

# COUNTRY OVERVIEW:



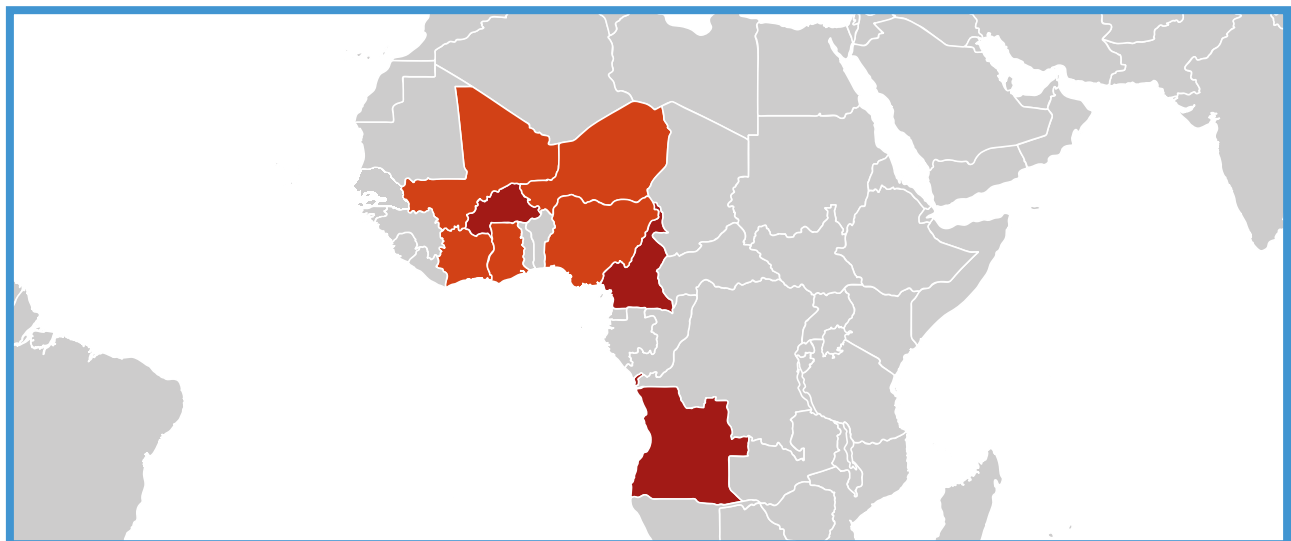
**2020 Government Defence Integrity Index**

# OVERVIEW: MALI

Over the past few years, Mali has made modest progress on improving defence and security sector governance. The 2015 Military Programming law outlines the Armed Forces' strategic goals and greater budget transparency, and the new general statutes provide objective criteria for recruitment and promotions. The new procurement code also makes it easier to sanction collusion. However, this legislative effort is yet to be translated into observable improvements in practice. Corruption risks across Mali's defence sector remain high with a lack of political will and weak institutional safeguards, allowing abuses to proliferate unchecked. In particular, the limited level of transparency hampers the effectiveness of external and internal audit bodies, which ultimately undermines the ability of the parliament to scrutinise the armed forces. Improving civilian democratic oversight of the defence sector whilst building the integrity of the armed forces are strong first steps to tackling corruption.



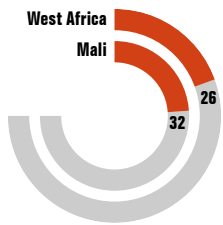
## West Africa: Mali's position within the region



In recent years, the region of West Africa has seen state corruption and weak governance fuel popular grievances and diminish the effectiveness and legitimacy of national institutions. While the region has benefited from relative stability, a variety of threats are looming on the security horizon. Governments are struggling to respond to spikes in Islamic terrorism and intercommunal violence. There are also enduring issues with corruption and drug trafficking that pose severe threats to national stability as they continue unchecked; weak accountability mechanisms and opacity in defence sectors across the region contribute to these problems. Lack of transparency translates into governments releasing incomplete information on budgets, personnel management systems, policy planning, and acquisitions of military assets. This, in turn, often coupled with lack of expertise and resources, undermines civilian oversight. Defence sectors in the region benefit from a defence exceptionalism in which they are exempt from regulations such as procurement or freedom of information legislation. However, most states in the region have signed and/or ratified the UNCAC, showing some commitment towards the reduction of corruption risk within their borders.

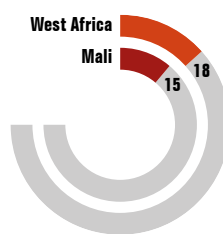
Despite several improvements inherent to the 2015 Military Programming law, the overall situation in Mali reflects regional trends identified in the region. In the midst of critical national and regional security crises, Mali can ill-afford for corruption to hollow out its defence forces, hindering their ability to respond to threats and increasing civilian mistrust and apathy. Corruption should be seen as a key strategic issue by the government.

# RISK AREAS



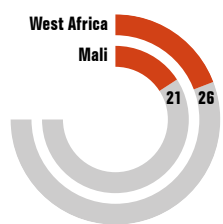
## Political Risk

Mali's constitution enshrines parliament's oversight and control over the defence sector, granting it the power to scrutinise defence reforms and approve the budget. The National Assembly's Defence & Security Committee (CDSPC) proposes amendments to budgets and helps elaborate objectives. In practice, however, both are easily bypassed by invoking unspecified 'national interest' clauses. Moreover the CDSPC is chaired by the President's son, closely tied to the executive and under-resourced, raising concerns about potential conflicts of interest. The Inspector General has no mandate to tackle corruption, whilst both internal and external audit and compliance bodies are ineffective when it comes to defence, and lack independence from the executive.



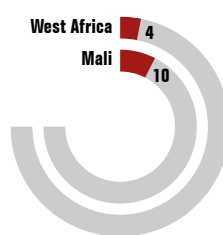
## Financial Risk

Limited transparency in Mali's defence budget is a key financial corruption risk. While recent budgets have been published and contain some detailed figures, there is no justification afforded for nearly half the spend. This lack of clarity is compounded by the absence of an enacted Freedom of Information Act, making information on defence spending hard to access and leading to major sums of money being spent without explanation or oversight. There is no evidence of regular audits of the accounts of the defence sector, with the BVG's last report from 2015 making no mention of defence spending, making legislative debate on the topic non-existent.



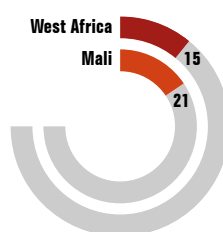
## Personnel Risk

Mali's defence sector scores poorly in terms of personnel corruption risks, with a culture of dissuasion and a lack of protection for whistle-blowers found throughout. There is no evidence of senior leaders making public commitments to tackle corruption, suggesting a lack of political will to address the issue. Existing codes of conduct are often inadequate and fail to cover corruption-related issues such as bribery. Irregularities within the salary payment system, including the absence of separation between chains of command and payment, expose the system to high risks, pushing underpaid personnel to complement their salaries through other means. Key technical decisions, appointments and promotions are informed by political interests, hampering natural and merit-based progress.



## Operational Risk

A lack of appreciation of the strategic dimension of corruption in military operations results in high operational corruption risk. With no credible policy to combat corruption in the defence and security services, a military doctrine still in development, and little awareness of corruption risks on operations, the Malian defence sector is ill equipped to address this issue. Though the gendarmerie, police, and National Guard receive some anti-corruption training, there is no evidence to suggest such training takes place for the military.



## Procurement Risk

There is limited information on defence procurement in Mali. Encouragingly, small purchases are detailed and published online, the majority of which come from open tenders. However no information is disclosed by the government about large purchases, exacerbating the risk of misuse of state funds. These purchases are also not made through open tender, with large contracts awarded in opaque circumstances. Equally, despite the existence of oversight mechanisms, they face acute problems related to access to information, resourcing, and undue influence from the military and government. Overall, there are complaints and sanctions mechanisms in place to punish wrongdoing and collusion but their enforcement is highly questionable and infrequent.

# THEMATIC FOCUS

The following section presents discussion of the four main challenges facing Mali, and suggests areas of reform that are possible, based on GDI findings.

## Budget and Finance

Sound management of assets, with timely and efficient accounting systems, is one of the most powerful mechanisms for maintaining organisational integrity. It relies heavily on the availability of information for adequate scrutiny. Financial management links available resources, military operations, and national policy objectives across systems and institutions. It ensures that income is used appropriately and sustainably, and allows for audits to uncover mismanagement and malfeasance.

*Access to detailed information on defence budgets, income, and expenditure is necessary to fulfil the oversight functions enshrined in the Malian Constitution. The annual defence budget should provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure across functions, and all ministries should consistently provide external audit bodies with comprehensive and detailed financial accounts on time.*

## Oversight

Oversight functions exist in the form of anti-corruption bodies, audit functions, and/or parliamentary committees, but defence institutions have historically been exempt from this degree of scrutiny. Oversight mechanisms instil confidence that systems are resilient against undue influence and efficient in the face of resource challenges. Well-functioning oversight mechanisms ensure that national defence decisions around operations, budgets, personnel management, and arms acquisitions are robust and aligned with strategic needs, and can note problems at an early stage, before they threaten to hollow out defence and security institutions.

*The Malian government should consider the role that Parliament plays in its role of oversight and control of the executive branch and its security agencies. The capacities of the members of the Defence and Security Committee are crucial in this regard, and should include the examination of financial details of off-budget defence purchases; and scrutiny of candidates for senior defence and security posts. Increased civilian oversight also paves the way for a more accountable defence and security sector.*

## Personnel

Staff with trust in the establishment they work for, and operating with a clear understanding of expectations, are key to the functioning of the armed forces and defence and security establishments. Effective recruitment, promotions and pay systems help ensure the presence of an effective, motivated and capable force. Conversely, a lack of standards and standard operating procedures, established by leadership and through codes of conduct, can sap the efficiency of operations and incentivise military abuse for private gain.

*To ensure that the resources allocated to the Malian security institutions are effectively employed to address the current security crisis, the management of both human resources and assets can be improved. To this end, the government of Mali should consider improvements in the management of human resources and a greater degree of transparency in terms of salary bands and job specifications.*

## Procurement

Ineffective or corrupt procurement in the defence sector wastes significant state resources, not only because it is one of the largest areas of government expenditure. Exceptions for defence procurement in law, combined with weak rules and/or scrutiny, can lead to the overpriced purchases of sub-standard arms or ammunition, threatening the safety of military personnel in combat. It is essential for defence purchases to be aligned with military needs, subject to oversight, processed through open competition as much as possible, and without undue influence from middlemen or agents.

*The Ministry of Defence should consider publishing formal procedures for defining purchase requirements, based on clearly identified needs that are set out in a published defence strategy. Exemptions to Public Procurement Regulation should also be specified, along with the mechanisms for applying for such an exemption. This can be complemented with the creation of an e-procurement website and/or printed gazette where tenders and bids are published.*

# COUNTRY SCORECARD: MALI

<b>Overall Country Score</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Very High Risk</b>
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<b>Political Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>32</b>
Q6	Public Debate	A	88
Q23	Export Controls	A	100
Q12	Budget Transparency & Detail	B	75
Q3	Defence Policy Debate	C	50
Q13	Budget Scrutiny	C	63
Q5	International Instruments	C	63
Q11	Acquisition Planning	D	33
Q18	Natural Resources	D	40
Q1	Legislative Scrutiny	D	42
Q14	Budget Availability	D	42
Q4	CSO Engagement	D	42
Q2	Defence Committee	D	46
Q19	Organised Crime Links	E	25
Q8	Anticorruption Institutions	E	25
Q10	Risk Assessments	F	0
Q15	Defence Income	F	0
Q17	External Audit	F	0
Q20	Organised Crime Policing	F	0
Q21	Intelligence Services Oversight	F	0
Q22	Intelligence Services Recruitment	F	0
Q7	Anticorruption Policy	F	0
Q76	Lobbying	F	0
Q16	Internal Audit	F	6
Q9	Public Trust in Institutions	NS	

<b>Financial Risk</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>15</b>
Q33	Unauthorised Private Enterprise	B	75
Q31	Beneficial Ownership	C	50
Q77	Defence Spending	D	38
Q24	Asset Disposal Controls	F	0
Q25	Asset Disposal Scrutiny	F	0
Q26	Secret Spending	F	0
Q27	Legislative Access to Information	F	0
Q28	Secret Program Auditing	F	0
Q29	Off-budget Spending	F	0
Q30	Access to Information	F	0
Q32	Military-Owned Business Scrutiny	F	0

<b>Personnel Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>21</b>
Q44	Bribery for Preferred Postings	B	67
Q35	Disciplinary Measures for Personnel	C	50
Q46	Military Code of Conduct	C	50
Q47	Civilian Code of Conduct	C	50
Q50	Facilitation Payments	E	17
Q39	Pay Rates and Allowances	E	25
Q40	Payment System	E	25
Q41	Objective Appointments	E	25
Q48	Anticorruption Training	E	25
Q49	Corruption Prosecutions	E	25
Q34	Public Commitment to Integrity	F	0
Q36	Whistleblowing	F	0
Q37	High-risk Positions	F	0
Q38	Numbers of Personnel	F	0

Q43	Bribery to Avoid Conscription	F	0
Q45	Chains of Command and Payment	F	0
Q42	Objective Promotions	F	6

<b>Operational Risk</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>10</b>
Q52	Operational Training	E	25
Q55	Controls in Contracting	E	25
Q51	Military Doctrine	F	0
Q53	Forward Planning	F	0
Q54	Corruption Monitoring in Operations	F	0
Q56	Private Military Contractors	NS	

<b>Procurement Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>21</b>
Q68	Complaint Mechanisms	A	83
Q66	Anti-Collusion Controls	C	50
Q58	Procurement Cycle	D	33
Q69	Supplier Sanctions	D	33
Q63	Procurement Requirements	E	17
Q67	Contract Award / Delivery	E	19
Q59	Procurement Oversight Mechanisms	E	25
Q60	Potential Purchases Disclosed	E	25
Q64	Open Competition v. Single Sourcing	E	25
Q65	Tender Board Controls	E	25
Q73	Agents and Intermediaries	E	25
Q57	Procurement Legislation	F	0
Q61	Actual Purchases Disclosed	F	0
Q70	Offset Contracts	F	0
Q71	Offset Contract Monitoring	F	0
Q72	Offset Competition	F	0
Q74	Financing Packages	F	0
Q62	Business Compliance Standards	F	13
Q75	Political Pressure in Acquisitions	NS	

Legend	Range of Scores	Corruption Risk
A	83 - 100	Very Low
B	67 - 82	Low
C	50 - 66	Moderate
D	33 - 49	High
E	17 - 32	Very High
F	0 - 16	Critical

**Key**  
 NEI - Not enough information to score indicator.  
 NS - Indicator is not scored for any country  
 NA - Not applicable

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