Leave No Woman Behind

National Report on
the Situation of Women with Disabilities
in Mali, 2020
Executive Summary

“When we have children, the men who are their fathers are ashamed to acknowledge their own children – we have not chosen to be disabled but we are rejected and live in really difficult conditions. All the necessities of life – food, housing, our children’s education, health care, employment – are beyond our reach.”

Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa. Its per capita Gross National Income is USD1,953, and the country ranks 182 out of 189 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index¹ and 152 in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.² There are significant disparities between communities, between regions and between municipalities in terms of poverty, with the poverty rates higher in rural than in urban areas. There are high rates of unemployment, especially among young people, and high income inequality, aggravated by the political and security crisis. There is limited and/or unequal access to education, health and infrastructure (roads, electricity, water, hygiene and sanitation).


While the Government of Mali has made progress in combating discrimination against women in relation to their access to basic social services, in both rural and urban areas and to reduce social inequalities, findings and analysis of the survey data show that discrimination remains a concern.

According to the World Disability Report, disabled people constitute 15.5% of Mali’s population, in line with the 15% global prevalence of disability. This means that there are some 2,247,000 people with disabilities in Mali.

Accurate assessments of the prevalence of disability are hampered by lack of systematic data collection. It is not clear if the Washington Questions³ are being used to assess disability at the individual level.

There are no studies in Mali on the situation of women living with disabilities. To further the objective of ‘Leaving no one behind’, a key principle of the 2030 Agenda, this report

² The Gender Inequality Index is a composite index with the following domains: reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. See UNDP, Human Development Reports, Gender Inequality Index. http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii
therefore looks at the specific issues of women with disabilities, examining data and the perceptions of women with disabilities gathered through focus group work. Data on women with disabilities was collected in Bambara and Kati, large peri-urban districts with a population of 987,000 to the north-east of the capital, Bamako, and home to the largest military camp in Mali. Findings are based on the data collected in five of Kati’s 37 municipalities – Diago, Dialakorodji, Kati, Sangarébougou and Kambila. Kati is a “cercle”, an administrative district within the Koulikouro region, one of Mali’s eight regions.

**Key findings:**

As a consequence of social and cultural prejudices about disability, women with disabilities are the chief victims of violence and abuse in their many different forms. Women and girls with disabilities face many obstacles in the Koulikoro region and these need to be properly acknowledged and addressed, especially in the Kati Cercle, where there is a lack of political will and social and cultural prejudices.

- Women and girls with disabilities are rejected, feel that they are a burden on family and society, and are regarded as a cause of misfortune or as monsters who need to be done away with. This leads to marginalisation and abuse, and lack of state protection.
- Stigma and exclusion prevent girls and women living with disabilities from participating in decisions that directly affect them.
- Social prejudice is an obstacle to the participation of women with disabilities in elective and decision-making positions.
- Women and girls with disabilities do not have equal access to food, protection, housing, training, information, new communication technologies, employment, decent pay, a home, procreation.
- The low levels of education and skills of women with disabilities limit their access to decent jobs, their full development and their contribution to development and society.
- The school drop-out rates of girls with disabilities are high, due to cost, distance between their homes and schools; insecurity and abusive behaviour; lack of accessible toilets and inaccessible classrooms.
- Poor health prevents girls and women with disabilities from accessing decent work and a stable income. They need workplace adaptations and may not work at the same pace as non-disabled persons.
- Unemployment and low-quality and insecure employment limit access to a decent income and cut people off from their social networks.
- Women with disabilities do not have the equipment or assistance they need to move about and do not have the means to acquire them.
- Single, divorced and widowed women with disabilities with dependent children are especially vulnerable and stigmatised.
Mme Koné Rokiatou Diakité, General Secretary of the Local Federation of Disabled Persons’ Associations of the Commune of Bamako puts it like this “… The voices of women with disabilities need to be heard. Women with disabilities in Mali will continue to be at risk if measures to empower them are not put in place. The Government of Mali must take steps to create and implement effective national laws and programmes so that all people with disabilities - especially women and girls - can enjoy a dignified future without discrimination.”

Call to action to ensure equal rights and the protection of the rights of women with disabilities:

The government should:

- Conduct a census of women and girls living with disabilities.
- Put effort into ensuring that women with disabilities are listened to and taken into account.
- Promote the participation and involvement of women and girls living with disabilities in consultation frameworks.
- Promote the emancipation and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities through literacy, provision of education and social and professional training.
- Make basic education compulsory and free for people with disabilities.
- Take account of disability in the curricula at all levels of education (basic, secondary, professional and higher).
- Involve more women and people with disabilities in the participatory processes of managing public and political affairs.
- Do more to improve the training of women with disabilities and young people to support their access to credit and job creation.
- Train women with disabilities in leadership and entrepreneurship.
- Ensure that regulations and laws on equality are implemented in development programmes.

Local authorities and political parties should:

- Train women and people with disabilities in leadership and citizenship to enable them to participate in the drawing up of candidate lists for election campaigns.
- Support micro-projects combatting poverty of people with disabilities.
- Do more to promote literacy among women and people with disabilities.
• Put in place consultation frameworks and exchange mechanisms in which women with disabilities can participate.
• Involve women with disabilities in political and local development activities.
• Ensure that workplaces and public facilities, transport and public buildings are accessible to people with disabilities.
• Set up a social fund for marginalised women and girls.

Communities should:
• Demystify disability and to put an end to the taboos and prejudices that surround it.
• Raise awareness of disability in politics so it becomes a real social issue and is given all the consideration that it should have. This was one of the most strongly felt opinions voiced by the women who were interviewed.
• Have confidence in the abilities and roles that women and people with disabilities can play in the social and economic development of the community.
• Become aware of the consequences of gender inequalities.
• Raise awareness about and combat violence against women.
• Put a stop to underage marriage and rape of and sexual violence against girls and women with disabilities. Recognise the rights of women and girls with disabilities.
• Recognise and support organisations of women and girls with disabilities.
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Setting the scene

Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa with a population of 18.8 million divided equally between women and men. Mali shares its long border, 7,200 km, with Algeria and Mauritania to the north, Niger to the east, Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire to the south, Guinea Conakry to the southwest and Senegal to the west. Mali gained independence from France in 1960.

From 1960 Mali has suffered droughts, rebellions, a coup and 23 years of military dictatorship until democratic elections in 1992. After winning presidential elections in July 2013, and a second round in August, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita took office in September 2013. He was re-elected president of Mali for a second term in August 2018.

Mali is a poor country with a per capita Gross National Income of USD1,953, ranking 182 out of 189 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index.\(^1\) Life expectancy at birth is 59.2 years for females and 57.7 for males.\(^2\) Mali ranks 152 in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index. There are significant disparities between communities, between regions and between municipalities in terms of poverty. In 2014, the prevalence of poverty was 52.8% in rural areas, 11.1% in Bamako and 46.6% in other urban municipalities. Similarly, poverty is more prevalent in some administrative regions than in others. In 2014, the poorest regions were Sikasso (65.8%), Mopti (60.4%), Ségou (56.8%) and Koulikoro (47.7%).

Complex Islamist and separatist insurgencies in 2013–2015, mainly in the north of the country, were brought to an end with the deployment of foreign troops. The 2015 Peace Treaty, brokered by Algeria, has been stalled by a lack of commitment by all signatories. The UN has about 15,000 soldiers and police in the country at present, one of its biggest peacekeeping forces in the world. Jihadist groups have reformed, rearmed and recruited new fighters and a new cycle of violence has begun. Among the UN alone, 200 personnel have been killed, making it the deadliest such mission since its start in 2013.\(^3\)

Mali signed and ratified the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007. The Optional Protocol was signed and ratified in 2008. Furthermore, the Malian Constitution affirms the country’s adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948 and the African Charter of Human and People’s Rights. The principle of the primacy of universal rights over national laws is affirmed in the Constitution. Thus, Article 116 of the Constitution gives duly ratified international treaties and agreement primacy over national laws.

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2 The Gender Inequality Index is a composite index with the following domains: reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. See UNDP, Human Development Reports, Gender Inequality Index. http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii
The United Nations has adopted four international instruments specific to people with disabilities:

- The Declaration on the Rights of the Mentally Disabled (9 December 1971)
- The Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (9 December 1975)
- The Principles for the Protection of the Mentally Ill and the Improvement of Mental Health Care (1991)
- Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (20 December 1993)\(^4\)

\[
\begin{array}{|l|}
\hline
\text{The focus group consultations with women and girls with disabilities carried out in 2019 identified a range of limitations for Mali to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These include,}
\hline
\text{'Inadequate or unsuitable legislation or regulations in certain areas, including travel and traffic; lack of knowledge of legal texts due to misinterpretation, lack of awareness about them in the public sphere and illiteracy; inadequate infrastructure, tools and support services tailored to the specific requirements of people with disabilities; attitudes, specifically prejudice, dangerous practices and stereotypes; unmet needs for assistance in the promotion and protection of people with disabilities, particularly in the area of capacity building and financial support; insufficient data from studies and national statistics to assess impact of policy measures, and difficulties and progress made'. (Source: Focus Group, Bamako, 2019)}
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\end{array}
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**Social protection and women's equality**

Social protection is implemented in practice by means of universal health coverage (AMO, RAMED, mutual health care). Policies and strategies which fall under the broad heading of social protection are:

1. The National Solidarity Policy.
3. The National Social and Solidarity Economy Policy, supported by its action plan, adopted 9 October 2014.
5. The Strategic Plan for Socio-economic Promotion of People with Disabilities.
6. The Strategic Plan for the Socioeconomic Promotion of Older Persons.

\(^4\)Although not a legally binding instrument, the Standard Rules represent a strong moral and political commitment of Governments to take action to attain equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities. The rules serve as an instrument for policymaking and as a basis for technical and economic cooperation.
In relation to disabilities specifically, other statutes exempt vehicles belonging to people with disabilities from tax and ensure that affirmative action measures favouring people with disabilities do not contravene equal opportunity legislation. The government is also working on a 10-year (2015–2024) strategic plan for the social and economic promotion of people with disabilities.

**Women’s participation in politics**

Women’s rights to political participation are enshrined in international instruments ratified by Mali and translated into national commitments in terms of legislation and regulations.

In 1997 the government of Mali created the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family (MPFEF). This was followed in 2010 by the publication of the National Gender Policy; in 2014, by the National Policy for the Promotion and Protection of the Child (PNPPE); and in 2015 by the National Family Policy (PNF). Since the adoption of the National Gender Policy, efforts have been made to improve the representation of women in official and elected bodies.

Although women play an important role as grassroots activists in the growing number of Malian political parties, they are less well represented in their governing bodies. In December 2015 a gender quota of 30% for the representation of women in official and elected bodies was established by law. This has begun to correct the imbalance between women and men and has increased the number of women on electoral roles and in elected bodies, especially at the local level. Thus, in the local elections of 20 November 2016, the representation of women on local councils increased from 927 women councillors in 2009 to 2,830 – 25.6% of all councillors; 203 women were appointed to official bodies in 2017, 25.9% of all 785 official appointments; and now, as of September 2018, there are 11 (out of 32) women ministers in the current government.5

Despite reforms, women continue to be politically marginalised. In 2016, around 3,370 women candidates were able to benefit from the provisions of Law No. 2015-052 on the “30% quota”: more than 25% of women were elected in 2016, up from 9% in 2009. However, fewer than 10% of the deputies elected to the National Assembly are women. In 2015 women held 16.2% of appointed positions in public services. Women account for less than a third of the workforce in higher education (30.68% for large schools and 30.18% for universities).

In 2009–2014, eight mayors of communes (out of a total of 644 communes) were women, including one with a physical disability. As shown in the table below, a further 132 women were elected to different commune positions, such as deputy mayor.

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5 The previous government consisted of 32 ministers, including eight women.
Currently (for the 2016-2019 electoral cycle) in local government there are 670 elected municipal councillors of whom 227 are women. Twelve women are mayors at the municipal level and others hold positions of responsibility. Table 2 shows the positions held by women.

**Table 1: Women holding elected positions in local government (commune level – 2009-2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Assistant</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Deputy</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Deputy</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Assistant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mali Municipalities Association Report

In 2009-2014 there were no women mayors in Kati Cercle (where this research was undertaken) and only six were elected to positions of responsibility in Kati’s 37 municipalities.

**Table 2: Women holding elected positions in local government (commune level – 2016-2019)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Assistant</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Deputy</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Deputy</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Deputy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mali Municipalities Association Report

**Table 3: Women holding elected position in local government (Kati Cercle – 2009-2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Commune</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Assistant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dialakoraba and N’gabakoro Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Deputy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dogodouman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Deputy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dialakorodji, Dombilaet, Doubabougou</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mali Municipalities Association Report
Similarly, for the period 2016-2019, there are no women mayors in the Kati Circle and only a small number (10) of women holding subordinate elected positions.

Table 4: Women holding elected position in local government (Kati Cercle – 2016-2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Commune</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Assistant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sanakoroba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Deputy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Kati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Deputy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Doubabougou, Niagadina, Oueléssébougou, SanankoroDjitoumou, Sanakoroba, Sangarébougou, Siby, Sobra and Tiélé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Deputy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Kati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Deputy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Kati</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mali Municipalities Association Report

In the five communes of the study area in Kati, all the positions of Secretary-General of the Town Hall (an appointed position) are held by men. In Dialakorodji there is a woman, technical officer, in charge of local development at the town hall.

What is really happening to women with Disabilities in Mali

Rights of women and girls with disabilities

Given the lack of data on women with disabilities in Mali it was not possible to establish how many women with disabilities participate in decision-making and political structures at the local level. It is clear, however, that the participation of women living with disabilities and other poor women in national and local decision-making bodies in Mali has not changed significantly.

There are no studies on the enjoyment of rights of women and girls living with disabilities. Even the international instruments ratified by Mali, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, do not disaggregate by gender or age and are silent on the issues of women with disabilities. There is an urgent need to reaffirm the rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure that they enjoy the same rights as their fellow citizens, that they are protected from all forms of discrimination and abuse and that they have equal access to justice.

Despite the Government’s professed commitment to equal rights for women, manifested in the international conventions and national legislation which it has signed and ratified, equal opportunities for women are largely unrealised. Neither political parties nor the state have been able to include measures promoting women’s rights in their political programmes and still less have they implemented them. Women continue to be under-represented in all decision-making bodies, and this is, in effect, a
violation of democracy and respect for human rights.

Electoral legislation in Mali is incomplete because it fails to include provisions that would enable persons with disabilities to enjoy their rights as voters, including the right to confidentiality.

Legislation does not require all polling stations to have disabled access, that there be voting materials that enable blind people to vote without having to rely on other people.

If we are to address satisfactorily the problems of women with disabilities, we need first reliable and up-to-date statistical data on the general situation of people with disabilities.

**Political participation of women with disabilities**

According to Mme. Koné Rokiatou Diakité, General Secretary of the Local Federation of Disabled Persons’ Associations of the Commune of Bamako,

“... the voices of women with disabilities need to be heard. Women with disabilities in Mali will continue to be at risk if measures to empower them are not put in place. The Government of Mali must take steps to create and implement effective national laws and programmes so that all people with disabilities - especially women and girls - can enjoy a dignified future without discrimination.”

The electoral process in Mali does not promote the participation of women living with disabilities. Apart from the right to be assisted in voting, there are no specific measures addressing the needs of disabled voters, not even to ensure access to polling stations for people with reduced mobility.

There are very few women with disabilities with official roles in decision-making in appointed or elected bodies. The arguments for the inclusion of women with disabilities and other disadvantaged women are based on the rights conferred by
international conventions and ratified by the country and equality between women and men enshrined in the Constitution.

At the highest level of government, there is only one woman with a disability – she is a technical advisor to the Ministry of Solidarity and Humanitarian Action. There are 14 women among the 147 parliamentarians in the National Assembly. None of them has a disability.

**Disabled people and their organisations in Mali**

According to the World Disability Report, disabled people constitute 15.5% of Mali’s population, in line with the 15% global prevalence of disability. This means that there are some 2,247,000 people with disabilities in Mali. Accurate assessments of the prevalence of disability are hampered by lack of systematic data collection and it is not clear if the Washington Questions\(^6\) are being used to assess disability at the individual level.

According to the President of The Disabled in Kati, there are 594 people living with disabilities in the Kati cercle, including 150 women. The categories of disability in Kati range from physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, to poor health brought on by, for example, stroke or mental illness. Generally women with disabilities in this rural area of Mali, face greater difficulties than men who have a similar disability, disadvantaged as they are by illiteracy, lack of decent employment and their role as head of the household.

The care of people living with disabilities dates back to 1959/1960, when the Canvell Centre assumed responsibility for the rehabilitation of children with polio. The then President of the Republic, Modibo Keita, used part of the Lenin Peace Prize awarded to him to build the first centre for Functional and Psychomotor Rehabilitation.\(^7\) The first association of people with disabilities was set up in 1972 as the "Malian Association for the Social Promotion of the Blind", now called the current "Malian Union of the Blind (UMAV)". The Association of Physically Disabled Persons (AMPHP) was created a year later, in 1973. The Malian Federation of Disabled People's Associations, set up in 1982,\(^8\) brings together a number of associations of people with disabilities (Organisations des Personnes Handicapées – OPHs). Initially organisations and associations dealing with disability focused on the needs of men. It was only in 1994 that the Malian Association of Disabled Women was set up. Its prime objective was to ensure that women with disabilities were not forced to go out on the streets to beg, and to promote their social, economic and professional integration. In 1999, a number of associations of women with disabilities set up the Malian Union of Associations and Committees of Women with Disabilities (UMFH). Currently, in addition to the associations specialising in the rights of women with disabilities, there are other civil society organizations working locally, nationally and internationally, that also deal with issues of disability. These are

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\(^7\) Fatoafrique.org. No author. La réadaptation fonctionnelle au Mali.

\(^8\) Exchanging the issue of disability at the national level (international disability rights analysis report (GTGH/FOSC-PAOSC II-AMI3))

The following organisations are recognised and receive support from the government:

- For visual disabilities – Malian Union of the Blind (UMAV) and the National Institute of the Blind in Mali (INAM).
- For physical disabilities – Malian Association of Physically Disabled Persons (AMPHP); the National Orthopaedic Equipment Centre of Mali (CNAOM); and the Physically Disabled Rehabilitation Centre (CRHP).
- For intellectual disabilities – Malian Association to Combat Mental Impairment (Association Malienne de Lutte contre la Déficience Mentale - AMALDEME) and the Medical-Psycho-Educational Centre (CMPE).
- For hearing disabilities – Malian Association of the Deaf (AMASOURDS) with the School of the Hearing Impaired as a structure for the care of hearing-impaired patients.

These official bodies are backed up by voluntary organisations and associations as follows:

- The Malian Association of People Disabled by Leprosy (AMHL).
- The Malian Association Raoul Follereau (AMRF) which fights against Leprosy and its effects.
- The SOS Association of Albino Children.
- The Association for Employment and Integration of Disabled People in Development (EIHD).
- The Malian Association of Disabled Lawyers (AMJH).
- The Malian Association for the Promotion of Physically Disabled Persons (AMPHP).
- Malian Union of the Blind (UMAV).
- Malian Union of Disabled Women’s Associations and Committees (UMAFH).
- The Malian Federation of Disabled People’s Associations (FEMAPH) which brings together all the above organisations.

**Policies to support participation of women and girls with disabilities at the local level**

Most women in the Kati Circle do not have paid work. They are housewives, farmers or street traders in the informal sector. Women may be members of community associations with no segregation between men and women. The survey undertaken for this research shows that these community associations do not have policies to address the needs of women and girls living with a disability. For this reason they do not
participate formally in these groups and only occasionally and casually attend functions and meetings.

The survey, which interviewed 200 people, representing community development associations and local elected officials, revealed that only nine associations have people living with disabilities among their members, and these are few – just one, two or three members. There are very few women with disabilities in local elected bodies which, in any case, do not gather statistics on the participation of women with disabilities. This is a sharp contrast to the commitments made in the international conventions signed and ratified by the government.

The reasons given for the non-participation of women and girls living with a disability are varied:

- Lack of knowledge regarding national policies on persons with disabilities on the part of the leaders of men's and women's associations.
- The community's negative attitudes towards women with disabilities.
- On the part of the women themselves – lack of confidence, feelings of inferiority and belief that there can be no positive outcome of participation.
- Their poverty and fragile and precarious earnings.
- Their physical or mental disability.

**Daily lives of women with disabilities**

In general, women with disabilities are victims of double discrimination: because they are women and because they are disabled.

Family and domestic tasks are generally the responsibility of women. Life is much more problematic for women with disabilities because, to start with, being a woman in Mali is not easy, and being disabled compounds the difficulties that women face.
Women with disabilities have problems accessing certain administrative buildings and public transport vehicles because they do not have ramps or other devices to facilitate disabled access.

Women with disabilities also suffer from stigma and rejection. Two testimonies stand out from the meetings held with women in Kati.

"The drivers of SOTRAMA, 9 do not want to take us because we disabled"

“When we have children, the men who are their fathers are ashamed to acknowledge their own children – we have not chosen to be disabled but we are rejected and live in really difficult conditions. All the necessities of life – food, housing, our children’s education, health care, employment – are beyond our reach.”

For this report data on women with disabilities was collected in Kati, a large peri-urban district with a population of 987,000 to the north-east of the capital, and Bamako, home to the largest military camp in Mali. Findings for this report are based on the data collected in five of Kati’s 37 municipalities – Diago, Dialakorodji, Kati, Sangarébougou and Kambila. Kati is a “cercle”, an administrative district within the Koulikouro region, one of Mali’s eight regions.

The responses to this survey together with consultations with women’s associations in Kati provide the basis for the following observations:

1. Perceptions of women with disabilities: the majority of women interviewed believe that society rejects them. They do not feel loved because they are made to feel that they are a burden on society, and on close relatives. Some people think that the disabled person can be a cause of misfortune or even that she is a monster who needs to be done away with. They believe that the state and elected officials are not doing enough to protect and uphold their socio-economic, cultural and political rights. They feel marginalised and under-valued. They are intimidated by abuse from others, both men and women.

2. Inequality of treatment: women with disabilities have limited access to food, protection, housing, training, information, new communication technologies, employment, decent pay, a home, procreation. They believe that they are instrumentalised by politicians and certain institutions that get rich on their backs.

3. Low levels of education and skills limit disabled women's access to decent jobs, their full development and their contribution to development and society.

4. A multiplicity of factors lead to significant school dropout rates. These include: the cost of schooling relative to family income; distance between their homes and schools; insecurity around schools; negative behaviour towards girls with disabilities; failure to take into account differences between girls and boys; the lack of school facilities tailored to girls’ needs etc.

9 Mini car for public transport
5. Poor health affects the ability of girls and women with disabilities to access employment and earn a stable income. People with disabilities require workplace adaptations and may not work at the same pace as non-disabled persons, and situations will vary depending on the type of disability.

6. Unemployment or low-quality employment – for example, low-paid or insecure employment, which limits access to a decent income and cuts people off from their social networks.

7. Society and culture: women living with disabilities experience stigma and exclusion from their families and communities. Some decisions that directly affect them are taken by older family members or husbands with no account for their own opinions. Social prejudice is an obstacle to their access to elective and decision-making positions.

8. Economic and financial means: some women do not have the equipment or assistance they need to move about and do not have the money to acquire them.

9. Women's marital and family status: some women with disabilities have dependent children because they were born out of wedlock or because they were divorced by men who no longer wish to be their husbands. The combination of disability and sole responsibility for their children is extremely problematic.

Issues emerging from focus groups

Opinions on education

Special education requires significant financial resources. Mali has limited financial resources to meet these very important needs, which is why the number of children and adolescents with disabilities - in all categories - who should be in education is below expectations.

Problems for children and adolescents with disabilities include:

- Inadequate special education structures; lack of qualified human resources at all levels; lack of reliable statistical data on children and adolescents with disabilities;
- Inadequate consideration of for children with disabilities in the construction of school infrastructure; lack of equipment and/or inappropriate equipment and lack of appropriate technical aids.

(Bamako focus group 2019)
## Opinions on disability and discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Sexual violence;</td>
<td>- Negotiating bureaucracy around marriage certificates is difficult;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Families without support;</td>
<td>- Appropriation of pensions of widows of military personnel killed in</td>
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<td>- Voicelessness;</td>
<td>battle by the parents;</td>
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<td>- Can't complete studies;</td>
<td>- Lack of disabled access to the courts of justice;</td>
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<td>- Difficulties in health and education;</td>
<td>- The lack of assistive devices for the blind, the deaf and people</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Cannot write with her hand;</td>
<td>with intellectual impairment;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Violence stemming from addiction;</td>
<td>- The difficulty for the majority of people with disabilities in</td>
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<td>- Carelessness [on the part of others] in daily activities life such as</td>
<td>obtaining the legal assistance to which they are entitled given their</td>
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<td>eating, washing, dressing, going to bed;</td>
<td>extreme poverty;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No access to employment;</td>
<td>- Failure to take into account the denial of the basic rights of</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Lack of competence;</td>
<td>disabled people;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Lack of training and advisory support;</td>
<td>- Failure to take into account the needs persons with disabilities</td>
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<td>- Problems at home: they are not informed or misinformed by their</td>
<td>when detained or in prison.</td>
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<td>husbands when they want to take a second wife;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- They don’t feel loved;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Children's civil status (e.g. when they are born out of wedlock);</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Problems with eligibility for food subsidies; (the age limit of 18</td>
<td></td>
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<td>is a huge difficulty);</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The pensions of deceased women civil servants do not take children</td>
<td></td>
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<td>into account;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Rates of interest of micro-credit loans are too high.</td>
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Source: Kati focus group

Source: Kati focus group
Conclusions and Recommendations

The Government of Mali has made remarkable progress in combating discrimination against women in relation to their access to basic social services, in both rural and urban areas. Findings and analysis of the survey data show that discrimination has been a concern of the Malian authorities and that they have made some effort to reduce social inequalities.

However, discrimination related to people with disabilities in Mali remains a concern for all stakeholders and especially for people with disabilities. Women are the chief victims of violence and abuse in their many different forms because of social and cultural prejudices in families and communities. The research undertaken for this project has shown that there are many obstacles to be overcome if disability in the Koulikoro region is to be properly addressed, especially in the Kati Cercle where there is a lack of political will and social and cultural prejudices are deeply entrenched.

Call to action to ensure equal rights and the protection of the rights of women with disabilities:

The government should:

- Implement international and national instruments for people with disabilities.
- Conduct a census of women and girls living with disabilities.
- Put effort into ensuring that women who have vulnerabilities are taken into account.
- Promote the participation and involvement of women and girls living with disabilities in the frameworks of consultation.
- Promote the emancipation and empowerment of women and girls with disabilities through literacy and social and professional training.
- Make basic education compulsory and free for people with disabilities.
- Take account of disability in the curricula of all levels of education (basic, secondary, professional and higher).
- Involve more women and people with disabilities in the participatory processes of managing public and political affairs.
- Do more to improve the training of women with disabilities and young people in access to credit and job creation.
- Train women with disabilities in leadership and entrepreneurship.
- Ensure that regulations and laws on equality are implemented in development programmes.
Local authorities and political parties should:

- Train women and people with disabilities in leadership and citizenship to enable them to participate in the drawing up of candidate lists for election campaigns.
- Support micro-projects combatting poverty of people with disabilities.
- Do more to promote literacy for women and people with disabilities.
- Put in place consultation frameworks and exchange mechanisms in which women with disabilities can participate.
- Involve women with disabilities in political and local development activities.
- Ensure that work places and public facilities, transport and public buildings are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Set up a social fund for marginalised women and girls.

Communities should:

- Demystify disability and to put an end to the taboos and prejudices that surround it.
- Raise awareness of disability in politics so it becomes a real social issue and is given all the consideration that it should have. This was one of the most strongly felt opinions voiced by the women who were interviewed.
- Have confidence in the abilities and roles that women and people with disabilities can play in the social and economic development of the community.
- Become aware of the consequences of gender inequalities.
- Raise awareness about and combat violence against women.
- Put a stop to underage marriage and rape of and sexual violence against girls and women with disabilities.
- Recognise the rights of women with disabilities.
APPENDIX I

Study report analysis and development team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis and report development team</th>
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<tr>
<td>Moussa Aliou TRAORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms BARRY Aminata TOURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Coulibaly Zeinaba Diallo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Djembéré Alamir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Idrissa A. TRAORÉ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Mady Keita</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Mamadou Diakité</td>
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<td>Mr Boubacar Diarra</td>
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APPENDIX II

Terms of reference for a study on the multiple forms of discrimination faced by disadvantaged women (vulnerable and disabled) in Kati Cercle, Koulikoro Region, Mali

1. Overview

On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, reflected in the document entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." Leaving no one behind is the key objective of the 2030 Agenda, which also aims to transform the world in which we live.

The social context of Mali is one of high rates of poverty and unemployment, especially among young people, and high income inequality. This situation is aggravated by the political and security crisis, with limited and/or unequal access to education, health and infrastructure (roads, electricity, water, hygiene and sanitation).

Weak social indicators mean that Mali remains among the low-human development countries, ranking 179th out of 188 countries in 2015. The poverty rate remains high and even seems to be increasing, rising from 43.6% in 2010 to 46.9% in 2014. There are still significant disparities between communities, regions and between municipalities in terms of poverty. In 2014, the prevalence of poverty was 52.8% in rural areas, 11.1% in Bamako and 46.6% in other urban municipalities. Rates of poverty also differ between administrative regions. In 2014, the poorest regions were Sikasso (65.8%), Mopti (60.4%), Ségou (56.8%) Koulikoro (47.7%). The least poor regions are Kidal (4.4% in
2011) and Bamako district (11.1%). Kayes (34.9%), Timbuktu (26.7%) and Gao (43.2%) are rated as intermediate in terms of poverty.

Mali has been a model of democracy since 1992 since the national conference organized by democracy activists following the coup d’état of March 1991. The Government of Mali has signed international treaties and conventions including the CEDAW. The Constitution of 25 February 1992 guarantees the same rights to citizens of both sexes without discrimination and proclaims in its preamble the defence of the rights of women and children as well as national cultural and linguistic diversity. The 1995 Beijing Declaration proclaims the right of rural women to health, education, work, access to natural resources and, above all, the right to participate in decision-making.

The National Gender Policy, in effect since 2000, (especially its Orientation No. 4), aims to harness the potential of women and men in the development of the country through their equal participation in all spheres of decision-making.

However, women in general and especially women in rural areas are poorly represented in community bodies and have little or no impact on national legislation and public policies (the Mining Code, mining conventions, the Land Code, the Tax Code).

In law, the principle of non-discrimination and its corollary, the principle of equality, are enshrined in the Preamble, Paragraph 3 of Article 1 and Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945), and Paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which prohibit discrimination. Other instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 7 and Article 23 paragraph 2, the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), Article 2, Paragraph 2 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which in Article 26 enshrines the right to equal protection of the law and provides in this regard that the law must guarantee for all equal and effective protection against discrimination.

The aim of the "Communities Stand Up Against Inequality" campaign is to eradicate poverty by reducing inequality and to achieve the 2030 Agenda goals by influencing policies and practices at the local and national level.

The aim of the study: to identify multiple discrimination, equal treatment of women, discrimination against vulnerable and disabled women, especially with regard to their participation in Mali’s political process and access to social protection, etc.

Study area: five Kati Cercle communes: Diago, Dialakorodji, Kati, Sangarébougou and Kambila.

2. Report

The report will be used for the following purposes:

• To strengthen evidence-based advocacy for women who are discriminated against and disadvantaged in Mali.

• To Inform the project’s policy and programmes in Mali.
• To help AMASBIF meet its reporting obligations in various international groupings focusing on discrimination against women or otherwise disadvantaged in the Kati Cercle in Mali.

3. **Scope of the study**
   
i. To identify the categories of actors in this study.

   ii. Research, data collection, and identification of key factors and causes of social inequities in the Kati Cercle in Mali.

   iii. Secondary analyses of survey and census data, focusing on equity and the reduction of social inequalities in Mali with examples from the Kati Cercle;

   iv. Analysis of cases and bottlenecks encountered by respondents in the Kati Cercle in Mali with regard to vulnerable women and girls.

   v. To document case histories and to gather information on political discrimination and access to social protection for vulnerable women while providing support to women with disabilities.

   vi. Analysis of the governance framework (policies, legislation and budgets) and partnership mechanisms needed to establish an environment conducive to the rights of vulnerable women, especially women with disabilities, at local and national level.

4. **Data Collection Tools**

   • Survey record No.1
     Questionnaire with indicators on women’s participation

   • Survey record No.2
     Opinions of vulnerable women and girls and/or those living with a disability regarding their condition and well-being;

   • Survey record No. 3
     Opinions of decision-makers (public services; regional and local bodies; associations)

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