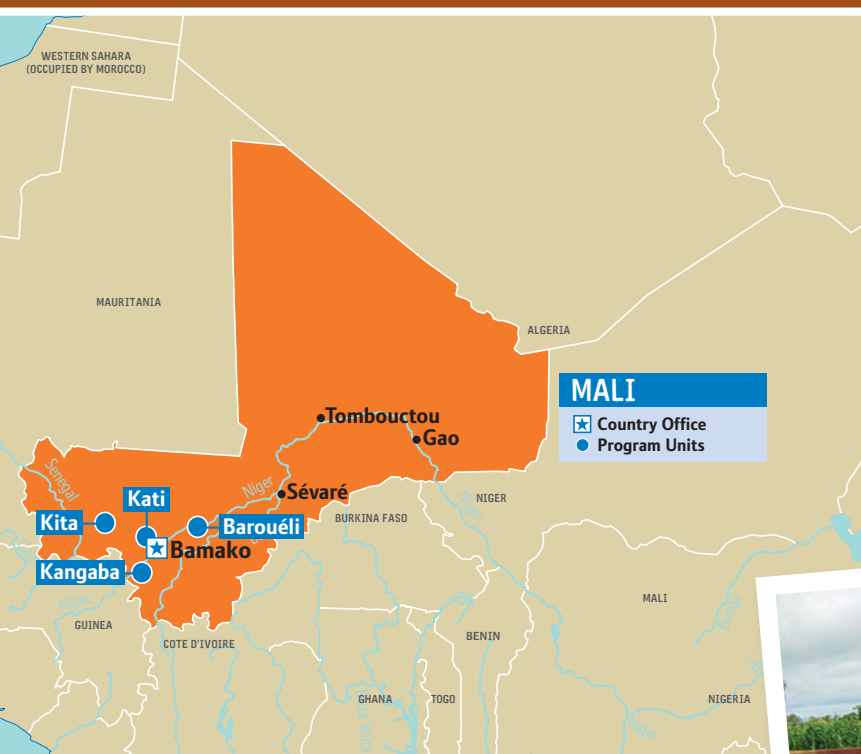


# A YEAR IN MALI

## SUMMARY REPORT 2011

Plan is supporting birth registration campaigns



### About Mali

Mali is located in Western Africa. The majority of the population of 12 million is concentrated in the country's south.

More than half of Mali's population live in extreme poverty.

Plan has been working in Mali since 1976. We work in partnership with the government, NGOs, children's and youth groups, as well as community organisations.

### Problems affecting the children of Mali

- Insufficient health services and poor sanitation
- Children lack access to a decent education
- Child labour and other abuses of children's rights
- Over 85% of girls and women have undergone female genital cutting



Children playing at a pre-school.

## PLAN'S PRIORITIES IN MALI

### 1 Child and maternal survival

- Providing mosquito nets and training to effectively prevent malaria – a primary cause of child death
- Constructing and promoting safe, clean water sources
- Working to prevent HIV and AIDS and care for those affected by it

### 2 Promoting and providing access to education

- Giving literacy training to adults (less than a quarter of the population can read and write)
- Improving the quality of primary schools and evening classes
- Providing nursery programmes

### 3 Working to protect and promote children's rights

- Supporting birth registration campaigns
- Working against child exploitation and abuse

### 4 Improving household economic security

- Working to support the poorest households by helping with food production and expanding income sources
- Increase access to savings and loans services

By being a child sponsor, you have directly supported projects like the ones below. Your ongoing support sustains our long-term development work which impacts the lives of children, their families and communities for generations to come.

Together we are making an invaluable difference to the lives of people in Mali.

To learn more about Plan's work in Mali visit:

[www.plan.org.au/ourwork/westafrika/mali](http://www.plan.org.au/ourwork/westafrika/mali)



Woman involved in soap making business.

## CASE STUDY: RESTORING HOPE

Thirty-four-year old housewife Fatou was understandably distraught when she learned she had contracted HIV: "In my mind's eye I could see my children as orphans in the near future," she explains. "When I learned I had AIDS I gave up all hope."

People with HIV and AIDS, particularly women like Fatou, face stigmatisation and social exclusion from the community in which they live. Besides having to cope with the fear of ill health and death, this means they frequently become destitute and unable to support themselves and their children.

To help women like Fatou, Plan is working in Kangabeto with the JIGIYA Association of People Living with AIDS. Rates of HIV and AIDS are higher than the national average in Kangabeto. And it appears to be on the increase because of unsafe sexual practices linked to the extensive gold-mining and trucking industries in the region.

Plan tries to help women fight the stigma they face as well as develop prevention, treatment and care services around the disease. Last but not least, we aim to develop income-generating activities for people affected.

Through her involvement with the JIGIYA Association, Fatou has achieved economic security and a new sense of self respect.

"Thanks to the association, I have come to terms with my disease and I have hope again," she says.

### New skills

Fatou is not alone. Forty-two women in Damballa Somono have benefited so far.

"When I learned that I was HIV positive, I thought about nothing but death", says Bintou, 32. "I despaired. But with the counselling and help of the association, I understood that I still had many things to live for and that with treatment I still had a chance for a meaningful life. Over time, I have come to accept my status and to actively seek out the continued counselling of the association."

Twenty-two of the women have improved their income by starting soap making businesses. Twenty others are now involved in retail sales.

"Thanks to the subsidy given to me by Plan, I was able to start a retail spice and fresh vegetable business," says Bintou. "This has enabled me to remain a part of my community, to improve my life and that of my children. I personally invite anyone suffering from HIV and AIDS to come out of the closet and to become part of an association that can help them comes to terms with the disease."

Fatou herself received training in soap-making. "The fact that I can still contribute financially, has helped me negotiate my place in our family," she explains. "Because of my earnings I can support myself and pay for my children's school fees."

This valuable work means that women can continue to make a living and remain part of their communities and to improve the lives of their children.

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## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2010

- Tackled the spread of malaria, HIV and other diseases by training 150 community health management officials this year. We also reached 25,495 people with health information sharing.
- In Plan areas, 92% of children under five and 47% of pregnant women now sleep under anti-mosquito bed nets
- Helped 838 severely malnourished children improve their diets
- Trained 2,667 teachers to improve their skills and raise education standards



Children pumping clean water from well into buckets.