



COUNTRY PROFILE



O. DOUCOURE, USAID/MALI

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

MALI SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1960

Population: 11.9 million (2004)

Income per person: \$360 (yr)

Source: World Bank Development Indicators

USAID IN MALI

www.usaidmali.org

OVERVIEW

Mali stands out as a stable democracy in the midst of the troubled West African region. The predominantly Muslim country began a transition to democracy in 1992 and continued with a peaceful change of power in 2002. Real GDP growth has averaged over 5 percent per year since 1994, facilitating national income per capita to rise from US\$240 in 1994 to US\$370 in 2004. For Mali to continue to play a positive role in the region, strenuous efforts must also continue to achieve broad-based poverty reduction. Therefore, USAID programs focus on health, education, democracy, economic growth, and communications expansion with a special focus on the North, Mali's most fragile region.



PROGRAMS

IMPROVING HEALTH SERVICES

Malaria is the number one killer of children in Mali. USAID promotes use of insecticide treated bednets, the most cost-effective way to reduce malaria, making nearly half a million available since the start of the program. USAID funding also expands access to HIV/AIDS prevention and testing services, further consolidates HIV/AIDS surveillance activities, reduces vitamin A and iron deficiency, increases immunization coverage, prevents and treats diarrheal diseases, and expands access to family planning, and reproductive health services.

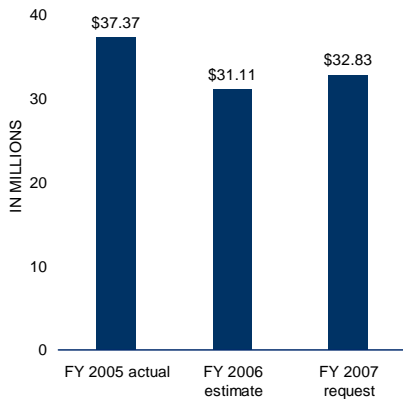
INCREASING THE QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

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

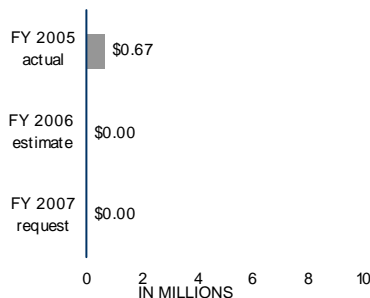


COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

USAID ASSISTANCE TO MALI



USAID FOOD AID TO MALI



For more information, see the
 FY2007 Congressional Budget Justification
<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/>

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STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

Since holding its first democratic election in 1992, Mali has become one of the most enlightened democracies in all of Africa. Mali can boast a fully open press and the largest number of private radio stations in any African country. USAID's democracy and governance program promotes the participation of various groups in the democratic process; provides local communities with the skills to administer their own financial systems; develops policies that support the success of decentralized government; and increases women's role in decision-making. Women were significantly represented on the 2004 ballot for the first time in history, and in the last two years the number of elected female leaders has increased by 200 percent. With USAID support, 24 targeted rural municipalities identified major governance issues and developed realistic strategies to address them.

ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mali's economy is based solely on agriculture and mining, but the country is committed to a market-based economy. Mali has become essentially self-sufficient in food production, so USAID programs strengthen agricultural sector growth by targeting export commodities for which Mali has a comparative advantage, such as rice, potato, mango, and animal products. They work to reinforce the Malian private sector by improving the management of agribusinesses and strengthening microfinance institutions. USAID helped increase mango exports to 2,984 metric tons, 14 percent more than the previous year. Four cooperatives working with USAID to develop export capacity saw their combined potato exports increase from 10 metric tons in 2004 to 374 metric tons in 2005.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Mali is one of the world's most information-deprived countries, with a largely illiterate population and only a nascent information technology infrastructure. Yet, access to information is critical to Mali's development. The USAID communications for development program improves the quality of information available on development-related topics and reduces regulatory and policy constraints on information access. Twenty-five USAID-funded telecenters provide information to a potential audience of over 750,000 people and have generated sufficient revenue to cover all of their operating costs. Internet access points are now available in most Malian cities and towns with a population of over 5,000 people. Over 310 radio programs were broadcast on topics concerning health, child trafficking, education, democratic governance, microfinance and trade opportunities, sound environmental practices, women's issues, and other topics.