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COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY (CDCS)

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ACRONYMS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
ADEFIM	Mutual Aid Association for Intellectual Development of Malian Women
AEG	Agriculture and Economic Growth Office
AFD	French Agency for Development
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMRTPE	Malian Association for Peace and Progress
ASACO	Community Health Management Association
CBAG	Community Based Armed Groups
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CEDAW Women	Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLA	Collaborating, Learning and Adapting
CNT	National Transitional Council
COCEM	Coalition for Citizen Observation of Elections
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (SARS-CoV2)
COVAX	Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access
CREDD	Government of Mali, Strategic Framework for Raising Voter Turnout
CRI 2002 Mali	Circle of Reflection and Information for the Consolidation of Democracy in Mali
CSCOM	Community Health Center
CSREF	Regional Referral Health Center
DA	Development Assistance
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DO	Development Objective
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EDSM-V	Mali Demographic and Health Survey 5 (2012)
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ERSD	Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development
EU	European Union
FAMa	Armed Forces of Mali
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEMAPH	Malian Federation of People with Disabilities
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FTF	Feed the Future
GAVI	Vaccine Alliance
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCC	Global Climate Change
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEC	Executive Cooperation Group
GFSS	Global Food Security Strategy
GHSA	Global Health Security Agenda
GoM	Government of Mali
GT DDI	Decentralization and Institutional Development Thematic Group

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HA	Humanitarian Assistance
HDP	Humanitarian, Development and Peace
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICS	Integrated Country Strategy
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
LSI	Layering, Sequencing, and Integrating
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MEN	Ministry of National Education
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MIS	Malaria Indicator Survey
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAG	Organized Armed Group
PAS	Strategic Sanitation Plans
PDD	Project Development Document
PDSEC	Commune-level Social, Economic, and Cultural Development Plan
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief
PCMD	Preventable Child and Maternal Death
PMI	President's Malaria Initiative
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PNG	National Gender Policy
PRODEC	Program for the Development of Education
RDCS	Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
RF	Results Framework
RFSA	Resilience Food Security Activity
RFZ	Resilience Focus Zone
RJA	Network of Active Youth
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SpO	Special Objective
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/Mali	United States Agency for International Development Mission to Mali
USG	United States Government
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

I. Executive Summary

Mali's military *coup d'état* in August 2020 presented new and unique challenges to an already complex and fragile development context. Addressing these challenges will require an equally new and innovative approach that accounts for the risks inherent in uncertainty and the multitude of complexities associated with climate change, conflict and rapid population growth that continue to stress the Government of Mali's (GoM) capacity to provide basic services. The approach in this strategy is a departure from the past as it seeks to strike a balance between tried-and-true development interventions that have yielded solid results over the past several decades and renewed, better integrated efforts to confront long-standing development and humanitarian challenges. The approach will build upon previous development gains in basic education, health and agriculture while addressing deficits in governance, peacebuilding, and basic needs. The strategy is also designed to overcome challenges associated with resilience to shocks and stresses resulting from climate change, food insecurity, and management of natural resources. At the heart of this approach is renewed emphasis on community-driven development, greater attention to localization, and the inclusion of marginalized groups, especially women and youth.

The goal of USAID/Mali's 2022-2027 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) is *a more stable, peaceful, and resilient Mali leading its own development*. During the CDCS period, USAID/Mali will focus development and humanitarian investments on helping Malians to improve governance for stronger democratic institutions and the socio-economic environment for a healthier, better educated and more prosperous population with citizens empowered to meet basic emergency needs, reduce vulnerability, and build community capacity to respond to shocks and stresses. The USAID strategy fully aligns with Mali's 2022 Integrated Country Strategy (ICS). The strategy takes an integrated approach to addressing priority cross-cutting issues to help ensure greater diversity, inclusivity, equality and accessibility for women and youth in all programming with a similarly strong focus on anti-corruption and transparency, community-driven development, integration across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus, and resilience to climate shocks and stresses. USAID will weave gender-responsive and socially inclusive approaches throughout implementation of the strategy to ensure that all USAID programs and activities achieve meaningful and sustainable impact. This includes working with Malians to address concerns related to trafficking in persons and priorities outlined in the National Security Strategy, including the revitalization of democracy, protecting human rights, and reducing discrimination, inequity, and marginalization in all forms.¹

The strategy will optimize both short and longer-term impacts by being more intentional in integrating development and humanitarian assistance programming across sectors. At the conclusion of the strategy, the Mission expects to have had a meaningful impact on the capacity of local entities to sustain their own development and provide basic services, including for example, greater provision of community financed health services, more students reading at grade-level, enhanced agricultural production and marketing, and an increased number of conflict-prone communities better able to resolve and mitigate sources of conflict including the just and equitable management of natural resources. By aggregating efforts across the USAID Strategy and with our development partners, more communities will be prepared and equipped to prevent and respond to shocks and stresses caused by conflict and climate change, and thus will be less vulnerable to instability, reducing the need for humanitarian assistance.

Country Roadmap

¹ United States Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, pg. 20.

Capacity - Mali receives an above average score on civil society and media effectiveness (0.86), particularly among the large pool of community-based organizations. Government capacity is ranked below average in terms of financial resource management and the ability to collect tax revenue, plan for emergencies, and address the basic service needs of a rapidly expanding population. This includes challenges in acting across all areas of the country equally which is a driver of both communal conflict and extremist ideologies. Of note are low scores for government capacity to maintain safety and security (0.24) and citizen capacity in terms of child health (0.50) and education quality (0.03).

Commitment - In 2020, Mali's transition Government publicly expressed commitment to strengthening governance structures, advancing anti-corruption, reinvigorating the 2015 Peace Accord, rewriting the constitution, and implementing multi-sector strategies (i.e., health, education, agriculture, nutrition, and countering-violent extremism.) However, challenges remain as the GoM works to expand its presence in key areas of northern Mali and the conflict-affected center of the country. The *Coup d'état* in August 2020 and subsequent consolidation of military power in May 2021 have delayed elections and political reforms are underway. Communities, especially through local platforms, demonstrate strong commitment to ensuring peace and access to healthcare and education, but are constrained by a very large economic gender gap (0.39) and often lack the tools, financial resources, support, and capacity to deliver on commitments and services. Lack of transparency and accountability combined with the need for government reforms constrain institutional capacities and contribute to uncertainty about Mali's development trajectory.

Development Objective 1 (DO1) will guide USAID's efforts to help Malians in building governance capacity and efficacy from the ground up. Activities will strengthen civic engagement of marginalized populations and local organizations to better serve their communities. By addressing local grievances and diverse drivers of conflict, USAID will assist in laying strong foundations for future peace and stability by better equipping communities to manage and mitigate conflict. To bolster democratic institutions and especially local and regional entities, USAID will strengthen the capacities of governmental and non-governmental organizations, citizens' groups, and the private sector for providing basic services to citizens. Specifically, USAID will partner with the Malian government to deliver quality education, health services, credible elections, and access to justice.

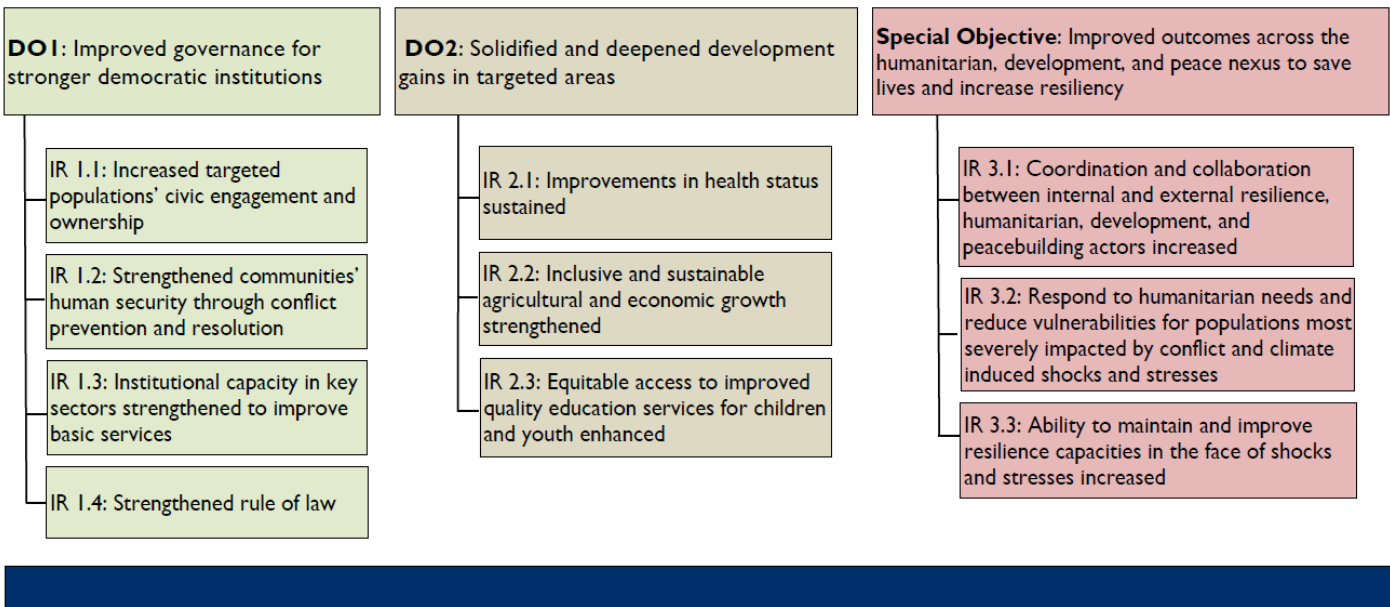
Development Objective 2 (DO2) will solidify and deepen development gains at the community level and will aid in strengthening community systems and services. Activities will champion inclusive development approaches that expand access to services and economic opportunities, prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), promote women's economic empowerment, empower adolescent girls, engage men and boys to address gender norms, and support other underserved and marginalized populations. This will be achieved by building on long-standing development investments and impacts, increasing funding to local partners, strengthening community associations, and investing in people to place them at the center of their own development processes.

The **Special Objective (SpO)** will bring greater coherence to USAID/Mali programming and serve as a cross-sectoral platform for improving outcomes across the HDP nexus. The Mission's technical offices will increase coordination and collaboration between internal and external resilience and HDP actors through the establishment and efforts of a SpO working group. This will enable USAID to respond to humanitarian needs more effectively, better maintain and improve resilience in targeted communities, and reduce vulnerabilities for populations most severely affected by conflict, climate-impacts, and other anthropogenic shocks and stresses. The SpO encompasses a new way of doing business to increase coordination, collaboration, and coherence across the HDP nexus by

formalizing and institutionalizing new organizational structures and processes. The expected end state of the SpO is to better operationalize the layering, sequencing, and integrating (LSI) of USAID investments to increase programmatic effectiveness, and to meet United States Government (USG) development goals in Mali. LSI “...includes the coordination, planning, and implementation of shifts from development assistance (DA) to humanitarian assistance (HA) in response to crises, and then back to DA as the shocks subside.... (LSI) of projects and activities across HA and DA portfolios is a direct result of joint analysis and planning that uses collective impact to promote synergistic effects on resilience in communities.”²

USAID/Mali CDCS Framework (2022-2027)

A more stable, peaceful, and resilient Mali leading its own development



² Policy Implementation Assessment of USAID’s Building Resilience to Recurrent Crisis: Policy and Program Guidance, Dexis Consulting Group, 2021, https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZDBM.pdf, pp.13, 22.

II. Country Context

Home to powerful empires and kingdoms that flourished during the precolonial era, Mali is a vast, landlocked country situated in the Sahel at the heart of West Africa. Its borders are the legacy of more than a half century of French colonial rule. Mali ranks consistently among the poorest countries in the world, with nearly half of the population living below the poverty line. One in four children under five in Mali is stunted, and the country ranks eighth globally for under-five child mortality, which is on the rise. Mali ranks 184th out of 189 on the Human Development Index. Only 39 percent of Malian women have some level of formal education, and female literacy ranges from 13-28 percent depending on location.³ Despite its persistent low-income status, the country has seen some notable socio-economic improvements over the past decade. Life expectancy has vastly improved since the 1990's.⁴ Mali has reduced child deaths due to malaria 47 percent since 2007 and is a leader in Africa in terms of mosquito bed net coverage. In agriculture, cereal production has increased five-fold over the past several decades and Mali is the number one producer of cotton in Africa. Industrial and artisanal gold mining has proliferated, with Mali ranked as Africa's third largest gold producer, and mining contributes significantly to national income and government revenue. Nonetheless, weak governance structures, military *coups d'état*, lack of accountability, corruption, human rights abuses, fertility rates that are among the highest in the world, very high burden of disease and maternal and child mortality rates, emerging pandemic threats such as Ebola and COVID-19, intercommunal conflict, separatist movements in the north of the country, and extremist inspired insurgencies all threaten Mali's future stability, security, and path to sustainable development.

A. Political and Security Situation

Following the March Revolution of 1991, Mali progressed from dictatorship to multi-party, democratic rule under the constitution of 1992. In response to long-standing grievances and a Tuareg rebellion in northern regions, the constitution was amended in 1999, decentralizing and devolving greater authority to the local level.⁵ The 2011 fall of Muammar Gaddafi's government in Libya subsequently led to an influx of combatants and arms into northern Mali, the unilateral declaration by separatist groups of the independent state of Azawad, and an Islamist insurgency, followed by a chaotic military *coup d'état* in 2012. Mali's return to democracy in 2013 was initially met with optimism, but ultimately resulted in public disaffection due to ongoing and widening conflict, high levels of corruption, the persistent absence of state services in large parts of the country, and perceived election irregularities. These grievances spurred months of mass protests, an August 2020 *coup d'état*, establishment of a transition government, and the further consolidation of military rule in May of 2021.⁶

Insecurity remains problematic with a rise in violence over the past two years and, most recently, in the first quarter of 2022.⁷ Violent extremist organizations (VEO) continue to perpetuate violence in northern and central Mali and prevent the State from delivering social services. Divisions among

³ UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2020. Human Development Report 2020: The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene. New York.

⁴ Demographic and Health Survey, 2006 and 2018.

⁵ Freedom House. Countries at the Crossroads 2011: Mali

⁶ The August 2020 *coup d'état* triggered restrictions on assistance under section 7008 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Act, 2012 (division I of Public Law 112-74; 125 Stat. 1195) which states that, "No funds appropriated shall be obligated or expended to finance directly any assistance to the government of any country whose duly elected head of government is deposed by military coup." While security assistance and voluntary family planning activities are subject to restrictions on direct assistance to Mali's government, USAID has been allowed to continue most activities that provide direct assistance to the government under Notwithstanding Authority (NWA).

⁷ Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED): <https://acleddata.com/dashboard/#/dashboard>

armed groups and across communities, combined with transnational organized crime and regional political dynamics have created a wide range of complex relationships, incentives, and tensions that further complicate opportunities for peace, security, and development. Extremist-inspired insurgency movements that are firmly ensconced in the tri-border area with Burkina Faso and Niger, and increasingly in other parts of the country, further restrict women's autonomy, especially in terms of education, health, and economic opportunity. The ongoing lack of state presence in much of the country stifles access to basic services and impedes the Malian government's capacity to address development needs. Moreover, criminality, kidnapping for ransom and conflict have left Mali at an impasse in terms of progress towards achieving its sustainable development goals.

B. Economic Overview

The COVID-19 crisis interrupted a five-year period of consistent growth. As a result, Mali's growth in 2020 reached only two percent against an initial projection of five percent. The transition government took measures to support households and businesses amid this economic slowdown, further increasing its fiscal deficit which reached 6.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020, against an initial projection of 3.5 percent. In March 2021, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected GDP growth of six percent for Mali, as well as an average inflation rate of two percent. Mali was relying on these positive projections to reduce its budget deficit to 4.5 percent of GDP, down from 5.5 percent a year earlier. As Mali's economy recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, instability continues to hamper the country's economic outlook. Additionally, high inflation and food insecurity have a disproportionate impact on Mali's poor and vulnerable households, which spend an average of 46 percent of their budget on food.

In January 2022, ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) imposed a broad regime of economic and financial sanctions on Mali. Restrictions included the closure of air and land borders and the suspension of cross-border commercial and financial transactions between Mali and most of its ECOWAS neighbors. Some essential imports such as food, medicine, and fuel were exempted from the embargo. ECOWAS represents 48 percent of Mali's imports and two percent of Mali's exports in the formal economy. The World Bank noted that merchandise exports decreased by 15 percent during the first quarter of 2022 (year-on-year,) including gold (-6 percent) and manufactured products (-33 percent), and imports of goods also decreased (-23 percent.) Declining revenues, frozen public assets, and lack of access to finance led to some spending cuts. During the first quarter of 2022, tax revenue decreased by 15 percent (year-on-year,) government expenditure decreased by eight percent, and the provision of public services was affected. Sanctions remained in place until July of 2022 and on-budget support provided by the European Union (EU), World Bank (WB), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been suspended pending progress on the return to democracy. Mali's economic growth prospects for 2022 remain conditional. The World Bank estimates that GDP growth will reach 3.3 percent in 2022 with sanctions lifted in the second quarter of the year.⁸

C. Gender

Mali has numerous sound policies and plans in place to achieve women's empowerment and gender equality. However, meaningful progress is impeded by inconsistent and ineffective implementation and accountability. The GoM approved a National Gender Policy (PNG) in 2010 and Mali is a signatory to numerous regional and international agreements guaranteeing the rights of women such as the Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

⁸ World Bank, Mali Economic Update: Resilience in Uncertain Times - Renewing the Social Contract, May 24, 2022: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mali/publication/mali-economic-update-resilience-in-uncertain-times-renewing-the-social-contract>

Despite these commitments, Mali ranks in the lowest tenth percentile among countries in terms of the overall gender gap per the World Economic Forum (149 out of 156 countries.) Options and economic opportunities for most women and girls are constrained, not least by the significant disparities between girls' and boys' educational access, retention, and literacy rates. While workforce participation among women is high, particularly in the informal sector, relatively few women make it to senior positions. Women comprise less than 20 percent of senior posts in the public and private sectors and, as of February 2021, occupied only 27 percent of seats in parliament, though this represented a significant improvement over the nine percent female representation in the previous parliament. Women and girls aged over 15 years spend an average of more than 20 percent of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to 2.5 percent for men.⁹

Data from the 2018 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) confirms that Mali ranks among countries with the greatest disparities between women and men. GBV is prevalent, with 18.4 percent of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) reporting that they were subject to physical or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months. Many women and men view GBV as normative behavior. More than half of women aged 20–24 years old were married or in a union before the age of 18 and the adolescent birth rate in 2018 was at 164 per 1,000 women aged 15-19.¹⁰ Women have less access to credit and other financial services than men, and land has historically been allocated by men in family leadership positions, limiting women's rights of access and denying opportunities for ownership. The Agricultural Land Law passed in 2017 specifies that 15 percent of government-managed lands will be allocated for use by women and youth, but limited measures to implement this law have not redressed the imbalance. Efforts over the past decade to pass a new Family Law that better defines and safeguards the rights of women, most recently in 2020, have met with resistance and failed.

D. Climate Impacts

Mali is estimated to be among the most vulnerable countries to climate stress due to its socioeconomic status, geo-location, and climate-sensitive economy. Two-thirds of the country is in the arid Sahara and semi-arid Sahel. The country's economy is primarily fueled by natural resources with cotton, gold, livestock, and cereals predominating. Mali's northern half is arid Saharan desert that presents challenges to sustainable livelihoods while the Niger and Senegal river basins, in the eastern and western portions of the country, support a variety of cash and subsistence crops. Urban centers are characterized by a large, vibrant, informal trading and commercial sector. Pastoralism and farming systems provide livelihoods for 74 percent of Malians and are highly sensitive to droughts and rainfall variability. Recurring extreme events—severe droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, five major droughts from 1987 to 2007, and catastrophic floods—prevent households from recovering and moving out of extreme poverty. The primary climate stressors in Mali are rising average temperatures, increasing annual rainfall variability, extreme heat and rainfall events, and the increasing frequency and magnitude of drought and dry spells. How these climate stressors manifest into risks varies by sector (e.g., agriculture, health, education) and by geographic location. While some risks are sector specific such as floods destroying crops, effectively addressing other risks requires multi-sectoral approaches.¹¹

As highlighted in USAID's Climate Strategy, extreme weather events and slow-onset climate impacts pose new risks, degrade ecosystems and natural resources, and aggravate existing social, economic,

⁹ World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2021: www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021/

¹⁰ Demographic and Health Survey, 2018.

¹¹ USAID Climate Change Annex pg. 1.

and political challenges and inequities. They also drive migration and increase the risk of conflict.¹² These persistent crises present both chronic problems of food insecurity and regularly recurring short-term emergencies. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) predicts further increases in food insecurity in 2022 after poorer than expected harvests in 2021, attributable to a combination of drought and lack of land access due to insecurity. Prior to recent price spikes and the resulting global food crisis, the World Bank reported that costs in Mali for food and non-alcoholic beverages increased by 5.2 percent in 2021, compared to an increase of 2.5 percent in 2020. Price increases have accelerated in 2022.¹³ The protracted crisis in Russia and Ukraine is exacerbating West Africa's food insecurity and impacting inflationary trends caused by the global pandemic and ECOWAS sanctions. Further complicating these macro-economic trends, the global price of wheat is rapidly rising and prices for barley, dry peas, oats, sugar, and sunflower oil are also increasing as Russia and Ukraine are key global agricultural exporters of these products in Africa. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), limitations on fertilizer exports from Russia and Ukraine through June 2022 are also impacting agricultural production, particularly in arid regions like the Sahel.

These challenges are widespread throughout USAID/Mali's Resilience Focus Zone (RFZ). The area covers the entire region in the center and north of Mali where the Resilience Food Security Activity (RFSA) and Feed the Future (FTF) activities operate, an area with historically high levels of chronic poverty, acute malnutrition, conflict, and exposure to natural hazards. The RFZ is endowed with vast land and water resources across several agro-ecological zones. The Niger Inner Delta, a flooded, humid area of approximately 30,000 km² is an internationally recognized wetland that provides valuable wildlife habitat and ecosystems services benefitting Mali, the West Africa region, and beyond. The area is also endowed with interconnected forestry, livestock, fishing, and crop production systems, which support millions of livelihoods in Mali. Transhumance, a type of pastoralism involving regular annual movements of livestock, remains a central adaptation strategy attracting large herds to the Niger Inner Delta each year from other regions in Mali and neighboring countries. If access to land and water resources are managed properly, this annual movement of livestock plays an important and beneficial role in nutrient recycling and ecosystem regeneration. Outside the Niger Inner Delta, most of the remaining RFZ consists of dryer areas dominated by rain-fed pastures and millet production during the rainy season with some opportunities for second-crop horticulture and irrigated production along the Niger River.

Considering that crop and livestock production still drive the regional economy and provide livelihoods for most Malians, maintaining and increasing the functionality and efficiency of these systems is critical for long-term sustainable development, yet, increasing instability has upset the balance of traditional agricultural systems in the RFZ. Underlying causes include a complex set of overlapping factors involving socio-political conflict, insecurity, and conflict over natural resources. This has provided opportunities for VEOs to recruit underemployed and marginalized youth, and to establish a large footprint in the region. In addition, more frequent and extreme drought, and localized flooding, along with growing population pressures, exacerbate competition and conflict resulting in (1) degradation of social and economic cohesion among farmers and pastoralists; (2) shifting patterns of herd movement that do not comply with customary rules and regulations; and (3) obstruction of livestock transhumance corridors by the expansion of cropping activities.

¹² USAID Climate Strategy 2022-2030 pg. 16.

¹³ World Bank, Mali Economic Update: Resilience in Uncertain Times - Renewing the Social Contract, May 24, 2022: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mali/publication/mali-economic-update-resilience-in-uncertain-times-renewing-the-social-contract>

III. Strategic Approach

USAID's CDCS goal will contribute to Malian efforts to advance a more stable, peaceful, and resilient country. USAID will pursue this goal through an integrated approach across: DO1) improved governance for stronger democratic institutions; DO2) solidified and deepened development gains (health, education, economic) in targeted areas, and; SpO) improved outcomes across the HDP nexus to save lives and increase resiliency. This strategic approach focuses on protecting and preserving prior development gains while enhancing collaboration and coordination across HA and DA investments to advance resiliency and stabilization. Underpinning the approach are scenario-based planning options that will rely on analytical data collected through USAID's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Platform to inform programming decisions.

This strategic approach incorporates institutional learning and differs from the previous USAID CDCS for Mali in several important ways. The previous CDCS reflected a more 'traditional' approach to development programming with objectives corresponding to technical sectors. This approach did not optimize incentives and structures for cross-sectoral work and resulted in fragmentation of effort across the portfolio. The new CDCS approach is integrated across technical sectors to enhance governance at all levels (DO1) while simultaneously preserving and protecting sectoral development gains (DO2). Stabilization and resiliency efforts under the previous CDCS were indirect and piecemeal while the new strategy encompasses a deliberate, institutionalized effort to promote stabilization and resiliency in a clearly defined focus zone (SpO). The new strategy also represents a deliberate effort to break down barriers between humanitarian and development assistance to maximize the short- and longer-term benefits of USG investments (SpO). Finally, the new USAID strategy has moved from a fixed, 'solid state' approach to a dynamic, scenario-based approach that accounts for the exigencies of a highly fluid operating environment and better enables strategic program pivots in response to rapidly changing conditions.

The new CDCS is guided by Agency priorities, U.S. foreign policy, national security considerations and USAID's comparative advantages among donor partners in Mali. It will also, to the extent possible, leverage contributions from the USAID West Africa Regional Mission and Sahel Regional Office's joint Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS). USAID/Mali will optimize coherence with regional programming on transnational issues such as peace and stability, trafficking in persons, transhumance, preventing and countering violent extremism, and enhancing community resilience in border areas. USAID/Mali will also leverage regional support services for institutional capacity development and for building the political and social commitment necessary to reduce vulnerability to climate shocks and stress.

The strategy emphasizes an integrated approach to addressing the multitude of complex development and humanitarian challenges Mali faces in geographic areas suffering climate shocks or experiencing insecurity and destabilization due to conflict. The CDCS approach will intensify collaboration among HDP actors working towards common goals and allow USAID to better address some of Mali's most intractable problems. This new way of doing business seeks to increase and deepen investment along the HDP nexus while forging a new internal management structure through the SpO to minimize HA-DA programmatic divides. The SpO will guide USAID's need to modify its organizational structure, operations, and approach to enhance HDP coherence and rapidly pivot to respond to changing conditions when needed. As a result, USAID will be better positioned to collaborate with HDP actors in support of stabilization and resilience efforts. Moreover, the SpO accounts for the increasing threat posed by climate change and pandemics, and highlights the need for USAID to help strengthen surveillance and early warning systems.

A. Community-Led Development, Localization, and Inclusion

Community-led development, localization, and inclusion are central to the CDCS strategic approach across the two DOs and the SpO. In recent years there has been increasing awareness that programs with significant community buy-in and ownership are often able to achieve success where others have not in addressing intractable development issues. The Mission has been successful in pioneering new partnerships with local entities to address issues of peace and security, and in promoting local solutions to health and educational challenges. During this strategic period, USAID will build on these successes by placing even greater emphasis on exploring and developing partnership with non-traditional partners. These partnerships will be an integral component of building upon local capacities and actors who are often best placed to deal with issues of peace and security, increased resilience, and stronger citizen engagement in, and oversight of, basic service provision. Elevating and supporting local efforts will also be key to implementing interventions that target the most vulnerable and marginalized groups within Malian society, not least, women and girls. By promoting greater inclusion throughout USAID programming, activities will be better positioned to address the multitude of social, political, and economic issues Malians face across gender, ethnic, and religious divides.

This CDCS strategic emphasis on community led-development, localization, and inclusion will allow the Agency to build on existing, longstanding partnerships with Malian organizations, directly engage with new local partners, better leverage local knowledge, and enhance sustainability. USAID will focus greater attention on stakeholders at the local level by increasing partnerships and support for community associations, grass-roots organizations, local civil society groups, and the Malian private sector. Moreover, USAID will seek out and promote opportunities to work together with local partner institutions to promote marginalized communities' access to services, as well as, to expand the inclusivity of USAID's programs for diverse populations. USAID will build on best practices and lessons learned to actively engage the broadest possible range of local stakeholders in co-creation and activity design and will systematically convene local partners to participate directly in activity monitoring and learning. USAID will also build the capacity of local organizations to work directly with the Agency and employ market-based partnerships with private sector and community actors when appropriate to advance innovation and private sector-driven solutions that address climate change, resilience, and conflict resolution.

B. Gender

A critical assumption underpinning the CDCS strategic approach is that a deeper, more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics and the ways in which USAID programming can drive positive social change for women and girls is central to optimizing impact and achieving sustainable results. USAID will focus on reducing gender gaps and promoting meaningful women's participation in development activities, especially in terms of decision making and resource allocation, as a means of enhancing socio-economic empowerment, community health, equitable access to education, and peace and security. In the context of DO 1 this will mean supporting activities that reduce gender inequalities in all aspects of governance, as well as, enhancing participation in peace, democracy, and justice. This includes capacity building for women members of community organizations, civil servants, and political party members to enhance their abilities and roles in promoting inclusion, civic engagement, decision making, and peacebuilding. Examples include capacity building for women peace mediators to engage in gender-responsive conflict resolution on land inheritance and user rights; ensuring representation and meaningful participation by women of different ages in community-based health, education, agricultural, and peace structures; and protecting women and girls from exploitation and abuse through activities to counter GBV and human trafficking. DO 1 programming will also work to reduce the risks to women and girls posed by radicalization and threats to social cohesion.

Through DO 2, future health programming will place even greater emphasis on gender issues such as GBV, women's reproductive health, and outreach to religious leaders who wield significant influence in shaping gender dynamics. USAID will advocate with key influencers, spearheading efforts to combat child, early, and forced marriage; and physical, emotional, and sexual violence. This will include incorporating diversity and inclusivity in programs that promote GBV first response services, men as partners, and referral systems for those subject to GBV and gender-based discrimination. Education programming will redouble efforts to improve access and retention for girls in both formal and informal educational institutions and will help to address social norms that impede access such as early marriage and pregnancy, and expectations of girls' roles in relation to household work and caregiving.

Under DO2, Feed the Future (FTF) interventions will reduce gender gaps by targeting value chains with significant roles for women such as horticulture and poultry, modifying activities to better enable women's participation such as holding trainings at times when women and girls are available, and addressing systemic barriers to women's participation and leadership in agricultural production, marketing, and agri-businesses. Also, under DO 2, new WASH interventions will address gaps and mitigate barriers to women's equality in local government WASH policies and the gender financial inclusion gap to enable women entrepreneurs to grow WASH businesses. Interventions will enable female water and sanitation entrepreneurs to secure the financing they need and will support civil society and other stakeholders to address the root causes of the gender gap in financial inclusion, such as by removing barriers on women's ability to open bank accounts and access credit. New WASH activities will provide financial literacy and business development services to female entrepreneurs and will identify and address supply chain issues in the production and distribution of menstrual hygiene supplies and other WASH related products of female-led social enterprises and SMEs.

USAID recognizes the importance of women's roles in fomenting stability, resilience, and early recovery in the face of shocks and crises. SpO activities will ensure more equitable access for women and girls to HA and will promote leadership roles for women of all ages in building community resilience. SpO activities will be designed to enhance women's roles in local peacebuilding, including the application of 'do no harm' principles, and will systematically incorporate targeted actions such as trainings, anonymous reporting mechanisms, robust referral systems, and one-stop referral centers to prevent and respond to GBV. SpO activities will also increase women's citizenship registration and access to civic documentation such as birth certificates and national identification to improve their protection, participation, and access to basic services.

C. Climate Change

Recurring shocks and stresses combined with inadequate capacity to predict and respond to recurring crises render the country extremely vulnerable to climate change. Climate variability and impacts such as droughts, flooding, and competition between herders and farmers over access to resources pose significant threats to the health and wellbeing of all Malians, and the CDCS strategic approach fully reflects priorities outlined in USAID's Climate Strategy 2022-2030.¹⁴ USAID will expand access to climate-smart agriculture technologies and practices in the Mission's RFZ to increase diversified livelihood opportunities and to improve food security and nutrition. USAID will strengthen institutional and human capacity to use long term climate projections to inform policy development and transitional pathways for people whose livelihoods are becoming increasingly unviable. USAID will assist the Malian government and local partners to access public and private

¹⁴ <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USAID-Climate-Strategy-2022-2030.pdf>

finance for adaptation and resilience through capacity development and technical assistance. Addressing land and water governance and management is also essential to reducing conflict and restoring long term stability; mitigating the impact of climate shocks; diversifying agricultural production, diets, and livelihoods; and expanding economic opportunities. Under the SpO these issues will be addressed to enhance HDP coherence and reduce the need for long term HA.

D. Donor Coordination

The US government is the largest bilateral donor to Mali and USAID plays a critical leadership role in donor coordination. Throughout CDCS implementation, USAID will coordinate closely with other donors to ensure ever greater coherence across all programs and activities with particular emphasis on health, stabilization, food security and nutrition, humanitarian assistance, and common approaches to governance reforms. The donor community has a strong coordination mechanism in Mali led through monthly meetings of the donor executive group, the *Groupe Exécutif de Coopération* (GEC), where USAID/Mali's front office and Program office play an active role. There are also active thematic groups that coordinate regularly on technical issues, such as elections and water sector strategy. USAID has excellent partnerships at the political and technical levels within Mali's ministries, and all Mission offices engage in coordination with counterparts in the public and private spheres. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation also maintains strong interest in USAID assistance and consistently seeks out new opportunities to build on the long history of USG foreign assistance in Mali which began shortly after the country's independence.

Mali's health sector is highly donor dependent, and USAID plays a central role in health coordination as the current co-chair with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) of the health partners' group. USAID is also a member of the Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism to ensure close coordination with all Global Fund activities and is the key USG interlocutor in Mali with COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) for matters pertaining to COVID-19 vaccine deliveries and vaccination. USAID/Mali will also play strong coordination roles throughout the CDCS period on elections; education; water, sanitation, and hygiene; nutrition; and within the humanitarian coordination cluster. For example, USAID currently co-chairs the peace and security sub-group of the GEC. While the Mission will continue to implement discrete activities to enhance stabilization, the international community recognizes that stand-alone efforts will have limited impact compared to opportunities for achieving greater synergy through wider donor approaches. Parallel programming, and complementary efforts well synergized with the broader donor community, offer opportunities for maximizing USG stabilization investments. To complement CDCS programming, USAID will actively seek out and engage in partnerships that leverage multi-sector approaches addressing the importance of improved delivery of targeted social services (health, education, job creation, and livelihoods) in stabilizing communities throughout the country. These efforts will build on larger regional stabilization efforts such as UNDP's Stabilization Facility for the Liptako Gourma Region and MINUSMA's extensive stabilization activities in the center of the country.

IV. Results Framework

A. DO1: Improved governance for stronger democratic institutions

Activities under DO1 address root governance drivers of development that are foundational to the performance, quality, and sustainability of democratic processes and key service sectors such as health, water, education, and justice. Improvements in governance and democratic institutions¹⁵

¹⁵ The Varieties of Democracy Initiative (<https://www.v-dem.net/>) divides democracy into five core principles: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian. Strong democracies and democratic institutions include a cadre of

will elevate efforts to enhance peace and stability while preserving and protecting development gains. Mali's government introduced reforms and new laws in recent years that offer grounds for cautious optimism - potentially creating more transparency and inclusive forms of governance relative to USAID's core development sectors. These include the Ministry of Justice's new legal framework establishing an anti-corruption court with national jurisdiction to strengthen Mali's fight against financial crimes. Also, the GoM has transferred authority over some finances, human resources, and planning for delivery of education, health, and potable water services to sub-national governments. Addressing corruption, justice, and good governance, especially sub-nationally, is central to social and economic development, as well as building sustainable peace, and is a key tenet of the 2015 Algiers Accord.¹⁶ Monitoring trends and opportunities to adapt our response, USAID will work through DO1 to achieve and support realistic gains to improve governance for stronger democratic institutions that promote peace, stability, and sustainable development.

Apart from supporting governance priorities under the 2022 Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) for Mali, DO1 efforts dovetail with the RDSCS goal of seeking entry points to leverage and amplify USG bilateral investments in ways that strengthen regional and national capacities to open, accountable, inclusive, and democratic governance. Additionally, DO1 activities align with RDSCS priorities to address the risks of instability from violent conflict; conflict and violence prevention; peacebuilding; and preventing and countering violent extremism. This includes opportunities to address issues related to conflict across national boundaries in areas such as the Liptako Gourma zone, often referred to as the 'tri-border area' linking Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.

DO1 Development Hypothesis

If inclusive civic engagement increases and empowered communities address the drivers of conflict and vulnerability, if the capacity of key sector institutions and organizations is strengthened, and if systems are bolstered to enforce the rule of law, human rights, and anti-corruption; then governance will improve through stronger democratic institutions for peace, stability, and sustainable development.^{17, 18, 19}

DO1 Development Hypothesis Narrative

The first part of DO1's development hypothesis – *If inclusive civic engagement increases and empowered communities address the drivers of conflict and vulnerability* – stems from democracy, human rights, and governance research on how best to operate in fragile states.^{20, 21} To offset the central government's challenges in providing basic services and protecting people, the Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Assessment recommends that USAID focus more on comprehensive

unelected civil servants (as well as a strong civil society) to check the power of elected officials, strengthen the stability of systems and provide continuity across elections.

¹⁶ The six pillar 2015 Algiers Accord includes: 1) principles and commitments, 2) political and institutional reforms, new regions, and decentralization, 3) defense, security, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, 4) socio-economic and cultural development, 5) reconciliation, justice, and refugee return, and 6) international support.

¹⁷ Wolff, S., Ross, S., & Wee, A. (2020). Subnational Governance and Conflict. World Bank.

¹⁸ Benjaminsen, T. A., & Ba, B. (2019). Why do pastoralists in Mali join jihadist groups? A political ecological explanation. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 46(1), 1-20.

¹⁹ Bleck, J., Dembele, A., & Guindo, S. (2016). Malian crisis and the lingering problem of good governance. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 5(1).

²⁰ [Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Assessment of Mali \(2019\)](#). Final Report. Management Systems International, Tetra Tech.

²¹ Nomikos, W. G. (2022). Peacekeeping and the enforcement of intergroup cooperation: Evidence from Mali. *The Journal of Politics*, 84(1), 194-208.

stabilization efforts at the community level via inclusionary efforts for women and youth, and community tailored approaches for conflict mitigation.²² To strengthen communities' and citizens' ability to achieve peace, stabilization, and sustainable development, USAID will help communities address external drivers (e.g., climate change, insecurity, displaced populations) and internal drivers (e.g., natural resource management, unresolved disputes, exclusion) of conflict and vulnerability. Inclusive local development plans offer one promising approach to directly help communities. Commune-level Social, Economic, and Cultural Development Plans (PDSECs) elevate local voices, including those of women and youth, and provide insights into community-led identification of priority needs. USAID will partner with local governments and other donors to respond to these needs together with communities.

The second part of DO1's development hypothesis – *If the capacity of key sector institutions and organizations is strengthened* – requires efforts to improve Mali's governance across sectors.²³ USAID will work through joint programming with bilateral, multilateral, and Malian partners to leverage and integrate investments that strengthen national and subnational capacity. Building on previous cross-sector investments and ongoing efforts, USAID will strengthen human and institutional capacity and systems across sectors. These efforts to build the capacity of Malian government staff and enhance governance systems will deepen gains made in key sectoral Ministries such as health, education, and justice. DO1 activities will also strengthen capacity within the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, and local government authorities and structures, to improve management, accountability, delivery, and the quality of health, water/sanitation, education, elections, and agricultural services such as irrigation.

And finally – *If systems are bolstered to enforce the rule of law, human rights, and anti-corruption* – serves to address ongoing national and local grievances relating to rule of law, human rights, and corruption,²⁴ and advances the fifth pillar of the 2015 Algiers Peace Accord for justice and reconciliation. Combatting corruption is a high priority for the US government²⁵ and central to USAID's vision for promoting effective governance and advancing development gains. Anti-corruption efforts cut across USAID/Mali intervention areas and will be systematically integrated within all USAID governance related activities, with particular emphasis on activities in the justice and health sectors. Given the anti-corruption priorities of USAID, the US government and Mali's transition government, work in this space leverages strategic alignment to advance inclusive decision making, greater transparency, and public oversight.

DO1 Intermediate Results

DO1 encompasses a broad base for multi-sector governance, permitting the scope and flexibility to adapt to a highly fluid context while contributing to the goal of a more stable, peaceful, and resilient Mali leading its own development. DO1 will increase targeted populations' civic engagement and ownership (IR 1.1); strengthen communities' human security through conflict prevention and resolution (IR 1.2); improve key sectors' institutional capacity to improve basic services (IR1.3); and strengthen the rule of law (IR 1.4).

²² USAID. "Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Assessment in Mali." Report prepared by Management Systems International, September 13, 2019.

²³ Wolff, S., Ross, S., & Wee, A. (2020). Subnational Governance and Conflict. World Bank.

²⁴ Bodian, Tobie, and Marending (2020). The Challenges of Governance, Development and Security in the Central Regions of Mali. SIPRI Paper.

²⁵ United States Strategy on Countering Corruption: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/United-States-Strategy-on-Countering-Corruption.pdf>

IR 1.1: Increased targeted populations' civic engagement and ownership

This IR will support targeted populations to improve their communities tangibly and measurably through the inclusive design, implementation, and monitoring of activities in their communities. Greater citizen engagement in the public sector through IR 1.1 will iteratively improve the quality and oversight of public service delivery and encourage public and private sector actors to expand equitable access, use, and demand for services.²⁶ IR 1.1 will build a foundation for inclusion, particularly of women and youth, through information sharing, participatory decision making, and active oversight and accountability for local level activities. The inclusion of diverse voices in policy and program design processes helps to ensure that programs meet beneficiaries' needs and encourage citizen engagement when crises arise. These actions create societal-level conditions necessary for the early reporting of disease outbreaks as well as natural and human-made disasters to permit effective governmental and non-governmental responses.

IR 1.1 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 1.1 is aligned with IR 2.1, IR 2.2 and IR 2.3 by improving citizen oversight and accountability of community-level health, education, and other public services. Additionally, supporting youth, women and girls, and persons with disabilities will enhance citizen engagement and ownership in coordination with DO2 activities through engagement with existing local platforms and local organizations. IR 1.1 will also be coordinated with the SpO to strengthen and support women, youth, and other marginalized populations.

IR 1.1 Partners

USAID recognizes the necessity of collaborating with local strategic partners for the success of IR 1.1. In addition to local communities, partners will include the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany, other EU members, and MINUSMA. Additionally, USAID will work with community-level education partners such as parent-teacher associations, parents of students, *Chambre des Metiers* and the *Fédération Malienne des Personnes Handicapées* (FEMAPH) to provide oversight of education services. Similarly, the health sector will strengthen the capacity of local entities [i.e. community health management committees (ASACOs), community health centers (CSCOMs), regional referral health centers (CSREFs), community groups, and civil society organizations] and health service beneficiaries so they are better able to hold health workers and local governance officials accountable for the availability and quality of care. USAID will also work with local organizations assisting with civic education and voter registration such as the *Coalition pour l'Observation Citoyenne des Élections au Mali* (COCEM), Circle of Reflection and Information for the Consolidation of Democracy in Mali (CRI 2002), the Mutual Aid Association for Intellectual Development of Malian Women (ADEFIM), the Network of Active Youth (RJA), Peace and Progress Association, and the Malian Association for Raising Voter Turnout (AMRTPE).

IR 1.2: Strengthened communities' human security through conflict prevention and resolution

USAID will use a conflict-sensitive lens and invest in communities to decrease vulnerabilities, reduce inter-communal conflict, and reduce incentives to join extremist organizations and community-based armed groups. Building on IR 1.1 activities to increase targeted population's empowerment, especially for youth and women, IR 1.2 will leverage USAID's multi-sectoral strengths and partner with communities to address their identified priorities. Additionally, community-based efforts will clarify existing tensions and create bridges between actors through

²⁶ USAID Blueprint for Global Health Resilience, 2021.

inclusive, community-led approaches to prevent and resolve conflict. Because the effects of climate change impact communities' well-being and trigger conflict, this IR will also focus on improving local natural resource management. IR 1.2 will also work to limit the destabilizing effects of violent extremism that disproportionately impact women and girls, and will support resilience, safety, and protection for vulnerable groups while engaging them as positive actors to prevent and counter violent extremism.

IR 1.2 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 1.2 is linked to IR 2.2 to improve livelihoods and natural resource management, which are significant drivers of conflict in resource-poor communities. Additionally, IR 1.2 is closely tied to SpO's efforts to promote coherence across the HDP nexus.

IR 1.2 Partners

USAID will collaborate regularly with donors across multiple convening venues on IR 1.2 activities. For example, USAID currently co-chairs the peace and security sub-group (GT4) of the GEC that includes donors such as MINUSMA, UN Women, EU, International IDEA, UNDP, Denmark, and Switzerland.

IR 1.3: Institutional capacity in key sectors strengthened to improve public services

Despite destabilizing events in northern and central Mali, most of the country's population lives in regions where development investments are ongoing. IR 1.3 guides mid- to long-term governance-related efforts across four sectors for sustainable development. At the sub-national and national levels, IR 1.3 will support well-governed public systems and institutions to provide critical basic services to Malians in an inclusive, transparent, and accountable manner. Specifically, this IR will guide health, water, education, and democracy investments to improve performance and service delivery through capacity building, inclusive processes, and public accountability.

Per USAID's 2021 Blueprint for Health Resilience, the ability to provide health services to a population is a critical factor in citizen perceptions of and trust in government, a key driver of stability.²⁷ As such, IR 1.3 includes health systems strengthening to improve public-private competencies for better health governance, quality, and equitable access. IR 1.3 aligns with USAID's Water and Development Plan under the USG Global Water Strategy by including activities to increase the availability and sustainable management of safe water and sanitation for the underserved and most vulnerable.²⁸ IR 1.3 also supports USAID's Education Policy for equal access to quality education by working with the Ministry of Education (MEN) and local school management and governance structures to improve education quality and elevate learning outcomes.²⁹ Lastly, IR 1.3 will strengthen Mali's institutional capacity to hold inclusive, credible, and transparent elections.

IR 1.3 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 1.3 is linked to efforts under IR 2.1, IR 2.2, and IR 2.3 to promote adequate public resources, governance, and financing; efficient supply chain systems; and quality supervision, staffing, and human resource oversight to ensure that individuals have access to quality health services and lifesaving commodities. IR 1.3 also supports the SpO by helping to ensure that development

²⁷ https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Blueprint_for_Global_Health_Resilience.pdf

²⁸ <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/water-and-sanitation/us-global-water-strategy>

²⁹ https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/2018_Education_Policy_FINAL_WEB.pdf

assistance prepares Malian institutions to reduce vulnerabilities and build community capacity to better prepare for and respond to shocks and stresses.

IR 1.3 Partners

USAID collaborates through multiple venues to strengthen institutional capacity. For example, USAID is an active member of the *Groupe Thématique Décentralisation et Développement Institutionnelle* (GT DDI) that includes members such as MINUSMA, UN Women, EU, International IDEA, UNDP, Denmark, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, WB, Global Fund, UNFPA, UNICEF, Global Fund, and GAVI. GoM partners for IR 1.3 include the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD), Ministry of Health and Social Development (MHSD), MEN, CNT, Constitutional Court, and the National Independent Electoral Commission. USAID will also enhance water governance under IR 1.3 by partnering with community-level WASH partners such as water users' associations and water management committees.

IR 1.4: Strengthened rule of law

To strengthen the impact of USAID's development investments and help build lasting peace, IR 1.4 will protect human rights, improve access to justice, strengthen justice institutions, and fight corruption. This IR will directly benefit women, youth, and vulnerable populations such as people living with HIV and survivors of human trafficking, gender-based violence, and other human rights violations. Access to justice and legal empowerment help translate legal guarantees of gender equality into real improvements in the daily lives of women by supporting women in protecting themselves from domestic violence, sharing in benefits from natural resources, retaining control over loans taken out in their name, and accessing inheritance or property upon divorce. Women, who often face multiple forms of discrimination, violence, and sexual harassment, are particularly affected by legal exclusion. Activities addressing these legal challenges will be essential to enable the basic protection of human rights, land access, legal identity, and freedom from violence. Additionally, IR 1.4 will build on existing government and non-government partnerships to uphold justice and address corruption.

IR 1.4 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 1.4 connects to DO2 activities by strengthening systems to promote transparency, leadership, accountability, and efficiencies for strong public service systems, especially in health (IR 2.1), WASH and natural resource management (IR 2.2), and education (IR 2.3).

IR 1.4 Partners

IR 1.4 will involve partnership with civil society, donors, and national and sub-national institutions. Key IR 1.4 partners include the European Union, Canada, Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, UNDP, MINUSMA, Swiss Cooperation, Sweden, WB, African Development Bank (AfBD), Global Fund, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of State Refoundation, MATD, radio stations, media outlets, *Bureau du Vérificateur Général du Mali*, and *Contrôle Général des Services Publics*.

Donors and other Development Actors

Multilateral organizations in Mali that share interests in this DO present opportunities for partnerships. Health-related USAID Activities under DO1 will engage the following multilaterals: the Global Fund; World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, GAVI, WB, UNFPA, and UNAIDS. Other bilateral donors supporting DO1 efforts include Global Affairs Canada, European Union, Denmark, and the Swiss Agency of Development and Cooperation (SDC). Other key development actors aligned with DO1 include private sector associations/advocacy groups, and NGO and civil society networks at the national and subnational levels. Under the GEC, USAID is the co-chair of the Peace and Security Working Group, the Health Dialogue Group, and the Elections Dialogue Group. As a

member of other groups, such as the Irrigation Dialogue Group and its WASH subgroup, USAID will continue to advocate for better governance of natural resources and for WASH and irrigation infrastructure. USAID will continue to participate in regular donor meetings and in thematic group discussions on the economy and inclusive development to initiate and maintain a regular dialogue with all stakeholders on key private sector issues in each sector. Participation will also continue in the Education Dialogue Group and relevant commissions on quality and governance to strengthen the education sector. Through these groups, USAID's advocacy will focus on the transfer of skills to communities in keeping with Mali's decentralization law and priorities.

B. DO2: Solidify and deepen development gains in targeted areas

USAID has partnered to improve the lives of Malians since 1961. Mali is a focus country for U.S. foreign assistance priorities and initiatives including Global Climate Change (GCC), FTF, Water for the World Act, Resilience, the Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS), the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), and Preventable Child and Maternal Death (PCMD). To solidify and deepen development gains achieved over the past 60 years, DO2 will maintain our commitment to longstanding investments by sustaining improvements in the health status of Malians (IR 2.1), strengthening sustainable agriculture and economic growth (IR 2.2), and improving equitable access to quality education services for children and youth (IR 2.3).³⁰

DO2 Development Hypothesis

If equitable access to quality essential health, education, and social services is sustained, and if economic opportunities are supported, then the communities in USAID-targeted regions will be more resilient and responsive leading to improvement in the socio-economic environment.

While DO2 will focus on Mali's center and south where most of the population resides, coverage will be flexible based on development opportunities and the permissibility of the operating environment. DO2 will prioritize areas based on population, priority zones for resilience and stability, disease burden, and opportunities to leverage external donor or cross sectoral programs to maximize development outcomes. DO2 will leverage improvements in governance achieved through DO1 and will complement the SpO by incorporating shock responsive mechanisms that deepen resiliency and help break the chronic cycle of annual need for humanitarian assistance.

Over the past ten years Mali has grown its economy and made gains in health, nutrition, agriculture, education, and water and sanitation. Malaria prevalence decreased from 46 percent in 2013 to 19 percent in 2021.³¹ Stunting and wasting rates of children under five years old went down from 38 percent to 22 percent and from 13 percent to 10 percent respectively between 2013 and 2021.³² A USAID assessment in 2015 found that only 3.2 percent of early primary students demonstrated grade level reading fluency and comprehension with the figure rising to 17.7 percent by 2021 for USAID student beneficiaries.³³ USAID's legacy and ongoing investments in agriculture, health, and education, along with those of other donor partners, have helped to mitigate the detrimental effects

³⁰ Mali's Integrated Country Strategy, Mission Goal 3: Mali's population makes significant advances in socio-economic conditions through economic development, increased resilience to shocks (e.g., climate change) and improvement in its business environment. DO2 also aligns with goals 1 and 4 (objectives 1.4, 4.1, and 4.4) of the U.S. Department of State Africa Bureau's Joint Regional Strategy.

³¹ Enquête Démographique et de Santé. (EDSM-V) 2012-2013 and Malaria Indicator Survey (MIS) 2021.

³² National Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2013 and 2021 Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART).

³³ USAID Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), EDC 2018 and 2021.

of conflict while advancing broad-based development gains. Ongoing development programs under DO2, such as the GFSS Mali Country Plan, have stabilizing effects for communities by improving resilience through nutrition, livelihoods, and inclusive agricultural-led economic growth.

Despite these development gains, Mali continues to face a multidimensional crisis. Ongoing development assistance in core sectors under DO2 remains essential in saving lives and contributing to resiliency. Malians experience persistently high levels of maternal, infant, and child mortality, and a very high burden of disease. Malaria remains the number one killer of children under five and human and zoonotic infectious diseases, including COVID-19, are endemic. The poor health and nutritional status of Malians is costly in both human and financial terms. Widespread poverty, malnutrition, and an underdeveloped private sector to support agricultural production limit socioeconomic opportunities. More than two million children aged 5 to 17 are not attending school and the education system is constrained by frequent labor disruptions, pandemic outbreaks, and environmental crises. There are too few facilities, teachers, and learning materials and, where educational facilities exist, direct threats of violence further restrict space for learning. WASH conditions in schools reflect the situation more broadly, with an estimated 30 percent of rural and small-town water facilities inoperative. Access to drinking water has increased, but only 66 percent of the rural population has access to a basic drinking water service with 34 percent using unprotected water sources or surface water for drinking and domestic uses.³⁴

Development challenges in Mali are compounded by complex and compelling social and economic factors, especially gender disparities. Unequal access to finances and education limits women's health-seeking behavior and ability to make decisions about their health and the well-being of their children. Women and girls are also disproportionately affected by lack of access to WASH and bear the time-consuming burden of water collection. DO2 will champion inclusive development that increases access to services and opportunities, prevents and responds to GBV, promotes women's economic empowerment, empowers women and adolescent girls to build their skills and livelihoods, engages men and boys to address gender norms, and supports other underserved and marginalized populations. DO 2 will also localize activities to strengthen community systems and services by increasing funding to local partners, strengthening community associations, and investing in the people at the base of the development pyramid such as community development agents and community health workers. These local partners, especially women and youth groups, play an essential role in mobilizing and educating communities, and in ensuring transparency and accountability for the provision of quality services.

Mali's health, education, and agriculture systems are adversely affected by issues of patronage, lack of transparency, and insufficient oversight. Governance challenges impede the public and private sectors from fully meeting the needs and interests of both well established and vulnerable communities. Empowering communities and national and sub-national stakeholders to advocate for and advance transparency, accountability, and good governance is critical to improve the sustained accessibility and use of quality services in health, education, WASH, and agriculture. DO1 activities that strengthen governance, human resources, financing, citizen engagement, and community empowerment will contribute to the sustainability of DO2 interventions. Synergy across sectors will be leveraged to assist Malians in fighting corruption and building the capacity of regulatory and audit institutions that promote transparency and accountability at the national and sub-national levels. DO1 and DO2 activities will be coordinated to optimize human resource development including transparent recruitment, training, and retention of qualified government and community personnel at all levels. USAID will also use evidence from Mission impact

³⁴ *Cellule de Planification et de Statistique, Secteur Eau, Environnement, Urbanisme et Domaines de l'Etat, Mali, 2020.*

evaluations and other studies to inform the systematic integration of governance considerations within DO2 programming.

In alignment with the SpO, DO2 will build on complementarity between development and humanitarian efforts. Through dynamic monitoring and community surveillance, USAID/Mali will assess, adapt, and respond to changing conditions to promote resilience and stabilization more effectively. The Mission will continuously monitor the security situation to inform collaborative stakeholder engagement. More deliberate linkages between development and humanitarian assistance programming will promote continuity for beneficiaries in communities transitioning from shocks and stressors to longer term development efforts.

DO 2 activities will build on MEL data and lessons learned to deepen and sustain development gains by using high impact practices, technologies, and innovations. DO2 will continue to program development activities in the context of close bilateral and multilateral collaboration to position USG resources as source-multipliers improving the overall socio-economic environment in focus areas.

DO2 Intermediate Results (IRs)

Socio-economic conditions in USAID supported communities will improve and these communities will be more resilient and responsive to shocks because of DO2 activities that foster local leadership, invest in community structures, and solidify and deepen improvements in health, agriculture and economic growth, and equitable access to education.

IR 2.1: Improvements in health status sustained

Activities under IR 2.1 will enhance equitable access to quality health services at all levels through local engagement, community empowerment, and strengthening of community health systems; increased demand for and utilization of quality health services; and improved wellbeing of individuals and households through the adoption of healthier behaviors. IR 2.1 will bolster Malians' ability to manage and plan their own health (at the family, household, community, district, regional, and national levels) to foster a more healthy and resilient population. Activities under IR 2.1 will focus on improving the quality and accessibility of community health services for maternal, infant, and child health and family planning; preventing, detecting, and treating infectious diseases including malaria, HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, and other emerging global health threats; promoting nutrition and hygiene activities; and changing health related social and behavioral norms. Improved health outcomes are achieved when individuals and communities are at the center of programming and increase the use of health services. IR 2.1 will emphasize community engagement, gender, inclusivity, and locally led development approaches. This will be done by strengthening the capacity of beneficiaries of health services and local entities (i.e., ASACOs, CSCOMs, CSREF, community groups, and civil society organizations) to hold health workers and local governance officials accountable for the availability and quality of care. Health programming under IR 2.1 will protect health development gains and build resiliency while addressing systemic issues of health governance, finance, and management at all levels. Activities will also promote an 'One Health' approach to multisectoral collaboration and coordination that enables stakeholders to respond to health shocks including infectious disease outbreaks and pandemic threats more rapidly and effectively.

IR 2.1 aligns with USAID's global health priorities and goals, as well as, the Government of Mali's 10-year Health Sector Development Program (2013–2023) and National Strategic Plan for Strengthening Community Health (2021-2025).

IR 2.1 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 2.1 activities are closely linked with IR 1.3 and 1.4 on strengthening institutions and systems to promote transparency, leadership, accountability, and efficiencies for strong public health systems. Adequate health resources, governance, and financing; efficient supply chain systems; and quality supervision, staffing, and human resource oversight need to be operational to ensure that individuals have access to quality health services and lifesaving commodities. USAID/Mali health programs will be designed to increase self-reliance at the community level and enable communities to better hold health workers and local officials accountable for the availability and quality of health services; increase engagement with, and ownership of, local health services; and reduce local barriers, especially for women and girls, to the adoption of healthy behaviors. Community monitoring and evaluation of health services and the performance of health service providers can greatly improve local health outcomes while empowering local institutions and citizens to manage their own health. DO2 activities will build the capacity of public health systems and institutions, and IR 2.1 is linked with IRs 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4 through engagement with existing local platforms to improve citizen oversight and accountability. In geographic areas of overlap, health development activities and actors will coordinate and collaborate with humanitarian assistance to better adapt and respond to crises as detailed in SpO IR 3.3.

IR 2.1 Partners

Mali's health sector is highly donor dependent, and USAID plays a key role in health coordination as Mali's largest bilateral health donor. IR 2.1 prioritizes strong donor collaboration to ensure that technical assistance and financial support for health is coherent and coordinated. Activities under IR 2.1 will leverage resources from other major health donors such as WHO, UNICEF, GAVI, the Global Fund, UNFPA, the European Fund, Netherlands, and Canada. IR 2.1 will be implemented through an integrated network of local partners, including public and private sector institutions, faith-based organizations, and civil society and community groups and associations. All IR 2.1 activities will align with and support the GoM's national health policies and plans, developed in close consultation with key Malian stakeholders and USAID implementing partners.

IR 2.2: Inclusive and sustainable agricultural and economic growth strengthened

To strengthen inclusive and sustainable agricultural and economic growth, IR 2.2 activities support implementation of Mali's GFSS for agriculture-led growth; increased resilience of people and communities to economic and climate shocks; and improved nutrition and WASH status, especially for pregnant women, adolescent girls, and children under two years of age. IR 2.2 is fully aligned with GoM strategies including the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP), the Multi-sectoral Nutrition Plan, Resilience Priorities, and the National Gender Policy (*Politique Nationale Genre du Mali*.) IR 2.2 also supports capacity building of local and national actors to further advance shared development objectives. USAID will facilitate partnerships with agricultural actors and the private sector to leverage additional resources that have a multiplier effect on USG assistance in targeted communities and will promote sustainable practices and behaviors for long term results. IR 2.2 will improve the delivery of quality agricultural market products; increase the availability and use of improved technologies and business practices that enable climate-smart agricultural practices; increase access to appropriate financial services; improve natural resources management; and increase the integration of smallholders into more diverse and efficient market systems. Activities under IR 2.2 will address systemic barriers, including gender dynamics, that hold back agricultural growth and private sector expansion through targeted market interventions. Gender specific efforts under IR 2.2 will include promotion of women focused value chains such as horticulture and poultry, assistance to women's producer cooperatives and associations, skills building for agriculture focused women entrepreneurs, and trade promotion activities targeting women owned food processors, input sellers, and other women owned agribusinesses. USAID will also work with the GoM on policy initiatives to promote a more favorable regulatory and business enabling

environment for agricultural production and private sector expansion, especially for women and youth.

IR 2.2 will improve the management of water resources to improve the resilience and long-term sustainability of irrigation infrastructures. This will be achieved by increasing water available for drinking and productive purposes; increasing the capacity of the private sector to deliver WASH and irrigation services; expanding watershed protection and restoration to improve water quality and quantity; allowing water-related institutions and the private sector to understand the availability of water resources in target zones; enhancing the roles of women and youth in water governance and management; and reducing vulnerability to water-related risks and stresses. IR 2.2 will also enhance the coverage of drinking water and sanitation services by improving access to basic drinking water services in households, pastoral corridors, and institutions such as schools and health centers; increasing access to basic sanitation services; improving the management of fecal waste; promoting the adoption of key hygiene behaviors; and increasing water related partnerships with the private sector.

IR 2.2 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 2.2 links to IR 1.1, IR 1.3, IR 2.1, IR 2.3 and SpO. Under IR 2.2, USAID will prioritize investments that leverage complementary activities in governance, education, and health.

IR 2.2 Partners

Activities under IR 2.2 will leverage financial resources and expertise from other bilateral and multilateral donors such as the WB, the European Fund, and KfW. Other partners include the *Direction Nationale de l'Hydraulique, Direction Nationale de l'Assainissement et du Contrôle des Pollutions et des Nuisances*, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and producer organizations. Mali's National Program for Access to Drinking Water (PNAEP 2022-2030) details implementation of the Access to Drinking Water component of the national water policy by 2030. USAID's approach is consistent with the GoM's water supply and sanitation sub-sector priorities. Activities will support local development plans [*Plans de développement économique, social et culturel (PDSEC)* and *Plans Stratégique d'Assainissement (PAS)*] including construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructure, and planning for climate and other shocks per GoM procedures and in coordination with other partners.

IR 2.3: Equitable access to improved quality education services for children and youth enhanced

IR 2.3 will increase literacy and numeracy through local language reading and math instruction; train teachers through pre-service and in-service training; create and distribute teaching and learning materials; encourage greater equity and inclusion of girls and children with disabilities; provide youth with technical and soft-skills training; include mental health/psycho-social support; bolster parental involvement to support education activities; and promote private sector engagement including partnerships with private schools. IR 2.3 activities support the objectives of Mali's *Programme Decennal de Developpement de l'Education et de la Formation Professionnelle Deuxième Génération* (PRODEC 2 2029-2028) which promotes the rights of children to equitable and quality education services, particularly for the most marginalized and those in conflict affected areas.

While solidifying development gains is important to sustainability, addressing acute needs for basic social services is also critical. Education programming will contribute to meeting basic needs and stabilization by 1) placing greater emphasis on decentralization of education management and resources; 2) prioritizing youth-driven initiatives; 3) identifying champions of, and building

community cohesion around, education; 4) investigating ways to make community level education entities more resilient, and; 5) coordinating and collaborating across sectors and with other partners working along the HDP spectrum.

The education portfolio will include 1) community-driven reading and math instruction; 2) emergency education activities that extend access to, and build the resilience of, beneficiaries in conflict zones by offering school feeding, psycho-social support, and child protection/school safety components; and 3) a work-readiness, entrepreneurship, and soft skills training intervention for youth focused on stabilization, resilience, capacity building, citizenship, and community participation. Education activities will build social emotional competencies alongside soft skills development for youth to directly prepare children and youth for work, and to help young people overcome exposure to conflict and crisis so they can learn more effectively. Under IR 2.3, USAID will continue to build on highly successful interventions promoting education access and retention for adolescent girls, especially those affected by conflict, and all IR 2.3 activities will emphasize the inclusion of and equity for females and persons with disabilities.

IR 2.3 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 2.3 is aligned with DO1, especially IR 1.1, IR 1.2, and IR 1.3, and with SpO IR 3.2 by focusing on decentralization and capacity building of community level education governance structures. Additionally, supporting youth, women and girls, and persons with disabilities will enhance citizen engagement and ownership. Under the SpO, there will be an emergency education intervention that partners with humanitarian actors to reduce vulnerabilities and build community capacity to better prepare for and respond to shocks and stresses.

IR 2.3 Partners

IR 2.3 activities will align with the Government of Mali's development priorities³⁵ and will be coordinated with bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs, and public international organizations such as Education Cannot Wait (ECW), UNICEF, and UNESCO. IR 2.3 activities will support the Ministry of National Education (MEN) at the national, regional, and local levels, as well as the *Direction Generale des Collectivites Territoriales, Ministere de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille, Ministere de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle, Ministere de la Jeunesse et des Sports*, and the *Cellule D'appui a la Decentralisation et Deconcentration de l'Education*.

C. SpO: Improved outcomes across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus to save lives and increase resiliency

To improve outcomes across the HDP nexus, the SpO will increase coordination and collaboration between internal and external resilience, humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors (IR 3.1); respond to humanitarian needs and reduce vulnerabilities for populations most severely impacted by conflict and climate induced shocks and stresses (IR 3.2); and increase the ability to maintain and improve resilience capacities in the face of shocks and stresses (IR 3.3). SpO IR 3.1 will encompass a new way of doing business to increase collaboration and coherency across the HDP nexus by institutionalizing a more intentional approach towards existing and new organizational structures, procedures, and processes that are both internal and external to USAID.³⁶

³⁵ Government of Mali, *Cadre Stratégique pour la Relance Économique et le Développement Durable* (CREDD) 2019-2023: Strategic Axis 3 - Inclusive growth and structural transformation of the development economy; Strategic Axis 5 - Development of human capital.

³⁶ USAID Policy & Program Guidance "Building Resilience to Current Crisis" December 2012.

IRs 3.2 and 3.3 will operationalize this new approach through LSI of USG resilience, humanitarian, and development investments to increase programmatic effectiveness.³⁷

Development Hypothesis

If multisectoral humanitarian and development assistance is layered, integrated, and sequenced; if basic emergency needs are met; if capacity of vulnerable populations and systems are built; and if humanitarian-development-peace coherence is strengthened, then lives will be saved; assets will be protected; communities will be more resilient to respond to new shocks and stresses; and USAID resources will be more effectively managed.

Population growth, climate change, emerging pandemic threats, insecurity, humanitarian needs, competition over natural resources, limited economic opportunity, and lack of basic social services are endemic in Mali. Mali's HA budget has increased steadily, exceeding \$75 million in FY22, reflecting a sharp increase in humanitarian need and underscoring the importance of better approaches to helping populations move past the cycle of need for emergency assistance. To increase resilience, communities need adaptive capacity and risk preparedness, mitigation, prevention, and protection. In areas where adaptive capacity and risk strategies are weak, shocks and stresses often undercut development gains, setting communities back on the path to inclusive growth and wellbeing.³⁸ Under the SpO, USAID will continue its longstanding program of HA to Mali while coordinating and integrating humanitarian and development actions across the HDP nexus to achieve multiplier effects. This will better protect development gains; mitigate the humanitarian, development, and economic costs of shocks; and help people, households, and communities speed up their recovery once crisis conditions have passed.³⁹

The SpO will be geographically flexible, driven by needs and opportunities, but will focus on LSI of activities in the RFZ. The USAID Mali RFZ encompasses 92 communes across the regions of Mopti, Tombouctou, and Gao, an area with high levels of conflict, internal displacement, poverty, acute malnutrition, and climate impacts.⁴⁰ This targeted approach will enhance development impact, cost effectiveness, sustainability, and learning in an area where USAID implements more than half of its annual HA programming including the RFSA. The SpO RFZ has a high co-location of USAID HA and DA activities with 80 percent of *communes* containing both. The RFZ hosts FTF and DA funded health, education, and PDG activities. USAID/Mali FY 2022 Operational Plan DA attributions to the RFZ totaled \$20.9 million demonstrating significant potential for additional DA and HA integration across all sectors. While humanitarian actors will remain the vanguard in crisis situations, enhanced collaboration and information sharing through SpO mechanisms will ensure that USAID/Mali can rapidly respond and pivot programming holistically along the relief to development continuum.

Emerging pandemic and bio-security threats, and the associated economic impacts of disease outbreaks such as COVID-19, strain Mali's already fragile systems and threaten development gains by increasing poverty, food insecurity, gender-based violence, learning loss, and mental health needs. To be resilient, health institutions must be flexible to plan, manage, and adapt resources, policy, and programming to respond to challenges as they arise. Improving coordination and

³⁷ *Ibidem.*

³⁸ BHA MALI Country Response Strategy 2020-2024.

³⁹ USAID Policy & Program Guidance "Building Resilience to Current Crisis," December 2012.

⁴⁰ Mali Resilience Focus Zone Survey 2021 Baseline Report, January 2022.

transition between and across health-related DA and HA programming through the SpO will help build a more resilient public health system.⁴¹

Compounding health challenges, growth in the number of school-age children will continue to be one of Mali's most pressing issues. With participation in primary and secondary education at less than 50 percent, the population aged 5 to 18 is expected to increase from seven million in 2015 to 9.4 million in 2025.⁴² Of particular concern are out of school children and youth, including the internally displaced, returnees, and ex-combatants, who often lack basic literacy, job skills, and market access. The education system is further constrained by conflict, labor disruptions, and environmental crises. A lack of classrooms prohibits access, and threats of violence by organized armed groups have forced approximately one quarter of schools to close. The cycle of crisis and conflict results in a lack of equitable access to education and poor learning outcomes. USG education programs should respond to short-term educational needs in conflict and crisis-affected environments while also working with stakeholders to address the long-term, systemic reforms needed to mitigate future crises and build resilience.⁴³ USAID calls for education programming to be risk-informed, conflict-sensitive and equitable.⁴⁴ Working across the HDP spectrum on education issues through the SpO will enable USAID/Mali to more fully incorporate risk and conflict-sensitivity in education programming and contribute in more targeted and meaningful ways to community stability and resilience.⁴⁵

Strong and effective collaboration across the HDP nexus will enable key actors to better meet Malians' immediate needs, reduce vulnerability, and strengthen community resilience to prepare for and respond to shocks and stresses. Through the SpO, USAID Mali will modify its organizational structure, operations, and approach to enhance HDP coherence in response to rapidly changing conditions. USAID Mali will create a new, internal organizational structure that intensifies collaboration among both internal and external HDP actors to help eliminate programmatic divides between HA and DA. The SpO team will have a clear mandate with dedicated human resources to incentivize, monitor, and measure the impacts of enhanced LSI for HA and DA investments.

USAID/Mali began including crisis modifiers into all new awards in 2020 to enable greater flexibility in response to crises and shocks. The SpO will produce an operational strategy for shock response that takes full advantage of embedded humanitarian response mechanisms such as crisis modifiers so that development programs are better able to address urgent needs. The SpO will also optimize proactive adjustments by 'flexing' development activities. This approach, called Shock Responsive Programming, enables rapid reprogramming of development resources to complement humanitarian assistance in response to a crisis. The SpO will encompass a robust collaboration, learning, and adapting platform to advance the emergency-relief-to-development coherence continuum among HDP actors. The SpO will also take into consideration the increasing threats posed by climate change and pandemics, and will help to strengthen surveillance and early warning systems. These and other efforts to proactively mitigate risk, save lives, and protect USAID investments will be elaborated in a SpO-centered Project Development Document (PDD) to include

⁴¹ USAID Blueprint for Global Health Resilience, January 2021.

⁴² Mali Education Multi-Year Resilience Program (MYRP, 2021-2023).

⁴³ [U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education \(2018\)](#).

⁴⁴ [Shah, R. 2019. Transforming Systems in Times of Adversity: Education and Resilience White Paper. USAID Education in Conflict and Crisis Network.](#)

⁴⁵ Resilience Leadership Council & Technical Working Group Programming Considerations for HDP Coherence: A Note for USAID's Implementing Partners.

jointly planned, and possibly co-funded, HA and DA activities that directly strengthen the HDP nexus.

In each of the above scenarios and approaches, a premium will be placed on soliciting proposals and programmatic interventions from community-based organizations through RFI's or co-creation. Requirements will include special attention to gender issues which are often a source of major concern or a limiting factor to increasing a community's recovery and resilience. Gender-based issues that may be addressed in the Mission's efforts to improve outcomes across the HDP nexus to save lives and increase resiliency include: equitable access to services; equitable benefits from services; the roles of women, girls, men, and boys; the role of services to address gender issues; GBV, and; women, peace and security.

IR 3.1 Coordination and collaboration between internal and external resilience, humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors increased

USAID/Mali will institute a Mission-wide 'virtual' SpO Team co-chaired by the Agriculture and Economic Growth office and a new Office for Humanitarian Assistance. The multi-sectoral SpO Team will be tasked with integrating and operationalizing joint DA and HA activities that increase program effectiveness. The SpO team will be supported by an advisory committee of relevant USAID Bureaus and Offices providing technical assistance and holding the SpO team accountable for delivering results.⁴⁶ The multi-sectoral team will hold coordination meetings internally for the Mission and externally with partners and other key HDP actors, develop a PDD, and establish a series of synergy action plans. While the SpO team will leverage existing HDP coordination structures, it will also establish a resilience-focused HDP platform for communication, coordination, and learning with USAID-funded partners at the national, regional, and sub-regional levels. IR 3.1 will advance localization by building on USAID Mali's longstanding investment in local development planning to systematically map and align HDP activities in relation to community development plans (PDSEC).⁴⁷ IR 3.1 will prioritize other key cross cutting issues such as gender and the protection of human rights.⁴⁸

IR 3.1 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 3.1 will support coordination and a learning and adaptive management process for all IRs of DO1 and DO2: IR 1.1 for effective inclusion of marginalized populations in governmental and non-governmental responses; IR 1.2 for social cohesion in conflict affected and conflict prone areas; IR 1.3 for more effective engagement by local governance structures to improve access to basic services; IR 2.1 for impactful adaptive measures that ensure LSI across HA and DA programs and activities; IR 2.2 for promotion of the HDP nexus in governance, education, and health; and IR 2.3 through education in emergency programming. Planning, analysis, and coordination under IR 3.1 will inform IR 3.3 activities.

IR 3.1 Partners

Relevant international, bilateral, and multilateral organizations; GoM institutions; subnational and community level entities; and international and local HA and DA implementing partners.

IR 3.2: Respond to humanitarian needs and reduce vulnerabilities for populations most severely impacted by conflict and climate induced shocks and stresses

⁴⁶ The Advisory Committee will include representation from Global Health, BFS, CPS, BHA, DRG Center and others.

⁴⁷ *Plans de Développement Social, Économique et Culturel* (PDSEC).

⁴⁸ OCHA "New Way of Working", 2017.

IR 3.2 encompasses USAID Mali's holistic approach to HA before, during, and after crises.⁴⁹ IR 3.2 has two elements that are foundational in linking HA with longer-term DA; the first focuses on USAID Mali's multi-sectoral emergency and early recovery assistance and the second on HA resilience programming.⁵⁰

IR 3.2 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 3.2 supports all IR's of DO1 and DO2, specifically: IR 1.2 to mitigate the negative impact of social conflicts on the quality of humanitarian assistance; IR 1.3 to improve access of the most vulnerable populations to basic services; and IR 2.2 to link short-term HA to more sustainable solutions. HA activities under IR 3.2 will be linked with and complement DA resilience activities under IR 3.3.

IR 3.2 Partners

USAID will partner with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) to strengthen humanitarian coordination and information management, as well as, humanitarian donors, NGOs, implementing partners, and relevant GoM ministries and national directorates.

IR 3.3: Ability to maintain and improve resilience capacities in the face of shocks and stresses increased

IR 3.3 will build on the learning and coordination platform under IR 3.1, operationalizing linkages across the HDP nexus to better meet immediate needs, reduce vulnerability, and strengthen community resilience to prepare for and respond to shocks and stresses. USAID defines resilience as the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth. IR 3.3 will implement a comprehensive resilience program based on the SpO PDD and action plans that operationalize and optimize linkages across the HDP nexus.⁵¹ All activities under IR 3.3 will promote resilience and will follow a standard framework for resilience implementation and measurement based on three primary capacities: absorptive, adaptive, and transformative. IR 3.3 will also include activities to prevent and resolve conflict, which is particularly important in building resilience given Mali's security context.

IR 3.3 Linkages to other DOs and IRs

IR 3.3 supports all IR's of DO1 and DO2 and focuses on USAID Mali's resilience strategy. DA interventions supporting DO1 and DO2 that take place in the RFZ will be prioritized for LSI. In particular, IR 3.3 will support IR 1.2 by strengthening the HDP nexus to promote social cohesion and conflict management. Planning, analysis, and coordination under IR 3.1 will inform IR 3.3 activities. IR 3.3 links with DO1 on governance and community management for natural resources, asset building, and climate change adaptation. HA activities under IR 3.2 will also be linked with DA resilience activities under IR 3.3.

IR 3.3 Partners

⁴⁹ <https://www.usaid.gov/mali/working-crises-and-conflict/humanitarian-assistance>

⁵⁰ BHA "Framework for Early Recovery, Risk Reduction, and Resilience."

⁵¹ The RFZ covers all target communes in Mopti, Tombouctou, and Gao where the Mission's RFSA and/or GFSS activities are working. The USAID Mali RFSA and two flagship GFSS activities will provide an initial foundation and testing ground for LSI in the RFZ. Additional HA and GFSS activities, as well as activities from other technical offices (PDG, Health and Education) will build on this foundation under IR 3.3 over the course of the CDCS.

Relevant international, bilateral, and multilateral organizations; GoM institutions; subnational and community level entities; and international and local HA and DA implementing partners.

V. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

Outcomes included in the Mission Result Framework (RF) are results oriented. USAID is committed to supporting short- and longer-term, measurable improvements in the lives of Malians rather than focusing on outputs such as training or equipping individuals, communities, or institutions. USAID/Mali will have a robust and adaptive MEL approach that aligns with the Mission RF to ensure that programming achieves CDCS results despite a fluid operating environment. Overcoming the many challenges posed by Mali's operating environment requires a creative and deliberate MEL approach that incorporates the use of appropriate performance outcome indicators, scenario planning, remote and third-party monitoring, collaboration, learning, and adapting. The MEL approach will include both sectoral and multi-sectoral indicators to track progress and outcomes related to achieving IRs and objectives.

Beginning in FY 2023, USAID/Mali will begin tracking the achievement of CDCS DOs, the SpO, and IRs through the Mission-wide PMP to provide a basis for continuous assessment and learning. Outcome indicators will be identified at the IR level (1-3 per IR) as part of this effort and will be considered as a core set of performance indicators to be measured through regular strategy surveys. Tracking of these indicators will facilitate analysis and discussion of progress in achieving CDCS objectives during pause and reflect milestones such as portfolio reviews, CDCS midcourse-stocktaking, and partner meetings. All population level indicators will be sex-disaggregated to assess progress in meeting USAID gender objectives and to inform ongoing learning and improvement of USAID's gender strategy and impact. The MEL approach will also include collecting and analyzing contextual data to assess scenario status and adapt development and humanitarian interventions as needed.

Equally important will be developing robust evaluation and collaboration, learning, and adaptation (CLA) plans to identify best practices, lessons learned, information gaps, and methods to capture critical knowledge and adaptive approaches. USAID will use CLA in a more systematic and intentional way, as exemplified by routine consultation with stakeholders through pause-and-reflect moments. The Mission Learning Plan will be refined as part of the 2023 PMP development process to integrate MEL at the DO level enabling USAID to better assess progress toward the CDCS goal. The PMP will identify learning questions for USAID to address key knowledge gaps associated with each DO and the overall strategy. The PMP will also include an Evaluation Plan to help address these learning questions.

VI. Mali Country Roadmap - <https://roadmaps.usaid.gov/country/mali>