

# STATEMENT BY THE PRACTITIONERS' NETWORK FOR EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (PN)

Ahead of the 4th International Conference on  
Financing for Development  
Sevilla, 29 June–3 July 2025

This statement represents the contribution of PN members to the FfD4 conference from an operational perspective. It draws on our experience as implementers to highlight what works—and where challenges remain—in translating priorities and commitments into practice at the country level.

## Key messages

**1. Tackling the funding challenge:** Pressure on public resources is growing, leading to a decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and increased competition for funding. The global community must urgently meet two challenges: first, to optimise constrained ODA for maximum strategic impact; and second, to expand financing beyond ODA through innovative partnerships and private capital mobilisation. Meeting these challenges requires enhanced technical and financial cooperation, supported by a mix of contextually relevant public-private instruments.

**2. Bridging the gap between policy, practice, and finance:** The Practitioners' Network offers a platform with the potential to better connect policy objectives, implementation experience, and financing frameworks. Building on PN members' proven ability to turn policy into practice and deliver real, on-the-ground impact, this bridging function is critical for working more efficiently together, across instruments and actors, and delivering coherent, end-to-end solutions that align with country priorities and global commitments.

**3. Promote strategic collaboration with European finance actors:** Stronger collaboration between PN, JEFIC, EDFI<sup>[1]</sup>, and others can unlock integrated solutions that mobilise resources, strengthen systems, and deliver inclusive, SDG-aligned outcomes. This model could be scaled and supported within the FfD framework, enhancing the impact of limited ODA while safeguarding humanitarian allocations.

**4. Leverage the unique value of executive development agencies:** PN members bring grounded, operational experience and trusted local partnerships. Their role is essential in

[1] Building on the statement of intent signed by EDFI, JEFIC and the PN in 2023

Translating finance into real impact, especially in fragile contexts and institution-building efforts. By providing technical cooperation, they help strengthen the enabling environment for effective international cooperation – across design, delivery, and financing – maximising development effectiveness and bridging technical and financial cooperation.

**5. Enhance EU international cooperation approaches to support FfD:** Improving the design and delivery of EU initiatives at global, regional, and country level – such as Global Gateway and Team Europe – can make a valuable contribution to the global Financing for Development agenda.

### **A dual collective challenge**

International cooperation faces a **dual collective challenge** that demands urgent and coordinated action. On the one hand, ODA remains a vital resource for addressing extreme poverty, inequality, and fragility. Yet, **ODA is increasingly constrained and must be deployed with strategic precision** – where it has the greatest catalytic potential, where it contributes to strengthening democratic governance, human rights, gender equality, and the rule of law, and where it can support the most marginalised.

On the other hand, **the scale of global needs far exceeds what ODA alone can deliver**. We must therefore expand and diversify financing for development by reinforcing the capacities of our partner countries to leverage their own resources, by mobilising private capital, by leveraging blended finance, and by forging new partnerships, aligning all these instruments and resources with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These two priorities – optimising ODA while mobilising private sector financing alongside building partnerships – are not competing. They are equal and interdependent enablers of sustainable development. The Financing for Development process must embrace both with equal ambition and urgency.

### **Connecting policy, practice, and finance**

The Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation (PN) brings together 25 European public-mandated international cooperation organisations. Since 2007, PN members have worked to enhance the impact of European development cooperation, while offering grounded, practitioner-informed insights into policy and programming. As a platform of implementers, the **PN helps bridge the gap between policy, practice, and financing** – by bringing field experience into strategic discussions and supporting better alignment between funding priorities and operational realities on the ground. PN members are the implementers of EU Member States' development policies and among the leading implementers of European external action, including through the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).

The EU's evolving development architecture offers valuable lessons for the global Financing for Development agenda. The Team Europe approach, Global Gateway strategy, and the integration of financial and technical cooperation under the NDICI **demonstrate the potential of coordinated, value-driven partnerships, based on mutual trust and shared interests**. To fully contribute to the Financing for Development agenda, these approaches must be further aligned with priorities emphasised by the Practitioners' Network, such as stronger partnerships based on policy dialogue, mutual benefits, and improved coordination

among actors at the global, regional and country level, and the strategic use of public sector expertise to strengthen institutions and policy systems that can support multiple investments.

PN members, with their long-standing local presence and trusted relationships, are well placed to support this effort and ensure that Team Europe, the Global Gateway strategy and its 360 approach – which aims to create an enabling environment for sustainable and quality investments by mobilising and combining diverse implementation modalities such as budgetary guarantees, blending, budget support, procurement, and grants, alongside technical expertise – to focus on sustainable and inclusive development and deliver on a scale and with legitimacy.

Realising this potential also requires a financing approach that is both ambitious and context sensitive. Technical cooperation must remain central to development finance, particularly in building the enabling environments that make investment viable, sustainable, and oriented towards shared priorities and development results. Bridging the gap between financial flows and harder-to-reach contexts often requires technical assistance, helping create conditions that enable local actors to engage with investment and contribute to longer-term outcomes.

Blended finance and guarantees should be used strategically to mobilise private capital, while continuing to complement grants and support for public systems. Ensuring a strong local presence is equally critical, so that financing is not only disbursed, but translated into meaningful, lasting impact in partner countries. The PN is committed to further connecting finance with delivery, and to ensure that resources reach where they are most needed and effective.

### **Strategic collaboration for greater impact**

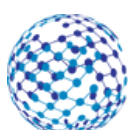
Looking ahead, the PN sees strong potential in fostering more systematic collaboration between policymakers, practitioners, and financing institutions – both within Europe and globally. The momentum toward multilateral reform and a more coherent, inclusive, and effective global financing system presents important opportunities. In this context, public implementers with development mandates, such as PN members, can play a strategic role in the design and implementation of financing solutions, drawing on their operational experience, trusted partnerships, and capacity to drive resources towards sustainable and inclusive development results.

The Practitioners' Network is committed to advancing the Financing for Development agenda through strategic collaboration with key partners. There is strong potential to deepen cooperation with European development finance actors such as JEFIC and EDFI, building on the statement of intent signed between the three networks in 2023.

By combining technical cooperation, public sector expertise, and investment capital, these partnerships can deliver integrated solutions that respond to the scale and complexity of today's development challenges. Such collaboration contributes to the FfD agenda by mobilising and aligning diverse financial flows, linking finance with development outcomes through coherent delivery models, and reinforcing long-term impact through sustained engagement and support for country-led priorities.

## THIS STATEMENT IS CARRIED BY THE SIGNATORIES BELOW:

### PN MEMBERS



**Practitioners' Network**  
for European Development Cooperation