Introduction: Catalytic Capital: Unleashing Philanthropy for System Change

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Philanthropy as a Catalyst

In an age where change accelerates at an exponential pace, the world is grappling with a unique and volatile set of challenges. Mohamed El-Erian, the foreword author of our first publication (*Reimagining Philanthropy in the Global South: From Analysis to Action in a Post-COVID World*[1]*),* uses the term "permacrisis" to describe the compounding issues of climate change, geopolitical instability, and technological disruption that now dominate the global landscape. These crises have revealed the fragility of systems once deemed resilient, highlighting the urgent need for transformative financing approaches to support sustainable development and achieve lasting systemic change in an ever-evolving world. This book explores the promise of catalytic capital and the emerging dynamics of development finance in this new global landscape.

Catalytic finance is a flexible, risk-tolerant form of investment that has the potential to bridge the (COVID-exacerbated) $[2]4 trillion annual financing gap needed to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[3]. Catalytic capital, to summarize the more detailed definition offered by *Impact Europe*[4], comprises deploying financial resources aimed at addressing market gaps by enabling impact-focused interventions. It is characterized by flexibility, risk tolerance, patience, and a willingness to accept concessionary returns to catalyse additional investments.

Spanning the full spectrum of financial instruments—from grants to impact investing, equity and various hybrid instruments—catalytic capital is defined by its purpose rather than its asset class, with a focus on fostering systemic change, supporting underserved needs, and promoting social and environmental well-being.

More than just funding, catalytic capital acts as a powerful enabler, mobilizing diverse capital sources to attract additional investments from both public and private sectors. Widely embraced by development finance pioneers, catalytic capital has the potential to de-risk investments, encouraging co-financiers to participate and unlock opportunities for scalable solutions beyond traditional approaches. Given its scope and considering the existential challenges facing global development, it is perhaps the most promising option for bringing about a radically new approach to development finance.

Within this framework, philanthropic capital—essentially private capital for public good—holds a unique yet often underutilized potential as pure risk capital, a role it has historically hesitated to fully embrace. Catalytic capital builds on this promise, redefining philanthropy's intrinsic role and unlocking its capacity for bold, transformative impact. By leveraging this underexplored resource for radical innovation, catalytic finance can position philanthropy as a pivotal driver of systemic change.

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[1] Woodcraft C, Munir K, Khemka NM, eds. *Reimagining Philanthropy in the Global South: From Analysis to Action in a Post-COVID World*. Cambridge University Press; 2024. https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/reimagining-philanthropy-in-the-global-south/892D6D9A346C1670F2B28B95F6198607

[2] All dollar references in this book refer to United States currency (US$).

[3] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2024) Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2024 https://financing.desa.un.org/iatf/report/financing-sustainable-development-report-2024

[4] EVPA (2023) Catalysing Impact. Catalytic Capital in Europe Whitepaper. Retrieved from https://www.impacteurope.net/sites/www.evpa.ngo/files/publications/EVPA-Catalysing-Impact-2023.pdf

Philanthropic entities play a significant role in catalytic finance, particularly within blended finance (a structuring approach that leverages risk subordination to attract private investment and that sits within the overall catalytic finance category[5]). According to Convergence, a leading platform for blended finance, an average of 18% of blended transactions in the High Development Dividend (HDD) category, annually include contributions from at least one foundation.[6] Convergence notes that with their ability to provide flexible capital *and* focus on impact, foundations have the potential to play an even greater role in catalytic finance—whether through non-return-seeking grants, concessional return-seeking investments (such as debt or equity), or commercial investments.[7]

The growing influence of philanthropic capital is further highlighted in Impact Europe's 2024 report, *The Size of Impact*, which underscores the increasing engagement of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), foundations, and corporations in impact investing.[8] Notably, foundations—both corporate and independent—are seen as key players in expanding impact investing activities by aligning their assets with their missions. The report also points to a 'potentially transformative shift' as corporations seek to integrate impact more deeply into their investment strategies, moving beyond profit-maximization.

The Scope of the Opportunity: Collaboration as the Sine Qua Non

While the catalytic role of philanthropy is increasingly recognized, its deployment for development goals remains neither widespread nor fully optimized. According to the OECD, philanthropic capital targeting development outcomes accounts for only about 7% of total Official Development Assistance (ODA), underscoring its relatively modest scale.[9] Even when philanthropy contributes to SDG funding, it often steers away from the most urgent and high-risk interventions.

This pattern is evident across various sectors, including health, education, and economic development, but is particularly stark in climate finance. Despite a global philanthropic budget of approximately $811 billion annually, only an estimated $7.8–12.8 billion is allocated to climate solutions.[10] This gap illustrates a broader challenge: philanthropy has the potential to play a transformative role across the entire development finance landscape but remains underleveraged in addressing systemic and high-risk global challenges.

Notwithstanding consistent calls for foundations to embrace their risk appetite, many remain reluctant due to various cultural and operational factors. Foundations often prioritize

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[5] EVPA (2023) Catalysing Impact. Catalytic Capital in Europe Whitepaper, Retrieved from https://www.impacteurope.net/sites/www.evpa.ngo/files/publications/EVPA-Catalysing-Impact-2023.pdf Page 18.

[6] Convergence 11 Dec 2024, Blending with Foundations. Retrieved from https://www.convergence.finance/resource/blending-with-foundations/view#

[7] The Convergence report (ibid) notes that it has recorded 236 blended finance transactions that include at least one foundation as an investor, totalling $24.2 billion in aggregate financing.

[8] Impact Europe (2024) The Size of Impact. Retrieved from https://www.impacteurope.net/sites/www.evpa.ngo/files/publications/The-Size-of-Impact-2024.pdf Impact Europe's earlier report *Catalysing Impact: Catalytic Capital in Europe-Whitepaper* offers the distinction that "catalytic capital pursues impact for people and planet that otherwise could not be achieved, which, in other words, means it is additional" and hence distinct from impact investing which is "tied to the concept of additionality in all its forms [and thus] broader than catalytic capital." (See https://www.impacteurope.net/sites/www.evpa.ngo/files/publications/Catalysing-impact-advance.pdf page 19)

[9] OECD. 9 Dec 2021, Private Philanthropy for Development – Second Edition. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/private-philanthropy-for-development-second-edition_cdf37f1e-en.html Page 32

[10] Climateworks Foundation (2023) Funding trends 2023: Climate change mitigation philanthropy. Retrieved from https://www.climateworks.org/report/funding-trends-2023

autonomy, maintaining control over their resources and decision-making processes, which frequently leads to a preference for conservative funding approaches and resistance to more collaborative strategies.

Engagement with other actors, such as ODA providers or commercial investors, has been hindered by structural and cultural barriers, with foundations often protective of their independence. Transparency, accountability, and alignment—key requirements for large-scale collaborative efforts—are sometimes perceived as overly bureaucratic and resource-intensive.[11] Additionally, the shared vision and long-term commitment needed for effective collaboration can be challenging for foundations with diverse agendas and operational strategies. When collaborations do occur, they are often driven by the personal initiative of individual leaders rather than embedded as a systemic or institutionalized strategy.[12]

Yet today, collaboration is not just desirable—it is essential. It lies at the heart of this compendium, which showcases compelling examples where partnership is both possible and imperative. By pooling resources and leveraging intermediaries, partnerships enable systemic approaches, foster innovation, and scale solutions that would otherwise remain out of reach for individual contributors. These collaborations enhance funding efficiency, strengthen networks of expertise, and promote shared learning—critical elements for addressing the complex global challenges we face today.

The Power of Public-Private-Philanthropic Partnerships

One powerful framework driving collaboration in development finance is the concept of public-private-philanthropic partnerships (PPPPs)[13]—a model first introduced decades ago and now gaining widespread recognition. By harnessing the catalytic role of philanthropy, PPPPs amplify impact and unlock new opportunities for systemic change. Several chapters in this book explore the PPPPs framework, with all our authors emphasizing the importance of multi-sector collaboration.

As this compendium illustrates, partnerships take many forms, and philanthropy's unique value lies in the additionality it brings—particularly in its ability to bear risk in ways that other sectors cannot. Through grant-making, seed capital, funding research, technical assistance, and junior equity participation in capital structures, philanthropy can play a unique role in de-risking initiatives and driving transformative outcomes.

While often associated with blended finance for de-risking projects, philanthropy's catalytic potential extends far beyond individual transactions. It can create the conditions necessary for sustainable private sector investment by convening stakeholders—governments, private investors, developers, and NGOs—to shape regulatory frameworks that reduce investment risk across entire sectors. By supporting ecosystem development and institutional

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[11] OECD netFWD (2014), "Venture Philanthropy in Development: Dynamics, Challenges and Lessons in the Search for Greater Impact", OECD Development Centre, Paris. Retrieved from https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/venture-philanthropy-in-development_62c219a9-en.pdf?itemId=%2Fcontent%2Fpublication%2F62c219a9-en&mimeType=pdf

[12] Ibid

[13] In this book, we primarily use the term Public-Private-Philanthropic Partnerships (PPPPs); however, some authors refer to the same concept as 4Ps. This is merely a difference in terminology, as both terms describe the same collaborative framework aimed at leveraging public, private, and philanthropic resources to drive sustainable impact.

strengthening, philanthropy can help de-risk markets, making them more attractive for private investment. Additionally, it can facilitate dialogue between governments and the private sector to develop policies, incentives, and infrastructure that enable greater financial flows.

Conviction in this transformative potential is gaining momentum, with dedicated entities emerging to champion this approach. The Partnering Initiative (TPI) defines partnerships as "long-term multi-stakeholder collaboration in which public, private, and philanthropic sectors align and combine their unique resources and powerful levers to deliver social, economic, and/or environmental transformation." In collaboration with the World Association of PPP Units & Professionals, TPI's work suggests that "going it alone" is an ineffective strategy for philanthropic entities. Drawing on over 46 case studies, they show how partnerships based on robust legal frameworks, effective risk-sharing mechanisms, capacity building, meaningful stakeholder engagement, and shared learning can deliver systemic impact.[14]

The transformative potential of philanthropy grows exponentially when foundations move beyond annual budgets to leverage their endowments. Long viewed primarily as grant-makers, foundations can significantly amplify their impact by using the full spectrum of financial tools available to them. While global foundation assets are estimated at $150 trillion, annual grant funding accounts for just $150 billion.[15] Unlocking this untapped potential requires deep, long-term partnerships. As WINGS aptly states: "Complex societal challenges cannot be resolved by any single individual or institution. Their scale and overlapping causal factors necessitate collaboration with public and private stakeholders."[16]

Partnerships are no longer a 'nice-to-have' but the *sine qua non* for effectively addressing these challenges.[17] By fostering models of meaningful collaboration, organizations can leverage their unique expertise, resources, and networks to achieve greater collective impact, fully unlocking the transformative potential of philanthropy.

The Context of Transformation

We cannot overemphasize that the context in which this book is written is one of unparalleled complexity. Climate change is the defining crisis of our time, with global warming surpassing 1.5°C and increasingly frequent extreme weather events affecting millions. According to the World Economic Forum's *Global Risks Report*,[18] climate-related threats are among the most likely and impactful global challenges over the next decade. Addressing them requires innovative financing models capable of supporting decarbonization and adaptation.

Technological acceleration is bringing additional complexity to the challenge. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and digital infrastructure are reshaping economies and

[14] Systems Change Activation: Empowering philanthropy's catalytic role in transformational PPPPs
Harrison, T., Fejes, L., Kukulskyte, L., von Abendroth, M., Moseley, C., Prescott, D., HirschHolland, A., Stibbe, D.T., The Partnering Initiative, (Oxford, UK) 2023 Retrieved from https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Philanthropy-critical-activation-PPPPs.pdf Page 44

[15] WINGS, Jul 12, 2023 The Philanthropy Transformation Initiative Report, https://wings.issuelab.org/resource/the-philanthropy-transformation-initiative-report.html Page 62

[16] Ibid

[17] Leslie Johnston, CEO of Laudes Foundation and Chair of Impact Europe notes that "Our biggest impact is when philanthropy can accelerate how the private and public sectors step up. Despite being a dreadful acronym, PPPPs are the way to go" https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7281706312508297216/

[18] World Economic Forum (2024), The Global Risks Report 2024, 19th Edition. Retrieved from https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Global_Risks_Report_2024.pdf

societies. While these technologies hold immense promise, they also exacerbate inequalities and challenge traditional governance structures. For instance, the rise of large language models and AI-driven decision-making, demands urgent regulatory and ethical considerations. As Mustafa Suleyman notes in *The Coming Wave*[19] the traditional approach of creating and unleashing technological power has shifted. The current challenge lies in containing this power to ensure it serves humanity and the planet through robust regulatory frameworks to ensure its development aligns with societal well-being.

In parallel, geostrategic shifts—marked by demographic bifurcation, political polarization, growing populism, democratic fragility and the retrenchment of global powers—are redefining the dynamics of international development. Countries in the Global South (a term itself increasingly contested due to shifting power structures and its implied oversimplification) are home to most of the world's population and are rapidly emerging as centres of innovation and leadership, asserting their agency and developing localized solutions deeply rooted in their cultures and communities.

These shifts underscore the importance of equitable financing mechanisms that prioritize the voices and needs of these communities. They may be challenged, however, by increasingly consolidated power. As Anne Applebaum notes in *Autocracy, Inc*[20], contrary to previous assumptions, the spread of autocratic practices has infiltrated democratic societies posing significant implications for the Global South and poorer countries. She argues that as autocratic regimes gain power, they may promote governance models that prioritize wealth and power consolidation over democratic principles, potentially marginalising developing nations, limiting their opportunities and stymieing their developmental goals.

The philanthropic sector's call for deeper, institutionalized, and inalienable collaborative models is juxtaposed with what the *Eurasia 2025 Risk Report* describes as "the laws of the jungle."[21] The report warns that global institutions, painstakingly built over decades to address entrenched socio-economic challenges like climate change, are under threat noting that the concept of "a community of nations" is increasingly viewed as "the stuff of fairy tales."[22]

According to the report, the critical political actors needed to strengthen global institutions are "moving in the other direction." Rather than fostering partnerships, the world is shifting toward heightened instability and conflict. With no one willing or able to safeguard global peace and prosperity, the risks of economic upheavals and military clashes will escalate. This erosion of governance will widen power vacuums, embolden rogue actors, and exacerbate human suffering, leaving the world increasingly fractured and volatile.[23]

Given these exogenous threats, unlocking the full potential of catalytic capital will require a cohesive alliance of actors within the development ecosystem, united by a shared

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[19] Suleyman, M. (2023) *The Coming Wave: Technology, Power, and the Twenty-first Century's Greatest Dilemma*. Crown https://the-coming-wave.com/

[20] Applebaum, A. (2024), *Autocracy, Inc.* Doubleday https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/725302/autocracy-inc-by-anne-applebaum/

[21] Eurasiagroup, 6 Jan 2025. Eurasia Group's Top Risks for 2025. Retrieved from https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2025

[22] Eurasiagroup, 6 Jan 2025. Eurasia Group's Top Risks for 2025. Retrieved from https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2025 Page 2

[23] Eurasiagroup, 6 Jan 2025. Eurasia Group's Top Risks for 2025. Retrieved from https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2025 p4-5

commitment to countering the trend toward fragmentation. This demands a laser focus on outcomes over inputs, leveraging philanthropy's inherent risk appetite, and ensuring that development policy is grounded in rigorous research that identifies clear market "gaps".

Random, *ad hoc* programs that are neither aligned with development goals nor underpinned by evidence and a collaborative institutional culture, are unlikely to deliver systemic impact. Philanthropy must fully embrace its capacity for risk-taking by providing scalable, highly flexible, and unrestricted funding. Moreover, it must explicitly prioritize innovation, test bold ideas, and take a leadership role in driving transformative, unprecedented action.[24]

Catalytic Capital: Bridging Gaps and Driving Impact

Catalytic capital intrinsically offers a beacon of hope as one of the most adaptable sources of funding for addressing systemic market failures and achieving development outcomes at scale. In defiance of the global challenges outlined above, it is experiencing a "coming of age" moment, fuelled by the post-COVID awakening of its potential, and can serve to reignite faith in humanity's capacity to unite for progress rather than fracture in conflict. Philanthropy can play a pivotal role in fuelling this journey, transitioning catalytic capital from sporadic, *ad hoc* transactions to a mainstream form of development finance rooted in a culture of collaboration. To do so, three key paradigmatic elements must be addressed:

First is the simple need to mobilize more. **Mobilizing more catalytic capital** is crucial for addressing global challenges that neither traditional investments nor philanthropy can effectively tackle alone. It fills critical market gaps by funding under-resourced areas such as climate change, affordable housing, and healthcare—sectors often viewed as too risky or unprofitable by traditional investors. By fostering systemic change, catalytic capital leverages diverse partnerships, demonstrates the feasibility of transformative approaches, and influences policy decisions, thereby unlocking public funding. At their 2024 annual conference, Impact Europe emphasized, "Catalytic capital remains crucial, but we need more," noting that foundations, representing about 11% of the sector, could mobilize an additional $50-60 billion if endowments were activated. [25] Our authors offer ideas about how more capital can be brought to market and what enablers might facilitate the task.

Secondly, **capacity building** is essential to the success of catalytic funding, ensuring that recipients can effectively use diverse resources to achieve sustainable impact. Strengthening operational, strategic, and financial capabilities maximizes funding outcomes, mitigates risks, and prepares organizations for scalability and long-term resilience. The recognition that local organizations are best positioned to design and implement context-specific solutions has underscored the importance of capacity building in driving systemic, deeply rooted, and enduring change. Catalytic capital can support this trend by funding ecosystem development and institutional strengthening while leveraging technology and digital infrastructure to enhance efficiency and transparency.

While adopting new technologies such as AI poses risks, including the potential to exacerbate historical power imbalances in the development sector, it also offers opportunities for

[24] Judge Business School, University of Cambridge (2020) *Philanthropy and COVID-19: Is the North-South Power Balance Finally Shifting?* Retrieved from https://www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/csp-report-covid-2020-executive-summary.pdf

[25] Impact Europe (2024) Size of Impact [Presentation of the Size of Impact report delivered at the annual conference of Impact Europe in Bilbao] 27 November

empowerment by enabling change-makers to build scalable models more effectively and rapidly than in the analogue past. Building capacity within the public sector and fostering a greater understanding of how regulation will also help enable catalytic capital flows will be critical for unlocking domestic capital. To date, governments often struggle to develop regulation conducive to catalytic capital, unintentionally hindering its growth. Our authors explore these themes at the level of the institution, the sector and the broader ecosystem.

And finally, **equitable climate transition** is essential in the context of catalytic capital as it aligns economic growth with environmental sustainability, addressing the dual challenges of climate change and global inequality. Catalytic capital can play a transformative role in funding high-risk, high-impact projects that not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also foster inclusive development, particularly in underserved regions. By channelling investments into renewable energy, green infrastructure, and nature-based solutions, it can enable the scaling of innovative approaches, equitable access to clean technologies, and a shift away from carbon-intensive pathways in emerging economies. Moreover, as Satya Tripathi, Secretary-General of the Global Alliance for a Sustainable Planet notes “We aren’t here to fix the market, we are here to fix the planet.”[26] This perspective underscores the urgency of rethinking traditional financial systems to prioritize planetary health and sustainability. Our authors provide examples of where catalytic capital has indeed served to test and scale innovative solutions to climate mitigation and adaptation and share how these might be scaled further.

A New Era of Collaboration: A Manifesto for Systemic Change

This book aims to serve as a guide for practitioners, policymakers, and funders, offering actionable tools to amplify the impact of catalytic capital and align efforts with systemic market needs. To move beyond fragmented approaches, it emphasizes the importance of shared principles, cultural alignment, and mission-driven coalitions. By focusing on innovative financing models and centring community needs, it shows how philanthropy can shift from being a supplementary funding source to being a transformative force.

Examples within this compendium span a diverse range of geographies, interventions, sectors, and opportunities. Each case underscores how catalytic capital—particularly philanthropic capital—can drive scalable and replicable solutions while addressing critical gaps in the global development architecture. With philanthropy at the forefront, this collection highlights its unique ability to take early-stage risks, de-risk investments, and align diverse financial resources toward high-impact outcomes.

Each chapter provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing development finance, fostering ecosystem development, and strengthening institutions. By illustrating bold, evidence-based strategies and championing collaboration, this book aims to empower stakeholders to tackle interconnected challenges and drive sustainable, inclusive progress. Through the voices of our contributing authors, it presents a roadmap for redefining catalytic capital as an engine for systemic change—one where philanthropy plays a leading role in unlocking transformative potential across our three themes, and as summarized below:

[26]Reuters, Jan 2, 2025. *Satya Tripathi: ‘We aren’t here to fix the market, we are here to fix the planet’* https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/land-use-biodiversity/satya-tripathi-we-arent-here-fix-market-we-are-here-fix-planet-2025-01-02

MOBILIZING CATALYTIC FINANCE

Chapter 1- The Role of Philanthropy in Mobilizing Private Finance for Sustainable Development: The global financing gap for sustainable development is widening, demanding innovative solutions. In this chapter, **Haje Schutte** examines how philanthropy can unlock private capital through blended finance and catalytic capital, ensuring critical priorities—from climate action to poverty reduction—receive the funding they require. As emerging markets face investment shortfalls, philanthropy's risk-taking potential can de-risk projects, attract institutional investors, and drive systemic change.

Drawing on insights from the OECD and global experts, this chapter highlights the transformative power of public-private-philanthropic partnerships and how foundations can move beyond traditional grant-making to deploy impact investments, guarantees, and innovative financial tools. By strategically aligning resources across sectors, philanthropy can bridge capital markets and the SDGs, catalysing investments that balance financial returns with meaningful social and environmental impact—ultimately redefining its role as a driving force for global change.

Chapter 2-The Opportunity of Pooled Funds for Amplifying Impact: In an era of interconnected crises—from climate change to biodiversity loss—transformative solutions require collaboration at scale. **Facundo Etchebehere, Attilio Tardani**, and **Emmanuel Marchant** explore how Public-Private-Philanthropic Partnerships can unlock new funding models, amplify impact, and drive systemic change. It introduces pooled funds as a game-changing approach, demonstrating how aggregating resources across sectors can mobilize capital for high-impact initiatives.

Through compelling case studies, the chapter illustrates how aligned interests between businesses, governments, and philanthropy can catalyse sustainable development—from empowering smallholder farmers to financing global land restoration efforts. It also confronts the challenges hindering PPPPs from reaching their full potential and offers actionable strategies for overcoming them.

Chapter 3-Unlocking Catalytic Capital: Private-Sector Innovation & Partnerships: With the global funding gap for sustainable development widening, the private sector is emerging as a critical force in unlocking catalytic capital. This chapter explores how businesses and financial institutions are shifting from traditional corporate social responsibility (CSR) to strategic impact-driven investments that de-risk projects, attract capital, and drive systemic change.

Through real-world case studies from leading global corporations—Philips, UBS, Unilever, BNP Paribas, and Allianz—**Sophie Faujour** and **Kehinde Sonuga** demonstrate how blended finance, public-private-philanthropic partnerships, and innovative funding mechanisms are mobilizing billions toward high-impact solutions. From healthcare transformation in Africa to blue finance for marine conservation, the private sector is rethinking its role in global development. This chapter makes a compelling case for businesses as catalysts of impact, bridging the gap between profit and purpose.

Chapter 4-Overcoming Market Barriers to Unlock Health Capital for the Global South: The Sustainable Development Goal for Health and Well-being (SDG#3) faces major challenges in reaching its 2030 targets, largely due to funding gaps. The pandemic has further strained fragile health infrastructure, reversing progress in life expectancy and maternal mortality reduction. Traditional funding—government spending and aid—falls short of demand.

This chapter explores game-changing solutions to unlock health capital for the Global South, revealing why private investment—common in energy and infrastructure—remains underutilized in health. It examines how blended finance, impact investing, remittances, and corporate ESG capital can transform funding. With real-world examples, **Neha Agarwal** and **Nikolaj Gilbert** illustrate how catalytic finance can bridge shortfalls and offers a roadmap for policymakers, investors, and changemakers to rethink health finance and mobilize toward a healthier, more equitable world.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Chapter 5- Philanthropy for Capacity Building: The Case of Tienda Cerca–Financial and Digital Inclusion for SMEs: Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the economic backbone of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), generating over 60% of employment and driving local supply chains. Yet, systemic barriers—including limited access to financing, digital exclusion, and regulatory hurdles—prevent them from reaching their full potential. These challenges disproportionately impact informal businesses, restricting their growth and long-term sustainability.

This chapter by **Catalina Garcia**, **Tom Achoki**, **William Ernest**, and **Fermin Vivanco** explores how philanthropy can be a catalyst for change, addressing these barriers and unlocking SME potential. Through the Tienda Cerca initiative by AB InBev, it highlights how blended finance, digital tools, and capacity-building programs can empower small businesses. By digitizing informal enterprises, expanding access to credit, and fostering entrepreneurial resilience, these interventions not only drive financial inclusion but also promote sustainable economic development.

Chapter 6- Regulatory Reforms and the Rise of the Saudi Impact Sector: Saudi Arabia is undergoing a transformational shift, leveraging regulatory reforms to position its non-profit and impact sector as a driving force for national and regional development. **Nouf bint Muhammad bin Abdullah Al Saud** considers how Vision 2030's ambitious agenda has unlocked new opportunities for philanthropy, impact investing, and catalytic capital, enabling a once-traditional charitable landscape to evolve into a SAR 100 billion economic powerhouse.

With the number of non-profit organizations surging from 4,000 to over 62,000 in just seven years, Saudi Arabia is pioneering a new model of impact-driven growth. The chapter delves into groundbreaking regulatory reforms, digital philanthropy, innovative financing models, and multi-sector partnerships. It highlights how Saudi Arabia's rise as a regional leader in the impact space can set the stage for a more dynamic and globally connected non-profit ecosystem.

Chapter 7- Radical Collaboration for System Change: The LAWFP as a Model for Scaling and the Role of Philanthropic Capital as a Catalyst: Water security in Latin America is at a tipping point—despite holding 30% of the world's freshwater, millions lack access to safe drinking water. Enter the Latin American Water Funds Partnership (LAWFP), a groundbreaking model of radical collaboration that unites governments, businesses, non-profits, and philanthropy to drive systemic change in water security.

In this chapter, **Lorena Guille**, **Carlos Hurtado** and **Ana Laura Elizondo Quintanilla** reveal how Water Funds pool financial and technical resources, implement nature-based solutions, and foster cross-sector partnerships to deliver long-term, scalable impact. With over 26 Water Funds engaging 340+ organizations, LAWFP has protected over 565,000 hectares of watersheds, improved water access, and strengthened community resilience. A compelling case study in multi-sector cooperation, this chapter demonstrates how philanthropic capital can act as a catalyst for innovation, unlocking sustainable financing to combat climate change and transform water security.

Chapter 8-Regulatory Reform to Unlocking the Potential of the Arab Third Sector: Bab Amal and Poverty Alleviation in Egypt: Despite the Arab world's growing development needs, its third sector remains constrained by outdated regulatory frameworks that limit its potential. This chapter explores how effective policy reforms can unlock catalytic capital, empower civil society organizations (CSOs), and drive systemic change across the region.

Through the case study of Bab Amal in Egypt, an evidence-based poverty alleviation initiative, **Abdelrahman Nagy** and **Noura Selim** illustrate how regulatory inefficiencies increase costs, delay impact, and hinder large-scale social transformation. It highlights five key policy areas—streamlining registration, financial sustainability, data access, multi-sector collaboration, and evidence-based policymaking—offering a pathway for unlocking billions in untapped development capital.

EQUITABLE CLIMATE TRANSITION

Chapter 9-Philanthropy as a Catalyst for Private Finance of Climate Solutions: The Green Development Investment Accelerator: The world is racing against time to finance the transition to a low-carbon economy, yet less than 2% of global philanthropic capital is directed toward climate solutions. Meanwhile, institutional investors control trillions in assets but hesitate to fund green infrastructure in emerging markets, citing high risks and fragmented markets.

Uday Khemka and **Aaran Patel** present the Green Development and Investment Accelerator (GDIA)—a bold new mechanism that leverages philanthropy to de-risk investment opportunities, lower capital costs, and mobilize large-scale private finance for climate action. By integrating philanthropy into a structured five-step de-risking process, GDIA aims to align policies, optimize sectoral coordination, and scale investible projects for institutional investors. A call to action for foundations, policymakers, and private investors, this chapter argues that philanthropy's greatest impact lies not just in grants, but in unlocking billions for climate finance.

Chapter 10- Building Climate Resilience: The Role of Philanthropy in Advancing Conservation and Nature-Based Solutions in LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) hold one-third of the world's biodiversity, yet climate change and deforestation threaten this vital ecological powerhouse. Despite the urgency, nature-based solutions (NBS) receive a fraction of global climate finance, while billions flow into environmentally harmful subsidies.

In this chapter, **Manuela Jimenez** and **Catalina Herrera**, explain how philanthropy can help bridge the gap and reshape conservation finance by funding high-impact, scalable solutions that protect ecosystems, empower communities, and drive economic transformation. Through case studies of leading philanthropic initiatives—Arapyaú Institute in Brazil, Moisés Bertoni Foundation in Paraguay, and Grupo Argos in Colombia—it demonstrates how strategic investments in forest restoration, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land use can accelerate climate mitigation and adaptation.

Chapter 11- Adaptation Finance for Global South-Can Philanthropy Bridge the Yawning Gap: As climate disasters escalate, the Global South faces a staggering $387 billion annual shortfall in adaptation finance. Despite urgent needs, adaptation remains severely underfunded, sidelined by investors who favour mitigation projects with clearer returns. This chapter explores how philanthropic capital can be the missing piece, unlocking adaptation finance through risk-tolerant investments, blended finance, and ecosystem-wide collaboration.

Dr Nilanjan Ghosh examines India as a case study, showcasing how philanthropic organizations can de-risk adaptation projects, support climate resilience, and influence policy reforms. Drawing on global data and case studies, the chapter argues that philanthropy can catalyse systemic change by bridging financing gaps, scaling high-impact solutions, and fostering collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society—ultimately driving an adaptation revolution.

Chapter 12- Philanthropy as a De-Risking Tool for SDG Finance: Africa faces a $1.3 trillion annual funding gap to achieve the SDGs and build climate resilience, yet private investors hesitate due to perceived high risks. Despite contributing less than 4% of global carbon emissions, Africa bears disproportionate climate impacts, with over 110 million people already affected by extreme weather events.

This chapter by **Allie Hollowell** and **Frank Aswani** explores how philanthropy is emerging as the most powerful de-risking tool for both sustainable development and climate finance. By absorbing early-stage risks, providing patient capital, and unlocking private investment, philanthropy is catalysing solutions in renewable energy, climate adaptation, and nature-based carbon sequestration. Through real world case studies, it reveals how blended finance, impact investing, and catalytic capital can accelerate Africa's green transition and economic transformation.

Transcending Limitations: Philanthropy as a Catalyst for Systemic Change

As the chapters in this compendium illustrate, addressing today's urgent global challenges requires bold, innovative financing approaches. Catalytic capital presents a powerful solution, but realizing its full potential demands a collective commitment to systemic change—with philanthropy leading the way. Beyond funding, philanthropy has the unique ability to convene governments, mobilize private sector engagement, and advocate for policy reform that can create an enabling environment for catalytic investments.

As a key de-risking component of catalytic finance, philanthropy plays a unique role in unlocking larger pools of private and public funding while strengthening institutional capacity and attracting new stakeholders to the impact space. To maximize this potential, philanthropists and system actors must actively recognize and advocate for philanthropy's catalytic function. At a macro level, governments should design regulatory frameworks that foster an enabling environment for catalytic capital, ensuring that philanthropy's opportunity to drive more effective and sustainable development finance is fully realized.

Indeed, this book is a call to action for philanthropists, policymakers, and practitioners to fully embrace philanthropic capital as a fundamental component of catalytic finance. By leveraging its flexibility, risk tolerance, and scalability, stakeholders can both increase the pool of capital for development finance, while also ensuring that it is deployed in ways that are more systemic. Enriched by empirical insights from sector experts, this collection serves to showcase examples of this vision in action, underscoring what drives success—and what hinders it. Using real world examples, our authors aim to show that when fully leveraged as risk capital—and not merely as funding—philanthropy can drive systemic innovation and transformative change.

To date, despite its promise, philanthropic capital remains underutilized and, at times, misdirected. Fragmented efforts, siloed approaches, and misalignment with systemic needs have limited its ability to deliver impact at scale or unleash its true catalytic potential. And yet, the need to strengthen systemic interventions and institutionalize collaborative structures has never been more urgent—both of which philanthropy is uniquely positioned to deliver. Building a resilient global development framework that can tackle interconnected challenges and counter the phenomenon of "permacrisis" is no longer a luxury—it is an urgent necessity to address the pressing challenges of our time.

The lessons from this compendium offer a compelling roadmap, showcasing real-world examples of how philanthropy can move beyond its traditional constraints and drive a new era of impact-focused, collaborative development finance. By expanding its role beyond funding projects to acting as a convener and catalyst for systemic transformation, philanthropy has the potential to drive innovation, foster optimism, and demonstrate the power of humanity to overcome adversity—transforming fractious tendencies into collaborative systemic solutions.