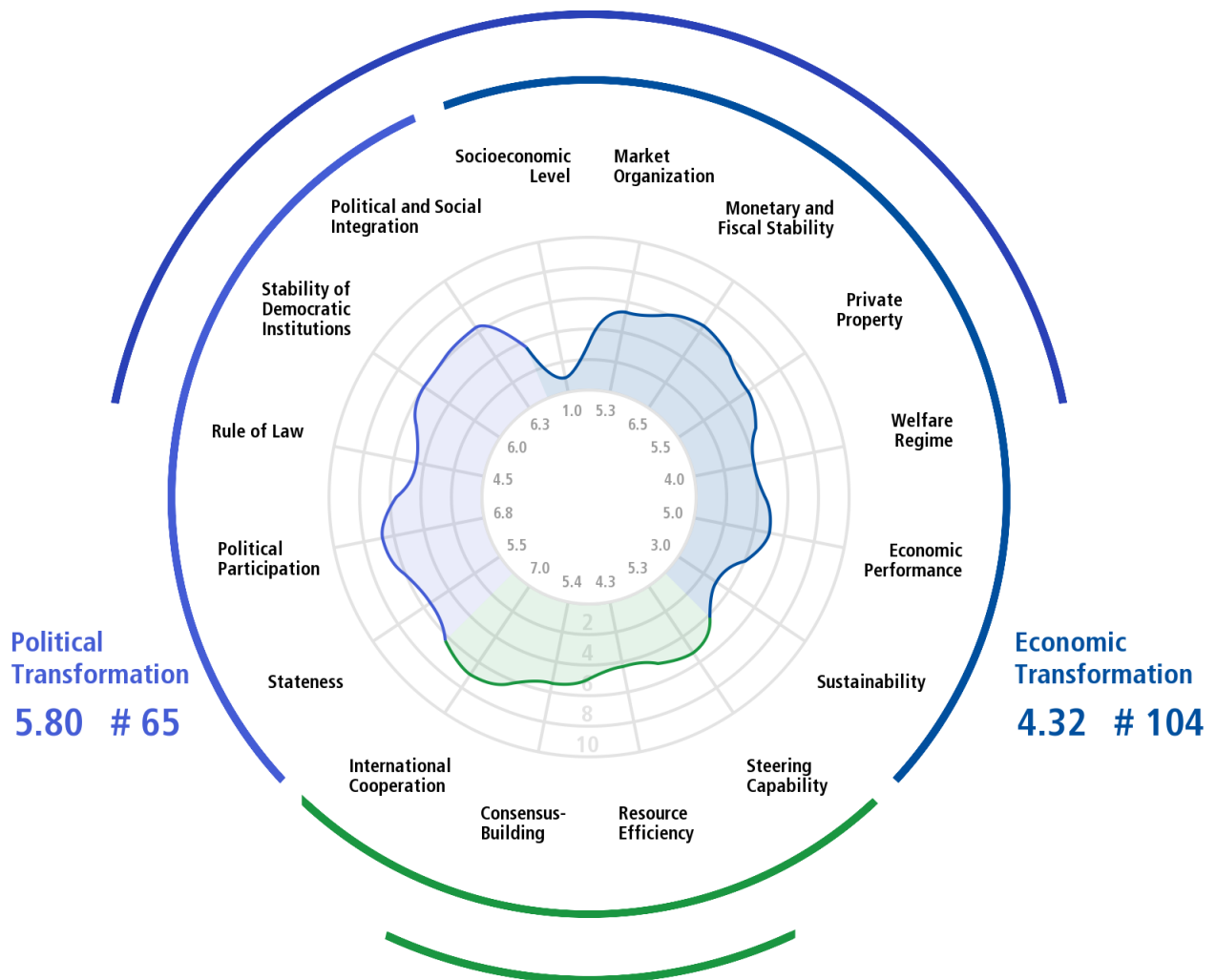


# Mali

## Status Index

**5.06 # 79**

on 1-10 scale out of 137



**Political Transformation**  
**5.80 # 65**

**Economic Transformation**  
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## Governance Index

**5.19 # 61**

on 1-10 scale out of 137

This report is part of the **Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) 2020**. It covers the period from February 1, 2017 to January 31, 2019. The BTI assesses the transformation toward democracy and a market economy as well as the quality of governance in 137 countries. More on the BTI at <https://www.bti-project.org>.

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**Key Indicators**

Population	M	<b>19.1</b>	HDI	<b>0.427</b>	GDP p.c., PPP \$	<b>2313</b>
Pop. growth <sup>1</sup>	% p.a.	<b>3.0</b>	HDI rank of 189	<b>184</b>	Gini Index	<b>33.0</b>
Life expectancy	years	<b>58.5</b>	UN Education Index	<b>0.290</b>	Poverty <sup>3</sup>	% <b>79.3</b>
Urban population	%	<b>42.4</b>	Gender inequality <sup>2</sup>	<b>0.676</b>	Aid per capita \$	<b>73.3</b>

Sources (as of December 2019): The World Bank, World Development Indicators 2019 | UNDP, Human Development Report 2019. Footnotes: (1) Average annual growth rate. (2) Gender Inequality Index (GII). (3) Percentage of population living on less than \$3.20 a day at 2011 international prices.

## Executive Summary

Mali underwent little progress with regards to political, security and socioeconomic advances during the review period. 2017 and 2018 were marked by the re-election of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) in mid-2018 to a second term. The election was declared free and fair by national and international observers. The result was not recognized by his challenger Soumaïla Cissé, leading to a polarization and division of the political class into several fractions. The review period also saw political and social unrest and protests. A constitutional referendum has been postponed due to public pressure. Teachers, health personnel and judges went on strike demanding better working conditions. The administrative reorganization that will see Mali arranged into 20 regions faces strong contest. Governance is characterized by “consensus” politics, despite the fact that Mali has a genuine opposition in parliament. Mali’s political party system and civil society are weak. Although vibrant and diverse, civil society maintains strong links to political parties. Reformist Islamic currents continue to influence politics, encountering little resistance.

The implementation of the 2015 peace agreement remains challenging, and a deteriorating security situation has undermined the ongoing peace process throughout the country. The United Nations has expressed its dissatisfaction over the state of the peace process. Both sides signed a peace pact that gave the Malian government a period of six months to implement the peace agreement.

Increasing insecurity, violent attacks committed by terrorist and other armed groups, as well as the emergence of a new and powerful fusion of terrorist and “self-defense” groups in Mali’s central region demonstrate why IBK will continue to need foreign military aid in order to tackle the various threats inside Mali’s territory. The G5 Sahel initiative, founded by five Sahel states (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad) to fight terrorists in the Sahel, illustrates the regional willingness to counter this threat. Bloody clashes have occurred in Mali’s central region between herders and farmers, especially Fulani herders, who are also now linked with militia and terrorist groups, such as the Macina Liberation Front.

One of the poorest countries in the world according to the World Bank, Mali faces grave socioeconomic difficulties. With a high demographic growth of 3% per year, Mali struggles with high illiteracy and unemployment rates, especially among the young population. It has been unable to increase secondary, tertiary and adult education opportunities for all in order to further equality, and it has failed to ensure its population benefits from economic growth. Work in the informal sector, as well as a high rate of remittances from migrants, are significant elements of the national economy.

## History and Characteristics of Transformation

Mali's transformation toward a market economy began in the 1980s under military dictator Moussa Traoré, who sought to cooperate with the IMF and liberalize the economy. In the early 1990s Mali underwent a democratic transition triggered by popular protests and a coup d'état by pro-democratic factions in the military. In 1992, Alpha Oumar Konaré became Mali's first democratically elected president. In 2002, the former coup leader Amadou Toumani Touré was elected to the presidential office. In the first two decades of Mali's democracy, the country enjoyed the reputation of a reform-oriented country and attracted high levels of international support. For example, it qualified for the IMF's Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) program in 1999 and was granted debt relief of roughly \$540 million in 2005.

However, since 2007, the principally Algerian group al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQMI) has operated in Malian territory, contributing to a criminalization of the Sahel zone by trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings, as well as engaging in abductions of Western foreigners. The influx into Mali of combatants and weapons from the former Libyan army after the downfall of the al-Qadhafi regime in 2011 triggered a new Tuareg rebellion at the beginning of 2012. A few days after the Bamako coup d'état on March 22, 2012 that toppled President Touré, two-thirds of Mali's territory was occupied by several different armed groups. In January 2013, a French military intervention to support the Malian army in an offensive against the Islamist groups was launched. A peace deal and elections in 2013 reinstated a democratically elected government. French and other international troops ceded operations to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which continued to support the Malian army. Donors and partners renewed pledges to help retrain the Malian army and rebuild the country.

Mali is still struggling with the aftermath of the 2012 multidimensional crisis. Despite the signing of a peace agreement in mid-2015 and established missions and operations to stabilize and pacify the country (e.g., MINUSMA, Operation Barkhane and G5 Sahel), the political and security situation remains extremely fragile, and has in fact deteriorated during the review period.

2018 marks a political transition: the end of Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's (IBK) first electoral mandate and, with his re-election in August, the start of his second mandate. The record of his first term is very mixed. There have been setbacks as well as incremental progress on political and security issues. Despite the difficulties of preparations, threats and public concern, the elections

of 2018 were held throughout the national territory with the exception of certain constituencies in the regions of Mopti, Gao and Kidal. IBK's main challenger, Soumaïla Cissé (who received 32.8% of the vote) did not accept the results. A dozen candidates from the first round of voting joined him in demonstrations to protest against the results of the polls through the front for the safeguard of democracy (FSD) and the coalition of the patriotic forces (COFOP). Soumaïla Cissé appears willing to engage with the president-elect, who made conciliatory overtures to his main opponent since his victory.

The 2015 peace agreement has been poorly implemented. The government has failed to be proactive in fostering peace. For example, the Conference of National Understanding, held in 2017 was poorly prepared and was not inclusive. Major opposition parties and armed groups only joined the conference toward the end. At the conference, the coalition of Azawad Movements (CMA) insisted but failed to achieve political independence for Azawad, the northern part of Mali. The conference recommended the government initiate dialog with Malian Islamic jihadist groups, such as the Support Group for Islam and Muslims (GSIM) led by Iyad Ag Ghali. The commission of good offices, established in 2017 by the former prime minister, Abdoulaye Idrissa Maïga, was designed to foster this dialog. It was chaired by Mahmoud Dicko, president of the High Islamic Council of Mali, but was dissolved in January 2018 by the new prime minister, Soumeylou Boubeye Maïga, after it established contact with intermediaries of Ag Ghali's terrorist group. Algeria's Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation served in 2018 as a basis for the development of Mali's National Law of Understanding. This law granted a general amnesty to perpetrators of crimes during the 2012 rebellion. The law is contested by human rights organizations.

Although terrorist attacks in Mali's capital Bamako decreased in the review period – only one was registered in the Kangaba camp outside Bamako in mid-2017 – the jihadist threat has increased in other parts of the country. Despite the presence of international military missions in Mali and the effective work they are doing on the ground, armed groups still possess capabilities to strike, and continue to perpetrate attacks on people and property. Jihadist groups merged at the end of March 2017 to create the GSIM. Already less than 200 km from Bamako, in Koulikoro region (Banamba county), jihadist fighters closed several schools October 2018. In Northern Mali, the situation in Menaka has become particularly worrying; MINUSMA, Barkhane and the Malian military patrols have been unable to secure the region, where the Islamic State in the Great Sahara (EIGS) has grown to a considerable scale, and now has the capability to carry out attacks in Niger and Burkina Faso. In early 2019, nearly 100 civilians were killed by terrorists in the Mopti and Menaka area. The center of Mali, in addition to experiencing terrorism, is the scene of inter-community conflicts between, among others, the Dogons and Fulani. At least 500 civilians were killed, and over 15,000 people fled the area to seek refuge elsewhere. This situation led the inhabitants (Dogons, Bambara and Peul) to organize into self-defense militias. In their field operations, the Malian armed forces have been accused of human rights violations in the region. Several mass graves have been discovered, and they are accused of torture and summary execution, especially in the region of Mopti.

The BTI combines text analysis and numerical assessments. The score for each question is provided below its respective title. The scale ranges from 1 (worst) to 10 (best).

## Transformation Status

### I. Political Transformation

#### 1 | Stateness

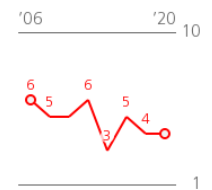
During the review period, the French-led military intervention, together with its Malian and African partners, pushed back the rebel and Jihadist groups occupying Mali's northern and central regions. However, ongoing tensions in Kidal, Menaka and Mali's central region of Mopti have prevented the Malian state from regaining its full monopoly on the use of force. Jihadist groups and bandits use violence to spread terror and fear in the north and the center of Mali. Beginning in 2017, Kidal continued to be threatened by separatist groups while Menaka is under attack by armed groups and terrorists. The Mopti region is a region that is not under government control, which has affected the neighboring Segou region.

Although jihadist groups no longer have the capacity to gain control over new territories, they have gained in strength over the review period. Recent attacks in Sévaré (headquarters of the G5 Sahel), in Timbuktu, and Ouagadougou, in neighboring Burkina Faso, illustrate their strength. Today's fragmented threat from four armed groups in the north, consisting of jihadist fighters, pro-government militia and separatists, makes it impossible for the government and its partners to effectively fight them. In the central region, violence is perpetrated by community militias, who form in response to the state's incapability to protect inhabitants. Some villagers embrace the jihadists as a means of defending their family, or are driven by their own economic interests, rather than by religious conviction. Foreign military forces from the Barkhane military operation and the United Nations Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) continue to help Malians counter the armed groups. Interim authorities have been installed in the north, and they work to establish a local administration presence in areas where the administration had disappeared. However, this task is hampered by insufficient funds. In order to regain its control over territory, in 2019 Mali's government allocated 22% of its national budget to defense (about XOF 450 billion).

Question  
Score

Monopoly on the  
use of force

4



The success of developing a modern national identity among the people of the historical Mandé and Fulani kingdoms and the Songhai empire is evident to the majority of Malian citizens, who acknowledge the nation-state. However, persistent failures to integrate some of the remote populations (e.g., Tuareg communities in the northeast) have continued to threaten nation-building since independence.

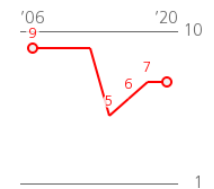
The 2012 Tuareg uprising posed the question of the nation-state in a different way, given the fact that the Tuareg National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) had proclaimed the separation of the Azawad area from Malian territory. The peace agreement, signed in mid-2015 by the Malian government, the loyalist fighters from the Platform alliance and the rebelling Coordination of Movements of Azawad (CMA), states clearly that Azawad only has a cultural dimension in Mali (i.e., not a political one). By signing a peace agreement, the Tuareg separatists accepted that concept. In that sense, the peace agreement provides greater autonomy to the sparsely populated northern regions of Mali without establishing a formal federal state. Nevertheless, Tuareg separatists raised the separation of Azawad at the national conference of understanding in 2017. With regards to citizenship, all individuals and groups enjoy the right to acquire citizenship without discrimination. No groups, including northerners such as the Tuareg, are denied citizenship.

According to its constitution, Mali is a secular state. Political parties with a religious orientation or built on religious foundations are prohibited by law. Islam in Mali has historically been moderate and pluralistic and has coexisted with other belief systems, such as animism (African Traditional Religion, ATR) and Christianity.

In recent years however, a gap has emerged between the majority moderate, tolerant and peaceful Islam and the more radical Islamist orientations. Islamic leaders openly supported Ibrahim Boubacar Keita during the 2013 presidential elections. Islam appears to be gaining increasing influence over politics and political behavior. In 2018, religious leaders supported different candidates during the presidential elections. Two religious leaders in particular have a significant influence on Mali's population and politicians: the president of the High Islamic Council, the Wahhabi Mahmoud Dicko; and the copresident of this council and spiritual leader of the Ansardine Association, Sufi M. Cherif Ousmane Madani Haidara (not to be confused with the Ansar Dine Terrorist Group, led by Iyad Ag Ghali). Both are able to mobilize hundreds and thousands of people. Both express political opinions and do not hesitate to remind political leaders of their capabilities to affect political issues. Debates on the role of Islam and religion in public life in Mali are ongoing. Religious leaders also participate in Mali's peace and reconciliation process. In summer 2016, they unsuccessfully mediated between the pro-government groupe autodéfense touareg Imghad et alliés (GATIA) militia and the MNLA affiliated to the rebel CMA in an effort to break the impasse in Kidal. In 2017, the High Islamic Council president was mandated by the former prime minister, Abdoulaye Idrissa Maïga, to conduct a good

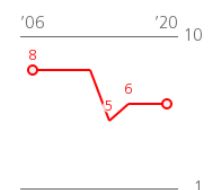
### State identity

7



### No interference of religious dogmas

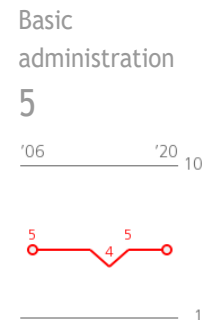
6



offices mission in the center and north of the country to engage with the leaders of the jihadist groups, including terrorist leader Iyad Ag Ghali.

It is clear that an established formal administrative structure is a lasting achievement of Mali's democratization and decentralization process. However, administrative performance is highly inconsistent across the country. Whereas the central administration is relatively powerful, local administrations remain weak due to insufficient implementation of devolution plans, including human and financial resources and capacities, to regional and municipal administrations. During the 2012 crisis, government employees fled the regions affected by the crisis, further weakening the administration in these regions. The responsibility for delivering basic services fell to village leaders, particularly in northern Mali. The presence of the state administration throughout the country remains limited. Access to drinking water and basic social and health services are also limited as result. Although the peace agreement included the use of interim authorities in communities at the local level to ensure the restoration of basic social services, plans were slowly implemented. Regional level Interim authorities were installed between February and April 2017, and are now operational, marking a tangible step toward improving governance in the former strongholds of the Tuareg rebellion. The new regions of Taoudeni and Menaka in the north are functional. In both regions, municipalities have been created. The governor of Kidal returned to office in September 2017 after an absence of more than three years, after a cease-fire agreement between CMA and Platform took effect. Governors in other regions have resumed their duties, except in Taoudeni. However, due to insecurity in central Mali, basic administration is fragile and inconsistent in this region. Jihadist groups have taken over state and administration tasks. State staff have either fled their posts or have been kidnapped or killed by the jihadists. Jihadist groups have forced municipalities to close schools (by the end of 2018, nearly 800 schools countrywide had been closed, and teachers as well as other basic administration staff have refused to return).

New regions were created in June 2018: Bougouni, Koutiala and Dioila. Governors were appointed, but the districts within these regions are yet to be defined. This reorganization of Mali into 20 new regions has been interrupted by security issues. Although all institutions are now in place, performance must be proved.





## 2 | Political Participation

According to the 1992 constitution, the president is elected by popular vote and can serve up to two five-year terms. The president appoints the prime minister. Members of the 147-seat unicameral National Assembly serve five-year terms. Debates between candidates for the presidency and legislature are televised, and all parties receive free broadcast time prior to elections.

The 2018 presidential election, which took place on July 29 and August 12, saw the re-election of the outgoing President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (with 67.2% of the vote) against his opponent in 2013, Soumaïla Cissé (32.84% of the vote). 24 candidates participated in the first round, which included one woman. Despite the volatile security situation and bloody incidents in northern and central Mali, the election environment was relatively calm. The pre-election phase featured widespread concerns over the transparency of the vote. These concerns solidified between the two voting rounds, when the president's main rival, Soumaïla Cissé and the majority of the candidates formed an uneasy coalition to challenge the results. International election observers found the election to be relatively well conducted in the places where it was held, though a fragile security situation led to very low turnout in parts of the north and the center of the country.

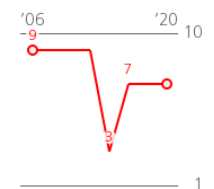
The legislative elections were initially scheduled for 2018 but were postponed to April 2019 by the Constitutional Court. The National Assembly demanded the postponement to allow for better organization of the poll, further implementation of the institutional reforms stipulated by the Algiers agreement and the mitigation of political tensions.

While local elections took place in November 2016, regional elections scheduled for December 2017 were postponed until July 2019 because various armed groups objected to the timing.

Since the 2013 elections, political representatives have held considerable power to govern. The influence of the military on Malian politics in the period that followed the 2012 coup d'état has declined since presidential and parliamentary elections were held. The prime minister sets national policy, and the parliament enacts new laws. However, the quasi-consensus politics (the presidency's majority in the National Assembly) leaves little space for parliamentarians to debate new policies and projects. In 2017, members of the political class proposed the establishment of an official commission to enact a range of constitutional reforms. The proposal was rejected by IBK, who favored a parallel proposal drafted by the minister of state for reform and French experts. Opposition political parties and some members of civil society created the platform "Antè a bana" ("Don't touch my Constitution") to prevent the head of state from imposing his favored version of reform. Despite the fact that the National Assembly adopted the referendum project, IBK suspended the constitutional referendum, which is now scheduled for March 2019.

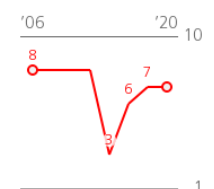
Free and fair elections

7



Effective power to govern

7



Islamic actors exert a tangible influence on politics and legislation. The High Islamic Council attempts to influence the Malian government to declare Koranic schools educational institutions and integrate these religious schools into Mali's national education system. In December 2018, under pressure from the High Islamic Council which had called on thousands of people to demonstrate, the government withdrew a plan to introduce sex education in schools.

External actors can exert an impact on the power to govern. In 2018, the World Bank pushed the Malian government into accepting a debt restructuring of the EDM, a state-owned electricity company that is on the verge of bankruptcy. In the area of defense, the international military mission Barkhane, MINUSMA and G5 Sahel support the Malian government in the fight against terrorism, which Mali would not be able to pursue alone.

Mali's constitution guarantees the rights of association and assembly, which are detailed in the 2005 law on the creation and management of associations. In general, permits to assemble are relatively easy to obtain. Associations in Mali are generally free to manage their activities and express their opinions. Many NGOs operate in Mali without state interference. However, observers have noted the prominent role of large established NGOs with ties to the political elite. These can overshadow smaller and more innovative groups, particularly when it comes to competing for funding.

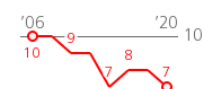
An ongoing lack of security in some parts of the country limits NGO activities. Violence committed by security forces can also restrict NGO activities. In Kongsiga in December 2017, one person was killed and 15 were injured after the police opened fire on demonstrators who had blockaded the city hall for a week in an attempt to force the mayor's resignation. In response to post-electoral demonstrations, initiated primarily by Soumaïla Cissé and other opposition candidates, the governor of Bamako, in November 2018, made a decision to prevent demonstrations in Bamako at Liberty Place and Independence Boulevard, two areas which are symbols of the democratic reforms of the 1990s.

The constitution guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the press. However, according to international observers, the government has on occasion restricted these rights. Mali's media landscape has evolved over the past 20 years. Today, Mali can count around 200 political parties, 400 free radio stations, 120 newspapers and several thousand associations. News websites are popular with the educated elite. However, internet access remains limited. Mali's media was considered among the most free in Africa before the 2012 crisis. This has changed. Whereas the southern part of Mali has a relatively open media environment, the northern part of the country experiences restrictions. Despite the variety and openness, there is almost no investigative journalism.

Intimidations of journalists, including death threats, were frequently reported in 2017 and 2018. In July, an influential blogger known for his criticism of political

Association /  
assembly rights

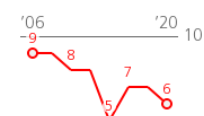
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1

Freedom of  
expression

6



1

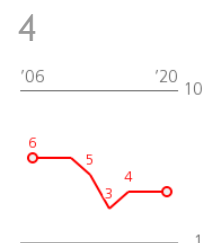
corruption and highly critical of the 2017 constitutional reform was shot in the chest. He survived the attack, but it was unclear whether anyone had been arrested in connection with it. Another journalist was sentenced to prison with five months probation for having denounced the president of the Constitutional Court for having taken XOF 900 million during the presidential elections. Defamation is a crime that can draw fines or imprisonment. In April 2017, a journalist was sentenced to six months in prison after being convicted of defaming the president of the National Assembly. The government began restricting media licenses in 2017 and closed approximately 50 radio stations in June 2017 for operating without a license, shortly before planned protests against the constitutional referendum. The government also temporarily restricted social media use in 2017, in an apparent attempt to prevent activists from organizing protests against constitutional revisions. In Mali's central region, two journalists were kidnapped by jihadists. Despite the fact that overall conditions for the media have improved in northern Mali, reporting on the situation in the north remains dangerous.

### 3 | Rule of Law

The separation of powers is enshrined in Mali's constitution. The National Assembly acts as a check on governmental activities and deliberates on draft laws, but only to a certain extent. For instance, Malian deputies who belong to the presidential majority tend not to question the decisions made by the government and they approve draft laws without assessing the long-term impacts. In 2016, the president established a committee to draft revisions to the 1992 constitution. Despite protests from opposition groups that the revision would strengthen the president's powers, the bill was adopted by parliament in June 2017. However, the scheduled July referendum on the changes was indefinitely postponed amid public protests. Conflicts of interest and cases of nepotism exist in the legislature and the executive. The president's son is the head of the National Assembly security and defense commission, and his son's father-in-law is the president of the National Assembly. During his first term, the president created a large coalition of deputies in the National Assembly. This coalition is the so-called presidential majority and represents a degree of complicity between some political parties. It is a continuation of the strategy used by the previous president, who also appointed opposition leaders as ministers and top-ranking officials in the government.

The judiciary is formally independent but does not effectively check the political branches of government. This is due to executive prerogatives in the appointment of judges, limited financial and organizational resources, and widespread corruption within the judiciary.

Separation of powers



Although the 1992 constitution guarantees the independence of the judiciary, the executive branch has considerable influence over it. This is due to the structuring of Mali's judiciary (Supreme Court, the higher council of magistracy, and the Constitutional Court). For example, the president heads the higher council of the magistracy, the body that supervises judicial authorities, while the minister of justice appoints judges and oversees law enforcement and judicial functions. This reduces the credibility and impartiality of the judiciary, as well as its ability to address major internal problems. While a number of judicial officials try to do their job well and to reform the system from within, the Malian judicial system is highly corrupt. Attempts by the ministry of justice to prosecute well-known corruption cases has met with only limited success. The lack of training opportunities and resources, and corruption, contribute to the undermining of the judiciary. When it comes to fighting corruption, judges are not completely free to preside over certain cases.

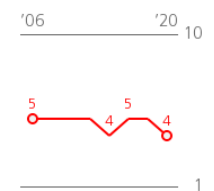
The judicial system does not cover the entire territory of Mali. There are approximately 630 judges and 334 lawyers serving a population of 18.5 million inhabitants. Most members of the judiciary are based in Bamako. Thus, access to justice is difficult for those in rural areas.

In 2018, magistrates went on a 100-day hunger strike to demand improvements to security, work and financial conditions. Judicial personnel have been subject to security threats. Militant attacks have prompted some judges to vacate their posts. In November 2017, Malian judge Soungalo Koné was kidnapped in central Mali by armed men who asked for the release of detained militants in exchange for his freedom.

In everyday life, civil servants demand and accept small bribes. This generates resentment and distrust among the public, inflates the costs of services provided, and affects political stability. High-ranking bureaucrats receive substantial bribes from organized crime networks, in return for overlooking illegal activities or protecting such networks from prosecution. There is frequent bribery in public procurement. Since 2003, the auditor general has been a key actor in reforming public administration procedures through the corrective measures he has recommended. However, some of these are yet to be implemented. Efforts to strengthen the auditor general's abilities to document financial irregularities continue. The number of his staff (main office and regional offices) has increased in recent years. The auditor general's 2015, 2016 and 2017 reports were only published in 2018. The latest report, published in October 2017 and covering 2015, estimated Mali had lost XOF 70 billion (€100 million) through fraud and bad management. Abuse of public office is rarely sanctioned. However, abuses now at least attract adverse publicity. One example is the case of a new presidential airplane purchased for artificially inflated prices in 2014.

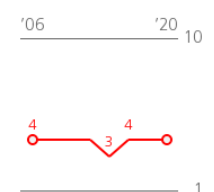
#### Independent judiciary

4



#### Prosecution of office abuse

4



The 1992 constitution included civil rights (e.g., the freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion) which, generally, are respected. Mali has ratified all United Nations human rights treaties and regional treaties, with two exceptions: the international covenant on civil and political rights' second optional protocol that pertains to the abolition of the death penalty, and the Statute of Rome that pertains to the International Criminal Court. The constitution bans discrimination on the basis of gender, religion or ethnicity and these provisions are generally respected. However, women are legally disadvantaged and there is societal discrimination against some ethnic groups that are practically treated as slaves.

The status of human rights in Mali has worsened over the review period due to increased levels of violence and insecurity. Terrorist attacks and violence have progressively spread from the north into several southern regions and Bamako, Mali's capital city. Human rights violations include murders, torture and severe mistreatment. Little effort has been made by Malian authorities to investigate and hold to account people who are implicated in these violations.

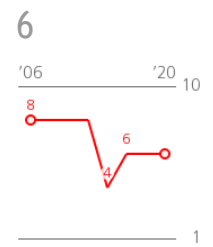
Trials are public, and defendants have the right to an attorney of their choice. However, the judicial system suffers from a large backlog in processing cases, which leads to long periods of pretrial detention. Detainees are not always charged within the 48-hour period set by law, and arbitrary arrests are common. Since the 2015 hotel attack in Bamako, a national state of emergency has remained in force until the present day. The state of emergency grants more authority to security services to search homes without a warrant, detain suspects, and restrict protests. These powers have often been abused. Neglect and mismanagement within the judiciary have resulted in major problems such as insufficient staffing and logistical constraints. These have hindered efforts to address issues like impunity from the law, violations of the right to due process and vigilante justice.

More than 80% of legal disputes in rural areas are resolved outside the formal legal system. Several cases of mutilation or death of albino children were recorded during the 2018 pre-electoral phase despite efforts by civil society associations to defend the rights of albinos.

Since 2015, the residents of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal regions have had better access to legal services. Several local courthouses and jails were renovated. Returned prosecutors, judges and judicial police officers, who had left during the armed conflict, now face limitations on their ability to conduct investigations outside the major towns due to the precarious security situation. Some had to abandon their posts for a second time when violence flared up and terrorist groups began to attack people in central Mali.

The state has established a mechanism to manage the non-execution of judicial decisions, the "espace d'interpellation démocratique" (EID), presided over by a jury of citizens and human rights defenders from Mali and elsewhere. In this forum,

## Civil rights



citizens can openly denounce any abuses they have endured from state bureaucrats, in cases where they do not comply with decisions made by the courts. The forum is intended to put public pressure on the government and to ensure decisions are respected. The forum also submits a series of recommendations about preserving the rights of Malian citizens. Unfortunately, 70% of EID recommendations are not implemented.

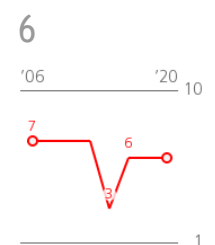
#### 4 | Stability of Democratic Institutions

The 2013 presidential and parliamentary elections signaled a return to democracy, and the re-establishment and functioning of Mali's democratic institutions. However, at present many regional and local institutions are still not functional. They lack adequate personnel and are ineffective. This is especially true in the northern regions of the country: when the violent attacks and occupation occurred in 2012, most local administration and school personnel fled. The absence of state authorities meant that basic social services were no longer provided to communities. At that time, the governors of Kidal, Taoudeni and Menaka relocated to Gao, and attempted to fulfill their duties from there. The peace agreement includes certain interim regional and local authorities delivering basic services over a maximum period of 24 months. Although the interim authorities are in place, their performance depends on financial resources that they frequently lack. In the run-up to the latest national elections, the vast majority of interim authorities lacked the finances to organize the election at a local level.

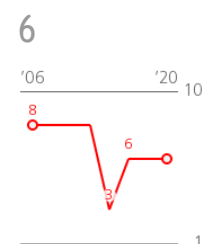
Mali's democratic institutions are characterized by uneven performance. Sometimes, their tasks are not clearly defined, which can create confusion. For example, the ministry of justice and the ministry of reconciliation have overlapping roles regarding the mission of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This has created leadership and management problems. The effectiveness of state institutions and agencies have been hampered by the frequent reshuffling of the cabinet (eight times between 2013 and 2017).

All key players in the south are committed to maintaining democratic institutions. They are in favor of democracy and reject authoritarian rule. Thus, the separatist and Islamist insurgencies are exceptions in Mali's history, and the 2013 elections illustrated this. The 2013 elections were deemed credible by most observers, and the leaders of the separatist Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) never seriously questioned the principles of democracy, despite their agitations for a separate "Azawad" state. The incumbent president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, won the majority of votes in the 2018 presidential election.

Performance of democratic institutions



Commitment to democratic institutions



## 5 | Political and Social Integration

In Mali, political parties are extremely weak. Unlike in many African countries, Malian parties are not organized along ethnic lines. Party agendas, rarely programmatic, are tailored to the ambitions of particular individuals. Candidates regularly shift their allegiance from one party to another. All political parties have the legal right to campaign, but they face major constraints such as low levels of funding and the inability to organize their members and mobilize voters. There is also a great deal of personalism and thus clientelism in Mali's political parties.

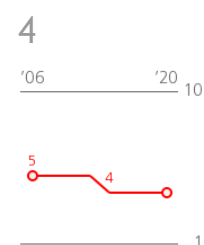
At present, only 19 out of 185 registered parties are represented in the National Assembly. However, for the second time in Malian political history, a significant opposition group exists in the National Assembly, fulfilling the traditional role of democratic political opposition after the legislative elections of December 2013. There is a tendency to build coalitions in "blocks" which results in some degree of stability. However, this tendency also reinforces the position of the presidential majority, and the notion of consensus politics that characterized the previous president's rule (2002-2012). This strategy of co-optation has stifled the emergence of a genuine opposition.

The large number of parties has done little to link state and society. While more established parties, such as the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) and the Rally for Mali (RPM) party, garner broad support in general, they do not represent well-structured social groups. The coalitions built around the larger parties and represented in the National Assembly do not address popular discontent. There is a deficit of democratic participation and poor performance by political representatives.

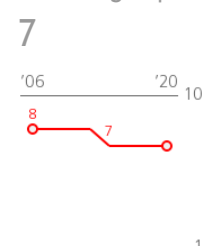
Mali's elaborate networks of mutual support, cooperation, and interest aggregation encompass economic (trade, agriculture, hunting), ethnic (communities of Lebanese origin, Chinese, Fulani) and social (Islamic, NGOs, education) activities, ranging from the local community to the national level.

During the review period, several interest groups have proliferated. Due to the lack of effective protection by the Malian state against multiple threats (terrorists, armed groups, and inter-community conflicts), self-defense groups have formed in northern and central Mali. Besides the well-known Ganda Izo and Gando Koy groups acting in the north, the Fulani association "Tabital Pulaaku" defends the interests of Fulani people in Mali's central region. The Dogons defend themselves through the group "Dan Nam Ambassador." Several unions represent the interests of their members in several professions, including health, education and the judiciary. Strike action is common and can paralyze the sector in question. For example, in 2018, the magistrate's strike paralyzed the justice sector for several months. Mid-2017, the huge movement "Do not touch my Constitution" gathered thousands of people and forced the Malian government to abandon its proposed constitutional reforms. Other influential groups include the National Youth Council and Muslim religious groups.

Party system



Interest groups



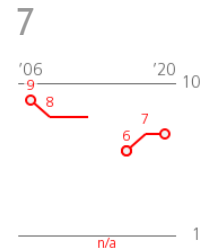
Approval of democracy has decreased slightly during the review period. In an Afrobarometer survey of 2017, 67% of Malians stated a preference for democracy over other forms of government, down from 75% in 2014. Malians also reject – by huge margins – authoritarian rule in the form of presidential dictatorship (88%, up from 86% in 2014) and single-party rule (76%, down from 84% in 2014). Military rule is rejected by 64%, which is lower than the continent average. This corresponds to the high level of trust in the defense forces (82%) and possibly reflects the need for security felt by many Malians.

Malians approve democracy but are dissatisfied with the democratic system they have. In 2017, only 12% of surveyed citizens considered Mali a full democracy, while 50% considered Mali a democracy with major problems. Approximately half of citizens trust democratic institutions, such as the presidency (56%), the electoral commission (51%), and the National Assembly (49%), but only 38% trust the courts. Malians may agree that a “strong state” is desirable, but they have divergent views regarding what purposes a strong state serves, and what norms ought to frame its operation.

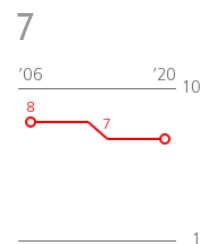
Malians tend to display high levels of mutual trust and an ability to self-organize, particularly the rural population (73% of the total population). However, there is a need to build trust within networks and across social divides along a broadly north-south axis. Extended family networks are the most important social structures in terms of mutual self-help. Such traditions produce strong social capital. They also lead to preferential treatment between family members in public administration (e.g., clientelism and corruption). The extensive network of civil society organizations across the country – often with international donor support – provide both welfare services beyond family networks and act as a substitute for the state, particularly in rural areas. They also provide income through small enterprises to individuals and small groups. High levels of self-help remain a persistent legacy of the failure to integrate rural areas into Mali’s socioeconomic development. During the political crisis, and since then, many community leaders have been involved in organizing basic public services.

In Mali, diverging interests are balanced through a dominant political culture of consensus. A system of so-called “joking cousins” relationships (“sinankunya” in the Bamanankan language) cuts across many of the various ethnic groups. Both consensus and “joking cousins” elements make social conflicts relatively opaque: conflict often disappears behind a veil of consensus, especially to foreign observers. Finally, and somewhat contrary to the “convergence” elements above, is the deeply rooted culture of public protests. Among the legacies of Mali’s democratization process that date back to the early 1990s is the ability of different key players (e.g., interest groups, community associations, and other non-state stakeholders) to organize street protests, to air their views and grievances against the government in Bamako. Malians are able to form loose coalitions to fight a common cause. The

### Approval of democracy



### Social capital





opposition to the proposed constitutional reforms in 2017 is one example. The most recent example (2018) is the controversy surrounding a textbook of sex education for adolescents, including a chapter on sexual orientation, interpreted by the president of the High Islamic Council as an apology for homosexuality. The textbook was to be introduced in the national education plan, but the plan evoked a mass protest by believers and non-believers from different religions. The project was subsequently withdrawn by the ministry of education.

## II. Economic Transformation

### 6 | Level of Socioeconomic Development

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked 182 out of 189 countries on the HDI (2017). Its HDI is low (0.427). There are substantial inequalities in Mali. The population is estimated at 18.5 million (World Bank 2017). With an annual growth rate of 3%, it is estimated that the country's population will almost double by 2030. Life expectancy at birth is 58.5 years. 58.2% of the Malian population lives in multidimensional poverty; 79.4% live on less than \$3.10 a day (2009). Poverty is considerably more prevalent in rural areas than in urban ones and income distribution is highly uneven in both. Although no recent data for the Gini index is available – in 2009 it was a rather low 33.0. Mali's Gender Inequality Index score of 0.677 points to the substantial marginalization of women.

Even though Malians face major structural obstacles, informal economic activities and the widespread practice of subsistence farming provide better living conditions than econometric statistics might suggest.

The quality of formal education is low. It is estimated that 77% of the population have access to primary education, 43% to secondary education, and only 5% to higher education. One-third of the population is able to read and write (HDI, 2017). Illiteracy affects women (78%) more than men (62%), reflecting broader gender inequality. The quality of schooling outside the urban centers is extremely poor. At the end of 2018, around 800 schools were closed, most prevalently in the central region.

Migration and remittances represent an important source of finance to the Malian economy. Remittances have a very significant impact on migrants' families, leading to increased incomes, poverty reduction, and improved health and educational outcomes. It represents 11% of GDP. Mali has experienced droughts, warfare and displacement (in the northern regions of Mali), and agricultural production is extremely vulnerable to weather conditions. Food security remains one of Mali's major challenges.

Question  
Score

Socioeconomic  
barriers

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The humanitarian situation remains precarious, especially for the 2.5 million people who depend on humanitarian aid, such as the internally displaced (approximately 110,000) and refugees (approximately 136,000). However, these difficult conditions have not deterred some 70,000 displaced people and refugees from returning home.

Economic indicators		2015	2016	2017	2018
GDP	\$ M	13099.5	14010.8	15339.6	<b>17196.7</b>
GDP growth	%	6.0	5.8	5.4	<b>4.9</b>
Inflation (CPI)	%	1.5	-1.8	1.8	-
Unemployment	%	7.7	9.7	9.4	<b>9.6</b>
Foreign direct investment	% of GDP	2.1	2.5	3.6	<b>2.1</b>
Export growth	%	26.6	-8.9	2.2	<b>6.3</b>
Import growth	%	46.5	11.2	-0.2	<b>1.8</b>
Current account balance	\$ M	-697.4	-1015.1	-1209.9	-
Public debt	% of GDP	30.7	36.0	36.0	<b>37.3</b>
External debt	\$ M	3691.9	3788.9	4374.6	<b>4896.2</b>
Total debt service	\$ M	106.4	120.2	153.8	<b>254.3</b>
Net lending/borrowing	% of GDP	-2.6	-3.5	-1.7	-
Tax revenue	% of GDP	14.1	15.4	15.9	-
Government consumption	% of GDP	16.4	16.7	16.9	<b>16.6</b>
Public education spending	% of GDP	3.8	3.1	-	-
Public health spending	% of GDP	1	1.2	-	-
R&D expenditure	% of GDP	0.3	-	0.3	-
Military expenditure	% of GDP	2.4	2.6	3.0	<b>2.9</b>

Sources (as of December 2019): The World Bank, World Development Indicators | International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Economic Outlook | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Military Expenditure Database.

## 7 | Organization of the Market and Competition

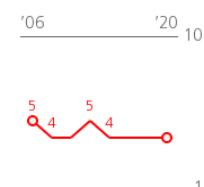
Mali's institutional framework for market competition remains weak, despite the fact that the country's rank in the latest World Bank report on the ease of doing business has improved to 145 in the 2019 Doing Business report.

In the Heritage Foundation's 2017 index of economic freedom, Mali ranks 102 out of 180 countries. It is ranked 12 in the region. The Heritage Foundation notes a number of improvements and "some significant reforms" in terms of diversification, poverty alleviation, tax administration and privatization, but highlights the need for change in other areas, such as curbing corruption and attracting FDI. Conditions have improved when it comes to starting a business, obtaining construction permits, registering property and resolving insolvency disputes. Starting a business in Mali takes 11 days and five procedures, with a cost of 56.8% of GNI per capita. Mali's starting a business score amounts to 84.05 out of 100 (rank 110 out of 190). However, these improvements have little bearing on the large informal economy (which is responsible for 90.5 % of total employment) and is centered around commercial activities. The retail and trade activities that occur in the streets and markets of numerous villages and towns are not reflected in official statistics. Furthermore, the severe security problems in the country make Mali less attractive to (foreign) investors.

Mali's national competition law is administered by the national competition council, the role of which is limited to consultative functions, and the national directorate of commerce and competition, which does not constitute an independent authority. The competition authorities share competencies with sector regulators. Monopolies exist at the state level. There are rules and regulations (anti-monopoly law) that prohibit monopolies and oligopolies, but corruption severely impedes their implementation. Mali's economy remains highly concentrated and competition mostly takes place between the formal and informal sector. Thus, price-fixing oligarchies exist in many economic sectors, such as in grain trading and rice production (office du Niger). Furthermore, the degree to which foreign rather than domestic interests are perceived as benefiting from impunity taints the opinion and degree of trust of the general population, especially over the privatization of formerly nationalized industries (e.g., railroad Transrail). The large and vibrant informal sector helps keep retail prices competitive. The modern retail distribution sector is small.

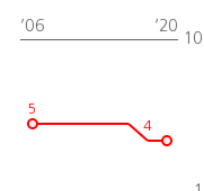
Market organization

4



Competition policy

4



Mali is a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Through the Common External Tariff (CET) of WAEMU and ECOWAS, Mali levies an average tariff of 12.1% (2017). However, Mali also uses the option given to each ECOWAS country to apply additional taxes to certain products, including spirits, livestock and mining products (even those from the WAEMU zone). Mali also imposes a special import duty on sugar from non-WAEMU states. While Mali does not subsidize exports, enterprises that export products may enjoy tax concessions. However, government officials often extort unauthorized “fees” during cross-border transport activities, and some individual companies take part in large-scale fraud related to import licenses. To improve its export strategy, Mali is establishing an export promotion agency for domestic firms. There is no stock exchange in Mali; the only Malian enterprise listed on the Bourse Régionale des Valeurs Mobilières (BRVM), based in Abidjan, is the Bank of Africa (since 2016).

The competitiveness of Mali’s goods and services is constrained by the country’s landlocked location and the high cost of inputs such as energy, water, communications, credit and transport. One of the most significant obstacles to Mali’s economic development remains the lack of financial services.

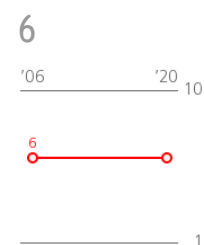
Mali has been a WTO member since 1995. Along with the other cotton four countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, and Chad), Mali continues to seek the abolishment of subsidies for cotton exports (WTO consultative framework mechanism on cotton, 2014). Mali enjoys the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries’ privileges under the Cotonou Agreement. West Africa (Mali belongs to this group) and the European Union concluded in February 2014 negotiations for a regional Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Mali has signed the regional EPA.

Mali is eligible for preferential trade treatment under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and for Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) financing and insurance products.

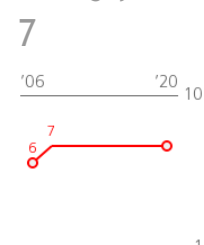
The institutional foundations for a banking system exist, but are vulnerable to extreme dependence on external factors. There are 13 commercial banks operating in Mali. In 2017, Coris Bank, a West African bank, moved to Mali. Although the degree of foreign ownership of banks remains low, Mali’s second-largest bank, Banque Internationale du Mali (BIM) was purchased by the Moroccan group, Attijariwafa Bank. This is part of a strategy to develop closer trade, financial and economic ties with Morocco, but also with Egypt and Tunisia.

According to the World Bank, Mali’s banks appear to be adequately capitalized, with an overall capital adequacy of the system (Basel I) of 12.9% in 2013, above the WAEMU average of 10.6%. One small and one mid-sized bank has failed to meet the minimum CAR (Capital Adequacy Ratio) of 8% (Basel I) as of June 2014. Mali’s membership of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the

Liberalization of  
foreign trade



Banking system



supervision exercised by the independent Central African Banking Commission (COBAC/BCAO) contribute to maintaining financial stability. Malian banks have met the IMF's minimum capital requirements (IMF, 2014). The financial system has sufficient liquidity, but Malian banks lack resources for long-term financing. In May 2011, the government created a fund to guarantee private sector activities and offer two- to seven-year loans to enable banks to lend to small and medium-sized enterprises. Weak prudential standards and lax enforcement pose potential problems for banking stability, but reforms are underway. Loan classification and provisioning regulations, capital adequacy, and risk concentration fall short of international standards. The BCEAO, with technical assistance from the IMF, has initiated a gradual implementation of Basel II/III standards, and has taken measures to improve credit information, adopt international accounting standards, and implement consolidated supervision, which is becoming increasingly important given the increased presence of regional banking groups in Mali.

A capital-stock investment company (SICR) was created by the government to buy shares in some companies. However, the banking sector generally contributes little to facilitating economic growth. Access to bank and financial services remains restricted, due to a lack of sufficient guarantees of loans, especially to the average person.

## 8 | Monetary and fiscal stability

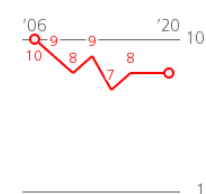
As a member of the African Financial Community (Communauté Financière d'Afrique, CFA), which is guaranteed by the French Treasury, Mali's monetary policy decisions are made by the Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), and the CFA franc is pegged to the euro. There are rising tendencies in West Africa to create a new currency. Discussions are ongoing. Notwithstanding the impact of the political crisis on the economy and, thus, inflation, a return to relative political stability since elections in 2013 has facilitated a resumption of economic growth with moderate inflation. Agricultural production, highly dependent on rain-fed crops has the greatest influence on inflation. From revised data, estimates and projections, inflation is 1.8% (World Bank, 2017).

Mali's macroeconomic framework is founded on robust cooperation with the IMF, World Bank and other international donors. Highly dependent on external lenders, Mali's public debt represented 34.7% of GDP in 2017. External debt in 2016 totaled \$3,787.9 million. The debt service share of exported goods and services was \$122.3 million in 2016. The cash deficit was -3.5% of GDP in 2017.

The Malian government has adjusted the priorities of the budget to address both its immediate security needs and to affect the implementation of the 2015 peace agreement. Two specific measures have budgetary implications. First, the peace agreement includes a process of fiscal decentralization. Second, sustainable

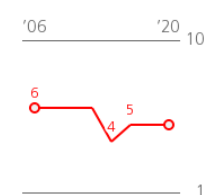
### Monetary stability

8



### Fiscal stability

5



development (FDD) is to form a major component of the peace process. The FDD is expected to help finance regional development projects, especially in the northern regions and accompany the decentralization process. The FDD is being financed primarily through export taxes and other levies targeting specific sectors.

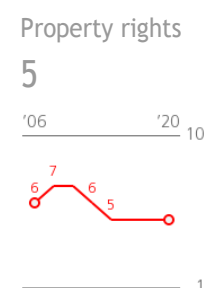
The share of security spending in Mali's budgets has been increasing during the review period, making the allocation of much needed money to social services and development increasingly challenging. A year before the crisis, military spending, as a share of public expenditure was 8.4% (or 2.1% of GDP). However, by 2013 this had risen to 11.4% (or 2.9% of GDP), and by 2017, the figure was 16.5% of spending (or 3.8% of GDP).

Thanks to continued debt management under the IMF's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), Mali's risk of excess debt remains moderate (IMF, 2018; World Bank, 2018). However, the overall budget deficit increased to an unusually high 4.5% of GDP in 2017, primarily as a result of the government regularizing off-budget military spending in current and future budgets.

## 9 | Private Property

In principle, Malian property rights are well defined and regulated. According to the World Bank's 2017 Doing Business Report, registering property in Mali requires five steps, takes 29 days, and costs 11.8% of the property value. Mali scored 8.0 in the quality of land administration index (the average for sub-Saharan African countries is 8.4 and for OECD countries, 22.7). Ubiquitous corruption increases the transaction costs of seeking legal title, which is further complicated by the fact that most land in Mali is not allotted. The contrast between nomads and the settled population complicates the Malian concept of property and customary access rights, and can result in conflict, especially in rural areas. Due to unreliable data on the scope of foreign land acquisition in Mali, there is persistent and growing popular concern – fueled by accusations voiced by Malian civil society actors (e.g., Coalition des Alternatives Africaines Dette et Développement, CAD-Mali) - that the Malian government is supporting land grabs by foreign investors.

The government established the Malian center for the promotion of industrial property (CEMAPI) and charged it with implementing the legal regime of property rights protection, including the WTO's agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS). There are two primary agencies tasked with the protection of intellectual property rights: the CEMAPI and the Malian office of the rights of the author (BUMDA). The BUMDA covers artistic and cultural works. Mali is a member of the African Property Rights Organization (IAPO) and works with international agencies recognized by the United Nations Industrial Development



Organization (UNIDO). Patents, copyrights, and trademarks are protected under Malian law.

In 2014, the Malian government adopted a national strategy for the development of intellectual property rights (SNDPI). The strategy, which is intended to encourage innovation and protect inventors, requires the ministry of industry to provide two years of funding for the initiative. However, the ministry has yet to fund the action plan or implement it. In the context of the limited progress of the national strategy, intellectual property rights have been weakened and have been the object of fierce debate. In February 2015, the Supreme Court canceled an executive order on copyrights, which sought to update copyright laws to include modern technology.

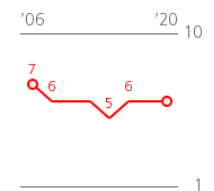
Private enterprises have little significance in the economic system. Most Malian private companies are small and employ few staff.

Private and public enterprises compete under the same terms and conditions. No preferential treatment is given to state-owned enterprises (SOEs), although they can be at a competitive disadvantage due to the limited flexibility they have in their management decision-making. Malian law guarantees equal treatment for financing, land access, tax burden, tax rebate, and access to raw materials for private firms and SOEs.

Mali is in the process of privatizing its SOEs, but a number of SOEs still exist. The government's privatization program for state enterprises provides investment opportunities through a process of open international bidding. The process is non-discriminatory. However, there have been many allegations of corruption. In the past few years, the government has privatized parastatal enterprises including the International Bank of Mali (BIM), the telecommunications company Société des Télécommunications du Mali (SOTELMA) and the cotton oil factory Huilerie cotonnière du Mali (HUICOMA). The Malian government continues to hold shares in the company responsible for cotton production (CMDT) and many banks. The national electricity company (EDM) is partially owned by the state. Private investors have recently sought to reduce their ownership share of the company, while the government has considered options to privatize the energy distribution portion of the company. The government is active in the agricultural sector: the Niger river authority (office du Niger) controls much of the irrigated rice fields and vegetable production in the Niger river inland delta, although private operators have been granted plots of land to develop.

Private enterprise

6



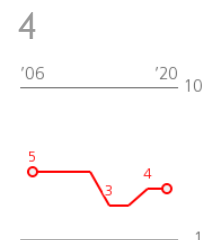
## 10 | Welfare Regime

The state's weak capacity and moderate revenue limits its ability to foster economic inclusion or provide compensation for exclusion. Insufficient health care and social infrastructure affects large segments of society, with almost no effective capital-funded schemes to guarantee welfare. The Malian state is unable to systematically combat poverty on its own. In 2015, Mali's government initiated a process to institutionalize a social protection system, the so-called universal health coverage. By 2018, compulsory health insurance, a medical assistance scheme and mutual health insurance covered approximately 2.2 million people (12% of the total population). This coverage remains low due to the fragmentation of the mechanisms of delivery and the disparity of services provided. The existing health insurance, l'assurance maladie obligatoire (AMO), initially open to employees and civil service agents, had, by 2018, widened its product chain by including the offer of voluntary insurance to everyone. Mali allocation of 1.6% of GDP to health spending has been relatively consistent for a number of years (World Bank, 2017). However, there has been only a slight improvement in basic welfare indicators (e.g., HDI).

The government has increased its efforts to provide social housing to the population (middle class). In 2019, 3,700 social housing units were available for allocation: 25,000 people applied for these homes.

The political crisis, its legacies, and the persistent insecurity in the north and the center of the country have weakened the country's social infrastructure. A large percentage of the Malian population relies on the mutual self-help system provided by the extended family. Malians also take advantage (particularly in rural areas) of the extensive network of civil society organizations, who are often supported by international funding. As with aspects of the informal economy that elude accurate measurement, the safety nets afforded by Malians to members of their networks (e.g., extended family and faith community) are deeply rooted and help protect many from life-threatening poverty. Indeed, this widespread solidarity mitigates otherwise acute – and violence engendering – inequality and cleavages of socioeconomic status. The longer insecurity at the community level continues, the more informal welfare provision capacities will be curtailed, exposing more of the most vulnerable Malians to greater risks.

Social safety nets





Multiple barriers hamper equal opportunity in Mali. Prospects for economic success and access to influence and decision-making authority depend on personal connections. The World Bank's 2017 inequality index puts Mali at 0.678. As of 2017, the overall loss of HDI due to inequality (IHDI) was at 34%.

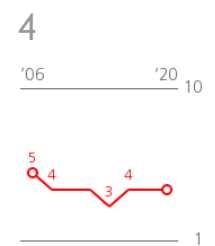
Malian women are not afforded the same opportunities as men. The country has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.678, ranking it 157 out of 160 countries in 2017.

Structural inequality between men and women is legally anchored in the widely contested family law (code de la famille), a barometer of popular resistance to legal mechanisms to enhance gender equality. The gap between female and male literacy rates (78% for women compared with 62% for men) is one indicator of gendered inequality, and mirrors the gender gap in school enrollment rates, which increases the higher the level of education (primary: 0.9; secondary: 0.8; and tertiary: 0.4). This inequality can also be seen in formal labor force participation: 38.6% of women compared to 67% of men). However, women's engagement in the informal economy, most often selling at markets, is substantial. Women's high level of informal economic and civil society engagement, as well as their presence in leading positions in the bureaucracy, is not mirrored in the areas of administration and politics. In 2016, the government adopted a law requiring that 30% of candidates for elections must be women. At present only 8.8% of parliamentary seats are held by women. In government, the number of female ministers has increased. Out of 32 ministers, 11 are women as of December 2018.

Within the broader context of the Islamic resurgence in Mali, popular state-regulated Islamic schools offer scarce or uneven access to opportunities in francophone state. Different education paths result in unequal opportunities. There are also disparities between rural and urban schools. Qualified teachers are deployed to urban schools, while unqualified teachers are generally found in poor, rural areas.

During the 2012 Islamist insurgency in northern Mali, women's rights were substantially curtailed. The 2012 crisis also highlighted the fact that persons considered to be of "slave origin" have been denied opportunities through unjust and illegal discrimination.

#### Equal opportunity



## 11 | Economic Performance

Real GDP growth has slowed in recent years from 7% in 2014 to 5.3% in 2017. The decline was partly due to problems in the primary sector. Primary sector growth reduced from 7.6% to 4.8% between 2016 and 2017, attributed to decreased rainfall. The tertiary sector has continued to grow as a result of renewed dynamism in the telecommunications sector, which has grown at a rate of around 6% since 2014. On the demand side, investment has risen sharply, partly as a result of an increase in private investments for the first time since 2012, and partly as a result of the government's efforts to reduce gaps in infrastructure.

Despite economic prospects remaining positive according to the African Economic Outlook, with a projected growth of 4.9% in 2019 (2018: 5%), the fragile security situation in Mali poses a serious risk.

Public debt stood at 35.9% of GDP in 2018, up marginally from 35.6% in 2017. External debt declined to 24.1% of GDP.

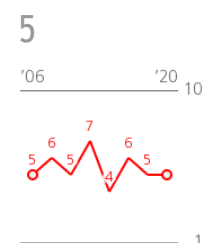
Attempts to modernize the tax administration and broaden the tax base proved successful as tax revenues as a share of GDP increased to 15.4% in 2016. The rate of inflation rose to 1.8% in 2017 as a result of higher food prices and increased international oil prices. Notwithstanding a slight deterioration in the terms of trade (owing to increased oil prices and lower gold prices), the current external deficit (grants included) fell to 5.8% of GDP in 2017, compared to 7.2% in 2016. It is expected to decline further to 5.7% in 2018 due to improvements in the terms of trade, which are likely to improve from -6.4% in 2017 to -0.1% in 2018.

Public finance reforms continue to focus on the mobilization of tax, customs, and land-related revenues. The government's key priority of fiscal decentralization requires transfers of resources to the subnational level. These transfers accounted for 22.9% of budget revenues in 2016 and were estimated account for 23.4% in 2017.

According to the African Economic Outlook, there are three major challenges to socioeconomic development in Mali. First, the security conditions must improve to enhance development. Second, private sector development requires better-managed public investment, more transparency in public procurement and a more equitable distribution of resources across the country's regions and priority sectors. Third, strong and inclusive economic growth is necessary to counter strong population growth of 3.6%.

High unemployment affects young people especially, who represent the largest age group. Unsuitable job training further exacerbates unemployment and the unemployment rate has increased slightly from 7.3% in 2014 to 7.9% in 2017. The employment-to-population ratio aged 15-24 has increased from 38% in 1991 to 50% in 2017 according to the World Bank.

Output strength



## 12 | Sustainability

Mali's considerable environmental challenges (desertification, mining, loss of biodiversity and water pollution) stem from its vulnerability to the effects of climate change. In 2018, Mali ranked 147 out of 180 in the environmental performance index (EPI), improving from its 2016 rank of 174.

Mali's institutional framework for environmental protection was created in the 1990s. The 1992 constitution (article 15) establishes the right to a healthy environment and the duty of the state to provide it. In 1998, the government established a comprehensive legal framework, the national environmental protection policy (politique nationale de protection de l'environnement/PNPE). A national environment and sustainability agency (agence nationale de l'environnement et du développement durable) was created. It facilitates Mali's continued participation as a pilot country in the climate investment funds' scaling up renewable energy program in low-income countries (SREP) program. However, given the lingering impacts of the 2012 crisis, environmental protections have been pushed down the political agenda. Grassroots efforts, rooted in local knowledge and cultural heritage about natural resource management, are a basis on which communities interact with national and international partners, especially on water and forestry issues. They negotiate the optimal balance of formal and informal rules and practices that shape how natural resources are owned, used and managed. In 2018, the national policy for the protection of the environment of Mali was updated in order to address the multiple environmental challenges and measures that are underfunded.

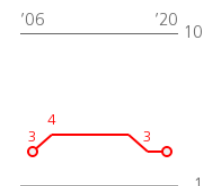
The recurring impact of low rainfall on agricultural production affects economic performance and food security. The impacts of climate change, desertification and drought are also factors that should be considered in regional and global policy contexts in which Mali has limited influence or no membership.

Mali's literacy rate is 33.1% (although it is lower for women than men), one of the lowest in the world. More than a third of young Malians (aged 15 to 24) are literate (39%). Of all children, 77.2% are enrolled in elementary schools, and 43.5% attend secondary school. The ratio of girls to boys enrolled in public and private schools was at 0.8 in 2016. However, ensuring that students regularly attend school and take examinations remains a major challenge. A very small percentage (7%) of students attend tertiary education. These figures have shown a slight improvement in recent years, but there are grave concerns over the quality of education. On average, there is one teacher for every 41 pupils. This ratio may differ from urban to rural areas. Teachers and professors regularly strike for better work conditions.

Mali scored 0.293 in the United Nations education index in 2017. Government spending in the education sector represented 3.8% of GDP in 2015, according to the World Bank. To date, educational policies have improved input indicators. The

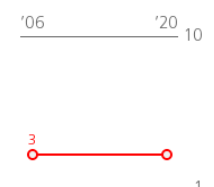
Environmental  
policy

3



Education policy /  
R&D

3



growing popularity of state-regulated Islamic schools (funded partially by Arab states) has contributed significantly to this. The integration of Quranic schools into the national education system should lead to a further reduction of illiteracy among children and young people.

A lack of relevant training opportunities and employment is a major impediment to the rapid socioeconomic development of the country. Only 2% of the Malian population have a university degree. Both domestic authorities and foreign donors consider education a high priority, but poor data collection and use plague the effective design and implementation of successful policies. The finances that the government allocates to the non-formal education sector is insignificant (0.3% of the total education budget) and insufficient to address the need for adult training.

The absence of significant spending on research and development in Mali (0.31% of GDP in 2015) underlines important questions – beyond access, inputs and quality – about the relevance of educational outputs to the Malian and regional labor markets and economies. Mali has just introduced a new ten-year national education program covering the period 2019 to 2029.

## Governance

### I. Level of Difficulty

Mali is ranked as one of the 10 poorest countries in the world (182 out of 189 countries, HDI score of 0.427 in 2017). Several constraints hinder the effective governance of transformation in Mali. Mali is a landlocked country. Almost two-thirds of Mali is in the Sahel region, which is subject to significant climate threats (especially the threat of insufficient rainfall during the growing season). Mali's economy is highly dependent on the agricultural sector. Thus, it is vulnerable to droughts and inundations that regularly affect the northern and eastern regions of the country, impacting a large portion of the national income. In recent years, sub-optimal harvests have made Mali rely more on food and oil imports. The post-transition period shows the lingering effects of the 2012 crisis, particularly in the form of general insecurity from multidimensional fighting (July 2014 to present) in Mali's northern and central regions.

Mali a striking rural-urban socioeconomic gap between the more prosperous urban areas and the poorer rural regions where the majority of the population lives. Socioeconomic development is constrained by extreme poverty – 49.7% of the population lives on less than \$1.90 per day, and 79.4% lives on less than \$3.20 per day (World Bank, 2017). Mali also suffers from a comparatively small educated labor force and formal sector. Despite considerable funding, education remains poorly managed and tangible progress is elusive.

International factors impact Mali's economic and political governance. One of the most aid-dependent states in sub-Saharan Africa, Mali is negatively affected by rent-seeking and patronage-clientelism. While the population struggles to hold its government accountable, powerful donors do so readily. International donors impose conditions or limit the scope of decisions made by the Malian state. Sometimes, they restrict the options available to the state or even overrule the decisions it makes.

Mali's capacity for economic transformation is further limited by its very low degree of integration into the global economy. Indeed, international investors and companies dominate key sectors (e.g., gold extraction and telecommunications), and the huge profits they generate bypass the public financial systems. They contribute little to domestic development. Plans for privatization of the state-owned cotton company has stalled under the current government. The large-scale sale of land has prompted some domestic resistance and international concern.

Structural  
constraints

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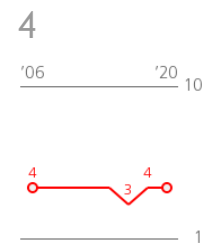
Mali's vibrant civil society organizations have helped strengthen pluralism since the democratic transition in the early 1990s. Since then organizations (e.g., representing peasants, educators and women) that had once opposed the one-party system now struggle to hold the elected regimes accountable. In the past twenty years, the NGO sector has flourished; it is incentivized by substantial funding from donor NGOs, agencies and countries. There are approximately 40,000 civil society organizations in Mali. However, many exist only on paper. It is estimated that 59% of all registered NGOs do not receive enough funding to function. Many organizations have limited internal management and coordination capabilities. NGOs engage in politics to varying degrees and in different ways. Specific interest groups such as women, students, or peasants are represented by large- and medium-sized organizations. They engage in advocacy over issues such as reconciliation, human rights violations, privatization and land grabbing. Service delivery NGOs tend to operate more on business principles and are usually apolitical. They are involved in the social sector (e.g., education and health).

Since the recent armed conflict, new organizations have emerged. For example, COREN continues to act as a vocal defender of the interests of the communities in northern Mali among other groups who also participate in the peace talks. Numerous small NGOs provide welfare services or help establish "small enterprises" in order to generate income outside family networks. These activities are important survival strategies, especially in the rural areas (and in the north of Mali) that are poorly integrated into the national economy. Religious organizations have also flourished in the post-transition environment. Democracy has facilitated vibrant public debates about religion and has led to the establishment of a multitude of religious associations.

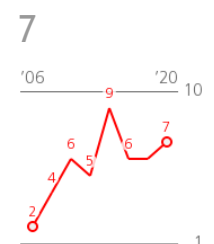
Mali is characterized by tolerance and a political culture of dialog. The intensity of the recent conflict is an exception to the rule. Hospitality ("jatigiya" in Bamanankan) is proudly emphasized in public discourse. The "joking cousins" relationships help to maintain strong ties between Mali's many ethnic groups and reinforces a political culture of consensus-building. Notwithstanding this deeply rooted culture of tolerance, dialog and social mediation, communal conflicts persist, usually over access to resources (e.g., farmland, water, pasture, and sites for artisanal gold mining). The insecurity issues in the northern regions have not been fully addressed. Social divides persist in the context of democratic pluralism, even though state institutions have resumed their functions. This reflects the inability of the state to effectively maintain peace and order – by force as well as through consensus-building – and its failure to significantly reduce crime-related violence outside the most populated areas and regions.

The problems of the 2012 multidimensional crises persist to the present day. Mali faces a severe internal and external terrorist threat, and bloody attacks have occurred in almost all the regions of the country. Long-standing tensions between the more

#### Civil society traditions



#### Conflict intensity



populous non-pastoralist ethnic groups and the Moor and Tuareg pastoralist groups in the north have fueled instability over the decades. The tensions between non-pastoralist (i.e., Bamanan) and nomadic groups (i.e., Fulani) led in 2016 to violent conflicts and murders, especially in the Mopti region, and continue today. Due to the state's incapacity to protect its people, some Fulani communities allied themselves with terrorist groups in order to benefit from the latter's protection and prevent the incursions of bandits who had been stealing their livestock. Under normal circumstances, the Malian state would provide such protection. Self-defense groups have been formed by the Dogon ethnic group to defend their community. Tensions are high among armed Tuareg groups in the north. The 2015 peace agreement can only partly address the problems Mali faces today. The G5 Sahel initiative fighting terrorism and insecurity has limited impact due to a number of factors. In December 2016, a group of Bellah, or so-called Black Tuareg who are enslaved by so-called White Tuareg, protested against the fact that they were not appropriately included in the peace process. The Malian conflict is extremely complicated and multidimensional, and without international support and mediation, there was negligible progress in the review period.

Over the past 20 years, Islam has gained importance as the state has weakened and it is increasingly influential in politics. Courted by the government, religious representatives are able to influence government projects and even derail them. In addition, foreign charitable organizations, among them Arab-speaking NGOs and Islamic preaching movements, have proliferated. In the absence of a functioning state, Middle Eastern NGOs have provided social and security services, thereby spreading their version of Islam. This spread of new ideologies that for the most part challenge the tradition of religious tolerance and Islamic syncretism that has been cherished by southern Malian populations, add another layer of tension and misunderstanding to north-south relations in Mali.

## II. Governance Performance

### 14 | Steering Capability

Mali is striving toward democracy and a market economy. It does this while being increasingly dependent on external support, which brings negotiations with external actors into every sphere of government priority-setting and implementation. The 2012 multidimensional crisis deeply affected the economic and social institutions of Mali. In 2018, the Malian government was working on its second strategy framework for economic growth and sustainable development (CREDD), to cover the following four years (2019-2023). The first strategy framework, which ended in 2018, was only partially implemented. The new strategy relates to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and strategies at national and local levels. Its main objective is to promote sustainable development, accelerate poverty reduction, reduce inequality, increase resilience and consolidate peace across the country. The guidance offered by donors and the discipline they demand remains a contentious point, regularly reported in the national press. These donor relations are likely to be further politicized by opposition politicians and some civil society actors.

After IBK's poor performance during his first electoral mandate (2013-2018), his new government is now set to move on and implement major policy priorities, in cooperation with international actors. With the perceived need to address the country's multiple challenges – peace and security, and social, economic and institutional development – the new government of President Keita should, in theory, be well-equipped to fulfill its role with its newly drafted strategic vision. However, this is threatened by the limited capacity of Mali's government to implement policy measures, its dependence on aid and demands by donors of policy discipline, the common internal clientelistic practices, and outright corruption. With eight reshuffles during his first presidential term, it is difficult to see how President Keita will effectively maintain and achieve strategic priorities.

In this context, the implementation of strategies and policies is often poor. The reasons for this may partly be attributed to a lack of will or a lack of leadership. During the review period, the United Nations, international and national actors requested in vain that the Malian government implement the 2015 peace agreement. A lack of information and communication of new strategies and policies can also impact implementation.

Question  
Score

Prioritization

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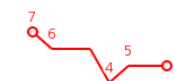


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Implementation

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1



Lacunae in the organization of rushed elections in 2016 and 2018 demonstrate that the government has learned little from evaluations by the administration, civil society groups and international donors throughout Mali's entire democratic period. One unheeded recommendation is the creation of a complete and transparent voter registration system and the NINA electoral card. The underlying issues in the north show other missed learning opportunities. Beyond restabilizing social order and fostering sustainable socioeconomic development as a means of dissuading border populations from turning to criminal activities, policy learning has been slow with regard to working with non-separatist populations (who see the state as either disinterested in or opposed to their concerns).

Significant media freedom and largely functioning markets, particularly in informal sectors, as well as the urban culture of demonstrations all provide mechanisms of feedback to the government. These allow the government to assess the impact and popularity of its policies and alter its approach if necessary. The debates regarding the privatization of the Malian cotton company CMDT are an ongoing example of this, and further highlight Mali's adaptation to external pressure from donors, learning from previous negotiation processes and exhibiting growing self-confidence. However, elite rent-seeking from external funds and international investments in primary sector mega-projects hinder the need to tackle corruption. The political leadership appears unwilling to abandon a deeply internalized high dependence on foreign aid in favor of greater self-reliance. The scope of France's operation Barkhane in the Sahel, as well as the need for an ongoing MINUSMA presence, prove the government's dependence on external support to reform military policy.

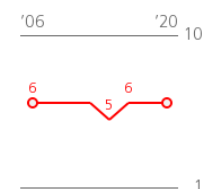
## 15 | Resource Efficiency

The Malian state's efficient use of resources is limited. The national bureaucracy has been reduced from 36 ministries in December 2017 to 32 by September 2018, which indicates a small step toward greater efficiency. Effective administration at the local level is threatened by security issues (see section 1.4). Government employees at the national and local level are often absent from their offices. However, awareness of this problem (and others) is growing due to the auditor general's increasingly effective and visible work. With foreign and domestic efforts to improve transparency, the auditor general's annual reports have triggered substantial public debate and have forced the spotlight on ministries and agencies to publicly explain themselves. However, the irregularities that have been exposed to date have not been officially addressed.

Improvements to Mali's institutional framework returned to the agenda during the review period. Of particular note in the post-crisis transformation is linking spending systems at the central and local levels, improving budget documentation and providing up-to-date information on budget execution. Cultivating professionalism among auditors, however, remains a long-term challenge.

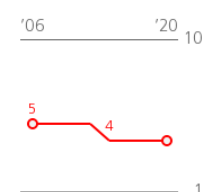
### Policy learning

6



### Efficient use of assets

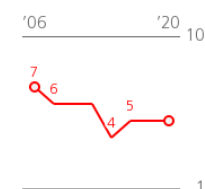
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With the struggles of the current government to find a solid footing, and the as yet unresolved fighting in northern and central regions, five persistent legacies of poor policy coordination continue to trouble Malian politics. Competition for resources to redistribute among clientelism networks, redundancies and tensions among the many government agencies all hamper policy coordination. The increasing importance of support programs from China also threaten policy coherence in light of China's general disinterest in working within the OECD and multilateral organizations' norms and practices for development cooperation. Given Mali's gradual return to "donor darling" status among established donors and partners, and the increasing importance of emerging donors and partners such as China and Turkey, effective policy coordination will remain a complex challenge in Mali's policy environment. Indeed, the ongoing security issues are expanding the scope of relevant regional and multilateral actors in policy formulation and implementation (e.g., G5 Sahel, Integrated Development Authority of the Liptako-Gourma Region (ALG), African Union, ECOWAS, WAEMU and the United Nations). More directly, donor-financed NGO activities further undermine policy coherence. A burgeoning "NGO industry" has emerged to pursue and access international financing, with a large number of uncoordinated and independent NGOs still ineffectively managed by a 2007 reporting system that was introduced to regulate NGO financing. The importance of non-state actors – whether in civil society and aligned with broadly liberal values or not – contributes both to supporting Mali's capacity and also hampers coherent approaches to deploying that capacity.

#### Policy coordination

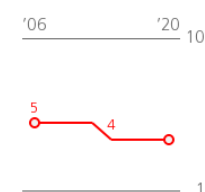
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High levels of corruption among the Malian political elite and bureaucrats have long fueled popular dissatisfaction with the democratic regime. Thus, fighting corruption continues to be high on the agenda. The office of the auditor general continues to investigate cases, with improved financial and organizational support; however, a lack of prosecutions by the prosecutor general of cases provided by the public auditor is a regular complaint. Only in 2018 did the public auditor publish his annual reports for 2015, 2016 and 2017. A study on the implementation status of the public auditor's recommendations, analyzing the period from 2005 to 2017, found that less than half of the recommendations have been implemented. Out of XOF 741.5 billion that was classified as misused, XOF 478 billion were attributed to mismanagement, and XOF 263 billion to embezzlement. Only 6.5% of the identified misuses (XOF 48 billion) have been reclaimed, and in only 6% of cases as legal action was initiated.

#### Anti-corruption policy

4



Maliens have become increasingly impatient with corrupt practices, which are a scourge on Malian society. For example, at the end of 2016, demonstrators demanded justice in the light of the corruption the government committed in 2014 (the purchase of an airplane and army equipment at inflated prices). However, there is little evidence of a willingness on the part of the government to act in the fight against corruption, and to effectively apply existing legislation and prosecution mechanisms. Mali has strengthened its arsenal in the fight against corruption with the establishment of a central office against illicit enrichment, operational since 2018. It also has a

transparency code and law on illicit enrichment as well as a budget line to enshrine the extractive industry transparency initiative (EITI), of which Mali is a member. Concerns over institutional quality and capacity to serve and protect citizens are fueled by rampant corruption, clientelism and rent-seeking behaviors at all levels of society.

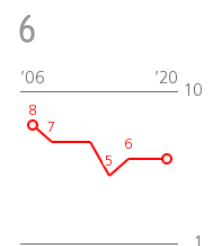
## 16 | Consensus-Building

Rather than coordinating coherent policies toward priorities, the government resolves conflicting objectives into a livable “consensus,” and indeed trades on this capability to defend its record and its future policy agenda. Rhetorically, the main political actors in Bamako agree on deepening democratic peace as a mid-term and long-term goal. Among the non-state groups that occupied northern Mali in 2012, only the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) explicitly declared its adherence to a democratic agenda, while rejecting the form of Mali’s democratically elected regime as one in which they did not recognize themselves or see their concerns addressed. The disagreements about the implementation of parts of the peace agreement and the role played by MINUSMA soldiers point to the persistent divergences among Mali’s major political actors on the means of implementing democratic governance and sustainable peace. This can leave space for deep-cutting critiques and searching questions about liberal politics and economics as well as attacks on the very foundations of the state as it is currently constituted.

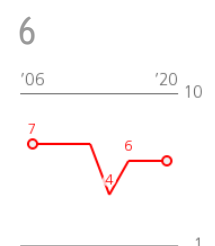
A qualified consensus on market economy principles is informed by a preference less for liberal market ideals than for economic democracy, in which the basic economic needs of all citizens are satisfied. While this does not directly challenge liberal norms, it offers a qualified convergence between reform-minded political actors and elites embedded in the social democratic tendencies of Mali’s political history. As the new government adjusts to the lingering insecurity and sets its sights on issues other than previous government.

While major political actors agree on the broad lines of a liberal democracy and market economy, minor yet still significant non-state groups are less well linked to state or donor funds, and are either less enthusiastic about the status quo forms of liberal democracy and market economy or are more radically alienated from notions of political and economic liberalism. In the Malian context, there is no automatic convergence or allegiance between different anti-reform actors and tendencies (e.g., anti-democratic non-state, anti-status quo civil society, anti-neoliberal civil society, anti-democratic actors, anti-family law, Islamic, faith-based welfare providers). Many groups draw supporters by saying that Mali’s eroded democratic institutions house corrupt, self-serving elected representatives. As the excesses and abuses of the 2012 crisis either recede from memory or are relived in the ongoing insecurity (especially by vulnerable communities and social groups), the status quo experience of a corrupted democracy among many Malians risks increasing the appeal of not-

Consensus on goals



Anti-democratic actors



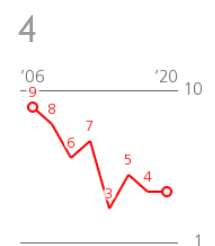
necessarily-democratic means to restore the promise of the 1991 People's Revolution.

Anti-democratic actors can be found among the increasing number of Islamic activists. They, while committed to public deliberation and free media, still tend to oppose some principles of liberal democracy, such as equal rights for women. Thus, they accurately represent the majority view of Malian society, yet their fragmentation into small, weakly organized groups limits their power overall. In this context, the rise of fundamentalist opinions proposed by fundamentalist and Salafi groups imposing conservative interpretations of Islam upon the populus, is hardly contested. In this regard, the High Islamic Council president, led by a Wahhabi, faces little resistance from the government or opposition politicians.

The so-called joking cousin relationships (Bamanan: *sènèkunya*) depolarize structural conflicts at the civil society level. However, when political leaders seek to establish as broad a consensus as possible through elite-driven patron-client relations, this has often merely moderated cleavage-based conflict, and only in the short-to-medium term, leaving little progress toward deeper resolution and leaving such cleavages conflict-prone.

Indeed, existing cleavages have rather been aggravated and uncovered as legacies of the 2012 crisis. They include divides between marginalized northeast and central regions, tensions between the light-skinned Tuareg and Arab population and the black population of northern Mali, with modern-day slavery and human trafficking continuing issues. Also lacking sufficient progress is closing the socioeconomic gap between urban elites and the large poor rural population. Even though the transition-period arguments and conflicts have receded since the establishment of the current government, the nature and rebuilding of the Malian state nevertheless remains a charged issue. This exposes key social cleavages along class and regional lines, which are further complicated by ethnolinguistic identities. Over the last two years, a reduction in cleavages could hardly be observed; the country is socially and politically split as perhaps never before. The worsening security situation brings more to light the cleavages between different ethnic groups in Mali's central region. The government has so far failed to propose an approach for addressing these problems. Instead of gathering all factions of Malian society together to discuss the problems and possible solutions, Mali's government opts for the less ambitious alternatives: in 2017, the national conference of understanding failed to reach a definitive resolution to conflicts because the process was not inclusive. The established law of national understanding grants a general amnesty for those having committed crimes during the crisis without taking into account the sensitivity of the question for many Malians. The Malian government withdrew a proposal to introduce sex education after public pressure led by the High Islamic Council instead of finding an adequate solution after a clarifying discussion, as wished by the Archbishop of Bamako, the Malian Cardinal Zerbo.

Cleavage /  
conflict  
management



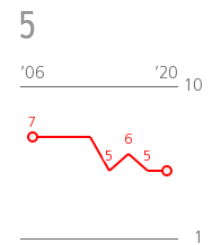
Mali's robust civil society space, which is richly structured with organizations, is not consistently or effectively involved by the political leadership in decision-making, policy implementation or in the monitoring of government performance. Given the freedom and dynamism of the Malian press, one exception is the influence civil society actors have on agenda setting and deliberation and thus on the broadest lines of policy formulation. Mali's dynamic civil society and community-based activists continue to draw attention to the need for military reform and discipline, and accountable governance in light of the ongoing conflict, as well as the accountability of MINUSMA and France's Operation Barkhane. Nevertheless, issues discussed by citizens or even championed by civil society organizations do not necessarily make the political agenda.

Reconciliation between different groups at the regional and local level is a precondition for restoring peace in Mali. The interconnected challenges of reconciling the victims and perpetrators of injustices arising from the rebellion, coup, insurgency, and ongoing fighting among state and non-state groups are daunting and complex. However, the commitment and capacity of Mali's political leadership to reconciliation is significant, as evidenced by the large majority of the Malian National Assembly that voted in March 2014 to establish the truth, justice and reconciliation commission (CVJR). The CVJR must establish the truth about crimes committed in the north between 1960 and 2013 and help build durable peace in Mali. It is quasi-independent, operating under the ministry of reconciliation. 15 commissioners were appointed at the beginning of 2015 and another ten in May 2015, due to tension created by the Coordination of Movements of Azawad (CMA). The CVJR finally embarked upon its mandate in January 2016. As of mid-November 2018, around 10,225 testimonies from victims and witnesses have been gathered. All regional offices are operational. It is still too early to assess the effects of the truth and reconciliation commission.

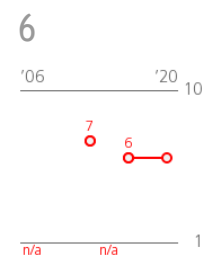
There have also been setbacks to the endeavors to achieve reconciliation. 2016 ended with the beginning of the long-awaited trial of Amadou Sanogo (the former army captain who staged the 2012 military coup) and more than a dozen co-defendants on charges related to the abduction and killing of 21 soldiers. The trial was quickly adjourned until 2017 and has yet to restart.

The national understanding act drafted on the basis of the national charter of understanding which followed the recommendations of the national accord conference, has not yet been adapted by the National Assembly. Human rights organizations find it incompatible with reconciliation and peace efforts as in its current version it provides for a general amnesty for perpetrators linked to the 2012 rebellion.

#### Civil society participation



#### Reconciliation



## 17 | International Cooperation

Among the most aid-dependent states in sub-Saharan Africa, Mali cooperates closely with bilateral and multilateral international donors from the OECD. Based on 2012 OECD and World Bank figures, Mali's level of aid dependency per capita has doubled from \$36.0 per person in 2000 to \$67.2 in 2016.

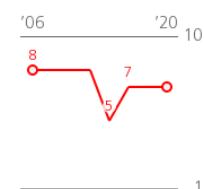
Since 2012, the effectiveness of international support has been more widely questioned, with donors now concerned about the crisis and its aftermath. Although donor evaluations show improved outcomes in specific sectors (e.g., education and health), the effectiveness of support has overall been limited. Elites' pervasive rent-seeking as well as policy implementation inconsistencies have become more evident in retrospect. The past donor practice of ignoring Mali's governance problems and rewarding elites with more financial assistance and aid has come under increasing scrutiny. Donors acknowledge that their own uncoordinated policies have limited aid effectiveness. Although policy dialog continues to harmonize donor activities and align them with Malian government policies, less-coordinated programs such as general and sectoral budget support still work in parallel to harmonized policies.

Mali has diversified its international cooperation beyond the OECD. While Malian relations with China have progressively deepened throughout the last decade, the Arab Spring hindered further cooperation with North African regimes (such as Libya) on infrastructure and food security in the Niger delta. China's support primarily comprises unconditional concessionary loans and infrastructure aid.

The reputation Mali enjoyed as a reliable partner in international cooperation has been quickly rehabilitated with the 2013 elections, but has been tarnished by the lack of effective implementation of the peace process and other necessary reforms to rebuild the country over the past years. IBK has lost credibility due to his insufficient political performance in fostering the peace process. With the increasing threat posed by the security situation, which saw fighting spread from northern regions to the center and even into the south, international partners supporting Mali in the fight against terrorism have become more nervous vis-à-vis Mali's government. Due to the need to implement the peace agreement, the Malian government has been engaged in a pact for peace with the UN to accelerate its implementation and to enhance coherence of international efforts in Mali.

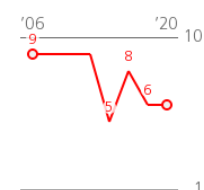
Effective use of support

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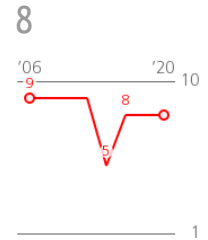
Credibility

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Mali cooperates with regional and international organizations as well as neighboring countries. It aims to promote peace and security as well as economic and sustainable development and prosperity. Just as Mali's former governments actively participated in international and regional initiatives and promoted regional integration, President Kieta was quick to reiterate these same commitments when he thanked ECOWAS members for responding to Mali's needs. In receiving assistance from this regional body, Mali benefited from a return on previous investments. Malian soldiers had served among ECOWAS forces during the crises in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The temporary suspension and subsequent reinstatement of Mali's African Union and ECOWAS memberships, and the role of Algeria in hosting peace negotiations are all part of an effective regionalism of which Mali has been a strong proponent. The Islamist attack in January 2016 in Burkina Faso and the assault in Côte d'Ivoire in March 2016 have led to increased regional cooperation over security. The creation of the G5 Sahel, a new regional cooperation between Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad with headquarters of the joint force in Mali, is currently focused primarily on security issues despite its broader mandate. G5 Sahel member states hope to better tackle security issues in a coordinated way, with sustainable financial support under chapter VII of the United Nations charter. In February 2018, the EU and other donors pledged €414 million for the joint forces. A further €2.4 billion was raised during a donor conference in December 2018.

### Regional cooperation



## Strategic Outlook

Mali is yet to overcome the multidimensional crisis it endured in 2012. The country must address the root causes of the crisis as well as the implications of the conflict. The new government must work hard at creating the necessary conditions for long-term security, democracy and economic development. It should combine short-, medium- and long-term measures (in both the military and civilian sectors) to address security threats, deepen democratic governance, accelerate equitable social and economic progress, and improve the efficacy of international donor assistance.

With regard to security, the government must put more effort than ever into the fight against terrorism, organized crime and armed groups that currently undermine the state and democratic institutions. Several international forces are operating in Mali as part of the joint action against terrorism; there is a need to ensure effective coordination between the various organized forces and to disarm self-defense groups so that the state can regain its monopoly over the use of force in the country.

The Malian government needs to create the conditions to improve governance (accountability, transparency and efficiency) at the political and administrative levels. It is important to establish a framework for dialog so that political parties can agree on essential common interests for Mali, including national unity, defense issues and national reconciliation. In order to strengthen the democratic process, political parties must participate in the shaping of political decisions by leading vigorous, but constructive, debates. The judicial system requires amendments, anti-corruption policies should be implemented, and measures must be taken so that the population begins to trust the system again. These actions will serve to reduce tensions and raise trust in public institutions. With regard to peace and reconciliation, the government must be proactive and address with urgency the current obstacles to the implementation of the peace agreement in a truly inclusive and coherent manner. By the same token, the groups that have not yet signed the peace agreement should be taken into consideration in order to reduce the risk of armed conflicts.

Mali has witnessed major electoral turnovers that have, however, not brought about palpable improvements to the country and its population. The country needs deep-running political change that goes beyond a renewal of top-level politicians and results in the introduction of political alternatives that can facilitate transformation in Mali.

With regard to social welfare and economic growth, anti-corruption measures could help to promote equity and sustainable socioeconomic development. It is imperative to recognize and treat education as a topic of national importance. The Malian government should emphasize the importance of education in all its forms, and especially for young people and adults, in order to include the two third of its illiterate population in economic growth.

Stable security conditions are key to development and economic growth. For this reason, Mali needs to undertake major peace-building initiatives in order to reap the benefits of ongoing political and economic reforms. The country must consider new ways to make the technical assistance and aid flows it receives from foreign partners more effective. These actions would contribute positively to accelerating Mali's development.