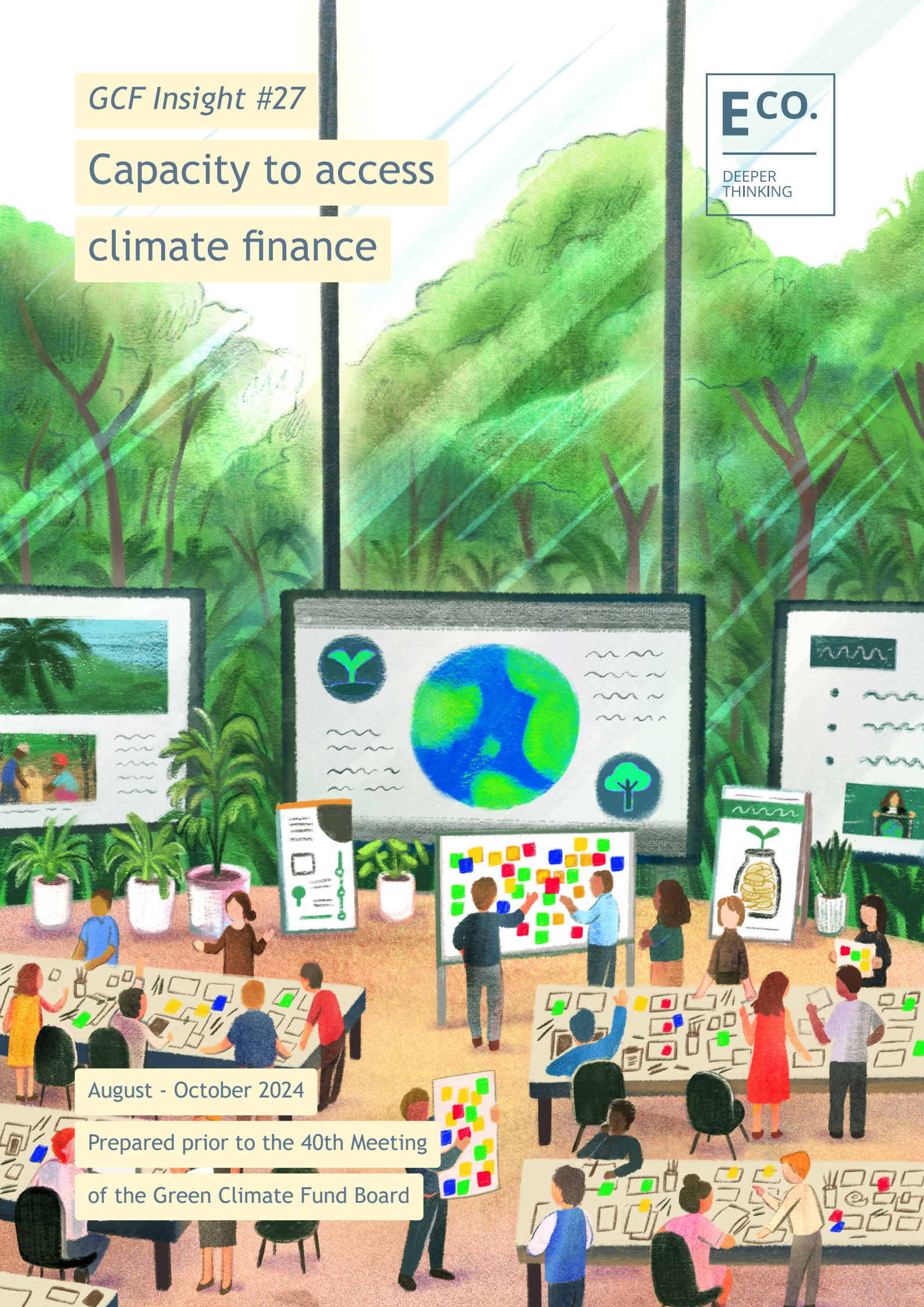


GCF Insight #27

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THINKING

Capacity to access climate finance



August - October 2024

Prepared prior to the 40th Meeting
of the Green Climate Fund Board

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About *GCF insight*

This survey and report is an initiative of E Co., and emerges from work we are doing to accelerate low-carbon climate-resilient development. E Co's team of consultants designed and administered the survey which was used to inform and prepare this report. We also conducted 16 interviews with survey respondents and others to get a more in-depth understanding of issues and solutions. E Co. conducted this research independently and is not affiliated with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the GCF Secretariat, or donors. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not represent those of the GCF. Nothing in the interviews or any information or material relating thereto shall be construed as implying any official endorsement of, or responsibility on, the part of the GCF.

E Co. provides consulting support to access climate finance from the GCF (and other funds and donors) across several service areas, including: market assessment, strategy formulation, policy development, monitoring and evaluation, fund support and training. However, we may be best known for our programme and project design services in response to the Fund's criteria and processes.

Capacity to access climate finance

The mobilisation and effective use of climate finance is crucial to address the impacts of climate change, particularly for the most vulnerable. While global climate finance flows have increased significantly, they remain insufficient to meet the urgent needs of addressing climate change. The Independent High-Level Expert Group on Climate Finance suggests that emerging markets and developing countries (excluding China) will require around USD 2.4 trillion annually by 2030 to meet climate and nature goals - four times current global investment levels.

The challenge extends beyond the flow of finance to the ability to access, absorb, and implement projects and programmes that deliver tangible and sustainable benefits for the most vulnerable. This report focuses on one of the greatest barriers to the effective use of climate finance: **capacity**.

The need for capacity building to address this barrier is undeniable, and recognised within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement as “fundamental”. There are many capacity building frameworks, but it is commonly acknowledged that capacity building needs to take place at three levels: systemic, institutional and individual as depicted by the UNFCCC (2024) - see Figure 1. At the individual level, it’s about empowering people with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to participate in climate solutions. This could involve training programmes on accessing climate finance, training for farmers on climate-resilient agriculture, or workshops for community leaders on accessing climate finance. Moving to the institutional level, we need to strengthen organisations and institutions, enabling them to adapt to change, promote cooperation, and effectively manage climate-related projects. This might involve ensuring National Designated Authorities (NDAs) have sufficient resources (leadership and people with knowledge, time, and funds), developing robust governance structures within a government ministry or enhancing the technical capabilities of a local not-for-profit or company. Finally, at the systemic level, capacity building focuses on creating an enabling environment for climate action. This could involve shaping national policies that incentivise sustainable practices or developing regulatory frameworks that support climate-resilient infrastructure.

‘Capacity building is fundamental to achieving the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement (Article 11) and has been identified as a priority in countries’ nationally determined contributions (NDCs).’ (UNFCCC)

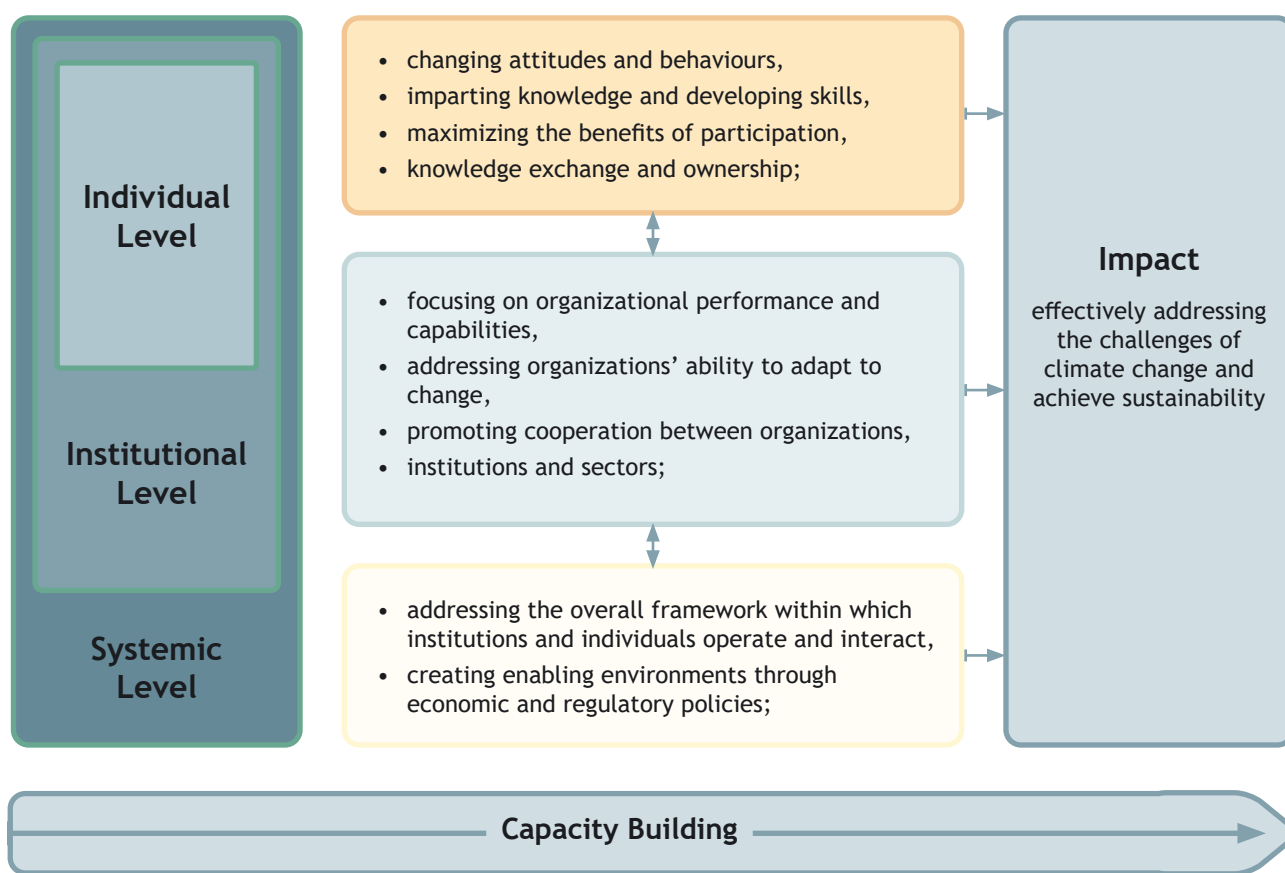


Figure 1: The three levels of capacity building to deliver impact (UNFCCC 2024).

This issue of *GCF insight* focuses on capacity building at the individual level. We must empower individuals with the skills and knowledge to effectively access and use climate finance. This will ensure that climate action translates into real progress on the ground, improving livelihoods and building resilience in communities.

This deficit extends to the absence of national accredited or implementing entities for various funds. Capacity building must be rooted in country ownership through individuals across national and local government agencies, sectoral organisations, companies, not-for-profit and community organisations, and local communities. This involves enhancing their understanding of climate change impacts and appropriate adaptation and mitigation practices and technologies.

Regional and international organisations are essential in supporting national entities and organisations. They often require their own capacity development while ensuring knowledge transfer to national stakeholders. Private sector consultancies and independent advisors play a role in supporting the development of project pipelines, but must also focus on building their own capacity, while ensuring the interventions they design and implement contribute to capacity building, and, crucially, retention through institutional memory where applicable.

It is important to recognise that capacity building extends beyond knowledge transfer and skill development to increasing the human resource base capable of addressing climate challenges. This is particularly critical for countries such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS), with small populations and low staffing levels in government positions. There is an opportunity to engage regional and international organisations to build relationships with national entities, fostering internal capacity without overburdening limited national resources.

To ensure long-term impact, we must consider how to retain valuable knowledge and skills within institutions. This can be achieved through robust knowledge management systems, mentoring programmes, and clear succession planning. However, recognising the dynamic nature of organisations and the inevitable turnover of personnel, ongoing capacity building is essential. When people leave, they often take valuable knowledge and experience with them, making sustained investment in training and development crucial for maintaining institutional strength and ensuring continuity in climate action.

The GCF's main tool for capacity building is the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. This is a dedicated capacity-building programme that provides financial and technical assistance to developing countries to help them access climate finance and implement climate change projects and programmes. The readiness programme is the largest capacity-building programme for climate action globally, having approved 693 readiness grants worth \$513 million for 142 countries as of April 2023.

The GCF's approach to capacity building is intended to be demand-driven and country-owned. It focuses on strengthening national institutions, enhancing national climate strategies, developing project pipelines, and promoting knowledge sharing. According to the 2024-2027 readiness strategy, the readiness programme is structured around three objectives: 1) capacity building for climate finance coordination and setting up the enabling environment; 2) paradigm-shifting GCF pipeline development and implementation for adaptation and mitigation, based on country needs; and 3) knowledge sharing and learning (GCF, 2023).

The GCF's approach to capacity building is also aligned with its strategic plan, which aims to promote a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways. The readiness programme supports this goal by helping countries develop and implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and Long-Term Strategies (LTSs).

Overall, the GCF's approach to capacity building is designed to be comprehensive and responsive to the needs of developing countries. It is an important part of the GCF's mission to help developing countries address the challenges of climate change. Along with the Project Preparation Facility (PPF), which provides funding for project preparation once a concept note has been developed, the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme ("Readiness Programme") aims to enhance the capacity of national stakeholders. Information about the PPF may be found here: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/ppf>

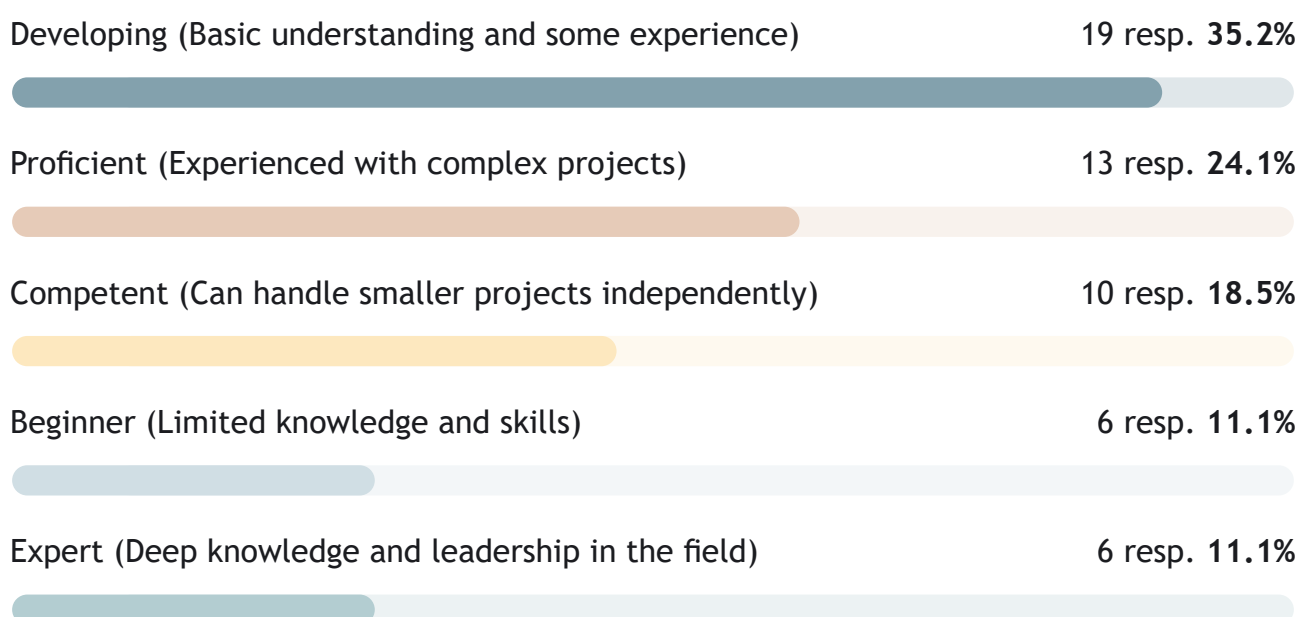
GCF also makes available guidance documents, such as the Programming Manual and the Sector Guides, and has a learning platform called iLearn which currently has nine free

online courses available. See <https://ilearn.greenclimate.fund/> for details.

Information about some other funds including the Adaptation Fund and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) can be found in a booklet entitled “Capacity-Building Resources for Accessing, Mobilising and Scaling up Climate Finance (UNFCCC PCCB-ICG, 2023): <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Climate%20Finance.pdf>.

Methodology

For our 27th edition of *GCF insight*, we asked the GCF stakeholder community their experience with capacity building for climate finance, and conducted a number of interviews to understand what is working and what is needed. We received 57 responses from a range of representatives: 20% implementing entities; 20% stakeholder organisation / cooperatives; 14.5% Direct Access Entities; 12.7% private sector; 9.1% board member; 7.3% central government agency; 7.3% International Accredited Entities, and 1 respondent from the GCF secretariat. The level of experience of respondents varied, with 35% having expert or proficient knowledge, 18% having ability to handle smaller projects, 35% having basic understanding and some experience, and 11% beginner.



Challenges of capacity building

General challenges

“On learning about climate finance: it’s a whole jungle out there.

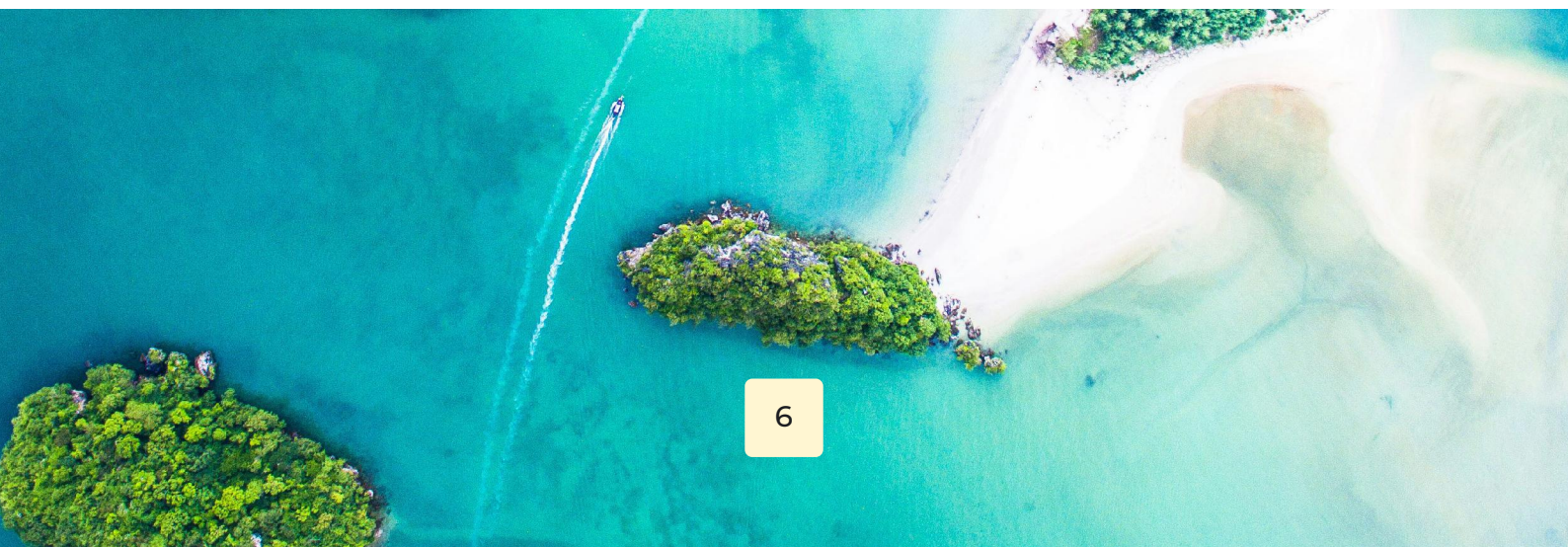
One has to work hard and look for learning resources”

Survey respondents identified the fragmentation of funding sources and varying requirements across funds and donors as key obstacles. This complexity is compounded by frequently changing access criteria and processes, which requires stakeholders to be aware of these and continuously update their knowledge and skills. Limited understanding of finance mechanisms that are complex makes designing attractive climate projects difficult. The lack of institutional capacity, inadequate in-house resources for training and personnel development, as well as high staff turnover, create persistent knowledge gaps.

“[...] knowing and doing are two different things. One needs to act,

to take action and do something about what one learns”

The main challenges identified by respondents to our survey can be summarised in the following broad categories. These challenges collectively contribute to inefficiencies in accessing and using climate finance, particularly for national organisations in developing countries.



Knowledge & information access

■ Fragmentation of funding sources

- The diverse requirements and conditions by different donors means that knowledge and capacity needs to be built for all of the potential funding sources for different projects in order to align the pipeline to the right source
- The climate finance landscape includes a wide array of options, such as bilateral donors, philanthropic organisations, and major climate funds. The challenge lies in developing the capacity to integrate these diverse options into cohesive solutions, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of climate finance.
- Navigating the multitude of funding options is a complex task. Gaining a clear understanding of all available resources without extensive research or networking makes it difficult for project developers to identify and access appropriate funding sources efficiently

■ Changing requirements to access finance

- Processes and procedures frequently change across the climate finance landscape. This requires ongoing capacity building and knowledge sharing, as one-time training sessions are insufficient to keep pace with evolving requirements.

Data needs and requirements for climate risks, vulnerabilities, and financing opportunities are continually evolving. This constant change adds another layer of complexity to the already challenging field of climate finance. Navigating these evolving data requirements can be particularly difficult in regions with underdeveloped data infrastructure.

■ Accessibility of resources and information

- Although some resources and information are available, professionals often face difficulties in accessing the knowledge necessary to design projects, write proposals, and stay current with the latest developments and trends in climate finance.
- It was noted by a respondent that some countries have fewer opportunities for capacity building, including being able to access resources and information.
- A number of respondents mentioned the need for certified climate finance resources, some emphasising that this should be free.

■ Complexity

- Fundamentally the topic of climate finance is complex, even for professionals working in the space. There can be confusion in terminology, differences in views about the best ways of designing projects and financial mechanisms, or demonstrating cost effectiveness.
- The application process for climate finance funding is complex and time-consuming, requiring both expertise and significant resources. Developing this expertise is not instantaneous; rather, it requires sustained investment in human capital. Organisations must commit to long-term capacity building, recognising that proficiency develops gradually through continuous learning and practical experience.

Cost

■ Access and support

- For many developing countries, having a stable internet for any online forms of training or information sharing is needed for learning to be effective. Even with unstable internet access, the cost for connecting is high. One interviewee we spoke to emphasised that he downloads content when visiting the capital to reduce the costs.
- There is a financial cost to investing in building capacity; for individuals and for organisations. Funding for training and personnel to carry out the work from the capacity building is not just an overhead, it is essential to building capacity.

Institutional

■ One size does not fit all

- Some respondents noted that capacity building for Brazil looks very different to capacity building for Tuvalu, due to the unique needs, and structures of government and stakeholders.

- Knowledge portals or training modules are only as effective as the individuals in roles where they have time to use them.

■ Low institutional capacity

- While our survey and interviews focused on individual capacity building, respondents noted that it is not only people without capacity, but the institutions in which people sit. Capacity that resides in institutions across the climate finance stakeholder landscape is essential for long term sustainability of that knowledge and wisdom.
- Accredited Entities play an important role for the mobilisation, absorption and delivery of climate finance in real tangible projects and need to be supported to build their own sustaining capacity. Capacity is not a one-off **initiative**, but something that needs to be sustained in the long-term.
- It is not only the capacity to navigate the climate fund, but also the additional layers of requirements from international organisations who may be involved in the project either as Accredited Entities or co-financiers. These add their own capacity burden.

■ Lack of spaces for conversation across the spectrum of national stakeholders

- It is not only governmental entities and Accredited Entities that need capacity building. Real national capacity building comes from both bottom up and top down simultaneously, whilst supporting a dialogue between the two. Interventions and actions to address the climate crisis need to come from the communities and localities, with the backing and national drive of decision makers.

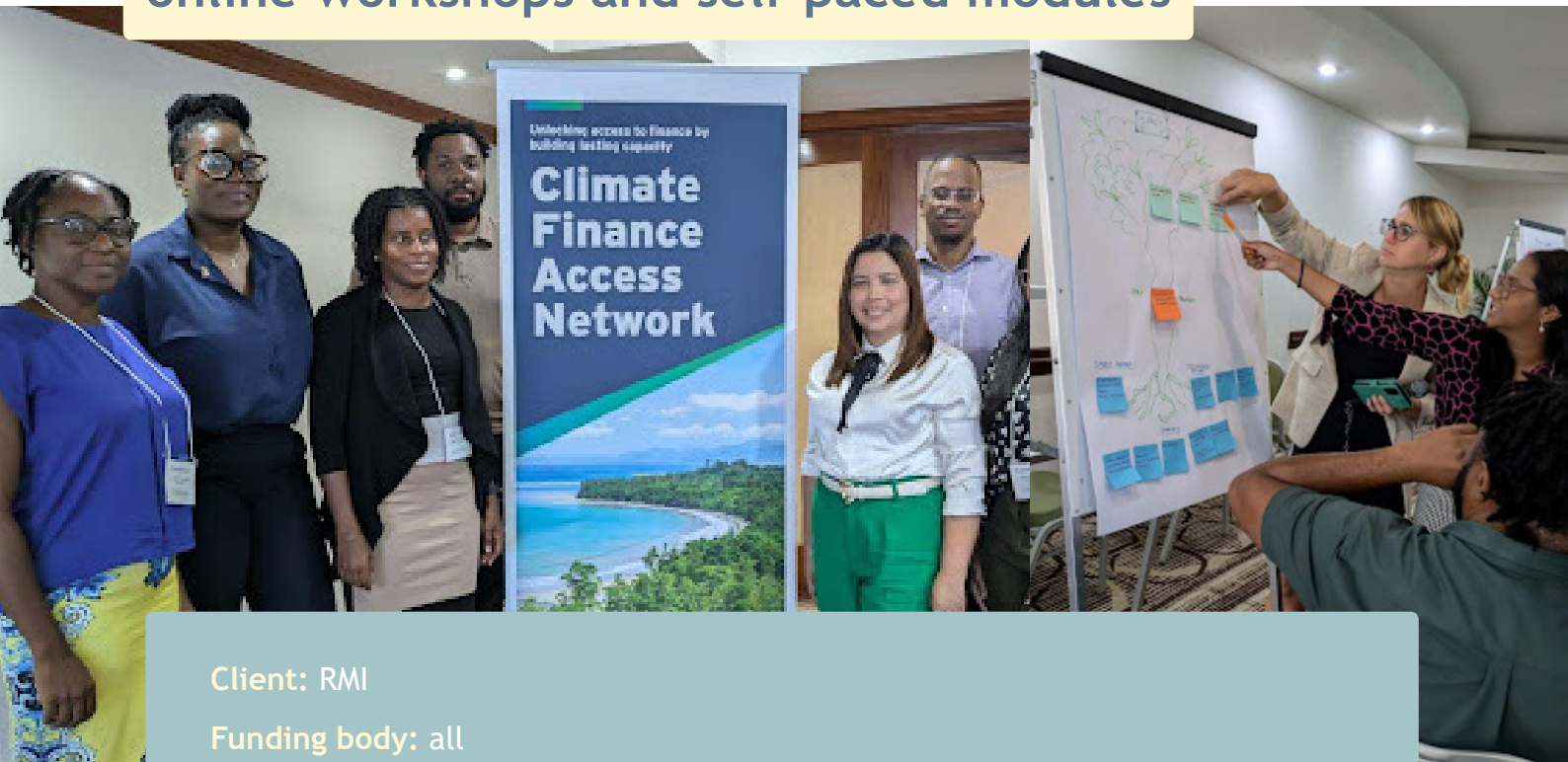
■ The challenge of getting stakeholder involvement

- Key stakeholders, particularly in smaller nations, often juggle multiple responsibilities across various roles. This can result in capacity building fatigue and scheduling challenges due to distractions of elections, geopolitical issues and multiple work obligations.



Case study:

Climate Finance Advisors Network (CFAN):
advisors provided with in-person, live,
online workshops and self-paced modules



Client: RMI

Funding body: all

Type of assignment: training

Region: Pacific and Caribbean

Overview of CFAN: CFAN supports developing countries in securing and structuring finance for climate investments. By cultivating a network of highly-trained, embedded climate finance advisors, CFAN builds the capacity of developing countries to more quickly access climate finance and achieve their climate objectives. CFAN is currently operational in the Caribbean and the Pacific, and shortly will expand to Africa.

Our role: E Co. has been the training partner within the Network, and since CFAN's inception in 2022. As part of this role E Co. has developed a number of online modules for the advisors, numerous in-person, online workshops, provided one-to-one coaching and supported four rounds of in-person training. In 2024, our teams supported the second Pacific cohort's in-person training, and the first Caribbean cohort's in-person training.

The challenge the project addresses: CFAN addresses the need for critical skills for human capital needed to mobilise, absorb and utilise climate finance for the benefit of the most vulnerable. The embedded advisor model not only builds the capacity of the individual, but strives to build awareness, and understanding throughout each of the NDAs and regional AEs that individuals are situated in.

Key learning from the work: Online modules and remote training are just one part of building capacity. In person training, and sharing of experience with others builds a depth of understanding and connection not possible without. In addition, building the strength of a team to support one another within each key stakeholder is critical. The development of proposals and long-term sustainability of capacity is only possible through team work, both internally within each organisation, but also laterally between organisations.

Potential solutions for improved capacity building

“Getting out into the field(s)! Far too often climate finance is academic and a concept that NGOs and policy makers try to enact from behind their computers or in boardrooms. If we are not out in the places where we are trying to help, speaking to the people who are doing the actual climate change fighting work, we aren't in the right place.”

According to the responses to the survey, solutions for enhanced capacity building in climate finance centre on three areas:

- 1 Knowledge and information access
- 2 Funding of capacity building
- 3 Institutional strengthening to enable individual capacity building

“Capacity around knowledge, technologies, and effective cooperation are the pillars for empowerment.”

1. Institutional

Respondents emphasised the need to somehow address the fragmentation of information available on sources of climate finance and their requirements and processes for assessing them. Mentorship programmes and peer-to-peer learning networks can facilitate knowledge transfer and provide ongoing support to climate professionals. A wide range of suggestions were received from survey and interview respondents. Key amongst them are the following:

- **Fragmentation of funding sources and varying requirements:**
 - Develop a “map to the climate finance landscape” showing entry points for different types of organisations
 - Provide regular updates on changes in funding requirements across different sources

- **Accessibility of resources and information:**
 - Produce simplified, jargon-free guides
 - Create multilingual resources

- **Project design and proposal writing:**
 - Provide templates and examples of successful project proposals
 - Offer one-to-one mentoring for proposal development

- **Keeping up with latest developments and trends:**
 - Establish regular newsletters or briefings on climate finance updates
 - Organise periodic webinars on emerging trends and new opportunities
 - Create online forums or communities for continuous peer learning and information sharing

- **Understanding financing mechanisms:**
 - Develop case studies on various financing mechanisms used in successful projects
 - Offer specialised training on financial modelling for climate projects

“Creating accessible spaces for grassroots actors means developing forums, platforms, or networks that make it easier for them to engage, learn, and contribute to climate finance conversations.”

2. Funding of capacity building

Access to funding for capacity building is clearly a significant barrier. Our survey revealed that only one respondent's organisation provided funding for continuing professional development. This forces individuals to shoulder the financial burden of their own growth, often leading them to choose low-cost, superficial options. To address this, we must explore mechanisms to provide financial support for capacity building initiatives. Additionally, in areas with poor connectivity, providing funding for stable internet connections will be crucial to ensure equitable access to online learning opportunities.

"I particularly liked seeing the documents, case studies, and example projects in the training I participated in. I would like to see case studies and to dissect a funding proposal and work backwards."

3. Institutional role in enabling individual capacity

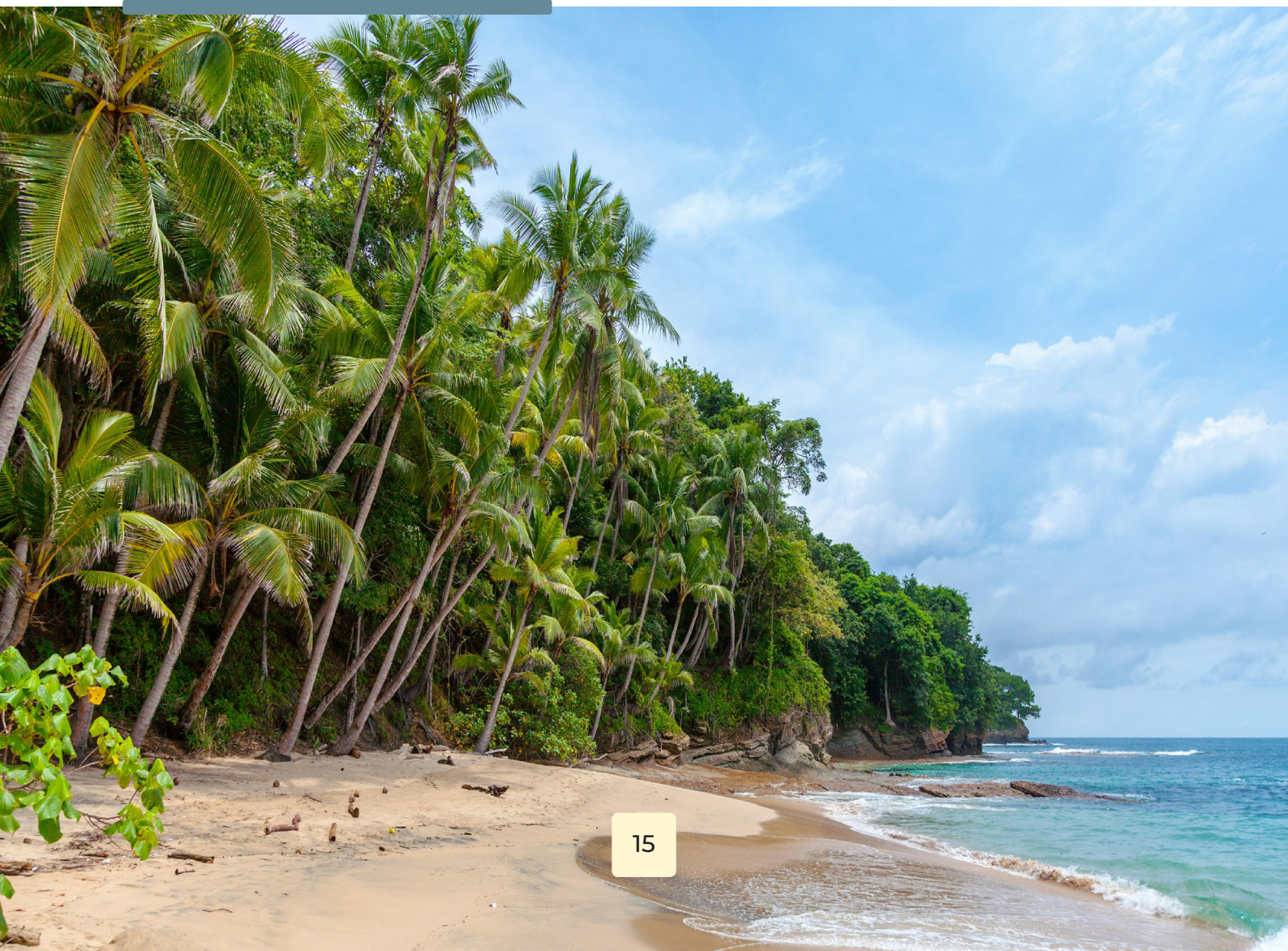
While our survey focused on the needs and experiences with individual capacity building, respondents also had views related to how institutions can facilitate and support individual access to climate finance. These included streamlining the complexities of working with international organisations, perhaps through guidebooks on their processes and requirements, or by facilitating direct engagement between local entities and international organisations for knowledge transfer. Mentorship programmes pairing experienced international professionals with local practitioners could also prove beneficial. Respondents also highlighted the need for improved stakeholder engagement, suggesting the development of toolkits specific to climate finance projects and the creation of platforms or forums for regular stakeholder interaction. Finally, institutions should seek to address capacity building fatigue and time constraints by offering microlearning modules for bite-sized, focused learning, and creating flexible, self-paced online learning options. Notably only a few respondents indicated that their organisation supported their individual learning with access to training or capacity building.

Institutionally, respondents noted that the establishment of dedicated climate units within organisations would improve coordination and knowledge retention. Simplifying

application procedures across climate funds (such as through the GCF's Simplified Approval Process, which, however, still draws criticism for not being particularly simple) and creating platforms for national institutions to engage and collaborate with international organisations can streamline access to climate finance.

The theory of change diagram below (Figure 2) illustrates the interconnected pathways through which capacity building can lead to impactful climate action. Starting with activities in three components covering knowledge and information access, funding of capacity building, and institutional strengthening to enable individual capacity building, it outlines a series of outputs, outcomes, and ultimately, long-term impacts. The outputs lead to enhanced skills, targeted funding, and strengthened institutions. The diagram envisions long-term impacts like reduced greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced climate resilience, and improved livelihoods for vulnerable communities. The theory of change diagram serves as a roadmap, guiding our efforts and reminding us of the interconnectedness of capacity building and climate action.

“People learn from each other, in a group.”



GCF insight #27 - Capacity to access climate finance

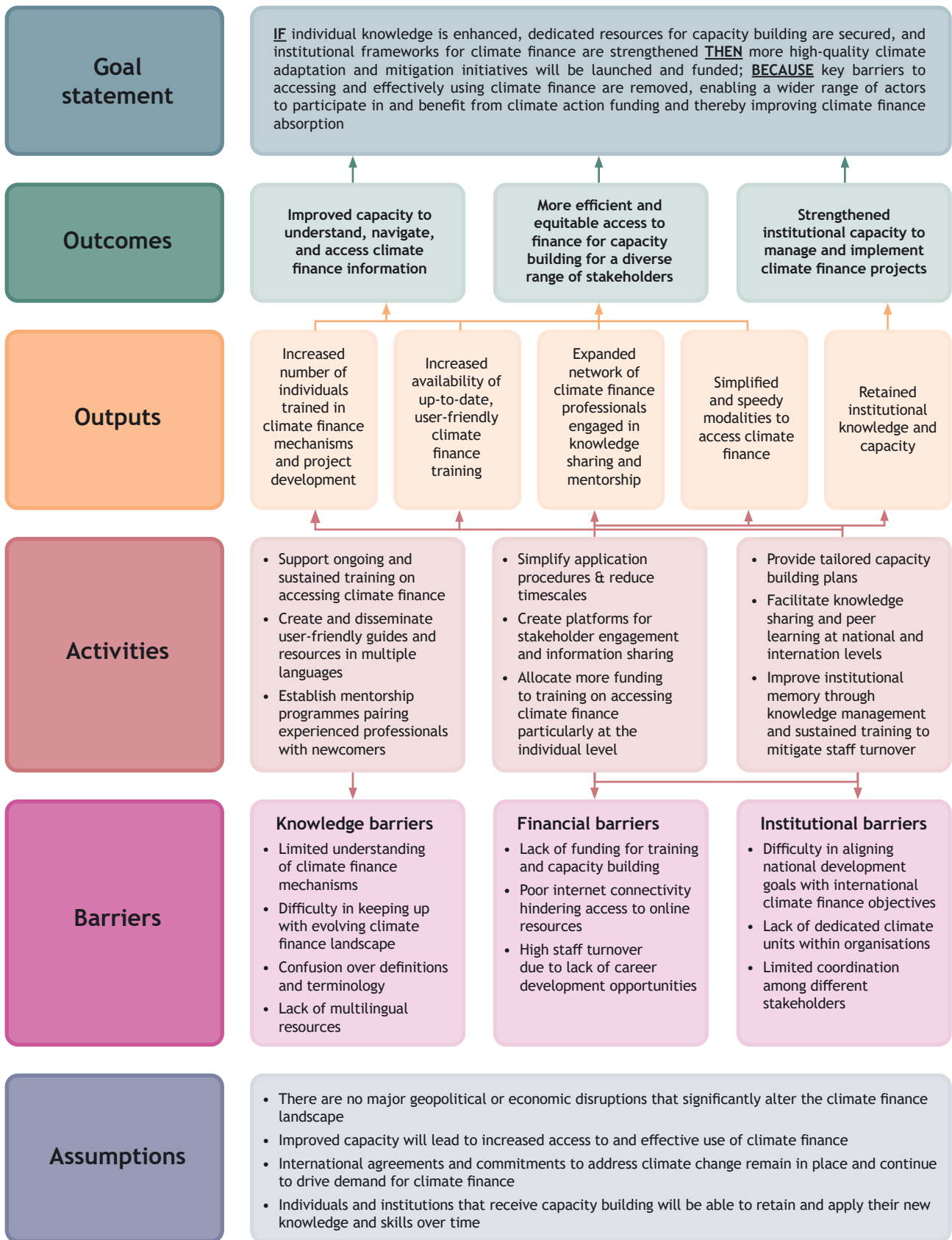


Figure 2: A GCF style Theory of Change incorporating the recommendations discussed in the report

Case study:

Oman readiness and capacity building for access to climate finance in the water & agriculture sector - in person



Client: FAO

Funding body: Green Climate Fund

Type of assignment: Training

Region: Middle East

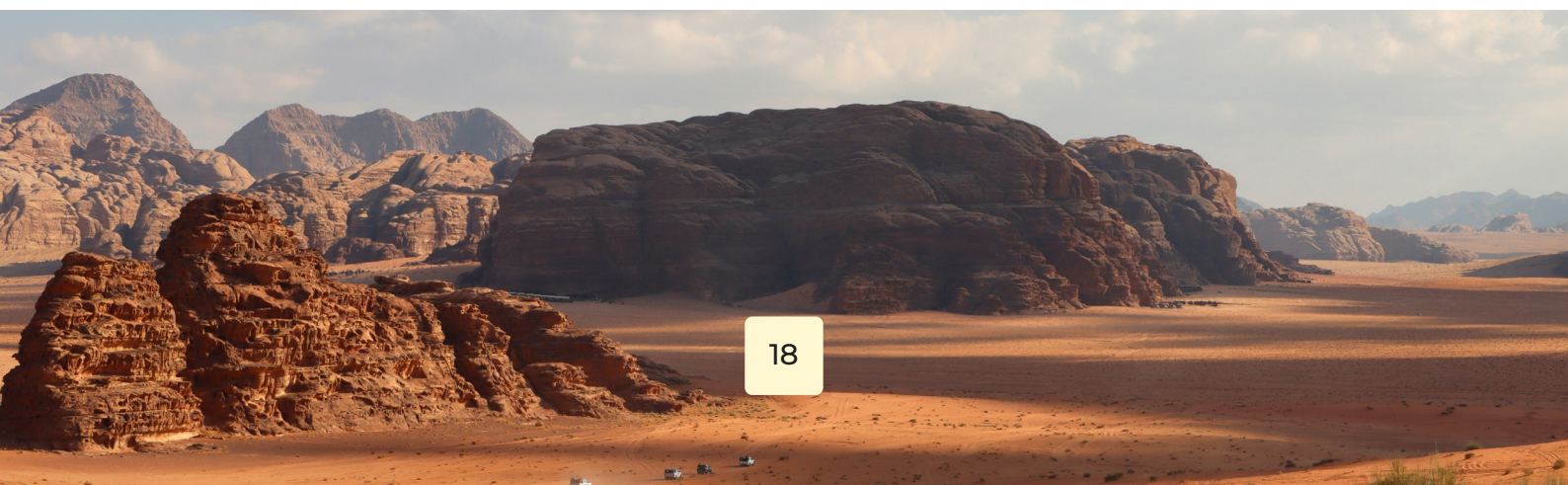
Overview of assignment: The assignment, “Building Resilient Environment and Sustainable Agriculture and Water in Oman,” aimed to enhance Oman’s readiness and capacity to access climate finance, particularly through the GCF. This project focused on the agriculture and water sectors, involving a comprehensive stakeholder engagement and capacity building process. The assignment included conducting a needs assessment, developing training materials, and

organising workshops to build knowledge and technical capacity in accessing GCF funds and in implementing climate adaptation and mitigation actions. Training was provided to around 60 participants in Salalah, focusing on GCF funding modalities and the priority climate actions related to agriculture and water, with a target of 30% female participation.

Our role: E Co, was responsible for delivering the training and capacity building services required for this assignment. This included identifying key stakeholders, developing an engagement network, conducting a training needs assessment, and designing training modules tailored to address climate finance in the agriculture and water sectors. The team organised and facilitated two workshops in Salalah, covering topics such as GCF funding modalities, climate data analysis, gender-sensitive practices, and the development of priority mitigation and adaptation actions. Additionally, E Co. provided post-training briefs, quizzes, and a knowledge management platform to ensure ongoing stakeholder learning and engagement.

The challenge the project addresses: Oman's agriculture and water sectors are facing significant risks due to climate change, including the fluctuating water availability and increase in temperature. Access to finance such as the one provided by the GCF is important to build resilience and mitigation to these growing impacts. However, there's a need for an improved stakeholder coordination, knowledge of the GCF processes, and general capacity for climate project formulation and implementation. The project aimed to address these challenges through enhancing the technical knowledge, establishing a stakeholder network, and building capacity for an effective planning and finance mobilisation.

Key learning from the work: One of the key learnings was the importance of creating an inclusive stakeholder engagement network to ensure that all relevant stakeholders, including private sector actors, women's associations and civil society have a voice and are empowered to contribute in climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. Another learning is that building capacity through tailored and adapted training focusing on specific needs identified through the assessments undertaken via surveys and consultations was effective in boosting the participants' readiness to engage with the GCF processes. In addition, integrating gender-sensitive approaches helped ensure that the benefits from climate finance are mutually and equitably shared between men and women. The final key learning from this exercise was the importance of establishing a knowledge management platform acting as a central repository and a golden record where all climate-related documentation could be found and accessed by the stakeholders allowing them to keep the continuous capacity building and empowering them to contribute to the country's response to climate change.



GCF readiness and the path forward

“GCF should require capacity enhancement in Climate Finance aspects as part of its conditionalities for accessing funding...”

In our survey we asked about the experiences of respondents with the GCF Readiness Programme. 73% of the survey’s respondents indicated that they were familiar with the GCF’s Readiness Programme, but only 32.5% have benefited from capacity building activities funded by the programme. 40% of respondents indicated that the Readiness Programme adequately prioritises the development of individual capacities within their specific organisation or country, but that there is still room for improvement.

“The GCF is not providing adequate, context-specific content”

Capacity building within the GCF Readiness Programme tends to offer a one-size-fits-all approach, which often leads to suboptimal capacity building outcomes, particularly in SIDS and LDCs. Its focus on national governmental institutions sometimes overlooks the critical need for capacity building at subnational and local levels. The bureaucratic complexity of the GCF process, coupled with limited transparency in decision making, have also been flagged as challenges and areas for improvement.

The survey brought to light several opportunities for the GCF and readiness and delivery partners to enhance their readiness offerings and better enhance the capacity of individuals. Key observations include:

“There could be a more intentional platform for exchange among peers and varied stakeholders like governments, private sector, AEs, civil society, etc.”

Training

- Readiness should seek to move beyond one-off training sessions and implement structured programmes with progressive levels and certifications. This will not only recognise participant progress but also provide a clear pathway for continuous development.
- To cater to a global audience, training materials and sessions must be available in English and other widely spoken international languages.
- Recognising that everyone learns differently, survey respondents wanted a range of in-person and online training options, including interactive webinars, self-paced modules, and traditional classroom settings, accommodating various learning styles, time constraints, and geographical limitations.
- GCF readiness partners can amplify the impact of training by fostering peer-to-peer learning and mentorship programmes. This collaborative environment will nurture a sense of shared purpose and accelerate the dissemination of knowledge.
- Training should prioritise equipping participants with the latest climate information, practical solutions, innovative financing mechanisms, and relevant policy frameworks. This comprehensive approach will empower them to effectively design, implement, and manage climate-related projects.
- Given the significant role of agriculture in both climate change mitigation and adaptation, GCF delivery partners should emphasise training on climate-smart agricultural practices.
- To ensure the long-term success and sustainability of climate projects, training should incorporate good governance principles. This includes transparent decision-making, accountability, and stakeholder engagement.
- Targeted training programmes for high-level officials involved in climate projects are essential. These programmes should focus on strategic leadership, policy development, and effective negotiation skills, enabling them to drive climate action at the national and international levels.

“GCF supporting Government’s but not supporting Local NGOs”

Programme Implementation and Support

- Establishing dynamic platforms for knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices will facilitate continuous learning and improvement.
- Participants need access to a wide range of resources and tools to support their learning and project development. This includes data, software, and guidance documents. GCF readiness partners could ensure these resources are readily available and user-friendly.
- To build local capacity, training programmes must be responsive to their unique needs and aspirations. This requires active engagement with community stakeholders and incorporating their perspectives into the design and delivery of training.
- GCF must streamline the application and proposal development processes to reduce administrative burdens and make it easier for participants to access funding and support. This will allow them to focus on developing high-quality projects that deliver real impact.
- Providing funding for staff time and recruitment is crucial to support project development and implementation. This investment will ensure that institutions have the dedicated personnel needed to succeed.
- Organising regional workshops will facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity building between executing entities. These workshops will provide opportunities for collaboration and peer learning, strengthening regional networks and accelerating climate action.

“Readiness funds often aren’t used efficiently to meaningfully capacitate

NDA and other critical stakeholders.”



Further Recommendations

- GCF and readiness partners should consider the special needs and aspirations of individual participants, providing tailored support and guidance to help them achieve their goals.
- Embedding experienced staff within institutions and project development teams will provide hands-on assistance and ensure effective capacity transfer. This has been recognised in the 2024-2027 Readiness programme which states: “That’s why GCF will provide an option to request placement of a GCF expert directly within a country agency.”
- Promoting peer learning across readiness programmes will facilitate the sharing of best practices and foster a sense of community.
- Strengthening trainer capacities will ensure higher-quality training and knowledge transfer.

By embracing these recommendations, GCF and readiness partners can significantly enhance their readiness offerings, empowering individuals and institutions to address the challenges of climate change and drive sustainable development effectively.

Case study:

St. Vincent and the Grenadines online training module capacity building



Client: Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre

Funding body: GCF Readiness

Type of assignment: Capacity building

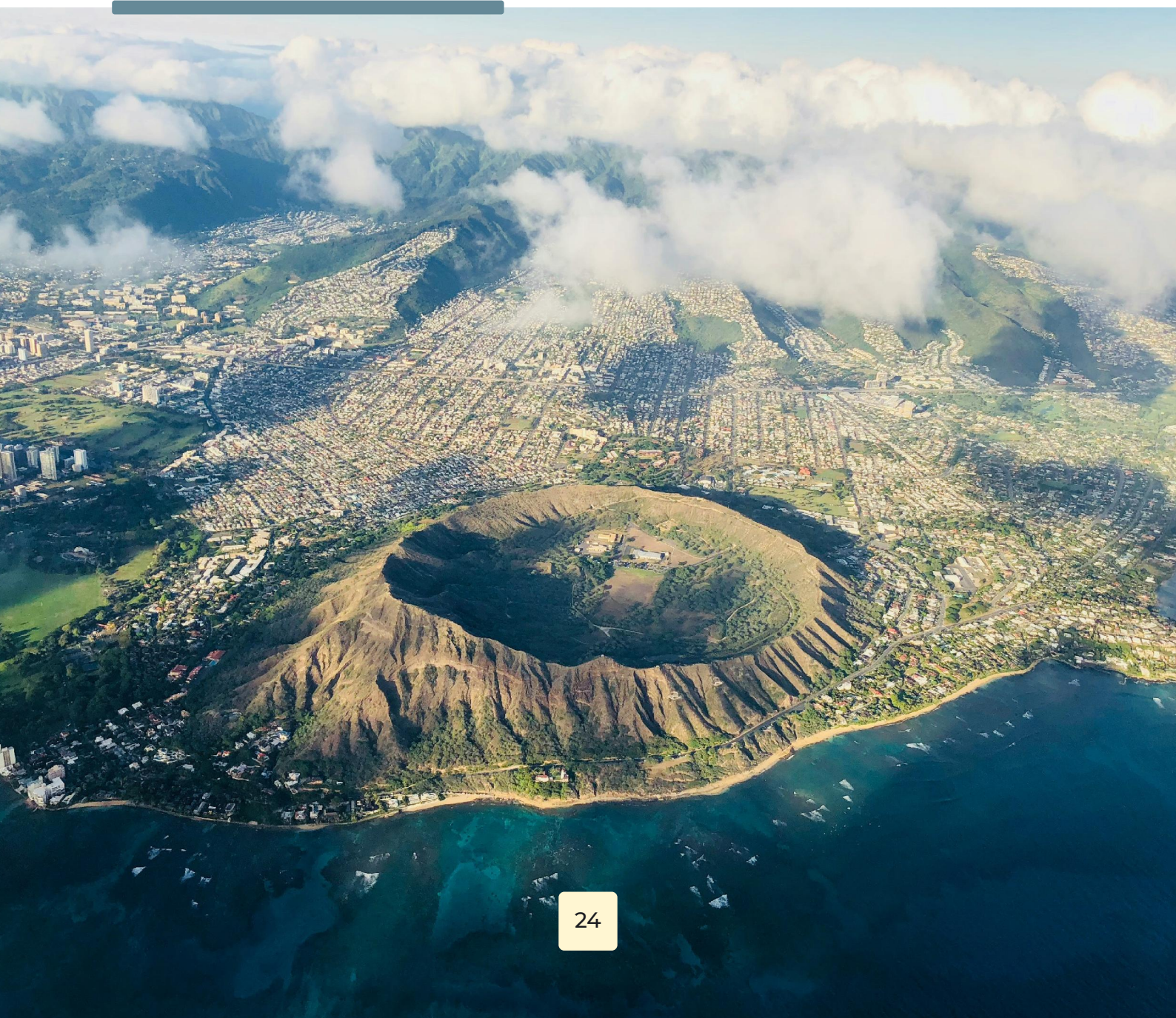
Region: Caribbean

Overview of assignment: This was the fourth round of readiness support for St Vincent and the Grenadine, delivered by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). The assignment focused on the provision of climate finance capacity building training for key governmental stakeholders to build on the previous rounds.

Our role: The E Co. team designed climate finance training based on a capacity assessment, and review of existing workshops.

The challenge the project addresses: The project was addressing the gap in institutional knowledge of accessing finance through the various climate funds, with a focus on the GCF.

Key learning from the work: Originally planned as three in-person workshops, the delivery modality was changed to an online series of six modules, as it was assessed that stakeholders did not have enough time, and there was a degree of ‘training fatigue’, partly due to the low numbers of personnel. E Co. designed and pre-recorded training specifically for GCF project development with module quizzes to assess learning. The modules were launched via an online live workshop and will be hosted by the country on their own e-platform. The key learning was that capacity building on Readiness should include ongoing support for participants, and materials should be updated with new developments within the fund. Providing an online course only risks having the materials become outdated.

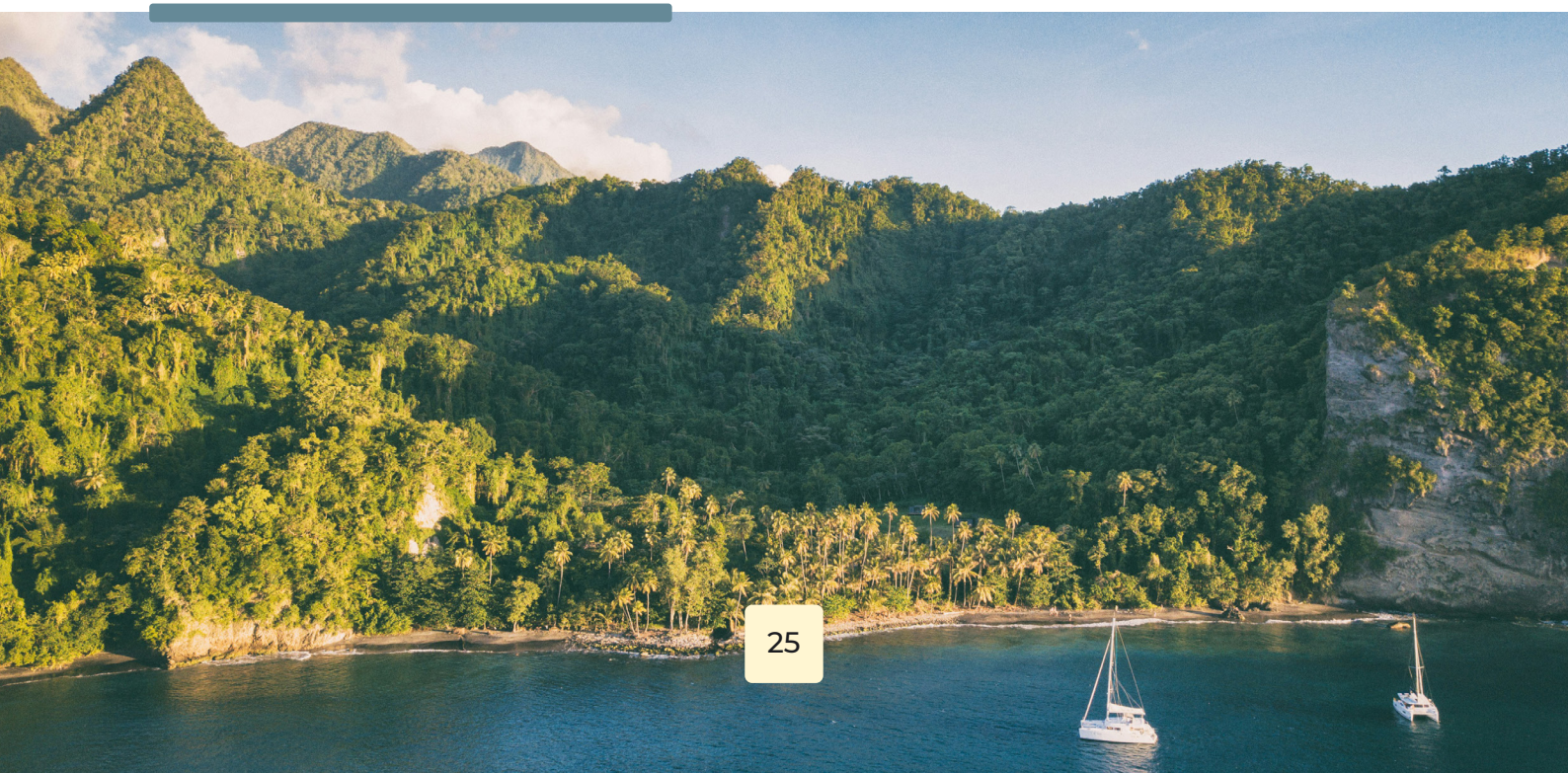


Conclusions

The mobilisation and effective use of climate finance remains a critical challenge in addressing the impacts of climate change, especially for the most vulnerable. Besides the fact that global finance flows are insufficient, a fundamental but often overlooked issue is that the capacity to access and absorb climate finance effectively is a significant barrier that must also be addressed. The GCF plays an important role through its Readiness Programme.

Our survey has highlighted significant opportunities for improvement and expansion to better enhance the capacity of institutions and individuals. The GCF and its Readiness partners should provide structured training programmes with progressive levels and certification, with both in-person and online options, interactive webinars, and self-paced modules to accommodate different learning styles and geographical limitations. Enhancing peer-to-peer learning through mentorship programmes to create a collaborative environment for knowledge dissemination would also facilitate continuous learning and improvement in a more personal manner that is often lacking. GCF processes could be further streamlined to reduce administrative burdens of the project funding cycle. Lastly, the GCF has the opportunity to embed experienced staff within project development teams to provide direct support, which it has recognised in the current Readiness Programme.

The GCF has made significant strides in addressing the critical need for capacity building through its Readiness Programme, standing out as one of the most advanced and comprehensive initiatives of its kind in the climate finance landscape. By refining the programme to be more tailored, flexible, and comprehensive, the GCF can accelerate the vital work of empowering people and organisations to achieve their countries' climate goals more effectively.



About E Co.

E Co. is a leading international climate finance and development consultancy based in London empowering organisations to achieve their climate ambitions. For over 24 years, we've been supporting and guiding clients to achieve low carbon climate-resilient development. By catalysing systemic transformation, we establish strong foundations for impact. Through a multi-disciplinary approach, our team specialise in: designing projects and programmes, market studies, strategy formulation, policy and legislation development, fund support, training and capacity building, and evaluations. We have a 99% success rate in unlocking climate finance and have mobilised over USD 7.5 billion of climate finance from global climate funds, including the GCF, GEF and Adaptation Fund. We are proud to have been trusted over the years to advise and provide support for governments, multilateral organisations, development banks, funds, NGOs, think tanks and educational institutions.

We offer comprehensive expertise across seven key service areas:

- **Market Assessment:** In-depth market assessments for informed decision-making.
- **Strategy Formulation:** Tailored strategies to translate climate ambitions into concrete actions.
- **Policy Development:** Guidance on sustainable policies that promote climate action and resilience.
- **Programme and Project Design:** Assistance in securing funding and designing impactful climate initiatives.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:** Independent scrutiny and analytical assessment to ensure accountability and maximise impact.
- **Fund Support:** Comprehensive support for navigating climate finance for diverse funds.
- **Training and Capacity Development:** Empowering individuals and organisations with the knowledge and skills to drive sustainable change.

References

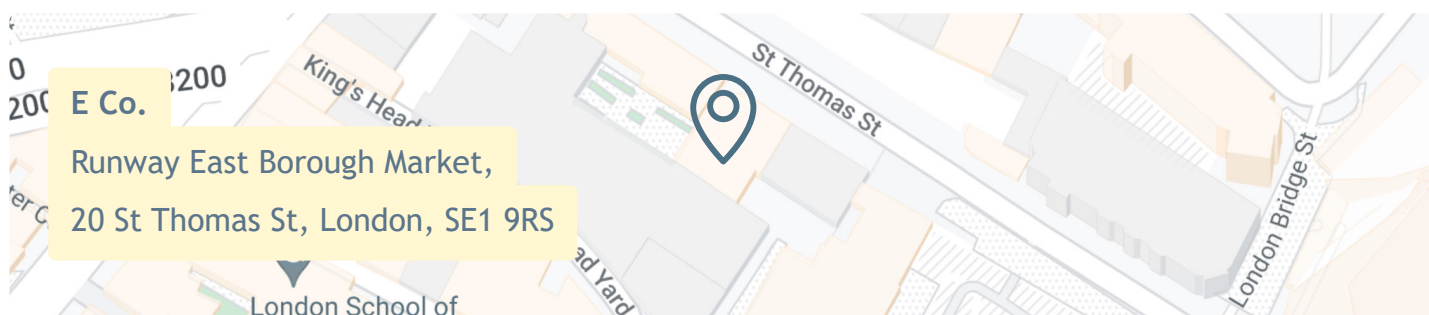
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Let's accelerate progress together. You can always reach out to our global expert team to discuss your needs. Send us an email us at: amy@ecoltdgroup.com or connect with us at the following:

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