



**Convention on the Rights  
of Persons with Disabilities**

Distr.: General  
28 April 2020  
English  
Original: French  
English, French, Spanish and  
Russian only

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**Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**Initial report submitted by Mali under article 35  
of the Convention, due in 2010<sup>\*</sup>, <sup>\*\*</sup>**

[Date received: 24 June 2019]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.  
\*\* The annexes to the present report are available from the web page of the Committee.



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## Introduction

1. The present report, which covers the period from 2008 to 2018, was prepared pursuant to article 35 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, in New York, on 13 December 2006.
2. This article provides that “each State Party shall submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a comprehensive report on measures taken to give effect to its obligations under the present Convention and on the progress made in that regard”.
3. Mali ratified the Convention by Decree No. 07-309/P-RM of 4 September 2007.
4. Mali is a landlocked country in the heart of West Africa, located entirely on the continental mainland. It has an area of 1,241,238 km<sup>2</sup>, 65 per cent of which is arid or semi-arid. It is one of the largest countries in West Africa and shares its approximately 7,561 km-long border with seven countries: Algeria to the north, Burkina Faso to the south-east, Côte d’Ivoire to the south, Guinea to the south-west, Mauritania to the north-west, the Niger to the east and Senegal to the west.
5. The population of Mali was 14,528,662 in 2009 (general population and housing census, 2009) and was estimated to be 18,874,286 in 2017. In 2016, 49.8 per cent of the total population was under 15 years of age, 46.8 per cent was between 15 and 64, and 3.5 per cent was 65 or older. With an average annual growth rate of 3.6 per cent, the population of Mali will double almost every 20 years, a development that could have a series of consequences in terms of natural resources and the educational, employment and health needs of individuals, particularly those living with disabilities.
6. According to the most recent general population and housing census, conducted in 2009, 70 per cent of the population lives in rural areas and works in the primary sector. The population is very young; 59.5 per cent of Malians are under 19 years of age. Women make up 50.4 per cent of the population. The annual population growth rate is 3.6 per cent.
7. With respect to devolution, Mali currently comprises 410 administrative units, including 19 regions, 1 district (Bamako), 60 *cercles* and 330 *arrondissements*, and 754 *communes*.
8. In terms of decentralization, the country has 825 territorial units, including 10 currently existing regions, 1 district (Bamako), 60 *cercles* and 754 *communes*.
9. Mali is an ethnic and cultural melting pot. Its population is composed of Muslims, Christians and animists. The country’s economy is based on agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, handicrafts, trade, tourism, mining, industry, small and medium-sized enterprises and so on.
10. The results returned from the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction indicate that gross domestic product (GDP) grew 4.5 per cent in 2009, compared to 4.3 per cent in 2007 and 5 per cent in 2008. The majority of the population lives below the poverty line. In addition, Mali is quite vulnerable to fluctuations in world commodity prices, particularly those of three products, cotton, gold and livestock, the country’s main exports.
11. By Decree No. 2016-0889/P-RM of 23 November 2016, the Government approved the Strategic Framework for a Sustainable Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development (2016–2018) as a national policy document. This document is the fourth of its kind, following the Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty (2002–2006), the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (2007–2011) and the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (2012–2017). It puts into effect the vision set forth in the “Mali 2025” national outlook study and it is also based on the Sustainable Development Goals; the priorities under the Plan for a Sustainable Recovery in Mali (2013–2014), the Government Programme of Action (2013–2018), the Accelerated Development Programme for the Northern Regions and the new challenges arising from the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali emanating from the Algiers process are also covered.

12. Following implementation, the country's GDP grew 5.8 per cent in 2016 and 6 per cent in 2015. The growth rate had been 4.5 per cent in 2009, 5 per cent in 2008 and 4.3 per cent in 2007. The income poverty rate declined from 47.2 per cent in 2015 to 46.8 per cent in 2016, and from 47.1 per cent in 2013 to 46.9 per cent in 2014. The poverty line decreased from 177,000 CFA francs (CFAF) in 2015 to CFAF 175,000 in 2016 owing to a decline in the annual inflation rate. Poverty continues to affect nearly one in two Malians. Despite the economic growth experienced in 2015 and 2016, the prevalence of poverty has not significantly declined.

13. Mali is a country with a thousand-year-old civilization, and its current political and human rights practices draw from its own history and from universal democratic values.

14. The Kurukan Fuga Charter, the constituent instrument of the Empire of Mali in 1236, had all the attributes of a constitution and included provisions on the protection and promotion of human rights.

15. The present report was prepared by the Interministerial Support Committee for the preparation of initial and periodic reports on the implementation of treaties ratified by Mali, which was created under Decree No. 09-049/PM-RM of 12 February 2009.

16. That Committee brings together designated representatives of all ministerial departments and of civil society so as to achieve greater inclusiveness and better follow-through in its work.

17. The present report describes the current status of the implementation in Mali of the Convention.

## **I. Legal and institutional framework for the implementation of the Convention**

### **A. International and regional commitments undertaken by Mali with respect to the rights of persons with disabilities**

18. Mali is a party to a number of regional and international human rights instruments that aim to address the situation of persons with disabilities.

#### **1. International legal instruments**

19. These instruments include:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the first Optional Protocol thereto
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Optional Protocol thereto
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Protocols Additional I and II thereto

- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol thereto
- International Convention against Doping in Sport
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
- The principal conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), in particular the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159) and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- The principal conventions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in particular the Convention against Discrimination in Education
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, adopted on 27 June 2013

## 2. Regional legal instruments

20. These instruments include:

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
- Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights, under which the Court of Justice of the African Union and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights were merged into a single court
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa
- Bilateral agreements concluded with certain neighbouring countries (Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea)
- Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in West and Central Africa
- Human rights commitments under the Economic Community of West African States and the Francophonie

## B. Institutional framework

### 1. Lead agency

21. The Ministry of Solidarity and Humanitarian Action is the lead agency for persons with disabilities. It formulates and implements national policy in the areas of poverty, sustainable human development, social welfare, social protection and support for older persons.

22. Its responsibilities include:

- Formulating and implementing appropriate policies and strategies in order to reduce poverty and social exclusion and foster sustainable human development
- Putting in place social protection systems that shield individuals and families from social risks

- Planning and implementing measures aimed at the social advancement of persons with disabilities
23. The Ministry comprises the following directorates:
- National Directorate of Social Development
  - National Directorate of Social Protection and the Solidarity Economy, regional directorates and subregional units
2. **Other government bodies**
24. The rights of persons with disabilities are addressed in all ministerial departments.

## II. Implementation of the Convention

### A. Definitions and general principles (arts. 1–3)

25. By ratifying the Convention, Mali endorsed and incorporated into its domestic legislation the general principles and definitions established in the Convention, pursuant to article 116 of the Constitution of 25 February 1992, which provides that “treaties and agreements which have been lawfully ratified or approved take precedence, once published, over domestic laws”.

26. Accordingly, under the domestic laws of Mali, including Act No. 2018-027 of 12 June 2018 on the rights of persons living with a disability, persons with disabilities are “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”.

27. Furthermore, Mali has adopted the following general principles:

- (a) Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons with disabilities;
- (b) Non-discrimination;
- (c) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- (d) Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- (e) Equality of opportunity;
- (f) Accessibility;
- (g) Equality between men and women;
- (h) Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

### B. General obligations (art. 4)

28. Measures have been taken to support persons with disabilities socially and economically in various areas. These include:

- (a) The adoption of legislative and regulatory measures aimed at the protection and advancement of persons living with a disability under the following laws:
  - Constitution of 25 February 1992, article 1 of which states that “the human person is sacred and inviolable. All individuals have the right to life, liberty, and security and integrity of the person”
  - ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Recommendation, 1983 (No. 168)

- Social Insurance Code (Act No. 99-041/P-RM of 12 August 1999)
- Provisions on special and inclusive education of the Education Policy Act (No. 99-046 of 28 December 1999)
- Criminal Code (Act No. 01-079/P-RM of 20 August 2001, as amended by Act No. 2005-45 of 18 August 2005 and Act No. 2016-39 of 7 July 2016)
- Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 01-80 of 20 August 2001, as amended by Act No. 2013-016 of 21 May 2013)
- General regulations on urban planning established under Act No. 02-016 of 3 June 2002
- Article 18 of the General Civil Service Regulations established under Act No. 02-53/P-RM of 16 December 2002
- Act No. 2015-052/AN-RM of 18 December 2015 introducing measures to promote gender equality in access to appointed and elected office
- Labour Code (Act No. 92-020 of 23 September 1992, amended by Act No. 2017-021/P-RM of 14 June 2017)
- Act No. 2018-027 of 12 June 2018 on the Rights of Persons Living with a Disability
- Ordinance No. 02-062/P-RM of 9 June 2002 on the Child Protection Code
- Ordinance No. 07-035-P-RM of 4 September 2007 authorizing the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto

(b) The implementation of policies and programmes, including:

- National Policy on Humanitarian Action and its Action Plan 2018–2022
- National Solidarity Policy (2018)
- National Social Protection Policy (2016)
- National Employment Policy (2015)
- National Vocational Training Policy (2008)
- National Special Education Policy (1999)
- National Plan of Action for the African Decade of Disabled Persons 1999–2009
- Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Persons with Disabilities 2015–2024
- Health and Social Development Programmes, I and II
- Community-based rehabilitation programme
- The official introduction under Decree No. 01-468/P-RM of 27 September 2001 of the Month of Solidarity and Combating Exclusion

(c) The creation of an institutional mechanism comprising State and private entities to support the implementation of projects and programmes such as:

- National Directorate of Social Development
- National Directorate of Social Protection and the Solidarity Economy
- Regional directorates and subregional units of the National Directorate of Social Protection and the Solidarity Economy
- National Directorate of Preschool and Special Education
- Malian National Centre for Orthopaedic Appliances and its branches in the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Ségou, Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu
- National Solidarity Fund

- Special education institutions for persons with disabilities, including visual, hearing, intellectual and physical disabilities
- Fédération Malienne des Associations de Personnes Handicapées (Malian Federation of Associations of Persons with Disabilities), national associations and regional and local federations
- House of solidarity in Bakaribougou

(d) The contributions made by civil society actors and technical and financial partners towards the advancement of persons with disabilities.

29. Today, many civil society organizations are working for the advancement of persons with disabilities. They are increasingly specialized and receive technical and financial support from international non-governmental organizations and bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies in implementing their programmes.

30. There are around 467 organizations bearing the designation “organization of persons with disabilities”. Of that number, 20 are affiliated with the Fédération Malienne des Associations de Personnes Handicapées, an umbrella organization with decentralized national, regional and local branches where experiences and know-how are shared.

### **C. Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)**

31. The Constitution of 25 February 1992 guarantees all human rights to all individuals, without discrimination. It is consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

### **D. Women with disabilities (art. 6)**

32. The Union Malienne des Associations et Comités des Femmes Handicapées (Malian Union of Associations and Committees of Women with Disabilities) brings together associations that have been formed by women with disabilities, addressing all types of disability.

33. The Union receives State support in the amount of CFAF 4 million annually to organize activities celebrating International Women’s Day and Pan-African Women’s Day and hold training, awareness-raising and advocacy sessions on violence and abuse committed against women with disabilities.

34. There is a particular emphasis on raising awareness among members of the health-care community with respect to reproductive health-care services for women with disabilities and on providing literacy training in the national languages.

35. Women with disabilities receive financing for income-generating activities (such as sewing and dyeing) through associations of and groups for women with disabilities.

36. Mali has made tremendous efforts to promote the advancement of women with disabilities by providing:

- Funding for the Vocational Training and Apprenticeship Support Fund
- Capacity-building programmes for women with disabilities (literacy education and vocational training)
- Equipment and access to mobility aids (crutches, canes, tricycles and motorized tricycles).

### **E. Children with disabilities (art. 7)**

37. The issues at stake in the education of children and adolescents with disabilities include social equity, equality of opportunity, respect for and promotion of human rights and better living conditions and greater social inclusion for the children. It requires both a

collaborative effort on the part of various ministerial departments and the mobilization of significant financial resources. (Coverage for such care is provided for under articles 3 to 16 of the Child Protection Code and article 17 of the law setting forth the compulsory health insurance scheme.)

38. Article 17 of Decree No. 09-552/P-RM of 12 October 2009 implementing Act No. 09-015 of 26 June 2009 provides that “only children of the insured who have physical or mental disabilities preventing them from engaging in paid work will be covered for life under the compulsory health insurance scheme, regardless of their age”. Between its launch and 24 January 2017, a total of 156 children with disabilities received benefits under the health insurance scheme.

39. The total cost of the care provided to the children from 1 May 2011 to 24 January 2017 amounted to CFAF 58,532,685.42 for all benefits, including medical treatment, surgeries, hospitalization, medical imaging, laboratory tests and medicine.

40. Special education has been given a significant boost as a result the creation of associations of persons with disabilities. Those associations prompted the establishment of the 10 special education centres in place in the country. They cater for more than 6,500 children and adolescents with sensory, physical and mental impairments.

41. Mali has adopted a National Policy on Special Education and Inclusive Education to support and protect children in general, without discrimination on the basis of disability.

42. The national policy on special education arose out of Act No. 99-046 of 28 December 1999 on education policy, as amended. Articles 47 and 55 of the Act provide that special education is aimed at persons with major impairments. Persons with minor impairments are accommodated by different forms and types of education. They follow the same teaching as students without disabilities while also receiving special educational care.

43. Furthermore, there are special education institutions for persons with various types of disabilities (visual, hearing, intellectual and physical disabilities), the Association Malienne de Lutte contre les Déficiences Mentales chez l’Enfant (Malian Association to Prevent Mental Impairment in Children), the Association Malienne des Sourds (Malian Association of Deaf Persons), the Union Malienne des Aveugles (Malian Union of Blind Persons) and the Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Physical Disabilities.

44. The 10-Year Educational Development Programme was established under Act No. 99-046 of 28 December 1999, which sets forth, in articles 46 and 47, the right of children and adolescents with disabilities, including severe disabilities, to an education. This programme has employed affirmative action in awarding scholarships for study abroad to students with disabilities who have passed their school-leaving exams.

## **F. Awareness-raising (art. 8)**

45. A national community-based rehabilitation programme has been in place in Mali since 1998. The aim of the programme is to raise awareness among the families of children with disabilities, to provide in-home physiotherapy and rehabilitation services and to carry out informational activities throughout the country.

46. During the month of October, one week is devoted to activities for the advancement of persons with disabilities.

47. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is celebrated every 3 December. A key element of the month is the third week dedicated to persons with disabilities. Each year at that time, lectures and discussions are held throughout the country.

48. The following activities were carried out in 2017:

- Day of Solidarity with Persons with Albinism
- A lecture and discussion on the difficulties faced by persons with short stature in adapting to their environment and the educational model appropriate for them

- A lecture and discussion organized by the Union Malienne des Associations et Comités des Femmes Handicapées on gender-based violence, with a focus on the situation of women with disabilities
  - A conference organized by the Association Vaincre le Bégaiement (Association to Overcome Stuttering) on the causes and consequences of stuttering in children and to share advice and insights on how to reduce the frequency of stuttering in children, especially in schools
49. Bambara, Braille and sign language versions of the Convention have been prepared.

## **G. Accessibility (art. 9)**

50. Mali has adopted standards on the accessibility of public buildings and facilities to persons with disabilities. Article 54 of Act No. 02-016 of 3 June 2002 establishing the general regulations on urban planning states that “developers, owners and operators of establishments open to the public must, during both construction and operation, take appropriate preventive and safeguard measures to ensure individuals’ safety. These measures will depend on the nature of the operations, the size of the premises, the method of construction and the number of persons who may enter the establishment, including persons with disabilities”.

51. The State has carried out socially beneficial projects, particularly in public service infrastructure, that take into account persons with disabilities and their special needs (such as the need for access ramps in community health centres, hospitals, schools, government offices and so on).

52. With respect to transportation, persons with disabilities crossing signs have been installed on the main roads of some of the country’s major cities.

53. Sign language interpretation is provided during major events held by the Ministry of Solidarity and Humanitarian Action.

54. In 2017, the Ministry of Solidarity and Humanitarian Action financed training for five interpreters in Abidjan to allow them to acquire supplementary techniques and practices to enhance their simultaneous interpreting abilities. They were given computers adapted for blind persons.

55. In 2015, Mali ratified the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled. This indicates the value placed by the State on respect for the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity. It also allows this group of persons with disabilities to contribute effectively to the life of the nation.

56. Measures are currently being taken at the Mali Radio and Television Office to ensure that the television news is accessible to persons with hearing impairments.

57. Following the establishment of Universal Telecommunication and Information and Communication Technology Access Centres, the Union Malienne des Aveugles has at its disposal a computer room with the capacity for 20 computers adapted for blind users.

## **H. Right to life (art. 10)**

58. The Constitution of 25 February 1992 enshrines the right to life for all persons without discrimination. The first indent in article 1 provides that: “The human person is sacred and inviolable.”

## **I. Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)**

59. In situations of armed conflict, humanitarian crisis or natural disaster, all victims receive care free of charge. Persons with disabilities are provided with assistive devices in addition to such assistance.

60. In its database, the National Directorate of Social Development has a disaggregated information system, specifying the number of displaced persons with disabilities in each region.

61. As part of its humanitarian assistance, Humanity and Inclusion provided emergency response training to approximately 20 persons with disabilities.

#### **J. Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)**

62. Article 2 of the Constitution reaffirms that “all citizens of Mali are born and remain free and equal in their rights and duties”. This means that all human rights, including the right to recognition as persons before the law, are guaranteed for everyone without discrimination. The right of everyone without discrimination to own property is also enshrined in the Constitution.

#### **K. Liberty and security of the person and freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (arts. 14 and 15)**

63. The Constitution guarantees for everyone, without discrimination, the right to liberty and security and the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

64. Article 1 further provides that all individuals have the right to life, liberty and security and integrity of the person.

65. The first indent in article 3 stipulates: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman, cruel, degrading or humiliating punishment or treatment.”

#### **L. Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)**

66. Persons with disabilities, particularly women and children, are the group that is most at risk of exploitation, violence and abuse. They are a major focus for begging and aid dependency.

67. In Mali, a national programme to combat begging was launched in 2008. However, this programme is not producing the expected outcomes owing to the religious and social aspects of the problem and a lack of financial resources.

68. A partnership agreement on combating the economic exploitation of children through begging was signed with the Coalition Malienne pour le Droit des Enfants (Malian Coalition for the Rights of the Child) in 2015.

69. Awareness-rising campaigns about gender-based and disability-based violence are conducted.

#### **M. Protecting the integrity of the person and liberty of movement and nationality (arts. 17 and 18)**

70. The Constitution guarantees protection of physical integrity to all persons without discrimination. The first indent in article 1 provides that: “The human person is sacred and inviolable. All individuals have the right to life, liberty, and security and integrity of the person.”

71. It also guarantees equal treatment in terms of rights and responsibilities for all Malians, who are born and remain free without discrimination on the grounds of disability (art. 2).

72. The Constitution also guarantees the right to move freely, without any discrimination based on physical condition, and the right to choose one’s place of residence.

## **N. Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)**

73. On 14 October 2015, the Government approved a strategic plan for the socioeconomic protection of persons with disabilities for 2015–2024 with a total budget of CFAF 11,053,000,000.

74. The goal of the strategic plan is to ensure full participation and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in an emerging Malian society without discrimination.

75. A quarterly grant was approved under a funding agreement signed in 2010 between the ministry responsible for persons with disabilities and the Fédération Malienne des Associations de Personnes Handicapées, to promote the full development of this group of persons.

76. A special budget line is dedicated to the provision of assistive devices for persons with disabilities.

77. In addition, the Tax Code and the Customs Code establish exemptions for persons with disabilities.

78. The State pays quarterly grants to several organizations and institutions and provides technical supplies to establishments. It provides teaching staff for institutions.

79. As part of the programme of support for income-generating activities for persons with disabilities, a total of CFAF 4 million was provided to the Federation to fund income-generating projects in 2017. Income-generating kits include 17 motorized tricycles, 1 motorcycle taxi, 1 wheelchair and training material.

80. In addition, at least 220 women from organizations in the regions of Kayes, Mopti and Timbuktu and Bamako District were helped to find work in the soap-making trade and 30 members of the Association malienne des personnes de petite taille (Malian Association of Persons of Short Stature) received information technology training.

81. Persons with disabilities are eligible for public housing programmes and 20 housing units have been thus provided to persons with disabilities.

82. Under the project to promote the empowerment of organizations of persons with disabilities, funded by the United States Agency for International Development, the Support Centre for Mutual Societies, Associations and Cooperatives, which implemented the project, was able to engage in activities between April 2014 and March 2016 totalling CFAF 3,360,000. These included the training of 72 members of organizations of persons with disabilities to draft and approve manuals of administrative, financial and accounting procedures, the training of 44 members of organizations of persons with disabilities on the administrative and financial management of an organization, support for seven organizations of persons with disabilities to draft a strategic resource mobilization document and the training of 21 members of organizations of persons with disabilities on project cycle management.

83. The National Social Insurance Institute pays an annual grant to several organizations of persons with disabilities. From 2008 to November 2017, the Institute paid out the following annuities, pensions and grants:

- Annuities to reimburse daily expenses for treatment and evacuation to 17,184 persons for a total cost of CFAF 7,187,746,075
- Disability pensions to 219 persons for a total cost of CFAF 3,586,145,981
- Grant paid to 4,272 children with disabilities for a total cost of CFAF 119,210,000
- Grant paid to 8 persons with disabilities for a total cost of CFAF 100,000,000

## **O. Personal mobility (art. 20)**

84. Each year Mali observes White Cane Day, dedicated to blind persons, in partnership with Sightsavers.

85. The National Orthopaedic Appliance Centre is a national public science and technology establishment with legal personality and financial autonomy, established pursuant to Act No. 02-065 of 18 December 2002. Its role is to provide specialized orthopaedic and rehabilitation services and any other tasks contributing to the fulfilment of this mission.

86. It contributes to mobility through assistive devices, technical aids and rehabilitation. Since the Centre was founded, the number of beneficiaries of its functional rehabilitation activities is as follows:

- 100,668 persons examined
- 218,867 rehabilitation sessions provided
- 8,016 orthopaedic devices manufactured
- 5,778 children with clubfeet treated using the Ponseti method

87. Since the Centre was established in 2016, CFAF 5,830,609,037 has been spent, shared between the State and partners.

88. The National Directorate of Social Development, its branches and partners help provide devices for persons with mobility and visual impairments. Each year, persons with disabilities receive tricycles, motorized tricycles and wheelchairs.

89. The National Orthopaedic Appliance Centre contributes to mobility through devices, technical aids and rehabilitation. From 2005 to 2014:

- The needs of 11,895 persons for assistive technology were met
- Support for device provision, which included 300 motorized tricycles, was given to 1,677 persons with disabilities
- Education was provided to 62,445 children with disabilities from deprived families

90. Persons with visual impairments who so require may receive training on mobility techniques at the Union Malienne des Aveugles.

91. Each year, persons with disabilities benefit from tricycles, motorized tricycles and wheelchairs.

#### **Device distribution from 2008 to 2016**

<i>Type of device</i>	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2015	2016	<i>Total</i>
Tricycles	480	506	593	295	431	322	269	753	3 649
Orthoses	88	123	59	115	40	38	0	187	650
Prostheses	229	109	89	445	43	79	18	225	1 237
Canes and other devices	695	843	978	6 065	738	662	526	1 022	11 529

**Total number of devices distributed: 17 065**

*Source:* Ministry of Solidarity and Humanitarian Action statistical yearbooks.

*Note:* No statistical yearbook was produced in 2012 owing to the crisis.

## **P. Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)**

92. The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression and opinion for all persons without discrimination. Article 4 provides that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, worship, opinion, expression and creation in accordance with the law.

93. Several media outlets propose specific programming for persons with disabilities. For example, the national radio programme on persons with disabilities, *Tribune de solidarité*, gives persons with disabilities an opportunity to reach a national audience.

94. Interpreting for deaf persons is provided at some events and the State supports the training of these interpreters.

### **Q. Respect for privacy, the home and the family (arts. 22 and 23)**

95. The Constitution guarantees respect for privacy, the home and the family for all persons without discrimination. Specifically, article 6 stipulates: “The home, privacy, family life and confidentiality of correspondence and communications are inviolable.”

### **R. Education (art. 24)**

96. In Mali, particular focus is placed on the education of persons with disabilities.

97. The State has a national policy and an action plan on special education, initiated pursuant to the amended Act No. 99-046 of 28 December 1999, the Education Policy Act, which stipulates that special education is aimed at persons with serious disabilities. Persons with less serious disabilities are catered for at different levels and in different types of education. They follow the same lessons as students without disabilities, while also receiving special educational attention.

98. In partnership with organizations of persons with disabilities, the State is endeavouring to ensure that children and young persons with disabilities are provided with an education through the establishment of 10 special education centres in the country. They are responsible for more than 6,500 children and young persons with sensory, physical and mental disabilities.

99. From 2011 to 2013, approximately CFAF 8,520,000,000 were raised to implement the action plan.

### **S. Health (art. 25)**

100. Mali provides the health-care services required for screening and early intervention for persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through national immunization days and prenatal and postnatal appointments.

101. Also available are the National Orthopaedic Appliance Centre and its regional branches, as well as early hearing loss detection, physiotherapy and speech therapy services in hospitals and some special education institutions.

102. Today, in addition to these measures, the State has put in place or encouraged the establishment of modern social protection mechanisms such as mandatory health insurance, the medical assistance scheme, mutual societies and cooperatives.

103. A health-care voucher was provided to 176 persons with albinism registered by the National Medical Assistance Agency and SOS Albinos was granted 900 tubes of sunscreen for persons with albinism in 2017.

104. The “Maison des Aînés” Institute for Studies and Research in Gerontology and Geriatrics carries out studies and research into older persons with disabilities and helps to improve their living conditions through free medical consultation in the fields of ophthalmology, cardiology, rheumatology, physiotherapy, general medicine and urology.

105. Of the 4,922 free appointments for older persons provided from January to September 2017, 3,938, or 80 per cent, were for older persons with disabilities.

106. The Institute deals with problems related to ageing of older persons, who generally have disabilities.

107. The actions carried out in this institute have led to the development of a support programme for deprived older persons, including those with disabilities. Mobile intervention teams have been trained and are available to provide nutritional, medical and psychological support for older persons. Approximately 100 older persons have already

used the services of the mobile teams. In the future, there are plans to extend these actions to all the regional capitals and subsequently to all older persons, including those with disabilities.

108. There are legislative and regulatory provisions on health that protect persons with disabilities from discrimination in access to health care, including sexual health services.

## **T. Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)**

109. Specialized public services have been established in Bamako and all the regions to enable persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible.

110. Persons with disabilities have access to a wide range of rehabilitation services in various fields. They participate in sporting competitions and cultural, political and other events. The actions taken to this end are:

- Construction of a sports centre for sportspersons with disabilities
- Promulgation of a disability-inclusive Sport Act
- A ministerial order to reward the sporting elite, including sportspersons with disabilities
- Recognition by the Ministry of Sport of the Fédération Malienne de Sports pour Personnes Handicapées (Malian Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities), allowing it to receive technical and financial support to organize the national championship and participate in national and international games and competitions
- Establishment of regional sports leagues for persons with disabilities in all regions
- A theatre company or music group organized in most major organizations of persons with disabilities

## **U. Work and employment (art. 27)**

111. Mali has established positive discrimination in favour of persons with disabilities for access to the civil service. Article 18 of the General Civil Service Regulations stipulates that these regulations may not be applied differently to men and women or to persons with and without disabilities, notwithstanding the provisions of specific regulations and the performance requirements of certain positions. However, special positive measures may be taken in favour of persons with disabilities under the implementing regulations to these regulations. Such measures may under no circumstances be considered discriminatory with respect to other persons.

112. From 2008 to the present, 290 persons with disabilities were recruited on an exceptional basis by the civil service and the National Social Insurance Institute.

113. The Government has adopted two national policies on employment and vocational training, taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities.

114. Pursuant to the recommendations of the national workshop on the employment of persons with disabilities held in November 2007, paid employment was found for 79 persons with disabilities and 123 persons with disabilities were trained over a period of six years.

115. The project to gain the commitment of companies to integrate persons with disabilities into the work environment, with CFAF 159,244,324 in joint funding from the Québec International Development Programme and Humanity and Inclusion, reached 246 young graduates with disabilities for a period of two years.

116. Under the green jobs employment assistance project, with CFAF 554,418,200 in joint funding from the French Agency for Development and Humanity and Inclusion, the projects of 39 persons with disabilities in various trade associations, such as poultry farming, fish farming and shea butter processing, were financed for a period of three years.

117. Private initiatives to facilitate employment for persons with disabilities are encouraged at the national and local levels.

118. To promote self-employment and entrepreneurship, the State supported the establishment of the Handi-Caisse credit union and has funded private entrepreneurial initiatives of persons with disabilities in the restaurant trade (Restaurant Défi), the information and communication technology sector (Intranet), and in dressmaking, hairdressing and local food processing.

119. Vocational training and employment for persons with disabilities are systematically integrated into the national vocational training and employment policies.

## **V. Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)**

120. Persons with disabilities receive support for an adequate standard of living through income-generating activities. They have access to assistive devices and technical aids.

121. The specific aspects of disability are incorporated in the National Social Protection Policy, approved in November 2016.

## **W. Participation in political and public life (art. 29)**

122. The advent of democracy led to the adoption of the Constitution of 25 February 1992, articles 27 and 28 of which guarantee civil and political rights to all Malian men and women without discrimination through their free participation in elections and membership of political and civil society organizations.

123. All citizens, including persons with disabilities, have the opportunity to participate in political life. There is no discrimination against persons with disabilities.

124. Article 92 of the Electoral Act (Act No. 2016-048 of 17 October 2016, amended by Act No. 2018-014 of 23 April 2018) provides that voters who are physically incapable of placing a ballot paper in an envelope or placing the envelope in the ballot box may be assisted by a voter of their choice.

125. Ways of making voting procedures more inclusive and ensuring their confidentiality are currently under discussion.

## **X. Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)**

126. The Constitution guarantees freedom of artistic and cultural creation and free participation in leisure and sporting activities.

127. This includes:

- Participation by three young delegates from the Union Malienne des Aveugles in citizen service volunteering activities every year
- Financial support for persons of short stature
- Seconding of youth activity leaders to the Association Malienne de Lutte contre les Déficiences Mentales chez l'Enfant
- Technical assistance to Enda Mali for its support of persons with disabilities
- Apprenticeships for young persons with disabilities at youth camps
- Provision of access to social and educational infrastructure (youth forums and youth centres) by organizations of persons with disabilities to conduct their activities
- Participation of young persons with disabilities in activities organized by the Ministry of Youth and Construction of Good Citizenship
- Construction of access ramps at youth facilities

- Participation of organizations of persons with disabilities in major events organized by the State, such as the arts and culture biennial

### III. Challenges and constraints

128. Mali faces numerous difficulties and obstacles that limit its efforts to implement the Convention. Some of these result from:

- Inadequacy or lack of appropriate legislative and regulatory instruments in some areas, for example on travel and movement
- Lack of awareness of instruments owing to misinterpretation, inadequate dissemination and illiteracy
- Limited infrastructure, tools and platforms adapted to the specific needs of persons with disabilities
- Prejudices, harmful practices and stereotypes
- Need for assistance to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly capacity-building and financial support
- Lack of national data and statistics to assess the impact of measures, difficulties and progress

129. Special education requires major financial resources. As a developing country, Mali has limited financial resources to meet the very high levels of need in this area. For this reason, the number of children and adolescents with all types of disabilities who receive an education falls short of expectations.

130. In this area, Mali has to face the following challenges:

- Lack of special education institutions
- Lack of qualified staff at all levels
- Lack of reliable statistics on children and adolescents with disabilities
- Insufficient consideration of disability in the construction of school infrastructure
- Lack of equipment and adaptive and assistive devices

### Conclusion

131. Act No. 2018-027 of 12 June 2018 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, for which the implementing regulations are currently being developed, constitutes the key framework for major reform in various fields through specific improvement or adaptation measures, in line with the rules and principles of the Convention.

132. The issue of persons with disabilities is among the leading concerns of the country's highest authorities. Their clear determination to create an environment conducive to the full development of persons with disabilities has been constantly reaffirmed in various political declarations.

133. Mali is actively involved in efforts to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities. It has adopted a number of national laws and ratified several international treaties, including the Convention.

134. However, the number of persons with disabilities is increasing, partly owing to the rise in chronic illnesses such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Other environmental factors, such as traffic accidents and natural disasters, contribute to the increased numbers in some contexts.