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Evaluation of the Sectoral Intervention Framework “Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa”

Summary of the report

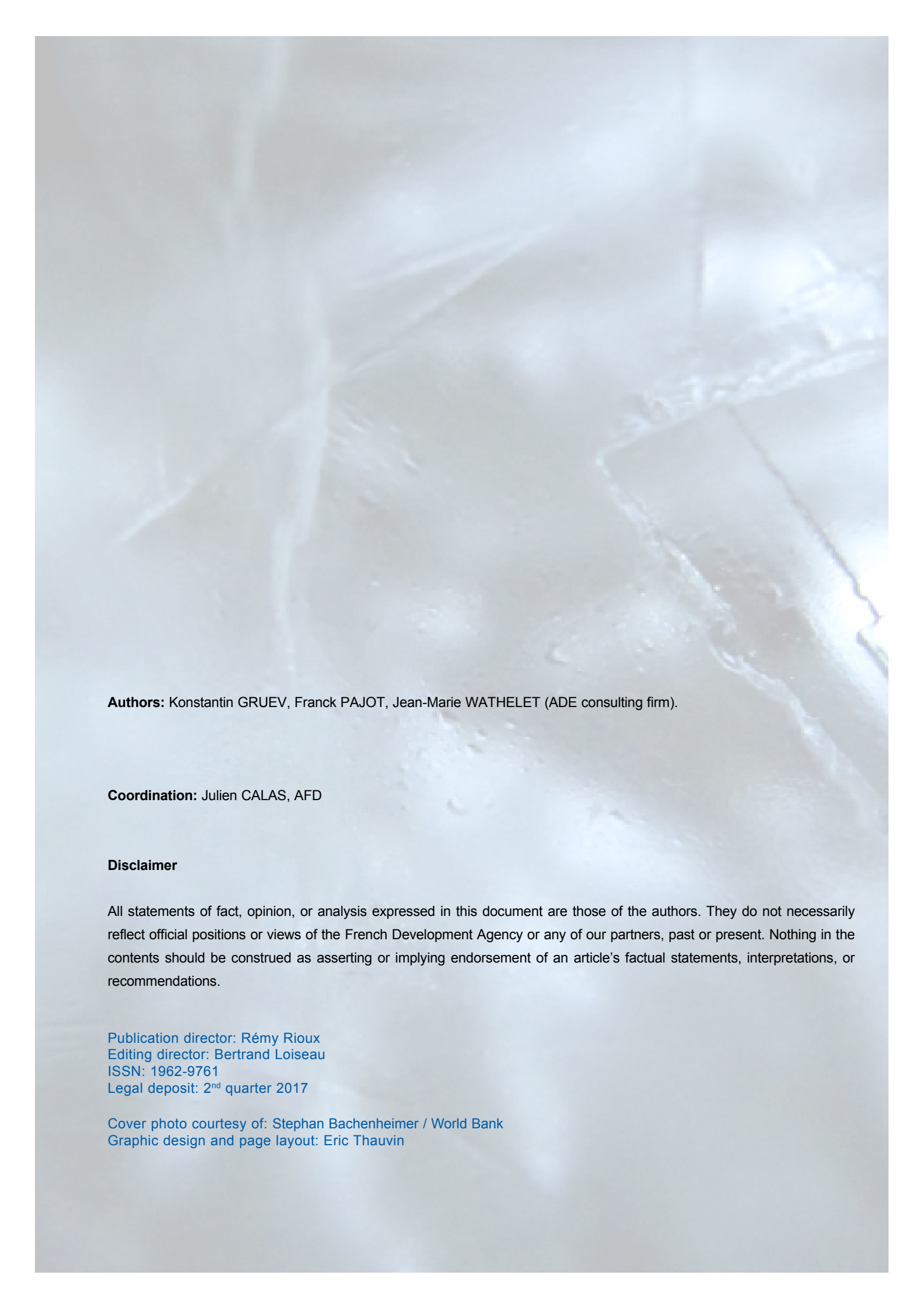
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Summary

In 2015, the Evaluation and Capitalisation Division (EVA) of Agence Française de Développement (AFD) initiated an evaluation of the Sectoral Intervention Framework for Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa for 2013-2016 (SIF or SIF FS SSA).

Sectoral Intervention Frameworks are reference documents that describe the ways in which AFD carries out its operations. They are the operational translation of the policy and strategy orientations defined by AFD’s supervisory authorities.¹

The aim of the evaluation of Intervention Frameworks is to learn lessons from experience in order to improve AFD’s future strategies. It also allows AFD to be accountable for the proper use of resources and to assess the development outcomes anticipated or achieved by its operations.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation framework of this Study was organised on the basis of four main questions in order to assess AFD’s strategic discourses (in terms of relevance, implementation, effectiveness and impact) and evaluate its portfolio of operations.

Various tools were mobilised for this evaluation: an analysis of the database of all of the operations in the SIF framework (over 500), two electronic surveys of AFD officers (50 respondents) and actors (78 respondents), a detailed analysis of 21 projects, and interviews with AFD staff and stakeholders both in France and during field missions in Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal.

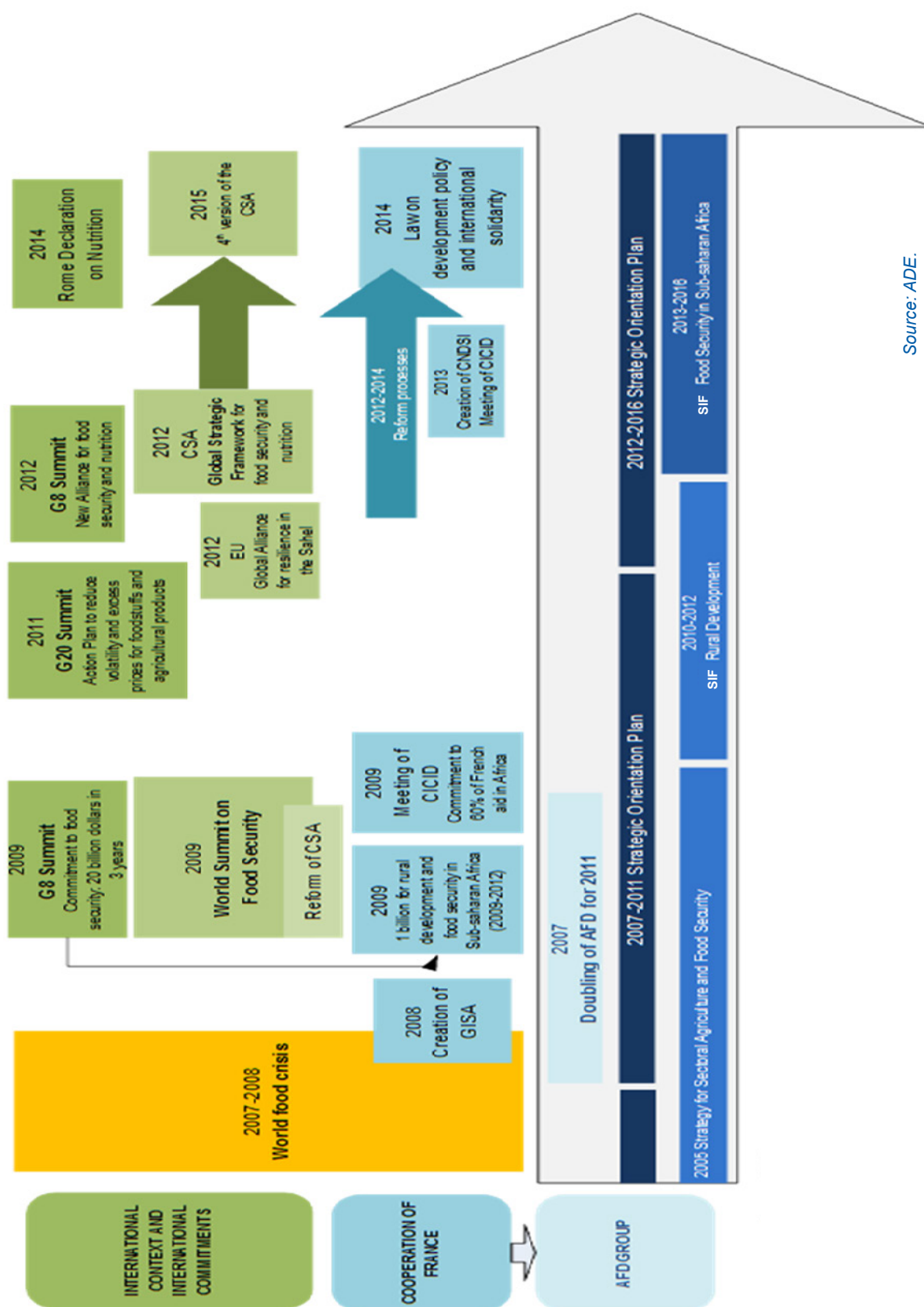
SIF Food Security

There has been international consensus on the concept of food security since the World Food Summit in Rome in 1996. The definition updated by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is as follows: *“Food and nutritional security exists when all human beings have, at all times, physical, social and economic access to food of which the consumed quantity and quality are sufficient to meet the nutritional needs and food preferences of the people, and whose benefits are reinforced by an environment with sanitation and adequate healthcare services and delivery to ensure a healthy and active life.”*

Many international commitments to food security have been made since the Declaration of Rome in 1996, particularly in response to the food crisis of 2007-2008.

¹ Guidance Note (NI 2014-66) “Processus d’élaboration et de validation des documents stratégiques de l’AFD”.

Timeline of commitments following the world food crisis of 2007-2008



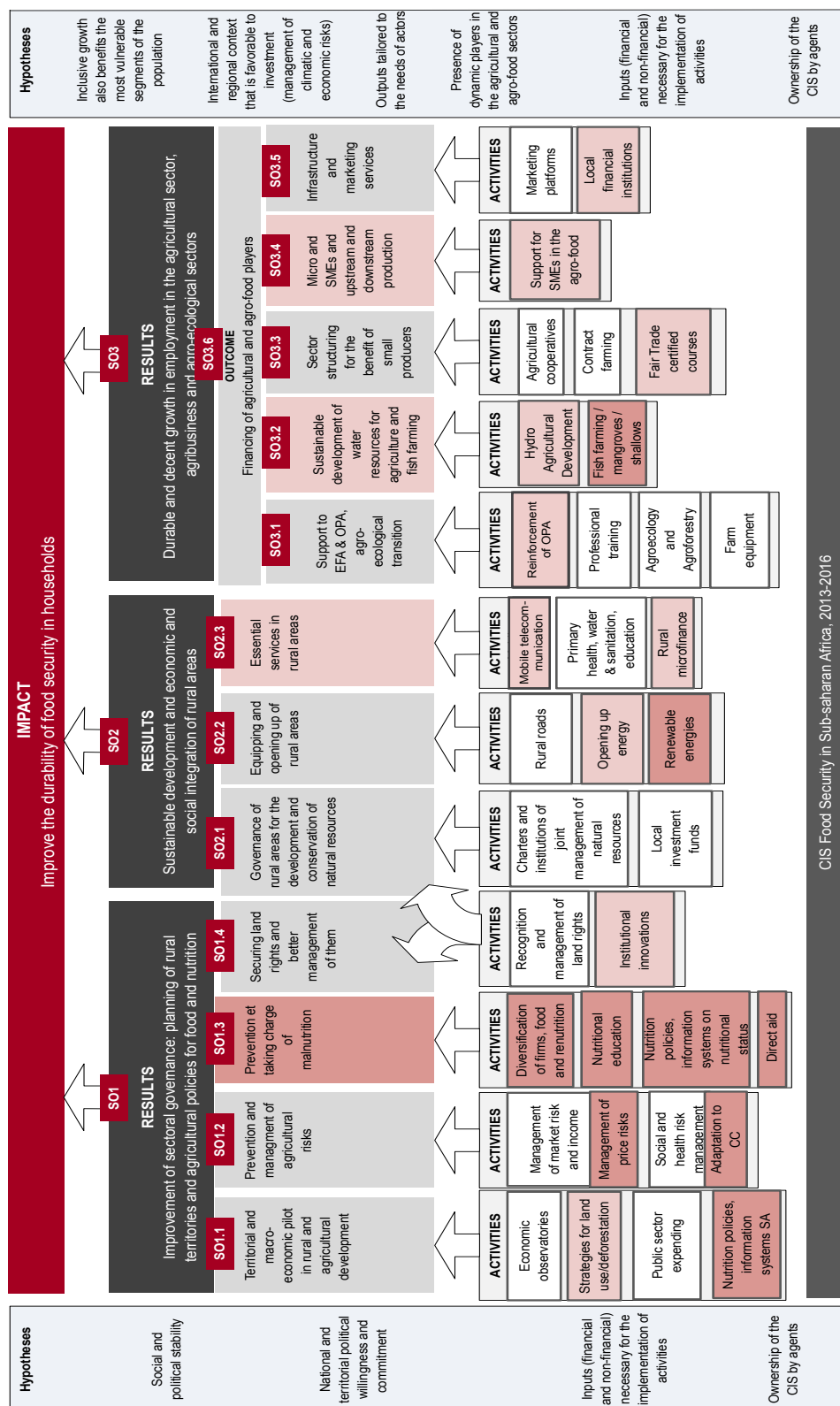
Source: ADE.

In the context of the Aquila Food Security Initiative (G8 Summit of 2009), France committed to providing EUR 1bn of financing for rural development and food security in Sub-Saharan Africa between 2009 and 2012.

AFD’s strategy for food security is set out in an SIF Rural Development for 2010-2012 (SIF RD), then in an SIF for Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa for 2013-2016 (SIF FS SSA).

A theory of change was reconstituted by the evaluation team on the basis of the analysis of the SIF Food Security and of the assumptions and risks identified. The analysis of the SIF Rural Development 2010-2012 made it possible to identify the new themes covered by the SIF FS SSA, as well as the other differences between the two documents.

Theory of change



New components compared to CIS Rural Development, 2010-2012

Components accentuated/prioritised compared to CIS Rural Development, 2010-2012

Source: ADE

Source : ADE

NB : SO = specific objective

CIS = cadre d'intervention stratégique / SIF = strategic intervention framework

1. Relevance

The SIF FS provides a relevant response to the challenges of food security.

Contrary to what its title suggests, the SIF Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa does not break from the SIF Rural Development which preceded it. On the contrary, it continues to fit with the operations proposed. The slight change compared to the preceding SIF does not mean that AFD does not offer the capacity to respond to the challenges of food security. Indeed, it is rather the opposite, as was shown in the analysis of some specific objectives. AFD proposes a relevant approach based on its experience and tailored to needs. In the two countries visited, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, the evaluation showed that the SIF FS was able to answer the specific challenges regarding food security. The results of the survey and interviews with external actors who are familiar with the SIF Food Security show that the stakeholders consider the SIF as being relevant.

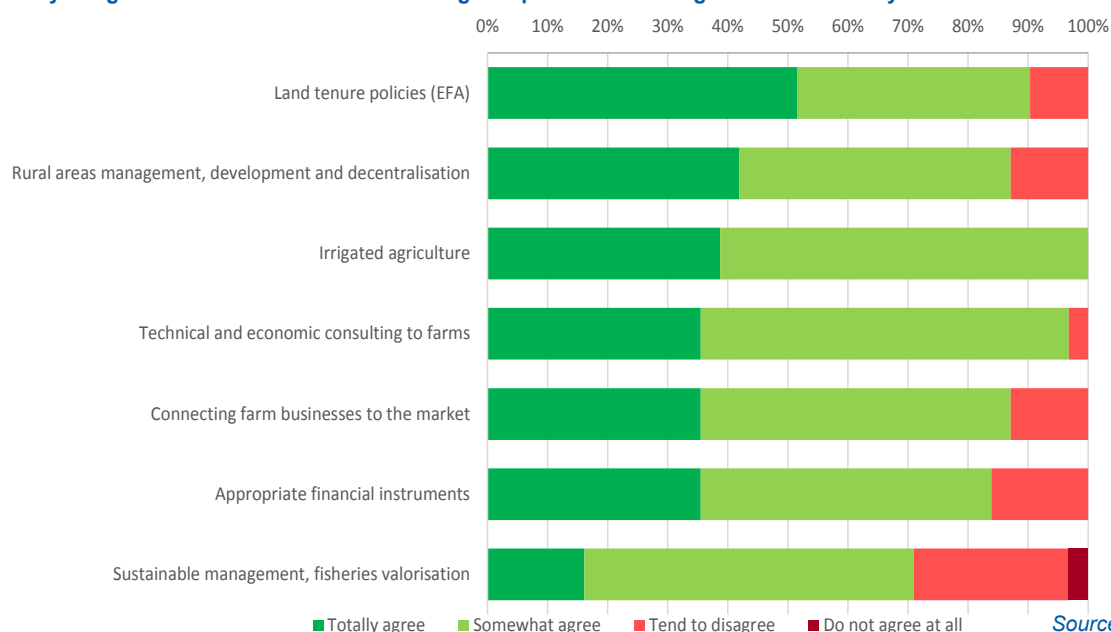
The SIF FS clearly identifies the fields in which AFD has comparative advantages.

The specific objectives, which benefit from more financial commitments, are based on these areas explicitly recognised in the SIF FS, and identified as such by AFD officers and external partners alike.

The six areas where AFD has comparative advantages are:

- ▶ The connection of agricultural enterprises to markets (sectoral approach);
- ▶ Irrigated agriculture;
- ▶ The equipment and sustainable management of rural areas in the context of decentralisation policies;
- ▶ Land policies (recognition and securing of rights of family farms);
- ▶ Technical and economic advice to agricultural holdings;
- ▶ Appropriate financial instruments (microfinance, guarantees, equity investments...).

Do you agree that the AFD has the following comparative advantages in food security matters ?



Source: Survey of AFD officers.

2. Implementation

The SIF terms of use are not clearly defined.

The SIF FS was formulated without an explicit framework defining the objectives of an Intervention Framework (IF) and its practical arrangements for formulation and implementation. The fact of whether or not the SIF has a prescriptive nature is not specified. The officers interviewed who use the SIF expressed different perceptions about the prescriptive nature of the document.

The SIF FS reflects a widely shared vision by the stakeholders.

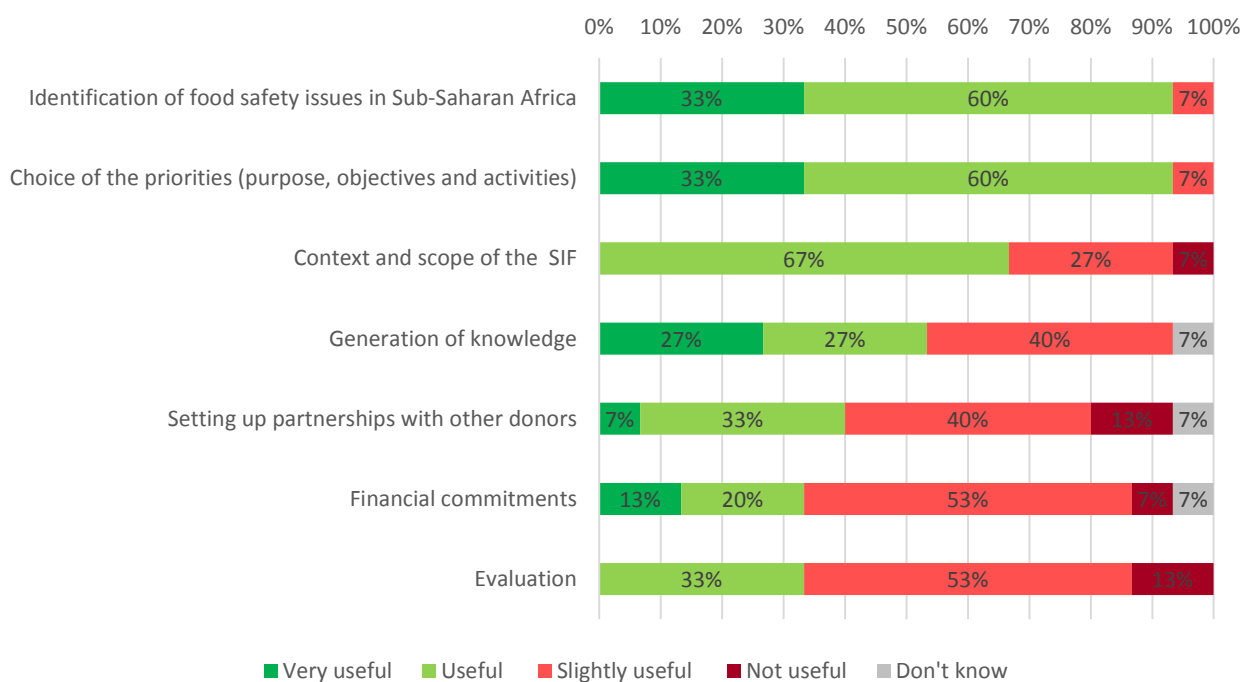
70% of the officers who answered the survey are familiar with the SIF FS. External actors are also aware of it, even if they

know less about it. It is difficult to make a judgment about the proportions of AFD officers or external actors affected by it, as there were no target values or points of comparison at the time of the publication of the SIF.

The SIF is used at AFD's headquarters, but little in agencies.

The SIF FS is recognised as providing an integrated approach to food security and is mainly consulted by AFD officers prior to operations. It is not used as a management, monitoring or evaluation tool for operations.

Measure of utility each of respective key components of the SIF FS (100%=15)



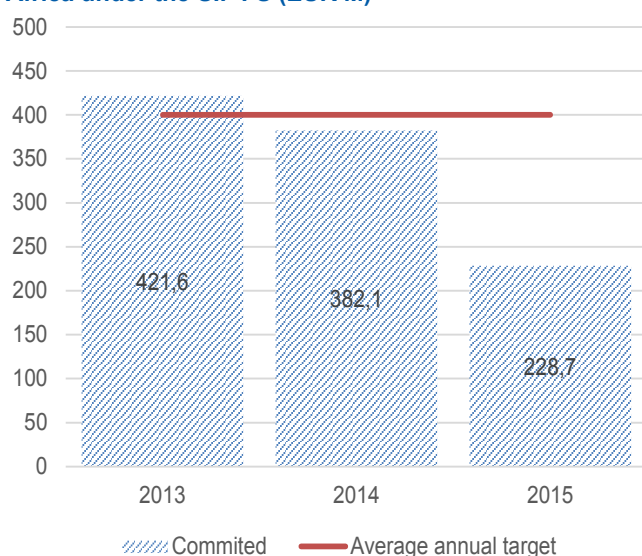
Source: Survey of AFD officers.

3. Effectiveness

The SIF appears to be generally effective.

The main expected outcomes of the SIF have been achieved. The financial commitments for 2013 and 2014 are in line with the objectives of EUR 400m a year. The results of 2015 are well below targets.

Financial commitments of AFD Group for Sub-Saharan Africa under the SIF FS (EUR M)



Source: AFD database, prepared by ADE.

Commitments are primarily focused on West Africa (60%). Concerning the breakdown by type of financing, the use of loans (sovereign or not) remains below the objectives of the SIF, whilst the use of grants (grant allocations and C2D)² far exceeded forecasts.

Forecasts for specific objectives are not in line with what was expected for operations targeting food crops, with water

management and fish farming (target achieved at 19%). Operations concerning governance and the equipment of rural areas mobilised the most resources, and significantly exceeded the planned development of the SIF (177%), driven notably by two large infrastructure projects.

The results of the translation of specific objective 1.3 “Prevention and management of malnutrition” into concrete actions are rather disappointing: few financial commitments and few operations.

These financial results differ significantly if based on the classification defined by the Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) in 2005. They accounted for EUR 160m in 2014, i.e. 6.1% of AFD’s activities in the region, and focused on priority poor countries (85% of activity in the sector). The CICID classification was, however, questioned by many actors because it is considered too restrictive in accounting for food security operations. That said, the difference between the two accounting methods clearly illustrates the challenges of having one method in terms of accountability. This is a very broad debate which exceeds the SIF FS level and several international initiatives, such as by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or G7, aim to harmonise the scope of operations for food security.

Compared to 2011-2012, there has been an increase in both the number of cofinanced projects and financial volumes cofinanced.

This change is proportional to the growth in the number of projects. The proportion of cofinanced projects consequently remains substantially the same. Conversely, the financial volumes committed to these projects increased by 5%.

² France’s Debt Reduction-Development Contract.

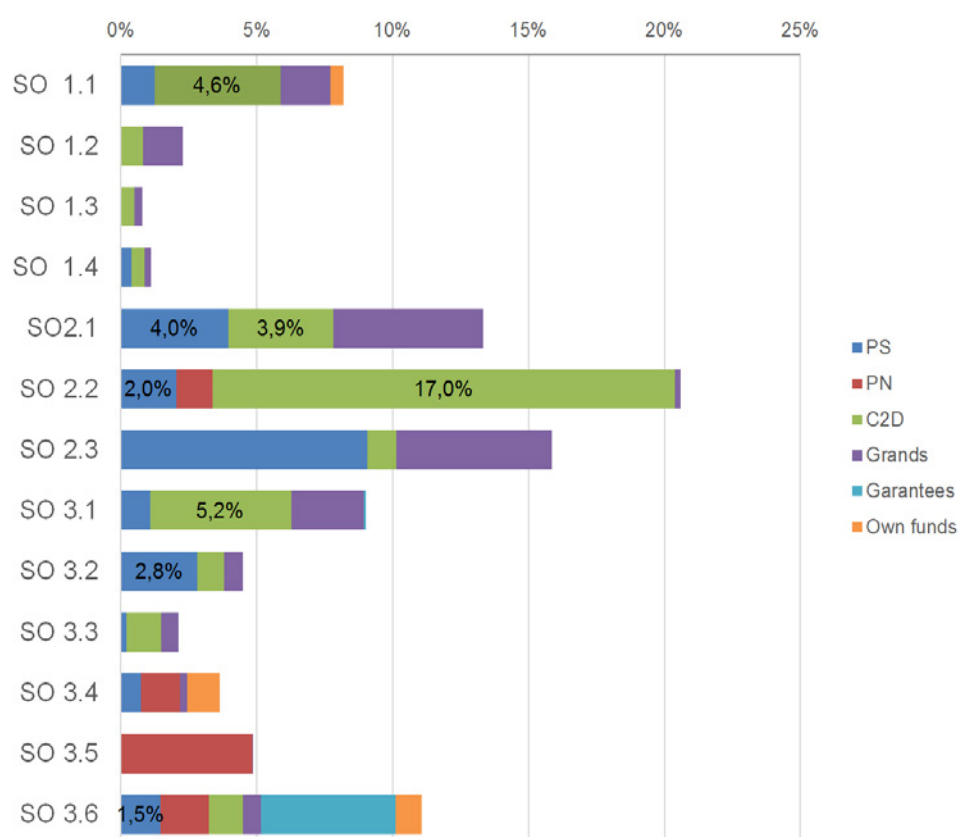
Overall, the planned knowledge production has been achieved.

Based on the review of some documents and interviews with those involved, it appears that the knowledge production is in most cases useful and directly related to AFD operations.

In general, the work conducted seeks to clarify the relevance of operations (completed or planned).

Out of the 4 evaluations planned, two studies have been carried out and one is being launched. Other non-planned evaluations have been carried out in connection with the SIF.

Financial commitments by specific objective and by financial instrument (% of total commitments)



Key: Specific Objectives

01 Sectoral governance	SO1.1	Steering	02 Territories	SO2.1	Governance		SO3.1	FAF-APO
	SO1.2	Risks		SO2.1	Equipment		SO3.2	Water
	SO1.3	Malnutrition		SO2.1	Services		SO3.3	Small producers
	SO1.4	Land tenure					SO3.4	Companies
							SO3.5	Goods
							SO3.6	Financing

Source: AFD database, prepared by ADE.

4. Impact

The low number of evaluations available means that it is not possible to make an assessment of the way in which operations have had an impact on the development outcomes.

While there has been an improvement in food security in West Africa, AFD's main area of operation, AFD's contribution to this dynamic cannot be demonstrated.

The SIF Food Security is consistent with the other AFD strategic documents, including those drafted before or after it,

although systematic reference is not made to the SIF FS in documents subsequent to its publication. This consistency between IFs does not, however, make it possible to conclude that the SIF has an influence.

As for the influence of the SIF FS on other stakeholders (researchers, NGOs), the shared vision reflected in the SIF FS is not related to the existence of this document, but to a dynamic of exchanges at various levels between AFD and its partners.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

The SIF FS does not provide an appropriate monitoring mechanism to assess the results of the operations implemented under it.

The SIF defines two types of indicators to assess the results: aggregatable indicators and specific indicators. The indicators proposed in the SIF are not explicitly integrated into the logical framework, which itself does not explain the chain of results linking the activities envisaged to the specific goals and the specific objectives to the overall objective. The result is a rather confusing set of indicators that do not directly reflect the results expected from the specific objectives and operations.

The existing monitoring-evaluation mechanism does not allow the assessment of the development results from SIF operations.

However, since 2014, the monitoring of two aggregatable indicators related to food security has been ensured by the Orientation and Programming Law on Development and International Solidarity (LOP-DSI).

The list of indicators proposed in the SIF is very broad and reflects the variety and complexity of issues to be taken into account in assessing food security.

The review of indicators used by other institutions confirms this difficulty, whilst also showing other potential indicators and highlighting the significant efforts which have been made to materialise the various aspects related to food security.

6. Recommendations

6.1. General recommendations

Define more explicitly the objectives and intervention framework (IF) implementation modalities

The evaluator proposes to explicitly define the objective(s) of the IFs, as well as the modalities for implementation and monitoring. For example, the IFs could focus on a communication objective and meet explicit objectives in terms of communication, the rationale for action and accountability. They show how AFD implements France's development strategy in any given sector.

This would allow an IF to be focused on the main points and provide a more concise and accessible document. Conversely, it would be necessary to define the objectives specifically. The implementation arrangements should also be specified: human resources allocated, budget, etc.

Choose among three options for the future AFD intervention framework in the field of food security which, in any case, should be "ageographical"

The field of food security should continue to be covered by an IF. From the perspective of AFD, there are three options to meet this demand, each with advantages and disadvantages.

- Option 1. A SIF Food Security and Nutrition;
- Option 2. A SIF "Agriculture and Rural Development" and a Crosscutting Intervention Framework (CCIF) "Food Security and Nutrition";

- Option 3. A SIF "SDG 2":³ Eradicate hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Whatever the option chosen by AFD's Senior Management, it is recommended that strategic documents should be "ageographical" and cover all AFD's geographical areas of operation, taking account of their specificities.

Articulate more explicitly the SIF with the strategies of partner countries and an integrated approach to food security in the countries of operation

Whatever the form adopted for the future strategic framework, as discussed in the previous recommendation, the goal should not be changed and would be "the achievement of SDG 2 in partner countries" through support for the definition (or adaptation) of policies and through support for the implementation of policies. This support would generally be structured on the basis of the three existing pillars.

Offer other financial instruments, such as sectoral budget support or pooled funds to empower contracting authorities and have a leverage effect

The SIF FS is implemented through various financial instruments, but the approach remains a project approach. The "sectoral budget support" or "common sectoral fund" approaches were not (or infrequently) used in the SIF and/or in food security. Using these instruments does not undermine the project approach, which is still relevant to meet specific needs.

³ Sustainable Development Goal.

6.2 Recommendations on specific objectives (SOs)

Reformulate the current SO 1.3 “Safety net and malnutrition”, specifying in more detail its pillars (firstly including nutrition and, secondly, insurance and safety nets)

The evaluator recommends reviewing the structure of the SO 1.3 “Safety net and malnutrition” through a more effective identification of the proposed concrete actions and the technical divisions responsible for its different aspects (health, nutrition, private sector, agriculture and rural development). This may require dividing up this SO, separating out at least what relates to insurance and safety nets on the one hand, and nutrition-related aspects on the other.

Develop the current SO 3.1.3 “Promote agro-ecology” in order to more explicitly promote the development of agro-ecological transition policies and focus more on the large-scale dissemination of techniques

In SO 1, “Improve sector governance”, it could be useful to support the actions of reflection or integration into agricultural policies aiming to move towards an agro-ecological transition, as was the case in France with the law on the future of agriculture and forestry. This evolution will mean that AFD’s Agriculture, Rural Development and Biodiversity Division (ARB) will continue to develop its expertise in this field. Under SO 3.1.3, support for applied research should be part of a more explicit perspective of changing agricultural policies.

Improve the formulation of the current SO 3.6.3 “Financing of agribusiness companies” by explaining more clearly its implementation modalities and the safeguards

The evaluator recommends that OS 3.6.3 “Financing of agribusiness companies” be better developed to more clearly detail the assistance terms that will be implemented in the operations supported by AFD Group.

For SO 2.3 “Governance of rural areas for sustainable development”, initiate knowledge production on how to link territorial approaches with food security

Several operations were conducted as part of SO 2.3 “Governance of rural areas for sustainable development”. The link, however, with food security is not clearly expressed in the SIF FS. It is recommended that AFD conduct knowledge production to better understand these links and improve the targeting of operations in this field.

Explicitly define the scope for accounting for projects that contribute to food security

The scope of food security operations is not clearly defined, which means that it is not easy to correctly assess the progress achieved. Pending an international agreement on this point, AFD could establish a pragmatic approach based on the allocation of a “food security” marker to its operations, depending on their purpose and based on the following values:

- ▶ Explicit food security purpose: 2;
- ▶ Indirect but demonstrated food security purpose: 1;
- ▶ No explicit objective for food security: 0.

Set out the operations in a coherent monitoring-evaluation framework with output, outcome and impact indicators defined on the basis of an action rationale

The evaluation recommends making it mandatory to define an action rationale for each project, with output, outcome and impact indicators, and enhance its quality. The indicators should be quantified with baseline and target values. A complete monitoring-evaluation mechanism (based on AFD good practices) should also be defined and harmonised.

Program evaluations focusing specifically on the impacts that operations have on food security

AFD is a major player in food security. However, a relatively small amount of research has been conducted to evaluate the

impacts that operations have on food security. Improving knowledge is an important issue in order to assist countries in implementing appropriate policies to achieve the SDGs. The evaluator recommends scheduling specifically oriented evaluation work on the impacts of food security operations.

Support knowledge production in order to participate effectively in international debates

The evaluation highlighted the quality and usefulness of knowledge production. Overall, this research focused more on supporting operations than on participation in international debates. Both dimensions are, however, important and in the next SIF resources should continue to cover both these aspects.

List of acronyms

AFD	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>
APO	Agricultural Producers' Organisation
ARB	Agriculture, Development and Biodiversity Division
C2D	Debt Reduction-Development Contract
CCIF	Crosscutting Intervention Framework
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CICID	Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development
CNDSI	National Council for Development and International Solidarity
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
EVA	Evaluation and Capitalisation Unit
FS	Food security
IF	Intervention Framework
LOP-DSI	Orientation and Programming Law on Development and International Solidarity
NL	Non-sovereign loan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIF	Sectoral Intervention Framework

SIF FS	Sectoral Intervention Framework Food Security
SIF FS SSA	Sectoral Intervention Framework Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa
SIF RD	Sectoral Intervention Framework Rural Development
SL	Sovereign loan
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SO	Specific Objective
VSE	Very Small Enterprise



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