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MALI GIRLS LEADERSHIP AND EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION (GLEE)

Adolescent girls in Mali confront a host of barriers to educational access. Although enrollment rates for boys and girls have risen over the last 20-30 years, a gender gap has persisted nationally, with girls enrolled at a lower rate (63.4 percent gross enrollment rate in lower primary school) than that of boys (74.8 percent).¹ The ongoing conflict has further prevented girls from enrolling and staying in school. There is a mutually reinforcing relationship between adolescents' health and their educational attainment. Quality education is particularly effective in empowering women to make decisions that improve their health and that of their families. Access to education, in turn, is impacted by girls' health status, particularly regarding childbearing.

The USAID-funded Mali GLEE project builds upon other programs to support and leverage efforts by the Government of Mali (GOM) and civil society to increase girls' educational opportunities in the country.

OBJECTIVES

Our theory of change for GLEE posits that to increase girls' enrollment and success at school, change is needed at the level of girls themselves and within their social groupings and institutions: their peers, families, schools, healthcare facilities, communities and the structures that support them. The three-year, \$15 million GLEE project seeks to achieve three objectives:

- 1) decreased barriers to quality education for adolescent girls;
- 2) improved safety of adolescent girls in schools and their communities; and
- 3) increased knowledge and adoption of positive health behaviors among adolescent girls.

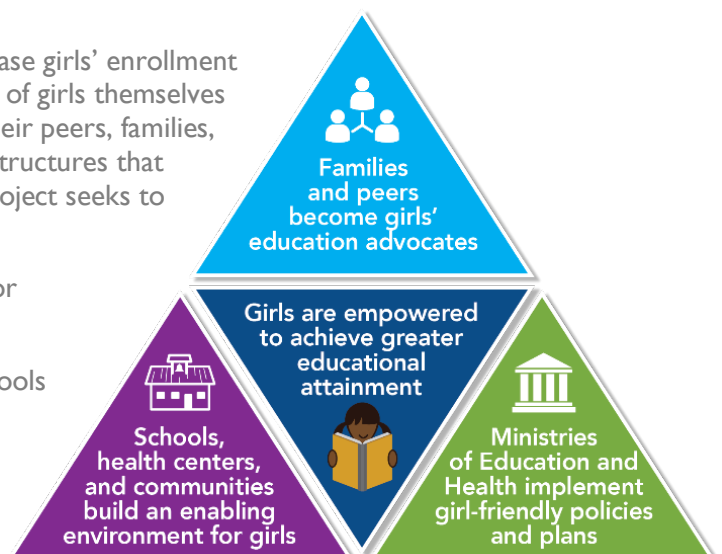


Figure 1.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Mali GLEE will achieve its objectives by adopting six strategies proven to be successful in Mali and other West African education programs and tailoring them to Mopti and Kayes. As shown in **Figure II**, GLEE strategies include:

- **Community mobilization**, and affirmed collaboration with school management committees (*comités de gestion scolaire* or CGSs), parents' associations (*associations des parents d'élèves* or APEs) and mothers' associations (*associations des mères d'élèves* or AMEs), religious and traditional authorities, school teachers, school administrators, and local healthcare providers.

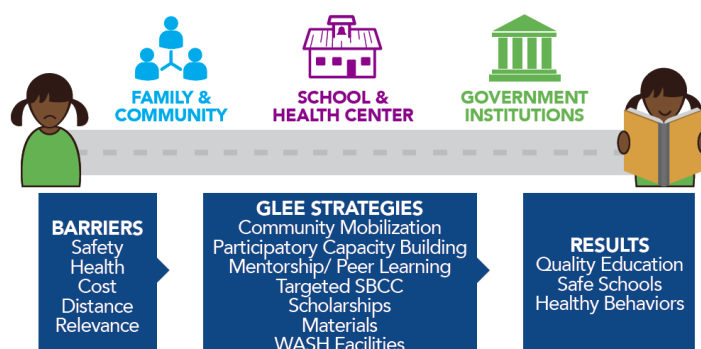


Figure II. GLEE Strategies Drive toward Results

- **Participatory capacity building** implemented through refined training-of-trainer (TOT) models that enable local trainers to facilitate learning in which participants engage in hands-on exercises to absorb new information and apply it to their own situations.
- **Mentorship/peer learning** through recruitment and training of GLEE mentors and Youth Ambassadors (YAs) to serve as role models, peer educators and student advocates.
- **Targeted Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)** includes the many conversations trained CGS/APE/AME representatives will have with their friends and neighbors to advocate for behavior change with respect to girls' education, safety and health.
- **Scholarships** in the form of mobile money transfers paid directly to schools on behalf of target beneficiary households will address the financial barrier to girls' education, including accessing accelerated learning programs (*Stratégie de Scolarisation Accélérée/Passerelle* or SSAP).
- **Materials** include teaching and learning materials (such as visual aids, maps, blackboards and quick references for teachers) provided to school teachers and administrators, stationery supplies to GLEE mentors for use in study groups, and Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) information materials to health workers and YAs.
- **Improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities** at schools will complement health and WASH behavior change activities. GLEE will provide handwashing stations (HWS) and rehabilitate latrines to support Menstrual Hygiene Management.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Mali GLEE will target six school districts (*Centres d'Animation Pédagogique* or CAPs) in Kayes and Mopti: Bandiagara, Douentza and Bankass in Mopti region and Rive Droite, Rive Gauche and Kéniéba in Kayes region.

¹ Suivi des Indicateurs de l'Enseignement Fondamental de 2011-2012 à 2014-2015, Avril 2015, p. 18.