



Enhancing Direct Access to GCF Funding for Equity Group to Scale MSMEs Adoption of Climate Technologies in East Africa

Initially launched as a partnership between the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) and Equity BCDC in the DRC, the collaboration evolved when Equity BCDC merged into Equity Group Holdings (EGH). The accreditation scope was subsequently expanded from a single country (DRC) to a regional program covering Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, and the DRC. Through targeted

technical assistance, GCA supported Equity Group Holdings in pursuing Green Climate Fund (GCF) accreditation under the Project-Specific Accreditation Approach (PSAA), marking a milestone in unlocking private-sector-led access to climate finance across East Africa.

Adaptation Need

MSMEs across East Africa are disproportionately vulnerable to the worsening impacts of climate change. These businesses – especially in agriculture, water, fisheries, and energy sectors – face heightened exposure to droughts, floods, erratic rainfall, and rising temperatures. Climate models project increased frequency and intensity of such events, threatening productivity and income stability for millions. For example, in Kenya alone, up to 98% of agriculture is rainfed, making it acutely sensitive to climate variability. In Rwanda, water scarcity is projected to worsen, directly affecting hydropower-dependent SMEs and rural food systems. Despite their crucial role in local economies, MSMEs encounter significant barriers in adopting climate-resilient technologies. These include lack of affordable financing, limited access to technical information, weak market linkages, and inadequate institutional support. Women-led businesses—often in informal sectors—are particularly disadvantaged, facing greater barriers in accessing credit and climate-smart tools.

GCA’s Added Value

The GCA-EGH partnership plays a pioneering role in advancing private sector engagement in adaptation finance in Sub-Saharan Africa, where regionally accredited private-sector DAEs remain virtually absent. Their collaboration led to the Scaling-up MSMEs Adoption of Climate Technologies in East Africa (SMACT) Concept Note, a project targeting 1.42 million direct beneficiaries (30% women) and supporting 140,000 MSMEs through concessional financing, LFI strengthening, and access to climate technologies and capacity-building for improved resilience and adaptive decision-making.

Total Investment Value Influenced	
N/A	
Beneficiaries	
N/A	
IFI Implementation period	
2023 - 2026	
Program	
Adaptation Finance	
Partners	
Equity Group Holdings	

Status

Completed

Countries



SDG contribution



PROJECT GOALS

Mainstreaming Adaptation and Resilience

To mainstream adaptation and resilience (A&R), GCA's support to EGH through the SMACT project integrates climate adaptation directly into financial systems targeting underserved communities. The project aims to mobilize USD 224.5 million to support MSMEs and LFIs through concessional lending, technical assistance, and climate-smart training. The focus on gender-responsive capacity building and identification of eligible climate technologies ensures alignment with community needs.

Expected Outcomes

EGH advances its GCF accreditation at the regional level, positioning it to directly access and manage climate finance for adaptation and mitigation across six countries in East and Central Africa.

Mobilization of USD 224.5 million through the SMACT program, unlocking private capital and de-risking adaptation investments via innovative financial instruments tailored to climate vulnerable MSMEs and underserved markets.

Improved institutional and technical capacity within EGH to design and deploy

inclusive financial products, resulting in support for 140,000 MSMEs and direct benefits to 1.42 million people, including 426,000 women, with an additional 5.9 million indirect beneficiaries across key sectors like agriculture, clean energy, and water.

TIMELINE

GCA Support Status

Technical Assistance Preparation

GCA Support Implementation

GCA Support Completion

Monitoring

Project Investment Value

Total Investment Value
N/A

IFI INVESTMENT VALUE

N/A

OTHER INVESTMENT
VALUE

N/A

IFI partners



Equity Group
Holdings

CONTACTS

GENERAL MEDIA INQUIRIES

info@gca.org

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

ClimateFinance@gca.org