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SELECTIVE INTEGRATED READING ACTIVITY (SIRA)

MOTHER TONGUE MAKES FOR MARKED IMPROVEMENT

Under the Malian Interim Education Plan prepared in 2014, the government of Mali addressed the low quality of the education system by focusing on improving reading skills for children. USAID supports the Malian government’s implementation of the new competency-based curriculum that begins instruction with the use of maternal languages in the early years of primary school, which then is progressively phased into instruction in French in Grades 3-6. In 2015, USAID assisted the Ministry of Education in conducting an Early Grade Reading Assessment baseline in Bamanankan (a major local language) and French. This baseline revealed that 66 percent of children in Grade 2 could not read a single word in Bamanankan and 70 percent could not read a single word in French.

The Selective Integrated Reading Activity (SIRA) aims to improve the reading skills of over 295,327 students in primary grades in the targeted areas of Segou, Koulikoro, and Sikasso. The project will work with the Ministry of Education to scale up reading as a subject area in the national education system by training teachers in reading and writing instructional practices and the use of classroom-based assessments; strengthening the Ministry of Education’s capacity to conduct both pre- and in-service training as well as design, print, and deliver instructional and reading materials; and increasing parent, community, and private sector support for early grade reading. It is expected that the combined effect of these interventions will catalyze significant changes in the government of Mali’s ability to expand and sustain the education reform.

SIRA GOALS

BUDGET: \$51 million

TARGET AREAS: Segou, Koulikoro, and Sikasso Regions

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER: Education Development Center

Over the 5-year (2016 – 2021) project cycle, SIRA aims to:

- Provision of reading and teaching materials to 295,327 learners and 11,442 teachers;
- Improved reading skills for 295,327 learners (142,386 females);
- 11,442 teachers (2,361 females) and 5,691 school directors trained and coached;
- 5,691 school-based associations supported to increase early grade reading outcomes.