



# GLOBAL CENTER ON ADAPTATION

2024 delivered a stark reminder that our planet is changing faster than ever. Last year was the hottest on record, unleashing erratic weather patterns, dwindling water supplies and fierce competition for scarce resources. These shocks fall hardest on the communities that depend on agriculture and natural ecosystems: three-quarters of the nearly 700 million people living in poverty worldwide rely on farming and natural resources for their survival. As climate change accelerates, preparing for its impacts is no longer optional but essential—yet the annual finance gap for adaptation, now estimated at between US \$194 billion and US \$366 billion, grows ever wider.

Investing in climate adaptation does far more than safeguard homes and habitats. It unlocks economic opportunity by boosting productivity, lowering the costs of disaster response and recovery, creating new markets in resilient infrastructure and green technologies, and stabilizing growth so that communities can attract investment and prosper over the long term. In other words, adaptation is the path to resilient economies: the stronger our defenses against climate shocks, the more we accelerate progress towards sustainable development, shared prosperity and a safer planet for all.

The **Global Center on Adaptation (GCA)** exists to drive that transformation. As the only international organization for climate resilience, GCA partners with governments, businesses and communities at every scale—local, national and continental—to identify high-impact adaptation solutions and integrate the most promising approaches into projects that climate-proof critical sectors while supporting sustainable livelihoods. Our mission is to shield the planet from the worst impacts of warming; our vision is a world in which every community thrives, secure in the knowledge that adaptation today builds prosperity for tomorrow.

Three core approaches guide GCA's work. These are: knowledge, leadership, and action.

## KNOWLEDGE Research for Impact



GCA builds and accelerates climate adaptation knowledge globally. It leads research to fill knowledge gaps, and drives innovation to develop specialized approaches.

## LEADERSHIP Agenda Setting and Advocacy



GCA's convening power brings together the most influential thinkers and decision-makers, while giving a voice to the most vulnerable. The Center formulates policy messages to shape and mobilize global, regional, and local adaptation agendas.

## ACTION Programs



GCA partners with governments, universities, community groups, international finance institutions, national banks, and private investors to design and implement resilience-building investments that protect climate-vulnerable populations and generate employment. We also facilitate access to financing through the Green Climate Fund.

## Our Global and Regional Network

Founded in 2018, GCA is the first international organization to maintain dual headquarters in both the Global North in Rotterdam and in the Global South in Nairobi – underscoring the equal partnership between regions and the conviction that climate adaptation solutions must be co-designed and co-owned. Its regional hubs in Abidjan, Dhaka and Beijing, leverage local expertise to pilot and scale context-specific approaches. Together these centers ensure a continuous, two-way exchange of knowledge and best practices that empowers communities and drives resilient and inclusive growth worldwide.



# SIX THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

Leveraging an extensive network of partners—each contributing unique perspectives, expertise and resources—GCA delivers tangible, sustainable impact across its six thematic focus areas.



## FOOD SECURITY

As climate change increasingly threatens global food systems, GCA is fast-tracking the adoption of climate-smart digital technologies to safeguard food security. In partnership with CGIAR—the world's foremost agricultural research network—we're embedding and scaling these innovations within agriculture investment portfolios funded by international financial institutions. By boosting the resilience and productivity of smallholder farmers, GCA helps protect livelihoods and ensure a stable food supply for a growing population under changing climatic conditions.



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Climate hazards increasingly threaten infrastructure networks and the essential services they support, leading to significant societal and economic losses. GCA embeds climate adaptation into infrastructure planning and investment—at national scales, within cities, across individual assets, and throughout entire catchments—to ensure that new and existing projects deliver resilient, inclusive, and equitable services. By integrating nature-based solutions alongside engineered approaches, we safeguard critical lifelines and foster long-term stability for communities and economies.



## WATER AND URBAN

As climate change intensifies the hydrological cycle—making water availability unpredictable and amplifying the risks of severe floods and droughts—GCA partners with national and city governments to deliver climate-resilient water services and fast-track urban adaptation. By combining advanced risk assessments, nature-based solutions such as restored wetlands and green infrastructure, and smart water management technologies, we help cities secure reliable water supplies, mitigate flood and drought impacts, and create healthier, more resilient urban environments.



## LOCALLY LED ADAPTATION

Locally Led Adaptation empowers the communities on the frontlines of climate change—those already pioneering their own solutions—by providing the resources, authority, and technical support they need to turn local ingenuity into lasting impact. GCA mobilizes funding, facilitates capacity-building, and forges partnerships that enable community-driven projects to flourish, ensuring that adaptation is not only locally designed but locally owned and sustained.



## YOUTH EDUCATION AND ADAPTATION JOBS

With 87 percent of the world's young people living in developing countries—regions on the frontlines of climate risk—many face unemployment or underemployment as they enter the workforce. GCA equips these future leaders with the knowledge, skills, and platforms they need to drive adaptation in their communities and beyond. Through tailored education programs, hands-on training in climate-resilient practices and direct support for climate adaptation-focused employment opportunities, we empower youth to become advocates, innovators, and agents of change in the global response to warming.



## CLIMATE ADAPTATION FINANCE

Achieving a climate-resilient global economy demands mobilizing billions in new funding and redirecting trillions in existing capital toward risk-informed investments. GCA strengthens the capacity of vulnerable countries to design and deploy large-scale adaptation programs by introducing innovative planning tools, blending public and private financing, and unlocking essential resources—ensuring that adaptation projects are bankable, scalable, and tailored to withstand our changing climate.



## GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

GCA integrates locally led adaptation with gender-transformative frameworks to ensure that international finance-backed projects address the unique needs of climate-vulnerable and marginalized groups. By recognizing the intersecting dimensions of gender and social inequality, we work with communities and financial institutions to design and implement investments that promote equal access, empower women and marginalized voices, and foster inclusive resilience across societies.



# OUR WORK IN AFRICA



The **Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program (AAP)** stands as Africa's flagship response to the climate crisis. Co-designed by the African Development Bank and the Global Center on Adaptation and endorsed by the African Union, AAP is set to climate-proof US \$25 billion in investments by 2025. By fast-tracking adaptation measures across the continent, it will help unlock sustainable development and deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The program concentrates its efforts on four strategic pillars—each underpinned by clear, measurable targets:



**Food Security:** The goal is to shape at least **\$10 billion** in investments to build climate-smart agriculture and resilient food systems supporting food security for at least **38 million farmers and herders in 26 African countries**.



**Infrastructure and Nature-based Solutions:** Here, the goal is to mainstream innovative climate resilience solutions, including nature-based solutions, into **\$12 billion** worth of investments in infrastructure for water, transport, energy, and urban systems. This will ensure climate-resilient infrastructure assets and services for **100 million people**.



**Youth Entrepreneurship and Adaptation Jobs:** The goal here is to support **one million youths** with entrepreneurship skills and create **five million climate adaptation jobs** through international financial institution investments worth over **\$2 billion**.



**Climate Adaptation Finance:** The goal is to unlock access to **\$1 billion** in climate adaptation finance. The idea is to achieve this by designing innovative public and private financial instruments and solutions that include structuring resilience bonds and debt-for-resilience swaps. This influences international financial institution investments for the financial sector and develops mechanisms for designing bankable adaptation investments and monetization of relevant adaptation benefits.

The African Development Bank has committed US \$12.5 billion to the AAP, complemented by additional concessional finance through the Climate Action Window of the African Development Fund—its lending arm dedicated to the continent's most vulnerable, low-income countries. GCA oversees the AAP's Upstream Financing Facility, which channels resources to the Center and its implementation partners—many of them African institutions—to embed climate adaptation and resilience components into projects led by international financial institutions, multilateral development banks, and other public- and private-sector development financiers.

Since its launch in January 2021, the AAP Upstream Financing Facility has shaped US \$18 billion in investments financed by the African Development Bank and other partners – including the World Bank – that strengthen resilience for over 112 million people. One dollar invested in the AAP Upstream Financing Facility helps climate proof US \$100 worth of investments to bring the most effective climate adaptation solutions to Africa. These tangible results have empowered GCA's global advocacy, underpinning high-level initiatives that have convened more than 80 heads of state, government leaders and their ministers to drive urgent action on climate adaptation.

Resources Committed  
to Support



**86**

IFI projects

Investments  
Influenced



**\$18.3 billion**

of investments

Countries  
Worked In



**40**

countries

Expected Number of  
People Benefitting







**112.3 million**

people

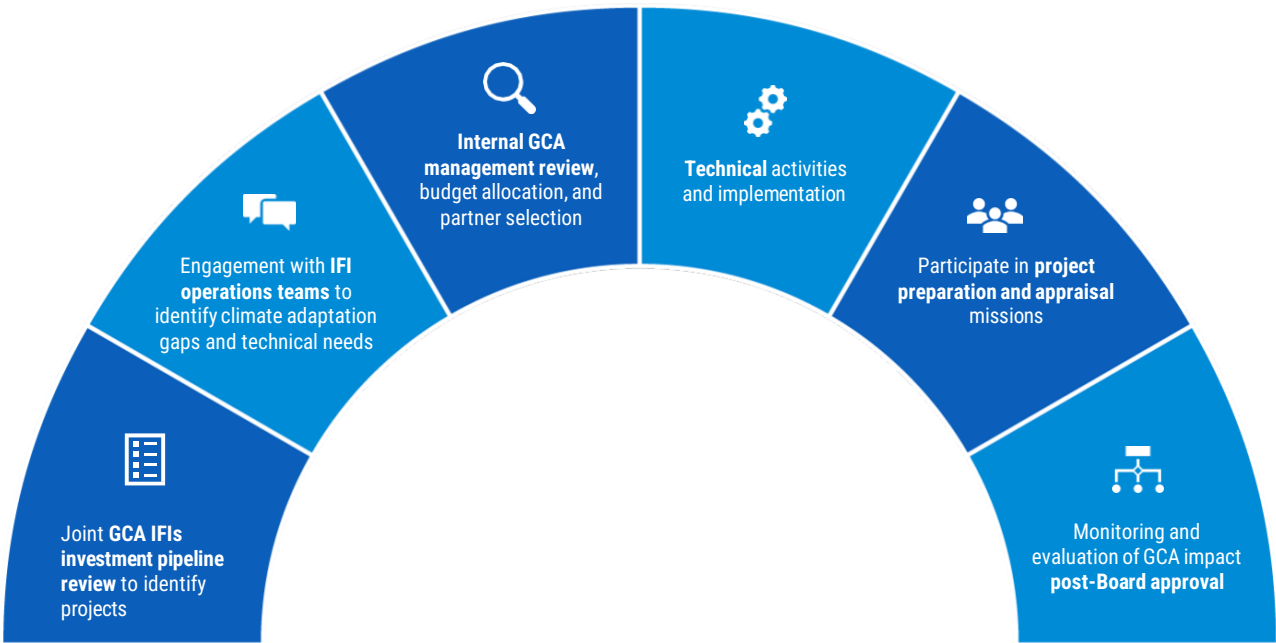
# OUR OPERATING MODEL

GCA works with key partners to achieve climate adaptation solutions at scale leveraging investments through the following areas:

| <br>Mainstreaming climate adaptation in international finance institution investments  | <br>Enabling direct access to global climate finance  | <br>Scaling domestic private sector participation in climate adaptation  | <br>Supporting financial system policy reform                            |
|---|--|---|---|
| GCA provides expert climate adaptation advisory services throughout the design and implementation of investment projects funded by the African Development Bank and other international finance institutions. By embedding technical capacity within national agencies, we ensure these projects not only succeed but also scale—amplifying resilience and impact across communities. | GCA empowers national institutions to secure climate adaptation funds by guiding them through proposal development and submission. We also facilitate the creation and financing of locally led adaptation plans, ensuring communities design and own the solutions that build their resilience. | GCA partners with financial institutions—including national banks—to advance climate adaptation finance by stress-testing portfolios, crafting robust risk-screening frameworks, and pinpointing emerging adaptation markets. We also nurture climate-focused entrepreneurs, helping them scale their businesses and drive innovative solutions that strengthen resilience. | GCA supports the International Monetary Fund in designing climate adaptation policy reform measures through the IMF Resilience and Sustainability Facility. |

## WORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO SHAPE CLIMATE ADAPTATION INVESTMENTS

GCA and its implementation partners support the mainstreaming of climate adaptation components into the projects of multilateral development banks and other public and private development finance institutions.



## OUR WORK IN ASIA

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### Bangladesh

Building on the success of the Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program, since 2022 GCA has partnered with the Government of Bangladesh to co-design and implement scalable adaptation solutions across South Asia. Drawing on the AAAP's proven model, this collaboration focuses on three strategic thematic areas to accelerate impact, strengthen resilience and ensure that locally driven innovations reach the communities that need them most.



**Locally Led Adaptation:** The goal is to ensure that the needs of poor and vulnerable communities are integrated into investments worth at least **\$1 billion**. This will help increase the resilience of at least 1 million people by 2026. Launched in 2022, GCA's Global Hub on *Locally Led Adaptation* also informs, connects, and inspires local communities and practitioners around the world.



**Nature-based Solutions for Systemic Resilience:** The goal is to mainstream innovative climate resilience solutions, including nature-based solutions, into **\$3 billion** worth of investments for resilient infrastructure, urban, and food systems that provide services for **20 million people** by 2026.



**Climate Adaptation Finance:** The goal is to unlock **\$1 billion** in climate finance by 2026.

Resources Committed  
to Support



7

International Financial  
Institution board approved projects

Investments  
Influenced



**\$2.5 billion**  
investments

Expected Number of  
People Benefitting



**21 million**  
people

### China

China faces mounting climate pressures as changing weather patterns strain its natural ecosystems and increasingly disrupt social and economic systems. In 2021, China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment unveiled a decade-long national climate adaptation strategy to address these risks. As a strategic partner to the Chinese government in climate adaptation, GCA brings cutting-edge expertise and global best practices to inform and support the strategy's implementation—ensuring that adaptation measures are both scientifically robust and locally relevant.



# LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

## SUPERVISORY & EXECUTIVE BOARD



**Macky Sall**  
4<sup>th</sup> President of the Republic  
of Senegal  
Chair of the Supervisory Board



**Ban Ki-moon**  
8<sup>th</sup> Secretary-General of the  
United Nations  
Honorary Chair of the  
Supervisory Board



**Feike Sijbesma**  
Honorary Chairman of Royal DSM  
Co-Chair of the Supervisory Board



**Professor Patrick V. Verkoijen**  
President and Chief Executive  
Officer



**Francis X. Suarez**  
43<sup>rd</sup> Mayor of Miami



**Rodger Voorhies**  
President, Global Growth and  
Opportunity Division of the  
Gates Foundation



**Nardos Bekele-Thomas**  
Chief Executive Officer of the  
African Union Development  
Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD)



**Jan Peter Balkenende**  
Former Prime Minister of the  
Netherlands

## ADVISORY BOARD



**Mia Mottley**  
Prime Minister  
of Barbados



**Samia Suluhu Hassan**  
President of the United  
Republic of Tanzania



**William Samoei Ruto**  
President of the  
Republic of Kenya



**Hilda Heine**  
President of the Republic of  
the Marshall Islands



**John Dramani Mahama**  
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**Duma Boko**  
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Francophonie and International  
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Ambassador of Denmark



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Minister for Ecology &  
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Développement



**Åsmund Grøver Aukrust**  
Minister of International  
Development of Norway



**Carola Schouten**  
Mayor of Rotterdam,  
The Netherlands



**Akinwumi Adesina**  
8<sup>th</sup> President of the  
African Development  
Bank Group



**Kristalina Georgieva**  
Managing Director of the  
International  
Monetary Fund



**Mahmoud Ali Youssouf**  
Chairperson of the African  
Union Commission



## STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT



"For those who are becoming increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and for whom the current system isn't working, the stakes couldn't be higher. I look forward to working with the Global Center on Adaptation to ensure governments engage with greater urgency to fix a broken financial system and fulfil their commitment to double adaptation finance by 2025."

**Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados**



"I have had the opportunity to interact with the Global Center for Adaptation, an international organization based in Rotterdam in the Netherlands, whose constitution is an appealing emblem of our aspirations, from the aspirational design of its global headquarters and futuristic regional headquarters in Nairobi, comprising green walls and roofs as well as rain gardens, to the collaborative culture of its staff."

**William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya**



"In Tanzania, GCA is working with our partners to bring innovative adaptation solutions to unlock much-needed climate finance. I can confirm that the AAAP is working well in our part."

**Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the Republic of Tanzania**



"Climate change is an existential crisis facing the world today. It deeply affects the poor and threatens to undo decades of development efforts. The world needs to scale up climate adaptation. Supporting affected countries in e.g., Africa in adapting to climate change is a priority for Denmark."

**Ole Thonke, Undersecretary for Development Policy and Climate Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark**



"The challenges posed by climate change are pressing, and Norway is committed to working with partners around the world to build resilience and protect vulnerable communities."

**Åsmund Grøver Aukrust, Minister of International Development, Norway**

# PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

GCA partners with the public and private sectors to scale innovative adaptation solutions, shape high-level policy, advance cutting-edge research, and drive impactful advocacy and communications. Our diverse network of partners—including international financial and multilateral institutions, governments, foundations and trusts, think tanks and universities, private companies and social enterprises, civil society groups, and youth-led organizations—unites behind a shared mission: accelerating climate adaptation action and delivering measurable results on the ground.

## Funding Partners

GCA's work is made possible through the generous support of:



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



Partnership | Progress | Prosperity

Gates Foundation



In partnership with

Canada



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK



MINISTÈRE DE L'EUROPE ET DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité

## International Financial Institutions

GCA works with the following international financial institutions to mainstream climate adaptation into their large-scale investments:



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP



THE WORLD BANK  
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP



European Bank  
for Reconstruction and Development



European Investment Bank



ASIAN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT BANK



Investing in rural people



Bank aus Verantwortung

## Key Strategic Partners



GLOBAL  
CENTER ON  
ADAPTATION

INVITATION

Would you like to learn more about our work and how you can help catalyze climate adaptation action?

Please reach out to our Development Team, to explore opportunities for cooperation.

[development@gca.org](mailto:development@gca.org)  
[www.gca.org](http://www.gca.org)