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USAID SARIYA BATO

CONTEXT

The justice sector in Mali has grappled with significant challenges, including poor governance, lack of coordination, abuse of power, corruption, and limited access to justice. Despite these obstacles, the Ministry of Justice has maintained a stable vision, supported by the Orientation and Programming Act passed by the National Assembly in December 2019. The implementation of this law has significantly contributed to change the justice sector. We have seen the creation of the national anti-corruption court, the creation of the national direction of human rights, the implementation of a new system of human resource management, the review of the criminal law and criminal law procedure, the improved access to justice, the legal assistance to the victims of gender-based violence, trafficking in person, and slavery, the rehabilitation and modernization of the tribunals.

USAID Sariya Bato (*“Respect to the Rule of Law”*) will support the Government of Mali’s goal of more efficient, effective, and competent Malian justice sector institutions that are accountable and responsive to the needs of Malians.

ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

The theory of change is based on the premise that if Malians experience more effective justice through competent, predictable, and transparent institutions, and their access to justice improves through innovative people-centric approaches, with institutions that fight corruption and ensure accountability for human rights violations, then the Malian people will have greater confidence in the fact that they live in a just society, thus enhancing the legitimacy of the entire governance system and people's trust in it.

The activity will work with the formal and informal justice sector to address key objectives divided into four components.

- **Component 1:** Strengthen justice sector institutions such as the Ministry of Justice, courts, and potential new institutions established for transitional justice.
- **Component 2:** Enhance access to justice for all by improving the navigability of the justice system, increase access to legal aid, and enhance public understanding of the judicial system, as well as strengthening linkages between formal and informal justice systems.
- **Component 3:** Enable anti-corruption and oversight mechanisms by building vertical and horizontal integrity networks to combat pervasive corruption, illicit enrichment, violent extremism, and organized crime.
- **Component 4:** Improve the protection of human rights and increase accountability for violations, with a specific focus on addressing sexual and gender-based violence and trafficking in persons in all its diverse forms, including hereditary slavery.

KEY EXPECTED RESULTS

USAID Sariya Bato will prioritize initiatives aimed at fostering localization, ensuring that interventions are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of local communities. By embracing people-centered justice approaches, the project will empower individuals to actively participate in the justice system and advocate for their rights. Strengthening local systems will be a core focus, enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of local institutions to deliver justice services efficiently and equitably.

Firstly, there will be a concerted effort to bolster the capacity and efficiency of the Ministry of Justice and courts, aiming to make justice services more effective and accessible to all Malians. Additionally, the project will introduce a technology solution, such as the computerization of model courts, to streamline case processing, reduce backlog, and enhance transparency. Moreover, the activity will support the Judicial Training Institute in updating its curricula and services to train legal professionals on new legal instruments, with a specific focus on combating terrorism, corruption, and cybercrime while promoting and protecting human rights.

Secondly, efforts will be made to expand access to legal aid services, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations. By providing legal assistance to those in need. The activity will work to strengthen linkages between formal and informal justice mechanisms, making the justice system more navigable for all citizens. By promoting collaboration between different justice providers, the project seeks to enhance the overall effectiveness and legitimacy of the justice system.

In addition to these efforts, the activity will prioritize initiatives to promote transparency, accountability, and integrity in governance. This includes measures to combat corruption, strengthen oversight mechanisms, support the Economic and Financial Special court, and promote good governance practices at all levels of government.

Addressing pressing human rights issues is also a key focus of the project. Efforts will be made to reduce the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, and descent-based slavery through targeted interventions and legal reforms.

Finally, through awareness-raising activities and community engagement initiatives, the project will empower communities to become more informed about their legal rights and responsibilities.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Dexis Consulting Group (Dexis)

Sub-contractors:

- Adapt Consulting LLC
- Malian Civil Society Organizations

INTERVENTION AREA

Nation wide