

Owen Barder

Career history

Years	Position	Achievements
2019 - 2024	Precision Development Chief Executive Officer Up to 250 staff across Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda, Singapore, South Africa, UK, US, and Vietnam. Also: Non-Executive Director, Social Finance (2019-2022) Schmidt Futures Innovation Fellow since 2022	Precision Development is a global social enterprise that uses technology, data, artificial intelligence, user-centred design, agile development and machine learning to improve the livelihood of people living in poverty by providing them directly with customised information to enable them to improve their livelihoods. Precision Development (PxD) was co-founded by Nobel laureate Michael Kremer. PxD has built systems that serve more than 10 million smallholder farmers living in extreme poverty. PxD has grown rapidly, and has built and improved systems serving 10 million smallholder farmers. It completed a successful Build, Operate and Transfer programme for the state government of Odisha now serving 7 million people; implemented private sector best practices for product development and management; built and rolled out a universal open-source technology platform. Organisationally, we have undertaken a major restructuring; established systems for career progression and professional development; set transparent and fair global salary standards; implemented new back-office systems for finance, HR and communications; and refreshed the Board.
2011 - 2019	Centre for Global Development in Europe CEO & Senior Fellow Built from scratch to 40 staff Budget of c. \$5m a year Visiting Professor in Practice at the LSE 2015-2021 Specialist Adviser to Select Committee on International Development 2016-2019 Senior Associate, Institute for Government 2011-2014 ONE Campaign Africa Advisory Board 2009-2019 Trustee of Publish What You Fund 2012-2016	Established the Centre for Global Development in Europe in 2011. Put in place legal structure, governance and funding for a successful, influential, sustainable, well-managed non-profit company and registered charity. I designed and delivered policy innovation in many areas, including co-chairing the Working Group that invented Development Impact Bonds to bring private capital to social problems; increased financial inclusion through smarter rules on anti-money laundering ; chairing the High Level Panel that led to globally accepted recommendations on improving and expanding humanitarian cash transfers ; promoted trade access for developing countries ; promoted insurance markets to improve government response to natural disasters . Represented the UK at the founding meeting of the Open Government Partnership . Raised funding from a variety of foundations, governments, companies and private donors. Built a culture of innovative, world-class data-driven research leading to real-world impact, in a vibrant, confident and diverse workplace with a start-up culture. Hosted popular Development Drums podcast.

2008 - 2011	<p>Development Initiatives</p> <p>Addis Ababa, Ethiopia</p> <p>Director of AidInfo</p>	<p>Created a new initiative which developed and implemented the International Aid Transparency Initiative, an international open data standard for development cooperation, enabling the public and private sectors to share financial information, geospatial data and activities, outputs and impact in the development sector. I coordinated policy objectives, technology and drafted the IATI standard. I built a new global consensus across governments, firms, international organisations and civil society on the importance of transparency and accountability of aid. IATI has been implemented worldwide by more than 1,500 government agencies, international organisations, NGOs and the private sector.</p>
2006 - 2008	<p>Department for International Development (DFID)</p> <p>London, UK</p> <p>Director of Global Development Effectiveness</p> <p>Director of International Finance and Development Effectiveness</p> <p>200 staff</p> <p>£2 billion a year budget</p>	<p>At DFID I was responsible for a wide range of policy and institutional partnerships, including measuring impact and results; relationships with the World Bank; regional development banks; CDC (now BII); global funds; development finance institutions; the IMF; debt relief; development topics at the G-8; the international development architecture; coordination with other donors; improving aid effectiveness; innovative financing; improving financial accountability in developing countries; statistics; and fighting corruption.</p> <p>Managed DFID relationships with other donors and with international organisations.</p> <p>Significant influence on the UK development agenda, including: greater use of evidence and quantified measures of impact; increased emphasis on growth, climate change and trade; and international measures to tackle corruption. I was the “IDA Deputy” responsible for the replenishment negotiations for the World Bank and other multilateral institutions.</p> <p>As a leader, I was top, or joint top, among DFID Directors, in annual staff surveys in measures of engagement, leadership and management. Mentored three members of the DFID scheme to accelerate career advancement for women professionals.</p>
2004 - 2006	<p>Center for Global Development</p> <p>Berkeley California</p> <p>Senior Programme Associate</p> <p>Also</p> <p>Visiting Scholar, Economics Department University of California, Berkeley 2004-2006</p>	<p>I led the design and implementation of the first Advance Market Commitment – creating the mechanism that is now a common part of the policy toolkit. Persuaded governments to implement the first AMC – for pneumococcal vaccines – and secured \$1.5bn of funding. The first vaccines financed by this programme were given to children in 2010, about 15 years faster than under previous financing mechanisms, saving 7 million lives by 2030. The same mechanism was used to accelerate development of vaccines against Covid-19.</p> <p>During this time, I also worked on technical assistance and knowledge sharing with developing countries, and published papers on the economics of pharmaceuticals, reforming foreign aid and the World Bank.</p>

<p>2002 - 2004</p>	<p>Department for International Development (DFID)</p> <p>London, UK</p> <p>Director of Information, Communication and Knowledge</p> <p>290 staff</p> <p>\$250m a year budget</p>	<p>Responsible for external communications and press relations; DFID's own information technology, systems and knowledge management; promoting development awareness in the UK; managing DFID relationships with NGOs and funding civil society organisations; office and information security; accommodation and office services; and promoting the role of knowledge sharing, information and communications in developing countries.</p> <p>Managed DFID information systems and budget, including a geographically distributed team of IT experts. Senior Responsible Officer for the project management system (still used in FCDO today). Managed human resources, budgeting and project management in IT.</p> <p>Member of the UN Secretary General's Task Force on Information and Communication Technology in Development.</p> <p>Led DFID's change management process to relocate policy posts from London to Scotland.</p>
<p>2000 - 2002</p>	<p>Department for International Development (DFID)</p> <p>London, UK</p> <p>Chief Economist for Africa & Head of Africa Policy Dept</p>	<p>Responsible for setting priorities & performance management for Africa; coordination with other donors; regional institutions; G-8 Africa Action Plan; HIV/AIDS; trade policy; the environment; reducing conflict and peacekeeping; and aid effectiveness.</p> <p>As chief economist for Africa in DFID, gave professional guidance, mentoring and support to the network of economists across Africa. Quality assurance of economic analysis.</p> <p>Led the introduction of a joined-up Government-wide fund for conflict reduction in Africa. Elected chair of the international Strategic Partnership for Africa, a group of African governments and donors.</p>
<p>1999 - 2000</p>	<p>Number 10 Downing Street</p> <p>Office of the Prime Minister, London, UK</p> <p>Private Secretary to the Prime Minister for Economic Affairs</p>	<p>Civil service role working for the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, reporting to Jeremy Heywood.</p> <p>Responsible for coordinating advice and decision-making on broad portfolio of domestic economic issues including: the economy, trade, industrial and competition policy, relationships with business, modernizing government, statistics, science, the information society and knowledge economy, the environment, education, employment, transport, culture, regional policy, and deregulation.</p> <p>Also responsible for managing the Prime Minister's Secretarial Unit (known as the Garden Rooms) and the Correspondence Unit.</p>
<p>1997 - 1999</p>	<p>South African Treasury</p> <p>Pretoria, South Africa</p> <p>Advisor to the Finance Minister on Medium Term Reform</p>	<p>Seconded to the South African Treasury to support the government of President Nelson Mandela.</p> <p>Developed the Treasury's strategy on budget reform, medium-term fiscal policy, and public sector management. Made a significant personal contribution to the reform of the Department's structures and policies, introduction of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, and a new system of local and provincial government finance.</p> <p>An independent evaluation of technical assistance in Africa in 2006 concluded that my individual work had "<i>made a significant contribution to South Africa's impressive macro-economic performance in recent years.</i>"</p>

1988 - Her Majesty's Treasury 1996 London, UK <i>Various positions, inc Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer</i>	Private Secretary to two Chancellors of the Exchequer (Norman Lamont then Kenneth Clarke). Over 8 years, I was variously working on public spending policy; the secretary to the Cabinet Committee on public spending; design of new framework for public expenditure management. Also international economic forecasting; domestic forecasting; labour market statistics and forecasting; and modelling of macroeconomic policy and medium term prospects. I managed the “modern office project” which introduced personal computers and email for all Treasury staff. Separately, in my spare time I set up and hand-coded the UK Government’s first ever website, as a result of which the UK was the first countries in the world to publish its budget online.
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Selected Publications

- **Making Markets for Vaccines**
with Ruth Levine and Michael Kremer, Center for Global Development (2004).
- **The Implications Of Complexity Of Development**
The Kapuściński Lecture (May 2012)
- **Government Cathedrals, Government Bazaars**
in *Capability, Capacity and Reform*, IBM (2006)
- **Payouts for Perils: Why Disaster Aid is Broken, And How Catastrophe Insurance Can Help To Fix It** with Theo Talbot (CGD Policy Paper 087) (2016)
- **Is Aid A Waste Of Money?**
Significance (the journal of the Royal Statistical Society), Vol 11, Issue 1, February 2014
- **Guarantees, Subsidies, Or Paying for Success? Choosing The Right Instrument To Catalyze Private Investment in Developing Countries**
with Theo Talbot (CGD Working Paper 402) (2015)
- **Advance Market Commitments: A Policy to Stimulate Investment in Vaccines for Neglected Diseases** with Michael Kremer and Heidi Williams
The Economists' Voice: Vol. 3: Issue 3, Article 1.
- **Reforming Development Assistance: Lessons From The UK Experience**
in *Security by Other Means*, Lael Brainard, (ed)., Brookings Institution Press and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (2006)
- **Doing Cash Differently: How Cash Transfers Can Transform Humanitarian Aid**
with the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Cash Transfers, chaired by Owen Barder (CGD & ODI report) (2015)
- **Beyond Planning: Markets and Networks for Better Aid**
CGD Working Paper 185 (2009)
- **Investing in Social Outcomes: Development Impact Bonds**
with Development Impact Bond Working Group, chaired by Owen Barder & Toby Eccles (2013)
- **SkyShares: Modelling the Economic Implications of a Future Global Emissions Budget** with Alex Evans and Alice Lépissier (CGD Policy Paper 067) (2015)
- **Promoting the Development Power of Economic Transparency** (Part of CGD’s White House and the World series) (2015)
- **Technology, Development, and the Post-2015 Settlement**
with Charles Kenny (CGD Policy Paper 063)
- **The Costs And Benefits Of Front-loading And Predictability In Aid: The Case Of Immunization**
with Ethan Yeh. CGD Working Paper No. 80, (2005).

Other Experience and Roles

- **Schmidt Futures Innovation Fellow** (since 2022)
- Visiting Professor of Practice, London School of Economics (2015 - 2021)
- Non-Executive Director, **Social Finance** (2019 - 2022)
- House of Commons International Development Committee Specialist Adviser (2016 - 2019)
- Fellow of the **Royal Society of Arts** (since 2019)
- Senior Associate, **Institute for Government** (2011-2014)
- **One World** - Non-executive Director (2000 - 2004)
- **Twaweza** - Advisory Group (2009 - 2012)
- **One Campaign** - Africa Policy Advisory Board (2009 - 2019)
- **Publish What You Fund** - Board Member & Trustee (2012 - 2016)

Educational Qualifications

- MSc (Economics) - London School of Economics (Distinction; highest overall marks in cohort).
- BA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics – New College, Oxford (First Class Honours).