



SOCIAL MISSION FRANCE

Toward a society free of poverty and exclusion

Over these past few years, France has suffered from a substantial increase in precariousness and in the number of homeless, plunging thousands of people into great social suffering. Poverty affects more and more families, single-parent families in particular, and having a job is not enough anymore to avoid poverty. There are between **4.6 and 8.6 million poor people in France**¹ - based on the adopted poverty threshold - and according to INSEE, there are about **3 million people with poor housing, including 133 000 homeless**.

Signs of poverty are increasing: food, clothes, housing, medical care, and education are more and more difficult to pay for. With the crisis, the rise in unemployment, the high cost of living, social inequalities increase the risks of insecurity, even for people who have a job. As for homeless people, emergency shelters are overburdened, and the number of temporary housing is inadequate. The sad thing is that people living on the streets get used to it in a few weeks, whereas the social support and the help with reintegration into society can take several years.

SUPPORT THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE TOWARD A SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL REINTEGRATION

In France, Secours Islamique France (SIF) solves these various issues with several plans of action: socially responsible grocery stores, night-time patrols, day centers for the homeless, emergency accommodation structures, housing, etc.



The economic crisis dramatically impacts citizens' everyday lives, notably the purchasing power. **Socially responsible grocery stores** allow a number of people suffering from precariousness and poverty, to access foodstuffs and personal care products **with prices representing 10% to 50% of their market value**. In addition, the recipients are given support **to realize a project or to pay off a debt** thanks to the money that is saved. Moreover, socially responsible grocery stores offer convivial and group activities such as educational workshops on food hygiene, health, money management, or knowledge exchange workshops, in order to favour social cohesion and human dimension, and to go beyond the «assistance for people» aspect.

The aim of SIF is above all to provide the excluded people with socio-educational support in order to favour exchanges and social cohesion, and thus, put an end to their isolation.

It is with this strong desire to break with isolation that **night-time patrols** were born. Since 2008, social teams have been going out to meet the homeless and the excluded in order to engage in dialogue and help them with **reintegration into society**. Throughout the year, three weekly rounds are performed thus allowing to build trustful relationships with these people in distress and develop regular exchanges. This helps them gain confidence and is an incentive for them to go the housing structures which can help them find **pragmatic and sustainable solutions** to their problems.

The SIF accommodation policy for the people in difficulty results in providing **emergency accommodation structures and reintegration housing**. In collaboration with social partners, the registered people receive thorough follow-up, supported by a team of social workers.

In parallel, every year, within the framework of the Winter Plan, SIF reinforces its actions to fight against social exclusion with an increased number of **patrols**, the distribution of winter survival kits, and the placement in emergency housing and shelters.

SIF also develops **seasonal actions** to provide the vulnerable and marginalized people (prisoners, migrants, students...) with food aid, by offering them food packages or meals **during Ramadhan or Eid Al Adha**.



[1] Source: Observatoire des inégalités

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