



A partnership between:



CC Facility Learning Hub

Transformative capital: The role of blended finance in shaping the trajectories of gender- and climate-focused impact funds in Sub-Saharan Africa



Housekeeping

- 1 **Your cameras and microphones are automatically disabled. If you wish you ask a question, we encourage you to use the Q&A chat function.**
- 2 **The event is being recorded and will be made available on the CC Facility Learning Hub website.**



Agenda

1

Opening Remarks:

- Robin Ivory, Manager, Market Insights, Convergence
- Erin Tansey, Director, Sustainable Inclusive Economies, IDRC

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Report Findings

- Julie Rouxel, Consultant, I&P Ecosystems

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Panel Discussion

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Q&A

What is the Learning Hub?

The Learning Hub's Objectives

Core Objectives



Bridging climate blended finance research and practice by translating lessons from CC Facility grantees to the wider ecosystem



Supporting Global South institutions to become leaders in researching, developing, and funding locally-led blended climate finance solutions

The Hub's Value Offerings:

Translating Market Acceleration Lessons to Benefit the Ecosystem

Partnering with Local Actors to Foster Blended Climate Finance Knowledge Exchange

Convening Diverse Stakeholders to Demystify and Mobilize Blended Climate Finance



Erin Tansey

Director, Sustainable
Inclusive Economies, IDRC



Transformative capital:

The role of blended finance in shaping the trajectories of gender- and climate focused impact funds in Sub-Saharan Africa

03/03/2026

Rationale of the study

A CRITICAL FINANCIAL GAP:

Sub-Saharan Africa needs ~USD 2tn by 2030 to build climate resilience

GENDER AND CLIMATE FINANCE

- Women, who make up ~70% of smallholder farmers, face disproportionate climate risks, yet only ~3% of climate finance explicitly targets gender equality.
- Women-led households are more exposed to climate shocks but are also central to climate adaptation and adoption of resilient solutions.



Proven traction, limited evidence: While concessional capital has delivered real results, there is still **limited systematic evidence** on how blended finance shapes fund strategies, operations, and impact.

BLENDED FINANCE AS AN ENABLER

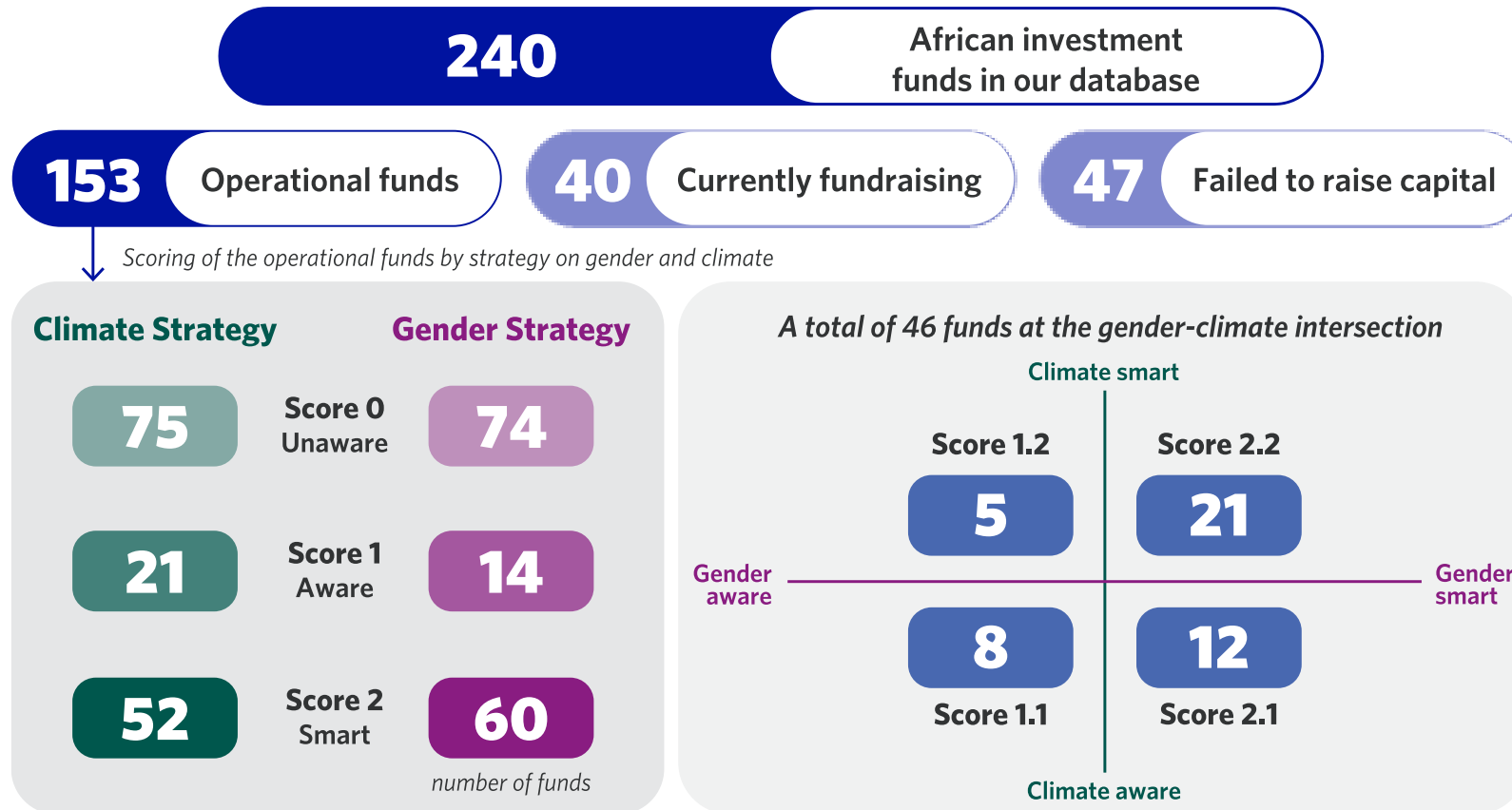
Over the past decade, blended finance has been **essential** to the emergence and scaling of funds operating at the gender-climate nexus, enabling investment in high-risk markets and overlooked enterprises.



With a decade of experience, the ecosystem is mature enough to **diagnose what works** and **identify pathways to deploy blended finance more effectively** for greater gender-and-climate impact.

Methodology adopted for the study

Each fund was assessed across two dimensions: the depth and intentionality of its gender strategy and its climate strategy, based on publicly available information and proprietary data.



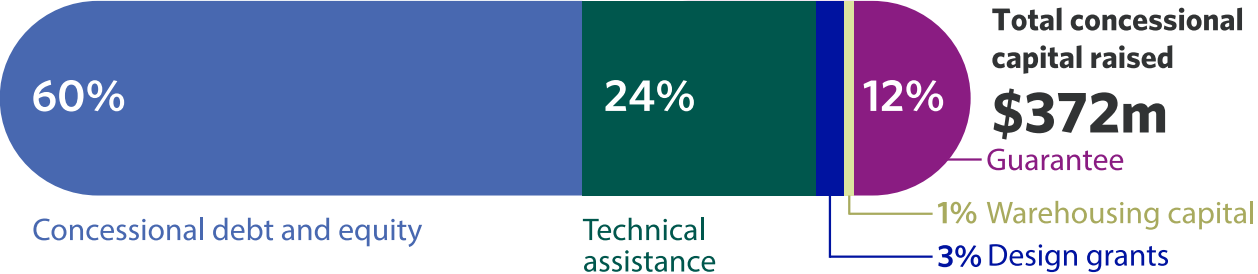
- A 0-2 scoring framework was applied to the database reflecting the degree of integration of gender and climate focus within the fund's investment thesis, governance, and operational practices.
- Funds scoring at least 1 on both gender and climate dimensions were classified as operating at the gender-climate nexus.

This process resulted in a final sample of **46 "Nexus Funds"**.

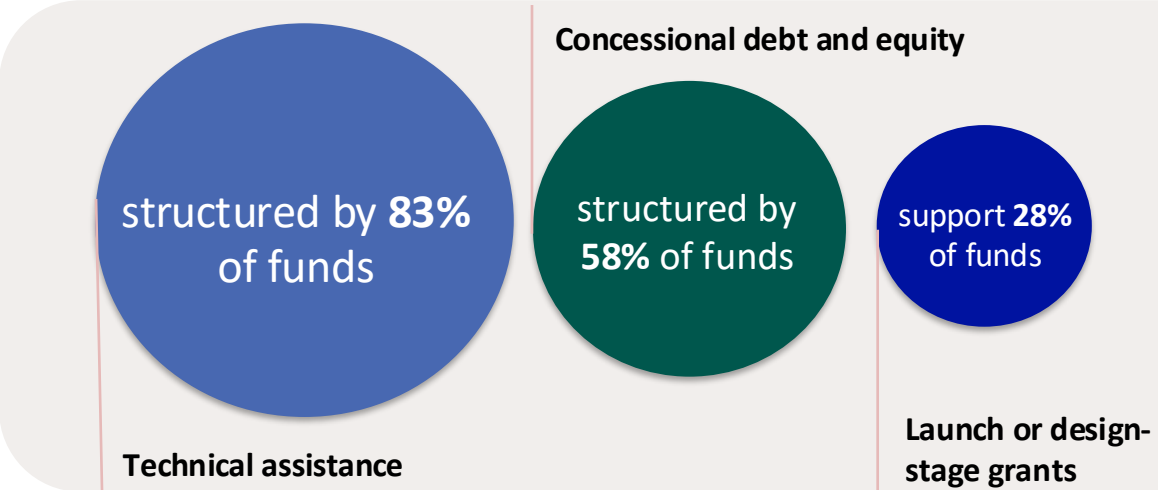
Blended finance is essential both to launch and operate gender-climate nexus funds

Blended finance is not peripheral to gender-climate nexus funds; it is a systemic feature of how these vehicles are structured, capitalized, and operated. Across the 46 gender-climate nexus funds reviewed, 86% have structured at least one blended finance archetype, and 68% rely on two or more.

Breakdown of concessional capital archetypes raised in the sample

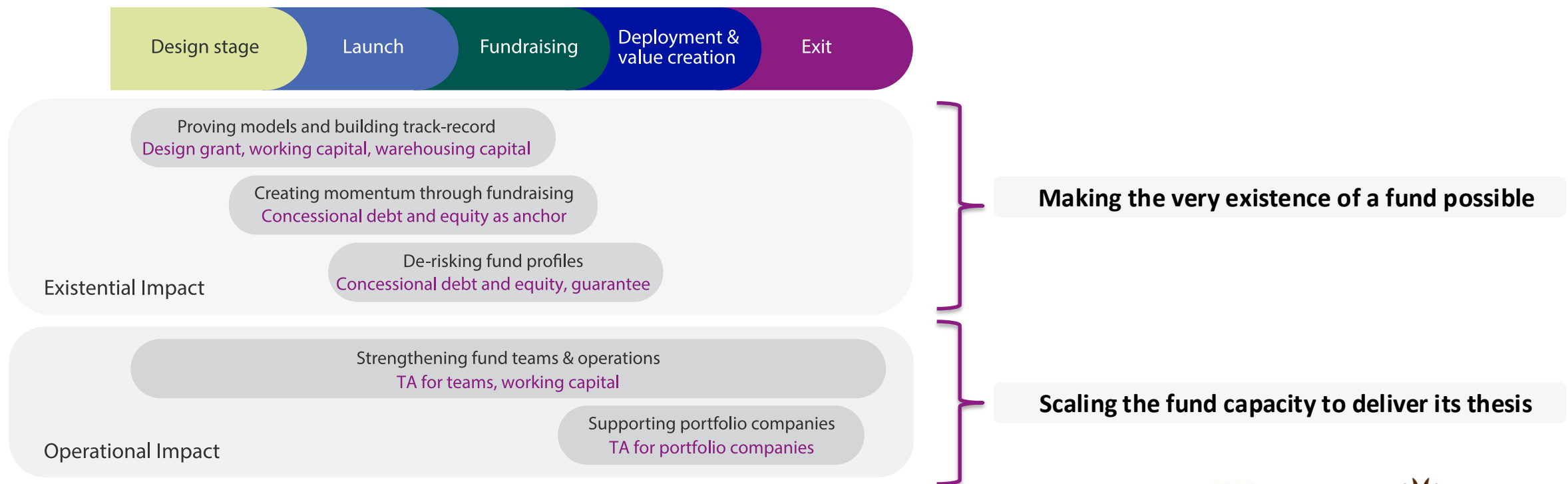


Breakdown of concessional capital archetypes raised in the sample



How can we ensure blended finance can become an enabler of funds rather than a gatekeeper?

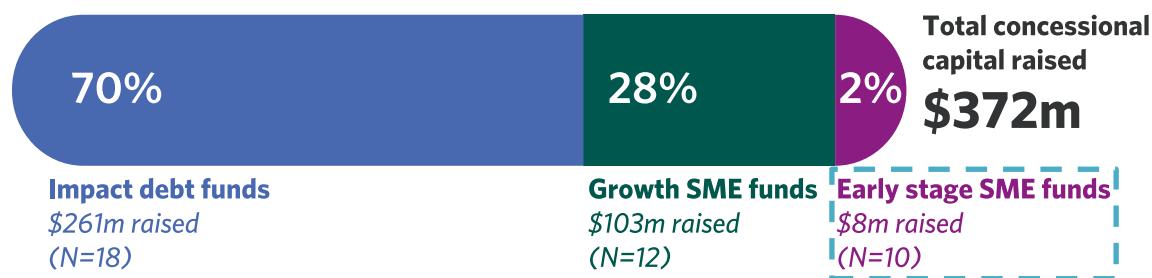
The role of blended finance plays out across the fund lifecycle, with different archetypes serving distinct purposes at each stage. **70% of fund managers** combine several archetypes to solve gaps throughout their fund life.



The Paradox: The access to blended finance is uneven & large funds tend to capture the bulk of it

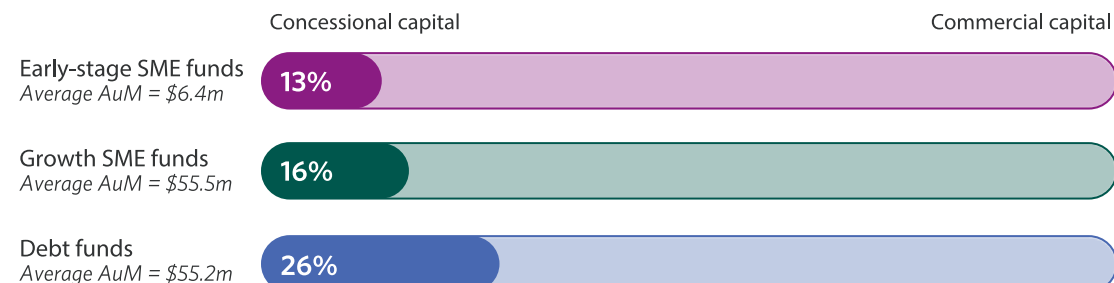
Larger vehicles tend to attract a higher proportion of concessional capital than smaller funds. This imbalance remains striking after accounting for fund sizes. On average, debt funds with \$55 million in AuM raised 26% of their funds from concessional capital, compared to just 13% for early-stage funds.

Breakdown by fund strategy of the amount of concessional capital raised in the sample



Early-stage SME funds are more likely to be first-time teams, women-led and outside Big 4 Countries

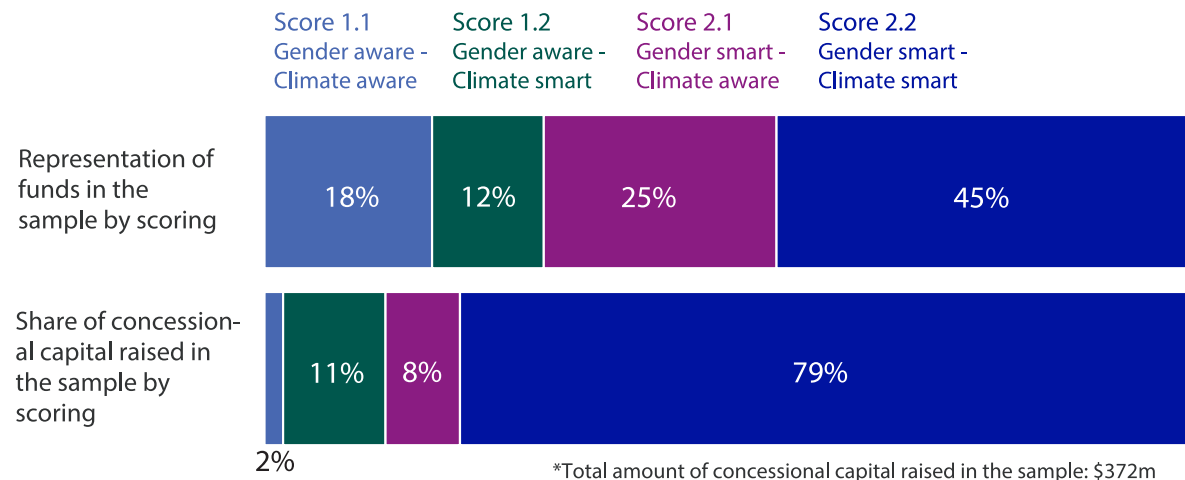
Looking closer at the percentage of concessional capital over fund size raised



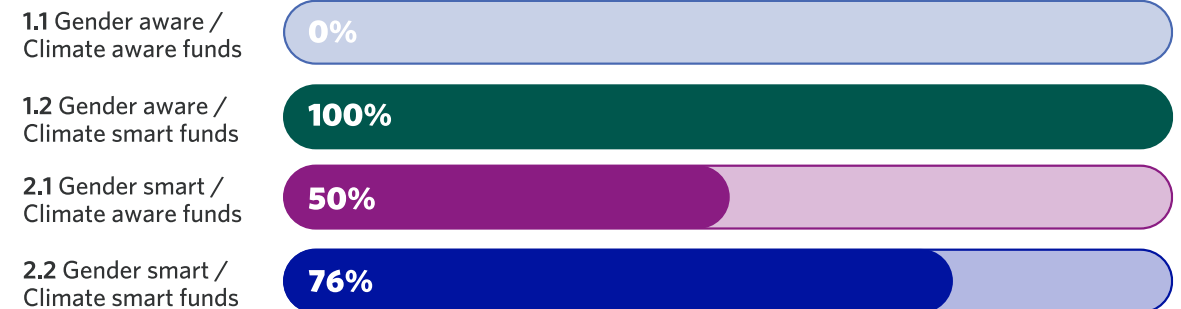
Climate and gender specialization are both key drivers of concessional capital mobilization

Analysis shows that both gender and climate integration across funds is not uniform and occurs **along a continuum**, with broad categories: generalist funds that are gender and climate aware and specialist funds that are gender or climate smart. Together they represent complementary functions in ecosystems, but analysis reveals that catalytic capital is rather unlocked by specialized climate funds rather than gender ones.

Intersectional specialization is a critical determinant for attracting concessional capital



Climate specialization is a more powerful lever for blended finance than gender specialization



This contrast points to the likely stronger perception of climate specialization as a rationale for catalytic investment relative to gender specialization

Raising blended finance archetypes can be challenging for fund managers

Blended Finance brings a new set of frictions that both fund investors and fund managers must actively manage. Catalytic fund investors are not neutral actors, they often come with explicit intentions to shape markets around gender, climate or other priorities. At the same time, fund managers are opportunistic and respond to where resources are available, which can in turn influence their strategies.

1

Added complexity

making waterfall, investor relation and reporting more complex can exclude many smaller and emerging teams operating with high additionality

2

Investment thesis distortion

as fund managers adjust strategies to accommodate fund investors' preferences they may not fully share or be equipped to implement

Changes in dynamics

Implications

For catalytic fund investors:

- Understanding their role as enablers and gatekeepers in the ecosystem
- Ensuring there is strong alignment with fund managers, and focusing on persuading co-investors
- More simplicity and clarity around instrument terms and reporting requirements

1

For fund managers:

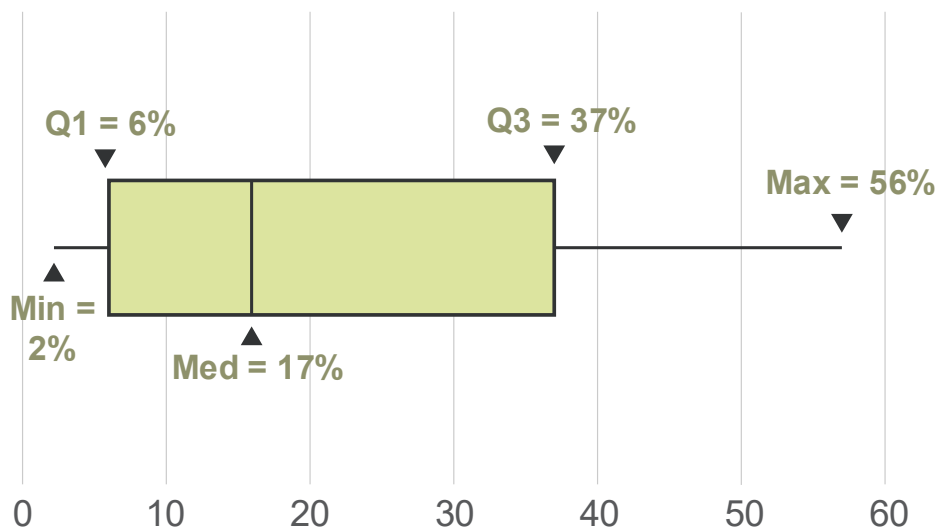
- Concessional capital has become critical to achieve first close in the nexus
- Fund managers need to engage catalytic capital providers early and coordinate with multiple actors to reach optimal structures and alignment

2

Robust frameworks and data are needed to better allocate concessional resources

The persistent lack of data and standardized benchmarks or frameworks leaves fund investors and fund managers navigating archetypes on a case-by-case basis. We advocate for more standardization around the use of concessional instruments.

We observe a clear gap of standardization in the sizing of concessional debt and equity tranches in our ecosystems

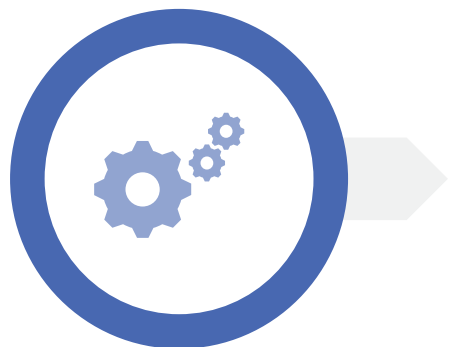


% of concessional capital tranches over total fund size in the sample

The absence of roadmaps around climate and gender integration

- **Climate integration** lacks clear, fund-relevant roadmaps. Many funds are pushed to “say something on climate” to meet investor expectations, risking **superficial or costly integration**
- **Gender integration** has benefited from the 2X Challenge but many funds however **stop at 2X alignment**.
- The next step for the ecosystem is to equip fund managers with **usable roadmaps that move beyond compliance**, enabling more intentional and integrated gender–climate strategies

Recommendations for our ecosystems

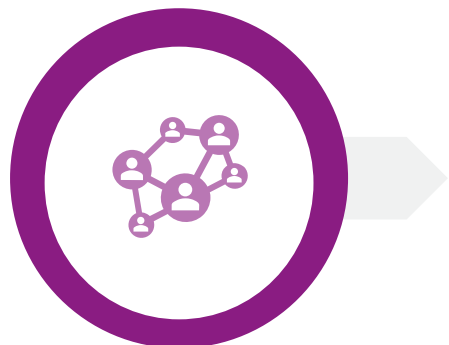


Calibrate, tailor and expand blended finance interventions to reflect and include the diversity of funds at the nexus

Differentiated support packages for various fund categories across fund lifecycles

Develop TA for fund managers aligned with fund maturity

Develop blended finance packages that are adapted to smaller funds



Improve coordination and data sharing across the ecosystem to uncover more insights, case studies and benchmarks

Develop benchmarking tools that help providers assess concessional support levels

Build frameworks that take into account both integration and additionality

Build coordination mechanisms to avoid under/over funding some fund strategies



Unlock dedicated resources and roadmaps to strengthen gender-climate integration

Support the costs of gender and climate specialists within portfolio fund teams

Provide multi-year TA to small funds to develop frameworks and processes

Support the creation of gender-differentiated climate impact measurement systems



Thank you!





Panel Discussion

Speakers



Tobias Ruckstuhl
Managing Partner, Persistent



Jen MacBruce
Director, Investment
Finance, MEDA



Amos Gachuri
Head, Investments,
FSD Africa



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2X



Julien Taris
Senior Expert - Strategy
and Innovation, Green
Climate Fund

Q&A



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Thank You