



COUNTRY PROFILE



O. DOUCOURE, USAID/MALI

The city of Djenné dates back to 250 BC. Today, it is making modern history with its wired Imam, Almamy Korobara. USAID provided computer equipment and a one-year Internet subscription for the Imam, who heads the Muslim community in one of Africa's most important Islamic cities. "With the Internet," he says, "I can find information for the preaching I do on Fridays, and I can help other Muslims understand what's going on in the world. I'm connected."

OVERVIEW

Mali stands out as a stable democracy in the midst of the troubled west African region. The predominantly Muslim country began a transition to democracy in 1992 and continued with a peaceful change of power in 2002. Real gross domestic product growth in has averaged over 5 percent a year since 1994, facilitating the rise of national income from \$240 per person in 1994 to \$440 in 2006. For Mali to continue to play a positive role in the region, strenuous efforts must be made to achieve broad-based poverty reduction.



PROGRAMS

PEACE AND SECURITY

The Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership is primarily funded by the Department of Defense to foster military-to-military relations and appreciation for democratic institutions. The program enhances the Malian military's ability to monitor the country's porous borders, prevent them from being used as safe havens by terrorists, and to mitigate the trafficking of people and illicit goods. Equally important is USAID's role in providing supplies, support, and services to at-risk populations. Access to development services prevent citizens from being swayed by terrorist propaganda, especially in the north.

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

Since its first democratic election in 1992, Mali has become one of the most enlightened democracies in Africa, boasting an open press and the largest number of private radio stations in any African country. USAID promotes citizen participation in the democratic process, provides communities with the skills to administer financial systems, develops policies that support decentralization, and increases women's role in decision-making. From 2006 to 2008, the number of elected female leaders has increased by 200 percent.

However, Mali is one of the most information-deprived countries, with a largely illiterate population and a nascent technology infrastructure. USAID's programs improve the quality of development information available and reduce constraints on information access. Twenty-five USAID-funded telecommunications centers reach a potential audience of 750,000 people and generate enough revenue to cover operating costs. Internet access points are now available in most towns with more than

MALI SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1960
Population: 12.5 million (2006)
GDP per person: \$470 (yr)

Source: U.S. State Department

USAID IN MALI

www.usaidmali.org



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

5,000 people, and more than 310 radio programs have been broadcast on topics including health, trafficking, microfinance, and women's issues.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

The Presidential Malaria Initiative offers services that reduce the spread of malaria in children and pregnant mothers, including insecticide-treated bed nets, indoor residual spraying, preventative malarial treatment, and medication for any child with symptoms. USAID also strives to empower women to take control of their health by offering family planning and maternal and child health services, which allow women to make informed decisions on family size and birth spacing. And USAID programs are strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Health, the private sector, and civil society to offer a complete package of services for women and children countrywide. In addition, USAID is expanding access to HIV/AIDS services, consolidating HIV/AIDS surveillance, reducing vitamin A and iron deficiency, increasing immunization coverage, and preventing and treating diarrheal diseases.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION

Mali's primary enrolment rate has traditionally been among the lowest in the world, particularly for girls. To address this problem, USAID pioneered a program of community-owned and -managed primary schools to increase access in remote rural areas, building 1,740 community schools over seven years. USAID now concentrates on increasing the quality of basic education through teacher training, improving the national primary curriculum, mobilizing communities to manage their schools; providing over 5,000 scholarships each year to disadvantaged girls, and increasing adult literacy. Additionally, USAID has distributed over 196,000 books in national languages to schools.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mali's economy is based solely on agriculture and mining, but the government is committed to a market-based economy. Mali has become essentially self-sufficient in food production, so USAID programs reinforce agricultural growth by targeting export commodities for which Mali has a comparative advantage, such as rice, potatoes, mangoes, and animal products. Projects reinforce the Malian private sector by improving agribusinesses management and strengthening microfinance institutions. USAID transfers agricultural technologies and develops human capacity through trainings on productivity, trade, and finance. New technologies in rice, including improved irrigation technologies, will help reduce risk of food insecurity and ensure more consistent access to food for Malians. USAID also supports the President's Initiative to End Hunger in Africa and the Global Climate Change Initiative.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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