

Migration governance profile: Republic of Mali

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In 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed a [Migration Governance Framework \(MIGOF\)](#) to help countries define what “well-managed migration policy” might look like at the national level. The Framework was welcomed by IOM Member States in the same year. The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI)¹ were developed to assist countries operationalize the MIGOF by using a standard set of approximately 90 indicators that could be applied across six key policy domains.

The MGI is a tool based on policy inputs, which offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to develop their migration governance. The MGI is not intended to function as a measurement of outcomes related to migration policies and institutions. Instead, it operates as an input-based benchmarking framework that offers insights on policy measures that countries can use to strengthen migration governance. The MGI is not meant to rank countries in the assessment of the comprehensiveness of their migration policies, or to identify gaps and areas that could be strengthened. The MGI aims to assist countries while advancing the conversation on migration governance by clarifying what “well-governed migration” might look like in the context of the [Sustainable Development Goal Target 10.7](#), “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.”

This country overview presents a summary of well-governed areas of the Federal Democratic Republic of Mali’s (hereafter referred to as Mali) migration governance structures, as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGI.

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With research and analysis by

Key findings

I. Adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights

I.1. International conventions ratified

The table below follows a standard format and looks at the ratification of specific international conventions. The list of conventions covered is by no means exhaustive.

Convention	Ratified
International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	No
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951	Yes (1973)
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954	Yes (2016)
United Nations Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961	Yes (2016)
ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	No
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child, 1989	Yes (1990)
United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990	Yes (2003)

I.2. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Mali offers migrants equal access to social services. The legal texts on access to care and education do not distinguish between nationals and migrants. For people without resources (including migrants), there exists a medical assistance scheme that provides free access to care in certain public hospitals. Foreign workers are covered by the mandatory public insurance scheme. Mali has ratified several conventions on social security portability, chiefly with African countries in which its citizens reside. It has ratified (or acceded to) numerous international treaties dealing with aspects of migration.

Mali is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Citizens of ECOWAS Member States are subject to the same legislation as Malians, except with regard to civil service posts, which are reserved for citizens of Mali. Citizens of non-ECOWAS countries wishing to settle in Mali must obtain a resident's card (renewable every 5 years) and a work permit from the National Labour Directorate.

I.3. Areas with potential for further development

Migrants face a number of obstacles when it comes to the right to work. For example, they are prohibited from holding civil service posts, as only Malian citizens are authorized to become civil servants. Foreigners wishing to work in the private sector in Mali must have their employment contracts approved by the National Labour Directorate before being able to start working. The exercise of a liberal, commercial, industrial or artisanal profession is subject to prior authorization by the ministry concerned.

The concept of permanent resident status does not exist in Malian law; as a result, foreigners wishing to settle in Mali must renew their resident card every 5 years. In addition, participation in elections, including at regional or local level, is reserved to Malian citizens.

2. Formulates policy using evidence and whole of government approach

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

As far as the institutional framework governing migration is concerned, Mali adopted in 2014 a national migration policy centred on managing migration in line with international standards and on the migration-development nexus in Mali. The policy upholds the principle of regional specificities regarding migration. It refers to the legal texts relating to the conditions for entry, stay and settlement of foreigners in Mali and the importance of ensuring the enforcement of ECOWAS rules.

Several Malian organizations are responsible for migration matters. The Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration's mission (2004) is to protect Malians who have settled abroad, to promote their interests and to support them upon return. The High Council of Malians Abroad (1991) enables Malians living abroad to stay involved in Malian political life. The Centre for Migration Information and Management (2008) is in charge of monitoring migration flows between Mali and ECOWAS.

Mali also has a well-developed institutional framework relating to refugees. For example, when it comes to health, education and labour market access (Article 13 of Law No. 98-40 of 20 July 1998, on the status of refugees), refugees have the same status as nationals.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

Although Mali has adopted a national migration policy, the policy does not stipulate who are the government entities in charge of formulating migration policy. Furthermore, the policy targets Malians abroad as a priority, although it does take into account some of the migrants' concerns in Mali.

There are also some gaps in the collection and publication of migration-related data.

3. Engages with partners to address migration and related issues

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Internationally, Mali is very involved in migration matters. It has signed several bilateral agreements on the right of residence of foreigners with its neighbours in Africa, with European countries (the French Republic in 1994, the Kingdom of Spain in 2007) and with the European Union (2015). In addition, Mali is an IOM Member State and an observer on the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mali works with civil society on migration issues, notably for the drafting of the new national migration policy. One of the policy's main focus is on capacity-building for migrant and civil society organizations.

Mali participates in the Migration Dialogue for West Africa, or MIDWA; the aim of which is to encourage ECOWAS Member States to discuss migration-related opportunities and challenges in the regional context.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

Mali has not signed the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97).

Mali does not work closely with the private sector, and the latter is rarely consulted on the development of migration strategies. However, the Government works with various associations and trade unions. For example, trade unions played a part in the adoption of certain agreements, notably the 2007 agreement with the Kingdom of Spain on matters pertaining to the admission of Malian workers on the Spanish labour market.

4. Advances the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

In certain socioeconomic fields, Mali can be considered relatively developed. The goal of the National Employment Agency is to help implement the Government's National Employment Policy and to collect, centralize and analyse labour market data and make them available to all job seekers (Malian or foreign). Mali has few measures specifically promoting the protection of foreign workers, given that such workers (once they have obtained a work permit) benefit from the same protections as national workers.

In addition to its agreement with ECOWAS, Mali has signed several bilateral agreements on labour market access.

The African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education has harmonized the system of higher education and research, so that programmes and entry levels are the same in all member countries. Mali allows anyone wishing to study (and having the right qualifications) to enrol in its universities. It does not have established quotas for foreign students. The rules of access to education are the same for everyone.

Mali has established a ministry that is in charge of Malians abroad, and its main task is to promote their interests and protect them.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

Mali greatly benefits from remittances sent by members of the Malian diaspora, but the Government has taken no action to create formal programmes for such transfers. In 2011, Mali adopted the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction 2012–2017. One of the aims of the Framework is to enhance cooperation between countries of origin and destination for the transfer of funds.

Although there is no discrimination regarding the rules of access to university, there is an important difference between the tuition fees paid by foreigners and nationals.²

5. Effectively addresses the mobility dimensions of crises

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

In 2012, Mali launched a national project – *PRECARICA* – to build national capacities for disaster risk reduction. It thus bolstered the capacities of the Civil Protection General Directorate (DGPC in French), State structures and local authorities to better prevent and manage natural disasters and conflicts.

Under the framework of the Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali 2013–2014 and the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction 2012–2017, the Government of Mali allows displaced persons and refugees to have access to basic services (education, security, health care).

The Government of Mali has adopted several measures to help its citizens abroad. For example, in 2000 it established the General Delegation for Malians Abroad, which works in close cooperation with the country's embassies and consulates.

² Tuition fees depend on the case of each student. A basic fee – CFA francs 5,000 – is applicable for Malians under 25 who have obtained the *baccalauréat* in Mali. Others are known as “special cases”. For those wishing to earn a degree in linguistics, tuition amounts to CFA francs 25,000.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

The Government of Mali has no specific strategy for migrants in crisis. Its capacities in terms of communication systems specifically for migrants could also be strengthened. Mali has no communication system, for either nationals or migrants. Since the 2012 crisis, management of the humanitarian response for nationals and migrants has been coordinated by the international community, with the support of the Government of Mali. Multiple simulations of migration crisis management have been organized in border areas; DGPC capacity has been bolstered for the establishment of an emergency medical-psychological unit (CUMP in French); the DGPC has been equipped with data-collection and data-centralization tools at the country's borders; and the number of training sessions and the level of structures working in migration crisis management and prevention have been increased.

Mali has no strategy for managing population movements prompted by environmental and climate change but it does have certain initiatives, such as the National Programme of Action for Climate Change Adaptation (2017). The Programme aims to mitigate the harmful effects of climate change on the most vulnerable populations, with the aim of achieving sustainable development and poverty reduction in Mali. In terms of crisis recovery, Mali has not adopted a strategy dealing specifically with migration-related challenges.

The National Migration Policy does not comprise a plan to facilitate the return of foreigners who fled the country during a crisis. It does, however, include several measures to encourage the return of Malians from abroad.

6. Ensures that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Since 2013, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), with the agreement of the Government of Mali, provides several trainings to build the capacities of Mali's police and armed forces.

The Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration offers returning Malians assistance at reception centres at several airports, train stations and bus terminals. There are several local associations whose goal is to enable reintegration of returning Malians. In addition, the National Employment Agency provides technical and financial services to returning Malians wishing to develop economic projects.

On 12 July 2012, Mali adopted Law No. 2012-023, on the fight against trafficking in persons and similar practices. The law supplements the Penal Code, which was not specific enough. Mali is committed to combating trafficking in persons. It compiles lists of cases, informs the population and trains judges on the issue.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

The border police centralizes all information as regularly as possible, however the lack of appropriate technology hinders this update.

The Government of Mali does not have a dedicated website on the conditions for entering the territory. That information is nonetheless available on embassy websites.

Key Sources

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