



# Support Fund for Feminist Organizations

ACTIVITY REPORT

**2020 - 2023**

## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



**B**etween 2020 and 2023, the world experienced significant social and political upheavals that had a profound effect on the rights of women and girls. The Covid-19 pandemic added to these vulnerabilities, causing an increase in domestic violence and slowing down the pace of any progress made towards gender equality. At the same time, movements opposed to women's rights have gained ground and are posing a threat to the advances previously made, worsening inequalities already exacerbated by armed conflicts and climate change.

Despite the significant progress made between 2015 and 2020, UN Women estimates that, if we continue at the current pace, it will take almost three hundred years to achieve gender equality. In response to these challenges, France declared gender equality and the promotion of the equal rights for women and girls as a national priority ("grande cause nationale") in 2017. This means that these issues have become a priority for French foreign policy, as illustrated by France's International Strategy for Gender Equality (2018-2022), which has made France one of the world's leading countries promoting feminist foreign policy.

The Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) is a flagship initiative for French feminist foreign policy, and was introduced at the G7 Summit in 2019. This fund is managed by *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, and aims to provide long-term support for feminist Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in France's partner countries. Overall funding of €120 million was initially committed for the 2020-2022 period, and then increased to €250 million for 2023-2027.

# The FSOF: a financing tool for feminist organizations

## An ambitious goal



**Reduce gender inequalities** by strengthening the technical, financial and administrative capabilities of civil society feminist organizations in France's partner countries



**Support** organizations that do not have access to financing



**Co-construct** through inclusive dialog based on mutual trust



**Broaden** networks, collaborations and synergies between feminist groups

## Three financing channels adapted to needs



**Channel 1:** thematic projects and calls for projects for feminist CSOs



**Channel 2:** initiatives from local or French feminist civil society organizations via the CSO Initiatives mechanism



**Channel 3:** financing for local feminist CSOs in partner countries, particularly via the *Équipe France* Fund



## Priority topics

- Sexual and reproductive health and rights, and comprehensive sexuality education
- Fighting discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence
- Improving women's economic empowerment and their participation in economic development
- Women's social and political leadership
- Access to primary, secondary and higher education for girls
- The Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the role of women in crises
- Gender and climate

## Inclusive governance

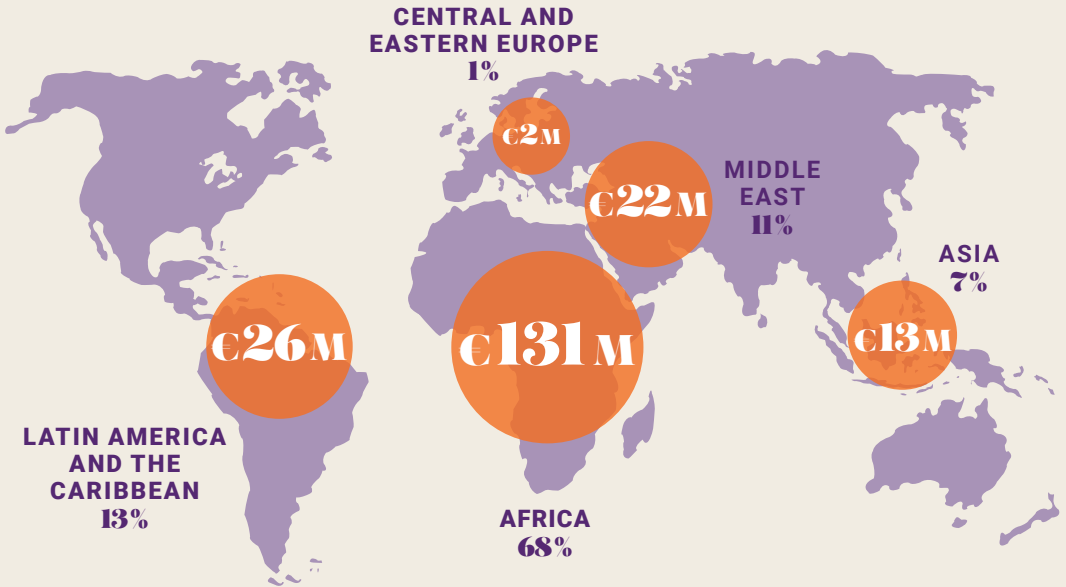


- A strategic and accountability framework drawn up with civil society
- A steering committee comprising the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and AFD, as well as qualified members of civil society since 2023
- Regular consultations with civil society

# Our commitments to feminist organizations

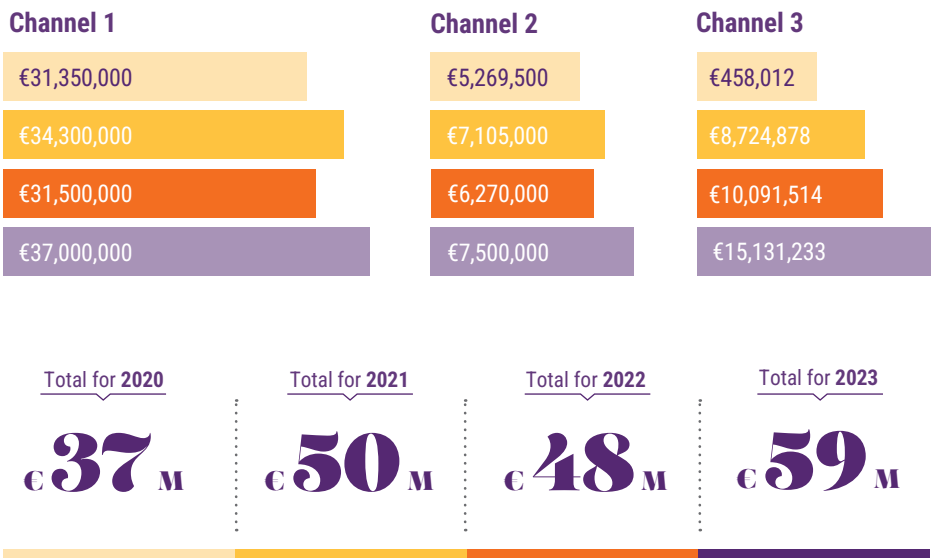


## Breakdown by region



# Breakdown by financing channel

2020
2021
2022
2023



## Mid-term assessment (2020-2022)



€135 M  
 approved compared  
 to an initial target  
 of €120 M

A mid-term assessment of the FSOF was carried out in 2022. The outcome showed just how relevant this initiative is, and its ability to reach feminist civil society organizations, as well as the fund’s remarkable responsiveness from the outset. Recommendations for adapting procedures and making governance more open were taken on board. The challenges to address include: mobilizing the organizations involved in the FSOF as a community; ensuring in-depth inclusion of feminist approaches, including in partnership relations; and providing financing over the long term.

# Channel 1 flagship projects

Every year, AFD finances projects and launches thematic calls for projects that aim to strengthen feminist civil society organizations.

2020

## Feminists in Action

AFRICA, ASIA, MIDDLE EAST, LATIN AMERICA

€15 M grant

Care France, Equipop, Oxfam, Mediterranean Women's Fund, XOESE - The Francophone Women's Fund, Pananetugri Initiative for the Well-being of Women



The Feminists in Action project reinforces sexual and reproductive health and rights, access to rights for women and girls, as well as their economic power, and helps combat gender-based violence.

✓ 199 CSOs supported in 30 countries (98% managed by women), the creation of four regional communities of practice and a feminist network in Latin America.

2021

## Feminists for Climate and Environment Alternatives

AFRICA

€5 M grant

CCFD-Terre Solidaire, Adéquations, WoMin, ACORD Rwanda



This initiative promotes gender equality with regard to climate and environment issues. It enables feminist organizations to boost the impact of their alternative models for the ecological transition, preservation of biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources. It raises awareness among local public authorities of women's rights and their role in environmental protection.

✓ 91 organizations supported, 750 campaigners trained in issues related to gender and climate.

2022

## Support feminist CSOs working towards the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST

€11.5 M grant

### ● Central Africa

The Fund for Congolese Women, the Stop Violence against Women Association, Women Act for Living Together

### ● Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea

Equipop, Diakonia Sweden, Women Action and Development, Gorée Institute

### ● Middle East

EuroMed Feminist Initiative, Women Empowerment Organization, Arab Women Organization, Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development



The aim of this project is to bolster local feminist organizations working on all four dimensions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325: to prevent violence, protect victims, participate in conflict resolution and advocate for peace in 14 countries across three regions experiencing crises and conflicts (West and Central Africa, Middle East).

More than 150 feminist organizations and 100 institutions to be supported to act on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and more than 25,000 people in crisis and conflict areas are to benefit.

2023

## Feminism, Action and Mobilization for an Inclusive Economy

AFRICA, SOUTH ASIA, CARIBBEAN

€10 M grant

Geres, Care, Confederación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Trabajadoras del Hogar, Empow'Her, South Asian Women Development Forum, West Africa Civil Society Institute



This project aims to amplify the voice of feminist organizations and their capacity to take action, to empower women and people from LGBTQIA+ communities and encourage their participation in economic life, particularly through efforts to overcome barriers caused by dominant gender norms.

166 CSOs from the Global South and six advocacy platforms will be supported.



### AFD, a feminist agency

In keeping with France's strategy, AFD is committed to promoting gender equality on an international scale. Its 100% Social Link strategy puts the fight against all forms of inequalities – including gender – at the heart of its mandate. AFD promotes a cross-cutting feminist approach in its efforts to reduce inequalities.

## Channel 2 flagship projects

Through its CSO Initiatives mechanism, AFD is supporting feminist civil society organizations in France and partner countries, to strengthen their capacity for action and improve their structuring.

2020

### Amplifying young feminists' voices in West Africa

BENIN, COTE D'IVOIRE, GUINEA, MAURITANIA, SENEGAL

€2.1 M grant

Equipop



This project supports movements initiated by young feminists in French-speaking Africa, to amplify their voices in the fora where policies for the future are discussed. On a national scale, this project helps boost the capacity for action for young, local feminist activist groups, and on a regional scale, it supports the development of a network of young feminists in West Africa.

✓ Boosting the capacity for action of more than 100 young feminists, 24 CSOs and transnational and regional movements. Improving the visibility of feminist movements in international forums. Participation of more than 2,000 young women in the mobile community caravan initiative.

2022

### Women, Dignity, Work

BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, HONDURAS, MEXICO

€1 M grant

Care France



The goal of the Women, Dignity, Work project is to transform working conditions and the social perception of domestic work so that these workers, most of whom are women, are respected, protected and given a decent salary. The project supports women's associations and labor unions, ensures domestic workers are fully aware of their rights and encourages social enterprises managed by these workers themselves.

✓ More than 200 domestic workers received certification for new skills acquired. A regional labor union school was created with the participation of women managers. Two social enterprises were set up by domestic workers.



2023

## Ecofeminist incubators

SENEGAL, BENIN

€270,000 grant

Research-action group for educational and social initiatives (GRAINES)



This project assists the Senegalese CSO GRAINES in rolling out a social, cohesive and ecofeminist business model in Dakar and Abomey by supporting women's groups and breaking down gender stereotypes.

✓ Breaking down gender stereotypes with 200 men. Supporting 20 young girls, 10 associations and 10 women's groups towards economic empowerment.

2020 - 2023

## Addressing sexual violence against minors

PHILIPPINES

€600,000 (2020) and €700,000 (2023) grant

CAMELEON



This project takes a holistic and integrated approach to protecting and accompanying young victims of sexual violence. This approach aims to support these victims into becoming advocates for change. Collaborating with local partners and capitalizing on this model in Phase 3 of the project will help secure these initiatives over the long term.

✓ Care and reintegration support was provided to 181 young girls victims of sexual violence. Improved access to education for 300 young people. Local, regional and national awareness and advocacy campaigns were launched to address sexual abuse against children and teenagers.

## Effective advocacy for legislation that protects women's rights

Reinforcing the capacity of feminist organizations to employ advocacy techniques and deploy collective advocacy actions has proven effective, since **this financing contributed to modifying the regulatory and legislative frameworks of certain countries working towards gender equality**. In Benin, women are now authorized by law to decide to terminate a pregnancy in the first 12 weeks. In Mexico, a decree was published in 2022 to place domestic workers, who are mainly women, under the general social security scheme and since 2023 employers have been obliged to officially declare these workers, which is a considerable improvement to their protection.

# Channel 3 flagship projects

The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs is supporting local feminist organizations using financing modalities such as the *Équipe France* Fund managed by French embassies. Since 2023, initiatives to support feminist organizations funded by the Ministry's Crisis and Support Center have been included in the FSOF.

2021 - 2022



## Reducing gender-based violence

ETHIOPIA

€850,000 grant

This project was introduced by the French Embassy in Ethiopia and has already supported 20 CSOs in addressing gender-based violence across eight federal regions and the capital, Addis-Abeba. The project attracted the attention of the country's authorities, including its President. Drawing on this experience, in 2023 the Embassy went on to launch a support project for feminist CSOs to strengthen the legal protection of victims of gender-based violence.

✓ Services are now available to provide integrated care for victims of violence. Local authorities are informed and social workers at community centers have undergone training.



## Reducing gender inequalities in Central America

PANAMA, COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA, SALVADOR, HONDURAS, GUATEMALA

€600,000 grant

The aim of the project is to help reduce gender inequalities in six countries in Central America. To this date, 20 CSOs have been supported. The elaboration of a multidimensional and cross-cutting approach to inequalities, particularly with regard to discriminations faced by indigenous and rural communities, has been recognized as a key driver for success. This support has encouraged other donors to get involved, thereby opening doors to additional sources of financing.

✓ 272 training courses were organized on the topics of gender equality, gender-based violence and comprehensive sexuality education, and income-generating activities have been introduced for CSOs working towards economic justice.

**2022 - 2023**

## Supporting feminist CSOs with innovative projects

GABON

€485,000 grant



The French Embassy in Gabon has launched a call for projects to support local feminist CSOs, with the aim of encouraging innovative and life-changing initiatives. The selected CSOs were appointed a central role in project governance. They strengthened their capacities to advocate through national media outlets and with the authorities.

- ✓ Personalized support for CSOs for administrative and financial management. Gender was incorporated in the advocacy techniques for combating discrimination.

**2023**

## Supporting educational programs for women and girls

AFGHANISTAN

€850,000 grant



The Ministry's Crisis and Support Center has been funding the NGO Begum Organization for Women in Afghanistan for two years, with the aim of providing educational and recreational programs for women and girls, in the Pashto and Dari languages, using the organization's radio broadcasts. A remote learning platform is expected to be developed alongside this initiative.

- ✓ 50,000 women and girls benefit from the programs. The radio broadcasts are available six days a week, and these broadcasts now cover six of the country's provinces.



### Generation Equality Forum

In 2021, France jointly organized the Generation Equality Forum with Mexico. This forum, convened by UN Women, was the first large-scale feminist event since the Beijing Conference in 1995. This event launched a five-year action agenda, involving multiple stakeholders, to accelerate progress made towards gender equality thanks to unprecedented financial commitments (US\$40 million in total). The FSOF is one of the most notable examples.

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## For a world in common

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Agence Française de Développement (AFD) helps advance France's policy on sustainable investment and international solidarity. Through its public sector and NGO financing operations, research and publications (Éditions AFD), sustainable development training programs (AFD Group Campus) and awareness-raising activities in France, AFD finances, supports and drives the transition to a fairer, more resilient world.

Alongside our partners, we provide sustainable solutions for—and with—communities. Our teams are working on over 2,700 projects in the field, in over 115 countries, including France's overseas departments and territories, to support projects for the climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality and global health. Together with Proparco and Expertise France, AFD supports the commitment of France and the French people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Working by your side, toward a world in common.



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