

# FRANCE, A KEY PLAYER IN GLOBAL HEALTH

Global health is one of the priorities of France's international development policy. France has adopted an inclusive approach, which is guided by the goals of protecting human rights, fighting inequalities and supporting universal access to high-quality health services, as well as targeted actions in the field of sexual and reproductive health rights. This global health priority was central to France's G7 Presidency in 2019. The Health Ministerial Meeting in May gave G7 and European Union Member States the opportunity to reiterate their commitment to providing access to high-quality primary health care. At the G7 Summit in Biarritz, tangible commitments were made to fund the fight against major pandemics and provide primary healthcare services in Sahel countries, with special emphasis being placed on gender equality and women's empowerment.

## FRANCE'S COMMITMENT IN FIGURES

- ▶ France contributes **more than €500 million per year to multilateral funds.**
- ▶ It is the **second-largest historical contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**, having paid a total of €4.61 billion to date.
- ▶ It is the **largest contributor to Unitaid**, which seeks to leverage innovation for global health, having paid more than €1.7 billion to date.
- ▶ It is the **sixth-largest contributor to GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance**, having paid €465 million for the 2016-2020 period.
- ▶ It has invested **more than €110 million in the French Muskoka Fund**, which works to support sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health.
- ▶ In 2019, **the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) invested €574 million** in health and social protection.
- ▶ In 2018, **Expertise France invested €18.4 million in the 5% Initiative**, 80% of which will be spent in Africa.
- ▶ A network of **10 regional Global Health Advisers** and **18 Social Affairs Advisers** has been set up in French embassies in Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia, and in G20 countries.
- ▶ There are **27 French Research Institutes Abroad (IFRE).**

## UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE AND THE STRENGTHENING OF HEALTH SYSTEMS ARE PILLARS OF FRANCE'S ACTIONS FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

For France, the health of populations is a factor in and a consequence of development. For this reason, it has adopted a **global health policy for the 2017-2021 period that is based on a cross-cutting approach**.

This strategy focuses on reinforcing health systems to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) with a view to effectively fighting disease. Driven by the values underpinning its health and social protection system, France continues to advocate for UHC at the highest level. By reinforcing health systems, notably primary health care, countries can build resilience to health crises: working alongside the World Health Organization (WHO), France has also committed to improving international health security.

### UHC: IMPACTS WELL BEYOND THE AREAS OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**Nearly 1 billion people lack access to basic health services** and nearly 100 million people every year are plunged into extreme poverty when paying for the care they need. The goal of UHC is to make high-quality health services accessible to all, including vulnerable and marginalized populations, without risk of financial difficulties.

In 2015, **UHC became one of the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. UHC is an investment which has benefits far beyond health and well-being (SDG 3): it also generates inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG 8), better school results for children, adolescents and young people (SDG 4), more gender equality (SDG 5), and improved nutrition of the population (SDG 2).

Since strengthening primary health care contributes to UHC and achieving the health-related MDGs, France is working to launch the **G7 initiative to establish a knowledge-sharing platform in primary health care** between G7 countries and low- and middle-income countries, particularly in the G5 Sahel.

France is committed to the **implementation of the political declaration adopted on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly** on 23 September 2019. This commitment is reflected in its involvement in the Providing for Health (P4H) network, which was co-founded with Germany in 2007, and its support for the Global Fund and GAVI. This is also why **France is fully mobilized in Africa to step up support for policies that seek to implement UHC**. The **Solidarity and Health Initiative for the Sahel** is a €26 million programme financed by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and managed by the AFD since 2013. It aims to promote access to healthcare for children under five in four Sahel countries (Mali, Niger, Senegal and Chad).

In 2019, France is chairing the **Foreign Policy and Global Health group**. This group, created in 2006 on the initiative of France and Norway, brings together seven countries (Brazil, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and France) committed to present a foreign policy and global health resolution to the United Nations General Assembly every year, highlighting the synergies between global health, foreign policy, economic growth and sustainable development. After making UHC a priority during its previous chairmanship, France aims to use this year to raise awareness of the importance of involving citizens and communities in health policies.

## A MAJOR INVESTMENT IN MULTILATERAL FUNDS

For many years, France has chosen to invest in multilateral health funds. This major commitment represents **two-thirds of France's official development assistance in the health field.**

### The Global Fund

France has contributed **€4.61 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria** since the Fund's creation in 2002. As such, it is the second-largest donor from a historical point of view. As part of this exemplary partnership, France works closely with donors, project leaders and beneficiary countries, and members of civil society and representatives of affected communities, with a view to boosting the sustainability of public and community health systems, promoting human rights and supporting gender equality.

To further these efforts, particularly in French-speaking beneficiary countries, France has set aside part of its annual Global Fund contribution for the **5% Initiative** since 2011. This initiative seeks to improve access to and implementation of Global Fund grants by providing targeted and professional French-speaking technical expertise in response to needs in the field. Managed by Expertise France, its success has been hailed by all partners and it has resulted in a constant increase in activity, with 5% increasing to 7% in the three years between 2017 and 2019. These developments have boosted its catalytic effect, complementing the efforts of the Global Fund.



France joined **GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance**, in 2004. For the current financing period (2016-2020), France has committed to providing funding of €465 million, with €100 million taking the form of a direct contribution and the rest being used as part of an innovative financing mechanism, the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm). The mechanism receives long-term donor pledges which it converts, through vaccine bonds on capital markets, into funding which is immediately available for GAVI. **France is contributing €1.39 billion to the IFFIm** over the 2007-2026 period. France considers that vaccination is one of the most effective health interventions, as it prevents between 2 and 3 million deaths worldwide every year.



France joined forces with **Brazil, Bazil, Chile, Norway and United Kingdom to create the innovative partnership Unitaid**. Today, France is the leading donor to this global health innovation agency, having paid more than 60% of cumulative resources since 2006. In supporting the most relevant innovations to treat, diagnose and prevent HIV, tuberculosis and malaria pandemics, Unitaid is an essential partner for the Global Fund.

## AFRICA: A FRENCH PRIORITY IN THE HEALTH FIELD

Eighteen of France's nineteen priority countries for official development assistance are in Africa, where health indicators still cause the most concern: demographic issues, delayed coverage of health needs, high rates of maternal and child mortality, high HIV/AIDS prevalence, high numbers of tuberculosis and malaria cases, and growing rates of non-communicable diseases.

Given the weaknesses in local health systems, especially in West and Central Africa, the French President decided to launch the **Presidential Initiative for Health in Africa** (IPSA) in 2019. Its goal is to encourage African countries to step up their political and financial commitments to health by launching high-level political dialogue and strengthening France's technical and financial partnerships. IPSA's reinforced technical assistance component, which will be implemented by Expertise France and financed by the 5% Initiative, covers five countries in French-speaking Africa (Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Niger and Mali).

**France's actions in Africa also seek to promote and improve the health of women, children and adolescents**, as seen in the implementation of the **French Muskoka Fund** to which **France has paid more than €110 million since 2011**. In 2018, this Fund was active in eight West and Central African countries (Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) through UNICEF, the WHO, the UNFPA and UN Women, responding to specific needs in the fields of sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent and nutritional health. The Muskoka Fund also helps raise awareness among communities through large-scale campaigns such as the C'est la Vie series (which broadcasts information on best sexual health practices, denounces gender-based violence, and supports women's basic right to health and education).

### GENDER EQUALITY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS: CENTRAL TO FRANCE'S GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY

The French President has also called for gender equality to become a major international cause. For this reason, France aims to pursue **a feminist foreign diplomacy**. Its first external action strategy, focusing on population issues and sexual and reproductive health rights for the 2016-2020 period, sets out the framework that contribute to the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action (1994). France pursues its advocacy efforts in multilateral forums and bilateral dialogues supporting **sexual and reproductive health rights**, including the right to abortion.

As part of the Ouagadougou Partnership, France supports coordination between donors to speed up progress with regard to the prevalence of contraception in nine French-speaking African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo) which have undertaken to **introduce modern contraceptive methods to 2.2 million more people by 2020**.

In July 2020, France will host the **Generation Equality Forum** in Paris to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the 1995 Beijing Conference on women's rights. This is an opportunity to continue efforts to mobilize the international community with a view to improving women's access to health and defending their right to make decisions about their bodies.