

Strategy for Sweden's development  
cooperation with

# Mali

2016–2020



REGERINGSKANSLIET

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**Government Offices  
of Sweden**

# Strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Mali, 2016–2020

## 1. Direction

Within the framework of this strategy, Swedish development cooperation with Mali is to contribute to a strengthened social contract and reduced vulnerability to relapse into conflict. In addition, Sweden is to contribute to more sustainable use of natural resources and strengthened resilience against climate change. The strategy will apply for the period 2016–2020 and comprises a total of SEK 1 200 million, of which SEK 1 180 million is intended for activities implemented by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and SEK 20 million is intended for activities implemented by the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA).<sup>1</sup>

Within the framework of the strategy, Sida is expected to contribute to:

### Strengthened democracy and gender equality, and greater respect for human rights

- Strengthened capacity among public institutions to provide basic public services
- Increased respect for the rule of law
- Strengthened capacity of civil society to participate in political processes and promote accountability
- Better conditions for gender equality and respect for human rights, with a focus on the rights of women and children

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<sup>1</sup> Contributions within the framework of this strategy are financed in accordance with the terms for appropriation items in appropriation directions concerning the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and appropriation item 1:1.4 Aid activities in appropriation directions concerning the Folke Bernadotte Academy for each financial year.

### Human security and freedom from violence

- Strengthened peace and reconciliation mechanisms at national and local level
- Greater influence and women's participation in peace processes and in peacebuilding and statebuilding

### A better environment, limited climate impact and greater resilience to environmental impact, climate change and natural disasters

- Improved capacity among public institutions and other actors at national and local level to contribute to environmental sustainability, increased resilience to environmental impact, climate change and natural disasters, and limited climate impact
- Increased sustainability and resilience of agriculture, with a focus on sustainable food security, productive employment with decent working conditions and sustainable use of natural resources
- Increased production of and improved access to renewable energy

Within the framework of the strategy the Folke Bernadotte Academy is expected to contribute to supporting Mali in the transition from conflict to peacebuilding in a long-term perspective through:

- Strengthened capacity among individuals and institutions to promote security and human rights

## 2. Country context

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, with nearly 45 per cent of the population living below the poverty line of USD 1.25 per day. In 2015, Mali was ranked 179 of 188 countries in the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index. At national level, 64 per cent of the population has access to clean water, while only 22 per cent has access to sanitation and 25 per cent has access to electricity. Shortcomings in democratic institutions, weak public governance and

widespread corruption have a negative impact on the provision of basic public services, including security.

Mali's economic development is relatively positive, with a growth rate of more than 5 per cent in 2014 and 2015. However, the economy is largely dependent on development aid and the global market price of gold and cotton. Agriculture accounts for 45 per cent of GDP and 80 per cent of employment of the active population. The country is vulnerable to climate change, which is manifested by, for instance, extended dry periods and lack of rainfall. A high rate of population growth puts further pressure on the country's natural resources and ecosystems. The country's food supply is uncertain. Resilience to environmental impact and climate change, as well as central government capacity to manage these issues, therefore needs to be strengthened. Mali is a Member State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which has signed an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union. The agreement is expected to contribute to increased trade and diversification of the economy, which are key issues in the country's development strategy. One challenge is to attract foreign investors and transition the informal economy to a formal one, increase tax revenues and ensure more inclusive and diversified growth. This challenge is amplified by high trade barriers, undeveloped value chains and weak regional economic integration. Resilience to climate change needs to be strengthened.

There are serious shortcomings concerning access to justice, and respect for human rights is weak. Impunity is widespread, the judicial chain underdeveloped and confidence in the judicial system is weak. Women's enjoyment of human rights is particularly weak. Children's enjoyment of their human rights is also weak, partly in light of the conflict and the prevalence of child labour. Structural inequality between men and women is prevalent at all levels in society, even though the fundamental law prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender. Opportunities for women to take part in decision-making and peace processes are limited. Female genital mutilation and gender-based violence are common.

The security situation is a cause of great concern and causes extensive human suffering. Conflicts recur between the government and groups in northern Mali, and within and between different groups. Threats from Islamic extremists and organised crime in northern and central Mali have increased. The government's ability to maintain security is wanting. Security needs thus span a broad spectrum and require action by the entire security sector – both police and military actors. Resilience to recurring crises is weak.

In mid-2015, a peace agreement was signed between the government, pro-government groups and groups that have fought for greater autonomy in northern Mali. The peace agreement lays the foundation for a long-term process that covers institutional issues such as decentralisation, reforms of the security sector and the judicial system, prosecution of crimes against human rights and redistribution of economic resources. Extensive and long-term international support for the continued peacebuilding and statebuilding process is warranted; at the same time the security situation means that development and stability initiatives in northern Mali are associated with risk. The strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Mali should be seen as a contribution to this peacebuilding work.

Sweden has a broad commitment to development in Mali, with long-term development cooperation in areas such as public administration, natural resource administration and dealing with climate change, which means that Sweden enjoys the confidence of both the government and civil society. Sweden also contributes approx. 250 staff to the UN stabilisation mission, MINUSMA, and participates in the EU civilian mission, EUCAP Sahel Mali, and the EU military training mission, EUTM Mali. Sweden has also contributed to efforts to clear explosive remnants. An important component of added value for Swedish involvement in Mali is therefore contributing to collaboration and synergies between development and security.

The motivation behind Swedish development cooperation with Mali is the widespread poverty and low achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, gender inequality, vulnerability to climate change, recurring droughts and food crises, a vulnerable economy and repeated conflict in the northern parts of the country.

### 3. Activities

Sweden's development cooperation with Mali is to be based on and characterised by a rights perspective and by the perspective of poor people on development. The rights perspective means that human rights and democracy are regarded as fundamental to development. This approach means that individuals and groups that are discriminated against, excluded, and marginalised, are made visible prior to each contribution. This is so that all people will be able to enjoy their rights, regardless of gender, age, impairment, ethnicity, religion or other belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression. The perspective of poor people on development means that the situation, needs, circumstances, and priorities of poor women, men, and children must be used as the basis for poverty reduction and the promotion of equitable and sustainable development.

Swedish development cooperation is to integrate environmental and climate sustainability, gender equality, and peaceful and democratic development. A comprehensive view of the challenges, needs and conditions of poor people and society is the foundation of development cooperation. The guiding principle is that economic, social and environmental conditions and processes are to be interpreted and managed in an integrated context. Gender equality, and the empowerment and rights of women and girls, are both goals in themselves and a prerequisite and a means for achieving sustainable global development. Violence and armed conflict are among the greatest barriers to economic and social development, and development cooperation is an important aspect of conflict prevention. An environmental and climate perspective, a gender equality perspective and a conflict perspective will be systematically integrated into Sweden's development cooperation with Mali.

The focus of activities and the specific context govern the choice of partners and forms of cooperation. The Swedish Government assesses that general budget support is not an option at present. A balance is to be sought when choosing partners. Cooperation with the government and its authorities at central level is to take place where it is considered to be strategic in order to contribute to statebuilding and strengthening central government control and legitimacy in all parts of the country

as providers of security and social services. Cooperation can also take place with authorities at local level for this purpose. Civil society can be an important agent for change and has an important role to play in promoting accountability and democratic development. However, civil society capacity is weak and needs to be strengthened. Sida is to identify agents for change who can best contribute to the positive development of society.

Cooperation should be designed to contribute to strengthened capacity and long-term sustainable results. Long-term, programme-based support may be combined with strategic and catalytic contributions. Sweden will promote coherent and effective aid coordination in the country, above all by means of active participation in EU aid coordination and joint programming.

Sida is to ensure that a holistic view is taken of the total Swedish support to Mali when implementing the strategy. The special needs and conditions that apply in northern Mali are to be taken into account in the strategy. Swedish development cooperation is to contribute to the benefit of the peace agreement. Sida and the Folke Bernadotte Academy are to ensure that their activities are carried out in such a way that results achieved are sustainable and durable. Synergies between the different areas of the strategy are to be harnessed as far as possible. Complementarity with other relevant strategies is also to be sought. Where relevant, development contributions should be coordinated with humanitarian contributions in the country so that Sweden contributes to a transition from temporary humanitarian assistance to sustainable development cooperation. Coordination with multinational or international peace and security-building measures may also be relevant. An appropriate division between activities should be maintained.

Development cooperation is characterised by high risk as a result of instability in parts of the country and of the weak structures created for implementing the peace agreement and channelling international support. Risk assessment and risk management are therefore essential. The risk of corruption is high and should be given particular attention in the design of development cooperation. Cooperation is to help prevent and combat corruption.

Sweden's development cooperation is to help strengthen the social contract between the government and the citizens. Sweden is to help promote democratic governance and the capacity of Malian public institutions, for instance with regard to budgeting and the implementation of decisions taken. Activities are to strengthen opportunities for public administration to provide basic services and for civil society to participate in political processes and hold decision-makers to account. Activities are to help strengthen the rule of law. Transitional justice and impunity prevention are key factors to increasing opportunities for sustainable reconciliation and limiting the risk of relapse into conflict. Further, activities are to help strengthen opportunities for individuals to enjoy their human rights. Children's needs must be given particular attention and activities may, for instance, help combat genital mutilation. Prospects for social security measures will be investigated. Activities are to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women. In this, women's opportunities for participation in decision-making processes, not least linked to peace and reconciliation processes, are central.

Sweden's development cooperation is to contribute to increased human security and freedom from violence. Sida's activities are to focus on enhanced capacity for peace and reconciliation by helping to strengthen individuals' opportunities to participate in conflict resolution and reconciliation processes at national and local level.

Sweden's development cooperation is to help strengthen capacity among public institutions and other actors to promote environmental and climate sustainability, more sustainable and productive agriculture that provides increased livelihood opportunities, productive employment with decent working conditions, and increased access to sustainable public services. This will include strengthened and sustainable administration of natural resources, including water, climate-adapted cultivation methods, the development of national and international value chains and markets of particular significance for poor women and men. Furthermore, activities are to contribute to increased access to renewable energy. Activities are to be in line with Mali's national climate action plan.

The FBA's activities are to contribute to improved capacity for an inclusive peace and reconciliation process with a focus on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and subsequent resolutions. The FBA's activities can also contribute to increased application of democratic principles and human rights in the security sector.

The forms of follow-up are described in the Government's guidelines for strategies within development cooperation and apply to the activities of both Sida and the FBA. Sida and the FBA are to report separately to the Government Offices (Ministry for Foreign Affairs). Sida and the FBA are to continuously keep each other, as well as other relevant authorities, informed about the implementation of the strategy.