

USAID Education Program



A student practices reading skills as part of a USAID-supported program.

Photo: USAID/Mali

Current Youth Education Programs: All basic education activities were terminated following the 2012 coup d'état. Currently, the Education Team manages two awards: (i) Out-of-School Youth, implemented by EDC; and (ii) Back to School, implemented through a grant to UNICEF.

The "Out-of-School Youth" award is a \$30 million activity funded by three teams - Education, Accelerated Economic Growth, and Governance and Communication – for five years (2010-2015). The project targets 10,000 Malian youth between the ages of 14-25 who have either never been to school or who have dropped out.

The program encourages youth to become better educated, economically productive, and civically engaged. Currently, the award operates in Kayes, Sikasso, and Timbuktu

providing basic education, work readiness skills, and entrepreneurship and technical training to allow youth to earn a living in their communities. The award is implemented through a volunteer youth corps who commits to living in the target villages for a period of 18-24 months and delivers basic education and entrepreneurship courses.

The back to school award is a \$3 million grant to UNICEF that supports Mali's Education in Emergency strategy. Through this grant UNICEF will: (i) train at least 5,000 teachers on emergency related modules (psychosocial support, peace-building and reconciliation, large groups/multi-grades, care for child development); (ii) set-up as many as 200 temporary learning spaces until school rehabilitation or new longer-term structures are built; (iii) provide teaching, learning and recreational materials for 10,000 children; and (iv) enable social mobilization of at least 240 women and youth groups and community organizations in the North.

Future Education Plans: A new education project appraisal document will guide educational programming for the next five years. It builds on the evidence gathered from past projects, visits to the field, and consultations with education experts and those with experience both in Washington and Mali, ranging from parents, to donor colleagues, to government officials.

Future activities will focus on four core objectives:

1. Improve the reading skills for early grade children in primary education;
2. Increase community engagement in support of improving reading competencies, girls education, and school health, sanitation and nutrition;
3. Support Education in Emergency; and
4. Reinforce the education recovery in the North.

USAID estimates these activities will reach 527,000 primary school students, approximately 25 percent of the total primary-age population. It focuses activities in smaller geographic areas, but provides these areas with a far more comprehensive suite of investments. This will result in greater student learning outcomes, and demonstrate that all Malian students are capable of being high-achieving students given the proper support.