



# DCED Global Seminar 2024

1-3 October 2024, Nairobi

## Participant feedback summary

### Introduction

The DCED Global Seminar 2024 was the biggest DCED Seminar so far, bringing together 180 participants from 45 countries across the three days; it was also the first Seminar explicitly designed to facilitate dialogue between donors and practitioners, with 40% of participants coming from donor agencies. In response to DCED member interests and trends in PSD, sessions were organised on seven thematic streams, making it the most ambitious DCED Seminar to date.

Themes covered include systemic approaches in practice, including sessions led by Gatsby Africa; employment and decent work; climate adaptation and environmental sustainability; innovative financing for systemic development; PSD in fragile and conflict-affected contexts; and effective donor-implementer relationships. In addition, every day featured an opportunity for small groups of participants to hold in-depth discussions on a technical topic of their choice in dedicated *Micro Clinics*.

About half of the audience (86) filled in the online feedback form shared in the final Seminar session.

### High-level-feedback

**All respondents indicated that the Seminar had fully or partially met their expectations** – with the vast majority (77%) indicating that the Seminar had fully met their expectations. 85% of respondents considered the quality of content as excellent or good overall, while 95% of respondents rated logistical arrangements and support as excellent or good.

### Most valued elements

**Asked about the sessions or elements of the Seminar that participants found particularly useful, several respondents commented on the value of the event overall;** plenaries and breakouts were respectively described as *'informative with good quality panellists'* and as *'deep-dive experience sharing'*. Respondents also appreciated that *'every session tried to identify barriers, solutions lessons learned, examples'* and that there was openness to *'share failures and unintended consequences'*.

**The list below indicates the most appreciated topics and elements of the Seminar (with a minimum of 5 votes each):**

1. The **Innovative Finance** sessions made up for the most popular stream overall (20 votes), with people commenting positively on individual sessions or the opportunity to connect with finance people overall. For example, one respondent noted that *"I loved the finance sessions. And the approach of bridging the gap. Excellent to bring all the different actors in the room."*
2. **Micro Clinics** were also highly appreciated (19 votes) as *"a great way to zoom into a topic of interest"*. Alongside break-out or smaller group discussions during the main programme, they were considered as particularly useful because they were *"more interactive and in-depth"* and provided a *"space to debate and discuss"*.
3. The **Climate Adaptation and Environmental Sustainability** stream was the third most popular one (16 votes). For example, one participant noted that *'the climate themes were particularly useful ... for sharpening thinking on gaps'*, while another one valued *'all the sessions on greening'* and the *opportunity for donor-implementer dialogue* on the topic. The break-out session on 'measuring green' was particularly popular (8 specific mentions).
4. Discussions on **donor-implementer relationships** – in particular the plenary session on the topic but also the opportunity for donor-implementer dialogue more broadly – was a much appreciated focus of the Seminar (**13 votes**).
5. The most popular individual session was Gatsby Africa's discussion on **'Are we ambitious enough? Being transformative rather than incremental'** (**12 votes**).
6. **The two sessions on PSD in fragile contexts** were highlighted by several participants as particularly insightful (**9 votes**).
7. **Systemic approaches for trade-related outcomes** was the most popular session under the 'Systemic approaches in practice' stream (**8 votes**).
8. The **Employment and Decent Work stream** also received specific praise (**8 votes**). For example, one participant remarked that *"the employment track was extremely useful"*.
9. **Breakout sessions and smaller groups for discussion in general** were much appreciated by participants (**8 votes**). While several people appreciated the plenary sessions role to inform, set the scene or present frameworks, as well as the *'good balance between plenaries and breakouts'* overall, many respondents particularly valued smaller group discussions for more interactive and in-depth technical discussions. For example, two participants highlighted that *"the breakout groups and micro-clinics were the most useful because they were more interactive and in depth"* and that *"facilitators did a great job in making the breakouts interactive"*.
10. **Time for networking during coffee breaks etc (7 votes)** – with some respondents noting that *'the most valuable aspect was the networking and the discussions sparked by the sessions'* and that they *'loved the networking opportunities - so valuable! It felt like the right mix of implementers and donors to really have good opportunities on both ends'*
11. **Opening plenary (5 votes)**

## **Aspects that could be improved**

**Participants were further asked if there were any aspects that could be improved and/or any additional content that they would have liked to have seen addressed.** While 13 respondents said that nothing could be improved, the most frequently mentioned suggestion was to **integrate more small-group and/or participatory and interactive formats into the programme** (20 votes).

### **Specific ideas on how to do that varied, including**

- organising more small breakout sessions and other small group conversations/ collaboration sessions (e.g. organised by regional interests or sectors)
- organising only one large plenary session per day/ a greater variety of formats with clear conclusions for different threads
- leaving more time for Q&A during plenary sessions/ reduce number of panelists
- using more innovative facilitation techniques
- including even more opportunities for networking, such as half a day of speed-dating or two evening receptions

A related point shared by 4 respondents was that it may have been beneficial to have a **lighter agenda/ less content overall**, with Day 2 in particular being considered too long.

While **Micro Clinics** as an interactive format were one of the most popular elements of the Seminar, 6 respondents also commented on the possible need for more structure and guidance, a narrower focus and vision for some of the groups.

**Another suggestion shared by 9 respondents was to expand participation and diversity** such as by including more voices from Africa, Asia and Latin America; featuring a greater variety of speakers to include more women, a greater variety of views, the private sector, beneficiaries, more donors outside the MSD space, and more field programmes. More dialogue with technical experts, such as on climate or humanitarian issues, was also suggested.

**Some participants commented on the balance between advanced and entry level content.** In particular, three people commented that the finance stream was too technical in parts and would have benefitted from more introduction for people not actively working in the space.

On the other hand, some respondents asked for **more in-depth content** on topics including

- government engagement and business environment reform (4);
- Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) (4);
- measuring systemic change (2) and examples of evidence (2)
- climate change and measuring green PSD (2);
- the role of global trends such as inflation, increased interest rates, decreasing donor funding and their implications for PSD (2); and
- MSD and employment (1).

## **Suggested next steps**

**Participants were asked what they would like to see happen as next steps following up on the Seminar.**

In terms of specific topics, **follow-up actions on Green PSD was the top priority among respondents (14 votes)**, in particular regarding the measurement of green PSD outcomes, finalising the global Theory of Change on Green PSD presented at the Seminar, and more general lessons learning on integrating climate change and just transition considerations into PSD design and implementation.

### **Several participants would also like to see more insights on**

- Donor-implementer relationships (3 votes), such as a DCED review on donor-implementer incentives and coordination, including to reach donors not familiar with MSD (2)
- Results measurement (3 votes), specifically on measuring as well as evaluating system change
- Finance (2), including on how to bridge the finance gap as well as green finance
- MSD in fragile contexts (2 votes)

**Continued networking, dialogue and knowledge sharing among participants or like-minded sub-groups** emerged as another priority (9 votes). **A variety of formats** was suggested, such as

- Written knowledge products (7) and regular communication through DCED/ BEAM (2)
- Smaller regional events and engagement with embassy/mission level (5)
- Webinars (3)
- Keeping the swapcard platform alive or otherwise building a continuous (online) community of practice (3)
- Databases (of MSD projects and of different interventions with associated measurement tools and guidelines) (2)

In this context, respondents would also specifically welcome follow-up to the **Micro Clinics** that they had been participating in (7 votes) – such as de-briefs, syntheses of outcomes, blog posts and continued exchanges. Some indicated that next steps had already been agreed within their group.

In terms of immediate follow-up actions, participants asked for a **brief summary of the outcomes of the Seminar and/ or links to all presentations and associated materials** (8 votes).

Four respondents recommended organising **another Global Seminar** in 2-3 years.

## **Selected quotes on the event**

*Well done DCED team. I have thoroughly enjoyed this seminar. Loved the calibre of people here. Loved the topics and the variety of types of workshops.*

*Keep it up. The momentum and energy coming out of this conference feels different than most.*



The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development



*Really exceeded my expectations. Best conference I've been to in a while*

*Thank you - great event!*

*Great networking. Good participants. Well run event. Good venue.*

*Very valuable for networking and for consolidating this active community of practice.*

*Well done team! Thank you for the good and open discussion climate*

*Great job, inspiring event! Keep up the good work!*

*Great job. The quality of participants was excellent!*

*Great job, thanks for the perfect organization and support upfront.*

*Great work, a lot of effort to bring it all together.*

*Let's have another Seminar again soon!*