

## Mali: Improving Access to Rural Health Services



Too few community health centers in the countryside, expensive drugs, and a poorly coordinated health care system have long plagued Mali's health sector. To address these shortcomings, the World Bank together with other donors in 1991 launched a [Second Health, Population, and Rural Water Project](#).

Spurred by a productive partnership between the Bank and UNICEF and the involvement of local communities, the project met its objectives. By 1998, nearly 300 new community health centers had been built, one-third of which were directly financed by the project. The percentage of the population living within 15 kilometers of a health facility more than doubled from 17 percent in 1995 to 39 percent

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The community clinics have been largely successful in improving service coverage and client satisfaction. In addition, community management committees were established for some government clinics, although staff continue to be employed by the government. Generic prescription drugs are now widely available, and prices are low enough for community health centers to cover recurrent costs from drug sales.

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