Mali is a landlocked country experiencing chronic insecurity and political instability. Life expectancy at birth is only 63 years and nearly half of the population live in extreme poverty. The country is overwhelmingly young with 47 percent of all Malians under the age of 15 and an average fertility rate of nearly six children per woman. Just over half of the population lives in rural areas and 62 percent of Malians work in agriculture. Economic activity is concentrated near the Niger River and 65 percent of the total land area is desert or semidesert. The country’s location and dependence on agriculture make it particularly vulnerable to conflict and climate variability.

OUR WORK

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY
We reduce poverty and improve resilience through integrated interventions in climate-smart agricultural production, market systems strengthening, and livelihood diversification. Our Feed the Future program invests in the cereal, livestock, and horticulture value chains through an adaptive approach that responds to the needs of farmers and market actors. The program highlights links between markets, dietary diversity, and nutrition while also promoting adaptation to climate change through improved use of irrigation and other sustainable climate-smart technologies. We also leverage the capacity of the private sector, stimulating investment in agriculture to open new markets and create jobs for Malians.

EDUCATION
We work to expand access to quality basic education by improving early grade reading and supporting parent and school management committees to increase accountability and oversight. We remove barriers to learning for the underserved, primarily adolescent girls and children with disabilities. We also increase opportunities for children and youth in conflict areas to help them return to school while emphasizing increased community engagement and more equitable access to education.
GLOBAL HEALTH
We have partnered with the Ministry of Health and Social Development, civil society, and the private sector for over 60 years and remain Mali’s largest bilateral health donor. Scaling local solutions in a country characterized by compounding and protracted crises is essential to fostering a healthier, more resilient Malian population. Our integrated health programs increase Malians’ ability to plan, finance, and manage their own health at all levels of the health system in the face of short and long-term shocks and stressors. Focus areas include health systems strengthening; maternal and child health; voluntary family planning; prevention, detection, and treatment of infectious diseases including malaria, HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, and other emerging global health threats; nutrition; and water, sanitation, and hygiene. USAID-supported health programs are being implemented in 991 health districts accounting for approximately 17 million people, 80 percent of Mali’s total population.

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE
We increase public accountability and trust in government by focusing on good governance, elections, rule of law, human rights, civil society, countering disinformation, and conflict mitigation. Through our support, Mali’s citizens better engage with their governance and justice sector institutions, and civil society plays a greater oversight role in ongoing reforms.

WORKING IN CRISIS AND CONFLICT
We provide critical programs that offer essential humanitarian assistance and conflict mitigation. We also build resilience among vulnerable communities such as those prone to recurrent crises and extreme poverty. Our activities provide basic health, nutrition, and food assistance; help to build more stable communities; create and diversify economic opportunities; and reduce tensions that can be exploited by organized armed groups.

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Students in Kati, one of the towns involved in the USAID Out of School Youth Program, which worked to counter illiteracy amongst this at-risk group.

USAID staff members pose next to an information booth at USAID/Mali’s celebration of the Agency’s 50th anniversary in 2011; our work in Mali has an equally deep history.

In Sikasso, a mass distribution campaign is part of the effort to achieve universal bed net use in the general population as part of USAID’s efforts to help with malaria eradication.