



RÉPUBLIQUE  
FRANÇAISE

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*



SUMMARY

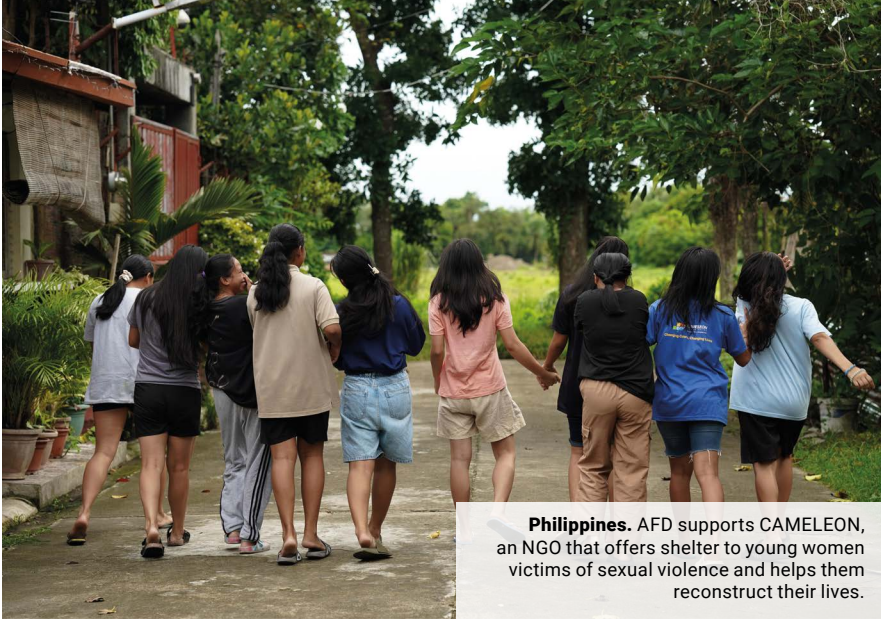
# Social cohesion, the basis for a **sustainable and inclusive world**

A CROSSCUTTING  
GOAL FOR  
SOCIAL COHESION  
2025-2030



AFD GROUP  
**solutions**

#WorldInCommon



**Philippines.** AFD supports CAMELEON, an NGO that offers shelter to young women victims of sexual violence and helps them reconstruct their lives.

# Social cohesion at the heart of French development policy

In a world facing multiple crises, social cohesion is a key lever for sustainable, inclusive, and resilient human development. It is one of France's international priorities for addressing rising inequalities.

Inequalities are increasing, and anti-rights movements are surging, especially those seeking to undermine the rights of women and girls. Strengthening social cohesion among individuals, social groups, and territories is therefore more urgent than ever. AFD Group aims to set up its strategic

ambitions to foster social cohesion and to provide ambitious crosscutting support for its partner countries. These strengthened goals will nourish all of AFD Group's areas of intervention and will be tailored to local context and issues and its partners' needs. ●

# Priority 1: increase the impact of our actions to foster social cohesion

Reducing inequalities is at the core of AFD Group's work. To this end, we are enhancing our tools to maximize the impact of projects that promote social cohesion and inclusion.

**A**FD Group supports inclusive, equitable, and redistributive development trajectories consistent with its mandate and fully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We fund projects that promote social inclusion and contribute to reducing inequalities, including gender inequalities.

## CROSSCUTTING ACTION FOR GREATER INCLUSION

AFD Group will step up its contribution to reducing multidimensional inequalities by gradually increasing its financing in this area:

**Palestine.** Psychosocial support workshop with women victims of violence. Supported by an association, these women were formerly housed at the Hayat Center in Gaza, the sole emergency shelter for women in the Gaza Strip.





**Senegal.** AFD financed a dike to protect housing from waves' surges in Guet Ndar, a district of Saint-Louis vulnerable to rising water levels.

- ▶ public policies aimed at reducing inequalities and promoting inclusion in the social and environmental sectors;
- ▶ redistributive fiscal and budgetary policies;
- ▶ infrastructure projects that enable access to quality services in disadvantaged areas and that benefit disadvantaged and/or underserved populations. We will focus on promoting fairness in ecological transition policies by providing financing to partners committed to implementing actions that reconcile ecological transitions and social justice. These partners include local authorities, private actors, and civil society organizations.

AFD aims for at least 50% of its commitments (in number of projects) to have inclusion and

the reduction of multidimensional inequalities as their main or secondary objective.<sup>1</sup> This ambition will be reviewed and implemented by each entity of AFD Group up to 2029, subject to the continued availability of budgetary resources in grants. For Proparco, this ambition has also been established as a key pillar of its 2023-2027 strategy. From 2026 onward, a revised analytical framework will enable more effective financing that promotes the inclusion of disadvantaged people.

Public policy dialogue is key for achieving our objectives. AFD will continue to mobilize diagnostic tools to support its partners, both during the appraisal phase or through technical assistance. Special attention will be paid to areas deemed "vulnerable" from both economic and climate perspectives, as well as to areas affected by violent crises and conflicts.



# Diverse approaches for AFD, Proparco, and Expertise France

For each of its entities, AFD Group's feminist commitment includes far-reaching goals and specific enhanced targets.

## | For AFD

These ambitious objectives will be implemented through two indicators, depending on available grant resources and budgetary constraints:

- A steering indicator measuring the share (in volume) of commitments marked DAC 1 and DAC 2<sup>(1)</sup> in loans and grants in partner countries, with an average target of 55%. This indicator enables us to report on all our actions on this issue, while maintain high level ambitions.
- An internal monitoring indicator tracking the share of grant authorizations in partner countries allocated to projects whose main

objective is promoting gender equality (DAC 2), with a target of 10%. As part of France's commitments under the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF), AFD will seek, within the limits of its allocated resources, to continue pursuing this objective.

## | For Proparco

The ambition of contributing to the promotion of gender equality is also a key pillar of Proparco's 2023-2027 strategy, with a target of €1.9 billion in commitments for projects aligned with the 2X Challenge<sup>(1)</sup> over three years (2023-2025).



**Bangladesh.** HERhealth, supported by Proparco, improves the everyday lives of employees in the textile sector.

## | For Expertise France

Expertise France aims to increase its target from 50% of its new signed projects marked DAC 1 and DAC 2 in 2023, to 75% in 2025 and 2026.

(1) The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) has developed the DAC 1 and DAC 2 indicators as markers to qualify the level to which a crosscutting objective is incorporated into development aid projects (DAC 2 = main objective and DAC 1 = significantly integrated objective).

(II) An initiative launched by the development finance institutions (including Proparco) at the G7 Summit 2018, in Canada. Its objective is to collectively commit and mobilize resources for projects that improve gender equality. These 2X criteria have been developed to help members identify compatible investments.

**ACCELERATING THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY**

AFD Group’s feminist commitment will be translated into concrete actions in line with France’s new international strategy for feminist foreign policy adopted in March 2025.

AFD has adopted a transformative feminist approach in line with this policy. It involves a structuring method that targets in-depth and lasting transformations by challenging existing power relations between men and women, gender dynamics, and social norms with the aim of transforming the underlying paradigms at the origin of discrimination and inequalities. The approach will take into account historical and cultural contexts, through work with local stakeholders that respects local specificities while promoting universal rights.

AFD will promote gender equality through a dual ambition:

- ▶ gender mainstreaming (DAC 1) in all AFD Group’s sectors of intervention and through all financial instruments (loans and grants);
- ▶ an enhanced commitment to women’s and girls’ empowerment, by supporting projects whose main objective is to promote gender equality (DAC 2).

This ambition will be tailored to specific geographical contexts. Special attention will be paid to strengthening AFD Group’s contribution to the “Women, Peace and Security” (WPS)<sup>2</sup> agenda, given the exacerbated effects of crises and armed conflicts on women and girls and their key role in conflict’s prevention and promotion of peace.

AFD Group (mainly through AFD and Expertise France) will act jointly and more strongly to support the three types of empowerment for women and girls:

- ▶ physical empowerment and the right of women and girls to control their bodies, including all actions to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and to combat all forms of gender-based violence;
- ▶ economic empowerment by encouraging (i) better access to education, training, and social protection; (ii) the promotion of professional equality; (iii) the development of decent work; (iv) support for women’s entrepreneurship; and (v) access to financial services;
- ▶ the promotion of political empowerment and access to justice, by enhancing (i) legislative frameworks, (ii) the funding of legal aid centers, (iii) the training of



**Tunisia.** Recording sound effects for the stop-motion film led by the ETC collective and produced at a youth center as part of the “N.E.F.T.I.” project, a beneficiary of the Accès Culture program.

justice personnel and police officers, and (iv) protection programs for women victims of violence, etc.

AFD will continue its commitment to the areas for which it has recognized expertise, including support for women's entrepreneurship, gender-responsive budgeting, the fight against gender-based violence, and the promotion of SRHR. It will focus on investing in new themes such as fighting technology-facilitated gender-based violence, and supporting care.<sup>3</sup>

AFD Group will prioritize three transformational and/or innovative tools:

- ▶ gender-responsive public-policy loans;
- ▶ gender-related credit facilities and equity investments in funds to finance women's entrepreneurship;
- ▶ financial support and guidance for feminist civil society organizations, through the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF), implemented in partnership with the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. The first phase has been successfully completed, with €137 million committed to support 1,400 feminist organizations across 75 countries. The French government announced a target allocation of €250 million for the second phase of five years (2023-2027). It is currently under implementation, subject to the continued availability of budgetary resources in grants.

### **PROMOTING THE SUSTAINABLE IMPACT OF CULTURAL AND SPORTS POLICIES**

Sports and culture bring people together. They are also drivers of social cohesion and inclusion. The United Nations recognizes

### **Sports and culture strengthen the link between peoples.**

them as crosscutting contributors to human development and the achievement of the SDGs. Promoting access to sport and culture fosters social bonds, particularly among young people.

Structuring these two sectors also creates opportunities for economic growth and youth employment. Building on an active portfolio, particularly in loans, AFD Group will scale up its financing for (i) inclusive cultural and sports public policies (e.g., to develop their offer and improve their governance), (ii) sports and cultural infrastructure, and (iii) stakeholder professionalization (through support to civil society actors and to sports and cultural entrepreneurship). Sports and culture can also be used as means of raising awareness about the SDGs. ●



**France.** AFD organized the Sport for Sustainable Development Summit. On the eve of the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, it brought together more than 500 participants committed to mobilizing \$10 billion by 2030 for sports infrastructures.

## Priority 2: get our partners involved in the international social agenda

To accelerate the reduction of inequalities, AFD Group relies on soft diplomacy and strengthened partnerships, at both European and international levels.

We will continue mobilizing all our public and private partners through the various coalitions existing within FICS<sup>4</sup> and IDFC and through close cooperation with bilateral, multilateral, and UN donors and partners (OECD, ILO, UN Women, etc.) at the European level, as well as with French and Francophone actors

(e.g., consulting firms, research networks, local authorities, sports federations, social and solidarity economy actors, museums, etc.). AFD Group is recognized as a leading donor in the areas of gender equality and the financing of sports, cultural and creative industries. As such, we will continue taking actions to steer financial flows toward advancing the social agenda. ●

# Priority 3: enhance our skills, internal practices, and accountability

To advance its commitment to inclusion and the reduction of inequalities, AFD Group builds on enhanced skills, shared tools, and rigorous monitoring.

New operational tools will be made available to our teams to better take into account the issues of social cohesion into our projects. We will accelerate the delivery of training on multidimensional inequalities. This training will be provided in various formats, at headquarters and within our network. An enhanced offer,

also targeting our external partners, is developed with AFD Group Campus. We will also strengthen coordination of our network of gender, equality and inclusion focal points, which includes 200 colleagues.

At AFD Group, we will continue to implement our feminist commitment in our internal practices.



**France.** Collective intelligence session at AFD Group Campus in Marseille with the students of the Master's Degree in Project Management for Development – "Modev").



SECOND  
WORLD SUMMIT  
FOR SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
DOHA 2025

## مؤتمر القمة العالمي الثاني للتنمية الاجتماعية SECOND WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

4 - 6 نوفمبر 2025  
الدوحة - قطر



**Qatar.** AFD participated in the Second World Summit for Social Development, organized by the United Nations and held in Doha in November 2025.

Quantitative and qualitative data on impacts and results related to social cohesion will be published.

Our progress in this area is reflected by the obtention of the AFNOR professional equality label; our training programmes; our commitments to diversity and to the fight against domestic violence, harassment, and discrimination; as well as our signing of the StopE sexism charter in 2023 and the LGBTQIA+<sup>5</sup> commitment charter, among other initiatives.

Finally, AFD Group will strengthen the transparency, accountability, and monitoring of its contribution to the reduction of inequalities, including gender inequalities, by conducting ex-post evaluations and enhancing its accountability framework. Furthermore, under the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, quantitative and qualitative data on impacts and results related to social cohesion will be published. ●

# Notes

(1) “Social cohesion: reduction of inequalities and inclusion” indicator of the sustainable development rating in AFD’s Sustainable Development Analysis and Opinion grid, projects rated +2 or +3.

(2) UN Security Council Resolution

1325 of October 31, 2000, and its implementation in the French strategy through France’s 4<sup>th</sup> National Action Plan for the “Women, Peace and Security” agenda.

(3) Care work is defined by the United Nations as “the direct and indirect care of people”, whether paid or unpaid.

(4) A coalition that brings together around a dozen public development banks, UN agencies (ILO, UNDP, WHO), the European Commission’s Directorate General for International Partnerships (INTPA), and other development partners.

(5) Measures taken include awareness-raising and training for managers and employees, support for internal anti-discrimination initiatives, and ensuring a nondiscriminatory environment for LGBTQIA+ persons.

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## For a world in common

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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.



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