

# Ex post evaluation – Mali

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**Sector:** Education facilities and training (11120)  
**Project:** Municipal Training and Education Centre CFCT – infrastructure component (2008 66 327\*)  
**Implementing agency:** Centre de Formation des Collectivités Territoriales (CFCT)



## Ex post evaluation report: 2019

All figures in EUR million	Planned	Actual
Investment costs (total)	5.75	5.84
Counterpart contribution	0.35	0.63
Funding	5.40	5.21
of which budget funds (BMZ)	5.00	4.95
of which co-funding (EU)	0.40	0.26

\*) Random sample 2017

**Summary:** The construction of a training and education centre for administrative staff and elected representatives of Malian regional authorities was intended to create a lasting and functioning institution in Bamako for training staff at the local and regional level. The improved skills of municipal staff and elected representatives were to improve the quality and sustainability of public services and the quality of governance at the local level. Indirectly, the better provision of public social and economic infrastructure was to have a positive impact on the living conditions of the population and thus also contribute to alleviating poverty. The FC project was embedded in the Municipal Development and Decentralisation DC programme.

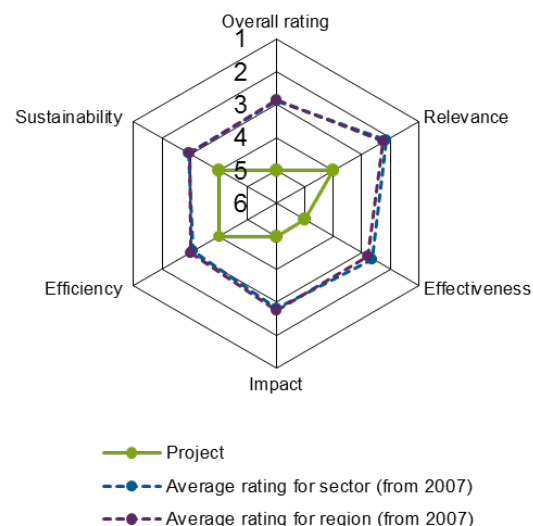
**Objectives:** Overarching developmental objective (impact): The objective of the DC programme was to improve basic public services, the conditions necessary for sustainable economic development in the regional authorities, and to strengthen good governance. To emphasise the impact level, this was detailed for the evaluation as follows: the living conditions of the local population (material objective) as well as the conditions necessary for sustainable economic development were improved, and good governance strengthened (structural objective). The objective of the FC measure (outcome) was the sustainable use of the training centre for the training and education of specialist and management personnel as well as elected representatives (material objective) to facilitate the efficient and competent fulfilment of their mandate (including supplying the population with basic public services) in the context of decentralisation (structural objective).

**Target group:** Staff and elected representatives of the regional authorities, and indirectly the local population.

## Overall rating: 5

**Rationale:** The Malian government's financing of the training centre's running costs is completely inadequate, meaning that the training capacity that has been developed is barely used. Significantly cheaper alternatives, such as renting premises for decentralised training in the various regions, were not examined when designing the project. Due to the running costs of the training centre it is difficult to switch to a decentralised training structure.

**Highlights:** Making alternative use of the training centre is urgently recommended, but such a solution is difficult to implement due to the strong competition between the different institutions and ministries.



## Rating according to DAC criteria

**Overall rating: 5**

### Ratings:

Relevance	4
Effectiveness	5
Efficiency	4
Impact	5
Sustainability	4

### Relevance

At the time of the appraisal in 2009, the decentralisation process in Mali was initiated already for some time. However, the quality of services at the municipal level in particular was still inadequate. This was due not only to the low proportion of state transfers to decentralised levels, but also to the lack of availability and the low levels of skills and qualifications among administrative staff at the local level. Consequently, the measures were designed to address the high training needs of administrative staff and elected representatives, and were thus potentially suited to improving the skills of administrative staff and decision-makers at the local level.

The underlying results chain (sustainable use of the provided training opportunities → better training and education of municipal decision-makers → efficient and competent fulfilment of the decentralisation mandate → improvement in the quality of public services and local governance → contribution to improving the living conditions of the local population) is comprehensible and potentially suitable for helping to solve the core problem. The results chain is based on the assumption that the quality of the training is appropriate; in the context of the DC programme, this was to be ensured with the help of GTZ (now GIZ) and the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM). The effectiveness of this results chain also crucially depends on whether the second problem of the lack of transfers, which leads to inadequate funding at local level relative to the responsibility transferred, is tackled at the same time.

Basing the size of the training centre on the needs identified at the project appraisal is comprehensible on a fundamental level. However, the training requirement potentially changing over time and the possibility of being able to give a flexible response were not taken into account in the project design. Meanwhile, there are about four times as many staff as in 2009. This development is also due to the lack of human resources in the local governments at the time of the project appraisal. In response to this situation, the local governments have started to recruit the overwhelming majority of their staff without the knowledge and approval of the central government. This means there is currently a need for staff training that far exceeds the centre's overall capacity.

The 2002 official poverty reduction strategy<sup>1</sup> of the Republic of Mali identified the consolidation of democratic development as a key strategic tool for economic development. This included strengthening decentralisation, deconcentrating power, increasing popular participation in political decision-making, as well as respecting and implementing the principle of subsidiarity.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the government has adopted an action plan<sup>3</sup> to implement the decentralisation targets. The main policy objectives here are training of elected local representatives, improving the financial resources of local governments, providing information and raising public awareness. However, the Malian decentralisation reform at the time was very much donor-driven. Overall, interest in fiscal decentralisation was already weak at that time, even though the project was facilitated by a few influential people at the time, particularly in the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Governments (MATCL). As a result, the project was only partially aligned with the interests

<sup>1</sup> CSLP (Cadre Stratégique de Lutte contre la Pauvreté) – Decision Point Document, May 2002

<sup>2</sup> Section: Consolidation du processus démocratique, participatif et de décentralisation, pp. 47 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Action Plan for Consolidation and Decentralisation

of the partner government. Given the Malian government's reluctance towards fiscal decentralisation, the financial risk of securing running costs at the time of the project appraisal was correctly identified, but this was not sufficiently taken into account in the project design, nor were adequate attempts made to remedy it.

To mitigate this risk, the project design relied in particular on the contributions of other donors to finance the training centre. An agreement was reached with the EU for it to finance the establishment of the training centre. However, the basic approach of a central training centre versus decentralised training in the regions was not coordinated with donors. For cost reasons in particular, the donors insist that training measures organised by the training centre should take place in the regions.

Against this background, greater consideration should have been given to alternative project concepts at the project appraisal. These could have responded more flexibly to the unpredictable development of the decentralisation process, in particular fiscal decentralisation, as well as carrying lower cost risks. Such an alternative to centralised training with a high initial investment for the construction of the training centre had been implemented already by German TC between 2008 and early 2015 in five cities across the country. However, this approach was not discussed at the time as an alternative to a central training centre; instead, it was merely understood as short-term and rapid support for the partner. Nonetheless, the fact that no significant investment was required argued in favour of this concept, as the training was given in rented premises. Running costs (transport, accommodation, meals, etc.) were also lower, there was greater practical relevance and the teaching took place in the respective local languages. Drawbacks included the weaker learning environment and the poorer morale among the staff of the local governments. However, these disadvantages are acceptable given the high financial risk. Another alternative would have been to build a much smaller central training centre on a suitably large property in an initial phase. As soon as the Malians had demonstrated sufficient financial commitment, the building could have been extended in a second phase. Occasional peaks in demand during the first phase could have been covered by using rented premises in the regions.

Even though the core problem was correctly identified, the overall concept for solving the core problem was inappropriate, both at the time of the project appraisal and from today's perspective. No flexible response could be given to the unpredictable fiscal decentralisation processes, despite an alternative low-risk solution essentially being implemented since 2008/2009, even though at the time this was only deemed to be an interim solution until the central training facility was constructed. The decentralised approach was not abandoned until early 2015 when the newly built training centre was ready to open its doors. Overall, the relevance is rated as unsatisfactory.

**Relevance rating: 4**

### **Effectiveness**

Objective of FC measure at outcome level: the sustainable use of the training centre for the training and education of specialist and management personnel as well as elected representatives (material objective) to facilitate the efficient and competent fulfilment of their mandate in the context of decentralisation (structural objective). The target achievement based on the indicators of the FC measure can be summarised as follows:

Indicator	Status PA, target PA	Ex post evaluation
<p>(1) Number of students enrolled in the training centre is in line with forecasts:</p> <p>(a) Initial training of staff</p> <p>(b) Further training of staff and elected representatives at the training centre</p>	<p>a) 330 per year</p> <p>b) 4,600 per year</p>	<p>a) Not achieved: 0 (2015/ 2016), 400 (2017)<sup>4</sup></p> <p>b) Not achieved: 851 (2015); 626 (2016); 799 (2017)</p>
<p>(2) Since 2011 at least 80% of all administrative staff newly hired (regularly and irregularly) at the local governments have completed the relevant training courses at the training centre.</p>	<p>Initial value 2008: 0 %</p> <p>Target value PA: 80 %</p>	<p>Not achieved: 400 administrative staff, estimated 6 %<sup>5</sup></p>
<p>(3) Percentage of enrolled students in the initial training who successfully complete the training cycle.</p>	<p>80 %</p>	<p>No result yet<sup>6</sup></p>

The unusually high value of indicator (1a) in 2017 is attributable to the training of 400 staff at local governments recruited without the prior approval of the central government, who were subsequently regularised by the central government. It is unlikely that such a procedure will repeat itself. For this reason it is assumed that use will be considerably lower in subsequent years.

The strikingly low target achievement of the indicators (1a) (except 2017) and (1b) can be explained by the wholly inadequate financing of the training centre's running costs by the Malian state, and by the higher training costs of the centre compared with training in the regions. This is why the other donors insist that training they finance, which is organised by the training centre, is carried out in the regions (see the Relevance section).

Indicator (2), which also takes the training of officials recruited irregularly by the local governments into account, equally falls far short of the planned target achievement, with an estimated 6% of recruited and trained staff.

The inadequate use of the training centre is also evident in terms of person-training days. The number of person-training days estimated for training at the centre was 37% lower than planned in 2017 (planned: 65,900; actual: 41,593), despite the fact that an unusually large number of staff underwent basic training that year compared to other years. Even taking into account the training provided by the training centre in the regions, the number of person-training days in 2017 was 19% lower than originally planned (planned: 65,900; actual: 53,535).

No results are yet available for indicator (3). Based on the feedback from various donors, however, we can assume the training courses are of an acceptable quality. That said, given the low use of the training centre in overall the quality of the courses has only a limited influence on the target achievement.

### Effectiveness rating: 5

<sup>4</sup> The training of the 400 staff began in 2016.

<sup>5</sup> In 2009 there were about 4,000 administrative employees at the local governments; in September 2016 it was 13,628 administrative employees. Extrapolating the figures, there were 6,750 administrative staff in 2011, and so another 6,900 were recruited by 2016.

<sup>6</sup>For the initial training completed in December 2017 there are currently no final tests. Apart from that there was no initial training in the new training centre.

## Efficiency

The construction costs of the training centre amounted to almost 600 EUR/m<sup>2</sup>, which in view of the quality achieved are in line with the standard costs in the country and the plans.

Due to construction delays the consulting costs increased from the initial figure of 8% to 15%. The delays were due, among other things, to the civil war between 2012 and 2013. Under these circumstances, the increase in consulting costs is appropriate.

Despite the reasonable construction and consulting costs, no investment costs would have been incurred, if the decentralised training courses had been continued in the regions (see Relevance). This means that the entire project costs could have been used for alternative purposes. This illustrates the extent to which the project was inefficient in terms of allocating funds. The efficiency is therefore deemed unsatisfactory in overall, despite the reasonable production efficiency, especially since any alternative use of the buildings in the future – as a school, for example – is rather dubious given the strong competition between the various ministries.

**Efficiency rating: 4**

## Impact

Overarching development objective: The living conditions of the local population (material objective) and the conditions for sustainable economic development have improved, and good governance have been strengthened (structural objective). Within the scope of the ex post evaluation, the target achievement is assessed based on the following indicators:

Indicator	Status PA, target PA	Ex post evaluation
(1) 60% of the population (differentiated by age and gender) are satisfied with the municipal services (administration, basic social services, energy supply).	40%, 60%	Achieved: 2011: 75% <sup>7</sup>
(2) Improvement in the quality of local governance, measured in terms of the share of: (a) local authorities conducting an annual public consultation on the budget report (b) the budgets of the regional authorities approved on a timely basis by the supervisory authority	(a) 12%, 50%  (b) 30%, 60%	(a) Achieved: 58% <sup>8</sup> (2014)  (b) Achieved: 98.5% <sup>9</sup> (2013)

Until the ex post evaluation, only 400 of the 13,638 staff members in the 761 local governments received 90 days of initial training at the training centre, and only 16% of the total Malian administration officials received some form of training or education. Even taking into account that the decentralised training was managed by the centre, it is not plausible that the project made a significant contribution to achieving indicators 1 and 2.

<sup>7</sup> GIZ: Nationwide customer satisfaction survey

<sup>8</sup> Part A of the 2013/2014 Report

<sup>9</sup> Based on a random survey of 396 local governments by TC. Data could not be collected for the 103 local governments in the three northern regions due to the dysfunctional administration.

Indicator (1) (satisfaction with municipal services) was achieved well before the training centre was ready for operation. The situation is similar with indicators (2a) and (2b). The indicators were already exceeded before the training centre started operating, and therefore, their fulfilment cannot be plausibly linked to the project.

**Impact rating: 5**

### **Sustainability**

The risk to the certainty of ongoing financing is materialised. The training measures which began in 2008/09 – still decentralised at that time, and continued from 2015 in the recently completed training centre in Bamako (as well) – suffered from the outset due to totally inadequate financing, even though the donors contributed a substantial portion. This explains why only 6% of the staff have received initial training so far, and only a small minority of the elected representatives have received further training at the training centre. In actual fact, the Malian state has essentially financed the fixed costs of the training centre in recent years (e.g. administrative staff, maintenance/repair) and the donors have covered the irregular training course expenses (e.g. teachers, rented rooms, fees). In the Separate Agreements of the financing agreement it was agreed that the Republic of Mali would (a) significantly increase its subsidies for the training centre, (b) develop and establish a mechanism for making a direct contribution from the local governments to the centre as part of the ongoing fiscal decentralisation reform, and (c) reserve at least 30% of the Dotation d'Appui Technique (DAT) from the Fonds National d'Appui aux Collectivités Territoriales (FNACT) as a financing window for the training of regional authority staff. Although the Malian state had increased its contributions by the time of the evaluation – albeit with major fluctuations over the years – neither a fixed mechanism for a direct contribution from the local governments nor an increase from the current 15% to 30% of the DAT was made compulsory. The donor community continues to make a large financial contribution to the running costs of the training centre (2015: 41%, 2016: 20%, 2017: 75%) without being able to finance much of the necessary training. At the time of the evaluation mission, there were no specific plans to significantly increase the Malian share of the financing, as was revealed in discussions by the Ministry of Regional Authority; this fact should also be considered against the background of the general stagnation in fiscal decentralisation.

On a positive note, the administrative board meeting of the ANICT (Agence Nationale d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales) resolved in September 2018 to make a substantial increase in funding for the training centre from 2019 onwards. The DAT proportion (Dotation d'Appui Technique, financing window for the training centre) from the FNACT (Fonds National d'Appui aux Collectivités Territoriales) is thus supposed to increase from 15% to 50%.

Even without taking depreciation on the constructed buildings into account, the running costs for training in the regions are significantly lower than in the training centre in Bamako. This is mainly due to the higher travel costs for the central solution in the state of Mali, but also to higher costs for accommodation and meals. Therefore decentralised training in the regions, organised by the training centre, is a prerequisite for many donors to finance training courses. The construction of a central training centre has resulted in a lasting commitment to a less favourable cost structure.

Income from renting overnight accommodation and classrooms amounted to just 2.5% of total expenditure in 2017, and thus did not make a significant contribution to sustainable financing. The lack of transparency and understanding of costs in the public sector, and especially in the training centre, means there is no realistic potential for improving the financial situation.

The training centre, which began operation at the beginning of 2015, still has no visible need for repairs. However, there are minor indications of less care being taken with handling buildings and equipment, implying higher maintenance costs in the future.

**Sustainability rating: 4**

### Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency** and **overarching developmental impact**. The ratings are also used to arrive at a **final assessment** of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

<b>Level 1</b>	Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations
<b>Level 2</b>	Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
<b>Level 3</b>	Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
<b>Level 4</b>	Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
<b>Level 5</b>	Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
<b>Level 6</b>	The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Rating levels 1-3 denote a positive assessment or successful project while rating levels 4-6 denote a negative assessment.

### Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected).

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The **overall rating** on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Rating levels 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while rating levels 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (level 3).