

OXFAM  
RESEARCH  
REPORT

# Delivering Education For All in Mali

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## Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
AfDF	African Development Fund (a lending instrument of the AfDB)
ANICT	National Investment Agency for Local Government (Agence National d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales)
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy (World Bank)
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
C-SCO-EPT	Coalition of Civil Society Organisations for Education For All in Mali
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FCFA	Franc Communauté Financière Africaine (West African franc)
GBS	General budget support
GDP	Gross domestic product
GoM	Government of Mali
GPRSP	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté) – Mali's second-generation PRSP
HIPC	Highly indebted poor countries
IFI	International financial institution
IFM	Institut de Formation des Maîtres (Teacher Training Institute)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDRI	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
MEN	Mali Ministry of National Education
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (of Mali MEN)
NGO	Non-government organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISE	Education Sector Investment Programme (Programme d'Investissement Sectoriel de l'Education)
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (policy loan of the IMF)
PRODEC	Ten-Year Education Development Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education)
PRSC	Poverty Reduction Strategy Credit (policy loan of the World Bank)
SARPE	Alternative Teaching Staff Recruitment Strategy (Stratégie Alternative de Recrutement de Personnel d'Enseignement)
SBS	Sector budget support
SWAp	Sector-wide approach
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

# Mali key facts: statistics and timelines<sup>1</sup>

## Social statistics (all 2008 unless otherwise stated)

<b>Total population estimate (2007)</b>	12.34 million. <sup>2</sup> Census due April 2009
<b>Percentage of population aged under 15 (2005)</b>	48% (5,921,760) <sup>3</sup>
<b>Percentage of population below poverty line</b>	54% below \$1.25 a day; 77% below \$2 a day; 64% below national poverty line <sup>4</sup> [National poverty line = FCFA 420 a day (€0.64; \$0.85)] <sup>5</sup>
<b>Number of school-age children 7-15 years old</b>	3,181,749 (2,279,587 7-12 year olds, 902,162 13-15 year olds) <sup>6</sup>
<b>Human Development Index</b>	Ranked 168 out of 179 <sup>7</sup>
<b>Primary net enrolment rate (percentage of children aged 7-12 in school)</b>	61% (68% boys, 53.9% girls) <sup>8</sup>
<b>Number of children aged 7-12 not in primary school</b>	891,225: of whom 532,687 (60%) are girls, and 358,538 (40%) are boys. <sup>9</sup>
<b>Number of students in public primary school</b>	1,101,341 (322,597 urban, 778,744 rural). Girls are 45.6% (501,788) of this number overall (48.8% in urban areas, 44.2% in rural areas). <sup>10</sup>
<b>Number of primary school students in all schools (public, private, community and medersa)</b>	1,823,037 (568,350 urban, 1,254,687 rural). Girls are 44.8% (1,005,673) of this number overall (48.5% in urban areas, 43.2% in rural areas). <sup>11</sup>
<b>Number of students in public secondary school</b>	351,737 (142,882 urban, 208,855 rural). Girls are 39.2% (137,878) of this number overall (45.4% in urban areas, 35% in rural areas). <sup>12</sup>
<b>Number of secondary school students in all schools (public, private, community and medersa)</b>	422,125 (195,457 urban, 226,668 rural). Girls are 39.6% of this number overall (45.1% in urban areas, 34.8% in rural areas).
<b>Secondary net enrolment rate (percentage of children aged 13-15 in school)</b>	7% (8.2% of boys, and 5.8% of girls) <sup>13</sup>
<b>Percentage of adults in Mali who can read and write</b>	23% <sup>14</sup>
<b>Teacher/pupil ratio (primary)</b>	1: 51 overall, or 1:64 in public schools (exceeds 1:100 in some cases) If only trained teachers are counted, 1:105 overall, or 1:81 in public schools i <sup>15</sup>
<b>Number of extra teachers required to provide universal primary education</b>	27,250 teachers, or 45,350 trained teachers <sup>16</sup>
<b>Number of primary schools with separate latrines for girls</b>	13.6% <sup>17</sup>
<b>Government current expenditure on education per person</b>	\$24 (FCFA 10,834; €17) <sup>18</sup>

## Political and policy timelines

<b>Next elections</b>	Presidential: April 2012 Parliamentary: July 2012 Local (commune): April 2009
<b>Decentralisation</b>	Eight regions and one 'capital district' (Bamako), divided into 50 districts ( <i>cercles</i> ), and 703 communes (684 rural, 19 urban)
<b>Budget process and financial year</b>	Financial year runs January–December. Mid-year budget performance report and the next year's draft budget presented to the National Assembly at beginning of October. Budget generally passed into law (as a Finance Act) in December.
<b>Overall policy and planning</b>	Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté (CSCR, Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Framework) runs from 2007 to 2011. Previous PRSP ran from 2002–06. Medium-Term Expenditure Framework updated yearly.
<b>Education policy and planning</b>	Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Éducation (PRODEC, Ten-Year Education Development Programme) launched 1998. Implemented via three Education Sector Investment Programmes (PISE): 2001–05, 2006–08, 2009–11.

## Economic statistics (all 2008 unless otherwise stated)

<b>GDP, growth and inflation (projections)</b>	GDP \$8.4bn (FCFA 3,779bn, €5.8bn;) in 2008; \$8.3bn (FCFA 4,111bn, €6.3bn,) in 2009 Real GDP growth: 4.9% in 2008; 5.3% in 2009 Inflation: 9.2% in 2008, 2.5% in 2009 <sup>19</sup>
<b>Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (2007)</b>	\$500 (FCFA 240,000, €365) <sup>20</sup>
<b>Revenue (without grants)</b>	\$1.4bn (FCFA 606bn, €924 m) 16% of GDP <sup>21</sup>
<b>Public sector wage bill</b>	\$433m (FCFA 194bn, €296m) 5.1% GDP <sup>22</sup>
<b>Government health budget</b>	\$156m (FCFA 70bn, €107m): 6.9% of total budget; 1.9% of GDP <sup>23</sup>
<b>Government education budget (including donor funding)</b>	\$461 m (FCFA 207bn; €316m): 21% of total budget; 30% of recurrent budget; 5% of GDP <sup>24</sup>
<b>Government budget for primary education (including donor funding)</b>	\$186m (FCFA 83bn; €127m): 40% of education budget; 2.2% of GDP <sup>25</sup>
<b>Education financing breakdown</b>	\$292m (FCFA 131bn, €200m) from internal government resources; \$19m (FCFA 8.7bn, €13m) from local taxation; and \$150m (FCFA 67bn, €103m) required in external financing (excluding technical assistance) <sup>26</sup>

## Donor aid and timelines (all 2007 unless otherwise stated)

<b>Total aid</b>	\$1.35bn (FCFA 648bn, €988m) (NB 2007 was an exceptionally high year.) <sup>27</sup> Top three donors: US, France, World Bank. Total of 18 OECD bilateral donors
<b>Aid per capita</b>	\$110 (FCFA 52,530, €80) <sup>28</sup>
<b>Aid to education</b>	\$111m (FCFA 53bn, €81m), 8.2% of total aid. Top donors: France and the World Bank (provide more than 50% together). <sup>29</sup>

<b>Gap in external financing for education</b>	\$20m (FCFA 9.6bn, €15m), 15% of the total required. <sup>30</sup>
<b>Education sector budget support (2006)</b>	\$39m (FCFA 20bn, €29m) of \$289m (FCFA 151bn, €230m), 13.5% of total aid to education that year (GoM). Donors: France and Sweden
<b>Aid given as general budget support</b>	\$118.6m (FCFA 57bn, €86.7m), 8.8% of total aid. Donors: World Bank, Netherlands, Sweden, France, EC (five in total). <sup>31</sup>
<b>Aid to health</b>	\$39.5m (FCFA 19bn, €28.9m), 2.9% of total aid <sup>32</sup>
<b>Debt savings 2006 (HIPC + MDRI)</b>	\$85m (FCFA 44bn, €68m) <sup>33</sup> ; equivalent to 1.1% of GDP, 6.5% of revenue. NB Mali completed HIPC in 2003, qualified for MDRI in 2006.
<b>EC Country Assistance Strategy (CAS)</b>	EC CAS for 2008–13 includes total resources of €559.3m (FCFA 367bn, \$744m) from the European Development Fund.
<b>World Bank Country Assistance Strategy (CAS)</b>	Joint IDA–IFC CAS for 2008–11 approved in February 2008.
<b>World Bank Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC)</b>	PRSC III, worth \$55m (FCFA 27bn, €41m), was still in the pipeline for approval in early 2009. <sup>34</sup>
<b>IMF PRGF</b>	A 2008–11 PRGF was agreed in May 2008, for a total of 27.99m SDR (\$42m, FCFA 20.6bn, €32m) <sup>35</sup>
<b>Fast Track Initiative</b>	Endorsed in 2006: \$8.7m (FCFA 3.9bn, €5.9m) from the Catalytic Fund committed for 2008 and 2009; however, only \$2.2m (FCFA 986m, €1.5m) was disbursed in 2008, with disbursement of a further \$2m (FCFA 986m, €1.5) projected in 2009. <sup>36</sup>

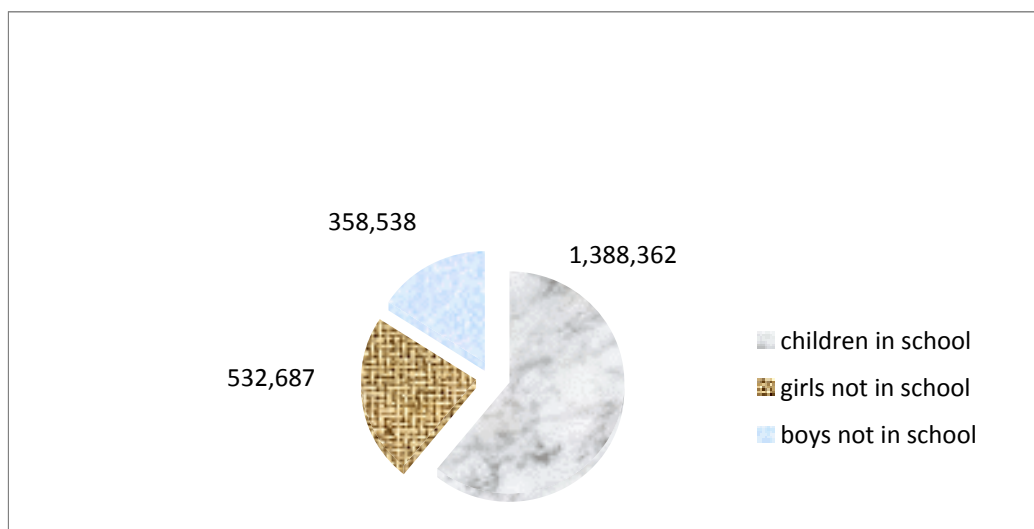
## Executive summary

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world. It has been democratic since 1991, and the international community considers it to have, overall, a well-performing government and economy. But this should not mask the huge scale of the challenges facing Mali in realising even the most basic rights of its citizens. This challenge is increased by the country's vulnerability to shocks, such as the food and fuel crises.

### *Education in Mali*

The goal of education for all Malian children by 2015 is still more a dream than a reality, despite indisputable improvements in the delivery of education in the 18 years since democratic rule began in the country. The number of children attending primary school has risen hugely, with the proportion growing from 21 per cent in 1990 to 61 per cent in 2008, and more than 20,000 extra teachers have been recruited in the past ten years. But still nearly 900,000 Malian children aged 7–12 are out of school; well over a third of that age group. Of these, 60 per cent – more than half a million children in total – are girls. Many of those children who start school do not finish (see Figure 1). Although the state is still the biggest provider of education to Mali's children, some of the increase in provision in recent years has been via a significant expansion in community schools, driven by donors and INGOs. It is crucial that these schools are included in the state system when donors no longer fund them.

**Figure 1: Malian children in school – 7–12 year-olds**



Source: *Annuaire Statistique 2007–08*, diagram created by Oxfam

The quality of education is also of huge concern: large classes (on average one teacher for 64 students in state primary schools), poorly qualified teachers, limited infrastructure, a serious lack of books and equipment, and confusion over curriculum policy mean that most of those Malian children who do attend school are being poorly educated. The poor quality shows in the fact that only 23 per cent of Malian adults – and only 29 per cent of Malians aged 15 to 24 – can read and write. This is the lowest adult literacy rate anywhere in the world.

### *Key obstacles*

There are some simple – but very serious – reasons for this gap in quality education for Malian children, on which there is near universal agreement: there are not enough

teachers, particularly well-trained teachers, and there are not enough schools and classrooms. Economic and cultural barriers have also been cited as posing problems.

The teaching profession in Mali is in crisis. Oxfam estimates a current workforce gap of at least 27,000 teachers.<sup>37</sup> Those teachers who are in post have had massively inadequate training: fewer than half of all primary school teachers have had any teacher training at all<sup>38</sup> – meaning that there is a gap of more than 45,000 trained teachers – and across the profession the average length of training per teacher is just five days.<sup>39</sup> This lack is all the more serious given that many teacher recruits have had limited education to start with. Very low salaries, averaging just \$170 (CFA 82,000, or €125) a month provide little incentive for better-qualified teachers. Meanwhile, school infrastructure is limited and of poor quality, and books and equipment are often non-existent.

The situation is worsened by the fact that many parents – themselves often uneducated – are reluctant to send their children, particularly their daughters, to school, according to some of those interviewed for this report. At present, primary school costs money (in unofficial fees) and provides a barely discernible education; these factors strengthen this resistance.

### *Government policy, practice, and financing*

Since the 1990s, the Government of Mali (GoM) has introduced sector-wide policy and planning, has increased spending, and has reorganised its ministries. There have been some improvements in outcomes, particularly in terms of enrolment. Yet there remains a deficit in both the vision and implementation of policy: the curriculum policy is constantly changing, decentralisation is not implemented properly, and there is a need to improve financial management in the Ministry of Education. Recruitment, training and management of teachers are key issues. Oxfam has calculated that the government's teacher recruitment target (2,500 trained teachers per year)<sup>40</sup> is not enough even to narrow – let alone close – the teacher gap. And even these targets are not being met. All these issues – and particularly the teacher crisis – need to be addressed urgently if the right of Malian children to an education is genuinely to be guaranteed.

Financing is also a serious issue. In 2007, donor aid promises to the sector fell short of what the government had projected it needed by \$20 million (FCFA 9.6bn, €15m).<sup>41</sup> The Malian government has increased investment in education in recent years, spending 17 per cent of the national budget (or 4.9 per cent of GDP) on education in 2007, of which around two-fifths was for primary education. Meeting international targets on spending levels, or equalling the levels of some of its neighbours, would require the GoM to raise education spending slightly; given the scale of the problem, it must at least meet this level. But in the current economic climate, the government is unlikely to be able to raise revenue – and thus spending – considerably. A more significant increase in financing is still required to meet needs, and donors must provide it.

### *The role of donors and international NGOs*

Donors also bear responsibility for failings, particularly in relation to the teacher crisis. There is firstly a historical responsibility for the disastrous structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s, which reduced the state's capacity to adequately finance and staff public services, particularly in the education sector. World Bank conditions to reduce the size of the civil service led to a devastating drop in the number of trained teachers, from which Mali is still recovering.

Donors are also failing Mali today, by not giving enough aid. While Mali does better than some of its neighbours in West Africa, the aid available still falls far short of needs. In 2007, OECD aid committed to Mali's education sector was just \$111 million (FCFA 53bn, €81m),<sup>42</sup> compared with the \$131 million (FCFA 63bn, €96m) which Mali had projected it needed in external financing in that year.<sup>43</sup> This was just 8.5 per cent of overall aid to



Mali, and considerably less than half of what was committed in aid to transport and storage that year.<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, donors need to give more of the right type of aid. Mali needs predictable financing, harmonised and co-ordinated around national priorities, which will allow it to strengthen its public education system and to pay recurrent costs such as salaries. Typically, this means providing aid as long-term, predictable budget support. However, less than 9 per cent of Mali's aid in 2007 came as budget support<sup>45</sup> – a far smaller proportion than in many other African states. In the education sector, statistics are harder to access, but the Malian government reported that just 13.5 per cent of its aid to the education sector in 2006 came as budget support.

Moreover, civil society is currently left out of the process of monitoring and evaluating aid. Donors need to do more to co-ordinate aid around government priorities (preferably through budget support) and to ensure that civil society is well funded and has a place at the table.

International NGOs (INGOs) such as Oxfam must also ensure that their work serves to strengthen both government capacity to deliver services and the ability of citizens to demand, direct, and monitor these services. This means that any programme which delivers services must be embedded in the vision, priorities, and strategies of Mali's education policy, and that work with government structures supports rather than distorts these priorities. INGOs should also continue and scale up work that supports civil society to engage with and monitor the government: for example, supporting engagement with the National Assembly or community budget-tracking.

### *Conclusion*

If 'education for all' is to be achieved in Mali by 2015 – or indeed at any time – the government must ensure that it builds strategies that respond to the expectations of Malian families, and realistic plans to implement them. To this end, work needs to be done to help civil society organisations (NGOs, trade unions, the women's movement, parents' associations) to be both partners and watchdogs of local authorities and the National Assembly; more focus should be put on basic education; and the government should foster confidence in the public system rather than relying on the development of private schools in urban areas and community schools in rural ones.

Most of all, improving the quality of education will require a strong emphasis on increasing teacher numbers and on pre- and in-service teacher training, which currently is massively insufficient. Donors should collectively support this need in Mali, and should significantly scale up budget-support aid flows in order to ensure that education for all can become a reality, and one that is inseparable from, rather than a challenge to, 'quality education'.

# 1 Introduction

## Purpose and background to this report

This report explores the status and challenges of primary education in Mali today, with a particular focus on the interventions and impacts of donor governments and institutions, as well as the policy and practice of the Government of Mali (GoM). It includes recommendations for action on achieving quality education for all, aimed at the government, at donors, and at international NGOs, including Oxfam affiliates.

The report was conceived and produced in the context of an expanding campaign for education for all in Mali, particularly through the work of the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations for Education For All in Mali (C-SCO-EPT), which links at international level with Oxfam International's For All campaign. It is intended as a background reference document to be used by Malian campaigns, and to inform policy development, lobbying, and campaign work by Oxfam at international level. It is hoped that by identifying key issues of relevance both to the Malian campaign for Education For All, and to Oxfam advocacy around donor behaviour, it will aid the development of alliances and partnerships between Malian and Oxfam International campaigns for quality education for all.

### *Coalition of Civil Society Organisations for Education For All in Mali*

C-SCO-EPT is a coalition of associations, NGOs, and teaching unions, which provides a platform for civil society to share information and to co-ordinate engagement in and influence on Mali's education and training policy.

### *Oxfam in Mali*

There are five Oxfam International affiliates with partners or programmes in Mali: Oxfam America, Oxfam France – Agir ici, Oxfam GB, Oxfam Novib, and Oxfam Solidarité. They co-ordinate their work through a Country Alignment Team, and carry out some joint work on supporting Malian civil society to campaign for universal access to quality essential services, particularly education.

## An overview of Mali

Mali is a large landlocked country with a relatively small population drawn from a variety of ethnic groups. It covers an area more than twice the size of France (1.42m sq km), of which two-thirds is desert or semi-desert inhabited by nomadic groups. Its population, estimated at 12.34 million,<sup>46</sup> comprises a number of different ethnic groups, including nomads and sedentary populations. There are 11 recognised national languages, although more are spoken. French is the official language, but is probably spoken by a minority of the population. There are ongoing insecurities in the north of the country.

Democracy was established in Mali in 1991, with the overthrow of the former military government. It is now widely held to be a stable democracy, with a good human rights record and a judiciary and media generally regarded as impartial and free. It embraces a form of consensus politics, led by the President. Mali's President, Amadou Toumani Touré (known as ATT), is not a member of any party, but has the support of most of the parties in parliament and a considerable base of popular support. A former army officer who was central to the 1991 revolution, Touré was first elected in 2002 and again in 2007. The influence of the National Assembly seems to be very limited. Civil society,

particularly the union movement, played a major role in the revolution, and remains very vocal and influential in some areas, without being systematically a part of the policy debate.

Mali is an extremely poor country, ranking near the bottom of the UNDP Human Development Index. Nearly three-quarters of Malians survive on less than \$2 a day, and one in five children do not survive to their fifth birthday. Three-quarters (77 per cent) of adults cannot read or write – this is the highest illiteracy level in the UNDP index. The challenges facing Mali in fighting poverty are daunting.

### *Mali's economy*

Mali's economy has doubled in size since the transition to democracy in the early 1990s.<sup>47</sup> However, it is extremely vulnerable to shocks, such as the food and fuel price crises of 2007–08, which in 2007 saw real growth drop from 5.3 per cent to 3 per cent. Prices of staple foods rose sharply, and a study by Oxfam International and Save the Children found that poor families across the Sahel were spending 80 per cent of household income on food.<sup>48</sup> It was projected that the rises in price of cereals alone would push more than a quarter of a million more Malians into poverty.<sup>49</sup> The IMF front-loaded its 2008 loan to Mali, delivering half of the total that, but these shocks are having a serious and lasting impact beyond that – both for the government, and for individual households.

Mali receives aid from a reasonable number of donors and has benefited from extensive debt relief, but it still has huge financing needs. The World Bank rates Mali well on public finance management, but reports that there is 'scope for improvement in financial accountability and transparency'. The 2006 report of Mali's Auditor General revealed some serious concerns over the country's public finance management, with FCFA 103bn (\$197m, €157m) missing overall, of which 70 per cent was due to unpaid or uncollected taxes and duties. The new IMF programme in Mali emphasises tax collection and also continues to push various privatisations, including – controversially – that of Mali's cotton industry.

### *Mali's development policy framework*

Mali's overall development policies are contained in its Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP, *Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Réduction de Pauvreté*), which is accompanied by sectoral Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks, setting out financing needs and available resources. The GPRSP, adopted in 2006, is the second-generation PRSP. Its focuses are to improve the business climate; strengthen energy, transport, and other core infrastructure; and to introduce reforms to focus state attention on and improve delivery of its core functions of security, justice, education, and basic health care. As in other poor countries, civil society organisations questioned the extent of donor control and influence in PRSP processes.<sup>50</sup>

## 2 The state of education in Mali

Mali has seen considerable improvements in education in the 18 years since democratic rule began, particularly in terms of the numbers of children attending primary school. Provision is mostly by the state, although there has been a big expansion in community schools, driven by donors and INGOs. However, overall rates of access are still among the worst in the world, while the literacy rate is the worst. Problems are particularly severe for poorer children, children in rural areas, nomads, and girls. The key obstacles are the lack of quality teachers and of infrastructure – and behind these, a lack of resourcing. Economic and cultural barriers also pose problems.

### Access to education

Despite massive improvements in education since the shift to democracy in 1991, children in Mali are still among the least likely anywhere in the world to go to primary school. Concerted action by government, donors, NGOs, and civil society has led to significant gains, with the proportion of seven- to 12-year-olds enrolled in school increasing from 21 per cent in 1996 to 61 per cent by 2008,<sup>51</sup> and an increase of more than 20,000 in the number of primary school teachers ('first cycle').<sup>52</sup> But even with these improvements, Mali still has one of the lowest enrolment rates in the world. And of those children who do begin primary education, the proportion who complete it is disastrously low: in 2006–07, the completion rate was only 54 per cent, and just 35 per cent in the northern Tombouctou region.<sup>53</sup>

According to official figures, more than 890,000 Malian children aged seven to 12 – four in ten of the children of this age – are currently out of school (see Figure 1).<sup>54</sup> The majority are girls and children in rural areas. The reality may be worse than official figures indicate: Oxfam partners working with rural communities report that in many areas far more than half of the children are out of school. Figures could be distorted by schools over-reporting, children dropping out after registration, and the huge number of unregistered births in Mali.<sup>55</sup> It is likely that well over a million children of primary school age are missing out on an education.

The problems are particularly acute for girls: of the children officially out of school, 60 per cent are girls. This means that more than half a million girls aged seven to 12 – over half the girls of this age – are out of school. By comparison, about one-third of boys of the same age are officially out of school.<sup>56</sup> There have been efforts to increase girls' enrolment, but it has not been enough to close the gap. Meanwhile, the large gender gap in completion rates widened between 2002 and 2008 (to 18.7 points).<sup>57</sup>

Access to primary education varies considerably by region. In the capital city Bamako, over 90 per cent of children are enrolled in primary school, and the enrolment rate for girls is slightly higher than that for boys.<sup>58</sup> In general, girls fare worst in rural areas, which are home to seven out of 10 Malians. In the northern region of Kidal, for example, only 33 per cent of girls attend primary school.<sup>59</sup> Urban parts of Mali are closer to achieving gender parity, with a small increase in the percentages of girls attending primary school: 49 per cent of urban students are girls, versus 44 per cent of rural.<sup>60</sup>

Poverty also has a strong impact: there is a difference of 22 percentage points in access between the poorest 40 per cent of the population and the wealthiest 22 per cent. These factors intensify one other: fewer than two in 10 girls from poor rural households complete primary school, compared with nearly seven in 10 boys from better-off urban households.<sup>61</sup>

*Free education is a slogan, that's all. If you have one teacher for six classes, then who actually gets an education? Nobody! If the state says education is free, they must make sure there is a good teacher for every class, not this meaningless slogan, 'A school for every village'. The words are good, but they have not been put into effect.*

– Member of school management committee, Doro village, Gao

## Provision of education

The public sector is still the largest provider of education in Mali, but given the huge expansion of community schools in the 1990s, to a lesser extent than in the past. Today, 60 per cent of all primary school pupils are enrolled in public schools, with others in community schools (18 per cent), *medersas* (or Koranic schools) (12 per cent), or other private schools (including for-profit private schools) (10 per cent).<sup>62</sup>

More than 90 per cent of community school pupils live in rural areas. These schools get some small subsidies from government, but are largely financed and run on a non-profit basis by communities or others. From the 1990s until recently, they were the focus of education aid from USAID and many NGOs, and saw a rapid expansion – much greater than that of the public sector. In the 2007–08 school year, there were 3120 community schools,<sup>63</sup> of which well over half were supported by USAID-funded programmes over a seven-year period (through World Education, Save the Children US, and Africare).<sup>64</sup> Community schools tend to be smaller than public schools: although the teacher–pupil ratio is better, community schools are most likely to have one teacher teaching multiple classes.<sup>65</sup> Staff at Mali's education ministry now state that they are aiming to bring community schools into the public system.<sup>66</sup>

Private education is very much concentrated in urban areas, particularly Bamako, which is home to 16 per cent of Mali's primary school children overall, but to 60 per cent of those at private primary schools. Just 4.6 per cent of primary pupils outside Bamako attend private schools, and these are largely concentrated in Kati, a town just outside the capital.<sup>67</sup> While anecdotal evidence suggests that private education is preferred by those who can afford it, the costs put it well out of the reach of most families. There are limited monitoring and regulation of private education.

## The quality of education

There are serious concerns about the quality of education in Mali. On average, there is one teacher to every 51 pupils, although this rises to one to 64 in public schools, one to 76 in Bamako's public schools, and one to 100 in some schools.<sup>68</sup> Teacher training (both pre-service and in-service) is limited, especially for community school and contractual teachers. The reality on the ground is that often two seats must be shared between every three pupils, or pupils sit on the floor, and in core subjects there may be only one textbook for up to ten pupils. Other teaching materials are virtually non-existent.

It is hard to find systematic and complete data on educational outcomes in Mali, although in theory the Ministry of Education should have these data. Government statistics show that 17 per cent of children in Malian primary schools are repeating a year, while the government estimates that, on average, fewer than six out of 10 pupils in each primary school pass their final exam, with massive variations between schools. Anecdotal evidence and interview data suggest that a large proportion of fifth- and sixth-year pupils understand very little French; in theory their language of instruction.

This lack of basic education has a clear correlation in literacy rates. Fewer than one in four Malian adults can read and write. While the literacy rate is very low across the board, there is again a large disparity between women and men: more than 30 per cent of men are literate, but fewer than 16 per cent of women.<sup>69</sup>

### **Box 1: Literacy – policy and progress**

According to the latest United Nations figures, only 23 per cent of adults in Mali can read and write – the lowest recorded literacy rate in the world.<sup>70</sup> This compares with an average adult literacy rate of 60 per cent across low-income countries.

The government approach has long been one of non-engagement, leaving NGOs to work on this problem. But activists have criticised the slow pace of change and the lack of government strategy and financing, pointing out that the government signed up to literacy targets as part of the Dakar Education For All framework in 2000.

There is now some sign that the pace is quickening. Following an international conference on literacy in Bamako in 2007, the government divided the National Education Ministry in two, creating a ministry of basic education and literacy, and another for secondary, higher, and professional education. It has developed a new strategy on literacy, drafted with significant UN input, and the President has promised to allocate at least 3 per cent of the national education budget to adult literacy training, compared with around 1 per cent in the past.

However, civil society activists who have been tracking the disbursement and use of these funds report that only 1.4 per cent of the education budget was actually disbursed for adult literacy. Moreover, they are still calling for proper training, recognition, and payment for Mali's literacy teachers, who currently work as volunteers, receiving only nominal fees for expenses.

*Sources: Jeunesse et Développement, Mali; Association des Femmes Educatrices, Mali; UNDP Human Development Indices 2008; IRIN ; African Platform for Adult Education*

### 3 Key barriers to quality education

In interviews and in a survey of relevant literature, the barriers to quality primary education in Mali that were repeatedly cited were a lack of quality, a lack of well-trained teachers, and a lack of infrastructure. There was also considerable consensus around a range of other obstacles to access to quality primary education for Malian children, particularly financial and cultural constraints. These especially affect girls.

#### Teacher crisis

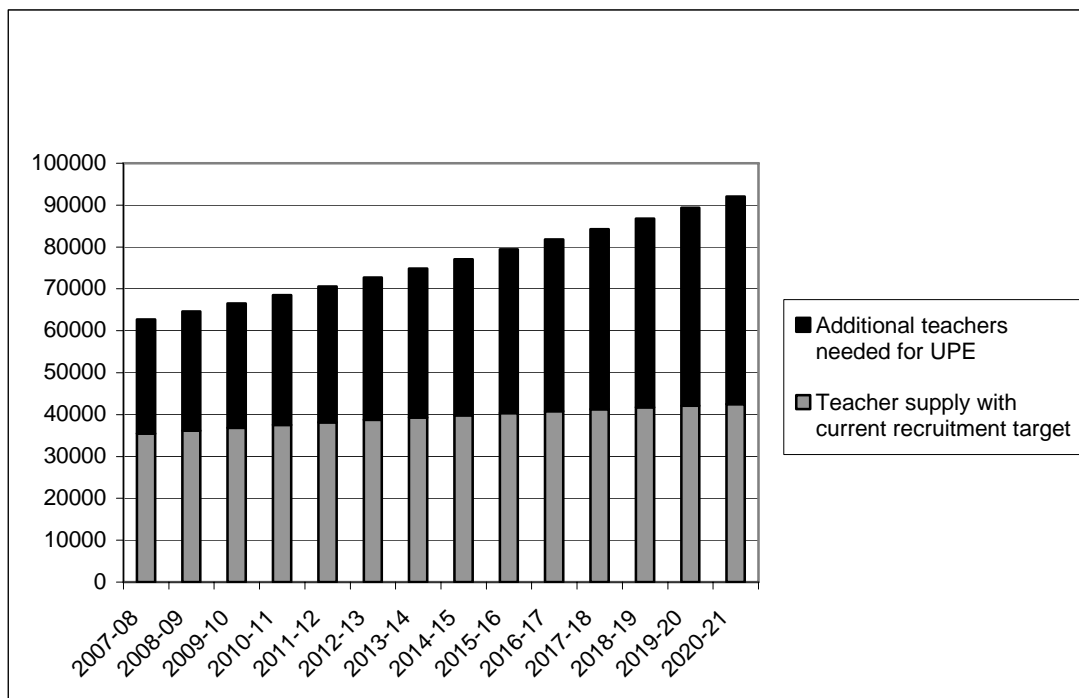
##### *Teacher numbers: destroying and rebuilding the workforce*

Mali today faces a teaching crisis. In large part, this dates back to World Bank and IMF structural adjustment reforms of the 1980s. Attempts to reduce the size of the civil service led to the resignation of around 1,000 qualified teachers, or 12.5 per cent of the teaching workforce. 'Reforms' to limit public spending saw five out of eight teacher training institutes (Instituts pédagogique d'enseignement général) closed, leaving just three in the whole country.<sup>71</sup> The combined effect – at a time when the aim was to expand education – was catastrophic. The challenge of restoring the teaching force, and the sacrifices in teacher quality that it has entailed, are severe, and Mali is still feeling the effects of these disastrous structural adjustment programmes.

Over the past decade, concerted efforts have increased teacher numbers dramatically, yet gaps remain. Officially, there were 35,442 primary school teachers in classrooms in Mali in 2007–08,<sup>72</sup> almost four times the 9,677 recorded in 1996.<sup>73</sup> But this means that there is still just one teacher for every 64 children of primary school age. To allow for universal primary education – Mali's state aim – while meeting the Education For All target of one teacher to every 40 children would require, at present, an additional 27,247 teachers – a further increase of 77 per cent (see Figure 2).

The government's policy is to train 2,500 new primary school teachers each year<sup>74</sup> – but this is not enough. Oxfam calculations show that, even with a conservative assumption about teacher retirement and with population growth remaining steady, this level of recruitment would not even narrow, let alone close, the teacher gap.

**Figure 2: The gap in Mali's teaching workforce to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE)**



Source: Calculated from data in Government of Mali (2008), *Annuaire Statistique 2007-2008* and World Bank; diagram created by Oxfam.<sup>75</sup>

These numbers do not even take into account the fact that the majority of Mali's teachers are untrained (see below): the gap in trained teachers is 45,350 – well over double the number of trained teachers now in school. A far more dramatic scale-up in numbers and training is needed to ensure that Mali's children can exercise their right to education.<sup>76</sup> This will require both the Government of Mali and donors to put an even more substantial focus on – and resources into – teacher recruitment and training.

There is also a need to recruit more women, who currently make up just over one-quarter of primary school teachers. Government figures show that more children stay in schools where the teacher is a woman,<sup>77</sup> and Oxfam partner organisations in northern Mali report that more girls enrol and stay in school when there are female teachers.<sup>78</sup> Parents may feel more at ease with sending their daughters to a classroom run by a woman, or there may be a 'role model' effect.

### *Teacher quality*

Efforts to increase teacher numbers have to a large extent been at the expense of quality. The civil service teachers who left in the 1990s have given way to teachers recruited on a contract basis and on low wages. There has also been a policy of recruiting 'all comers'. One third of all Mali's primary school teachers have themselves not even completed junior secondary school ('second cycle'), while only just over 10 per cent have completed high school. In community schools, where salaries are much lower than in public schools, the statistics are even starker: 20 per cent have no school qualifications at all, while only 3.5 per cent have completed high school.<sup>79</sup> These teachers are struggling to provide a decent education to Mali's children with low wages, poor infrastructure, little support, and often no training at all.



## *Teacher training*

Teacher training has also sacrificed quality in order to increase numbers – which is particularly worrying given the very limited education of many teachers to start with. Just over half of all primary school teachers have had no formal training at all, and across the profession, the average number of days training per teacher is just 5.2. More than 80 per cent of community school teachers are untrained.<sup>80</sup> Overall, there is one trained primary school teacher to every 105 primary school pupils in Mali.

When teachers are trained, there are still concerns about quality. The Alternative Teaching Staff Recruitment Strategy (Stratégie Alternative de Recrutement de Personnel d'Enseignement, or SARPE) aimed to boost teacher numbers by giving just 90 days training. Half of this was practical training – which in effect, often just meant starting work! Of the teachers who are trained, just over half have received only SARPE training.<sup>81</sup> There is general recognition that this training is far from adequate: it is seen by all actors as a very poor, second-best measure aimed simply at getting numbers into the classrooms in the short term.

Mali has been opening more teacher training colleges, after the closures of the 1980s and 1990s, and there are now 13 in total, covering all the regions. All new teachers are now recruited from teacher training colleges, not through SARPE. Most official interviewees seemed confident that problems with teacher training and quality would soon be dealt with by this expansion of training places. However, as explained above, it is impossible to see how this can be the case, with current recruitment levels. Far more ambitious targets are needed.

Given the number of SARPE-trained and untrained teachers already in post, a step-change in in-service training is also needed. This is an area of emphasis for the government and some donors, which is welcome. The government target was to provide in-service training for 3177 teachers from 2007 to 2011,<sup>82</sup> a target which (taking attrition into account) should provide training for all untrained teachers by 2012. But concerns remain about quality and appropriateness of this training: relevant materials are lacking; the target is to provide just 20 days training; much of the provision takes place in term-time; and a considerable amount focuses on teachers supporting each other. Teachers interviewed for this report stated that in-service training they had received did not leave them feeling fully equipped for the requirements of the curriculum. The focus on in-service training is positive, but a greater investment seems to be called for.

Moreover, there remain questions to address about access to and quality of teacher training institutes. For instance, a number of recruits, particularly women, drop out of training.<sup>83</sup> Monitoring of the enrolment and progress of women and men is needed, and the barriers to women qualifying as teachers need to be identified and addressed. Moreover, teacher-training colleges need proper resourcing and materials to keep pace with the demands of, for instance, the new curriculum – which is not happening now.

## *Teacher management*

There are also problems with the management of teachers, and in ensuring proper deployment. Teachers are not distributed equitably across the country: there are marked teacher shortages in some densely populated regions and in public schools. While 60 per cent of primary school pupils attend public schools, less than 50 per cent of primary school teachers are in the public sector.<sup>84</sup> Teacher recruitment strategies must focus on the state sector, while the management and deployment of teachers must be improved.

*What is clear is that there is a terrible lack of teachers... SARPE is producing what is possible, not what is needed. You cannot train a teacher in 45 days with a magic wand. These teachers, who can't really teach, are stood in front of a class of 80 to 100 pupils and told to get going with only a few educational materials. – Coalition EPT, Mali*

### *Teachers' pay and conditions*

Teachers hired since 1998 have been recruited on a contract basis, rather than as permanent civil servants. These are in theory permanent contracts, but jobs are nonetheless not as secure, and there are concerns around career progression. Some are calling for a 'local authority civil service' to offer a more stable professional environment to teachers and others. Contract teachers were for a long time paid less than civil servants, though now pay scales are aligned.<sup>85</sup>

However, all teachers in Mali are badly paid – particularly community-school teachers. The average pay for a public school teacher is FCFA 82,000 (€125, \$168) per month. Community-school teachers receive on average between one-third and just over half of that, including a government subsidy of FCFA 25,000 (€38, \$50) a month.<sup>86</sup> Addressing this gap and improving pay and conditions across the sector is crucial. This is not only to avoid strikes like the one which crippled secondary education in 2006–07, but also to attract and retain better trained recruits by competing with the salaries paid by ministries, INGOs, and donor-funded programmes.

As a benchmark, all teachers in Mali should have their terms and conditions aligned with the 1966 ILO recommendations.<sup>87</sup>

### **Weak infrastructure**

An increase in teacher numbers needs to be accompanied by efforts to address the serious lack of schools and classrooms. Official policy is that students should have to walk no more than 3km to school, but nearly 125,000 primary school students (almost 7 per cent of the total) have to travel more than 5km to reach their primary school. This rises to over 11.3 per cent in Gao and 12 per cent in Segou.<sup>88</sup>

Fewer than one in five schools has a separate classroom for each year group, and nearly one school in 12 has either no classrooms or only one – and yet teachers do not get training in multi-grade teaching. There is an even greater lack of other infrastructure: just over half of all schools have latrines, and only 14 per cent of schools in the country have separate latrines for girls (a factor which encourages girls to attend school). In the northern regions and others where children have to travel the longest distances to reach school, there is a particular need for canteens to provide children with a meal while at school: yet only 49 per cent of schools in Tombouctou, 41 per cent in Gao, and 18 per cent in Mopti have canteens.<sup>89</sup>

#### **Box 2: Getting what you can – the reality for a public primary school principal**

The average Malian primary school principal will have a staff of four teachers or fewer. Besides the principal, there will be perhaps another civil servant fully trained before 1998, and one or two teachers on contracts with the local authority, according to the quota set by the Education Ministry. If there is a big shortage, parents might get together to pay a very low salary for another teacher. Teachers are likely to teach in double shifts, or to teach multiple classes at once.

If you are a primary school principal in Mali, you are likely to have no more than three classrooms for six classes, and will have a 50–50 chance of having latrines. Getting more buildings, desks, or chairs requires the local authority to apply – through a complicated process – for funds from a government agency. You might also approach NGOs or others for direct financing, especially if you are running a former community school in a rural area. Local residents who now have jobs in town are also a possible source of funds.

For books and materials, you will get a government grant – originally funded by the World Bank and the Netherlands – which amounts to between \$0.50 and \$1 per head (FCFA 250 to

500, €0.38 to 0.76) for the whole year, depending on the size of the school. This can be spent only on a list of approved items including chalk, books, and paper. You will probably also use levies from parents, or they will buy directly for their child. The walls of your classrooms are likely to be bare.

The local government support service may also send you schoolbooks directly. You will get what you are given – usually far too few books for the class, and often not in the key subjects. Weak distribution systems and corruption meant that in 2006, more than \$6m worth of books (FCFA 3.25bn, €5m) went missing. Most of your students – and some of your teachers – won't have schoolbooks at all.

In return for your long service, the most you will receive will likely be around FCFA 285,000 per month a month (depending on experience) (\$578 or €434), out of which you will have to pay for your rent and food.

## School fees

Officially there have been no fees charged for primary education in public schools in Mali since 1991. But in practice most families are still paying for education. Amounts vary, and can include registration fees, fees for books and materials, and the levies which school management committees (CGS) can raise to support schools in their area. These should come from the whole community, not as fees per child, but in reality it is parents with children in school who pay. Given the desperate under-resourcing of schools, such fees are not surprising.

The community-school system has expanded access to education, but it has also formalised the paying of fees by parents. Community schools have always required community contributions, and where donor support has stopped (as it has from USAID, the major donor), the strain on communities is even greater.

Oxfam visits and reports from partners reveal charges ranging from about FCFA 1,500 to FCFA 3,000 (\$3.00 to \$6.00/€2.30 to €4.60) per child per year. Government surveys indicate that the average household spending on primary education in 2001 was FCFA 3,451 (\$7.00 or €5.26) annually, and even among the poorest 40 per cent of households, those least likely to be using private education, it was FCFA 2,810 (\$5.70, €4.30) a year.<sup>90</sup> While apparently small, these are significant amounts in a country where the average income level was FCFA 183,000 (\$250, €280) a year, and disposable income was almost non-existent.<sup>91</sup>

Legally, children should not be excluded from public schools if their parents fail to pay levies or other charges, but there are reports of such exclusions. Moreover, many families are deterred by the costs from sending children – particularly girls – to school. Research by Oxfam and Save the Children shows that, given current prices, families in the Sahel are spending on average 80 per cent of their income on food.<sup>92</sup> In this context, education becomes an unaffordable luxury.

Increased resourcing of schools by the public sector will be necessary to keep primary schools going and to remove this barrier to education for the poorest families.

## Parental reluctance

Beyond the basic lack of provision and the cost, there are other significant cultural, social, and economic barriers which deter parents from sending their children, particularly girls, to school. Formal education can still be perceived as offering irrelevant 'French' education (and the popularity of Koranic schools, which educate more than 10 per cent of primary school pupils, may attest to this). The fact that education is of poor quality hardly helps. Nor do the difficulties in properly implementing a new curriculum; introducing new teaching methods; and giving instruction in mother-tongue languages

in the early stages, which was intended to improve education quality, but which have been badly managed.

Community-based organisations report that the value of girls' education, in particular, is often not recognised, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, Mali's problem of early marriage for girls is considered to be one of the worst in the world: this poses a barrier to girls attending school, and is a key reason for girls dropping out of school early. Despite the legal marriage age for girls being 15, one-quarter of Malian girls are married before then, and marriage of girls as young as 10 is not unheard of.<sup>93</sup>

For the poorest families, the opportunity costs of sending children to school rather than having them working can also seem very high. Children from rich households are between two and three times more likely to attend primary school than are children from poor households, and girls in particular are expected to help with caring and domestic work and to fetch water.<sup>94</sup>

## 4 Government policy, practice, and finance

Since the 1990s, the government has introduced sector-wide policy and planning, increased spending, and reorganised its ministries. There have been some improvements in outcomes, particularly in terms of enrolment. Yet there remain a deficit in policy coherence, some serious failures in policy implementation, and big financing gaps. These need to be addressed if the right of Malian children to an education is genuinely to be guaranteed.

### Policy and progress

Since 1993, education has been recognised as a constitutional right in Mali, and has been a stated priority of successive governments.

In policy terms, this has been translated into a Ten-Year Education Development Programme (Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Éducation, or PRODEC), covering all aspects of education. There was broad consultation with, and involvement of, donors in the design of PRODEC, in which the World Bank played a key role. It is a sector-wide approach (SWAp) around which all donors should co-ordinate, but it is not a budgetary programme: sources of financing are not pooled and each donor retains its own procedures. The Ministry of National Education (MEN) led education policy and delivery, but in October 2007 it was split in two: into a ministry for literacy and basic education, and another for secondary and higher education and scientific research.

Implementation of PRODEC, which began in 2001, has been through three consecutive multi-year plans, the Education Sector Investment Programmes (Programmes d'Investissement Sectoriel de l'Éducation, or PISE). PISE I ran from 2001 to 2005, PISE II from 2006 to 2008, and PISE III runs from 2009 to 2011. Each has had a component on access and quality for education and another on management and decentralisation. Donors have been involved both in design of the programmes and in regular evaluation of their progress.

PRODEC aims to enrol 95 per cent of children in primary education by 2010. It acknowledges inequalities between rural and urban areas and between boys and girls, and aims to correct them. Its core objectives are concerned with universal quality education; bilingual education (French and national languages); access to textbooks; better teacher training; decentralised management of schools; and improved capacity of all actors, including local authorities, communities, and the private sector, to run and support schools.

The quantitative objectives of the PISE II programme emphasised basic education. It aimed to raise enrolment and completion rates, and to reduce the gender gap – which it was not on track to do. Other objectives were to decentralise management of schools and resources and to improve the quality of education, including through curriculum reform and by having more and better-trained teachers. Other specific targets were set out in the GPRSP.

Reforms and bigger education budgets have brought success in meeting some of the government targets – although targets around girls' education have been missed by a considerable margin. There have been big increases in enrolment rates (where the expansion in community schools has also been a factor) and in teacher training provision. The number of teacher training institutes (Instituts de Formation des Maîtres, or IFM), went from three in 1991 to 13 in 2008, although the PISE objective of training 2,500 new teachers (through pre-service training) each year is still not being met. (And, as our

calculations show, this target is anyway insufficient.) There remain major weak spots around girls' enrolment and completion rates.

**Figure 3: Primary education targets and progress**

	Target	2008 actual
Gross enrolment, girls	70% by 2008 (PRODEC)	70.7%
Gross enrolment, boys	88.2% by 2008 (GPRSP)	89.5%
Gross enrolment, all	80% by 2008 (PRODEC)	80%
Teacher/pupil ratio	1:52 (GPRSP)	1:51

Source: PRODEC, GPRSP, Mali Annuaire Statistique 2007-2008

Further progress will involve addressing some key challenges around policy implementation (particularly in terms of decentralisation and curriculum reform) and addressing financial management as well as financing levels.

### *Decentralisation*

Since 1999, Mali has theoretically had a decentralised system for the planning and delivery of public education, as well as of health care, water, and sanitation. Under this system, school management committees (Comités de Gestion Scolaire, or CGS) should run primary schools, which are the responsibility of local councils. Ministry of Education support services at district level (Centres d'Animation Pédagogique, or CAP) should provide technical assistance, such as training, and should manage the allocation and distribution of some resources from central government. A central fund (Agence Nationale d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales, or ANICT) should process infrastructure grants from all donors to local authorities.

The reality is different. Capacity at local level is very weak – even many mayors cannot read or write. In many schools, there is no functioning committee. School principals have little time and no resources to be writing multiple reports, managing committees, and dealing with councils which anyway have little to offer them: they tend instead to relate directly to ministry technical support services.<sup>95</sup> This runs the risk of deepening inequalities in the support and management of schools: schools with more educated or skilled parents will have stronger management, those with less educated parents and communities weaker management, perpetuating or even exacerbating inequalities.

Local authorities and civil society frequently complain that the ministry (at central or local levels) is retaining resources which should be passed to local authorities to meet their devolved responsibilities: the last Auditor General's report confirmed that this is happening. Those resources that are disbursed – teachers, books, etc. – tend to be allocated from the centre, in a way that often does not respond to needs. For instance, one school reported, in a typical incident, that it had received 19 Year 6 history books, when it had 101 students in Year 6 and in fact needed French books.<sup>96</sup>

The gap between the decentralised theory and the reality of delivery can create a vacuum in accountability. At a local level, decentralisation is presented not as a right to voice needs and make decisions, but as a responsibility to provide: that delivering education is 'no longer the responsibility of the state'. But local actors do not have the capacity, resources, or decision-making power to provide that education. In practice, schools and communities often turn to NGOs to provide it.<sup>97</sup>

### *Financial management problems*

The Auditor General's report in 2006 found that, across all sectors of government, nearly \$200m (FCFA 103bn, €157m) of government money had gone missing, nearly 70 per cent of which was due to unpaid or uncollected taxes, including cases involving fraud by private companies and by local or junior officials. A significant sum went missing in the education sector: more than \$6m (FCFA 3.2bn, €5m, or nearly 3 per cent of the total money unaccounted for) was lost through missing schoolbooks, which were purchased but never delivered. This was ascribed by the report to 'mismanagement' rather than to fraud on the part of the ministry.

The report stated also that there were weak financial controls, systems, and reporting, and poor procurement systems, such that prices paid for the same item could vary by a factor of ten. School building did not respond to needs, and disbursement of funds for construction was weak, at around 62 per cent of the amounts committed.

### *Staff management problems*

The Auditor General's report for 2006 found that the Ministry of Education was over-staffed, but with staff who lacked the necessary capacity. It also noted that key personnel spent 'almost the entirety of their time' (300 days in some cases) in workshops outside Bamako, which were of limited benefit in terms of training. This statistic is likely to be a better indication of the 'per diems' (daily expenses) claimed for training rather than of training actually attended. Per diems were frequently cited by interviewees as a big problem in the ministry: draining resources, distorting priorities, distracting staff time, and making participation in external processes a perk to be shared around rather than a duty to be allocated according to expertise. Many ministry staff rely on per diems to turn their low basic wages into a sufficient salary to support themselves and their families. Eliminating per diems and instead directing money through the overall wage bill to fund an across-the-board salary increase could have a dramatic impact in reducing the amount of time spent by staff in needless meetings or workshops.

#### **Box 3: The 'new' curriculum**

Development of a new curriculum for primary education has been a key concern for government, donors, and education experts in Mali. Specialists gave input and donors contributed support to design a curriculum which introduces mother-tongue teaching instead of French in early years and brings in some new teaching methods.

But support for the curriculum has varied, even within government, and implementation, beginning as a pilot in 2005, has been weak. There have been difficulties finding teachers to teach in the language relevant to their region (11 languages are recognised in the curriculum), and it has raised questions about how to deploy teachers. Training has been very limited, and has not yet been introduced into teacher-training colleges. Classroom materials to support the curriculum are not available in most schools – indeed, teachers' guides are not even available for some levels.

In the light of these problems, the government has officially suspended introduction of the curriculum temporarily. Some education experts are objecting to this, and fear a longer suspension. It is clear that the government must both clarify policy and ensure proper implementation if the standard of education for Mali's children is to improve.

## **Education financing**

### *Overall government spending on education*

The Malian government has in recent years increased the proportion of the country's budget allocated to education. Public expenditure on education rose from 15 per cent of government spending (4.3 per cent of GDP) between 2002 and 2005 to 17 per cent in

2006,<sup>98</sup> of which 37 per cent was devoted to primary education.<sup>99</sup> Primary education spending was projected to rise to just over 40 per cent of the education budget in 2008.<sup>100</sup>

Mali is thus meeting the World Bank recommendation that developing countries spend 4 per cent of their GDP on education, although not the recommendation of the Dakar Framework for Action to spend 6 per cent of GDP on education, or that of the Global Campaign for Education to spend 20 per cent of the national budget on education.

**Figure 4: Education spending in some West African countries, 2002–05**

	Public expenditure on education as % of GDP	Public expenditure on education as % of total government expenditure	% of total current public expenditure on education spent on pre-primary and primary
Mali	4.3%	14.8%	50%
Niger	2.3%	No data	No data
Burkina Faso	4.7%	16.6%	71%
Senegal	5.4%	18.9%	48%
Côte d'Ivoire	4.6%	21.6%	43%

Source: Human Development Report 2007/2008, UNDP.

Mali's GPRSP projects that the share of the budget allocated to education will remain steady at around 17 per cent up to 2011, although absolute expenditure in the sector will increase slightly (see Figure 5). But the spending commitments in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework show a bigger rise in absolute spending on education, representing a move from 17 per cent of the budget in 2006 to around 21 per cent in 2008. The government should stick to the more ambitious spending scenarios.

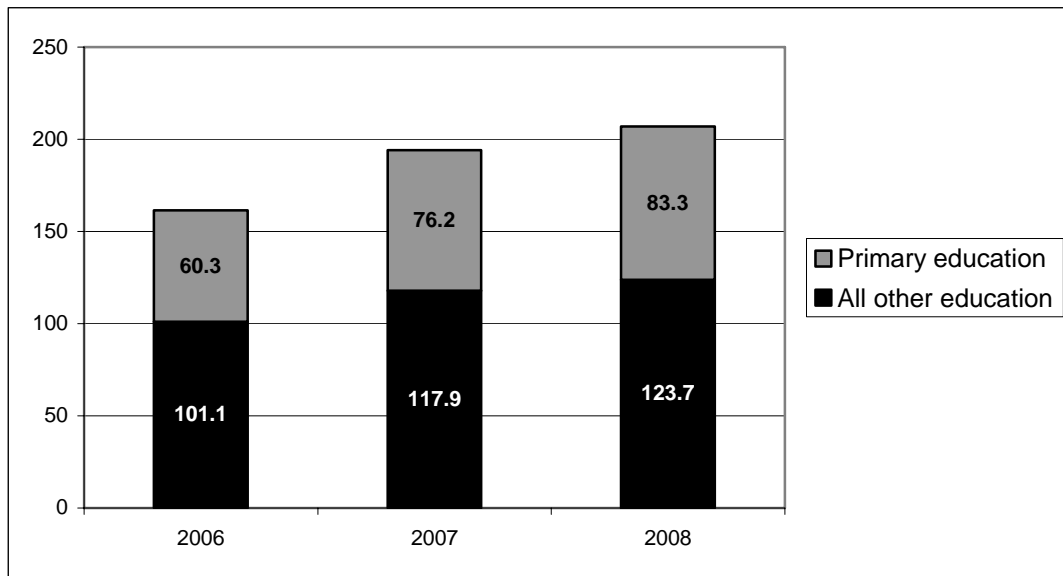
**Figure 5: GPRSP: total and recurrent spending on education 2006–11 (% of total budget)**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total	16.94%	16.82%	17.71%	17.33%	17.12%	17.38%
Recurrent	30.07%	30.12%	30.29%	30.29%	30.31%	30.41%

Source: GPRSP, 2007–2011.



**Figure 6: MTEF: spending on education 2006–08 (FCFA billions)**



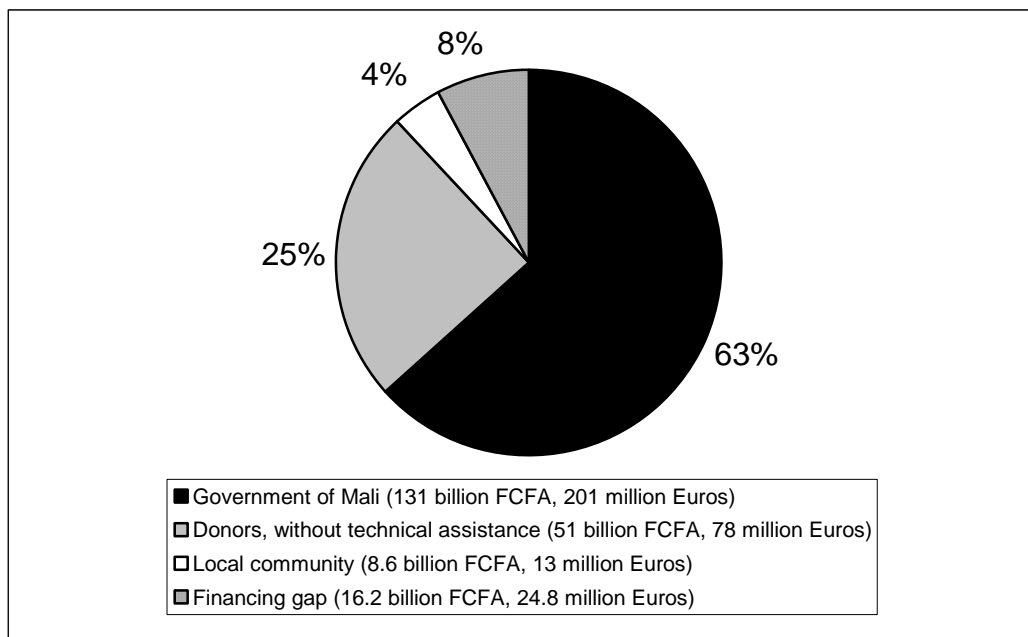
Source: Ministry of National Education (2006) *Medium-Term Expenditure Framework 2006–2008*, diagram created by Oxfam.

### *Resources required for education*

Mali's national education strategy required a total of \$405m (FCFA 194bn, €296m) in 2007, and \$461m (FCFA 207bn, €316m) in 2008. The bulk of this was due to come from the Malian government's resources: in 2007, \$256m (FCFA 123bn, €187m); and in 2008, \$292m (FCFA 131bn, €200m), or roughly 63 per cent of the total in each year. In each year, local taxation was also to provide a small amount, with external – donor – resources being sought to provide just under one third of the financing.<sup>101</sup> However, in 2007 (the last year for which aid figures are available), donor aid committed to education was just \$111 (FCFA 53bn, €81m),<sup>102</sup> a little over one quarter of the total budget, leaving a gap of \$20m (FCFA 9.6bn, €15m) in what was being sought in external finance. The projected financing gap in 2008 was \$36m (FCFA 16bn, €25m).

The GoM could perhaps better mobilise some domestic resources, particularly in terms of tax collection and gold revenues, to meet some of this financing gap. However, recent and ongoing strains from high food and fuel prices are still imposing severe restraints, particularly in terms of tax and tariff revenues. Significant donor support will be necessary in 2009 and beyond.

**Figure 7: Projected availability of the \$462m (FCFA 207bn, €316m) required for education, 2008**



Source: Mali MEN (2006) *Medium-Term Expenditure Framework 2006–2008*, diagram created by Oxfam.

#### Box 4: Hidden treasure?

What impact does Mali's gold resources have on financing for basic services? Fifty-six tons of gold were extracted in Mali in 2007, generating export revenues of FCFA 546m (75 per cent of total export revenues).<sup>103</sup> But how do gold revenues support state funding for basic services like education? Many would argue that it is hard to say, or track, but it is unlikely that Malians are deriving the full benefit that they could from the mining of this precious and irreplaceable asset. The lack of clear and easily understood information on mining revenues prohibits citizens from knowing where and how this money is being spent. A lack of national budget transparency is also a major stumbling block to accountability. The 2007 Oxfam America report 'Hidden Treasure' argues for more transparency about mining revenues, including more openness on benefit streams, simplification of mining taxes and reporting, and stronger civil society capacity to monitor transparency. (See R.Parker and F.Wood (2007) 'Hidden Treasure: in search of Mali's gold-mining revenues', Oxfam America: Boston, [www.oxfamamerica.org/resources/files/hidden-treasure](http://www.oxfamamerica.org/resources/files/hidden-treasure))

## 5 The role of donors

Donors are also failing Mali today by not giving enough aid, or the right kind of aid. In 2007, OECD aid committed to Mali's education sector was just \$111m (FCFA 53bn, €81m),<sup>104</sup> compared with the \$131 million (FCFA 63bn, €96m) that Mali had projected it needed in external financing in that year.<sup>105</sup> This was 8.5 per cent of overall aid to Mali, and considerably less than half of what was committed in aid to transport and storage that year.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, donors need to give more of the right type of aid. At present, aid is uncoordinated, and a very small proportion comes as budget support. Aid is unpredictable, hindering long-term investment and planning; it is still tied to inappropriate and often harmful conditions such as privatisation and liberalisation; and civil society is left out of the process of monitoring and evaluating aid. Donors need to do more to co-ordinate aid around government priorities (preferably through budget support) and ensure that civil society is well funded and has a place at the table.

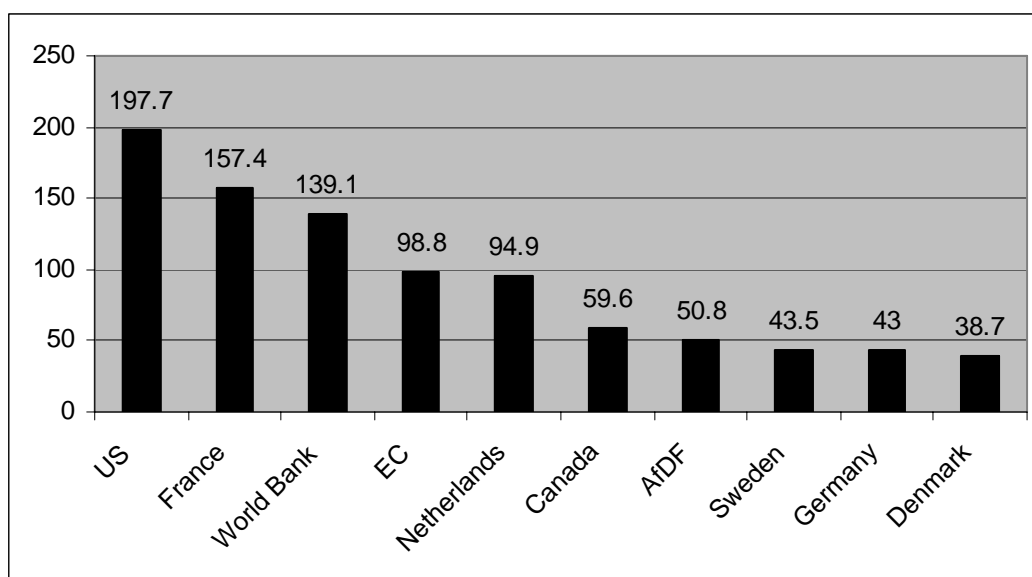
### More aid: Mali's financing needs

#### *Overall aid to Mali: how much and from where?*

In recent years, aid to Mali has increased from \$526m (FCFA 276bn, €420m) in 1997 to \$1.35bn (FCFA 648bn, €988m) in 2007.<sup>107</sup> While it is clearly moving in the right direction, aid is not increasing fast enough to meet the demands of the country, nor to fulfil donor promises to rapidly increase aid to Africa and to ensure that education plans are fully financed. This is all the more pertinent given the recent food and fuel crises, which the World Bank estimated would push another quarter of a million Malians into poverty, and the current global financial crisis, which the IMF describes as posing 'new and substantive challenges' to Mali.<sup>108</sup>

Currently 24 OECD donors (16 bilateral and 8 multilateral) provide aid to Mali,<sup>109</sup> of which in 2007 by far the biggest commitments came from the USA, followed by France and the World Bank, via the International Development Association (IDA).<sup>110</sup>

**Figure 8: Mali's top ten donors and aid (average over 2005–07)**



Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System, aid figures are commitments in \$ constant 2007 prices, diagram created by Oxfam.

Much of the increase in levels of aid to Mali in recent years has come from its top six donors, all of which have boosted their aid, with Canada nearly tripling its contribution between 2002 and 2006, and the Netherlands nearly doubling its aid in the same period. The USA made a hugely increased contribution in 2007: more than nine times the level in 2005 or 2006. Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, and Belgium (EU donors that currently provide small amounts of aid flows to Mali) should all seek to scale up their contribution, looking at delegated co-operation and providing more bilateral funds through joint general or sector budget support.

Some donors have actually reduced their aid to Mali recently: they should reverse this trend. The African Development Fund (AfDF) and Japan have reduced their lending to Mali in the past five years. The AfDF has cut its aid by more than half since 1997.

### *Education aid to Mali: how much and from where?*

In 2007, just 8.5 per cent all aid flows (\$111m, FCFA 53bn, €81m) allocated to Mali in 2006 was directed to the education sector, with just under half this going to basic education (including primary education). The health sector, in comparison, received less than 3 per cent of aid flows. Transport and storage, on the other hand, received 18 per cent.<sup>111</sup>

Sixteen donors have provided aid for education in Mali between 2005 and 2007: Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, UNDP, UNICEF, USA, and the World Bank. The majority of aid tends to come from a very few of these: in 2006, Canada and the Netherlands together provided 76 per cent of all education aid and 95 per cent of the aid for basic education; in 2007, France alone provided 40 per cent of education aid. Other donors need to do more to fill the gap.<sup>112</sup>

**Figure 9: Key donors to Mali's education sector, average of 2005–07**

	Total aid to education		Total aid to basic education		Aid to basic education as percentage of education aid
	US\$ m	€m	US \$m	€m	
Canada	48.1	35.1	44.8	32.7	93%
Netherlands	38.3	28.0	32.0	23.4	83%
France	25.0	18.3	9.2	6.7	37%
Sweden	14.8	10.8	0	0	0%
Japan	8.2	6.0	3.1	2.3	38%
USA	6.8	5.0	6.3	4.6	92%
World Bank	5.0	3.7	1.7	1.2	34%
Belgium	4.7	3.4	2.1	1.5	75%

Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System. All amounts based on commitments, US constant 2007 prices.

Mali's plan for the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) was endorsed in September 2007. For 2008 and 2009, \$8.7m (FCFA 3.9bn, €6m) was committed from the FTI Catalytic Fund,

although only \$4.2m (FCFA 2bn, €3m) of this is now projected to be disbursed. In any case, this is not enough to bridge the education financing gap (approximately \$36m, FCFA 16bn, €25m, in 2008 alone), as this initiative is intended to do.<sup>113</sup>

### **Box 5: Life after HIPC – Mali’s debt relief helps deliver education**

In 1996, Mali’s external debt totalled \$3bn (FCFA 1.5tr, €2.3bn) – more than its total GDP – and the government was spending \$116m (FCFA 59bn, €90m) every year on paying debt service to the rich world. The squeeze on public spending was severe: while debt service grew, spending on real services fell, so that by 1995 the government was spending more on servicing debts than it was spending on education.

In 2000, Mali qualified for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, and thus for some reduction in its debt payments. Some of Mali’s debts were cancelled through HIPC in 2003 and through the new Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) in 2006. In total, HIPC and MDRI led to the cancellation of \$2.8bn (FCFA 1.3bn, €2m) of debt for Mali. Of this, more than half (\$1.5bn, FCFA 719m, €1.1m) was debt owed to the World Bank.

The Malian government projects that total debt savings will average around \$90–100m (FCFA 45.1bn, €69m) per year between 2007 and 2011. This is equivalent to around 4 per cent of annual government expenditure each year. These savings have been accounted for separately in Mali’s national budget, with most of the money being allocated to education: from 2000 to 2006, \$162m (FCFA 85bn, €130m) in HIPC savings was allocated to education, just under half of the total HIPC savings.

Mali’s debt in 2008 was \$2.1bn (FCFA 952bn, €1.5bn), amounting to 25 per cent of Mali’s GDP, compared with the 136 per cent of GDP that its debt represented in 1994. This level of debt is judged to be ‘sustainable’ by the IMF and by Mali’s government. Mali had committed only to borrow at concessional (cheaper than market) rates, in order to keep its debt affordable; although in 2007 it took out a large loan from the Islamic Development Bank at non-concessional rates, to fund electricity generation. The government stated that this project was necessary, and the loan affordable, however.

*Sources: Mali HIPC Decision Point Document, IMF and World Bank; HIPC Status of Implementation Report 2007, IMF and World Bank; Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Government of Mali; sixth review of Mali’s PRGF, IMF, 2007; first review of PRGF, IMF, 2008; 2006 Budget Presentation, Government of Mali; Jubilee Debt Campaign.*

*Exchange rates for 1996 are average annual rate of \$1 = FCFA 507.797, € rate is for illustration, based on fixed FCFA-€ rate. Otherwise see note 1.*

## **Better aid: alignment, harmonisation, predictability, ownership, and transparency**

### ***Aid quality commitments***

Mali’s donors all signed up to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 and the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008, thus committing to respect developing country ownership of policies; align their lending to national priorities and processes and make it more predictable; harmonise procedures to reduce the transaction costs of aid; and improve the impact and transparency of aid. Developing countries, in turn, were asked to improve their public finance management and to put in place operational poverty reduction plans. Oxfam and civil society allies have also been calling on donors to ensure proper funding for and engagement of civil society, including women’s organisations.

### ***Harmonisation, alignment, and budget support***

*The donors do not support one plan – they keep bringing their own innovations which drag the planners and implementers in all different directions. If you look at PRODEC, which all donors pledged to support, you can easily see that the content and execution keep changing to suit these donor projects... The government needs to choose one path and stick to it: whatever donors come should follow that path. – Kady Baby Maiga, FAWE/Coalition EPT, Mali*

Aid fragmentation and incoherence remain chronic problems in Mali. For example, in 2007, the country had 65 Project Implementation Units (parallel structures outside government to administer donor aid), of which 22 were for the African Development Bank alone.<sup>114</sup> There can be tensions between ministries over managing donor relations. A new, largely donor-driven, cross-ministerial 'secretariat for aid efficiency' is in place, but is seen as weak. Donors have general and sectoral groups to co-ordinate their aid: government officials have said that this has improved dialogue. There are some sector-wide approaches (SWAps) in place, but at least one study has found that these do more to give donors access to policy making than to strengthen the government or ensure donor co-ordination.<sup>115</sup>

The education sector is seen as one of the best in terms of donors' alignment with the government and harmonisation with each other. In theory, nearly all donors have aligned their programme content and funding around the government's ten-year SWAp (PRODEC) and its joint expenditure programme (PISE). Donors should therefore be supporting government policy, using the same monitoring indicators, and jointly overseeing the PISE. But in reality, alignment is limited. Objectives may be the same, but strategies and priorities can differ considerably. Civil society groups have complained that the government ends up being pulled in different directions and that its leadership is undermined.

Donors must align and harmonise not only objectives, but actual funding, and make sure that they are genuinely supporting government priorities and programmes. This means delivering more through sector budget-support (SBS), and pooling (i.e. combining with other donors) or delegating (i.e. passing management to another donor) their funds in order to reduce transaction costs. Budget support is also necessary to give the government the funds it needs to invest in recurrent costs such as teachers' salaries.

Only 13 per cent of education aid in 2006 (the last year for which data is available) was delivered via SBS.<sup>116</sup> The Netherlands and Sweden provide their aid largely as SBS, and France and Canada are planning to do so. Sweden and Norway are likely to delegate management of education SBS to the Netherlands, and Germany may follow suit. Other donors in theory co-ordinate around PRODEC, but they do not provide sectoral budget support; these are the World Bank, Japan, Belgium, Switzerland (which provides its funding via the World Bank), USAID, UNDP, AfDB, and FAO. The degree to which these other donors co-ordinate with the government and use its systems is questionable.

Mali also receives very little general budget support (GBS). In 2007, only five of its 25 donors gave any general budget support. The World Bank was the biggest provider of GBS by volume (\$45m, FCFA 22bn, €33m), followed by three bilateral donors (the Netherlands \$41.1m, FCFA 18bn, €30m, Sweden \$23.7m, FCFA 11bn, €17bn, France \$5.5m, FCFA 2.6bn, €4m), and then the EC (\$3.4m, FCFA 1.6bn, €2.5m).<sup>117</sup> This signifies an increase in GBS from the World Bank and the Netherlands, but a drop from France and the EC. It means that in total Mali received approximately \$119m (FCFA 56.9bn, €86.7m) of aid as GBS in 2007, less than one tenth of its total aid. This is a smaller proportion than a number of other countries in West Africa and other African countries – both those receiving less and those receiving more aid.

**Figure 10: Proportion of aid received as general budget support, 2007 (US\$ millions)**

Country	Total aid, 2007		Proportion received as GBS
	\$	€	
Burkina Faso	\$700.1m	€511.6m	24%
Zambia	\$1,028.1m	€751.3m	23%
Mali	\$1,352.3m	€988.2m	9%
Ghana	\$1,675.2m	€1,244.2m	13%
Tanzania	\$2,787.5m	€2,037m	14%

Source: OECD Creditor Reporting System (2006), except Mali GBS, from *Matrice Financière des donateurs, Rapport Intermédiaire*, June 2007.

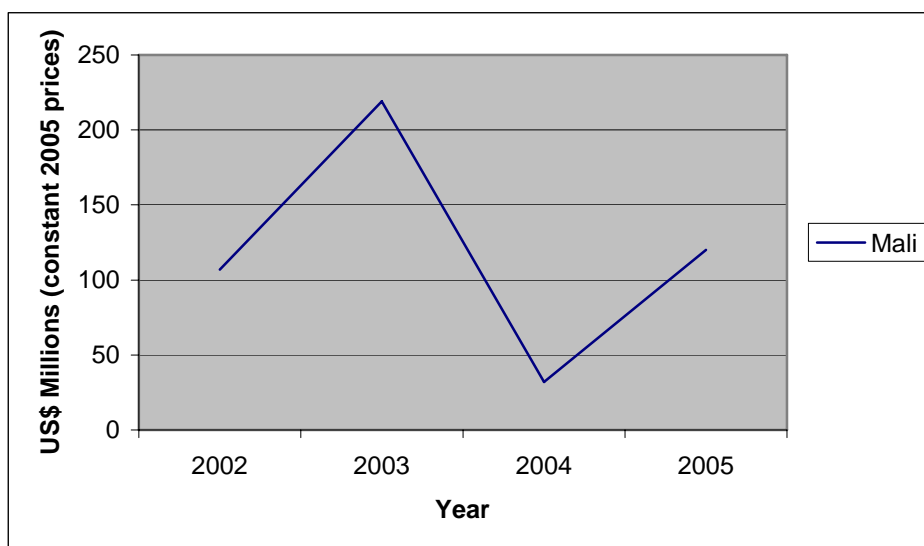
Overall, budget support levels appear to be remaining fairly constant, although the African Development Bank has stopped giving budget support, and France reduced it significantly after 2006 (although France planned to give more sectoral budget support). GBS levels may pick up if the European Commission makes some further commitments: these have been delayed while the Commission designs a new long-term MDG-focused aid instrument ('MDG contract') for budget support, and the commitment made in 2007 was just one eighth of that in 2006.

In March 2006, the then six GBS donors (current GBS donors plus the African Development Bank) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on joint budget support. It promised timely information about and early disbursement of promised aid, conditional on continued good performance under the IMF PRGF programme and other conditions developed jointly by the government and donors. It will be monitored by a cross-ministerial and donor committee, which will meet twice a year (once just before the budget is finalised), after joint donor missions.

### *Predictability*

GBS to Mali has been highly unpredictable over the past five years and looks set to continue to vary immensely year on year. There is a need for donors not only to improve the disbursement of their aid, but also to provide more budget support on a long-term basis in a predictable manner.

**Figure 11: General budget support to Mali, 2002–05**



Source: OECD, *Creditor Reporting System 2006* (\$ 2005 constant prices), diagram created by Oxfam.

The lack of predictability in Mali’s aid is tied to problems around ownership and conditionality (see below). In 2004, the World Bank held back \$50m (FCFA 24.5bn, €37m) in aid over Mali’s reluctance to implement privatisations being demanded by both the World Bank and the IMF. The resultant fluctuations in aid when governments try to resist such strong-arm tactics can have a severe impact on government budgets. However, even this does not fully account for the swings in Mali’s GBS in recent years; donors must make more stable, long-term commitments.

Donors spent \$119m (FCFA 62.4bn, €95m) on technical assistance (TA) for Mali in 2005. Only 15 per cent of this (\$16m, FCFA 8.4, €12.8m) was co-ordinated with other donors: far short of the Paris Target for 40 per cent of technical assistance to be co-ordinated. Big TA spenders include the USA (\$37m, FCFA 19.4bn, €30m), France (\$24m, FCFA 12.6bn, €19m), and the World Bank (\$18m, FACFA 9.4bn, €14m)).

### *Ownership and conditionality*

*True partnership supposes autonomy of beneficiary countries in requesting aid and in determining its objectives... Often programmes are imposed on us, and we are told it is our programme... People who have never seen cotton come to give us lessons on cotton... No one can respect the conditionalities of certain donors. They are so complicated that they themselves have difficulty getting us to understand them. This is not a partnership. This is a master relating to his student.*

– President Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali, speaking in Washington DC in 2005

The World Bank and the IMF have a much-criticised history of attaching harmful economic policy conditions to their loans to Mali, which continues – although to a lesser extent – in their programmes today. Mali’s education sector is still feeling the disastrous impact of civil service and public spending cuts made from the 1980s onwards, and farmers are suffering heavy falls in income because of enforced liberalisation of the cotton sector.<sup>118</sup>

Despite a growing consensus that economic policy conditions are unacceptable, many donors are still following the World Bank and IMF lead on conditions for general budget support.<sup>119</sup> The World Bank’s Poverty Reduction Support Credit project (PRSC II, negotiated in January 2008) had 28 policy conditions, including the privatisation of the cotton parastatal and the Banque Internationale du Mali (BIM).<sup>120</sup> The Bank also ties its aid to social development conditions in the health and water sectors, but these by no



means make up the majority of conditions. There was a requirement to adopt a budget for the health and social development ministry programmes for 2008, but some other social sector conditions seem more focused on private sector involvement than on poverty reduction outcomes. There were conditions, for example, to develop standard contracts for NGO and private sector engagement in health care provision, and to develop public/private partnerships in water management.

The IMF loan conditions include economic policy conditions that limit democratic ownership of policy, and are also potentially harmful. Its Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) includes conditions on steps towards the privatisation of the cotton, telecoms, and banking sectors. The last PRGF (to the end of 2007) contained a wage bill ceiling that could limit pay increases to or further recruitment of public workers, including teachers. The IMF has insisted that this condition was government-driven, and flexible enough to meet changing priorities without damaging the government's ability to hire public sector workers, especially in health and education. However, the ceiling was determined by the often overly conservative macroeconomic framework set out by the IMF, and was agreed prior to approval of the national budget by the Malian National Assembly. On a positive note, the new PRGF signed in 2008 has no wage bill ceiling, though it still contains many conditions calling for privatisation of the cotton, telecoms, and banking sectors.<sup>121</sup>

The EU takes a different approach, by tying its budget support in Mali to outcome indicators around health and education. The conditions call for more children, and more girls, in school, improved teacher/pupil ratios, and a decrease in pupils repeating school years. Other conditions call for an increase in the recurrent budget allocated to education, and an increase in the education budget allocated to basic education. Unacceptably, European GBS is also tied to having an IMF programme in place, such that economic policy conditions are attached indirectly.

### *Transparency*

Mali is rated reasonably well on donor assessments of transparency. Good public finance management (PFM) systems, and plans for improving them, are among the pre-conditions of donors providing more aid directly to developing country government budgets. Mali gets a rating of 4.0 for PFM aspects of the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), above the average for low-income countries.<sup>122</sup>

It can seem that donor approval is based on perception of political will to combat corruption at least as much as on a country's performance in doing so. The recent report by Mali's Auditor General reveals significant fraud and mismanagement (see section 4), including within donor-funded projects (e.g. expenses claims for fictitious missions or technical assistance, as well as poor procurement practice). This report makes it clear that across-the-board improvements are needed but that budget support is at no greater risk of waste or embezzlement than project aid, an interpretation that has been backed up by some donors in interviews. The key is greater transparency and oversight by both parliament and civil society.

The Auditor General's report has discouraged some donors from giving direct support to the Malian government, though others feel that its transparency is an important step and that the government should be assessed on the strength of its response, rather than for publicising PFM problems which are common to many governments in the region.

Donor transparency is also an issue: while some donors make information about their aid loans and grants available, much of the information comes late, is retrospective, and is often inaccessible to civil society. NGO invitees to a recent review of EC aid, for example, were given less than 24 hours' notice of the meeting and of the report. Donors must do much more to release timely, accessible information to civil society organisations, and to ensure that such organisations have an active role in planning and monitoring.

### *Engagement of and funding for civil society*

Many Malian civil society groups are concerned about the transparency and accountability of public resources, and some doubt the impact of budget support on the ground. In particular, there is a concern that funds are being retained by government at central and local levels, rather than being passed on to elected local authorities as envisaged under decentralisation. This needs to be tackled.

Donors are failing to provide sufficient funds for civil society groups to act as independent monitors and advocates around the use of budget support. One organisation noted that 'with budget support, donors are expecting civil society to be their eyes and ears'. At present, to Oxfam's knowledge, only the government of the Netherlands funds civil society groups working around monitoring and holding their government to account for poverty reduction. If donors are to provide more budget support to Mali, this must go hand-in-hand with more support for civil society to hold governments to account, as well as the other work done by such organisations.

Civil society organisations need to be part of all budget support discussions. CSOs must be part of the formal review process of the GPRSP and must have their comments taken on board, and they must be full participants in all joint budget support review meetings. Documentation and decisions taken at these meetings should be made publicly available in a timely manner. This is crucial to ensure that budget support is effective in its twin aims of promoting development and reinforcing local and democratic ownership of policy, rather than donor policy prescriptions.

### *International NGOs*

International NGOs play and have played an extensive role in Mali's education system, and have been extremely important in helping to expand access, particularly for rural children and girls, in building the capacity of local authorities, and in supporting Malian organisations - for instance, in developing innovative education models and influencing policy. Some INGOs even give funds through the same co-ordinating mechanisms as official donors.

It is important that INGO interventions, like those of donors, are structured around supporting national priorities and programmes, and act to support and strengthen a sustainable public education system at all levels. It is also crucial that INGOs continue to play a role in supporting Malian CSOs to influence and engage with the development of national education policy and to monitor its implementation.

## 6 Conclusion and challenges

### For donors, government, and INGOs

#### *Education financing and priorities*

- The Government of Mali should ensure that it spends a minimum of 20 per cent of the total government budget on education, prioritising primary education within this, in line with calls from the Global Campaign for Education.
- The Government should set a higher target for teacher recruitment and should invest more in the teaching profession, including formal in-service and initial training and improving teachers' pay and conditions.
- Decentralisation reforms were intended to include a decentralisation of resources to community level, which has not happened; the government must ensure that resources for education are reaching school and community levels.

#### *For donors: more aid*

- Donors need to rapidly scale up their aid to Mali, to meet the country's development financing gap, which, in the education sector amounts to around \$20m (FCFA 9.6bn, €15m) per year. In particular:
- Germany and Japan should reverse the decline in their aid to Mali.
- EU donors currently providing small amounts to Mali – such as Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, and Belgium – should seek to scale up their aid.
- Donors must provide more of their aid via general budget support or sector budget support in education. In particular:
  - France and Canada should scale up the amount of aid they provide via education sector budget support;
  - Japan, the USA, and Switzerland should start providing sector budget support for education;
  - Scale-up by Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, and Belgium should be through delegated co-operation and providing more bilateral funds through joint general or sector budget support.

#### *Government and donors*

##### **Government accountability to citizens**

- The Government of Mali and donors must agree that civil society organisations have a formal and substantive role in the review process outlined by the national Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP), ensuring that they attend and participate in meetings and that their comments are acted upon.
- Documentation and decisions from GPRSP meetings should be made public in a timely manner.
- The government must formally include civil society and the National Assembly in the debate around education policy and, in particular, must reach and abide by a consensus on the new curriculum.

### **Government ownership**

- The World Bank and the IMF must stop attaching economic policy conditions to their aid.
- The European Commission must de-link its budget support from the IMF programme.
- All bilateral donors should ensure that joint budget support is linked neither to an IMF programme nor to World Bank economic policy conditions.
- INGO education programmes must be rooted in the priorities of PRODEC and implemented in partnership with and support of decentralised authorities, both helping them to carry out their development plans and strengthening their ability to do this themselves.

### ***Citizens' engagement of government***

- Civil society must have a formal role in reviews of budget support.
- Donors and INGOs should fund and support more budget tracking and service-delivery monitoring by communities and civil society networks.
- INGOs should continue their support of school management committees and citizen engagement in decentralised structures and processes.
- INGOs should continue their crucial support for literacy initiatives, both overall and as a vital element in improving governance in the provision of essential services.

# Annexes

## Annex 1: Methodology

This report was based on desk research and visits to Gao, Bamako, and Kati, Mali in October and November 2007. Interviewees included CSOs, national and international NGOs, unions, teachers, a school management committee, local government authorities, locally- and centrally-based government officials, donor representatives and programme staff, and parliamentarians. In most cases, the report cites the most recent data available as of late 2008. In some instances, when newer information was unavailable, the figures may be several years old.

### *Interview list*

#### **Schools and communities**

- School principal, Bourem district
- School management committee and parents, Doro village school
- School principal and teachers, Kati public school
- School principal, Kati community school
- School principal and teachers, IEP-run school, Kati

#### **Elected local government, Gao commune, district and region**

- Mayor of Gao commune
- President of Gao District Council
- Officials and members of Gao Regional Assembly
- Cabinet Director of the Governor of Gao, with officials

#### **Local, district and regional government authorities**

- Académie d'Enseignement, Gao region
- Centre D'Animation Pédagogique, Gao district
- Chargé de Suivi Regional, Gao region
- Agence Nationale d'Investissement dans les Collectivités Territoriales, Gao region

#### **Donors and donor-funded projects**

- ADERE-Nord (EU-funded project)
- PASED, Gao (UNDP-funded project)
- Atou Seck, Senior Education Economist, World Bank
- Abdoul Wane, Resident Representative, IMF
- Ba Mamadou Samba, African Development Bank (AfDB)
- UNICEF
- Thomas Feige, Economic Adviser, European Union

### **CSOs and NGOs**

- Coordinator, Groupe de recherche, d'étude et de formation femme - action, (GREFFA)
- Coordinator, SEAD
- Staff, Tassaght
- President, staff and committee members, CAD-Mali
- Coordinator, Federation of African Women Educationalists (FAWE-Mali)
- Staff and members of the Conseil National de la Société Civile (CNSC)
- Tibou Telly, General Secretary, Syndicat National de l'Éducation et Culture (SNEC)
- Coordinator and staff, Association des Femmes Educatrices au Mali (AFEM)
- Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
- Oumar Mariko, Secretary General of SADI Party
- Institut pour l'Éducation Populaire (IEP)
- Mahamadou Cheick Diarra, Pamoja West Africa / Jeunesse et Développement
- Fédération des collectifs d'ONGs Mali (FECONG)
- Douglas Lehman, PADDEM
- World Education (both Gao and Bamako)

### **Central government**

- Cellule d'Appui a la Déconcentration et Décentralisation de l'Éducation, Ministry of Education
- Division d'Enseignement Normal, Ministry of Education
- Community Schools Unit, Ministry of Education
- Chaka Sanoge, PRSP analyst, Macro-Economic Unit
- Souleymane Koné, National Director for Basic Education, Ministry of Education
- Youba Ba, Director of Administrative and Financial Division (DAF), Ministry of Education (with staff)

## Annex 2: Some statistics on education in Mali

**Table 1: Numbers of primary pupils in rural and urban areas, by type of school**

Type of school	Rural areas	Urban areas	All	% of total
Public	788,744	322,597	1,101,341	60%
Private	38,658	137,807	176,465	10%
Community	297,002	29,589	326,591	18%
<i>Medersa</i>	140,283	78,357	218,640	12%
All	1,254,687	568,350	1,823,037	100%
% of total	69%	31%	100%	

Source: *Annuaire statistique 2007/2008*

**Table 2: Primary teacher/pupil ratio, by type of school**

Type of school	Number of schools	Number of teachers	Number of pupils	Pupils per teacher
Public	3,921	17,190	1,101,341	64
Private	766	4312	176,465	41
Community	3120	8819	326,591	37
<i>Medersa</i>	1436	5121	218,640	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>9243</b>	<b>35,442</b>	<b>1,823,037</b>	<b>51</b>

Source: *Annuaire statistique 2007/2008*

### **Annex 3: Current World Bank programmes in Mali**

The World Bank has provided around \$1.9bn (around FCFA 900bn, €1.4bn) in IDA loans to Mali since 1963. As of March 2007, the Bank had 13 IDA-financed operations with a value of \$542.3m (FCFA 260bn, €396m), in diverse areas including agriculture, energy, transport, education, and financial reform. The majority of Bank lending comes in the form of investment lending, more commonly known as project aid. The World Bank's lending to the education (under PISE II) comes in this form and amounts to \$35m (FCFA 17bn, €26m). While this funding is aligned to the government plan and is part of the education SWAp, the funding is not provided as general budget support or sector budget support. There are aims to phase out this loan and to make education part of the Bank's general budget support in the future.

The Bank provided \$42m (FCFA 18.8bn, €29m) in the form of GBS in 2008, through its one-year Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC II). Disbursed in January 2008, this loan was intended to support the government's medium-term programme for the year, focusing on public finance reform, financial sector development, and the health and water sectors. The amount given was down by \$3m (FCFA 1.3bn, €2m) on the previous year's allocation.

*Source: World Bank ([www.worldbank.org/mali](http://www.worldbank.org/mali))*



## Annex 4: Mali's scores on the Paris aid-effectiveness targets

Indicators	2005 baseline	2010 target
1 Ownership – operational PRS	C	B or A
2a Quality of PFM systems	4.0	4.5
2b Quality procurement systems	Not available	Not applicable
3 Aid reported on budget	60%	85%
4 Co-ordinated capacity development	15%	50%
5a Use of country PFM systems (aid flows)	29%	53%
5b Use of country procurement systems (aid flows)	45%	Not applicable
6 Parallel PIUs	65	22
7 In-year predictability	71%	85%
8 Untied aid	95%	More than 95%
9 Use of programme-based approaches	48%	66%
10a Co-ordinated missions	7%	40%
10b Co-ordinated country analytical work	30%	66%
11 Sound performance assessment framework	D	B or A
12 Reviews of mutual accountability	none	none

Source: OECD (2007) '2006 Survey on Monitoring The Paris Declaration: Mali'.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> **Note on exchange rates:** the exchange rate between the CFA franc (FCFA) and Euro is fixed at FCFA 655.957 = €1; this rate is used throughout the report. The exchange rate between FCFA and US dollar is floating. The rates used are the annual rates for the period of the data (as supplied by the Central Bank of West African States, BCEAO): for 2006, FCFA 522.4251 = \$1; for 2007, FCFA 479.3445 = \$1; for 2008, FCFA 448.26 = \$1; for non-dated data, the rate as of 14 April 2009, FCFA 493.134 = \$1.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank World Development Indicators Database.  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20535285~menuPK:1192694~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html>

<sup>3</sup> UNdata: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Mali>

<sup>4</sup> UNDP (2008) *Human Development Indices 2008 : a statistical update*, New York: UNDP.

<sup>5</sup> Government of Mali (2006) *2<sup>nd</sup> Generation PRSP 2007-2011: Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

<sup>6</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales (2008) *Annuaire National des Statistiques Scolaires de l'Enseignement Fondamental 2007–2008*, Government of Mali, pp. 79–82.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (2008) *Human Development Indices 2008 : a statistical update*, New York: UNDP.

<sup>8</sup> *Annuaire Statistique des Statistiques Scolaires de l'Enseignement Fondamental*, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Calculated from net enrollment rate and number of current primary students.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 37.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 52.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 88.

<sup>14</sup> UNDP (2008) *Human Development Indices 2008*, *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales (2008) *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> Calculated from child and teacher numbers, and training levels, in Mali Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.* Follows UN Institute for Statistics model of calculating school population for UPE as school-age population plus 10 (though note that this is lower than the actual numbers of students plus school-age children out of school at present), and aims for EFA target of 1 teacher to 40 students.

<sup>17</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.*, p. 864.

<sup>18</sup> Calculated from total recurrent education expenditure budgeted for 2008 in Mali, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006) *Medium-Term Expenditure Framework 2006–08*, Government of Mali.

<sup>19</sup> IMF (2008) *First review under the three-year arrangement under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility*.

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- <sup>20</sup> World Bank, 2007. See <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20535285~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419~isCURL:Y~isCURL:Y,00.html>
- <sup>21</sup> IMF (2008b) *op. cit.*
- <sup>22</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup> Government of Mali (2006) *2<sup>nd</sup> Generation PRSP 2007–2011: Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy*; GDP figure is from IMF (2008) *op. cit.*
- <sup>24</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006) *op. cit.*; Government of Mali (2006)
- <sup>25</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006) *op. cit.*
- <sup>27</sup> On a commitments basis, in 2007 \$ prices. OECD Creditor Reporting system (CRS) <http://stats.oecd.org/WBOS/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=CRSNEW>, accessed April 2009.
- <sup>28</sup> Aid figure from OECD Creditor Reporting System (2007 figure but last checked/updated in 2009) from OECD Statistic Extracts website, <http://stats.oecd.org/WBOS/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=CRSNEW>. population figure from World Bank WDI database.
- <sup>29</sup> OECD CRS, *op. cit.*
- <sup>30</sup> External financing needs from Mali Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006) *op. cit.*; actual aid for education from OECD Creditor Reporting System, accessed April 2009. All in 2007 prices.
- <sup>31</sup> OECD CRS, 2009, *op. cit.*
- <sup>32</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup> IMF (2008) 'Mali: Sixth Review Under the Three-Year Arrangement Under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility and Request for Waivers of Nonobservance of Performance Criteria and Request for Extension of Commitment Period – Staff Report', IMF Africa Department
- <sup>34</sup> World Bank (2009), see [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/02/09/000104615\\_20090210155246/Rendered/PDF/PID1Concept0StageDec21.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/02/09/000104615_20090210155246/Rendered/PDF/PID1Concept0StageDec21.pdf)
- <sup>35</sup> IMF (2008), *op. cit.* SDR exchange rates taken from [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org), daily rate for 14 April 2009.
- <sup>36</sup> Fast Track Initiative (2008) *FTI Catalytic Fund Annual Status Report December 2008*.
- <sup>37</sup> Teacher numbers from Mali Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.* Potential school population is calculated according to UN Institute for Statistics model, of school-age population plus 10 per cent. This gives a smaller number than the actual number of primary pupils plus school-age children out of school – so the estimate is conservative. The number of teachers required is taken as the EFA target of one to every 40 pupils.
- <sup>38</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation de Base, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.*
- <sup>39</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>40</sup> Government of Mali (2006) *2<sup>nd</sup> Generation PRSP 2007-2011: Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy*.
- <sup>41</sup> Please see page 25 of this report where this figure is explained.
- <sup>42</sup> OECD CRS, 2009, *op. cit.*

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- <sup>43</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Education Nationale (2006). The exchange rate used is 479.3445 FCFA = \$1, the 2007 average as supplied by the West African Central Bank (BCEAO).
- <sup>44</sup> OECD CRS, 2009, *op. cit.*
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>47</sup> International Monetary Fund (2008) Article IV consultation.
- <sup>48</sup> Oxfam International & Save the Children (2008) *Rising Food Prices in the Sahel: the urgency of long-term action*.
- <sup>49</sup> IMF (2008), *op. cit.*
- <sup>50</sup> Interview data.
- <sup>51</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Education de Base, de l'Alphabetisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.*
- <sup>52</sup> There were 30,515 teachers in 2006 (Mali MEN, *Annuaire Statistique 2005–2006*), compared with 9,677 in 1996 (cited in World Bank (2007) 'Evaluation of World Bank Assistance to Primary Education in Mali').
- <sup>53</sup> Ministre de l'Education de Base, de l'Alphabetisation et des Langues Nationales, 2007-2008, *op. cit.* p. 91.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>55</sup> See, for example, UNICEF, Plan-Mali, UNDP (2004) *Etude nationale sur l'enregistrement des enfants à la naissance*.
- <sup>56</sup> Figures on girls and boys from Mali MEN, *Annuaire Statistique 2005–2006*, *op. cit.*
- <sup>57</sup> World Bank (2006) 'Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Credit to Mali for a Second Education Sector Investment Program' [PISE II]; Mali Ministère de l'Education de Base, de l'Alphabetisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.*
- <sup>58</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Education de Base, de l'Alphabetisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.*, p. 83.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.
- <sup>61</sup> Mali MEN, *MTEF Education 2006–2008*, *op. cit.* Children completing school: 17 per cent of poor rural girls; 68 per cent of better-off urban boys.
- <sup>62</sup> Mali MEBALN, *Annuaire Statistique 2007–2008*, *op. cit.*
- <sup>63</sup> Ministre de l'Education de Base, de l'Alphabetisation et des Langues Nationales, 2007–2008, p. 23.
- <sup>64</sup> USAID (2006) *Meeting EFA: Mali Community Schools*.
- <sup>65</sup> Mali MEN, *Annuaire Statistique 2005–2006*, *op. cit.*
- <sup>66</sup> Interview data.
- <sup>67</sup> Mali MEN, *Annuaire Statistique 2007–2008*, *op. cit.* pp. 38–40.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>69</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Indices 2008*.
- <sup>70</sup> UN Human Development Index.
- <sup>71</sup> Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank (2007) 'Evaluation of World Bank Assistance to Primary Education in Mali'.
- <sup>72</sup> Mali MEN, *Annuaire Statistique 2007–2008*, *op. cit.*

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- <sup>75</sup> Based on: school population calculated as school-age population plus 10 per cent (UNESCO / UN Institute for Statistics method); population growth at 3 per cent (from UNDP Human Development Indicators 2008); teacher attrition at 5 per cent (indicated as conservative by UNESCO, which cites 6.5 per cent as a 'medium' attrition level for Africa); and teacher recruitment at 2,500 (GoM target, from GPRSP).
- <sup>76</sup> Figures calculated by Oxfam, based on statistics from Mali MEN *Annuaire Statistique 2005–2006, op. cit.*; and *MTEF Education 2006–2008, op. cit.*
- <sup>77</sup> Mali MEN, *MTEF Education 2006–2008, op. cit.*
- <sup>78</sup> Interviews with civil society organisations Tassaght, GREFFA.
- <sup>79</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Education de Base, de l'Alphabetisation et des Langues Nationales (2008), *op. cit.*
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>82</sup> Government of Mali (2006) *2<sup>nd</sup> Generation PRSP 2007–2011: Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy*.
- <sup>83</sup> Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank (2007) *op. cit.*
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- <sup>85</sup> Interview with SNEC (Syndicat National de l'Education et de la Culture); Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS) (2007) 'Teacher shortages, teacher contracts, and their impact on education in Africa'.
- <sup>86</sup> Interview data; Mali MEN, *MTEF Education 2006–2008, op. cit.*
- <sup>87</sup> ILO/UNESCO 'Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers' (1966). Sets international standards on the following: initial and continuing training; recruitment; advancement and promotion; security of tenure; disciplinary; procedures; part-time service; professional freedom; supervision and assessment; responsibilities and rights; participation in educational decision-making; negotiation; conditions for effective teaching and learning; social security. See <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001604/160495e.pdf>
- <sup>88</sup> Mali MEN, *Annuaire Statistique 2007–2008, op. cit.*
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 861–4.
- <sup>90</sup> Malian Poverty Evaluation Assessment (EMEP), 2001, cited in Mali MEN, *MTEF Education 2006–2008, op. cit.*
- <sup>91</sup> World Bank, World Development Indicators. GNI per capita 2001, Atlas method (current US\$) – US–FCFA exchange rate is 730.34 = \$1, average rate for 2001.
- <sup>92</sup> Oxfam International & Save the Children (2008) *Rising Food Prices in the Sahel: the urgency of long-term action*.
- <sup>93</sup> Interview data. Figures on marriage of girls from IRIN news, see [www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=74027](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=74027), quoting government statistics from 2001.
- <sup>94</sup> IEG (2007) 'Evaluation of the World Bank Assistance to Primary Education in Mali'; USAID (2006) *Meeting EFA: Mali Community Schools*.
- <sup>95</sup> Interviews with Gao CAP; Tassaght; school principal; GREFFA.
- <sup>96</sup> Interviews with principal of Ecole Kokobougou 2 and other schools.

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- <sup>97</sup> Interview data.
- <sup>98</sup> Government of Mali (2006) *2<sup>nd</sup> Generation PRSP 2007–2011: Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy*.
- <sup>99</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006), *op. cit.*
- <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>101</sup> All spending and resource projections from Mali Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006), *op. cit.*
- <sup>102</sup> OECD CRS, 2009, *op. cit.*
- <sup>103</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Économie de L'Industrie et Du Commerce. *Comptes Économiques Du Mali*, November 2008.
- <sup>104</sup> OECD CRS, 2009, *op. cit.*
- <sup>105</sup> Mali Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale (2006), *op. cit.* The exchange rate used is 479.3445 FCFA = \$1, the 2007 average as supplied by the West African Central Bank (BCEAO).
- <sup>106</sup> OECD CRS 2009, *op. cit.*
- <sup>107</sup> Both figures from OECD creditor reporting system. 1997 figure based on US constant prices 2005, using average 2005 exchange rate of \$1 = FCFA 524.666. 2007 figure in 2007 constant \$, using 2007 exchange rate (see note 1).
- <sup>108</sup> IMF (2008) *First review under the three-year arrangement under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility*.
- <sup>109</sup> Mali's OECD donors in 2006 were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, the USA, the African Development Fund, the European Commission, the Global Fund for HIV, AIDS, TB and Malaria, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank.
- <sup>110</sup> This is based on constant US\$ 2007, taking an average between 2005 and 2007 to account for differences in donor disbursements.
- <sup>111</sup> OECD Creditor Reporting System.
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>113</sup> Fast Track Secretariat (2008) *FTI Catalytic Fund Annual Status Report*, Oslo, Norway, December 2008.
- <sup>114</sup> OECD (2008) *2008 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration*.
- <sup>115</sup> I. Bergamaschi (2007) *Mali: Patterns and Limits of Donor-Driven Ownership*, Oxford University, Global Economic Governance Programme.
- <sup>116</sup> Matrice Financière des donateurs, Rapport Intermédiaire, June 2007.
- <sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>118</sup> Oxfam (2006), *op. cit.*
- <sup>119</sup> Both the Commission for Africa (2005) 'Our Common Interest' report and the United Nations (2002) report 'Final Outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development' recognised the need for developing countries to be able to determine their own economic paths.
- <sup>120</sup> Oxfam considers both legally binding conditions (prior actions) and non-legally binding benchmarks as conditions in this report. Oxfam, like many other NGOs, considers both to be conditions, given that that benchmarks influence the behaviour of recipient governments and are used as a means of assessing loan performance.

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<sup>121</sup> IMF (2008) 'First Review Under the Three-Year Arrangement of the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility', Staff Report, Washington, December 2008.

<sup>122</sup> OECD (2006) Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey.



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