



## Mali Development Profile 2009

**Capital City:** Bamako

**Population:** 12,666,987

Modern day Mali was once part of three West African empires that dominated trade in the trans-Saharan area: the Ghana Empire, the Mali Empire and the Songhai Empire. The Mali Empire was at its peak in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with the ancient cities of Djenné and Timbuktu being famous centres for Islamic learning and trade. In the late 1800s, Mali came under French control, subsequently becoming part of French Sudan. Mali finally gained independence from the French along with Senegal in 1959, the two nations being collectively known as the Mali federation. Yet the following year the Mali Federation dissolved due to political disagreements with Mali subsequently becoming an independent nation.

In 1968, following progressive economic decline, the Malian government was overthrown by a military coup leading to one-party in the country for the next twenty years. During this period the country was faced with widespread droughts, student protests and numerous coup attempts. Anti-government protests in 1991 led to a successful coup, a transitional government, and a new constitution and in the following year the country held its first democratic multi-party elections. These and subsequent elections in 2002 were a success, leading to Mali to become one of the most politically and socially stable countries in Africa. Nevertheless Mali's turbulent history has had its impact, meaning that Mali remains one of the world's poorest countries; its adult literacy rate is estimated to be the lowest in the world. Mali has come a long way in the past twenty years, but strategic interventions are needed to ensure greater livelihood opportunities for its population.

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**Human Development Index ranking:**

168<sup>th</sup> (out of 179)

**GDP per capita:**

US\$1053

**Adult Literacy:**

22.9%

**Life Expectancy:**

53.7 years

**Physicians per 100,000 people:**

8

**Under 5 Infant mortality:**

196 deaths per 1000 births

**Access to safe drinking water:**

60% of the population

**Electricity Access:**

12% (urban 37%, rural 2%)

Sources: UNDP (2008) *Human Development Report 2007/2008: Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world*, United Nations Development Programme; UNDP (2008) *Human Development Indices: A Statistical Update 2008*; United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF (2009) *State of the World's Children*, United Nations Children's Fund, CIA (2009) *The World Factbook*, Central Intelligence Agency.