Catalyst Now
For the world's social innovators

H&M FOUNDATION



Global South Climate Solutions Advocacy Toolkit

Community-led solutions shaping climate resilience, justice, & systems transformation

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ABOUT CATALYST NOW

Catalyst Now (formerly Catalyst 2030) is the global movement for social innovation. We connect over 7,000 social innovators, community builders, corporate leaders, philanthropists, and policymakers for collaborative change. Created with the support of Ashoka, Echoing Green, the Schwab Foundation, and Skoll, and incubated by the One Family Foundation, we exist to unite the world's social innovators under one umbrella, enabling leaders and organisations to move as one rather than in silos, and to collaborate to accelerate systemic change.

Our core values

Catalyst Now is a values-driven, member-led movement dedicated to transform systems through social innovation and collaborative action. Our core values guide every aspect of our work, shaping how we engage, collaborate, and create impact worldwide.



People and nature at the centre
In everything we do, we place people, nature, and their ways of life at the heart of our work. We stand accountable to them for our actions.



Co-creative mindset
The future of innovation is co-creation. We seek to acknowledge our own biases and silos and work to move beyond them. This includes sharing all relevant data when we collaborate and ensuring that everything Catalyst Now produces is non-proprietary.



Collaborative leadership
We prioritize co-creating approaches that reflect shared ownership and credit collective impact. Our shared norms are based on the needs and challenges we face.



Humble audacity
We have audacious goals and approach them with the humility to recognize that none of us alone knows how they can best be accomplished.



Spirit of generosity
On any given day we are all donors, doers, visionaries or clients. We commit to sharing our knowledge, time and networks freely without expectation of receiving anything in return, other than the achievement of collective goals.

ABOUT CATALYSTS FOR CLIMATE COLLABORATION

We are facing a climate reality where 98% of adaptation investment fails to reach those who need it most. Yet, the solutions aren't missing; they are being implemented right now by grassroots leaders and innovators. The challenge isn't a lack of ideas; it is a lack of visibility, connectivity, and access to the global policy tables that control resources. We are here to change that.

Catalysts 4 Climate is a global Catalyst Now collaboration dedicated to amplifying Global South leadership into global policy spaces. We unite diverse experts and practitioners to scale locally-led climate solutions in the Global South, shifting the global climate narrative from "vulnerability" to "solutions-driven leadership."

Catalysts 4 Climate recognizes that locally relevant, owned, and comprehensive climate solutions already exist, yet they must be scaled urgently to meet the climate challenge. Local leadership matters because communities bring contextual knowledge, relationships, legitimacy, and adaptive capacity that external actors cannot easily replicate.

We aim to reduce vulnerability and mitigate climate effects, while regenerating our earth and communities. We amplify Global South leadership in climate discussions by scaling solutions that work in multiple local contexts and by 'climate-proofing' the current work of our members. By building trust, partnerships, and collective advocacy, we aim to shift systems and influence global policy and funding flows so that these locally-led solutions are prioritized and resourced.

Our Vision for Global South Climate Leadership

The primary goal of Catalysts 4 Climate is to bridge the gap between existing, locally-owned climate solutions and the urgent need for global scaling, particularly in the Global South. This is critical because while comprehensive solutions in agriculture, housing, circularity, disasters, health, and resilience already exist at the community level, they are often disconnected from the global funding and policy ecosystems that could amplify their impact. The challenge, therefore, is not only to scale individual solutions, but to create the ecosystem conditions that allow proven solutions to thrive and spread. By uniting diverse leaders, the collaboration aims to shift the narrative from vulnerability to leadership, ensuring that adaptation and resilience efforts are led by those most affected and that the 98% gap in adaptation investment is addressed through concrete, proven models.

WHY THIS TOOLKIT EXISTS

The Global South Climate Solutions Advocacy Toolkit was developed to amplify the leadership, innovation, and lived expertise emerging from communities and social entrepreneurs across the Global South. While those most affected by climate change continue to face disproportionate impacts, they are also leading some of the most effective and adaptable solutions advancing resilience, equitable development, and systems transformation.

Through the Catalysts 4 Climate, this toolkit seeks to strengthen collaboration across regions and sectors, elevate locally led climate solutions, and support collective advocacy efforts that influence global policy and financing priorities. It aims to bridge the gap between grassroots innovation and global decision-making by showcasing scalable initiatives and shared policy priorities that can shape a more just and sustainable future.

The toolkit also serves as a platform for visibility, partnership building, and resource mobilization, helping ensure that community-rooted solutions are recognized, supported, and replicated at greater scale.

This toolkit is designed as a practical advocacy and engagement resource for members, partners, policymakers, funders, and stakeholders working across climate and sustainable development sectors.

The toolkit can be used to:

- Showcase proven community-led climate solutions and scalable models
- Support advocacy efforts at global forums, donor engagements, and policy dialogues
- Strengthen collective messaging and amplify Global South perspectives in climate discussions
- Build partnerships and collaboration opportunities across sectors and regions
- Mobilize funding and investment toward locally led initiatives
- Share practical examples of equitable green development and systems change in action

Each thematic section includes featured solutions, insights, and advocacy priorities that can be referenced independently or collectively depending on the audience and context. Members are encouraged to use the toolkit as a shared resource to elevate both their own work and the broader collective vision for climate justice and sustainable development.

GLOBAL SOUTH CLIMATE SOLUTIONS BANK

The Solutions Bank showcases a growing portfolio of community-led, locally rooted, and scalable initiatives advancing equitable climate action and sustainable development across the Global South. These solutions reflect the innovation, resilience, and leadership of communities that are responding directly to interconnected climate, social, and economic challenges.

It is designed to elevate scalable models with the potential to influence policy, strengthen cross-sector collaboration, mobilize investment, and accelerate systems change. It showcases proven approaches and practical innovations that support knowledge exchange, foster partnerships, and amplify Global South leadership in global climate and development discussions.

The following thematic areas are featured throughout the toolkit, with each section highlighting a selection of initiatives and emerging models that demonstrate impact, adaptability, and potential for replication: Agriculture & Food Systems, Climate & Health, Disasters, Migration & Resilience, Housing, Materials & Circular Economy, and Climate Learning & Awareness.

Taken together, these cases also reveal recurring barriers beyond the individual innovator, in financing, policy, institutional arrangements, and access to decision-making that are needed to scale.

More solutions can be found on our online gallery webpage.



AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS



PRAKRUTI PLUS: CLIMATE ADAPTATION MARKETPLACE PLATFORM

India, Asia

Effective climate adaptation requires investing not only in technologies, but also in the community-based market systems that enable equitable access, adoption and long-term resilience.

Catalyst Management Services

The Challenge
Climate-vulnerable communities face increasing heat, water stress, and livelihood risks but lack affordable access to climate-smart solutions. Meanwhile, innovators struggle to reach last-mile markets, and climate finance rarely reaches community-level adaptation, leaving a significant gap between innovation, investment, and implementation.

The Solution
Prakruthi Plus is a community-driven climate adaptation marketplace platform that connects climate innovators, manufacturers, community institutions, and local entrepreneurs to deliver affordable climate-smart products and services. Through trusted last-mile distribution, digital impact tracking, and ecosystem partnerships, the platform enables vulnerable households to adopt solutions that improve resilience, livelihoods, and productivity while generating measurable climate and social outcomes.

Impact

- Communities: ~10,000 households reached across four states; expanding to Odisha.
- Environment: Scales clean energy and climate-smart solutions.
- Livelihoods: Increases incomes, productivity, and resilience.
- Partnerships: Mobilizes public, private, and community actors.
- Systems Influenced: Generates community-level evidence to inform adaptation investments, climate finance, and public policy while strengthening last-mile delivery systems.

Scalability

- Replicate the model by partnering with FPOs, SHGs, NGOs and community-based organizations across climate-vulnerable regions across global south
- Continuously onboard climate innovators and manufacturers to create a curated marketplace of locally relevant adaptation solutions.
- Combine CSR, philanthropic grants, government programmes and impact investment to reduce adoption barriers and finance scale.
- Use transaction and impact data to improve product selection, demonstrate outcomes, attract investment and support policy replication across states and countries in the Global South.

Opportunities for Collaboration
Governments, funders, NGOs, innovators and private sector partners can collaborate by piloting climate-smart solutions, co-investing in community distribution networks, supporting innovation deployment and scaling evidence-based climate adaptation.



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SEKEM

ECONOMY OF LOVE REGENERATIVE FARMING

Egypt, MENA

SEKEM's climate-resilient food systems approach, together with Economy of Love's high-integrity carbon credits, offers a scalable model for advancing food security, ecosystem health, and the socioeconomic conditions of smallholder farmers.

SEKEM Holding

The Challenge

Conventional, chemical-intensive agriculture in Egypt degrades arid soils, threatens rural livelihoods, and worsens climate vulnerability. Smallholder farmers lack the financial incentives, specialized organic training, and market tools needed to shift to resilient, ecological, and regenerative farming systems.

The Solution

The Egyptian Biodynamic Association (EBDA) supports 250,000 smallholders in adopting the Economy of Love (EoL) regenerative standard through technical, regulatory, and market-access assistance, while returning 100% of carbon-credit revenues generated on their land directly to them. This approach finances local climate adaptation and addresses rural inequalities.

Impact

- Supports over 40,146 smallholders across 23 Egyptian governorates, addressing inequalities that limit marginalized farmers' access to resources.
- Promotes biodynamic agriculture, reporting 410,000 tonnes of verified CO_2e removals, improved soil health through 1.5 million tonnes of compost, up to 27% lower water use, and reduced fossil-fuel and chemical use through solar-powered irrigation and regenerative practices.
- Strengthens economic resilience by returning carbon-credit revenues directly to landholders, supporting personal development, independence, and household financial stability.
- Pioneered the registration, issuance, and trading of Egypt's first carbon credits on the Egyptian Stock Exchange, integrating regenerative agriculture into the national economy.

Scalability

- Financial incentive: Directly sharing carbon-credit revenues with smallholders encourages adoption and enables self-sustained growth.
- Integrated value chain: The initiative supports not only farmer training but also direct access to local and international buyers.
- Local Multiplier networks: Trusted community facilitators and demonstration plots promote knowledge transfer and reduce resistance to biodynamic farming.
- Transparent verification: EoL certification promotes sustainable, ethical, and transparent supply chains, while the ImpacTrace Service enables farm-to-shelf product traceability.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments, funders, and NGOs can partner to sponsor smallholder organic transitions, buy verified EoL carbon credits, or co-develop international.



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RIGHTS-BASED FPIC FOR CARBON PROJECTS

Global

This solution demonstrates that a rights-based approach to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) is not just compatible with carbon project standards, but is essential for creating successful project outcomes for business, people, and the planet.

Landesa

The Challenge
Community involvement that respects proper consultation and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent is inconsistently applied in carbon offset projects. Without these safeguards, affected communities are exposed to displacement, lost livelihoods, and violations of land rights, while project developers face reputational risks.

The Solution
To safeguard self-determination, Landesa designed a ten-step process that embeds meaningful consultation and FPIC throughout the entire lifecycle of a carbon project. Applicable to Indigenous, local, and Afro-descendant territories, this practical guidance for project developers and communities works to actively protect and strengthen community land tenure rights during the consulting, design, and implementation phases of carbon projects.

Impact
- Mitigates Tenure & Governance Risks: Encourages assessments of local land rights and governance to provide transparent data for rights holders and project developers.
- Fosters Stakeholder Buy-in: Establishes a structured consultation process that embeds community perspectives into project outcomes.
- Secures Equitable Benefit-Sharing: Suggests key outcomes to inform project benefits alongside community efforts, resources, and land-use trade-offs.
- Advances Gender Equity: Actively includes women and marginalized groups through targeted, actionable steps.

Scalability
- Market-Adaptive Design: Relevant for both voluntary and compliance markets, from private projects to regional, jurisdictional initiatives.
- Plug-and-Play Compliance: Aligns with consultation and engagement requirements across carbon standards, lowering the barrier to adoption.
- **Turnkey Lifecycle Integration:** Mirrors the carbon project lifecycle, making it highly adaptable and intuitive to replicate.

Opportunities for Collaboration
Governments, funders, NGOs, and most importantly, local communities, can leverage this approach to safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendant populations.



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CARBON CREDITS TO SDG-ALIGNED COMMUNITY-DRIVEN ACTION

Tanzania, East Africa

This solution proves that FPIC-backed rights, direct community revenue sharing, and sustainable bioingredient monetisation are not concessions, but the core design of institutional-grade carbon assets - maximizing value for communities, climate, and capital.

Amaly Legacy

The Challenge
Accelerating deforestation is driven by agricultural expansion, while local communities capture little value from standing forests. Existing carbon finance often bypasses community decision-making, leaving benefit-sharing opaque and stewards without enforceable rights. Traditional conservation models also miss opportunities to monetize the forest's bioingredients and build sustainable value chains that create additional revenue for local communities.

The Solution
A community-led forest carbon program covering more than 600,000 hectares of Tanzanian miombo woodland, with bilingual FPIC-anchored agreements, local village and district committees, and community-led proceeds, while targeting forests rich in high-value bioingredients to support sustainable commodity value chains and carbon generation where appropriate.

Impact

- Communities Reached at Scale: Scalability enables impacting communities at scale with participatory committees governing allocation of proceeds.
- Equitable Benefit Flows: ~80% of net income directed to communities, local NGOs, and stakeholders through a bank-escrowed structure.
- Partnerships Built: Co-implemented with district councils and local NGOs, with FPIC embedded.
- System Influence & Co-Benefits: Carbon credit proceeds fund water, electrification, healthcare, and education, guided by village-level committees.

Scalability

- Dual-Market Design: Structured for both voluntary and compliance demand, Article 6- and CORSIA-aligned, enabling replication where national carbon frameworks mature.
- Replicable Legal Architecture: Bilingual, FPIC-anchored agreements with district and village-level variants offer a model template for community-land jurisdictions across the Global South.
- Beyond Carbon - Phase Two: These forests are rich in bioingredients, including one whose global supply has collapsed after two shocks and for which these landscapes hold the only scalable biological substitute, unlocking recurring canopy-preserving revenue with strong healthcare demand.

Opportunities for Collaboration
Funders, offtake partners, governments designing carbon market regulations, and NGOs seeking replicable FPIC and benefit-sharing models are invited to engage, including at our October 2026 funder convening, Majlis Nabe' al-Aman.

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CLIMATE & HEALTH





PRECISION ACTION AND ANALYTICS TOWARDS CLIMATE AND HEALTH

India and the Philippines, Asia

This solution demonstrates the importance of institutionalising AI-enabled, climate-informed early warning systems and integrated data governance to strengthen climate resilience, disease preparedness, and evidence-based public health decision-making.

Swasti

The Challenge

Climate change is increasing the frequency and spread of infectious diseases, while fragmented surveillance systems limit governments' ability to detect risks early. Health systems often respond only after outbreaks occur, leading to preventable illness, deaths, and inefficient allocation of resources

The Solution

PATCH is an AI-powered, multi-source early warning system that combines climate, environmental, health, wastewater, and community intelligence to predict climate-sensitive disease outbreaks. It generates hyperlocal risk forecasts, hotspot maps, and actionable alerts, enabling governments to shift from reactive outbreak response to proactive preparedness and targeted public health action.

Impact

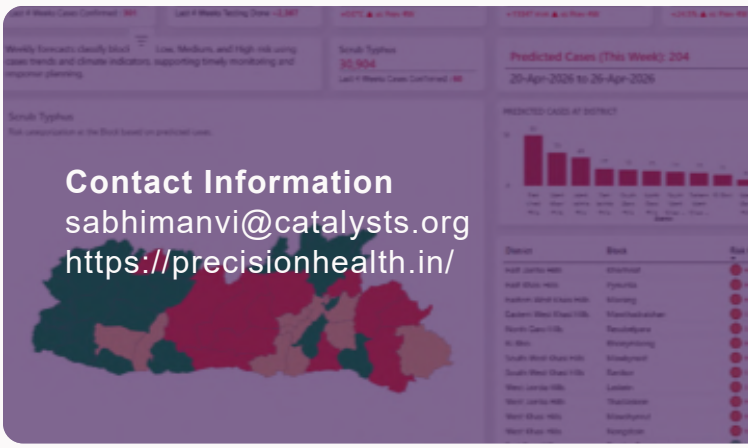
- Predictive Risk Models deployed in 3 states.
- Wastewater surveillance in 5 cities.
- 4-8 week early warnings for dengue, malaria, scrub typhus, and typhoid, enabling earlier public health action.
- 579 lives saved through the Tamil Nadu scrub typhus predictive model.
- Strengthened partnerships with national, state, and city governments, advancing One Health and climate-informed public health decision-making.

Scalability

- Modular data architecture enables rapid adaptation to new diseases without rebuilding the platform.
- Customisable for different geographies using locally available climate, environmental, and health datasets.
- Supports multiple use cases, including infectious diseases, zoonotic diseases, air pollution, and heat-health risks.
- Designed for government adoption through integration with existing surveillance and administrative systems.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments, climate and health funders, NGOs, and technology partners can support PATCH by investing in platform expansion, integrating public data systems, strengthening local implementation capacity, and enabling adoption across vulnerable geographies.



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CLIMATE CARE CHAMPIONS PROGRAM

India, Asia

This solution demonstrates the importance of embedding climate-health capacity within existing frontline health systems, so that heat-health preparedness becomes a core, funded function of public health policy rather than a standalone project.

Swasti

The Challenge

Extreme heat is a silent killer, disproportionately harming outdoor workers, pregnant women, children, the elderly, and the chronically ill. Frontline health systems in India lack the awareness, training, and tools to recognise, treat, and prevent heat-related illness.

The Solution

The Climate Care Champions Program (Swasti, with the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education at Columbia University) equips frontline health workers to recognise, respond to, and prevent heat-related illness through a train-the-trainer model, a contextualised eight-module heat-health curriculum, monthly Communities of Practice, and a multilingual AI powered chatbot for real-time field support.

Impact

- 189,000+ individuals reached across the 2024–2025 heat seasons in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and NCR Delhi.
- 2,609 frontline workers trained to identify, stabilize, and refer to heat-related illness cases.
- Early recognition and prevention of heat illness protect the productivity and wages of outdoor and informal workers most exposed to extreme heat.
- Collaboration spans Swasti, Columbia University (GCCHE), the Elsevier Foundation, and state health departments.
- Working towards integration of heat-health preparedness into government Heat Action Plans, with plans for standardised heat-health indicators and annual district heat burden.

Scalability

- The train-the-trainer cascade model multiplies reach without requiring expert deployment at every site, keeping unit costs low as coverage expands.
- The Swasti AI Saathi chatbot (multilingual) allows digital reinforcement to scale across languages and geographies faster than in-person training alone.
- Phase two's three-arm implementation research across three districts of Andhra Pradesh state to generate a comparative evidence base needed for state and national adoption.
- Embedding the model within existing government cadres and Heat Action Plans means scale-up rides on public health infrastructure rather than parallel systems.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Partners can collaborate through funding scale-up to new districts and states, integrating the heat-health curriculum into government and CSR health programmes, and co-developing evidence for policy adoption.



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SAFE BIRTHS AND HEALTHY HOMES

Uganda, Africa

Integrating clean, reliable energy into rural healthcare and maternal health policies can enable safer facility-based deliveries, strengthen health services, and protect vulnerable communities.

Kyosiga Community Christian Association for Development, Solar Health Uganda, Let There Be Light International

The Challenge

Uganda's maternal mortality remains high, and rural mothers face barriers to safe facility-based delivery, while inadequate lighting and unreliable electricity can hinder health workers' ability to provide quality care during childhood.
SB+HH addresses these barriers while incentivizing facility delivery.

The Solution

SB+HH supports maternal and infant health through solar programming in rural off-grid communities. Health centers are solar electrified and mothers receive portable solar lights for infant care after the critical birth event. The initiative encourages skilled facility-based deliveries, improves lighting for health workers, promotes safer homes, reduces dependence on polluting fuels and torches, and expands access to reliable, affordable energy.

Impact

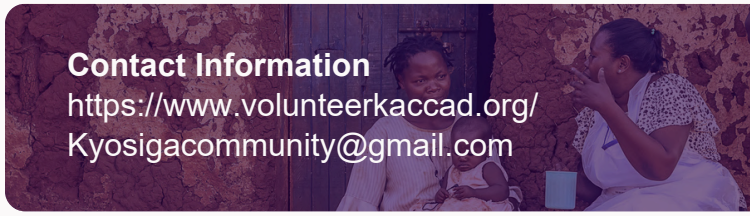
- Reached 20,284 mother-baby pairs and 259,480 people across 10 communities.
- Reduced reliance on kerosene, candles, and torches, contributing to cleaner and safer homes.
- Families reduce lighting costs by 20–30% of household income and gain reliable renewable lighting for activities after dark.
- Demonstrates how energy access can be integrated into maternal and newborn health programming, strengthening the link between renewable energy, healthcare delivery, and community health, through cross-sector collaboration.

Scalability

- Government integration: District and national health authorities can improve maternal and infant health by adding basic energy access to current standards of care. Extensive, longitudinal intake and impact data, disaggregated by gender, geography, and health status, are available upon request.
- Replication through partnerships: NGOs, energy-access organizations, and health partners can adopt the SB+HH model and adapt it for other underserved rural communities.
- Sustainable financing: More funding from governments, climate funds, foundations, and impact investors can support solar systems, replacement parts, and portable solar lights for new mothers.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments can integrate SB+HH into health and energy policies and prioritize rural facilities; funders can finance electrification and scale-up; NGOs can integrate SB+HH into health, climate, livelihoods, and energy programs, while solar companies, health facilities, and VHTs support technology, maintenance, outreach, and monitoring.



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DISASTER RESPONSE, MIGRATION & RESILIENCE

HARPIAMAPPER - ALL-WEATHER TERRITORIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR AMAZONIAN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Brazil, Amazon region

This solution demonstrates that disaster resilience in the Global South requires investment in locally owned, all-weather Earth-observation infrastructure and the local scientific workforce to run it, rather than dependence on episodic, expensive foreign consulting.

Amazon SAR Tech Aerospace

The Challenge
For 70% of the year, clouds and smoke blind optical satellites over the Amazon, exactly when landslides, floods, and fires peak. Vulnerable communities and under-resourced municipalities make life-or-death territorial decisions without continuous, affordable, physically grounded data.

The Solution
HarpiaMapper is a SaaS platform combining cloud-penetrating InSAR/SAR radar (NASA ISCE+/GMTSAR-certified) with explainable AI trained on tropical geophysics. It delivers millimetric ground-deformation alerts, flood and fire-risk mapping, and auditable reports in plain language, no radar expertise required. Every deployment trains local youth and municipal staff to operate it.

Impact
- Continuous geotechnical monitoring proposed for hillside risk zones in Parauapebas, with 17 rural youth trained as climate-resilience agents and several active at COP30.
- Students planted and georeferenced 160 native trees; biomass monitoring has been active since 2022, including a contract with Gävle municipality, Sweden.
- Built local capacity in geospatial data, scientific writing, and AI-assisted analysis, creating pathways into environmental monitoring and planning.
- Partnerships include: Zarvan/ESA BIC Sweden, Parauapebas Civil Defense, CMDCA, Pará Education Secretariat, and BNDES Garagem Top 50.
- Advances predictive climate intelligence for municipal infrastructure, linking local data to global adaptation finance.

Scalability
- Replicable across the tropical Global South: Radar works through clouds and smoke, enabling transfer to climate-vulnerable regions.
- Capacity-building as delivery mechanism: Mandatory local training expands the skilled workforce alongside deployment.
- B2G recurring model + open data: Uses free Sentinel/Copernicus data and lean infrastructure to keep costs low.
- South-South learning: Demonstrates frontier tech can be developed and led within vulnerable regions.

Opportunities for Collaboration
Governments can adopt HarpiaMapper as municipal climate-risk infrastructure via public procurement, while funders, NGOs and researchers can co-finance replication cohorts, integrate the platform into adaptation and Loss & Damage programs, and support South-South training partnerships.

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SEEDS: ENABLING HOUSEHOLDS IN HIGH-RISK AREAS FOR RESILIENCE BUILDING

India, Asia

Effective climate adaptation cannot separate prediction from proof, enabling the warning systems and loss-recognition systems to be built as one continuum, so that anticipation translates into protection and "loss and damage" becomes evidence- based, community-directed climate finance.

Sustainable Environment & Ecological Development Society (SEEDS)

The Challenge
Climate disasters are forecast too late, and their true toll is counted too little. Households get warnings after risk has built, not before it strikes, and no trusted channel exists for them to record what they actually lost, leaving communities invisible to relief, insurers, and climate finance.

The Solution
Real-Time Anticipation & Household Assistance: Early warnings, household mapping, and customized advisories. The model uses AI and satellite intelligence to anticipate disaster risk household by household, trigger alerts, and let survivors self-report losses or potential impacts through a digital disaster e-wallet. Combined knowledge enables an ecosystem-level response that supports at-risk communities in a timely and effective manner. Sustained support helps build resilience against future risks.

Impact
- Anticipation Proven at Scale: Issued pre-emptive risk advisories to 125,000+ people in one monsoon season with 90%+ accuracy in flagging high-risk houses.
- Restoring Agency: Tested across diverse climate risks, enabling disaster-affected households to directly report economic and non-economic losses to public agencies.
- Recovery accelerated: Fewer processes ensure support flows rapidly and directly to communities.
- The model can directly unlock funding pools for loss-and-damage and disaster response.

Scalability
- Co-ownership of community and government networks: Replicate the model by partnering with provincial governments, local community-based organizations, and NGOs across climate-vulnerable geographies of the Global South.
- Leverage hyperlocal knowledge for blended loss- and-damage financing: The model allows independent verification through technology platforms, potentially linking to support ecosystems - parametric insurance, CSR, philanthropic capital & Loss & Damage Fund disbursement.
- Open data architecture: Adaptable for low-resource, low-tech environments.

Opportunities for Collaboration
overnments, funders, insurers, technology partners and community organizations can co-pilot the model in high climate risk areas, co-invest and drive adoption across the Global South.



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GOONJ RAHAT & SARRD: DIGNIFIED, SOCIETAL ALLIANCE-LED DISASTER RESPONSE AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

India (National - across 20+ states)

This solution demonstrates how Goonj's Societal Alliance for Resilience and Response to Disasters (SARRD) framework shifts the disaster paradigm from reactive, transactional charity to a proactive, cross-sectoral alliance that centers community and dignity in climate emergency responses.

Goonj

The Challenge

Disasters are no longer occasional events but a recurring climate reality. Traditional disaster response remains fragmented, reactive, and top-down, treating survivors as passive beneficiaries of ad hoc aid. This transactional approach undermines local agency, ignores community wisdom, and fails to build long-term resilience before the next crisis hits.

The Solution

Goonj's SARRD framework mobilizes a year-round alliance of citizens, civil society, institutions, and corporates to shift from ad hoc relief to proactive preparedness. Through its "Disaster-to-Development" model, affected communities lead their own rehabilitation, repairing local infrastructure, desilting water bodies, and rebuilding schools, earning dignity-centered material resources as a reward rather than a handout.

Impact

- Responds to major climate events and disasters, reaching hundreds of thousands annually.
- Restores fragile ecosystems through community-led work and local knowledge.
- Facilitates thousands of community-chosen projects, creating dignified work and restoring critical infrastructure.
- Unites donors, institutions, corporates, and grassroots for proactive resource commitment.
- Shifts from 'donor-driven charity' to a 'societal alliance' recognizing disaster-affected people as active partners in climate resilience.

Scalability

- Leveraging the SARRD framework to secure year-round material and financial commitments, enabling instant 24–48 hour deployment when crises strike.
- Establishing institutional alliances with schools, universities, and corporate hubs to act as standing collection, awareness, and processing centers.
- Replicating Goonj's standardized framework for local asset mapping, allowing communities anywhere to instantly organize post-disaster repair projects.
- Positioning dignity-driven material circularity as an eligible mechanism for national and international climate adaptation funding.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Call for governments to embed SARRD in disaster plans, funders to provide flexible long-term adaptation funding, corporates and academia to join the SARRD Alliance, and civil society to adopt Goonj's community-led, dignity-focused rehabilitation approaches.



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STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITY FOR FIRE RESILIENCE

Brazil, LATAM

This solution demonstrates why climate adaptation policy and finance should support locally led territorial resilience systems that combine community capacity, science and technology, rather than funding isolated, short-term interventions.

Umgrauemeio

The Challenge

Wildfires increasingly threaten tropical forests, biodiversity, human health and local livelihoods, while prevention and response remain fragmented among communities, brigades, governments, researchers, technology providers and funders. Resources often arrive through short-term projects instead of strengthening permanent territorial capacity.

The Solution

Abrace a Floresta builds territorial resilience by connecting local communities and brigades with government, science, technology and finance. It combines prevention, early detection, data, response and monitoring based on local needs, while strengthening institutions. Rather than deploying standalone tech, it creates a shared resilience architecture adaptable across territories and governance systems.

Impact

- Abrace o Pantanal established an integrated monitoring and response system covering 2.5 million hectares, 11 monitoring towers, and 1.18 million hectares within direct camera coverage.
- In monitored areas, burned area in 2023 was around 75% lower than the 2020 baseline, according to MapBiomas Fire data used by the project.
- In 2022–2023, the project recorded 664 confirmed fire detections and 59 firefighting responses, connecting tech with real action.
- The model demonstrates public-private-community collaboration around shared fire-management infrastructure and is evolving into a replicable model integrating local knowledge, advanced monitoring, biodiversity protection and community empowerment.

Scalability

- Territory-first replication: Start with local needs and governance, adapting people, science, technology, and infrastructure to each territory.
- Modular technology: Combine monitoring, AI, GIS, communications, and response tools based on local capacity, infrastructure, and wildfire risk.
- Network-based implementation: Connect communities, brigades, agencies, researchers and private partners to share expertise and infrastructure.
- Fit-for-purpose climate finance: Flexible public, philanthropic and private capital can fund the shared territorial infrastructure and local capacity needed for long-term resilience, reducing dependence on repeated short project cycles.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments, funders, NGOs, universities, and technology partners can strengthen locally led fire resilience through policy, long-term funding, shared infrastructure, science, training, and tools.



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HOUSING & URBAN RESILIENCE



THE CAMPAIGN FOR ROOF OVER OUR HEADS (ROOH): AFFORDABLE CLIMATE-RESILIENT HOUSING

Global

The ROOH Labs act as a collaborative crucible that co-creates resilient housing by inviting market forces, scientific innovation, and combined with traditional wisdom from communities.

The Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC)

The Challenge
Over 2 billion people in informal settlements face severe climate risks due to inadequate and unsafe housing. How can we deliver climate-resilient, robust, low-carbon, and affordable homes to those living and working in informality through adaptable, locally led solutions?

The Solution
The campaign entails the development of dwelling-level strategies through four aspects: Materials, design, Technique, and finance, by leveraging the local construction ecosystem of a settlement (residents, laborers, masons, artisans, vendors, suppliers, and manufacturers). The process emphasises the following: Incrementality, Local availability, affordability and accessibility, Individual savings over credit products, and Skill-building.

Impact

- Active in 10+ Global South countries, 40+ cities, and 70+ informal settlements, with 100+ household interventions demonstrating climate-resilient housing solutions.
- Reduced indoor temperatures by 1–2°C on average (up to 4–7°C maximum), lowered energy costs, and eliminated water ingress in rain-prone homes.
- Community-Led Scaling: Each demonstration home inspired 6 additional households to adopt similar solutions through local savings and skilled artisans.
- Expanded from 6 demonstrations in 3 cities to 100+ resilient homes in 18 months,

Scalability

- Under the campaign's framework of scalability, demonstrated interventions are the primary catalysts of change.
- For every 1 demonstration, 6-10 other families in proximity mobilize savings and adopt similar solutions (scale factor of 1:6 – 1:10)
- The campaign has scaled up from 6 demonstrations across 3 cities to 100+ resilient houses across India
- The campaign framework has been successful in its application to 12 countries across 3 continents.

Opportunities for Collaboration
ROOH invites collaboration from governments, funders, NGOs, communities, industry, academia, construction actors, and the private sector to expand locally driven, scalable climate-resilient housing solutions.



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RESILIENCE FROM THE GROUND UP: COMMUNITY-BASED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR RESILIENT HOUSING

Urabá, Colombia

This solution demonstrates how embedding community-based organizations as formal implementers of national housing policy can advance climate adaptation and racial equity together, offering a replicable model for redistributing power and resources to historically excluded communities.

Build Change

The Challenge

Colombia's housing policy favors new construction over its vast informal housing stock (60% of homes). In Urabá, historically excluded Afro-descendant communities face compounding climate risks, flooding, erosion, extreme heat, with little technical or financial support to upgrade or build safely.

The Solution

Build Change partners with Colombia's Ministry of Housing and Afro-descendant community-based organizations (CBOs) in Urabá to deliver technical assistance for resilient home retrofits. Engineers & architects work alongside CBOs & households to build local technical, financial, & administrative capacity to implement housing improvements at scale, including co-designing safer roofs, reinforced walls, flood-resilient floors, & rainwater harvesting.

Impact

- Engaged 70+ community organizations, mapped 62 active CBOs, & delivered 5 pilot home retrofits informed by a 100-household survey.
- Retrofits strengthened homes against wind & flooding, improved ventilation & lighting, & added rainwater harvesting.
- Protected home-based incomes while using local labor & materials to strengthen local economies.
- Collaborated with the Ministry of Housing, City & Territory, local CBOs, & partners to shape a nationwide CBO-led housing improvement program.

Scalability

- Institutionalizing Technical Assistance: Embed the CBO model into MVCT's housing improvement decree and Social Management Scheme to formalize community organizations as nationwide implementers.
- Expand Financing Access: Improve CBOs' access to credit, subsidies, and guarantees to enable housing retrofits at scale.
- A Replicable Technical Assistance Roadmap: Adapt the four-stage model (assessment, design, implementation, evaluation) developed in Urabá to other regions and climate risk profiles.
- Sustained CBO Capacity Building: Continue investing in organizational, technical, and administrative training so CBOs can independently manage future housing improvements.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments can adopt and fund CBO-led technical assistance within national housing policy, funders can support scaling the model beyond Urabá, and NGOs can partner on training, financing tools, and climate-resilient design standards for community-led housing programs.



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MATERIALS & CIRCULAR ECONOMY



GOONJ: SURPLUS MATERIAL AS A CATALYST FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

India, Asia

This solution demonstrates the critical need to reframe waste/ surplus material as a valuable development resource that restores human dignity, addresses material poverty and mobilizes local community action.

Goonj

The Challenge

In a glaring societal paradox, cities discard millions of tons of usable materials (especially clothing) while millions lack basic necessities. Conventional aid treats surplus as waste and people as charity recipients, undermining human agency and dignity.

The Solution

Goonj collects urban surplus and processes it at dedicated sorting hubs into dignified, tailored resource kits. Through its "Cloth for Work" model, rural communities identify local needs (e.g., repairing roads, clearing water bodies) and contribute their own labor. The material kits serve as a reward for their work, transforming surplus into non-monetary economic capital.

Impact

- Reaches millions across 20+ states by redistributing urban surplus.
- Diverts over 8–9 million kilograms of usable materials from urban landfills each year, preventing tens of thousands of metric tons of carbon emissions.
- Generates hundreds of thousands of person-days through upcycling & manufacturing.
- Mobilizes citizen networks, corporate, grassroots, and rural local bodies across 70+ cities.
- Reframed national perception around clothing, making it recognized as a basic, dignified human need alongside food and shelter rather than a secondary charity item. Impacted the culture of giving in India into mindful giving.

Scalability

- Decentralized Hubs: Replicating neighborhood-level urban collection points paired with regional processing/upcycling facilities across emerging cities.
- Non-Monetary Barter Framework: Integrating the ‘dignity-for-work’ reward model into existing rural development and local infrastructure programs globally.
- Standardized Logistics & Quality Control: Streamlining sorting, sanitation, and kitting processes to handle high-volume material flows predictably.
- Carbon & Circular Economy Financing: Leveraging carbon offset credits for land-use diversion and resource reuse to build self-sustaining financial models.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments, funders, NGOs, and businesses should scale non-monetary circular economy models by embedding them in policy, investing in circular infrastructure, adopting the Cloth for Work framework, and strengthening reverse logistics and surplus redistribution.



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RECYCLING KAMPALA WASTE INTO NUTRIENT-RICH ORGANIC FERTILIZERS

Uganda, East Africa

This solution underscores the critical importance of investing in community-led, circular economy innovations that simultaneously address urban waste management, enhance rural food security, and build climate resilience through regenerative agriculture.

Prolific Innovations Limited

The Challenge
Smallholder farmers face declining soil fertility, low crop productivity, and prohibitive agricultural input costs, while organic waste is frequently dumped or burned, exacerbating greenhouse gas emissions and environmental pollution. Communities urgently require affordable, climate-smart solutions to enhance food security and livelihoods.

The Solution
Prolific Innovations Limited transforms organic waste into Vermi Power Organic Fertilizer using vermicomposting and Black Soldier Fly technologies. The enterprise also supplies climate-smart agricultural inputs, trains farmers in regenerative agriculture, and promotes sustainable farming practices. This comprehensive approach restores soil health, minimizes waste, boosts crop yields, and strengthens community resilience against the escalating impacts of climate change.

Impact
- Recycled over 8,500 tonnes of municipal organic waste into high-quality organic fertilizer.
- Trained more than 11,000 smallholder farmers in climate-smart and regenerative agriculture.
- Restored soil health, significantly reducing urban waste accumulation & greenhouse gas emissions.
- Created sustainable employment opportunities for youth through urban circular economy enterprises.

Scalability
- Regional Expansion: Scale up urban organic waste collection systems and fertilizer production networks across East Africa.
- Deepen collaborations with municipal governments, environmental NGOs, and agricultural distributors.
- Infrastructure Investment: Secure funding to upgrade processing facilities, processing equipment, and rural farmer outreach programs.
- Franchise/Replication Model: Replicate the waste-to-fertilizer business model by empowering local youth entrepreneurs in other rising urban centers.

Opportunities for Collaboration
Governments, institutional funders, NGOs, research bodies, and private sector partners are invited to collaborate to scale municipal waste recycling, smallholder training, and climate-smart agriculture across the African continent.



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BLUE-GREEN CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Kenya, Africa

This solution demonstrates the importance of increasing direct climate finance and policy support for community-led circular economy enterprises that restore ecosystems, strengthen food systems, create green jobs, and build climate resilience.

Bunyala Agr Climate Impact Solutions

The Challenge

Communities in the Lake Victoria Basin face increasing climate change impacts, flooding, organic waste pollution, declining fisheries, degraded ecosystems, unemployment, and rising food insecurity. Smallholder farmers and fishing communities lack affordable circular solutions that simultaneously restore ecosystems, create livelihoods, and strengthen climate resilience.

The Solution

Bunyala Agr Climate Impact Solutions is building a Blue-Green Circular Economy enterprise that converts organic, agricultural, and fish waste into Black Soldier Fly (BSF)-based fish feeds, animal feeds, biochar, and organic fertilizers. The initiative combines sustainable aquaculture, regenerative agriculture, ecosystem restoration, waste recovery, youth employment, and community-led climate adaptation to strengthen resilient food systems across the Lake Victoria Basin.

Impact

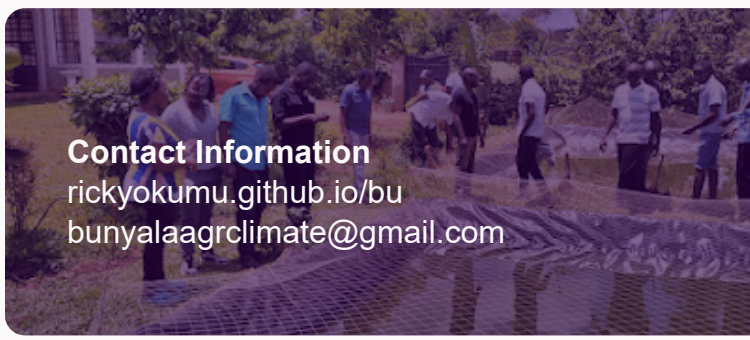
- Communities reached: 1,000+ direct and 6,000+ indirect beneficiaries through climate-smart agriculture, aquaculture, and capacity building.
- Environmental outcomes: Recovered 10+ tonnes of waste, reducing pollution, restoring ecosystems, and lowering emissions.
- Livelihoods improved: Created green jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities, and improved productivity.
- Partnerships built: Collaborating across government, research, community, and innovation networks.
- Systems influenced: Advancing community-led circular economy models for climate resilience and sustainable development.

Scalability

- Replicate the Blue-Green Circular Economy model across Africa's climate-vulnerable regions.
- Expand decentralized BSF production and climate-smart feed through local entrepreneurs and cooperatives.
- Strengthen public-private partnerships to accelerate adoption.
- Leverage digital technologies, climate finance, carbon markets, and knowledge platforms to scale impact sustainably.

Opportunities for Collaboration

We welcome partnerships with governments, investors, NGOs, research institutions, corporate partners, and climate finance organizations to scale circular manufacturing, ecosystem restoration, sustainable aquaculture, and youth-led green enterprises across Africa.



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BIOPLASTIC TECHNOLOGY

Indonesia, Asia

This solution demonstrates the importance of policies that support biobased materials, plastic redesign, and inclusive farmer value chains.

Greenhope

The Challenge

Across Southeast Asia, millions of tonnes of everyday plastic, sachets, wrappers, and mixed-material packaging never enter a recycling stream. Even when they do, conventional oil-based plastic can persist in landfills, waterways, and ecosystems for decades. Waste management alone cannot solve a problem rooted in the material itself, while the smallholder farmers who could supply a genuinely biodegradable alternative remain out of the value chain entirely.

The Solution

Greenhope applies the circular economy's 9R framework at its most upstream level: Redesign. Its cassava-based materials replace or reduce oil-based plastics, shrink its carbon footprint, and lower environmental impact while creating a new reliable income stream for local cassava farmers. Its three solutions, Oxium, Ecoplas, and Naturloop, offer biodegradable, biobased, and compostable alternatives to conventional plastics.

Impact

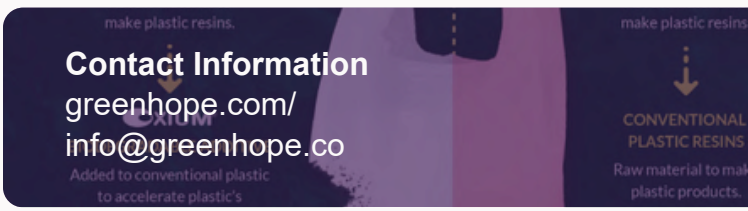
- Communities Reached: Empowers local cassava farmers by integrating them into the sustainable supply chain.
- Environmental Outcomes: Plant-based materials reduce dependency on oil-based plastic and its carbon footprint, leaving no microplastics.
- Livelihoods Improved: Boosts farmers' income through steady commercial demand for local crops.
- Partnerships Built: Collaborates with brands, manufacturers, governments, and NGOs to drive eco-friendly adoption.
- Systems Influenced: Drives policy, industry standards, and market acceptance for a circular, bio-based economy.

Scalability

- Abundant Local Raw Materials: Uses readily available crops like cassava, allowing production to easily replicate near local farms.
- Existing Machinery: Works with standard plastic machinery, enabling quick production expansion without buying costly specialized equipment.
- Global Partnerships: Expands through international distributors, brands, and white-label manufacturing to rapidly reach large markets.
- International Standards: Meets global eco-certifications, allowing smooth entry into countries with strict plastic bans and regulations.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments, funders, NGOs, and brands can accelerate the shift from single-use plastic to biobased materials while creating durable new income for smallholder farmers. Ways to engage include co-investment in production capacity, policy support for biodegradable and biobased standards, and brand partnerships to bring Ecoplas, Naturloop, and Oxium to market faster.



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THE BOTTLE TOILET: TURNING PLASTIC WASTE INTO SAFE SANITATION

Nigeria, Africa

The solution demonstrates how integrated policies on plastic waste management, sanitation, circular economy, climate action and community development can be translated into practical, locally driven solutions that address multiple challenges simultaneously.

International Climate Change Development Initiative (ICCDI)

The Challenge

Plastic pollution, inadequate sanitation infrastructure, open defecation, and limited access to safe toilets continue to threaten public health and environmental sustainability, particularly in underserved communities and schools.

The Solution

The Bottle Toilet Project transforms discarded PET plastic bottles into durable, low-cost toilet structures, turning waste into a valuable resource while improving sanitation. The initiative combines recycling, climate education, community participation and youth empowerment to reduce plastic pollution, promote circular-economy practices, discourage open defecation, and create practical, locally driven sanitation solutions.

Impact

- Improves access to safe, affordable sanitation in underserved communities and schools.
- Diverts PET waste by transforming plastic into useful toilet infrastructure.
- Engages youth and women in recycling, construction, education, and green livelihoods.
- Demonstrates a scalable, community-based model linking sanitation, waste management, climate education, and the circular economy.

Scalability

- Government and institutional adoption: Integrate the model into local sanitation, waste-management, climate education and school infrastructure programmes.
- Community-based replication: Train local youth, women and community groups in PET-bottle collection, eco-brick preparation and construction so the model can be replicated using locally available materials.
- Strategic partnerships and financing: Expand through partnerships with governments, development organizations, schools, private-sector CSR programmes and climate-finance partners to support replication across more communities and states.
- Develop a standardised implementation toolkit documenting the technical process, costs, environmental benefits and community engagement model, making it easier to replicate and scale the approach.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments, funders, NGOs, and other partners can help scale the Bottle Toilet Project through funding, technical expertise, policy support, community mobilisation, research, training, and replication across underserved communities.



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CLIMATE LEARNING & AWARENESS



platô

SCHOOL OF THE (IM)POSSIBLE: TURNING STUDENTS INTO GUARDIANS OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES

Brazil, LATAM

This solution demonstrates why climate education policy should invest in participatory, arts-based approaches that foster children's agency, ecological citizenship, and care for their local environments.

Platô Cultural

The Challenge

Climate education remains fragmented and disconnected from children's local environments. Teachers need practical tools to connect climate knowledge with real ecosystems, while young people need meaningful ways to move from climate awareness and anxiety toward agency, ecological belonging, and action.

The Solution

School of the (Im)Possible transforms climate education into an immersive adventure combining storytelling, theatre, play, scientific inquiry, AR, and local environmental exploration. Children enter a fictional mission to "rewrite the future," turning nearby green spaces into "climate portals" where they investigate environmental challenges and design local actions. A gamified platform supports teachers in adapting missions with expert knowledge, while students document discoveries in multimedia books shared through a global youth climate library.

Impact

- 2,000+ students reached across Brazil, Scotland and Finland through immersive climate-learning experiences.
- Increased climate literacy, ecological awareness, engagement, collaboration, and student agency, including stronger engagement from children than in conventional classrooms.
- Collaboration between schools, municipalities, cultural organizations, artists, and international education networks.
- The model has gained international recognition through major awards, COP26/27, and publications, demonstrating its potential to shape how climate, arts, technology, and place-based learning are integrated into education systems.

Scalability

- The fictional framework can be localised around different ecosystems, climate challenges, and cultural contexts.
- Teachers can customise missions, locations, and expert content to different curricula, ecosystems, and climate realities.
- Any school can partner with a nearby park, wetland, forest, or conservation area and turn it into a recurring learning and stewardship site.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Governments can integrate the model into climate education strategies; funders can support multi-year expansion; schools and NGOs can implement local editions; and cultural, scientific, and technology partners can contribute creative content, knowledge, data, and locally relevant experiences.



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ENERGETIC

India, Asia, Global

Energetic is a four-player cooperative challenge that teaches players about energy transition and what it takes to decarbonize a city.

City Atlas

The Challenge

To prevent climate change from getting worse, we have to build new infrastructure quickly, which requires widespread agreement among people. We need almost perfect cooperation between governments, businesses, and the public.

The Solution

We provide a public practice space for the energy transition through Energetic, a collaborative game based on real data. Players work together to decarbonize cities' power grids. Adaptable from 2.5-hour sessions to month-long workshops, our tool delivers the clear, accurate public climate education called for by the Paris Agreement and National Academies.

Impact

- Thanks to teachers who have administered a survey for our project, we have results from 6 NYC high schools and 274 students. The key before-and-after question is “How confident would you be in describing the factors in the energy transition to a family member?” In each class surveyed, students became more confident in their understanding of the energy transition and in describing the steps to decarbonize NYC. In classes at Bronx Science, there was a five-fold increase in students answering ‘confident’ and ‘very confident’ after learning with Energetic.

Scalability

- Localization: We want to map the game experience to different cities so that players can apply and understand their lived experiences in their cities.
- Programs: Energetic does a great job of helping people to understand, communicate, and work with energy/climate topics. We want to plug the game as a tool within various industries such as tech, sports, and research, so that we accelerate energy/climate considerations in each of them.
- Digital: Expand the game beyond its current platform to lightweight, browser- and mobile-based experiences. This will broaden access and ensure that limited computational resources do not prevent people from engaging with the game.
- Funding via grants, sponsorships, philanthropy, investments, etc.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Knowledge partners to localize the game experience so players can see how their choices affect the places where they live. Program partners to run pilots, engage participants, and help measure the game’s effectiveness. We want to develop models and playbooks that support scale.
Digital development partners to expand the game to lightweight browser and mobile platforms, making it more accessible.

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SHARED POLICY & ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

SHARED POLICY AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Across the collaboration's thematic pods, the same systemic pattern keeps surfacing: the solutions already exist. What is missing is an enabling system that can recognize, finance, scale, and sustain them.

Impact at this level is co-produced: social innovators can develop and implement effective solutions, but their ability to achieve systemic impact depends on governments, funders, markets, communities and other ecosystem actors playing complementary roles.
Community led and social innovations are too often held back by policy and financing systems designed around single sectors, short term projects, and external implementers. As a result, solutions that are working on the ground remain trapped in pilots, while the systems that could take them to scale remain unchanged.

Social entrepreneurs are calling for a fundamental shift: proven, community led solutions should be recognized as core, fundable public functions, not as standalone projects or charity. That means embedding heat and health resilience into public health policy; recognizing community based organizations within national housing policy and technical assistance financing; integrating circular economy and community rehabilitation models into climate and recovery policy; and making health system strengthening a core component of climate adaptation investment.
The infrastructure needed to enable systemic change is also missing. Across the collaboration, social innovators are identifying the need for climate risk disclosure standards for consumer finance, standards for biodegradable and biobased materials, open access to climate and environmental data, and better integration of climate and environmental data into routine health surveillance and planning. These are essential foundations for allowing better solutions to become the norm and for enabling institutions to anticipate, understand, and respond to interconnected climate, environmental, and health risks.

The funding system is part of the problem

Beneath these sector-specific barriers lies a deeper and more persistent challenge: the people closest to the problems often remain furthest from the capital needed to solve them.

Social innovators and local leaders often lead small and resource-constrained initiatives. Many simply do not have the staff or infrastructure to navigate increasingly complex compliance, due diligence, and reporting requirements attached to available funding. As a result, significant pools of capital never reach social innovators or last-mile communities, and when funding does reach them, it is often projectized. Short funding cycles and narrowly defined outputs push organizations to address symptoms rather than root causes. They may deliver visible results within a project period, but lack the flexible, long-term capital needed to address the systems that are producing those problems in the first place.

SHARED POLICY AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

There is also a fundamental trust and access gap. International funders understandably need confidence that their capital will be well governed and effectively used. Yet grassroots organizations without international visibility or institutional credibility can struggle to demonstrate that capacity, even when they have deep community trust, proven results, and solutions that work.

The result is a paradox: capital is looking for impact, communities are generating impact, and yet the two often cannot find each other.

The bridge between global finance and local innovation needs to be rebuilt. That means investing not only in solutions themselves, but also in the infrastructure that makes those solutions visible, verifiable, and investable. This includes stronger and more accessible due diligence pathways, better communication and amplification mechanisms, trusted aggregators, and funding models designed around the realities of grassroots organizations. It also means investing in the capacity of local organizations to meet due diligence and reporting requirements, recognizing that many have not historically had the resources, systems, or support needed to navigate these processes.

This was a key learning from the Catalysts for Climate convening during Catalysing Change Week, which brought together representatives from the World Bank, major philanthropic organizations, social innovators, and aggregators to explore how people-powered solutions could become more deeply integrated into the World Bank's work.

The conversation made clear that the challenge is not a shortage of promising solutions. It is the architecture around those solutions, including policies, capital flows, institutions, and decision-making structures, that needs to change.

Communities must have power, not just participation

Communities cannot be treated simply as beneficiaries, consultees, or sources of local knowledge. They need a genuine seat at the table where policies are designed, investments are allocated, and priorities are set. Too often, leaders and intermediaries speak for communities and make decisions on their behalf. Systems change requires shifting that power, so that people who are closest to the problem have greater power in shaping the solutions and implementing them.

Building on these lessons, the collaboration's advocacy is centered on a bold but practical proposition: establish a dedicated Global South-led climate fund that puts resources directly into the hands of proximate-led organizations and solutions, rather than routing capital through multiple layers of intermediaries. This fund would be paired with a strong pipeline of investment-ready, scalable solutions, creating a stronger bridge between community innovation and global climate finance. The ambition is to change who gets funded, who gets heard, who gets to decide, and ultimately, whose solutions shape the systems of the future.

CALL TO ACTION

If we are serious about getting more resources into the hands of communities and social innovators, we need to change how funding systems work. The following actions can help close the gap between available capital and the organizations best positioned to turn it into lasting impact.

Collaborative, consolidated, and standardized due diligence: Large funding organizations can work together to establish shared due diligence processes and standards. This would reduce duplication on both sides and prevent social organizations from having to repeatedly dedicate scarce time and resources to the same compliance requirements for every funding application. A shared approach would make funding more accessible while maintaining the accountability funders need. At the same time, funders should recognize that many local organizations lack the resources and systems to meet rigorous due diligence requirements and should be willing to invest in the capacity building and resourcing needed to strengthen these systems.

Leverage network-based models: Networks and consortia can create a pathway for smaller social innovation organizations to apply for and manage larger grants collectively. This allows substantial resources to reach grassroots organizations without requiring each organization to build the administrative infrastructure expected of much larger institutions. It also creates opportunities for organizations to combine their strengths, share knowledge, and deliver impact at greater scale. This is one way large institutions can reach the smallest and most proximate organizations without losing the local leadership that makes their work effective.

Make narratives and opportunities accessible: Language should never be a barrier to accessing funding or participating in global programs. Funding opportunities, application processes, and technical guidance should use clear, accessible language, minimize jargon, and be available in multiple languages. Making information easier to understand and navigate can open existing programs to many organizations that are currently excluded.

Invest in stronger amplification and communication: Social innovators also need support to communicate the value and impact of their work in ways that are clear, compelling, and accessible to different audiences. Networks such as Catalyst Now and other aggregators can play an important role by bringing together content creation efforts, strengthening the visibility of community-led solutions, and connecting innovators to a shared and expanded audience, making proven solutions easier for funders, policymakers, and markets to find and act on.

Move from donor relationships to genuine partnerships: We are not seeking traditional donor-recipient relationships. We are looking for partners who will align with local action, accelerate community-led initiatives, and help communities take their solutions further.

CALL TO ACTION

There is an urgent need for technology, financing, and technical support for SMEs developing climate solutions. Convening platforms such as Catalyst Now can help bridge this gap by aggregating resources, connecting enterprises to the right partners, and creating pathways into new markets and investment opportunities.

Build strategic alliances for systems change: Strategic alliances between social innovation networks, social innovators, funders, businesses, and policy stakeholders can become powerful vehicles for accelerating impact. When these partnerships are developed and announced at moments of global attention, such as UNGA and COP, they can demonstrate what is possible when philanthropy, public finance, markets, and community-led action work together. These alliances can become models for building lasting bridges between charity, philanthropy, government, and the market.

Institutionalize proven models through public systems: Scaling a proven social innovation is not only about expanding the organization or securing additional philanthropic funding. For solutions to reach population scale and become sustainable, governments need pathways to integrate effective models into existing policies, public budgets, workforces, and programs. Funders, social innovators, and government partners should work together to create these pathways, including by generating evidence that is useful for public decision-making, aligning innovations with government priorities and systems, and resourcing the transition from externally funded pilots to public-sector adoption. Institutionalization should be treated as a pathway to scale, not an afterthought once a model has been proven.

The opportunity is to move beyond isolated commitments and build lasting infrastructure for collaboration. We need funding systems that trust local actors, policies that recognize community led solutions, and partnerships that give those solutions the resources and visibility to shape the systems of the future.

CONCLUSION

Climate change is a global problem, but solutions must often be deeply local. Many solutions are being built and implemented by people on ground who know their communities, understand the realities they face, and are already finding ways forward.

They are local leaders protecting their communities from extreme heat, smallholder farmers adapting to changing weather, women building businesses that strengthen local economies, indigenous communities protecting ecosystems, and grassroots organizations developing practical solutions where they are needed most.

The barriers and asks in this toolkit tell a consistent story: the Global South is not short on climate solutions, nor on evidence that they work. What's missing is a policy and financing architecture that recognizes community-led, cross-sectoral solutions as the core infrastructure of climate adaptation, and a bridge that lets global capital reach organisations that have proven impact but not yet built international credibility.

Closing that gap is not a matter of finding new solutions; it is a matter of governments, funders, and multilateral institutions choosing to build the systems, and the trust, that let the solutions already in this toolkit scale and sustain, including by integrating proven approaches into existing public policies, budgets, programs, and institutions

This is where networks such as Catalyst Now and its members have an important role to play. We can help make local solutions more visible, connect social innovators with the resources and partners they need, create bridges to policymakers and funders, and amplify the voices of the people who are too often missing from global climate conversations.

Catalyst Now's contribution is therefore to strengthen the connective infrastructure around these solutions, increasing their visibility and helping connect local innovators with partners, resources and decision-making spaces that can enable greater impact.

What is needed now is for institutions with power and resources to meet the action with trust, flexibility, and long term commitment. This report brings to the forefront the urgent need to support and scale these local solutions through global networks and partnerships. By aligning resources and efforts, we can achieve exponential impact and true resilience.
Through creating a new paradigm of climate change design: the problem is global, but solutions are inherently local, therefore, we must work with local leaders and communities who have the knowledge and resilience to tackle climate challenges.

Climate change demands urgent, collective action. We need to move beyond discussions to tangible support for local solutions. By working together, we can create resilient, sustainable communities worldwide.

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