

Summary

France's international strategy for a feminist foreign policy

2025-2030

KEY FIGURES ON GENDER INEQUALITIES AROUND THE WORLD

Around the world, **142 million women** of childbearing age **have no access to abortion in any circumstance**, and **193 million only have access to abortion if their life is in danger** (OECD Development Centre, 2023).

In 2022, more than **133 women were killed every day by an intimate partner or a member of their family** (UNODC¹ and UN Women, 2023). More than a quarter of the world's population believe it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife (UNDP², 2023).

Conflict-related sexual violence increased by 50% between 2022 and 2023, and 95% of the victims of such crime were women and girls (UN, 2024).

Climate disasters are not gender-neutral. **Women and children are 14 times more likely to die than men during natural disasters** (UNHCR³, 2022; CARE International, 2014).

Almost half of the global population believes that men make better political leaders than women, and **43%** believe that men make better business executives than women (UNDP, 2023).

1. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

2. United Nations Development Programme

3. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

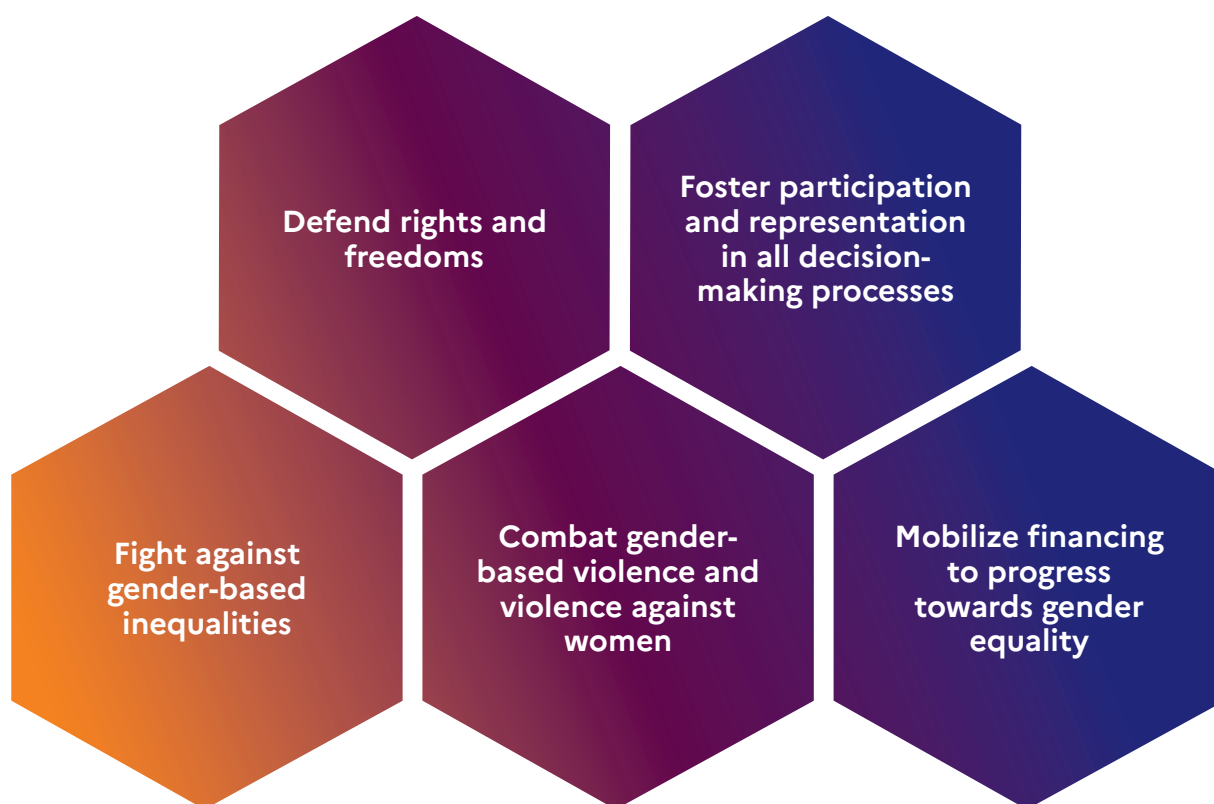
What is a feminist foreign policy?

A State that has adopted a feminist foreign policy places the rights of women and girls and gender equality at the centre of its foreign policy.

France makes it a priority in every field of its European and international action, such as peace and security, climate and the environment, development, democratic governance, human rights, humanitarian action, economic, financial and trade issues, digital technology, culture, education, health and food security. **All methods of diplomatic, bilateral and multilateral action**, as well as consular activities, are concerned.

France was the fourth country to adopt a feminist foreign policy in 2019, after Sweden, Canada and Luxembourg. Today, some 15 countries share this commitment while developing their own definitions and priorities.

The five pillars of France's feminist foreign policy



What initiatives has France rolled out since 2019 as part of its feminist foreign policy?

2019

Emblematic initiatives launched during the French Presidency of the G7:

- the **Global Survivors Fund**, launched by Dr Denis Mukwege and Ms Nadia Murad, 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winners;
- the African Development Bank's **Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA)** initiative to help women become entrepreneurs in Africa;
- the **Gender at the Centre Initiative** for girls' education and the inclusion of gender in and through education.

2020

Support Fund for Feminist Organizations launched, which strengthens more than 1,400 organizations in 75 countries, making France the leading country financing feminist organizations.

2021

Generation Equality Forum co-hosted with UN Women and Mexico - the biggest feminist gathering since the Beijing Conference in 1995, with \$40 billion in pledges to accelerate gender equality around the world.

Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security launched (2021-2025).

2022

Under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, negotiations resumed on:

- the **Women on Boards Directive**, adopted in 2022, which ensures at least 40% of board members are women;
- the **Pay Transparency Directive**, adopted in May 2023, which strengthens the principle of equal pay.

Voluntary contributions to UN Women tripled, meaning France is among the 15 leading contributing countries to that agency.

2023

Sexual and reproductive health and rights identified as a priority of feminist foreign policy, with the publication of France's second international strategy in this field (2023-2027).

Voluntary contributions to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) quadrupled, and financing continued for the Supplies Partnership for the procurement of contraceptives, to which France is the 3rd largest contributor.

2024

Creation of the Laboratory for Women's Rights Online. This is the first international platform for exchanging ideas and an incubator for projects to fight gender-based violence in the digital environment.

First resolution on the elimination of violence against women and girls in the digital environment adopted by the United Nations, put forward with the Netherlands.

KEY PROJECT FROM THE SUPPORT FUND FOR FEMINIST ORGANIZATIONS (FSOF)

The Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) was announced in 2019 by the President of the French Republic. It aims to support feminist civil society organizations (CSOs) working in France's development policy partner countries. As part of the Fund, France has supported multiple projects:

→ since 2021, the "Feminists for Climate and Environment Alternatives" project has helped more than 90 feminist organizations in 14 countries in Africa to amplify the impact of their solutions to support the ecological transition, the preservation of biodiversity and the sustainable management of natural resources. It spreads awareness among local public authorities about the rights and role of women in preserving the environment. Some 750 activists have already been trained on gender and climate issues.

→ the "Femmes, dignité, travail" (Women, Dignity, Work) project, implemented in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico, aims to transform the conditions and social perception of domestic labour so that it may be appreciated, paid a decent wage and protected. It provides practical support to associations and workers' unions, improving their knowledge of their rights and encouraging the creation of social businesses governed by themselves. To date, 200 domestic workers have received certification for their new skills, a regional labour union school has been set up with the participation of female leaders, and two social enterprises have been created by domestic workers.

→ the "Fighting gender-based violence" project, launched by the French Embassy in Ethiopia, has supported 20 organizations in the fight against gender-based violence in eight federal regions and the capital. It has contributed to the development of victim support services and training for social workers in refuge centres. Following this experience, in 2023 the Embassy launched a project to support feminist CSOs working to improve access to the justice system and prosecution for this violence.

LANDMARK COMMITMENTS FROM THE GENERATION EQUALITY FORUM

At the Generation Equality Forum in 2021, France committed to tangible progress.

For example, France announced its support to **ODAS Center** (Organization for Dialogue on Safe Abortion,) the first feminist institution in Francophone Africa dedicated to expanding access to safe abortion. The initiative operates in 12 countries of West Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Madagascar, in collaboration with regional champions and numerous technical partners.

A PROJECT SUPPORTED BY THE LABORATORY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS ONLINE

The Laboratory for Women's Rights Online is a platform for the discussion of ideas and a project incubator. It aims to prevent and fight against online and technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

In 2025, the Brain Builders Youth Development Initiative association, one of the winners of the call for projects, developed an AI-generated chatbot, in English and French. It will provide assistance, support and help to victims of online or technology-facilitated gender-based violence (cyber harassment, pornographic deep fakes, dissemination of personal data, unauthorized dissemination of intimate content, etc.). This tool will be available in Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon and Benin.

Why has France adopted a feminist foreign policy strategy?

According to UN Women, at the current rate, it will take **close to 300 years to achieve gender equality**, given the many challenges and difficultly attainable progress. **France must continue and step up its action on gender equality** amid a growing number of crises, a rise in anti-rights movements and wider-spread conservatism in all bodies. **It has set concrete and increasingly ambitious aims and has adopted an international strategy for a feminist foreign policy.**

Therefore, France's strategy for a feminist foreign policy (2025-2030) has new ambitions:

- the rights of women and girls, their freedoms and gender equality are advocated for and fully integrated into all areas of action, at every level of France's international and European action, without exception. The rights-based approach is reaffirmed and reinforced;
- new aims are set to address contemporary challenges: crises and conflicts, climate change, health, international finance and trade, digital technology and artificial intelligence.

This international strategy is in line with the measures of the nationwide **Interministerial Plan for Gender Equality (2023-2027)**.

How is the feminist foreign policy implemented?

Implementing a feminist foreign policy requires working differently. As a consequence, France is focusing on several innovative principles:

- enhanced commitment in partnerships at bilateral and multilateral levels, more extensive European ambition and robust dialogue on women's and girls' rights and gender equality with all countries;
- a participatory approach, built in collaboration with civil society;
- promotion of international expertise and research;

→ collective work, led by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs with other ministries, the diplomatic and consular network and French agencies, focusing on common priorities, positions and messages;

→ rigorous monitoring thanks to an accountability framework evaluated by an independent body, the High Council for Gender Equality.

Priority commitments of France's international strategy for a feminist foreign policy

- **Host the Fourth Feminist Foreign Policy Conference** and co-chair the Feminist Foreign Policy Group (FFP+) meeting in 2025.
- **Promote and defend sexual and reproductive health and rights**, including the right to safe abortion in multilateral bodies, and advocate for the inclusion of the right to abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
- **Strengthen the implementation of the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations.**
- **Deploy and reinforce the Feminist Francophone Alliance and the Francophone Network for Equality and Women's Rights** launched at the Francophonie Summit in 2024.
- **Promote girls' education and gender equality in and through education:**
 - fight gender-based violence and gender stereotypes at school, promote the leadership of girls, women teachers and educational staff, support the orientation of girls towards STEM sectors.
- **Focus on fighting violence against women and girls and gender-based violence:**
 - encourage the **universal adoption of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence**;
 - fight all forms of sexual violence, including conflict-related, and combat impunity of the perpetrators in cooperation with the International Criminal Court, particularly the **Trust Fund for Victims**, and the competent courts;
 - **strengthen the action of the diplomatic and consular network to ensure the protection of French nationals who are victims of violence abroad**, provide security to the victims, assist them in the steps they take and direct them to the appropriate services and structures, both locally and in France.

- **Support access to law and justice**, with legal assistance programmes, and work on the **effectiveness of women's right to vote** across the globe;

- **Improve women's participation in decision-making:**

- support the implementation of the recent General Recommendation 40 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which makes parity a norm for inclusive, peaceful and sustainable governance;
- call for the appointment of a high-level emissary to accelerate women's participation in political and decision-making spheres.

- **Ramp up commitment to gender equality in all multilateral bodies:**

- **support the implementation of projects** run by UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund, particularly in crisis zones;
- **put feminist foreign policy and girls' education at the core of France's presidency of the G7** and work in the G20 by re-engaging partners through the Gender at the Centre initiative created in 2019 under the French Presidency and in supporting the Global Partnership for Education's action to achieve gender equality in and through education.

- **Defend women's rights in the digital environment:**

- widen the scope of the Laboratory for Women's Rights Online: scale up projects contributing to the fight against online and technology-facilitated gender-based violence of the first edition and the following, and reinforce exchanges between States for a legislative framework for violence in the digital era;
- continue work begun for the AI Action Summit in February 2025: promote the statement calling for the consideration of gender equality in the artificial intelligence era, adopted by 12 countries, encourage the implementation of its recommendations and take steps to foster this in other States.

- **Strengthen the rights of women and girls in peace, security and humanitarian relief efforts** by launching the fourth National Action Plan 2026-2030 implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and by contributing to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, particularly its climate security programme.

- **Systematically take into account gender equality in bilateral and multilateral finance** to continue its integration in the political portion of French solidarity investment; today, all Team France projects must take gender into consideration in order to be validated by the Ministry.

- **Committing Team France for an ambitious feminist foreign policy:**

- strengthen the interministerial coordination of feminist foreign policy to make it more effective through the creation of a dedicated interministerial working group;

- implement the second Action Plan for Gender Equality in the Workplace (2024-2026) of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. Several measures are already effective:

- ensure the dissemination of the booklet entitled "J'attends un enfant" (I'm expecting a baby) to prepare Ministry workers in France and abroad for parenthood;

- continue to balance out the talent sources to achieve parity objectives within the Ministry;

- better take into account Ministry workers' health by ensuring their access to abortion even when they are abroad;

- ensure better treatment in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including when it comes to victims' private lives;

- make training courses on gender equality, the fight against gender stereotypes and sexual and gender-based violence mandatory for Ministry workers, and continue training courses on the priorities of feminist foreign policy and the consideration of gender in projects and financing.



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