LETTER FROM MALI HEALTH

For ten years, Mali Health has collaborated with peri-urban communities in Bamako to develop and implement local solutions to help mothers and children access basic healthcare. Working with women, communities, community health centers, and the health system, we have learned a great deal about how to support our partners as they respond to some of the most difficult maternal and child health challenges remaining in the world.

Today, we are as committed as ever to solutions that are community-based and that work within Mali’s health system. Going forward, we will emphasize engaging communities and their resources in greater depth - finding ways to help local stakeholders replicate and sustain the results we’ve achieved together for the past decade.

The plan that follows is our roadmap to our next five years:

Our programs are strong and we will maintain them at the highest level. While we continue to provide access to high-quality care to thousands of mothers and children, we will investigate new opportunities to extend our impact.

We will help our staff to perform at the highest level, give them the freedom to innovate, and we will strive to be a leader in how to build, invest in and support community-based teams.

We will build our monitoring and evaluation capacity, so that the decisions for our programs and organization are informed by the evidence we collect.

As we document our model and approach, we will advocate for universal health coverage in Mali that ensures every poor mother and child has access to care.

We will pursue the partnerships and resources that will allow our work to reach sustainability, positioning Mali Health and our partners to have an impact for mothers and children now and into the future.

We are pleased to share the following plan, outlining how Mali Health will maintain our community-based capacity building work in the years to come. We are confident that with our partners, we will continue to help communities improve maternal and child health in Mali.

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THE CHALLENGE AND OUR APPROACH

Maternal, infant and child mortality rates in Mali are some of the highest in the world because women and children cannot access basic healthcare. Mali’s health system is decentralized, which means that the responsibility to provide life-saving healthcare does not lie with the government, it lies with communities. Communities often do not have the resources and experience they need to provide basic care to mothers and children, which is a primary reason for their poor health outcomes.

While Mali’s decentralized health system presents many challenges - it also presents many opportunities. We help communities fully embrace their role in providing basic healthcare. We recognize and build on the many resources that communities do have to improve maternal and child health, and we provide the ones they do not.

When we help communities manage their resources and improve the quality and availability of maternal and child healthcare, the results are astounding. Women and children access the care they need earlier and more often, health centers function better and become more sustainable. By empowering communities, we help the health system to function the way it was designed to.

Our approach is different because we look for solutions that are developed within communities and can be supported using local resources - instead of solutions that always rely on us, or on other outside resources.

Because the needs in Mali are so significant, Mali Health has and will continue to serve families directly to make sure they have access to care. But our goal remains helping communities build a local system that provides basic primary healthcare to all mothers and children.
IMPROVE maternal, neonatal, infant and child health by STRENGTHENING community capacity to INCREASE access to care and the quality of care
- Improve the knowledge, skills and access of vulnerable populations to reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health (RMNCH) care and services
- Improve the quality of RMNCH care delivered at community health centers (CSComs)

BUILD, INVEST in and SUPPORT a high-performing team
- Develop, and train staff in, Mali Health’s core competencies
- Improve the recruitment and training of our staff
- Improve management and accountability
- Strengthen the resources available for staff development

STRENGTHEN our ability to use data in every aspect of our decision-making
- Standardize our methods of monitoring and evaluation
- Strengthen our culture of learning and our use of data and evidence
- Improve the alignment between data collection and program impact
- Develop and implement an internal process of quality improvement, to be used by our Mali and US teams

DOCUMENT and SHARE our program models and approach
- Clearly define and validate our program models and our approach
- Explore and experiment with methods to improve the sustainability and impact of our programs
- Advocate for universal health coverage in Bamako and in Mali that is community-centered and patient-centered

DEVELOP partnerships and resources to ensure sustainability
- Increase and diversify our funding sources
- Build partnerships that allow us to expand our impact
- Maintain balanced budgets and rebuild our cash reserves
ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTHCARE
Improve the knowledge, skills and access of vulnerable populations to RMNCH care and health services

Our steps to get there will be:
- Improve the knowledge of mothers, pregnant women and caregivers for children under age 5 in RMNCH through educational sessions conducted by community health workers (CHWs), animateurs and media campaigns
- Strengthen the skills of mothers, pregnant women and caregivers of children under 5 in RMNCH
- Provide free and subsidized care to the poorest pregnant women and children under age 5
- Help mothers, pregnant and vulnerable women and caregivers for children under 5 afford fees at their community health centers

IMPROVING QUALITY
Improve the quality of RMNCH care delivered at community health centers

Our steps to get there will be:
- Improve the quality and delivery of clinical care
- Improve the satisfaction and experience of patients in CSComs
- Strengthen the management of the CSCom by its community management association (ASACO)
- Help CSComs and ASACOs increase their revenue
- Ensure the sustainability of our QI approach and impact after Mali Health concludes direct program support
- Audit and counter-audit all maternal and infant deaths in our partner CSComs
- Integrate family planning into our technical support for health centers, and additional services like laboratory trainings, ultrasound and biosecurity/WASH when possible

Our measures of success will be:
- CSComs perform at 90% or above on patient exit surveys & mystery client surveys
- Patient satisfaction rates remain above 90%
- ASACOs achieve a score of 85% or above on their quarterly performance assessments
- CSComs’ annual revenue rises by 5% per year
- Every partner CSCom has adopted a QI Sustainability Plan
- Family planning is integrated into prenatal and postnatal care visits

IMPROVE maternal, neonatal, infant and child health by STRENGTHENING community capacity to INCREASE access to care and the quality of care

Maintain:
- 0% maternal & child mortality
- 90% or above prenatal and postnatal care coverage
- 90% or above facility-based delivery
- 100% on-time childhood vaccine coverage

Incidences of:
- Malaria under 5%
- Diarrhea under 3%
- Malnutrition under 1%

100% of enrolled mothers and caregivers report that they can afford healthcare

75% of enrolled children receive treatment within 24 hours of symptoms

Our measures of success will be:
- Every partner CSCom has adopted a QI Sustainability Plan
- Family planning is integrated into prenatal and postnatal care visits
BUILD, INVEST in and SUPPORT a high-performing team

Our steps to get there will be:

- **Develop and train staff** in Mali Health’s core competencies
- **Strengthen opportunities** for staff development and advancement
- In our recruitment of staff and board members, **value the talent of women**
- **Improve our staff and performance evaluation methods**
- **Improve management and accountability**
- **Build an engaged and high-performing board**
- **Strengthen the resources** available for staff development

Our measures of success will be:

- Formation of a Staff Development Committee
- 100% participation of staff in professional development
- 100% of staff creates a career development plan
- Succession plans for key positions
- Updated description of roles and responsibilities of field agents
- The senior and junior staff participate in external or international opportunities connected to their skills or responsibilities
- A method for evaluating staff performance chosen by our team
- Funds budgeted for professional development
MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Our steps to get there will be:

Standardize all monitoring and evaluation (M&E) protocols and plans

Reinforce the importance of objective, accurate data collection and ensure use of high-quality data at every level

Share, appreciate and use data and feedback

Engage all program staff in M&E processes

Improve the alignment between data collection and program impact

Develop and implement an internal process of quality improvement, to be used by our Mali and US teams

Our measures of success will be:

100% adhesion to our M&E protocols and plans

100% of data collected from the field are reliable and verified

Methods of data verification exist at every level

The method for transmitting data is known and respected

M&E trainings for program staff, including field staff

100% of program staff have a defined role in supervision and M&E plans in their program

Quality Improvement plans for each program and for our board

A new or updated dashboard tool

STRENGTHEN our ability to use data in every aspect of our decision-making
Our steps to get there will be:

**Finalize and define** our program models, including program theory, implementation and evaluation

**Rigorously test** our program strategies to ensure the highest impact

**Explore and experiment** with methods to improve the sustainability and impact of our programs

**Advocate for universal health coverage** in Bamako and in Mali that is community-centered and patient-centered

**Seek feedback** on our programs and approach from partners and beneficiaries

**Create, share and seek knowledge** and best practices in community participation and empowerment

**DOCUMENT and SHARE** our program models and approach

4 OUR APPROACH

**Our measures of success will be:**

- Written minimum package for each program
- M&E data and evidence that supports our program theory of change and strategies
- A written analysis of at least 3 models for each program
- Ongoing meetings with stakeholders to collect feedback, including CSComs partners ASACOs, women and community members
- Mali Health is represented in national conversations among community health stakeholders
Our steps to get there will be:

- Increase and diversify our funding sources
- Maintain and increase support from individual donors
- Maintain and increase support from institutional donors
- Build partnerships with other organizations in Mali that will allow us to expand our impact
- Maintain balanced budgets and rebuild our cash reserves

Our measures of success will be:

- Increase in the number of multi-year funders
- Long-term relationships with donors
- Diversified revenue sources
- Stronger relationships within the Ministry of Health and international NGOs in Mali
- Increased balance of funds in reserve
- Balanced or surplus budgets
- Increased involvement of community health partners in program implementation
Mali Health will improve the effectiveness and impact of our organization and our programs.