

Democracy
Empowerment
Cooperation
Rights
Sustainable development
Innovation
Opportunity
Gender
Agriculture

This commitment is also reflected in the decision to confirm Senegal as a priority intervention country. The initiatives covering the 2017-2020 period, in full thematic coherence with those of previous years, confirm as priority the following three sectors of intervention: agriculture and rural development, the private sector and human development with specific attention to education.

The activities and objectives of the programmes and projects of the Italian Cooperation are part of national development and poverty reduction strategies, aiming at their ownership by the partner countries. Assistance and technical support to the State structures of the sub-region are fundamental elements of Italian action, as well as the creation of partnerships and alliances with international agencies, civil society organizations, local authorities and new cooperation actors such as diaspora associations and the private sector.

 AGENZIA ITALIANA
PER LA COOPERAZIONE
ALLO SVILUPPO
DAKAR Office

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**THE ITALIAN COOPERATION
FOR AN INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT**


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For more than thirty years, the Italian Cooperation has supported West African countries in their efforts for a durable peace, the eradication of all forms of poverty and the economic and social emancipation of the most vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to women, young people and people with disabilities.

The presence of an office of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) in Dakar reflects the importance that Italy continues to attach to the development of Senegal, the center of democratic stability in West Africa. With a regional mandate, the AICS Dakar office is the center of programming, monitoring and coordination activities of interest to Senegal, Cape-Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and Sierra Leone.

In the current context of instability and crisis at the regional level, the Italian commitment reflects a broader strategy of the Italian Cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa to support the consolidation of democratic processes and the socio-economic well-being of populations.

Growth Development
Education
Peace Inclusion
Justice Rights
Empowerment



AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Italian Cooperation in West Africa has engaged since the 1980s in the areas of **agriculture, rural development** and **food security** given the importance of the primary sector in the economies of the countries of the sub-region and the very high level of poverty in rural areas.

The specificity of the environmental and socio-economic situations, very fragile due to climate changes, found in the AICS sectoral intervention countries led to the development of a strategy based on the following axes :

- contribute to food security through the intensification of ecological agriculture that will take into account adaptation to climate change and sustainable management of natural resources ;
- support small producers and their organizations in structuring value chains : from production to marketing, for a profitable, equitable, job-creating and opportunity-based agriculture with a focus on young people and women ;
- innovate the techniques of production and transformation of agribusiness through research and development, while respecting the environment and enhancing local knowledge.

This strategy is based on a rural development perspective that sees agriculture as strongly linked to local capacity building, gender equity, support for social services and decentralization. Efforts are concentrated on the development of rural areas including their communities, as well as the intensification of promising agricultural sectors namely rice growing, horticulture, seed production and the creation of mixed farms.



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The work of the Italian Cooperation in the sub-region supports the **human development** sector by intersecting essential variables such as the fight against poverty, the promotion of human rights, the strengthening of the offer of basic social services and the economic empowerment of young people and women.

An inclusive and **participatory approach** in the sector is adopted, in line with national policies.

As a fundamental component of human development, the Italian Cooperation recognizes **education** as a priority sector in its intervention by providing support to countries in the creation of inclusive education systems. Thus, it contributes to the improvement of the quality of learning to strengthen the schooling and retention of children in the school system, especially girls and children with disabilities.

With regard to the gender dimension, which represents a cross-cutting axis of Italian Cooperation, a twin-track approach is adopted by identifying, on the one hand, specific initiatives for the promotion of gender equality, the fight against violence, the socio-economic empowerment of women, and by ensuring, on the other hand, gender mainstreaming in any initiative promoted.

The actions put in place address different intervention plans, particularly at the political level, through support to the institutions for the elaboration, adoption, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and, at the same time, at the operational level through the creation of legal-judicial assistance services, the provision of training opportunities and local services.



PRIVATE SECTOR

In line with AICS' priority areas, the promotion of the private sector on the basis of the principles of free competition, respect for workers' rights and the protection of the environment is an integral part of the development strategy adopted by the regional office of AICS Senegal for West African countries.

The various initiatives being planned in the countries of competence to support entrepreneurial activities (micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in different typologies and forms of association) share the common vision that the private sector can contribute not only to the growth of **sustainable economy**, but also to the affirmation of democratic, participatory principles and the elimination of discrimination.

The intervention model adopted in the programmes and projects funded in the region proposes :

- **financial solutions adapted** as much as possible to the specific needs of micro and small enterprises (loans at subsidized rates, guarantee lines, equity investments, investment premiums, microcredit, leasing) and often promoted by marginalized groups (such as women and young people) ;
- **training** focused on the effective and sustainable management of entrepreneurial activities and the creation of skilled labour.

In this perspective, the strengthening of the private sector and its involvement in development policies contribute concretely to job creation, the promotion of the economic role of women and the fight against the causes of irregular migration.



MIGRATION

In accordance with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Dakar AICS office considers that the impact of migration on the development of the communities of origin is of fundamental importance.

Therefore, the commitment of AICS, through the implementation of regional interventions, adopting a multidisciplinary and multidimensional approach, aims at mitigating the root causes of irregular migration by implementing specific actions of **local development, creation of employment** and vocational training, as well as **resilience** and **protection** of the most vulnerable categories.

The aim is to deconstruct the myth of migration as a unique opportunity for success, highlighting examples of local success.

The programmes are accompanied by communication and awareness initiatives aimed at providing accurate information on the risks associated with irregular migration routes and an overview of concrete opportunities at the local level.

Our institutional partners in the different countries of the sub-region play a fundamental role in this process, alongside civil society organizations, international organizations, diaspora associations, local authorities and private actors.

In Senegal the action of AICS, in line with the National Development Plans and in a harmonized way with the main donors, has recently been reinforced by initiatives financed with the *European Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing root causes of irregular migration in Africa*.