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Call for Partnership (CFP)

Women's Adaptation Plans for Climate Resilient Livelihoods in the Sundarbans in Bangladesh

Locally Led Adaptation

CFP Ref.: CFP-0023

CLOSING DATE: 05 June 2025

CLOSING TIME: NOT LATER THAN 18:00, Central European Time (CET)

PPORPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSING DATE AND TIME SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED.



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1. Background

1.1. Introduction to this Call for Partnership (CFP)

The Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) invites registered non-profit organizations (local and international non-government organizations, community based organizations, universities, and companies limited by guarantee) with substantial expertise in community engagement, community-led development, climate adaptation planning, and facilitating multi-disciplinary dialogues, to present proposals to formulate **Women's Adaptation Plans for Climate Resilient Livelihoods in the Sundarbans in Bangladesh**.

1.2. Introduction to the Global Center of Adaptation

GCA is an international organization that works as a solutions broker to catalyze action and support for adaptation solutions, from the international to the local, in partnership with the public and private sector, to ensure we learn from each other and work together for a climate resilient future. Adapting to impacts of climate change provides a “win-win” for livelihoods, food security, water supply, health, security, and economic growth. The work of GCA elevates the visibility and political importance of climate adaptation and facilitates solutions, such as smarter investments, new technologies and better planning to become more resilient to climate related threats. GCA is a rapidly growing organization with offices in Nairobi, Abidjan, Beijing, Dhaka, Groningen, and Rotterdam.

GCA's ambitious 2020-2025 business plan and strategy have three pillars:

- **Programs:** Food Security; Using Nature for more resilient infrastructure; Water for Urban Growth and Resilience; Climate Finance; Youth Leadership.
- **Knowledge:** Building adaptation knowledge globally through cutting edge products such as the State and Trends in Adaptation Report and the Adaptation Knowledge Portal.
- **Advocacy and Awareness:** Formulating policy messages to move the global, regional, and local adaptation agendas forward.

1.3. Introduction to GCA's Locally Led Adaptation Program

The impacts of climate change are most acutely felt by socially, economically, and politically disadvantaged and marginalized people and groups because of their higher vulnerability and lower adaptive capacity. Recognizing the highly localized nature of climate impacts; the importance of local adaptation action; the potential and creativity of communities to develop locally appropriate and innovative solutions; the ownership benefits of community-driven action; and the strong need for accountability to poor and marginalized communities affected by climate change, the GCA is strongly committed to addressing barriers to accelerating and scaling up LLA through the [Global Hub on Locally Led Adaptation](#). The Hub aims to promote LLA at scale, with speed, to reduce climate risks for populations and sections of society that are most vulnerable to climate change. The activities of the Hub are guided by the eight [Principles for Locally Led Adaptation](#).

GCA's efforts to scale up LLA are focused on integrating locally led adaptation planning with traditional development investments, particularly by international financial institutions (IFIs). GCA works with local partners to facilitate adaptation planning based on LLA best practice (documented, for instance, in this [Guide](#)). **People's Adaptation Plans** are produced by vulnerable communities, based on community-led data collection and mapping efforts, and informed by scientific climate risk assessments. The planning process supports communities in understanding climate risks as a community, negotiating priorities, and designing solutions. The Plans are shared with associated IFI project teams to inform investments and used by communities to leverage local development funds. In some countries in Africa, the planning process is informing national efforts to embed adaptation in local development planning.

GCA is now piloting Women's Adaptation Labs, to focus on women's adaptation priorities. Women's groups are supported by technical experts to develop locally tailored solutions to adaptation challenges prioritized by women, such as housing, food, water and livelihood security.

2. Women's Adaptation Plans for Climate Resilient Livelihoods in Sundarbans in Bangladesh

2.1. Project Context and Overview

The Sundarbans is the world's largest mangrove forest, spanning approximately 10,000 square kilometers across southern Bangladesh and eastern India. It plays a crucial role in protecting biodiversity, sustaining livelihoods, and serving as a natural buffer against cyclones and coastal erosion. However, heavy dependence on—and over-exploitation of—its natural resources for income and subsistence is depleting this vital ecosystem, contributing to environmental degradation, and intensifying the impacts of climate change.

Coastal communities in Bangladesh face poverty rates higher than the national average. In 2022, 23% of the population—about 9.5 million people—living in coastal districts were classified as poor, with many struggling to meet their basic nutritional needs. These communities are also disproportionately exposed to coastal hazards and are less equipped to cope with and recover from their devastating effects.

Traditional and cultural norms further limit economic opportunities for women in the region. Excluded from key sectors like fishing, women are often confined to informal, low-paying roles such as drying fish, fetching water, assisting with agricultural tasks, and selling produce in local markets. The lack of alternative livelihood options, combined with limited access to skills training and market opportunities, keeps many women trapped in poverty.

A recent assessment by the GCA, *Enhancing Coastal Resilience Through Nature-based Solutions*, highlights the pivotal role of nature-based solutions (NbS) in strengthening coastal resilience in Bangladesh. NbS offer a pathway to support the livelihood needs of impoverished

communities while delivering biodiversity gains, enhancing ecosystem resilience, and restoring critical ecosystem services. By promoting sustainable alternatives to resource-depleting practices, NbS can provide communities—particularly women—with more secure and sustainable sources of income.

A community-led, women-centered assessment of climate vulnerabilities, livelihood diversification needs and opportunities, and innovative approaches to harness the potential of NbS can lay the foundation for long-term resilience—both for coastal ecosystems and for the vulnerable communities that depend on them.

The Government of Bangladesh, in partnership with the World Bank, is developing a series of projects under the Bangladesh Coastal Resilience Program to strengthen the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems, with a focus on the Sundarbans. The first project, currently under preparation, aims to bolster institutional capacity for coastal resilience and regional cooperation; rehabilitate polders; enhance coastal protection through NbS and ecological restoration; and expand livelihood opportunities for communities that depend on the Sundarbans.

GCA aims to support the project by piloting Women's Adaptation Labs engaging women dependent on the Sundarbans in three villages - within 5 KM of the Sundarbans reserve forest - in Khulna or Barisal division (to be decided in consultation with GCA, the Government of Bangladesh, and the World Bank). Guidelines and a capacity building approach will also be developed for scaling up this approach to other Project areas.

2.2. Project Objectives

GCA's support to the Bangladesh Coastal Resilience Program aims to deliver a locally led methodology for vulnerable women dependent on the Sundarbans - living within 5 KM of the Sundarbans reserve forest - in three villages in Khulna or Barisal division to take the lead in identifying climate threats, particularly to their livelihoods, and in developing locally appropriate solutions to mitigate these threats with support from technical experts. The solutions should ideally include sustainable community-led natural resource management; the promotion of jobs, entrepreneurship, skills and capacity that strengthen climate resilience; and where necessary or where opportunities present, livelihood diversification.

To deliver on this objective, GCA is seeking a local delivery partner in Bangladesh with proven expertise in locally led approaches to develop Women's Adaptation Plans in three villages in Khulna or Barisal division. The partner is expected to share a list of villages situated within 5 KM from the Sundarbans reserve forest in Khulna and Barisal region and provide a justification on their selection of villages. This will further be finalized in consultation with GCA, the Government of Bangladesh, and the World Bank.

The partner will be expected to identify and/or facilitate the creation of women's groups in the three villages, support them to map and understand climate risks especially as they relate to local livelihoods, and facilitate needs-based technical support for the women's groups to support them in the development of Women's Adaptation Plans .



2.3. Project Components

The partner will be expected to deliver four components:

- 2.3.1 Prepare a situational analysis report for the three villages, including a scientific current and future climate risk and vulnerability assessment, to inform the planning process.** The report should include comprehensive socioeconomic, political and policy analysis, and identify key stakeholders in the process, including existing community institutions such as Village Conservation Forums, Village Credit Organizations, Community Patrolling Groups, Dolphin Conservation Teams, Village Tiger Response Teams, Tiger Scouts, Youth Conservation Groups, and Conservation Women Groups. The scientific risk and vulnerability assessment, typically conducted by a local university, should include desk research on past climate trends and future projections; generation of downscaled maps on exposure to key climatic risks and hazards, including the identification of hotspots for multi hazard climatic risks; and an analysis generated to inform community consultations. The assessments, conducted in collaboration with a local university, will draw on data collected by community co-researchers. This data is digitized to identify vulnerable hotspots at the village or community level using GIS shapefiles.
- 2.3.2 Facilitate locally led mapping and enumeration in the three villages.** This [GCA Guide](#) will be contextualized to develop the planning process, which will include house-to-house enumeration by trained community mobilizers to gather data on climate vulnerability, and dependence on natural resources for livelihoods, housing, energy and food security. The data will be analyzed in collaboration with a local university, to inform the planning process by the community.
- 2.3.3 Facilitate Women's Adaptation Labs.** Based on the information and data analysis generated in component 2.3.2, women's groups will be supported to identify priorities for building climate-resilient livelihoods. Technical experts (for instance, experts in livelihood and enterprise development, natural resource management, gender/social inclusion, agriculturalists, or carbon markets) will be identified by the partner on the basis of this prioritization, to work with the women's groups to identify ways to climate-proof existing livelihoods, identify opportunities for livelihood diversification, and for skill and capacity development. The Labs will aim to ensure that Project funds are targeted at livelihood interventions that provide the highest returns, promote cost-effective resilience, minimize losses, and promote productivity gains. The outcomes will be described in three **Women's Adaptation Plans**, which will include:
- A description of the processes and methodologies followed to ensure a locally led planning process and support local leadership.
 - The situational analysis report for the villages described under component 2.3.1.
 - The data, information, maps and analysis described under component 2.3.2.
 - Priorities for investment identified during the Women's Adaptation Labs.
 - Stories and case studies shared by community members related to climate vulnerability, and to local leadership to address these vulnerabilities.



- A monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning strategy to track progress on the Plans.

2.3.4 Develop guidelines on the methodology, in English and Bangla, for Project Implementation Units (PIUs) documenting a practical, step-by-step guide to replicate and scale the locally-led planning approach across all project areas during implementation, by the results of a rapid evaluation of the processes conducted to deliver components from 2.3.1 to 2.3.3.

2.3.5 Develop an approach to deliver capacity building to the PIUs.

2.4 Project Outputs

The Partner is expected to execute the following major outputs:

- A situational analysis report for each of the three villages, as described in component 2.3.1 above.
- Facilitation of house-to-house mapping and enumeration by community mobilizers in the three villages (as described in component 2.3.2).
- Analysis of data gathered by the community mobilizers, and validation by the community.
- Facilitation of Women's Adaptation Labs in the three villages, for the women's groups to engage with technical experts.
- Women's Adaptation Plans for each of the three villages, validated by the participants in the Labs.
- Guidelines in English and Bangla for the PIUs to replicate the methodology, including lessons learnt, in other Project areas.
- A capacity building approach for the PIUs to implement the methodology.

2.5 Project Approach and Methodology

The methodology for developing Women's Adaptation Plans will draw on best practices documented by the GCA in [*Locally Led Planning: A Guide for Building Climate Resilience in Urban Informal Settlements*](#) and on the Partner's experience in facilitating community-led planning in Bangladesh. The following steps are anticipated:

- **Stakeholder mapping:** A mapping of key stakeholders in each of the three villages, to seek their buy-in, understand existing power dynamics, define roles and responsibilities, and convene expertise and leadership to drive the process.
- **Scientific climate risk and vulnerability assessment:** In parallel to the situational analysis, a climate risk and vulnerability analysis is conducted to inform community deliberations, typically in collaboration with a local university. This includes desk research on past climate trends and future projections; generation of downscaled maps on exposure to key climatic risks and hazards, including the identification of hotspots for multi hazard

climatic risks; and an analysis generated to inform community consultations. The assessments, conducted in collaboration with a local university, will draw on data collected by community co-researchers. This data is digitized to identify vulnerable hotspots at the village or community level using GIS shapefiles.

- **Identification/ mobilization/ reactivation/ formation of women's groups:** Existing women's groups are identified, or new groups formed, in the three villages to participate in the Women's Labs.
- **Training in enumeration and mapping:** Selected members of the women's groups are trained as community co-researchers/ mobilizers to collect geotagged data using a tool such as Kobo Toolbox.
- **Village mapping and enumeration:** Data collection and mapping by the co-researchers, guided by a detailed questionnaire developed in consultation with GCA, and in the case of this project. The data is then analyzed and presented to the women's groups for validation and to inform the next step.
- **Community-led climate risk and vulnerability assessment:** The scientific risk assessment and data analysis for each village is presented to the women's groups, for them to prioritize climate risks and vulnerabilities and identify the need for technical expertise, and skills and capacity, to develop and implement solutions.
- **Women's Adaptation Labs:** The women's groups engage with technical experts and trainers (identified on the basis of the outcomes of step 6) to develop locally appropriate solutions, and identify needs for training for related skill and capacity development.
- **Women's Adaptation Plans:** Plans are developed for each village, with the elements listed in 2.3.3 above.
- **Guidelines:** Guidelines are developed to guide implementation in other Project areas, reflecting experiences and lessons from the piloting.
- **Capacity building approach:** An approach for building the capacity of the PIUs to implement the methodology in other Project areas.

3 Alignment with GCA Values and Commitment

- Demonstrated support of the core values of GCA and its commitment to climate action and adaptation.
- Active engagement in partnerships and initiatives with, inter alia, United Nations, intergovernmental, national, subnational, industry or sectoral, non-governmental and other related organizations in support of climate, environmental and/or social causes.
- Demonstrated support of the principles of sustainable development, including inclusion and social and environmental corporate responsibility.
- Compliance with recognized environmental and social standards.



4 Submission Guidelines

4.1 How to Apply

- Only **registered non-profit organizations (e.g., INGO, NGO, CBO, Universities, Company Limited by Guarantee)** are eligible to receive a sub-grant from GCA.
- The organizations responding to this call **must meet the minimum eligibility criteria** and demonstrate their capacity to **implement all the technical criteria**.
- Proposals and all supporting documents must be **submitted as a PDF**, no later than **05 June, 18:00, Central European Time (CET)** to **subgrants@gca.org** and cc'd to **shahrin.mannan@gca.org**.
- Proposals **must include**:
 - **Annex 1**: Project Document (proposal template) addressing the details outlined in this call.
 - **Annex 2**: Completed Partner Information Document & minimum required documents.
 - **Annex 2a**: Budget and Financial Report Template.
- **Important to note**:
 - All registered non-profit organizations are encouraged to respond to this call and complete the templates in as much detail as possible.
 - Responses to **Annex 1** will be considered even if there is a lack of detail or if the form is incomplete.
 - Responses to **Annex 2** will be considered even if some details are lacking, if justified.
 - The template serves as a tool for interested organizations to showcase their technical expertise and experience in response to the call.
 - Organizations need only meet the minimum eligibility criteria to be considered.
- Proposals received **after the closing** date and time **will not be considered**. Organizations will be notified once a decision about the Sub-Grant is made.
- For all questions or requests for additional information contact **shahrin.mannan@gca.org**. The email subject heading should be clearly marked with the following information: **Women's Adaptation Plans for Climate Resilient Livelihoods in the Sundarbans in Bangladesh**.
- If an interested organization has concerns about completing the templates, please reach out.
- Proposals and all supporting documents must be drafted **in English**.
- All applicants will be **notified in writing of the selection process outcome within three weeks** after the submission deadline.
- GCA reserves the right to decline disclosure of the specificity of decision derived by GCA mission due to reasons related to confidentiality.
- GCA reserves the right to accept or reject any submissions, and to annul the selection process and reject all submissions at any time, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected implementing partners.

4.2 Process Overview

- After the deadline, all submissions will undergo an evaluation process.

- The most suitable partner will be selected based on the evaluation outcomes.
- The selected partner will be contacted to conduct a due diligence assessment through in-depth meetings.

5 Project Duration

The duration of the project is **up to eight months**, commencing upon the signing of the subgrant agreement and **completing it no later than 15 March 2026**. Please note that the project duration is fixed and cannot be extended beyond 15 March 2026.

6 Selection Criteria & Evaluation

The evaluation's purpose is to assess the organization's eligibility, and the technical expertise of respondents. The evaluation consists of two sets of selection criteria:

- (1) **Minimum Eligibility Criteria**
- (2) **Technical Expertise**

The first section specifies the minimum eligibility criteria that an organization must meet to qualify for the call. This set of criteria is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Only organizations that pass this initial assessment will proceed to the next stage.

The technical expertise is evaluated based on the relevance and depth of experience and expertise in relation to the criteria outlined in the call, specifically how well these align with achieving the expected results.

6.1 Selection Criteria

Name	Description	Score	
EC	Minimum Eligibility Criteria	Pass/Fail	
EC1	Evidence of registered not-for-profit entity status with a legal presence and registration.		
EC2	Expertise in community engagement, mobilization, community-led climate vulnerability assessments, climate adaptation planning, and facilitating multi-disciplinary dialogues.		
EC3	Working presence in coastal areas (Khulna and Barisal division) of Bangladesh particularly with communities living inside/vicinity of the Sundarbans reserve forest.		
EC4	An established leader in locally led approaches in Bangladesh with minimum of 5 years in operation.		
TC	Technical Expertise <i>Relevance of the proposal to achieve expected results</i>	Max Score: 100	Min Score: 60
TC1	TC1: Specific technical expertise	30	20
	TC1.1 Experience in implementing projects related to gender, livelihoods and climate change (Provide at least 3 project examples).	10	
	TC1.2 Experience in facilitating locally led approaches, preferably locally led adaptation planning (Provide at least 3 project examples).	10	



	TC1.3 Experience in developing manuals/guidelines for project implementation teams (Provide at least 3 project examples).	5	
	TC1.4 Experience in capacity building for government and other project implementation staff.	5	
TC2	TC2: Team strength to deliver quality outputs (qualification as per CFP)	30	20
	TC2.1 Clear distribution of responsibilities, team structure, gender balance and level of effort distribution.	5	
	TC2.2 Relevant expertise of key team members and supporting team.	10	
	TC2.3 Knowledge Management Specialist with proven experience in producing knowledge material, including guidelines and case stories) in English.	5	
	TC2.4 Experience of the Climate Risk Assessment Specialist/GIS Specialist (external consultant – ideally a local university professor) in producing hazard, vulnerability and risk maps for the project area and analyzing the results.	5	
	TC2.5 Examples of established reporting and monitoring practices.	5	
TC3	TC3: Relevance of proposed approach and methodology for achieving expected results	30	15
	TC3.1 Clear and robust methodology to deliver quality outputs.	15	
	TC3.2 Clarity of description of key activities, and alignment with GCA's guidance in this CFP and in the Guide linked above.	10	
	TC3.3 Innovation in techniques or strategies to deliver project results.	5	
TC4	TC4: Alignment with GCA values and experience	10	5
	TC4.1 Alignment to GCA values & commitments.	5	
	TC4.2 Experience with partnerships engagement.	5	
	<i>Scoring for Criteria is based on maximum points. Grading for each criterion under technical expertise will be conducted using the following scale: 0 = not included, 2 = scarcely included, 4 insufficient, 6 good enough, 8 good, 10 excellent to above expectations</i>		

6.2 Exclusionary Criteria

GCA will not engage with any entity whose public image is severely compromised by past activity or advocacy in one of the categories below, or in other areas which may be deemed, at any given time, to reflect negatively on GCA.

Name	Description	Score
EXC	Exclusionary Criteria	Pass/Fail
EXC1	Systematic failure to demonstrate support of the core values of GCA and its commitment to climate action and adaptation.	



EXC2	The organization is not involved in illicit behavior, including organized crime, trafficking, corruption, terrorism or violations of internationally agreed sanctions.	
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6.3 Evaluation

After assessing whether organizations meet the minimum eligibility criteria, the organization with the highest score in the technical evaluation **will be considered** for the sub-grant. The scoring allows GCA to identify the most suitable partner.

A preliminary capacity assessment will be conducted based on the information provided in **Annex 2**. This assessment aims to identify organizational and programmatic risks and **will not impact** the evaluation scoring or partner selection. The insights gained from this assessment **will inform the comprehensive due diligence assessment that the selected partner will undergo**.



Annexes

Annex 1: Sub-Grant Project Document

To be downloaded from website

Annex 2: Partner Information Document

To be downloaded from website

Annex 2a: Budget & Financial Reporting Template

To be downloaded from website