

# AFD GROUP AND innovation



## Financing and implementing innovative projects

## Amplifying impacts through innovation

## Co-creating innovation for a better tomorrow

Whether social, technological, financial, or methodological, innovation is central to AFD Group's activity and to the action of the two funds it hosts: the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and the Fund for Innovation in Development (FID). It is implemented through the financing of projects that offer new solutions, the support of initiatives, and the creation of spaces for exchange that renew our practices. By mobilizing these levers, AFD Group strengthens the effectiveness of its work and contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## PILLAR 1

# Financing and implementing innovative projects

AFD Group mobilises expertise and financing to support initiatives that open up new pathways in areas such as education, governance, or support for entrepreneurs. They shape concrete solutions that help build more inclusive and sustainable development.

## 3 initiatives supported by AFD Group

### HARNESSING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INNOVATION (AFD)

Now an essential tool, AI can help address social, economic and environmental challenges. In Senegal, for example, French is the mother tongue of only a minority of teachers and pupils. This is why the NGO Libraries Without Borders is piloting an AI-enhanced French learning application for teachers in the cities of Dakar and Thiès.

► Find out more at [afd.fr](http://afd.fr)

### FOSTERING OPEN GOVERNMENTS (AFD & Expertise France)

The #PAGOF project supports public administrations and civil society organisations in French-speaking African countries in developing digital public policies that meet the standards of the Open Government Partnership—such as transparency, citizen participation, etc. A guide brings together good practices drawn from these countries' experiences.

► Find out more at [expertisefrance.fr](http://expertisefrance.fr)

### SUPPORTING HIGH-IMPACT START-UPS (PROPARCO)

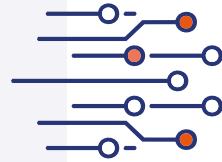
Often created in response to underserved or unmet needs, African start-ups can generate significant impact, but access to finance remains a major challenge. Co-financed by several institutions, including Proparco, the ARAF fund invests in start-ups offering innovative solutions to improve livelihoods and climate resilience for smallholder farmers in East and West Africa.

► Find out more at [proparco.fr](http://proparco.fr)

## INNOVATIONS in common

**Innovation is not a linear process.** Some of the projects supported by AFD Group can, in turn, inspire other regions.

For example, French oak seeds have been planted in several locations in Turkey—where the climate is similar to what France is expected to experience in the future—, making it possible to test their resilience to climate change. This will help France prioritise the most robust species.



## Two innovation support funds HOSTED BY AFD GROUP

### THE FRENCH FACILITY FOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT (FFEM)

**Created in 1994 by the French government, the FFEM is a financial instrument dedicated to global environment protection and sustainable development.** By financing pilot projects in developing countries, it has been taking concrete action for the past 30 years to preserve biodiversity, the climate, international waters, land and the ozone layer, and to combat pollution.

Its ambition is to **test solutions, demonstrate their impact and scale them up widely**. Working in partnership with public and private stakeholders as well as civil society, the FFEM has already supported more than 400 projects in 120 countries, mainly in Africa and the Mediterranean, contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.

**One example:** The WEECAM project aims to structure the collection and treatment of waste electrical and electronic equipment in Cameroon, reducing pollution and health risks linked to informal waste management. The project seeks to establish a sustainable and replicable model in Africa by strengthening local capacities and the institutional framework.

► Find out more at [ffem.fr](http://ffem.fr)

### THE FUND FOR INNOVATION IN DEVELOPMENT (FID)

**FID is an innovative mechanism, created in 2021 and hosted by AFD, dedicated to supporting projects at different stages of their development.** It finances social, technological and organisational innovations to combat poverty and inequality.

At the heart of its approach: **synergies between innovation and research teams to pilot, test and evaluate the impact of projects using rigorous scientific methods**. FID's ambition is to contribute, in the long term, to the transformation of public policies by supporting the scaling up of innovations whose effectiveness has been proven.

**One example:** In Madagascar, the "Young Girl Leaders" initiative, conducted by the NGO CARE, seeks to combat stigma related to menstruation—which can negatively affect school performance. The programme has been evaluated in 140 schools and it has shown promising results, with a 17% increase in the likelihood of girls progressing to the next grade.

► Find out more at [fundinnovation.dev](http://fundinnovation.dev)

**PILLAR 2**

# Amplifying impacts through innovation

To help innovations emerge and be deployed on a larger scale, AFD Group provides tailored support to meet the needs of its teams and partners. It also conducts impact evaluations of projects, generating lessons to inform continuous improvement.

## Scaling up our impact

Planning a second phase for each project to multiply its impact—**by expanding its scope and engaging new partners**—is the aim of the “scaling up” approach. This is even more effective when it is integrated from the very start of a project.



### THE Intrapreneurship PROGRAMME

Within AFD Group, innovation is seen as a lever for internal transformation. Our flagship initiative is the Intrapreneurship programme. Now in its sixth season, the programme enables staff to develop their ideas within an internal incubator. These ideas are tested, connected with relevant networks and scaled up when they demonstrate impact. Since 2018, 32 projects have been supported.

## Innovating to assess impacts

**Innovative practices are used to measure the impact of projects supported by AFD Group.** The use of satellite data, for instance, makes it possible to assess impact ex post, particularly when impacts are visible from space, when areas are vast or hard to access, or when collecting impact indicators would be costly.

**One example:** In the Congo Basin, satellite data have been used to measure the reforestation impact of projects financed by AFD Group in the region.



Partnerships are key in this area. To move faster and go further, AFD Group—together with KfW, GIZ and IRD—initiated the MapMe initiative. It enables development practitioners to exchange good practices, share data and receive training on the use of satellite data.

► Find out more on [mapme-initiative.org](http://mapme-initiative.org)

**PILLAR 3**

# Co-creating innovation for a better tomorrow

Within AFD Group, innovation is built on an open and collaborative ecosystem, bringing together institutional partners, think tanks, tech experts, researchers and civil society organisations to reflect on and prepare for the challenges of tomorrow.

## Learning differently

As a training centre, AFD Group Campus is a laboratory for pedagogical innovation. It works with partners to design, test and deploy innovative learning formats tailored to reinforcing the knowledge, know-how and interpersonal skills of those who are helping to bring about change towards a sustainable world.

► View the training offer on [campus.groupe-afd.fr](http://campus.groupe-afd.fr)

## Exploring emerging technologies

AFD's Emerging Tech Lab produces analyses and conducts experiments on emerging technologies (AI, data, Earth observation tools and data, cloud computing, etc.), following a responsible innovation approach. Its work helps shed light on key issues and inform decision-making.

**One example:** Developed by AFD, the AI Investment Potential Index (AIIPi) helps guide public and private investment decisions to address countries' specific AI needs and promote inclusive and sustainable development.

► Explore the data on [aipotentialindex.org](http://aipotentialindex.org)

## TechTalks WEBINARS

Dedicated to technological innovation for sustainable development, these webinars provide a forum for dialogue between researchers, development practitioners, private-sector actors and public decision-makers.

► Check out upcoming webinars on [afd.fr](http://afd.fr)



## Toward a world in common

AFD Group finances and drives the transition to a fairer, safer and more resilient world, working with its partners to support communities all over the world. Drawing on the complementary strengths of its entities – Agence Française de Développement for public financing, Proparco for responsible private investment, and Expertise France for technical expertise – the Group is ideally positioned to meet all sustainable development challenges.

Working in over 160 countries, including France's Overseas Territories and Departments, the Group adapts its operations to the realities on the ground, actively supporting local initiatives. With over 4,000 projects, whose objectives are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), AFD Group works on behalf of the French people, together with all stakeholders committed to economic development and the preservation of common goods: climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality and global health. Working by your side, toward a world in common.



[www.afd.fr/en](http://www.afd.fr/en)

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