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FRANCE'S INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY ON BASIC EDUCATION

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Executive summary

Despite progress with education for children worldwide, many disparities remain in terms of access and upholding the right to education. These inequalities in education have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which heightened the learning crisis and the education funding gap.

France, as the sector's number three donor worldwide, is actively engaged in supporting the resilience of education systems and actors and defending the right to education for all in all contexts. France's new International Strategy on Basic Education for 2024-2028 focuses on the pre-primary to secondary education period to promote the key role of education for individuals and societies and priority investment in education to achieve all the 2030 Agenda sustainable development goals.

The strategy promotes a vision for education to support children's education pathways and well-being taking a human rights-based and child rights-based approach. International action in education will be aligned with partner countries' needs and French priorities in the sector in a partnership approach committed to stakeholder dialogue, co-construction and complementarity to achieve common goals.

France will ensure the consistency of its multilateral, European and bilateral commitments to increase the impact and efficiency of **its inclusive, sustainable investment policy** in support of Goal 3 of the Presidential Development Council meeting of 5 May 2023: "Invest in youth by supporting education and teacher training in developing countries".

The strategy defines five priority goals for 2024-2028:

1. Contribute to inclusive and equitable quality education from pre-primary to secondary levels.
2. Contribute to access to education for all and support keeping children in school.
3. Support education for young girls and adolescent girls and the mainstreaming of gender equality in and through education.
4. Support education in emergencies and crises and the resilience of education systems.
5. Improve education system governance and funding.

Four cross-cutting priorities will be included in these priority goals:

- School supervisory staff and teacher training;
- Support for the Francophonie and the French language for quality learning in multilingual contexts;
- Gender equality in support of France's feminist foreign policy priorities;
- Mainstreaming of digital and environmental agendas in education to adjust to the challenges of the 21st century.

To achieve these priorities, France is committed to:

- Leveraging bilateral, European and multilateral channels;
- Scaling up multi-actor partnerships for an efficient response to educational needs;

- Political advocacy for education at bilateral and multilateral level;
- A drive for education funding and the reform of the global education aid architecture.

France will support these priorities with:

- **An annual €350 million contribution to support education systems in Francophone Africa**, in accordance with the commitments of the Plan for the French Language and Multilingualism;
- **A contribution to the multilateral Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund** for the current funding cycle to support education in emergencies and protracted crises;
- **Renewed support for the Gender at the Centre Initiative** for the 2024-2026 period coordinated by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI);
- France's sustained position for the 2024-2028 period **among the leading providers of voluntary funding to UNESCO's Education Sector and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** for the coming financing period and **our active contribution to the governing bodies** of these organizations;
- In addition to these direct contributions, **funding provided by French agencies, in particular the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Group with an annual average of €500 million earmarked for the education sector**, in large part in delegated funds from the Global Partnership for Education and the European Union.

DEFINITION OF BASIC EDUCATION

Basic education is the term most commonly used internationally.

In the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) developed by UNESCO, basic education covers primary and lower secondary education.

Many terms exist for this first stage of learning in life, reflecting different philosophies and differently organized education systems. For example, the term "fundamental education" refers to school attendance from 6 to 15 years old in Burundi, but only applies to primary education in Haiti. The term basic education is not used in the French school system, which is organized into primary (nursery and primary) and secondary (lower secondary and general and technical upper secondary).

This strategy does not use the ISCED definition of basic education.

With reference to France's objectives, the notion of basic education used in this document conveys the ambition to guarantee 12 to 15 years of free, compulsory, quality education for all from pre-primary to upper secondary level.



PART 1

Background
and education
challenges

CHAPTER 1

Current situation

Significant progress, but with challenges

Considerable progress has been made with education for children worldwide since the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. These major advances relate to a number of education issues:

Access to primary education

In addition to the widespread scale-up of access to primary education, virtual gender parity can be observed at this level. The average primary completion rate for girls has increased by 20 percentage points to 87% in the last 25 years and from 85%¹ to 90% for boys.

Access to secondary education

Worldwide, 77% of adolescents complete lower secondary school and 58% of young people complete upper secondary education². Two-thirds of adolescent girls are now enrolled in secondary education as opposed to half in 1998. Yet, the situation differs by world regions and lower and upper secondary levels, since parity in lower secondary education has been achieved by just half of the world's countries and in upper secondary education by merely one-quarter³.

Provision of pre-primary education

Steady progress has been made with access to pre-primary education in recent decades. UNESCO⁴ estimates that the global ratio for participation in pre-primary education increased from 46% in 2010 to 61% in 2020.

Despite this substantial progress, huge geographical and socioeconomic disparities and challenges persist, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic:

Quality of education: a major learning crisis

Despite the quantitative progress in education, students' learning outcomes and basic skills (literacy and numeracy) remain poor. The World Bank reports that 70% of ten-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries are unable to read a simple text as opposed to 57% in 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The lack of initial and in-service teacher training and teacher shortages are contributing factors to this learning crisis. UNESCO estimates that 44 million additional primary and secondary teachers are needed worldwide to meet the goal of basic education for all by 2030⁵.

Other driving factors are compounding the poor quality of learning: lack of teaching resources, curricula with sometimes limited relevance, lack of equipment and infrastructures, and a disconnect between language of instruction and mother tongue.

1. Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Gender report, A new generation: 25 years of efforts for gender equality in education. Paris, UNESCO, Plan International, MEAE 2020.

2. Global Education Monitoring Report, UNESCO.

3. Ibid

4. "Why early childhood care and education matters", unesco.org/en/articles/why-early-childhood-care-and-education-matters, UNESCO, 15 November 2022.

5. UNESCO "Global report on teachers: addressing teacher shortages; highlights", International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2023 unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387400

Access to education and keeping children in school: the challenge of inclusive and equitable education

Despite a downturn in the number of out-of-school children (an estimated 400 million children not in school in 2000), UNESCO data points to 250 million children and young people aged 6 to 18 worldwide still not in school in 2023. In 2022, 40% of out-of-school children lived in Sub-Saharan Africa (98 million) and 35% lived in Central and Southern Asia (85 million). Strong demographic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa limits the intake capacity for new entrants into education systems. The main factors of exclusion are poverty, disability, place of residence, language, religion, ethnic origin, gender inequalities and displaced person status. These often multiple and intersectional sources of discrimination deprive millions of children of their right to education. UNESCO estimates that young girls and adolescent girls represent 48% of the out-of-school population (122 million).

Keeping children in school remains below target: Primary completion rates remain low and very low in the most fragile countries; over one-quarter of lower secondary students and over half of upper secondary students do not complete their respective levels of education. Transitions from primary to secondary and from lower secondary to upper secondary are sensitive phases marked by school dropouts.

An education funding gap

The learning crisis is compounded by the education funding crisis. Despite the 2015 Incheon Declaration commitments urging governments to allocate at least 4% to 6% of GDP to education and/or allocate at least 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education, the sector remains underfunded. UNESCO estimates the average annual funding gap at \$97 billion in the 79 low- and lower-middle-income countries. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic played a role in reversing this last decade's upward trend in public spending on education: 41% of low-income countries reduced their education expenditure following the onset of the pandemic in 2020 with an average decline in spending of 13.5%.⁶ The increase in volume needs to be accompanied by an improvement in the equity and efficiency of existing investments to meet priority educational needs and reach the most vulnerable populations.

6. 2022 Education Finance Watch (EFW) report co-authored by the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report team, the World Bank and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Support education system resilience to address the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and the multitude of crises

Education is a human right, including in a crisis defined as an event or circumstances representing a critical threat to the safety and well-being of a community or other groups of people. The multitude of often-interconnected and protracted crises (health, food, environmental, humanitarian, security, etc.) raises complicated challenges for education systems and undermines children's rights, including the right to education. The resulting displacement of populations often calls for alternative solutions to guarantee learning continuity and accessibility, and raises challenges in terms of integrating new entrants into receiving countries' schools. UNICEF estimated the number of displaced children at **43.3 million at the end of 2022**.

The historic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the learning crisis and existing vulnerabilities and inequalities. World Bank data shows that 1.6 billion children, or 94% of the planet's schoolchildren, were no longer at school in April 2020. School closures affected young and adolescent girls disproportionately by exposing them to a greater risk of child marriage and early pregnancy, both major causes of school dropouts, and had a greater impact on the most vulnerable and marginalized children.

Quite aside from the short- and long-term effects on learning outcomes and the psychosocial well-being of learners and teachers, this will have a substantial economic impact on future generations. Learning losses and the rise in school dropout rates could cost an entire generation an estimated \$10 trillion in lifetime earnings, or the equivalent of 10% of global GDP.⁷

Already actively working on education continuity with the ImaginEcole project, France also committed to funding education post-pandemic in the Paris Declaration of 10 November 2021, a call launched by forty countries including France.

France's international strategy on basic education has been defined in response to this major education crisis and in support of the resilience of education systems and actors.

The priorities of France's international strategy on basic education have been defined to respond to this education crisis and support the resilience of education systems and actors.

7. From the report, *The State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery*, UNESCO, UNICEF, WORLD BANK GROUP, 2021.

IMAGINECOLE, EMBEDDING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING PRACTICES

Launched to guarantee education continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ImaginEcole project covers 12 Francophone African countries today.

Steered by the Conference of Ministers of Education of French-Speaking States and Governments (CONFEMEN) and UNESCO under the Global Education Coalition (GEC) with funding from the Global Partnership for Education and from France (Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport), the measure pools teaching resources and helps teachers create resources and embed digital technologies in their teaching practices. It draws on French expertise provided by Réseau Canopé, Edtech Maskott and France Education International (FEI) in partnership with national teams in stakeholder countries working on setting up hybrid educational models.

The project has developed twelve training modules and five digital skills assessments and has pooled hundreds of granular content bites. It also includes PIX⁸ modules to test digital skills.

8. PIX, service public en ligne d'évaluation, de développement et de certification des compétences numériques

CHAPTER II

France's areas of action

UN and European education agendas

At the World Education Forum organized by UNESCO in the Republic of Korea in 2015, **France committed alongside the international community to implementing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) by 2030** with the signing of the Incheon

Declaration. France supervises global progress towards SDG4 as a member of the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee coordinated by UNESCO and actively participates in a number of technical groups.



EDUCATION 2030 AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4 (SDG4)

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

SDG4 and its seven targets cover the entire education continuum from pre-primary through vocational training to higher education.

The Incheon Declaration tasked UNESCO with coordinating the Education 2030 agenda based on the Education 2030 Framework for Action adopted in November 2015. This framework guides the implementation of SDG4 at national, regional and global level. The SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC), reformed in 2021 and steered by UNESCO, is the cornerstone of the global education cooperation mechanism. It defines the strategic guidelines for the implementation of the Education 2030 agenda and monitors progress towards SDG4.

The French Minister for National Education and Youth sits on the committee for France as co-representative for Western Europe and North America (Group II), alongside the Portuguese

Education Minister, with a mandate running from 2021 to 2025. France also actively contributes to the donor group represented by the United Kingdom for the 2024-2025 mandate.

Reforming and restructuring the global education aid architecture

In April 2023, in its capacity as SDG4 lead agency, UNESCO launched an initiative on the sidelines of the Annual Meetings of the World Bank and IMF to strengthen the multilateral education financing system as part of a move to restructure the highly fragmented global education aid architecture. The aim is to improve the coordination and efficiency of all funds, instruments and initiatives and to propose innovative approaches to close the sector's funding gap.

France actively participates in this multi-actor thinking, not only as a member of the initiative, but also in its capacity as co-chair (2021-2023) and current member of the Education Finance Technical Committee (FA3) reporting to the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee.

Held at the start of the UN General Assembly in September 2022, **the Transforming Education Summit (TES) saw record engagement** by the international community to implement SDG4, which had been largely stalled by the COVID-19 pandemic.

France, the number three education aid donor, has played a leading role in the sector as a key education funding player since 2018 and through its involvement in the reform of global education aid launched by UNESCO.

This commitment takes forward the work by the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact held by France on 22 and 23 June 2023 and the Paris Pact for Peoples and the Planet to lay the foundations for a new, more efficient and equitable international financial system so that no country has to choose between poverty reduction, climate action and saving the planet.

France defends the right to education in the relevant international human rights forums, in particular the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council.

France supports the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, an independent expert appointed by the UN Human Rights Council. First established in 1998, the mandate was most recently renewed in 2023 under UN Resolution 53/7 with the support of France. This UN monitoring measure provides regular, impartial reports on this priority issue.

In response to the global rise in attacks on academic and creative freedom and the right to education, France joined forces with South Africa to launch **a call for the protection of academic freedom** (UN Human Rights

Council, supported by 73 States, 2023). At the 4th Paris Peace Forum (PPF) in 2021, France and UNICEF launched a call to stand up for children's rights in the digital environment, stressing the risks but also the opportunities of digital technology for children, especially in online learning. In keeping with this call, a policy statement on children's rights in the digital environment was adopted in New York on 17 March 2022. This statement is currently supported by 23 States.

France funds educational programmes provided by international organizations. For 2023, France financed the provision of educational programmes by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and by UNICEF in Jordan and Libya.

France's action in education includes its contribution to the European development policy and building a partnership approach in Team Europe.

The new European Consensus on Development adopted in 2017 defines the principles guiding the coordination of EU Member State and European Union development actions and programmes in preparation in view of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

European education cooperation is also built into the **Global Gateway strategy** announced in 2021 to leverage €300 billion in public and private funds to develop sustainable infrastructures by 2027 using European institutional and Member State financial cooperation instruments.

The Global Gateway strategy takes an integrated approach focusing on both physical infrastructures and human development, in particular with its education and research pillar.

Education funding and programming tools include:

- The Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe) with a budget of €79.5 billion for the 2021-2027 period. A total of 9% of NDICI-Global Europe commitments for 2021-2022 were earmarked for education.
- Team Europe Initiatives working with Member States and their agencies, the European Commission and European financial institutions.

This framework for the EU's external action is rounded out by the implementation of European Commission action plans, developed with French support, such as the current implementation of:

- Gender Action Plan III – GAP III to promote gender equality and empower women and girls. Gender equality in education is a GAP III priority;
- Youth Action Plan (YAP) in European Union external action for 2022-2027.

THE REGIONAL TEACHERS INITIATIVE FOR AFRICA (RTIA)

Announced at the European Union - African Union Summit (EU-AU) in February 2022 and launched in 2023, the Regional Teachers Initiative is designed to scale up teacher training and increase the number of qualified teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa to provide the 15 million qualified teachers needed and meet SDG4 by 2030.

The purpose of the initiative is to improve learners' basic skills by focusing on teacher training and teacher professional development as well as improving teacher governance and human resources management.

France (MEAE, MENJ and its agencies, and the AFD Group) co-constructed the project and supported the principle of developing peer dialogue by networking stakeholders, in particular in the Francophone world. With an investment of €100 million, this initiative is one of the flagship projects of the European Global Gateway strategy.

The project will strengthen links with other European agencies and Member States. The European Commission and Member States – Belgium, Finland and France – will work with UNESCO and the African Union on conducting the project.

In addition to coordinating the consortium, Expertise France is the lead technical assistance agency for the project and engages in policy dialogue on education subjects with African partners.

France's support for this initiative is part of Goal 3 of the Presidential Development Council meeting of 5 May 2023 on education and teacher training and underpins the European strategy for education.

Steering France's international action

France's international strategy on basic education is defined by:

- **The Programming Act on Inclusive Development and Combating Global Inequalities (LPDSLIM) of 4 August 2021.**⁹

The main aims of this policy are, "i) ending poverty in all its forms, combating food insecurity and malnutrition, and promoting education and health; and ii), promoting human rights, particularly child rights, strengthening the rule of law and democracy, and gender equality [...]". The act also reiterates the role of education as leverage for the exercise of child rights.

- **The ten priority policy goals defined by the Presidential Development Council (PDC) meeting of 5 May 2023**¹⁰, **to be monitored annually by the foreign and economy ministers, and in particular Goal 3 on education: "Invest in youth by supporting education and teacher training in developing countries"**. France thereby renews its commitment to the sector by highlighting the role of teachers in meeting SDG4 (Target 4.c) and places young people at the top of this agenda.

- **The new guidelines adopted by the Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) on 18 July 2023.**¹¹

CICID thereby consolidates the emergence of a new inclusive, sustainable investment (ISI) policy based on a scaled-up, impactful partnership approach to make Team France's action more effective and transparent.

Support for African young people was a priority of the EU-AU Summit on 17 and 18 February 2022 held under the French Presidency of the EU, in line with the 2021 Montpellier Summit, which gave pride of place to dialogue with young people recognized as major players in social transformation dynamics and fully-fledged parties in this new partnership. In his speech on the Africa-France Partnership on 28 February 2023, the President of the French Republic also highlighted the need, as Europeans, to provide concrete solutions that meet young people's needs.

9. legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043898536/ (in French only)
10. Presidential Development Council (PDC) meeting on May 5, 2023 elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2023/05/05/conseil-presidentiel-du-developpement (in French only)

11. Guidelines for international cooperation policy and official development assistance (CICID), 2023 diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/orientations_cle017322.pdf (in French only)



PART 2

France's education approach

CHAPTER I

Vision for education and guiding principles for the strategy

A holistic, humanist vision for education

In our international action, **France defends a vision for education grounded in the fundamental values and principles of human rights proclaimed by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.** This vision underlies all French positions, projects and investments in the sector. It is based on:

- **Recognition of the responsibility of States to guarantee the right to education**, as proclaimed by Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) adopted by the United Nations in 1989. The right to education is the responsibility of the States. They are assisted by a host of players in the realization and protection of child rights;
- **Defence of education as a global public good interconnected with the other global public goods and its status as a driver to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals¹²**;
- **The ambition to guarantee equity and the principle of non-discrimination in education cooperation, to counter multidimensional inequalities and to alleviate factors of vulnerability** in order to improve the resilience of individuals and societies;

- **A vision for the education continuum with an approach geared to each stage in life throughout the education pathway** focusing on specific needs and transition periods (early childhood to childhood, childhood to adolescence, and adolescence to young adulthood);

- **Promotion of education as the most profitable and sustainable investment for inclusive societies and the most effective way to offer children a protective environment (especially in crises) and reduce poverty and inequalities.**

Education has positive knock-on effects at both individual and collective levels: economic growth due to increased productivity, greater employability combined with higher earnings, access to better healthcare and stronger social cohesion;

- **Priority support for public education systems.** France plays its part in guaranteeing the role of government regulation and oversight of the private education supply to prevent the commodification of education. It safeguards the principles of non-discrimination, inclusiveness, equity and quality of private education and supported non-formal education models;

12. Related SDGs: SDG1 – No poverty, SDG3 – Good health and well-being, SDG5 – Gender equality, SDG8 – Decent work and economic growth, SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities, SDG 13 – Climate action

• **A holistic multisector approach to education targeting child well-being and the training of future citizens** capable of adjusting and making informed responsible decisions for inclusive, sustainable societies. As a cornerstone of human development, education also has the potential to transform and empower societies and individuals by giving them agency to act on their environment and their life course.

Education cooperation methodology

The guiding principles are **in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2023 CICID guidelines** for more effective inclusive, sustainable investment.

Human and child rights-based approach (HRBA/CRBA)

In keeping with the guidelines of the French Human Rights and Development Strategy and its associated action plan, this approach recognizes all people as having rights and being actors of their own development to ensure that it is truly sustainable. Education cooperation is not only a solidarity action, but a means to implement States' international obligations to respect, protect and fulfill human rights, particularly child rights since children have specific rights in addition to "generic" human rights.

The conceptual framework is based on two guiding principles (do no harm and do maximum good for the realization of rights) and five working principles.¹³ In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), France promotes the participation of children in all their diversity, as actors of their rights and their development, and the role of school in human rights information and education.

Multi-stakeholder partnership approach

France promotes an inclusive co-construction and cooperation approach with partner countries, education system actors, development partner groups and civil society organizations.

Multisector, multiscale approach

France supports the decentralization and deconcentration of actions and encourages local stakeholder uptake and engagement through skills transfers and capacity-building at all levels by means of sharing expertise with partner countries, in particular through peer dialogue. The multisector approach is designed to scale up collaboration and dialogue between stakeholders (institutional, civil society, communities, parents, etc.), including outside of the education sector, to better address children's holistic needs (health, food, etc.).

13. The five working principles are: i) legality, universality and indivisibility of human rights; ii) participation, inclusivity and access to the decision-making process; iii) non-discrimination and equal access; iv) accountability and access to the law; and v) transparency and access to information (Human Rights and Development Strategy, Ministry of Europe and foreign affairs; https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/policy_paper_human_rights_cle01e941.pdf)

An approach targeting conclusive and sustainable impactful outcomes

Targeting relevance, contextualization and alignment of actions

France will ensure that its actions are aligned with partner countries' education sector plans and national strategies, and will propose locally contextualized support measures in a dialogue and co-construction approach.

Consistency and complementarity

France will ensure the consistency and complementarity of bilateral, European and multilateral commitments with a focus on seeking financial efficiency, leverage effects (multiplier effects, co-financing, etc.) and coalitions of actors to encourage investment in education and scaling-up of initiatives.

With France's other international strategies:

- **The feminist foreign policy adopted by France in 2019 and France's 2018-2022 International Strategy for Gender Equality, currently under renewal for the 2024-2028 period:** education for girls and social, political and economic empowerment for young women, combatting gender-based violence and social norms in and through education, and the mainstreaming of the gender equality goal in education policies and systems;
- **France's 2023-2027 Global Health Strategy and International Strategy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR):** France supports health education and comprehensive sexuality

education programmes in support of young people's empowerment and informed decision-making, especially young and adolescent girls, with respect to their bodies and their sexuality. France defends access for all to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services taking in menstrual health and access to quality sexual and reproductive services and products.

• The French Republic's 2023-2027

Humanitarian Strategy: education and protection of child rights are humanitarian action priorities.

• The 2023-2027 Civil Society and Civic Engagement Strategic Guidance Paper:

France's ambition is to strengthen its partnership with French and local civil society in the education and training sector and to support actors in education for citizenship and international solidarity (ECIS) as well as community education.

• The 2019-2024 International Strategy for Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture:

France promotes a multisector approach to take integrated action to address the causes of malnutrition, which compromises children's cognitive and physical development. France supports measures to train young people for farming jobs in rural areas.

• The French Human Rights and Development Strategy and the 2021-2027 Road Map for France's International

Action in Civil Registration: a major factor for access to education, in particular for girls, the civil registration of children guarantees their right to education.



Raising funds for education by means of leverage effects between bilateral and multilateral channels: a case study of the C2D3 with Côte d'Ivoire

In 2001, France launched the Debt Reduction and Development Contract (C2D) policy actioning the bilateral commitment to cancel all of its official development assistance debts for countries participating in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. The C2D mechanism consists of converting debt into development programmes by means of refinancing through grants when payments are made under C2D contracts.

In 2021, France signed a third C2D with the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire for €1.144 billion for a five-year period (2021-2025). Aligned with the Ivoirian government's priorities under the New National Côte d'Ivoire Development Plan for 2021-2025, the C2D3 allocated a budget of €185.8 million for the education-training-employment continuum. **Recognized as an additional contribution, the C2D3 created a leverage effect enabling Côte d'Ivoire to access the GPE Multiplier (\$40 million).**



THE EDUCATION CONTINUUM APPROACH: SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S EDUCATION AND TRAINING PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIOECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The education continuum covers: pre-primary, primary and secondary education (general, technical and vocational), higher education, vocational training and entry into working life.

The purpose of this continuum approach is human capital development for youth employability.

France's contributes to seven of the SDG4 targets with its education continuum actions and supports individuals on their lifelong learning pathways. In 2022, AFD continuum commitments stood at €629 million. Although quality, access and governance are common continuum pillars, each stage of this pathway targets specific goals and covers a multitude of actors.

Spotlight on France's support for vocational training

Covering a wide range of public and private players by education/training level and economic sector, vocational training refers to all skills transfer processes, especially practical skills transfers, associated with gainful employment in an occupation. France supports the development of a wide range of quality demand-driven training. Given that a large number of future jobs have yet to exist, cooperation in this sector takes a forward-looking approach to prepare for future skills and occupations (green professions, digital professions, etc.) and supports the absorption of newcomers into the labour market.

Vocational training cooperation includes taking measures in support of:

1/ Initial training in the form of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in secondary education (starting in upper secondary) and in higher education at professional bachelor's degree level (three years of higher education) to make university courses more work-oriented (agricultural colleges, international French vocational campuses, and international opening of French trades and skills campuses);

2/ Continuing training in association with businesses and the private sector, with the:

- Development of training centres by public-private partnerships (e.g. the training institutes in Morocco run by delegated management and developed with the AFD group);
- Consolidation of workplace training;

3/ Structuring vocational training geared to the private sector's skills needs.

France is a member of the Team Europe Initiative on professional training in Africa (Opportunity-Driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training) alongside the European Commission, Belgium, Germany and Finland to support demand-driven skills training systems. The initiative will develop vocational education and training courses geared to concrete, decent employment opportunities created by European investments in Africa, particularly through the Global Gateway investment. Expertise France will coordinate the project's technical assistance facility scheduled to be launched in early 2024.

France is also assisted by civil society expertise under the AFD's CSO Initiatives mechanism (I-OSC).

Spotlight on France's action in entry into working life and employment.

This track includes support for employment access policies and entrepreneurship measures, the structuring of employment agencies and the quality of employment.



COOPERATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The goals of France's international strategy on basic education support access to higher education for young people through the acquisition of a set of basic skills, primary and secondary school retention, education continuity in context of emergencies situations, and academic guidance to encourage the creation of a pool of teachers.

French goals and priorities for higher education

• Quantitative goals:

- 500,000 international students enrolled in French higher education in 2027 in keeping with the guidelines of the Choose France/Bienvenue en France strategy launched in 2018 to attract international students;
- Double the number of grants by the French government to reach 15,000 grant holders by 2027.

• Qualitative goals, including:

- Improve student reception. A total of 151 establishments were awarded the *Bienvenue en France* quality label from 2019 to 2023;
- Gradually roll out the *Etudes en France* (Studying in France) platform;
- Extend the supply of digital education, instruction in the English language and overseas training, especially on international French campuses;
- Raise French-language learning opportunities for non-French-speaking international students;
- Target the excellence of student mobility candidates' academic profiles and boost the doctorate level;
- Raise the profile of French government higher education grants with a minimum target of 10% of grants in high-tech sectors;

- Support students and researchers from countries touched by crisis, in particular via the PAUSE emergency hosting programme (scientists and artists);

- Support preparatory classes to enter top universities with a partnership approach between French and foreign establishments.

The large-scale Partnerships with African Higher Education programme (PEA)

Funded by the AFD and run by the French National Research Agency (ANR) and Campus France, the large-scale Partnerships with African Higher Education Programme (PEA) supports African higher education in structuring courses that lead to professional opportunities, while participating in the internationalization of French higher education. Open to 18 African countries to date, the first two editions (2022 and 2023) covered 14 projects for €2.5 to €3.5 million each for a four-year period. These projects involved 14 African establishments and 35 French establishments. A third edition is being launched in 2024.

The **Elysée Programme for scholarships** launched in 2016 is designed to fund Bachelor's and Master's studies by Syrian awardees in strategic fields working for the future of Syria or in which France is renowned for its expertise. The programme managed by Campus France has supported nearly 350 students. Initially reserved for Syrian student refugees living in Lebanon or enrolled in an establishment in France, the programme was extended to Syrian student refugees in Jordan, Turkey and Kurdistan in 2020.

CHAPTER II

Cross-cutting priorities running through France's commitments

France will incorporate the following four cross-cutting priorities in its international action in basic education.

School supervisory staff and teacher training as a cornerstone of France's international action

Initial and in-service training to build teachers' professional capacities is key to improving the quality of education.

France's support for teacher and trainer training is part of a drive for the systemic upskilling of all education staff (head teachers and principals, trainers, inspectors and equivalent positions, and educational advisers where they exist) to support the professionalization of practices and create lasting change.

France defends the pivotal role of teachers in transforming education systems, including by supporting raising the profession's profile and improving teachers' standing and careers management.

In keeping with Goal 3 of the Presidential Development Council meeting of 5 May 2023, France promotes a partnership dynamic for sustainable outcomes involving skills transfers and peer dialogue reaching beyond a project's timeframe in order to cultivate partner structure ownership and empowerment.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

The AVNI NOU programme is designed to upskill teachers in Haiti with in-service training and elevate the standing of the profession. This programme is part of the national ten-year education plan, one of the three objectives of which is to improve the quality of education by upskilling teachers.

The National Network of National Post-Graduate Teacher Training and Education Institutes (R-INSPÉ) has signed a bilateral partnership framework agreement with the Senegalese education ministry to develop, with the support of the French Ministry for National Education and Youth, close and structured train-the-trainer cooperation between the 14 regional teacher training centres and the French training institutes. An education research track and transfers of expertise on training and the role of inspectors are also on the agenda, engaging the two countries' general inspectorates in a work focus covering the entire administrative and educational chain.

Supporting La Francophonie, a key to meeting education challenges

Francophone education systems face common challenges: decline in proficiency in the French language and in instruction by teachers of and in the French language with a negative impact on the quality of learning and a drop in the attractiveness of the teaching profession, especially in French language learning, affecting the recruitment pool.

France will make every effort to promote French, a shared language, as a qualitative learning driver in education systems using the French language as one of the languages of instruction. This cross-cutting goal will be actioned in close cooperation with the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), Conference of Ministers of Education of French-Speaking States and Governments (CONFEMEN), the Institute of the Francophonie for Education and Training (IFEFF) and the Association of Francophone Universities (AUF).

Support to Francophone education systems concerns many of the priorities in this strategy: training education staff and teachers, curriculum reforms and development of teaching resources, increasing inclusion, student and teacher skills assessments, and collection and use of education data.

The linguistic track of education cooperation proposes a range of contextualized solutions depending on the place of French in the education systems.

As a language of instruction in some 30 countries, French can be a language of instruction alongside one or more other languages or the main language of instruction from the start of school.



The Francophone world: a dynamic, cosmopolitan space full of opportunities

The 2022 edition of the *Report on the French Language Worldwide* by the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) points up common characteristics in the Francophone world:

- **The youth of French speakers as growth potential for the Francophone world.**

The majority of French speakers in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb are 15 to 24 years old. With its buoyant demographic growth, the Francophone world is forecast to number over 700 million French speakers by 2050. This development potential determines common agendas to guarantee young French speakers in all their diversity a full course of quality education and decent work.

- **A multilingual, multicentric space with a polymorphous shared language.**

French is the fifth most spoken language worldwide with 321 million French speakers in 2022, including 62% of everyday speakers in Africa.

- **The French language is a driver for access to:**

1. Employment, mobility and studies;
2. Knowledge and digital content. In 2022, French was the number four language on the Internet. La Francophonie supports the “discoverability” of French-speaking content in the digital environment, i.e. online availability and the ability for content to be found among a large number of resources;
3. Cultural pluralism.

France aims to scale up bilingualism and multilingualism in support of education systems' language policies by:

i) Improving the balance between national languages and/or mother tongues and French to promote academic achievement by encouraging early learning in the mother tongue with a gradual transition to French as language of instruction.

France has been supporting the implementation of the International Organisation of La Francophonie's School and National Languages Programme (ELAN) since 2011 (€11 million in AFD funding). This programme helps improve the quality of early learning in pre-primary and primary school with the development of bilingual instruction in French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa.

ii) Supporting French as a foreign language in partner countries' education systems.

In view of the range of varieties of French used in the classroom, teacher training of and in the French language supports the adjustment of teaching practices. France will work on increasing proficiency in the French language by supporting instruction in teaching in French as a language and in non-linguistic disciplines as well as the development of teaching resources in the Francophone world.

France's International Strategy on Basic Education for 2024-2028 is aligned with its commitments for the Francophone world and the guidelines of the Plan for the French Language and Multilingualism launched in 2018.



FRANCE'S COMMITMENTS UNDER THE PLAN FOR THE FRENCH LANGUAGE AND MULTILINGUALISM

On International Francophonie Day on 20 March 2018, the President of the French Republic presented an ambitious strategy for the French language and multilingualism based on three pillars: learning, communication and creativity.

Five years after its launch, the 2023 Review (in French only) reported on the many advances made in cooperation with French and Francophone operators, including:

- **€350 million per year in support for Francophone African education systems.**
A budget of €356 million dedicated to this in 2020;
- **The multinational APPRENDRE programme** (Support for the Professionalisation of Teaching Practices and the Development of Resources). Coordinated by the Association of Francophone Universities (AUF) with AFD funding (€20 million since 2018), the programme has assisted 900,000 teachers, trained 4,000 teacher trainers and developed an expertise partnership platform to build teachers' teaching practices (in primary and secondary education);
- **The Educational Resources project** (in French only) launched in 2020 and coordinated by UNESCO in partnership with the Institut Français (IF) with AFD funding (€15 million). The project supports the production and dissemination of material and digital educational resources (primary and secondary) in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa;
- **The ImaginEcole project** for teacher training using and in digital technology, digital skills assessments and pooled teaching resources;

- **IFClasse**, managed by the Institut Français de Paris, offers online training to build the language and digital skills of teachers of French and teachers teaching in French;

- **CONFEMEN's Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems** (in French only) works on building French-speaking countries' capacities in assessing learning and steering education systems. As a historical technical and financial partner to PASEC, France supports the 2024-2025 PASEC assessment cycle, geographically extended to non-Francophone countries and member countries of La Francophonie outside Africa and extended in focus to the assessment of learning in lower secondary in addition to primary education.

France has also undertaken to build the place of the French language in education systems throughout the French-speaking world with:

- **The LabelFrancEducation** (in French only) for bilingual education establishments worldwide teaching in French and another language. In 2022, the LabelFrancEducation network covered 587 schools;
- **The foreign language assistant mobility programme;**
- **The Ev@lang aptitude test** coordinated by France Education International.

As a flagship project for the ambitions announced in 2018, **the Cité Internationale de la Langue Française in Villers-Cotterêts** opened on 30 October 2023 and is **dedicated to the French language and French-speaking cultures**. The Cité is the 2024 host for the 19th Sommet de la Francophonie and will eventually become a hub for research and French-language teacher training.

Education for girls and mainstreaming gender equality in and through education as a common pillar of France's education cooperation and feminist foreign policy

Since the official adoption of France's feminist foreign policy in 2019, France has been promoting gender equality and the defence of women and girls' rights in all areas of French foreign policy.

Multilaterally, France has made its mark as a lead partner alongside like-minded and partner countries to mainstream gender equality agendas in negotiating and decision-making bodies. France's ambitious advocacy in numerous forums (EU, UN Security Council and National Assembly, G7, G20, UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), OECD, etc.) actively contributes to guaranteeing the gains obtained in international conventions and agreements and extending the scope of recognized fundamental rights to women and girls.

Although France and like-minded countries have made gender equality a strong pillar of foreign policy, equality is coming increasingly systematically under attack. The rise in anti-rights movements embodies a conservative trend opposed to the promotion and defence of gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

In response to these movements, France has made it a strategic priority to support feminist movements and civil society organizations, including for education for girls.

Despite the progress in gender parity, huge socioeconomic and regional disparities persist, in particular to the detriment of young and adolescent girls from rural areas or with disabilities. Although girls' education is key to achieving gender equality, it is not enough to reduce the multifaceted obstacles and discrimination that hinder access to equal opportunities on the education continuum.

Paradoxically, schools can play a role in producing gender stereotypes and perpetuating violence and discriminatory behaviour through differential socialization (different treatment of children depending on their biological sex) and through the projection of different expectations, consciously or unconsciously, by education staff.

In addition to supporting education for girls, France promotes systematic gender analysis in education policies and practices and consideration of the specific needs and obstacles encountered by young and adolescent girls in their education.

France supports a transformative approach to gendered social norms in and through education to bring about endogenous, structural and long-term changes in support of equality. Based on a multi-stakeholder, multisector approach to reduce multiple intersectional inequalities and discrimination, this approach promotes:

- **Educational opportunities addressing the gender equality goal** in the analysis of education needs and education policy planning and budgeting. It supports keeping girls in school by deconstructing stereotypes (in teacher training and learning content), combatting gender-based violence in education, and adapting education infrastructures and equipment.

- **Support for social demand for gender equality in and through education** by means of a contextualized approach and community engagement in association with the families.

France promotes leadership for young and adolescent girls, mainly by means of civic education, and the importance of their education to create a virtuous cycle to help achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals. Education for girls has many positive impacts for societies: reduction in infant mortality and child marriages and early pregnancies, access to employment or gainful activities, increase in a country's economic growth rate, participation in public life, etc.

In addition to a necessarily affirmative policy and uptake by the education community, the active participation of boys and men is decisive to engage in thinking and create changes regarding the roles and places assigned to everyone in society. Gender equality actions benefit as much girls as they do boys, who are also exposed to gender stereotypes and their repercussions in terms of dropping out of school, as highlighted by the Global Report on Boys' Disengagement from Education.¹⁴

KEY TERMS

Gender-sensitive education and gender-transformative education

Gender-sensitive education: Education that identifies and addresses the different needs of girls, boys, women and men to promote equal outcomes and which acknowledges the impact of gender-differentiated norms, roles and relations and the resulting gender inequalities. It does not explicitly seek to redress gender inequalities.

Gender-transformative education: Approach designed to unlock the potential of learners in all their diversity. It helps remove gender-based barriers to education and aims for social transformations by putting an end to harmful gender-based norms, attitudes and practices to achieve fair, equal and inclusive societies.

* Published in the 2021 brief on "Gender Transformative Education. Reimagining education for a more just and inclusive world" supported by UNICEF, UNGEI, Plan International and Transform Education, UNGEI and UNICEF.

14. unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384078

Mainstream digital and environmental agendas to support the transformation of education

Advancing the green transition by addressing the interconnectedness of educational and environmental agendas

Education systems are hard hit by extreme weather, but education is also an effective way to protect ecosystems and take climate action by giving learners the knowledge, skills and means to act for more sustainable societies. Although frontline victims of crises, children and young people are also actors of change and bearers of innovative solutions geared to achieving sustainable development for present and future generations.

In line with the principles of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, France advocates more effective mainstreaming of education in climate negotiations and climate finance and the embedding of climate change impacts in all education policy areas (planning, budgeting, infrastructures, curricula, education data, etc.). France promotes the role of education for environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the contribution of education to SDG13.

Supporting the digital transformation of education – balancing new opportunities and the need for regulation

Digital technologies transform our relationship to knowledge and learning methods, and call for education systems to be geared to the rapid advances in information and communication technologies. Digital technologies can improve learning when they are used securely, inclusively and ethically, if they complement teachers' pedagogy to address major educational challenges such as:

- i) Teaching/learning quality and relevance, by proposing a range of appropriate and contextualized complementary digital resources;
- ii) Equity and inclusion, by enabling accessibility to knowledge (solutions and resources adapted to persons living in remote areas and with disabilities).

France supports education in digital technologies through the development of digital skills on curricula and dedicated certificates, pooling online resources, and the use of digital technologies to improve education management systems. France offers its expertise in media and information literacy to help teachers and learners analyse information in complex digital environments.

At the same time, bridging the digital divide will remain a priority of France's international action to reduce inequalities of material access and connectivity.¹⁵

15. UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report 2023 entitled "Technology in education: a tool on whose terms?" estimates that only 40% of primary schools, 50% of lower secondary schools and 65% of upper secondary schools worldwide have an Internet connection. (unesco.org/gem-report/en/technology)

Digital access and education help improve girls' inclusion, reduce the under-representation of girls and narrow gender inequalities in this area.

Among technological advances, the development of artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping how we relate to knowledge and offers the potential for innovation in education and learning practices.

France promotes a responsible and regulated use of AI, including generative AI, to ensure compliance with the principles of equity and inclusion and support teachers with incorporating this technology into their teaching practices.

Although technology has transformative potential for education, it is not neutral and calls for government regulation and oversight to be steered to work for learning. France adopted the **Declaration on the Rights of the Child in the Digital Environment** in March 2022, supported by a number of other nations, to guarantee the right to privacy and intellectual freedom and to protect users from abuse of digital technology (violent, illegal or hateful content, online harassment and violence, privacy violations, etc.).

In order to take forward and act on the work to protect children in the digital environment, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs created the **Children Online Protection Lab** in 2022 and also spearheaded the **Laboratory for Women's Rights Online** in 2023 to identify, prevent and curb online and technology-facilitated gender-based violence. A gendered approach to building awareness of the uses of digital technology is key to child protection online, preventing cyberviolence and promoting gender equality, since girls and women are the most exposed to online violence.¹⁶

16. See The Laboratory for Women's Rights Online official internet page (diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/feminist-diplomacy/the-laboratory-for-women-s-rights-online/)



PART 3

The strategy's
priority goals

France will concentrate its action for the next five years on five priority goals. Alongside their pillars for action, these goals will define and guide bilateral and multilateral action in education and will contribute to the definition of positions backed by France on the international stage.

Based on an ecosystemic approach to education, these priorities take into account existing dynamics between education actors and learning spaces in an open environment receptive to their surroundings following a “transition from a focus on classrooms to schools as learning organizations”.¹⁷

Under the education continuum approach, France will focus in particular on actions that support pathways to higher education and vocational and technical training pathways.

PRIORITY 1

Contribute to inclusive and equitable quality education from pre-primary to secondary education

France will support the acquisition of basic skills for learning and the development of a broader common core of knowledge, skills, values and aptitudes to help educational staff and learners adjust to societal, environmental and digital transformations.

France will leverage five drivers, including the possibilities offered by digital technology:

1. Teacher, trainer and school supervisory staff training;
2. Learning and teaching resources and content;
3. School conditions and learning and teaching environments;
4. Support for bilingual and multilingual education policies;
5. Education system monitoring and evaluation systems.

17. See Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education: unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379707

Area of Action 1:

Support for structured, qualitative and measurable teacher, trainer and school supervisory staff training at central, deconcentrated and decentralized level.

Pillar 1: Support the definition, implementation and reform of public policies for initial and in-service teacher training, ensuring a continuum and synergies between these training phases in teachers' careers.

Pillar 2: Improve or strengthen the structuring of partner education systems' supervisory and management staff by means of initial and in-service training (head teachers and principals, inspectors, trainers and educational advisers) to promote a teacher support approach.

Pillar 3: Support the inclusion in education policies and teacher training course content of knowledge and skills in:

1. Education for sustainable development (ESD);
2. Gender equality and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE);
3. Civic education and international solidarity;
4. Education in digital technologies including media and information literacy (MIL);
5. Education in life skills¹⁸ and critical thinking.

18. Life skills are a set of abilities that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life and maintain stable mental well-being to be able to adopt appropriate and positive behaviour in the way they relate to themselves, to others and to their environment. Examples of these skills are problem solving, effective communication, self-awareness, empathy for others and coping with emotions. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines ten life skills to develop to be able to adopt behaviour that promotes health and well-being. In 2001, they were classified into three categories: cognitive, social and emotional. ac-paris.fr/les-competences-psychosociales-cps-128435 (in French only). Life skills are cross-cutting interdisciplinary skills.

Area of Action 2:

Improvement of teaching and learning content, including digital media, enabling the acquisition of basic skills and the development of transferable skills.

Pillar 1: Support the acquisition of a core of basic skills and support fast-track measures and pathways to solve the learning crisis.

Pillar 2: Build ministry capacities to develop, produce (publish), put into use and update material and digital teaching resources and education curricula adapted to national contexts and including transferable knowledge and skills and necessary life skills.

Pillar 3: Support research in education and teaching innovations, and promote the pilot testing of measures applying research outcomes in schools.

Area of Action 3:

Improvement of learning and teaching conditions and access to a safe, inclusive quality school environment.

Pillar 1: Support the development and maintenance of safe, inclusive and sustainable infrastructures (planning and retrofitting for climate change-resilient buildings) and a material school environment conducive to learning (textbooks, digital equipment, connectivity, etc.).

Pillar 2: Support the development of safe school environments for the well-being of children and educational staff and to keep children in school (school meals, access to safe drinking water, adequate mixed healthcare infrastructures, psychosocial support, etc.).

Pillar 3: Support the prevention of school-related violence, including gender-based violence, and the protection of learners and educational staff.

Area of Action 4:

Support for bilingual and multilingual education policies and levelling-up of proficiency in French as a teaching language in French-speaking education systems.

Pillar 1: Support bilingual and multilingual policy-making and implementation by promoting the place of mother tongues in formal education curricula to improve the acquisition of basic skills and support the transition to French where it is the language of instruction.

Pillar 2: Contribute to improving proficiency in the French language by teachers and learners where it is the language of instruction by means of initial and in-service teacher training, developing and pooling resources, transfers of expertise and skills assessment support (certification).

Area of Action 5:

Scale-up of education system monitoring and evaluation systems contributing to the quality of education.

Pillar 1: Support the creation and/or improvement of quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and information systems, including disaggregated data, to hone the identification of disparities (gender-specific, rural/urban and disability) and support central and devolved actors' capacities to collect, analyse and use such data.

Pillar 2: Support the system to monitor and assess the performance and skills of students, teachers and school supervisors and promote inclusive testing (teacher participation).

Pillar 3: Build the capacities of education systems to turn student performance assessment results and observations into public policies.

PRIORITY 2

Contribute to access to education for all and support keeping children in school

Nearly 250 million children and young people are deprived of education. Guaranteeing equal opportunities calls for the creation of the real conditions for inclusive and equitable schools through support for:

1. A sufficient supply of contextual education to meet demographic pressure and learners' specific needs;
2. Demand for education from families by fighting inequalities – especially socioeconomic and geographical – and eliminating multidimensional barriers to schooling and the pursuit of studies in keeping with the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education.¹⁹

This track takes a multisector, multistakeholder approach focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalized children and adolescents in close coordination with local authorities, communities, families and civil society.

Area of Action 1

Support for the supply of education and adaptation of the school environment and learning and teaching conditions for an educational response geared to specific needs and contexts.

Pillar 1: Promote a combined approach supporting both sufficient availability (geographic coverage) and adaptation:

1. School infrastructures and equipment, ensuring their maintenance for better adaptability and accessibility to persons with disabilities, those in remote areas and displaced persons;
2. Inclusive and accessible material and digital teaching resources, ensuring that content is devoid of gendered or disability stereotypes;
3. Teacher training, stepping up training in gender- and disability-sensitive education and building education community awareness of the equity and inclusion agendas.

Pillar 2: Support the development of quality school meals in keeping with France's international commitments within the Global School Meals Coalition.

19. unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-against-discrimination-education?hub=70224

Area of Action 2

Contribute to guaranteeing access at all levels of education from pre-primary to secondary.

Pillar 1: Support inclusive access to:

1. Quality pre-primary education by supporting public early childhood care and education policies and teacher training to gear teaching to childhood development;
2. Lower and upper secondary education.

Pillar 2: Contribute to reducing obstacles to demand for education (geographic distance, economic vulnerabilities, access to school supplies, etc.) to promote keeping learners in the education system, in particular regarding the transition from primary to secondary education and in lower and upper secondary education.

Pillar 3: Develop and assist with actions to identify out-of-school children and/or school dropouts and provide educational guidance, and improve bridges to technical and vocational education, especially for young school dropouts.

Pillar 4: Support non-formal education mechanisms and pathways to the public education system, while ensuring oversight and regulation of the private education sector.

Pillar 5: Promote the equitable and sustainable inclusion of refugees, displaced persons and returnees in the national education systems, using appropriate learning and teaching curricula.



Global School Meals Coalition

Spearheaded in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which deprived millions of children of meals due to school closures, the School Meals Coalition was launched at the initiative of the World Food Programme (WFP), France and Finland at the United Nations Food Systems Summit in September 2021.

The purpose of the coalition is to provide every child with a healthy, nutritious meal in school by 2030. School meal programmes help improve children's health and academic achievement and reduce social, economic and gender inequalities. They can support local agricultural markets and production and steer them toward sustainable models.

In 2023, this international engagement for school meals comprised 90 member countries and 101 non-State partner organizations (international organizations, NGOs, research bodies, etc.). It has made major, concrete advances:

- 418 million children receive a school meal, as opposed to 388 million at the start of 2023;
- Collective investment in national school meal systems has risen €5 billion to €48 billion in two years.

The first School Meals Coalition Global Summit held in Paris on 18 and 19 October 2023 under the auspices of the President of the French Republic concluded with a set of deliverables including:

- A new Cities Feeding the Future initiative actioned by municipalities;
- Support to countries to scale up their school meal programmes.

France reaffirmed its national commitments (€1 school meal initiative) and international commitments with the participation of the French research ecosystem's work on school meals (Institut Agro, CIRAD, IRD, INRAE, etc.). Brazil joined the Coalition's trio of co-chairs alongside France and Finland in October 2023.



EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE)

The second World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education held at the invitation of UNESCO in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (14-16 November 2022) reaffirmed the right of every child to early childhood care and education.

Early childhood encompasses the period from birth to eight years of age and recognizes the holistic nature of child development including education, health, nutrition, safety, protection and well-being. Early childhood education encompasses educational development programmes from birth to two years old and pre-primary (or pre-school) education for children from the age of three to the start of primary education.

Enshrined in SDG Target 4.2, ECCE is recognized as crucial to improve children's academic achievements and social equity, and for children to develop to their fullest potential.

Pre-primary education in France corresponds to nursery school for children starting at three years old (two years old in some cases) prior to primary school. **France, with its wealth of expertise in pre-primary education and in complementarity with the actors at this level, will focus its international action in the sector on:**

- **Promoting pre-primary education as an integral part of education systems and the development of holistic, quality pre-primary education.** France will support the actioning of policy and legal frameworks to guarantee the right of every child to inclusive, quality pre-primary education;
- **Supporting quality teaching and the professionalization and elevation of the status of teachers and early childhood professionals,** development of appropriate child development resources and teaching methods, support for multilingual education and promotion of mother-tongue teaching for early learning, and ECCE monitoring and evaluation systems;
- **Developing a multi-stakeholder, multisector early childhood approach in association with the health and nutrition sectors,** covering in particular the first thousand days of life as a critical period in a child's development and building family awareness of the importance of the early childhood period.

PRIORITY 3

Support education for young and adolescent girls and the mainstreaming of gender equality in and through education

In addition to an integrated gender approach across all of the strategy's objectives, France will take dedicated action to guarantee access to education for young and adolescent girls and better address their specific needs and obstacles.

Alongside support for a formal and non-formal supply of education mainstreaming the gender equality agenda, France will seek to lend impetus to long-term transformative change dynamics leveraging a number of measures, including support for feminist civil society.

In complementarity and consistency with its feminist foreign policy, France will target five areas of action.

Area of Action 1

Increase social demand for gender equality in and through education with support for feminist organizations and young feminist activists working for inclusive and quality education for young and adolescent girls.

Area of Action 2

Support leadership for female teachers and school supervisors who are influential role models for students.

Area of Action 3:

Promote access by young and adolescent girls to digital and scientific disciplines (STEM –science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

GENDER AT THE CENTRE INITIATIVE (GCI)

Launched during the French Presidency of the G7 in July 2019, the Gender at the Centre Initiative supports embedding gender in education policies and practices in eight countries across Sub-Saharan Africa. Coordinated by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), this multipartite partnership is an alliance of education ministries, civil society organizations, donors (European Commission, France, Germany, Italy and United Kingdom) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

Since 2019, over 1,000 actors in partner education ministries and civil society have been trained in gender-responsive education sector planning, and fourteen countries have resolved to achieve gender equality in and through education with the Freetown Manifesto for Gender Transformative Leadership in Education.

France will continue to support the initiative whose second phase is due to start in 2024.

Area of Action 4

Support research, pooling of knowledge and best practices, and multi-stakeholder dialogue regarding harmful gender norms to overcome barriers to education for young and adolescent girls.

Area of Action 5

Eliminate all forms of violence that hinder young and adolescent girls' education: support programmes to combat gender-based sexual violence against young and adolescent girls in all their diversity, ensure safe access to menstrual health to reduce school absenteeism among adolescent girls, etc.



SUPPORT FUND FOR FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS (FSOF)

Launched in 2020 and co-constructed with civil society, the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) supports feminist civil society organizations in partner countries of France's international solidarity and development policy. Funds target capacity building for CSOs promoting gender equality and women and girls' rights, especially in the seven identified priority areas:

- Sexual and reproductive health and rights and comprehensive sexuality education;
- Combating gender-based discrimination and violence;
- Empowerment of women and their participation in economic life;
- Social and political leadership for women;
- Access for girls to primary, secondary and higher education;
- The Women, Peace and Security Agenda;
- Gender and the climate.

The FSOF is designed as a tool to meet the needs of feminist organizations in all their diversity and advance their access to international financing. Under its first funding cycle (2020-2022), the FSOF raised €134 million in support for over 1,000 organizations in 73 countries.

As the leading French feminist foreign policy tool, the FSOF makes France the number one country funding feminist organizations worldwide. France announced the second FSOF funding cycle on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in 2023, with the aim of a €250 million budget for a five-year period (2023-2027).

Spotlight on the Feminist Solidarity Fund for Girls' Education programme

The programme furthers the education and empowerment of marginalized girls using local sustainable approaches supporting the activities of feminist CSOs working in this area. The programme has two tracks: i) CSO organizational capacity-building and facilitation of access to funding for their actions; and ii) access to data on gender norms in and through education and feminist CSO advocacy capacity-building. The programme is funded by AFD (€10 million for three years) and managed by an NGO consortium.

PRIORITY 4

Support education in emergencies and crises and the resilience of education systems

A mere 2% to 4% of humanitarian intervention funding is allocated to education. This is extremely low considering the growing needs associated with the multitude of crises and conflicts. Equitable access to inclusive, quality education remains a vital service in emergency situations. Education continuity helps maintain a semblance of “normality” and plays a role in a child’s physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection.

In complementarity with its humanitarian strategy, France will concentrate its action in two areas.

Area of Action 1

Support for planning and deployment of rapid educational response mechanisms in crises taking a multisector partnership approach to ensure the continuity of emergency, rehabilitation and development actions.

Pillar 1: Support education continuity to reduce the risks of exclusion, school dropouts and children out of school among learners most at risk by supporting the development and use of alternative teaching measures (via formal education and non-formal education in support of civil society) and providing assistance for teacher

capacity-building and upskilling to ensure education continuity. Education is a basic social service whose reactivation in emergencies contributes to crisis recovery. In association with humanitarian support actions, access to safe drinking water, hygiene and school meals are key to education continuity in emergencies.

Pillar 2: Take a holistic multi-actor approach in development and crisis situations to build inter-sector dialogue and bridges between educational services and the other basic services: child welfare and protection against violence (including sexual and gender-based violence), nutrition, physical and mental health, and psychosocial support (including for teachers in crisis situations).

KEY TERM

Resilience

The notion of resilience is associated with the concepts of fragility and capabilities. It is defined by the OECD as, “the ability of nations, communities or households to absorb shocks and recover from them, while positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change or uncertainty.”

Resilience-building as applied to development and crisis situations is based on:

1. A contextualized diagnostic assessment of the factors of fragility (cyclical and structural) and mitigation of the factors of fragility;
2. Building absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities (capitalization on experience).

Area of Action 2

Support for formal and non-formal education actors and assistance with building their capacities for crisis prevention (primarily by crisis-sensitive planning and budgeting) and for risk anticipation to mitigate impacts on the most vulnerable populations.

Pillar: Build the risk prevention, anticipation and management capacities of all education actors (teachers, educational staff, school management committees, etc.) at central and devolved level in liaison with government bodies.



Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

Launched in 2016 and hosted by UNICEF, Education Cannot Wait is the only multilateral fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises. Working in 45 countries, ECW was set up to position education as a major priority on the humanitarian agenda, to generate more funds for the sector, and to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus in education.

From 2018 to 2022, France allocated €10 million to ECW (€6 million for Lebanon and €4 million for the Sahel). **France reaffirmed its commitment to education in all contexts with its announcement of a contribution to ECW's current funding cycle** at the 78th UN General Assembly in 2023.



THE FRENCH REPUBLIC'S HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY (2023-2027)

Steered by the Crisis and Support Centre (CDCS), France's humanitarian strategy will contribute to the achievement of Priority 4 by embedding the following commitments in its humanitarian action:

- Child welfare and rights, including the right to education, as systematic cross-cutting priorities of the humanitarian response;
- Gradual increase in bilateral and multilateral funds to maintain access to inclusive, quality education in emergencies;
- Stronger advocacy at bilateral, multilateral and European levels stressing the importance of education in emergency response.

This strategy focuses on other priorities: promotion and defence of international humanitarian law, humanitarian response geared more to climate-induced and environmental crises; mainstreaming gender equality, women and girls' rights, food security, malnutrition and access to healthcare in the humanitarian response; new ways of working for French humanitarian aid and €1 billion in financing by 2025.

PRIORITY 5

Improve education system governance and funding

Considering that governments are the leading source of funds for education, efficient governance of education systems is a vital prerequisite to improve the quality, equity and resilience of education systems. Governance refers to education policymaking and how the education system is run, regulated and evaluated by the relevant institutions and bodies.

Area of Action 1

Support for efficient qualitative management of human resources and educational staff at central and devolved levels.

Pillar 1: Improve the quantitative and qualitative analysis of educational needs and related human resources planning.

Pillar 2: Support public policies on teacher recruitment (geographic coverage and renewal) and growing a pool of quality teachers by elevating their status (remuneration, recognition, and careers management and prospects).

Pillar 3: Support teacher initial and in-service training planning and management.

Area of Action 2

Assistance with improving the sector planning and governance of education systems by supporting capacity-building in planning for actors in central and decentralized education departments and authorities, assisting primarily with training in gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive sector planning.

Area of Action 3

Support to improve the management, planning, effectiveness and accounting of funds at central and deconcentrated levels.

Pillar 1: Support the transparent and efficient management of public finances for education needs and support interministerial dialogue between education ministries and finance ministries.

Pillar 2: Promote and build gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive budgeting capacities.

Pillar 3: Support the analysis and assessment of education needs for their inclusion and actioning in budget programming.

Pillar 4: Encourage the raising of public funds, particularly domestic, and additional private innovative financing complementary to current education finance,²⁰ while supporting the regulatory role of government in preventing the commodification of education.

20. MEAE (2023), Report “Mobilising Innovative Finance to Achieve SDG 4”, KOIS Advisory (diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/2023_innovative_finance_for_education_cle04ba7b.pdf)



PART 4

Implementing actors and resources



A coordinated Team France working for education

Action supported by comparative advantages

As a historical partner in education cooperation, France leverages:

- Its diplomatic network, as the number three network worldwide;
- The French education system, for targeted peer-to-peer dialogue;
- A multitude of expertise, particularly in teaching disciplines and educational methods, pre-primary education, initial and in-service teacher training, public policy evaluation and teaching-learning assessments by a data collection and statistical department, and catering for special needs (special educational needs and disabilities);
- The similarity between the French education system and partner countries' education systems, and expertise in the French language facilitating exchanges in the French-speaking world.

Institutional actors and their agencies

Team France refers to all French actors working in the field of education. The purpose of the Team France approach is to improve the readability, visibility, cooperation in and coordination of the French actions in support of common goals for education defined in this strategy. In addition to a common vision for education, the purpose is to have a shared methodological approach supportive of sustainable, impactful outcomes.

The Team France approach brings on board all stakeholders and supports the development of multi-actor collaborative arenas to guarantee the complementarity of expertise.

At the helm of France's international action, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs coordinates France's international strategy on basic education. It defines the strategic and policy priorities for cooperation in education, and contributes to the strategy's funding, implementation and accountability by deploying the diplomatic network (central administration, embassies, cooperation and cultural action services, cooperation and cultural action advisers, education cooperation attachés, permanent representations and delegations, etc.).

Under the joint oversight of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for the Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, the AFD Group implements the inclusive, sustainable investment policy in over 150 countries and overseas France. The AFD Group comprises the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the interministerial international technical cooperation agency Expertise France, and its private-sector financing subsidiary Proparco. The AFD Group works at education system level in a partnership approach aligned with national sector priorities and in capacity-building for local actors. AFD allocates an annual average of €500 million to the education sector, mainly in delegated funds from the Global Partnership for Education and the European Union.

The international technical experts (ITE) network coordinated by Expertise France is a key instrument for bilateral dialogue in education.

The Ministry for National Education and Youth, represented by its European and International Relations and Cooperation Department (DREIC), takes action in keeping with its policy for the French education system's internationalization and based on cooperation framework agreements with partner education ministries. It takes a peer dialogue approach to engage with its network of expertise (central and deconcentrated departments – IGESR, DGESCO, DNE, DGRH, DEPP, DJEPVA), regional education authorities and academic regions, the network of post-graduate institutes for primary and

secondary teacher and educational staff training (INSPE) and the Institute of Training for National Education Managerial and Administrative Staff (IH2EF). The ministry works with agencies including:

- **France Éducation internationale (FEI)**, which works in education cooperation, teaching of and in French, certification and qualification in French as a foreign language, international mobility (including the programme for language assistants and international recognition of qualifications) and certification in language skills;
- **The Canopé Network**, which provides lifelong training and professional development for teachers. It helps teachers take on board digital tools and the digital environment. It includes the Media and Information Literacy Centre (CLEMI) tasked with training in media and information literacy (MIL) throughout the French education system.
- **PIX**, the online platform open for everyone to assess, develop and certify their digital skills.

Also actively engaged in this work is the decentralized cooperation network and other ministries such as the ministries for higher education, research and innovation, the ecological transition and territorial cohesion, and agriculture and food sovereignty.

Civil society organizations

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in France and partner countries are key partners for the implementation of this strategy. They offer vital assets with their local knowledge, their approach to community engagement and cooperation with the populations, and their agility and responsiveness in difficult situations. CSOs are also able to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized populations and informal education systems that can escape major international donors' development policies. This ecosystem of CSOs also includes French education for global citizenship and international solidarity actors.

Academic, research, philanthropic and private-sector actors

The purpose of collaboration with universities and research bodies is manifold, but it is mainly to produce knowledge to inform educational policies and practices and to develop an aspirational vision identifying challenges and needs.

Foundations and private-sector actors make an active contribution to educational challenges by means of their expertise and their networks. They have flexible, innovative systems to be able to develop new solutions, raise additional funds and scale education projects in keeping with common values and objectives.



Support for education initiatives by civil society organizations

AFD's CSO Initiatives programme (I-OSC) (in French only) co-finances field projects spearheaded by recognized public-interest associations, unions and foundations, and supports CSO capacity-building in OECD DAC-eligible countries. In 2023, the education sector accounted for 24 I-OSC projects for a total of €25.84 million or 15.8% of I-OSC funds granted (€35.47 million or 22% if ECIS projects are added in).

A handbook on public grants for international solidarity has been published to guide CSOs²¹.

Spotlight on the Global Campaign for Education²² (GCE) and Coalition Éducation

The Global Campaign for Education provides a platform for over 100 national and regional education coalitions to unify and coordinate civil society voices with respect to the global education agenda. Coalition Éducation (in French only) voices the demands of its 22 French civil society NGOs and unions at French and European level, defends the right to inclusive, quality education for all, and contributes to the partnership between civil societies and public authorities.

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the AFD support and work with Coalition Éducation.

21. See *Le guide des subventions publiques pour la solidarité internationale*/ Guide for public grants for international solidarity (only in french)

22. campaignforeducation.org/en



EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE DIPLOMACY FOR THE PROMOTION AND DISSEMINATION OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE AND FRENCH EDUCATION ABROAD

The cooperation and cultural action services use education and language diplomacy to promote and disseminate the French language and French education abroad (FEA) in liaison with MEAE operators and in complementarity with the AFD Group's mandate to improve education systems for inclusive and equitable quality education.

Agency for French Education Abroad (AEFE)

Reporting to the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Agency for French Education Abroad is the agency in charge of coordinating the network of French schools abroad (French lycées and approved schools).

Its brief is twofold: i) Provide an education service for French nationals abroad, and ii) contribute to the reach of the French language and culture by educating foreign students in French education establishments abroad.

AEFE is the agency for the international development of the FEA strategy, a government priority. Following consultations in 2023, eleven priority countries were identified for the development of French education abroad: Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

As an instrument of soft power, the AEFE contributes to France's attractiveness in education.

At the start of the school year in September 2023, the network counted 139 countries and 580 schools, the list of which is set by joint annual order of the Minister for National Education and the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

In 2022, the AEFE opened 16 regional training institutes (RTI) to meet the training needs of network staff. The RTIs also develop training for teachers of and in French in local education systems, in particular LabelFrancEducation secondary schools.

The Institut Français and the Alliance Française network

Reporting to the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for Culture, the Institut Français has two main missions: to promote the French language and culture and to work for cultural diversity. **With a network of 93 establishments, the Institut Français promotes the teaching of French as a Foreign Language (FLE) and supports the training of teachers of and in French using digital training methods (IF Classe and IF Profs).** The Alliance Française network teaches 500,000 French language learners in 135 countries worldwide.



Education cooperation with multilateral actors

The French priorities are actioned in close collaboration with:

- The United Nations organizations working for education and childhood, and specialized UN institutions and entities: UNESCO, its bureaus and institutes (International Bureau of Education (IBE), International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) and UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the World Bank;
- The European Union in association with the European Commission (DG INTPA – DG ECHO) and the Global Education Network Europe (GENE);
- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- The regional development banks;
- Multilateral funds: Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait;
- Institutional Francophonie actors: International Organisation of La Francophonie, CONFEMEN, IFEF and AUF. This collaboration covers the entire education-training-employment continuum.

Spotlight on the [Global Partnership for Education \(GPE\)](#)

The Global Partnership for Education, established in 2002, is the largest multilateral fund solely dedicated to financing basic education in over 80 developing countries. GPE brings together all partners invested in education (partner countries, donor countries, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and foundations).

France is a historical GPE partner and the number three donor countries to the 2021-2025 period with a contribution of €333 million. It is actively engaged in GPE's governance bodies and is represented on the three standing committees.

The Agence Française de Développement is the leading bilateral representative entrusted with a sum of over €600 million to take action for national education systems on the ground.



UNESCO'S INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING (IIEP-UNESCO): SECTOR PLANNING FOR RESILIENT, INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION SYSTEMS

France is a traditional IIEP partner and one of the leading donors alongside Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Argentina. As a key player in the international education cooperation architecture, IIEP's mission is to strengthen the capacity of UNESCO Member States to design education policies and plan and manage their education systems.

The development of the education sector action plan and education policy budgeting can target a priority education sub-sector with gender-responsive, crisis-sensitive and disability-inclusive planning and budgeting.

Operational objectives

This section sets out the objectives, methods and means for the implementation of the strategy's priorities.

OBJECTIVE 1

Leverage bilateral, European and multilateral channels for the strategy's priorities

ACTIONS

- **ACTION 1:** strengthen policy, financial and programming commitments in support of the strategy's priorities.
- **ACTION 2:** Mainstream education agendas in strategic bilateral, European and multilateral dialogue.
- **ACTION 3:** Support capacity-building for local actors and promote exchanges of expertise.

METHODS

Diplomatic missions/Embassies

- **Mainstream education agendas in policy and strategic dialogue with partner countries and in action plans** (and, where appropriate, in Team France's single inclusive, sustainable investment strategy when CPD/CICID Goal 3 is one of the three priority goals chosen by the mission).
- **Action the strategy's priorities in keeping with local contexts, using available tools and channels including the Team France Fund (TFF).**
- **Assume the role of lead partner in education cooperation** in relevant geographic areas and Team France coordination and readability by means of local development councils.²³
- **Take bilateral action systematically seeking the complementarity, sustainability and continuity of Team France actions for education.**
- **Contribute to multi-stakeholder sector dialogue** with active participation in local education coordination bodies such as local education groups (LEGs)²⁴ in association with the operators.

23. The **local development councils** set up by the Programming Act of 4 August 2021 are chaired by ambassadors for the synergy and coordination of work by Team France actors in partner countries under a single strategy.

24. A **Local Education Group (LEG)** is defined in the GPE Charter as "a collaborative forum for education sector policy dialogue under government leadership, where the primary consultation on education sector development takes place between a government and its partners." LEGs of education sector partners (international organizations, civil society, donors, private sectors, teachers and philanthropy) contribute to the consistency and alignment of external financing with the educational priorities identified by the partner country.

Ministries (MEAE, MENJ and other ministries) and their operators

- **Deploy the raft of AFD Group financial instruments** (project and budget support, grants, loans, mixed grants/loans, delegation of funds from the GPE, the European Union and other donors, contribution to the Education Sector Pooled Fund, Debt Reduction and Development Contracts (C2D), etc.), in particular soft loans to support domestic investment in education.
- **Support capacity building (operational, steering, etc.) for local actors** at central and deconcentrated levels.
- **Leverage French and Francophone expertise in education** by teaming up local expertise with international technical experts (ITE).
- **Develop transfers of skills and knowledge and peer partnerships (inter-academic cooperation, for example, for the French education system's European and international outlook).**
- **Support education projects:**
 - i) **Using** the Fund for Innovation in Development (FID), the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) and the Emergency Humanitarian and Stabilization Fund (FUHS);

ii) **Through decentralized cooperation with French local government bodies** and the French Local Government Financing Facility (FICOL).

- **Encourage funding mechanism adaptability and flexibility** for rapid disbursements in the event of crises, in particular.

At multilateral level, in close liaison with the permanent representations

- **Operationalize the strategy's priorities with voluntary contributions to international organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO, etc.), budget allocations to multilateral funds (GPE and ECW), and European cooperation instruments (NDICI and Team Europe Initiatives).**
- **Contribute to strategic guidelines** on the governance bodies of multilateral funds and organizations.
- **Step up collaboration for education with institutional Francophonie actors** (OIF, AUF, IFEF, CONFEMEN, etc.).

FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC COMMITMENTS

France undertakes to:

→ Scale up its commitment in support of education in emergencies and crises with:

- A contribution to the Education Cannot Wait fund for the current funding cycle;
- Increase in the share of humanitarian aid earmarked for education in keeping with the guidelines of the French Republic's Humanitarian Strategy (2023-2027).

→ Take forward and develop the ambitions of the Plan for the French Language and Multilingualism in keeping with the strategy's priorities, including:

- €350 million per year in support for French-speaking education systems and flagship programmes including APPRENDRE;
- €4 million in funding for the 2024 assessment cycle for PASEC coordinated by CONFEMEN.

→ Maintain a leading strategic and financial role in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) by:

- Committing to uphold France's position among the leading contributors to the GPE for the coming financing period;
- Participating in the definition of strategic guidelines on the GPE's governance bodies in a partnership dynamic with the fund's members;
- Consolidating the partnership with AFD as GPE representative and partner and seeking leverage effects with France's bilateral commitments.

→ Maintain France's position among the leading providers of voluntary funding to UNESCO's Education Sector and institutes (IIEP-UNESCO and IBE).

→ Guarantee education for girls and gender equality in and through education as a common pillar of France's feminist foreign policy and international action in basic education.

France will maintain a leading financial and strategic role in the partnership for the Gender at the Centre Initiative and will contribute to the second phase of the GCI (2024-2026).

OBJECTIVE 2

Scale up international advocacy for education and its funding

ACTIONS

- **ACTION 1: Mainstream the strategy's priorities in bilateral, European and multilateral dialogue and international negotiating bodies and forums.**
- **ACTION 2: Support the raising of international funds for education and the reform of the global education aid architecture.**

METHODS

- **France will promote the pivotal role of education in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and crisis prevention.**

It will reaffirm key messages on the international stage, including the:

- Priority of a qualitative and quantitative response to the shortage of teachers by means of support for teacher training and elevating their status;
- Right to inclusive and equitable quality education in all contexts;

- Role of education in climate action and mainstreaming of education agendas in dialogue and negotiations on environmental and climate challenges in keeping with the principles of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE – Article 6 of the UNFCCC and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement);
 - Defence and promotion of the rights to education for girls in all contexts;
 - Protection of education, learners and educational staff from attack in keeping with the [Safe Schools Declaration and its Guidelines](#).
- **France will contribute to the reform of the global education aid architecture and will continue to actively participate in the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee and its working groups.**
 - **France undertakes to deploy innovative solutions and financing mechanisms for education in accordance with the Paris Declaration.**
 - **France will continue to encourage interministerial dialogue between finance and education ministries.**

OBJECTIVE 3

Scale up multi-stakeholder partnerships

ACTIONS

- **ACTION 1: Step up collaboration with civil society organizations.**
- **ACTION 2: Foster alliances and coalitions of stakeholders working for the strategy's priorities.**

METHODS

France will step up its partnership with civil society in the following areas:

- Collaboration in sector dialogue in education and support for the participation of civil society in key events on the Education Agenda wherever possible;
- Support for projects spearheaded by international, French and local civil society organizations, including youth associations and associations of young activists, working on the strategy's pillars through various channels (TFF, subsidy committees, CSI Initiatives, FSOF, etc.).

France will continue to support multinational and regional initiatives in education:

- In Team Europe, France will be fully engaged in the implementation of the Regional Teacher Initiative for Africa.
- As a member of the Greening Education Partnership coordinated by UNESCO, France will take forward the partnership dynamic in accordance with the commitments of the Declaration on the Common Agenda for Education and Climate Change adopted at COP28 in December 2023.

France will maintain close relations with countries with a feminist foreign policy and will engage in collaboration forums with like-minded countries in support of education for girls and gender equality in and through education.

France will actively promote the role of Paris as "World Education Capital" and, as such, will contribute to scaling up dialogue, collaboration and synergies between key partners in and outside of the education sector to work towards SDG4.

OBJECTIVE 4

Guarantee uptake of the education strategy by the French diplomatic network and coordination of Team France for its implementation

ACTIONS

- **ACTION 1: Scale up information and communication on the challenges in education.**
- **ACTION 2: Organize regular monitoring of the implementation of the education strategy.**

METHODS

The French network will be kept regularly informed of the latest developments in education and French positions, actions and financing in the sector.

An internal network dissemination and support methodology will be proposed to ensure:

1. Sound knowledge and shared understanding of the vision and challenges of France's education strategy;
2. Contextualization by the network of the French priorities, sharing of best practices and promotion of cooperation projects in the sector;
3. Uptake of the multilateral education issues to strengthen the connection and synergies with the bilateral track and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships.

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs will regularly monitor the implementation of the strategy by means of an accountability mechanism (steering committee, annual review, accountability framework and external evaluation) involving the different stakeholders in the sector (ministries, operators and CSOs).



PART 5

The monitoring and accountability mechanism



At the helm of France's international action, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs will monitor and implement this strategy with all the actors concerned.

The mechanism will comprise:

- An **annual steering committee** meeting to monitor the objectives and indicators and discuss achievements, difficulties and prospects to be developed.
A data collection tool will be set up to facilitate this monitoring and accountability exercise for actors contributing to the implementation of the strategy;
- **An accountability framework, which will be appended to the strategy;**
- **Thematic advisory committees, as required.** These multi-stakeholder consultative committees will operationalize and coordinate actions by theme, engaging with a wider range of actors as the subject requires (other ministries, academic and research players, multilateral partners, etc.)
- **A final evaluation** will be conducted in the last year of the implementation of the strategy.

Appendix

Acronyms and abbreviations

ACE	Action for Climate Empowerment
AEFE	Agency for French Education Abroad
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ANR	French National Research Agency
APPRENDRE	Support for the Professionalisation of Teaching Practices and the Development of Resources Programme
AU	African Union
AUF	Association of Francophone Universities
C2D	Debt Reduction and Development Contract (C2D)
CDCS	Crisis and Support Centre
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CICID	Interministerial Committee for International Co-operation and Development
CIRAD	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
CLD	Local development councils
CLEMI	Media and Information Literacy Centre
CONFEMEN	Conference of Ministers of Education of French-Speaking States and Governments
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPD	Presidential Development Council
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSE	Comprehensive sexuality education
CSO	Civil society organization
DEEP	Directorate for Assessment, Forward Planning and Performance
DG ECHO	European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG INTPA	European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DGESCO	Directorate-General for School Education
DGM	Directorate-General for Global Affairs
DGRH	Directorate-General for Human Resources
DJEPVA	Directorate for Young People, Community Education and the Voluntary Sector
DNE	Directorate for Digital Technology in Education

DREIC	European and International Relations and Cooperation Department
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECIS	Education for citizenship and international solidarity
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EF	Expertise France
ESD	Education for sustainable development
ETI	Expert technique international
EU	European Union
FEA	French Education Abroad
FEF	Fonds Equipe France
FEI	France Éducation International
FICOL	French Local Authorities Financing Facility
FID	Fund for Innovation in Development
FLE	French as a Foreign Language
FSOF	Support Fund for Feminist Organizations
FUHS	Emergency Humanitarian and Stabilization Fund
G20	Group of Twenty
GAP	Gender Action Plan (EU)
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GCI	Gender at the Centre Initiative
GDP	Gross domestic product
GENE	Global Education Network Europe
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HRBA/CRBA	Human rights-based approach/Child rights-based approach
IBE	International Bureau of Education
IFEF	Institute of the Francophonie for Education and Training
IGESR	General Inspectorate of Education, Sport and Research
IHE2F	Institute of Training for National Education Managerial and Administrative Staff
IIEP - UNESCO	UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning
INRAE	French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment
INSPE	Post-Graduate Institute for Primary and Secondary Teacher and Educational Staff Training
IRD	French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development

ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISI	Inclusive, sustainable investment
LEG	Local Education Group
LPDSLIM	Programming Act on Inclusive Development and Combating Global Inequalities
MEAE	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
MENJ	Ministry for National Education and Youth
MIL	Media and information literacy
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIF	International Organisation of La Francophonie
PASEC	CONFEMEN's Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems
PEA	Partnerships with African Higher Education
PPF	Paris Peace Forum
RTI	Regional training institutes
SCAC	Cooperation and Cultural Action Service
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TES	Transforming Education Summit
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
YAP	Youth Action Plan (EU)

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