Implementing GHSA Biosafety Goals in Mali in Partnership with Civil Society

GHSA planning activities under Action Package 3 recommend that countries develop a strategic plan, informed by a policy framework, to guide the development and implementation of a national whole-of-government oversight program for pathogen biosafety and biosecurity. In October 2016, the Mali Association for Biosafety & Biosecurity (MABB) received funding from Global Affairs Canada to strengthen the Malian national system for biosafety and biosecurity. Collaborators on the project include the International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and Pen Management & Development Consultants (PMDC).

In January of 2017, stakeholders gathered together in Bamako to establish a new National Biosafety & Biosecurity Working Group who are providing guidance on the development of policy options and solutions for strengthening Mali’s national biosafety & biosecurity system. Members of the working group include representation from both government and non-governmental organizations with Secretariat support provided by the MABB. As a key first step in the process, members of the MABB, together with a subcommittee of the National Working Group, engaged with national authorities to identify, collect and collate all relevant oversight approaches in Mali related to biosafety and biosecurity legislation, standards and guidelines, licensing, inspection, enforcement and other components of a national framework. The organizations and entities with responsibilities for biosafety and biosecurity were also identified and their respective roles outlined. Strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the development of a comprehensive biosafety oversight system in Mali were identified. This information is now being used to identify existing gaps and will be further analyzed during the upcoming meeting of the Working Group in July 2017.
Stakeholders Gather Together in Bamako, Mali, January 2017

Meeting of the National Biosafety & Biosecurity Working Group