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odi.org

Five-year strategy

Harnessing the power of evidence and ideas





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Who we are

ODI is an independent, global think tank.

Our vision is a sustainable and peaceful world in which every person thrives.

We harness the power of evidence and ideas through research and partnership to confront challenges, develop solutions and create change.

Evidence. Ideas. Change.

Our values



Independence



High quality



Fairness, diversity and equality



Working together



Transparency and accountability



Sustainability

Responding to a changing world

Extraordinary gains have been made in the life span, literacy and food security of the world's poorest in recent decades. This progress was not inevitable. Nor is it irreversible.

We are also living in a time of rapidly changing technology, norms and power structures, affecting everything from the future of our planet to the food and energy we consume to how we access information and evidence. Geopolitically, we have arrived at a moment of deep uncertainty.

Many of the challenges facing the world – climate change, violent extremism, rising authoritarianism, financial instability, inequality, pandemics, the future of work – affect all countries, rich and poor. And complex global challenges require multifaceted and evidence-informed solutions.

ODI brings multiple perspectives, disciplines and tools to understanding these complex and interconnected problems. We work with a wide range of partners to collect robust evidence, find and test creative solutions, and engage with those who have the power to change policy, practice and approach.

What we do

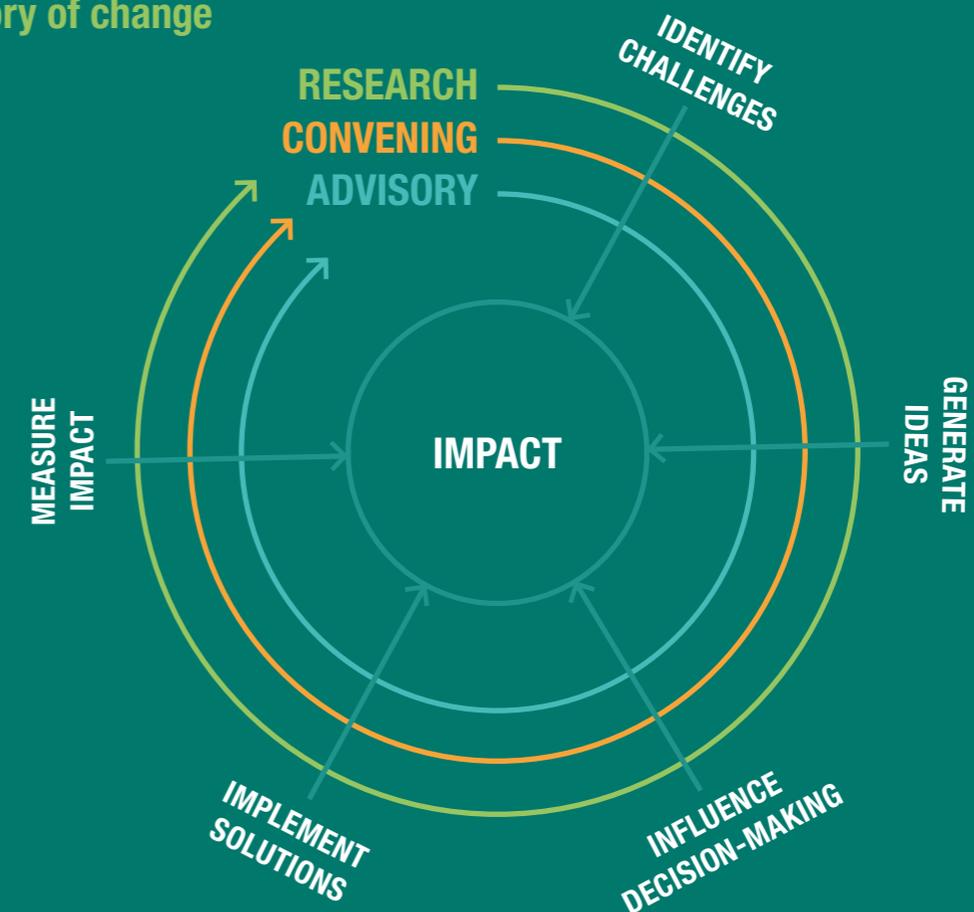
We undertake cutting-edge research and analysis to generate evidence, ideas and solutions.

We act as trusted, expert advisers to those making change around the world.

We bring people together to turn ideas into action.

We communicate our work around the world to increase its reach and impact.

Our theory of change



Guiding principles



Our **independence** is the cornerstone of our credibility. It allows us to develop fresh ideas, challenge orthodoxies and take the risks we need to succeed.



At a time when the world is faced with complex dilemmas, **innovation** will be essential to finding, testing and scaling bold ideas and solutions. We will be increasingly innovative in the ways in which we bring people together, communicate ideas and increase our influence.



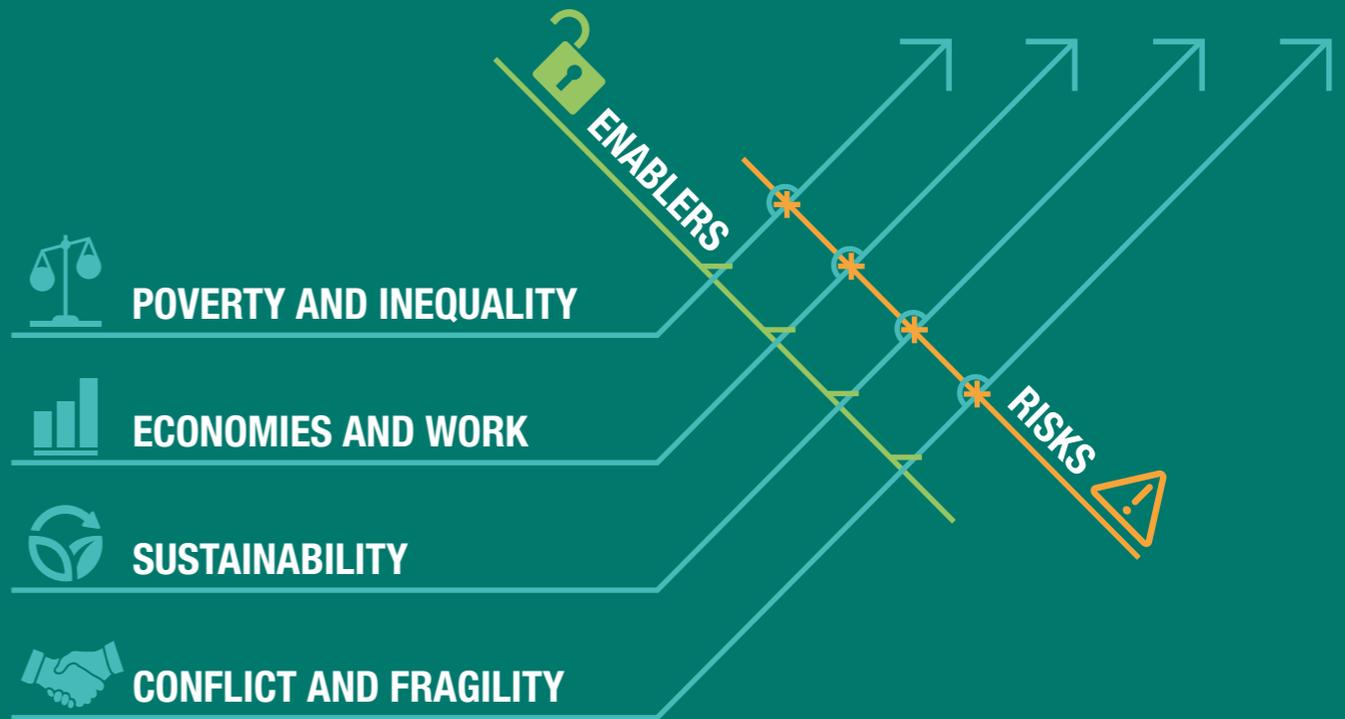
We are **a global** organisation, with staff, partners and ODI fellows in 50 countries around the world. The changes we seek require local knowledge, new relationships and perspectives, and credibility with decision-makers at both the national and international levels. We will therefore strive to broaden where we work in the world, as well deepen and strengthen our links with who we work with, especially at country level.



ODI exists to have real **impact** for those who need it most. This is at the centre of our thinking about what to do, where to go and how we measure our success.

Our work

Our work addresses four key global challenges, and explores the tools and approaches needed to enable progress and address risks. Our multidisciplinary approach combines research, advisory work, convening and communications.



Four challenges



Ending extreme poverty and reducing inequality

Progress in eliminating extreme poverty and reducing inequality is too slow if we hope to achieve the global commitments in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In some places, trends are going in the wrong direction. Our work has been at the forefront of understanding poverty, inequality and exclusion, identifying barriers to addressing these issues, and influencing research and policy agendas to accelerate progress. We are continuing to dig beneath data averages to uncover where inequalities are deepest, and to lead on defining and embedding ‘no one left behind’, with a focus on women and girls, disabled people and others experiencing persistent discrimination and displacement.

The impact we seek

- We will put the global commitment to end extreme poverty and address corrosive inequality at the top of international, national and subnational agendas.
- We will proactively influence policy and investment choices to prioritise the poorest and most marginalised people first, and will track and analyse the progress being made.
- We will bring together partners and data to galvanise action and accountability.



Transforming economies and the future of work

Current patterns of economic growth in high- and low-income countries are neither sufficiently sustainable and inclusive nor producing enough high-quality work – especially for women and young people. There is too little economic activity in fragile and conflict-affected states. These trends exacerbate disaffection, conflict and inequality, and limit resilience to economic shocks. Our analysis and policy advice inform and shape the debates, policies and institutions helping to transform economies and create more – and better quality – work for all. We work to understand trends and overcome constraints in political economy; the use of new technology; and gender, demographics and other dimensions of poverty and inequality. We will assess the impact of globalisation and the potential for innovation by operating between global trends and country-level policies and outcomes.

The impact we seek

- We will increase support to enable lower income and fragile countries to make decisions and attract investments that create inclusive and sustainable economic transformation and job creation.
- We will work closely with global institutions to impact rule-making and policy-making and create incentives for positive change.
- We will assess the dynamic impacts of demographics, migration, globalisation and technology on economies and societies.



Ensuring sustainable water, land, food and energy

As consumption of food, water, energy and other natural resources rise, the world is not on track to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate change or manage its finite resources sustainably. And those who are socially, economically, culturally or politically marginalised are affected first – and worst. ODI looks at the pressure points between poverty eradication and sustainable resource management and governance, examining data and technology, incentives and financing, and institutional innovation. We support governments, communities and industries to answer difficult questions, to ensure sustainable transitions in energy, land, agriculture, and water (and the connections between them) and address key challenges of poverty eradication, climate action and natural resource management.

The impact we seek

- We will bring together the development, humanitarian and climate communities to integrate sustainability approaches, and highlight the links between climate change and the lives of the poorest people.
- We will support governments, international organisations and the private sector to make decisions based on an enhanced understanding of future climate and resource trends and how to effectively manage and mitigate emerging risks.
- We will facilitate transitions in energy, water, food systems and land, and a shift to more sustainable and efficient production and consumption patterns.



Preventing conflict and violence and addressing fragility

As the duration and consequences of conflicts and violence increase and the international system falters, a just and lasting peace remains elusive for far too many. Our work seeks to understand and disrupt the drivers of conflict that kill, injure and displace millions every year. Engaging with our wide global network, we support a multitude of actors to develop coherent and comprehensive efforts to prevent and mitigate the impacts of crisis and fragility, and support states and their citizens to achieve long-term peace and stability.

The impact we seek

- We will identify and encourage operational and behavioural changes in the way that international actors understand conflict, and prevent and respond to crisis. This includes more devolved humanitarian action, where local response is genuinely valued, supported and enabled.
- We will develop new approaches to de-risk investments that support inclusive growth in fragile and conflict-affected countries.
- We will deepen understanding of the drivers of armed conflict and violence, including violent extremism, and will develop ideas and evidence to incentivise investments in prevention.

How progress happens: risks and enablers

Understanding *how* progress happens, and where we falter, is as important as understanding the challenges themselves. We identify, analyse and demonstrate the factors integral to securing and sustaining progress. These are key levers that enable the policy, practice, investment and accountability that change lives. We will build on ODI's pioneering work on 'doing development differently' and 'risk-informed development', concepts that are transforming global understanding and practice.

Managing and mitigating risks

The rate, frequency, intensity and nature of risks are rapidly changing. Interconnected global risks threaten progress in human development, and our world is not well positioned to understand, manage and mitigate them.

To develop meaningful policies and allocate resources, citizens and decision-makers must understand emerging and interdependent risks, opportunities and uncertainties. Understanding and acting on risk is a foundation for effective poverty reduction, development and humanitarian action. Risk-informed development pushes us to ground our actions in the problem: are we prepared for shocks and crises, and do we really understand them? How can we demonstrate that investing in prevention is both politically and economically the right choice? Are we focusing on the most appropriate solutions?

ODI is developing a robust, interdisciplinary platform that identifies new and emerging risks, develops evidence-based strategies to manage vulnerabilities and uncertainty, and provides decision-making support and options for policy-makers, donors and the private sector.

The impact we seek

- We will ensure decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society are better informed about how to identify and manage risks, trends and opportunities.
- We will foster collaboration between those working on climatic, conflict, pandemic and economic risks to identify joined-up approaches to addressing these challenges.
- We will identify opportunities, tools and partnerships to scale up investments that effectively prevent risks, build resilience and improve millions of lives.



Unlocking the enablers of progress

Politics, finance and technology ultimately define the shape and scale of progress. Understanding and unlocking these enablers is at the heart of ODI's approach to identifying what works, where and why.

Grounded in local contexts, our work supports policy-makers and practitioners to 'do development differently'. We achieve this by working with them to integrate evidence, foresight, citizen perspectives and learning into decision-making, and to adaptively manage their efforts. Politics and institutions set the agenda and pathways for long-term advancement, and our work will increase understanding of the political economy of change and how to strengthen the social contract through accountable and inclusive institutions.

At the same time rapid changes in technology are also having profound impacts. Our work on digitalisation, automation, access to finance and connectivity, and our new initiative on technology and development will move this critical agenda forward with diverse partners. We will remain at the forefront of the transformation in financing for development and humanitarian assistance, incorporating new partners, tools and approaches.

As an adaptive organisation, we will also continue to focus on emerging issues with great positive and disruptive potential, and support our partners to do likewise. We will increase our pioneering work examining how migration impacts the achievement of the SDGs.

The impact we seek

- We will help our partners to understand how innovations in finance and technology can scale up impact and citizen engagement, while mitigating the negative aspects of rapid disruption.
- We will support development actors at all levels to make decisions based on better evidence and increased understanding of institutions and politics, and to increase their effectiveness and accountability by adapting their strategies and implementation.
- We will provide an evidence base and collaborative platform to address both the challenges and the potential of migration and displacement.

A changing organisation for a changing world

ODI began its journey almost 60 years ago. The Cold War, decolonisation, the birth of development banks and agencies, the green revolution – all spurred the acute need for evidence and engagement about what was and wasn't working. Throughout its growth and evolution, ODI has stood as a key partner to those actors and institutions seeking progress and an end to the tyranny of poverty and conflict.

To deliver ODI's ambition, we will continue to evolve and ensure we are the partner of the future. These changes will be guided by this strategy's four overarching principles.

This also means commitment to living our values – to diversity and equality, to sustainability, to inclusion and transparency. Our people are our greatest asset and our success is testament to their hard work, entrepreneurial spirit, skill and dedication.

To achieve this we will set goals, take deliberate steps and measure the following:

- We will further enhance our inclusiveness and the diversity of our people and partners.
- We will reduce our gender pay gap to 5% in either direction.
- We will track our carbon footprint and make significant cuts on a clear path to carbon neutrality.
- We will ensure that all our publications and digital platforms meet a high standard of accessibility for disabled people and those with impairments.
- We will transition from using terms such as 'developing' and 'developed' that create false distinctions between countries, communities and the universal challenges we all face.

