

# Building a decentralization Safo, based on socio-cultural and artistic development of the population

## Abstract

The quest for new governance is underway in Mali since the national conference in 1992. It implies a redistribution of power in the management of resources and services for communities. Above all, it requires a new behavior of the citizen, who must be mentally and intellectually prepared to become himself the main architect of his developmental development of his locality. In the rural commune of Safo, where we have spent more than three years in need of investigation, the people and their elected officials are looking for an original way to achieve decentralization. The theme, "Building a decentralization Safo, based on socio-cultural and artistic development of the population" is an attempt reconciliation of traditional and modern louse Also see around a common purpose, local development, based on the valuation redu socio-cultural heritage and artistic.

**Keywords:** decentralization, socio-cultural, heritage, Safo, education, population

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## Introduction

The socio cultural and artistic values can serve as inspiration to revitalize education, governance and local development in the context of decentralization. The success of the latter requires the consideration of local knowledge, in accordance with the requirements and laws of social change. This local knowledge in Safo and concerns about ironman's aesthetics of speech, the use of plants, clay and iron, farming techniques, management of the environment, related cultural practices and worship. It is transmitted from generation to generation, orally, under the control of ole s unwritten customary laws. The laws of social change discussed here relate to transformations (which) collectively affect the values, (and) practices of a society or social group.<sup>1</sup> These considerations on local knowledge and social change led to the development of the following: Presentation of the town - Objective and theoretical -Framework Methodology - Literature Review - Search Results. The latter research results from the indication of roles and places of local development actors, the definition of a type of so-called global literacy, ending with a critical analysis of different ideas addressed in the seventh part.

## Presentation of Safo

Safo rural town in remote barely 20 km from Bamako was created in 1996 by Law No. 96059 of November 4, establishing of new municipalities in the Republic of Mali. It is confined to the East by the commune of Tienfala, to the East and to the South, by the communes of Moribabougou and Sangarébougou, to the West by the urban commune of Kati and the commune of Diago (NGara), to North by the commune of Koula, in the North-West by the commune of Yelekebougou, in the South-West by the commune of Djalakorodji. It has fourteen villages that are: Chodo, Dabani, Dognoumana, Donéguébougou, Falayan, Kodialani, Kola, Safo, Serwala, Sirababougou, Somabougou, Tassan, Torodo, Zorocoro. It has an area of 306.94<sup>km<sup>2</sup></sup> (Source: GIS Base Oise, PACT Bamako), with Safo village as its capital. The communal population composed mainly of Bambara farmers is estimated at 14 681 inhabitants (provisional results of the RGPH 2009).

<sup>1</sup>Bremond Janine GELEDAN Alain Dictionary of Economic and Social Sciences, Editions Belin, France, 2002, page 72.

## Problem

In the rural community of Safo, so development requirements necessary to the community, especially the customs and traditions continue to determine its socio-economic and cultural life. It needs a bridge to establish between its Bamanan past and its present of a Mali whose survival is due to the emergence of an efficient educational system, a pluralist democracy broadened at the base and a dynamic and competitive economy.

However, the reality on the ground I ns reconciliatory not seem to favor the establishment of a complementarity between local traditional powers and powers of local authorities. The village chiefs, the gerontocracy system, the influence of leader's local opinion among others are required increasingly to political and administrative leaders, able to thwart their decisions. Despite this conflict situation, the modern authorities, pledged political legitimacy try to rush about in their own arena, ignoring the traditional authorities, holders of legitimacy by their deep knowledge of mil I had physical and cultural and social foundation solid. They approach in a combination of intellectual effort, mental and physical, the use of mobilization and preservation of local knowledge is essential to both parties, along with ownership of the texts of decentralization. It is the language of the environment that carries and conveys this knowledge. T content of decentralization can be better shared, taught in that language. Socio-cultural and political imperatives dictate the revaluation of the local language and its inclusion in all aspects of decentralization as key factor of socio-cultural development of the population.

## Objective and methodology

The present communication aims to demonstrate that e born of practices identified traditional powers can be upgraded and rehabilitated to the current situation of the rural commune of Safo for its development. Its drafting required the reading and analysis of documents relating to the oral tradition, decentralization and literacy in the national language. A field survey of the populations of the rural commune of Safo and Diéma reinforced the information collected on the theme. Interview guides and questionnaires were used to collect information from populations, services and associations.

## Theoretical frame

Theoretically, the development of the theme is part of the logic of social change following a culturalism and unescosian conception. The latter has been defined by Guy Rocher as “any observable change in a time which affects in a way that is not a temporary or ephemeral the structure or function of the social organization of a community and changes the course of history”.<sup>2</sup> The contribution of customs and morals to social change, especially in the transformation of societies living in traditions, has been recognized as capital by development theorists. According to UNESCO, for change to succeed and benefit the majority of the population, education must be provided in its mother tongue. According to the same UN organization, literacy constitutes “a process of acquiring basic cognitive skills and the use of these skills for socio-economic development as well as citizen awareness and critical thinking, the basis of personal and social evolution”.<sup>3</sup>

## Literature paper

The Presidency’s document of the Republic of Mali and the Mission for Decentralization and Institutional Reforms of the final report entitled *Synthesis* “The issue of the insertion of traditional authorities and institutions in the new democratic context in Mali” With an appendix advocacy for traditional authorities and institutions, had once identified the problem to advocate ways forward: The merit of this document developed by consultants<sup>4</sup> the different profile lies in the prescription of the nature of the Mali company formerly dedicated to the spoken word. In a society of morality, they believe, the word stands out as the very essence of human existence. It is defined as a functional speech, an action-word, that makes and breaks, that creates and that acts on everything positively or negatively. It is the expression of the mechanism of transmission and acquisition of knowledge and the indicator of how to perceive the universe by men. They succeed in identifying three historical aspects that would have irreversibly affected our society and that coexist in competitive legitimates, entitled visions : the “visions 1, that of an era prior to Islam, the visions 2” relating to the excessive Islamization of society and the” visions 3 “built on the colonial intrusion. The adherents of each of these apparently irreconcilable visions intend to impose ignoring the other as the sole authority to remove the Mali unstuck:

- a. Visions 1: without the foundation of tradition no development.
- b. Visions 2: point of salvation out of Islam.
- c. Visions 3: out of the west point of progress.<sup>5</sup>

The authors acknowledge that progress has certainly been made at the level of visions 2 and 3, but each time “insidiously “Recovered by relentless socio-cultural demands. Thus are distinguished real country and the official country “. They recommend the establishment of a partnership between traditional powers and officials by focusing on education and training. But they do not indicate how this could be

<sup>2</sup>Bremond Janine GELEDAN Alain Dictionary of Economic and Social Sciences, Editions Belin, France, 2002, page 72.

<sup>3</sup>UNESCO Literacy unenjevital, suivisurl'EPT World Report, UNESCO Publishing, 2006, p age 155

<sup>4</sup>Consultant coordinator Richard TOE; Traditionalist Consultant Mahmoud Bamba Movement NKO; Consultant socio-anthropologist, Seydou DAFPE

<sup>5</sup>Presidency of The Republic of Mali and the Mission of Decentralization and Institutional Reforms Title summary of the final report on "The issue of the inclusion of traditional authorities and institutions in the new democratic context in Mali", p.5

concretely realized.<sup>1-5</sup>

The problematic of the creation of the rural commune of Meguétan in Koulikoro constitutes the plot of the book of Facoh Donki Diarra. Inhabited mainly by illiterates, created in the disunity between the populations and empty of viable economic resources, this rural commune should however assert itself in the name of the decentralization. She “crawled more than she walked wrote the author. The empowerment of the inhabitants to manage their own affairs was certainly a democratic advance, but it also allowed them to discover their limits and their inability to cope with the multiple socio-economic and cultural problems of their locality. Unprepared assume that, they believe less and less in success of decentralization. A good part of the disenchanting population, vote” like to get rid of a chore While a handful of opportunists intend to seize the opportunity to achieve their ends, abusing honest citizens, “using them with lies and trickery”, To get elected, said the author. The same situation was unprepared populations to support as part of decentralization exists in Safo. However it is not too late to get on with this grip of task they are, these people, the promoters of their municipality.

The memory, “Contribution of cultural heritage to local development, case of the rural municipality of Mande of Salia Coulibaly raises the delicate problem of the consideration and non-consideration of cultural heritage as a factor of development by rural people.<sup>6</sup> They are not numerous among the inhabitants of the rural commune of Mande, those who think that the cultural heritage constitutes a factor of development, according to Coulibaly. According to his investigations, this heritage would be rather a cumbersome burden for some. Others appreciate it but in the sense of cultural tourism only for pecuniary reasons. As for the hesitant, who say “I do not know they do not actually consider it a priority for local development. Although Coulibaly himself acknowledges that cultural heritage is the foundation of development, almost negative responses from its questionnaires, forced him to locate its development strategies in Outlook. But the presence of many movable and immovable cultural property: historical sites, oral expressions, local arts and knowledge as well as human treasures, which he has made the case, validly attest that the cultural heritage is alive and well in the rural commune of Mande. Populations have also conscience since they preserve the jalousemen t. In our opinion, the problem is at two levels: how to trust people to publicize their cultural heritage? How to ensure that they are the first beneficiaries and that they are not stripped of this heritage to be upgraded?

## Results

Enq uêtes Sociological have the following results:

### Roles and places of actors village communities and their elected representatives

A Safo, the seats are roles and actors in the decentralization process of revitalization from the cultural heritage may be expressed in the following activities:

- I. Clustering around the school,
- II. Collection bed téraires categories of oral tradition,

<sup>6</sup>The question put to respondents was as follows: "Are you satisfied with the role of cultural heritage in the development of your community?"The answers were: 55% no, 37% yes and 8% undecided. Source: The Salia Coulibaly memory.

- III. Collection of traditional knowledge on soil, seeds and farming methods technics the resort,
- IV. The collection of knowledge in the field of traditional medicine,
- V. Collection of traditional knowledge in the field of preservation and development of the ecosystem,
- VI. Mobilizing opinion leaders for advocacy for decentralization, fight against corruption and the softening of manners,
- VII. The reevaluation of *K<sub>te</sub> KB*<sup>7</sup>.

In addition to these activities Specifics, literacy can bring to the people of the town of Safo other no less significant benefits: According to a linguist, investigations of former DNAFLA allowed to inventory several application areas of knowledge and know-how literate populations that are among others:

- Marketing of cotton (agricultural products)
  - I. Field picketing,
  - II. Rainfall records,
  - III. The popularization of agricultural techniques,
  - IV. Registration of births and deaths,
  - V. AV management,
  - VI. The management of APEs and CGS,
  - VII. Hygiene and sanitation of the village,
  - VIII. Primary health care,
  - IX. The peasant fattening
  - X. Reforestation,
  - XI. The installation of signs,
  - XII. The distribution of inputs and recovery of loans,
  - XIII. The recovery of taxes,
  - XIV. Mill management,
  - XV. The management of village pharmacies,
  - XVI. The management of village shops... etc.<sup>7</sup>

Actors communal development: school managers, farmers, hunters, healers, craftsmen, traditional communicators, religious leaders are a good part of the local civil society. It is up to their protagonists, the town hall, the state and the technical and financial partners, the NGOs, to accompany them. Awareness, training, equipment and financial support to enable them to organize, assert and emancipate. For Jean-Pierre Olivier of Sardan, it is the presence of a developmental configuration<sup>8</sup> that determines the existence of development.

<sup>7</sup>KANE Soumana, Director General of NRC-NFE, "Engagement and preservation of local knowledge across national languages", paper presented at the National Conference of Scientific Research Symposium 2: Languages and science education, the (16 -19 May 2016) in Bamako on page 4 and 5.

<sup>8</sup>Olivier de Sardan Jean-Pierre, Anthropology and development, socio-anthropological test of social change, Editions Karthala, Paris, 1995, p 7: "We will call" development configuration" this widely cosmopolitan world of experts, bureaucrats, NGO leaders, researchers, technicians, project managers, field workers, who live in some sort of development of others, and mobilize

**Literacy, a new dynamic of decentralization:** Why a new dynamic? Because there was a first start since the national conference of 1992, which helped laid the foundations of decentralization. The second national revival could occur literacy communities and their elected representatives in their language. The laws of decentralization require a strong commitment of the municipality for literacy and the promotion of national languages. The Decree N° 02-313 / P-RM of 04/06/2002 in its Article 2 allocates to the municipality the conception and the application of the educational strategy of the State in the villages, fractions and districts through preschool the first cycle of public and community primary school, the Functional Literacy Centers (CAF), the Education Centers for Development (CED), the Women's Learning Centers (COFFEE).

**Proposal to create an Association for the Development of Non Formal Education (ADENF) in the common:** The attributions of such an association will extend to the promotion of the literate environment and to the development of local knowledge beyond classical literacy. Activities such as literacy of men and women of the village, collection, transcription and translation of literary categories of oral tradition, Lorisat ion of certain traditional knowledge in the cultural field, health and that of conservation ecosystem furnish the various functions of this association. It will load further dissemination of various products obtained through brochures and edited books, audio and audiovisual materials produced and through the canvas.

**Literacy of men and women in the village:** Mgw kana srw duguk cwn min Tε is kalanje, seennianijate the Fasokan na.<sup>9</sup> It takes from an idea based on the eradication of illiteracy in the village in a goal on overall literacy text a u town everyone must be able to read, write and count in their mother tongue. It is the village, including the village chief and his counselors, religious organizations, associations are women and young people, the Association of Parents (APE), School Management Committee (SMC) and teachers instead, take all initiatives in this direction, in collaboration with the town hall, in identifying men and women in the village who are likely to be literate; identifying ways and means to achieve this literacy goal; Previously, the association must conduct an awareness that emphasizes the urgency and importance of self-study of villagesà from the national language. The village can no longer sit back and wait for the state or NGOs to come and teach them.<sup>6-10</sup>

- A. Literacy allows residents to follow the study of their children see to supervise them at home;
- B. It allows men and women to learn to manage their households, to increase their income, properly maintain their health, well co nserver their environment to consolidate their social relationships and to understand the evolution of their country in a modern world in perpetual change.

**Proposal to establish an association for artistic and cultural development in the city (ADCA):** The creation of such a structure is necessary for the cultural renaissance of the town. It can be fixed essentially a mission to revitalize some traditional knowledge and values identified. This means it is better to start identifying arts resource people and culture of the community in the context of inter-municipal cooperation for large-scale operations can come true in this sens.

and manage for this purpose considerable material and symbolic resources.

<sup>9</sup>Translation "Everyone must read, write and count in their mother tongue in the village.

The operators of such cultural initiative must be the villagers themselves, the newly literate because it affects their lives every day.

- I. Farmers who have accumulated a lot of experience in the cultivation of millet, maize and gardening, who know the nature of soils, seeds and cultivation techniques used in the past and today,
- II. Hunters and traditional healers: who know the virtues of trees, herbs and plants, the best conditions for the conservation of wild animals and the forest,
- III. Local craftsmen Potters and blacksmiths, boisseliers, griots, etc. who live in a certain way of their profession,
- IV. Religious leaders: Acting on the mind and consciousness of the people through their socio-cultural and spiritual benefits.

**Identification and organization of the holders of local knowledge:**  
The revaluation of local knowledge through the identification of their owners. This identification can be done within the framework of the intercommunality, because it happens that the inhabitants of several neighboring communes benefit from the services of the same

specialist in this or that field of local knowledge. In the rural district of Diéma, the Territorial Development Agency in the Region of Kayes (ADTRK) had a directory of local talents and know-how. The following areas were selected:

**I. Fields of the arts:** traditional and modern crafts: dye, braid and traditional adornments; talents and know-how in music; talents and know-how in theater.

**II. Field of agriculture:** talents and know-how in agriculture

**III. Field of traditional medicine:** talents and know-how in health.

The agency had prepared a local skills identification sheet with seven columns (Table 1). The identification mission and organization of local skills and talents can be experienced in Safo and neighboring towns, full of useful traditional nt potential. Its objective is to help holders to capitalize their knowledge, to improve it, to ensure its durability, in the legality, while fructifying their income. Each rural commune of Mali, in its Economic Social and Cultural Development Plan (PDSEC) can program such an initiative and consider its implementation in the framework of intercommunal.

**Table 1** Local skills identification sheet with seven columns

Last name and first names	Age	Ethnic and languages	Talents/know-how	Activity description	Town	Phone
x	x	x	x	x	x	x

### Collection, transcription and translation of literary categories of the oral tradition

Much of the oral literature with the deaths of the ancients is disappearing. Each village can help save the few remaining items before it’s too late. This is done by transcribing tales, p roverbes, riddles, songs, games and puns of the soil. The production of the village monograph, the description of the dance steps and songs that accompany them, the cultural events and their audiovisual production also belong to the village through the association, the town hall and their partners.

### Revalorization the “K<sub>teɔ</sub> KB”

The spirit of K<sub>teɔ</sub> Reign over the whole town, for its revaluation, the suggested activity is initiating a local festival on the “K<sub>teɔ</sub>” which includes conferences and symposia on the topic. The “K<sub>teɔ</sub>” Is the name of the snail Bamanankan. The biological constitution of this peaceful and mysterious animal was interpreted by the Bambaras to designate the social composition of humanity, the rotation and revolution of the earth and the end of the world by the deluge. For Bambara according Sada Sissoko” the “Kote” symbolizes the organization of society, that is to say, it is like a big snail “kotéba” in its form and in its manifestations, a name which was given immediately to the folk ensemble, artistic and spiritual as a means and method of socialization, training and entertainment.<sup>10</sup> “Its uniqueness is that it symbolizes the Bambara cosmogony and manages all components of the Bambara ethnic grouping them (old, old, men, women, youth

and children) in the same community destiny, through associations or organizations such as :

- I. secret organizations (Ceko)
- II. youth organizations
- III. Women’s organizations (tòn)
- IV. caste people’s organizations
- V. mixed organizations<sup>11</sup>

### Decentralization and cultural flourishing

Laws provide many possibilities for municipalities to self-manage through local elected representatives and freely enjoy their human, financial and natural resources, under the supervision of the State. But this is not enough. Decentralization must sustainably mobilize grassroots communities to improve their own living conditions. For the rural commune of Safo, we suggested the fulfillment of socio-cultural and artistic development, to win the bet of local development. And for several reasons: Cultural resources are still living in Safo and neighboring towns despite the proximity of the capital. All villages in the commune share the association of “K<sub>teɔ</sub>”, or “K<sub>teɔ</sub> ba Called “K<sub>teɔ</sub>” or “K<sub>teɔ</sub> beatsn”. The benefits of the young people who compose it are called “K<sub>teɔ</sub>” it when it comes to fieldwork or any other paid manual work and “K<sub>teɔ</sub> Tulon when it comes to socio-cultural events. The “S<sub>teɔ</sub>”, the work of the age classes are almost confused with “K<sub>teɔ</sub>”. Young girls and boys of the same age group find themselves in the

<sup>10</sup>SISSOKO Sada The kotéba and evolution of modern theater in Mali, EditionsJamana 1995, p18 and 19.

<sup>11</sup>SISSOKO Sada The kotéba and evolution of modern theater in Mali , EditionsJamana, 1995, p 15.

S<sub>certna</sub> to work together. The “Musoton” Mutual mutual aid associations and socio-economic and cultural benefits for women, located in the villages of the municipality are very dynamic in their performance and organizational stability.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the proliferation of mosques and churches, the Hunters Association, “Donsoton” The society of initiation as that of “mkoo” And especially that of Kteo Have survived, even though they no longer exist in their original form as in the days of the ancient Bamanan. The population has a cultural heritage inherited from their ancestors that deserves to be valued to serve the decentralization and generate sustainable development. This ancient cultural fond was tolerated by the monotheistic religions that are taking hold peaceful not in the area. As it comes to building a decentralization based on a full and harmonious socio-cultural influence, the is not excluded that the rural world in Mali in his choice of type of development, rejects a model that is perpetuated by the destruction of the nature and life, adhering to culturalism arguments that advocate renunciation and measure the face of globalization. In this case, why not inspire us from our ancestors, “related to nature by an umbilical cord an alternative sung by the poets of Negritude. But for the late Pascal Baba couloubaly, it is simply imperative to testify to the history of wealth, the intrinsic value of an endangered culture; often relied mysti Culture and magnified indiscriminately. “The enormous cultural and social stability of pre-colonial Africa (he said) is a big lie”.<sup>12</sup> Perpetuating this point of view amounts to pushing the continent further into primitivism and underdevelopment. In par tageant these ideas, we add that every culture has a soul. This is to soak up the life-giving source and not entitled to return to a bygone past for not cultivating the past ism. “The fight is in front and not behind thinks the Anthropologist.

## Conclusion

At the joint UNESCO-World Bank-Sahel Seminar organized in Dakar in December 1976, participants defined and characterized the term basic education as follows: “Basic education exempts, given the means available to the society concerned, a minimum educational content (knowledge, values, attitudes, know-how) likely to help any beneficiary to understand the problems of his environment, to be aware, as a citizen, of his rights and duties, to participate in the socio-economic development of his community and to flourish as an individual”. This idea inspired us the theme “To build decentralization in Safo, based on the socio-cultural and artistic development of the population.<sup>13</sup> This age it to advocate a rational and conscious Develop the basis for Safo. What is Rational and Conscious Development? It is a development conceived with a concern for method and logic, based on reasoning in a natural and necessary sequence of facts or events by the community itself. Its credo is education and training in the national language to lay the foundation for empowerment and sustainable local development. The linchpin of the socio-cultural and artistic development of the local population to build an original decentralization is the Town Hall. This should include in its Pl Year Economic Development and Social ULTURAL C (ICESCR),

<sup>12</sup>About collected during the conference held by the Professor Fire Pascal Baba Couloubaly the Mande University Bukari for the benefit of students in 2007

<sup>13</sup>BELLONCLE Guy, rural Young Sahel , training experience literate youth in Mali, Editions L'Harmattan and ACCT 1979 , p 14.

literacy and training of the population in Bamanankan and in many areas of life: Decentralization, Education, Health, New Information and Communication Technologies, Survey Techniques, Written Text Production Techniques, Income Generating Activities, etc. It will succeed in this mission by setting up an effective mechanism to raise awareness among the population and by forging a good relationship with the State and its decentralized services, NGOs and donors.<sup>14,15</sup>

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## Conflict of interest

Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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<sup>14</sup>Ministry of Economy Finance and Budget, National Institute Of Statistics, Central Bureau Of The Census " 4th General Census of Population and Housing of Mali (RGPH) Final Results Part 0 : Directory villages in March 2013.

<sup>15</sup>Presidency of The Republic of Mali And The Mission of Decentralization And Institutional Reforms Title summary of the final report on “The issue of the inclusion of traditional authorities and institutions in the new democratic context in Mali ” .