



Investing in the SDGs: What role for institutional investors?

Objectives:

- To share experience and research on how effectively institutional investors are currently contributing to the SDGs.
- To initial thinking about what 'good investment' for sustainable development might look like and to draw on participants experience to shape the next phase of Christian Aid's research and advocacy.

Background information:

Governments and international institutions are increasingly emphasising private sector money as a means to plug the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) financing gap and in tackling climate change. Yet traditional measures of financial flows tell us very little about developmental impact and environmental and social governance (ESG) issues are not fully incorporated into many policies or practices of companies and institutional investors.

This workshop will focus on the role of private institutional investors. Drawing on Christian Aid's research into the norms and standards ("investment universes") that shape different intuitional investment practices, we will consider what, if anything, these can tell us anything about international capital markets readiness to contribute towards the SDGs and tackling climate change. Are any of the existing investment universes up to the task – and if so – what can we learn from them? Or is a different approach required?

The workshop will also draw on Both ENDS work in the Netherlands calling on pension funds to have more responsible investment practices. Both Ends is particularly concerned about the fact that many institutional investors remain heavily invested in the fossil fuel sector – one important factor standing in the way of more aggressive climate action.

A small number of institutional investors who have committed to aligning their investments in a way that helps climate change and contribute to the SDGs have been invited to contribute to our discussion.

Questions we hope to discuss with the audience include:

- What, in your experience, does 'good' institutional investment for sustainable development look like?
- What mechanisms are needed to incentivise institutional investors to make meaningful contributions towards the SDGs?

Format: 2-3 short presentations followed by facilitated audience discussion around a number of predetermined questions

Speakers:

Suzanne Ismail (Christian Aid)
Matti Kohonen (Christian Aid)
Danielle Hirsch (Both ENDS)
Moderator: Cindy Coltman (Both ENDS)

¹ <https://www.pggm.nl/wie-zijn-we/pers/Documents/Institutional-investment-into-the-Sustainable-Development-Goals-statement.pdf>

² <https://www.pggm.nl/english/what-we-think/Pages/Investing-in-UN-targets-with-return-on-investment.aspx>