

## Critical minerals: Learning from experience for more effective donor engagement

Friday 19 June 2026 half-day training

Side event to the DCED Global Seminar; held at the same venue

Register via the [online registration form](#)

Global efforts to realise climate goals, digital transformations and energy security are driving growing demand for critical minerals such as copper, lithium and rare earth elements. A significant proportion of known deposits for these minerals is in the global south which should create opportunities for partnerships with donor countries that deliver strategic benefits for both sides. However, for such partnerships to deliver maximum value for all participants, they should align with producer countries' development ambitions, reflect best practices for protecting human rights and the environment, and engage effectively with the private sector along value chains. While there is significant experience from previous 'resource booms' to draw on, successful examples of converting extractive resources into sustainable developments are rare. The current context of global strategic competition for access to critical minerals is further raising the stakes for producer governments, affected communities and the environment.

The DCED Secretariat and the OECD have jointly created a half-day workshop for participants in the Global Seminar to explore some of the key issues related to critical minerals and (private sector) development. It will be structured in four sessions.

**Session 1** will help to set the scene by explaining why certain minerals are considered critical, how producer countries are responding to growing global demand, some of the international initiatives that have been launched to ensure open and transparent markets, and collaborative efforts by public and private actors to establish secure and resilient value chains.

**Session 2** will consider the lessons from previous periods of high prices for mineral commodities and how these might inform development interventions related to critical minerals. It will explore the main 'transmitters' between mining and (economic) development, e.g., employment, local economic development, government revenues, multi-purpose infrastructure, and the essential 'enabling conditions' for the mining sector to deliver such benefits at scale. The discussion will touch on some of the negative consequences of poorly-managed mining sectors, e.g., corruption, conflict, damage to human rights and the environment, repression of civil society and activists, and explore what donors and other stakeholders can do to help guard against these risks.

**Session 3** will introduce participants to the most important global policy and standards frameworks – including voluntary sustainability standards promoted by industry – for responsible mining and

supply chains for critical minerals. It will consider what they are trying to achieve and how they work in practice to balance the interests of mineral producers and consumers. This will also be an opportunity to consider the role of standards in the context of growing global competition for access to critical minerals.

**Session 4** will explore how blended finance can help to incentivise private investment into the critical minerals value chain in emerging markets and developing economies. Development finance actors are increasingly focusing on value chains for critical minerals. They can address the risk-return profile of investments in the sector and bridge the investment gap by unlocking additional private capital flows through, e.g., great use of blended finance mechanisms. As more development finance institutions engage in the sector, there is an opportunity to draw lessons from emerging transactions and build scalable, replicable financing approaches. Doing so will be essential to secure resilient and responsible critical mineral supply chains, while supporting economic development in resource-rich countries.

**Session 5** will focus on the role of the artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector – on which millions of livelihoods depend in the global south - in critical mineral production and supply chains. It will explore ASM's very specific characteristics and how greater professionalisation of the sector can help improve incomes, working conditions and participation in global supply chains. The discussion will also draw on insights from previous sessions, e.g., how standard frameworks are working to enable sourcing from ASM production while managing the risks often associated with the sector, such as damages to the natural environment, illicit financing and the involvement of armed actors.

This workshop is aimed at DCED members and other practitioners who are looking for a high-level overview of the key development opportunities and challenges related to critical minerals. It will be structured with plenty of opportunities to discuss ideas and exchange experiences amongst participants with the explicit aim to encourage donor coordination and collaboration. Participation will be free of charge, however, since places are limited, we encourage early expressions of interest.

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