

What is Development Finance International?

The Development Finance International (DFI) Group is a non-profit capacity-building, advocacy, advisory and research group which works with more than 80 governments, international organisations and civil society organisations worldwide. We help citizens and governments, especially in developing countries, to mobilise the maximum and best quality financing for their development, which will end poverty and fight inequality, and encourage international and donor organisations to support them in reaching these objectives.

Our subsidiary Debt Relief International (DRI) has worked with the same organisations for more than 25 years helping them to maximise their debt relief and to borrow and lend responsibly and sustainably, and to spend the proceeds of debt relief and new borrowing on reducing poverty and inequality. Independent evaluations have concluded that DRI had a major role in the conception and implementation of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries' and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiatives, and was directly responsible for helping developing countries to negotiate more than US\$100 billion of debt relief, and for adding more than US\$20 billion to the scale of the initiative by assisting countries to calculate their entitlement to relief, to demand changes to the design of the initiatives, and to negotiate the maximum amounts of relief from multilateral, Paris Club and non-OECD government creditors.

More recently, we have launched two major global joint initiatives with Oxfam and one with New Rules for Global Finance:

- In 2008, we launched the [Government Spending Watch](#) programme. This is the only global database tracking government spending on the SDGs in 82 countries and has become the “go to” location for transparent comparable and up-to-date (2016) data and analysis on government spending for a wide range of UN and multilateral organisations, CSOs and bilateral donors. It will shortly be expanded to cover 155 countries and updated for 2017 data. This programme has been run in a formal partnership with Oxfam, and supported by a wide range of other organisations including AHBN, GCE, Global Partnership for Education, IBP, ILO, Save the Children, SDSN, Water Aid, UNESCO, UNICEF and UN Women. It has produced three major global reports:

[2012](#) [the first in](#) helped
the IMF to change its policies on tracking government social spending; the
[second in 2013](#)
was a huge step forward in data publication and transparency on government spending; and
[the third in 2015](#)

had a major impact on focusing discussions in the Addis Ababa FFD conference on progressive taxation and spending to fight poverty and inequality.

- In 2012, we began to work with New Rules for Global Finance in preparing a biennial report on the governance and impact of multilateral organisations, the Global Financial Governance and Impact Report. The first two editions of this report focused mainly on governance and development impact respectively, and analysed the performance of the G20, Financial Stability Board and other financial regulatory organisations, IMF, World Bank, and organisations governing global tax policies. With additional support from the partnership of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung New York Office, the 2017 edition has concentrated on the impact of these organisations on inequality, with a more rigorous methodology and strong involvement of the organisations themselves. The two earlier reports are available on the New Rules website

[here](#)

and

[here](#)

, and the

[2017 report here](#)

- Since 2016, we have worked with Oxfam to produce the Commitment to Reducing Inequality database, index and report. This is a major new initiative ranking governments for their performance on fighting inequality through three types of policies: progressive government spending; progressive taxation; and progressive labour policies. The report has been pre-launched with small meetings at the IMF and the London School of Economics, and is being launched globally in New York, Barcelona, New Delhi and 7 other locations on July 17. The report, index and data are available on the [CRI page](#).

We work in three ways, through:

1. **Research and analysis.** Over the last 20 years, DFI has produced more than 300 analytical reports across a very wide range of development financing and government spending subjects, for more than 30 different funding institutions, and worked in partnership with research and analysis institutions and specialists from more than 50 countries, especially promoting direct South-South cooperation by providing Southern experts to help other developing countries. For more details, see the research and analysis pages of

[this website](#)

and of the

[Government Spending Watch website](#)

2. **Capacity-building.** DFI's core expertise has been in building capacity of governments, CSOs and other stakeholders to mobilise the best development financing and spend it more effectively on fighting poverty and inequality. Between 1996 and 2010, DFI ran two major global

capacity-building programmes, the HIPC Debt Strategy and Analysis Capacity-Building Programme and the Foreign Private Capital Strategy and Analysis Capacity-Building Programme, which helped more than 50 developing country governments to improve laws and institutions, and develop better strategies and analytical capacities, to mobilise the maximum debt relief and private capital. Independent evaluations and beneficiaries assessed these programmes as being highly successful in building deep, wide and sustainable capacity. They were decentralised to our regional partners in 2010, but we continue to be partners in the global capacity-building Debt Management Facility (DMF) run by the World Bank.

3. Advisory and advocacy Services. For 20 years DFI has helped to provide high-level policy advice on how to change global, regional and national policies to promote better development financing and ensure it is spent on fighting poverty and inequality. It also helps governments and CSOs to advocate change across the world. It has particularly specialised in creating coalitions, groupings and networks of the poorest and smallest countries to advocate to the larger and wealthier, notably having supported the African Committee of 10, African Development Bank, African Union, Commonwealth Finance Ministers, G24, HIPC Finance Ministers Network, OIF Network of IDA-Eligible Finance Ministers, UN Economic Commission for Africa and UEMOA to advocate positions to the G20, IMF, OECD, UN and World Bank as well as to major G7 and OECD governments.

What's different about Development Finance International?

- We have no conflict of interest. We never get involved in financing deals, and so are able to provide independent and unbiased advice, capacity-building, research and analysis, with our only aim being to maximise impact on fighting poverty and inequality
- We do not supplant our clients' staff, pushing them into subsidiary data-collecting roles or into the background. We build their capacity to do it for themselves and work ourselves out of a job as fast as possible, and let them take the credit for the work they do. We have done this successfully in 3 continents, handing our major global programmes over to regionally-led partners.
- We prioritise South-South cooperation, funding directly government officials, parliamentarians and CSO representatives (many of whom we have trained ourselves) to help similar countries, rather than importing less appropriate or relevant expertise from OECD countries. We draw from a database of more than 150 consultants, of whom more than 130 are Southern-based.
- We listen to Southern voices, especially from the smallest and poorest countries, and help them to force other much more powerful and richer organisations and governments to listen to them. Together, led by key Southern advocates.
- We always start from what a country or partner needs, never from a global model. One size never fits anyone, let alone all. We start everything from local context, and then consider global best practices.
- We never settle for second best. Our work depends on direct access to primary data and

local analysis, by the best qualified official and independent analysts, strictly quality controlled by a team of senior partners.

- We are committed to enhance transparency of global and national data, documents and analysis, and accountability of governments and multilateral organisations to parliaments, civil society and citizens.

What does DFI intend to do in the future?

DFI's mission continues to be to fight inequality and poverty with the maximum amount of highly effective finance. DFI will seek partnerships with any organisation which shares this goal and the principles stated above, to have the maximum impact on reducing inequality and poverty across the world.

DFI is determined to maximise policy actions and finance to fight inequality and poverty across the world. The SDGs have reaffirmed that eliminating poverty and achieving equality for women cannot be achieved without sharply cutting income and wealth inequality in each country. This needs to be a joint effort by [governments](#) , [international organisations](#) which advise them, [civil society](#) , and the [private sector](#), and DFI is helping all four groups.