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Scaling Social Protection in a Changing Climate

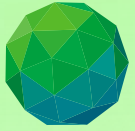
Social Protection in a Changing Climate Webinar
May 13th and 14th , 2026
Songdo, South Korea

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Agenda

1	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and objectives	5 min
2	Presentation(GCF) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Findings of the GCF-commissioned Strategic Review on Social Protection and Climate Adaptation	15 min
3	Presentation (FCDO, UK, HLP) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scale up Social Protection in Fragile Settings, Supporting Peace Resilience & Recovery	10 min
4	Presentation (Government of Somalia) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Somalia-focused practical case highlighting challenges in accessing climate finance, the gap between ambition and on-the-ground reality	10 min
5	Presentation (Task Force- BMZ, Germany, World Bank) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the Task Force objectives, key activities and outputs across Workstreams 1, 2 & 3	15 min
6	Interactive session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Q&A	25 min
7	Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrap up	5 min

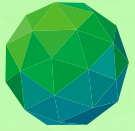


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WELCOME

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Social protection and climate change: A strategic review of the evidence

Roadmap to scale GCF Social Protection-focused investments

Oscar Garcia, Director, Department of
Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning, GCF

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Climate change is outpacing our response

294M+

people in acute food insecurity across 53 countries

GRFC, 2025

2×

the number in extreme poverty by 2050 without ambitious mitigation

World Bank, 2025

7.1%

mean long-term GDP decline projected for Africa

Adom, 2024

*Climate risks are becoming increasingly **non-linear**, compounding and cascading — interacting across sectors and regions in ways that amplify systemic disruption. Sector-specific interventions alone cannot keep pace. We need **coordinated, human-centred approaches** that combine **mitigation, adaptation, equity and resilience-building**.*

Social protection can do much more than *cushion shocks*

Build Resilience

Directly reduces income poverty and addresses root causes of vulnerability — targeting the same populations most exposed to climate change.

Stabilise Livelihoods

Prevents crises from escalating into humanitarian emergencies by averting distress asset sales and negative coping strategies.

Anticipate Shocks

Anticipatory cash transfers delivered before a forecast shock safeguard food consumption and reduce costly recovery burdens.

Support Adaptation

'Cash Plus' approaches — combining transfers with skills, assets and climate-smart practices — enable **long-term livelihood** change.

Reduce Emissions

Environmentally conditioned cash transfers and green public works **incentivise** conservation, reforestation and ecosystem restoration.

Enable Just Transitions

Income support and retraining **protect workers** as economies shift away from fossil fuels, ensuring no one is left behind.

Where the evidence is thin — and the **risks** are **real**

01 Maladaptation risk

Programmes not designed with long-term climate risk in mind can trap households in areas with poor environmental futures or disincentivise mobility — responding to shocks without enabling structural adaptation.

02 Slow-onset change

Evidence on social protection's effectiveness against gradual processes — desertification, sea-level rise, shifting agro-ecological zones — is extremely limited. These require forward-looking strategies, not just shock response.

03 Transfer size & coverage

In many low-income and FCAS settings, benefit levels are too small and coverage too partial to **close poverty gaps** or enable meaningful adaptation investment. Current systems are under-resourced.

04 Transformative pathways

There is comparatively little evidence on social protection's role in enabling transformational change — as opposed to protecting consumption after shocks. This is an urgent research and policy frontier.

Exploring Social Protection Relevance for GCF



A triangulated approach

Portfolio analysis of GCF projects and case studies, complemented by **evidence** from global practice drawn from the **literature review** and **stakeholder consultations**.

SP shows strong impacts on pro-poor and human-centred climate action

Climate Objective

Responding to climate shocks and stressors

Facilitate and enable climate-change adaptation

Contribute to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration

Support just climate transitions

How SP enables this



Reduces negative welfare impacts of climate shocks and disasters by transferring income to cushion the effects.

Allows households to meet urgent needs without engaging in erosive coping strategies.



Strengthens household and community resilience.

Supports income security and livelihood diversification.

Improves health, food security and education outcomes.



Promoting engagement in mitigation activities or measures that reduce carbon emissions.



Cushions households from adverse effects of climate mitigation policies like carbon taxes and fossil fuel subsidy removals.

What is hindering investments then?

Weak climate rationale in proposals.

Funds need clearer evidence that social protection addresses climate-induced needs, not just regular social spending.

Project-based funding structure

Multilateral climate funds often prefer on-the-ground, short-cycle results, which makes financing system-building such as registries and delivery infrastructure harder

Additionality concerns

There is pressure to show that climate finance is not replacing domestic social spending, which raises the bar for evidence and justification.

Limited consensus on “transformative” investment.

Current funding norms often favour infrastructure, technology, and private-sector logics over public systems like social protection.

Fragmented institutional alignment.

Social protection sits across sectors, so weak coordination between climate ministries, social protection actors, and climate funds slows integration.

Tension in fragile settings.

In FCAS, humanitarian finance is often larger than social protection finance, while national systems remain weak or disrupted.

Why should GCF invest in SP for climate action?



Need for **innovative and system-wide approaches**: Climate impacts are now outpacing current adaptation and mitigation efforts, making a **business-as-usual trajectory untenable**.



Transformative Change
Through social protection, GCF financing can shift from fragmented, project-based interventions to scalable, government-owned systems that reach the most vulnerable delivering system-level outcomes that are **scalable, sustainable, and replicable**.



Strategic imperative: Climate change raises SP demand while straining SP fiscal capacity; aligning GCF strategy with donor and multilateral trends on SP and FCAS **strengthens relevance and leadership**.



SP strengthens alignment with UNFCCC mandate e.g. GGA, Baku-Belem declaration, Global Goal on Hunger and Poverty - acting to **mobilise more finance for NAPs and NDCs**.



Efficiency and scale: GCF already funds SP-relevant activities but current use is ad hoc. A strategic approach would **reduce transaction costs, increase scale, and deliver systemic impact**.

SP Contributes to GCF Investment Criteria

GCF Investment Criteria

(Source - GCF 2024 Investment Framework)

1 Impact potential

Protects vulnerable populations from climate shocks; reduces negative coping; supports resilient livelihoods.

Sustained adaptation impact at scale

2 Paradigm-shift potential

Embeds climate risk into national social protection systems (e.g. shock-responsive systems, climate-informed targeting)

Shifts from projects level to system-level interventions

3 Sustainable development potential

Delivers co-benefits across food security, health, inclusion, and livelihoods

Delivers strong co-benefits aligned with GCF priorities

4 Needs of the recipient

Targets poorest and most climate-vulnerable populations using existing national systems

Ensures finance reaches last mile

5 Country ownership

Builds on and strengthens national policies, institutions, and delivery systems, reducing duplicity and projects that create parallel structures

Supports nationally-led, scalable and sustainable solutions, potential vehicle for Direct Access

6 Effectiveness and efficiency

Uses established systems to deliver finance faster, at scale, and at lower cost

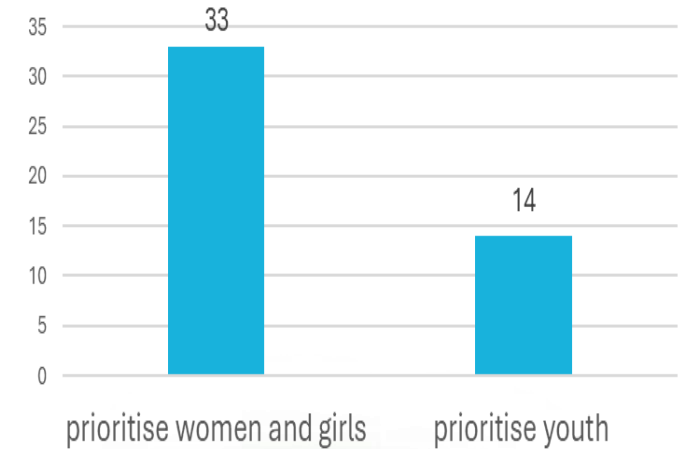
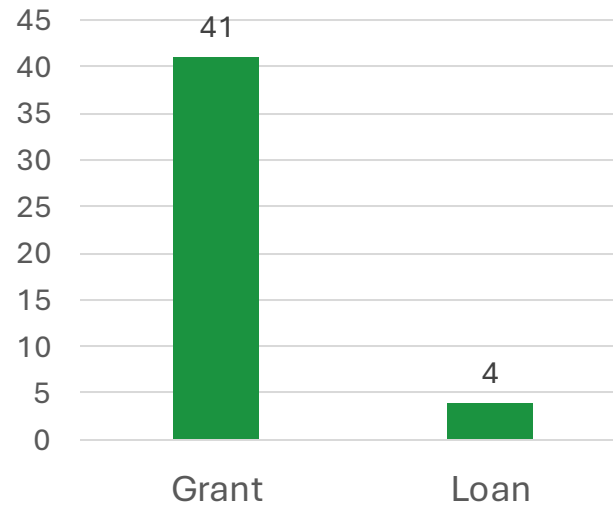
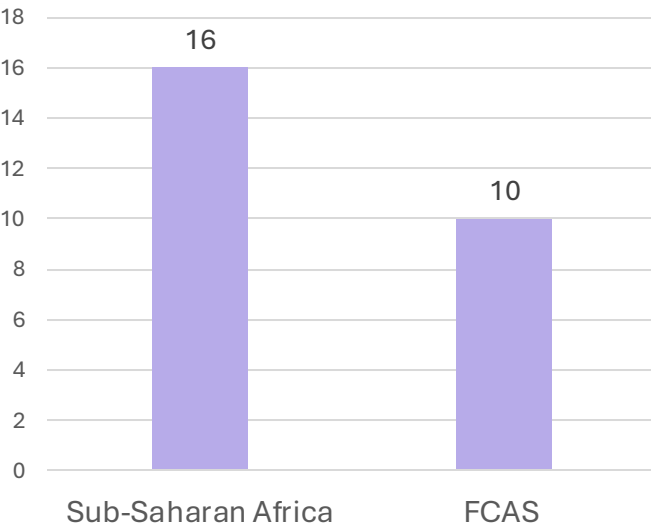
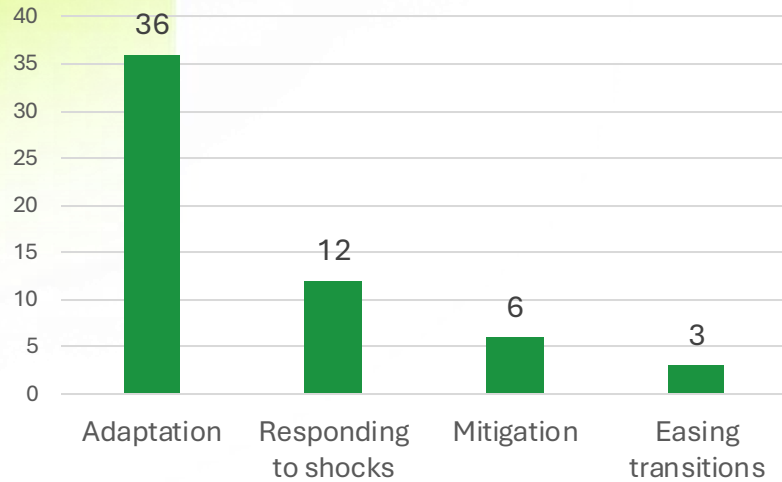
Reduces costs, increases speed, improves delivery performance

How Social Protection interventions can contribute

3

How has the GCF invested in social protection so far?

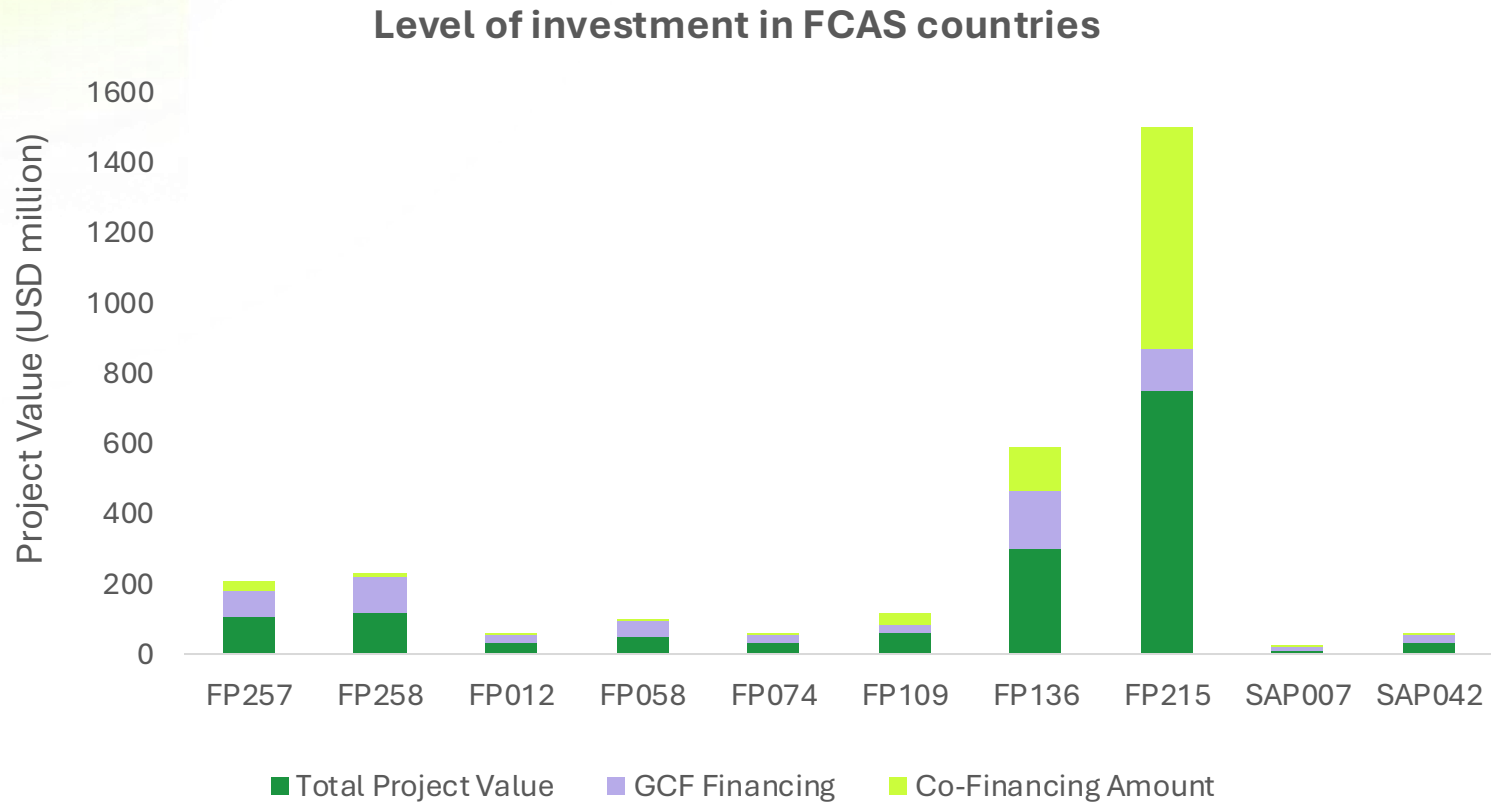
How the GCF has invested in SP: Funded Activities



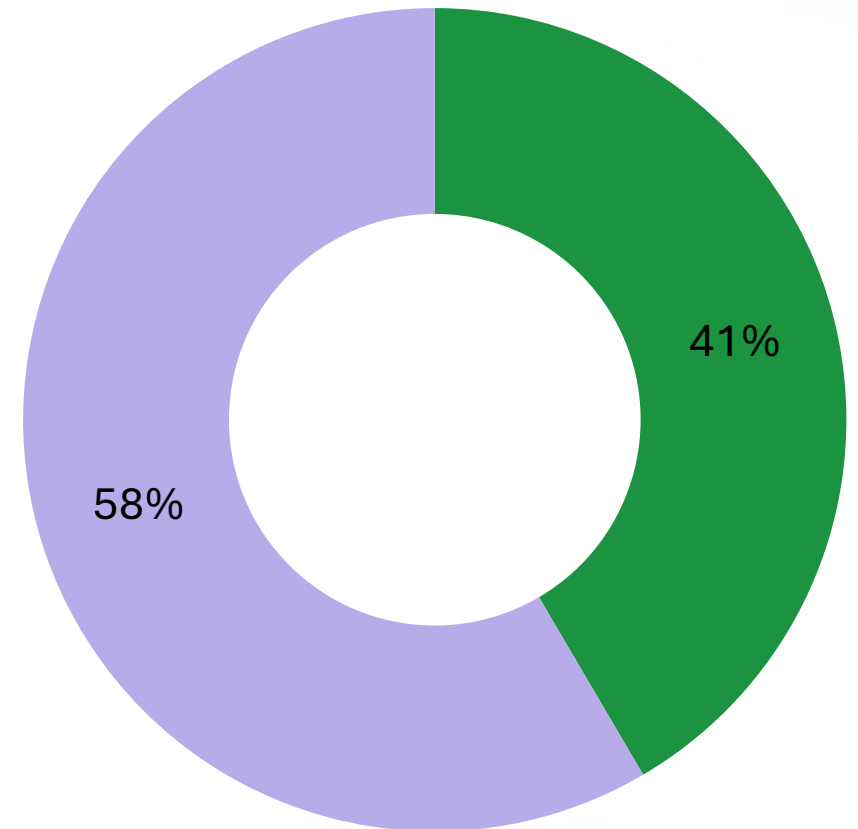
41 GCF Funded Activities integrate social protection.

Main instruments and approaches: Public Works Programme, cash transfers & vocational training/livelihoods, links with EWS, use of SP targeting

Spotlight: SP investments in FCAS countries



% contribution for FCAS projects

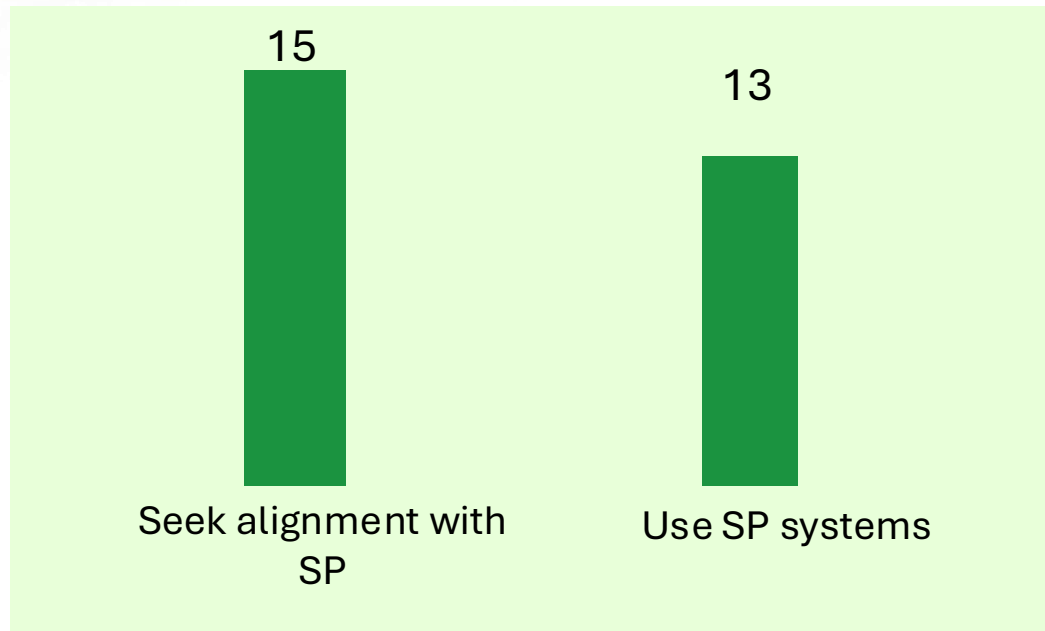


■ GCF Financing ■ Co-financing

Untapped potential: SP is mainly addressed as aspirational add-on

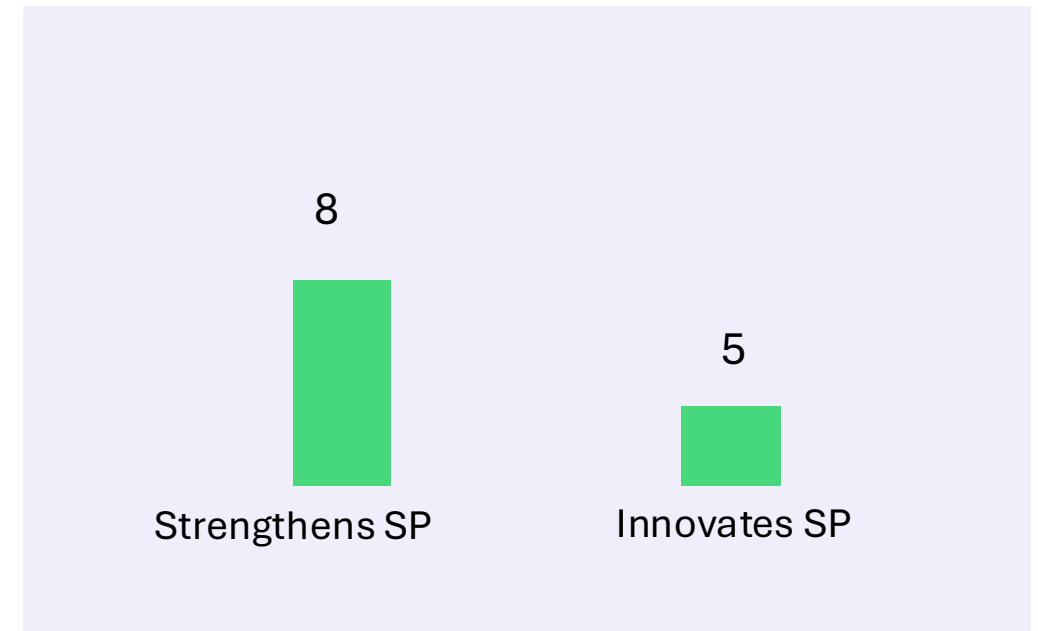
Funded Activities: level of integration with SP is usually soft

Lower ambition: 28 projects



where projects are

Higher impact: 13 projects

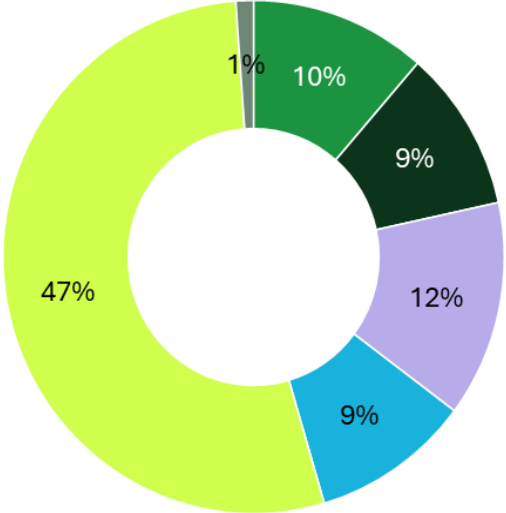


where value is



Stronger SP–Climate integration mobilises more co-finance

Co-Financing by Entity Types



■ Bilateral Donor ■ Finance Institution ■ CSO/ Not profit
■ MDB ■ Government/Public Sector ■ Private Sector

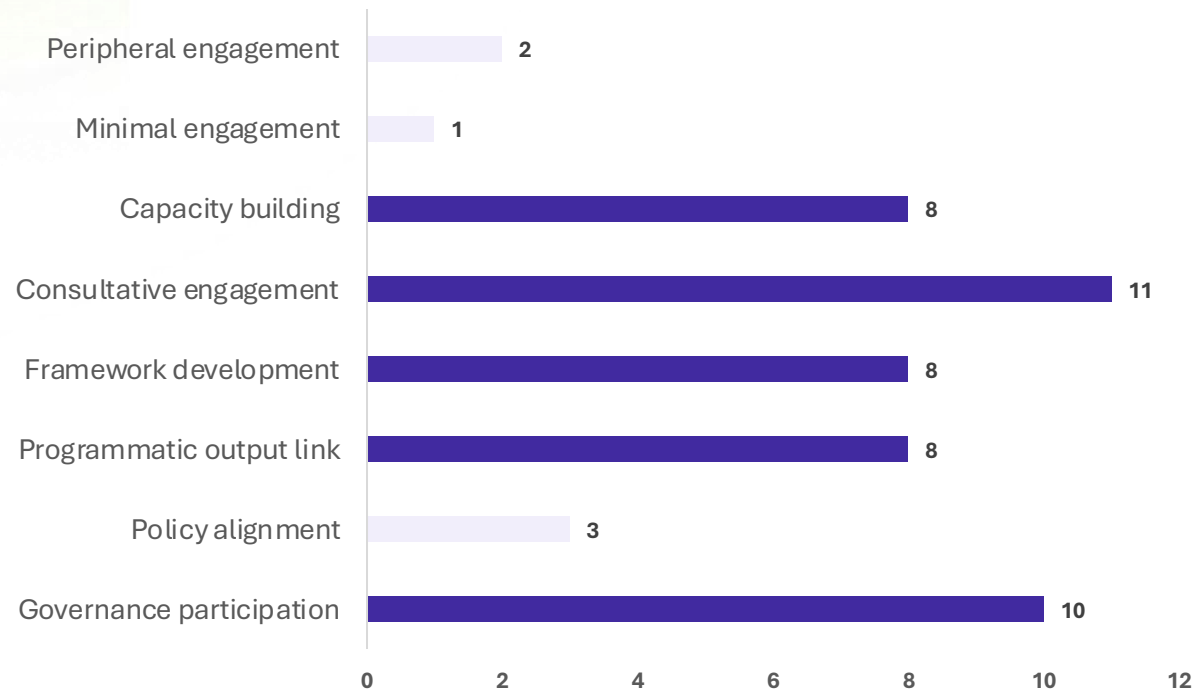
“ Projects that **actively strengthen or innovate within SP systems** attract nearly **double the co-financing**. ”

41% Co-financing of projects that invest in SP system strengthening/and or innovate

23% Co-financing of projects **seek alignment with SP / use ongoing SP programmes and systems**

Readiness is also being invested on SP

Type of Readiness Investments on SP



35 Readiness projects have engaged with social protection:-

18 NAP programmes

17 Standard Readiness

in **7** FCAS countries

Best practice: MWI-RS-004 strengthened institutional capacity and investment to expand and strengthen social protection systems in response to climate risks and emergencies.

4

How can the GCF scale its investments in social protection?

Broadly what does this require?



Current state

Passively receiving social protection proposals focused on project-level interventions



Future vision

Proactively funding and supporting the institutional architecture and delivery systems for nationally-led social protection for climate action

Strategy 1: Pioneering new programmatic approaches for SP and climate action

Clearly **articulate** and **define SP** as a scalable mechanism to reduce climate vulnerability and enhance climate resilience

1

Bring climate science into SP planning

→ Target future poverty and food insecurity hotspots due to climate change, climate-related mobility, conflict and climate overlap, and maladaptation risks

2

Back scalable SP–climate models

Combine SP instruments + system strengthening

3

Unlock FCAS potential

→ Leverage existing SP partnerships to bring adaptation where vulnerability is highest, including with Readiness support

4

Strengthen country ownership

→ Explore funding nationally owned safety nets, and encourage non-gov. safety nets to align, sequence, and transition to national systems as relevant.

5

Shift from grant-heavy projects to diversified financing

→ Scaling GCF should actively deploy a broader mix of instruments including concessional loans and blended finance to enable to system-based investments and mobilise co-financing at scale.

Strategy 2: Identifying entry-points across the project cycle – Project financing

GCF Project Type	Applicable financing instrument that could be explored to complement GCF grants
<p>Readiness / PPF grants for building and strengthening foundational capacity, policy and strategy, institutional strengthening, (incl. FCAS capacity support), early stage pipelines</p>	<p>Co-financing by other MCFs, philanthropic finance, CSO/ Not profit</p>
<p>Scaling and adapting national programmes linked to climate resilience</p>	<p>Concessional loans, co- finance by MDBs, Nat Governments, other MCFs, bilat donors. Guarantees, blended finance, private and/or philanthropic finance, CSO/ Not profit</p>
<p>National SP system strengthening and climate innovation</p>	<p>Concessional loans, co- finance by MDBs, Nat Governments, other MCFs, Global Shield Financing Facility ASP programmatic window, bilat donors, Guarantees, blended finance, private and/or philanthropic finance, CSO, Not profit</p>
<p>Forecast-based financing / shock-responsive SP windows with pre-agreed triggers enabling anticipatory action and climate-response scale-up of support</p>	<p>Grant + Contingent finance, insurance-type instruments (parametric models), Global Shield Financing Facility ASP programmatic window</p>

Strategy 3: Adaptive change – strategic and incremental institutionalisation



Raise awareness and internal literacy across GCF on relevance of SP for climate action



Equip teams to assess SP elements and collaborate across units to **harmonise** approaches.



Cross-functional forum: convene an SP Working Group with investment, technical, country engagement, M&E, and legal representation



Single steward: establish a corporate SP Focal Point to provide technical leadership and cross-team coordination



Provide **structured advisory guides** encouraging accredited entities (AEs) to integrate SP in proposals.



Country-level anchors: identify champion countries to drive readiness and pipeline work and raise awareness of clear climate resilience outcomes from SP integration

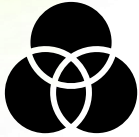


Partner matchmaking: proactively align countries with accredited entities and national ministries that have SP expertise and successful pilot projects



Evidence and learning: Create illustrative cases, data and evidence and indicators from ongoing investments to develop strong evidence base to fund SP programmes

Strategy 4: Strengthening external partnerships



Explore complementarity and coordinated co-financing

Combining **strengths** with **other climate funds, MDBs and humanitarian actors** enables complementary financing and efficiency (system development; shock-response; climate data integration) through a single national platform, replacing parallel project structures.



Raising awareness and providing support to AE and NDAs

AEs supporting proposal development are often not fully trained on social protection; existing path-dependency on familiar project approaches limits exploration of sector



Benefits for FCAS and beyond

Even where social protection systems are weak MDB-funded programmes exist; **climate funds can add climate expertise** to improve efficiency, targeting, and timeliness by leveraging social protection databases and networks.



Technical partnerships boost capacity

Engage **experienced partners** to help countries identify and design climate-linked social protection interventions.

Key takeaways

Social protection is a scalable, system-level solution for greater climate resilience for the most vulnerable. Yet current GCF investments remain **ad hoc and largely project-based**, missing opportunities for system-level impact, especially in FCAS.

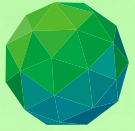
Diversification

Diversification of instruments, moving beyond grant-heavy pilots toward **programmatic investments in national systems**, supported by a **broader mix of instruments (grants, concessional loans, guarantees/blended finance)**, is essential to unlock scale, efficiency, and co-financing.

Integration across project cycle

Integration across the GCF project cycle and institutional systems and stronger partnerships. Scaling SP does not require new processes, but **embedding within existing GCF operations and investment criteria** including:

- ✓ Guidance for appraisal (internal) and proposal development (AEs/DAEs)
- ✓ Identifying entry points across the readiness and project cycle
- ✓ Internal champions and cross-team coordination (internal), cross ministerial collaboration (external)
- ✓ Stronger evidence, indicators, and case studies to demonstrate impact and enable replication and scale



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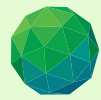


Thank you!

Link all the publishing available for participants

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Case study 1: Burkina Faso FP074

Theme: Adaptation



Africa Hydromet Program – Strengthening Climate Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa

Total project funding: USD 31m

GCF funding: 22.8m Grant (73.4%)

Co-financing: 8.3m Grant (26.6%). Entity Type: MDB

Beneficiaries: 5.3m

Accredited Entity: World Bank

Social Protection integration

- No formal SP integration
- Synergies with SASPP mentioned but not actioned / defined further.
- Political context constrains feasibility of SP integration

Key learnings

- Systems-first hydromet investments can indirectly strengthen SP by enhancing the data ecosystem needed for shock response.
- Cross-ministerial coordination is a structural barrier
- GCF's requirement for clear institutional arrangements at proposal stage is a constraint in FCAS where inter-agency relationships cannot always be formalised in advance.

Missed opportunities/entry points

- No operational bridge from early warning triggers to SP mechanisms (targeting, payment systems, contingency financing, benefit delivery).
- Underutilised potential to link the Food Security Early Warning System (SAP) to shock-responsive SP actions.
- Possibility to connect strengthened last-mile climate information dissemination to community-level SP outreach.

Case study 2: Ethiopia FP136

Theme: Cross-cutting



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Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods Project (RLLP)

Total project funding: USD 297.2m

GCF funding: 107.2 Loan + 58.1m Grant (165,237,592/55.6% total)

Co-financing: 100m Loan + 19m Grant + 13m Grant (132m/44.4% total). Entity type: MDB, Multilateral Trust Fund.

Beneficiaries: 30.4m

Accredited Entity: World Bank

Social Protection Integration

- RLLP is designed as a follow-on programme for households graduating or transitioning out of PSNP.
- PSNP provides protection and asset creation. RLLP supports landscape restoration and livelihood diversification
- No evidence this is happening in implementation.

Key learnings

- In theory, sequencing model shows promising link to SP.
- Shared implementation architecture between RLLP and PSNP should support operational linkages - but weak coordination risks parallel planning and transition gaps.
- Lack of conflict sensitivity of PSNP might compromise how prepared beneficiaries are for RLLP.

Missed opportunities / entry points

- No clear mechanism to verify readiness for transition or bridge to support gaps between PSNP and RLLP which is necessary for resilience logic in sequenced approach.
- PSNP community structures not fully leveraged for RLLP oversight.
- RLLP could leverage PSNP MIS, watershed plans, and oversight mechanisms for better integration with SP.

Case study 3: Mozambique SAP042

Theme: Adaptation



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Building Climate Resilience by Linking Climate Adaptation and Social Protection through Decentralised Planning

Total project funding: USD 28.3m

GCF funding: 23.5 m Grant (82.9%)

Co-financing: 3,349,714 In-kind + 1,171,271 Grant + 100k In-kind + 212,815 Grant (4,833,800 / 17.1% total). Entity type: Govt, bilateral donor & INGO

Beneficiaries: 974.7k

Accredited Entity: World Bank

Social Protection integration

- LINK directly integrates climate adaptation into PASP
- LAPs support inclusion of climate risk analysis linked to PASP delivery
- Built on evidence from the PRIORIZE pilot (2018–2020), which demonstrated LAPs as an effective entry point for aligning climate adaptation with SP targeting and delivery.

Key learnings

- LINK demonstrates what a genuinely joined-up approach looks like in practice.
- Cross-sectoral coordination structures are a key enabler, but local capacity gaps remain a significant constraint.
- A crisis modifier shows how adaptive mechanisms can be embedded directly into SP-climate programmes.

Missed opportunities / entry points

- SP coverage remains low (20.5% of HH in project sites) and transfer values are insufficient – limits reach and impact.
- Lack of conflict-sensitive design risk maladaptation outcomes in fragile districts.
- Long-term institutionalisation and domestic financing are critical but not yet secured.

Case study 4: Somalia FP246

Theme: Adaptation



Climate Resilient Agriculture in Somalia

Total project funding: USD 94.9m

GCF funding: 79.7m Grant (84%)

Co-financing: 15,194,229m Grant (16%)

Beneficiaries: 21m

Accredited Entity: FAO

Social Protection integration

- No explicit SP integration - resilience is pursued through agricultural, productive and natural resource-based pathways

Key learnings

- This is a context where SP systems are weak, fragmented and largely externally driven.
- The absence of functional SP systems may lead adaptation programmes to bypass SP entirely rather than invest.

Missed opportunities/entry points

- FAO's existing beneficiary infrastructure (digital systems, mobile money, post-distribution monitoring) could be leveraged for parallel delivery.
- Scale of the project plus targeting of the most climate-vulnerable provides an opportunity to pilot SRSP or adaptive mechanisms alongside agricultural investments.