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*“If you see them yourself, in front of you telling [you their problems], really it is a big thing. You just took us out of a sort of darkness.”*

Young man, Kimparana, Segou region

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## IMRAP and Interpeace

Institut malien de Recherche Action pour la Paix (IMRAP) has worked in close cooperation with Interpeace since it was founded.

IMRAP is a Malian association that aims to renew the commitment of Malians to live together harmoniously. It seeks to establish inclusive dialogue as a mechanism to manage peacebuilding and social cohesion challenges.

Interpeace is an international organization recognized for its approach to accompanying societies in building lasting peace. It has a strong experience in developing Mobile Dialogue Units, like in Somalia for instance.



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# THE MOBILE DIALOGUE UNIT

*Helping Malians to get to know  
each other better*

EMBASSY OF DENMARK  
**DANIDA** | INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

**IMRAP**

**ii**  
interpeace



## Engaging all Malians in a virtual dialogue

The Mobile Dialogue Unit (MDU) is a team of the *Institut Malien de Recherche Action pour la Paix* (IMRAP). Created in 2015 as part of the partnership between IMRAP and Interpeace, it seeks to respond to the request of many Malians to **broaden and deepen the dialogue for peace in Mali**.

The MDU makes films about a range of peacebuilding themes, and screens them across the country using a mobile cinema equipped with a generator, an inflatable screen and an audio system. Each screening is followed by a debate session in which audience members can freely express themselves and gain a mutual understanding of the issues addressed.

*“We used to think that we were the only ones to be confronted with difficulties [...]. We heard those of others. Maybe they will hear ours one day.”*

Sub-Prefect of Didiéni, region of Koulikoro

### Encouraging inclusive reflection

The MDU aims to **engaging the entire population**, including the most marginalized, **in a collective reflection** on the challenges facing Malian society. The MDU visits public spaces in **all regions of Mali**, including **remote areas and refugee camps** in neighbouring countries. The screening-debate events often draw hundreds of people.

In a context of oral tradition and low literacy, video is an effective way to get messages across to people of all ages and social backgrounds. As a true ice-breaker, video can help facilitate discussions around sensitive topics such as illicit activities, religion, domestic violence etc.

### Creating a virtual dialogue

The MDU videotapes each debate and then screens key extracts in other locations. The unit then films the reaction to these extracts and screens those as well. This approach allows to **initiate a virtual dialogue among Malians**. It builds bridges between groups who do not usually interact because of geographical, cultural or social reasons.

The (re)building of **bonds of trust and mutual understanding** lies at the heart of this approach. It allows for prejudices to be dismantled and for Malians to get to know each other, from ordinary citizens to the top government decision-makers.