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EDUCATION RECOVERY SUPPORT ACTIVITY (ERSA)

BEYOND ACCESS

As the education situation in Mali moves from emergency to protracted crises, and schools begin to reopen, there are many children and youth who have missed out on years of schooling. As a result, thousands of children and youth have been deprived of opportunities to learn and make living wages, increasing the potential risks of being targeted for recruitment by armed extremist groups still operating in the north of Mali. Strategies should not only focus on reopening schools and rebuilding infrastructure but also address the needs of children and youth who have been out of the school system for years, continue to be faced with violence and insecurity in their communities, and have suffered both physical and psychological trauma.

SECOND CHANCE OPPORTUNITIES

USAID’s Education Recovery Support Activity (ERSA) assists the Malian government’s “Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali” to restore basic, quality education services in the North and the implementation of the 2015 Peace Agreement. It aims to support equitable access to quality education and livelihood opportunities for children and youth in conflict-affected areas. ERSA provides second chance opportunities to access education and livelihoods opportunities while simultaneously building the capacity of the Ministry of Education and local partners to adapt and strengthen the educational system to be more resilient. In Gao and Menaka Regions, ERSA re-enrolls out of school children, 9-14 years, and provides accelerated learning opportunities to make up for lost years. The project supports the Ministry of Education to develop the tools and management systems required to fast-track children back into formal schools through an accelerated education program (AEP). For youth 15-24 years, ERSA provides opportunities for vocational training, basic literacy and numeracy, work readiness preparation, and internships. ERSA mobilizes communities to increase support and safety of education for children and youth as well as providing students and teachers with the tools to strengthen their ability to both prevent conflict and prepare in the event of future unrest.

EDUCATION RECOVERY SUPPORT ACTIVITY GOALS

BUDGET: \$15.2 million

TARGET AREAS: Gao and Menaka Regions

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER: Education Development Center

Over the 5-year (2015 – 2020) project cycle, expected results are:

- 290 Accelerated Education Program (AEP) Centers established (150 centers will be built or rehabilitated);
- 290 AEP teachers trained;
- 10,150 out of school children from 9 to 14 years enrolled in the AEP centers; among them 7,540 will integrate into the formal school system and 1,160 will start vocational training;
- 2,800 young people will be offered employment opportunities (internship, partnership development).