

Public actors, integral to cooperation

French public expertise is a central element in the technical cooperation projects implemented by Expertise France. The agency's imminent incorporation into AFD Group will empower it to share this well-regarded expertise on an international scale.

Key expertise for development

Mobilizing public expertise is essential in helping partner countries strengthen their policies. To that end, Expertise France works in close association with French public institutions (ministries, local authorities, public bodies, etc.) to source short- or long-term experts. As part of Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the agency will be empowered as a platform for public expertise in the service of partner institutions.

Ministries, essential partners

Among public institutions, French ministries are prime partners for Expertise France, which harnesses their know-how in the technical cooperation projects it leads. As sources of expertise, the ministries are also associated with project design, which helps

to ensure that lessons learned from the public policy implemented in various sectors in France are taken into account.

Strong added value for States duties

Public expertise is particularly valuable in such key areas of State intervention as public finance, health, security and justice—in late 2020, Expertise France will absorb Justice Coopération Internationale (JCI), the current operator of the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, some projects deploy public personnel exclusively. This is the case, for example, with European institutional twinning projects, in which the European Union entrusts a Member State to support a neighbouring European State's administration with the strengthening of a given public policy area.

15
EU twinning
projects
currently
managed by
Expertise France



Exchanges with French public experts organized through the European programme Urbayiti are helping to bolster urban management in Haiti.

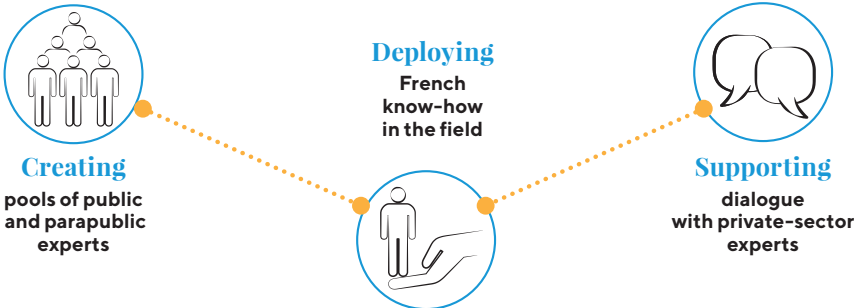
Fuelling the debate on development

Specialized in assembling complementary skills, Expertise France helps to advance dialogue between the public sector and other elements of society—the private sector, civil society and the realm of research. Notably, the agency organizes

the “Rendez-vous de l’Expertise”, discussion conferences on questions related to international technical cooperation and official development assistance. In 2019, six conferences were organized on subjects as varied as fighting pandemics, the link between entrepreneurship and stability in conflict zones, supporting innovation, maritime security, biodiversity and open government. [↻](#)

Highlighting know-how

Expertise France’s contribution to making the most of French public expertise



In step with the French *ministries*

“A relationship based on trust”



By **Adèle Liéber**, Deputy Director, Head of the International Relations Delegation, DGFIP, French Ministry of the Economy, Finance and the Recovery

Our work with Expertise France takes place as part of an agreement signed in 2017, which guides the distribution of roles between the two institutions. We combine our skills beginning with the design phase of technical cooperation projects and continuing throughout their implementation—the Public Finances Directorate General (DGFIP) deploys its specialized know-how in public finance, while Expertise France contributes its project management skills. Furthermore, we’ve charged the

agency with the administrative and financial management of all our European institutional twinings.

These complementary functions make it possible to work effectively on projects financed by France or the European Union. Thus, in 2019, we worked with Expertise France on 19 projects in core areas of public action, including mobilizing internal resources in Guinea, establishing a land register in Algeria, and undertaking budget and accounting management in Cambodia. In 2019, 18 DGFIP experts served as project leads and

“Sustained, high-quality dialogue”



By **Francesco Gaeta**, Director of European and International Affairs, French Ministry for the Ecological Transition

As part of the partnership agreement, which is in the process of being renewed, Expertise France is a major partner for both the French Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the French Ministry for Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Government. The partnership bears on objectives like implementing the Paris Agreement, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and advancing France’s international goals in high-stakes areas like preserving biodiversity, fighting climate change, developing a circular

economy, creating sustainable cities, and so on. In this context, the two ministries entrust Expertise France with the administrative and financial management of the European twinning projects they’ve been assigned. Since this instrument of influence was launched in 1998, there have been 40 or so twinning projects with very different countries, in terms of both their levels of development and the nature of their needs.

Sustained, high-quality dialogue with Expertise France makes it possible to reconcile the agency’s

168 were deployed on short-term missions.

Thus, over the years, we have developed a relationship based on trust and close proximity in the service of the countries where we operate. More broadly, this joint work is enabling us to pave the way toward new cooperation initiatives, in coordination with the other French actors in development. **A. L.**

priorities with those of our ministries. The latter boast a unique technical expertise network in ecological transition, particularly in the operators they oversee. The ministries thus encourage collaborative agreements between Expertise France and these operators to better mobilize French technical expertise on the international stage—an example being the convention between the agency and the French Office of Biodiversity or the French agency for ecological transition (ADEME). It's a positive experience in every way, one that deserves to be continued or even enhanced in the years to come. **F. G.**

“Supporting administrative reforms”

Expertise France is mandated by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs to oversee management of international technical experts (see page 11).

Having observed certain areas of dysfunction, the Democratic Republic of the Congo requested France to support reforms to its administration. My first mission is to support the reform of the Ministry for the Civil Service, which may, in turn, entail reforms in other administrative areas. That involves breaking down boundaries between internal structures, for example. My second mission consists of supporting the reorganization of the country's National School of Administration (through competitive exams, governance bodies, programmes and so on).

The overall objective is to make the administration more effective through more cohesive functioning and more efficient allocation of resources. To that end, the new file on administrative management of the state's civil personnel represents major progress. It will help streamline human resources management within the administrations. The resulting savings will create a little bit of breathing room in the state's budget. **N. B.**



*By **Nfamara Baldé**, technical expert and advisor to the Minister for the Civil Service in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*



INTERVIEW

Bringing French skills together”

As an important component of development aid, technical cooperation has changed greatly from its beginnings in the 18th century to today. As Expertise France celebrates its fifth anniversary in 2020, we look back at the broader dynamics that led to the agency’s founding in 2015.

When did French technical cooperation begin?

F.P. Technical cooperation is a longstanding activity that probably emerged with international trade. In France, some see its precursors in the work of personalities such as Diderot, Catherine II’s guest in Russia, or Voltaire, welcomed by Frederick II of Prussia, who put their skills at the service of high foreign officials. One revealing history is that of Auguste Pavie, who, in 1885, secured authorization to found a Cambodian school. In 1888, it was expanded to train French colonial administrators and became the *École Coloniale*. It would go on to serve as a model for training senior officials in French administration, which



With **François Pacquement**, in charge of *Historic and Strategic Reflexion* at *Agence Française de Développement (AFD)*

goes to show that sharing skills can transform us as well. As for modern technical cooperation, that seems to me to begin with the founding of international institutions, particularly

1889

To train senior officers, the Ministry of the Colonies founds the *École Coloniale*

1921

The Sarraut Plan envisions economic and social investments in the colonies

1941

General de Gaulle creates the *Caisse Centrale de la France Libre*, forerunner of AFD

1949

The UN codifies technical cooperation with the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance

1961

France is the first country to create a Ministry for Cooperation

the League of Nations (1919). However, most importantly, it was at the end of the Second World War that the first elements of the French system of cooperation were conceived.

How would you characterize the evolution of French technical cooperation since 1945?

F.P. Several periods stand out. First, from the 1960s to the 1980s, French policy regarding technical cooperation was established in a complex context featuring multiple actors—on the one hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Treasury; on the other, the Ministry of Cooperation, which brought grants and expertise to the table, and the Caisse Centrale, which granted loans.

From 1980 to 1998, this state of affairs was transformed through structural modifications, which involved shifting technical assistance to new kinds of professions and changes to the services France provided. Moreover, the globalization that accelerated at the end of the Cold War brought increased mobilization for a range of ministries, particularly to respond to the needs of countries in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as former USSR countries.

A third period began in 1999, an era of public reform in France. That entailed greater alignment between foreign affairs and cooperation, the beginning of skills transfers to operators and a revival for aid in general.

Together, this led to the creation of Expertise France.

What factors gradually led to the creation of Expertise France in 2015?

F.P. In 1998, ending surrogate cooperation was still an issue—the elimination of the Ministry of Cooperation was intended to establish a global approach to support efforts in development and international cooperation. One source of inspiration was the German model, with a technical assistance agency that was adapted to international needs and their dynamics.

Combining several operators into one agency was intended to bring together French skills, both private and public, to offer partner countries richer and better adapted expertise and boost France’s market share in global competition. The process mobilized several successive Interministerial Committees for International Cooperation and Development (CICID). One key step was the France Expertise Internationale (FEI) period from 2011 to 2015. Its start-up culture, practical effectiveness, versatility and agility played a crucial role in defining Expertise France as we

now know it. Today, the issue is to respond to the challenges of the 21st century, and especially to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. That begins with more cohesiveness, more synergy—that’s the page of our history we’re in the processes of writing now. [↗](#)

6
operators
merged in 2015
to create
Expertise France

1981

ADETEF, the international cooperation operator for the Ministries of Finance, Budget and Sustainable Development, is established

1996-1998

The French cooperation system is reorganized

2015

Expertise France is created following the merger of six international cooperation operators

2020

Justice Coopération Internationale joins Expertise France

2021

Expertise France joins AFD Group



INTERVIEW

A new dynamic with the French State”

The new objectives and means contract between the French State and Expertise France assigns the agency 16 objectives with corresponding indicators for 2020-2022. Anticipating enhanced financial resources, the incorporation of Justice Coopération Internationale (JCI) and closer alignment with Agence Française de Développement (AFD) in particular, this road map aims to consolidate Expertise France and multiply the effectiveness and impact of its efforts in the field.



With **Martin Fortes Delacroix**, *Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Expertise France*

What does the future have in store for the agency?

M. F. D. The 16 objectives that Expertise France has been assigned for 2020-2022 will lead us to a new, more balanced phase of development. The agency will be equipped with a clearer strategic framework, will conclude its reorganization and will be bolstered by a sustainable financial model and clear relationships with the State. In this rejuvenated context, it will welcome the JCI teams and join AFD Group in 2021.

In what ways does the objectives and means contract represent a new chapter in the agency's history?

M. F. D. Numerous challenges await Expertise France at a time when the international context continues to deteriorate, whether in regard to security, health, economics or climate. Furthermore, technical cooperation is integral to France's response to these issues. It teaches us to face these challenges together, challenges that are more than ever shared in common.

After five years devoted to organization and growth, Expertise France is now beginning the second chapter in its history. The new contract with the State marks a real turning point. It sets forth a renewed collective vision to establish Expertise France as an agency that can be more confident in its future and in its position within the French development system, which will be more visible both in France and abroad, and finally, which will be more robust and better structured.

What role does French public expertise occupy in these plans?

M. F. D. To be effective, Expertise France must align its actions with France's foreign policy, as defined by the Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) in February 2018, and achieve recognition as the international cooperation agency for all the ministries. To do that, the relationships with ministries whose expertise we draw on must be as close as possible. In this spirit, in 2021 we will be creating sector-specific committees that will involve ministries which provide expertise and their operators, in order to establish more in-depth and sustained dialogue on strategic and operational questions.

To sum up, I would say that our agency is entering into a new dynamic with the State, founded on mutual trust, as a way to confront development challenges together and to work to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. [🔗](#)

16
objectives
for 2020-2022

“Ready to innovate together”

With a few months to go before Expertise France joins AFD Group, we are ready—ready to welcome the teams, collaborate on even more projects, and innovate together.

The work of preparing this alignment, begun in 2018, is already bearing fruit and attests to the added value of “group action” in development. That’s been the case, for example, in the context of European efforts to support employment in

Burkina Faso. It’s been the case with adaptation to climate change through the Adapt’Action facility. And it’s the case today in the context of Team France’s response to the Covid-19 crisis. These very encouraging initial results reflect the growing demand for impactful action that has driven the integration of Expertise France into AFD Group. They illustrate our determination to offer development services that match the “*new ambition*” which the President of the Republic wishes to give to this policy area.

And that’s our goal: to “team up” to improve our projects’ impacts while gaining in efficiency, particularly by offering technical resources that complement the traditional financial offerings. Soon, AFD Group will be able to offer integrated approaches to encourage dialogue within public policy as a way to advance alignment on the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly by combining loans with technical assistance drawn from French know-how. In this regard, Expertise France stands as a tremendous gateway to French public expertise and a key resource for showcasing the solutions Team France can offer.

To achieve this, by 2022 we must structure a clear, consistent offer that will bring together all our group’s strengths. This important work in progress, which stands at the heart of our corporate mission, will be an opportunity to question how we can best deploy our broad repertoire of instruments in a new, expanded environment.

In the meantime, the Finance in Common Summit, which will be held on November 12, 2020, as part of the Paris Peace Forum, will be an unprecedented milestone. For the first time, all public development banks will be able to dialogue on the instruments they bring to the table, in order to take advantage of their full potential as a resource for climate and the Sustainable Development Goals. The European expertise agencies will play a critical role in this. In this effort, to bring about these goals, we are all working together. **R. R.**



By **Rémy Rioux**, Chief Executive Officer, Agence Française de Développement (AFD)