



IMAGINE THIS!

Improving inclusive education
for adolescent girls in Mali

Year 2

The IMAGINE project in Mali is ensuring that conflict and crisis don't keep girls out of school. Already, with your support:

- 247 COMMUNITY READING CAMPS WERE ESTABLISHED
- 5,707 YOUTH ARE CATCHING UP ON MISSED SCHOOL
- 2,996 COMMUNITY MEMBERS WERE TRAINED TO SUPPORT GIRLS' EDUCATION



ABOVE: Landscape of Mali.

COVER: Girls in a classroom in Mali.

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Djèguè, 12, learning in class at her school in Bougouni region.

Full marks

Girls' education in Mali has been disrupted, but their passion for learning has not. The IMAGINE project is helping girls bring that energy back into the classroom.

GIRLS IN MALI ARE MISSING OUT ON SCHOOL. COVID-19, armed conflict and displacement have created an educational crisis in the country: schools are closed, students are falling behind and youth, especially girls, can't easily return to their studies after living through crisis.

We know that education is the most powerful way for girls to overcome inequality. Thanks to you, the Mali IMAGINE project is helping to build flexible and alternative learning programs so out-of-school children have a greater chance of integrating back into formal education.

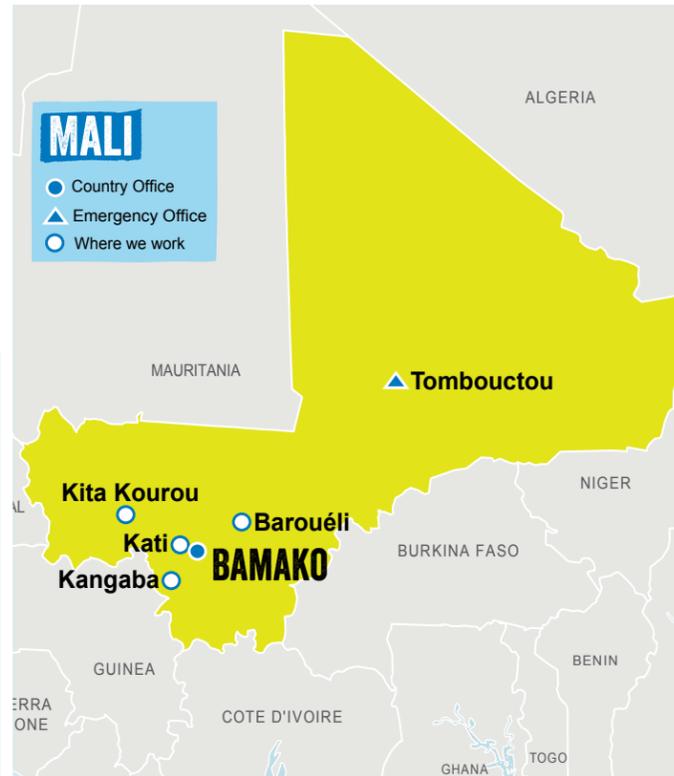
THE IMAGINE PROJECT HAS THREE KEY GOALS:

- 1** Increase the ability for girls in crisis-affected communities to access and complete their basic education.
- 2** Improve inclusive, conflict-sensitive education environments for girls.
- 3** Work with teachers and governments to address girls' educational needs during conflict.

 **THANK YOU** for believing in the power of education to change girls' lives!

The scene

MALI IS THE EIGHTH LARGEST COUNTRY IN AFRICA, and home to the famed Tombouctou (Timbuktu), once a flourishing hub of trade and culture and a center of Islamic scholarship for centuries. Today, many of Mali's heritage sites remain under threat from armed conflict, and Mali's people continue to suffer human rights violations after more than a decade of violence, political coups and economic crises.



- Ongoing conflict has displaced 385,000 people.
- 1,664 schools in Mali remain closed, affecting nearly half a million children.
- When a girl gets married, she is often expected to drop out of school. In Mali, 52% of girls are married by age 18.
- By the time they reach secondary school, only 15% of girls are enrolled.



Imagine this!

LITTLE THINGS GO A LONG WAY

Sometimes, the solution to removing barriers is as simple as building a bridge—or a ramp.

WHEN AN ILLNESS LIMITED HER ABILITY TO MOVE AROUND, Soungaye dropped out of school. She could no longer physically access the building where her classes were taking place.

"I didn't go to school for two months, until the IMAGINE project arrived," says Soungaye.

Soungaye joined an accelerated learning centre that opened in her village as part of the IMAGINE project. The staff at the centre went with Soungaye to talk to the director of the local school, hoping to find a solution that would let Soungaye return to regular classes to learn with her peers. The answer? Simple...

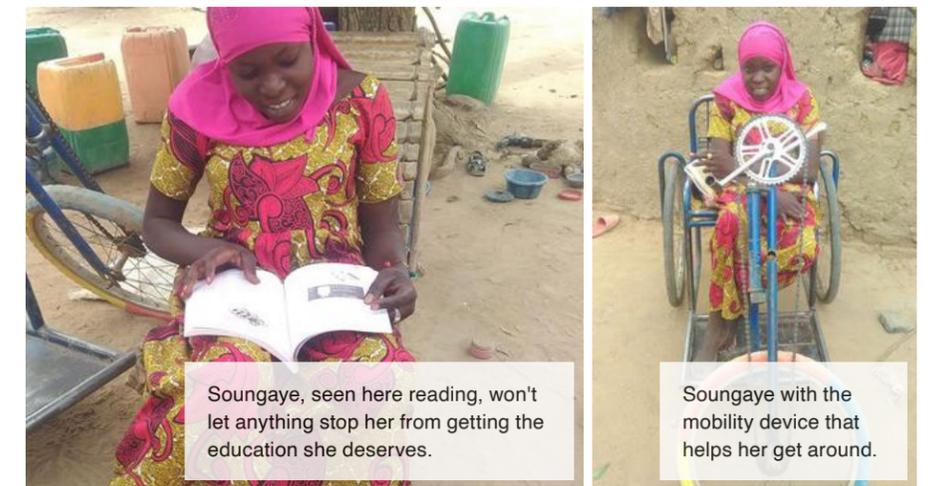
"We used the wooden boards that were in the school yard to make a ramp," explains Mr. Diarra, the school director. "The next day, Soungaye returned to school and she was very happy."

With staff from the IMAGINE project there to advocate with her, Soungaye was able to claim her right to education and get back to the learning she loved so much.

"I am very happy to be back in school and I thank Plan International and the IMAGINE project who helped me to continue my studies. I will do everything to succeed in school and to contribute to the development of my community."

“
I didn't go to school for two months, until the IMAGINE project arrived.”

– Soungaye



Soungaye, seen here reading, won't let anything stop her from getting the education she deserves.

Soungaye with the mobility device that helps her get around.

TEACHING FOR CHANGE

What we learn in the classroom is far more than just the rules of grammar and mathematics. School is also where we build confidence and envision what our futures might look like.

IT CAN SOMETIMES BE CHALLENGING TO LEARN IN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT, let alone in a school or community that's been ravaged by crisis and conflict for more than 10 years. This is why the IMAGINE team is focused on offering training and support to girls, teachers and government officials to ensure they have the knowledge and tools they need to enable girls to return and complete their studies.

So how do they do this? Girls are encouraged to understand that education is not only their right, but also their path to a better future. "Before I went to an IMAGINE session in my village, I didn't know what I wanted to be," shares one 15-year-old participant. "I didn't do my homework. Now, I've learned how to set

goals and I want to finish my studies and become a midwife." Another mother commented that she has noticed a change in her daughter's outlook. "She is more aware of what she wants and has more and more confidence in herself."

Teachers also receive training to help them ensure more girls succeed. For Soumaila, the training has helped her and her colleagues understand how their attitudes can help address inequalities that affect students, especially girls. "Now we have tools and language to talk about gender, sex, and other difficult topics," she explains. "I think this training is incredibly important and recommend that it be extended to other municipalities."



THE RUNDOWN

You are helping girls learn in conflict zones. Here are some of the achievements that your support made possible:

4,476 YOUTH

received life-skills training that addressed self-awareness, goal setting, decision-making, creative thinking, empathy, stress management, problem solving and conflict.

41 ELECTED OFFICIALS AND COUNCILLORS

were trained to support and strengthen their communities' education systems.



10,874 GIRLS

at risk of dropping out of school attended remediation classes to help them continue their studies until graduation.



12,378 DISPLACED YOUTH

received school kits to support their return to 34 schools.



108 YOUTH CLUBS

were established that will encourage girls to engage in and support each other's learning.



8 CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

were signed to build girl-friendly infrastructure at 53 schools, including separate latrines and safe water and sanitization stations.



1,190 YOUNG PEOPLE

participated in home-based learning programs in communities where their schools were closed.



737 OUT-OF-SCHOOL GIRLS

attended accelerated education programming to help them re-enter school.



The Mayor of Bandiagara, right, delivers school supplies provided by Plan International to local Quranic schools.

OPENING DOORS

Quranic schools offer inclusive education programs.

QURANIC SCHOOLS ARE NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTITUTIONS in towns and villages in northern Mali that are often connected with a mosque. Muslim girls and boys learn about the Quran and, when there are no other local options, these schools also offer general education programs.

The IMAGINE team is supporting efforts to integrate these schools into Mali's formal education system so they can offer a safe and inclusive formal education option.

Through your support, last year 1,975 youth (964 girls) attending Quranic schools received school kits and hygiene supplies to support their learning, and their

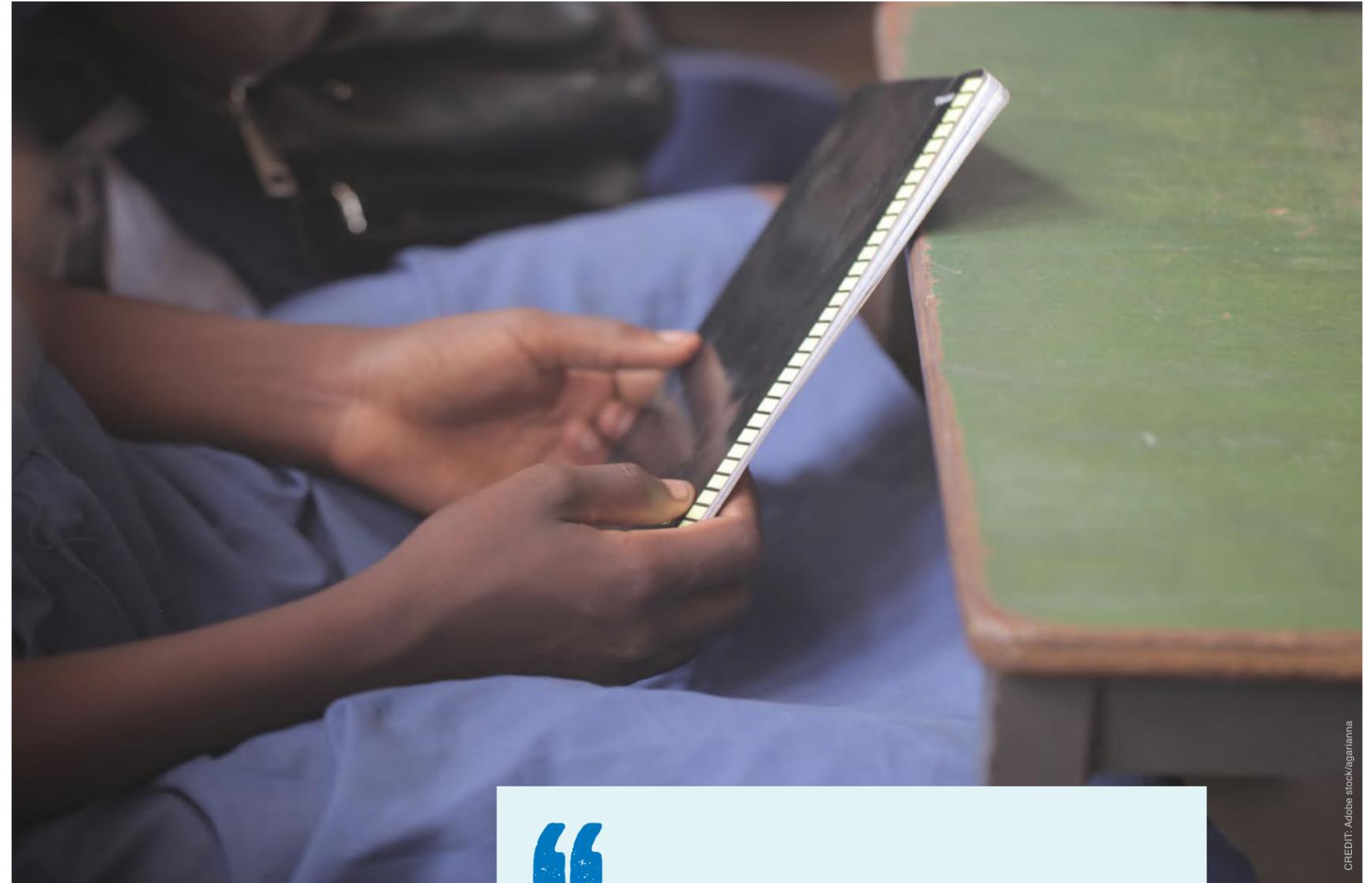
teachers were trained to help make learning more gender inclusive. And that's just part of the changes taking place in these schools.

For Oumar, a teacher in one of the Quranic schools, IMAGINE's teacher training workshops helped him understand equality within an Islamic context.

"It was interesting to discover the fundamental rights of children in Islam, and to define the concept of gender equality in Islam and to be enlightened on the rights of women in Islam," Oumar shares. He now can support more girls to attend school and help them learn about their rights while they learn about the Quran.

Thank you!

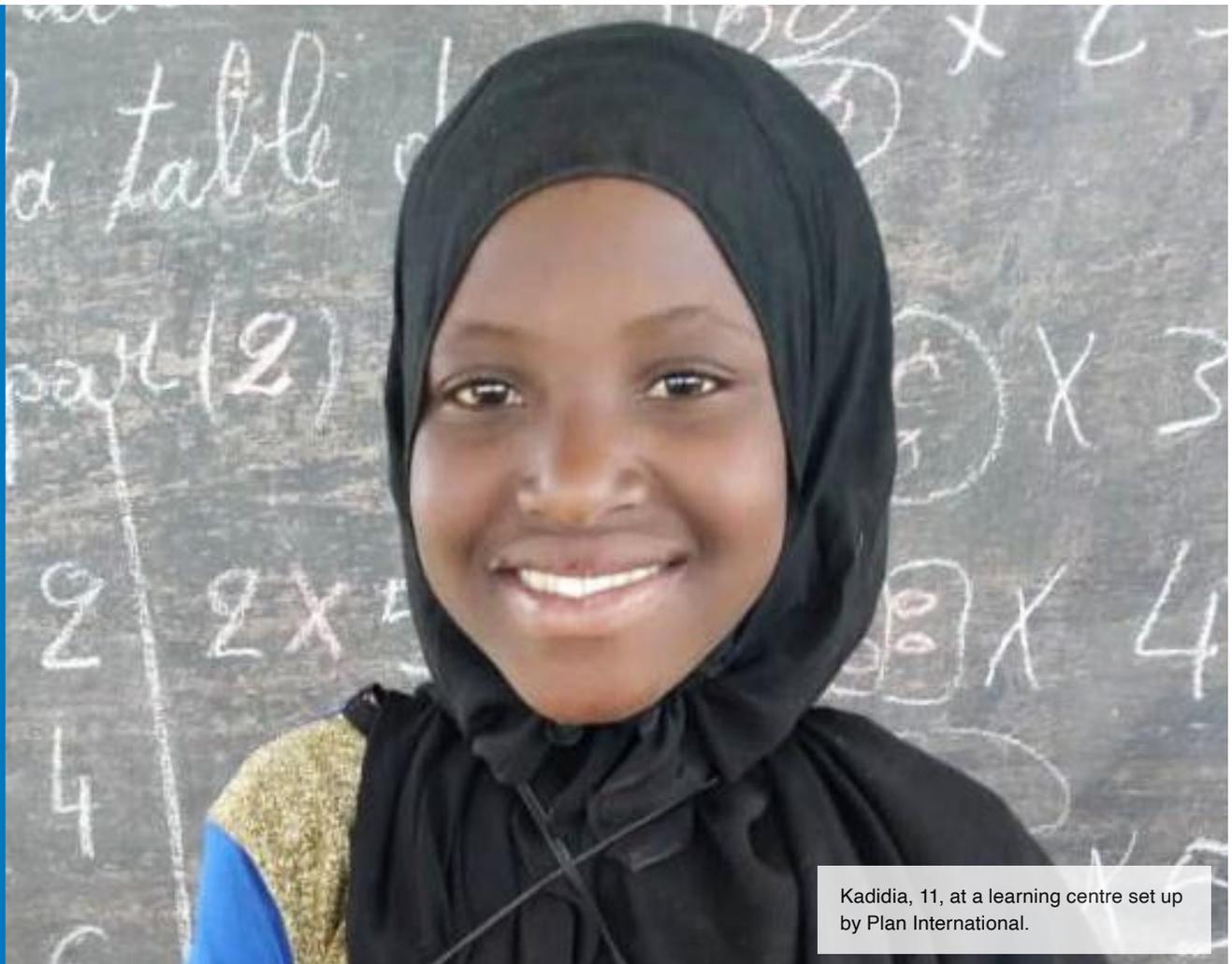
We are so grateful for your incredible generosity. Your investment is helping to pave a path back to learning for thousands of children in Mali, especially girls. **We can't thank you enough!**



“

With the remediation classes this project introduced, we were able to help children who really needed special attention to succeed in their classes.”

– Hamidou, a teacher for remedial classes introduced by this project



Kadidia, 11, at a learning centre set up by Plan International.



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