



Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Mali 2021–2025

1. Direction

The objective of Sweden's international development cooperation is to create conditions to improve the lives of people living in poverty and oppression. Swedish development cooperation is based on the principles of aid and development effectiveness, the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

The strategy is applicable from 2021 to 2025 and comprises a total of SEK 2 billion, of which SEK 1.95 billion is intended for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and SEK 50 million for the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA).

This strategy directs the use of funds under appropriation item 1:1.9 'Africa' in the appropriation directions for Sida for each budget year, and funds under appropriation item 1:1.4 'Development Cooperation' and appropriation item 1.4.1 'Folke Bernadotte Academy' concerning administrative costs associated with implementation of the strategy in the appropriation directions for the FBA for each budget year.

Sida's activities will contribute to the following objectives:

Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality

- Strengthened respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including reduced corruption
- Greater gender equality, including access to, and respect for, sexual and reproductive health and rights

Peaceful and inclusive societies

- Inclusive processes to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts by peaceful means

Environment, climate and sustainable use of natural resources

- Reduced climate impact and increased resilience to climate change
- Sustainable management and use of natural resources, including biodiversity
- Sustainable and resilient agriculture focusing on improved food security and livelihood

The activities of FBA will contribute to the following objectives:

Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality

- Strengthened respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including security sector reform

Peaceful and inclusive societies

- Enhanced opportunities for equal participation in peace processes and strengthened capacity to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts at different levels of society

2. Country context

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, marked by widespread vulnerability and extensive security challenges. A peace accord was signed in 2015 and provides the basis for building sustainable peace, creating stability and contributing to sustainable development. However, the key elements of the peace accord have not been implemented. An increase in terrorism and criminal activities, including illegal trade in arms, drugs and people, has compounded the security situation in recent years, especially in the northern and central parts of the country. In August 2020, after months of protests in Mali against the incumbent government, a military coup took place; the President was forced to resign and the Parliament and Government were dissolved. A negotiation process led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) resulted in an agreement on an 18-month transitional period for a return to democratic rule and the implementation of key reforms, including of the Constitution and democratic institutions.

The majority of the population earn their livelihood in the informal sector, and poverty is widespread throughout the country. Agriculture accounts for the livelihood of most people in the northern and central regions, but unclear land rights and changing patterns of behaviour have contributed to conflicts between herders and farmers, particularly in the central regions. Corruption in public administration and the judicial system is widespread. State presence is weak, particularly in rural areas, limiting the ability to provide the population with security and basic public services. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact threaten to further burden already weak social structures and exacerbate the plight of already vulnerable groups.

The human rights situation is very worrying. There are regular reports of grave human rights violations and abuses linked to the security situation. Women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights and women's participation in political and decision-making processes are restricted; this is due to factors including structural inequalities, child marriage and gender discrimination in the workplace. Gender-based violence and female genital mutilation are prevalent.

Mali is a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants. Humanitarian needs are immense and food insecurity widespread. The significant security problems, extensive environmental challenges and changing climate patterns are contributing factors.

3. Activities

Sida will carry out, monitor and report on activities in accordance with the Government's guidelines for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance strategies (UD2017/21053). The guidelines state inter alia that activities will be actively directed towards achieving the objectives and that the actual results should be monitored based on the objectives. The annual strategy report will be comprehensive and among other things include a presentation, analysis and assessment of the results of the activities in relation to the defined objectives. Results will be used for decision-making, learning and accountability, and for ensuring transparency for the general public. Monitoring will produce reliable and useful information about results in both the short term and the long term by using both qualitative and quantitative information, where possible. The follow-up of results will primarily establish whether the activities made a difference,

how and for whom. Follow-up based on existing conditions will determine the extent to which development cooperation made a difference.

Sweden's development cooperation contributes to sustainable development in accordance with the 2030 Agenda, the financing for development commitments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The activities' contribution will be particularly relevant to the following sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda: no poverty (SDG 1), zero hunger (SDG 2), good health and well-being (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13), life on land (SDG 15), peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16) and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). Strategy reports to the Government will include references to how activities contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in relation to the strategy's priorities. Swedish development cooperation as a whole will contribute to poverty reduction in the country, better conditions for democratic development and respect for human rights.

Activities will contribute to strengthening the rule of law, increasing transparency and accountability, and reducing corruption. Activities will also contribute to strengthening conditions for democratic, free and fair elections. Where possible and appropriate, activities will also focus on strengthening critical institutions and confidence in them. Efforts to increase gender equality should aim to strengthen women's participation in decision-making processes and improve attitudes concerning the agency of women and girls. FBA's activities will focus on strengthening respect for rule of law, including support to dialogue and participation in security sector reform, where deemed appropriate.

Development activities will create conditions for more effective and relevant initiatives and processes for peace, conflict prevention, democratisation and reconciliation. The participation of women and young people in these initiatives and processes should be strengthened. FBA will promote conflict prevention, peacebuilding and the participation of women and young people in peace process and in mechanisms to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. Support for efforts to reintegrate ex-combatants may be included.

Development activities will contribute to sustainable management and use of natural resources, including conservation and restoration of biodiversity and its ecosystem services. In these activities, Sweden should harness the synergies between sustainable natural resource management and environmental, social and economic resilience. Activities will include support to small-scale and sustainable agriculture and forestry, which includes a sustainable use of natural resources and contributes to increased health protection. Activities in the agricultural sector may also contribute to productive employment and decent work. They may also include measures for increased access to renewable energy and increased energy efficiency. Activities that aim to limit Mali's climate impact or strengthen resilience to climate change may also contribute to managing the underlying causes of conflict.

Sweden has extensive and multifaceted engagement with Mali. Development cooperation is one part of Sweden's total engagement in the country, which also includes humanitarian support, extensive personnel contributions to peace support operations and contributions to the EU's activities. Sweden's development cooperation will be relevant and effective. Activities will harness the linkages between long-term development cooperation, peace support and humanitarian assistance. Long term, activities will contribute to reducing dependency on humanitarian assistance. Synergies will be sought between the different strategy areas and with activities within the framework of other relevant strategies for Sweden's development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Where relevant, the potential of digital transformation and innovation will be harnessed as a tool for achieving the objectives. Mobilising other financial resources should be explored.

Sweden's development cooperation will be adapted to prevailing circumstances, and be flexible and effective. Direct cooperation with state actors may pose a certain risk and should only take place following a thorough risk assessment.

Sweden will promote coherent and effective development and aid coordination in the country, not least through active participation in EU Joint Programming and in cooperation with relevant multilateral actors.

This is a translation of a Swedish Government decision. In the event of any inconsistencies or discrepancy between this version and the Swedish original, the latter will prevail.