

SUPPORT MECHANISM FOR LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION INITIATIVES (CSO-I)

METHODOLOGY GUIDE

on the procedures for co-financing
local CSO projects

May 2025

This guide is subject to change.
The most recent version is available on the AFD website.

/// KEY POINTS

This methodology guide has been updated (**major changes from the previous version of the guide are highlighted in purple**) to reflect the new procedures for the 2025 Call for Expressions of Project Intentions (AMI). The guide only applies to the financing of local CSO projects under the CSO Initiatives mechanism.

A second guide for French CSOs has also been updated and published at the same time as the AMI.

For other AFD programs, please refer to the pages on the AFD website relating to CSO/NGO offers.

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How To Use This Guide

This guide sets out **how AFD works with civil society organizations** (CSOs) under its CSO Initiatives mechanism and the various projects that can be co-financed under this framework.

It **supplements the information provided in the Call for Expressions of Project Intentions (AMI)** published annually by AFD and in the financing agreement.

This guide details the **financing cycle for projects that are shortlisted and then selected**: the financing application, the contract agreement process and disbursement of funds, and then the monitoring of project implementation, audit and closure.

The CSO-I mechanism draws on various supporting documents:

WORKSHEETS AVAILABLE IN THIS GUIDE:

- ✓ Eleven worksheets categorized as follows:
 - Project methodology worksheets
 - Cross-functional thematic worksheets
 - Contract management worksheets

OTHER REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE ON THE AFD WEBSITE:¹

1. CSO Initiative Note (NIONG) template
2. Budget table
3. Instructions for using the budget table
4. Letter attesting to capabilities
5. TOR audit template
6. Communication Kits (folder)
7. Interim Implementation Report template
8. Final Implementation Report template
9. OSCar User Guide

¹ <https://www.afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects>

I. ABBREVIATIONS

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
GA	General Assembly
ANO	No-objection
AMI	Call for Expressions of Project Intentions
APCC	Call for Crisis and Post-Crisis Projects
CA	Board
SA	Statutory Auditor
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
CDCS	Crisis and Support Center
CICID	Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development
CRTF	Technical and financial report (interim or final)
MPN/OSC	Mobilization & National Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (within AFD)
F3E	Fund for the promotion of preliminary studies, cross-cutting studies and evaluations
FGEF	French Global Environment Facility
FID	French Development Innovation Facility
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
AML/CFT	Anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism
MEAE	French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
NIONG	CSO Initiative Note
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
ILO	International Labor Organization
CSO	Civil society organization
AFD/SDD	Development Solutions Directorate (formerly part of DOE – Operations Directorate – before split)
AFD/GEO	Geographic Directorate (formerly part of DOE – Operations Directorate – before split)
SMA	Structuring of the non-profit sector
AFD/MPC	Mobilization, Partnership and Communication Executive Directorate
EU	European Union

II. AFD AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Agence Française de Développement (AFD) finances and supports projects that improve people's living conditions, reduce inequalities, combat climate change and preserve biodiversity. AFD is a public financial institution that implements policies defined by the French government.

1. THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH AFD WORKS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOS)

Over the past twenty years, AFD has significantly expanded the ways in which it works with CSOs, both in terms of financing projects and activities and in terms of generating knowledge or mobilizing expertise. In 2023, AFD (excluding Expertise France) granted almost €465 million (a steady increase) to CSOs of all nationalities through its range of instruments.

This collaboration now encompasses a broad spectrum of instruments tailored to the specific needs of CSOs and their added value. This is made possible through various instruments managed by various departments within AFD Group and other organizations:

Category	Financing Instrument	Department/Organization	Type of Financing
CSO-initiated projects	CSO Initiatives	Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC) within the Mobilization & National Partnerships Department	Grants
CSO-initiated projects	FID – French Development Innovation Facility FGEF – French Global Environment Facility	Funds whose secretariats are hosted by AFD	Grants
Ad hoc, thematic or geographic calls for projects	Consultation Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) Actions in fragile environments (Calls for Crisis and Post-Crisis Projects, or APCCs)	Development Solutions Directorate – SDD Geographic Directorate - GEO	Grants
Ad hoc, thematic or geographic calls for projects	Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) call for projects	Co-led by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and Agence Française de Développement (AFD)	Grants
AFD-initiated Projects	Call for tenders	AFD DG market	Purchase of services by AFD from operators, such as CSOs, which then act as operators (project managers) for an AFD project

Small-scale projects	<p>Micro-Projects Office</p> <p>Support program for migration-related projects by International Solidarity Organizations (PRA/OSIM)</p> <p>Small Initiatives Program (PPI)</p>	<p>La Guilde</p> <p>Forum of International Solidarity Organizations for Migration (FORIM)</p> <p>Global Environment Facility (GGEF)</p>	Grants
Calls for thematic projects	Calls for proposals	Expertise France	Grants for projects aimed at French, local and international CSOs for projects to be carried out in partnership with organizations in the countries where projects are being implemented
Calls for thematic projects (combating pandemics and improving healthcare systems)	Canal Projets	The Initiative (Expertise France Health Directorate)	Grants for projects that complement Global Fund programs

The partnership between AFD and CSOs is built around the specific financing mechanisms detailed above, but also through mechanisms such as consultation meetings, strategic and technical dialog, project instructions and project monitoring.

AFD field and regional offices are playing an increasing role in monitoring this partnership, particularly in countries where non-governmental action is strong or in countries in crisis or post-crisis situations where AFD has chosen to work through CSOs.

Please note: The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and French embassies in countries where projects are being implemented offer other financing instruments to CSOs, including emergency project financing. The Ministry publishes a grant guide (the 2023 version is available on the MEAE website²).

² <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/societe-civile-et-volontariat/actualites/article/actualisation-du-guide-des-subsventions-publiques-pour-la-solidarite>

2. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION – MOBILIZATION & NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS DEPARTMENT (MPN/OSC)

Since 2009, the CSO Initiatives (CSO-I) mechanism has been managed by the **Civil Society Organizations Division of the Mobilization & National Partnerships Department (MPN/OSC) within the Mobilization Partnerships and Communication Executive Directorate (MPC).**

MPN/OSC manages the strategic partnership between AFD and CSOs, and selects, appraises and monitors CSO Initiatives projects developed and implemented by local and French CSOs in developing countries and in France (for ECIS and SMA projects, see below).

MPN/OSC's mission is to:

- Lead the dialog and partnership relationship with representatives of local and French civil society (strategic dialog, shared knowledge creation, organization of meetings, etc.) and the ministries to which the AFD is accountable;
- Co-finance projects led by CSOs that aim not only to fight poverty, reduce inequalities and achieve sustainable development goals, but also to support the structuring and capacity building of civil society;
- Co-finance projects to structure the non-profit sector (SMA) and promote education for sustainable development and global citizenship, also known as Education for Citizenship and International Solidarity (ECIS) projects.

AFD's relationship with CSOs, its objectives and procedures are set out in a roadmap, which is linked to AFD's Strategic Guideline Plan (POS), approved by its Board of Directors. The latest versions of these documents are available on the AFD website.

III. CSO INITIATIVES MECHANISM

AFD's CSO Initiatives mechanism provides co-financing for projects proposed by French CSOs and, more recently, for locally governed CSOs in France or in partner countries, while respecting their right of initiative.

Which CSOs are eligible? Non-profit associations and non-governmental organizations, as well as regional and international non-profit platforms constituted in accordance with the applicable laws in their countries, which work in the field of sustainable development.

All **shortlisting eligibility criteria** are **set out each year in the Call for Expressions of Project Intentions** (AMI).

In which countries? All countries eligible for official development assistance according to the list established by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC).³

In which sectors? All sectors in which AFD operates: agriculture, environment/biodiversity/climate, water and sanitation, education, integration and vocational training, health and social action, urban development, energy, the productive sector and microfinance, human rights, local development, citizen participation, gender equality, and SMA projects.

The **following sectors are not eligible**: French language, university and hospital cooperation, emergency humanitarian aid, collections and shipments of materials or food.

1. CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE CSO INITIATIVES PROJECTS

Through various instruments, the CSO-I mechanism can **fund two categories of projects**:

- **Field** projects
- **Sustainable development and global citizenship education** projects and/or projects to **structure the non-profit sector (SMA)**.

Project shortlisting criteria are updated each year when the Call for Expressions of Project Intentions is published and should be reviewed first.

FIELD PROJECTS

"Field" projects are implemented in one or more countries eligible for official development assistance and, **if possible, in partnership with other local civil society organizations**. They must contribute to the **achievement of sustainable development goals**. The project must include measures to strengthen local stakeholders; it must involve the central and decentralized government services of the country in which the project will be implemented, unless the situation in the country does not allow it.

The project must **consider gender and gender equality issues**, regardless of its geographic and thematic scope, and offer practical solutions in this regard wherever possible.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION PROJECTS

Sustainable development and global citizenship education projects (sometimes called global education or education for citizenship and international solidarity (ECIS) **are part of Agenda 2030 and**

³<https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>

SDG 4, whose Article 4.7⁴ aims to ensure that learners “acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity [...]”.

Projects aimed at raising awareness of these issues among citizens of all ages and that encourage their commitment to a fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable world, are therefore eligible. Project activities may be carried out in the partner country, or abroad (including France and Europe).

Citizenship outreach activities may be included in field interventions and will be particularly effective.

PROJECTS TO STRUCTURE THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR (SMA)

SMA projects must contribute to achieving the following objectives: **support or creation of platforms or collectives, support funds, or any long-term collective initiative.**

Their goal is to strengthen the capacity-building initiatives of local CSOs, enhance the coordination and overall effectiveness of the actions of community organizations, and improve dialog with and participation of CSOs in major international events.

They must have a **national, regional** or international **impact** on at least one or more of the following three pillars:

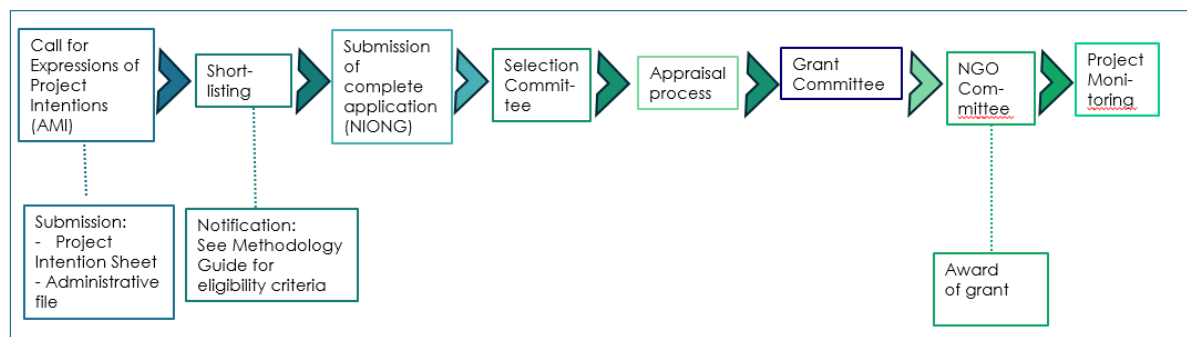
- Structuring, closer alignment and convergence of CSO actions
- Professionalization and creation/dissemination of innovations in the sector and beyond
- Contribution to the collective efforts of CSOs to strengthen dialog on public action and position the public sector on national and international issues.

The proposed structure must involve **a significant number of members and be representative of the non-profit sector concerned**. If the number of members is limited, it must demonstrate that its actions have a scope and impact that are structural for the national non-profit sector overall. It must not compete with similar initiatives but must demonstrate real added value. The project must not focus on a field that is too narrow or that affects an audience that is too small.

⁴ SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Target 4.7 states: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”.

2. PROJECT FINANCING CYCLE

Three stages take place before AFD decides to grant financing: shortlisting, selection and appraisal. The CSO must first submit a project intention sheet, then a complete application (NIONG) if it is shortlisted, before a grant is awarded after selection.



A. PROJECT SHORTLISTING – THE CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF PROJECT INTENTIONS

Projects are shortlisted based on a Call for Expressions of Project Intentions (AMI) launched by AFD on its website once a year for the following calendar year. The AMI is open for two months. The call contains the shortlisting criteria and the template for the Project Intention Sheet that the CSO must submit.

To respond to the AMI, the CSO must follow the submission procedures specified in the call:

- The CSO must ensure that its structure and project are eligible based on the shortlisting criteria;
- The CSO must then **use the OSCar portal (AMI menu)** to notify AFD of its intention to submit a project by providing the project intention sheet (available in the AMI appendix) and the documents that make up the administrative file detailed in the AMI.

The CSO must refer to the AMI, published each year on the AFD website, and to the criteria specified therein, before submitting an application for co-financing to AFD, within the timetable specified in the AMI. Any incomplete or non-compliant file will be declared ineligible.

Any projects that are not shortlisted under the AMI will not be eligible for financing under the mechanism in the following calendar year.

MPN/OSC will only contact the CSO during this stage to request, if necessary, clarification on the documents sent by the CSO.

After in-depth review, MPN/OSC will inform CSOs whether their projects have been shortlisted for the following year's planning. CSOs will be notified by email according to the timetable set out in the AMI.

/// KEY POINTS

Shortlisting a project does not guarantee that it will receive financing; it merely entitles the CSO to submit a complete application.

Once the AMI is closed, the CSO may not submit any further projects for consideration before the following year's AMI opens.

B. PROJECT SELECTION

After receiving notification that its project has been shortlisted, the CSO must send, via the OSCar portal only, the complete application file for co-financing (called the CSO Initiative Note or NIONG) to MPN/OSC before the deadline specified in the AMI. This file consists of:

- A complete administrative file and
- The project description file (the NIONG). CSOs must refer to the various NIONG templates available online, depending on the type of project submitted: <https://www.afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects> (Reference Documents).

MPN/OSC will then examine this file to ensure it complies with the selection criteria detailed in this guide. Once the MPN/OSC selection committee has met (selection committees meet throughout the year), MPN/OSC will inform the CSO by email or by regular mail whether its project has been selected and explain the reasons for not selecting it, where appropriate.

MPN/OSC will not appraise any project not selected at the end of this stage. If the project is not selected, the CSO may, if it wishes, submit it again under the next AMI, provided that the CSO submits a stronger proposal with additional information, in line with MPN/OSC's feedback.

C. PROJECT APPRAISAL

All **selected projects undergo an in-depth appraisal by MPN/OSC** before they are presented to AFD's decision-making bodies. Except in exceptional cases, the average time required by MPN/OSC to appraise a project is approximately six months. During this appraisal stage, MPN/OSC will contact the CSO as necessary to obtain additional information and help improve the project, taking into consideration the various opinions received (within AFD and the French Ministry for Europe and of Foreign Affairs).

At the same time, **CSOs are encouraged to contact the French Embassy and local AFD office in the relevant country or countries to present their projects at a meeting, which they are responsible for arranging.**

At the end of the appraisal process, the finalized NIONG is first presented to the Grant Committee, a non-decision-making body within AFD.

Lastly, all selected projects are presented to the Specialized Committee Supporting CSO Initiatives, known as the "NGO Committee", which will grant or reject the co-financing. The "NGO Committee" is an offshoot of AFD's Board of Directors, which has delegated to the committee the authority to grant financing to CSOs under the CSO Initiatives mechanism. Projects appraised by MPN/OSC are presented to the committee six or seven times a year for a decision on co-financing. If the NGO Committee approves the requested grant, AFD and the CSO sign a financing agreement.

Project Financing Cycle

STAGE	CSO	AFD
SHORTLISTING		Issue Call for Expressions of Project Intentions (AMI), in preceding year
	Submit Project Intention Sheet via the OSCar portal (AMI menu)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyze eligibility of project intention - Send email informing the CSO whether its project has been shortlisted or not for the following year's planning

IF PROJECT SHORTLISTED		
SELECTION	Write an application for financing for the shortlisted project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit CSO Initiative Note (NIONG) via the OSCar portal (NIONG menu) • Submit administrative file via the OSCar portal (CSO Information menu) 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examine file to check whether it meets selection criteria - Present project to selection committee

AFTER PROJECT SELECTION		
APPRAISAL		Project appraisal. <i>Average appraisal time: 6 months except in exceptional cases</i>
	Hold talks between CSO and AFD	
	Once the NIONG has been appraised, contact French Embassy and AFD field office in the relevant country/ies	
		Present project to the Grant Committee, then to the NGO Committee for decision on financing

IF PROJECT APPROVED		
FINANCING AGREEMENT		Prepare and send to the CSO by email (using AFD's <i>esygnature</i> electronic signature process) the notification letter and the finalized draft financing agreement for approval
	<p>AND</p> <p>LIFTING OF CONDITIONS PRECEDENT</p>	<p>- After agreement, submit the documents required to lift the conditions precedent to signature, either via the OSCar portal (CSO Information menu) or by regular mail (see Notification Letter)</p> <p>- Approve administrative documents and lift of conditions precedent to signature</p> <p>- Sign agreement via <i>esygnature</i> (CSO then AFD)</p> <p>- Lift condition precedent to paying the first disbursement (Tranche 1)</p>
	<p>- Submit the documents required to lift the conditions precedent to the first disbursement (Tranche 1) in the OSCar portal (Disbursement Request menu, see Notification Letter)</p>	

DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION		
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	<p>- Monitor project performance</p> <p>- Throughout implementation, option to ask MPN/OSC for project modifications: request for a no-objection (ANO), which may or may not require an amendment to be written</p>	<p>- Hold talks with the CSO</p> <p>- Responses to no-objection requests</p>

AT MID-TERM		
DURING THE PROJECT	<p>- Write the interim technical and financial implementation report</p> <p>- Submit reports via the OSCar portal (Disbursement Request menu) with a disbursement request for the second disbursement (Tranche 2)</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the interim implementation report via a no-objection (ANO) - Second disbursement (Tranche 2)
	Conduct the interim financial audit on completion of Tranche 1 of, mandatory for all projects.	

AT END OF PROJECT		
END OF PROJECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write final technical and financial implementation report - Conduct the external evaluation, mandatory at the end of each phase for multi-phase projects and encouraged for other projects - Conduct the final external financial audit on completion of Tranche 2 of the project, mandatory for all projects 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold talks with the CSO on project completion - Approve final documents submitted by the CSO (performance, audit and evaluation reports) - Close project

IV. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS UNDER THE LOCAL CSO INITIATIVES MECHANISM

Each of the two stages detailed above has eligibility criteria associated with it:

- **Shortlisting stage: the eligibility criteria may rule out an application;** they lead to a rejection.
- **Selection stage: the eligibility criteria do not rule out an application;** they allow its admissibility to be assessed. A negative response to one or more of these criteria may result in MPN/OSC not accepting the application and not proceeding with its appraisal.

For each of the two stages, the eligibility criteria are divided into two categories:

- **CSO eligibility criteria**
- **Project eligibility criteria**

/// KEY POINTS

The **shortlisting criteria are set out in detail in the annual AMI**, and the selection criteria are set out in this guide.

The term "project" is used generically and includes all the categories described above (single- or multi-country "field" project, sustainable development and global citizenship education project, SMA project).

1. CSO SELECTION CRITERIA

A. GOVERNANCE

The CSO must demonstrate that it meets the criteria detailed below in a **letter attesting to its capabilities** (see AFD website to download a template for this document).

The CSO must comply with the following rules of professional conduct (where applicable):

- i) Holds a quality label and/or accreditation/charter, where applicable, and has a documented ethics charter or code of professional conduct internal to the CSO
- ii) Complies with International Labor Organization (ILO) regulations
- iii) Publishes a social balance sheet where this is required by labor law.

The CSO has good governance practices and its decision-making processes are transparent: It operates in accordance with its articles of association (involvement of decision-making bodies (general assembly, board, executive committee), publication of decisions, frequency of meetings), formalized relations between headquarters and delegations, existence of a remuneration policy, a volunteer charter, transparency and publication of information.

The CSO has internal control and reporting rules: Existence and dissemination of the CSO's activity reports, the president's moral reports; existence of a finance committee, a donor committee, an independent internal control department, an internal evaluation unit; existence of procedures for disseminating the conclusions/results of these controls.

The CSO has rules for external controls: Audits and/or evaluations carried out by external stakeholders (government, statutory auditor, EU audit or other competent organizations); existence of procedures for disseminating the conclusions/results of these controls.

The CSO has and enforces purchasing and procurement procedures that observe the principles of transparency and competitive bidding, in accordance with national regulations.

The CSO has a financial information transparency policy tailored to the various audiences it addresses, for example: certification and publication of annual accounts, communication of summary documents (income statements/balance sheets), creation of an account for the use of resources collected from the public and any other relevant financial information on its activity.

B. AML/CFT⁵ DUE DILIGENCE CARRIED OUT BY THE CSO

AFD pays particular attention to corruption and fraud issues in the projects it finances and has adopted a policy to fight fraud and corruption (available on the AFD website).

As an institution with a banking license, AFD has also established a system for countering money laundering and the financing of terrorism (AMF/CFT).

It therefore requests that CSOs it finances comply with measures such as freezing of assets and banning the direct or indirect provision of funds or economic resources, adopted by the United Nations, the European Union or France, which are applicable without delay by all national or foreign natural persons on French soil and by any legal entity operating in France or established in France, pursuant to the provisions of Article L. 562-4 of the French Monetary and Financial Code (CMF).

To do this, a mechanism has been created for CSOs to refer to. The relevant worksheet provides details of this mechanism. CSOs must complete a structure compliance questionnaire and a project compliance questionnaire. They must submit these questionnaires with the NIONG at the time they submit the project. The audit terms of reference template (interim and final) must be used; it includes checks on the CSO's compliance procedures.

An FAQ document is also available, along with educational documents explaining the entire compliance process and the screening method. All these documents are included in an AML/CFT folder available online on the CSO Financing page.

AFD also recommends that CSOs become familiar with the guide published by the French Treasury entitled "Guide to humanitarian aid exemptions under EU sanctions".⁶

These sanctions regimes are intended to achieve different objectives, such as the fight against terrorism, but also the fight against nuclear proliferation, coercion in response to serious human rights violations, deterrence and defense against cyberattacks targeting non-EU countries or international organizations, and any act that threatens peace. Their purpose is therefore broader than countering terrorist financing.

AFD conducts anti-money laundering, fraud and corruption due diligence on the counterparties/partners it finances and must, as soon as the project appraisal is completed, collect information from its counterparties/partners, particularly in the case of financial transfers (of any kind).

This due diligence is updated throughout the project implementation phase. In such cases, MPN/OSC must issue a no-objection (ANO). If the AFD Compliance Department issues an unfavorable opinion on a project, the appraisal may be interrupted and/or the granting of co-financing refused.

CSOs with shortlisted projects must complete a specific AML/CFT project questionnaire and attach it to their application for financing (Project Compliance Questionnaire available in the appendix to the NIONG and in the AML/CFT documents section of the AFD website).

⁵ AMF/CFT: Anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism

⁶ <https://www.tresor.economie.gouv.fr/Institutionnel/Niveau2/Pages/f3234489-26a1-48f7-8a05-f31d34551f13/files/78b41956-7c8c-4541-b392-a1364cf98a86>

C. CSO FINANCIAL SITUATION

The CSO must submit its estimated budget for the current year via the OSCar portal. If the application is submitted in the second half of the year, the CSO must also provide its estimated budget for the following year.

The CSO's financial situation must be sound. If the CSO's balance sheet showed a net loss or a negative level of equity over the past three years, AFD expects the CSO to explain this and to provide details of the planned recovery strategy. In this case, these details must be attached to the application file in the form of a written note signed by the CSO's management team or legal representative, and submitted via the OSCar portal.

D. MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY AND QUALITY OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION BY THE CSO

The CSO must justify its management and implementation capabilities with regard not only to the project submitted, but also to other projects it currently has underway. To do this, MPN/OSC will analyze the ratio of project budget to the CSO's annual budget (an annual project budget higher than 70% of the CSO's annual budget is a warning threshold, except in cases that are duly justified).

2. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection stage involves a qualitative assessment of the project based on the information provided in the NIONG. This analysis is based on the project eligibility criteria set out in the AMI to which the CSO responded (which remain valid for the selection phase) and the assessment criteria detailed below.

Experience and expertise of the local CSO: The CSO's expertise and the added value it brings will be examined in relation to the project theme and/or proposed geography. The NIONG must clearly demonstrate the added value provided by the CSO and its partners in implementing the project (know-how, expertise, experience).

The project's consistency with the CSO's rationale for intervention will also be analyzed.

Consistency and relevance: MPN/OSC pays particular attention to the relevance of the project in relation to the context and the needs identified, which the CSO must clearly explain (the presentation of a summary diagnosis will be appreciated). MPN/OSC also examines how consistent the project is with local sectoral public policies, where they exist in the sector concerned. Where appropriate, the project must make reference to the country's policy documents and any reforms underway. If the project makes no reference to these items, the application must explain the reasons why.

If there are no public policies in the sector concerned, the CSO must make reference to international good practices.

Partnerships: The quality of any partnerships forged between the CSO leading the project and other local civil society stakeholders is an important criterion for appraising the project. The project must primarily target the strengthening of local civil society stakeholders (including the lead CSO); the project may not target only the central and decentralized government services of the country in which the project is being implemented. These services must, however, be associated with the project (unless the situation in the country does not permit this).

If a partnership is forged between local CSO and other local organizations involved, this partnership is assessed in terms of the following factors (these factors are detailed in the NIONG):

- The NIONG must include all **useful information on all potential partners:** references, levels of expertise, means, management capabilities, and on how they will work with the local CSO leading the project.

- It must explain **how the partners will be involved in the project and to what extent**. To help ensure the sustainability of the project, MPN/OSC will take into consideration the ways in which the partners are involved in identifying, designing, implementing and evaluating the project.
- **The relationships established between the CSO and its partners** must be described in terms of how they came about and how they have developed.
- The NIONG must also explain the **capacity building strategy** for its partners, the objectives set, the ways in which it will be implemented, and the indicators that will be used to measure its success. The CSO must also explain how it will position itself and how it will contribute specifically to the process. If the CSO carried out an institutional assessment of the partner in a shared manner prior to the project being developed (which is recommended), summary points from this may be included in the NIONG to help provide an understanding of which aspects the capacity building actions will focus on.
- **The quality of the empowerment strategy** envisaged for the stakeholders involved must be described in detail: the project must contribute significantly to the institutional, technical and financial empowerment of the local partners and the various stakeholders involved in the project.
- The NIONG must, if necessary, detail how the project will be handed over (project management, governance, infrastructure, equipment, supplies, property titles, contracts, agreements, etc.).
- In the case of a multi-phase project, MPN/OSC will also assess the **expected changes in terms of partnership** (roles of the various stakeholders and level of autonomy that partners have during the project). The NIONG must clearly distinguish between partners and service providers.

Overall quality of the project: The NIONG's clarity and consistency are critical. CSOs are therefore encouraged to pay attention to the quality of the NIONG, which should be reflected in the logical framework of the project:

- The overall consistency of the project and how well the objectives, activities and resources are aligned;
- The result and effect indicators are specific and consistent with the objectives and expected outcomes;
- Lessons learned from previous actions and evaluations are taken into account;
- The project's estimated budget is consistent with the planned actions, and the unit costs are justified;
- The human resources and technical resources mobilized are consistent with the project's objectives.

Project size: Projects of significant importance and impact are preferred.

Gender analysis: Gender mainstreaming is a quality criterion for the project. It shall be based on a gender analysis of the project, the results of which, presented in the assessment/issues section, feed into the project design, at the very least as part of a "do no harm" approach so that the project does not increase gender inequalities, and in all other cases to improve the project's objectives, outcomes, activities and indicators.

Methodology considerations are provided in the Gender worksheet, and CSOs are encouraged to include in their budgets all the resources required for gender mainstreaming in the project.

Consideration of cross-cutting objectives related to biodiversity, climate, and the environment in the project: This is strongly encouraged because these themes are part of the priorities of French development aid policy and provide assurances that the project will effectively contribute to sustainable development issues. Having them as a central part of the project will give it an advantage in the selection process. Whenever the CSO states that its project addresses one or more of these themes, they must appear in the logical framework and be reflected by indicators.

Methodology considerations are provided in the Biodiversity/Climate worksheet.

Consideration of young people as project stakeholders: AFD considers that young people play a vital role in ensuring the "full integration" of the economy and the workplace, society and citizenship, the

environment and the climate, all of which are essential to achieving the SDGs. CSOs must endeavor to include measures that promote the quest for generational equity in their projects, particularly by making it easier for young people to get involved.

Methodology considerations are provided in the [Young People as Stakeholders worksheet](#).

Consideration of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA): As an aid organization and employer, AFD is aware of its responsibility to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, protect its employees, partners and beneficiaries of its actions, and to promote the highest possible standards of behavior. CSOs are now being urged to give greater consideration to this aspect in their projects. Project budgets submitted to the CSO Initiatives mechanism may now include expenditure relating to developing, strengthening, deploying, sustaining and adapting policies, procedures and tools to combat sexual exploitation and abuse. This expenditure must be justified and appropriate to the needs and specific characteristics of the CSO, its partners and its project. This may include expenditure related to:

- Training, information and awareness-raising activities for CSO teams and partners (at headquarters and in the field), as well as for beneficiary populations and communities;
- Discussion, co-construction and risk analysis workshops on policies and tools for protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse;
- Translation needs;
- External, technical, ad hoc support needed by CSOs at whatever stage they are in the project to help with policies and tools for protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse.

Methodology considerations are provided in the PEAS worksheet.

Innovation: AFD will assess how innovative a project is. The CSO must explain this in detail.

Target groups: The NIONG must detail the project's beneficiary population, quantifying it as precisely as possible: number and status of beneficiaries, **the type of structure they adopt** (for example, village committees, professional associations, neighborhood associations, etc.) and clearly distinguishing between direct and indirect beneficiaries.

It must also explain the target population's level of commitment and how the beneficiaries will take ownership of the planned actions. Young people are expected to be fully involved in the project, not just beneficiaries.

Human Resources: The CSO must use the HR tab in the project budget (Excel) to explain the human resources mobilized, precisely indicating the status of the personnel (salaried, volunteers, ad hoc volunteer experts, expatriates from other countries), the duration of their mission and their profile. **Time spent by the human resources on the project must be tracked (using time sheets or a time tracking tool or software, which the auditor must review).**

The involvement of volunteers is encouraged, including under some kind of reciprocal agreement (see the Young People as Stakeholders worksheet). This is a further way of actively involving young people in the project. In some countries, there are national volunteer schemes that CSOs may draw on for the project.

The CSO must explain how the human and technical resources mobilized for the implementation of the project relate to the objectives, activities and duration of the project. The CSO must ensure that the techniques or technologies it plans to use for the project are viable and sustainable over the long term, and that they are suitable for the local context and for the management and/or maintenance capabilities of its partner(s).

Monitoring and evaluation method and system: AFD will examine the quality of the mechanism and methods used to evaluate and/or monitor and evaluate and/or study the effects.

AFD strongly encourages [external evaluation](#) for all projects, regardless of their nature. External evaluation is required at the end of each phase for projects involving several phases. An evaluation of the effects of the change processes is strongly encouraged every nine years (every three phases). The cost of the evaluation or effects study may be included in the project's estimated budget and must not be

underestimated; the evaluator must be chosen through a call for tenders. Methodology considerations are provided in the Evaluation Principles worksheet.

Project capitalization: MPN/OSC encourages capitalization exercises carried out as part of projects and their wider dissemination, beyond the CSO itself. Capitalization materials can vary widely (brochures, reports, educational materials, conferences, videos, films, photographs, etc.).

Long-term success and sustainability: The NIONG must explain the prospects for the sustainability of the actions and achievements after the end of the project.

MPN/OSC pays particular attention to the conditions of social ownership, economic and financial viability and institutional sustainability of the action, in particular how the partner(s), stakeholders and/or beneficiary communities will take ownership of it.

MPN/OSC also pays attention to the strategy of financial empowerment of potential partner(s) and to how recurring costs incurred by the project will be covered over the long term.

Financial resources mobilized for the project: The CSO must ensure that its budgets are consistent (expenditure = resources) and that its financing plan is viable. The plan must indicate whether the expected resources are already available, have been applied for, or are still to be applied for.

Message content: The CSO must ensure that the content of messages conveyed by the project (publications, events, websites, etc.) does not contain racist, discriminatory or proselytizing language. France encourages CSOs to implement their projects in line with the human rights-based approach set out in the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs' Human Rights and Development Strategy.

V. ONCE THE PROJECT HAS BEEN SHORTLISTED: THE APPLICATION FOR CO-FINANCING

1. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR CO-FINANCING VIA THE OSCAR PORTAL

Once the project has been shortlisted, the CSO submits the application for co-financing via the OSCar portal.

The application for co-financing must include the following documents:

- **An administrative file** from the CSO. It is important to check that all the administrative documents are up to date and have been uploaded correctly to the dedicated area on the OSCar portal (CSO Information menu). If there are any changes to the administrative documents (relating to the board, executive committee, articles of association or management team), the CSO must upload updated versions to the dedicated area on the OSCar portal. Please provide a translation in French or English of all administrative documents, especially the articles of association.
- **A technical and financial file for the project, called the CSO Initiative Note (NIONG)**, in Word and Excel formats (for the financial tables), uploaded to the dedicated area on the OSCar portal (Projects menu).

/// KEY POINTS

Any incomplete or non-compliant file will be declared ineligible.

Files prepared according to the standard format used by other donors (the EU, for example) will not be accepted. The CSO must use the templates available in the reference documents on the AFD website.

A. FORMAT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE FILE UPLOADED TO THE OSCAR PORTAL (CSO INFORMATION MENU)

The administrative file must be submitted, **dated and signed less than three (3) months** before the submission date of each NIONG.

The documents that make up the administrative file are mentioned in the NIONG template.

B. FORMAT OF THE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL FILE UPLOADED TO THE OSCAR PORTAL (PROJECTS MENU)

The **technical and financial file** comprises:

- **The CSO Initiative Note (NIONG)**, see the [template](https://www.afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects) in the Reference Documents folder on the AFD website <https://www.afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects>.
- **The detailed estimated budget in Excel format with several tabs**, see the Reference Documents folder on the AFD website.

2. CSO INITIATIVE NOTE (NIONG)

A. NIONG

There is a single [template](#) for presenting projects, whether they are single-country or multi-country field projects, ECIS or SMA projects (see the Reference Documents folder on the AFD website: <https://www.afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects>).

/// KEY POINTS

The file must be prepared using Excel and Word files (Times New Roman font, size 11, single-spaced), and the maximum number of pages specified must be strictly adhered to. **No PDF files.**

The file may be prepared in French (preferred). For English-speaking CSOs or CSOs more familiar with the English language, the NIONG may be submitted in English.

The NIONG consists of:

- The [Project Summary Sheet](#)
- Project description
- Appendices

And accompanied by an estimated budget (see paragraph below).

B. PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

The Project Summary Sheet is **presented at the start of the NIONG**; it is a summary of the project (objectives, outcomes, target groups, etc.) prepared following a predefined format presented in the NIONG template.

C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND INDICATORS

This is the **main part of the NIONG**. It must describe the project using the format provided.

It **must detail the various characteristics of the project**. It must explain how the project came about, the project's context, diagnostic studies carried out beforehand, partnership structure, project steering, objectives, expected outcomes and main activities planned, and lastly the conditions for its long-term sustainability, along with the evaluation, audit, communication and capitalization arrangements put in place.

The project's approach to **gender** must also be explicit and ambitious, as must its inclusion of young people, especially since these two areas are linked in several ways.

In addition to the logical framework indicators presented in the NIONG, the CSO must also provide, via the OSCar portal (NIONG form) [and in the NIONG](#), information on aggregated indicators.

/// KEY POINTS

Aggregated indicators (AIs) must **be entered** directly in **OSCar** (restricted AI list) **and in the NIONG (complete AI list)**.

The CSO is required to fill in these indicators. They fall into two categories:

- **Specific aggregated indicators that apply to CSO Initiatives projects. The CSO is required to fill in these indicators.**
 - **For “field” projects**, the CSO must specify in the NIONG and in the form on the OSCar portal, the number of local CSO partners involved in implementing the project and, of these, the number of CSO partners who are beneficiaries of reallocation.
 - **For sustainable development and global citizenship education or SMA projects**, the CSO must provide information in the NIONG and in the form on the OSCar portal:
 - The number of CSOs (whether or not they are members of the CSO carrying the project) directly impacted by the project
 - The number of natural persons (who are members of the CSO) directly impacted by the project
 - The overall number of natural persons impacted by the project.
- **Aggregated sector-specific indicators for French bilateral aid**, which apply to AFD and have been approved by the French Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID). For “field” projects only, it is mandatory to provide information on the indicators applicable to the project, depending on its nature.

D. APPENDICES TO THE NIONG

The NIONG has several appendices that CSOs must complete.

Logical framework

Activities, expected outcomes, objectives and **key indicators** must be summarized in the logical framework, which is used as a reference document throughout the project's implementation. Methodology considerations are provided in the [logical framework worksheet](#).

The list of reallocation beneficiaries, regardless of the amount received, accompanied by the partner information sheets

Reallocation is the process by which the CSO passes on a share of the project funds to designated partners, regardless of where the funds came from (AFD and other funding bodies).

The beneficiary of reallocation is always a legal entity and not a physical person. The reallocation must be formalized in an agreement between the CSO and its partners who are the beneficiaries of the reallocation. MPN/OSC does not issue a no-objection (ANO) on this reallocation agreement, and the agreement does not have to be sent to MPN/OSC. However, the agreement may be reviewed during an audit.

Reallocation may involve a:

- **Financial reallocation:** A transfer of funds to the partner(s) for the implementation of the project (the partner(s) then become(s) responsible for the funds passed on), even though the CSO is still legally responsible to AFD for the proper use of these funds. This reallocation may take place at any time during the project.
- **Material reallocation:** The transfer to the partner(s) of equipment acquired for the implementation of the project (vehicles, for example). Reallocation may take place at any time during the project.

Reallocation may be:

- **First tier:** From the CSO to its main partner;
- **Second tier:** From the CSO's main partner to one or more other local partners. This second-tier reallocation is subject to the same conditions as first-tier reallocation. The local CSO is responsible for monitoring these conditions.

Financial reallocation is not mandatory. There is no minimum or maximum reallocation amount.

In accordance with the provisions for anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), AFD must carry out AML/CFT due diligence on the beneficiary(ies) of financial reallocation paid in one or more disbursements and regardless of where the funds came from (AFD or another donor)-

- When the reallocation beneficiary(ies) is/are identified at the time the project is developed, the CSO must, in the NIONG, complete the list of partners and stakeholders receiving reallocation, including the amount reallocated, and the partner information sheet.
- If the reallocation beneficiary(ies) is/are identified during project implementation, the CSO must inform MPN/OSC and provide the list of these partners via the OSCar portal in order to obtain a no-objection (ANO).
 - The CSO must provide identification details for the reallocation beneficiary(ies) (company name, registered office, identity of the responsible partners) using the list of partners and stakeholders receiving reallocation (see Appendix of the NIONG) and the partner information sheet.
 - After completing the necessary AML/CFT due diligence, MPN/OSC will notify the CSO of its response (objection or no-objection) within one month. The CSO may only pass on funds to the partner(s) after receiving AFD's no-objection.

Partner information sheet

This sheet describes the main characteristics of the CSO's main partner(s) (regardless of whether reallocation is planned or not). The CSO may send this sheet after the application for co-financing has been submitted if the CSO identifies the new partner during project implementation. However, if reallocation is involved, the CSO must obtain a no-objection from AFD when a partner is added or changed.

"Country component" sheet

For multi-country projects only, the CSO must fill out a summary sheet for each country where the project will be implemented. This sheet provides a summary of the project in each country (local context, objectives, activities and project outcomes). There must therefore be as many "country component" sheets as there are countries covered by the project. These sheets must be updated with information on project implementation when submitting the interim and final implementation reports.

Compliance Questionnaire: Analysis of the CSO/Foundation Counterparty System

In many intervention areas, AFD has to deal with the risk of funds destined for CSOs being misappropriated, in particular to finance terrorism. Despite the many, and increasing, efforts undertaken by CSOs to promote and strengthen their operations, some CSOs may still be vulnerable to this risk.

CSOs may be exposed to the risk of their funds being misappropriated to finance terrorism not only because of their location and/or involvement in sensitive areas, but also because of their involvement in areas with little or no access to banking services, which results in the increased use of cash, or because of the type of activities they engage in.

Furthermore, French financial institutions must comply with various regulatory obligations aimed specifically at combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. As a result, AFD is strictly prohibited from making funds available, directly or indirectly, to any listed persons or entities.

The CSO partner fills out this questionnaire so that AFD can assess how it manages fiduciary risk and the risk of money laundering and terrorist financing.

Fiduciary risk should be understood as everything involved in good financial governance within each counterparty. This includes corruption risk and internal governance aspects (such as the organizational measures, rules, procedures and processes used to understand how the counterparty is managed, administered and controlled). AFD pays particular attention to the risk arising from the counterparty's failure to comply with the conditions of use or time for the funds transferred to it. This requires the counterparty to behave responsibly, transparently and with respect for the resources assigned to it by AFD.

Note: The questionnaire has two parts: one relating to the CSO itself (to be submitted as early as possible via OSCar), and the other focusing on the project.

E. DETAILED ESTIMATED BUDGET

The CSO must provide details of **the estimated budget** (download the documents: [Budget table](#) and [its instructions for use](#)). It must **specify the duration of each Tranche (number of months)**.

/// KEY POINTS

To complete the estimated budget, the CSO must refer to the budget table's instructions for use.

The budget must be **submitted in Excel format, signed, dated and stating the name and position of the authorized person**, at the same time as submitting the application for co-financing.

The CSO must fill out the "projected" columns in each of the six tabs:

- Expenditure/Resources/Valuations
- HR Breakdown
- Country breakdown (for multi-country projects)

The allocation of expenditure is estimated. It may be updated during project implementation, provided that any request to do so is duly justified and has received a no-objection from the MPN/OSC project manager, in cases where a prior no-objection from AFD is required.

In the "Resources" tab, the CSO must ensure that the column indicating the status of resources (already available, applied for, still to be applied for) appears in the budget included in the NIONG.

In all cases, the total projected expenditure must be equal (to the nearest euro) to the total projected resources for each of the Tranches and in total.

Applicable exchange rate

Unless otherwise agreed between the CSO and AFD (MPN/OSC) in the NIONG, costs incurred in currencies other than those used in the CSO's accounts for the project shall be converted to euros (€) using an exchange rate in line with the CSO's usual accounting practices, provided these practices meet the following conditions:

- The accounting rule is documented and is standard practice for the CSO;
- This rule is applied consistently throughout the project;

- This rule is applied to all types of transactions and all sources of financing throughout the life of the project;
- Evidence of the accounting rule used shall be provided by the CSO upon request by MPN/OSC;
- Exchange rates shall be readily available for any audit and made available to MPN/OSC upon request.

Rules governing expenditure incurred prior to project effective date

Expenditure is not eligible if incurred prior to the date on which the AFD grant was awarded (date of the NGO Committee).

However, expenditure incurred prior to the project effective date may be accepted in two special cases:

- If the CSO wanted to **start the project early using financial resources already obtained that are equal to or greater than 50%** of the total budget (private or public sector finance). In this case, the CSO must provide proof of the financing agreements obtained before the financing agreement between it and AFD is signed. This retrospective expenditure may only be incurred in the twelve months preceding the date on which the AFD grant was approved.
- **If there is a delay between the end date of AFD financing for one phase of a project and the date of granting financing for the next phase**, AFD may retrospectively finance the expenditure that the CSO had to incur to ensure continuity between the two phases. This retrospective expenditure may only be incurred in the twelve months preceding the date on which the AFD grant for the new phase was approved; the CSO must provide evidence that this expenditure was essential.

Any request for retrospective reimbursement of expenditure must be clearly justified and discussed in advance with MPN/OSC. The CSO must explain the reasons for requesting retrospective treatment in the NIONG sent to MPN/OSC. The CSO must include the expenditure eligible for retrospective treatment in the estimated project budget attached to the NIONG submitted for AFD financing. The CSO must be able to justify expenditure that was incurred prior to submitting the application to MPN/OSC, if necessary.

NB: If the project has been the subject of studies (initial evaluation, diagnostic studies, feasibility studies) before the project is submitted to MPN/OSC, this expenditure may be included in the project's estimated budget, provided that it is duly justified and detailed in the NIONG and discussed with MPN/OSC. If agreed by AFD, this expenditure will be eligible even if incurred and disbursed before the start of the project, but must have been carried out within a maximum of twelve months preceding the effective project start date.

VI. ONCE FINANCING HAS BEEN APPROVED: CONTRACT AGREEMENT AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

1. CONTRACT AGREEMENT

A. SIGNING OF THE FINANCING AGREEMENT

a) Notification of granting of AFD financing

AFD financing is granted on the condition that no significant change occurs in the project or its working environment compared with the situation described at the time of project appraisal.

Once the grant has been approved by the NGO Committee, MPN/OSC sends the beneficiary CSO a **notification letter** by email, along with the finalized draft agreement in PDF format, before triggering the electronic signature process (via the secure esygnature workflow).

The notification letter sets out the terms and conditions and the documents to be provided for signing the agreement.

The financing agreement was revised in April 2025 and now applies to all CSOs financed by AFD (all mechanisms); however, it provides for specific provisions related to certain mechanisms, including CSO-I.

The financing agreement comprises the contractual agreement with, as appendices, the project description and its financing plan, which have contractual value.

If a crisis and/or a natural disaster and/or a coup d'état occurs in the country(ies) where the project is being implemented, MPN/OSC is prepared to take the consequences of these events into account in terms of the timetable, logical framework and the current project budget (at a constant AFD grant rate). These aspects would need to be adjusted following the temporary or permanent suspension of project activities, in connection with a change in needs related to reconstruction/rehabilitation or recovery. MPN/OSC will analyze the feasibility of the requested adjustments, and will make the necessary amendment(s). MPN/OSC will inform the CSOs concerned of this flexibility available to them as soon as such an event occurs in the country(ies) where the project is being implemented.

/// KEY POINTS

Before finalizing the financing agreement, the CSO must ensure that:

- It updates the **project description and financing plan** attached to the agreement if necessary, ensuring that these do not change significantly from those in the documents presented to the NGO Committee (in particular the list of countries concerned, duration, project start and end dates, components, stakeholders and operating procedures). If more substantial modifications are required for the project, related to changes in the project environment, the CSO will inform MPN/OSC as soon as possible. MPN/OSC will examine the content and accept or reject these modifications **before finalizing the agreement**.
- It updates the **communication sheet** if required for its publication on the AFD and French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs websites in accordance with IATI standards. The CSO's signature on the agreement will indicate its written consent to its publication and to the disclosure of project data.

b) Lifting of conditions precedent to the signature of the financing agreement

Only once the Agreement has been signed electronically, which must take place no later than two months after the date on which the notification letter is sent, will AFD commit to financing the project.

MPN/OSC will send the operating procedure for the electronic signature process to the CSO at the same time as the notification letter and the finalized draft agreement.

The electronic signature process for the agreement will only be triggered once the CSO has agreed the finalized draft agreement by email and all the expected documents, as set out in the notification letter, have either been uploaded to the OSCar portal or sent by regular mail and have been checked by MPN/OSC.

The CSO must have previously checked that all the administrative documents are up to date and have been uploaded correctly to the dedicated area on the OSCar portal (CSO Information menu):

- Accounts for the last three financial years;
- Activity reports for the last three financial years;
- Composition of the Board of Directors;
- A copy of the minutes of the appointment of the president made by the beneficiary's decision-making body, dated, signed and bearing the handwritten words "certified true to the original" by a representative of the beneficiary authorized for this purpose and whose authorization is in force on the date of signing the agreement;
- A copy of the articles of association dated, signed and bearing the handwritten words "certified true to the original" by a representative of the beneficiary authorized for this purpose if this is the first upload to the OSCar portal, or a certificate signed by a representative of the beneficiary authorized for this purpose and whose authorization is in force on the date of signing the agreement and stating that the articles of association uploaded to the OSCar portal are the most up-to-date articles of association;
- A copy of the beneficiary's license or registration certificate from the relevant authorities, dated less than three (3) months ago;
- A copy of the identity documents of each person authorized to sign on behalf of the beneficiary the agreement, any disbursement request and any documents authorized by or required from the beneficiary under the agreement.
- A Beneficiary's bank details for the account to which the grant funds are to be transferred.

The CSO must also **send by regular mail**:

- An original of the certificate of delegation of signatures designating the persons authorized to sign on behalf of the beneficiary the agreement, any disbursement request and any documents authorized by or required from the beneficiary under the agreement. The original specimen signatures of each of the authorized persons must be sent with the certificate.

At the same time as signing the agreement, the CSO must also upload the following **communication materials** to the OSCar portal (Projects menu – Associated Documents/Communication Document section):

- For all projects, the **communication sheet** (Word format, see the template and instructions provided in the Communication Kit available on the AFD website: <https://www.afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects>). This sheet presents the CSO leading the project, its local partners and the project's objectives, content, location and expected outcomes. **This is the document used to meet the transparency standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).** It must be accompanied by a high-definition photo, which the OSC must send to the project manager by email.
The CSO agrees that the communication sheet may be distributed externally and approves its content upon signing the financing agreement. AFD then publishes this document on its website and on the French government's website (www.transparence-aide.gouv.fr), in accordance with France's commitments on transparency for financed projects. The CSO is free to use it, in paper or digital format, to publicize its project. Uploading it to the OSCar platform will be considered as consent for its publication;
- **For all projects, one to two photos illustrating the project or its context** (see the Visibility Guide in the **Communication Kit** (see the Reference Documents folder).
- **For projects whose financing agreement specifies Level 2 communication, the project communication plan** (see to the Level 2 Communication Guide in the Communication Kit).

B. CONTRACTUAL PROVISIONS OF THE FINANCING AGREEMENT

a) CSO's commitments and obligations

MPN/OSC informs the CSO that by signing the agreement, it commits to the following:

- The CSO must **comply with all the commitments and obligations made under the agreement** and ensure that potential partner(s) who may be reallocation beneficiary(ies) also comply with these commitments and obligations.
- The CSO must ensure that these commitments and obligations under the financing agreement are **included, as appropriate, in the reallocation agreement with each partner**. This reallocation agreement may take any form the CSO chooses. MPN/OSC does not provide a no-objection on this reallocation agreement. However, this agreement may be reviewed as part of an audit or on request by MPN/OSC.
- The CSO undertakes to **comply with all local laws and regulations** applicable to it and to the project, particularly in the areas of environmental protection, safety and labor law (environmental and social standards), and to comply with international standards in the areas of environmental protection and labor law, including the Fundamental Conventions of the ILO and international conventions on the environment, in keeping with the laws and regulations applicable in the country where the project is being implemented.
- The CSO **undertakes to ensure that the funds invested in the project are not of illicit origin and that the project does not give rise to any act of corruption, fraud or anti-competitive practices.**
- The CSO **undertakes not to make funds available, either directly or indirectly, to any entity included on the lists applicable to AFD (see relevant worksheet).**
- The CSO undertakes, when awarding contracts relating to the implementation of the project (contracts for intellectual services, services, works and supplies) to **comply with the rules relating to procurement**. If a contract is not awarded or performed in accordance with the commitments, AFD will be entitled to request the reimbursement of all or part of the funds it has paid.
- The CSO agrees to **meet the various key dates** of the project outlined in the agreement.

- The CSO agrees to **comply with the reporting commitments** outlined in the agreement (audit, evaluation, communication).
- The CSO undertakes to implement any **specific commitments** related to the implementation of the project, as defined with MPN/OSC during project appraisal and included in the agreement. The CSO must specify the conditions for their implementation in the implementation reports.
- The CSO undertakes to open a dedicated account or, failing that, to implement a **system for tracking all project-related expenditure and resources** (cost accounting).

b) Procurement rules and thresholds in the financing agreement

In the procurement, award and performance of contracts relating to the implementation of the project, the CSO undertakes to:

- Observe the **principles of competition, fair treatment and transparency**, in accordance with internationally recognized standards recommended by the OECD and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption;
- **Comply with the laws and regulations of the country and/or procedures** applicable to it in all aspects of the contract procurement process. The CSO shall apply the most restrictive of the provisions of the laws and regulations applicable to it and the provisions of this section;
- Award contracts to companies that are in all respects sufficiently assured of their ability to perform the contract;
- Require applicants to provide the proposed **Integrity Statement** (see Reference Documents folder) duly signed, and to include this signed document as a contractual document of the contract (including in the case of a negotiated contract) only if the contract is greater than or equal to €20,000;
- **Keep the documents and accounting records** relating to the procurement, awarding and performance of contracts **for a period of ten years** from the deadline for the disbursement of funds stipulated in the agreement, and submit them for verification to AFD or to an auditor appointed for the project.

In the procurement, award and performance of contracts relating to the implementation of the project, the OSC undertakes to follow the following procurement procedures (if necessary, refer to the Support Guide to the Standard Agreement between AFD and CSOs available in the AML/CFT & Procurement folder on the AFD website).

If the contract value is less than €20,000, the CSO shall follow its own procurement procedures, except for contracts relating to project audit and evaluation, which must undergo a competitive bidding process (see sections on audit and evaluation).

If the contract value is less than €200,000 for supplies, consultants or services, or less than €300,000 for works, the CSO shall apply its own procurement procedures, provided that they include:

- ✓ Decision-making by an evaluation committee of at least three suitably qualified individuals with no hierarchical link between them (except in exceptional cases), for contracts worth more than €40,000;
- ✓ The principle of awarding contracts for intellectual services to the best bidder (based on quality and cost);
- ✓ Publication of the contract award notice for contracts worth more than €40,000 after competitive bidding (may be done annually);
- ✓ No mention of brand names in the technical specifications (unless necessary);
- ✓ Reasonable submission deadlines;
- ✓ For calls for tenders, sending a complete file (including evaluation criteria and draft contract) to bidders;
- ✓ The Statement of Integrity signed by the selected provider.

If the contract value exceeds €200,000 for supplies, consultants or services, or exceeds €300,000 for works, the CSO should refer to the Support Guide to the Standard Agreement between AFD and CSOs.

In the case of the award or performance of contracts with a restricted or open call for tenders, the CSO must ensure that:

- The time period allowed for preparing tenders is sufficient to allow the candidates to prepare good-quality tenders;
- Tenders must be analyzed by an evaluation committee based on the exclusion, qualification and award criteria announced in advance. This committee must be made up of at least three members, all of whom shall have the technical and administrative expertise required to formulate a sound evaluation of the tenders. At the end of the committee, a record of decisions must be written and signed;
- The total cumulative amount of amendments to a contract may not exceed 20% of the initial amount of the contract.

c) Contractual dates of the financing agreement

MPN/OSC informs the CSO that by signing the financing agreement, it commits to meeting the following dates:

- **The signature date of the agreement** may be later or earlier than the actual start date of the project;
- **The validity date of the agreement** is two years after the effective project end date;
- The **expenditure eligibility start date** is the same as the effective project start date (this date appears in the NIONG and in the agreement). It may not be earlier than the date of the AFD grant, except in the case of retrospective expenditure detailed above;
- **The expenditure eligibility end date** is the same as the effective project end date. All expenditure must have been incurred (i.e. expenditure **committed and paid for activities carried out**) by this date, except for expenditure related to the final evaluation and audit, which may be paid up to one year after the effective project end date. If expenditure incurred for activities carried out before the end of the project has not been paid by the effective project end date, it may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, but it must be certain (final amount known from supporting documents) and be covered by a no-objection request;
- **The deadline for the disbursement of funds** is the date beyond which no request for disbursement may be made to MPN/OSC. It is set at six months before the effective project end date;
- **The deadline for the use of funds** is the same as the effective project end date. This is the date beyond which no expenditure may be incurred (i.e. committed and paid), except for expenditure related to the external audit and the final project evaluation, which may be incurred up to one year after the effective project end date. Funds not used by the deadline, not duly justified or insufficiently justified, must be returned to AFD;
- The CSO must send the **interim technical and financial implementation report including the actual for Tranche 1 and the forecast for Tranche 2** (provided that at least 70% of total expenditure for the Tranche has been incurred) to MPN/OSC no later than three months after the Tranche 1 end date;
- The CSO must send the **interim audit report** to MPN/OSC no later than three months after the Tranche 1 end date;
- The CSO must send the **final technical and financial implementation report** to MPN/OSC no later than three months after the effective project end date; this deadline increases to six months if the project has no subsequent phase;
- The CSO must send the **final audit report** for Tranche 2 to MPN/OSC no later than six months after the effective project end date;
- The CSO must send the **final evaluation report** to MPN/OSC:
 - No later than three months after the effective project end date if the CSO plans to submit a new phase application;
 - No later than six months after the effective project end date if the project has no subsequent phase.

d) Conditions precedent and specific commitments related to the project

The financing agreement **may include specific conditions precedent to the implementation of the project**. To lift any conditions precedent specified, the CSO must provide the requested documents at

the earliest opportunity. The requested documents may differ greatly in nature, for example (list not exhaustive):

- A letter from the local authorities confirming that they agree to the project and its implementation;
- Evaluation report or audit report from the previous phase;
- Technical and financial implementation report from the previous phase for approval by MPN/OSC;
- A document confirming that a monitoring and evaluation system is in place;
- A document outlining the project's or CSO's gender strategy;
- Detailed results indicators and/or the implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system;
- Written confirmation that other stated financing has been secured;
- Any other documents related to the implementation of the project.

The financing agreement **may also include specific commitments related to the implementation of the project**. The CSO must report on whether these specific commitments have been met in the implementation reports.

Where applicable, the agreement will state these specific commitments at the very end of Article 6.

e) Safety- and security-related provisions

CSOs that receive an AFD grant are responsible for the safety and security of their staff (expatriate, local, ad hoc support, volunteers) during project implementation, and for the safety and security of the staff of the entities to which they entrust or delegate all or part of project implementation.

The terms of reference CSOs draw up for recruiting auditors, consultants, experts and external evaluators for projects must also include a clause on their safety and security if they are required to spend time in the field.

CSOs **are advised to develop a safety and security plan** and update it regularly to reflect any changes in the project's operating environment. For reference, a best practice guide is available at the following link: <https://www.afd.fr/en/ressources/best-practice-guide-security-plan>. This guide highlights the importance of taking safety and security considerations into account and provides best practices for developing a dedicated plan. It is aimed at all entities receiving or that may receive AFD financing. MPN/OSC allows any costs related to safety and security to be included in the project budget.

CSOs may, if they wish, use the services (free of charge) of a specialized security solutions provider (with which AFD has signed a contract) to advise them on their security plan. CSOs wishing to benefit from this assistance should contact the MPN/OSC project manager, who will put them in touch with the specialized provider.⁷

f) Communication-related provisions

The financing agreement specifies the visibility level (level 1 or level 2) applicable to the project. The CSO and AFD determine the visibility level during the project appraisal phase.

CSOs that receive an AFD grant agree to give visibility to AFD's financial support and to follow the communication guidelines for level 1 or level 2 as detailed in the [Communication worksheet](#). The [reference document](#) (Communication Kit) includes templates for the required documents, logos and other materials that CSOs may find useful.

These communication guidelines apply to all projects that AFD co-finances except in cases involving a sensitive security environment that puts project partners or beneficiaries at risk, or when communication may be harmful or detrimental to the smooth running of the project. The CSO and AFD will discuss these exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

⁷ CSOs may also wish to visit the INSO ([International NGO Safety Organization \(INSO\) | Analysis & Advice for Humanitarians](#)) website to gather information on security and safety matters.

2. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

A. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS PROCEDURES

Projects are divided into two Tranches (with some exceptions), which correspond to the two disbursements that AFD makes to the CSO over the course of the project. At the request of the CSO, AFD will decide whether an additional Tranche should be set up if a particular situation requires it.

/// KEY POINTS

The typical **schedule for a three-year project** is as follows: Tranche 1 (18 months) and Tranche 2 (18 months). However, MPN/OSC allows some flexibility in the duration of each phase. For example: Tranche 1 (12 months) and Tranche 2 (24 months) or Tranche 1 (15 months) and Tranche 2 (21 months).

In all cases, the CSO must always state the duration of each phase (number of months) in the technical and financial documents.

The disbursement for Tranche 1 is an advance paid on signing the financing agreement. The first disbursement **will equal 100% of AFD's financial contribution to the budget for Tranche 1.**

The lifting of the conditions precedent to the first disbursement only takes place after both parties have signed the agreement.

MPN/OSC reserves the right to cancel the financing granted if the conditions precedent to the signature are not lifted within 18 months from the date of the AFD grant.

The disbursement for Tranche 2 is the balance of the grant requested by the CSO. The CSO must prove that it has incurred 70% of the total estimated expenditure in the budget for Tranche 1. The second disbursement will equal 100% of AFD's financial contribution to the budget for Tranche 2, as detailed in the **interim financial implementation report.**

The CSO and MPN/OSC must hold a mid-term evaluation meeting after receiving the interim financial implementation report. This meeting may be held remotely.

CSOs are reminded that **MPN/OSC cannot make the second disbursement without having previously received the interim technical and financial implementation report, and without first approving** this with a no-objection.

AFD will transfer the grant funds to any bank account designated by the CSO at a reputable banking institution acceptable to AFD (discussion required at the time of negotiating and signing the contract), located in the country where the CSO is domiciled.

The CSO is not required to open a bank account specifically for the project, but it must use a system that keeps accurate cost accounting records to track of project-related expenditure and resources.

/// KEY POINTS

MPN/OSC reserves the right to make its first disbursement, or subsequent disbursements, conditional on the actual mobilization of equivalent resources from the financial partners listed in the financing plan, or possibly from other partners not initially listed.

B. DISBURSEMENT REQUEST AND LIFTING OF CONDITIONS PRECEDENT

For each disbursement request, the CSO must upload a PDF copy of the disbursement request letter to the OSCar Portal (Projects menu – Disbursement Request section), addressed to AFD for the attention of the Head of the Civil Society Organizations Division. This letter must be:

- On CSO letterhead or stamped with the CSO stamp;
- Signed **in original** by an authorized person who has submitted a specimen signature to MPN/OSC (no electronic signatures or scanned signatures; the signature must be scanned in **original** form).

The original letter must be dated, include a subject line, the number of the relevant financing agreement, the amount of the expected disbursement (in figures and in words) and the bank account details of the account into which the disbursement is to be paid.

The letter must detail all the accompanying documents required for the requested disbursement, including the bank account details document.

The CSO must also request the lifting of any specific conditions precedent; this may be included in the same letter as the disbursement request.

To lift the conditions precedent to the first disbursement, the CSO must provide MPN/OSC, via the OSCar portal, with its disbursement request, the supporting documents mentioned in Appendix 4 of the financing agreement, in particular:

- The single budget table identical to the one approved as part of the agreement, in Excel format, dated, signed and stating the name and position of the authorized person;
- The logical framework of the project, in Word format, as presented in the final version of the NIONG.

To lift the conditions precedent to the second disbursement, the CSO must provide MPN/OSC, via the OSCar portal, with its disbursement request, the supporting documents mentioned in Appendix 4 of the financing agreement, in particular:

- The interim technical and financial implementation report in Word and Excel formats.

See the Reference Documents folder to download templates for these documents.

C. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The logical framework ([NIONG appendix](#)) must be sufficiently detailed to present in concrete terms the preparation and implementation of the project's main activities and **must indicate the duration and dates of the Tranches** (see also the [Logical framework worksheet](#)). It is sent:

- **At the start of Tranche 1:** logical framework **highlighting the activities planned to start in Tranche 1** (as presented in the NIONG). If the logical framework is amended from that included in the NIONG, the changes must be clearly identified and MPN/OSC informed.
- **At the start of Tranche 2:** the interim technical and financial implementation report does not include the logical framework as such, but incorporates its elements into its structure. Refer to the [template provided](#).
- **At the end of the project:** the final technical and financial implementation report does not include the logical framework as such, but includes its structural elements.

All the documents submitted will be used as a basis of reference and comparison when transmitting and validating the technical and financial reports for the tranches completed.

/// KEY POINTS

The logical framework must follow the format presented in the NIONG; if not, MPN/OSC will return it and delay the disbursement.

VII. DURING THE PROJECT: MONITORING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

MPN/OSC monitors the implementation of the projects it supports in various ways, including:

- Approval of the interim and final technical and financial implementation reports submitted by CSOs;
- Field monitoring missions, carried out either by MPN/OSC or by the local AFD field office;
- Receipt of evaluation reports;
- Mid-term evaluation meeting with the CSO for each project;
- Interim and final audits.

1. INTERIM AND FINAL TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

A. GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING THE IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

The implementation report is submitted twice:

- **At the end of Tranche 1**, the **technical and financial implementation report** is sent to MPN/OSC **no later than three months after the Tranche 1 end date, provided that at least 70% of total expenditure for Tranche 1 has been incurred**. If total incurred expenditure does not reach the 70% threshold by the Tranche 1 end date, the CSO does not have to submit the interim implementation report but must submit a no-objection request to extend the duration of Tranche 1. If total incurred expenditure reaches the 70% threshold before the Tranche 1 end date, the CSO may submit a no-objection request to reduce the duration of Tranche 1. The interim implementation report accompanies the letter requesting the second disbursement. The interim audit report covering Tranche 1 of the project must accompany the interim implementation report.
- **At the end of Tranche 2**, the final technical and financial implementation report is sent to MPN/OSC no later than three months after the effective project end date. This deadline increases to six months if the project has no subsequent phase. The final report covers both the project as a whole and the second Tranche of the project. The evaluation report of the project must accompany the final implementation report. The CSO must send the audit report covering Tranche 2 of the project to MPN/OSC no later than six months after the effective project end date.

/// KEY POINTS

MPN/OSC reserves the right to set a different schedule for the delivery of the technical and financial implementation reports if the project warrants it.

The implementation report must be in the requested format. Refer to the report template.

The CSO must upload the report in Word and Excel formats (not PDF format) to the OSCar portal (Projects menu – Disbursement File section for the interim report; Projects menu – Monitoring section for the final report).

The CSO must submit a duly justified no-objection request to MPN/OSC to obtain authorization for any delay in submitting the implementation reports.

MPN/OSC has one month to respond from the date of receipt of the request.

B. GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING THE TECHNICAL REPORT

a) Interim technical report

The interim technical report must describe the implementation of the project during Tranche 1. It must provide quantitative and qualitative information on the progress of the project and what it achieved during this Tranche.

The CSO must detail the activities carried out and the resulting outcomes (indicators) in the tables provided for this purpose, and comment on any variations noted in relation to the initial logical framework (critical qualitative analysis).

The measures taken to address these differences and, if applicable, the difficulties experienced, must be explained (changes in the way activities are carried out, organizational or budgetary changes to the project, etc.). The report template provides information on how to fill out each section (see the Reference Documents folder).

b) Final technical report

The final technical report must describe the implementation for the project overall. It must provide qualitative and quantitative information on the achievements and outcomes of the project, along with lessons learned, an in-depth analysis and an overall assessment of the project's effects (see the Reference Documents folder).

C. GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING THE FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report must be submitted at the same time as the technical report.

When preparing the financial report, the CSO must take into account the detailed estimated budget filled out for the NIONG approved at the time of signing the agreement (to download this document, see the Reference Documents folder). The detailed budget is the only financial document that must be completed as the project progresses.

In the narrative accompanying the detailed budget, the CSO must, as appropriate:

- Provide a reminder of the **no-objections** from MPN/OSC that it has received for variations greater than or equal to **20%** of the initial planned (or revised, if applicable) **total** of a budget heading in the overall project financing plan;
- **Explain** systematically any variations greater than or equal to **10%** of the total of any budget heading in relation to the initial estimated budget (or revised budget, if applicable) for that heading over the duration **of a Tranche**;
- Provide information on new financing obtained for the project (donor, amount and, if applicable relevant period).

/// KEY POINTS

The various tabs of the budget table must be dated, signed and state the name and position of the person who approves the budgets. This must be a person authorized to sign the agreement or disbursement requests. If not, the CSO must attach the authorization decision for the new signatory, an original specimen signature and a copy of their identity document.

2. MID-TERM PROJECT EVALUATION MEETING

The project's mid-term evaluation meeting (which may be held remotely) is an important milestone for the CSO and MPN/OSC. The CSO and MPN/OSC must jointly ensure that it takes place after the CSO has submitted the interim implementation report.

For the discussion to be constructive and effective, the CSO and MPN/OSC may discuss the following topics (the CSO may also suggest adding other topics to the agenda if it feels this is necessary):

- Possible changes in the project's operating environment;
- The extent to which the planned activities have been completed and the outcomes achieved (interim measurement of indicators) including a focus for each country where the project is being implemented;
- A description of the support that the CSO has provided and the difficulties or obstacles encountered, if any, in implementing the activities and achieving the expected outcomes, along with a description of the proposed solutions to overcome the difficulties or obstacles identified;
- The status of the partnership relationship between the CSO and its potential partner(s);
- The CSO's proposed evaluation process (timetable, nature of the internal/external evaluation, indicators, main evaluation questions identified at this stage, etc.);
- The CSO's proposed capitalization exercises (targets, times, stakeholders, scope, etc.);
- Main changes, realignment and innovations necessary for the next stage of the project (e.g. review of activities, changes in human resources, no-objection requests, new phase, etc.);
- Gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of young people as stakeholders in the project;
- The state of relations with embassies and AFD field offices at the local level;
- Financial audit (interim and final) procedures;
- Communication actions already undertaken and planned, if applicable.

3. OTHER DOCUMENTS TO SEND TO AFD

The CSO must send these documents to MPN/OSC via the OSCar portal in the following circumstances:

Updated or changed CSO documents

Updates

- The audited annual accounts, approved by the General Assembly, are updated based on those provided in the initial administrative file.
- The annual activity report, approved by the General Assembly, is updated based on the last one provided in the initial administrative file.
- Organization chart (if changed).

Changes

- New mailing address.
- Articles of association.
- CSO's amended license or registration certificate.
- Persons newly authorized to sign agreements, disbursement requests and/or implementation reports with the authorizations **and original specimen signatures** + copies of identity documents for these newly appointed authorized persons (which must also be sent by regular mail) (changes subject to AFD's AML/CFT risk controls).

Documents created as part of the project

- Copies of the main publications financed under the project.
 - Minutes of any steering committees, monitoring committees or extended meetings held as part of the project.
- If the agreement includes specific commitments, the progress made in achieving them should be specified in the implementation reports at least.

/// KEY POINTS

To make it easier to read the financial documents, if the latest accounts (balance sheet and/or income statement) show a deficit or an adverse trend, or if the CSO is facing financial difficulties over one or more years, MPN/CSO requests that the CSO provide information to assist in understanding its financial situation when compiling or updating its administrative file. The CSO must then include a detailed commentary in the related annual accounts.

4. CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING A NO-OBJECTION (ANO)

During project implementation, the CSO must request, via the OSCar portal (Project menu – ANO Request section), a no-objection (ANO) from MPN/OSC in the circumstances described below. This must take the form of a **duly justified no-objection request letter, accompanied by the additional documents listed below.**

- **The no-objection request is a scanned letter that clearly identifies the project (agreement number and project title mentioned in the heading) and the sender (first and last name, position and organization).**
- This no-objection request does not have to be signed by an authorized person. It may be signed by a person typically in contact with MPN/OSC for the project's operational monitoring, in accordance with the CSO's internal procedures.

It is strongly recommended that CSOs contact their AFD project contact before submitting any no-objection request.

	Circumstance	Details	Documents to be sent <u>with the no-objection request letter</u>
1	CSO name change (no legal change)	The no-objection will result in an amendment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New articles of association; • Statement of registration with the Prefecture; • Publication in the official gazette; • SIRENE notice; • AGM minutes.
2	Significant change to some of the project's data (implementation timetable, areas of intervention, activities, etc.) but which do not fundamentally affect the project	The CSO must submit the no-objection request prior to making the proposed changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description and justification of the proposed changes.
3	If a crisis and/or a natural disaster and/or a coup d'état occurs in the country(ies) where the project is being implemented	MPN/OSC is prepared to take the consequences of these events into account in terms of the timetable, logical framework and the current project budget. These aspects would need to be adjusted following the temporary or permanent suspension of project activities or following a change in needs related to reconstruction/rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description and justification of the proposed changes.

		or recovery. MPN/OSC will analyze the feasibility of the requested adjustments for the no-objection, and will make the necessary amendment(s).	
4	Significant change to the project's overall budget (Expenditure and/or Resources) attached to the financing agreement	<p>The following changes require the CSO to submit a no-objection request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the overall project financing plan, any variation greater than or equal to 20% in a budget heading compared with the last approved budget. • If MPN/OSC approves the proposed new overall project budget, it will be binding and the CSO will be required to use this new basis in its project reporting. • Increase in the percentage of AFD financing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed new budget with explanatory narrative.
5	Addition of a significant private co-funder	<p>Addition of one or more co-funders (public or private), contributing at least 15% of the total project amount; Including those that the CSO identifies as solicited or to be solicited at the time it submits the NIONG and acquired during the project.</p> <p>If MPN/OSC approves the proposed new overall project budget, it will be binding and the CSO will be required to use this new basis in its project reporting.</p>	N/A
6	Equipment financed under the project	If the equipment was not foreseen in the initial application for financing (amount greater than €10,000 for "field" or ECIS/SMA projects).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSO must specify the conditions under which ownership of the equipment will be transferred at the end of the project.
7	Reallocation to one or more new partners during the lifetime of the project, or to a partner not identified as a reallocation beneficiary in the initial NIONG	<p>The CSO must submit a no-objection request for any reallocation not foreseen in the initial application for financing.</p> <p>AFD must approve this request before entering into the planned contract with the new partner(s) and before disbursement of funds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated list of CSO partners who are beneficiaries of reallocation. • Information sheet(s) for these new partner(s).
8	Procurement through a negotiated contract outside the thresholds specified in the financing agreement	<p>The OSC must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - justify that its procedures allow it to sign a mutually agreed contract - explain why it is not desirable or possible to proceed with a competitive bidding process 	N/A

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain why a particular provider has been selected (is it qualified or experienced to perform these services?) - ensure that the contract amount is consistent with initial estimates and current market prices - ensure that the contractual terms are workable and reasonable. <p>AFD must approve this no-objection request before the contract is signed.</p>	
9	Evaluation	<p>Terms of reference for the final project evaluation. AFD recommends that the CSO submit the terms of reference to it no later than 6 months before the project end date.</p> <p>AFD must approve this no-objection request before the tender process starts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference on CSO letterhead.
10	Audits	<p>The CSO must use the mechanism's terms of reference template, which can be downloaded from the Reference Documents folder.</p> <p>The CSO must submit the documents with the no-objection request, within the first 12 months of the project.</p> <p>AFD reserves the right to require a no-objection on the selection of the auditor if necessary.</p> <p>AFD must approve this no-objection request before the tender process starts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference for the audit assignment (covering the interim and final audits).
11	Request for additional time to complete and submit the interim and/or final implementation, audit and/or evaluation report	N/A	N/A
12	Request for an extension to the duration of a Tranche or postponement of the effective project end date	<p>Postponement of the effective project end date will result in an amendment. Both parties must sign this extension before the original project end date. Failure to do so will result in the extension being refused.</p>	N/A

13	Early termination of the project	Early project termination will require an amendment.	N/A
14	Expenditure incurred for activities carried out before the end of the project but not paid by the effective project end date	If expenditure incurred before the end of the project has not been paid by the effective project end date, but the activities have been carried out, it may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, but it must be certain (final amount known from supporting documents) and be covered by a no-objection request. Except for expenditure related to the final evaluation and final audit, which may be paid up to one year after the effective project end date.	N/A

/// KEY POINTS

No-objection requests must be submitted to MPN/OSC at the earliest possible opportunity; they must not be submitted after the fact.

MPN/OSC reserves the right to assess whether an amendment to the financing agreement is required if there are significant changes to the project. Failure to meet the deadlines set may result in the AFD making certain expenditure ineligible.

5. PROJECT EVALUATION, CAPITALIZATION AND FINANCIAL AUDIT

A. EVALUATION

Final external evaluation: AFD encourages CSOs to make use of external expertise. The external evaluation is an eligible expense in the financing plan submitted to MPN/OSC. The project budget must therefore include the cost planned for the evaluation, based on a fair estimate that reflects the scope of the evaluation. This cost must not be underestimated.

In all cases, CSOs are expected to select the evaluation service provider through a call for tenders or, as a minimum, a restricted consultation (see the [Procurement rules and thresholds](#) section).

CSOs must ask the selected consultants to arrange an oral discussion with the relevant MPN/OSC project manager during the evaluation.

A final external evaluation is required at the end of each phase for all multi-phase projects and must be carried out prior to any new application for financing. Appraisal of the next phase of a project will not start without the final evaluation report for the previous phase and its inclusion in the NIONG submitted for the new phase.

An evaluation of the effects of all project phases rather than a traditional evaluation is strongly recommended during the final phase. CSOs must carefully plan this exercise in advance (and discuss it with MPN/OSC), during the first two project phases.

With this in mind, the project must include **monitoring and evaluation systems** from the start.

Change-driven approaches, outcome mapping and similar are also eligible monitoring and evaluation methods.

B. CAPITALIZATION

Capitalization on experiences is a collective process that allows project stakeholders to improve their capacity building efforts and share their knowledge with others. MPN/OSC encourages capitalization exercises because they are a way to learn from the actions taken and to share these lessons widely for the benefit of the CSO community and international solidarity in general. They also serve to highlight how non-governmental action contributes to development and international solidarity. The guidelines around capitalization are provided in the [relevant worksheet](#).

C. FINANCIAL AUDITS (INTERIM AND FINAL)

The external financial audit for the project is mandatory for all projects, regardless of the amount of grant awarded by MPN/OSC. It is carried out in two stages: an interim audit covering Tranche 1 of the project, and a final audit covering Tranche 2.

The project budget must include the cost of the two audits, based on a fair estimate of what is needed (a minimum threshold is set at 1% of the overall project cost).

If the CSO plans to carry out an audit for another major donor involved in the same project (provided that the scope and timing are identical), AFD will not require an additional audit or specific rules on tendering. The CSO must provide MPN/OSC with a copy of the resulting interim and final audit report.

The financial audit must be carried out by an external and independent audit firm, selected according to the [procurement rules](#) and [through a call for tenders or, as a minimum, a restricted consultation](#). The auditor must be selected within the first 12 months of the project.

MPN/OSC issues its no-objection:

- On the audit terms of reference (CSOs must use the terms of reference template in the Reference Documents folder), before the tender or consultation process starts;
- MPN/OSC reserves the right to require a no-objection on the selection of the auditor if it deems this necessary.

The financing plan must show the estimated cost of the financial audit.

The audit reports must be submitted no later than three months after the completion of Tranche 1 and six months after completion of Tranche 2.

Approval of the interim audit at the end of Tranche 1 will not be a condition precedent to the disbursement for Tranche 2.

However, submitting the final audit report (for Tranche 2) is a condition precedent to the first disbursement for the next phase. If the auditor raises any concerns, the CSO receiving AFD funds must present the planned remedial measures and the timetable for their implementation.

Should any expenditure be declared ineligible, AFD is entitled to request reimbursement of the relevant amounts.

Any CSO may be subject to a random financial audit instigated and paid for by MPN/OSC.

CSOs must ensure that their audit, evaluation and capitalization partners comply with the safety and security requirements of the CSO and its staff and partners.

VIII. GLOSSARY

Official Development Assistance (ODA): ODA is the combined efforts of OECD member states to promote development in least developed countries (LDCs) and middle-income countries (MICs), in accordance with the rules of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Open Call for Tenders: Refers to a competitive bidding process organized for the purpose of awarding a contract, which is preceded by public notice and is open, without limit in number, to all bidders meeting the eligibility and qualification criteria. This is the standard method for awarding contracts for supplies, equipment or works. There may be a pre-qualification stage. If not, the pre-qualification step is integrated into the tendering process.

Restricted Call for Tenders: Refers to a competitive bidding process organized for the purpose of awarding a contract, access to which is limited to the restricted list of bidders drawn up by the grant beneficiary; the number of bidders is limited in advance.

Financial audit: A quality control activity carried out in an objective and independent way and intended to improve how an organization operates and increase its value. The audit helps an organization achieve its goals through a systematic and rigorous approach used to observe and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

No-objection (ANO): A document by which the donor acknowledges information and/or provisions in accordance with the reporting requirements listed in the financing agreement.

Beneficiaries: In this guide and in documents presenting the project, this term refers to individuals, groups or organizations that benefit from the project, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally. Related terms: group/population affected, targeted or reached.

Logical framework: The logical framework approach is a formalized process for project planning focused on development outcomes, which also serves as the basis for project design and the subsequent steering, monitoring and evaluation system. These considerations help make the project's intervention rationale and key components clearer, as summarized in the logical framework table.

Financing agreement: Agreement between the donor and the CSO beneficiary that determines the commitments of both parties and the legal framework for co-financing the project. Refers to the financing agreement, its appendices and, if applicable, any subsequent amendments to it.

Eligible project expenditure: Refers to all expenditure included in the financing plan as appended to the financing agreement or as revised, and approved after AFD's no-objection or amendment. Expenditure costed under the project must be incurred within the project's geographical area and eligibility period. Any expenditure incurred and/or paid outside these limits requires a no-objection from AFD.

Effect: An expected or unexpected change attributable directly or indirectly to an action. Related terms: outcomes, achievements.

Effectiveness (success, accomplishment): The extent to which the objectives of the development action have been or are being achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

Efficiency: The extent to which resources (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into outcomes in the most efficient way.

Evaluation: A systematic and objective assessment of a project or program, whether ongoing or completed, its design, implementation and outcomes. The purpose is to determine the relevance and

achievement of objectives, efficacy of actions taken, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, documented, tangible and useful information that can be used to feed lessons learned into beneficiaries' and donors' decision-making processes.

External evaluation: Evaluation of a development project conducted by departments and/or individuals outside the donor and implementing organization.

Internal evaluation: An evaluation conducted by the non-profit organization itself. Related term: self-assessment.

Mid-term evaluation: An evaluation conducted halfway through project implementation.

Participatory evaluation: An evaluation method in which representatives of aid agencies and other stakeholders (including beneficiaries) work together to develop and conduct an evaluation and draw conclusions.

Baseline: An analysis that describes the situation prior to the start of the development action, against which improvements can be assessed or comparisons made.

Purpose: The overarching objective toward which the development action is intended to contribute. Related term: development goal.

Negotiated contract: Refers to a process of awarding a contract to a provider without prior competition (also referred to as "direct agreement", "mutual agreement" or "negotiated procedure without advertising or competitive bidding").

Target group (target population): Persons or organizations for whose benefit the development action is undertaken.

A distinction can be made between the primary target group for whose direct benefit the action is undertaken and the secondary target group that indirectly benefits from the outcomes of the action.

Impacts: Positive and negative long-term effects, both primary and secondary, brought about by a development action, whether directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally.

Indicator: A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable way to measure and report on changes related to the development action or to help assess the performance of a development stakeholder.

Project objectives: The **overarching objective** is the long-term changes that will result from the project, in addition to projects from other partners and endogenous dynamics. The **specific objective** (or objectives) is the main direct change or changes expected at the end of the project that will benefit the target groups in physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental or other terms.

Civil society organizations: In the context of the missions assigned by the French government to the Agence Française de Développement, the term "Civil Society Organizations" (CSOs) includes:

- Non-profit groups under local law;
- Non-profit collectives and platforms.

Partners: People and/or organizations working together to achieve jointly agreed-upon objectives. The concept of partnership refers to joint objectives, shared responsibility for achieving those objectives, mutual commitments and clear accountability. Partners should primarily be CSOs (formal or informal non-profit groups, grassroots communities, trade unions, networks and platforms) but may also be universities, professional associations, multilateral organizations, private companies, governmental organizations (centralized or decentralized), local authorities, etc.

Stakeholders (protagonists): Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development action or its evaluation.

Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of the development action are consistent with beneficiaries' expectations, country needs, global priorities, and partner and donor policies.

Project: A project is a set of actions which, over a given timeframe and with given resources, are designed to move from a problematic situation, identified during a diagnostic study, to an improved situation generating long-term benefits for the target communities.

Accountability: The obligation to account for having carried out work according to agreed rules and standards, or the obligation to report clearly and impartially on results and performance, in relation to the mandate and/or objectives set.

For evaluators, accountability refers to the responsibility to provide accurate, impartial and credible performance assessments and progress reports. For public sector decision-makers and managers, accountability is an obligation to be accountable to taxpayers and citizens.

Outcomes: These are the changes (behavior, processes, status) in the situation or behavior of beneficiaries and/or tangible products and/or services resulting from activities. All outcomes combined leads to the achievement of the specific objective.

Reallocation: Reallocation is the process by which a local CSO passes on a share of the project funds to designated French or local partners, regardless of where the funds came from (AFD and other funding bodies).

Viability (long-term success and sustainability): Benefits from a development action that continues after the end of the initiative/project. The likelihood of obtaining benefits over the long term. A situation in which the net benefits are likely to outweigh the risks. The ability of the action, or the model on which the action is based, to persist over time.

IX. WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEETS

Relating to the Methodology Guide on the procedures for co-financing local CSO projects

Project methodology worksheets	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Logical framework2. CSO project evaluation and capitalization principles
Cross-functional thematic worksheets	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Placing an emphasis on "gender" in projects4. The "biodiversity-climate change" theme5. Youth empowerment for projects and the SDGs
Contract management worksheets	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Guidelines covering communication and visibility7. Financial audit of CSO projects8. Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in OSC projects9. New mechanism for monitoring compliance with sanctions regulations for CSOs and foundations10. Lump-sum installments

1. PROJECT METHODOLOGY WORKSHEETS

Worksheet 1: Logical framework

A. GENERAL COMMENTS

The logical framework is **one of the key tools for managing the project cycle**. A project is defined as a set of actions which, over a given timeframe and with given resources, are designed to move from a problematic situation, identified during a diagnostic study, to an improved situation generating long-term benefits for the target communities. A development project therefore aims to generate long-term benefits for its target communities.

The logical framework presents **an overview of the project strategy**, outlining how the activities will seek to address the problems identified and to change the situation or behavior of beneficiaries.

This is why it is essential to spend as much time on the analysis (diagnostic) phase as on the project design phase. The logical framework is therefore the result of the findings made during the diagnostic phase, using an approach that:

- Analyzes the stakeholders to ensure that their needs, challenges and potential conflicts, motivating factors and capacities are taken into account
- Analyzes the wider context of the problem and its underlying causes (possibly summarized in a problem tree)
- Determines the objectives in terms of expected tangible changes for the main beneficiaries
- Identifies the different possible strategies and selects one of them
- Explains the external factors (risks and assumptions) that affect and influence the project.

The civil society organization (CSO) cannot do this on its own but must **work alongside its local partners and other stakeholders**. Discussions between partners as to the expected tangible changes, and on the intervention rationale for achieving them, are important in creating a sense of structure. The choice of indicators and definition of target values must also be the result of a collaborative process.

The logical framework is a flexible tool that should be used to provide operational support throughout the duration of the project. Where applicable, it should reflect any changes to the project. Agence Française de Développement (AFD) will approve any changes made to the logical framework during project execution, provided there are solid grounds for making them.

B. DEVELOPING THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The logical framework must **draw upon the Project Summary** included in the project document submitted by the association (the CSO Initiative Note or NIONG).

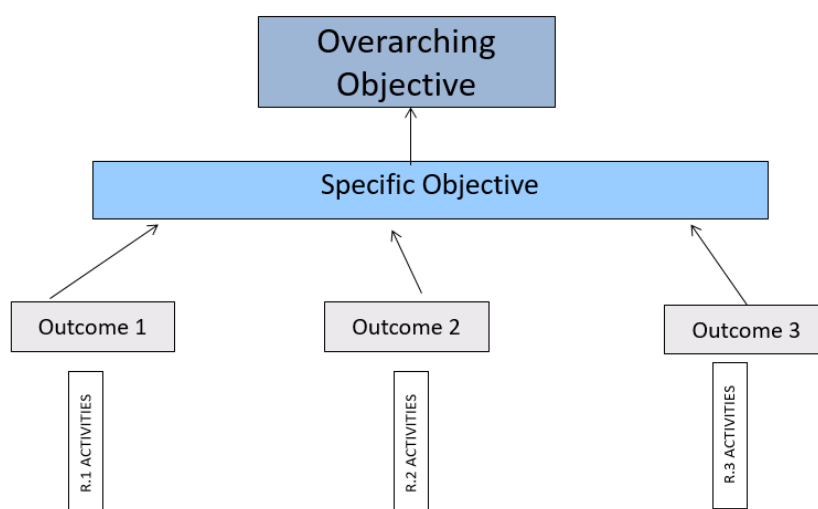
The logical framework **does not provide all the details** of a project or program. The CSO must provide other details in the narrative version of the project proposal (the body of the NIONG) and in the budget. These documents must use a consistent naming convention for the components of the logical framework (objectives, outcomes, activities, indicators).

The logical framework is a living tool that should be referred to and updated throughout the life of the project.

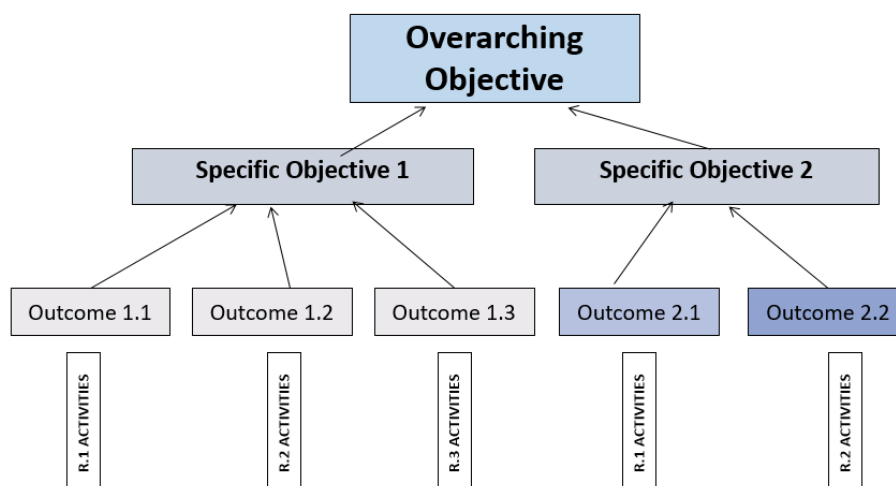
a) Table based on the pyramid of objectives describing the intervention rationale

The logical framework table presents a **logical sequence of cause-and-effect relationships** based on the pyramid of objectives. This is also referred to as the outcomes chain.

Pyramid with a specific objective



Pyramid with two specific objectives



The logical framework consists of a **table summarizing the key aspects of a project or program**. It must identify and convey the logical relationships within a project by following the vertical and horizontal lines of reasoning that link the different levels of the table.

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical hypotheses
Overarching objective					
Specific objective(s)					
Expected outcomes					
Activities					

IF the assumptions are true AND the activities are carried out, THEN the results can be achieved.
 IF the assumptions are true AND the outcomes are obtained, THEN the specific objective of the project will be achieved.
 IF the assumptions are true AND the specific objective is achieved, THEN it will contribute to the achievement of the overarching objective.

Template for the logical framework to be included as an appendix to the NIONG (Appendix 1 of each NIONG)

Reminder of the project schedule: **Tranche 1:** Reminder of the dates for Tranche 1 / **Tranche 2:** Reminder of the dates for Tranche 2

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Overarching objective	Long-term changes that will result from the project, in addition to projects from other partners and endogenous dynamics. It must be shown that the project is expected to make a significant contribution to this change.				
Specific objectives (SO)	<p>These are the main <u>direct</u> change or changes expected <u>at the end of the project</u> that will benefit the target groups.</p> <p>They describe the final improved situation.</p> <p>These will stem from the expected outcomes (with a clear logical connection) and the expected reactions of stakeholders.</p> <p>It is good practice to limit the number of specific objectives (often one is sufficient for field projects or general interest projects).</p> <p>For large-scale projects and/or projects with very distinct components, or for programs, a second and possibly a third specific objective may be added.</p>	<p>Indicators for measuring the achievement of the objective (2 to 4 indicators)</p> <p>Quantitative and/or qualitative variable that provides a simple and reliable way of measuring whether the project has achieved the expected objective.</p>	<p>Indicate the baseline conditions (BC) before the start of the project and the expected target value at the end of the project</p> <p>BC:</p> <p>T:</p>	<p>(NB: Often requires the use of indirect sources such as specialist surveys)</p>	<p>These are the external conditions necessary and beneficial for the implementation of the project that are beyond the control of those responsible for managing it.</p> <p>These may be factors relating to local or global dynamics or to other partners' projects with a significant impact on progress towards achieving the objectives.</p> <p>These factors are identified by analyzing the context and external risks to the project.</p> <p>Present a set of assumptions for all objectives</p>

Expected outcomes	<p>These are the changes (behavior, processes, status) and/or tangible products and/or services resulting from activities.</p> <p>All outcomes combined leads to the achievement of the specific objective.</p> <p>If there is more than one SO, a separate set of outcomes must be presented for each SO (at least two results per SO).</p> <p>R1 (or R.1.SO.1 if more than one objective): R2: R3: ...</p>	Outcome indicators (2 to 5 indicators per expected outcome)	BC: T:		<p>These are the external factors and conditions – the behavior of certain stakeholders, for example (excluding partners, administrators, and the project team) – which are likely to influence the relationship between the outcomes and the anticipated objective. They are identified by analyzing the context and external risks to the project.</p> <p>Present a set of assumptions for all outcomes</p>
Activities	<p>What are they key activities that must be implemented in order for the expected outcomes to be met (group activities together by outcome) Where possible, activities must be quantified (see example) but not detailed here; details must be presented in the NIONG.</p> <p>Activities for R1: Activity 1.1 (or A.1.1 R.1.OS.1 if more than one objective): Activity 1.2:</p> <p>Activities for R2: Activity 2.1 (or A.2.1 R.2.OS.2 if more than one objective): Activity 2.2:</p>				<p>These are the factors and conditions outside of the direct control of the project team – the behavior of certain stakeholders, for example (excluding partners, administrators, and the project team) in response to project activities – which must be in place for the planned activities to be carried out and produce the expected outcomes. They are identified by analyzing the context and external risks to the project.</p> <p>Present a set of assumptions for all activities</p>

b) Tips for writing the components of the logical framework

Defining objectives

The overarching objective and the specific objectives must be expressed in the same way:

- Either with a verb in the infinitive
- Or with a sentence with a conjugated verb describing the improved situation at the end of the project

Example of overarching objective:

- (Contribute to) strengthening the resilience of vulnerable populations in the Diffa region of Niger

OR

- The capacity of vulnerable populations in the Diffa region of Niger to be resilient is strengthened

Example of specific objective:

- Improve the health and nutritional status of vulnerable populations, particularly pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under 5 in the department of Maïné-Soroa (Diffa region, Niger)

OR

- The health and nutritional status of vulnerable populations, particularly pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under five in the department of Maïné-Soroa (Diffa region, Niger) is improved

The logical framework table already shows a vertical causal relationship in the intervention rationale, so it is not necessary to specify the objectives with phrases such as "through" or "thanks to." The approach will be clarified through the presentation of outcomes and activities.

Defining outcomes

Outcomes must be expressed in terms of the improved situation that will prevail after implementing the activities, using a sentence with a conjugated verb.

Example:

- R1. The skills of local communities (intermediaries, women's associations, households) in preventing and controlling waterborne diseases are strengthened.
- R2. Access to safe drinking water is increased and improved in a sustainable manner for the targeted beneficiaries.

For multi-country projects: the values of the outcomes indicators may be aggregated for all countries or broken down by country, as appropriate.

Defining activities

All activities must be expressed in the same way:

- Either with a verb in the infinitive
- Or with an action or process

Each set of activities relates to one of the project outcomes and must therefore be numbered accordingly.

Example:

- *Activities relating to outcome 1*
 - A.1.1 *Train 50 teachers from the 5 partner schools*
 - A.1.2 *Provide teaching materials to the 5 partner schools*
 - *Activities relating to outcome 2*
 - A.2.1 *Update 10 teaching curricula*
 - A.2.2 *Distribute the updated teaching curricula to the 5 partner schools*
- [OR]
- *Activities relating to outcome 1*
 - A.1.1 *Training of 50 teachers from the 5 partner schools*
 - *Activities relating to outcome 2*
 - A.2.1 *Updating of 10 teaching curricula*

Defining indicators, targets, and sources and means of verification

The logical framework must **only include indicators that measure expected changes**, i.e. at the level of the specific objective(s) and the various expected outcomes.

Activity monitoring indicators are **not included** in the logical framework.

An indicator is a unit of measurement that helps to **assess progress made** towards achieving an expected outcome or objective.

Indicators determine what information to collect to answer key questions about the progress of the project or program.

Indicators can be **quantitative** (e.g. percentage of farmers trained who adopt a new agricultural technique) or **qualitative** (e.g. beneficiaries' opinion of the quality of sewerage facilities provided as a percentage of satisfaction expressed).

A combination of the two is preferable where possible.

Wherever possible, **baseline conditions should be quantified**.

Defining assumptions

Assumptions must be defined in positive terms, **as the external factor that must occur to enable the project or program to implement its activities, obtain its outcomes or achieve its specific objective(s)**.

They are primarily **based on the risk analysis** that will have been carried out during the diagnostic phase: the risks will be presented in the relevant table in the NIONG, accompanied by mitigation measures. Assumptions will be the remaining external factors that are not considered to be risks that can be mitigated. Furthermore, an excessive number of assumptions can complicate the logical framework and associated monitoring process. It is therefore important to limit assumptions to those that would jeopardize the success of the project or program if they were proven wrong.

Assumptions must be categorized into three levels, depending on their influence: activity level, expected outcomes level or specific objective level.

It is important to **avoid listing as assumptions questions that the project itself should answer** or factors that can be verified during the diagnostic phase, for example: *"the Ministry of Health approves the project concept"* or *"the quantity of water in the water table for drilling purposes"*.

Any assumption to be included in the logical framework and monitored must be "probable", i.e. an important external factor that is very likely to occur, but which still has a reasonable risk of not happening. Because of this element of uncertainty, it is essential to monitor this external factor throughout the project or program, so that action can be taken if necessary.

Example of assumptions to be included in the logical framework:

- *Security conditions make access to the intervention area possible*
- *Upcoming parliamentary elections do not lead to civil unrest.*
- *The partner ministry remains committed throughout the project.*

An important external factor that is unlikely to occur should not be listed as an assumption, but rather as a risk. The project or program design should be amended to take account of an external factor as risky as this. If it is impossible to modify the project or program to take account of an external factor that is unlikely to occur (i.e. a risk), it may mean that the project or program is not viable and needs to be re-examined.

Presenting the project schedule

The template for the logical framework submitted as an appendix to the NIONG includes a reminder of the project schedule at the top, which must also show the dates for each of the two tranches. Activities starting in Tranche 1 must be highlighted **in yellow**.

Note: Each component of the logical framework must be worded in the same way in the NIONG narrative.

c) Logical framework as a basis for coordination, monitoring and evaluation

The logical framework can be used as a basis for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the project. The information gathered on indicators will be used to **assess progress and guide decision-making throughout implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project or program**. These data can also be used to learn from a project or program, to build on successes and avoid repeating the same mistakes. To contribute to this process, indicators must answer the following questions: How? When? How many/how much?

As mentioned above, it is important to define meaningful indicators to measure the achievement of the outcomes and specific objective(s). These **indicators provide a way of quantifying the changes brought about**, usually in the situation or behavior of beneficiaries, as a direct result of the project or program, and provide the basis for **evaluating the achievement of the specific objective(s)** of each project/program.

They are different from indicators for monitoring the implementation of activities, which correspond to deliverables (goods and services produced through the project or program) and which are used internally by the CSO as part of its project/program monitoring and coordination system.

The monitoring and coordination system must be structured around **a few key monitoring questions** (similar to evaluation questions), based on the outcomes and assumptions in the logical framework.

Indicators and activities must incorporate cross-cutting themes (gender, biodiversity, climate, active youth) if the CSO has stated that it will take them into account in the NIONG.

C. OTHER CHANGE-DRIVEN APPROACHES

If the CSO has adopted a change-driven methodological approach, it may, in addition to the logical framework, present a Change Theory diagram at the end of Appendix 1 of the NIONG.

It is perfectly feasible to combine a change-driven approach with the logical framework. During the project design phase, the CSO and other stakeholders may define a vision and change pathways before redrafting the logical framework for the project. Broadly speaking, the main expected changes can be used to identify the overarching objective and the specific objectives of the logical framework, while change pathways can be used to determine the expected outcomes of the logical framework. The aim is to align the thinking behind the project and its timeframe (medium-term) with those of the change-driven approaches (longer term and more strategic). The project may explain how some of the change-driven approaches will be implemented, within a shorter timeframe.

D. DOCUMENT RESOURCES

- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) / Project/Program Planning Guidance Manual (available in 7 languages): <https://www.ifrc.org/document/projectprogramme-planning-guidance-manual>
- IFRC / Monitoring and Evaluation Guide (available in 4 languages) <https://www.ifrc.org/document/monitoring-and-evaluation-guide>
- PM4NGOs / Project DPro Project Management for Development Professionals Guide – PMD Pro – 2nd Edition: <https://pm4ngos.org/methodologies-guides/project-dpro/>

E. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK TEMPLATES

Three logical framework templates are presented below:

- A template for a field project (with a single specific objective)
- A template for a field project (with two specific objectives)
- A template for an ECIS/sustainable development education project

Logical framework example for a field project – version with a single specific objective

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Overarching objective (Purpose) Long-term goal	(Contribute to) strengthening the resilience of vulnerable populations in the Diffa region of Niger				
Specific objective(s) (SO) <i>(outcome)</i>	Improve the health and nutritional status of vulnerable populations, particularly pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under 5 in the department of Maïné-Soroa (Diffa region, Niger)	<p>Nutrition program performance Cure rate / Drop-out rate / Death rate</p> <p>Neonatal mortality rate (no. of neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births)</p> <p>Proportion of women aged 15 to 49 assisted by qualified medical staff during childbirth</p> <p>Proportion of new curative consultations for pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under 5 in intervention districts</p>	<p>BC: <50% / >30% / >30%</p> <p>T: >75% / <15% / <10%</p> <p>BC: 41 per thousand T: <15 per thousand</p> <p>BC: 29% T: 60%</p> <p>BC: N/A T: 60%</p>	<p><i>Consultation records</i></p> <p><i>Health center records</i></p> <p><i>SLEAC survey</i>⁸</p> <p><i>Final evaluation report</i></p> <p><i>National Health Information System data</i></p>	<p>The upcoming presidential elections do not destabilize the country's health system.</p> <p>The intervention area is not experiencing any new vectors causing new diseases that specifically affect women and children.</p>

⁸ *Simplified Lot Quality Assurance Sampling Evaluation of Access and Coverage*

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Expected outcomes (output)	R1 Children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women receive high-quality nutritional monitoring and care in the intervention area	Proportion of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition receiving therapeutic treatment Proportion of facilities supported by the project in which the nutritional program is appropriately implemented Proportion of children leaving the treatment program who have been successfully cured	BC: 30% T: 70% BC: N/A T: 70% BC: 30% T: 80%	<i>Health center records</i> <i>National Health Information System</i> <i>Project monitoring reports</i> <i>Regular monitoring sheets for the treatment program</i>	Turnover among healthcare staff does not affect quality of care The number of people living in the area remains stable (no new groups of displaced people have arrived)
	R2 Women of childbearing age, pregnant and breastfeeding, and newborns receive high-quality healthcare in the intervention area	Proportion of ANC4s (the fourth and final antenatal care visit) in health centers in intervention districts Proportion of pregnant women tested for HIV and who know their serological status Proportion of pregnant women who have received awareness information and are able to cite at least three warning signs during labor and delivery Proportion of women of childbearing age and pregnant and breastfeeding women who state they are satisfied with maternal and child health services in the department	BC: 31% T: 70% BC: N/A T: 70% BC: 30% T: 80% BC: N/A T: 80%	<i>KAP surveys</i> <i>Consultation records</i> <i>National Health Information System</i> <i>Maternity records</i>	Management committees remain motivated and available Communities remain motivated and aware

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
	R3 The capacity of the healthcare system in supported districts to deliver primary and secondary healthcare is strengthened	<p>Rate of data completeness and timeliness in intervention districts</p> <p>Number of days with shortages of nutritional inputs and medicines</p> <p>Percentage of health center staff trained by the project who apply their new knowledge in maternal and neonatal care, malnutrition management and HIV screening</p>	<p>BC: <60% T: >90%</p> <p>BC: 18 days per month T: <5 days</p> <p>BC: N/A T: 80%</p>	<p><i>Pharmacy stock sheets</i></p> <p><i>Minutes of quarterly data validation meetings</i></p> <p><i>Pre-/post-test training</i></p> <p><i>Supervision reports</i></p>	<p>Medical inputs remain available</p> <p>Health authorities stand by their commitments</p>
Activities Highlight activities starting in Tranche 1	Activities for RI: <u>Activity 1.1:</u> Two KAP surveys and analysis of barriers to behavioral change <u>Activity 1.2:</u> Training for 120 community intermediaries and Mamans Lumière ⁹ on IEC and CCC activities in nutrition <u>Activity 1.3:</u> Information – education – communication (IEC) for communities (50,000 people) on nutrition <u>Activity 1.4:</u> Support for 8 women’s associations and 10 management committees in the form of training and financial resources for referral to CRENIs ¹⁰ <u>Activity 1.5:</u> Supply of equipment and inputs required for care in the 2 CRENIs, 3 CRENASs and 5 CRENAMs <u>Activity 1.6:</u> Supply of nutritional inputs in the 3 CRENASs and 5 CRENAMs <u>Activity 1.7:</u> Training and refresher training for 150 health professionals				<p>Security conditions allow communities to access health infrastructures</p> <p>The authorities respect agreements on the availability of healthcare staff</p>

⁹ Maman Lumière (Mother of Light): A woman in the community who has healthy children and knows how to take good care of their health, keeping their vaccination records up to date, going to the health center when necessary, and following a few basic hygiene and nutrition rules. A Maman Lumière is responsible for encouraging other mothers to adopt these practices by explaining the benefits to them. In this way, she becomes the mother who brings light to others, “the village’s mother of light”.

¹⁰ A CRENAM cares for children suffering from acute and moderate malnutrition. Children considered to be severely malnourished must be cared for by a CRENAS or CRENI. CRENAM Outpatient Nutritional Recovery Center for Moderate Malnutrition / CRENAS Outpatient Nutritional Recovery Center for Severe Malnutrition / CRENI Intensive Nutritional Recovery and Education Center

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
	<p>Activities for R2:</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1:</u> Training for 120 community intermediaries and Mamans Lumière on IEC and CCC activities in maternal and child health</p> <p><u>Activity 2.2:</u> Information – education – communication (IEC) for communities (50,000 people) on maternal and child health</p> <p><u>Activity 2.3:</u> Financial support for 10 management committees (referral of pregnant women and newborns)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.4:</u> Fitting out of 10 health huts: supply of technical equipment and inputs required for maternity care, operating theaters and neonatal wards</p> <p><u>Activity 2.5:</u> Training for 150 maternity and neonatal care professionals</p> <p><u>Activity 2.6:</u> Training for 50 matrons</p>				<p>Weather conditions remain favorable for access to the intervention area</p> <p>Midwives remain interested</p> <p>Security conditions allow for interaction between health huts</p>
	<p>Activities for R3:</p> <p><u>Activity 3.1:</u> Support for setting up joint oversight meetings with the regional health department</p> <p><u>Activity 3.2:</u> Training of all 200 members of the management committees of the 10 supported health huts</p> <p><u>Activity 3.3:</u> Revitalization of the 10 health hut management committees</p> <p><u>Activity 3.4:</u> Supportive supervision of the 10 health huts with the health district</p> <p><u>Activity 3.5:</u> Exchange of practices between the 10 district health huts</p>				

Logical framework example for a field project – version with two specific objectives

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Overarching objective	Improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable residents of Butungi province				
Specific objective(s) (SO)	<p>SO 1 Strengthen food security for 35,000 poor families in Butungi province</p> <p>SO 2 Increase the effectiveness of support for sustainable agricultural and economic development by public sector institutions, the private sector and NGOs</p>	<p>% of target population with an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS)</p> <p>Number of households able to cover their nutritional needs over X number of days per month</p> <p>% of respondents who know where to access local farmer support services</p> <p>% of support service providers whose services meet at least 70% of predefined quality standards</p> <p>Average number of crop types grown per target household during last agricultural season</p>	<p>BC: 50% T: 80%</p> <p>BC: 1,500 kcal/day/adult T: 2,000 kcal/day/adult</p> <p>BC: 30% T: 80%</p> <p>BC: 40% T: 80%</p> <p>BC: 2 T: 5</p>	<p>Survey of a sample of the population</p> <p>Survey of a panel of farmers</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture data</p> <p>Survey of service providers</p> <p>Data collected during baseline surveys and monitored by the Union of Farmers' Groups (UGP)</p>	<p>Project benefits are not offset by a reduction in government services and social security benefits</p> <p>Agricultural production remains profitable despite worsening trade terms for agricultural products</p> <p>Weather conditions remain stable</p>

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Expected outcomes	<i>SO1.R1 Horticultural and market garden production is increased</i>	<p>% increase in income from horticultural and market gardening activities</p> <p>Increase in area planted with crops other than rice</p>	<p>BC: N/A T: 25%</p> <p>BC: N/A T: 10%</p>	<p>Data collected during baseline surveys and monitored by the Union of Farmers' Groups (UGP)</p> <p>Data from technical baseline survey and monitoring by UGP</p> <p>Monitoring by partner NGOs</p> <p>Technical documents from the Ministry of Agriculture</p>	<p>Contractual relations and collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture's irrigation services remain positive</p> <p>Farmers continue to be motivated to adopt new cropping systems</p>

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
	<i>SO1.R2: Rice production is increased</i>	<p>A new high-yield variety is adopted by % of target farmers</p> <p>Increase in rice production yields</p>	<p>BC: N/A T: 70</p> <p>BC: 3 tonnes/hectare T: 5 tonnes/hectare</p>	<p>Monitoring by partner NGOs and identification by UGP</p> <p>Data collected during baseline surveys and monitored by the Union of Farmers' Groups (UGP)</p> <p>Data from technical baseline survey and monitoring by UGP</p>	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture continues to play a key role in the development process, despite the change of government</p> <p>Within the Ministry of Agriculture, the conditions for staff to apply their new-found skills and competencies in practical situations remain in place</p>
	<i>SO2.R1: The capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture to support the rural development process is strengthened</i>	<p>% of issues raised by representatives of farmers' groups that have been fully addressed by local authorities (Ministry of Agriculture)</p> <p>Number of partnerships established between agricultural authorities, the private sector and civil society to address issues affecting rural development in the target area</p>	<p>BC: 20% T: 60%</p> <p>BC: N/A T: 5</p>	<p>Documents from national credit banks/NGOs</p> <p>Monitoring by the Union of Farmers' Groups (UGP)</p> <p>Project monitoring report</p>	

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
	<i>SO2.R2: Farmer support groups have been set up and are effectively providing services to their members</i>	<p>% of trained groups providing the planned services to their members</p> <p>% of trained community workers carrying out awareness-raising and follow-up activities in accordance with terms of reference</p> <p>% satisfaction of farmers' group members</p>	<p>BC: N/A T: 70%</p> <p>BC: N/A T: 80%</p> <p>BC: 30% T: 80%</p>	<p>Survey of groups</p> <p>Monitoring reports from partner NGOs</p> <p>Supervision visits to groups</p>	
<p>Activities</p> <p>Highlight activities starting in Tranche 1</p>	<p>Activities for SO1 R1:</p> <p><u>Activity 1.1.1:</u> Deployment of 3 participatory research projects with 200 leading farmer groups on the best types of orchards and vegetables to plant and the most appropriate production systems</p> <p><u>Activity 1.1.2:</u> Setting up an extension system involving the Ministry of Agriculture, two private-sector companies, the 200 groups and two local NGOs</p> <p><u>Activity 1.1.3:</u> Organization of the supply of agricultural inputs to the 200 groups</p> <p>Activities for SO1 R2:</p> <p><u>Activity 1.2.1:</u> Development of 100 hectares of new rice terraces</p> <p><u>Activity 1.2.2:</u> Introduction of two new rice varieties to 20 pilot groups</p>				<p>Farmers actually take the time to attend group meetings</p> <p>The necessary technologies remain available throughout the project</p>

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
	<p>Activities for SO2 R1:</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.1:</u> Completion of an organizational audit and design of an organizational capacity-building strategy</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.2:</u> Implementation of a training program for 300 workers</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.3:</u> Installation and upgrade of hardware and equipment for five local agricultural services in the province</p> <hr/> <p>Activities for SO2 R2:</p> <p><u>Activity 2.2.1:</u> Capacity building for two NGOs to mobilize farmers' groups</p> <p><u>Activity 2.2.2:</u> Training for 100 community workers</p> <p><u>Activity 2.2.3:</u> Training of representatives from 200 farmers' groups</p>				The results of the upcoming elections will not lead to civil unrest or population displacement

Logical framework example for an ECIS project

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Overarching objective (Purpose) Long-term goal	Strengthen local and international citizenship among young people exposed to socio-economic inequalities in the disadvantaged areas of three twinned towns: Dakar (Senegal), Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) and Marseille (France)				
Specific objective(s) (SO) (outcome)	Support and promote national and international solidarity projects involving 1,200 young men and women from the project's three towns.	<p>Percentage of young people involved in the project who feel recognized as agents of change in the transformation of their local area</p> <p>Percentage of solidarity projects integrated into national or international schemes in each of the three countries</p> <p>Percentage of young people involved in the project who reinvest their commitment in new initiatives (within NGOs, associations, institutions or schools)</p>	<p>BC: 10% T: 70%</p> <p>BC: N/A T: 30%</p> <p>BC: 20% T: 80%</p>	<p><i>Monitoring reports from COPIL member organizations</i></p> <p><i>Project monitoring and external evaluation reports</i></p> <p><i>Participatory evaluations carried out with young people</i></p> <p><i>Follow-up plan for solidarity projects</i></p>	The institutions and local authorities that are members of the steering committee remain committed to integrating local and global citizenship as a strategic focus of their political projects and to disseminating the program's achievements

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
Expected outcomes (output)	R1: Educators in the three countries strengthen their ability to support the commitment of 1,200 young people to local and international solidarity projects.	Percentage of trained educators using the new support tools Satisfaction rate of the young people involved with the support they receive in the areas participating in the project	BC: N/A T: 80% BC: 30% T: 80%	<i>In-situ observation</i> <i>Questionnaire for educators</i> <i>Satisfaction survey with young people</i>	Trained educators remain in place for the duration of the project.
	R2: The 1,200 young people from the three countries implement international solidarity initiatives that they then replicate at the local level.	Proportion of young people involved who remain committed until the end of the solidarity initiative. Number of views of video clips on online media and related social media platforms Percentage of young people trained who apply the new knowledge acquired in project preparation to how they implement their initiative	BC: N/A T: 85% BC: 500 T: 5,000 BC: N/A T: 85%	<i>Project monitoring reports</i> <i>Questionnaire for young people</i> <i>Media survey</i> <i>Monitoring attendance at project workshops</i>	The municipalities remain committed to providing suitable educational infrastructures for rolling out activities. Local elections do not affect international issues in the project areas.
	R3: Citizenship lessons and methods for taking action are produced and disseminated in the three countries.	Percentage of project partner organizations satisfied with the teaching materials produced Number of organizations or educational networks associated with the project that have adopted at least one of the disseminated methods	BC: 50% T: 90% BC: N/A T: 12 (of 18)	<i>Survey among partner organizations</i> <i>Project monitoring reports</i>	

	Outcomes chain	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline conditions / Target values	Sources and means of verification	Critical assumptions (relating to the context or to the program)
	<p>Activities for R3:</p> <p><u>Activity 3.1:</u> Coordination of cross-border action research on local and global citizenship among young people in the three countries involved in the project</p> <p><u>Activity 3.2:</u> Facilitation of a strategic support committee conducting studies and analysis on the effects of local and global citizenship in the three cities involved in the project</p> <p><u>Activity 3.3:</u> Support for the creation of 12 groups of educational stakeholders and young people to disseminate the program's achievements in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and France</p>				<p>Young people actively take part in civic education activities.</p> <p>The geopolitical and security situation means the project can run smoothly in all three countries.</p>

Worksheet n° 2: project evaluation and capitalization principles

The **evaluation and capitalization of civil society organization (CSO) projects** jointly financed by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) are **both hugely important**.

The aim of this document is to outline the **main guiding principles** for the evaluation and capitalization of CSO Initiatives. These guidelines **are not set in stone and may be adjusted, clarified, or expanded** to factor in the diversity of CSO projects and any changes to practices, particularly when it comes to identifying the most appropriate evaluation tools or supporting new experiments in this field. In addition to the protocols outlined by AFD in the methodological guide (details of which can be found below), dialog is constantly maintained with CSOs on this subject.

Guidelines regarding CSO Initiative projects are in keeping with AFD's wider strategy for project evaluation, which is set out in the **AFD Group's monitoring and evaluation policy**.¹¹ **This policy promotes evaluations which have an impact**, i.e., which have value, and which are used. *For this purpose, evaluations must involve the stakeholders and, first of all, the counterparties and be placed as close as possible to the others; Thus, joint evaluations (co-led by AFD and the organization receiving funding from AFD) are promoted. Furthermore, evaluations must be tailored in terms of questioning, method and timing.*

To boost transparency regarding its activities and to make it easier to exchange best practice with other stakeholders in sustainable development, AFD intends **to publish the results of its own evaluations routinely and encourage publication of evaluations carried out by its partners**. Over and above this evaluation approach, AFD promotes capitalization, interdisciplinary studies, the widespread exchange of expertise and all other processes for identifying evaluation tools and methods tailored to suit the work carried out by development stakeholders.

The evaluation of CSO Initiative projects is a vital component of the evaluation of development support activity. Evaluations are required as a result of the diverse range of stakeholders, strategies, objectives, and initiatives, plus the fact that it is public money being allocated. There are, however, specific challenges relating to measuring outcomes owing to the often-complex nature of their end goals - geared as they are towards social change (capacity building, seeking influence through advocacy, partnerships, and so on), - their size, and the way in which they operate.

For the past 20 years, encouraged by donors, CSOs have fully integrated the evaluation culture and almost systematically include evaluations in their projects. The dissemination of evaluations has also been greatly improved and is becoming a real support for exchange, learning, improvement of practices and shared capitalization.

AFD continues its dialogue with CSOs on issues related to the evaluation of projects it co-finances. AFD continues to consider that it is necessary to be pragmatic, innovative and open on monitoring, evaluation and capitalization practices. Reflection and research on evaluation methods and tools adapted to the diversity of interventions must be supported. The CSOs themselves, beyond the necessary accountability, are concerned by these issues and often bring innovations in this field.

There are two types of evaluation for CSO Initiative projects: individual project evaluations (see § 1) and interdisciplinary evaluations (see § 2).

¹¹ Validated in 2024 : <https://www.afd.fr/en/ressources/afd-group-monitoring-and-evaluation-policy>

1. EVALUATING CSO PROJECTS CO-FINANCED BY AFD

a) Methodology

CSO Initiative projects are to be evaluated in line with best practice for the evaluation of development projects. Evaluations should **draw upon the guidelines issued by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for the evaluation of development projects** (impartiality and independence, credibility, usefulness, participation, and coordination). Evaluations are generally performed with **reference to six criteria determined by the DAC** (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability). This regulatory framework is to be used as a template and **should not prevent you from tailoring evaluations to suit the specificities of the projects** or project portfolios being evaluated. AFD promotes evaluations which have an impact, and which are designed in such a way as to meet the objectives and uses of the evaluation as outlined in conjunction with stakeholders. Beyond the DAC criteria and/or by reference to them, it is a matter of identifying the **evaluation questions** that the evaluation will seek to answer.

Evaluations must assist the CSO in clarifying key issues relating to the project, in assessing its implementation and outcomes and in furthering its knowledge. **The full set of DAC criteria does not have to be used for each evaluation, as this can lead to evaluations which only gloss over the project and from which little can be learned.**

Evaluation of the first cycle of the project (1st phase), for example, will focus on the criteria of relevance and coherence, without necessarily exploring other effects or impacts. Evaluation of the 3rd phase of the project, meanwhile, will deal in depth with effects, changes, impact, sustainability, and so on. Evaluations should be tailored.

Depending on the type of project, **other more interdisciplinary criteria often have to be taken into consideration:** the extent of the changes the project is seeking to contribute towards; and the extent of the project's impact in terms of capacity building, governance, empowerment, the quality of partnerships and contribution to/influence on public policy are more complex concepts, requiring a more sophisticated approach. Such concepts must also play a more prominent role in evaluations.

Evaluations of CSO projects must also assess whether interdisciplinary themes (such gender, biodiversity & climate, and youth) have been taken into account. The terms of reference guiding the evaluation may choose to refer to the corresponding worksheets from the Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC) guide.

AFD is open to a **variety of evaluation methodologies**. Most project evaluations are based on the objectives of the project. Goal-neutral approaches (outcome harvesting, most significant change) can also be useful depending on the evaluation issues. Use of change-oriented approaches (AOC) is also possible¹².

Whenever possible, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) may incite or accompany impact assessments to measure the impact of its projects, focusing on specific issues and attributing results directly to the initiatives implemented. AFD aims to improve the evaluation of its actions in order to meet expectations for more detailed information on certain strategic interventions, especially those that are innovative or emblematic. AFD is one of the few institutions to carry out counterfactual impact assessments, similar to academic research, which contribute to the international debate on development assistance. It wants to integrate local researchers into its teams in order to better take into account local contexts, build capacity and ensure the sustainability of its approaches. These assessments, often experimental or quasi-experimental, aim to fill knowledge gaps and provide useful results for civil society organizations, AFD and the development community. AFD also promotes mixed methodologies combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The CSO-I projects can benefit from the PAIRES partnership between the AFD and the IRD, which finances this type of evaluation for interventions co-financed by the AFD: <https://paires.hypotheses.org/>

¹² <https://f3e.asso.fr/boite-a-outils/>. Also see guides [Animer un atelier «vision et chemins de changement»](#) et [Comment suivre et évaluer les changements](#).

b) Evaluation procedures

Thought should be given to the final individual project evaluation from the start of the project, with human, technological and financial resources set aside for this purpose. An evaluation schedule should also be drawn up. This requires particular focus for initiatives comprised of multiple phases. The evaluation must be included in the project design/implementation schedule in order to feed into the formulation of the next phase.

In such cases, any lessons drawn from the evaluation of one phase should be used during formulation of the next phase and must be incorporated into the CSO Initiative Note (NIONG) (for which there is a specific document). The evaluation report must be submitted with the NIONG.

Evaluations should also be viewed as a participatory process, carried out in conjunction with the main partners involved in the project, and should involve contributions from as many project stakeholders as possible: the association leading the project, partner associations (both national and international), recipients, and financial and institutional partners.

AFD promotes the use of external experts. However, CSOs may wish to carry out project evaluations internally. In situations where a final evaluation is mandatory (see below), the Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC) will assess the suitability of this solution based partly on the level of independence of the internal evaluators. MPN/OSC is also open to peer evaluation (evaluations overseen by or involving an evaluator from an NGO working on the same themes but not involved in the project being evaluated).

Most evaluations relating to CSO Initiative projects will be final evaluations: evaluations carried out during the last year or the last six months of the project. CSOs may, however, choose to carry out *in itinere* evaluations: evaluations spread out across the entire duration of the project. This differs from heightened monitoring in that the evaluative analysis is external. Such an exercise may prove beneficial from a learning perspective.

The cost of evaluations may be included in the financing plan submitted to MPN/OSC. For final external evaluations, CSOs are encouraged to use a tendering process for selecting service providers or failing that restricted tendering. Other than in specific cases and depending on the size and the number of countries involved in the project, a minimum budget of €15k is recommended.

The terms of reference must be submitted to AFD for approval prior to the beginning of the evaluation, and at least 6 months before the end of the project.

The selected evaluation team is invited to take the MPN/CSO project leader for an exchange.

c) AFD requirements for individual evaluations

The AFD therefore encourages CSOs **to integrate a voluntary evaluation process in projects of a certain size, without making it a systematic obligation**, except within the framework of some specific instruments detailed below.

- **A final external evaluation is required for multiphase projects:** if a CSO plans to implement its project over several phases, it will be required to conduct an external evaluation at the end of each phase before a new funding application is considered.
- For large field programs, implemented over a period of time (more than 6 years), effects studies will be strongly encouraged and will result in an in-depth exchange between MPC/MPN/OSC and the OSC prior to the exercise and no later than the mid-term meeting.
- Ideally, the evaluation report should be included in the attachments to the NIONG (project document) for the next phase; failing that, the provisional report will be accepted, provided the final report is submitted by the beginning of the project appraisal phase at the latest.
- Evaluation reports or summaries of them are to be published on the CSO's website. In keeping with AFD's policy of transparency and subject to approval from the CSO, evaluation reports or summaries of them may be published on the AFD website (publication formats may be suggested to the CSO).

d) Monitoring & evaluation

AFD encourages the introduction of monitoring & evaluation mechanisms from the beginning of the project, particularly for complex or large-scale projects. Monitoring of the context and the changes and outcomes of projects is an essential part of project coordination, helping to ensure quality. It also helps to

boost the efficacy of the final external evaluation. The cost of monitoring and evaluation may be included in the financing plan submitted to AFD.

e) Capitalization procedures

Experience capitalization is a collective process through which stakeholders are able to build capacities and share their knowledge with others. Experience capitalization is conducive to learning and both individual and collective progression. Capitalization can take place over the course of the project, drawing on contributions from project stakeholders (as is the case with evaluations). In the event of an external expert being called upon, they will act as more of a supervisor, facilitator, or coordinator than as an objective expert (as is the case with evaluations).

AFD strongly encourages capitalization exercises (these are mandatory for program agreements, multi-year partnership agreements and joint programs involving multiple stakeholders); the purpose of these is to draw lessons from the project and to ensure that these are widely shared among CSOs and within the wider international development sphere, in addition to promoting the contribution made to international development and cooperation through the non-governmental initiative.

CSOs are free to decide on which capitalization strategies they feel to be most appropriate and most useful and are encouraged to use all available capitalization mechanisms (media platforms, web, and so on). AFD has no specific requirements regarding content or form, but capitalization exercises should demonstrate their value and be justified within the wider context of the project, in addition to being shared as widely as possible externally.

Costs of capitalization exercises are eligible in the budget submitted to MPN/OSC.

2. INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES/EVALUATIONS COORDINATED BY AFD

In addition to project evaluations, **AFD may find it necessary to order and coordinate more wide-ranging, strategic evaluations**, looking beyond individual projects.

Wide-ranging evaluations are to be carried out with the goal of educating CSOs, AFD and the development community. They are part of a broader process aimed at analyzing the relevance, the coherence, and the effectiveness of non-governmental initiatives with regard to individual tools, sectors, sub-sectors, countries, or regions in relation to the objectives of the CSO Initiative mechanism, or perhaps even more broadly in relation to development issues. MPN/OSC will work closely with AFD's evaluation department when carrying out these studies. Some studies may be carried out in conjunction with the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) or the official development assistance evaluation committee.¹³ AFD may also choose to commission interdisciplinary studies, capitalization exercises or meta evaluations of the non-governmental projects it supports.

The primary objective of these interdisciplinary evaluations is to contribute to strategic discussions on core issues of interest both to CSOs and AFD. These cover funding mechanisms and stakeholder practices, dealing with issues such as supporting the development of the non-profit sector, supporting capacity building, partnership quality, alignment with public policy, the existence of multiple stakeholders, contributions made through advocacy, local development, and human rights.

3. DOCUMENT RESOURCES

- To view the F3E's publications and methodological resources (in French): <https://f3e.asso.fr/eclairer/publications/>
- To view studies supported by the F3E (in French): <https://f3e.asso.fr/recherche-croisee/>
- Microproject evaluation: <https://f3e.asso.fr/comment-suivre-et-evaluer-un-microprojet-de-solidarite-internationale/>
- Evaluating Education for Citizenship and International Solidarity (ECSI) projects (in French): <https://f3e.asso.fr/evaluer-les-effets-de-ses-actions-decsi/>
- AFD: <https://www.afd.fr/en/ressources/analysis-monitoring-and-evaluation-contributions-social-change-meaningfully-measuring-international-solidarity-and-decentralized-cooperation>

¹³ Decree n° 2022-787 of May 6 2022 regarding the functioning of the official development assistance evaluation committee.

- AFD: <https://www.afd.fr/en/evaluate-our-actions>
 - [Evaluation of the FISONG mechanism](#)
 - [Joint multiple-stakeholder programs: progress report and capitalization](#)
 - Evaluating human rights projects: <https://www.afd.fr/fr/comment-contribuer-au-renforcement-des-droits-de-lhomme>
 - [Responding to crisis: AFD, the Fondation de France and the funding of NGOs in Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake](#)

2. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL THEMATIC WORKSHEETS

Worksheet n° 3: Placing an emphasis on « Gender » in projects

A. WHAT IS MEANT BY GENDER?

Gender refers to the social and cultural characteristics which come with being either a man or a woman. This is separate from sex, which refers to biological characteristics. Gender is a social construct: it is learned, changes over time and varies between cultures. The social roles assigned to women and men also change depending on their age, their social status, their religious or ethnic background and their sexuality. Social and cultural characteristics are not seen as being equal: those associated with being male are felt to be superior to those associated with being female. This leads to a significant amount of inequality between women and men. Taking a "gender approach" provides a way of understanding gender as a social construct and the unequal balance of power between men and women, as well as among men and among women. If properly understood, these social roles and relationships can be factored into development projects in order to facilitate their implementation and to ensure that their benefits are equally shared and that the project does not worsen inequality. Taking a more ambitious approach, they can also be deconstructed with a view towards transforming social roles and relationships by devising more egalitarian models.

B. GENDER EQUALITY: A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL AND A PRIORITY FOR AFD

The international community has recognized gender equality as a powerful factor in sustainable development and tackling poverty. Sustainable Development Goal n°5 puts the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality at the heart of the international agenda.

France's international strategy for a feminist diplomacy (2025-2030)¹⁴ sets new ambitions:

- the rights of women and girls, their freedoms and gender equality are fully integrated in all fields of action, at all levels of France's international and European action without exception. The rights-based approach is reaffirmed and strengthened;
- New targets are set to respond to contemporary challenges: crises and conflicts, climate change, health, international finance and trade, digital and artificial intelligence.

The law of programming relating to solidarity development and the fight against global inequalities 2021-2025¹⁵ sets out France's ambitions in terms of gender equality and states that "the State commits that by 2025, 75% of the annual volumes of commitments of French bilateral development aid have gender equality as their main or significant objective and 20% as their main objective".

The guidelines for international cooperation policy and official development assistance established by the **Interministerial Committee on International Cooperation and Development (CICID)** published in July 2023 listed among the 10 priority policy objectives the one of "Promoting women's rights and gender equality, notably by supporting feminist organizations and institutions for the promotion of women's rights".¹⁶

Since the implementation of its Gender Transversal Intervention Framework in 2013, the AFD group has gradually focused on promoting an integrated and systemic gender approach in the projects it supports, Taking into account the diversity of contexts and interactions between sectors. The positioning of AFD has

¹⁴ https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/strategie_diplomatie_feministe_-_2025-2030_cle09e1ef.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043898536>

¹⁶ https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/orientations_cle017322.pdf

evolved from an approach aimed at equality between women and men to a positioning aimed at supporting structural transformations in gender-based power relations.

The AFD group's 2025-2030 strategy sets out three transversal priorities: planet, social link and democratic dynamics. The "promotion of gender equality with a transformative feminist approach" is one of the two objectives of the Social Link priority, in addition to the objective of reducing multidimensional inequalities and promoting inclusion.

Gender mainstreaming has been a systematic element in the analysis and selection of CSO Initiatives co-financing applications submitted to MPC/MPN/OSC for some years.

A gender-blind project is potentially one that contributes to reinforcing gender inequalities.

Boxed text – grading projects using the "Gender equality" marker from the OECD DAC

All operations funded by AFD are given one of three possible scores based on the OECD DAC's "Gender equality" marker. For projects co-financed through the CSO Initiatives (CSO-I) mechanism, this score is awarded to each project by the Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC). This marker is used to assess the proportion of ODA that is spent on reducing gender inequality.

Noted 0: Projects which do not feature gender equality as a target are considered as being blind to the issue of gender.

Noted 1: When gender equality is an important, intentional objective but is not the main driving force behind the project. The target of gender equality must be explicitly referenced in project documentation; its presence cannot be either implicit or implied. In its [handbook on the marker](#), the OECD states that "the project/program, in addition to other objectives, is designed to have a positive impact on advancing gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls, reducing gender discrimination or inequalities, or meeting gender-specific needs." A number of criteria must be met to receive a score of 1: a gender-specific analysis of the project must be carried out, with any conclusions drawn from it used in the project design phase. A "do no harm" approach must also be employed. There must be at least one explicit gender equality objective backed by at least one gender-specific indicator (or there will be as part of the project); data and indicators must be disaggregated by sex where applicable, and a commitment must be made to monitor and report on the gender equality results achieved by the project in the evaluation phase.

Noted 2: When the empowerment of women or gender equality is the project's main objective, having played a decisive role in its conception.

C. WHAT ARE AFD'S EXPECTATIONS IN THIS REGARD?

AFD has tightened its requirements for projects in order to ensure that placing an emphasis on gender is not seen simply as an added extra but instead plays a constituent part in the context analysis, and the process of determining the project's objectives, activities, and indicators, in addition to aiding capacity building for partner organizations.

When replying to the call for expressions of project intentions (AMI) (or, failing that, in the CSO Initiative Note [NIONG]), **AFD expects non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to explain how gender issues were taken into consideration in:**

- **The context analysis/diagnostic and key issues:** your presentation of the context of the project and key issues must address gender issues in the sector/area in which the project is to be implemented. If the NGO is not in a position to provide a comprehensive analysis of gender issues, this may be included in its activities, allocating money from the budget for this purpose.
- **The presentation of the NGO and its partners:** this must show whether the NGO and its partners have the skills to incorporate these issues into the project, or show how they plan to acquire or source these skills. The NGO must also indicate whether it has its own gender strategy.
- **The project origin and how it was designed:** the NGO will specify what roles were played by women and men in designing the project.
- **Determining the desired objectives and expected outcomes:** for each objective, the NGO will outline how the gender approach has been taken into account, showing clearly how this is reflected in the outcomes and activities. This will be used to assess how the roles, obstacles and needs specific to women and men have been considered and, where applicable, how the project will help to foster greater gender equality and change social roles and relationships.

- **Capacity building:** how the gender approach has been factored into general capacity building initiatives (looking at issues such as equal participation in training and governance) and gender-specific capacity building initiatives (such as training courses and workshops)
- **Qualification of recipients:** the NIONG will outline, where applicable, how the project will benefit women and men differently. Recipients and targets will be divided by sex.
- **Indicators:** these will be disaggregated by sex, and should make it possible to assess the project's ambitions with regard to the context and the current circumstances (a target of 40% of girls in education may be high in certain contexts, but could be the norm or only a slight increase in others), in addition to measuring participation and effects for both women and men.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** the CSO will outline how its monitoring mechanism (involving the gathering of disaggregated data) and evaluation can be used to monitor and evaluate the ways in which the project seeks to achieve the outcomes it set in relation to gender, any obstacles encountered and levers which could be deployed in order to rectify the project as a result (where applicable), and whether or not the project could be more ambitious in light of the issues at stake.

AFD also expects to see an emphasis on gender reflected in the project's logical framework and for all of these elements to be regularly monitored and reassessed over the course of project implementation. The terms of reference for evaluation must contain an evaluation question on gender, and the evaluator must be able to assess the effectiveness and the quality of the initiatives carried out and the outcomes achieved.

MPN/OSC encourages CSOs to take an [intersectional](#) approach to focusing on gender. This means taking into consideration other social characteristics, including discrimination factors such as age, disability and real or supposed origin.

In addition, MPN/OSC strongly encourages CSOs to develop a mechanism for prevention and appropriate response to sexual abuse and harassment practices that may be perpetrated as part of the implementation of the project. A specific tool sheet is proposed on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse in projects (cf. dedicated worksheet).

D. HOW CAN GENDER EQUALITY BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION FOR CSO INITIATIVE PROJECTS?

The questions that CSOs should be able to answer are:

a) Project context analysis and diagnostic of key issues

What roles do women and men play in households and within their communities? Does this result in inequality in terms of access to services and resources, or access to physical and decision-making spaces? Violence towards girls and women? What sort of role will this play in the project? Is it likely to stand in the way of project objectives being met? Which levers could the project activate in order to overcome such obstacles? Which goods and resources are controlled by women, and which are controlled by men? How are decisions taken within households and within the community? How are production and reproduction tasks divided up between women and men? What impact does this division of labor have on their availability and their capacity to participate in project activities? Was data disaggregated by sex and gender used for your analysis of the situation? Was the needs analysis and diagnostic carried out in consultation with both women and men, girls and boys? Are women seeking change? If so, how and when do they express themselves? Are they able to negotiate with the men in their lives and the authorities? Are they given support in doing so? Have you identified NGOs, institutions or experts working locally to promote gender equality? Are you familiar with national policies and laws protecting and safeguarding the rights of women? Is the political and legal context conducive to gender equality?

b) Project design

Is the project likely to have a negative impact on women, men, girls, or boys? This includes the double burden of women, retaliatory measures, loss of control over activities and decreased revenue. Is it likely to reinforce gender stereotypes and/or gender inequality (whether between women and men or

between girls and boys)? Are there any social, religious, legal and/or cultural obstacles likely to stand in the way of women, girls, men, or boys participating in the project? How does the project aim to prevent potential negative effects and overcome any obstacles that are encountered?

Do the project objectives take into consideration the different roles women/girls and men/boys play, as well as social relationships? Is the project aimed at reducing gender inequality in terms of access to essential services, control over resources and income, access to the law and justice, combating gender-based violence, the participation of women (including young women) and access to spaces for decision-making (whether economic, political, or social)?

Will the expected outcomes benefit both women and men? Are they aimed at reducing inequality and/or enabling economic independence and/or boosting women's capacities for taking action and decisions and/or developing and safeguarding women's rights?

Are the planned activities organized in such a way as to promote the participation of both women/girls and men/boys, on an equal footing (access to information, schedules, childcare, speaking opportunities for women, including young women)?

Will they help to reduce gender inequality, promote greater female empowerment and/or break down gender stereotypes and/or tackle gender-based violence? Could the project have an impact on gender-based social relationships and the division of labor, both within households and within society? Could it have an impact on social norms, common law, or national legislation?

Have the project team and partners been given sufficient training on gender and gender equality? Do the NGO and/or its partners have an internal policy or charter for preventing discrimination, tackling psychological and/or sexual harassment and combating sexist behavior and stereotypes, and will this be enforced?

c) Monitoring and evaluation, indicators

Do the monitoring indicators show the number of women/girls and men/boys benefiting from the project? Do they show the number of women and men in positions of responsibility and the numbers participating in individual activities?

Can the outcome indicators be used to measure progress made towards equality or in reducing gender inequality in different fields?

Are there other indicators relating to knowledge, attitudes, and practices within the community regarding the participation and leadership of women (including shifts in perception as to women's capacities for decision-making), particularly young women, which should be included?

d) Budget

If your CSO or its partners does not possess the requisite competencies in relation to gender, has money been allocated in the budget for training on gender, strengthening the project team or partners, or for recruiting a temporary consultant?

Has money been allocated in the budget for both women and men?

Does the budget reflect all of the measures you will seek to take aimed at promoting the equal participation of women and men in the project, making the necessary adaptations, and collecting data disaggregated by sex?

E. FIND OUT MORE

The AFD Group and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs have launched a [Massive Open Online Course \(MOOC\) on gender and development](#), which is available to access for free. A number of modules are already available: 1) Defining the concepts of gender and development and the historical background, 2) Incorporating gender into organizational practices, 3) Incorporating gender into public policy, 4) Incorporating gender into development projects.

[All you need to know about gender and development](#), a document made up of 24 "moments for reflection" on gender, aimed at creating a shared foundation of knowledge on issues linked to gender equality in the sectors and regions AFD operates in.

A set of [sector-specific toolkits \(Education; Professional training and Employment; Water and Sanitation; Energy; Transport and Mobility; Supporting the private sector, entrepreneurship and financial inclusion; Health; Urban development; Rural development, agriculture and biodiversity; and Environmental and social due diligence\)](#) have been developed by AFD aimed at outlining key issues in each of these sectors and providing tools and examples to assist with the integration of gender.

[Country gender profiles](#) provide an overview of the institutional and regulatory context, with presentations of the institutional, non-profit and research partners active in the field of gender equality. 40 country profiles are available among the countries AFD operates in.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, a roadmap for gender equality that was adopted in 1995 by 189 countries, national-level reviews were published on the UN Women website.

[Data on laws, social norms](#) and gender equality by country and by region is also available on the OECD website.

The F3E has produced worksheets on [Gender and development](#). These cover the basic concepts of gender, exploring intersectional approaches and gender-based violence in addition to providing a methodological framework for incorporating gender into field projects or education for citizenship and international solidarity. A number of documents on community capitalization of Gender practices are also available: [Vivre le genre !, Agir pour le genre](#).

Coordination SUD produced a [Support guide for incorporating the gender approach at an organizational level](#) plus a self-learning guide on [Sexist & sexual violence-Prevention and protection in the international solidarity sector](#).

Should you wish to find the contact details of a female expert who can support you, please consult [The global directory of female experts on gender and equality. - Gender Experts](#)

Worksheet n° 4: The theme of « Biodiversity – Climate change » in projects

At a time when global geopolitical and environmental crises are multiplying on our planet, and the impacts of climate change and the degradation of ecosystem services are putting social development gains even more in jeopardy, economic or security, AFD has defined its **Strategic Orientation Plan V for the period 2025-2030 (POS V)**. The AFD affirms itself as the bank for sustainable and solidarity investment and maintains its quality and impact requirement of 100% SDG.

For the AFD group, alignment with the SDGs aims at achieving strong sustainability of development models that combine ecosystem integrity (terrestrial and aquatic), reduction of inequalities and prosperity for all. The achievement of the 100% SDG commitment means for AFD an increased attention to the impacts of its sectoral contributions and the quality of its offer as well as the systematic consideration of three cross-cutting issues: (i) the protection of the planet, (ii) the reduction of multidimensional and gender inequalities, and (iii) civic and democratic participation such as the promotion and protection of human rights.

The AFD group aims to align with **international agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the Global Biodiversity Framework (CMB) adopted at COP15**. The global dimension integrates the issues of climate change mitigation, adaptation to climate change and protection and restoration of biodiversity.

A. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PRESERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY, MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTS AND NATURAL RESOURCES: BIODIVERSITY IN PROJECTS

a) Biodiversity, what are we talking about?

In the broadest sense of the term, biodiversity means life on Earth in all its forms. Drafted in 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) describes it as “the variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.”

For donors such as AFD, biodiversity and natural resource issues refer to the CBD's Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted in December 2022 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14 and 15:

- “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.”
- “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.”

Biodiversity helps to keep the biosphere in balance and provides services to human societies (most notably for supplies of food and energy). As such, **close attention must be paid to it**. Preserving it will also mean preserving all of the underlying biophysical mechanisms that support the ecology of these animal and plant species within their environments. This concerns small and large water or mineral cycles passing through the soil, particularly carbon.

The degradation of biodiversity continues worldwide, threatening the survival of humanity on Earth. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has warned of a sixth mass extinction and called for firm action from economic and political leaders in response to the urgency of the climate and environmental crisis. The expansion of crop growing and grazing into natural environments, unsustainable farming and forestry practices, urban expansion and the development of extractive industries and infrastructure have all directly contributed to land degradation and the resulting loss of biodiversity, with direct consequences for more than 3.2 billion people. The annual cost in terms of the loss of services provided by biodiversity to economies is estimated at over 20% of world GDP (\$20,000 billion).

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework aims to halt and reverse the loss of nature. The framework includes 23 action-oriented global targets for urgent action to be achieved by 2030 and

beyond for the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity. In addition to its specific targets on the state of biodiversity, the main thrusts of the WBF are to promote the integration of biodiversity into all economic sectors ("mainstreaming"), to increase public and private financial flows in favour of biodiversity, to reduce harmful financing and to seek to align these financial flows with the issues at stake.

b) France and the AFD group's biodiversity targets

France has an exceptional natural heritage, thanks to its overseas territories and its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) at sea, and has made the preservation of biodiversity one of the hallmarks of its external action. In this respect, AFD conducts committed diplomacy whose initiatives are promoted, among other things, by its development and solidarity investment policy and through the international action agenda (support to the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's* objectives, in particular the 30/30 one via the *High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People* and through the *One Planet Summits* for forests, oceans and water. AFD is supporting France's ambition.

The AFD Group is committed to development in harmony with nature and has been working for more than 20 years on biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable agriculture, green cities and a responsible blue economy. In 2024, the AFD group took **a new step by making it a key commitment** in its fifth strategic orientation plan **to ensure that 100% of its interventions are aligned with the Global Framework for Biodiversity**. The group aims to contribute to the global goal of halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030 and restoring good biodiversity status by 2050.

This requires:

- 1) **Ambitious financial targets: € 1 billion of financing per year, over the period 2025-27 in favour of nature** (doubling compared to 2020)
- 2) **A comprehensive approach:**
 - Integration of biodiversity issues in all projects and sectors
 - Target of 20% of the nature finance devoted to projects of conservation and restoration of ecosystems in favor of protected areas or sustainable management of biodiversity
 - Zero net loss: ensure that funded projects have no negative impact on biodiversity

The integration of **nature-based solutions, the fight against pollution, the protection of the oceans** and the contribution to the target «**zero net deforestation**» are privileged levers.

The Group is giving itself until 2027 to develop all its operational methodologies to do so.

The Group will also:

- **Aligning its actions with national biodiversity strategies** (national biodiversity strategies and action plans).
- **Support for projects with high structural and financial impact** (transformative interventions on biodiversity).
- **Equity and social justice** (social dimensions of biodiversity: involvement of local communities and vulnerable populations in the management and conservation of natural resources).

Biodiversity is now routinely taken into consideration during the analysis and selection process for Civil Society Organization (CSO) Initiative co-financing requests presented to the Mobilization, Partnerships and Communication Executive Directorate/Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPC/ MPN/OSC)

Boxed text – grading projects using the "Biodiversity" marker from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

AFD rates all operations financed according to the three levels of the "Biodiversity" marker of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) set up by the OECD in 1992 to facilitate the monitoring, coordination and comparability of the activities of the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) focused on the objectives of the three Rio Conventions (climate change, biodiversity, desertification).

For projects co-financed through the CSO Initiatives mechanism, a score is awarded to each project by MPN/CSO.

The DAC Biodiversity marker is used to identify official development assistance commitments and projects which are contributing to at least one objective of the United Nations (UN) Convention on Biological Diversity. These objectives are:

- the conservation of biological diversity

- sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species, and genetic resources)
- fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge

The OECD has outlined eligibility criteria for determining whether activities will contribute towards one of the objectives of the CBD, providing examples of the types of contributing activities. The activity may have a directly positive impact on biodiversity or natural resources, or on capacities and how biodiversity is governed (including policy; regulations; knowledge; skills; financial, human, and technological resources) With this in mind, it is vital not to exclude projects which adopt a "soft" approach from biodiversity funding. Such projects may concern the transformation of institutions or capacity-building in the interests of biodiversity.

Projects can be given a DAC Biodiversity score from 0 to 2:

- DAC 2: The main objective of the project contributes to at least one of the CBD objectives

- DAC 1: A secondary objective of the project makes a major contribution to one of the CBD objectives

- DAC 0: The project is not designed to meet any of the CBD objectives

Notes to assist with understanding:

A main objective is explicitly defined as one that is fundamental to the design and impact of the project. Ask yourself this question: could the project have been implemented or designed in this way without this objective?

A secondary objective, while important and explicitly described, is not among the main motivations behind the project. Although explicit reference to it is made, it is tied to another end goal, which could have been funded without this focus on biodiversity. Projects which fall into this category, which are sector-specific, are said to have "co-benefits for biodiversity."

c) What are AFD's expectations when it comes to focusing on biodiversity in projects?

For the AFD Group to meet its commitment to reach €1 billion worth of biodiversity funding by 2025, projects which have a positive impact on nature will be prioritized. Aside from managing the negative effects activities may have, the primary reason for incorporating nature and biodiversity into development projects supported by AFD is to make the most effective contribution to helping socio-economic models transition towards more sustainable practices. Development trajectories should focus on scenarios with significant long-term environmental sustainability, while ensuring that the essential services nature provides to societies are protected and accessible to all in a fair manner.

There are three distinct categories for development projects:

1. Projects with a broadly positive impact on the preservation of biodiversity and environment and natural resource management, particularly those which:

- Improve the quality of environments and promote rational use of natural resources
- Will help to reduce pressure on sensitive environments and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources
- Improve biodiversity through conservation and sustainable development

This includes two types of projects:

1. Projects aimed at biodiversity preservation or environment management
2. Projects with co-benefits in these areas.

Preliminary remark

The assessment of the effects of a project on the state of biodiversity and natural resources (species present, pressures on environments, etc.) must be done in relation to its context, which presupposes a context analysis.

If the CSO wishes to deepen this context analysis, it can carry out a baseline diagnosis (particularly recommended for projects with a biodiversity objective). In this case, its cost may be included in the funding requested from AFD. Special attention should also be paid to indicators for measuring results and impacts, and to monitoring and evaluation systems for characterizing the improvement of the state of biodiversity.

2. Projects with a broadly neutral impact on biodiversity and natural resources provided they seek to prevent or minimize any negative impact on biodiversity and the environment.

3. Projects that could have a negative impact on the state of biodiversity, the environment, and natural resources:

- If the project has a residual impact on the environment and natural resources at a local level despite offsetting measures being introduced
- If the project results in harm being caused to critical habitats (zones which are particularly rich in biodiversity, threatened species or old-growth forests)

Funding requests submitted must clearly outline how the issue of biodiversity has been taken into consideration when responding to the call for expression of interest (and in greater detail in the CSO Initiative Note [NIONG]).

Please explain the impact (whether negative, neutral, or positive) the project/program will have on the state of biodiversity in the medium to long-term, providing a detailed account of the expected impact of planned activities.

There are three possible cases:

1. **If the project generates potential negative impacts on the state of biodiversity**, then the avoidance, reduction and compensation measures (ERC sequence) for potential negative impacts that will be implemented as part of the project/program are described in detail. The actions taken will be proportionate to the biodiversity issues identified when the project was designed. As part of its new ambition, AFD will not support projects that have negative effects on the state of biodiversity and for which the project promoter does not take appropriate measures to reduce, mitigate or even compensate for them,
2. **If the project leads to co-benefits on biodiversity but does not include a specific objective on these issues**, then an analysis of the positive impacts will be carried out and presented in the project documents,
3. **If the project/program includes explicit specific objectives on biodiversity and natural resources**, then the CSO will specify according to the ambitions of the project:

- An analysis of the context and the issues identified on which the project/program intends to act;
- A description of the biodiversity policies defined by the countries or territories in which the project is being carried out, specifying how the program intends to contribute to these policies, on their scale and in relation to the biodiversity issues located in the project's area of influence;
- The definition of objectives (primary or secondary as presented in the CAD notation above): the objectives of the program/project must be explicitly reflected in the activities and results that will be monitored and evaluated;
- The list of proposed activities;
- The definition of indicators to measure the achievement of the results/impacts set by the program and, where appropriate, the baseline situations indicating the initial state of biodiversity in the project/program area (or the studies required to establish them);
- A description of the resources deployed (internal and external);
- Planned capacity-building actions for partner organisations;
- Awareness-raising/training initiatives for beneficiaries and citizens in order to encourage mobilisation and civic commitment to these issues (young people and women in particular - see the "young people as actors" tool sheet, which addresses the issues of full integration and intergenerational justice in relation to biodiversity and the climate);
- The planned monitoring/evaluation system(s).

To guide the analysis and raise questions about the project's contribution to biodiversity, the CSO project holder may refer to the grid of the sustainable development analysis and advice mechanism used by AFD to facilitate the cross-cutting consideration of the Sustainable Development Goals (including biodiversity) in the operations it finances. This grid is presented in the "to go further" section below. A self-assessment of the project following this grid can be integrated into the NIONG without being mandatory. The grid can also be used to define objectives for improving practices by moving from one level to another if necessary (the grid distinguishes five levels of consideration of biodiversity issues).

For projects that include agricultural activities, the project promoter may also refer to **AFD's position paper on Agroecology produced in July 2022 (see section "Further information")**. This includes specific analysis grids to qualify agroecology activities and thus deduce correspondences between the levels set by the sustainable development analysis grid and the assessment of the biodiversity co-benefits of the activities.

Lastly, in line with the commitments made by AFD in its exclusion list and in particular Article 17 revised in 2022, activities that present a very high environmental and biodiversity risk will not be financed, in particular the following:

- Activities carried out in (a) Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites, (b) natural and mixed sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list and (c) legally protected areas (IUCN categories).
- Operation resulting in a negative and irreversible residual impact on a critical habitat;
- Large-scale forestry or agricultural project (>100 ha) that does not use a methodology that ensures zero deforestation;

AFD's exclusion list is available on the AFD website: [AFD Group Exclusion list | AFD - Agence Française de Développement](#)

d) Find out more

For reference purposes, **examples of activities ranked in order of the risk** they pose to biodiversity preservation and environment and natural resource management is available below.

Low-risk activities

Providing education, technical support, or training.
Community awareness-raising initiatives. Controlled agricultural experiments carried out exclusively for research and evaluation purposes, restricted to small areas (generally less than 4 hectares). Such experiments must be closely monitored and must not have any impact on any protected areas or other environmental sensitive areas.
Studies, technical analysis, or other information-generating activities, not including intrusive sampling of endangered species or vital habitats.
Nutrition, health care or family planning and nutrition programs for mothers and infants, except: (a) when certain activities may have a direct impact on the environment (such as construction and water supply systems, for example) or (b) when hazardous bio-waste is being handled (especially for HIV-AIDS) or when blood samples are being taken.
Reconfiguration of water extraction points for household use, surface wells or hand-dug wells and small water storage systems. When choosing the locations of water extraction points, care must be taken to ensure that no protected areas or other environmental sensitive areas will be affected.
Small-scale construction projects: construction or renovation projects where the total surface area is less than 1,000 m² (and where no protected area or other environmental sensitive areas may be affected).
Credit programs: where there is no risk of any significant biophysical repercussions on the environment.
Capacity-building for development purposes: studies or programs aimed at building the capacities of stakeholders in

Medium-risk activities

Natural resource management on a small scale with no negative impact.
Smallholder agriculture, natural resource management and sanitation.
Agricultural experiments: controlled, closely monitored experiments, exclusively for research and evaluation purposes, across more than 4 hectares of land.
Medium-sized construction projects: construction or renovation projects where the total surface area is greater than 1,000 m² (examples include warehouses, barns, shops selling staples and community training centers).
Rural roads: construction or renovation of rural roads shorter than 10 km, with no impact on environmental sensitive areas (located at least 100 m away) or forests (located at least 5 km away).
Sampling: studies, technical analysis, or other similar activities, not including intrusive sampling of endangered species or vital habitats.
Water provision or storage: construction or reconfiguration of small-scale water extraction or storage points for both household and non-household use.
Support for intermediary credit institutions where direct environmental damage is a possible outcome.
Pesticides: small-scale deployment of general use pesticides, the least toxic available. Use limited to farmers and for demonstrations, training and emergency assistance or education, with professional supervision.

High-risk activities

Nutrition, health, or family planning projects, if (a) these could have direct repercussions on the environment (such as construction projects or supply systems, for example).
River basin development.
The development of new agricultural land: leveling out fields.
Planned resettling of people.
Construction of access roads or renovation of roads (whether primary, secondary, or tertiary) longer than 10 km. More specifically, roads which may cross or pass alongside forests or other environmental sensitive areas.
Laying pipes and constructing sewers for water supply purposes.
Construction of large-scale water extraction points. Large-scale irrigation.
Water control structures: dams and dikes. Drainage of low-lying land or other flooded areas.
Large-scale agricultural mechanization.
Acquisition or use of pesticides over large areas of land.
Industrial exploitation or production: sawmills, agro-industrial processing of forestry products, tanneries, fabric dyeing, and so on.

B. PRESENTATION OF THE BIODIVERSITY TABLE FROM AFD'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS SYSTEM.

Consistent with the SDGs, the Sustainable Development Issues Analysis Framework integrates the Agency's strategic orientations and is organized into three pillars ("planet", "human", "economy & governance") and seven dimensions: biodiversity, low-carbon transition, climate change resilience, social linkages, gender, economy and governance.

The analysis grids is available on the AFD website: <https://www.afd.fr/en/ressources/sustainable-development-analysis-grids>

The biodiversity grid is broken down into five sub-criteria for evaluation purposes, which can be used where applicable:

- Integrity, functionality, and connectivity of ecosystems
- Sustainability of natural resource usage
- Inclusion of local people in environment and natural resource management
- Enhancing and sharing relevant knowledge, data, and technology in relation to biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources
- Introducing or consolidating a political, regulatory or governance framework aimed at encouraging biodiversity

The grids predict a scale of progression of impacts from -2 to +3 (-2, significant negative effects to +3 positive structuring effects).

The first 4 levels (from -2 to +1) correspond to CAD marker 0, level +2 corresponds to CAD marker 1, and level +3 corresponds to CAD marker 2. The transition from one level to another allows for a better consideration of biodiversity in the project and can therefore be used to define improvement objectives by the project leader.

AFD's position paper on Agroecology is available on the AFD website (French only):

<https://www.afd.fr/fr/ressources/meilleure-integration-transition-agroecologique-projets-finances-groupe-afd>

Tool for identifying climate and biodiversity positive activities at the same time within development projects.

In keeping with the AFD Group's aim for 30% of its climate funding to have a directly positive impact on biodiversity, AFD has developed an Excel tool for identifying climate and biodiversity positive activities which could be incorporated into projects in order to place greater emphasis on climate/biodiversity synergies. This tool lists activities with co-benefits for the climate and biodiversity, helps project leaders to identify nature-based solutions and supports arguments in favor of acting on climate change by drawing on existing activities. You may also use it to direct analysis of key project issues in advance of the design phase. We would recommend that CSOs use this tool from the initial stages of the project/program design process, where possible.

This tool is available on request from AFD.

C. TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS EFFECTS- CLIMATE CHANGE IN PROJECTS

CSOs contribute to climate activity by developing projects and initiatives which are directly fighting climate change the climate. They also encourage public stakeholders to incorporate climate-related issues into public policy, while improving their own internal practices through corporate social responsibility initiatives.

a) What is meant by climate change?

Climate change poses a significant threat to tackling poverty and enhancing prosperity. There is an urgent need to promote resilient, low-carbon development, every effort must be taken to stabilize the average world temperature and adapt economies and societies to global climate instability.

The Paris Climate Accords, which were adopted at COP21 in 2015, and the Sustainable Development Goals - particularly number 13: "Take urgent impact to combat climate change and its impacts" - provide a framework for countries and development stakeholders, encouraging these issues to be taken into consideration.

Below can be found definitions for mitigation, adaptation, and public policy:

- **Mitigation:** alignment with challenges linked to climate change and low-carbon strategies (*Action on greenhouse gas emissions, involving reducing them, restricting them, or protecting and improving carbon sinks and reservoirs*)
- **Adaptation:** resilience to climate change (*the extent to which a system must adjust in response to climate change (including climate variability and extreme weather) in order to mitigate potential damage, take advantage of opportunities or tackle consequences*)
- **Public policy:** factoring in the issue of climate change when determining or implementing public policy in the country/countries in question

b) The AFD Group's climate target

The Agency has evolved from an approach based primarily on the intrinsic benefits of climate co-benefit projects to research and the characterization of the coherence of supported interventions with low-development trajectories carbon and improving people's resilience to climate change. **The AFD is thus attentive to ensuring that the supported projects present, where relevant, co-benefits (adaptation and/or mitigation) and are aligned with climate policies (local trajectories of mitigation and adaptation).**

CSOs are expected to factor the issue of climate change into their projects and must outline whether projects/programs incorporate specific objectives, expected outcomes and activities linked to climate change. In such cases the CSO will provide a detailed analysis of the context, the issues which the project/program will seek to address and the resources to be employed. The following points must be covered in this analysis:

- The alignment of activities with the Paris Accords and the country or countries' decarbonization strategies (measures and policies introduced by countries aimed at cutting emissions and adapting to climate change)
- An analysis of the project in relation to the three dimensions outlined below (mitigation, adaptation, and public policy), in function of their relevance with regard to activities
- An analysis of the context, including a "vulnerability assessment" for the area with regard to the effects of climate change, must be included in the "NIONG" in order to justify adaptation initiatives. Should additional analysis prove necessary (including "participatory vulnerability assessments" involving recipients), this can be incorporated into funding requests made to AFD. Go to the [Find out more](#) section for assistance with vulnerability assessments
- The medium- to long-term impact of the project/program on tackling climate change (mitigation AND adaptation) and its effects
- Any negative impact the project/program could potentially have on tackling climate change and its effects (particularly if the project generates high CO2 emissions); in such cases, details of the planned corrective measures must be provided.

The NIONG does not ask you to provide an exact estimate of your project/program's carbon footprint. However, you are asked to provide an overview of the potential impact it could have on the climate, using the points below.

1. Mitigation - Alignment with issues linked to climate change and transitioning away from carbon

The project aligns with the country's climate targets or it will make a significant contribution to transitioning away from carbon:

Mitigation projects that will help to reduce emissions at a regional level

Pioneering mitigation projects in a sector with the potential for replication

Pilot agroecology projects

Projects aimed at raising awareness of issues linked to climate change among the wider public, including mitigation

Projects promoting innovative approaches which are in keeping with the low-carbon transition within companies (such as social enterprises)

Forest conservation and/or restoration project, or afforestation with high sequestration impact

Building Energy Efficiency Project

Types of "Mitigation" projects:

Cutting greenhouse gas emissions: clean energy technology (improved cookstoves, for example), solar electrification, energy efficiency in buildings.

Carbon sequestration: reforestation, sustainable forest management, agroforestry, preservation of mangroves, preservation of coral reefs.

Education for citizenship and international solidarity (ECIS) projects centered around climate issues, including mitigation.

2. Adaptation: resilience to climate change

For a project to be resilient to climate change, it must meet some of the following criteria:

Is the project adapted to climate change ?

Can the project deliver the desired impacts for the population despite climate risks? Does the project allow for protection and/or improvement of infrastructure to better withstand climate change and variability?

The project has current and future effects on the adaptation of the territory and/or sector/system in which it operates

Does the project contribute to increasing the percentage of the population aware of the expected effects of climate change and the most appropriate responses?

Does the project increase the number of people covered by and familiar with early warning systems?

Does the project reduce the number of people killed, injured and affected by extreme weather events?

Does the project reduce the risks of climate-related disasters to goods and people?

Does the project maintain or improve ecosystem services and natural resource management in a context of climate change?

To what extent does the project support capacity building of local civil society on climate change adaptation?

The project has a transformational effect on the sector/system in which it operates

Does the project structurally orient sectors/territories/systems towards new modes of development more resilient to climate change?

What is the potential for replicability and scale-up of the project?

The project factors in uncertainty (yes if it meets any of the criteria below)

The adaptation of and by the project will remain effective even in extreme climate scenarios.

- Will the project be able to have a positive impact even in the extreme scenarios outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)?
- To what extent do the project's information and awareness-raising initiatives entail significant, lasting change in terms of how people think and act (behavioral changes)?

OR

- *The project incorporates corrective measures in the event of different climate scenarios.*
- Will it be easy to make changes to the project at a low cost in the event of new information (whether related to the climate or monitoring-evaluation) coming to light? This will involve switching from one solution to another previously identified solution (change or gradual progression).
- Will the project help to increase the number of people with livelihoods which are more resilient to climate change?

Types of “Adaptation” projects:

Agricultural resilience: sustainable agricultural practices, agroecology, agroforestry, irrigation, water resource management, erosion control, sustainable land management.

Sustainable ecosystem management: management of drainage basins, preservation of mangroves, preservation of coral reefs.

Urban or rural sanitation: reducing the risk of flooding for areas affected by extreme weather events. Improved, climate-resilient housing.

Education for citizenship and international solidarity (ECIS) projects centered around climate issues, including adaptation.

3. Support for public policy

This relates to projects that involve advocating for, helping to develop, or helping to implement public policy linked to climate change (mitigation or adaptation) at a national or regional level.

The project will contribute towards sustainable regulatory or strategic decisions for stimulating low-carbon development

Supporting or implementing sectoral policy decisions (in fields such as energy/electricity, agricultural development, forests, urbanization, waste, and transport) for stimulating low-carbon development

Assisting with the development of strategy plans (long-term low-carbon strategies)

Contributing towards the introduction of sustainable laws and regulations which promote the development of renewable energy

The project will result in or assist with the introduction of quality standards, certifications or labels which exceed those currently in place and which promote a low-carbon trajectory

The project will have an impact on the institutional environment

Creating institutions geared towards promoting policies and/or investment plans which are in keeping with low-carbon development

Gathering more relevant data for developing low-carbon strategies

Boosting planning and coordination capacities for the implementation of low-carbon projects

Capacity-building, training, supporting public stakeholders with the implementation of low-carbon strategies in different sectors.

Types of projects:

Themes: promoting agroecology, sustainable management of natural resources (soil - water - plant resources), sustainable territorial development, “clean” energy policies, waste management - at a local, national, or regional level.

Types of initiatives: advocacy, training, and information for local stakeholders, helping local stakeholders to draft policy position papers, helping local stakeholders to participate in public policy and national/international negotiations.

c) Find out more: tools available

Sustainable development analysis grid

As is the case for biodiversity, in order to direct their analysis and to encourage them to consider the contribution their project will make to the climate, the CSO leading the project may refer to the sustainable development analysis grid used by AFD to ensure that Sustainable Development Goals (including those linked to climate change) are taken into consideration at all levels within operations it finances. This grid can be used to set targets for improving practices. With regard to climate change, there are two grids: one for **low-carbon strategies** and the other for **resilience to climate change**; these can both be found on the AFD website <https://www.afd.fr/en/ressources/sustainable-development-analysis-grids>

These grids can be used to analyze the expected outcomes of projects with regard to climate-related issues. Using a series of criteria and questions, the aim is to adopt a “do no harm” approach, so as to ensure that all projects are in keeping with individual countries' climate strategies and to identify ways of better integrating these strategies into the project design process.

Vulnerability assessments - documents

- [USAID](#) climate risk country profiles

Very clear, with national coverage, but some countries are not available

- [THINK HAZARD](#) portal

- Outlines climate risk levels for individual countries/regions based on historical evidence. Details are given as to qualitative future trends in relation to a baseline
- Not infallible, but no false negatives

- Country climate profiles by the World Bank:
<https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country-profiles> (not all countries are covered however)

- The ND Gain climate vulnerability index site : <https://gain.nd.edu/>

Worksheet n°5: youth empowerment for projects and the sustainable development goals

A. WHAT IS MEANT BY YOUTH?

There are a number of ways of defining youth, making it a difficult concept to pin down: biological age, social and cultural constructs, and physiological, psychological, social, and economic empowerment. In the interests of greater inclusivity for Civil Society Organization (CSO) Initiative projects managed by the Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC), the term **youth** is to be understood as referring to the period of transition between childhood and adulthood, the end point being socio-economic, civic, and environmental empowerment.

There are currently 1.2 billion young people aged between 15 and 24, making up 16% of the world's population. By 2030 the number of young people is expected to rise by 7%, reaching close to 1.3 billion.¹⁷ Young people make up more than half of the population in most countries AFD operates in.

Emphasizing the issue of youth in France's policy for solidarity development and tackling inequality

The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) launched a youth strategy in 2015,¹⁸ guiding France's foreign policy through the prism of this priority generation. This reference document outlines France's commitment to empowering young people to bring about change. It recognizes associations as the best means of initiating the engagement and independence of young people in their journeys as citizens, helping them to open up to the world.

In April 2024, following the submission of the report of the CNDSI Working Group for a «participation of young people in the elaboration and implementation of the development policy and international solidarity of France», the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs has announced the drafting of a road map «Youth» in the external action of France supported by the general direction of Globalization. The aim of this roadmap is to promote and propose ways for effective and genuine participation by young people, in all their diversity, in public policies on development cooperation and international solidarity.

MEAE's policy on youth is consistent with that of many bilateral and multilateral backers. Some of these have introduced ambitious strategies in this field, with significant resources. In 2015 the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), targets to be reached by 2030 in order to transform our world and our societies. **The UN has recognized the pivotal role that young people across all countries will play in meeting the targets set out in the 2030 Agenda. The French programming law on Solidarity Development and Tackling Global Inequality of August 2021** outlines this ambition in a sustainable way, identifying young people as a priority target for this policy, which is geared towards involving young people in dialog with partners.

a) Full integration for youth

“Full integration” - both economic and professional, social and civic, and environmental and climate-related - will be crucial to meeting the SDGs. This will involve considering these three different dimensions in conjunction with each other, thus preventing the instability which can arise from a silo approach, while respecting the “do no harm” principle.

b) Intergenerational equity

The concept of **intergenerational justice and equity** involves taking steps to ensure that [future generations](#) do not suffer the negative consequences (whether environmental, social or economic) of

¹⁷ [UN Global Issues - Youth](#)

¹⁸ [Rapport Jeunesse FR Web_cle869574-1.pdf \(diplomatie.gouv.fr\)](#)

development or “maldevelopment”, as promoted by the 20th century’s economic and industrial model, centered around the unbridled consumption of resources (or the inaction) of a single individual or group (and eventually all of humanity). This can also lead to an evaluation of the ecological debt which a group or process may pass on to future generations, raising the concept of the anticipated “reimbursement” of this debt in the form of compensation. This is a valuable complement to the related concept of the ecological footprint, the aim of which is to improve individuals’ or groups’ perceptions of the spatial impact of their actions.

c) Youth and Gender: two common issues

In much the same vein as inclusion and tackling inequality, the issues of gender and youth would appear to be linked and mutually transformational. The specific role to be played by young women and men within projects and in tackling gender inequality must be clarified.

If young women and girls are given the opportunity to stand up for their rights, they represent a truly vital resource. There is a growing awareness of the role which young women and young men can play within society, which is increasingly being reflected in development policies and projects. There is still a lot of progress to be made, however, requiring a more proactive and more intersectional approach to these two issues.

d) The vital role played by civil society organizations

Having reaffirmed their commitment to empowering young people in order to help them to bring about social, political, economic, and environmental change, CSOs are the driving force behind this objective. In 2017 Coordination SUD created the “Youth and International Solidarity” commission, which is aimed at promoting and implementing this vision of young people engaged with international solidarity, just like with gender.

Recommendations for placing an emphasis on youth in international solidarity organizations

1. Develop a shared vision for youth within your organization
2. Make youth engagement attractive and encourage young people to play prominent roles within projects **across all stages**
3. Rethink your organization's youth communication strategy
4. Promote intergenerational dialog
5. Adapt to the needs of young people to enable them to participate
6. Introduce a suitable support system
7. Give young people the chance to learn by doing within projects with a view towards full integration, from an economic/social, civic/professional, social/citizen and environmental/climate perspective

Find out more: [Coordination-SUD-Etat-lieux-jeunes-dans-SI.pdf \(coordinationsud.org\)](#)
Publications by CoSud's Youth and International Solidarity Commission: [Publications by CSUD - Coordination SUD](#)

B. AFD'S EXPECTATIONS FOR INCORPORATING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INTO PROJECTS

In the ongoing dialogue between MEAE and AFD and civil society, CSOs are encouraged to provide themselves with effective means of involving young people more closely in projects so that they can tackle economic imbalances more effectively, social and environmental. The objective is to make these young people fully active ties of projects and society, so that actions gain relevance, efficiency and sustainability in the short, medium and long term.

The inclusion of youth in a project is not only about including young people as beneficiaries, or a percentage of young people as beneficiaries. Nor is it the generational diversity of beneficiaries. These conditions are necessary but not sufficient. Inequalities, prohibitions and even violence or discrimination affecting young people must be the subject of actions aimed at changing the place of young people in

society with a view to making them actors (in the short, medium and long term) the SDGs in their environment while integrating their age-related specificities. The objectives of change should ideally be co-developed and carried, if not at least appropriate by the young themselves, they do not dictate themselves in an authoritarian way.

In the instruction document, the CSO is asked about the inclusion of young people in its project. AFD is therefore careful to ensure that the consideration of this issue is increasingly integrated into projects. Because of its 100% social link strategy, the majority of funded projects must be at least Level 2, as far as youth inclusion is concerned. Special attention is paid in the appraisal of CSO Initiatives projects to efforts invested so that young people can be fully mobilized as actors and actors of the SDGs and no longer in a passive posture of mere beneficiaries, and to what extent the project aims at the full integration of these young people. This approach aims to contribute to a civic education, through action, of young people by giving them the opportunity to be fully actors and actors in local and global issues. This also contributes to the fight against rising extremism, the training of future civil society cadres, their socio-professional integration and the strengthening of dialogue between partners.

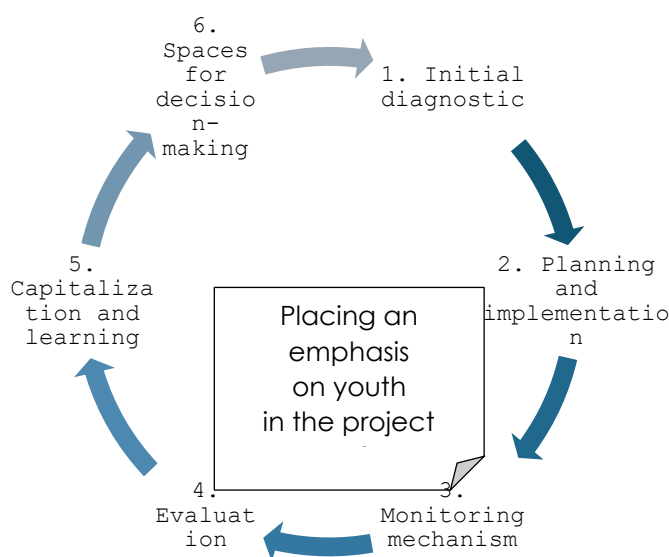
The rating of projects is carried out in three levels ranging from 0 to 3.

Level 0: the project does not concern youth;

Level 1: the project has at least partially and specifically for beneficiary youth (passive posture of the latter in the project);

Level 2: the project makes youth an actor;

Level 3: the project promotes an integral integration of the youth actresses of the project



Placing an emphasis on youth at every stage of your project

AFD encourages CSOs applying for funding to place greater emphasis on youth engagement in their projects at every stage. This may involve: contributions from young people to project creation; taking the initiative to launch projects; forming project teams; preparing, and drafting projects; training and access to information; project implementation; evaluation and sustainability.

a) Initial diagnostic and key issues

CSOs must document their understanding of the project context through the prism of youth. This will involve analyzing the role played by young people in society/in their communities and their capacity for speaking out, making independent choices, organizing themselves and taking decisions. The specific challenges young people face must be analyzed, exploring how these can be overcome in order for young people to play **a role in the dynamics of social, economic, ecological, and political change with a view towards becoming potential solutions**. CSOs must involve young women and men as much as possible in the project diagnostic phase, factoring in their understanding of the context, their aspirations, and their capacity for engagement in project implementation. This will also help to develop a clearer understanding of local dynamics involving young people. Projects can help to highlight what connects the problem the project is seeking to address, and the place given to young people/and their engagement in the area in question. Details must be provided as to the resources deployed aimed at improving the knowledge of both professionals and recipients. Examples include surveys, studies, training courses, demonstrations, eyewitness accounts and information gathering.

b) Planning and implementation for greater youth engagement

Projects may seek to set targets for improving youth engagement across all fields, exploring aspects such as inclusion, consultation, and strategic dialog alongside this target group. This might involve **changing the status and role of young people** in projects through initiatives geared towards empowerment (independence, critical thinking, their capacity for influence, decision-making), improving their organizational skills or giving them a more prominent role within non-youth-specific organizations. Such “strategic” changes may take the form of measures geared specifically towards **building young people's capacities for initiative**, their organizational skills, and their power to influence. Targeted awareness-raising campaigns among the general public and in an intergenerational context may help to bring about such changes, the goal being to encourage young people to get involved in public life and civic participation. From an operational perspective, young people can participate at all levels of projects, **playing an essential role in adaptation, ownership, and accountability**. Stakeholders which are directly involved in initiatives - such as spaces for decision-making and dialog involving young people - must be quantified, with as much detail as possible provided on the varied and specific needs of young people. Details may also be provided as to what roles young people will occupy in the field.

c) Monitoring, evaluation, and capitalization

Implementing a “Youth” strategy (whether primary or secondary), producing new knowledge, and documenting and identifying ongoing changes requires specific resources and measures, in addition to particular outcomes and performance indicators. These must be explicitly included in projects. Where necessary, methodological support may be included, enlisting the services of experts within the project country or within the CSO. This will make it possible to document the emergence of key youth issues and how they are being addressed, including through changes to plans of action, training, or activities. Project evaluations should endeavor to pay close attention to how the issue of “youth empowerment” has been incorporated into the project, as well as to the effects of the project in terms of boosting young people's power to act.

d) Spaces for decision-making: the importance of youth participation

Irrespective of whether young people are the main recipients of a project, it is essential that they participate in the decision-making process. Details must be provided as to their role within the project, dialog frameworks and partner organizations. If they are significantly marginalized in the initial context, reasonable progress will be expected, taking the local context into account. This participation may be evaluated based on laws introduced in the countries in question and civil society reference documents from each country. Tools for measuring the participation and contribution of young women and young men can also focus attention on their participation,¹⁹ thus stimulating their role within spaces for civic participation.

C. EXPERIENTIAL AND EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES

a) Stimulating civic engagement through youth and volunteering

Through civic and solidarity engagement, a range of different volunteering opportunities²⁰ are available for enabling young people to acquire the capacities to take decisive action on the SDGs. Such an approach also helps to promote learning by doing, and education on citizenship and international solidarity. It is designed to enable the practical development of the skills needed for civic engagement and to help to bring through future leaders in civil society and the non-profit sector worldwide. Providing learning opportunities to the youth of partner countries through charity and volunteer work adds value to projects, which must be factored in to both the logical framework and the budget (in the section on value creation).

When undertaken as part of an ambitious public policy, volunteering provides a rare opportunity to establish a connection between education, full integration (economic/professional, social/citizen and environment/climate), and active citizenship. It empowers young people by enabling them to make meaningful contributions to activities of general interest.

¹⁹ Booklet - Cross capitalization of FISONG “civic participation” projects, AFD

²⁰ See worksheet on incorporating volunteering into projects

b) Youth and education for citizenship and international solidarity (ECSI)

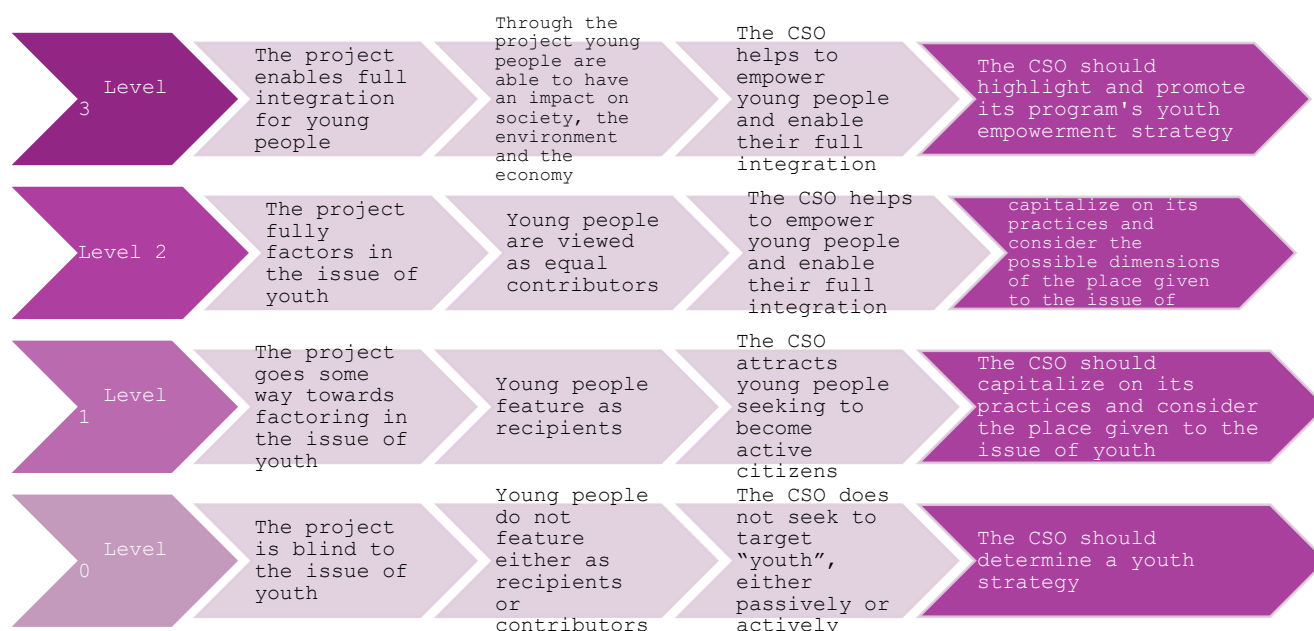
ECIS is centered around education, politics and empowerment, the overarching objective being to promote the building of a fair, united, and sustainable world by encouraging everyone to seek out information and to take action to deliver change. It is designed to respond to the major challenges of our time, whether social, environmental, economic, cultural, or political, all of which are complex, interdependent, and international. A multi-stakeholder group coordinated by AFD was set up in 2017 to facilitate dialog surrounding ECSI. In 2021 it published a joint paper²¹ outlining the scope of ECIS and the vital role it plays in establishing and promoting a set of common values, empowering citizens, and raising awareness of a whole host of complementary practices.

ECIS is for everyone, but many of its initiatives are aimed at younger generations, and it is particularly well-suited to placing a greater emphasis on youth and the potential of young people to make an active contribution to the ecological transition, the transition to democracy and other interdependent transitions. ECIS provides a complementary alternative to formal education, helping with the development of young citizens by fostering critical thinking, providing guidance, breaking down prejudice, discouraging inward-looking thinking, giving value to engagement, and supporting meaningful solidarity initiatives. Project objectives can be used to promote a learning by doing approach for young participants in projects. This will also help you to distinguish between age-dependent strategies for supporting young people in their active involvement, developing over time a dynamic approach aimed at enabling them to become fully-fledged citizens of the world (once they enter adulthood), irrespective of their gender, religion, or social background.

D. APPRAISING PROJECTS THROUGH THE PRISM OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

MPN/OSC employs a specific grading system for assessing the emphasis placed on youth in projects. The system is designed to better consider this interdisciplinary issue across all sectors and geographies for projects in receipt of funding.

Grid for assessing the emphasis placed on youth by the CSO



E. USEFUL POINTERS

Here are a few questions to ask yourself when considering **the issue of youth and the role it plays in your project**:

²¹ [The pivotal role played by education for citizenship and international solidarity: joint paper | AFD - Agence Française de Développement](#)

a) How prominent are young people and youth engagement in the project?

- Are young people a target for the project? Are young women a specific target?
- Out of the total number of recipients, what percentage are young people?
- Are young people organized into teams or groups within the project?
- What roles do young people occupy in governance of the project and/or the CSO and its partners?
- What contribution is made by young people to the project's objectives and expected outcomes?
- How many volunteers are involved in the project (including those from the project country/countries and reciprocal volunteers)?

b) What measures have been taken aimed at changing the place given to young people?

- Does the project help young people to build their capacities for action (particularly in terms of democratic leadership and governance)?
- Does the project enable young people to "learn by doing" with a view towards full integration (not just economic/professional, but also social/civic and environmental/climate)?
- Are young women encouraged to actively participate across all spaces and roles, enabling them to play key roles in the dynamics of social transformation, including in leadership positions?
- Does the project seek to change national policy or regulatory frameworks? Do young people contribute to the design process?
- Do the terms of reference for project evaluation make specific reference to the role of young people and is this worksheet included in the appendices for the attention of the evaluator?

c) Which youth engagement levers have been activated? Are there any plans for volunteering or ECIS initiatives?

- Does the project include any measures aimed at promoting a dynamic of accountability, empowerment, and solidarity engagement among young people?
- Are there any plans to recruit young people through volunteering schemes in France or partner countries? Is the principle of reciprocity between young people encouraged?
- Does the project draw upon ECIS initiatives involving young people in their execution?
- Do capacity building and support initiatives involve young people addressing other young people?

d) Are young people involved in drafting the budget?

- Have resources or expenditure items been clearly earmarked for youth activism?
- Have specific resources linked to volunteering schemes been incorporated?
- Does charity work carried out by young people feature in the budget?

e) Is the role played by young people a clear part of the logical framework?

- Do the objectives and expected outcomes reveal the role played by young people in the project?
- Have specific indicators been identified for assessing the emphasis placed on youth?
- Has the active contribution made by young people to meeting the SDGs been described?

Worksheet n°5 bis: Incorporating volunteering into projects

A. WHAT IS MEANT BY VOLUNTEERING?

International volunteering provides a way for **people to show their solidarity** by participating in initiatives, projects, or organizations of general interest. Recognized by the French law on solidarity development of August 4, 2021 as one of the mechanisms for official development assistance (ODA), it is supported by the French government and local authorities, engaging with civil society organizations (CSOs) as part of a partnership approach.

Volunteering differs from international charity work in the length of the commitment required and the types of contracts which are signed. Charity work is a part-time commitment, with activities which are either recurring, one-off, or temporary taking place over an unspecified period of time. Charity workers do not receive any payment, making this an altruistic endeavor. **Volunteer workers, meanwhile, commit to working full time on international solidarity initiatives which can last anywhere from a few months to several years.** They are given a living allowance, access to social security and training. In France, long forms of volunteering for international solidarity are governed by **two main laws, both of which contribute towards Agence Française de Développement's (AFD) objectives of supporting CSOs:**

The **Volunteering for International Solidarity (VSI)** law from 2005: this is part of France's international cooperation policy. The purpose of VSI is to carry out missions of general interest overseas in the fields of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Coordinated by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), VSI employs the use of two operators: the Fonds de coopération de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire ([FONJEP](#)), which is responsible for MEAE loans for volunteering, working with accredited CSOs and volunteers; and Frances Volontaires, which is responsible for promoting and organizing volunteering for international solidarity. VSI is targeted at anyone over the age of 18 and takes place outside of Europe, with the exception of foreign volunteers volunteering in France (reciprocal volunteering). There are around 30 or so accredited VSI organizations specializing in training and monitoring at an international level.

The **Civic Service (SC)** law from 2010: Civic service is part of France's wider youth policy; it aims to strengthen social ties and cohesion by giving all young people the opportunity to take part in projects of general interest. It is managed by the Agence du Service Civique (the French Civic Service Agency), which employs accredited organizations and is specifically targeted at young women and men aged between 16 and 25, irrespective of their background or nationality. The principle of reciprocity through volunteer work is made possible through civic service.

In addition to these frameworks for civic engagement and cooperation at an international level, there are a range of volunteering schemes and initiatives²²:

Targeted at groups of young people (examples include Chantiers Solidaires [work project schemes centered around practical initiatives, independent learning and working with others], international solidarity and youth initiatives (Jeunesse Solidarité Internationale - JSI) and Ville, Vie, Vacances [a scheme which provides access to cultural, civic, sporting and leisure opportunities for at-risk youth aged between 11 and 18]/International Solidarity (VIV/IS), and youth projects)

- Targeted at people in work (unpaid leave for volunteering)
- Targeted at the retired (volunteering opportunities for seniors)
- Run by the European Union (the European Solidarity Corps)
- Run by the United Nations (United Nations Volunteers)

State support for stakeholders engaged in volunteering is taken from the MEAE's budget for engaging with volunteering initiatives. Part of a long-term strategy, the size of this budget has continued to rise, the goal being to meet demand for engagement from young people in keeping with ODA's upward trajectory. *The budget was €20.67m in 2020. It is expected to sit at €22.5m in 2021 and could reach as high as €23.4m in 2022.*

²² Please refer to the summary table of volunteering opportunities in the "Find out more" section

B. WHAT VOLUNTEERING CAN ACHIEVE?

Described by the UN Secretary General as a "powerful, interdisciplinary lever for implementing the **Sustainable Development Goals**", by the Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) as "an interdisciplinary lever for solidarity and development policy", and by the **French planning law on solidarity development and tackling global inequality (LOP-DSLIM) of August 2021** as "**an interdisciplinary lever for solidarity development policy**", international volunteering for exchange and solidarity is a versatile, reciprocal and practical mechanism. Volunteering has benefits for partners, for the development of cooperation and projects, and for the implementation of innovative solutions and initiatives through the fresh perspective it offers on projects and organizations. But it also benefits the volunteers themselves, assisting with their development at a personal level (self-discovery), at a professional level (providing technical skills which can be put to use for studies or in a professional context) and in terms of being an active environmental citizen (seeing the world in a different light). Volunteers promote a positive image of France abroad, representing its values of solidarity and dialog between peoples.

France Volontaires - France's platform for international volunteering opportunities for exchange and solidarity

Launched in 2009 and **reporting to the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs**, France Volontaires is **France's platform for international volunteering opportunities for exchange and solidarity**. A joint creation involving public stakeholders and international solidarity associations, it was set up to promote international volunteering for exchange and solidarity in all its forms, while expanding on the range of missions from both a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Its aim is to make international volunteering ever more accessible, regardless of the age, the background, the region, or the competencies of the individuals seeking to participate. France Volontaires is able to rely on its members - experts in volunteering initiatives - on its partners in France and across the world, and on its network across mainland France, France's overseas territories and internationally, with 24 volunteering spaces in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

France Volontaires and the AFD Group signed a framework agreement in December 2021. This partnership between two organizations with a long history of supporting French cooperation initiatives is designed to **build their respective capacities - both here and over there - for engaging volunteers, particularly young people, in the Sustainable Development Goals and International Solidarity**, primarily through **volunteering in projects funded by AFD**.

The AFD Group, Expertise France and France Volontaires have a shared ambition to make volunteering accessible to as many people as possible, both here and over there, in all its forms, with ever higher demands in terms of quality. To make a real difference, volunteering must employ a "do no harm," no replacements approach, while respecting gender equality and preventing or minimizing any risks linked to the operational context. Volunteers will require a framework and the appropriate resources to achieve this. The principle of reciprocity provides an opportunity to establish a more balanced cooperative relationship with partner countries and regions.

a) Why encourage volunteers to take part in CSO projects?

Volunteers engage in local cooperation and have the capacity to promote the local innovations they discover at an international level. Volunteers act to bridge the gap between communities and local authorities. Upon their return, wherever they are in the world, international volunteers form a pool of expertise, helping to bring about change within organizations, partnerships, and society. They contribute to all phases of projects on a daily basis, across a wide range of geographies and themes. AFD provides support to CSOs committed to assisting with the professional integration of young people, while encouraging them to take the initiative in the interests of galvanizing their projects.

b) Volunteers helping to reach and promote the Sustainable Development Goals

As outlined in the 2030 Agenda, volunteer work contributes towards active citizenship, while helping citizens to get to grips with the challenges of sustainable development. Based on improvement and mutual understanding, volunteers help societies to heal while strengthening social cohesion. They offer spaces for both individual and collective development, helping to build strong, dynamic societies. Volunteer work has a multiplier effect, enabling local action at the heart of communities aimed at ensuring **that no one is left out**. Volunteers act as co-incubators and have the capacity to promote the

local innovations they discover at an international level. They often serve as a bridge between communities and local authorities. They form a pool of expertise, providing vital resources for cooperative projects. From health, education and professional training to revenue-generating activities, water and sanitation, waste management and social integration, every day volunteers help to implement projects in a wide range of areas at the heart of the 2030 Agenda's push for inclusivity.

c) Empowering young people

AFD is committed to **empowering young people in at least half of its projects**, in keeping with its "100% Lien Social" strategy. The Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC) pays close attention to initiatives which promote the involvement of young people in project processes and organizations. In 2015 a specific indicator was introduced to monitor progress made in relation to this target.²³

The anger of young people worldwide and the natural altruism which resides in every one of them are not enough on their own to bring about the change needed to make the world a better place, or to help these young people to find their place in it. By giving young people access to international volunteering opportunities, **CSOs are able to place an emphasis on youth** in their projects, their strategies and dialog with their partners. They activate the **process of youth empowerment, which has a positive impact on the volunteers themselves as well as on society, making them feel useful and providing opportunities for self-development**. Taking a "youth empowerment" approach means getting young people involved in the dynamics of social transformation. But this is not limited to simply consulting them: young people must be involved in decision-making, for which they need to be given the requisite support in building their capacities to act and take responsibility. International volunteering schemes help to facilitate and promote learning.

d) Aiding full integration through volunteering

A key component of AFD's "100% Social Link" strategy, **full integration** can be achieved through volunteering pathways for young people as well as through dialog with partners. The full integration of young people is defined as their capacity to successfully become independent, and to assert their rights in an active and sustainable way with regard to social, societal, economic, professional, environmental, and climate-related concerns. Full integration must be a target when writing descriptions for volunteering opportunities. AFD believes that volunteering should be used to assist with the full integration of as many young people as possible, beginning with those who need it the most.

e) Volunteering and the reciprocity principle

In the context of volunteering, reciprocity will be crucial if we are to leave the North-South paradigm behind and begin to factor in the interdependent nature of local and international issues. This will involve working towards **more equitable and more balanced relationships between countries and partners**. One of the means through which this can be achieved is the deployment of international volunteers in France. Bringing international volunteers into France is part of a wider approach aimed at restoring balance to partnership-based relationships and working together to address transnational issues. This will directly contribute towards meeting **Sustainable Development Goal 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**.

Reciprocal mobility (South-North, South-South) is becoming increasingly commonplace as a result of the global volunteering ecosystem, helping us to move away from the dated North-South dichotomy. Many countries have made volunteering a crucial component of their youth civic engagement policies.²⁴ AFD works with France Volontaires to support these public policies and the **development of national volunteering ecosystems**. These have proven to be complementary and just as important as policies linked to education, training, and socio-professional and environmental integration for young people.

The LOP-DSLIM of 2021 outlines the ambition of the reciprocity principle: "In devising its policy for solidarity development and tackling global inequality, France is seeking to share responsibility with other backers as well as the leading international development organizations. Greater requirements have been placed

²³ See the Youth Empowerment worksheet

²⁴ Togo, Benin, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Paraguay, and overseas cooperation areas. France Volontaires' remit is to support these pivotal dynamics.

on partner countries, while promoting a spirit of reciprocity. As stated in article 3, an annual report will be submitted to the legislative authorities on **“activities undertaken by France aimed at consolidating reciprocal mobility and reciprocal volunteering.”**

CSOs are the main recruiters of volunteers, contributing towards a process of shared learning on practices and experiences of working with international volunteers on their projects.

France Volontaires statistics show that **251 international volunteers** were involved in civic service work in France in 2019 (+45% on 2018, confirming the rising trend). Out of the 24 countries these volunteers came from, nearly half were from just four countries: Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Excerpt from a volunteering reciprocity capitalization initiative

“Bringing international volunteers to France gives them the opportunity to explore their relationship with the world. Through intercultural exchange, this encourages us to question the relationship we have with time (as a resource, working time, leisure time), family relationships (intergenerational solidarity), and gender equality, moving towards greater reciprocity in volunteering.

“In Europe, time is seen as just another resource. Everything is scheduled and organized. In Senegal time is seen as being infinite. There are advantages and disadvantages on both sides. Professional ambitions eat away at personal and human ambitions. Reciprocity helps to bring these two viewpoints together. People in Senegal waste time, but they use that time to live. French people do not waste time, but they mostly disregard the human aspect. There are things which both sides can learn from each other.” Mame Ousmane Diene, CEMEA (Training Centre for Active Education Methods) Senegal.

The forming of binational volunteering partnerships can provide an opportunity to establish reciprocity, with such partnerships paying witness to and playing a part in the effects of projects, both here and over there. CSOs, operators and public authorities actively cooperate with each other in support of these dynamics and in overcoming obstacles which can limit the activities of CSOs. The deployment of volunteers is not authorized in certain countries (French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs [MEAE] security zoning is applicable to all volunteers). Requests for visas and temporary residence permits must be anticipated by CSOs. Effective levers can be activated, including reciprocity agreements incorporating volunteering, with multiple countries deploying significant resources. Similarly, capitalization helps to disseminate the knowledge and practices of CSOs and their partners, who have been working on reciprocity for a number of years.

C. WHAT POSITION DO VOLUNTEERS OCCUPY WITHIN PROJECTS?

The position occupied by volunteers will depend as much on their abilities as on the role assigned to them by the CSO. This decision will be taken based on the project objectives set by the CSO and its partners. It shall be informed by dialog between the different stakeholders, including young people involved in the project diagnostic and design phase. This will also depend on the CSO's youth emphasis strategy²⁵. A range of different actions are possible, from project management and awareness-raising to partnership coordination and training and education for citizenship and international solidarity. All of these actions can be performed in the spirit of reciprocity.

Volunteers for International Solidarity chiefly undertake development projects, emergency projects and restoration projects, serving a range of different interests:

- **Policy/ethics:** Helping to bring countries closer together. Effectively serving the interests of partner organizations through support and implementation of high-quality human and technical assistance.
- **Economic:** Safeguarding the financial sustainability of CSOs. Volunteers for International Solidarity give CSOs access to skilled, committed professionals. This contribution can also be included in the budget as financial compensation.
- **Professional:** forming a deep pool of potential future employees, VSI equates to a period of professional training.

²⁵ See the youth empowerment worksheet

- **Environmental:** Running for an average of 12 months, VSI placements are long-term commitments. This helps to minimize travel and limits their environmental impact, while providing an alternative to the ad-hoc use of technical experts.

As a result, most Volunteers for International Solidarity occupy project management/coordination or technical assistance roles. 73% of them hold master's degrees. Many of the French people involved in international solidarity started out as volunteers after their studies.

An example of a project employing the use of volunteers for international solidarity

The project **Promoting Alternatives to the Detention of Children in Madagascar and Niger** was run by **Grandir Dignement**, a CSO that was launched in 2010 to work with children and young people in conflict with the law. It seeks to ensure that human dignity is respected in custodial settings and throughout the criminal process more generally. The aim of the project was to develop measures and penalties as alternatives to imprisonment in both Madagascar and Niger, in the interests of aiding the integration of children in conflict with the law and protecting their rights.

Volunteers for International Solidarity occupied supervisory roles within projects in Madagascar and Niger over periods running from 12 to 24 months.

Civic service provides a way of addressing other issues linked to **youth civic engagement**. It allows you to put together mixed teams for your projects, irrespective of whether the engagement is individual or collective, or whether these are young French people or young people from the project country. Projects which factor in the interdisciplinary nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are particularly conducive to engaging young people from different countries.

In 2020, civic service volunteers working internationally were more likely to be women and more likely to have a degree than other civic service volunteers. 76% of volunteers had the equivalent of a two-year higher education diploma while 22% were baccalaureate level. 68% were women and 47% were aged between 23 and 25²⁶. International civic service attracts a younger, less qualified demographic than VIS. CSOs cannot expect a professional level of performance from Civic Service volunteers. Once the terms of the assignment and the CSO's capacity for support have been established, steps must be taken aimed at ensuring accessibility for all young people.

An example of a project employing the use of civic service volunteers

The Development Cooperation Department project PrODDige was launched with the aim of getting social transformation stakeholders in the Greater Lyon area to engage with the Sustainable Development Goals through reciprocal volunteering.

Awarded €402,690 worth of funding through AFD's I-OSC (CSO Initiative) mechanism (out of a total budget of €890,402), this three-year project (2020-2022) involved the deployment of 72 volunteers - half of whom were French nationals - on a training-action pathway linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. These young people took up 9-month Civic Service assignments, which were divided up into individual assignments with non-profit organizations, local authorities and higher education institutions and projects carried out in four-person teams linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. PrODDige was an original project for a number of reasons, including for developing a local response to universal sustainable development challenges based on perspectives from different cultures; and its innovative training program, alternating between formal and informal skills acquisition.

D. THE QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK TO MAKE VOLUNTEERING WORK FOR YOUR PROJECT

- For what objective are volunteers being deployed within the project?
- Which volunteering mechanism should I choose? What prior authorization is required?

²⁶ Sources: 2020 annual report for the French Civic Service Agency [rapport-activite-agence-service-civique-2020.pdf](#)

- What geographies may volunteers be deployed in? And in what circumstances?
- What is the best way of showcasing volunteers in the CSO Initiative Note (NIONG)?
- How can volunteering be incorporated into the logical framework?
- Where can room for volunteering be found in the CSO's budget? What is the cost of volunteering?
- How can volunteering be entered in OSCAR?
- How can I capitalize on volunteer work as part of the project?
- What outcomes should I expect from volunteering as part of the project? How can it be promoted?

E. FIND OUT MORE

NGO liaison committee for volunteering (CLONG Volontariat): Volunteering: a core part of international solidarity

A member of Coordination SUD (the national coordination of French NGOs for international solidarity) CLONG Volontariat provides a space for dialog for both development and humanitarian projects. In 2019 CLONG Volontariat began working on a project for the development of the non-profit sector with support from AFD. The aim of **volunteering for international solidarity** is to establish skilled volunteering in development projects conducted by international solidarity associations.

a) Tools

- Summary table for volunteering opportunities: [Dispositifs VIES 2019.pdf \(france-volontaires.org\)](#)
- MEAE information sheet: [fiche repere volontariat web-2 cle075c8f.pdf \(diplomatie.gouv.fr\)](#)
- Guide For increasing reciprocity in volunteering [Guide-reciprocite-volontariat.pdf \(france-volontaires.org\)](#)

b) Contacts

- France Volontaires and its global network of Volunteering Spaces www.france-volontaires.org
- Clong Volontariat www.clong-volontariat.org
- Fonjep [International Solidarity, Volunteering for International Solidarity | FONJEP](#)
- French Civic Service Agency www.service-civique.gouv.fr

c) Legislation

- [French programming law on solidarity development and tackling global inequality, August 4 2021](#)
- [Civic Service Law, March 10 2010](#)
- [Law on Volunteering for International Solidarity, February 25 2005](#)

3. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT WORKSHEETS

Worksheet n° 6: Communication and visibility guidelines

Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is a public financial institution that implements the development and international solidarity policy defined by the French government. As such, it has transparency and accountability obligations towards both French citizens and recipients of its funding. In this capacity, AFD is responsible for ensuring the visibility of its support across all of the projects and programs it co-finances.

The funding agreement between AFD and CSO specifies a level 1 or level 2 project visibility (explanations below). The choice of a level 1 or 2 communication is determined by the CSO and AFD during project appraisal.

A. LEVEL 1: FOUR VISIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY AFD

There are four obligations regarding visibility and communication for projects run by local CSOs and supported by AFD:

1



Mention support from AFD

The CSO must include the AFD logo on all communication materials relating to the project throughout project implementation

2



Provide photos illustrating the project

The CSO must send one or two photographs to the AFD project manager with the communication form one month after the agreement has been signed, followed by a selection of photographs when sending the intermediate report and the final report.

3



Produce a project communication form

The CSO must produce a communication form for the project using the template and format available on www.afd.fr*. The CSO must upload this communication form to OSCar when making their initial funding request.

4



Invite AFD to key project events

[The CSO] agrees to invite AFD representatives to project-related events, throughout project implementation (the local AFD agency for field projects and the Paris head office for projects of general interest)

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WRITING A COMMUNICATION FORM:

- **Header:** Present in a concise way the key information of the project (title, holder, duration, start date of the project).
- **Context:** Clearly describe the project, its challenges, its limits and partners, with useful links and mention of the French actors where appropriate. Make the most of the achievements of previous phases if it is a recurring project already financed by the scheme (or on another scheme or another donor), it is important to mention what has progressed well in previous phases
- **Objectives:** Define clear objectives with qualitative and quantitative indicators
- **Targets:** specify direct and indirect targets (reasonable and relatively proportionate to the project)
- **Expected results:** Formulate specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound outcomes (SMART approach).
- **Supporting structure:** Briefly present the organization, its missions and ambitions and its main partners
- **Language:** Use a simple, clear and accessible language to ensure easy comprehension regardless of the level of knowledge of the reader. Please avoid jargons, or too little explicit. The more precise, concrete and comprehensible the information is, the easier it will be to read.

B. LEVEL 2: A BETTER-PLANNED, IF NOT EVEN STRONGER, COMMUNICATION

Level 2 involves the implementation of the 4 Level 1 obligations, plus the establishment of a **dedicated communication plan for the project**, led and implemented by the CSO. This level of communication is decided jointly between the OSC and the AFD project manager during the appraisal phase of the project.

This greater visibility allows us to strengthen our dialogue on this subject, to better report on the impacts and results of the project, and above all to better anticipate the communication actions planned in the project.

Level 2 may include projects on education for sustainable development and global citizenship or on structuring the associative environment (SMA) or innovative and high-potential communication fields.

EVERY BENEFICIARY OF AFD FINANCING MUST UNDERTAKE TO COMPLY WITH THE **LEVEL 1** OR **LEVEL 2** GUIDELINES SET OUT IN THE TABLE BELOW. THE FINANCING AGREEMENT SPECIFIES LEVEL 1 VISIBILITY OR LEVEL 2 COMMUNICATION FOR A PROJECT



The CSOs must inform AFD of the actions and communication materials deployed as part of the project. AFD may thus be able to relay information on its own communication channels and help amplify the resonance and media coverage of the project.

These communication and visibility guidelines apply to all projects that AFD co-finances, except in the case of a sensitive security context exposing project partners or beneficiaries, or when communication may hinder or impair smooth running of the project. These exceptions are discussed between the CSO and AFD on a case-by-case basis. In these specific cases, a level 2 communication will be adjusted to the field realities and constraints identified by the partner.

All the information and instructions of the Level 2 Communication Guide are available online in the Communication Kit on the AFD website.

In addition to the visibility of the AFD, the instructions of the level 1 and 2 guides available in the communication kit sent by the AFD at the time of signing the financing agreement also frame the use that must be made of the AFD brand and its actions, respecting its image and values.

The **communication kit** available online brings together all the useful documents:

- Level 1 and Level 2 visibility guides, with instructions adapted to the level of visibility applicable to your project;
- The communication form: the template to be completed and a notice to guide you if necessary;
- The different versions of the AFD logo. The graphic case is available on request. A short presentation of the AFD in several languages (French, English, Spanish, Arabic);
- An act of assignment of image rights and an act of assignment of copyright for photos and videos;

For media relations, an example of a press release and invitation to journalists if necessary.

Worksheet n° 7: Financial audits of projects (interim and final)

Attention a new version of the Terms of Reference will be finalized in summer 2025

Financial audits of projects are about more than simply gathering accounting records. Their aim is to monitor the use of funds allocated to projects, in accordance with the terms of the agreement and their own purpose, while following this methodological guide.

The goal is to improve both the quality and the consistency of the information produced by the CSO, verified by the auditor and passed on to the Partnerships Department/Civil Society Organizations Division (MPN/OSC).

In order to achieve this, the issue of the financial audit must be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity during the project appraisal phase. This will involve establishing effective communication between the CSO, MPN/OSC and the auditor, in addition to specifying the terms for the financial audit. The project audit will be carried out in two stages: an interim audit covering Tranche 1 and a final audit covering Tranche 2.

A. DESCRIPTION

The project audit will be carried out in two stages: an interim audit covering tranche 1 and a final audit covering tranche 2.

a) Which costs are subject to auditing?

All CSOs in receipt of co-financing for implementation of their project. MPN/OSC may wish to conduct a random financial audit of CSOs for projects it has co-financed. These will be funded through program 209.

b) Budgets for financial audits

Because financial audits are co-financed by AFD, **their cost must feature in the budget for the project included in the attachments to the CSO Initiative Note (NIONG).**

During the project appraisal phase MPN/OSC will pay particular attention to the amount allocated for carrying out the financial audit. Care must be taken not to underestimate this amount in relation to the requirements and scope of the financial audit (a minimum of 1% of the overall budget for the project is recommended).

c) Selecting an auditor

The contract for the financial audit must be awarded **within the first 12 months of project execution.** MPN/OSC will issue a notice of **no objection to the terms of reference** for the financial audit and the selection criteria. **The CSO shall be required to use the terms of reference template available on the AFD website.**

- MPN/OSC reserves the right to issue a notice of no objection to the choice of auditor, should it feel this is warranted.

The terms of reference template to be used for financial audits (which can be tailored to meet the requirements of CSOs) are to be downloaded from the AFD website.

The CSO must select an external, independent auditor or audit firm, a member of a national organization of chartered accounts or statutory auditors.

The auditor's role will be clearly outlined in the terms of reference for the financial audit.

As a service provided, **financial audits are subject to the rules governing AFD tendering procedures as outlined in AFD's funding agreement and following a call for tenders or at least limited consultation**. The selection of the auditor should take place within the first 12 months of project execution.

Should a CSO decide to launch one single call for tenders for audits on multiple ongoing projects funded by MPN/OSC, they must send to MPN/OSC :

- A request for a notice of no objection to the terms of reference for the call for tenders
- Once an auditor has been selected, one request for a notice of no objection for each project, within the first 12 months of project execution, to the auditor's engagement letter, to which a checklist for audit items must be appended

B. THE TWO FINANCIAL AUDIT PERIODS DURING THE PROJECT

a) Scoping meeting with the auditor

When and with whom?

This meeting should take place between the CSO and the auditor as soon as possible after the beginning of the project once the auditing contract has been awarded. The CSO must assemble the project managers and the chief financial/accounting/legal officers for the project. This is a one-off visit from the auditor to the CSO at the start of the project. The auditor will only return again at the end of the project for the financial audit.

What is its aim?

The primary objective of this meeting is to ensure that the CSO fully understands the scope of the audit and what it will involve. It should enable the CSO to strengthen the internal procedures needed for ensuring contractual obligations are met. It should also make the job of the auditor easier, keeping any ineligible expenditure items observed upon completion of the project to a minimum. This meeting also provides the auditor with an opportunity to make recommendations to the CSO at the start of the project. Please note: audited expenditure items must not under any circumstances be sampled at this stage. The auditor may choose to outline the aim and the sampling procedures (% of expenditure items, breakdown by budget item, random selection, and so on), but sampling will only be conducted during the financial audit at the end of the project.

What preparations should be made?

To ensure that the meeting runs as smoothly and as constructively as possible, the CSO will share any documents the auditor requests of them in advance of the meeting (such as the CSO's articles of association, CSO accounts and activity reports, the AFD funding agreement and any supplementary clauses, the partnership agreement, the project document (NIONG) and the methodological guide).

What points should be addressed?

Each auditor will be responsible for setting the agenda for the meeting. If a scoping meeting is to take place, MPN/OSC wants at least the following points to be addressed:

- The CSO's contractual obligations to AFD under the terms of the agreement (this includes scheduling, eligibility of expenditure items, tendering, activity reports and partnership agreements).
- The scope and the nature of the project co-financed by AFD.
- The nature of any partnerships within the project (outlining their scope, their purpose, financial reallocation or reallocation in kind, contractual arrangements for supervision, and the fiduciary circuit)
- Any information relating to the existence of a consortium, where applicable, and the contractual arrangements for implementation of the consortium
- The tendering arrangements the CSO intends to employ within the project (CSOs are encouraged to share an indicative tendering plan with the auditor, listing all of the contracts to be awarded or in the process of being awarded within the project and including all of the relevant key information)
- The funding mechanism for the project (including the types of co-financing arrangements, the level of co-financing and payment procedures)

- Financial and accounting traceability procedures for the project and the CSO's internal control procedures
- The procedures for applying contractual obligations regarding compliance with International Sanctions Lists (vetting)
- Whether or not to use lump sums for intermediated financing within the project.

What should this meeting achieve?

It should give the auditor the opportunity to:

- Acquire sufficient knowledge of the project's organizational procedures, in addition to accounting and information-sharing processes
- Identify weakness and risk factors in relation to the nature of the project and the type of partnership
- Identify key, specific control points
- Identify the CSO's traceability procedures for financial and accounting information

It should give the CSO the opportunity to:

- Get to know its contractual obligations to AFD and their involvement in practical implementation of the project
- Identify any areas of potential risk in its management method which could prevent it from meeting its obligations and to determine how these can be addressed
- Identify best practice regarding the traceability of project information (examples include introducing analytical monitoring of the project, time sheets and pay slips) and tendering
- Understand what form the financial audit will take, what is expected and how they can work effectively with the auditor

Following this meeting, the auditor will draft an independent scoping report outlining their main recommendations for the financial audit. This report will be shared with the CSO.

At the mandatory halfway point meeting, the CSO may present the contents of the scoping report to MPN/OSC and any measures the CSO has taken aimed at meeting the recommendations made by the auditor.

b) Execution of the financial audit and report

The auditor will carry out their assignment at the end of Tranche 1 and at the end of Tranche 2, and will prepare a report for each audit. **For multi-phase projects, they must check to ensure that any recommendations made during the audit on the previous phase have been implemented by the CSO.**

The CSO must send the interim financial audit report to MPN/OSC within three months of the end of Tranche 1, and send the audit report for Tranche 2 within six months of the project end date.

Should the audit identify ineligible expenditure items, any unsubstantiated funds should be paid back to AFD within six months of the audit report being validated by MPN/OSC .

Financial audit checklist (forthcoming)

The auditor selected through the tendering process shall commit to carrying out all of the following checks. A copy of this list, completed and signed, must be included in the attachments to the financial audit reports. If certain points cannot be verified, this must be stated in the management letter, with reasons provided.

Information to be included in the report:

- Auditor (name/status/address)
- Certification/qualification
- CSO or partner being audited
- Audit dates
- AFD agreement n°
- Amount audited
- Tranches 1 or 2

Please use the terms of reference template provided on AFD website

Worksheet n° 8: Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse within projects

A. WHAT IS MEANT BY PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE?

Sexual exploitation,²⁷ abuse²⁸ and harassment²⁹ often occur as a result of power imbalances linked to social and gender inequality. In the humanitarian and development sector, the risk of abusive behavior is exacerbated by what are often significant power imbalances, the sometimes weak or defective nature of local legal frameworks, and the vulnerable situations people in fragile contexts find themselves in.

All forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment are unacceptable.

All organizations, whether private or public, must be aware of the risk of abusive behavior, **both internally and as part of their activities**, and must act as swiftly as possible to deal with it.

AFD has adopted a **zero-tolerance** policy for these situations of abuse, which are not only criminal, but also cause serious and lasting harm to victims.

B. AFD'S EXPECTATIONS WITH REGARD TO PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

As a financial backer and employer, AFD is aware of its **responsibilities** when it comes to tackling sexual exploitation and abuse; protecting its employees, its partners and recipients of its activities; and promoting the highest possible standards of behavior.

In line with commitments made by France at the Safeguarding Summit in London in October 2018 and the subsequent working groups (bringing together the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, AFD and civil society representatives to develop measures for preventing and responding to cases of sexual violence), AFD has sought to **strengthen its efforts** in order to **prevent** abuse, sexual exploitation, improper treatment and harassment; to **respond** to any cases; and to strengthen **awareness-raising** mechanisms. AFD is aware that partner CSOs involved in the "CSO Initiatives" mechanism need **support** when it comes to **designing, strengthening, deploying and establishing** their policies, procedures and practices for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). This is a complex and sensitive subject, and AFD is now keen to **provide enhanced support**, while recognizing the diverse and varied nature of its partners' circumstances, resources and capacities in this regard. This support is likely to change over time, but currently takes two forms:

²⁷ Sexual exploitation involves the abuse or attempted abuse of an individual's vulnerable state (this includes someone who depends on you for their survival, for food rations, for school textbooks, transport or other services) or an unequal balance of power or trust in order to gain sexual favors, including but not limited to offering money or other social, economic or political advantages. This includes human trafficking and prostitution. (Source: UNHCR)

²⁸ Sexual abuse: physical intrusion of a sexual nature committed by force, under coercive conditions or as a result of an unequal relationship, or the threat of such intrusion. Any sexual activity with a child is considered sexual abuse. (Source: Global Affairs Canada)

²⁹ Sexual harassment involves repeatedly subjecting an individual to comments or behavior with sexual or sexist connotations, undermining their dignity as a result of its degrading or humiliating nature, or creating an intimidating, hostile or hurtful environment. Sexual harassment also includes using any form of severe pressure, even when not repeated, with the perceived or real intention of getting an individual to perform acts of a sexual nature, whether on the individual responsible for the harassment or on a third party. (Source: French Criminal Code)

a) 2021-2022: a study

As part of the "CSO-Initiatives" mechanism, AFD conducted a study aimed at helping partner CSOs to develop and strengthen their practices and policies for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. The purpose of the study - which looked at French and some international CSOs - was to identify the **best tools and practices** for preventing and tackling sexual exploitation and abuse. The study also sought to **analyze** progression, experiences, obstacles and key factors for success, in addition to change levers and resources. The study's final aim was to promote dialog and the sharing of experiences, in addition to stimulating discussion with a view towards a **collective improvement of practices**.

The study report is available on request. The report also contains the presentation made at the post-study workshop held in February 2022, plus four best practice worksheets:

- Building the capacities of local partners regarding their protection policies
- Deploying complaints handling procedures
- Awareness-raising and training for staff on protection
- Transparency and communication

b) The eligibility of PSEA expenditure items within projects from the 2022 call for expressions of project intentions (AMI) onwards

Budgets for projects submitted to AFD for co-financing through the "CSO-Initiatives" mechanism may now include expenditure items linked to **introducing, strengthening, deploying, establishing or updating** policies, procedures and tools for tackling sexual exploitation and abuse. These must be justified and adapted to the needs and specificities of the CSO, its partners and the project.

Such expenditure items may be linked to:

- Training, information and awareness-raising for CSO staff and partners (both at head office level and out in the field), as well as recipients and recipient communities
- Joint workshops for discussing and analyzing risks linked to PSEA
- Translations
- External, technical, one-off support required by the CSO, irrespective of what stage they are at regarding policies and tools for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

This is not an exhaustive list. The budget for the project and the CSO Initiative Note (NIONG) must include these expenditure items: the budget will list them in accordance with their nature (or as an activity which does not fall into any category) in the relevant budget section; the NIONG will outline the approach sought by the CSO and/or its partners, the nature of these expenditure items, their objectives and their scope, plus the implementation context.

c) A few useful links for PSEA

- The United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/protection/operations/405ac6614/secretary-generals-bulletin-special-measures-protection-sexual-exploitation.html>
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC):
 - Report drafted by the working group responsible for the prevention of exploitation and sexual violence in situations of humanitarian crisis
https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy_files/iasc%20poa%20and%20report%20french.pdf
 - International standards governing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:
https://safeguardingsupporthub.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/210609%20RSH%20Summary%20Brief_Global%20SEAH%20Standards_Final_0.pdf
 - Best Practice Guide, Inter-Agency Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms
<https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/Best%20Practice%20Guide%20on%20inter-agency%20CBCMs.pdf>
 - Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) website:
<https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/>

- Self-learning guide, published by Coordination Sud in 2021:
<https://www.coordinationsud.org/document-ressource/guide-dautoformation-violences-sexistes-sexuelles/>

Worksheet n° 9: mechanism for monitoring compliance with sanctions regulations for CSOs and foundations – Version May 2025

AFD must – like all legal entities under public law and all private entities incorporated or established in France and conducting business in France or abroad – comply with the provisions of Article L. 562-5 of the French Monetary and Financial Code (CMF), **which bans “making funds or economic resources available, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of persons whose funds or economic resources are subject to a freezing order” (individual financial sanctions), adopted by the United Nations, the European Union and France.** International financial sanctions also include sector-specific measures (embargoes, bans on transactions with certain entities in a given sector, export bans on dual-use goods, etc.). Failure to comply with these prohibitions may result in the entities and their representatives being held criminally and disciplinarily liable.

As such, AFD implemented in October 2023, updated in April 2025, a framework for the risk of financial sanctions violations in projects financing CSOs, detailed below.

A. STAKEHOLDER SCREENING- OBLIGATORY

AFD expects CSOs to screen the Stakeholders financed under the approved grant (suppliers/contractors, staff, and implementing partners, including reallocation beneficiaries).

AFD will continue to support CSOs in this process, providing them with assistance in using **the single list of asset freezes available free of charge on the DG Treasury website** (publicly available at <https://gels-avoirs.dgtresor.gouv.fr/>), which collates the various lists of applicable sanctions.³⁰ Resources are available in the AML/CTF & Procurement reference documents.

CSOs may also install an automatic filtering tool by purchasing a solution from specialized software vendors. AFD will continue to help CSOs finance purchasing this type of filtering solution if they request it. **Finally, the CSO can ensure compliance with this prohibition by using a payment method via a bank or an official payment service provider that undertakes to comply with the 3 lists of sanctions (UN, EU, France).**

The beneficiaries of AFD funds are responsible for the extent and frequency of due diligence, and the methods used to comply with the ban on making funds available.

B. FINAL BENEFICIARIES SCREENING

Reminder – **the prohibition on making funds or economic resources available to a person or entity subject to sanctions applies and implies that CSOs applying for a grant from AFD, implement means to comply with it. – as soon as :**

- **the funding granted by AFD includes cash transfers** (cash transfer, cash for work, per diem to populations to participate in a workshop, training, school scholarship, etc.) or
- **the provision of goods with an economically exploitable value** (livestock, materials, inputs, etc.)³¹

There are three exceptions to compliance with this ban, which must be detailed in the "Compliance Questionnaire: analysis dedicated to the project":

³⁰ DG Treasury also provides users with Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) so that CSOs' information systems can access the lists.

³¹ This does not include food support, medical kits, hygiene kits etc.

a) Humanitarian exemption or dispensation obtained from the competent authorities

- **If the project qualifies for a humanitarian exemption³²** : if the country of funding deployment is covered by a humanitarian emergency appeal issued by OCHA³³ or UNHCR³⁴ (e.g. PRH, flash appeal) and the project falls within the areas covered by this emergency appeal; or
 - a. **If the CSO can take advantage of a waiver obtained by the national sanctions authority³⁵ and can forward the relevant authorization to AFD Group.**

b) Exceptions for projects targeting certain population groups

Certain categories of population may benefit from exemption by exception.

These groups are:

- **Minors;**
- **People whose identity needs to be protected**, because of persecution “on account of their political opinions, their religious affiliation, their race, their nationality, or their membership of a particular social group,” as defined by the Geneva Convention of July 28, 1951, or people “persecuted for the reason of their action in favor of freedom,” as defined in paragraph 4 of the Preamble to the French Constitution of 1946;
- **People without official identity documents:** In case the project takes place in a context/ a place where verification of the civil status of the beneficiary populations is impossible (the state does not provide identity documents, for example), the filtering of beneficiaries is therefore impossible and is not therefore required. The CSO must however provide evidence to support this impossibility (press articles, reports from international organizations such as the World Bank, the OECD, etc.).

For these categories of persons, AFD carries out an analysis on a case-by-case basis of the specific constraints making filtering impossible (in the absence of identity documents), or inapplicable (due to age or imperative need to protect the identity of individuals: e.g. people living with HIV or at risk because of their gender identity), **in order to exempt all or part of the recipient populations from screening.**

These waivers must be specifically justified by the CSO if they are used during the investigation: they will be the subject of an opinion from the Compliance department and the Board of Directors or its specialized Committees (including the NGO Committee) will be systematically referred to the court for a decision.

c) Alternative measures to screening

AFD can accept that the CSO uses alternative means to screening. These alternative means to screening must be demonstrated by the OSC through the “Compliance questionnaire: analysis dedicated to the project”.

As such, the CSO will have to demonstrate (i) a rigorous selection of beneficiary populations and (ii) implement control measures to ensure the proper use of money transfers or resources that are economically exploitable and therefore their non-diversion.

³² Exemption under applicable law due to the humanitarian purpose of the project, including the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2664 adopted on December 9, 2022.

³³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

³⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

³⁵ The competent national authority that can grant a screening exemption is the one in charge of applying FR, EU and UN sanctions measures. With regard to these three sanctions regimes, such an exemption could only be granted by the French DG Trésor, from which the OSC would have to request the benefit.

C. TIGHTER EX-POST CONTROLS AS PART OF PROJECT AUDITS

Compliance with the contractual commitment and the fact that no funds have been made available to persons listed within the project will be checked during the project audit (interim and final), by the auditor, using all appropriate means (which may include screening if necessary), based on a sample of expenditure financed by the AFD-awarded grant.

It is therefore imperative for CSOs to keep track of their controls. This may take the form of screen printing and/or results reports from the filtering tools used by the CSO, or the full table of persons subject to asset freezes and sanctions available on the French government website and extracted on the day the control was carried out. The auditor will be able to verify the accuracy of these controls by screening beneficiaries during his audit.

This control will be adapted to the nature of the project in question. In particular, in cases where the CSO is covered by an exemption, derogation or exception, the control may be limited to verifying that the project meets the frameworks for derogations invoked.

A template of the standard terms of reference for AFD audits can be downloaded from AFD's website.

Worksheet n° 10: The introduction of lump sums for intermediated financing below EUR 50,000

In order to develop and structure civil societies in its countries of intervention, AFD may use **a system of financing or intermediated mechanisms** under which it grants funds to civil society organizations (French or local law) for the latter to redistribute these funds to other organizations and/or physical beneficiaries of civil society, through dedicated envelopes or specific mechanisms, to many actors who were not necessarily known at the start of the project.

In the context of these intermediated financing, if all expenses **remain below a threshold of €50,000**, AFD may accept the implementation of **lump sums to justify any or part of the co-financing funding- amounts redistributed** per action/beneficiary and over the duration of the project. Thus, the lump sum amount per project/beneficiary must be less than €50,000 over the duration of the project.

This solution then replaces the obligation to justify the amounts redistributed by accounting documents, at 1 euro, by the OSC carrying the financing and, mirrored, by the organizations or natural persons receiving the amounts redistributed under the project.

This worksheet details and guides the implementation of these lump sums.

A. WHAT ARE THE INTERMEDIATED FINANCINGS COVERED BY THIS TOOL SHEET?

The intermediated financing covered by this worksheet includes **redistributive envelopes provided in projects, support funds, endowment funds, grants, emergency funds, Calls for projects and structured mechanisms to redistribute grants** to other actors within the project.

They can work **on all types of projects**, field or sustainable development education or SMA.

The intermediated financing covered by this tool sheet **are to be distinguished from conventional retrocessions** between a CSO carrying the AFD's financing and its implementing partners. **The "classic" retrocessions from a CSO to implementing partners are not affected by these modalities of justifications for sums paid on a lump sum basis, regardless of their amount. The «classic» retrocessions are still to be justified by accounting and extra-accounting documents, at 1 euro.**

B. WHAT ARE THE LUMP SUMS FOR AFD?

They are inspired by the lump sums accepted by the EU as part of its "simplified cost options".³⁶

For AFD, within the framework of a **lump sum**, the expenses incurred by the beneficiary of the sum (civil society organization or natural person), are **justified** by the **transmission of the proof(s) of realization of the project/ activities financed, and no longer** through the transmission of accounting documents³⁷.

For example, if a CSO carrying the project co-financed by the AFD grant makes, within the framework of the project, a call for projects/initiatives to finance actions implemented by other French or local associative actors, by means of single grants of €20,000, the latter will be able to justify the €20,000 collected by transmitting the document(s) demonstrating **proof of implementation of the action** and **good management of the funds**. The accounting documents justifying these €20,000 redistributed subsidies will therefore no longer be required.

³⁶ Cf. Règlement (UE) 2021/2060 ; Guide sur les Options de Coûts Simplifiés 2021-2027 de l'Agence Nationale de la Cohésion des Territoires

³⁷ Depending on the amount, other management documents demonstrating good management of funds may be required (cf. *infra*).

Schematically:

- **Prior to the project**, the OSC signatory with the AFD and the recipient of an amount redistributed on the project (OSC or natural person) specify in the agreement that binds them:
 - o **The amount paid in case of completion of the planned action** (with a possible advance, intermediate milestones or in one payment – see below),
 - o **The part or parts** demonstrating the **completion of the action** (the “deliverables”),
 - o And, depending on the amount paid, the **additional document or documents demonstrating the proper management of the redistributed funds**.
- When **conducting the project**, the recipient of the sum carries out the planned action respecting the entire framework that links him to the signatory CSO with the AFD.
- **Downstream of the project**, the recipient of the sum sends for control to the signatory CSO with AFD (i) the document or **documents** that have been specified in the agreement as **demonstrating the completion** of the project, and (ii) the **additional document** or documents demonstrating the **proper management of the funds**. Taken together, these documents serve as a justification for all expenses incurred; These are the ones that will be provided to the external auditor when auditing project expenditures. Their transmission to the signatory CSO with the AFD, according to the terms of the agreement, releases the payment of the lump sum (or its balance) contained in the agreement.

In the event of non-transmission of any agreed document to demonstrate the completion of the project or the sound management of the funds, the signatory CSO with the AFD does not pay the balance of the lump sum amount and is entitled to recover the entire advance already paid if necessary. **In order to limit this binary aspect, it is however possible to provide intermediate milestones of realization associated with intermediate pieces of realization** (cf. below).

Therefore, the lump sum does not respond to a logic of performance but to a logic of materiality/realization of the project/action financed. The CSO (via the requested deliverable) and the auditor (see below) do not verify that the project has been successful but that it was carried out in accordance with what is stipulated in the agreement between the CSO and the beneficiary.

C.IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LUMP SUM AMOUNT BY THE AFD FUNDING PROVIDER CSO

a) Determine the appropriateness of a lump sum

By no longer requiring the transmission of accounting supporting documents for each expenditure, **lump sums make it possible to adapt and secure the justification of expenditure by the beneficiary of the amount redistributed**. The implementation of lump sums is particularly useful **in the context of certain mechanisms and cascading funding, calls for projects/initiatives, multiple funding, small amounts of “push” funds, emergency funds, scholarships, etc.**

The appropriateness of implementing a lump sum is assessed for each project funded by the CSO that carries out the project and has signed the agreement with AFD.

For the lump sums envisaged, the arrangements for setting up a lump sum (amount paid, documents demonstrating the completion of the expected action and documents demonstrating the sound management of the funds) must be **discussed** during the appraisal of the project, **with the CSO's usual interlocutor within the AFD** (most often the AFD project manager), and presented in the NIONG and the project budget.

When the lump sum is set up, **there is only one lump sum per beneficiary at the same time**. Also, in the event that a recipient of a lump sum applies for a second lump sum, they should first receive the balance of the first lump sum before signing the agreement on the second lump sum.

In the case of co-financing between the CSO that is responsible for the AFD funding and other donors, the beneficiary has two options:

- Option 1: retain the real-world reporting mode for co-financing by other donors. In this case, the lump sum amounts only cover the expenses redistributed by the CSO carrying the AFD fund

- ing to the beneficiary. In the agreement, it is then stipulated that **the beneficiary may not go to present these same expenses to another co-financier**. On the other hand, **the deliverable(s) must disprove the completion of the entire action**; he or she is not "flexed" toward the expenses justified by the lump sum amount or a "brick" of the project.

For example, for a €50,000 project where the redistributed AFD funding is €30,000 and that of the co-financier is €20,000, the beneficiary will justify the expenditure of 30,000 € according to the terms of the lump sums with the OSC carrying the AFD financing and the expenditure of 20,000 € according to the reporting modalities of the co-financier, namely at the "real" level. The beneficiary can receive 30,000 € after transmission of the necessary parts and deliverables and also benefit from a refund of 20,000 € for other costs incurred;

- Option 2: apply lump sums to all co-financing. In this case, all the co-funders – the AFD-funded CSO and the other(s) – **agree on the reporting modalities of the lump sums**. In the case of the example above, the CSO that redistributes and the co-funder(s) have agreed on the reporting modality of lump sums: the beneficiary will justify all expenses to lump sums.

The implementation of the lump sum is only possible **at the last level of the "cascade"**. In the case of a multi-level cascade, for example according to the AFD-OSC1-OSC2-OSC3 scheme, the lump sum payment is only possible between OSC2 and OSC3. **However, in any case, it is the OSC1 (the signatory CSO with the AFD) who remains responsible and bears the financial risk.**

b) Determination of lump sum

For **lump sums of less than €2,000**, the determination of the lump sum is made by the CSO redistributing the amount, according to the modalities it defines.

For **lump sums between €2,000 and €50,000**, the determination of the lump sum is made by the OSC redistributing the amount on the basis of a **provisional budget that it requires from the recipient of the redistributed amount (OSC or natural person)**. The lump sum must be questioned and consistent with the context of the project and the action financed.

c) Determination of deliverables (parts) demonstrating the completion of the project/action financed and the proper management of the redistributed funds

Amount	< 2 000 € (including advance if applicable)	Between 2 000 € and 20 000 € (including advance if applicable)	Between 20 000 € and 50 000 € (including advance if applicable)
Upstream, prerequisites for determining the lump sum redistributed	Indicate the deliverable(s) in the agreement to justify the lump sum (documents proving the completion of the actions)	Indicate the deliverable(s) in the agreement to justify the lump sum (documents proving the completion of the actions) + Determine the amount based on detailed budget estimates	Indicate the deliverable(s) in the agreement to justify the lump sum (documents proving the completion of the actions) + Determine the amount based on detailed budget estimates
Downstream, documents to be provided by the beneficiary to release the lump sum	Provide the deliverable(s) determined by the OSC and agreed in the agreement (documents proving the completion of the actions)	Provide the deliverable(s) determined by the OSC and agreed in the agreement (documents proving the completion of the actions)	Provide the deliverable(s) determined by the OSC and agreed in the agreement (documents proving the completion of the actions)

+ Technical and financial review	and	+ a technical and financial review that includes a justification of the variations by heading > to + or - 10% compared with the estimated budget
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Determination of the deliverable (parts) demonstrating the completion of the project/action by the beneficiary of the redistributed sum

For all lump sums, the OSC redistributing the sum and the beneficiary of the redistributed sum specify in the agreement that binds them a piece (s) / a deliverable (s) demonstrating the achievement of the project/action financed.

For lump sums above €2,000, the determination of the piece(s) demonstrating the completion of the project/action financed in cascade is discussed with AFD, often the project manager.

The deliverable(s) demonstrating that the project has been completed by the recipient must reflect the expected objective of the project or action being funded.

It is recommended that the AFD interlocutor (often the project manager) discuss the deliverables with the CSO carrying the funding to ensure their realism and seriousness, and assess their adaptation to the context of the project, the actors and the country, since they become the proof of implementation of cascaded actions, replacing accounting documents.

The deliverables demonstrating the completion of the project by the beneficiary of the redistributed sum may be, for example:

- For an action/project to train an audience, the deliverables can be the signed sheets of the people trained, as well as photos of the training and the invitation to the training;
- For an action/project to publish a study on the internet, the deliverable may be the URL link of the publication;
- For a project to organize a conference, the deliverables can be the location of the room signed by the lessor, as well as photos of the conference and his invitation.

This list is not exhaustive, as the deliverables will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the CSO redistributing the amount, depending on the nature of the activities related to the amount paid.

The CSO must identify for each project one or more sufficiently "ambitious" deliverables (not a simple photo or narrative report that explains the action, for example).

The deliverable should be as much as possible an **"external" proof**, that is a document that is not produced by the recipient itself.

Determination of additional pieces demonstrating the good management of funds

In addition to the piece(s) demonstrating that the project/action has been carried out by the beneficiary of the redistributed amount, the recipient must send the CSO redistributing the sum of the pieces **demonstrating the good management of the funds**. In the interest of proportionality, these documents are more numerous as the lump sum increases:

- **For lump sums below €2,000**, no additional piece required;
- **For lump sums between € 2,000 and € 20,000**, the beneficiary of the redistributed sum must send, in addition to the piece(s) demonstrating the completion of the project, **a technical and financial balance sheet**;
- **At least, for lump sums exceeding €20,000**, the beneficiary of the redistributed sum must send, in addition to the piece(s) demonstrating the completion of the project, **a technical and financial balance sheet** which includes a **justification of the variations** by heading of expenditure exceeding more or less 10% in relation to the provisional budget transmitted when the lump sum was introduced.

The format of the technical and financial balance sheet is not predefined by AFD. The content and format are defined by the signatory CSO with AFD. It is expected that the minimum technical review describes the action carried out and financed in cascade, the expected objectives and those achieved, the

successes and difficulties. It is expected that the financial balance sheet will at least provide a picture of the nature of expenditure incurred to implement the planned action.

d) Changes made by the implementation of a lump sum to other business rules

The implementation of lump sums does not make any changes to the framework defined by the AFD apart from the elements specified in this tool sheet: **no change related to contracting rules or rules related to customer knowledge (KYC), the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing and compliance with regulations including sanctions.**

e) Possibility of a lump sum advance

The signatory CSO with the AFD may **pay an advance to the beneficiary of the redistributed sum to implement the project/planned action, for example from the beginning of the project and without the advance being conditional on the transmission of a piece.** However, at the end of the project/action, in case of non-transmission of any agreed document to demonstrate the completion of the project or the sound management of the funds, the signatory CSO with the AFD is entitled to recover the entire advance already paid if applicable.

f) Possibility of implementing intermediate milestones associated with intermediate deliverables to reduce risks related to operational hazards

In principle, the lump sum is binary: if the document or documents demonstrating the realization of the project/ action are not transmitted, the sum is not released.

If the funded project is likely to be subject to very strong uncertainties, which make it unlikely that the project will be carried out or even make it difficult to define an objective, it is recommended not to mobilise a lump sum amount, and thus to remain "on the level".

If the funded project is at risk of being subject to contingencies, it is still possible to secure a share of the funding with an intermediate milestone(s). For example, the CSO-recipient agreement states:

- the recipient will receive 100% of the funding if they complete the project (and produce the requested deliverable and parts) (lump sum)
- but also that the recipient will receive, for example, 50% of the funding if it achieves such intermediate objective before the end of the project (intermediate milestone). If applicable, even if he does not produce the final deliverable linked to 100%, he will still keep the 50% linked to the intermediate milestone.

Also, contrary to the advance, the release of a sum as part of an intermediate milestone is associated with the transmission of a deliverable.

Contrary to the advance payment, the beneficiary retains the sum linked to the achievement of the intermediate milestone even if it does not reach the final objective of the action/project and does not release the entire lump sum.

Finally, it is not prohibited to make amendments to the CSO-beneficiary agreements. However, this is not the "normal" mode of risk prevention related to the binarity of the lump sum.

g) Lump sum paid to the recipient in case of under or over-delivery compared to the initial budget

Prior to a project, the CSO and the beneficiary sign an agreement stipulating that the recipient will receive a lump sum if he transmits the requested deliverables, including the "technical and financial balance sheet" (in the context of a project greater than € 2,000) in which the beneficiary notes the expenses incurred to conduct the project.

Downstream of the project, even if the beneficiary has committed according to the technical and financial balance an amount lower or higher than the lump sum amount, the amount paid to the beneficiary is always the amount that appears in the agreement.

However, if the amount realized is much lower than the agreed amount (for example, €2,000 realized for €5,000 agreed), then the lump sum does not comply with this AFD framework according to which the lump sum must be consistent with the context of intervention and the funded project and here the auditor may reject the lump sum for the entire project.

D. HOW AND WHERE TO INDICATE THE FINANCING INTERMEDIATES IN THE NIONG AND BUDGET OF THE PROJECT?

In the project budget (under Excel): these intermediated funds are to be reported under **heading 7 "Redistributive funds (not applicable to retrocessions)";**

In **the project NIONG**, it is expected, in part **"VIII Comments on the estimated budget"**, a presentation of the intermediated financing provided for in the project and the choice of their justification on a flat-rate basis or real on the basis of accounting documents: description of the actors involved, amounts at stake, mechanism envisaged, deliverables justifying lump sums, etc.

If the CSO wishes to implement lump sums for ongoing projects, the CSO must be authorized to do so via ANO. AFD will authorize the CSO to implement lump sums based on the above modalities.

In any case, AFD does not formally validate each lump sum; It only validates the above elements that are the CSO's "doctrine" for lump sums.

E. MODALITIES OF EXTERNAL AUDIT UNDER A LUMP SUM

The purpose of the interim and end-of-project audits is to verify, with regard to lump sums:

- **Compliance with the AFD framework for the construction of the lump sum;**
- **Compliance with the agreement** made between the OSC redistributing the lump sum amount and the beneficiary of the lump sum amount of the documents sent by the beneficiary of the sum **(deliverable(s) of realization and possible complementary documents of good management of the funds).**

In the AFD-OSC 1-OSC 2-Beneficiary scheme, the auditor who audits the correct application of the lump sum will "descend" to the last level of the "cascade" to verify that the lump sum amount between CSO 2 and the beneficiary complies with the AFD framework and that the documents provided by the beneficiary are in accordance with the documents stipulated in the CSO 2 – beneficiary agreement.

F. BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF THE LUMP SUM

The lump sum amount has advantages over another reporting method:

- The **reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries**, since it is no longer necessary to link each euro of co-financed expenditure to individual supporting documents;
- **Greater accessibility of funds to small beneficiaries** due to simplification of the management process;
- The **concentration of human resources towards achieving strategic objectives**, with fewer resources required for document collection and verification;
- **More efficient and fair use of funds.** In the European context, the European Court of Auditors has repeatedly recommended that the European Commission encourage and extend the use of simplified cost options, **particularly because they reduce the risk of errors;**
- **Reduced risk of fraud by the beneficiaries of the lump sum, in particular the production of false documents.**

However, the lump sum also has disadvantages:

- **With the lump sum amounts, CSOs carrying AFD funding must allow time to build a lump sum amount specific to their needs.** The success of the lump sum is largely based on the quality of their training and control work. Thus, for each lump sum redistributed, the CSO will:
 - In advance of the project, select one or more suitable deliverables through an exchange with the recipient of the lump sum;
 - Prior to the project, check the consistency of the budget forecast with the context of intervention and the funded project;
 - in advance of the project, develop agreements tailored to each lump sum, indicating the deliverables and its delivery schedule;
 - downstream of the project, bear the responsibility for not redistributing the planned amount if the deliverables and additional parts have not been produced.

- **A lump sum is based on the “all or nothing” principle, that is to say, if the contractual deliverable is not produced, the beneficiary will not receive the lump sum.** On the other hand, in a logic of agreement «to the real», even if the project is not fully realized, the beneficiary will receive the amount of invoices paid in the context of the project presented.

TOWARDS A WORLD IN COMMON

Agence Française de Développement (AFD) helps implement France's international development and solidarity policy.

Through its financing of NGOs and the public sector, as well as its research and publications, AFD supports and accelerates transitions towards a fairer, more resilient world. It also provides training in sustainable development (at AFD Campus) and other awareness-raising activities in France.

We build joint solutions with our partners, with and for the people of the Global South. Our teams are involved in more than 4,000 projects on the ground, in France's overseas territories and 115 countries, including areas in crisis. We strive to protect the common good—promoting peace, biodiversity and a stable climate, as well as gender equality, health and education. In this way, we contribute to the commitment of France and the French people to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).



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