



## ***Women's economic empowerment, a priority for France's external action***

France considers women's economic empowerment as a driving vector of progress and sustainable development. In full conformity with President Macron's commitment to make gender equality the "great cause" of his five-year term, France adopted its gender strategy for 2018–2022 at the last Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) in February, 2018. The strategy outlines France's priorities for the promotion of gender equality in its external action and acts as a roadmap for the French Ministry of Foreign affairs' implementing agencies, such as the French Agency for Development (AFD).

As professional inequalities continue to undermine women's full potential, and have a direct economic impact on societies, France highlights women's economic empowerment as one of its five priorities. In accordance with its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, France is strongly committed to making women take the lead to reach sustainable development. To take concrete steps to make gender equality a reality, France commits to increase girls' and women's access to services and more particularly to social services such as lifelong education and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

France also identifies access to land property, financial services, transport infrastructures, legal services, and information and communication technologies as essential conditions for women's economic empowerment. More specifically, France targets the elimination of gender stereotypes in the world of work, helping women to successfully integrate into sectors where they are currently under-represented, they are active but not recognized such as in climate change and ecological transition or to create their own profitable companies. It also recognizes the role of public policies in guaranteeing women's employment, social protection, and services and security at the workplace.

France promotes humanitarian-aid programmes designed to guarantee women's livelihoods in crisis and post-crisis situations. Finally, France promotes women's role in mitigation and adaptation to climate change. By accounting for 60 to 80% of the agricultural production in developing countries, women contribute to rural economy and food security, a sector that is essential but under threat by climate change. Climate variations put women in a very vulnerable and insecure economic position. France strongly defended the integration of a gender dimension in the Paris Climate Agreement and in the Gender Action Plan of the UNFCCC to specifically integrate these variations into climate change policies, negotiations and finances at the local and international level.

## ***France's recommended approach***

### **A rights-based approach**

Gender inequality in the workplace is often fomented by patriarchal and cultural standards. The fact that women are not always aware of their rights exacerbates their silence and can lead to resignation. France fosters a rights-based approach to development programmes so that women gain better knowledge of their country's constitutional and international commitments, and to delegitimize professional discrimination.