

Bamako, Mali, September 12 (Infosplusgabon) - Mali and France on Wednesday signed several agreements totalling 33.5 million euros (about 21.98 billion CFA francs), during the visit to Paris of Malian Prime Minister Boubou Cissé, official sources in Bamako said.

The first agreement, which was signed by the Prime Minister and the Director-General of the French Development Agency (AFD), Remy Rioux, is about the "Memorandum for forward-looking dialogue in the economic and development areas".

The aim of this partnership is to develop an intellectual production programme to help inform public policy in the priority areas defined by the Malian government.

The second agreement is a grant of 18.5 million euros (12.14 billion CFA francs), provided by AFD to the Malian government to supporting the agro-ecological transition of Mali's cotton production system (AGRECO) project.

For a period of 4 years, it aims to support producers and their organizations for increased

production.

It will also help improve the performance of the networks of the Cooperative Cotton Producers' Societies (SCPC) and rural management centres (GRCs).

The third agreement is a budget of 15 million euros (9.84 billion CFA francs), to support the decentralization reform in Mali.

The grant is to support the Malian authorities in meeting the challenge of supporting the decentralization process, through the co-financing of a programme carried out by the World Bank.

This funding should ensure the availability and deployment of public resources to strengthen the provision of essential public services at the local level.

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