

HARANDE

YOUTH LIVELIHOODS NEEDS ASSESSMENT & LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT



DECEMBER, 2016

Report: Youth Livelihoods and Needs Assessment & Labour Market Assessment



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List of Acronyms

ACEFOR	Projet d'Appui à la Compétitivité des Entreprises par la Formation Professionnelle
APEJ	Agence Pour l'Emploi des Jeunes
CNJ	Conseil National des Jeunes
DET	École de Formation Professionnelle – Direction de l'Enseignement Technique
FAFPA	Fonds d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle et à l'Apprentissage
FIER	Formation professionnelle, insertion et appui à l'entrepreneuriat des jeunes ruraux
GNI	Gross National Income
LDC	Low Developed Country
LMA	Labor Market Assessment
OSY	Out of School Youth
PAJM	Programme d'Appui à la Jeunesse Malienne
PEJ	Programme Emploi Jeune
PROCEJ	Projet Compétences et Emploi des Jeunes
PRODEFPE	Programme Décennal de Développement de la Formation Professionnelle pour l'Emploi
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
YELI	Youth Empowerment & Leadership
YLNA	Youth Livelihoods and Needs Assessment

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Background

Introduction

To overcome the principal underlying causes of food and nutrition insecurity in the Mopti Region, vulnerable households must be able to prepare for and adapt to climate change, respond effectively to natural, economic and social shocks such as conflict, and access resources that are essential to their well-being and livelihoods, including health, education, financial and agricultural services. To assist these households, CARE will lead a six-member consortium to implement HARANDE. This fully gender-integrated, evidence-based program is built on a comprehensive Theory of Change designed to enhance the resilience of participants through coordinated interventions to improve food and nutrition security, while strengthening the capacity of people, households and communities to respond to and cope with a myriad of shocks and stressors. The overall Goal of HARANDE is: Sustainable food, nutrition and income security improved for 270,000 vulnerable household members in Bandiagara, Douentza, Tenenkou, and Youwarou Circles by 2020.

With regards to this Assessment Study Scope of Work, through Save the Children's support, HARANDE is seeking to improve the market relevant skills of 20,300 young females and males living in targeted communities of four circles of the Mopti region, in addition to the non-farm livelihoods of 4,500 youth, which will contribute to the wider food, nutrition, and income security goals of HARANDE.

The HARANDE Theory of Change is designed to enhance the resilience of program participants through integrated interventions that will rely on development investments already being made by various stakeholders. In addition to coordinating with other programs to avoid duplication, and rather create synergies where geographic overlays exist, HARANDE will layer customized activities on top of existing programs to maximize impact.

Purpose of the Study

This study was undertaken to assess the supply side (youth ages 14-30 needs and preferences related to livelihoods), as well as the demand side (needs and opportunities in the labor market) in preparation for the

design of the Youth Empowerment & Leadership (YELI or "enlighten" in Bambara) curriculum and training plan (IO 2.2).

Additionally, the study aimed to assess entrepreneurial and job linkage supports and improved capacity; training quality; training offerings; curriculum; and, job linkage supports of vocational training institutions in the region. The study aimed to collect information from two primary sources: youth, and key stakeholders in the labor market (i.e. employers and vocational training providers). In addition, the study considered youth migration and will build and coordinate with the Value Chain analysis (conducted by CARE), which will be reviewing value chains and thus business opportunities that extend beyond Mopti region and its four circles targeted by the program.



Youth Livelihoods & Needs Assessment

The youth livelihoods and needs assessment (YLNA) findings will help HARANDE determine youth's perceived needs and preferences and rapidly gauge indicative literacy, numeracy and employability skills

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levels. It will also help understand the ways youth currently learn as well as ways they could learn – opportunities might include: free time during the day; places they congregate for social purposes; those related to their relationship with organizations; adults and youth who could serve as trainers; and their awareness of the planned project partners.

This information will help make informed decisions with regards to partner selection, and delivery mechanisms and methods for training and other project interventions. As part of the youth livelihoods needs assessment, a gender analysis was conducted to help determine the key considerations in designing interventions that are at least contextually gender sensitive in terms of access/control of resources and services.

The information gathered through individual questionnaires and focus groups included:

- Youth demographics, particularly education level, including level of literacy;
- Youth perceptions of services available in their community;
- Youth interest in/knowledge of entrepreneurship, and understanding of value chain;
- Existing skills (technical and “soft”) among youth;
- Specific skills that youth would like to acquire;
- Youth needs and hopes for the future;
- Youth perceptions of challenges and barriers to entrepreneurship and employment.

Please see Annexes I – IV for the questionnaire tool.

Labor Market Assessment

The labor market assessment (LMA) findings identify which business sectors currently have the potential capacity to absorb new job entrants today, and which might have potential for growth (these are called “action sectors”). It will also help detecting the key competencies required by these sectors, helping Save the Children choose what content to include in the Youth Empowerment and Leadership Initiative (YELI-Enlighten in Bambara) curriculum. It will contribute to identify key areas of potential employment. Through a service asset mapping, it will identify potential partners for training and job linkage, and entrepreneurial support

services, and market opportunities for youth who want to start or expand their own or their family businesses.

The Labor Market Assessment focused on three distinct sets of stakeholders; employers, training providers and public administration and services.

Employer and Market Situation:

Local market conditions directly influence the outcome of job training programs. Save the Children engaged teams of youth participants in directly conducting a large part of the Labor Market Assessment.

By conducting surveys, observations and targeted interviews with business leaders and other private-sector stakeholders, the LMA obtained information on such factors as:

- Key economic growth areas in the region;
- Saturated business and service fields in local areas;
- Types of businesses and services in demand with low availability in local areas;
- Identification of possible value chains in the area and ways for youth to integrate them;
- Upcoming staffing needs for entry- and mid-level staff;
- Employers’ perceptions of youth as new hires;
- Characteristics that employers are looking for in new hires and that they are generally unable to find;
- Opportunities, challenges and barriers to entrepreneurship and employment.

Existing Training Providers:

Actors in the public and civil society sectors seek to bridge the gap between youth skills and employers or labor-market needs by providing training and other support services. By mapping existing government and NGO service providers for youth, the LMA obtained information on such factors as:

- Provision of formal and/or continuing education for youth who have not completed high school, including vocational training programs;
- Existence of life skills programs, if any;
- Provision of employability training and job placement/career counseling services;

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- Provision of entrepreneurship development training, technical support, and start-up loan access;
- Existence of community service learning programs, if any;
- Other services available to youth within the community (health, sports, social, etc.)

Public Administration and Services:

Mali in general and particularly the central and northern regions of the country have been the target of AQMI¹ for some time now. The push factor that may influence young people in joining or supporting AQMI would be influenced by the way the public administration is perceived by youth and whether they seem to be supportive and helping solve problems.



Potential participant in Bandiagara answering the individual questionnaire.

By mapping services of the administration and the way they are perceived by youth, it should be possible to support the corresponding services in responding more positively to youth requests and enabling to become

more youth-friendly. As a consequence, the LMA obtained information on such factors as:

- List of services regularly or occasionally accessed by youth;
- The way these services perceive youth;
- The way each of these services are perceived by youth;
- What would be the minimum level of service or understanding that youth feel they should be receiving;
- If youth feel they don't receive the necessary services from the public administration, where do they go to instead to seek such services?

It should be noted that many of the stakeholders who were interviewed did not have a clear understanding of the youth needs, nor a clear vision of their mission and how they could contribute more effectively to helping young people find jobs and create their own small businesses.

Investing into building the capacity of many of the institutions might be a first steps in securing sustainable results and improved services to young people.

In many cases, the representatives answering the questions from the interviewers were just reading out a text they had downloaded from their organization's website. When being asked follow-up questions, they would often deflect the question to someone else attending the meeting, who in turn would not really answer the question.

This was showing a limited understanding of their role and purpose and both the institutions and the individuals would greatly benefit from technical support in helping them better define their mission and the ways it could be carried out.

Occasionally, the embarrassment was visible, but most of the time, stakeholder representatives would just give some evasive answers in order to evacuate the question and move to other types of questions that they would be more familiar with.

¹ Al Qaeda au Maghreb Islamique

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Indicative list of stakeholders and informants interviewed during the LMA included:

- Projet Compétences et Emploi des jeunes (PROCEJ)
- Union Nationale des Maisons Familiales Rurales
- Fonds d'insertion d'emploi rural
- Formation professionnelle, insertion et appui à l'entreprenariat des jeunes ruraux (FIER)
- Conseil National des Jeunes (CNJ)
- Fonds d'Appui à la formation Professionnelle et à l'apprentissage (FAFPA)
- Académie de l'enseignement, division alphabétisation
- Direction de l'enseignement technique (Ecole de formation professionnelle)
- APEJ Agence Pour l'Emploi des Jeunes
- Chambre régionale de commerce
- Chambre d'artisanat
- Chambre de Commerce du Mali
- Swisscontact
- GIZ – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (*German Society for International Cooperation*)

Youth Livelihoods

Youth livelihoods are the range of income generation activities that youth engage in to survive. The range extends from very informal to structured and could be listed as: working on the family land for food and accommodation; selling a few crops or phone cards; a roadside or market stall or mobile maintenance repairs; a structure that is rented for a shop or workshop (to make wood products; a casual job for which you are paid a small amount; an entry level job that requires no skill and pays a small weekly wage; or a professional job that pays a salary monthly.

The youth who holds a job is paid a wage or salary on a regular basis, either weekly or monthly. Usually this requires a set of skills that result from completing a skills training program and achieving a qualification.

Youth employment programs are thus the activities required to ensure youth have the skills sets and ability and experience to get a job.

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Employment Situation in Mali and Mopti

To better understand the overall employment situation in Mali in general and in Mopti in particular, it is important to understand the geo-political as well as the socio-economic contexts, which have significantly evolved over the past few years, even though they find their roots in the political changes that occurred in the early 1990's.

I. Political Context

Only now Mali seems to start recovering from what has probably been the most profound crisis in its history. The transition period has come to an end, with a new president elected and a government put in place. But its long-term sustainability is questionable if improvements are not in sight for the population, and especially the young people.

According to the Malian Multi-Annual Strategic Plan for 2014-2017, the crisis of the state was caused by the fact that Mali's governance had gradually lost relevance to many Malians, with exclusion based on cast, ethnic group, class, gender and age common all over Mali, and a practice of buying off interest groups, especially, but not only, in the North. Re-emerging rebellions and the aversion towards a strong army following the dictatorship of Moussa Traoré have since 1991 introduced a practice of buying off interest groups and minimizing military presence, allowing criminal groups to settle in more or less ungoverned territories and finally to nestle within government structures. This weakening of state structures and giving way to criminal interest has been sustained by a judicial system that rubberstamped established interests and reinforced impunity.

Regionally, Mali has been confronted with increasing instability, an increased availability of small arms, the Algerian pressure on Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups and the return of well-trained and heavily armed Touareg rebels after the fall of Khadafy. The mix of jihadist and Azawad-independence fighters was a decisive factor in the crisis of the Malian state.

In August 2013 the population made a choice. It opted for a democratic way out. It entrusted Ibrahim Boubacar Keita to lead the country out of the crisis. The social

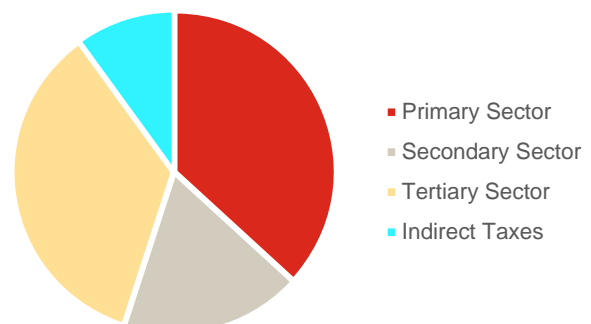
fragmentation however, still exists. The religious community is still divided. The economy is still unable to provide sufficient employment. The government capacity to deliver social services and help the population become more resilient is still weak. Literacy rate is still low and population growth high.

II. Economic Context

Economically, Mali has done relatively well the last decade with annual percentages of growth of 6-7%, except for the crisis year 2012 (-0.4%). Purchasing power had improved slightly. Employment growth, however, lagged behind and was not able to cater for all newcomers on the labor market. The lack of employment growth is largely due to the very low level of industrialization in the country: some 6% of GDP, whereas comparable countries would achieve normally 15-20% industrial contribution to the GDP. Mali is a country of agricultural production and commerce. Its landlocked status and poor infrastructure, however, limit the trade perspective. The consequence of these two characteristics is that not much added value is created in Mali and hence economic growth has not really trickled down to the population.

Mali is a Low Developed Country (LDC) with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita estimated at USD 660 and a GDP of US \$10.3 bln in 2012 (World Bank report 2013). The GDP has regressed by 0.4% in 2012, as a result of the crisis, coming from previous growth percentages of 5-7%. The biggest parts of GDP were shared in 2012 between the primary sector (36.8%), secondary sector (18.2%), tertiary sector (35 %) and indirect taxes (10%).

GDP



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Agriculture was 23.9% of this GDP, with 5.5 % for rice production and 1% for cotton production. The weight of mining has been 6.4% of GDP while industry represented only 6.4% of GDP.

Both mining and industry have a tremendous potential for growth, but would require important investments that individuals and small businesses cannot afford. Also, industry requires access to electricity, which is not available in many parts of the country. Unless a more decisive move is made towards investing into solar energy, there is no expectation that electricity would become readily available in those areas outside the large cities.

In 2013, traditional import/export trade constituted the biggest part of Services' contribution to GDP with 15.3% and the financial services had the lowest contribution (0.7% of GDP).

STARTING A BUSINESS IN MALI: According to the 2015 report on the Ease of Doing Business, globally, Mali ranks very poorly at 169 in the ranking of 189 economies on the ease of starting a business. The start-up capital is the equivalent of 10 times the GNI per capita.

TRADING ACROSS BORDERS: According to the same report, globally, Mali stands at 163 in the ranking of 189 economies on the ease of trading across borders.

III. Employment Context

In Mali, the employment context is marked by the following considerations:

- A low level of employability of young people across the country;
- A low level of employment opportunities for young people across the country, and particularly in the north and central regions;
- The need to support all technical training institutions, public and private, to ensure higher training output throughout the country;
- The need to identify specific regional outputs that could be locally transformed and enhanced to secure access to wider markets in the country and to neighboring countries;

- The need to adapt any training to the traditional occupational patterns in the region, while reinforcing the socio-economic potential of the youth in their places of origin and thereby preventing the risk of rural exodus;
- A long wait by the youths across the country and in some regions in particular, including Mopti, to find employment or the possibility to establish their own small business, in a security context that has been deeply affected by over four years of conflicts.

Capacity building of youth through education of quality and especially vocational training is probably the most efficient way of reinforcing the resilience of Malian girls and boys.

According to the National Employment Agency, one of the main challenges identified for ensuring better youth employment is the implementation of follow-up mechanisms at all levels.

IV. Key Employment Projects

There has been significant investment by the donor community to focus on youth livelihoods and employment as a priority. Some of these initiatives are carried out through specific projects led by international NGOs and others are conducted either directly through some government agencies or as specific projects under the purview of specific government agencies, with funding from national and international agencies.

Many of these programs have had or will have positive results and outcomes, and it is important for the Harande Project to build on these results, in order to maximize its impact.

Some of these programs are still ongoing, and Save the Children will look for ways to cooperate more directly in order to offer better and more comprehensive services to the youth participants.

A summary table of key employment projects is presented on the next page.

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V. Key Employment Projects Summary Table

Project Name	Description
1. Programme Emploi Jeune (PEJ)	This program aims to contribute to the social and economic development of youths, aged 15 to 40, by offering them as many options as possible through employment or self-employment.
2. Programme d'Appui à la Jeunesse Malienne (PAJM)	This entrepreneurship program is directed to youth, aged 21 to 35, who have the ability to take initiatives, to develop and submit a draft micro-enterprise business plan as well as the main elements of its implementation. They must also agree to engage in a long-term support process. The project covers all regions of the country.
3. Projet d'Appui à la Formation et à l'Insertion Professionnelle	This project aims to contribute to economic growth and to poverty reduction in the areas covered by the program. Specifically, it aims to improve access for young people and women to employment through vocational training and the qualitative and quantitative development of financial products tailored to the needs of small-size businesses.
4. Projet d'Appui aux Jeunes Entrepreneurs (PAJE Nieta)	This project aims to strengthening youth skills to become economically productive and civically engaged citizens for themselves, their families and their community.
5. Programme Décennal de Développement de la Formation Professionnelle pour l'Emploi (PRODEFPE)	This project aims to contribute to the achievement of growth objectives through the development and the acquisition of professional skills and human resources skills.
6. Projet d'Appui à la Compétitivité des Entreprises par la Formation Professionnelle (ACEFOR)	This project aims to improve the competitiveness of agricultural enterprises of the formal and informal sectors by adapting the training offer to their skills needs.
7. Projet Compétences et Emploi des Jeunes (PROCEJ)	The project aims to facilitate the access of young Malians, aged 15 to 35, to employment (temporary or permanent) in order to reduce extreme poverty.

VI. Training and Employment Mechanisms Under Consideration

The following concepts are being considered and investigated by the Agency for National Employment for improving employability opportunities for youth.

Alternate apprenticeship training: This is a combination of in-class theory, combined with practical hands-on learning through an apprenticeship placement in a company or a small business. It often involves 20% of theory and 80% of practical work. It has proved to be effective in countries like Morocco, where it is widely implemented.

Apprenticeship training for out-of-school youth (OSY):

Traditionally, access to apprenticeships is available only for youth who are on the formal vocational training pathways. This leaves a large cohort of OSY without opportunities for training. In order to address the needs of OSY and strengthen their employability prospects there is a shift in programming towards combining accelerated learning, skills training and apprenticeship.

Skills training by mobile training units: Youth in rural areas, with very low population density, as it is the case in all four target circles, have limited options to attend technical and vocational training. Mobile training units can go to specific locations for a short

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period of time and offer training in specific technical areas, which should then be complemented with practical apprenticeship placements. In this case, the 20% theory / 80% practice approach, can be given over condensed periods of time, so that the mobile units would come to the same location only once a month or once every other month.

Continuing vocational education and training: This is particularly important, as a long-term investment, to ensure that the business remains relevant and that new techniques are learned on a regular basis. It is part of lifelong learning and is not sector-specific. It is crucial for the employability of individuals.

Traditional Apprenticeship: The system of apprenticeship first developed in the later Middle Ages in Europe and came to be supervised by craft guilds and town governments. A master craftsman was entitled to employ young people as an inexpensive form of labor in exchange for providing food, lodging and formal training in the craft. It is still an effective way of transferring craftsmanship from one generation to the next, but a more formal framework is necessary to make it effective and not risking to fall into a covered exploitation of youth.

Training of local trainers: This can be a very effective complement to mobile training units in the vast region of Mopti. Local trainers can indeed offer ongoing support and coaching throughout the region, while the mobile training unit is operating elsewhere in the country.

Other mechanisms: Financial mechanisms are also considered as incentives for the business sector to hire more young people, such as reduced employment charges for the employers, 100% for the first year, 50% the second year and 25% the third year.

However, such incentives have often demonstrated their inefficacy in other countries where young people were hired at the reduced rate for a limited period of time, and were then replaced by other youth hired under the same conditions, making youth employment more insecure.

VII. Unemployment Rates

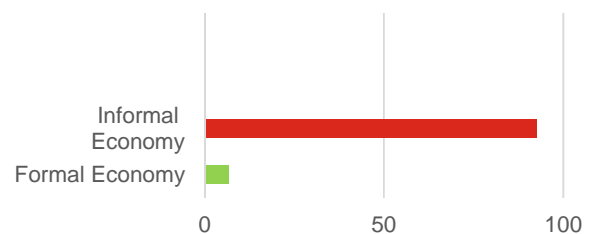
Depending on the definition of unemployment in a country and the advantages associated to this status, the unemployment rates can be rather deceiving.

The official unemployment rates used in Mali are not very helpful since they show an overall unemployment rate of 8.22% and a youth unemployment rate of 10.7%, representing 7.91% of young men, versus 14.06% of young women.

Although these numbers are not low, they cannot be considered as particularly high either, and may not reflect the reality, since many youths working in a family would not be considered as unemployed, even though they don't perceive their own earnings.

A distinction is made from unemployment for young people who are not studying, not in training, and not working, where the rate for young men is 16.87% and for young women 46.56%, which is probably a lot closer to the reality of the real unemployment rate.

Only 6.85% of youth are working in the formal economy, versus 92.77% in the informal economy.



Overall, 20% of employment is located in urban areas and 80% in rural areas.

13

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Bambaras (*farmers, agro-pastoralists, and craftsmen*), Markas (*farmers, agro-pastoralists, and craftsmen*), Bozo-Somono (*fishermen, and agro-pastoralists*), Songhai (*agro-pastoralists, and traders*), and Bobos (*farmers, agro-pastoralists, and craftsmen*). Population is 80% rural.

The region is separated into several areas: the Inland Niger Delta around Mopti, the Bandiagara cliffs and the plain of Bankass along the Burkina Faso frontier. Mount Hombori, the highest point in Mali at 1153 meters, is in the Mopti Region, near the city of the same name.

Bandiagara circle covers an area of 10,520 km² (4,060 sq mi), with a population density of 30/km² (78/sq mi). By far the largest of the four circles, Douentza circle covers an area of 23,481 km² (9,066 sq mi), which is approximately the same size than the state of New Hampshire (8,953 sq mi). Douentza's population density is only of 11/km² (27/sq mi) as compared with 57.4/km² for New Hampshire. Tenenkoun circle is slightly larger than Bandiagara with an area of 11,297 km² (4,362 sq mi), but with a much lower population density of 14/km² (38/sq mi). Finally, Youwarou circle, with an area of 7,139 km² (2,756 sq mi), and a population density of 15/km² (39/sq mi), is the smallest of the four circles.

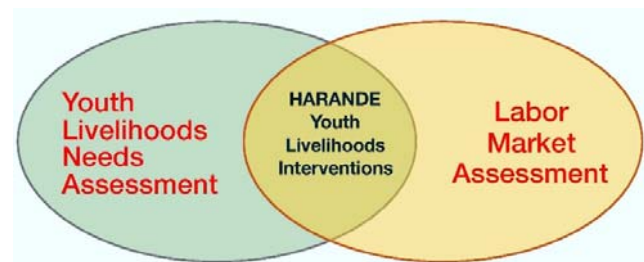
The region is well-irrigated and its agriculture is well-developed, with particularly successful fishing. Mopti serves as an important commercial crossroads between Mali's north, south and bordering nations. Tourism was also well-developed, notably in the cities of Djenné and Mopti (the former of which boasts the Great Mosque of Djenné, the largest mud structure in the world) and in Dogon country. Both the city of Djenné and the Bandiagara Escarpment have been named World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. In terms of its climate, Mopti Region is considered part of the Sahel.

IX. The Nexus of Youth Livelihoods Interventions

While the YLNA and LMA were ultimately two separate studies the assessment team placed emphasize on integration of both studies throughout the process. For example, young people who participated in the focus group discussions that were the basis of the YLMA had an option to conduct mapping research on employment opportunities in their communities. This ensured greater youth participation for the participants as well as ability

to build synergy of findings for both studies. The findings from both assessments provide a nexus for programming of all youth livelihoods intervention in the Harande project. As such the following section of the report is presented in an integrated way.

Please refer to Annexes I – IV for full set of tools used to conduct each assessment.



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The Methodology

I. The Approach

The YLNA and LMA took place during 15 consecutive weeks, from July 4th through October 15th, 2010, and was organized around the stages of work described below.

The team used assessment methodologies that emphasized:

- Using a structured qualitative approach for interviews and focus groups;
- Drawing on documentation for quantitative data;
- Focusing on “Appreciative Inquiry,” that is, finding what is working and building from there;
- Using experience in one stage to improve later stages so that learning informs the process; and,
- Shifting from analysis of challenges to formulating strategy options for moving forward.

A series of interviews, focus groups, and discussions were held in Bamako and in Mopti, focusing on the needs in the Mopti region, and particularly the circles of Bandiagara, Douentza, Tenenkoun, and Youwarou, from July 29 through August 05, with a view to gathering as much information as possible to make recommendations on ways to support youth in accessing jobs or creating their own small businesses.

All assessment activities were guided by the following principles:

Youth Voice First: Youth experiences are best presented by the youth themselves; youth transformation is at the heart of the social change needed. Listening to youth’s voices and youth’s views within the context of overall political, social, cultural, and economic dynamics, is critical in assessing how best to shape a strategy. The team included nine Malian youths, emphasized fieldwork directly with youth, and prioritized youth input.

Build on “What Works”: The team focused on identifying, describing, and understanding what strategies and models have been successful, or have the potential to enhance youth education, skills training, livelihoods promotion, and employment opportunities in Mali.

Understand the role of the Malian government:

Recognizing that government goodwill and cooperation are necessary for successful programming, and particularly for a policy environment conducive to youth transformation, the team communicated with, and solicited input from, government offices (at all levels; national, regional, local) involved in youth development policy and programs.

Focus on sustainable youth development mechanisms:

The assessment team emphasized the importance of, and assessed the potential for, youth development and support strategies which, to the extent possible, will be self-financing and thus able to continue long term in the absence of donor project support.

Prioritize access to services by both young women and men (gender equity):

The team explored options for both females and males. According to information gathered during the assessment, there are some predetermined roles for males and females in terms of economic and social activity. For example, women are associated with firewood gathering, market gardening, and poultry, egg production an increasingly, fruit and vegetable transformation; while livestock raising (goats, cows, camels, horses, donkeys) and fishing are associated with men.

Balance the Labor and Supply Demand:

The assessment team focused on both understanding the employment and training challenges faced by youth (supply side), as well as listen to the opportunities outlined by the employers (demand side) for sustainable youth employment and livelihoods.

It should be noted that both young people and adults were very supportive of the approach adopted by Harande. Many of the youth in the target areas are often engaged in requests from various NGOs to answer similar questionnaires. However, they are rarely consulted in terms of the specific needs of young people and do not have the opportunity to express their opinions on the challenges they are facing. The participatory methodology of the youth and labor market assessment was very well received and appreciated by all people involved in this effort; youth and adult alike.

All the people involved in the interviews and focus groups expressed interest in a follow-up activity that would allow them to learn about the findings,

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conclusions and recommendations from this effort. To date the assessment methodologies have essentially been one sided, requesting information from young people and relevant stakeholders but never engaging and following up with the community on how they can contribute to the solutions of the challenges as identified by the assessment. As part of the Harande project we will make every effort to share a summary report of the findings with all stakeholders involved in the YLNA and LMA assessments.



The picture above was taken in front of one of the national agencies represented in Mopti, and shows the road conditions and the lack of businesses in the area.

Overall, young people were surprisingly optimistic, despite the current situation of insecurity and the lack of income opportunities. They perceived their participation in this survey very positively, showing that a wider initiative, involving them as actors, would be welcome and could contribute to a successful implementation of Harande activities.

II. The Assessment Team

The Assessments were conducted by a core team of 3 members, which included:

- *Team Leader:* Jean-Pierre Isbendjian; International Youth Development Consultant, Life Skills — Entrepreneurship — Employability.

- *Education Advisor:* Prosper Nkwe, Save the Children Mali
- *Resilience-Food Security & Livelihoods Advisor:* Sidiki Diarra, Save the Children Mali

During field investigations in Mopti, the team received additional support from:

- *Youth Livelihoods Advisor:* Magdalena Fulton, Hunger and Livelihoods Department; Save the Children USA
- *Program Director, Skills to Succeed:* Patricia E. Langan Hunger and Livelihoods Department; Save the Children USA

III. Engagement of youth in the process

In each circle, 24 participants were selected to participate in the interviews and focus groups, representing a very limited sampling of 96 youth participants, out of an overall population of 962,122 in the four circles concerned. In each circle, the 24 participants corresponded to the following profile: 8 between the ages of 14 to 18 (in-school or out-of-school), half females and half males; and 16 between the ages of 19 and 30 (essentially out-of-school), half females and half males.

Furthermore, the 8 participants from each circle (14-18 years old) responded to the questionnaire and participated in a focus group only. Attendance in both was one of the selection criteria. Participants were selected on the advice of local NGOs, for being engaged youth, likely to be part of the program interventions that would follow.

On the other hand, the 16 participants from each circle (19-30 years old) did also respond to the questionnaire and participate in a focus group. Their selection was also made with the assistance of local NGOs. These participants were further involved and were offered to participate into one of the following two tasks:

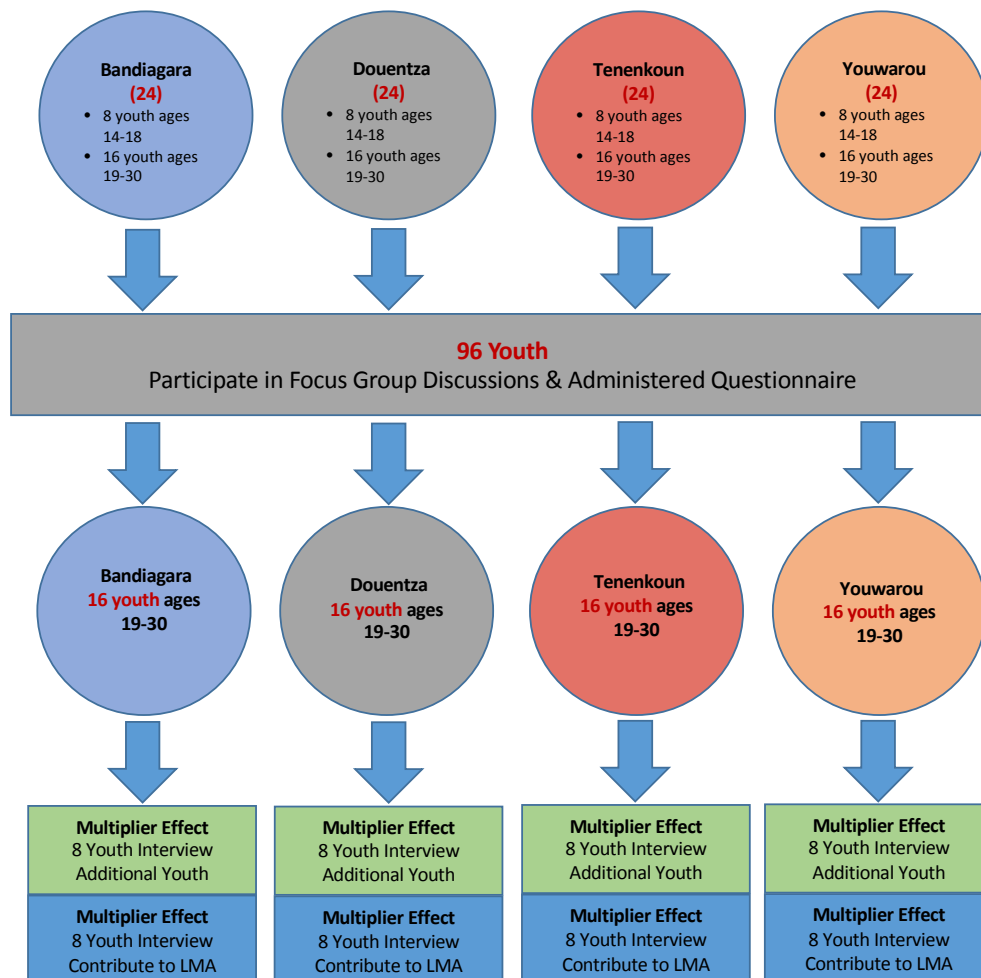
- One group (8 people working by pairs) was to identify additional youth who would participate in focus groups conducted by each pair of youths. Support staff did take notes in those focus groups.
- The second group focused on economic issues. They interviewed business people (for half of them), or

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undertook market observations for the other half. All the information was collected by support staff.

Support staff then met in a two-day workshop to gather the answers from the various circles, considered whether the answers were consistent across the four circles or required further clarifications.

One question in particular has been raised later on with several support staff to confirm the information gathered through the interviews and focus groups. It was confirmed that, despite the assumption that many youths were leaving their circles, only few were considering that, and mostly for their studies or finding a start-up loan to establish their own small business, with the intention of going back to their place of origin.



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IV. Timeline of the assessment process

Activity	04-Jul	11-Jul	18-Jul	25-Jul	01-Aug	08-Aug	15-Aug	22-Aug	29-Aug	05-Sep	12-Sep	19-Sep	26-Sep	03-Oct	11-Oct
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15
Finalize and Translate Tools & Training Materials															
Recruit Adult Leaders															
Recruit and Select Youth															
Print all materials for YLNA Tools for the Adult Leader Training															
Adult Leader Training															
Conduct Youth Focus Groups															
Train Youth in LMA and YA															
Youth Conduct the Assessments in the Circles															
Identify and Set up LMA stakeholders interviews															
LMA Interviews with key stakeholders and informants															
Bring Youth Groups for Data Collection and focus Groups															
Refinement Period															
Data collection and consolidation															
Translation of the synthesis, PP for USAID TOC Meeting															
DRAFT Final Summary Report															
USAID Meeting on Harande Theory of Change (TOC)															
Incorporate Feedback from USAID Harande TOC Meeting															

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Key Findings from Questionnaires

The following analysis was guided by the key findings from the individual questionnaires, as referenced in Annex I, and from the comments expressed by the interviewers during the two-day restitution workshop, conducted immediately after the field assessments.

I. Household Composition

Given the limited number of surveyed youth, the numbers below can only be seen as indicative of the household compositions in each of the three circles, and cannot be considered as fully representative of such composition.

In Bandiagara, the households of the youth 14-18 are made of nearly 8 people (4.25 adults and 3.65 youths in average), while those of the youth 19-30 are made of nearly 11 people in average, with huge disparities, ranging from 3 to 27 people per household. Only very few households are headed by women, and the vast majority of the parents are illiterate.

In Douentza, household sizes are more consistent with an average of 11 people. Very few households are headed by women, and even though the majority of the parents are illiterate, many have completed high school and several have a college degree.

In Tenenkoun, household sizes have an average of 10 people. Very few households are headed by women. Here, the majority of the parents have completed high school with many having a technical or a college degree, though the mothers have almost systematically reached a slightly lower level than the fathers.

As for Youwarou, the households of the youth 14-18 are made of 8 people (3.25 adults and 4.75 youths in average), while those of the youth 19-30 are made of slightly over 12 people in average, with little disparities. Again, the majority of the parents are illiterate, with only a few exceptions who completed high school and only one with a college degree.

II. School Enrollment

Across the four circles, the reasons mentioned most frequently for leaving school were the cost, the distance,

and the difficulties in finding transportation (which underscores the problem of the distance to schooling options in each circle). However, it should be noted that with population densities varying from 11 to 30 per km², it is very difficult for a country with very limited financial resources to offer schooling at a reasonable distance from all potential students. In countries with underpopulated areas and reasonably good financial resources, schooling is often offered through online interaction with teachers, but such approach also relies on broadband Internet access, which is definitely not currently available in the region of Mopti.



The cost of the studies was mentioned as the most important obstacle. The costs involved in studying are a combination of direct costs, such as registration, books and supplies, transportation, and meals, and indirect costs, such as income shortfall for the family, as the youth going to school is not contributing to an income for the family. If the students have to go farther away to study, they need to find some accommodation, which always comes at a price, even when it is with some relatives. There is either a direct financial contribution or

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some household work, which then competes with the school work.

Even those students who obtain a scholarship to continue their studies in a larger town, receive some financial support as well as a place to stay for the first two years, but have to find their own accommodation starting the third year, which makes things complicated. Many girls get harassed by their teachers and some have to recourse to prostitution to cover their expenses.

In some circles, the relationships among the students (mostly males) and the relationships between the students and the teachers were perceived as problematic. Difficult relationships between students and teachers very often go in line with poor academic results.

With the exception of Bandiagara, the youth seem to consider that school prepares them relatively well for work. This is surprising in comparison with the comments made during the focus groups, that they regret not having pursued the TVET track instead of the academic track, since they feel that TVET would prepare them better for finding a job or creating their own small business.

Many of the youths explained that they would love to study further if they could do it under reasonably good conditions. This implies that the costs would need to be very low and that the youths would be able to devote their time entirely to their studies rather than doing household work for the hosting family.

In some cases, young women who had the potential to pursue their studies, got married and interrupted their studies, in order to generate an income. Furthermore, a less instructed husband is less likely to let his young wife pursue her studies.

Teenage marriages are also an important factor among girls to leave school early. Many get married between the ages of 14 and 17.

Finally, the difficulty for all youths, including those with higher education diplomas, to find jobs, does not motivate the parents to push their children to pursue their studies, and does not encourage the younger siblings to complete longer studies.

Sadly enough, many parents consider that knowing how to read and write is sufficient, and that more is

unnecessary and does not bring anything more that is needed.

Madrasas are probably now more dominant in Pakistan's educational system than they are anywhere else; but the general trend is one that is common throughout the Islamic world. In Egypt the number of teaching institutes dependent on the Islamic university of al-Azhar increased from 1,855 in 1986 to 4,314 ten years later. The Saudis have stepped up their funding so that in Tanzania alone they have been spending \$1 million a year building new madrasas. In Mali madrasas now account for a quarter of the children in primary schools.¹



III. Economic Situation & Migration

Almost all the youths who participated in the assessment agreed that the economic situation of Mali was dire, and that the economic situation in their circle is even further compounded, but that they would not want to leave Mali, and if they were to leave their circle, it would only be for their studies, and that they would desire to return upon completion of their training.

This particular statement was further confirmed by the support staff that overviewed the implementation of the assessment efforts. They confirmed that the majority of the youths did not want to leave their present locations, and would only do that for two reasons: either to pursue their studies in a school that is not available where they live and that is too far to commute, or to make enough money for them to have a start-up capital to create their own small business. In both cases, they would intend to return to their place of origin as soon as they could.

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Only a limited number of youths seem to consider leaving their place of origin to seek better living options elsewhere. However, the assessment did not meet any of those and therefore cannot elaborate on their motivations.

The assessment team recognizes the importance of migration in Mali and recommends that a further assessment, focusing on this very issue be conducted in order to further refine a possible intervention around this.

This being said, it should also be noted that in its “Mali Migration Crisis at a Glance” report from March 2013, the International Organization for Migration considered that a lot of the migration between Southern Africa and Northern Africa and Europe, was transiting through Mali, rather than just originating from there.

IV. Safety

The vast majority of the youths who were interviewed felt that their safety and that of their families were not at stake. Despite the insurgency in the North and the 2012 Northern Mali conflict, youths seem to be confident that peace will prevail.

They also felt that they were treated fairly by the people and institutions around them. This is an important factor in terms of potential grievances that can lead to radicalization and terrorism. The fact that the young people do not seem to feel that are treated unfairly leads us to think that they would not easily join rebel forces.

V. Participation in Society

This is an area that did not score very well among the participants and only a few get engaged in their communities, probably more as a result of apathy than due to a conscious decision.

It appears that the vast majority of the youths interviewed do not take part in the decision making process in their community. However, they end up not being pleased with the decisions that are made, and feel that their opinions are not – or would not be – respected by the elders.



Community service activities could be a very effective instrument for changing the opinions at both ends of the spectrum. The elders could see youth doing effective and useful work, and through their contribution, the youth could see that they are valued in their communities and can make a difference.

By promoting community service activities, and offering some financial support to enable youths to implement them, the program can contribute to bridging the intergenerational gap and engage the youths in becoming more active, socially-aware citizens.

VI. Public and Private Institutions

In general, youths across the four circles have a relatively positive opinion of the government and of its institutions. Youth perceive them as trying their best to improve the situation in the country.

With the exception of Youwarou, the local/regional authorities are relatively well perceived, though not as well perceived as the national institutions. It seems that youth observe some corruption at the local level, which they resent very much. They also observed a high level of cronyism among the elected officials. Even when some control committees have been established by the central to ensure the appropriate functioning of local institutions, those appointed on the control committees are friends of those they are supposed to monitor.

Associations, youth clubs and NGOs are very well regarded by youth across the four circles, although they feel that they could do better in engaging youth in the services provided. To a large extent, they feel that they have the required skills and abilities, but that the NGOs

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tend to look outside of the local population to identify workers for carrying out the work.

Even though they have a high respect for the NGOs, they also commented that they often offer training and more training, but that there is seldom any linkage with job placements or business creation, and they feel that much of these efforts are wasted.

VII. Violence and religion

The vast majority of the youth across the four circles are against the use of violence. They do not accept the use of violence in the name of Islam or any other religion.

In the same way, they do not consider that the Sharia should be a source of the law in Mali. This would also imply that Jihadism is not an option for them.

Even though this is what was reported by the youth who were interviewed, it should also be mentioned that during the two-day workshop carried out with the support staff, comments were made that some of them had not been welcome by youth in some areas, where the interviewers (all Malians) were referred to as “westerners.” Those same youths continued by saying that “everything western is bad”, including education. This seems to be coming from a very small minority, but it should not be ignored, and goes in support of the language used by the Islamist organization – Boko Haram.

VIII. Outlook on Life

Despite the many difficulties and challenges that youths are facing, they seem to have a relatively positive outlook on life and are mostly confident in their future. This is a very important factor that, if not present, can lead to recruitment by extremist groups, leading up to potential radicalization. It is however, an area that has been satisfactory and for which there should be no real concern at this stage.

This part of the questionnaire was more difficult to administer, requiring more attention, and some of the interviewers do not appear to have filled out the questionnaire correctly. As a consequence, since it was impossible to go back to all interviewers, this part of the questionnaire was not included in the analysis, in order to avoid misinterpretation.

As a consequence, it should be noted that the comments above were collected during the two-day workshop with the support staff and the interviewers, together with some of the replies that were more clearly recorded.



In Bandiagara, and three other circles, selected youths participated in focus groups that helped identify some of the key challenges that they feel they are facing.

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Key Challenges Expressed by Youth

The following analysis was guided by the key findings extracted from the focus group discussions, as referenced in Annex II, and from the comments expressed by the interviewers during the two-day restitution workshop, conducted immediately after the field assessments.

I. School System

One of the main challenges faced by young people in the four circles of Mopti, is the lack of relevance of the school system in relation with the types of jobs available in the areas. The vast majority of the youth who participated in focus groups mentioned that if they could go back in time and do things differently, they would have wanted to follow a technical/professional vocational training track rather than following classical academic studies.

They strongly felt that their studies did not prepare them to find a job or start their own business. They referred to the Ministry of Education as “a machine to train unemployed workers.”

They recognized that technical/professional vocational studies are not promoted through the academic school system of the Ministry of Education and that they know very little about what is actually available in their areas.

In too many cases, young people have to go far away from home to go to schools, and they realize that at the end of secondary school they obtain a diploma that does not offer job opportunities in the areas where they live.

Moreover, when they complete their secondary school with success, they don't have the financial means to pursue their studies to a higher level, due to the many costs involved.

II. Family Pressure

Young people having completed their studies and those still studying, did comment on the fact that many parents don't see school as a priority and put pressure on the

youths to assist with numerous domestic tasks or to help with the family business.

As seen earlier in the report, very few parents are well educated and, as a result of that, they don't see much value in having their children pursue higher studies. To many parents, it is enough for their children to read and write.



Finally, studying represents a double cost for the parents. There is a direct cost induced by the costs associated with the studies, and there is an income shortfall due to the fact that the youths are not available to generate an additional or complementary income for the family. If the children are not doing very well at school, it is then more systematic and more easily justifiable for the parents to take their children out of school.

III. TVET² versus Academic

Comments were made previously that the academic studies promoted across the country by the Ministry of Education were not very effective and did not yield

² Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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many jobs, especially among youths who could not afford to pursue their education beyond secondary.

Even students with good marks, who would have the capacity to pursue university studies, often are confronted with the inability of their family to pay for the studies, which involves the need for the students to go to a large city or the capital in order to continue their studies, which generates many extra costs. This is also less justifiable for the majority of the youth and their parents, since too many university graduates still have difficulties finding jobs, due to the fact that the studies they completed are not directly connected with existing jobs.

Instead of promoting the same academic school system across the country, it would be advisable to reconsider the education system in order to offer more TVET training in rural areas, at a ratio probably as high as 80% for TVET among eligible youth, versus only 20% for academic studies.

It should also be noted that the economy in these circles is very fragile and the markets so small that they get rapidly saturated, making it unrealistic to promote bulk technical training to large portions of the youth population, across the four circles. In as much as possible, technical training should be offered on a rotating basis and for a wide range of technical areas in order to avoid training large portions of a generation in limited technical areas and increasing the risk of saturating the market.

Young people suggested that technical/professional training orientation should start as early as primary school, in order to raise the awareness and interest of the youths in those technical areas, which they might actually like better than their academic studies.

This should call for an in-depth revision of the school system in Mali, as far as the Harande program is concerned. However, such revision could actually take place in many other African countries, where the context is similar.

IV. Quality of Teachers & Teacher Training

With a few exceptions, the majority of the students complain about the lack of training of their teachers and their inability to further explain things that students have difficulties understanding.

Also, many teachers seem to lack professionalism and ethical values at many levels. They appear to be lacking both initial and continuous training, particularly in the field of pedagogy.

Many teachers seem to harass the female students to obtain sexual favors against giving them good marks. Other teachers don't hesitate to seek some financial compensation for giving the students sufficient average notes to graduate.



It also seems to be frequent that higher education students who have obtained a scholarship must pay extra money for all the documents that teachers provide. Overall, it looks very poorly on the school system and lowers significantly the trust that students can place in their teachers.

Similar observations have been made about teachers in other countries, where the training of training provided through the like skills training induction has been very effective in transforming those teachers, improving their capacity as teachers and reinforcing their ethical values.

V. Adequate Training

As suggested in the previous paragraphs, young people realized that they did not receive adequate training, and

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particularly technical training, to be able to find a job or to start their own business.

They realized that what they learned at school did not equip them with skills that they can use to work. They regretted that technical schools were not options that were presented or promoted, in connection with job opportunities, prior to deciding to go to high school.

These considerations underlined the need for early exploration of career opportunities, highlighting the training selection that can lead to jobs that they find interesting.

Also, when technical training is offered to large groups of young people, through NGOs, they don't see the linkage to existing jobs, which makes them more reluctant to engage in just any technical training.

Finally, they don't see many entrepreneurship training opportunities that would help them come up with new business ideas and enable them to turn those into viable business plans. Moreover, when such training is made available through some special initiatives, it is seldom linked to start-up funds that would actually enable them to implement their business plan.

VI. Lack of Business Ideas

When considering the option of starting their own business, not only do they mention the lack of adequate technical training, but they also mention the lack of original business ideas that would work and the lack of entrepreneurial training opportunities that would enable them to develop a business plan, start a business, and then run and grow a business.

Most importantly, they are not sure about how to develop a business idea and how to then move to the next phase. They also feel that they lack the necessary confidence and would want to receive appropriate support to help them, not just access a start-up fund, but also receive ongoing technical support to help them succeed.

When being asked what type of business they would want to start if they were to receive the necessary support: there is a lot of repetition across the region, with very few original ideas. This shows that the potential participants have had very limited exposure to businesses outside of what they can see in their area. If funding was available to support their projects, they

would soon compete with one another, without considering alternative options and added values.

Any entrepreneurship training should put a very strong emphasis on creativity and on developing innovative business ideas.

The acquisition of basic personal competencies, as part of any comprehensive life skills training program, should form the basis of any entrepreneurship training, so that basic life skills such as self-confidence, goal setting, personal values, the power of positive attitude, listening skills, and ethical values would be possessed.

VII. Access to Start-Up Funds

This is probably the most frequently mentioned reason for not being able to start a business. Young people feel that in some cases, when they come up with a viable business plan, they would be able to start a business if they were able to access a start-up fund. However, this seems to be a vicious circle, since they know that they cannot access any start-up funds to start a business, they don't really try to develop anything.



As a result of this preliminary assessment, any youth entrepreneurship creation effort would need to be comprehensive enough to involve the following necessary components: 1) Acquisition of basic life skills among participants; 2) Development and screening of business ideas; 3) Assessment of the necessary skills in relation with the business and possible reinforcement of these; 4) Development of a viable business plan;

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5) Access to financial services; 6) Mentoring and coaching support for a period of six months and up to two years.

Any youth entrepreneurship program should also look at ways to create small groups of business partners among youths, interested in the same business idea, and possessing complementary entrepreneurship characteristics.



Entrepreneurship is not for everyone, and is not a panacea. However, it is generally agreed that some 10 to 15% of a given population is entrepreneurial by nature. The ILO has defined a list of 16 characteristics that make good entrepreneurs, and it is not common to identify people who score high on each of these 16 characteristics. By combining youths with complementary characteristics who are interested in the same business idea, youths are significantly increasing their chances of success.

Also, youth with complementary entrepreneurial characteristics would be mentoring each other, without realizing, reducing thereby the need to identify numerous business mentors.

VIII. Business Registration Tax

In addition to having difficulties obtaining start-up loans, youth are also confronted with having to pay a business

registration tax, which represents a lot of money for the youth, before they would even start having their first income. Even though not much information was made available about this tax, it seems to be another government disincentive that needs to be tackled.

In a country like Albania, which in the early 2000's was not a rich country, a similar tax payment was covered through existing businesses who would sponsor the new businesses as part of a program established together with the Albanian Chamber of Commerce.ⁱⁱ

IX. Recruitment by Existing Businesses

When a business hires new workers, it is usually based on who the owner knows rather than diplomas, skills and competencies. Many youths considered that if their parents were connected, they would be able to get them a job through the extended family, but otherwise it is almost impossible to find a job, even if you are really good and have plenty of diplomas.

This notion further questions the value of formal studies, when good or even excellent grades don't yield jobs, but only nepotism does.

Youths also commented on the fact that most job announcements were not public and could not be found in any newspapers. Those jobs were usually verbally advertised throughout the extended family.

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Challenges Expressed by Business Owners

The following analysis was guided by the key findings from detailed interviews, observations and discussions, as referenced in Annexes III and IV, conducted with business owners, chambers of commerce, trade associations, and other business related institutions.

I. Impact of the Insecurity

Many business owners explained that since the beginning of the conflict, business has slowed down significantly and that this uncertainty prevents them from making development plans for their businesses and hire more staff.

However, the majority of the business owners who were interviewed would want to grow their business and be able to hire young people.

The insecurity has had a particularly negative impact on everything that catered for or was connected to the tourism industry. The hotel industry has been particularly affected by the crisis.

Hotel rooms often generate between 5 and 8 jobs directly and indirectly, contributing significantly to the employment across numerous business sectors in the vicinity of their location.

The disappearance of the tourism industry in the area has generated additional unemployment that cannot easily be reclassified in other business sectors.

II. Sets of Skills Being Sought

Even though the vast majority of the business owners recognize that they are essentially recruiting people from within their extended family or known through relatives, some would consider applications from outside those circles, especially if they have received additional training.

Most consider that it is more important that the potential recruits can show what they can do, rather than showing diplomas and certifications. They tend to value demonstrated skills over theoretical skills.

As far as soft skills are concerned, business owners are looking for young people who are eager to learn and work, who value well done work, who are punctual, who

are responsible and autonomous, who speak softly and do the work.

It was clear from the interviews that most business owners are unable to define a list of skills that they are looking for.

III. Lack of Adapted Equipment

The majority of the business owners who were interviewed would be keen to cooperate with the Harande project and offer apprenticeships to young people, but state that they would need additional equipment to enable them to offer valuable apprenticeship opportunities.

Such investment into equipment could be considered with a view of growing small businesses and boosting the job market, but would require to better define what is expected through apprenticeships so that youth participants could fully benefit from such investments.



IV. Growing Existing Small Businesses

This is one the most efficient ways to boost the job market and create a series of apprenticeships that can lead to new jobs or new business creations.

It is also a more reliable option than creating a series of new small businesses that take time to solidify and require larger investments.

However, many business owners would not know how to grow their business in the first place and would need some support through a series of short training

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workshops to help them develop a business plan to sustain the growth of their existing business.

The acquisition of new/additional equipment could be part of the growth plan and would need to include the engagement of apprentices who could learn from established businesses, prior to creating their own business.

V. Apprenticeships

The notion of apprenticeship seems to have been operating in Mali for many years.

Usually, parents come to see a reputable business owner with the child they want to place in apprenticeship, and ask the business owner to teach the youth over the years, and the youth usually receives a very small financial compensation in return.

The principle is good, but the practice is not as good as it seems. Even though the youth would be ready to work on his/her own after only two to three years, the business owner would usually attempt to keep the youth for at least seven years, and the “graduation” seldom goes well.

A clear Charter for Apprenticeships should be developed together with key stakeholders such as the Chambers and the trade associations. Once a comprehensive Charter for Apprenticeships is adopted, information sessions should be arranged with members of the Chambers and the trade associations so that they could implement clear guidelines that would establish a healthier relationship between business owners and apprentices.

VI. Illiteracy among Business Owners

In the same way as many parents of potential participants are illiterate, many business owners are illiterate as well. They usually manage to run their business following their own system, but – because of that handicap – they would have difficulties growing their business to a next level without knowing how to read and write.

This is perceived as a big impediment to any business growth across the region. This is also one of the reasons why apprenticeships are based on a verbal agreement that is not sufficiently clear and defined.

VII. Disconnect between Businesses and Training Institutions

There is a total disconnect between the actual businesses and the training institutions in the Mopti region, and probably beyond.

As a result of that, the technical training institutions seem to train in a vacuum, without taking into account the needs of the business sector.

In return, the business sector does not seem to value the youth that are trained by those institutions.

Closer cooperation should be developed so that both sectors could work more closely together and mutually benefit from the cooperation, which would include joint public events.

VIII. Diversification of the Business Sector

The highest demand across the four circles is for food products, and some circles seem to be much worse off than others, due to the limitations of local production and the distance from areas where some food items are grown. This results in extra costs that are linked to the transport, and the storage of the products, as well as to the risk of not selling all items in time and having to throw away unsold food items that cannot be kept any longer.



After general foods comes bakery, clothing, car and motorbike repair – especially electrical automotive, cosmetics and hair dressing, small electronics, carpentry,

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metal construction, as well as masonry, plumbing, painting and tile laying.

However, with such small populations scattered over large areas, market saturation is quickly reached, and it is only through extensive diversification that more jobs can be created.

Other options would imply the production of good quality products at a relatively low cost, which could be exported to other areas/regions where the demand is high and currently unsatisfied. However, this would imply the identification of a raw product that is readily available in the area and that could be transformed locally to increase its export value and marketability.

IX. Access to Electricity

One of the major handicaps that the business sector is facing outside the main towns is access to electricity, which is generally supplied by generators instead of solar energy.

An investment in solar energy could achieve a wider supply of electricity in remote areas. With the provision of inexpensive renewable power, new business opportunities can be developed, that were previously unthinkable in those areas.



Such efforts would also boost the use of clean energy across the region, including the use of solar-powered stoves instead of fossil and wood fuel, and offer better storage options.

This would also generate numbers of new jobs ranging from the installation of solar panels to their maintenance,

to the overall electrical work in areas currently without power, to the provision of solar powered water pumps for irrigation and cultivation.

X. Value Chain & Transformation

Another important sector that requires electricity is that of transformation, which traditionally has mostly taken place in the circle of Mopti, where electricity has been available for many years.

Mopti is the only circle that is listed as having had some important growth over the past few years. The growth is directly linked to its access to electricity and the industries that require electricity.

Almost all the transformation taking place in Mopti region is taking place in Mopti town and immediate surroundings, where electricity is available.

XI. Tourism & Handicraft

These two sectors have generated multiple jobs in the past, but have been abruptly halted by the insurgency and the attacks in the North.

Small projects could be supported in the hotel industry in order to maintain the minimum necessary capacity and be able to restart rapidly when more stability returns.

Investments were made by some projects in the handicraft sector, but have been underutilized by lack of demand. It is still premature to make large investments in these sectors as long as more stability has not been established.

It is important to perpetuate the know-how in the handicraft sector and make sure that the techniques are not lost, if the insecurity was to last.

Training and support should be extended to improve the quality of traditional handicrafts in the region and generate new demand.

Linkages should be established with larger hotels in Bamako to promote the handicraft production from areas that tourists are not visiting, due to current insecurity.

XII. Quality of Final Products

Generally, Malians consider that what is produced in Mali is poorly finished. They tend to say that if you want something well finished, get it from another country.

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This is an area where the program can bring a lot by helping the companies in acquiring newer, more effective equipment and also in offering to the participants a combination of both technical and soft skills, so that they will develop an appreciation for good quality work and will acquire the know-how to perform it.

This is also one of the qualities that business owners felt that job seekers were missing: the appreciation for good quality work.

XIII. Very Few Female Hires

A particular concern that should be highlighted from the interviews held with business owners, is that very few women get hired, even in jobs such as seamstress and tailoring, which are dominated by women in many countries around the world.

A particular expression that was frequently used by business owners to justify the absence of women among their workers is that they lack courage or determination. Another expression used by many was that they don't have the love for work. An excuse used by many was that the work was probably too hard for women. Finally, they also explained their situation by stating that no woman ever applied for a position with them.



However, restaurant owners openly admitted that it was important for them to have women as waitresses to attract male customers.

XIV. Business Women

One of the main challenges in reaching the objectives of the Harande program will clearly be to find a way to reach 45% of female participants.

Given the fact that most employers appear to not hire female workers, there are two options that need to be pursued by the program:

- Identify businesses owned by women to help them grow their business, become role models for young women, and create additional jobs for other young women; and
- Identify young women possessing entrepreneurial characteristics, and give them the necessary support to start their own businesses and thereby create new jobs for more young women.

The idea of promoting the recruitment of young women by existing businesses that do not currently recruit female workers, should not be abandoned, but life skills should be imparted to female participants first so that they can acquire some of the traits that employers are looking for, however limited results should initially be expected from this approach.

Recommended Interventions

Based on the YLNA and LMA in the four circles there are a number of key needs and interventions to consider along the employability and entrepreneurship pathways. In addition, both YLNA and the LMA point to

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interventions on both the supply side (young people entering and preparing for the job market) as well as the demand side (employers and market readiness to absorb new employees and entrepreneurs). Furthermore, the assessments highlight the growing momentum in the area of youth livelihoods and the extraordinary potential for impact and economic growth powered by young people in the next decade of development in Mali.

I. Employability Pathway

The recommendations under the employability pathway reinforce the gaps identified by Harande in technical and vocational training and education. In particular the findings suggest that a greater investment in vocational education rather than academic studies would yield higher employment outcomes for youth, especially rural youth. Furthermore, integration of life / soft skills into the current technical and vocational education would provide a more holistic approach allowing youth to thrive and become more resilient to the fluctuation and dynamic nature of the current market. In particular negotiation skills have been noted as a key competency contributing not only to the business aspect (customer service, etc.) and employability training, but also as a key strength in conflict resolution and peace building.

Greater involvement of the private sector through linkages to TVET institutions would ensure that employers feel confident to hire the young people who participate in TVET training and education. The private sector can be engaged with vocational training institutions through participation in curricula review (to ensure relevance) as well as engagement in the labor market support for young people through activities such as internships, apprenticeships and career fairs. In terms of apprenticeships, findings from the assessment point to a number of key interventions. These include increased access to apprenticeships and on the job training for young women as well as strengthening the overall quality of apprenticeships through adaption, promotion and dissemination of Charters for Apprenticeships. Charters can be initiated with various trade associations to ensure that an adequate number of apprenticeships and on-the-job opportunities are available to young people in the Mopti region. An incentive structure can be put in place for private sector companies that participate in the charters and the private sector can be further engaged through short training workshops. This could

include “how to grow your business” training workshops for participating private sector partners as well as access to additional equipment that would benefit the business while at the same time allow young people to practice their skills within a professional environment.

Furthermore, quality of services offered by the private sector presents an area of opportunity for strengthening. Action to strengthen the quality of services could include collaboration with local Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations to identify key areas of interventions for technical training including plumbing, electricity, electro-mechanics, and leather tanning. In addition, new areas for growth in the local sectors include alternative power and solar energy and link closely with Power Africa initiatives as well as a growing regional focus on green jobs.

On the next page, table #1 recaps the recommended interventions along the employability pathway.

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Recommended Interventions Table #1

Employability Pathway

Identified Need	Proposed Interventions
1. Increase availability and quality of technical and vocational education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for higher ratio of technical and vocational education rather than academic studies in rural areas Promote technical and vocational education as a better option in rural areas Offer life skills training within TVET Create linkages between TVET and the private sector
2. Increase apprenticeship opportunities for young women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify business women in each circle Establish a network of business women across Mopti Region Offer additional support to business women to promote apprenticeships among young women Engage business women in promoting technical and vocational education among young women
3. Promote quality apprenticeship through the adoption, promotion and dissemination of a Charter for Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Charter for Apprenticeships with the chambers and trade associations Organize initial information sessions Develop incentives Organize short training workshops for Business Owners
4. Increase the offering of apprenticeships among Business Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer “how to grow your business” training workshops for cooperating Business Owners Purchase additional equipment to enable Business Owners to accept more apprentices
5. Consider ways to substitute alternative power produced through generators by solar energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make solar energy more readily available across the four circles Train young people in solar energy installation and maintenance
6. Improve the quality of the services offered by Business Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work through Chambers of Trade Associations to identify key areas of technical support (particularly plumbing, electricity, electro-mechanics, and leather tanning) Offer a combination of equipment and training incentives Offer basic life skills to current workers Enhance business management through a series of short training workshops (including estimates, and responses to private and public tenders)
7. Improve quality and finishing of leather and skin tanning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more effective tanning equipment Provide technical training in finishing techniques
8. Enhance negotiation skills in all sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training in negotiation skills with both providers and customers

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Recommended Interventions

II. Entrepreneurship Pathway

The interventions under the entrepreneurship pathway are supported by local education authorities (Agence pour la Promotion de l'Emploi des Jeunes), youth and community members as well. The success of young people entering the self-employment pathway will largely depend on the relevance of business opportunities as well as the market saturation and purchasing power. A key to ensuring success for young people as they embark on starting their own business is access to comprehensive entrepreneurship training. This will include acquisition of basic life / employability skills among youth, support in development and screening of business ideas and business planning, testing of entrepreneurial characteristics, assessment of skill gaps, access to financial services, as well as sustained coaching and mentoring. Additional support will include facilitation on how to organize small groups of business partners among youth in order to diversify risk and share resources.

Both assessments have demonstrated the huge interest of young women to open up their own business or to grow existing micro-enterprises. Engaging with successful women business owners and entrepreneurs to promote women's entrepreneurship through community events combined with incentive building for young women (childcare; additional training, access to finance, etc.) will strengthen and increase young women's participation and success in entrepreneurial ventures. Incentive building for young people entering the self-employment pathway is especially important.

Interventions promoting community service present benefits to both young people and their communities and can be achieved by stimulating and linking community service with income-generating activities (IGA). This combined with access to small grants as well as connection to entrepreneurship training to youth groups with successful IGAs will increase the success of young people who choose self over wage employment while at the same time it diversifies the business option in the local market.

Furthermore, apprenticeship is just as important in entrepreneurship and self-employment as it is in wage employment. Promoting quality apprenticeships as a way for young people to become autonomous and create their own businesses will be a key intervention.

Green economies and the growing focus on environment provides a window of opportunity for youth entrepreneurship. In particular promoting and collaborating with companies offering solar energy installation and maintenance to individuals and businesses. These interventions will be supported by offering of technical and vocational education in the area of solar power and incentivizing the installation of solar energy for the first 50 orders in each of the four circles.

Additionally, promotion of the transformation and conservation techniques such as solar-powered cold-storage facilities in key villages in each circle, demonstration of solar-powered drying techniques and eco-friendly packaging and labeling techniques provide a myriad of opportunities for youth entrepreneurship. This augmented by focus on climate smart strategies through adapted training support such as water management for climate change mitigation; effective soil management practices; alternative energy solutions for climate-smart agriculture; sustainable and inclusive food chain practices; disaster risk reduction; strategies for knowledge sharing, dissemination, and effective learning have enormous potential to further strengthen this growing entrepreneurship niche.

Vertical value chain integration of young people into entrepreneurship opportunities is another successful engagement intervention. Vertical integration allows for young people to enter the value chain not only along the traditional value chain trajectory but also along the economic ecosystem generated by the value chain. In particular examining the tourism value chain ecosystem as well as linking the handicraft sector to the tourism value chain present strong entrepreneurship opportunities for youth in the Mopti region.

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On the tourism side there is a great need for identification of the current need in increase in hotel rooms per circle as well as continuing the focus on the quality in the tourism sector as a way of strengthen and grow the tourism industry and related industries.

Continuing to nurture the integration of tourism and handicraft sectors by collaboration with existing handicraft artisans to enhance the quality and finishing of their products and linking with hotels in Bamako to promote the handicraft production from areas that tourists are not visiting, due to current insecurity presents a viable opportunity for youth entrepreneurship and sustainable employment.

On the next two pages, table #2 recaps the recommended interventions along the entrepreneurship pathway.

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Recommended Interventions Table #2

Entrepreneurship Pathway

Identified Need	Proposed Interventions
1. Promote entrepreneurship among potential participants	Establish comprehensive entrepreneurship programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of basic life skills among participants; • Development and screening of business ideas; • Testing of entrepreneurial characteristics; • Assessment of skills needed and possible reinforcement of these; • Development of business plans; • Access to financial services; • Mentoring and coaching support for a period of six months and up to two years. • Consider ways to create small groups of business partners among youth
2. Promote entrepreneurship among young women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage business women in promoting entrepreneurship among young women • Consider additional incentives for young women
3. Promote quality apprenticeships as a way for young people to become autonomous and create one's own business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivize Business Owners in promoting entrepreneurship • Engage Business Owners in helping identify potential entrepreneurs
4. Promote the creation of companies offering solar energy installation and maintenance to individuals and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the offering of technical and vocational education in the area of solar power • Incentivize the installation of solar energy for the first 50 orders in each of the four circles
5. Enhance negotiation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in negotiation skills with both providers and customers
6. Promote initiatives that can lead to business diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Community Service activities among young people • Induce the idea of linking community service with income-generating activities (IGA) • Provide small grants to enable the process • Offer entrepreneurship training to youth groups with successful IGAs
7. Promote transformation and conservation techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote solar-powered cold-storage facilities in key villages in each circle • Demonstrate and promote solar-powered drying techniques • Promote packaging and labeling techniques

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Identified Need	Proposed Interventions
8. Promote value-chain integration through adapted training support	Training in value-chain integration, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value chain development and selection criteria; • Nature and diversity of end-products; • Identifying value chains to be considered, on the basis of data collection; • Generating end-product ideas; • Determining working conditions & gender-based constraints in the value chain; • Selection and validation of agribusinesses; and • Ensuring the inclusion of sufficient flexibility to reorient production.
9. Promote climate-smart strategies through adapted training support	Training in climate-smart strategies, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water management for climate change mitigation; • Effective soil management practices; • Alternative energy solutions for climate-smart agriculture; • Sustainable and inclusive food chain practices; • Disaster risk reduction; • Strategies for knowledge sharing, dissemination, and effective learning
10. Ensure the continuation of the tourism sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the current need in hotel rooms per circle • Maintain the quality in the sector to prevent the total collapse of the sector
11. Ensure the continuation of the handicraft sector linked to tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with existing handicraft artisans to enhance the quality and finishing of their production • Linkage with hotels in Bamako to promote the handicraft production from areas that tourists are not visiting, due to current insecurity

ⁱ Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, p. 93; see the review by Max Rodenbeck, “The Truth About Jihad,” *The New York Review*, August 11, 2005, which also discusses several other books mentioned in this article.) Although no recent numbers are available, the school enrollment rate between 2004 and 2008 was averaging 50% in primary school.

ii Strengthening the Youth Sector and Building Capacity in the Balkans USAID Cooperative Agreement #194-A-00-02-00102-00 End of Project Report: 01 May 2002 — 01 October 2005 Page 15: Chamber of Commerce of Albania: The Chamber of Commerce agreed to sponsor registration fees of €800 per enterprise that had to be paid to the Ministry of Finance and other public institutions, thereby reducing a big access barrier for young people to start up their own businesses. The Ministry of Finance of Albania has since then worked on amendments to legislation to make it easier for young entrepreneurs to establish their own business, and some results are starting to show.