

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Mali
Program Title:	Improving Quality of Basic Education
Pillar:	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
Strategic Objective:	688-007
Status:	Continuing
Planned FY 2005 Obligation:	\$5,301,000 DA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$0
Proposed FY 2006 Obligation:	\$4,261,000 DA
Year of Initial Obligation:	2002
Estimated Year of Final Obligation:	2012

Summary: Mali's primary school enrollment rate has traditionally been among the lowest in Africa and the world, particularly for girls. To address this problem, in the mid-90s USAID pioneered a program of community owned and managed primary schools to increase access to primary education in remote rural areas of Mali, places where the Malian government could not afford to build schools. Over a seven-year period USAID built 1,740 community schools. Other donors followed suit adding another 817 schools, greatly expanding access to education. Enrollment grew from 39% in 1995 to 71% in 2003. As significant, while only one-third of students attending school were girls in 1995, 43% of primary school students were girls in 2003, narrowing the gender gap significantly. Mali's Ministry of Education and donor partners, including USAID, reviewed progress in achieving education for all children and decided that to encourage more children to enroll in school, as well as keep children in school, attention must now be focused on the quality of instruction. Therefore, USAID's program focuses on improving the quality of Mali's education system through teacher training; assistance to improve national primary school curriculum; mobilization of communities to manage and advocate more effectively for public schools, community schools and Islamic schools; scholarships for 5,000 disadvantaged girls each year through the President's Africa Education Initiative (AEI); adult literacy; and reinforcement of management skills for local control of schooling.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2005 Program: Improve Quality of Workforce (\$1,700,000 DA). Mali is experiencing a severe teacher shortage, needing 2,500 more new teachers each year to meet the current demand. Most teachers enter the classroom without any formal training, many with only a ninth grade education. To help remedy the situation, USAID will expand its teacher training program in order to reach approximately 4,600 teachers from 800 public schools, community schools, and Islamic schools using a more cost-efficient school-based training model. USAID will focus on upgrading teachers' ability to perform so that the curriculum is taught using modern, interactive techniques. School directors will be trained to play a leadership role in improving teacher performance. USAID will continue to support a teacher training program via radio, giving practical activities and solutions so that school lessons become immediately useful in the African village, not just obscure, rote repetition and memorization exercises. Interactive media centers which will bring a wealth of information to students and teachers through the internet will be created in six teacher training colleges serving 2,800 students. The radio education and media centers will be made possible through funds from the AEI. Principal contractors and grantees: World Education and Education Development Center (primes); and World Learning, Stewart International, DevTech Systems, and Academy for Educational Development (subs).

Improve the Quality of Basic Education (\$3,601,000 DA). In a study done in 2000, most girls in Mali said they dropped out of school because they were not learning anything. Realizing that Western texts meant little to Malian children, the Government of Mali has been involved in developing a curriculum that draws on every day life in Mali for material. USAID will support this effort by providing expertise to the Ministry of Education in mathematics, science and life skills, with attention to the special learning needs of girls, for development of a curriculum and relevant learning materials that encourage more active, student-centered teaching. Assistance given in achievement testing piloted in the FY 2004 program will continue, furthering the Malian Government's ability to track system-wide progress in reading and mathematics.

USAID will also focus on assuring that 800 schools meet established criteria for “effective,” well-functioning schools through management training programs focused on school improvement plans and monitoring student and teacher performance. USAID will build upon previous successes in assisting communities to advocate for increased services and resources. Support to 200 adult literacy centers offering courses that address development issues will be expanded. These literacy programs will not only create a base of literate adults in villages, but will also pass on practical information that can lead to behavior change. For example, mothers will be taught the importance of using bednets to protect their children from malaria. Through the President’s Africa Education Initiative, USAID will provide 5,000 scholarships to disadvantaged girls in the north of Mali where girls’ attendance in school remains low. USAID will continue to improve education planning at the regional level. Training will be consolidated in 16 regional offices to assure that priority setting, in terms of hiring new teachers or constructing new schools, reflects analysis of education statistics and budget projections. Monitoring the impact of educational investments will be reinforced. Principal contractors and grantees: World Education and Academy for Educational Development (primes); and World Learning, Stewart International, and DevTech Systems (subs).

FY 2006 Program: Improve Quality of Workforce (\$1,261,000 DA). USAID plans to intensify its teacher training assistance, focusing on quality performance by teachers and school directors. Educators will continue to be trained at the school level so that local realities can be taken into account and teacher time away from school is minimized. USAID intends to use lessons learned from its pilot program of integrating Islamic schools into the Malian teacher training system in order to expand the number of Islamic schools offering high quality education. The radio education program may expand to nationwide coverage. Students at six teacher training colleges will be trained to use the Internet to assist in their classroom teaching. Same implementers as FY 2005.

Improve the Quality of Basic Education (\$3,000,000 DA). USAID intends to continue supporting the nationwide implementation of Mali’s new primary school curriculum. Resources may be used to continue assistance in the establishment and use of a student achievement testing system aligned with the new curriculum. USAID plans to reinforce assistance to 800 schools in meeting established criteria for “effective,” well-functioning schools through management training programs that allow parents to monitor and improve school performance. USAID will seek to expand its assistance beyond regional education offices to local school administration offices for improved planning and monitoring of school performance. Same implementers as FY 2005.

Performance and Results: Since the start of USAID’s education program, four major results have been achieved to date: 1) 7,100 teachers and administrators have been trained in the use of Mali’s new primary school curriculum, bilingual education and child-centered teaching methods have been partially funded through the President’s African Education Initiative; 2) 405 schools were regrouped into clusters of public, community and Islamic schools to begin a new school-based teacher training program that promises to be more cost-efficient and effective than the traditional training in workshops; 3) Mali’s first achievement test to measure progress in mathematics and French was piloted to allow the Ministry of Education to assess student competencies; and 4) over 160,000 textbooks were distributed to students.

USAID anticipates that over 4,700 teachers will receive on-going, systematic teacher training and support, and a radio teacher education program will reach 85% of Malian teachers. As a result, USAID expects over 70% of sixth grade children attending USAID-supported schools to pass their 7th grade entrance exam. In addition, all 15 of the Ministry of Education’s regional offices will be using education data to set goals and targets and will make financial decisions accordingly. Finally, in USAID-supported schools, over 80% of the parents and communities will be shouldering a portion of the financial responsibility for operating primary schools and at least 60% will be able to advocate effectively for materials and services for their schools, such as textbooks, teacher training, or teachers’ salary payments. In 2007, enrollment should rise to 80%.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Mali

	DA	ESF
688-007 Improving Quality of Basic Education		
Through September 30, 2003		
Obligations	10,690	50
Expenditures	604	0
Unliquidated	10,086	50
Fiscal Year 2004		
Obligations	6,455	0
Expenditures	5,201	5
Through September 30, 2004		
Obligations	17,145	50
Expenditures	5,805	5
Unliquidated	11,340	45
Prior Year Unobligated Funds		
Obligations	0	0
Planned Fiscal Year 2005 NOA		
Obligations	5,301	0
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2005		
Obligations	5,301	0
Proposed Fiscal Year 2006 NOA		
Obligations	4,261	0
Future Obligations	36,933	0
Est. Total Cost	63,640	50