

FINAL EVALUATION

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

**IMPROVED ACCESS THROUGH THE INCLUSION OF ALL IN THE HIV AND AIDS RESPONSE IN MALI**

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Evaluation dates: June - September 2022



**Key project data**

- **Country:** Mali
- **Budget:** €607,541
- **Lead organization:** Malian Federation of Organizations of People Living with Disabilities (FEMAPH)
- **Start date:** 01/06/2019  
**End date:** 31/05/2022
- **Partners:** Malian Network of Organizations of People Living with HIV and AIDS (RMAP+) and Humanity & Inclusion (HI)

**Background**

Disability is a somewhat neglected issue in West and Central Africa. Yet the 2016-2021 UNAIDS strategy recommended that people living with disabilities should be considered among the 12 forgotten priority population groups to be targeted to end AIDS. A study conducted in Mali with 1,051 people living with disabilities, which was published in 2022 in AIDSCare, estimated HIV prevalence among people living with disabilities to be 2.38% (95% confidence interval: 1.58 – 3.44%), with a sex ratio imbalance of 3.31% for women and 0.78% for men.



**Project leads and implementation approach**

The project was developed based on achievements and lessons learned from implementing a previous project supported by L'Initiative, which was led by Handicap International (HI), under which FEMAPH was a partner. FEMAPH then became the lead for the follow-on project between June 2019 and May 2022, working with 26 organizations of people living with disabilities, 16 organizations of people living with HIV and 13 HIV care sites in four regions of Mali, plus the district of Bamako. The project addresses the need of people living with disabilities to access HIV prevention, testing, treatment and support services through inclusion-based advocacy.



**Project objectives**

**Overall objective**

Contribute to achieving the 90-90-90 targets by promoting inclusion and universal access to HIV and AIDS services in the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Ségou and the district of Bamako.



**Specific objective 1**

Improve access to prevention, treatment and social support services for people living with disabilities in 13 HIV sites.

**Specific objective 2**

Strengthen internal governance and coordination within two networks (FEMAPH and RMAP+) and their membership, through promoting people living with disabilities.

**Specific objective 3**

Strengthen the capacity of organizations of people living with disabilities, organizations of people living with HIV, and HIV care sites to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on their members.

## Evaluation results



### Relevance

Epidemiological indicators demonstrate the project's relevance, as HIV prevalence among people living with disabilities is nearly four times higher than prevalence among the general population.

The project also addresses systemic gaps in the health system in terms of infrastructure development and training of health personnel, and needs in terms of strengthening community systems at local level, in a country where decentralization is crucial.

The project is aligned with the national strategy and the broader health and social development framework. The project aims to strengthen the legal framework and legal environment related to disability and complements interventions funded by the Global Fund.

### Effectiveness

The project has proven effective, with a 100% activity completion rate resulting all the targets and expected results being met. In addition, the lead organization has been flexible in terms of adapting activities to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and has developed strategic partnerships with key players in the HIV response. The lead has demonstrated adaptability in its use of tools to assess the organizational capacity of organizations and to certify HIV care sites.

### Efficiency

The project had a spend rate close to 100%. The lead organization and their partners implemented 100% of the activities of the logical framework and achieved the anticipated results. The lead was able to mobilize additional funds to expand the number of access ramps in HIV care sites.

The transition from an international to a national organization leading the project was a success.

### Impact

FEMAPH's work to support the certification of HIV care sites that provide care provision adapted to people living with disabilities has resulted in the number of sites obtaining a maximum score increasing from 0 to 12 sites.

Field surveys have reported a decrease in community discrimination against people living with disabilities, changes in the mindset and medical practices of health care workers towards people living with disabilities, as well as greater job satisfaction among health staff. This has resulted in improved relationships between caregivers and patients and improved health literacy among people living with disabilities.

One unanticipated outcome has been the "snowball effect" of health workers trained in sign language cascading learning to their colleagues.

### Sustainability

Strengthening governance and the capacity of FEMAPH and RMAP+, and the 26 organizations of people living with disabilities and 16 CSOs, was at the heart of the project. The certification tool allowed for an baseline assessment to be made and subsequently a roadmap and action plans to be developed, and then an endline assessment. The results are very encouraging as the majority of organizations achieved a higher rating. In order for this work to be sustainable, however, it needs to continue until organizations have achieved a specific improved rating, because not all organizations achieved the same level of development. Securing funding for a new phase of the project would help to strengthen this work to ensure a sustainable decentralized HIV response.



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The external evaluation showed that the project was highly relevant in terms of health indicators and issues nationally for the target population group (people living with disabilities), and that it was aligned with the national AIDS strategy and other development mechanisms, as well aligning with Mali's legislative framework and with Global Fund grants. It also demonstrated the project's effectiveness and efficiency in terms of achieving the anticipated results, its impact and evidence-based outcomes, and its focus on sustainability.

Recommendations for FEMAPH: The evaluation raised a number of considerations, including around the cost/effectiveness of the mass HIV testing approach, which it recommended stopping, the need to better identify the most vulnerable people living with disabilities who are not targeted by the project and the need to carry out some operational research. The evaluation also recommended that work should continue around integrating indicators for monitoring people living with disabilities into the DHIS2 tool. The evaluators encouraged FEMAPH and RMAP+ to carry out an institutional analysis that would enable them to play a more policy-focused role. Finally, they also recommended that ongoing support be given to organizations of people living with disabilities and CSOs to improve their governance and strengthen their capacity to the level needed to ensure they are sustainable organizations.

Recommendations for L'Initiative: the evaluation encourages further technical and financial support to be given to FEMAPH, in particular for institutional analysis and improving the continuum of care through strengthening referrals following HIV testing.



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