

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six

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What are France's strategic priorities for development?

Education, climate change, and global health are key focus areas; security concerns shape priority-setting

In February 2018, France's Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) – the body in charge of setting the strategic direction of France's development cooperation – reaffirmed its commitment to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and the protection of global public goods. The committee also reiterated the overarching priorities of French development policy: fighting poverty and inequality; human rights, education, and health; accelerating transitions in energy, ecological sustainability, demographics and governance; crisis response and prevention; and migration management. The CICID also committed to strengthening France's efforts in five areas: 1) international stability, 2) climate change, 3) education, 4) gender equality, and 5) global health.

President Macron has made global education a key priority of his government's development policy. In February 2018, France co-hosted the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Financing Conference in Dakar, Senegal. The Conference raised a total of US\$2.3 billion in donor contributions for 2018 to 2020. France committed €200 million (US\$260 million using GPE's official conversion) over three years to the GPE Fund, which will be accompanied by €100 million in bilateral funding for basic education channeled through the French Development Agency (AFD). This is more than double the US\$116 million cumulative contribution of France, which was the 11th-largest contributor in GPE's history as of December 2017. For more information on France's education ODA, see our 'Deep Dive': education ODA.

Tackling climate change is another priority and will remain so under President Macron's government, who has made it a flagship theme of his presidency. In 2015, France hosted the Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nation's climate convention and has made the implementation of the agreement a top priority of his government's foreign and development policy. France plans to increase financing for climate-related programs by €2 billion (US\$2.2 billion) per year between 2015 and 2020. Additionally, funding for climate-adaptation programs is set to reach €1.5 billion (US\$1.7 billion) per year by then. In total, €3 billion (US\$3.3 billion) of this funding over

2018 CICID conclusions outlined five key development priorities:

- **Peace and stability:** Increasing focus on development programs that promote peace and stability to fight terrorism; focus is on the Sahel region.
- **Climate change:** Increase in annual funding in partner countries; €1-billion pledge to the Green Climate Fund for 2015 to 2018; €2 billion for renewable energies in Africa between 2016 and 2020.
- **Education:** Key priority for France; co-chair of the GPE Funding Conference in February 2018.
- **Gender:** Cross-cutting approach to France's external action. Focus on access to essential services, women's entrepreneurship, sexual and reproductive health, girl's education.
- **Health:** Strong support to multilateral organizations, particularly the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and UNITAID.

the 2016-2020 period will be dedicated specifically to renewable energies in Africa.

Global health also remains in focus, particularly on the multilateral level, through France's strong support to multilateral initiatives like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund); Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi); and UNITAID. The government's strategy for global health for 2017 to 2021 emphasizes four priorities for health interventions: 1) health systems strengthening (HSS), 2) global health security, 3) the promotion of health for the most vulnerable, and 4) the development of expertise, innovation, and research in global health.

Within its overall foreign policy, France focuses on fighting terrorism. This impacts development spending, as France increasingly uses development cooperation as a way to promote peace and stability in partner countries. This drives a strong focus on the Sahel region of Africa,

where development projects accompany France’s military and political interventions. In July 2017, the French President launched the Sahel Alliance (Alliance avec le Sahel) a joint initiative of France, Germany, and the EU, along with the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the UN Development Program (UNDP), to better coordinate support for development and security in the G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger). France committed €200 million to the Alliance (US\$221 million). In addition, during a High-Level Conference on the Sahel in February 2018, France pledged €1.2 billion (US\$1.3 billion) over the next five years for the G5 Sahel force.

Related to this and the increased attention to conflict-affected and fragile states, France increasingly focuses on the humanitarian aid-development nexus. It will dedicate €500 million (US\$553 million) per year by 2022 to urgent humanitarian action and post-crisis stabilization. In 2016, it created a facility for alleviating vulnerability and responding to crises, managed by the AFD. The facility focuses on countries in crisis, post-crisis, or otherwise vulnerable situations, and was allocated €100 million in 2017. Funding for this facility will double by 2020 to reach €200 million (US\$221 million). France’s humanitarian assistance strategy is expected to be published in March 2018.

France is a pioneer in using innovative financing mechanisms to fund development programs. France currently allocates half of the revenues from its national financial transaction tax (FTT) to development and climate programs (an estimated €798 million, or US\$883 million in 2018). The French government is pushing for a FTT to be implemented at the European level to fund ODA and the

fight against climate change. Domestically, it also uses proceeds from an airline ticket tax, of which €210 million (US\$232 million) is allocated every year to development and climate change. In practice, those extra-budgetary revenues mobilized by the FTT and the airline tax are pre-allocated to the Solidarity Fund for Development, which redistributes resources to 29 organizations, among them the Global Fund, the Green Climate Fund, Gavi, IF-Fim, and UNITAID. France is also the second-largest contributor to the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm) (see ‘Deep Dive: global health’ for more details).

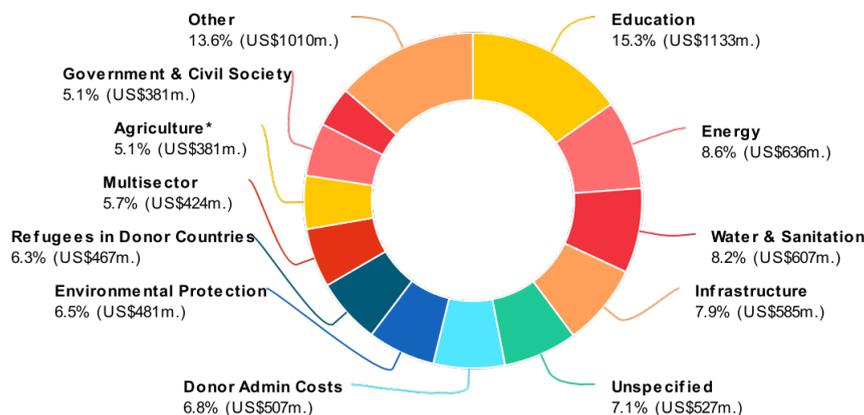
Education is largest sector of bilateral ODA, but student costs distort picture; energy is rising

According to OECD data, France delivers 62% of its ODA bilaterally (2016). The single largest share goes to education: in 2016, education constituted 15% of French bilateral ODA (US\$1.1 billion). However, 65% (US\$868million) of this comprises costs of students from partner countries studying in France, which can be reported as ODA. Thus, the vast share of France’s education ODA does not go to actual projects in partner countries.

In line with France’s commitment to spend €2 billion in Africa on renewable energies, financing for energy-related projects went up by 22% between 2015 and 2016, reaching US\$636 million and making it the second-largest sector of French bilateral ODA. Most of this (46% or US\$290 million) was allocated to energy projects in sub-Saharan Africa. Water and sanitation comes third, at 8% of bilateral ODA (US\$607 million), followed by infrastructure (US\$585 million, or 8%).

FRANCE'S BILATERAL ODA BY SECTOR, 2016

Total: US\$7,426 million



OECD CRS. Gross disbursements. *Includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, and rural development. In 2016 prices.