



## CapacityPlus in Mali

Mali is one of 57 countries identified by the World Health Organization as having a human resources for health (HRH) crisis<sup>1</sup>. With an estimated 0.7 physicians, nurses, and midwives for every 1,000 people, only 72% of health facility posts are filled and health workers are unequally distributed, especially in rural areas<sup>2</sup>. Mali also has one of the fastest growing populations in the world, with an annual growth rate of 3%<sup>3</sup>. Producing enough quality, well-deployed health workers to overcome the current shortage is a challenge exacerbated by a rapidly expanding population.

One of the US Government's Global Health Initiative (GHI) Plus countries, Mali is also one of CapacityPlus's emphasis countries. Working with the Ministry of Health, local training institutions, and other partners, CapacityPlus is addressing Mali's shortage and unequal distribution of qualified health workers. A comprehensive program of assistance aligns with the Government of Mali's HRH policy and operational plan and incorporates GHI principles and strategies. Activities aim to increase access to qualified health workers and the services they provide, especially in the areas of family planning and reproductive health.



### Strengthening Health Workforce Data for Decision-Making

To best utilize the current workforce, Mali's health leaders need to know exactly how many health professionals are working in the country, what their qualifications are, and where they are posted. In collaboration with the West African Health Organization, CapacityPlus helps the Ministry of Health strengthen information on the country's employed health workers for use in planning and management. In June 2011, the Ministry installed a customized version of iHRIS Manage, CapacityPlus's health workforce management software. CapacityPlus is now working with the Ministry's human resources directorate to pilot the system at the district level. The pilot will be used to further customize iHRIS Manage for Mali and demonstrate how data can be used to improve the management of health professionals at different facility levels.

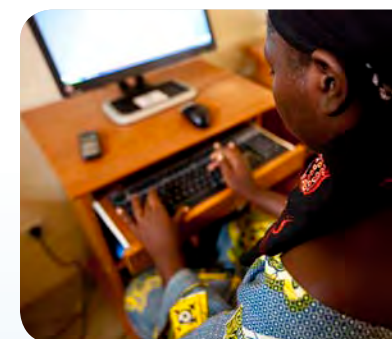
### Mobilizing Stakeholders to Support Health Workers

CapacityPlus is teaming up with the Ministry, the World Health Organization, and other partners to establish and sustain a Mali Health Workforce Observatory, a high-level

advocacy and policy-making group that will address challenges related to preservice education, retention, management, and distribution. The Observatory will guide the use of data from Mali's iHRIS Manage system to support the health workforce. CapacityPlus will apply its stakeholder leadership group guidelines and document a case study of how the guidelines are adapted and used. Once the Observatory selects priority health workforce issues to address, CapacityPlus will track linkages to improving service delivery at the facility level.

### Improving Health Worker Training and Retention

CapacityPlus furthers the former Capacity Project's work at Gao Nursing School, which addressed challenges with the lack of skilled health workers in Mali's northern regions. To help identify and assess bottlenecks related to infrastructure, equipment and materials, curriculum, faculty, and management at the school, a needs assessment will be conducted using CapacityPlus's Bottlenecks and Best Buys Assessment Tool. Additionally, CapacityPlus will conduct another assessment to identify factors associated with retention of nurses and midwives in community health centers in the Gao region.



Under the Capacity Project, the family planning/reproductive health curricula at Gao Nursing School was revised by developing new modules based on IntraHealth International's Learning for Performance (LFP) instructional design approach. Building on lessons learned, CapacityPlus will strengthen training systems at the *Institut national de formation en sciences de la santé* (INFSS) and five other private midwifery and nursing schools.



To guide school selection and other aspects, CapacityPlus will create a technical advisory committee. Once established, CapacityPlus will train committee members, along with representatives from the INFSS and each school, to apply the LFP approach. CapacityPlus will conduct a rapid needs assessment, again using the Bottlenecks and Best Buys Assessment Tool, to identify any gaps in faculty performance or skills in family planning/reproductive health, and will help each institution develop a performance plan to address gaps and inform faculty trainings.

### Testing Innovative Education Methods

CapacityPlus is developing a new SpacedEd online learning course intended to serve as a refresher training course on family planning curricula for faculty members at nursing and midwifery schools. The spaced education method was

developed and tested by researchers at Harvard University and has been shown to increase knowledge and retention more than other learning methods.

CapacityPlus will assess the acceptability and feasibility of using the SpacedEd platform at Gao Nursing School. It is anticipated that the SpacedEd course will be implemented and evaluated at the INFSS and the five private nursing and midwifery schools in subsequent years.

### Empowering Health Workers

CapacityPlus is a key partner in the Ministry's initiative to train all skilled birth attendants—including obstetrical nurses, midwives, *matrones* (auxiliary midwives), and doctors—in active management of the third stage of labor (AMTSL), a recommended practice to prevent postpartum hemorrhage. CapacityPlus works in Mali's Koulikoro Region, using an approach that focuses on stakeholder communication and a training methodology that decentralizes training activities to the district level and uses a combination of group-based and site-and-individual learning approaches. In 2011, a total of 239 health providers (148 women and 91 men) were trained and supported in AMTSL in five districts. CapacityPlus also supports the Ministry at the national level to promote AMTSL policy dialogue, curriculum development, and supervision.

### Monitoring Results

In addition to tracking the Observatory's work and conducting various assessments, CapacityPlus will design a results framework and monitoring tool that will link results in health workforce availability and productivity to health services related to maternal and child health and family planning/reproductive health. A concept paper will propose key strategies for integrating gender approaches into health workforce activities.

<sup>1</sup>World Health Organization. 2006. The world health report 2006: Working together for health. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/whr/2006/en>.

<sup>2</sup>Global Health Initiative: Mali strategy. <http://www.ghi.gov/country/mali/documents/160488.htm> (accessed November 21, 2011).

<sup>3</sup>The World Bank. Population growth (annual %). <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SPPOPGRW> (accessed September 22, 2011).

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### The CapacityPlus Partnership



#### Associate Partners

African Population & Health Research Center (APHRC)  
Asia-Pacific Action Alliance on Human Resources for  
Health (AAAH)

West African Institute of Post-Graduate Management  
Studies (CESAG)  
Partners in Population and Development (PPD)

#### Additional Partners in Mali

Ministry of Health  
Gao Nursing School  
*Institut national de formation en sciences de la santé*  
World Health Organization

*Direction des ressources humaines de la santé, du  
développement social, de la promotion de la femme, de  
l'enfant et de la famille*