

Mali Focus – Part One

Claire Bedot, French Translator for the UBS World Service Centre, went to Mali in March with professional photographer Joaquim Dassonville. The stories and images that follow present a very dynamic Bible Society, building for the long term in order to contribute both to the development of the country and to that of the Church.

Sunday in Bamako...

MALI – “Sunday is wedding day in Bamako...” sing the Malian duo Amadou and Mariam. And on this particular Sunday, there are several young couples gathered on the patch of lawn in front of the hotel to have their wedding photos taken. In a proud display of traditional and western outfits, they smile beaming smiles as the cameras click... Beyond the green lawn, Mali’s dusty red soil comes into view.

We get into a taxi and head for the town centre. This is our first experience of Mali traffic, with beeping car horns everywhere. All types of vehicle share the road with pedestrians. Motorcycles zigzag between cars, and the public minibuses are so packed with passengers that some have to stand on the step at the back.

Array of stalls

In the town centre we come across an array of market stalls set up along the pavements. A man selling charcoal, which he gets from the interior of the country, has piled up large sacks along the wall. During the next few days we see vehicles



A wedding photo session [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/21 MAL08DJ-23]

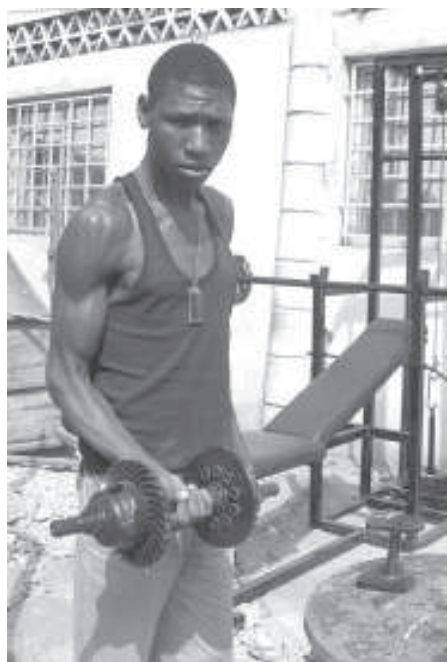
straining under the weight of sacks like these, which they deliver to the capital, Bamako. He also offers the precious fuel (responsible for the harsh deforestation of a large part of Mali) for sale in small black bags of identical weight.

A little further on, a stallholder has set up a stall selling sports equipment made from bric-a-brac such as the dumbbells made from parts of car engines. Judging by this salesman’s physique – he was proud to demonstrate his product for a photo – the weights are no less effective for being makeshift! Next, we see someone selling caged birds, targeting the privileged clients of Bamako’s beautiful villas.

Continuing our journey, we get to the narrow streets of the *Marché Rose*. There, the culture-shock is even greater. Amadou and Mariam sing about the beautiful clothes Malians wear for celebrations, and these luxurious African fabrics are displayed everywhere, along with simpler cotton materials. Women feast



A charcoal merchant [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/21 MAL08DJ-25]



Adama Dembélé, who sells home-made sports equipment [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/21 MAL08DJ-33]



A bird stall at the Bamako market [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/21 MAL08DJ-31]



Plantains and kebabs on sale at the marché rose [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/21 MAL08DJ-52]

their eyes on gold jewellery, negotiating at length with the salesman, asking advice... We thread our way through the crowd, carried along by the smells of the market – the butcher with his buffalo horns heaped up on the ground... stalls full of pigeons and other living poultry which will be killed and plucked a few feet away before being cooked in huge pots... fritters, plantains, or fish being fried, attracting customers... stalls of multi-coloured spices...

Traditional medicines

After passing the medicine market with its myriad pills sold in little foil packets shining in the sun, we come to a strange and gloomy sight. This part of the market is reserved for potions and traditional medicines: animal skins, monkey

skulls, animal hair, shellfish, all kinds of powder... This eerie place reminds us that animism is widely practised in the country: in fact, Mali's Islam is tainted with animism.

Then suddenly we find ourselves at the indigo stall. Next door, the sales ladies seem to disappear behind mountains of bright white washing powder. At the gates of the mosque we are prevented from going any further, because we are not Muslims. There are very few Westerners here, so we stand out! We meet one or two in the tourist craft market.

We continue wandering along the crowded streets, until it's time to go back to the hotel to get ready for the next part of the day's agenda: practice for the Bible Society's *Listening* project in the park of the *Palais de la Culture* on the banks of the Niger. (WR 422/21 - 06.08) [10 photos]



Mali Factfile

Population: 13.9 million
Official language: French
Life expectancy: 48 years
Population growth: 3 per cent p/a
Minimum monthly legal salary: 28,640 CFA Francs (US \$64.50)
Literacy rate: 19 per cent
(Some local estimates say 44 per cent)
Religions: Islam: 90 per cent, Animism and Christianity: 10 per cent
(source: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr)

An afternoon in the park

MALI – There’s a lazy, Sunday afternoon atmosphere in the park of the Palais de la Culture in Bamako. People are relaxing in the shade of the trees along the river bank. Some are playing pétanque, a young man lights a charcoal fire to make tea, another lays down for a siesta, children are doing somersaults on the grass, friends are chatting and laughing...

Then the atmosphere becomes even livelier when a group gathers at the park entrance; mostly young people, along with some not-so-young, carrying traditional musical instruments, iceboxes and drinks; T-shirts are handed out and put on hastily...

The instruments are tuned, the band sets up in a cheerful hubbub and gradually forms a procession, led by a musician playing the n’goni (a traditional instrument) and followed by a group of dancers. They start to



The music group rehearsing for the BS in Mali’s *Listening to the Word* project [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/22 MAL08DJ-103]

sing: “A’ ye n’an ka ngongon baro, baro mana diya an ka sigi na diaya” [“Come, let’s talk together... And when we’re in communion, we’ll find it easier to live in harmony...”]. Then comes another song: “Matigi Yesu makaritigi an ka tanu, dukukolokan siyau bèè k’a bonyan” [“Let us give thanks to Jesus, he is the God of mercy; let all mankind honour him...”].

Nearby conversations stop in mid-flow, as surprised faces turn towards the music group. In the street opposite the park, onlookers stop and listen. Some will stay there all afternoon to listen to this traditional music about a glorious king who is God and to whom all praise is due.

“God’s Word for all the people of Mali”, proclaim the T-shirts worn by the dancers and musicians. The onlookers are astonished because they are not used to hearing the Gospel message presented in such a Malian way,

and in their language, Bambara. Today, there are no foreign words being spoken by a stranger in a suit, standing on a stage: only people singing in their own language, respecting their culture, conveying a message they often associate with the West (see interview with Pastor Emmanuel Traoré, page 39).

Traditional

Today, the musicians are playing traditional instruments – the n’goni, the sokou, the balafon, the djembé and the n’gousounbara – and telling Bible stories like Malian minstrels (see article on Bourama Koné, page 37). And the dancers are dancing like their Malian ancestors (see ‘Teaching them to dance all over again’, page 38); lively, graceful dances that charm passers-by. For the Christians, these are expressions of hope for change, for a new and meaningful way to share their faith.

This story refers to project 81401. (WR 422/22 - 06.08) [10 photos]



Dancers rehearsing for the BS’s *Listening to the Word* project [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/22 MAL08DJ-106]

Goals of the *Listening to the Word* project

- Encourage Christians to deepen their faith by drawing on their own culture and helping to build a Christian identity that is truly Malian.
- Train the churches and missions which support the Bible Society in Mali to convey the Bible message in a simple and contextual way – adapting their approach to suit an oral culture, using in particular the storytelling method of Bible narration.
- Giving all Malians, especially those groups which have not yet been reached, the opportunity to hear the Word of God in a form they can relate to culturally.



Young Malian girls [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/22 MAL08DJ-123]

Bourama Koné – the musician at the heart of the *Listening to the Word* project



Bourama Koné [photo: UBS/Jaques Dembélé WR422/23 MAL08DJ-83]

MALI – About 20 years ago, Bourama Koné went on a literacy course in his language, Bamanankan. He was a Muslim, he loved his God, but he didn't understand what he believed: "When you're a Muslim, you don't understand what you're saying when you worship God because it's in Arabic," he explains.

Having learnt to read, Mr Koné became a teacher of Bamanankan. He wanted to read his own language, and among the small amount of literature available, he found a Bible. Deeply touched by what he read, he tried to understand this religion that spoke his language.

"I actually believed in Jesus several years before I knew how to 'become a Christian' in the 1990s," he admits.

Having become a committed Christian and being a well-known musician (he plays the n'goni, an instrument made from an empty gourd with strings attached to a fretboard), Bourama Koné contacted the Christian radio station in Bamako: Radio Hope, and offered his musical service. He started by telling Bible stories while accompanying himself on the n'goni, like a traditional minstrel. The Bible Society became interested in his original, and yet authentically Malian approach, and suggested he do

the same thing using the actual Bible text. The beginning of Genesis has already been recorded as far as the story of Abraham.

That's how the *Listening to the Word* project came into being, based on the discovery that Malian non-Christians were very receptive to this way of presenting the Bible message, which has infinitely more hope of reaching their hearts than methods used in places where the oral tradition is less important. Bourama Koné was one of the first to use this traditional approach, which has now been developed and adapted by the Bible Society.

"I know God gave me this gift of communication: conveying the Bible message like a traditional storyteller. I've worked hard, and now I can relate any Bible story as if it were a Bamanankan tale," concludes Mr Koné.

This story refers to project 81401. (WR422/23 - 06.08) [2 photos]

Teaching them to dance all over again



Dance student Tabita Diarra [photo: UBS/ Jaques Dembélé WR422/24 MAL08DJ-407]

MALI – Tabita Diarra is a young Christian who studies dance at the Balla Fasséké Kouyaté Academy of Arts, Professions and Multimedia studies (CAMM) in Bamako. She is well-known and admired in Mali, where she teaches pop singers to dance and move on stage.

“Malian people love music and love to dance. So if we present the Gospel in a creative way, they’ll listen!”

“I’m in my fourth year, and these studies last five years,” Tabita tells us. “I’m starting to master all the steps we’re taught, both in contemporary and traditional dance. But my main inspiration is music and singing: the song lyrics

help me with my dance choreography. In fact, all my dances tell a story, although, in the case of the *Listening to the Word* project, the main aim is to catch the audience’s attention.

“Malian people love music and love to dance. So if we present the Gospel in a creative way, they’ll listen!”

And yet, in church circles, dancing was frowned upon until recently. There’s only one dance step that’s acceptable, named ‘*tirer et sortir*’, which is very discreet and consists of taking one step forward diagonally and one step back. This is rather sad in a country where the people have such a rich background in traditional dancing... So when the *Listening to the Word* project came into being, Tabita seemed to be the perfect person to teach the young participants to dance.

More energetic

“Even though dancing is part of our culture in Mali, we had to teach them to dance all over again!” said Pastor Emmanuel Traoré (see ‘Mali has something to offer worldwide culture’, on page 39). The Church has discouraged the Malian cultural traditions of music and dance. The way we dance in the ‘*Listening to the Word*’ project is much more energetic than you’d normally see in a church environment, but it’s a more authentic reflection of our culture.”

A real blessing

“It’s amazing that Tabita managed to get into the CAMM without a pastor disallowing this,” Pastor Traoré continued with a smile. “But today, she is a real blessing, and a true gift for this project!”

This story relates to project 81401.

(WR 422/24 - 06.08)

[1 photo]



Dancers rehearsing for the BS in Mali’s *Listening to the Word* project [photo: UBS/ Joaquim Dassonville WR422/24 MAL08DJ-91]

‘Mali has something to offer worldwide culture!’

Pastor Emmanuel Traoré, a Board member of the Bible Society in Mali, explains the cultural importance of storytelling in Mali, and talks about the Listening to the Word project

MALI — “I am a converted Muslim. I call myself Emmanuel these days, but my real name is Mouhamadou Traoré. I was born in Bamako. I became interested in football at a very early age. I later became a footballer, a ‘Malian International footballer’ as we say. I played for the Mali international team. I also played in France for Blois football club from 1969 to 1975. Then I lived in the USA before returning to Mali. I am well known in this country.

The wrong way

“I am one of the few Bamako pastors who were actually born here. It is difficult to get through to the people of Bamako, but I

must admit that we go about it the wrong way – we invite big-name speakers, organise evangelistic campaigns... but only children turn up! That’s not the way to communicate with the people of Mali. Once they hear a good story, Malians will stay and listen, whatever the name of the storyteller.

Oral tradition

“Similarly, if we open a Christian school, people will send their children there. So we should make better use of two things that are part of our culture: storytelling and school. And football too!

“Malian people love stories. The oral tradition works well in our country. We love to speak,

“We should make better use of two things that are part of our culture: storytelling and school. And football too!”

we love eloquence, and we love listening to stories. 70 per cent of the population cannot read or write. So how else can we spread the Gospel other than orally?

“Of course, literacy is important, and the Bible Society’s Alpha (literacy) project is starting to make progress, but we still need people to tell Bible stories, because this is the way to communicate with people of a predominantly oral culture. Now we need to find ways to spread these



The Bible Society in Mali’s *Listening to the Word* team [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/25 MAL08DJ-136]



Dancers taking part in the rehearsal for the BS in Mali's *Listening to the Word* project [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/24 MAL08DJ-131]

stories to a wider audience – such as on the radio or television!

“One day, I set off to attend a Bible Society meeting in Dakar (Senegal), and in the taxi that took me to Bamako airport I heard Bourama Koné on the radio [see page 37]. I spoke to the taxi driver as if I were a marabout [a Muslim holy man] or a Muslim who was outraged by what he had heard:

“‘Young man, what does this mean? How can you listen to such things?!’

“The taxi driver answered: ‘Oh, I’m sorry, Uncle, but what this man is saying is so true! We have been deceived, but he’s telling the truth – the truth about Abraham!’

Just listen!

“‘How do you know?’ I retorted.

“‘Just listen!’ he said. ‘If you listen properly you’ll know that this is the truth! What we were brought up to believe was not the truth.’

“This discussion with the taxi driver highlights Bourama’s incredible gift! He is a real sto-

ryteller, in keeping with our culture. We Christians have, until now, neglected our culture. Although I am wearing a suit, I am still Malian in my heart. God created me with a Malian sensitivity, and if this sensitivity is not awakened, my heart will not be touched.”

Talk about Jesus

“The way that Bourama communicates the Bible message changed my own way of teaching God’s Word. I used to talk about Jesus Christ straight away. Now I don’t do that. Before telling people about Jesus, I go back to the beginning, talk about what God made, who the spirits are, how they work... I explain these things first of all.

“Very near here, in the River Niger, people sacrifice animals in the water. They think the spirits eat and drink, and that they will come and drink the blood that has been shed. We must tell them this is not true! That’s why the stories of Bourama Koné are so important; it’s vital to share the Gospel in a way that people can relate to culturally.

“As part of the Storytelling Project, we sing and dance in a way that shows the church is not a graveyard, and that Jesus came to give us Life – abundant Life! This project is going to change the way of thinking of many pastors and church members, and then the church will blossom.”

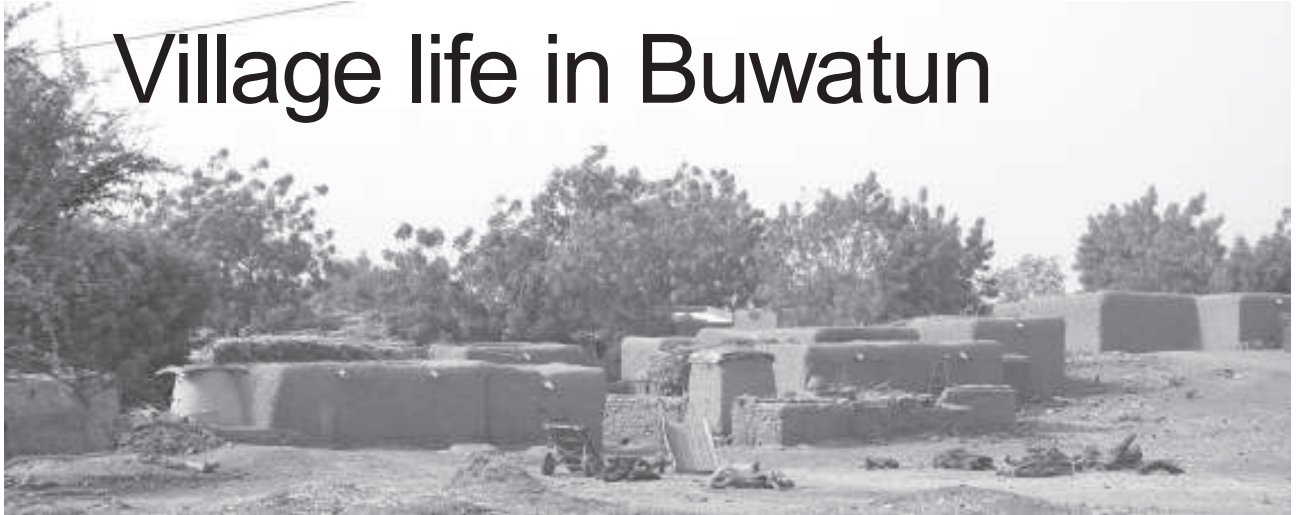
“As part of the Storytelling Project, we sing and dance in a way that shows the church is not a graveyard, and that Jesus came to give us Life – abundant Life! This project is going to change the way of thinking of many pastors and church members, and then the church will blossom. Like a woman who has been shut away indoors and who has been suddenly set free, it’s time for the church to come out of hiding and it’s time for change!

Set her free

“This project is going to help the church and set her free. That’s why I’m giving my time to this endeavour: when people see and hear us singing praises to Jesus Christ with such joy, they will understand that church is not somewhere you go to in order to wait for death! And if cemetery-type churches exist elsewhere, I’m convinced that Mali has something to offer worldwide culture!”

This story refers to project 81401. (WR 422/25 - 06.08) [5 photos]

Village life in Buwatun



The mud huts of Parana village, San Region [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/26 MAL08DJ-131]

After an eight-hour journey from Bamako, we arrive in Sanékuy to find the village seemingly asleep. No-one comes out of the mud houses, there are no children playing in the street... However, once we've parked near the village square, we hear shouts and laughter coming from nearby. When we get to the well, we discover a large group of young girls drawing water and cheerfully preparing a meal.



Young girls at the well in Sanékuy village [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/26 MAL08DJ-161]



Church leaders listening to the rehearsal of the Bible Society's *Listening to the Word* project [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/26 MAL08DJ-141]

We are soon informed that they are all Christians and all engaged to be married. They come from the surrounding villages and are taking part in a two-month 'preparation for marriage' course. During this time they will learn to read and write; they will also follow cookery classes, hygiene lessons, and Bible studies.

Village elders

A few dozen metres from there, we come across a group of men sitting in a circle in the shade. Among them are the village elders and several church leaders from different parts of the region, who are taking part in the Bible Society in Mali's ministry – *the Listening to the Word* project and the literacy program, called 'Alpha'.

Sanékuy is in the Buwatun region, some 600km east of Bamako, not far from the border with Burkina Faso. The unusual thing about this village is that it is mostly Christian, in a country where the vast majority of people are Muslim. Out of the 2,000 or so villagers, some 1,200 squeeze into the village church every Sunday!

An elderly man called Nicodème Dembélé, who is head of the church elders' committee, explains how the Gospel came to the village:

Preaching the Gospel

"When I was born, the Word of God had not yet reached Sanékuy," he told us. "This was an Animist village. However, my older brother, who was at school in San, about 30km from here, discovered the Gospel through some missionaries. Then one day, when he was visiting Sanékuy, he decided to stand in the village square and start preaching the Gospel!" ☛

“The response was far from positive: at first, we were the only family to convert to Christianity, and we were shunned because of it. The others were suspicious, especially the village chief.

“But my brother came back regularly, usually bringing with him a group of fellow Christians who would sing in the village square: it was like a party!

“Gradually, a few other families accepted the Gospel. The first missionaries arrived in Sanékuy in 1935 – first of all a French Catholic priest, then some English Protestants... and as you can see, today our village is mostly Christian!”

Pictures and songs

Siméon Keita, the pastor of Sanékuy, then tells his story. He says that when he was a child, he used to be envious of the Christian children, because they went to Sunday School where they were given nice pictures and taught to sing beautiful songs.

“Those of us who didn’t go to church didn’t sing as much as them, and that made us envious,” he says. “That’s what attracted me to Sunday School: I went for the music, but I had to

hide this from my parents because they would have disapproved. When I grew up, I was able to tell them I was a Christian, and later I studied and became a pastor.”

Rural version

We continue talking for some time, and hearing about the history of the village and of the story of the translation of the Bible into the Boomu language, which is spoken in Sanékuy (see ‘Translation tested in the village square’ in the next *World Report*). Then everyone gets up to go and listen to the regional choir from the *Listening to the Word* project.

The difference between this rural group and the one based in Bamako (see page 39) is striking, and highlights the need to adapt to Mali’s particular sensitivities and traditions – the ‘Listening to the Word’ project provides training for about 15 storytellers and three music groups. The Bamako group is lively and cheerful; the one in Sanékuy is serious and solemn.



A young girl cooking a meal [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/26 MAL08DJ-147]

As soon as the first notes ring out, children flock from all over the village. Adults gather round too, as do the young girls we met by the well. Soon, a crowd of people are listening attentively to the choir – the singing, the music, the Bible texts – as night falls in Sanékuy.

In the crowd we recognise Téné Kamaté Dembélé, who is 54 and has just learnt to read, thanks to the Bible Society’s literacy program (see page 45).

When the light has faded, the musicians put away their instruments, and conversations start up again as people go their separate ways. Before the Bible Society team leaves, however, the village chief gives us two live cockerels – “for our dinner” explains Jacques Dembélé, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Mali. (WR 422/26 - 06.08)

[10 photos]



The choir of the BS in Mali’s *Listening to the Word* project in Sanékuy village [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/26 MAL08DJ-166]

The Bible Society in Mali takes up the literacy challenge

“Illiteracy is not a fate, it is a problem to be tackled and solved,” said Ousmane Issoufi Maiga, the Prime Minister of Mali, at the opening of the Literacy Summit held in Bamako last September*.

Greatly encouraged by the government’s determined attitude, the Bible Society in Mali (BSM) decided to increase its efforts to take up the challenge of illiteracy, which stands at 53.6 per cent in the country, and which is even higher in rural areas and amongst women (some say the figure is as high as 81 per cent – see ‘Mali factfile’ on page 35).

High quality

While the BSM relies on the churches, who are the main participants in its literacy program, called ‘Alpha’, it also has other partners: in order to ensure a high quality program, the Society turned to the Abdoulaye Barry Language Institute of Bamako and the National Department of Basic Education, which have trained many trainers (or supervisors).

Between 2006 and the first term of 2007, 1,433 people took part in the BSM’s literacy courses, in Bamako as well as in three of Mali’s eight regions: including the Dogons, the Bwa (who speak Boomu) and the Bamanans. And this number is growing rapidly.

“Our church has been offering literacy courses for years, with very little success,” admits Moussa Théra, Pastor of the



A young mother reads from the blackboard during a literacy class in Sotuba district [photo: UBS/Joaquim Dassonville WR422/27 MAL08DJ-391]

Evangelical church in Mali, in the San District. “But when the Bible Society started this program, guaranteeing to train the leaders, as well as supplying the syllabus, the books, and the blackboards, people could tell that this was serious, and they started to request literacy classes for their villages.

Give our time

“Today, in San, the requests come flooding in! In addition to the neighbouring village of Kalfadaga, where some 30 students have been taking lessons since May 2007, two classes have just started in the Muslim villages of Kadioloko and Fio.

Parana, near San, is one of the villages that realises the value of the training offered by the Bible Society and would like to have a literacy class of its own. The literate people are far from being a majority in this Catholic hamlet.

The difficulty here though, like elsewhere, is to find someone who is willing to be trained in literacy and then give his or her time on a voluntary basis to pass on the teaching to others – three times a week, three to six months a year.

Perhaps Odile or Marie Koné, two dynamic sisters, will take up the challenge and become volunteers?

Training the trainers

“There are currently 16 leaders in total in the four districts of the Ségou region,” says Esaïe Dembélé, who lives in Sanékuy (see *Village life in Buwatun*, page 41) and coordinates the BSM’s literacy program in the surrounding area. “I have been in this position since 1997, and since 2006 I have been spending my time training the trainers, who will then go on to train others in turn. That’s where the future of this project lies. ☞

“We have a school in Sanékuy, and all the children go there from the age of six. But this situation is still rare. So the literacy centres are vital.”

In fact, while there are some children who walk miles to go to school, there are many others who don't go at all. Some stay at home because there is no school within walking distance, or because their parents can't afford to buy the basic school stationery; but most of them contribute to the family income by helping in the fields or by selling fruit or groundnuts.

“If I devote my life to literacy, it's because the development of this region and of Mali depend on it,” says Esaïe Dembélé. We need ten centres like the one in Sanékuy in this district!”

*source: *L'Essor*, one of Mali's national daily newspapers, September 23, 2007

This story relates to project 81405.
(WR 422/27 - 06.08) [10 photos]



Children selling fruit by the roadside
[photo: UBS/
Joaquim Dassonville
WR422/27
MAL08DJ-228]

Recipe for fari – Parana style



[MAL08DJ-199]

Mix together:

- White beans, cooked and crushed
- Baobab leaf purée, and potash

Mould the mixture into balls and place into shrub leaves which you then fold over: the leaf sticks to the mixture and stops the balls sticking to each other. Once they're cooked, they come apart easily. Serve with a mixture of peppers, onions and shea butter oil.



Odile Koné [photo: UBS/Joaquim
Dassonville WR422/27
MAL08DJ-195]

‘My dream is to write books...’

“I can read the Bible texts which have already been published in Boomu, and when the entire Bible is available, I’ll be able to read it myself!”

Téné Kamaté Dembélé, who is 54 years old, lives in the village of Sanékuy (see ‘Village life in Buwatun’ page 41). She has recently learnt to read and write and beams with pride because of it.

“I can’t begin to tell you how useful my new skills are,” she says with a smile. “When you can’t read or write it’s a bit like being blind or deaf: nothing is clear, you can’t understand things properly, even though you can see and hear.

Boomu Bible

“I followed the whole course: three days a week, three months a year, after harvest time, for three years. Now I can understand everything I read. I can read the Bible texts which have already been published in Boomu, and when the entire Bible is made available, I’ll be able to read it myself!

“I’ve been going to church since I was very young, and being able to read the Bible means a lot to me. I used to have to rely on what I heard at church on a Sunday, but now, if my heart is troubled, I can read the Word of God by myself whenever I want to, and be comforted by it.

Small business

“Being able to read and write has allowed me to set up a small business, selling rice at the market. Now I know how to manage the supplies and read the weighing scales, as well as being able to calculate things. It has really changed my life!

“My own experience gives me reason to believe that this literacy program will have a positive impact on our region. It will bring development and health improvements: because if people are able to read, they will be better informed about illnesses and how to avoid them.”



Mrs Kamaté, who is delighted to be able to read [photo: UBS/ Joaquim Dassonville WR422/28 MAL08DJ-168

“I can’t begin to tell you how useful my new skills are. . . When you can’t read or write it’s a bit like being blind or deaf: nothing is clear, you can’t understand things properly, even though you can see and hear.”

“I don’t want to stop there either: my dream is to write books! I think it’s important to write about hygiene for example, so that women are better informed and able to change their social habits and live healthier lives.”

(WR 422/28 - 06.08) [2 photos]