Alphabétisation Fonctionnel  
**CAFé**- Centre d'Alphabétisation Féminin  
**CAP** Centre d'Animation Pédagogique  
**CAP**- Certificat Aptitude Professionnel  
**CNR-ENF** Centre Nationale De Ressource Pour L'Education Non-Formelle  
**CED** Centre d'Education pour le Développement  
**Danida**- Danish International Development Agency  
**DEF**- diplôme d'étude fondamentale  
**DNJ**- Division Nationale des Jeunes  
**EFP**- Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle  
**FAFPA**- Fonds d'Appui a la Formation Professionnelle et L'Apprentissage  
**GREAT**- Groupe de Recherche en Economie Appliquée et Théorique  
**GER**- Gross Enrollment Rates  
**GDP**- Gross Domestic Product  
**GOM**- Government of Mali  
**GTZ**- Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit  
**IICEM**- Initiatives Intégrées pour la Croissance Économique au Mali  
**ILO**- International Labor Organisation  
**LuxDev**- Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation  
**NGO**- Non Governmental Organization  
**PAJM**- Programme d'Appui à la Jeunesse du Mali  
**PDY** - Programme Denmisennin Yiriwaton (Programme pour l'épanouissement des adolescents)  
**UNICEF**- United Nations Children's Fund  
**UNESCO**- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
**UFAE**- Unités de Formation et d'Appui aux Entreprises

# EDC/EQUIP3 MALI YOUTH ASSESSMENT

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Purpose of the Assessment*

From March 19 through April 23, 2010, the USAID/ EQUIP3 program conducted a rapid assessment of Malian youth. This report presents the results of the assessment in the form of a snapshot of Malian youth – in particular, those with little or no education – and the policies, programs, economic, and employment situation that relates to them. The findings from this assessment provide the basis for recommended youth program strategy options that will be further developed and presented to USAID/Mali in a subsequent project design document.

### *Political, Economic, and Employment Context*

Mali has gained considerable attention from the international community for maintaining impressive political stability, in comparison to its often politically tumultuous West African neighbors. After gaining independence from France in 1961 amid relative calm, Malians lived under a military dictatorship for the next 30 years; and since 1991, have taken steps towards a multi-party democracy.

Historically, Malian students and youth have played an active role in pushing Mali's political reform process via periodic student strikes and demonstrations. In 1991, student-led, anti-government rioting gained momentum among government workers and led to the arrest of President Traoré on March 26, 1991, marking a bloodless coup d'état and another significant surge towards political reform in Mali.

Mali's political stability is supported by the predominant use of Bambara, one of 13 nationally recognized languages in Mali. While French is the official language, Bambara is the common language of the marketplace and is spoken by nearly 80% of the population comprised of several ethnic groups residing across Mali's 8 administrative regions.

Unfortunately, Mali's relative political stability and inter-ethnic harmony is sometimes disrupted. An influx of economic refugees fleeing turmoil after the 2001 coup in the Côte d'Ivoire brought disruption in the south. In the north, the Tuaregs, who have traditionally sought more autonomy, began armed attacks that led to clashes with the military. Despite signed peace treaties, renewed fighting broke out in August and September 2007, in which a number of Malian troops were killed and around 30 taken hostage.

In addition, there are persistent signs of activity of violent extremism, some of it related to Islamic extremism and AQIM (Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb), among other groups.<sup>1</sup> Signs indicate international connections between various groups engaged in different activities such as drug and arms smuggling with products originating in Latin America, transiting through North Africa to Europe with northern regions of Mali serving as a drop point and link to desert

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<sup>1</sup> Counter Extremism and Development, USAID 2009

transportation networks.<sup>2</sup> If this project works in northern regions as planned, particular care will need to be given in terms of branding, presentation and outreach in addition to design. While political and violent strains of Islam are not generally seen as compatible with mainstream religious practice in Mali, a small population, likely including youth, that are receptive to this way of thinking, appear to be potential recruits for extremist groups. Some of this recent struggle reflects older north-south conflicts in Mali, including issues of ethnic and clan access to resources and political control.

To address this heightened security situation, USAID/Mali and US Embassy Bamako are focusing on ways to utilize the resources available across each U.S. Government agency to create a comprehensive approach to the problem. In addition, they hope to impress upon the wider international community the need for a significant increase in resources to northern Mali.<sup>3</sup>

Mali is one of the five poorest countries in the world. As of 2005, 59% of Malians lived on less than a dollar a day.<sup>4</sup> The majority of Malians survive on animal husbandry or the production of subsistence crops or cereals, such as corn, millet, sorghum and rice. The combination of agriculture, forestry, livestock and fishing make up 37.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP). A government priority is to increase and diversify agricultural production and so contribute to food security. Food security is always a concern for Mali, especially for communities in the arid northern regions of the country.<sup>5</sup>

The constraints to economic development are numerous and include the high cost of capital and public services, poor basic infrastructure, low labor productivity, weak local saving rates and the landlocked nature of the country. Mali remains heavily dependent on foreign aid and is among the most indebted countries in the world. Foreign investment in Mali is primarily through foreign loans. Exports remain dominated by gold, cotton, and livestock.

Mali is also one of the fastest growing countries in the world; roughly half of Mali's population is under the age of 18<sup>6</sup>; and youth as a whole make up 69% of the population.<sup>7</sup> The Government of Mali considers youth employability as one of its top priorities, recognizing that high levels of youth unemployment leads to disaffection due to non-fulfillment of personal and productive potential, thus producing a demographic group that is a potential political and social risk factor. In response, the government has been creating and supporting numerous youth employment and skills training programs and is forming a committee on youth and development to continue work on this issue<sup>8</sup>.

The job market in Mali includes a modern sector and an unstructured informal sector. Most of the jobs are in the informal agriculture sector where they are being created through small enterprises and self-employment, including both the subsistence and the small commercial

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<sup>2</sup> New York Times April 5, 2010

<sup>3</sup> USAID/DCHA/CMM ASSESSMENT: NORTHERN MALI

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, unpublished

<sup>5</sup> The Labour Market in Mali, GREAT Groupe de Recherche en Economie Appliquée et Théorique Abdramane TRAORE: Posted to GPN on November 13, 2003)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mali\\_statistics.html#68](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mali_statistics.html#68) accessed April 21

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Youth and Sports, Technical Note on Mali's Youth Policies, September 2009

<sup>8</sup> Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports, (2009). *Rapport General des Assises Nationales de la Jeunesse*

farming sectors. Many youth are involved both in family agriculture and small scale livelihood activities within the informal economy, in rural areas and small towns, and increasingly, in the bigger cities such as Bamako. After the farming season, youth tend to migrate to urban areas in search of 'quick cash.' Rural youth report being marginalized by their urban peers and report that given the opportunity they would much rather earn viable livelihoods in their home villages.

### ***Key Findings and Program Implications***

The assessment findings are based on demographic, economic and employment profiles of Malian youth examined through document research, key informant interviews and field visits. Given the wide variation among Malian youth ages 14-25, the assessment focused primarily on un-schooled or out-of-school youth with marginal literacy skills.

An over-arching finding is that there is a consensus among rural and urban youth and other stakeholders, including government officials, donor representatives, and private youth serving organizations, that primary attention should be given to youth living in rural villages and peri-urban areas in an attempt to reduce migration from rural areas to urban centers. Youth want to earn, and given the opportunity, they want to achieve successful livelihoods in their home villages. They are entrepreneurial and able to identify the inputs and knowledge they need to reach their goals, which are predominantly in the agro-pastoral sector.

Another finding is that youth are forming associations and through these associations, they are making contributions to their communities as well as raising money. They seek literacy and management skills to improve their associations and their entrepreneurial activities. They emphasize literacy in particular as a skill they need. They are ripe for attention and programming relevant to their needs and desires.

This rapid assessment also found that there is an active skills training system in Mali, with two predominant training models serving undereducated youth. One model is heavily subsidized by the government and provides skills training in vocations such as carpentry, metal work, electricity, sewing, hairdressing, and fabric dying, in classrooms and workshops. This model rarely results in employment or the achievement of a livelihood based upon the learned skill. This is due in part to the fact that youth need additional business and life skills education, also known as work readiness skills, to transition and succeed in work.

The second model is the atelier: apprenticeship in the shop of a carpenter, metalworker, or other tradesperson. This model is more likely to result in long term employment. While a shift from a training mentality to a livelihoods mentality needs to occur, both models provide a firm basis upon which to build.

In the agro-pastoral sector, models that enable youth to farm fish and chickens and to raise garden crops for market are being tested around the country; and while both the government and NGOs are supporting youth entrepreneurship within this sector, missing elements include links to value chains and broader markets, as well as the business and life skills education that enable a youth to turn a small concept into a viable livelihood. These are the areas the project should focus on.

The government's role in subsidizing much of the skills training provided across the country means the government will play a vital role in leveraging change in the youth sector. Any youth focused project will need to work closely with the government and the other major donors, such as the World Bank Mali division, which is highly invested in this area and is currently working with the Malian Ministry of Youth and Sports to launch a new youth support initiative, to re-conceptualize the outcomes desired and leverage policy to help make them happen.

## II. ASSESSMENT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

In March, 2010, USAID/Mali requested that the USAID EQUIP3 program conduct a rapid assessment and design mission to deepen findings documented in the limited existing analyses of Malian youth (ages 15-24 years old): their literacy and numeracy achievements, labor market opportunities, training and employment linkages, and related initiatives supported by the Government of Mali and other donors. The assessment took place over a six-week period (3 weeks in-country) from March 19 through April 30, 2010, culminating in a two-and-a-half hour briefing with USAID/Mali. Their feedback was incorporated into this assessment report.

This report presents a snapshot of the most disadvantaged sector of Malian youth—those with no or little education—including their economic situation, and the policies, programs designed to impact this hard-to-reach population. The findings from this assessment will provide the basis for recommended youth program strategy options that will be further developed and presented to USAID/Mali in a subsequent project design document.

### *Assessment Objectives*

The following assessment objectives were developed by USAID/Mali in collaboration with EDC.

**Objective 1:** Identify the essential characteristics of Malian Out-of-School youth groups and define target groups and geographic areas for the Malian Support to Out-of-School Youth Program;

**Objective 2:** Profile Malian labor market demands and trends in selected geographic regions and economic sectors;

**Objective 3** Create an analytical snapshot of the existing policies and institutional capacity (strengths, weaknesses, gaps) in public and private organizations providing education, training and employment services to Malian youth;

**Objective 4:** Recommend key elements of the Mali Support to Out-of -School Youth Program: approach, scope, geographic areas of intervention, targeted ages, and expected results.

### III. ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### III.1 Process

The Assessment took place during 6 consecutive weeks, from March 22 through April 30, 2010, and was organized around the stages of work described below.

- **Week One, March 22-26: Assessment Start-up**
  - Assessment team meetings in Newton, MA, and via teleconferencing
  - Review and revision of scopes of work
  - Refine tools and protocols
  - Gather and review key background documents
  - Refine assessment design in consultation with USAID/Mali
- **Week Two, March 29 – April 2: Finalize In-Country Assessment Plan**
  - Assemble Malian team
  - Schedule Bamako meetings and field trip itineraries
  - Finalize assessment design based on feedback from USAID
- **Week Three, April 5 -10: In-Country Assessment Begins, Bamako**
  - Clarify assessment plan, logistics, and scheduling
  - Conduct meetings with USAID/Mali, Ministries, youth organizations/projects, donors, vocational training institutions, enterprises and employers
  - Conduct initial youth focus group and refine focus group methodology
- **Week Four, April 12-17: Field Investigations, Urban and Rural**
  - Conduct sector specific meetings with related officials, organizations and projects
  - Hold focus groups, by gender, with youth and community members
- **Week Five, April 19-23: Final Bamako Meetings and Consolidation of Findings**
  - Consolidate field trip experiences and findings
  - Conduct final interviews
  - Debrief USAID/Mali with power point presentation of main findings and implications
- **Week Six, April 25-29: Analyze Data and Write Draft Report**
  - Synthesize feedback, final interviews, additional reports
  - Write, edit, and submit draft report

#### III.2 Methodology

The team used assessment methodologies that emphasized:

- Using a structured qualitative approach for interviews and focus groups;
- Drawing on documentation for quantitative data;
- Focusing on “Appreciative Inquiry,” that is, finding what is working and building from there;

- Using experience in one stage to improve later stages so that learning informs the process; and,
- Shifting from analysis of challenges to formulating strategy options for moving forward.

Primary assessment methods included:

**Document Research:** Review of relevant Mali youth related websites and documents including associated government programs, policies, legislation, strategies, and plans; institutional and individual research and analyses papers; and NGO/Youth Group program descriptions and evaluations. Documents presenting international best practice and global experience with youth programming were also reviewed, as were news and economic reports. See the bibliography (Appendix 1) for a full listing of documents and web sites reviewed.



PAJM textile sales business

**Field Research:** The assessment team divided into two sub-teams to conduct field investigations in rural and urban zones outside of Bamako; one team visited Segou, Severe, Mopti, and San while the other team visited Bougouni and Sikasso.

**Site Visits to Current Youth Programs:** The team visited youth programs currently being implemented by governmental, nongovernmental, and private organizations to conduct interviews with staff and stakeholders and to observe and learn about promising

practices, particular challenges, and priority needs for youth support and youth focused programming. (See the daily meeting log included as Appendix 2.)

**Oral interviews:** The team interviewed government officials from the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training; the Ministry of Artisans and Tourism; the Ministry of Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Education; and other stakeholders at the national, provincial, and district levels on various aspects of youth services and youth needs. Also interviewed were non-governmental actors, including representatives from international development agencies with youth programs; international, national and regional NGOs; private-sector institutions; and youth serving organizations including the National Council of Youth at national and local levels.

**Focus Group Discussions:** Focus group methodologies were piloted in Bamako (at the Carrefour des Jeunes) and refined. Focus groups were then conducted with additional youth in Bamako (at the Maison des Jeunes), in Kola, Sikasso, Hourounema, Banakone, Mopti, and Soroba. (See the focus group protocol as Appendix 3.)



Village focus group

**Data Analysis:** The teams met daily to report and synthesize data. Field notes were compiled and circulated to share insights and observations with the entire team. Emerging theories were confirmed or challenged by subsequent informants.

**Feedback on Initial Findings:** The team shared the assessment findings and related implications via a Power Point presentation and discussion at USAID/Mali on April 21. Also shared were the potential scope, targets, and expected outcomes for the Mali Out-of-School Youth Program. USAID/Mali provided feedback which has been incorporated into the assessment report. (See the findings, implications and risk table as Appendix 4.)

### **III.3. Principles**

The Assessment activity was guided by the following principles:

**1. Develop a close working relationship with USAID/Mali.** The assessment team benefited from USAID/Mali's extensive knowledge and understanding of context-specific sectoral issues, challenges, and opportunities. The team worked closely with USAID/ Mali's offices of education and economic growth on the assessment and will continue to do so during the subsequent design of innovative youth development programming in Mali.

**2. Build on proven models.** While assessing constraints, key problems, and issues facing youth, the team focused on identifying, describing, and understanding what strategies and models have been successful, or have the potential to enhance youth education, skills training, livelihoods promotion, and employment opportunities in Mali.

**3. Listen to the voices of youth.** Youth experiences are best presented by the youth themselves; youth transformation is at the heart of the social change needed. Listening to youth's voices and youth's views within the context of overall political, social, cultural, and economic dynamics, is critical in assessing how best to shape a strategy. The team included nine Malian youth, emphasized fieldwork directly with youth, and prioritized youth input.

**4. Understand the role of the Malian government.** Recognizing that government goodwill and cooperation are necessary for successful programming, and particularly for a policy environment conducive to youth transformation, the team communicated with, and solicited input from, government offices (at all levels; national, regional, local) involved in youth development policy and programs.

**5. Focus on sustainable youth development mechanisms.** The assessment team emphasized the importance of, and assessed the potential for, youth development and support strategies which, to the extent possible, will be self financing and thus able to continue long term in the absence of donor project support.

**6. Prioritize access to services by both girls and boys (gender equity).** The team explored options for both males and females.

### **III.4 Assessment Team**

The Assessment was conducted by a core team of 10 members, which included:

- Team Leader: Bill Potter
- Youth Employment Specialist: Chris Murray
- Education Specialist: Barbara Garner
- Youth Specialist: Noah Yarrow
- Youth Assistants: Seckna Bagayogo, Mousa Kaba Coulibably, Sirirki Diarrassuba and Hawa Diallo
- Admin/Logistics Specialist: Dramane Berthé
- Translator: Jacques Poudiougou

During field investigations outside Bamako, the team received additional support from:

- Senior Youth Advisor: Souleymane Kante
- Youth Volunteers: Abdoulaye Coulibaly and Amadou Kouma (Bougouni); Yaya Berthé (Sikasso); Daouda Sidide (Ségou); and Ismaila Tolo (Mopti)
- Admin assistant: Kanny Diallo



Assessment Team (not pictured: Noah Yarrow)

## IV. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

This section covers the political and economic situation within which Malian youth are functioning.

### *IV.1 Political Overview*

Mali has gained considerable attention from the international community for maintaining impressive political stability, in comparison to its often politically tumultuous West African neighbors. After gaining independence from France in 1961 amid relative calm, Malians lived under a military dictatorship for the next 30 years; and since 1991 have taken steps towards a multi-party democracy.

Historically, Malian students and youth have played an active role in pushing Mali's political reform process via periodic student strikes and demonstrations. In 1991, student-led, anti-government rioting gained momentum among government workers and led to the arrest of President Traoré on March 26, 1991, marking a bloodless coup d'état and another significant surge towards political reform in Mali.

Mali's first democratic elections were held in the spring of 1992, with Alpha Oumar Konaré elected president. Konaré was reelected in 1997, after which Mali witnessed a peaceful transition of power in 2002, when Amadou Toumani Touré was elected president. Amadou Toumani Touré is currently serving his second five-year term after being reelected in 2007.

Mali's political stability is supported by the predominant—through certainly not the sole—use of Bambara, one of 13 recognized local languages spoken in Mali. While French is the official language, Bambara is the common language of the marketplace and is spoken by nearly 80% of the population comprised of several ethnic groups (Manding - Bambara or Bamana, Malinke - 52%, Fulani 11%, Saracolé 7%, Mianka 4%, Songhai 7%, Tamachek and Maur 5%, other 14%) residing across Mali's 8 administrative regions.

Unfortunately Mali's relative political stability and inter-ethnic harmony is sometimes disrupted. An influx of economic refugees fleeing turmoil after the 2001 coup in the Côte d'Ivoire brought disruption in the south. In the north, the Tuaregs, desert nomads who have traditionally sought more autonomy, began armed attacks in June 1990 that led to clashes with the military. In April 1992, the government and most opposing factions signed a pact to end the fighting and restore stability in the north. Its major aims are to allow greater autonomy to the north and increase government resource allocation to what has been a traditionally impoverished region.<sup>9</sup>

Despite a 1992 peace treaty, periodic clashes have continued in the northern provinces of Timbuktu and Gao. In 2006 a small-scale Tuareg rebellion again broke out. This was initially resolved later in the year with the help of Algerian mediation but a Tuareg faction calling themselves the Democratic Alliance for Change (ADC) continues an anti-government insurrection

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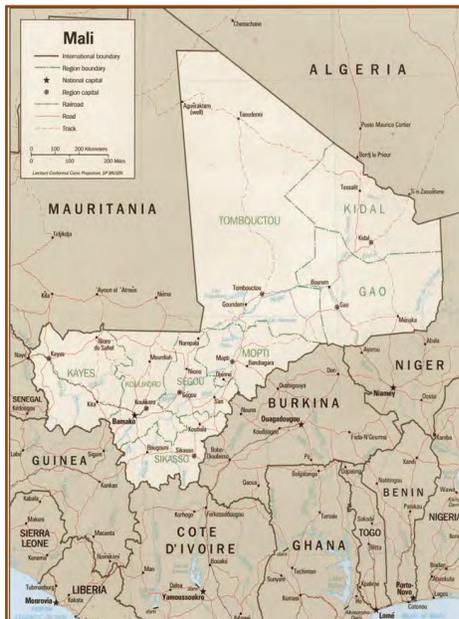
<sup>9</sup> <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2828.htm>

in the north. Renewed fighting broke out in August and September 2007, in which a number of Malian troops were killed and around 30 taken hostage.

In addition, there are persistent signs of activity of violent extremism, some of it related to Islamic extremism and AQIM (Al-Queda in the Islamic Maghreb), among other groups.<sup>10</sup> There are also signs of international connections between various groups, including drug and arms smugglers whose products originate in Latin America, transit through North Africa to Europe with northern regions of Mali serving as a drop point and link to desert transportation networks.<sup>11</sup> If this project works in northern regions as planned, particular care will need to be given in terms of branding, presentation and outreach in addition to design. While political and violent strains of Islam are not generally seen as compatible with mainstream religious practice in Mali, a small population, likely including youth who are receptive to this way of thinking, appear to be potential recruits for extremist groups. Some of this recent struggle maps onto older north-south conflicts in Mali, including issues of ethnic and clan access to resources and political control.

Extreme isolation, widespread youth unemployment, and severely insufficient access to social services are the hallmarks of the absence of the state in northern Mali. With a recent history of violent rebellion between northern tribal groups and the Bamako-based Government of Mali, there is a clear potential for grievances, resources, and opportunities to coalesce into a destabilizing mix. In an effort to address these pressing issues, USAID and US Embassy Bamako are focusing on ways to utilize the resources available across each U.S. Government agency to create a comprehensive approach to the problem. In addition, they hope to impress upon the wider international community the need for a significant increase in resources to northern Mali.<sup>12</sup>

## IV.2 Economic Overview



Mali is among the five poorest countries in the world, with 65 percent of its territory consisting of desert or semi-desert. It covers an area greater than New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas combined. It is landlocked, bounded by Algeria to the northeast, Mauritania to the northwest, Senegal to the west, Guinea to the southwest, Côte d'Ivoire to the south, Burkina Faso to the southeast, and Niger to the east.

Mali is basically an agrarian economy, with economic activity largely confined to land irrigated by the Niger River and by sporadic rainfall during the months of May through July. The majority of Malians survive on animal husbandry or the production of subsistence crops or cereals, such as corn, millet, sorghum and rice. The combination of agriculture, forestry, livestock and fishing make up 37.9%

<sup>10</sup> Counter Extremism and Development, USAID 2009

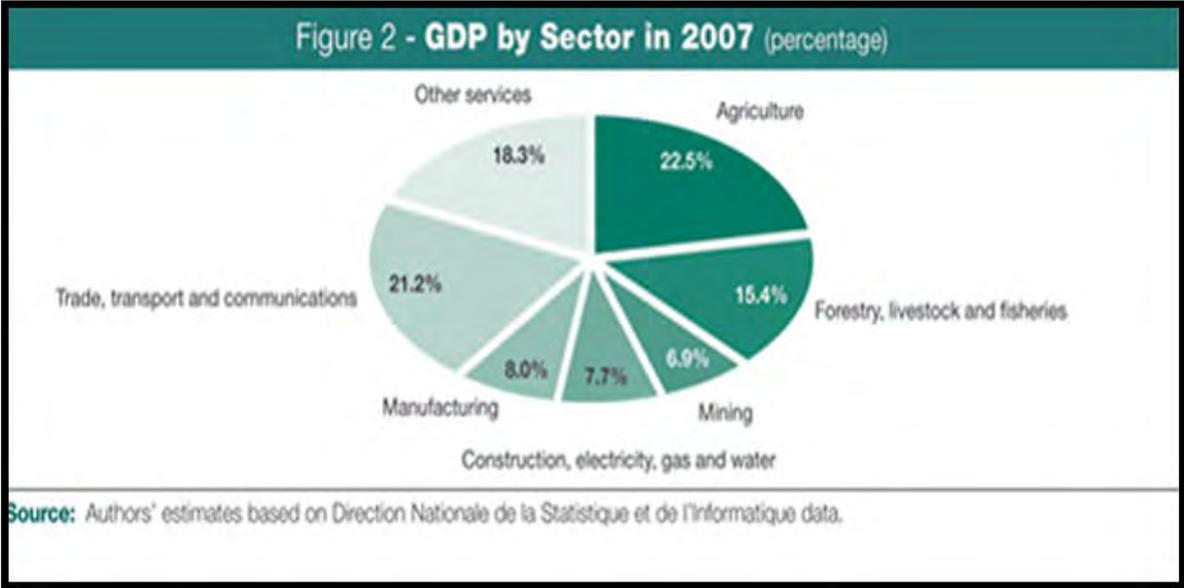
<sup>11</sup> New York Times April 5, 2010

<sup>12</sup> USAID/DCHA/CMM ASSESSMENT: NORTHERN MALI

of the gross domestic product (GDP). The Malian government’s objective is to increase and diversify agricultural production and so contribute to food security. Food security is a pressing issue in Mali where 68% of the population is considered poor and the majority of the population relies on agriculture for their livelihoods and their food security.

The country's main exports are gold, which provides 60% of exports by value, and cotton, which provides 24% of export value. Economic growth declined in 2007 and 2008 due to difficulties in the mining and cotton sectors (cotton output fell about 52% in 2001). The cotton sector has been adversely affected by falling international prices, but the government is attempting to expand the cotton processing and textile sectors, to ensure the maximum benefits of cotton production for the country.

The table below shows a 2007 breakdown of the Malian economy.



The constraints to economic development in Mali are numerous. These include the high cost of capital, the weakness of the basic infrastructure, the high cost of public services, poor productivity of labor, the landlocked nature of the country and the weakness of the local saving rate. Mali is heavily dependent on foreign aid and is among the most indebted countries in the world. Foreign investment in Mali is primarily through foreign loans.

## V. PROFILES OF MALIAN YOUTH

This section provides a snapshot of the context within which under-educated Malian youth function. It covers the demographics of Malian youth, their employment profiles, and the information technologies with which they engage.

### V.1 *Demographics and Migration*

Mali is one of the fastest growing countries in the world. In mid 2007, the population of Mali was estimated at 12.6 million people.<sup>13</sup> With a national population growth rate of 3.3%, the population will double in 23 years, pointing to significant implications for education spending, environmental protection, food security and economic development.

Roughly half of Mali's population is under the age of 18<sup>14</sup> and youth as a whole make up 69% of the population.<sup>15</sup> Young people bring creativity, energy and talent to economies and form the foundation for future development: they should be seen as an asset, rather than a 'time bomb.' That said, if high levels of youth unemployment lead to disaffection from non-fulfillment of personal and productive potential, this demographic becomes a political and social risk factor.

Mali can be thought of as a nation on the move. A recent IOM report describes how demographic growth, poverty, unemployment and drought continue to push people out of rural areas and into cities (the urban population growth rate is 4.4%). The report also notes a significant emigration out of Mali to other West African countries and Europe.<sup>16</sup> In addition, a growing number of people from other African nations headed to North Africa are passing through Mali. Generally, those Malians relocating to cities or abroad send remittances back to their families, often providing a significant amount of support.

While both regional and national unemployment among youth decreased from 1997 to 2007 (ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth 2008, World Bank unpublished), this trend will likely be reversed by the recent decline in global economic activity.

In the rural areas, the majority of youth are involved in agriculture, engaged primarily with family farming during the rainy season. Agriculture also draws a considerable number of youth back from the urban area to assist in crop harvests. Cash income can be earned only with great difficulty at the village level as the market is quite small, and tends to be cash-poor. After the farming season, many youth migrate to urban areas in search of 'quick cash' and most return to their village when the rains come. In the cities, youth strive to earn a daily allowance selling water, mobile phone cards, shoes and clothes. Rural youth report being marginalized by their urban peers; and say that given the choice; they would much prefer to earn a viable livelihood in their home village.

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<sup>13</sup> World Bank, unpublished

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mali\\_statistics.html#68](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mali_statistics.html#68) accessed April 21

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Youth and Sports, Technical Note on Mali's Youth Policies, September 2009

<sup>16</sup> IOM 2010

*If we had equipment to farm and the right skills, we would gladly stay in our village to feed our family and make a living.*

*- Youth Voice, Soroba Village, Segou*

The Regional Youth Council in Segou indicates that the time youth spend in the city needs to be reduced and that youth in the city must be persuaded to think about 'the garden they have at home' or the 'business at home'.

The migration of females from villages into regional cities is motivated mainly by the need to earn money for their marriage trousseau.

*I came to the city to earn money for marriage. I clean house and sell water. It's very hard. I plan to go back to my village.*

*- Youth Voice, Bamako*

Young girls used to make their own marriage trousseau – they would literally weave, create or process by hand the majority of goods that made up their contribution to the marriage. The standard contents of a Malian girl's trousseau have changed in the last decade and now include manufactured items that must be purchased. This is one example of how changing demands in rural areas have created a need for cash income generation.

## **V.2 Employment Profiles**

The job market in Mali includes a formal sector and an unstructured informal sector. Most of the jobs are in the informal agriculture sector and where opportunities increase. Poverty is far greater in rural areas than urban, contributing to what many participants called a "rural exodus." For example, in 2005, 20% of urban residents were considered "poor" versus 73% of rural residents.

Most new jobs are being created through small enterprises and self-employment. This includes the subsistence and small commercial farming sector. The Africa Commission<sup>17</sup> recommends an 'increased focus on young entrepreneurs as

<sup>17</sup> Realizing the Potential of Africa's Youth – Report of the Africa Commission May 2009

## **Youth Livelihoods**

*Youth livelihoods are the range of income generation activities that youth engage in to survive. The range extends from very informal to structured and could be listed as: working on the family land for food and accommodation; selling a few crops or phone cards; a roadside or market stall or mobile maintenance repairs; a structure that is rented for a shop or workshop (to make wood products; a casual job for which you are paid a small amount; an entry level job that requires no skill and pays a small weekly wage; or a professional job that pays a salary monthly.*

*The youth who holds a job is paid a wage or salary on a regular basis, either weekly or monthly. Usually this requires a set of skills that result from completing a skills training program and achieving a qualification. Youth employment programs are thus the activities required to ensure youth have the skills sets and ability and experience to get a job.*

drivers of change'. Most youth who are not involved in agriculture are found in the informal economy, either in the rural areas and town, or increasingly in the bigger town and Bamako. This informal and unstructured sector contains opportunities for growth and job creation, if it can be assisted to 'work smarter'.

The informal sector accounts for 94% of all employment, one of the highest rates in the world. As an illustration, more than eight in ten Malian families gain income from the informal sector. However, the situation is complex and changing, particularly from a regional perspective. For example, poverty is quite high in the region of Sikasso, despite the presence of a strong agricultural sector. Kayes has a lower level of poverty than many might expect, due to a high level of money transfers from migrants to their home region.

Some youth take a 'deterministic' view of income generation, emphasizing the importance of learning from their parents and doing the same jobs as their parents. Many others show initiative and engage in entrepreneurial activities.

*I did not go to school because my father was a builder and so I worked with him.*

*- Youth Voice, Bamako*

- In Segou region, following the death of his father, one young man relocated from his village to Segou and began working in various small commerce activities, eventually saving up enough to buy a TV and VCR. He has rigged these up as a portable system with speakers, and now rents out his system for outdoor parties and activities around town. He sends the money he earns back to his mother and younger siblings so they may attend school.
- In Bankaoni village outside of Sikasso, groups of young men formed an association and engage in income-generating activities such as renting out metal chairs for marriages and holiday parties. They have reached out to other youth in nearby villages, helping them form their own associations and providing them with seed money.

Both rural and urban youth are generally hopeful. They say that "if there are opportunities in the village, we will stay." They also note that those who have left, upon hearing of viable economic options, would likely return. What are those viable economic options, attractive to rural youth? Many youth identify the particular importance of farming inputs— tools and fertilizer first and foremost, but also wells or access to water, training, new varieties of seeds, draft animals and livestock.

Two commonly mentioned 'projects' are market gardening and fish farming. Some interventions are less realistic or would involve significant planning; one village suggested fish farming, though they were far from any freely available water source and their wells were going dry. Others may be 'additive' rather than transformative; increasing access to fertilizer in an area where it is already in use may improve crop yields, but is unlikely to have a long-term impact on youth incomes and food security. Nonetheless, youth are able to express a wide variety of possible activities.

### V. 3 Information and Communication Technologies

Utilization of mobile technology has grown exponentially throughout Mali, providing rural communities the ability to more easily communicate and access important information. Access to information and communications systems via mobile networks has proven to be a key low-cost tool for individuals to improve their socioeconomic status throughout the Sahel. In recent years, successful cell phone communication networks have been established in rural zones in West Africa, allowing farmers to research market price data by SMS text messages in local and national markets. Cell phone driven informational networks give the farmer an advantage over previous systems where inefficient market information and manipulation by traders often meant that farmers would receive a lower price for their goods. Access to market information allows farmers to get the best price for their produce and ultimately increase their revenue. Mobile technology has also paved the way for rural health care providers to access key health data as well. Micro lending groups use mobile technology to improve their service delivery (not to mention m-banking cash transfers via cell phones). Literacy programs have also benefited from mobile technologies. Mobile literacy has introduced activities that range from multimedia lessons delivered via cell phones to the creation of teacher networks with SMS text messages.

A surprisingly large number of youth in Mali, particularly those in urban and peri-urban areas, claim to have cell phones. Youth use their phones to communicate with friends, parents, and clients (in the case of those who were working) and with wholesalers who coordinate the importation of goods for their micro businesses. The examples range from the obvious, such as the moto-taxi driver giving his number to clients for future business; to the unexpected, such as in the fish-seller who lets her clients know where she is located in the market each day. A few urban youth also reported using their phones to access the internet, send e-mails as well as use their phones to listen to music.

Given the range of low-cost, sustainable uses of mobile for sustainable development, a great potential exists for Malian youth to leverage mobile technology to their advantage.

## VI. YOUTH POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The Government of Mali considers youth employability as one of its top priorities, as it has demonstrated during the past four years by the creation of the Agency of Youth Employment (*Agence pour la Promotion d'Emploi des Jeunes* or APEJ), the National Fund for Youth Employment (*Fonds d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle et à l'Apprentissage*), the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, or EFP (*Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle*) and the Chamber of Trades (*Chambres de Métiers*) linked to the Ministry of Artisans and Tourism (*Ministère de l'Artisanat et du Tourisme*).

In 2009, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with support from the World Bank, put in place a technical working group on youth development (comprised of government ministries, foreign

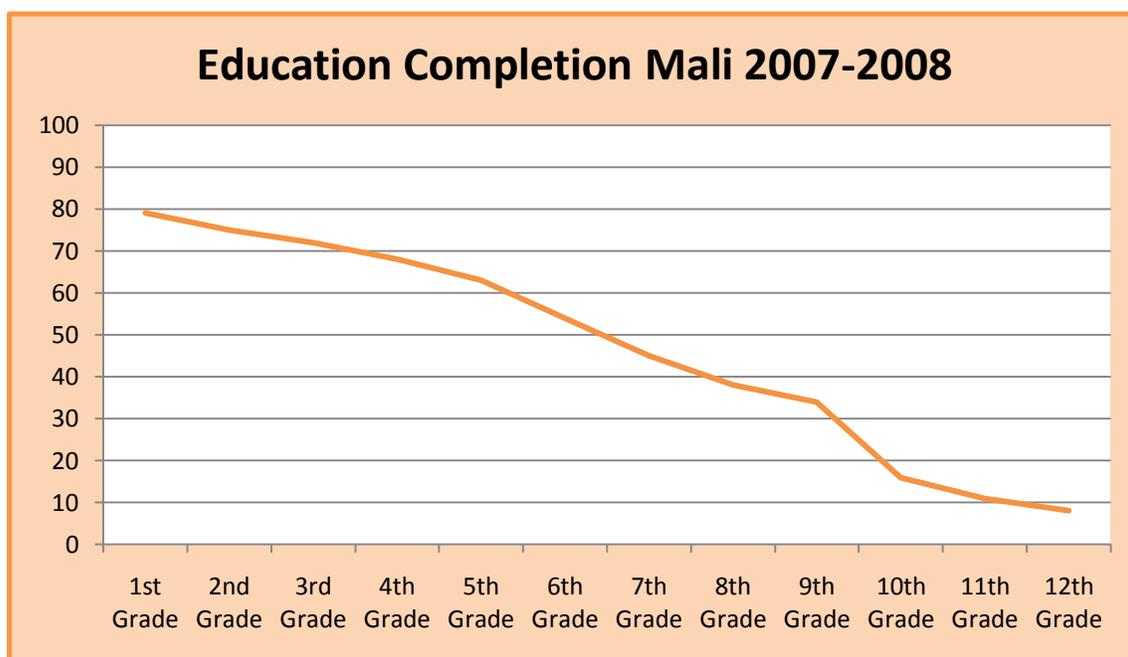
donors, NGOs and youth representatives) that will meet regularly to further develop Mali's youth policy agenda, with a focus on youth development at the commune level.

The Government of Mali devotes almost 28% percent of its budget to education, of which 10% is ear-marked for vocational education programs, and approximately 5% for non-formal education. Governmental and non-governmental donors also provide support to youth employment programs.

This section presents a brief overview of the formal education sector and the variety of non-formal educational and vocational programming designed to enable youth to move into economic and food security.

### **VI.1 Formal Education**

Mali's development is hindered by some of the lowest literacy rates in the world. In recent years, Mali has invested significantly in improving access to education. As a direct result, gross enrollment rates (GER) in primary education have increased from 27% in 1990 to 46% in 1998 and 77.6% in 2007.<sup>18</sup> However, urban gross enrollment rates are much higher than in rural areas; the GER for Bamako was greater than 100%, while for Bankass, a cercle level town in the Dogon region, it was only 55.7%. In terms of gender, GER is 68.0% for girls, but 87.5% for boys for primary education nationally, showing significant disadvantages for females in terms of education access.<sup>19</sup> Despite these significant achievements, actual educational attainment remains low; in the 2007-8 school year, only 54 out of 100 Malian children completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade, while only 8 in 100 completed 12th grade (see figure below).



*Based on RESEN Mail July 2009*

<sup>18</sup> UNESCO data cited in Weyer 2009

<sup>19</sup> F. Weyer 2009

Somewhat ironically, there is an association between unemployment and education. The more educated an individual is, the greater the likelihood they will be unemployed (Weyer 2009). This is a result of a number of factors, especially lack of formal-sector jobs in Mali, particularly service-sector and other professional jobs that require a high-school diploma or greater. Instead, most jobs in Mali for youth and the rest of the population are in the informal sector, particularly in agriculture (World Bank, unpublished). This does not mean that education is unimportant or even possibly a negative influence on employability. Rather, it means that there is a very large disconnect between the demand for skilled workers and the supply.

As a result of this disconnect, the few young people who do manage to graduate from high school or even complete the first nine years of education, are often unable to find employment that utilizes their skills. This results in a feeling of “disorientation” (the apt French term used for these youth) as reported by participants in youth focus groups containing educated youth. There are few opportunities to use the full range of talents and capacities these youth have obtained, and after a period of unemployment, many of them end up working in sectors that require only a basic level of education.

While increasing access to education means that the current population of Mali has the highest degree of formal education attainment of any previous generation, the quality of that education is not always high. A 2007 World Bank education sector study in Mali found that “less than 50 percent of young people who have completed the six years of first cycle basic education will, as adults be sustainably literate, compared to an average of 75 percent for comparable countries in the region.” Only 50% of those aged 22-44 who completed the 6<sup>th</sup> grade can read.<sup>20</sup> This means that even while more and more Malians are able to access primary schools, the outcome of these investments in education in terms of both employment and functional skills are quite limited.

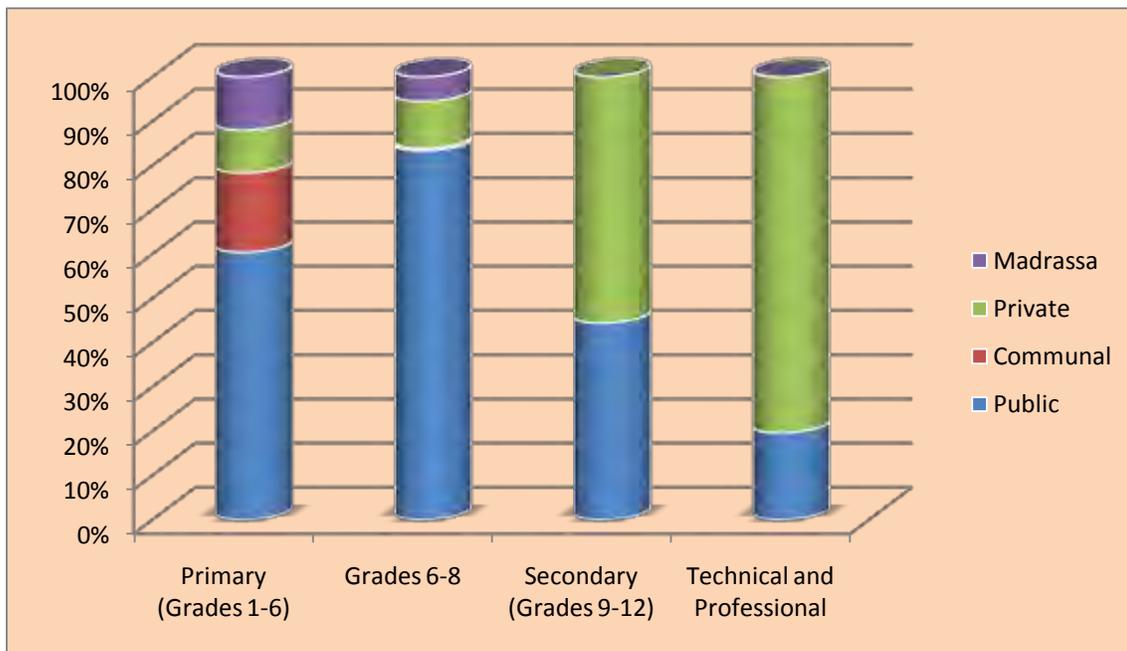
In addition to low enrollment and retention rates, the education system has poor internal efficiency --- students do not learn what they are supposed to, as the 2007 World Bank report revealed. And it has poor external efficiency: it is not responsive to the needs of society, particularly the economy. The methodologies, while changing under the guidance of USAID-funded PHARE, emphasize memorizing over analyzing, applying, and creating. Further exacerbating this problem, the content does not include the generic skills that would allow graduates to learn a new job quickly.

There are a variety of education delivery mechanisms; public, private, communal and madrassa schools are all active in the Malian education sector. The largest provider for grades 1-6 is public schools, as well as communal schools, which often receive no direct state funding. For grades 6-8, public is again the largest category, with smaller contributions from private and madrassa schools, while communal schools generally stop at 6<sup>th</sup> grade. In the secondary portion (grades 9-12), there is a fairly even split between private and public provision, while in the technical and professional schools, private providers appear to dominate. However, this impression is somewhat inaccurate, as it is through state financing to private schools that the vast majority of

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<sup>20</sup> Resen 2009

technical and professional training is provided. While the delivery mechanism may be private, the funding is provided by the state (see figure below).



Based on Resen Mali 2009

## VI.2 Non-Formal Education: Government Structures and Programs

Within the Government of Mali's Ministry of Education (*Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale*) the division that is devoted to out of school youth is represented at the central level by DNEB (*Direction Nationale Éducation de Base*) and CNR-ENF (*Centre Nationale De Ressource Pour L'Éducation Non-Formelle*), which deal with policy and technical implementation, respectively. This section of the Ministry has three non-formal education programs, two of which are specifically targeted at youth. One, the CED (*Centre d'Éducation pour le Développement*), is designed to meet the needs of out of school youth ages 9 -14 in rural areas. Four years of basic education followed by 2 years of pre-professional training, provided in villages from January to June, the program is synonymous with failing to provide the skills training it promises. Given the CED's dependency on funding allocations at the commune and regional level, the number of active CEDs has dropped considerably in recent years.

The second program designed specifically for youth is the CAFé (*Centre d'Alphabetisation Féminin*), literacy classes for women ages 16 and older. The curriculum, recently revised, is in the process of being finalized. The new content focuses on life skills. Topics include protecting the environment; energy (new and renewable energy); health and hygiene; HIV/AIDS; reproductive health; technology, self, culture, and diversity; exploitation of children; violence against women; citizenship; income generation; creativity; and mathematics related to the topics. New instructional materials that correspond to the curriculum may be in order. This curriculum offers great potential.

CAFé courses are offered in villages, towns, and cities, funded by the government in partnership with international funders. Criteria for teachers include a high school diploma, residence in the community, stability and availability to teach. The courses are not popular as young women have limited time and the course is not seen as relevant. The new curriculum may make the course more appealing.

The third program is the CAF (*Centre d'Alphabetisation fonctionnel*). While designed for adults, youth aged 20 and older can often be found in these literacy classes. These courses are usually held from January to June and are often offered by the government in partnership with external donors. Malian and international non-governmental organizations involved in providing literacy classes often use the CAF materials and methods as well. The government or non-governmental agency provides the teacher training and books, but the teachers are often community volunteers, often minimally trained and poorly motivated because they are not compensated. Some communities require student fees that pay for oil lamps or other inputs; others provide teachers with sacks of rice, field labor, or other supports in appreciation of their contributions.

### **Non-Governmental Programs**

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NGO-supported non-formal education literacy programming for out-of-school youth comes and goes. These courses, which cover reading, writing, and math, are sometimes given as the programmatic intervention or, more often, as a complementary support component of a larger program: such as literacy classes with health as their content as a component of the health-focused USAID-funded PDY program of the early 2000s. Non-governmental organizations sometimes use the CNR-ENF curriculum, materials, and methodology; other times they develop their own materials and methods. Rural communities often enlist a literate community member to provide literacy classes to others in the community. They may draw upon the CNR-ENF materials via the commune level CAP (*Centre d'Animation Pédagogique*).

A quick description of some current literacy programming provides a snapshot of the current context. Those highlighted here are not precursors or complements to vocational training; those are discussed in the next section.

The Stromme Foundation supports adult literacy classes in partnership with seven Malian non-governmental organizations. In any adult literacy class, a good portion of youth aged 20-25 can be found. Stromme's programs graduated 2331 neoliterates in 2008, 56 percent women. New modules including topics such as decentralization, democracy, citizenship, and good governance, and new methods, entitled "Active Literacy", are currently being piloted and evaluated.



Vocational Training Center

World Vision works directly with communities rather than via local non-governmental organizations. They support literacy programs as part of their community development activities, using their own materials and providing the teacher with a bicycle. But, since 2009, at least in San, the program has been handed to the communities, who must support the literacy teacher. It is not clear whether this will be the case in all the communities.

The Centre d'Ecoute Communautaire Pour Enfants et Jeunes en Situations Difficile is a community center in Sikoro, the original neighborhood in Bamako and now one of the poorest. Along with other programming, a young facilitator at the center offers French literacy classes to youth. Another facilitator leads literacy classes in Bambara for mothers, many of who are youth themselves.

### **VI.3 Vocational Training**

#### **Governmental Programs**

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Two ministries in particular focus on the vocational training, education, and community life of youth. The mandate of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (EFP, *Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle*) is to elaborate national policy on employment and on professional training, while working closely with the *Chambres de Métiers* linked to the Ministry of Artisans and Tourism, to ensure targeted training programs for youth. The EFP has a central arm and also implements an activity.

The central services are the National Agency for Employment (ANPE, *Agence National Pour l'Emploi*), the Agency for Promotion of Youth Employment (APEJ, *Agence Pour la Promotion de l'Emploi des Jeunes*), and the Training and Support Unit for Business (UFAE, *Unité de Formation et d'Appui aux Entreprises*). The Fund to Support Professional Training and Apprenticeship, known as FAFPA (*Fonds d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle et à l'Apprentissage*), is the activity the located within the Ministry. FAFPA is described later in this section.

The ANPE plays a role in implementing the national employment policies of the Government of Mali, working with employers to understand human resource needs, and collecting, analyzing, and communication employment-related data. The ANPE works with employers, supports entrepreneurship, does research on employment and training needs, and oversees implementation of vocational training and retraining for the employed. The ANPE also works to support the employment of women.

The APEJ focuses on the social and economic development of youth ages 15-40, with the goal of employment or successful entrepreneurship. This involves ensuring that professional training matches the needs of employers, the school to work transition, access of poorly skilled youth to work, access of youth to credit, developing an entrepreneurial spirit among youth.

The UFAE focuses on private enterprise and entrepreneurship.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (*Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports*) is responsible for the development of policy relating to youth, sports, and culture. Its central services include the National Division of Youth, which contributes to the development of national youth policy, does research and studies that contribute to the promotion of young with the goal of their successful inclusion in the civic, social, and cultural life of Mali and supports the community life of youth. The DNJ is divided into four divisions: the division of socio-educational activities and law, the division of youth associations, division of infrastructure and equipment, and the division of studies, training, and placement of youth.

The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training invests in vocational training for unemployed youth in a variety of ways. One technique, a model similar to one used by the US federal government to fund vocational training in the US, is to contract with private, non-profit, or public organizations to finance a percentage of slots for students and a percentage of teacher salaries. The organizations receiving this support include both local training centers in a quasi public-private partnership and local branches of international vocational training providers and local private businesses. They follow the government curriculum for the relevant vocational areas, and students sit for a final exam. Those who pass receive the Certificate Aptitude Professional (CAP).

Swiss Contact has been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training for the past decade. Training curriculum, standards and accreditation have now been developed for twelve trades<sup>21</sup>, for training in approximately 30 government-accredited public-private training centers across the country.

Among them, some of the most dynamic include the Centre Pere Michel, a Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre with two sites in Mali, one in Bamako, one in Sikasso. Together they serve about 650 students at a time, in classes of around one hundred students per level, per school. The course includes theoretical classroom study and workshop practice, and takes three years to complete. Incoming students must pass an entrance exam; this is not a program for youth who have less than DEF-level academic skills. Don Bosco follows the government curriculum, augmenting it as they see fit, and students sit for the government exam at the end of their third year. Training is available in electricity, auto mechanics, welding and metal work, farm machinery. The Sikasso center has augmented its electricity curriculum with a specialty in solar energy.

In Bamako, employers recruit the Don Bosco graduates, and the director boasts that all the graduates find employment. The employment situation is not as easy in Sikasso, however. They are reporting that only 60% of their and so that center has recently added an office that specifically focuses on job placement.

Their directors are Catholic brothers, members of the order of Selesian Don Bosco. Financing is somewhat diversified: a mix of student fees paid by families, student fees paid by the government, salaries of the religious-affiliated staff paid by their order, and a steady contribution from a Spanish charity. Their students come from across the country; a handful come from neighboring countries. Their workshops are large and, compared to other Malian vocational centers, reasonable well equipped. Their staff is stable, receives in-service training annually, and does not go on strike. And, as mentioned, the employment rate for graduates is high.

The AMAPRO Training Center in Segou is a privately owned Malian-run skills training center that receives considerable government funding from FAFPA. AMPRO trains both unskilled and skilled artisans. It has very basic, old equipment with which it provides technical training in electrical, metal welding, automotive repairs, Motorbike repairs, carpentry and construction. AMAPRO training also provides personal development skills such as basic health, HIV AIDS, work ethics and

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<sup>21</sup> The twelve trades promoted by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training are: auto mechanic, auto electrical, carpentry, masonry, building construction, metal work, refrigeration, radio and TV repair, sewing, hair dressing, jewelry, photo processing,

literacy. Among the 280 unemployed youth they have trained, 218 have been employed; 27 in 2005, 21 in 2006, 31 in 2007, 15 in 2008.

A more typical vocational training center is the privately owned, largely-government supported, Sikasso Sewing Center, which enrolls 65 mostly but not exclusively female students at a time. The government pays 130,000 CFA per year for a large percentage of the students. Each student pays a fee of 6,000 CFA per year as well.

This center offers courses of two lengths: Those who are not schooled take 8 hours of French literacy a week, in addition to their dressmaking classes and workshop apprenticeships. The strength of this center’s model is that it does include hands on apprenticeships in businesses in the community, as well as hands on training alternating with theory in the training center. It also includes a French literacy component, although the literacy materials are generally, rather than focused on dressmaking or business management. The weakness is that it includes no job placement or follow-up. Its mission is training rather than the achievement of a secure livelihood. They have no record of employment for their graduates.

#### **VI.4 Entrepreneurship**

A variety of international and Malian non-governmental organizations provide training and support to those whose goal it is to run their own businesses. International NGO World Vision uses a model it calls “Area Program Development”, working in a number of villages in a Commune to develop the whole area. A visit to a new project in a village outside of SAN (on the Mopti Road) reveals 200 beneficiary participants in a market garden project. There are 150 woman and 50 men on the project, and about 15 youth. The Association members feel it is important to keep the youth involved here, and that youth show an interest. The World Vision Model is as follows:

Agency	Description	Positive Features	Limitations
<p><b>World Vision San Base</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market Garden</li> <li>• Village based “Area Program Development”</li> <li>• Government Agriculture Agent support</li> <li>• Market crop training</li> <li>• Seed for three years</li> <li>• Support to put wells in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible to all members irrespective of ability</li> <li>• Provides food for beneficiary with growth into surplus for sale</li> <li>• Government Agriculture Agent support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not youth focused but includes youth</li> <li>• No business skills training</li> </ul>

Projects like those of Trickle Up, AJA and PAJM suggest that youth entrepreneurship programs make a difference. When youth improve their business skills; become more aware of the finances of the business; manage their business better; and then seek more customers (marketing); not only does the business generate more income; but it begins to employ more people. If the impact of this is measured across a local community, it results in increased income and buying power, as well as a more stable community with less youth migration. Increases in quality and production are not limited to the informal sector.

AJA (Association Jeunesse Action Mali) has been in existence for 18 years and is providing practical entrepreneurship training and support for youth aged 14-35, which includes artisan training and work exposure. AJA operates three centers with 23 staff, including 18 trainers.

Three Models of Enterprise Development seen in Mali			
Agency	Description	Positive Features	Limitations
<b>AJA Mali Association Jeunesse Action Mali</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Focus</li> <li>Practical Entrepreneurship Training</li> <li>Group training</li> <li>Post Training Support</li> <li>Access to Loans</li> <li>Artisan Focus</li> <li>Bamako only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practical Methodology</li> <li>Visual Training Material</li> <li>Loan Repayment delayed for six months</li> <li>Extended training 8 months</li> <li>Practical post training support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on loan for business growth</li> <li>Only have Bamako experience</li> </ul>
<b>World Vision San Base</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market Garden</li> <li>Village based “Area Program Development”</li> <li>Market crop training</li> <li>Seed for three years</li> <li>Support to put wells in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible to all members irrespective of ability</li> <li>Provides food for beneficiary with growth into surplus for sale</li> <li>Government Agriculture Agent support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not youth focused per se but includes youth</li> <li>No business skills training</li> </ul>
<b>PAJM Programme d’Appui à la Jeunesse du Mali</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing micro businesses selected</li> <li>Three weeks business skills training</li> <li>Business plan development</li> <li>Access to funding</li> <li>Post training support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on existing business growth</li> <li>Results include job creation for new employees</li> <li>Support post training is very hands on</li> <li>Loans are being repaid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of small business at this level restricted to towns</li> <li>Short training period</li> <li>Business owners do not seem to grasp of their daily finances</li> <li>Access to funding very soon after commencement of program</li> <li>Purchase of stock with loan, not capital</li> </ul>
<b>Trickle Up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target very poor</li> <li>Seven modules of training</li> <li>Local language and practical</li> <li>Grant resources to grow business</li> <li>Mixed business sectors</li> <li>Group Savings 25 members each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Methodology that works with the poor</li> <li>Post training support</li> <li>Post training grant</li> <li>Rural and town based, village level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase of stock with loan, not capital equipment</li> <li>Not youth focused</li> </ul>

### VI.5 Retraining

The Government of Mali also provides funds for vocational retraining of the already employed. While this is not the target group of this project, it is a vital part of the GOM youth services. The Fonds d’Appui a la Formation Professionnelle et L’Apprentissage (FAFPA), an agency of the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, manages the FAFPA fund, which is generated by a 2 percent payroll tax paid by artisanal industries. Business owners who are members of an

Artisan Association access the fund to pay for training of their employees. The FAFPA Fund is generated by a 2 percent payroll tax paid by industry.

Employers request training through their Artisan Association (Business Member Organizations) and 90 percent of the cost is covered by FAFPA, the employer pays the rest. The aim is to improve the skills of the employee. Most of the training is group training, but occasionally individuals are funded, mostly for scarce skills where training is done outside the country.

FAFPA have been supported by Swiss Contact to revise and develop practical training materials that include pictures, photographs and worksheets.

FAFPA covers three kinds of training. There is the Secteur Moderne: two weeks training in industry, to up-skill. Then is Artisan training which is done where the artisan reside in the villages. Agricultural training is also provided in the villages and includes rice cultivation, market gardening, bee keeping, poultry, fish farming in ponds, cattle breeding. This training for existing farmers involves capacity building and business skills. The training providers are local and receive capacity building. As an example, the Segou FAFPA statistics for 2009 are:

Secteurs	Prevision	Realisation	Taux
<b>Secteur Moderne</b>	450	161	<b>35%</b>
<b>Artisanat</b>	860	567	<b>66%</b>
<b>Monde Rural</b>	1750	1601	<b>91%</b>
	<b>3060</b>	<b>2329</b>	<b>76%</b>

FAFPA has a new project funded by the World Bank, which is training out of school youth at one of two regional centers (SAVOIR or CELI). This is six months training with a practical component done in industry. At SAVOIR, the training accommodates 20 learners each for electricity, brick-laying, plumbing, tiling, and painting.

Programme d'Appui à la Jeunesse du Mali (PAJM) is a four year French-funded initiative located within the Ministry of Youth and Sport, supported by two technical advisors. Its aim is to strengthen the youth capacity through center-based activities and youth entrepreneurship. PAJM has three areas of focus:

- to assist the Ministry of Youth and Sport to strengthen the capacity of national and regional youth associations and federations to engage in policy dialogue and formation;
- to develop the capacity of youth groups, their leadership, and youth cultural and civic activities (youth groups can apply for funding for local youth activities); and,
- to conduct youth entrepreneurship training and facilitate micro credit loans.

As a result of the program becoming bigger than planned, PAJM is looking for additional funding or partnerships.

## VII. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents main findings from data collected and analyzed during the rapid youth assessment. The findings are categorized according to: Rural and Peri-Urban Focus; Youth Associations and Youth Spaces; Youth Employability; Youth Skills Training; Youth Entrepreneurship; and Government Role and Policy.

### ***VII.1 Primary Focus on Rural Village and Peri-Urban Youth***

An over-arching assessment finding is that there is a consensus among rural and urban youth and other stakeholders, including government officials, donor representatives, and private youth serving organizations, that primary attention should be given to youth living in rural villages and peri-urban areas in an attempt to reduce migration from rural villages to urban centers. This key finding aligns well with the Ministry of Youth and Sports' newly developing, World Bank-supported, youth policy and support program which will place a primary focus on youth development at the commune level.

The central hypothesis behind this approach is that if additional pull factors are provided in rural areas, addressing the primary reasons youth have given for leaving, youth will be more likely to remain in them and correspondingly less likely to leave. This hypothesis was confirmed in discussion with rural and urban youth, as well as with parents and service providers.

In addition, all of these groups noted that given the seasonal nature of the movements of many youth, some would likely return to the village once they found out about the new available opportunities. This proposed targeting would exclude potential youth beneficiaries from Bamako and other regional capitals, in favor of smaller peri-urban areas and rural villages.

As discussed above, the 'pull' factors for youth migration to the urban centers most often relate to perceived employment and access to services or other opportunities; while the 'push' factors are usually the relative lack of these opportunities and services at the rural level, along with other individual factors depending on the circumstances of the person or family. The most significant factor causing youth to leave rural areas is lack of income generating opportunities during the dry season. The greatest draw of the urban areas is access to income generating opportunities. Cash-income is perceived as important to provide support for the family, access to manufactured goods (particularly for a trousseau for young women), and payment for medical services and other goods.

Looking at it the other way around, what are the 'pull' factors in rural areas and the 'push' factors from urban zones? Youth almost unanimously report a strong connection to family in rural areas, and a desire to take care of parents in their old age. Communal associations, the familiarity of the environment and other intangible and social factors are also reasons why youth prefer to live in their native villages. In terms of push factors, youth often initially find urban centers challenging to negotiate, particularly if they do not have close family or friends already living there. They associate many different risks with urban living, including abuse and exploitation. Despite the perception of expanded possibilities of urban centers, some youth acknowledge that failure to generate income is a real possibility, and find that they are both unable to make a living in the city and lack the support network present in the village.

A number of projects target Malian youth in urban zones. Indeed, there appears to be a general bias toward working with youth in urban or semi-urban areas, as it is often easier to provide inputs (training, loans etc) where both beneficiaries and skilled workers to administer the programs are located. Many programs also address the needs of rural populations, but effective programs focused specifically on rural youth ages 15-24 are few.

This project could attempt to assist youth in finding secure income generation activities in urban areas, as a number of other projects do currently. However, by providing services to youth in urban areas, this project would provide an additional 'pull' factor, potentially drawing additional youth to the cities and increasing the negative impacts of this general migration. We therefore propose to target youth in rural areas.

These findings have led us to recommend that this project focus on the creation of options and opportunities for youth at the village level relating to income generation. Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, a variety of options should be created for young people to choose from and pursue in order to meet their expanded need for cash income. This would take into consideration the limits and opportunities of different rural environments and contexts, as well as the personal ambitions and skills of individual youth beneficiaries.

### **Age Cohort**

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While the target age is clearly defined (14-25 years of age) by USAID/Mali, no such clear understanding exists among the target population and Mali in general. In Mali, "youth" is understood at starting around the age of 10 or possibly 15, but generally continues up to the age of forty (40). Further, many individuals do not know their exact age, making screening for age challenging. This report recommends that the age-range of the program's target population be expanded to at least 14-30 in order to adjust to the cultural, social and economic reality of young people's lives in the program's operational context.

Depending on the implementation strategies to be developed, it will likely be necessary to differentiate interventions based on age sub-groups. For example, younger youth generally lack the experience necessary to grow a small business into something that involves hiring staff and perhaps renting shop space. Older youth may be more appropriate for the kind of entrepreneurial training that supports them as they enlarge their businesses. The project may decide, for example, that youth 20 and above may apply for and receive loans, while those under 20 may not.

Many youth in the younger end of the range have a limited idea about what they want for their future; the goal may be clear, but a realistic pathway is usually not clearly defined in their minds. Many still talk about participating in training programs to acquire skills that they expect will assist them to get income-producing jobs. Youth in this younger age range may also be involved in entry level informal trade like street selling. Those still at home in rural areas most often assist their family with domestic and agricultural production.

Many rural youth at the higher end of the range (approximately 18-24 years old) have left school and have realized that further study opportunities are scarce. Some have completed basic skills training programs but have not secured work opportunities afterwards. Many have resorted to moving to the bigger towns to seek income opportunities after the agricultural season. Youth over the age of 24 have a greater life experience and possibly some work experience. Those that run small businesses are more likely to be sustainable and might have the potential to grow if supported.

## Gender

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According to information gathered during the rapid assessment, there are some clearly defined roles for males and females in terms of economic and social activity, though some of these are becoming less distinct. For example, women are associated with firewood gathering, market gardening, and poultry, egg production an increasingly, fruit and vegetable transformation. Livestock raising (goats, cows, camels, horses, donkeys) and fishing are associated with men. However, there are inter-dependencies. While a herd of cows is often tended by a man, milk processing and selling is usually a female activity. While fish catching is a male activity, the catch is then often wholesaled to females who may process the fish and sell them individually at market. Some novel activities, such as fish farming, do not necessarily have a strong traditional gender association with them. The planting and harvesting of millet, corn, sorghum, beans, and peanuts is most often done by men, while the processing and selling of these crops is generally done by the women. When considering any income generating activity related to agriculture, a variety of products associated with each gender should be selected so that one gender is not excluded. While some programming bias may be unavoidable, or even desirable, any

*In the village of Kola, not far from Bougouni, the president of the women's association proudly displays the school note book in which the saving group accounts are recorded. Across two pages, neatly ruled into columns, are the accounts. The name of each participant listed down the left, the date of deposit on the top of each column across the top, a careful check indicating deposit. The page is full. Another two pages display records of who borrowed what, when, and when it was paid back. A young woman nearby is identified as the scribe, the keeper of the accounts.*

*A quick look into the women's association mill room reveals a grinding machine, neatly labeled basins of grain waiting to be ground, and a blackboard, upon which the records of the milling accounts are recorded. Who keeps these records? The same young woman who records the accounts of the savings group; the only woman in the community with the literacy skills needed to enable these activities to function independently, without relying upon the literacy skills of one of the few literate men in the community or upon a visiting non-governmental organization functionary.*

intervention needs to carefully examine the potential impact on different actors according to their roles, which in this context are often at least partially determined by gender.

## Family

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The extended family is still the smallest functional unit of much of the Malian population. Parents, as elsewhere in the world, play a significant role in determining the life-paths of their children. For example, when asked why they chose a particular trade or income generating activity, many young people respond that they are following their parent footsteps, who have been involved in the same trade. One of the findings of this study is that it will be necessary to establish significant parent involvement in the project, particularly in the initial stages. In order to ensure effective participation on the part of the youth beneficiaries, it will be necessary to fully explain the risks and opportunities of any intervention to the parents. This aligns with international best practice for working with minors, and is particularly important in the Malian cultural context. Similar outreach and explanation should happen with other community groups, particularly village leadership structures.

### **VII.2 Youth Associations and Youth Spaces**

*A note about the following sections: these findings are intertwined. Teasing them out and examining them individually enables more nuanced analysis; at the same time, it creates a certain level of redundancy that for the sake of clarity cannot be avoided.*

**Youth Associations** Youth are actively forming associations, whether neighborhood or village-based, formal or informal. The purpose of the associations varies: some begin as savings groups that allow youth to generate capital to purchase or rent certain items, such as CD players to use at parties; the associations evolve as members realize they can purchase the CD player, rent it out to others, and thus earn back their capital and then make a little profit. Other associations are created with the goal of improving the neighborhood or conducting a money-making activity such as chicken farming or renting chairs for weddings and funerals. Some youth recognize the value of organizing but need help to do so. Programming that can build on this desire to associate and to benefit the community in doing so will build on youth's natural inclinations and help youth find a role for themselves within the community. This might include both helping youth establish but also helping youth enhance associations.

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*The target group of this project is “Out-of-School” youth, defined as youth who were never enrolled or enrolled but dropped out before completing grade 9. The description of youth presented here who are trained but unemployed does not include educated youth: those who have their high school or even university degrees and cannot find employment. Youth tend to stay in the urban areas where they received their education and thus have neither the geographic or educational profile targeted in this assessment.*

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**Youth Spaces** Another aspect of associating is social: youth express a desire for a youth “space”, a place for themselves within a village or neighborhood. These spaces, they explain, can also be money-making ventures that, over time, become self sustaining. The concept of a youth space is most likely both literal and figurative: in traditional Malian culture, males spend an extended period of their lives as youth, in apprenticeship to fathers and other elders, waiting to take more valued roles in their communities. Associations and spaces give youth designated roles that can contribute to the life of the community. Building upon these inclinations may enable youth to remain in their communities.

**Many out-of-school youth have limited or no literacy skills and literacy is perceived as a valuable asset for economic security.** This “felt need” is encouraging, because literacy skills are valuable. Literacy skills are particularly valuable when entrepreneurial activities are conducted by associations of youth, because recording who has done what, contributed what, and drawn out what is vital to the workings of the association. These recording duties now rest with the very few, sometimes-sole literate person within the association. Increasing the numbers of possible treasurers or secretaries within the group means greater transparency and less pressure on one person.

Regardless of its value, literacy is not a pre-requisite to some technical skills training and atelier programs for unschooled youths. The best evidence of this was found in the carpentry atelier in Sikosso. Most of the 30 youth learning their trade there had never been to formal school and were succeeding without the benefit of reading or writing. Nevertheless, if the participants were literate, the atelier owner admitted, the learning process would be easier. While not denying that literacy skills are important, recognizing that even completely unschooled youth can learn a trade without spending a year or two first building literacy schools implies that a simultaneous model of literacy and skills training, that incorporates the life skills needed to succeed in the job market, would be appropriate for this population.

**Impatience** Youth express a desire for immediate and individual gain. This finding resonates with youth development research. The obvious implication is that programming needs to balance opportunities for short term gain with longer investments that will lead towards more stable, mature livelihood opportunities. Examples of how this might happen can be seen in skills training

programs that enable participants to almost immediately fashion items that can be sold. Profits provide youth with immediate cash; the skills they develop over time are the long term gain. Other programs are scheduled to allow youth to return to petty commerce over weekends or holidays, enabling them to earn small sums as they work towards employment or entrepreneurship using the higher-level skills they are developing in their program. The implication of impatience in relation to providing literacy instruction is that literacy should be taught simultaneously rather than sequentially. This way youth can begin actual skills training as they begin literacy classes. They can also make the connection between the literacy instruction they are getting, which is not as interesting or inviting as hands on vocational training, and their livelihoods, if the content of the literacy materials relate to their livelihoods. And they can begin to use that content almost immediately, as literacy becomes one more tool they use to make a living.

*Youth are actively forming associations, whether neighborhood- or village-based, formal or informal.*

### **VII.3 Youth Employability**

**Jobs are Scarce.** When reporting on Mali, which is one of the poorest countries in the world, it seems redundant to declare that jobs are scarce, but there it is. A projected GDP growth of 5.1% for 2010<sup>22</sup>, better than the previous few years, will not provide sufficient jobs. Therefore, regardless of whether youth want livelihoods or not—and they do—earning them will be difficult for the foreseeable future.

**Youth would like to earn via agro-pastoral activities.** Youth want to remain in their villages, and the obvious way to do so is to earn via agro-pastoral activities. Youth can identify potential activities such as chicken or fish farming or kitchen gardening, and the inputs they need for these activities. Inputs range from knowledge, such as how to farm fish, to land, to capital for equipment or wells or seed. While it is difficult to generate income at the village level, some projects are already demonstrating that these activities have the potential to generate income, particularly if they are linked to value chains in nearby peri-urban areas.

**Some Youth are Trained and Unemployed** Some estimates suggest there are as many as 25,000 frustrated ‘disorientated’ youth who have recently completed four years of non-formal schooling and are waiting for opportunities. These are the CED graduates who never received their skills training but have pre-professional training and literacy skills. An additional cohort of youth have completed full-fledged training courses, such as dressmaking, dying, hairdressing, carpentry, or one of many other vocations, and have never put their training to use. This occurs for many reasons.

Some youth completed programs but do not have any practical experience to make them employable. Some completed courses but have only rudimentary skills. Others have decent skills but lack equipment or capital so cannot start their own businesses, or lack connections so they

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<sup>22</sup> African Economic Outlook

cannot find employment in existing businesses. Others entered already saturated markets that do not need another tailor, seamstress, dyer, hairdresser, or carpenter. Regardless of the reason, these youth languish, semi-trained or trained but not utilized.

Many implications arise from the finding that there are a great number of youth who have skills but have not turned these skills into livelihoods. The most obvious is that some of these youth just need the “accompaniment” necessary to move them into livelihoods. This accompaniment might be in the form of introductions and equipment and might be most easily provided via a referral service. Others might need skills upgrades or even re-training if the market for their skills is non-existent in their geographic areas. Whether this group trained and waiting, should be a priority, will be decided in the design phase that follows this assessment. Regardless, another implication, which is in and of itself a not-surprising finding, is that skills training should not occur without a linkage to employment. This will be discussed at greater length in the next section, which covers the types of training that youth are receiving.

#### **VII.4. Youth Skills Training**

##### **Center-Based Training**

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**Numerous Center-Based Skills Training Programs Exist, but...** There are numerous skills training centers in Mali serving many youth. These are centers that offer training in one or a number of vocational skills, such as sewing, carpentry, metal work, or automobile repair. Some of them are privately owned, others are operated by non-governmental organizations, although both types are **largely subsidized by government funding**. For an overview, see section III.

**Most youth who complete skills training fail to find employment.** The reasons for this are many, with the weak economy itself undoubtedly the primary. However, the skills training centers themselves are another reason. Almost none of the skills training centers include in their programming key elements recognized globally as needed to move youth into successful livelihoods.

**One lack is linkages with local employers.** Employer/skills training linkages serve a number of purposes. They enable the skills training program to align its curriculum to the specific needs of local employers and ensure relevance to the local economy. They even enable skills training operators to reduce enrollment in certain vocational areas not needed in the local economy, and augment it in skill areas that are. They enable the skills training program to establish on-the-job training opportunities for its students, assuring that students learn the intangibles of workplace culture before starting a job. And they introduce employers to their graduates, which helps link newly-minted workers with available jobs.

**Graduates don't get jobs, declares the owner of the Sikasso Dressmaking Skills Training Center. This is training for training's sake; a money making venture for the Center owner.**

Given the “training for training sake” mentality of many skills training center operators, it is not surprising that **another missing element is business and life skills education** for the youth. Most Malian skills training programs focus on the theory and practice of the target skill, to the exclusion of almost anything else. Yet most youth need business and life skills education, also known as work readiness skills, to transition and succeed in work. Business skills within the Malian context include health and safety, workplace behavior, communication, problem solving, and using technology such as cell phones, profit and loss, customer service, understanding the market, saving and investment, business ethics. Life skills include job seeking and keeping, personal health and safety, preventing HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy, family, community, and civic responsibility, personal finance.

**Support to find and keep employment** is another element missing from the current skills training model widely (but not solely) available in Mali. When employment, rather than training, is the goal, then students have not “graduated” until they are not only successfully employed (within existing businesses or as entrepreneurs leading their own businesses) but have retained that employment for enough time to be considered launched. Seeking out job opportunities and introducing appropriate youth to those jobs should be a responsibility of the training center; preparing youth for job interviews and for the first few months on a job is the responsibility of a skills training provider as well. Preparing youth for the world of work might involve on the job training opportunities, visits to a variety of employers, and the business and life skills mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Tailors need sewing machines and scissors; carpenters need saws. With employment as a goal, **enabling graduates to have the equipment they need** falls within the purview of a skills training center. This may mean helping students to earn and save money, secure a loan, or borrow the necessary equipment. The methods will vary but the goal is to remove the barriers that prevent youth from moving from training into earning.

Also valuable and also missing from most current skills training operations is **vocational orientation**. This is the precursor to formal enrollment: an activity that familiarizes the potential student and his or her family with the vocation, what the work entails, and helps the youth and family decide whether this vocation is appropriate. The time and financial commitment required by skills training demand that the arrangement *not* be entered into lightly. The more information

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*One roadside carpentry atelier in Sikasso has 12 apprentices. The owner describes the training as “individualized”: he teaches one-on-one and the apprentices teach each other. They earn while they learn: he pays them a stipend for their work, and to discourage thievery, he admits. He also allows them to leave as needed during the agricultural season and has seen most of his apprentices open their own businesses upon completing their training.*

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that is shared about the vocation, its demands and opportunities, and the responsibilities of the skills training center to its students and its students to it, the more likely the students and their families will be happy with their choices and successful in their pursuit of livelihoods.

### **Apprenticeship-Based Skills Training (or Atelier)**

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The atelier is a common feature in peri-urban Mali. Countless carpenters, tailors, welders or mechanics can be found running small businesses roadside or in villages. These small businesses form an integral part of the informal Mali economy. Many of the owners learned their technical skills from their fathers. The self-sustaining atelier is the traditional model for skills training in Mali: an atelier owner often brings unskilled youth into the workplace to assist him with basic tasks, as well as in many cases to learn skills by doing these basic tasks. The amount of structured training varies from place to place. Many youth are earning a very small income and learning skills and techniques by witnessing and working alongside the owner as they practiced their business.

**Numerous apprenticeship opportunities exist but** these ateliers usually lack many of the same elements that skills training centers lack. A major difference is that ateliers provide the observant youth with exposure to the business environment, although often the youth must draw lessons from what he or she observes around him, and sometimes provide youth with a way to earn what they need to purchase the tools they need for the vocation in question. And, as one astute atelier owner in Sikasso notes, atelier training is individualized. Apprentices who learn quickly move through more quickly than those who learn slowly.

**Effective rural training models do exist in Mali.** Some of them incorporate almost all the elements needed to move youth into successful livelihoods; others are stronger in some areas than in others. Most of them are non-governmental organization projects, some Malian, many foreign, and include Cooperation Suisse, World Vision, Born Foten, and Trickle Up. These models both give assurance that success with out-of-school youth is possible and provide potential partners and models on which to build.



Trickle-Up business

### **VII.5 Youth Entrepreneurship**

**Most new jobs that are created in the Malian economy are being created through small enterprises and self-employment.** This includes the subsistence and small commercial farming sector that many youth express a desire to join. As has been discussed, most youth who are not involved in agriculture can be found in the informal economy, either in the rural areas and town, or increasingly in the bigger towns. This informal and unstructured sector contains opportunities for growth and job creation, if it can be assisted to 'work smarter'. A large number of different entrepreneurship programs exist in Mali, some donor initiatives and others initiated by local NGO. The table above on page 22 contrasts four different approaches.

Members of the younger cohort of youth rarely grow their entrepreneurial businesses to the size that requires additional staff. That type of growth takes a certain amount of time and expertise. Older “youth” (in the Malian definition of the term) are more likely to move their businesses towards the formal sector and employ others.

### ***VII.6 Government’s Role and Policy***

**The Government of Mali plays a substantial role in the employability of youth** by funding, via scholarships or teacher salaries, a large portion of the skills training enterprises currently in business in Mali today. However, much of the government investment is going to programs that do not result in employment, as described in section IV.4. A change on the part of the government to a funding scheme that emphasizes or requires employment outcomes could play a positive role in shifting the skills training providers away from training for training’s sake to employment.

As the implementation of decentralization of education moves along, decisions about the deployment of government resources for formal, non-formal, and vocational education will increasingly be made at the commune level. Ensuring that commune members understand and recognize what their scarce resources could and should be buying in the form of skills training that responds to the reality of their local economy and results in employment is an activity that should take place in partnership with the work being done by USAID funded PRADDE-PC, where geography allows. Coordinating with the on-going policy work of the World Bank will also be important.

And while not a government agency, the national federation of youth councils is a natural partner for this project. The youth council federation has as its mentoring agency the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

## **VIII. SUGGESTED PROGRAM MODELS**

This section suggests possible program models aligned to the findings presented above and geared to the over-arching assessment finding that primary attention should be given to youth living in rural villages and peri-urban areas in an attempt to reduce migration from rural areas to urban centers.

### **Village Level**

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Malian youth are vocal about their desire to develop viable livelihoods in their home villages, both during and after the agriculture season. Within Mali’s rural context, youth livelihoods should focus on income generating activities linked to the agro pastoral sector, supported by technical agriculture livelihood skills training integrated with integrated literacy and life skills and business skills. Agro-pastoral training could jointly focus on upgrading agriculture farming skills and on market garden skills, as well as poultry farming, fish farming, and similar activities that would lead to livelihood opportunities during the dry season.

Village youth have also asked for particular trade skills such as agriculture equipment repairs, water management systems repairs, metal welding, wood working, mechanics and tailoring. In reality demand at the village level for such skills is fairly low: there is only a need for one or two ‘practitioners’ of each trade per village. Training methodology should take into account rural spread, cost effectiveness, local capacity and capacity building. Agro-pastoral and trade skills livelihoods training should be supported by group savings and matching savings schemes for youth.

## Peri Urban Level

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The project should also provide focused livelihood training support to peri-urban *communes* and *circles* surrounding a cluster of target villages. There are more market opportunities in the commune towns, more training centers and ateliers, and more business opportunities for youth



to access. A main peri-urban focus should be to improve the relevance of existing training to better align with local labor market demand. Training should be aligned with existing regional agriculture development plans and links should be made to regional markets and supply chains.

The focus on developing increased livelihood opportunities for village and peri-urban youth should involve program options related to training and support activities as described in the following section.

### VIII.1 Program Options

#### Work Readiness Training

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Youth need business and life skills education, also known as work readiness skills, to transition and succeed in work. A key component of this is integrated literacy, which is perceived as a valuable asset for economic security and should be aligned with youth skills training. In this case the term “literacy” refers to instruction in reading, writing and math. The literacy referred to here is literacy that is pragmatic: it is literacy youth can use in their pursuit of livelihoods. The content of the literacy materials is related to the goal of the project: life skills, business management, and in some cases, the technical skills of a particular vocational area. By incorporating content that is relevant to the goals of the learners, the literacy instruction directly supports learning that is occurring in hands-on vocational workshops or classrooms, and via any other life skills and business management training that occurs. So while the youth are learning to read, write, and do math, they are learning concepts valuable to their livelihoods.

While the specifics for this project have not been determined, life skills may include topics such as personal health and safety, HIV/AIDS awareness, financial literacy (managing personal finance, saving), work ethics, and family, civic, and community roles and responsibilities. Business skills may include such topics as math for business (calculating profit and loss, keeping books, cash flow, bills and receipts) customer service, financial management, business planning, business

operations, business ethics, entrepreneurial ideas, profit and loss, banking, what is an entrepreneur, market analysis, marketing, selling and finding customers, analyzing the competition. Vocational literacy may include vocation-related math (measurement, weighing) the vocabulary of a vocation, relevant French terms.

## Agricultural Training

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Most youth want to remain in their villages and are interested in earning a living via agro-pastoral activities. The project could develop agricultural training programs that build on and provide innovation to family and village agricultural activities currently taking place. For example, increased crop production, achieved by upgrading skills and equipment, could be linked to peri-urban markets, and possibly to a food processing value chain, based on increased understanding of how to maximize local market opportunities.



Market Garden

Youth have identified income generating agro-pastoral activities such as market gardening, poultry and fish farming, some of which are being conducted on a small scale, that should be scaled up to become expanded youth livelihood opportunities. It would be helpful to learn more from both the World Vision and Bougouni youth association youth market gardening models.

Agro-pastoral training and support activities should lead to improved technical agriculture

skills; access to more and better seeds; better farming equipment; and, improved wells. Literacy, life skills and work readiness skills should also be integrated as critically important training components.

## Technical Training

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To stay in their home village year round, youth need to be engaged in viable livelihood activities after the agricultural season. Rural youth are asking for technical training in carpentry, masonry, welding, electronics, mechanical, agricultural equipment repair, etc. and related resources to assist them with start-up livelihood trades. Technical training interventions need to be delivered based on local “labor market demand” studies



Technical Training Center

conducted within each target geographic area. This is important to avoid repeat of the finding that a great numbers of peri-urban youth have been trained in technical skills areas unfortunately not linked to securing a viable livelihood.

## Training at Peri-Urban Centers

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Most technical training centers are located in peri-urban and urban centers. Extending technical skills training to remote rural small villages can be difficult due to the distance to commune or circle level training centers. Various models of training should be considered including sending village youth to commune or circle training centers or ateliers; and, or sending mobile trainers to villages. It is important however, to take care not to train too many participants in the same skill within a local area so as not to flood the limited local market.



Sewing Atelier

Many peri-urban youth have received technical skills training and now need the “accompaniment” necessary to move them to the job place. This accompaniment might be in the form of work readiness, financial, and business skills training as well as links to credit and savings programs to facilitate the purchase of start-up equipment. Others might need skills upgrades or re-training if the market for their skills is non-existent in their geographic areas.

The project should work to improve technical skills training to include:

- business and life skills education
- literacy integrated with business and life skills education
- vocational orientation
- linkages with local employers for experience and jobs
- support to find and keep employment
- access to appropriate tools and equipment

## Training at the Atelier

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The assessment identified private sector ateliers as an integral part of the informal economy and an important source for skills training, apprenticeships and exposure for youth to the business environment. The project should consider improving and expanding the atelier model to allow greater numbers of youth to benefit from this hands-on skills training, apprenticeship and exposure to the workplace. This would require working with local artisan associations and carefully selected ateliers to develop a well structured, upgraded technical and business skills training, to include integrated literacy and work readiness skills. Also some occupational health and safety improvements would be needed as well as some machinery upgrades. The end result would benefit both the atelier and the youth.

Few if any ateliers are found at the village level, which might mean selecting one or two youth per target village to be trained in a peri urban atelier, and be exposed to workplace experience. An option could be for rural youth who already have received some training, and have their own equipment, to travel in to a peri-urban atelier one day a week for training. This would encourage youth to remain grounded in their village, while receiving periodic exposure to the peri-urban

market. The project should ensure a coordinator to provide coaching and oversight for this training approach.

Thus, the project should work on developing upgraded, better skilled ateliers capable of offering higher quality skills training and job placement for youth. Better run ateliers should also lead to better business operations which would provide a boost to the local economy. This could feed into a value chain economic growth support plan that sees product being marketed in regional towns.

## Entrepreneurship

Most out of school youth with active livelihood pursuits are engaged in the informal sector; and thus aspects of entrepreneurship training should be included in all program offerings (agricultural, technical and integrated literacy), as well being a main program thrust on its own. Project efforts devoted to micro and small enterprise growth and improving and expanding youth livelihoods within the informal sector will lead to greater youth employment opportunities, and will likely stimulate local economic growth.

The assessment visited successful small enterprise growth activities that the project should learn from and possibly partner with. As such the project should work to improve current training and support methodologies and incorporate a clear youth focus. A three-part enterprise growth program could be considered:



AJA training material

- Youth livelihood agriculture training for rural and peri urban youth conducted outside of the agriculture season, locally and practically. It would focus both on improved gardening techniques and on marketing agricultural products. The project should learn from a World Vision market garden approach blended with business training models such as Trickle Up, incorporating some of the AJA training material.
- Economic stimulation of small enterprises to create jobs for youth. Target peri-urban micro and small enterprises that demonstrate potential to expand and employ entry level youth (coming from other skills training programs). Participant business owners could include ateliers. Examine related PAJM and AJA models.
- Youth income generating activities targeting youth-run *survivalist* and micro businesses. Some of these target youth will be graduates of the atelier program and village youth who have received technical skills training. The aim will be to assist these youth to run their businesses using better business practices, leading to better profit margins and more savings. Examine related Peace Corps and N'Domo/Segou models.



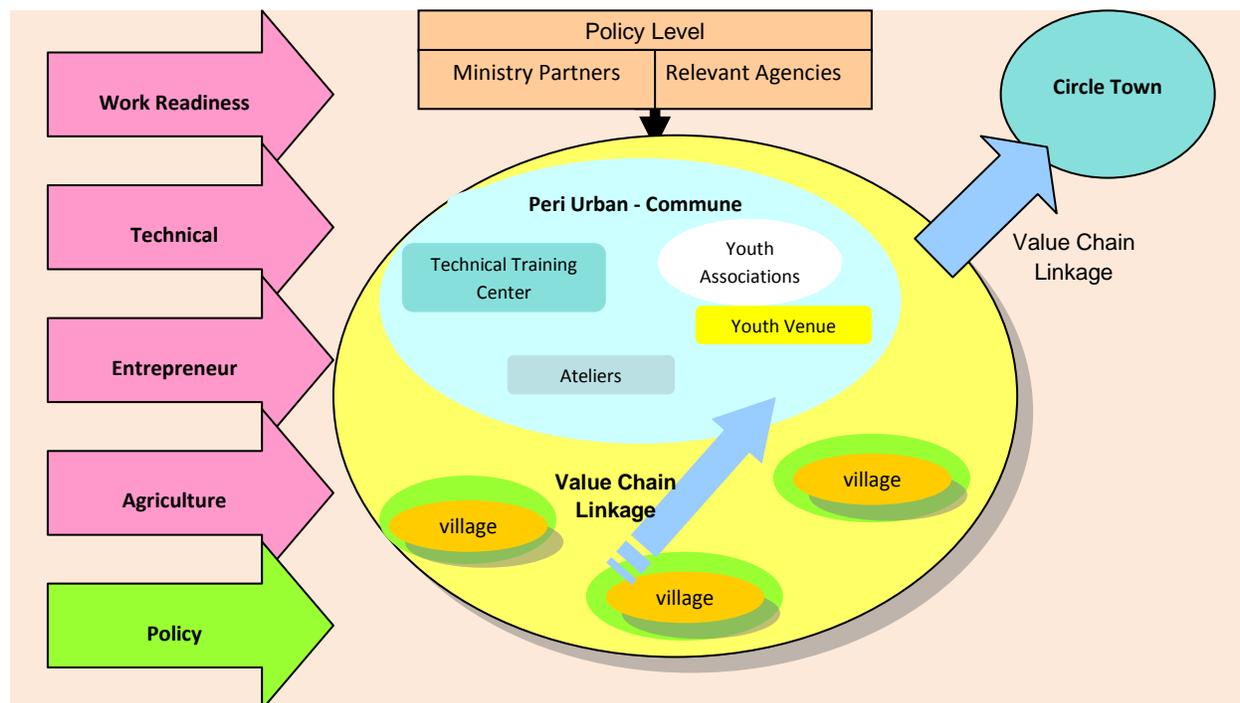
AJA Youth Project

Additional aspects of entrepreneurship development to consider include:

- Training needs to be tailored to different age groups and skill levels.
- Training needs to be very practical and visual (see AJA model).
- Training might be provided only one day a week to allow participants to continue with other activities. This is particularly important for youth involved in on-going income generating activities.
- Participants need to be supported and encouraged to earn income during the training period. This provides real life experiences, related to the actual business of the participants, to discuss during training sessions.
- Participants should be encouraged to participate in a savings process (not necessarily group savings) for a minimum of an initial 12 months. They can then access the savings to buy (capital) equipment to help expand their business.
- Post training support is critical and should be provided for at least two years after training.
- Access to credit through a financial institution should only be considered after year two when the business has show stability and an ability to generate income to repay a loan.

### VIII.2 Rural / Peri-Urban Program Model: A Visual Interpretation

Rather than working “wide” across the entire country, the project should go deep in selected communes that are not being served by other organizations that focus on youth. This will allow for a synergy of the variety of activities anticipated as necessary to move youth into successful livelihoods. It will also allow for differentiation of activities, based on the local economy. These activities will include policy work at the commune level, linkages with and support to economic development plans and activities, and the addition of accompaniment services to training centers, ateliers, and entrepreneurship programs.



## IX. CONCLUSION

The EQUIP3 rapid assessment of Malian youth revealed much activity and much potential. Youth are entrepreneurial and inventive; and they are finding ways to earn money, however small. If at all possible, rural youth want to remain in their communities and the obvious way for them to do so is to engage in viable agro-pastoral livelihoods. While it is difficult to generate income at the village level, some projects are already demonstrating the potential to generate income, particularly if they are linked to value chains in nearby peri-urban areas.

Youth serving organizations are providing a wide range of training services; but recognize that they are failing to move youth into employment; and may be open to modifying their practices. The Government of Mali is prioritizing youth employment and associated support mechanisms to assist in this arena. It seems the time is right to work closely with Ministries of Employment and Technical Training, Youth and Sports, Agriculture, and Education; and associated training providers; to shift from a training mentality to a livelihoods mentality, which is critically needed to enable job placement for greater numbers of youth.

Many peri-urban youth have received technical skills training and now need the “accompaniment” necessary to move them to the job place. This accompaniment might be in the form of work readiness, financial, and business skills training, as well as links to credit and savings programs to facilitate the purchase of start-up equipment. Others might need skills upgrades or re-training if the market for their skills is non-existent in their geographic areas.

Most out of school youth with active livelihood pursuits are engaged in the informal sector; and thus aspects of entrepreneurship training should be included in all program offerings (agro-pastoral, technical and integrated literacy), as well being a main program thrust on its own. Project efforts devoted to micro and small enterprise growth and improving and expanding youth livelihoods within the informal sector will lead to greater youth employment opportunities and will likely stimulate local economic growth.

The principles that have emerged from EQUIP3’s global research on youth livelihood interventions are applicable to Mali, and will be apparent in the project design: Many youth are already economically active; Young people’s economic activities are linked to household livelihood strategies; Households are actively engaged in planning for youth livelihood development; Youth must often balance education with work; Livelihood programming should reflect marketplace realities and build from existing assets and activities; Livelihood is the key driver of positive youth development outcomes; The youth cohort is diverse; youth livelihood programs should be cross sectoral and track both livelihood-specific and cross-cutting outcomes and impacts.

In designing a program based on the information included in this report, an obvious beginning will be an in-depth exploration in each commune targeted for activity of the experiences and inclinations of the local youth, the services in place and the economic opportunities available. The opportunity to work with local government, youth associations, and those business people active

in the local economies, on interventions that are appropriate to the local milieu, and that will help to put the brakes on youth migration from rural villages to urban centers, makes this a very exciting project to contemplate.

Upon final completion of the assessment report (after incorporating feedback from USAID), EQUIP3 will expand and further develop the main program strategy options as the basis for the USAID/Mali Support to Out-of-School Youth Project document.

**Appendix 1: Bibliography**

**Appendix 2: Daily Meeting Log**

**Appendix 3: Youth Focus Group Protocol**

**Appendix 4: Key Findings, Implications, and Risks**

## Appendix 1: Bibliography

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## Appendix 2: Daily Meeting Log

### Bamako Meeting Log

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
April 6 <sup>th</sup>	15h	Carrefour Des Jeunes (Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports)	Mme Djénébou Sanogo, Directrice	20 22 42 11
	16-18h	Carrefour des Jeunes	Youth Focus Group	
April 7 <sup>th</sup>	8h	Centre d'écoute communautaire pour jeunes, Niamakoro	Ibrahim Camara, Président	76 47 27 29
	10h	Association de Soutien au Développement des activités de Population (ASDAP)	Dr. Diarra Mamaou	20 20 27 69
	11h	Centre d'Education pour le Développement (CED)	Dr. Fadjala Kamissoko, Chef Division CED	76 47 36 32
April 8 <sup>th</sup>	8h	ENDA Tiers Monde	Soumana COULIBALY	20 22 55 64
	9h	AJA Mali: Association Jeunesse Action Mali	Souleymane SARR (Executive Director)  as well as the Program Director and Resources Director	76 22 90 50
	11.30-1pm	USAID	Offices of Education, Economic Growth & DG	
	15h	Centre d'Ecoute Communautaire Pour Enfants et Jeunes en Situations Difficile de Sikoro	Mahamane Maiga, directeur	76 46 38 67
April 9 <sup>th</sup>	9am	Fondation Stromme	Mme Andrea Ahouassa Adedodja, Chargée de Programme Senior  Mr. Mamadou Koulibaly, Education Coordinator	20 22 38 84

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
			Emmanuel Diarra, Microfinance Coordinator\West Africa	
April 9th	15h	Centre Nationale De Ressource Pour L'Education Non-Formelle (CNR-ENF)	Soumana Kané, Chef Cellule Alpha, Formation et Suivi/Evaluation Nouhoun Diakite, Directeur General	79 03 36 20
	8h30 – 10h	Programme d'appui à la jeunesse du Mali (PAJM)	Gilles Lossois : Technical Advisor Cheickna Traoré: Technical Advisor	20 21 75 92
	15h	Programme d'Appui à la Jeunesse du Mali (PAJM) Ministry of Youth and Sport; Nationale de la Jeunesse	Gilles Lossois : Technical Advisor	20 21 75 92
	15h	Centre de Formation Professionnelle de Missabougou	Karim Sangare, Director,	76 31 9466
April 10th	9-11h	Centre Père Michel	Director	20 21 35 57
	16-18h	Project Jeunes (Focus Group)		66 78 07 78
April 12th	9h	Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment (APEJ)	Oumar Sidi Aly, Chief of Youth Entrepreneurship;	66 75 16 62
	10-11.30h	IICEM of USAID (integrated initiatives for economic growth in Mali)	Jean Francois Guay, Director	76 40 26 77
	10h	World Vision	Pierre Saye, Director of Ed/Advocacy	20 22 04 62
	13h	Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training	Drissa Ballo, Director General	66.75.25.27

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
	13h	Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l'Emploi (ANPE)	M. Abdoulaye B. Traore, Chef du Département Perfectionnement Reconversion	20 22 83 54
	15h	Direction nationale de l'Education de Base (DNEB)	Mountaga Diarra, chef division CED  Mountaga Diarra, chef division Alphabétisation	76 47 36 32
	15h	Embassy of Denmark DANIDA	Charlotte Just 1 <sup>st</sup> Secretary of	
	17-18h	Swiss Contact	Ulrich Stucki, Resident Representative	66 74 29 37
April 19th	11h00	Banque Mondiale	Kamano Pierre Joseph, senior education specialist	20 22 22 83
	15h00	USAID (par telephone)	David Jackson	20 70 27 41
April 22nd	8. 30 -10. 30	Peace Corps	Mike Simsik, Director Diadie Diarra, Small Enterprise Development Assistant,	20.21.44.79
	12- 13h	Chambres de Métiers	Elmehdi Ag. Hamaty, Conseiller Technique du l'Artisanat et du Tourisme	20 21 61 65
	13hr- 14hr	Conseil National de la Jeunesse du Mali	Siriman Traore, President	66 71 50 69

## Bougouni Meeting Log

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
April 13 <sup>th</sup>	7h30	Voyage à Bougouni		
	10h30	Centre de formation professionnelle /Adama Coulibaly	Adama Coulibaly Amadou Kouma	66 81 66 35
	12h00	Visite du stade omnisport de Bougouni		
	13h30	Visite du centre de formation / alphabétisation		
	14h00	Service local de la jeunesse, des sports, des arts et de la culture/ONG Borne Fondene Mali	Lamine	
	15h00	Visite guidée du périmètre maraicher des jeunes de Bougouni	Abdoulaye Coulibaly	66 81 66 35
	16h00	Rencontre avec les membres de la communauté et le groupement de jeunesse de Bougouni	Kouma, Bagayoko, chef de quartier Heremakono	66 71 82 90
	17h00	Restitution		
April 14 <sup>th</sup>	8h00	Focus groupe : groupement des jeunes du villahge de Kola et les membres de la communauté	Abdoulaye Coulibaly	66 81 66 35
	12h00	Voyage à Sikasso		

## Sikasso Meeting Log

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
April 15 <sup>th</sup>	8h00	Coopération suisse / centre international d'expertise	Nabe vincent Coulibaly	20 62 01 27
	9h30	Direction régionale de la jeunesse / conseil communal de la jeunesse	Modibo Baganka	76 04 58 82
	10h15	Centre de promotion de la jeunesse	Solomane Diakité	76 39 64 36
	11h00	Service local des arts et de la culture	Meyaka Ouattara	
	13h00	Groupe de jeune / Association des jeunes résolue de Hamdallaye (AJRDH)	Drissa Sanogo	76 14 31 87
	14h00	Atelier d'apprentissage en menuiserie	Nouhoum Koné	76 39 30 36
	15h00	Centre de formation BENKAN / Filles déscolarisées	Soumahoro	76 03 09 88
	16h30	Restitution		
April 16 <sup>th</sup>	8h00	Centre de formation Jean Bosco	Père Antonio Héréra	21 62 00 62 76 21 29 78
	9h00	focus group : village de Banakoni (association Benkadi)	Mohamed Traoré	77 85 78 66
	12h00	Retour à Bamako		

## Ségou Meeting Log

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
April 13 <sup>th</sup>	7h30	Voyage à Ségou		
	12h00	Enda Ségou	Dr Daouda SIDIBE, coordinateur	76 49 47 18
	12h45	Focus group :	Mohamed Baba DIARRA	66 72 38 15
	14H30	FAFPA (Fond d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle et à l'Apprentissage)	Adama Japkilé, Directeur Régional	66 72 42 07
	15h00	Direction Régionale de la Jeunesse de Ségou	Hama C. Touré, Directeur par interim	75 29 84 14
April 14 <sup>th</sup>	09H15	Focus groupe: Village de Soroba	Siaka COULIBALY	
	16H00	World Vision/San	Josué DIARRA, Directeur de base	79 05 03 58
	16h30	Voyage à Mopti		
April 16 <sup>th</sup>	18H00	LUX-DEVELOPMENT	Michel CADALEN	74 76 76 76
	19H15	Association GANGAN	Demba DOUCOURE	76 08 50 58
April 17 <sup>th</sup>	09H10	Centre NDOMO	Boubacar DOUMBIA	77 53 52 42
	10h00	Retour à Bamako		

## Mopti Meeting Log

Date	Time	Organization / Agency	Key Interviewees	Contact
April 15 <sup>th</sup>	09H00	USAID TRICKLE UP	Mariam MAIGA	79 23 68 45
	10H00	AEJT Mopti (Association des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs)	Garba DIAKITE, president	76 12 29 66
	10H15	Centre de Formation Professionnelle Aicha	Kadia HAIDARA	65 54 13 80
	15H30	Conseil Régional de la Jeunesse de Mopti	Nouhoum BOCOUM	76 01 03 18
	16H00	PAJM Mopti (Programme d'appui à la Jeunesse du Mali) antenne de Mopti	Mr Maiga	
April 16 <sup>th</sup>	09H00	Direction Régionale de la Jeunesse de Mopti	Aly KAMPO	79 27 81 79
	09H00	World Vision	Paulin DIARRA	79 49 01 51
	10H30	Focus group: Village de Hourounèma	Adjoda CISSE	78 94 56 04
		WINROCK INTERNATIONAL		
	12h00	Retour à Ségou		

**NB** : Deux équipes ont été constituées pour faire cette étude dans les régions

**Equipe 1** : Bill, Barb, Coulibaly, Diarrassouba, Mme Diallo et Solo

**Equipe 2** : Noah, Chris, Dramane, Hawa, et Jacques

Cities	Teams	Dates
Bamako	1+2	April 6th, 12th
Bougouni	1	April 13th and 14th
Sikasso	1	April 15th and 16th
Ségou	2	April 13th, 14th, 16th, 17th
Mopti	2	April 15th, 16th

## Appendix 3: Youth Focus Group Protocol



Youth focus groups were organized to gather qualitative information about youth knowledge, attitudes and practices related to education, income generation and other social and economic issues of concern to youth. Given the study's limited time frame, it was not possible to meet with youth informants for extended periods of time or on repeated days, during which trust could be established, a key element to gaining access to truthful information about often complex

personal beliefs and behaviors. Therefore, following the introductions, initial questions posed to the youth participants revolved around a symbolic figure, which was chosen and named by the youth themselves. The focus group conversation then flowed around this central figure (who was treated as possibly a fellow group member) allowing the youth participants to share personal information in a de-personalized, third-person context.

The second section of the inquiry then posed direct questions to youth participants about their lives and experiences. Males and females were separated in order to maximize the participation of females and to create a non-threatening environment where each gender could identify and discuss its specific challenges.

The questions were developed in French and English and translated into Bambara for use by our team's facilitators during the Bambara-language discussion groups. The questions were then back-translated into French to ensure accuracy.

The initial set of questions was tested with a group of youth at the Carrefour des Jeunes facility in Bamako on April 10 and then revised and re-tested during subsequent focus group discussions in Bamako, Segou, Mopti, Bougouni and Siakasso.

## Focus Group Questions:

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### Salutations / introduction

#### 1. Travail/compétence

*(on part d'une image pour introduire les débats)*

1. Que peut-il faire comme travail ?
2. Comment a-t-il trouvé ce travail ?
3. Travaille-t-il à plein temps ?
4. Pourquoi est ce qu'il fait ce travail ?
5. dans quel type de structure travaille-t-il ?
6. Quelles compétences faut-il pour faire ce travail ?
7. Comment dépense-t-il cet argent ?

#### 2. Ecole & éducation & formation professionnelle

1. a-t-il-été à l'école ? si oui : jusqu'à quel niveau ? Si non : pourquoi ?
2. la personne a-t-elle fait une formation non formelle ? si oui, quel type ? et qui vous a donné cette formation ?
3. cette formation a-t-elle permis d'avoir du travail ?
4. y-t-il d'autres programmes de formation qu'elle connaît ? si oui, lesquels ?

#### 3. Perspectives

*(On revient vers les jeunes eux-mêmes pour leur poser ces questions)*

1. Qu'est ce que vous faites dans la vie ?
2. Que voulez vous devenir dans trois ans ?
3. qu'est ce qu'il faut pour atteindre votre objectif?

#### 4. Programme

1. Si un partenaire veut aider la jeunesse, par où doit-t-il commencer ? (*probe*) En ville ou en campagne ?

## Appendix 4 : Mali Youth Assessment: Key Findings, Implications, and Risks

	Key Findings	Implications	Risks
<b>Government Youth Structures / Programs</b>	1. Government is investing in private vocational training schools (FAFPA) that do not result in job placements	Government training resources would give better results if the programs they invest in include all the non-training elements required for economic success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased costs</li> </ul>
	2. Government programs lack accompaniment phase job placement, start-up equipment	Policy change could leverage change at implementation level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fewer youth might be served, but those served will get jobs.</li> </ul>
	3. There are examples of effective government youth programs	Effective partnership with government are needed to insure government support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government interference</li> </ul>
	4. Technical training centers have urban bias	Alternative technical training methodologies are needed in rural areas	
<b>NGO Programs / Civil Society</b>	1. There are examples of effective rural training models (Cooperation Swiss, World Vision, Conseil, Born Foten, Trickle Up)	New projects should build on existing successful models	
	2. The Conseil des Jeune is the civil society structure focused on youth	The local level Conseil is a potential civil society structure to partner with for project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This civil society structure can be co-opted by the government structure</li> <li>The capacity of each structure can vary greatly</li> </ul>

	Key Findings	Implications	Risks
Youth Associations	1. Some youth are organizing themselves into associations for income generation and saving activities; others are asking for help with organizing	Project activities should build on and enhance youth associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of capacity (ie, management, literacy) of youth associations could make program implementation and sustainability a challenge</li> </ul>
	2. Youth appreciate the benefits of working within associations, but also want individual gain	Project activities should include a careful balance of both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The challenge is to keep a balance</li> </ul>
	3. Youth are asking for youth venues that have potential to become self sustaining and provide opportunities for business and cultural activities	Projects should assist youth to develop youth spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unused and Unsustainable Centers, Youth politics</li> </ul>
Youth	1. A large percentage of males leave their villages after the harvest to earn money and then return for the following farming season. Others don't return for longer periods of time  Some females leave the village to earn money for marriage. Most return to the village	Situate income-generating activities in the village to keep youth from migrating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income generation at village level is challenging</li> </ul>
	2. Both genders prefer to earn money in the village rather than travelling outside	Projects focused on rural development for youth might be able to slow migration	
	3. Youth are able to identify inputs needed for income generating agro-pastoral activities	Project efforts should include strategies and inputs to enable youth income-generating agro-pastoral activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's harder to generate income at the village level</li> </ul>

	Key Findings	Implications	Risks
	4. Cultural dynamic that girls are more occupied with housekeeping activities and have less time than project participation	Project should invest in parent orientation around giving girls time for fund raising activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could alienate parents and create problems for girls</li> </ul>
	5. Youth want quick financial gain	Build in short term rewards en route to longer term gains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth may abandon activities that take too long to materialize</li> </ul>
	6. Reality of Malian context, youth goes up to 35 years old	Might need to expand USAID's definition of youth	
<b>Youth Employment</b>	1. Not many jobs for which we can train youth	Alternative livelihood programs for youth are required	
	2. Ateliers in peri urban areas provide viable employment opportunities for youth	Strengthened Ateliers may expand employment opportunities for youth	
	3. Successful entrepreneurs provide job opportunities for less skilled youth	Providing entrepreneurs with better business skills may result in increased job creation	
<b>Youth Skills Training</b>	1. Numerous skills training and apprenticeship programs exist, but literacy, life, business skills, connection with employers and post-training support and equipment are often missing	<p>Projects should build on current skills programming and develop the missing elements</p> <p>Training resources could give better results if the private programs they invest include all the non-training elements required for economic success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher cost may lead to serving fewer</li> <li>• Some inputs needed for end result employment may be beyond the scope of the project.</li> <li>• Government might not be amenable to changing the way they are supporting youth programming</li> </ul>
	2. Literacy is not a prerequisite to some technical skills training and Ateliers for unschooled youth	Literacy is understood as an important skill and can be conducted simultaneously with vocational training	

	Key Findings	Implications	Risks
	3. Variety of training models will be needed to serve the different education profiles of youth (non-schooled, drop outs, pre-DAF, CAD finishers)	The project will need different training models to respond to the various youth education profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to find enough good competent people to implement programs</li> </ul>
	4. There are a lot of unemployed trained youth	The project should assist those youth with post training components (literacy, life, business skills and post-training elements such as equipment, connection with employers, support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading too thin without enough resources and therefore without impact</li> </ul>
	5. Youth are choosing training programs without fully understanding what it takes to earn a living in that vocation	Youth and parents need to understand what is necessary to move from vocational training to employment, so they can make wise choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand for viable vocations may exceed available slots leading to more competitive environment</li> </ul>
	6. Vocational / technical training centers are resourced with basic equipment, and no occupational health and safety	Policy and practice could emphasize occupational health and safety, including upgrading equipment as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost implications</li> </ul>
	7. Literacy is perceived as a valuable asset for economic security	Integrate literacy into youth support activities. The literacy program content should be life skills, business-related math, business management, vocational content, related health and safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and training phase is costly</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	1. Few youth training centers are conducting income generating activities	Project should encourage income generating activities on the part of the training centers	
	2. The Atelier model is an example of a self sustaining centre	Project should build on this positive model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abuse of trainees</li> </ul>
	3. Private training centers are largely government funded	Project should encourage income generating activities on the part of the training centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to change mind set</li> </ul>

	Key Findings	Implications	Risks
	4. There are a number of different successful enterprise development programs, each serving a different target population	The project could build on these models	
	5. Many programs either give a loan or a grant before the new business has put into practice adequate management systems	Projects should only grant access to finance after the business demonstrated financial management capacity	
	6. Loans granted to youth businesses are often defaulted on, especially government loans	Projects should consider risks carefully, and educate participants carefully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High percentage of default</li> </ul>
	7. There is a successful group savings scheme model being used	This model might be encouraged in other programs	