

Action brief

Community advocacy for institutional strengthening of the multisectoral approach to nutrition through the management of Economic, Social and Cultural Development Programmes (PDESC) in Mali



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Country: Mali

Themes: Coordination and capacity strengthening

Sub-themes: Analysis/guidance for institutional frameworks (national/subnational), including coordination mechanisms

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Overview



Mali is facing an unprecedented food crisis that exceeds the last peak in 2013/2014, at the beginning of its crisis. Between October and December 2021, almost 1.2 million people needed emergency food assistance, almost three times more than the year before. By June 2022, the number of people who needed emergency assistance reached approximately 1.8 million. The deterioration of the food crisis is part of a wider trend of a rapidly worsening humanitarian crisis: nearly 6.3 million Malians are in need of emergency assistance to access food and nutrition, water, health, education, social protection and shelter (source: FONGIM/ Food Security Cluster). In addition, cereal production in the 2021 season was down by about 15% compared with yields from the 2020 season and by 10.2% compared to the average for the past five years (2016–2020).

This concerning situation of increasing food needs and decreasing production of cereals for mass consumption could be corrected through a community advocacy strategy to strengthen the management of economic, social and cultural development programmes (PDESCs)¹ in municipalities, circles and regions.

This strategy is implemented using three tools developed by the Nutrition Coordination Unit, in partnership with all stakeholders in the multisectoral approach to nutrition, and led by the regional government and decentralization minister, who is responsible for the institutional strengthening of PDESC management bodies.

The three tools are:

- a guide to analysing the mainstreaming of nutrition in the PDESCs.
- the functional management capacities self-assessment tool of the Regional, Local and Municipal Steering, Coordination and Monitoring Committees for Development Actions (Comités Régionaux, Locaux et Communaux d'Orientation, de Coordination et de



Suivi des Actions de Développement – CROCSAD, CLOCSAD and CCOCSAD),¹ which is the sole management framework for the National Nutrition Policy for the SDGs through the Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development Framework (Cadre de Relance Économique et de Développement Durable – CREDD 2018–2023) with a “three-one” approach: one leadership (governor, prefect and sub-prefect); one planning framework (PDESC); and one monitoring and evaluation framework (the PDESC programmatic and financial performance monitoring dashboard).

→ the programmatic and financial performance monitoring dashboard for the management of nutrition mainstreaming in the PDESCs.

The optimal use of these three tools enables the establishment of a mutual accountability mechanism that excludes no one from the multisectoral approach to nutrition.



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Objectives of the action brief

To strengthen the mutual accountability and good governance mechanisms of the multisectoral approach to nutrition at the level of municipalities, circles and regions, through two aspects:

- a culture of responsibility among all stakeholders in the multisectoral approach to nutrition, through evidence-based decision-making
- working with all stakeholders to ensure that no one is excluded from the PDESC development vision, with nutrition as a gateway (linked to 12 of the 17 SDGs): active link between the 2021–2025 Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan (PAMN) and the PDESCs



Period covered

Resource design was staggered over three years. This initiative forms part of the implementation of the 2021–2025 Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan, through its focus area No. 6: “Strengthened governance and accountability in the field of nutrition.” These resources were designed during the COVID-19 pandemic and the political and security crisis in Mali.



What action was taken?



By regularly holding sessions of the Intersectoral Technical Committee on Nutrition (which brings together all the focal points of the government's ministerial departments), the multisectoral platform for nutrition makes it possible to communicate with all stakeholders at the central level. As a result, a growing number of sectoral policies, such as those related to agriculture, water and sanitation, have more of a nutrition focus. However, the PDESCs, which are at the intersection of all the nutrition-focused policies, did not incorporate nutrition activities. Given this finding, one of the recommendations from the July 2019 forum was to develop tools for including nutrition in the PDESCs.

These three resources were developed in an inclusive and participatory manner, with all SUN networks and relevant staff under the coordination of the Ministry for Regional

Government and Decentralisation. These aspects will inform the performance measurement framework of PAMN 2021–2025 focus area No. 6 “Strengthened governance and accountability in the field of nutrition.”

Good governance in the management of PDESCs through the multisectoral approach to nutrition (particularly at regional and **develoved** level) is a key concern for governments, citizens, development partners and other stakeholders. The objective is to achieve an acceptable return on investment from the scarce resources made available to the decentralized and **develoved** authorities, in order to “ensure that each Malian has a satisfactory standard of nutrition for their well-being and for national development.”

Four elements are essential to meeting these challenges:

1. Communicating with all stakeholders regarding the multisectoral approach to nutrition to make nutrition a political priority and ensure financial commitment to the PDESCs
2. Strengthening collaboration among nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive sectors
3. Strengthening coordination between stakeholders around the development vision of the PDESCs, with nutrition as a gateway
4. Forging multisectoral partnerships in search of intelligent agreements



What would the country do differently?

- Ensure the building of capacity among the various actors involved (governors, prefects, sub-prefects, etc.) at regional and community levels on the multisectoral approach to nutrition and the challenges related to governance and accountability.
- Pursue an inclusive approach through an interactive and participatory process involving all key actors (state sectors, civil society organizations, technical and financial partners, community stakeholders) from the various nutrition sectors in Mali.

- Establish better coordination with existing technical frameworks for nutrition at regional and decentralized levels by introducing them into the governance bodies referred to in the objective.
- Pursue communication on the multisectoral dimension of nutrition in order to promote ownership of this approach in the various sectors by all nutrition stakeholders.



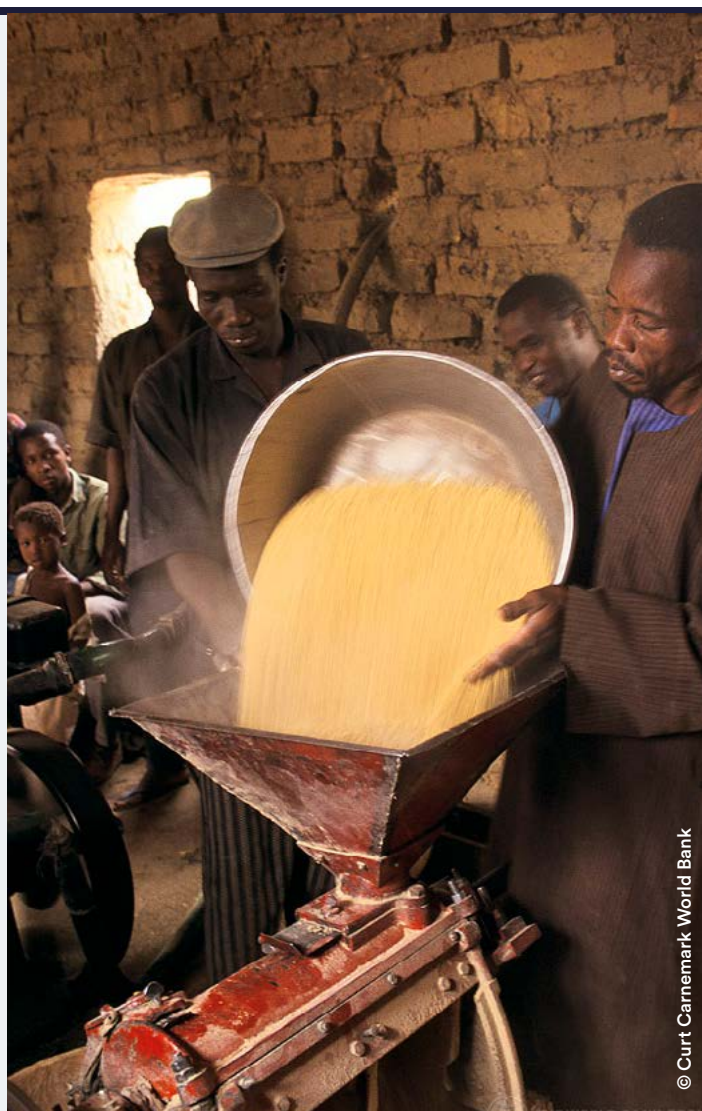
Adaptation and applicability

Opportunities:

- Existence of documents defining the legal framework for strengthening decentralization and devolution systems.
- Existence of information and management subsystems and human resources for strengthening decentralization and devolution systems.
- Existence of good governance bodies that take into account the essential needs of all parties. (Progress in the decentralization of development responsibilities represents an opportunity to develop those resources.)
- Existence of decentralized sectoral programmes for health, education, water, etc.

Threats:

- Difficulties in the political and security situation, as is currently the case in Mali.
- The poor reliability of data on the management of nutrition-specific or nutrition-focused sectors does not allow for evidence-based decision-making.



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Next steps

The mid-term review and final evaluation of the 2021–2025 PAMN will enable the continuous improvement of resources used for institutional strengthening of governance bodies.

Endnotes

- 1 Decree No. 08-095/PRM of 21 February 2008 on the creation of Regional, Local and Municipal Steering, Coordination and Monitoring Committees for Development Actions.



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