



African Climate Foundation Strategy 2026–2030

Shaping the transition from within





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African Climate Foundation

Strategy 2026–2030

Shaping the transition from within

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACF	African Climate Foundation
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFSTC	African Food Systems Transformation Collective
AFOLU	Agriculture, forestry and other land use
AGN	African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change
AI	Artificial intelligence
AU	African Union
COP	Conference of the Parties
COP 28	28th United Nations Climate Change Conference
CPI	Climate Policy Initiative
DFI	Development finance institution
G20	Group of Twenty
G77	Group of 77
GCA	Global Center on Adaptation
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIDEP	Green Industrialisation Development Expert Panel
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JETP	Just Energy Transition Partnership
NEH	New Economy Hub
PMU	Project Management Unit
RECs	Regional economic communities
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Trade and Development
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WTO	World Trade Organization

Message from the chairperson

The international system is in a period of disruption. Multilateral assumptions that shaped the past three decades are weakening, geopolitical shocks now reach African economies in days rather than over years and the rules governing trade, finance and climate action are being rewritten in real time. The climate transition has become a central arena of changing landscapes, tying energy, minerals, industrial policy and finance to questions of national strategy and global influence.

Africa enters this moment carrying the inherited costs of an uneven system. Trade rules remain asymmetric. Debt servicing compresses fiscal space across the continent. Capital is priced against perception instead of the fundamentals. As a result, African economies pay what amounts to a 'narrative tax', the additional borrowing and investment costs deriving from how the continent is described in global markets and media rather than from its actual performance. These pressures are connected expressions of the same asymmetry, and they are the immediate environment in which any African climate and development strategy must now operate.

There is another side to this current global disruption. New norms, new institutions and new hierarchies are being formed, and the continent is less invested in preserving an order that has historically unduly penalised it. This position carries a real opportunity, provided that African stakeholders can act with coherence, negotiate from informed positions and clearly define what they want the next system to do for them.

The fundamental conviction of African Climate Foundation is that the climate and development future of this continent must be grounded in African realities and determined by African agency, not decided by external powers. The strategy for 2026–2030 responds to the present moment by deepening that conviction in practice. It moves from programmatic breadth to systems integration, concentrates support on the priority areas that hold the greatest leverage for African transformation, and orients ACF to support the governments, coalitions and communities already driving the transition.

This strategy is a commitment to amplify that support over the next few years.

Prof. Carlos Lopes

Chairperson of the Board

Message from the executive director

When we began this strategy refresh, we made a deliberate choice: not to write a strategy about Africa but one shaped by it. The conviction that Africa's climate and development future must be defined from within, on its own terms, is the founding principle of the African Climate Foundation's (ACF) existence. It had to be the founding principle of this process, too.

This strategy was not built in a room. It was built over years of showing up at multilateral forums and regional summits, in government offices and community engagements, and in partner conversations and programmes that define ACF's everyday work. Every partner conversation, every programme refined in response to what the evidence showed, every engagement that deepened our understanding of what it actually takes to shift systems on the ground all fed into the thinking behind this document.

Over the past year, we also undertook a structured process of reflection and consultation. We drew on the accumulated insight of our programme and country strategies. We convened six scenario planning workshops with more than 130 experts to explore how geopolitical shifts, demographic realities and the accelerating pace of the global transition would shape Africa's choices between now and 2030. We asked our grantees directly: what is working, what is missing and where can ACF add the most value? We worked internally, aligning departmental strategies with our growing ambitions and engaging our donors candidly on where we needed to improve.

What emerged was not a new direction. It was a sharpened one. The conversations confirmed what our experience had already suggested: that depth drives greater impact than breadth, and that integration across policy, finance and institutional capability unlocks transformation. Importantly, these discussions also confirmed that the most important thing ACF can do is help build the conditions in which African actors can move faster, negotiate from greater strength and hold direction under sustained pressure.

The strategy that follows reflects all of this, not as a summary of consultations but as a genuine response to them. It carries the voices of communities and financiers, negotiators and researchers, governments and civil society. It is grounded in African realities because it was built from within them.

The moment demands no less. And ACF is ready.

Saliem Fakir

Executive Director

Who we are:

Our vision, mission, objectives and values

Vision

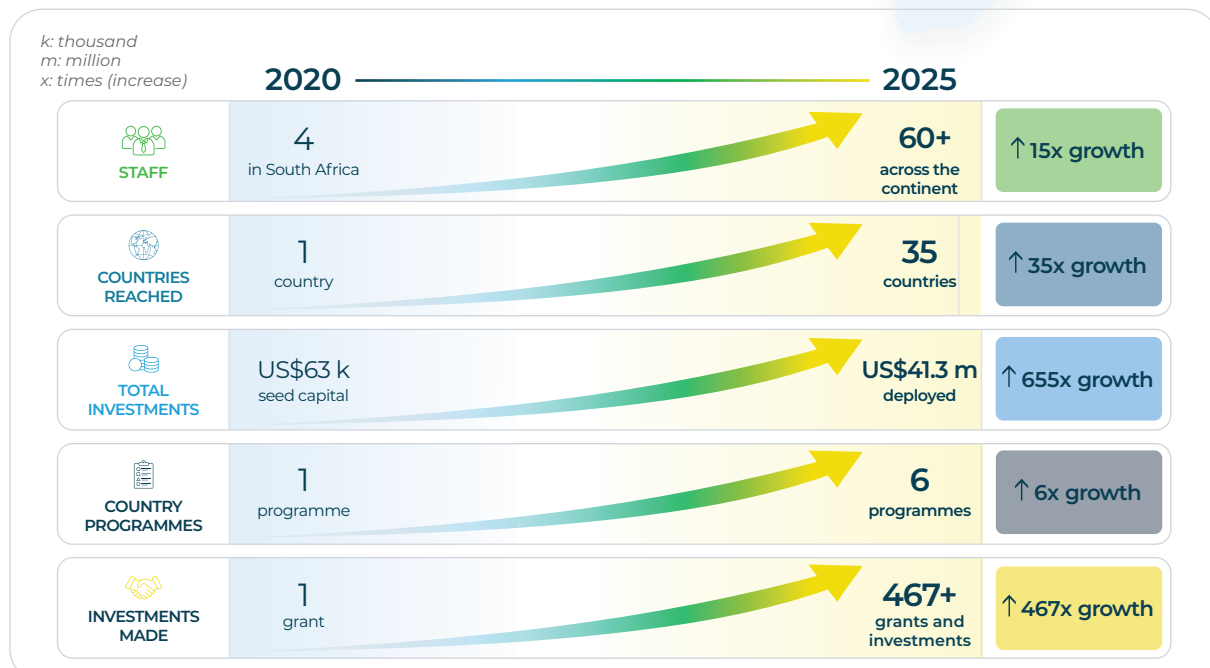
A vibrant and climate-resilient Africa in which inclusive socio-economic development delivers sustainable and equitable growth.

Mission

Supporting interventions at the nexus of climate and development that can deliver long-term socio-economic transformation and inclusive development on the African continent.



The numbers tell the story: 2020–2025



Strategic objectives

Strengthening African agency and collective action

1

Amplify Africa's collective climate agency by strengthening the institutions, coalitions and platforms through which African actors define and drive their own transition.

Improving ecosystems for lasting impact

2

Advance Africa's climate-aligned and inclusive development pathways through agile, responsive and strategic approaches to grantmaking, fiscal hosting and ecosystem strengthening.

Securing long-term financial sustainability and resilience

3

Mobilise and deploy diverse, sustainable and mission-aligned financial resources to maintain long-term impact and partnerships, reducing vulnerability to external shocks.

Building institutional capacity for continental delivery

4

Build a continent-wide operational architecture that enables agile delivery, accelerates capital deployment and deepens regional engagement in step with ACF's growing ambition.

Measuring what matters: impacts, learning and accountability

5

Safeguard impact integrity through adaptive measurement systems that assess long-term contribution, drive systemic learning and ensure accountability to partners, funders and the communities that ACF serves.

Our values



Empowerment

We empower communities, build local agency and support lasting, community-driven solutions to Africa's climate challenges.



Collaboration

We work across geographies, disciplines and communities with openness and humility, co-creating African-led solutions for a just climate transition.



Accountability

We hold ourselves accountable to our mission, our partners and the communities we serve. We act with transparency and a commitment to continuous learning and responsible stewardship.



Integrity

We build trust through consistent, evidence-based work and deliver on our promises with professionalism and clarity.



Commitment

We remain focused and resilient in the face of complexity, guided by a long-term vision for sustainable and equitable development across Africa.

Looking back on the previous strategy period: Our journey to date

The African Climate Foundation (ACF) was born out of a simple but powerful idea. For climate philanthropy to have a real impact in Africa, it needs an African institution rooted in the continent's realities, one that can navigate its complexities and is trusted by those driving change on the ground.

That vision was formalised in ACF's founding documents through a clear and practical mandate to administer grants and deliver projects that have a positive impact on climate change and advance low-carbon development in Africa. From the outset, ACF realised that fulfilling this mandate would require strong governance and African leadership. A two-tier structure was therefore established: a technical board responsible for operational oversight and delivery, and an advisory council of African thought leaders shaping strategy and programmatic direction.

This governance structure became an anchor in ACF's formative years. It embedded rigour, accountability and institutional discipline, laying the foundation for the organisation's reputation for integrity and professionalism. It also guided ACF's earliest work, first and most formative in South Africa. The mission there was deliberately focused: supporting South Africa's transition to a low-carbon, inclusive and climate-resilient economy, but the ambition was always continental.

South Africa became more than a starting point. It was the environment in which ACF's approach was forged. Working alongside the government, civil society, the labour sector and research institutes, ACF supported technical analysis, strengthened dialogue and helped to advance processes that contributed to the launch of South Africa's Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP). These engagements were defining. They underscored the necessity of aligning climate ambition with economic transformation and social inclusion, and highlighted the institutional conditions required for durable transformation.

The lessons drawn from this experience shaped ACF's next phase. The launch of the organisation's *Strategic Framework 2021–2025* marked a deliberate expansion beyond a single-country focus. The strategy articulated what was then pioneering in global climate philanthropy and has since become widely recognised: that climate action and development are inseparable. From the beginning, ACF championed the climate and development nexus, recognising that Africa's transition must extend beyond decarbonisation to deliver structural economic transformation, social inclusion and justice.

What began as focused national engagement evolved into a broader continental mandate. The institutional foundations established in those early years, coupled with strong governance, African leadership and practical engagement at the intersection of climate and development, enabled ACF to expand across Africa with coherence and credibility.

As the organisation matured, the two-tier governance structure (consisting of the technical board and the advisory council) was consolidated into a single board, streamlining oversight while preserving the African thought leadership and technical depth that continue to define ACF today.

The years that followed brought steady and substantial growth. In 2020, total investments amounted to just over US\$63 000 in South Africa alone. Today, ACF has made more than 467 investments totalling approximately US\$41.3 million across the continent. The team has grown from four South Africa-based professionals to more than 60 working throughout Africa by February 2026.

This growth is evident not only in scale but also in presence. In addition to South Africa, ACF now operates dedicated country programmes in Senegal, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Zambia, each supported by local teams working alongside governments, civil society, labour, business and research institutes. Active programming is deepening across a growing number of additional countries – including Zimbabwe, Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe – where local teams are being established. Beyond these anchor countries, ACF's grantmaking has reached 35 countries.

Over time, ACF's portfolio has expanded to address the full spectrum of Africa's climate and development priorities – energy access and just transitions, sustainable land use and agriculture, adaptation and resilience, electric mobility and green industrialisation, green minerals, sustainable finance, and international partnerships. Across these areas, ACF has become a trusted bridge-builder, connecting political, technical, financial and advocacy ecosystems to accelerate meaningful and durable change.

This trajectory reflects three key factors. First, the exceptional talent and commitment of the ACF team, professionals who combine technical and operational excellence with deep contextual understanding. Second, the growing demand across Africa for credible, African-led institutions capable of supporting national and regional climate and development agendas in informed and practical ways. And third, the reputation that ACF has built as a reliable partner, one that listens, learns and collaborates rather than prescribes.

Throughout this journey, ACF has been guided by a consistent philosophy: learning by doing. The organisation has tested ideas, adapted approaches and refined its model in response to experience and shifting contexts. This culture of reflection and responsiveness has enabled the organisation to remain agile, trusted and relevant in a rapidly changing landscape.

The founding purpose remains constant: to deliver tangible and positive climate and development impact in Africa. What has expanded is the scale, ambition and confidence with which ACF pursues that purpose – grounded in the conviction that Africa's climate and development future must be shaped from within, on its own terms and for its own people.

Six years on, ACF has evolved from proof of concept to a continental platform with the institutional depth, partnerships and credibility required to operate at scale. The next phase is not about expansion for its own sake. It is about deliberate strategic choice: focusing effort, sharpening priorities and deepening systemic impact. This 2026–2030 organisational strategy outlines that direction.

The context today: Why this moment matters

A defining moment for climate and development

Africa stands at a decisive moment. Climate impacts are intensifying as global economic relationships shift, geopolitical competition deepens and technological change accelerates. These forces are no longer unfolding in parallel. They are converging around the climate transition, shaping economies, institutions and human opportunity for decades to come.

Climate and development cannot be separated. Energy access, resilience, industrialisation, finance, jobs and sovereignty are all part of a single transformation. The question is no longer whether a transition will occur but on whose terms: who holds value, and who bears the risks? The decisions made now – on energy systems, adaptation pathways, industrial strategies, trade, infrastructure, technology and finance – will determine whether African economies become more climate-resilient, competitive and inclusive, or remain locked into patterns of extraction, dependency and inequality.

People are already paying the price

These dynamics are not theoretical. Across the continent, climate instability is already a lived reality. Droughts disrupt agriculture and water systems, floods damage homes, roads and energy infrastructure, and heat stress erodes health, productivity and urban liveability.

Behind these pressures are people. Farmers are watching harvests fail. Workers are labouring in dangerous heat. Families are becoming displaced as floods sweep through their communities. Mothers are stretching limited food to feed their children. Young people, particularly girls, are pulled from school as livelihoods collapse.

Climate shocks are reshaping migration patterns, deepening food insecurity, straining public budgets, disrupting supply chains and redefining development choices across the continent – exacerbating inequalities along gender, geographic and income lines.

At the global level, emissions remain misaligned with agreed-upon climate goals. Commitments have multiplied, but implementation has lagged. Each year of delay raises costs, and the consequences of inaction will be borne most heavily by those least responsible for the crisis.

The global climate transition is competitive, not neutral

Climate action has become inseparable from geopolitical and economic competition. Energy transitions, green minerals, green industrial policy, technology standards and climate finance are now tied to national security, trade strategy and global influence. What was once framed as technical cooperation has become a central arena of strategic contestation.

For African countries, the climate transition presents both leverage and risk. The global demand for Africa's resources, markets and labour is rising, particularly in sectors that are tied to decarbonisation. Yet without coordination and clear, climate-aligned development priorities, countries risk entering into arrangements that constrain policy space, limit domestic value addition or transfer environmental and social costs onto vulnerable communities.

The terms of engagement, therefore, matter profoundly. Where coordination is strong, African actors can negotiate with clarity, capture more value and shape trajectories. Where it is weak, external priorities fill the vacuum. Meaningful influence means setting priorities, coordinating across borders and ensuring that partnerships reinforce rather than undermine sustainable development, justice and equitable opportunity.

The finance gap is structural, not incidental

Central to this challenge is finance. Although Africa contributes the least to global emissions, it receives only about 3% of global climate finance.¹ High debt-servicing costs compress fiscal space, and elevated borrowing costs inflate the cost of capital for governments and firms alike. The broader financing gap reflects not a shortage of investable opportunities but structural risk perceptions, fragmented pipelines and limited access to long-term capital. The financial architecture does not yet match the scale or nature of Africa's transformation opportunity.

The consequences are systemic: where capital is scarce, short term or mispriced, even strong policy frameworks cannot scale. When financial structures are poorly designed, risk is transferred to the governments and communities least able to absorb it. Reform momentum is nonetheless growing. The strategic question is not simply how to mobilise more capital but also how to structure it so that it builds domestic capability, strengthens sovereignty and sustains transformation over time. Climate finance must serve transformation, not merely transactions.

Africa's structural advantages are real, but not automatic

These dynamics play out against a defining structural backdrop: Africa's population is young and growing. By 2050, one in four people globally will be African.² This demographic trajectory creates the potential for a powerful demographic dividend – but only when economies generate productive employment, expand domestic value addition and integrate into a climate-aligned global economy.

Technological change offers powerful tools to raise productivity and expand access, from digital systems and artificial intelligence (AI) to advanced automation and clean energy technologies. Yet ownership, governance and value capture will determine whether these shifts widen opportunity or deepen exclusion.

Low-carbon transitions alone will not guarantee inclusive growth. They must be deliberately integrated with industrial policy, skills development and domestic capability-building. Without this integration, climate transition risks reinforcing structural dependency rather than transforming it. Whether Africa captures the gains from both demographic momentum and technological change depends, above all, on the strength of its institutions.

Holding direction under pressure

Ambitious climate strategies depend on institutions that function consistently over time. Across the continent, institutional performance varies, shaped by capacity constraints, resource pressures and external influence. Regional bodies face challenges, especially where cross-border climate resilience, energy integration or industrial coordination is required. Civil society and research institutions remain essential to accountability, innovation and public voice, yet operate in a tightening financial and political space.

Strengthening institutional performance, therefore, requires more than technical assistance. It demands attention to governance, incentives, coordination mechanisms and the realities of the political economy. Climate and development outcomes will depend less on formal commitments and more on whether institutions can sustain action, manage trade-offs and hold long-term direction under pressure.

The transition will be shaped from within, or imposed from without

Ultimately, Africa's climate and development trajectory will be determined by African agency. The transition is competitive and uneven, shaped by shifting power dynamics. It will not automatically deliver equitable outcomes.

1 African Development Bank (AfDB) (2024) COP29: African leaders urge rapid increase in climate finance for adaptation and green growth. Abidjan: AfDB

2 World Bank (2024) World Development Indicators. Washington, DC: World Bank

Africa boasts assets of global significance: renewable energy potential, green minerals, growing markets, a strategic geographic location and a dynamic young population. Whether these assets translate into durable, climate-aligned development gains is not predetermined. It depends on coherence across policy domains, assertiveness in negotiations and the ability to direct capital towards domestic value creation. Above all, it relies on institutions that have the strength and continuity to hold that course.

Where ACF fits in

ACF exists to ensure that the continent's climate transition is shaped from within.

ACF is an African institution in the 'fullest' sense: built on the continent, led from the ground and trusted by governments, coalitions and communities because it has earned that trust through years of practical, non-prescriptive engagement. The organisation was established with a clear conviction that for the climate transition to serve Africa, it had to be shaped by African actors, grounded in African realities and accountable to African priorities. That conviction has only solidified over time.

ACF's role is to support, not to lead. African governments, institutions, coalitions and communities are already driving the transition. The organisation's work is to strengthen their capacity to act – helping to create the conditions in which they can move faster, negotiate from positions of strength and hold direction under sustained pressure. This is the foundation of everything that ACF does.

What makes ACF distinctive is not any single instrument, but the model through which it works. In each country and region where the organisation operates, it supports an investment platform approach: helping to align policy, finance, investment and institutional capability simultaneously, so that progress in one area accelerates the others. This is not project philanthropy. It is systems work, and it requires the kind of deep, long-term presence that ACF has spent six years building throughout the continent.

In practice, this means supporting communities, civil society, labour, governments, financiers and global institutions in shaping enabling policy and redirecting capital towards Africa's priorities. It involves helping to strengthen the coalitions and movements that give African actors a greater collective voice. It also means building the ideas and analysis that help those actors think through and act on the challenges they face. And it entails supporting the institutions driving change so that they can define the transition on their own terms. By acting simultaneously on policy, finance, investment, institutional capability and ideas, ACF helps to shift the system – not just the symptoms – of Africa's climate transition.

This support is delivered through three integrated instruments: strategic grantmaking, fiscal hosting and incubation. Each instrument fills a distinct gap. Together, they are designed not to build ACF's own footprint but to strengthen the ecosystem around it.

The measure of success is not the size of ACF's portfolio. It is the growing strength, autonomy and agency of the African institutions, coalitions and movements that ACF supports. Against this backdrop, the priorities that follow outline where the organisation will focus its support over the next strategy period and why.



Case study

Pata, Senegal: What resilience looks like from the ground up

In one of Senegal's poorest regions, a 12-hectare market garden sat largely unused in Pata, a commune in Kolda. The land was there. The water was there. What was missing was electricity.

ACF supported ENDA Energie, a local non-governmental organisation, to install a 32.7 kilowatt-peak (kWp) solar system that brought the garden back to life. But the work did not stop at infrastructure. Over 75 young people and women were trained in production, processing and enterprise management. Forty-five direct jobs and 100 indirect jobs were created within seven months, and the municipality developed a Territorial Climate Energy Plan with the institutional anchors to sustain it.

Pata has shaped how ACF thinks about community-scale investment: clean energy, productive capacity, local skills and governance are not separate interventions. They work – and last – only when they are addressed together.




From breadth to integration: Our strategic priorities

The six years since ACF was established have been consequential. Climate impacts have intensified. The geopolitical and financial landscape has changed profoundly. African countries are asserting their own transition agendas with greater confidence and ambition. The climate finance architecture has grown more complex, and the demands on the institutions navigating it have increased in tandem. ACF has grown too – in relationships, credibility and depth of engagement continent-wide.



In its early years, ACF's portfolio was shaped by the breadth of demand from partner countries and institutions. Responding to that demand was the right instinct. It grounded the organisation's work in real priorities, built relationships across the continent and generated the experience and insight on which this strategy is built. Over time, ACF developed an interconnected portfolio spanning energy access and transitions, green industrialisation, adaptation and resilience, sustainable finance, green minerals, electric mobility, sustainable land use and agriculture, and international partnerships.

The learning from that period is clear: depth and integration drive greater impact than breadth alone. The imperative now is not expansion but integration, not because the work is done but because the moment demands more coordinated, sustained and system-level engagement.

Over the next strategy period, ACF will therefore organise its work around three core priority areas:

-  Energy access and transitions
-  Adaptation and resilience, and
-  Green industrialisation.

These priority areas sit alongside two cross-cutting enablers:

-  Sustainable finance, and
-  International partnerships.

The three priorities were not chosen arbitrarily. They represent the biggest leverage points for Africa's climate transition, and they are inextricably linked: progress in one area accelerates progress in the others.

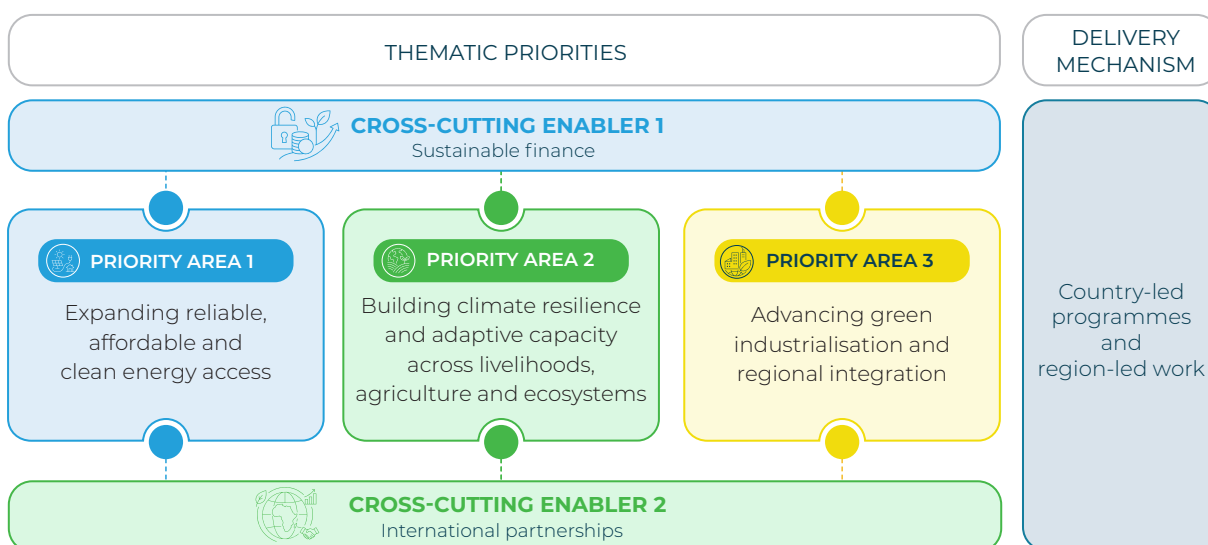
Sustainable finance and international partnerships run through every priority. They are not separate workstreams but the connective tissue that enables the core priorities to reach scale, attract investment and endure beyond individual funding cycles. Addressing all five together – rather than in isolation – is what makes system-level impact possible.

This is not a withdrawal from ACF's existing programmes. All the current areas of work continue within this framework. The shift is architectural: integrating ACF's portfolio into a structure that sharpens focus, reinforces complementarity and maximises impact across interconnected domains. Together, this structure reinforces what ACF has been building towards: consolidated, sustained engagement that drives transformation at the system level.

Across all five priority areas, the barriers to progress share a common character. They are structural and mutually reinforcing: weak policy frameworks constrain finance, shallow financing markets limit investment and gaps in institutional capacity slow implementation. Progress requires these barriers to be tackled simultaneously rather than sequentially. This is the logic that runs through all of ACF's work. Progress is delivered through three integrated instruments: grantmaking, fiscal hosting and incubation.

In each priority area and enabler that follows, ACF's role is grounded in the same commitment – to support and reinforce the momentum that African actors are already generating, not to lead or substitute for it. But its role is distinct in practice, shaped by the specific barriers, actors and opportunities that define each area in each context.

Thematic priorities and delivery



PRIORITY AREA 1

Expanding reliable, affordable and clean energy access

The challenge

Throughout Africa, hundreds of millions of people are still without reliable and affordable energy. Although the continent is home to nearly 17% of the world’s population, it accounts for only about 3% of global energy consumption.³ More than 685 million people remain without electricity, and roughly 80% of households rely on firewood or charcoal for cooking.⁴ The consequences are immediate: families exposed to harmful air pollution, clinics and schools without dependable power, and enterprises unable to expand.



Our vision

Energy as a foundation, not a constraint:

universal access for people and enterprises, delivered through affordable and reliable systems that are powered by Africa’s renewable resources and governed by capacitated institutions. In such a system, energy becomes a catalyst for resilience, industrial competitiveness, economic sovereignty and the electrification of productive and transport systems in a rapidly decarbonising world.

At the same time, Africa holds an extraordinary opportunity. The continent possesses around 60% of the world’s best solar resources yet accounts for only about 1% of installed solar capacity.⁵ Scaling renewable generation can strengthen utilities and transmission networks while off-grid and mini-grid solutions extend reliable access beyond traditional grid expansion – in many contexts, allowing countries to bypass costly legacy infrastructure entirely.

The energy transition is not only about access, it is also about economic competitiveness, industrialisation and the electrification of productive and transport systems. As climate policy tightens globally, fossil fuel-dependent economies face growing exposure to carbon border adjustment measures, volatile hydrocarbon demand and shifting capital flows. Affordable, climate-aligned energy systems are not simply desirable but also economically imperative.

³ Our World in Data (2024) Cumulative global carbon emissions.

⁴ World Bank (2024) World Development Indicators. Washington, DC: World Bank

⁵ International Energy Agency (IEA) (2022) *Africa Energy Outlook 2022*. Paris: IEA

Across the continent, governments, utilities, enterprises and communities are already driving the transition. Regulatory reforms are progressing, generation capacity is expanding and decentralised delivery models are gaining traction. The constraint is not ambition or resolve. It is the structural conditions that allow momentum to reach scale: high upfront capital costs, shallow financing markets, grid bottlenecks and policy frameworks that are misaligned with long-term transition pathways. The core challenge is institutional: building the capacity for planning, coordination and delivery to sustain universal access and support the energy transition over time.

ACF's role

ACF does not design national energy policy, build infrastructure or implement projects directly. Its role is to support and reinforce the momentum that African actors are already generating, not to lead it. Anchored in long-term relationships

across government, civil society, labour, research and finance ecosystems, ACF will deepen its support for the enabling conditions that African actors need to expand clean energy access sustainably and at scale. In practice, this means working alongside partners to:



Case study

New Economy Hub: Putting communities at the centre of South Africa's energy transition

South Africa's energy transition has policy frameworks in place. What it has lacked is a locally grounded vision of what comes next for the people most directly affected – the miners, municipalities and communities whose livelihoods are tied to coal.

ACF incubated the New Economy Hub (NEH) to fill that gap. Crucially, the NEH needed to be trusted by civil society, media and community groups as an independent voice, not an arm of a funder. ACF provided the hub's institutional infrastructure through fiscal hosting and governance support, then stepped back, giving the NEH genuine autonomy over its direction and partnerships.

In two years, the NEH has supported 20 initiatives across 25 partners, reached nearly five million people through public information efforts and helped shift public debate from technocratic transition management towards questions of economic justice and community agency. The transition conversation in South Africa now includes the people it is supposed to serve.



Our priorities

- **Accelerate clean energy transitions** in fossil fuel-dependent economies, strengthening policy coherence, transition planning, institutional readiness and the electrification of key sectors including transport.
- **Expand distributed renewable systems** that deliver reliable energy access for people and power productive use across agriculture, services, local industry and emerging electric mobility systems.
- **Strengthen institutional capacity** for integrated energy planning, modelling and regulatory design, ensuring credible and financeable transition pathways that are aligned with long-term system electrification. This includes through AI-enabled planning and modelling tools that improve the accuracy, speed and accessibility of energy system forecasting and investment decision-making.
- **Unlock renewable investment** for energy generation, grid readiness, storage and enabling infrastructure, improving project preparation and alignment between public and private capital.
- **Embed equity, social protection and local ownership** into transition frameworks, ensuring that energy and electrification pathways are just, inclusive and politically durable. This includes supporting community-led energy initiatives and locally governed distribution models that place ownership and decision-making in the hands of the people they serve.

Over ACF's next strategy period (2026–2030), the objective is not isolated activity but coherent, sustained engagement – so that ambition translates into implementation, and national transition plans into real investment.



PRIORITY AREA 2

Building climate resilience and adaptive capacity across livelihoods, agriculture and ecosystems



Our vision

Resilience as security, not survival: an Africa whose land, coastal, rural and urban economies remain stable and productive in a changing climate. An environment where families, farmers, workers and communities are protected from recurring crisis, where ecosystems are restored and where climate risk is anticipated and managed instead of endured. In such a future, resilience is not a buffer against instability but a foundation for long-term economic transformation.

The challenge

Climate instability does not announce itself in policy documents. It arrives in the shortening of a rainy season, the silting of a river, the disappearance of fish from waters that fed a community for generations... It is measured in the distance that a pastoralist must now travel for pasture, the harvest a smallholder cannot sell and the flood that takes a home built on the only land that a family could afford. For hundreds of millions of people across the continent, adaptation is not a future challenge – it is a lived reality.

The scale of exposure is stark. Nine of the world's 10 most climate-vulnerable countries are in Africa,⁶ and up to 118 million Africans could be exposed to extreme climate events by 2030.⁷ These pressures are not temporary shocks but signals of a sustained shift in the continent's development risk profile. As extreme events recur, their effects accumulate: productive assets are depleted, fiscal space narrows and social pressures intensify, particularly when access to finance, insurance, infrastructure, secure land and marine governance remains limited.

This vulnerability is most concentrated in the sectors that anchor livelihoods and growth. Africa's land and coastal economies span agriculture, forestry, fisheries, rangelands and marine resources, and provide employment, income and macroeconomic stability across much of the continent. The agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) sector alone contributes roughly 35% of regional gross domestic product (GDP) and supports more than half of the labour force, with agricultural production dominated by rainfed smallholder systems that are highly exposed to climate variability.⁸

Along the coast, marine economies that sustain food security, trade corridors and urban development face rising sea levels and accelerating ecosystem degradation. These sectors must sustain a projected population of 2.5 billion by 2050. Whether they weaken under mounting stress or evolve towards more resilient and regenerative models will shape Africa's growth trajectory for decades.

6 AfDB (2024) COP29: African leaders urge rapid increase in climate finance for adaptation and green growth. Abidjan: AfDB

7 United Nations (UN) (2022) Climate change and poverty: Vulnerability of the poorest. New York: UN

8 World Bank (2024) World Development Indicators. Washington, DC: World Bank

These sectors are also central to Africa's climate pathway. AFOLU accounts for about 59% of the continent's total emissions, largely driven by deforestation and land degradation. Yet it also holds the continent's largest mitigation and adaptation opportunity.⁹ Nature-based approaches across forests, wetlands, rangelands and coastal ecosystems could offer transformative potential if they are aligned with sound governance, secure resource rights and long-term investment.

Climate risk does not remain confined to rural or coastal areas. As agricultural stress worsens and ecosystems degrade, migration reshapes vulnerability in towns and cities. Resilience therefore cannot be approached sector by sector. It must integrate rural, urban and coastal economies, and align land, water, marine and infrastructural systems with market systems within coherent policy and investment frameworks.

Adaptation finance for land-based sectors remains profoundly insufficient. Current flows are estimated at approximately US\$3.7 billion, against an annual need of nearly US\$49 billion by 2030.¹⁰ Capital is often short-term and fragmented, project pipelines remain thin and risk is frequently transferred to those least able to absorb it. Durable progress requires integrated land, water and coastal governance; secure resource rights; functioning markets; effective social protection; and financial systems that are capable of mobilising patient capital at scale. The decisive question is whether adaptation becomes a driver of structural economic renewal or remains a recurring emergency response in an increasingly unstable climate.

Communities, farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolk are already adapting – drawing on lived experience and indigenous knowledge to steward land and marine resources. Capability exists throughout the continent. The constraint lies in scale, coordination and finance. This is where sustained support can make a meaningful difference.



Case study

African Food Systems Transformation Collective: Building the infrastructure that connects knowledge to power

The debates on Africa's food systems have long been shaped by voices from outside the continent, and the funding that flows into them has often reflected that: it is fragmented, siloed and disconnected from the realities on the ground. ACF established the African Food Systems Transformation Collective (AFSTC) to change that by building the infrastructure that connects knowledge to power.

At its core, the AFSTC brings together over 70 of the continent's own experts, drawn from every region, working alongside 10 advocacy and policy bodies in a network where research agendas are set by the questions that practitioners are actually grappling with. Innovations that are quietly building resilience in food systems are documented – from the Sahel region to the Great Lakes, through regenerative practices, territorial markets, food sovereignty and locally owned value chains. For the first time, these innovations are connected directly to the advocacy strategies and funding decisions that can take them further.

What came out strongly from the AFSTC's work is the failure of food governance to meet the needs of current and future generations. The status quo, maintained largely by multinational food companies with limited accountability to African communities, has failed the continent's people. In phase two, the AFSTC is being established as a direct support network to governments, advancing more just and equitable outcomes in national food policies.

9 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2019) *Climate Change and Land: An IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*. Geneva: IPCC

10 Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) & Global Center on Adaptation (GCA) (2023) *Accelerating adaptation finance – Africa and global perspectives*. Rotterdam & Abidjan: CPI & GCA. Available at <https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/publication/accelerating-adaptation-finance-africa-and-global-perspectives/>

ACF's role

ACF does not design or implement adaptation programmes directly. Its role is to reinforce the enabling conditions under which African leadership can translate into scale and long-term impact, not to substitute for it. In practice, this means working alongside partners to:



Our priorities

- **Scale locally led resilience and ecosystem restoration**, embedding community initiatives within supportive policy, financing and social protection frameworks that prioritise equity and local ownership.
- **Improve access to project-level finance** for climate-resilient infrastructure and essential services including water, river, ocean and food systems, risk management tools, and adaptive social protection. This includes explicit support for community-led investment platforms that enable locally governed, community-directed resilience at scale.
- **Strengthen adaptation governance**, planning and investment frameworks, integrating nature-based and agroecological approaches alongside improved coordination across sectors, and alignment between local practice and national strategy. This includes AI-enabled tools for climate risk modelling, early warning, and adaptive land and water management.
- **Reinforce regional resilience cooperation** across shared water basins, food markets, rangelands and coastal ecosystems, recognising that climate risk transcends borders.
- **Advance a fair and accessible adaptation finance architecture** that complements domestic and regional efforts and supports durable institutional strengthening rather than short-term response cycles.

Over ACF's next strategy period (2026–2030), the objective is to shift adaptation from emergency response to long-term investment – connecting community knowledge, public policy and financial systems so that resilience sustains livelihoods, protects and restores ecosystems and strengthens economic stability.



PRIORITY AREA 3

Advancing green industrialisation and regional integration



Our vision

From extraction to transformation: competitive, low-carbon African economies that retain value locally, generate decent work at scale, strengthen regional markets and anchor resilience within a decarbonising global system. In such economies, green industrialisation is not an environmental add-on. It is the foundation of economic sovereignty, productive employment and long-term competitiveness.

The challenge

The continent with some of the world's largest reserves of cobalt, manganese and platinum processes a fraction of what it extracts. The continent with the youngest workforce and the fastest-growing cities imports most of what it consumes. This is not an accident of geography or capacity. It is the legacy of an economic structure that can, and must, change.

Across much of Africa, economic structures remain locked in the export of raw materials with limited domestic value addition. Minerals are extracted, agricultural commodities shipped and primary products traded with minimal processing at the source. While these sectors generate revenue, they create too few jobs, constrain skills development and limit the emergence of diversified industrial capability. Economies continue to be exposed to commodity price volatility and external demand cycles. Youth unemployment remains high despite expanding labour markets. Without upgrading and diversification, growth remains vulnerable and employment generation is insufficient to keep pace with demographic momentum.

Regional fragmentation compounds this exposure. Intra-African trade accounts for roughly 15% of total exports,¹¹ limiting scale and hindering the development of competitive regional value chains. Markets remain segmented, infrastructure corridors are incomplete and regulatory systems are not fully harmonised. The result is a familiar pattern: Africa exports raw materials and imports higher-value goods.

The global climate transition is simultaneously intensifying these pressures and opening new pathways. Supply chains are being reconfigured, carbon border measures are emerging and low-carbon production standards are reshaping trade and investment flows in ways that could disadvantage unprepared economies. Industrial policy, trade integration, energy systems and climate strategy are now interdependent: the countries that fail to align them risk being locked out of the markets and value chains that will define the next decade.

Yet the same transition that creates these pressures also creates genuine opportunity. Africa's renewable resources, strategic minerals, agricultural base and youthful workforce provide a powerful foundation for low-carbon industrial growth. Renewable-powered industrial corridors, green industrial parks, agroecological value chains and mineral processing capacity all offer practical pathways. Green industrialisation and regional integration reinforce one another: renewable-powered production reduces exposure to fossil fuel volatility, regional markets increase scale and competitiveness, and domestic value addition builds skills, anchors employment and strengthens fiscal stability. The African

11 United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2020) *Economic Development in Africa Report 2020: Tackling Illicit Financial Flows for Sustainable Development in Africa*. Geneva: UNCTAD. Available at <https://unctad.org/publication/economic-development-africa-report-2020>

Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offers a platform to connect these ambitions. Managed strategically, these assets can shift Africa's position in global value chains. Managed poorly, they risk reproducing extractive patterns under a 'green' label.

Capturing that opportunity, however, is not automatic. Progress remains uneven: industrial policy is often fragmented across ministries, and trade, energy, fiscal and climate frameworks are not consistently aligned. Infrastructural bottlenecks constrain competitiveness, and access to long-term, patient capital remains limited.

Industrial transformation unfolds over decades; it requires sequenced policy reform, sustained infrastructure investment, regulatory coherence and alignment between clean energy deployment and industrial upgrading. The central challenge is not launching green initiatives but embedding industrial upgrading and regional integration into durable economic systems that are capable of sustaining productivity, employment and competitiveness over time.

African governments, regional institutions, cities, firms and workers are already driving this transformation. Industrial strategies are being developed, regional agreements deepened and investment frameworks reoriented towards productive sectors. The momentum is real. But the remaining barriers are structural, and it is here that sustained support can make a meaningful difference.

ACF's role

ACF does not design industrial policy, lead trade negotiations or implement projects. Its role is to support and reinforce the enabling environment in which African actors are already driving transformation, not to substitute for it. In practice, this means working alongside partners to:



Our priorities

- **Improve coherence across green industrial, trade, investment, climate and energy policy frameworks**, ensuring that decarbonisation bolsters competitiveness and that equity, social protection and local ownership are embedded into transition planning.
- **Scale domestic value addition** in minerals, manufacturing and agroecology, strengthening skills, productive capacity and decent employment. This includes through community-led and locally anchored value chains that build productive capacity from the ground up and ensure that the gains from industrialisation are distributed equitably.
- **Advance renewable-powered industrial corridors, parks and low-carbon production hubs** that are linked to domestic and regional markets.
- **Strengthen AfCFTA implementation and regional value chain integration** through harmonised standards, coordinated infrastructure planning and aligned investment frameworks.
- **Connect industrial upgrading with clean energy deployment and domestic capability-building**, ensuring that regional agreements translate into practical, sustained outcomes.

Over ACF's next strategy period (2026–2030), the objective is to move from extraction to transformation so that Africa's industrial assets, regional platforms and climate commitments translate into retained value, productive employment and durable economic sovereignty.

Cross-cutting enablers

Energy systems, resilience and green industrialisation define the structural transformations that are required. Sustainable finance and international partnerships determine whether those transformations are realised and on whose terms.

On the one hand, finance shapes trajectory. The scale, structure and sequencing of capital flows will determine whether climate ambition translates into productive assets, resilient systems and competitive industries, or continues to be restricted by fiscal pressure, fragmented pipelines and misaligned incentives. Sustainable finance is not a parallel agenda. It is the architecture that finances, de-risks and sustains transformation.

On the other hand, international positioning shapes leverage. The global transition is not neutral. Trade regimes, debt structures, climate finance rules, technology standards and geopolitical alignments influence value capture, industrial competitiveness and policy space. The terms of engagement will dictate whether African economies strengthen sovereignty and domestic capability or absorb risk in systems that are defined elsewhere.

Sustained finance and international positioning are therefore cross-cutting enablers and decisive multipliers. They influence how capital flows, how risk is distributed, how standards are set and how African priorities are advanced in regional and global arenas.

They do not sit beside the core priorities; they enable them.



CROSS-CUTTING ENABLER 1

Unlocking finance for a just and sustainable transformation



Our vision

An African financial architecture that mobilises domestic and international capital at scale, strengthens sovereignty, supports industrial upgrading and accelerates climate resilience. In such a system, finance builds capability rather than dependency, expands opportunity instead of extracting value and sustains transformation beyond funding cycles – with capital that is affordable, patient and aligned with long-term national priorities.

The challenge

Behind every stalled African infrastructure project, every early-stage initiative that cannot reach bankability and every smallholder or small enterprise that cannot access affordable credit is a financing system that was not designed for Africa's transformation. The consequences of that misalignment are not abstract; they are measured in investments that do not happen, jobs that are not created and resilience that is not built.

The numbers tell a structural story. Although Africa contributes the least to global emissions, it receives only about 3% of global climate finance.¹² High debt servicing costs compress fiscal space, illicit financial outflows (estimated at US\$88 billion annually) erode domestic resources, and elevated

12 AfDB (2024) COP29: African leaders urge rapid increase in climate finance for adaptation and green growth. Abidjan: AfDB

borrowing costs inflate the cost of capital for both governments and firms.¹³ The broader financing gap (estimated at between US\$1.4 and 1.6 trillion by 2030)¹⁴ reflects not a shortage of investable opportunity but structural risk perceptions, fragmented project pipelines, shallow domestic capital markets and limited access to long-term finance.

The consequences are systemic. Public investment in infrastructure, resilience and productive sectors remains constrained. Early-stage projects struggle to reach bankability. Domestic savings are frequently channelled into short-term or low-risk instruments rather than mobilised into productive, climate-aligned investment. Where capital is scarce, short term or mispriced, even strong policy frameworks cannot scale. Where financial structures are poorly designed, risk is transferred to the governments and communities least able to absorb it.

Reform momentum is nonetheless growing. Green bond frameworks are emerging across the continent. Pension funds and sovereign wealth funds are beginning to explore climate-aligned allocations. Regional platforms are advancing harmonised standards and cross-border investment mechanisms. Domestic capital markets are strengthening in several economies. Yet structural barriers persist. Conservative risk pricing inflates the cost of capital, early-stage and project preparation finance remains limited, domestic capital markets continue to be shallow in many contexts, and global financial rules often fail to reflect African realities, development timelines and transition priorities.

Building a sustainable finance architecture is an inherently long-term task. It requires institutional strengthening across treasuries, development banks and regulators; mobilisation of domestic savings at scale; credible pipeline development; regulatory reform; and alignment between climate ambition, macro-economic management and industrial strategy.

International capital is available. What is not automatic is its direction. Attracting and deploying it on favourable terms requires credible project pipelines, investor-ready frameworks and the institutional capacity to structure deals that build domestic capability rather than extract value. Many countries face a gap not in ambition but in the technical and institutional foundations needed to convert that ambition into an investable opportunity.

African governments, central banks, development finance institutions (DFIs), sovereign funds, pension funds and private investors are already working to address this. Green bond issuances are growing, development banks are reorienting mandates and domestic capital market reforms are advancing across multiple economies. The barriers that remain are structural and it is here that sustained, targeted support can make a meaningful difference.

ACF's role

ACF does not allocate large pools of capital directly or design financial system reform. Its role is to reinforce the enabling conditions under which long-term, climate-aligned capital can flow at scale, not to substitute for the actors driving reform.

Philanthropic capital plays a distinct role in this system. It absorbs early-stage risk, supports policy reform and project preparation and unlocks pathways that larger pools of public, private and diasporic capital can then follow.

But philanthropic capital alone cannot close the gap. ACF's role is therefore to deploy that philanthropic capital where it can do the most to unlock broader flows and strengthen the systems that direct them. In practice, this means working alongside partners to:

13 UNCTAD (2020) *Economic Development in Africa Report 2020: Tackling Illicit Financial Flows for Sustainable Development in Africa*. Geneva: UNCTAD. Available at <https://unctad.org/publication/economic-development-africa-report-2020>

14 Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) (2022) *Landscape of Climate Finance in Africa*. London: CPI. Available at <https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/publication/landscape-of-climate-finance-in-africa/>



Our priorities

- **Mobilise domestic and diasporic savings** towards productive, climate-aligned investment by strengthening the frameworks, incentives and instruments through which pension funds, sovereign funds and local financial institutions allocate capital.
- **Strengthen institutional governance** in treasuries, central banks and DFIs, building the capacity to design, steward and deploy both domestic and international capital effectively and accountably.
- **Scale blended finance instruments** that absorb early risk, fortify domestic capital markets and crowd in larger pools of public and private capital across African economies.
- **Deepen regional coordination** through harmonised standards, cross-border investment platforms and capital market integration across the AfCFTA and regional economic communities (RECs).
- **Advocate for global financial reforms** that improve access to affordable capital, liquidity and concessional finance, while supporting African-led financial architecture that promotes domestic agency.

Over ACF's next strategy period (2026–2030), the objective is clear: capital flow towards Africa's transformation priorities on terms that build sovereignty rather than undermine it.



CROSS-CUTTING ENABLER 2

Strengthening African agency in global climate, finance and trade governance



Our vision

An Africa that shapes the global climate transition on its own terms: negotiating equitable bilateral partnerships, influencing multilateral rules and mobilising international investment in ways that reinforce domestic development and long-term sovereignty. In such a system, international partnerships expand value, protect policy space and strengthen resilience rather than constrain it.

The challenge

The rules that govern climate finance, trade in green goods, green mineral supply chains and technology standards are not written on neutral ground. They are shaped by actors with interests, in forums where presence, preparation and coalition matter. For African countries, the question is not whether to engage – it is whether engagement is deep enough, coordinated enough and grounded enough in domestic priorities to shift outcomes instead of simply registering objections.

The global climate transition is reshaping economic governance at a rapid pace. Decisions taken in multilateral forums such as the Group of Twenty (G20) and the BRICS blocs, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) increasingly determine access to capital, markets, technology and regulatory space. Carbon border measures, industrial subsidies, debt frameworks and concessional finance instruments directly affect export competitiveness, fiscal stability and domestic value addition. These are not technical matters at

the margins of development strategy; they are central determinants of whether Africa's industrial and climate ambitions can be realised.

Bilateral relationships are equally consequential. Partnerships with major economies – whether in energy, trade, industrial cooperation or climate finance – carry terms that shape policy space, value capture and dependency for years. When countries negotiate from a position of analytical depth and clear domestic priorities, bilateral partnerships can accelerate technology transfer, improve financing terms and support industrial upgrading. When they do not negotiate from this position, partnerships risk locking economies into arrangements that transfer risk and limit future options.

Progress is visible but uneven. African delegations to the UNFCCC's Conference of the Parties (COP) have grown by 325% over the past decade, and the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change (AGN) is the world's largest negotiating bloc after the Group of 77 (G77) and China.¹⁵ The challenge, however, is not presence but power. Translating numerical weight and moral authority into rule-shaping outcomes across multilateral, bilateral, trade and investment arenas requires analytical depth, sustained coordination and resources that are not yet consistently available.

African governments and regional institutions are navigating these spaces with growing sophistication. Technical capacity is deepening, diplomatic coalitions are expanding and investment frameworks are maturing. Yet the decisive question remains whether Africa's engagement across multilateral forums, bilateral partnerships, and trade and investment negotiations reinforces domestic transformation or constrains it. The challenge is therefore neither ambition nor presence. It lies in coordination, analytical depth and the resources needed to engage consistently and strategically, and it is here that sustained support can make a meaningful difference.



Case study

Green Industrialisation Development Expert Panel: Africa shapes the green industrial agenda on its own terms

The rules governing green industrialisation are being written now, and the countries that arrive at negotiating tables with the strongest analytical foundations are the ones that shape them. For too long, African countries have entered those rooms without a shared framework, drawing on research produced elsewhere and responding to agendas set by others. The Green Industrialisation Development Expert Panel (GIDEP) was built to reverse that.

Established by ACF and the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance at the University of Cape Town, GIDEP brings together leading African thinkers on green industrialisation alongside experts from the broader Global South in a sustained process of collective knowledge-building. The research agenda responds to the questions that policy-makers, negotiators and institutions are actually confronted with, so that the thinking produced is immediately useful and the people who need it are already invested in what it finds.

That is what makes GIDEP more than a research network. The analysis it generates moves from expert panels into policy briefs, from policy briefs into negotiating rooms and from negotiating rooms into the decisions that will define Africa's industrial future. The network itself becomes an advocacy infrastructure, one where shared knowledge evolves into shared position and where shared position becomes collective power.

¹⁵ Markiewicz V, Gandah PPT & Micinski NR (2024) Who speaks for Africa at COP? Power and politics at the UN climate negotiations. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/07/who-speaks-for-africa-at-cop-power-and-politics-at-the-un-climate-negotiations> [accessed 26 March 2026]

ACF's role

ACF does not negotiate on behalf of governments. Its role is to reinforce the enabling conditions under which African actors can engage across multilateral, bilateral, trade and investment arenas with coherence, credibility and strategic clarity, not to substitute for it. In practice, this means working alongside partners to:



Our priorities

- **Enhance negotiation capacity and technical analysis in multilateral forums** including the G20, BRICS, UNFCCC and WTO, ensuring that African positions are grounded in rigorous evidence and long-term development strategy.
- **Build the analytical and institutional foundations** through which African countries can negotiate more equitable terms with bilateral partners in energy, trade, industrial cooperation and climate finance – grounded in clear domestic priorities.
- **Support the development of credible, investable project pipelines and investor-ready frameworks** that attract international capital on terms that build domestic capability and strengthen sovereignty.
- **Advance more equitable multilateral rules** across climate finance, carbon border measures, technology standards and concessional finance instruments, ensuring that global frameworks reflect African development realities and transition timelines.
- **Reinforce regional coordination** through the African Union (AU), RECs and continental platforms, aligning national positions and amplifying collective influence in global governance processes.

Over ACF's next strategy period (2026–2030), the objective is to close the gap between presence and power – building the analytical depth, institutional coordination and trusted coalitions through which African actors can engage with the weight that their collective position deserves.

Supporting structural transformation: How ACF works

Country and regional investment platforms

Structural transformation does not happen through isolated projects or single interventions. It happens when policy, finance and institutions align, when the conditions exist to attract investment, when financial systems have the capacity to receive and deploy it, and when international partnerships reinforce rather than constrain domestic priorities. ACF will continue to advance its strategy by strengthening the conditions that make that transformation possible. It does this through country- and regionally led investment platforms, supporting the institutions, actors and ecosystems that drive them towards long-term impact.

The investment platform approach

An investment platform is a coordinated architecture in which public institutions, communities, the labour sector, civil society organisations, research bodies, financial actors and private-sector stakeholders work together to align policies, build credible pipelines and connect capital to climate priorities. They operate at multiple levels – national, regional and community – recognising that durable transformation requires action at each level.

ACF's role in these platforms is to help strengthen the conditions, capacities and connections that allow them to function and endure. It does this through three reinforcing layers of support:

- **Strengthening enabling conditions:** supporting policy reform, planning systems, regulatory coherence and institutional coordination so that the environment is conducive to climate-aligned investment;
- **Expanding financial capacity:** supporting ministries of finance, budget offices, regulators and project preparation systems to develop credible pipelines, reduce fragmentation and ensure that capital can be effectively received and deployed; and
- **Connecting to capital:** supporting structured engagement with domestic and international investors, regional platforms and global partnerships so that investment flows towards bankable, climate-aligned priorities on terms that strengthen sovereignty.

Together, these layers of support contribute to durable investment ecosystems that sustain capital flows beyond individual projects or funding cycles.

Country-led platforms

ACF's work is delivered primarily through country-led platforms that are supported by local ACF teams. These teams combine technical expertise with deep political and institutional insight and strong local networks. They understand the complexity of local political economies, institutional realities, social dynamics and transition pathways. This contextual grounding allows ACF to engage credibly across government entities, financial institutions, the private sector and the labour sector, civil society and community networks.

ACF is deliberate about where it engages. Presence is shaped by a clear process of prioritisation, identifying where transition momentum, institutional readiness and political will create genuine openings for systemic change, and where sustained ACF support can make a meaningful and lasting difference.

In each country, ACF shapes its support across energy access, resilience, green industrialisation, sustainable finance and international partnerships to the specific national context. Support is tailored rather than standardised, reflecting differences in institutional maturity, economic structure, climate exposure and transition trajectories.

In practice, this may include supporting the establishment or operationalisation of a government-led country investment platform to strengthen project preparation, reduce fragmentation, enhance the relevant ministry of finance's capacity and unlock both domestic and international capital. Equally, it can include supporting community-led investment platforms – locally governed structures through which communities can direct resources, build productive assets and engage with national and international capital on their own terms.

The objective is always institutional durability: ensuring that the governance systems and investment frameworks driving these platforms can continue to mobilise climate-aligned finance beyond the strategy period.

Regional-led: Scaling coherence and influence

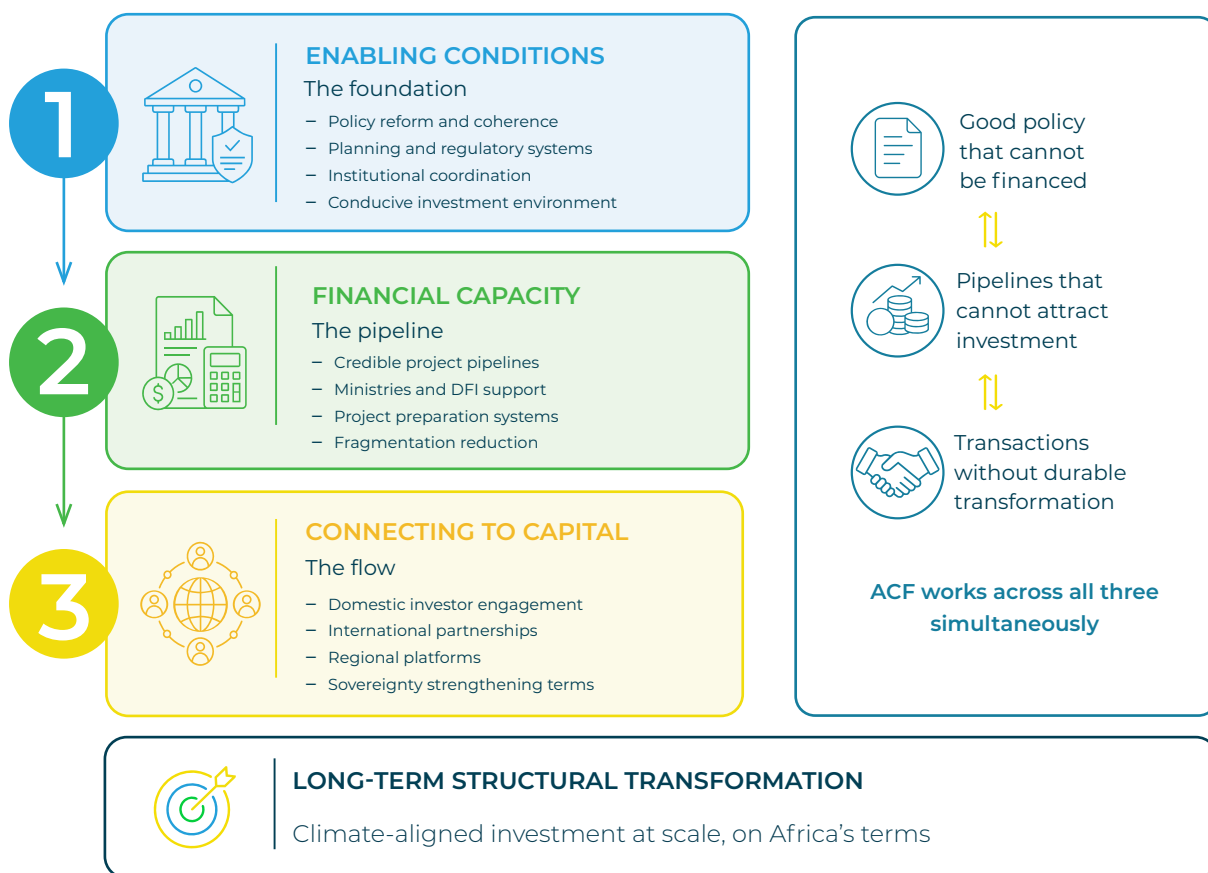
Country platforms alone cannot address the full scope of transformation. Many of the constraints that shape investment outcomes transcend national boundaries – trade regimes, financial standards, infrastructure corridors, shared water basins, supply chains and negotiation processes. Regional platforms complement country engagement by working at the scale where these cross-border dynamics are determined.

Through collaboration with the AfCFTA, the AU, RECs, the AGN and other continental bodies, ACF will continue to support alignment between industrial, financial, trade and climate frameworks. This helps to harmonise standards, strengthen coordinated investment planning and reinforce Africa's collective positioning in global climate and economic governance.

Linking national initiatives to continental processes improves coherence and reduces fragmentation, ensuring that domestic reforms are reinforced by cross-border dynamics instead of undermined by them. The three investment layers operate at a regional scale just as they do at the country level: attracting cross-border investment, building regional financial capacity to receive and deploy it, and mobilising international partnerships that amplify continental leverage.

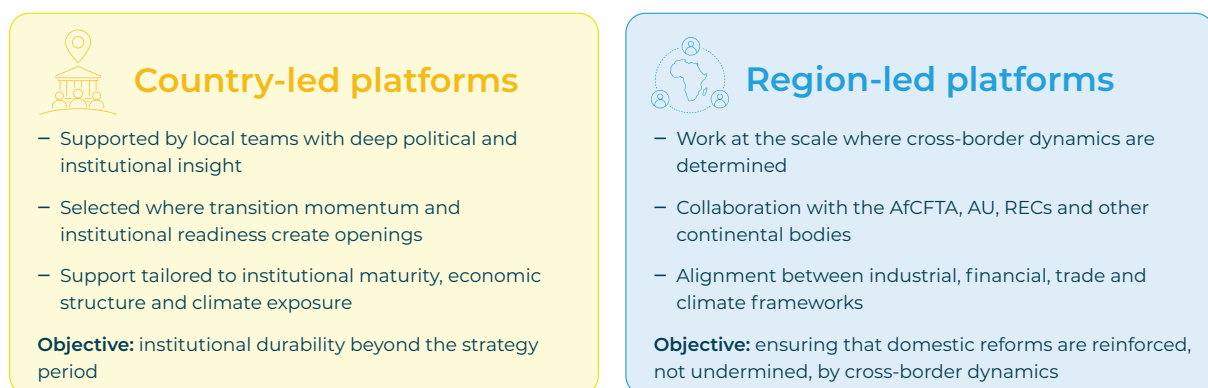
How the three layers of the investment platform approach work together

Three reinforcing layers working simultaneously to align policy, finance and capital towards long-term structural transformation.



Each layer is necessary. None is sufficient alone. This is what distinguishes ACF's investment platform approach from conventional project-by-project philanthropy.

The two investment platform types



The objective is always institutional durability: ensuring that the governance systems and investment frameworks driving these platforms can continue to mobilise climate-aligned finance even after the strategy period has ended.

Partnerships, coalitions and ecosystem support

No single institution can drive structural transformation alone. Investment platforms, therefore, operate through coordinated networks spanning government, business, civil society, labour, research and financial actors. ACF will continue to invest deliberately in coalition-building and sustained relationship management. Effective partnerships require patience, clarity of roles and sustained trust, as well as a breadth of engagement across political, technical, civic and financial constituencies to build resilience into transition processes.

Equity and inclusion are embedded throughout. Climate and development transitions endure only when they deliver tangible improvements in livelihoods and opportunity. Ensuring that local communities, workers, small enterprises and marginalised groups are not merely integrated into planning and investment processes but are also supported to lead them – including through community-led platforms and locally governed coalitions – strengthens both the legitimacy and the durability of reform.

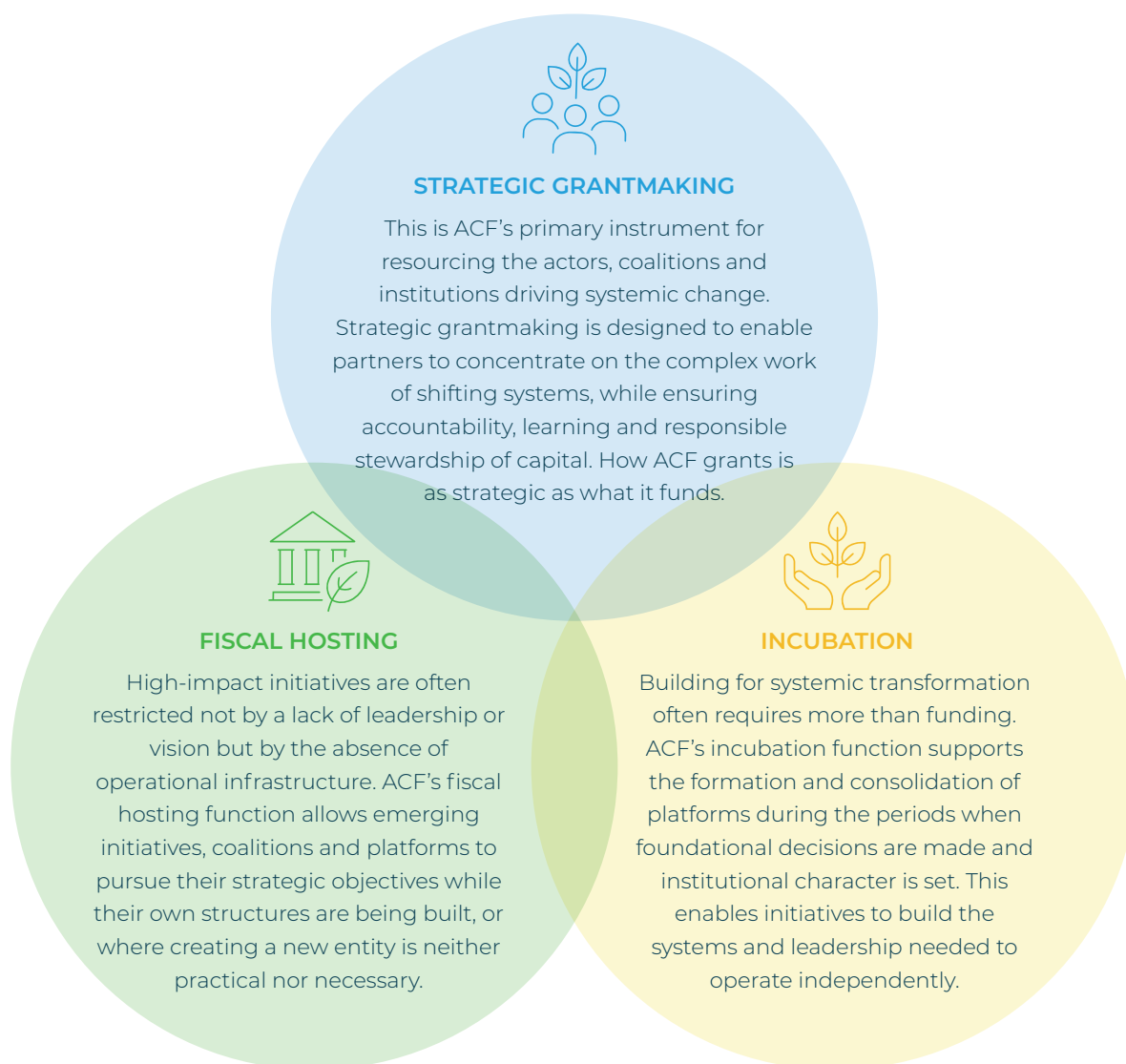
Designed for complexity

Structural transformation is inherently non-linear. Political cycles shift. External shocks occur. Reform pathways evolve. Investment mobilisation requires technical depth, patient capital and institutional persistence. Effective investment platforms are therefore designed with this complexity in mind, and ACF's support is structured to reflect it.

These platforms prioritise long-term institutional capability over short-term outputs, coherence across actors over fragmented interventions, and ecosystem-wide alignment over isolated project delivery. By working through locally anchored teams, strategically selected country engagements and complementary regional platforms, the ACF supports the enabling conditions under which African institutions, markets and communities can attract, absorb and deploy climate-aligned investment, building the foundations for a transition that is governed and led from within the continent.

Support through grantmaking, fiscal hosting and incubation

Systemic change needs more than good ideas and willing actors. It requires institutional infrastructure, sustained resourcing and operational credibility to enable those actors to do their most important work. ACF provides this support through three integrated instruments: strategic grantmaking, fiscal hosting and incubation. Together, these instruments are designed not to build the ACF's own footprint but to strengthen the ecosystem around it.



Strategic grantmaking

Strategic grantmaking is ACF's primary instrument for resourcing the actors, coalitions and institutions driving systemic change. Since 2020, ACF's grant portfolio has grown from modest beginnings to more than 467 investments across 35 countries, totalling over US\$40 million. This scale reflects a deliberate evolution from supporting discrete initiatives to resourcing long-term institutional strengthening and ecosystem development. Over the next strategy period (2026–2030), ACF will build on these foundations, enhancing the quality and strategic coherence of its grant portfolio.

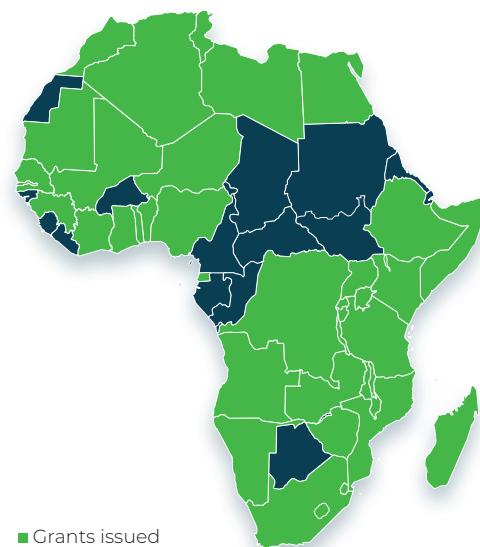
ACF's grantmaking is anchored in sound governance and mission-aligned thematic and country strategies. These strategies define long-term transition pathways, identify leverage points and guide pipeline development towards African-led systemic change. Investments are selected through a structured process – concept development, internal review, due diligence and board approval – to

ensure alignment with strategy, sound representation, risk management and system-level impact.

Rigour alone, however, does not drive transformation. Experience has demonstrated that systemic change requires trust, flexibility and sustained engagement. ACF therefore applies trust-based principles in a disciplined governance framework: proportionate due diligence, multi-year commitments where possible, adaptive funding structures and open dialogue with partners.

The objective is not short-term delivery. It is institutional strengthening, coalition formation, community-led platform development and policy advancement towards the continent's climate and development objectives – at every level, from national governments to locally governed initiatives. ACF's grantmaking is designed to enable partners to concentrate on the complex work of shifting systems while ensuring accountability, learning and the responsible stewardship of capital. How ACF grants is as strategic as what it funds.

Grantmaking across 35 countries



Fiscal hosting

In many contexts, high-impact initiatives are restricted not by lack of leadership or vision but by the absence of operational infrastructure: legal status, fiduciary systems, governance frameworks or administrative capacity. Without these foundations, even well-conceived coalitions and platforms cannot function effectively.

ACF's fiscal hosting function directly addresses this constraint. By providing institutional infrastructure under its own governance and compliance systems, ACF enables emerging initiatives, coalitions and platforms to pursue their strategic objectives while their own structures are being built, or where creating a new entity is neither practical nor necessary.

Fiscal hosting has become a core delivery channel alongside grantmaking. It allows new platforms to move from concept to execution quickly, particularly in politically complex or rapidly evolving contexts where speed and credibility matter. Each hosting arrangement carries fiduciary, reputational and governance responsibilities and is therefore undertaken selectively and strategically, only where there is clear strategic alignment, defined accountability and a credible pathway towards institutional maturation. ACF will continue to apply and strengthen this discipline, ensuring that fiscal hosting supports ecosystem capacity rather than creating permanent dependency.

Incubation

Building for systemic transformation often requires more than funding. Emerging coalitions and institutions need sustained strategic support during their critical early stages – help to clarify their strategies, establish governance, strengthen partnerships and build the operational credibility required to attract broader backing. ACF's incubation function provides exactly this.

Working alongside emerging initiatives, ACF supports the formation and consolidation of platforms during the period when foundational decisions are made and institutional character is set. Over time, this sustained engagement enables initiatives to develop a distinct identity, build the systems and leadership required to operate independently, and become durable actors in the broader ecosystem.

Incubation needs careful structuring, deliberate selection and clear expectations from the outset. Lessons from ACF's first strategy period (2021–2025) underscore the importance of pacing growth alongside internal capacity and ensuring robust institutional safeguards. Over the next strategy period (2026–2030), ACF will continue to apply and refine these lessons. The measure of success is not how long ACF remains involved but how quickly and durably an initiative can stand on its own.

An integrated ecosystem support architecture

Grantmaking, fiscal hosting and incubation are not separate programmes. They are deployed as an integrated system, each filling a distinct gap in the support landscape. Grantmaking finances strategic actors, fiscal hosting provides the infrastructure through which they can operate, and incubation builds the institutional foundations required for long-term independence. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts – together, they help reinforce enabling environments, strengthen institutional capability and support the conditions under which climate-aligned investment can flow at scale.

The ultimate objective is not institutional expansion for its own sake. It is to build dynamic African institutions and coalitions capable of defining, financing and sustaining their own climate and development trajectories. Over time, and particularly during the next strategy period, success will be measured not by the growth of ACF's portfolio but by the ecosystem's growing strength, autonomy and agency.



Case study

The Just Energy Transition Partnership's Project Management Unit: Getting to work on day one

South Africa's Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) committed US\$8.5 billion to support the country's shift from coal. But a financial commitment is not a programme. Translating it into action required an institution capable of coordinating the government, business, labour and civil society sectors – one that did not yet exist.

Building such an institution through conventional public sector processes would have taken years. Instead, ACF provided administrative and financial infrastructure through fiscal hosting, allowing the JETP's Project Management Unit (PMU) to become operational without delay.

The results followed quickly. The *Just Energy Transition Implementation Plan: 2023–2027* was approved by cabinet in November 2023 and presented by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the same year. Six priority portfolios were established. The JET Funding Platform launched and received over 240 project applications in its first funding windows. Fiscal hosting did not just make efficiency possible but it also highlighted the difference between momentum and stagnation at a critical moment.

The organisation behind the strategy

A compelling strategy is only as strong as the institution behind it. Delivering systemic climate and development transformation across multiple countries requires financial resilience, capable and committed people, disciplined systems, credible governance and a learning architecture that can navigate complexity over time. As ACF has evolved from a nationally focused initiative into a pan-African platform, it has invested deliberately in the institutional foundations that underpin delivery.

Continued growth requires further institutional strengthening. The question for partners and donors is not only what ACF seeks to achieve but also whether its institutional capacity is growing in line with its ambition. Institutional credibility is itself a form of capital. The priorities that follow outline how ACF will improve its organisational foundations over the next strategy period (2026–2030) – ensuring that growth in scale is matched by growth in coherence, resilience and long-term effectiveness.

Strengthening financial systems

Organisational growth requires financial infrastructure that evolves in parallel. ACF has begun a financial transformation process that provides a strong foundation for building. Over the coming period, the focus will be on deepening that transformation.

This includes implementing and optimising integrated financial, grant and project management systems capable of supporting complex multi-currency, multi-donor and multi-country operations with reduced manual intervention. This means streamlining core financial processes – budgeting, procurement, reconciliation and reporting – and investing in dynamic management information systems that enable real-time reporting, dashboards and forecasting. As ACF’s footprint grows, financial structures and controls must be designed to scale without requiring proportional increases in overhead with each portfolio expansion.

Getting financial operations right is not a back-office concern. It is a central condition for deploying capital efficiently, reporting to donors transparently and managing resources effectively across an increasingly complex organisation. Strong financial systems support everything else in this strategy.



Our priorities

- **Deepen the finance transformation**, including the implementation and optimisation of integrated financial, grant and project management systems across multi-country and multi-currency operations.
- **Streamline and standardise financial processes** such as budgeting, procurement, reconciliation and reporting to improve efficiency, reduce manual work and strengthen real-time management information for decision-making.
- **Build long-term financial resilience** by developing an investment strategy, strengthening institutional reserves, leveraging fiscal hosting strategically and enhancing coordinated donor accountability systems.

Strong financial systems create the operational conditions for effective delivery. But systems alone do not drive transformation – the people within them do.



Talent and culture

ACF's growth from four staff members in 2020 to over 60 professionals across nine countries by February 2026 is one of the clearest markers of how far the organisation has come. It is the people who make up ACF – their expertise, networks, contextual knowledge and commitment – who have made its impact possible.

As the organisation has expanded, investing in people has emerged as central to sustaining and deepening that impact. One of the key lessons from the first strategy period (2021–2025) is that organisational development is inseparable from people development. Growth in ambition, footprint and influence must be matched by deliberate investment in the teams and systems that carry this work forward.

Embedding organisational values is the starting point. ACF is committed to a clear set of values: empowerment, collaboration, accountability, integrity and commitment. As the organisation becomes more geographically dispersed and thematically complex, ensuring that these values are consistently reflected in how people are recruited, supported, developed and retained becomes increasingly important. Values cannot remain statements of intent; they must be embedded in the full employee lifecycle – recruitment and onboarding, performance management, leadership development, retention.

Alongside values, ACF will invest in the systems and structures that underpin its talent management strategy. This includes forward-looking talent plans aligned with ACF's growth trajectory, a coherent policy environment that drives equity, fairness and transparency across geographies, and strengthened performance management and personal development processes that support staff in growing in tandem with the organisation. Professional development is not peripheral – it is integral to sustaining long-term institutional effectiveness.

ACF also recognises that the work of systemic transformation places significant demands on the people who carry it out. As expectations increase and programmes scale, maintaining a working environment that supports staff well-being becomes essential for resilience and sustainability. Investing in ACF's people and their development, experience and well-being is not merely an internal administrative priority but also a strategic condition for delivering on ACF's broader mission.

ACF staff presence in Africa



Our priorities

- **Embed organisational values** consistently across recruitment, leadership, performance management and culture.
- **Strengthen institutional systems** through proactive talent management strategies, modernised human resources processes and standardised policies across locations.
- **Build a stronger learning culture** by enhancing performance management, development planning and a structured learning agenda.
- **Prioritise retention and well-being** through competitive compensation, wellness support, staff engagement and recognition.
- **Strengthen cross-team and cross-country coherence**, ensuring that a growing and geographically dispersed organisation works with shared purpose, consistent practice and mutual accountability.



Governance and risk management

ACF was established on a strong governance foundation. The organisation has expanded across multiple countries, managing a growing portfolio of grants and fiscal hosting services, working with a widening range of funding instruments and engaging an expanding set of partners and regulatory environments. The scope of governance and risk management has naturally broadened. Over the next strategy period (2026–2030), these systems will continue to be strengthened to reflect the scale, complexity and long-term strategic ambition that will define ACF's trajectory.

The board's active role in guiding and overseeing the organisation has affirmed and embedded good governance principles. Oversight mechanisms have been strengthened through the board and its committees, particularly the risk and audit committee. As ACF continues to grow, governance practices will be further consolidated and standardised across geographies and service models, providing increased assurance in fiscal hosting, regranting and programme delivery.

ACF will also deepen its organisation-wide risk framework across financial, operational, legal, reputational and strategic domains. This includes enhancing legal and regulatory compliance, strengthening donor assurance systems and embedding robust internal controls that reinforce institutional resilience.

Underpinning all of this is a recognition that governance is not a compliance function alone – it is a shared institutional capability. Building a culture where governance, ethics and risk stewardship are owned across the organisation, rather than concentrated in a single team, is central to ACF's ability to operate with credibility and confidence as it grows.



Our priorities

- **Strengthen governance architecture** and board oversight in line with ACF's growing scale and complexity.
- **Standardise and embed governance practices** across geographies and service models, including documentation and assurance processes.
- **Deepen the organisation-wide risk framework** across financial, operational, legal, reputational and strategic domains.
- **Enhance compliance, controls and donor assurance systems** to reinforce institutional resilience.
- **Embed governance and risk stewardship** as a shared organisational capability, strengthening continuity, culture and credibility.



Securing long-term financial sustainability

As ACF has grown in scale, reach and institutional maturity, its approach to partnerships and financial sustainability has evolved from a primarily fundraising activity into a broader function centred on long-term institutional resilience, ecosystem positioning and relationship stewardship.

The ACF's funding base has grown significantly since inception, reflecting strong funder confidence and increasing demand for African-led climate leadership. This growth has enabled ACF to expand its reach, deepen its programmatic work and build a continental presence. It has also raised questions about financial sustainability that must be addressed as the organisation enters its next phase.

The most immediate question is concentration risk. A significant share of ACF's funding comes from a small pool of international donors. While this has provided stability during a period of rapid growth, shifts in donor priorities, political changes in funding countries or broader contractions in official

development assistance and philanthropic giving can disproportionately affect ACF's financial position. In the current global environment, diversification is a practical priority rather than a long-term aspiration.

Over the coming period, ACF will broaden and deepen its donor base across geographies and philanthropic communities, including greater engagement with philanthropy in Africa and the Global South, as well as intersectional philanthropies. It will place greater emphasis on securing multi-year, flexible and undesignated funding that supports both programme delivery and core institutional capacity. The organisation will strengthen relationships with regional climate foundations and regranteeing platforms to reinforce its position in the broader philanthropic architecture.

Beyond income diversification, ACF will strengthen its financial foundations in a more structural way. This means mobilising capital to support its investment strategy, building institutional reserves to buffer against external shocks and developing longer-term financial planning frameworks to reduce vulnerability to shifts in the global funding environment. Financial resilience is not simply about raising more funding, but it is also about building the structural foundations that allow ACF to absorb shocks, sustain commitments and grow with confidence.

Strengthening donor and stakeholder relations is equally important. Integrating systems across departments, improving reporting quality and building more proactive and coordinated relationship engagement will sustain existing partnerships and create the conditions for new ones. ACF's ability to secure and retain support depends on its credibility, clarity of purpose and demonstrated impact, and its communications and advocacy work directly reinforces that credibility.



Our priorities

- **Diversify and expand ACF's donor base**, while deepening strategic partnerships in the broader climate philanthropy ecosystem and across regional and intersectional philanthropic networks.
- **Increase multi-year, flexible and undesignated funding**, ensuring balanced support for both programmatic delivery and core institutional operations to enhance long-term sustainability and resilience.
- **Mobilise capital to support ACF's investment strategy** and build institutional reserves, strengthening financial stability and enabling strategic growth.
- **Strengthen fiscal hosting** as both a financial and strategic asset, attracting diverse, high-impact hosted initiatives that reinforce ACF's mission, visibility and ecosystem leadership.
- **Streamline donor management processes**, integrate systems and strengthen cross-departmental collaboration to enable coherent and proactive relationship stewardship, improved reporting and sustained donor retention.



Measuring impact and embedding learning

Advancing climate and development transformation across complex systems requires a measurement approach that reflects how change actually occurs. Shifts in policy, institutional capability, coalition strength and investment practice unfold over long time horizons, emerge through the combined efforts of many actors and rarely follow linear pathways. They cannot be captured by short-term outputs alone.

For ACF, impact is defined as a durable change in institutions and financial systems, in policy frameworks and in collective agency. The central question is whether the enabling conditions for climate-aligned development are strengthening over time and becoming more coherent and resilient.

Improving measurement and learning will be a priority over the coming strategy period (2026–2030). This includes developing methods that assess contribution rather than attribution, drawing on quantitative and qualitative evidence, long-term institutional indicators, portfolio-level analysis and structured reflection with partners. The intention is to build an integrated framework that links measurable signals of progress with contextual analysis – reflecting the shared and cumulative nature of transformation.

Monitoring and reporting approaches will continue to evolve to remain proportionate and adaptive. Accountability to funders and partners remains essential. At the same time, systems will increasingly balance reporting requirements with meaningful learning, emphasising reducing reporting burdens on partners and ensuring that evidence generation supports both their strategic objectives and ACF's.

Underpinning this approach is a recognition that measurement is not simply a reporting function but also a shared institutional capability. Embedding learning into programmes, partnerships, communications, grants, finance and operations is central to guaranteeing that insight informs strategy and resource allocation. Strengthening ACF's learning architecture and culture of reflection will support better decision-making, deeper partner engagement, and greater foresight and coherence across the organisation.



Our priorities

- **Develop a systems-informed measurement framework** that assesses contribution over time rather than short-term attribution.
- **Integrate quantitative and qualitative evidence** to track institutional change, policy influence and shifts in financial systems.
- **Strengthen portfolio-level analytics and structured partner reflection** to improve strategic decision-making and adaptive management.
- **Reduce grantee reporting burden and strengthen partner monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity**, ensuring that monitoring approaches are proportionate, supportive and aligned with partners' own strategic objectives.
- **Embed a culture of learning across the organisation**, ensuring that insight informs strategy, resource allocation and forward-looking programme design.

Voice and visibility

During its first five years, ACF's reputation was built primarily on the strength of its work and relationships. That foundation remains strong. The organisation now operates across multiple regions, engages in major multilateral processes, supports flagship initiatives and plays an increasingly visible role in shaping climate and development debates. Its profile has risen, its media engagement has expanded and its digital presence has grown.

As ACF's profile and responsibilities expand, its communications must evolve in parallel. Elevating ACF's voice is not about visibility for its own sake. It is about ensuring that African-led perspectives are present, coherent and influential in the debates that shape climate, finance, energy transition and development outcomes. Narrative coherence, brand consistency and proactive positioning are essential to sustaining credibility and strategic influence in an increasingly complex geopolitical and funding landscape.

ACF's recent brand refresh provides a strong foundation for the next phase. Over the coming period, the organisation will strengthen its core narrative to communicate a clear, unified African-led

perspective to diverse audiences, from funders and policy-makers to the media and civil society. It will safeguard the consistent application of refreshed brand guidelines to embed a coherent identity that reflects ACF's maturing reputation and strategic positioning.

ACF will deepen media engagement across African and global platforms, taking a more proactive approach to telling the stories that emerge from its work and that of its partners. Internal communications systems and channels will be strengthened so that teams throughout the organisation are aligned on messaging and able to consistently reflect ACF's identity in their own engagements. Strategic communications will confirm that the organisation's policy positions and flagship initiatives are clearly articulated and coherently amplified across multilateral platforms and national processes.

ACF occupies a distinctive position: an African institution with a continental reach, deep programmatic credibility and long-term relationships spanning government, finance, business, civil society and research domains. That position gives ACF a perspective on climate and development that few others can offer – one that is grounded in African realities, connected to African actors and committed to African-led solutions. Strengthening ACF's voice is about ensuring that that perspective is heard clearly and consistently in the debates that shape the continent's future.



Our priorities

- **Strengthen and unify ACF's core narrative**, articulating a clear and consistent African-led perspective across audiences and platforms.
- **Expand proactive media and digital engagement**, strengthening relationships with African and global media and amplifying the stories emerging from ACF's work and partnerships.
- **Strengthen internal communications systems and alignment**, ensuring that teams are equipped and coordinated to represent ACF's identity effectively.



Operational footprint and infrastructure

ACF now has staff in nine African countries and has made grants in 35 countries. Dedicated country programmes operate in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia, each with local teams working alongside governments, civil society organisations, businesses and research institutions. By any measure, ACF has become a pan-African organisation in both reach and ambition.

As the organisation's continental footprint has expanded, the systems that support its work – finance, administration, compliance, legal registration and banking – have remained anchored primarily in South Africa. This structure has provided stability and strong oversight during a period of rapid growth. As programmatic reach deepens across regions, however, operational infrastructure must evolve in parallel to support agility, speed of capital deployment and effective regional engagement. Operating a continental programme from a single jurisdiction introduces regulatory and financial complexities that require increasingly deliberate management as scale increases.

Over the coming period (2026–2030), ACF will progressively expand its operational presence through a phased, deliberate approach. The first step, planned for 2026, is a comprehensive operational mapping exercise to assess ACF's current and anticipated programmatic footprint, operational demand, regulatory requirements, risks and cost drivers across regions. This will inform clear decisions about where and how to establish additional operational capacity.

Based on this assessment, ACF will develop a sequenced expansion plan that defines the establishment of priority operational hubs and the required capabilities to support multi-country delivery. Financial, administrative and compliance systems will be embedded in each hub to ensure

consistent standards and robust oversight across jurisdictions. The geographic expansion will be deliberately phased – drawing lessons from initial hubs before expanding further and applying those insights to guide selective growth into additional regions over time. The objective is to position the right operational capacity in the right places so that ACF can operate effectively across the continent without over-centralising or over-extending.



Our priorities

- **Align operational infrastructure with programmatic footprint**, ensuring that systems and presence evolve in step with continental expansion.
- **Establish priority operational hubs** with the appropriate legal, financial and compliance capacity to support effective multi-country delivery.
- **Adopt a phased and learning-based expansion approach**, embedding consistent standards while positioning the right operational capacity in the right locations.

Looking forward

ACF enters its next phase as a more capable, more connected and more confident institution than the one that started this journey in 2020. The ambition is greater. The focus is sharper. The model is proven.

Climate impacts are intensifying. The global competition for resources, markets and influence is accelerating. Africa's ability to shape what happens in this transition has never been greater, and the cost of failing to do so has never been higher.

ACF's role is to support that shaping, not to lead it, not to substitute for African actors, but to help build the conditions, coalitions and capabilities through which they can act with coherence and sustained impact.

The conviction that drives this work remains constant: Africa's climate and development future must be shaped from within, on its own terms and for its own people.

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