LINKAGES
Cascade of HIV Prevention, Care, and Treatment Services for Key Populations

KEY POPULATIONS
In Mali, about 93 percent of women and 96 percent men do not know their HIV status. The total number of persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) in Mali is estimated at 120,000, with only about 35,000 who are currently on antiretroviral therapy (ART). Mali’s HIV prevalence rate of 1.1 percent is low compared to most other sub-Saharan African countries, but pockets of higher prevalence exist among key populations at risk for HIV infection, particularly female sex workers (24.2 percent) and men who have sex with men (13.7 percent). Many members of these high-risk populations have difficulty accessing HIV testing and treatment services due to the stigma and discrimination that they face.

PROJECT’S APPROACH
LINKAGES is a global USAID project that focuses on HIV services for high-risk populations in nearly 30 countries, including Mali. It has three objectives:

- Implementation of targeted prevention, care, treatment, and adherence support for key populations. LINKAGES works with Malian NGOs to ensure that key populations have access to a full range of HIV services, with particular focus on testing and on linkages to treatment for those who test positive, with immediate initiation of treatment, retention on treatment, and viral load suppression.

- Increased demand for prevention, care and treatment and adherence support for key populations. LINKAGES helps Malian NGOs engage in appropriate behavior change activities to support HIV prevention, testing, treatment literacy, adherence and viral load suppression.

- Strengthened systems for planning, monitoring, evaluating, and assuring the quality of programs for key populations.

LINKAGES PROJECT GOALS

BUDGET: $3.3 million

TARGET AREAS: 22 health districts in Bamako, Segou, Sikasso and Gao

PROJECT CYCLE: October 2016 – September 2018

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE:

- Supported 11 drop-in-centers and 50 peer coordinators for members of key populations

- Reached 11,717 members of key populations with HIV prevention interventions

- Diagnosed and treated 3,769 cases of sexually transmitted infections

- 7,033 members of key populations received HIV testing and counseling services and their test results