

8TH HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
Development Centre, 24-25 October 2022

POLICY STATEMENT ON FUTURE PERSPECTIVES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE



**Strong
Shared
Green**

Development We Can Do Together

On 24-25 October 2022, we the members of the Governing Board of the OECD Development Centre came together for our 8th High-Level Meeting. We took stock of the profound development challenges currently facing the world. Marking the Centre's 60th Anniversary, we reflected on the Centre's founding purpose and reaffirmed our core objectives for the years ahead.

We are motivated by the shared belief that an open and informed dialogue is essential to achieve sustainable development. We are a community of diverse countries facing common challenges. We value this diversity as a unique feature of the international architecture, promoting development in an interconnected world and helping the OECD address the profound global challenges we face today.

Significant challenges and opportunities on the path to sustainable development

Our world has been shaken by multiple crises. The COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the growing climate emergency have shown us how vulnerable we are on the path to sustainable development. Across continents, poverty and inequalities are rising.

Millions of citizens face hunger, poverty, discrimination and violence, with women and girls being particularly affected. Governments are struggling to cope with many, often interlinked risks: food shortages, disrupted energy markets, rising prices, economic slowdown, tightening financing conditions, disruption in global value chains, climate-induced natural disasters, corruption, insecurity as well as other economic and humanitarian challenges, including forced migration.

We note with great concern that inequality is rising, both between and within countries. For many years, the world appeared to be converging, with many countries turning globalisation into better lives and economic growth. Yet, we now know that these hard-fought development gains have not reached everyone. They have proven fragile and reversible. They have also proven unsustainable, placing great strains on the planet's natural resources.

Delivering on Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals has never looked so challenging. To achieve the SDGs, we must seize the opportunities provided in this time of transition, for example by the digital transformation and diversification of energy sources. At the global level, we need to redress, in a transparent and accountable manner, major systemic shortcomings in areas like climate change, trade, investment, debt and access to finance, fiscal sustainability, food security, and migration. Domestically, many countries face structural challenges, including lagging industrial development, high informality, limited social protection, widening inequalities, gender discrimination, corruption, digital gaps, inadequate access to finance and technology, low quality in education, and limited capacity for domestic resource mobilisation and progressive tax reforms. Yet, we know that making progress is urgent. As we noted at the [7th High-Level Meeting of our Governing Board \(2021\)](#), social discontent and polarisation are rising. There is a need to include and engage citizens for sustainable development and advance, internationally, a New Deal for Development.

The founding purpose and unique value of the OECD Development Centre at 60

In considering these development challenges, we revisit today our founding purpose, as set out by John F. Kennedy in May 1961, who proposed a Centre where citizens, officials, students and professionals from countries of all income levels could "meet to study in common the problems of economic development".

Our global economy, our policy priorities, and the language we use to describe development have changed immeasurably in 60 years. Yet, the Centre's role is more important than ever in addressing the needs of policy makers and the international community. Since its creation, through innovative tools and partnerships – regional outlooks, country reviews, policy dialogues – the Centre has enriched our understanding of the process of sustainable development and fostered the mutual engagement between OECD and countries of all income levels. This is why we need to reconfirm and further enhance its role as **"bridge builder"** recognising that global prosperity can only be achieved through effective multilateral co-operation.

The Centre **is a unique space for dialogue**. Since its establishment, it has contributed to OECD's outreach, through bringing together the knowledge and experience available in participating countries of both economic development and of the formulation and execution of general economic policies, as mentioned in its mandate.¹ It convenes a diversity of stakeholders on equal footing to share experiences, deepen their mutual understanding and find common ground. Its diverse membership, including both OECD and non-OECD countries, allows the Centre to serve as an **"honest broker"** in the search for new ideas and policy solutions. Its convening power allows the Centre to address complex and pressing sustainable development issues such as the just green transition, global value chains and the migration and development nexus.

The Centre conducts rigorous, independent analysis that cuts across sectors. Its policy advice is multi-dimensional and actionable, drawing on knowledge, data and practical experience from across the Centre's membership, the OECD and other international organisations. The Centre supports policy makers in making more **informed decisions that recognise underlying development issues** including informality and the root causes of gender inequality. Its analysis supports global discussions on issues like social protection, quality infrastructure and localisation of development.

The Centre is a **pathfinder** in development, anticipating and explaining major emerging trends. Its ground-breaking work on "shifting wealth" and "development in transition" have been crucial in **shaping the development agenda and facilitating global consensus**. It has helped policy makers adopt a multi-polar view of the global economy and look beyond mere income measures in understanding the development process and deciding on priorities for international co-operation.

We also emphasise the Centre's value for the OECD, taking careful note of the Vision Statement agreed by OECD Members at their 2021 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting: [Trust in Global Co-operation - The Vision for the OECD for the Next Decade](#). We welcome the OECD's ongoing engagement with countries beyond its membership and stand ready to help put this vision into practice.

We note that, since the 1990s, the Centre has led or enhanced the OECD's close collaboration with regional organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as embodied in joint flagship reports and ministerial-level fora. Partnerships such as these have helped the OECD build trust and share knowledge and values beyond its membership. They have also helped the OECD improve its work, by better integrating the rich experiences and understanding the crucial perspectives of non-OECD member countries.

Crucial instruments and approaches for policy makers and the international community

We agree that, to overcome the above challenges and realise the opportunities for greater prosperity everywhere, policy makers need more innovative and better designed tools and approaches:

1. We value more inclusive policy dialogue and knowledge sharing

Innovative ideas and the momentum for reforms can come when we bring together different perspectives and learn from one another. We need to bridge countries from different regions and income levels, from high-income countries to least-developed countries. We also need to consider the other factors that differentiate countries: our geographies, our sources of food and energy, our technologies and innovation capacities, our systems of production and consumption, our historical and cultural backgrounds, and our political systems. Further, we need to engage at different levels, connecting national, regional and international communities for more equitable, more inclusive, more resilient, and more sustainable societies and economies.

2. We need rigorous, independent analysis and policy advice

Development is a complex, multi-dimensional and non-linear process. Our policies need to be based on analysis that recognises the interaction between economic, social, environmental and cultural factors, understands institutional challenges, and cuts across policy sectors. We need evidence, measures and advice that are independent and can be tailored to specific national and local contexts.

3. We need strong and inclusive multilateralism and international co-operation

Our profound development challenges can only be solved and our ambitions realised through global collaboration, based on a shared understanding of priorities, roles and responsibilities. We need

1. Decision of the Council Establishing a Development Centre of the Organisation [C(62)144(Final)], Article 2; C(2002)181/REV2].

platforms and organisations that can identify what works and point the way forward in key areas including poverty reduction, governance, the rule of law, finance, just green transitions, technology transfer, trade and forced migration. We need an international space where we can explore and discuss complex issues and innovate together in pursuit of greater well-being and sustainable development.

Looking forward: a new commitment to a stronger Development Centre

In this important anniversary year, we celebrate the many achievements of the OECD Development Centre since its creation in 1962. We welcome the recommendations made to us by the [Group of Eminent Personalities](#). We note the issues discussed in the Key Issues Paper prepared for this 8th High-Level Meeting of the Governing Board (2022). We also highlight the agreed priorities in our 2023-2024 Programme of Work and Budget, with its focus on recovering from the crises, fostering transformation and just green transitions, promoting quality infrastructure investment, and advancing gender equality and more inclusive societies.

We consider the great challenges and opportunities that lie ahead on the path to sustainable development and recognise the evolving needs of today's policy makers, of the international community and the OECD.

In this regard, we the members of the Development Centre, endeavour to strengthen our Centre to ensure that it can:

- Continue delivering high-quality, independent analysis and targeted policy advice to its members and partners, ensuring it responds to members' priorities, addresses major sustainable development issues and responds to pressing emerging issues.
- Convene policy dialogue across countries, including with relevant state and non-state actors, reinforcing its role as an "honest broker" on the most pressing development challenges as identified through quality dialogue and active participation of members.
- Strengthen its role of development pathfinder, through a revitalised Governing Board, which promotes mutual understanding and identifies solutions on key globally-relevant issues that add value to the OECD and other multilateral efforts. To that effect, we will ensure that the Governing Board's new architecture and the Centre's work help us addressing our key priorities. We will organise and further engage in dedicated sessions of the Governing Board to exchange views on the most relevant themes, to strengthen its relevance for the OECD and non-OECD Members. We agree on the importance to ensure the Centre's accountability to the Governing Board through members' greater engagement and the Centre's regular reporting on its work.
- Consolidate and expand, in a balanced manner, its membership of countries of all income levels across regions, notably, but not exclusively, from OECD member countries, as an inclusive and strategic partner for the OECD and the international community.
- Deepen its engagement, communication and co-ordination with all parts of the OECD and further its outreach to non-member countries, in order to help enhance the OECD's relevance, global reach and understanding of development challenges.
- Ensure its long-term financial sustainability to deliver on its work including through the review of the Mechanisms Determining Assessed Contributions by Members.

Finally, we will follow up on the progress of these actions and promote the effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and impact of the Centre's work in the years ahead in order to ensure that it can continue delivering value to its members and partners and leaving no one behind on the path to sustainable development.