

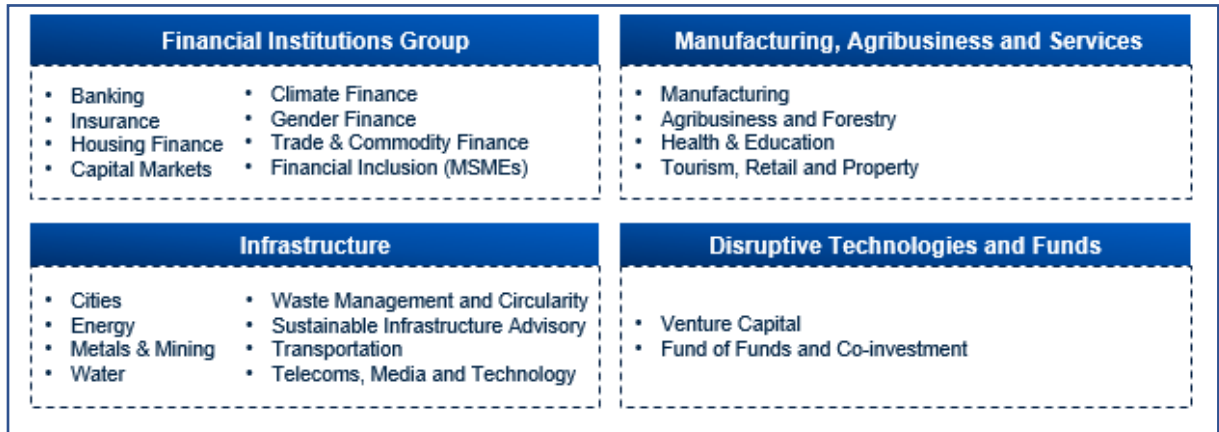
IMPACT INVESTING CHALLENGE 2024

Climate change and gender are closely intertwined, and addressing both challenges together will lead to better development results. While climate change poses a significant global challenge, its impacts are disproportionately borne by women and marginalized groups — in the wake of climate shocks such as droughts and extreme rainfall, girls are more likely to drop out from school; extreme weather impacts more severely natural-resource-based and climate vulnerable sectors where women are often overrepresented as employees; climate-induced stresses can lead to an increase in gender-based violence ([WB, 2023](#)). On the other hand, the transition to greener economies has the potential to produce exciting opportunities for women. Across 10 major economies, there are 11 million unmet green jobs in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement ([WEF, 2023](#)). With the global labor force participation rate for women standing at under 48 percent (versus 72 percent for men) ([ILO, 2022](#)), there is substantial scope for women to advance in the labor market and enhance their economic empowerment. There is growing evidence that women entrepreneurs drive business and climate value ([IFC, 2023](#); [ECB, 2022](#); [BIS, 2022](#)). Thus, addressing both fronts in tandem not only complements each other but also leads to improved development outcomes.

As the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets, International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, is mandated to create markets and opportunities in developing countries. Operating across more than 100 countries, IFC leverages its capital, expertise, and influence to catalyze job creation, unleash innovation, and fuel growth where it's needed the most. Built on World Bank Group's [Gender strategy](#) and [Climate Change Action Plan](#), interventions at the Gender and Climate nexus is one of the key priorities at IFC. In Fiscal Year 2023 ([IFC Annual Report, FY23](#)), IFC's investment generated 2.2 million additional outstanding Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises loans, of which 1.4 million are to women; IFC provided US\$14.4 billion climate financing, expected to reduce 11.5 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

The IFC Impact Investing Challenge 2024 invites you to share innovative impact investing ideas on the gender-climate nexus. The focus is to identify bankable, creative, gender-responsive climate financing solutions. **Your challenge is to assemble a team of up to 3 individuals to propose a solution to invest in a financial intermediary exposed to one of the key sub-sectors (see Figure 1) that a development finance institution like IFC could potentially finance. In your proposal, please consider any type of financial intermediaries (e.g. bank, insurance company, microfinance institution, private equity fund, startup accelerator, fintech company, etc.) regardless of size, located in any developing country which is a [member of IFC](#), and through any types of financial instruments (e.g., loans, equity, sustainability-linked bond, etc.).** Put yourself in the shoes of an IFC investment officer who is tasked with preparing a proposal to the investment committee to justify an investment opportunity that addresses the dual challenges. This could involve launching a new product or service or enhancing an existing one. Your project should effectively address a specific development challenge while demonstrating its commercial viability. Please click [here](#) to see samples of IFC interventions in gender.

Figure 1: Key Sectors which IFC Involves



Please submit your proposal consisting of a video presentation of no longer than 3 minutes together with a presentation deck (click [here](#) for template) to IFC (click [here](#) for application link) by April 15th 2024 at 11:59pm EST. All participants will get access to a series of masterclasses and trainings, and shortlisted teams will be asked to submit a more detailed proposal to IFC by the first week of May. For this challenge, the focus is expected to be on (i) qualitative analysis of the development need being addressed; (ii) the commercial feasibility of your proposal; and (iii) the potential impact and scalability of your solution (to learn more about how IFC assesses its impact, click [here](#)). Quantitative analysis can support the proposal, although detailed modeling is not required.

While selecting the country and type of private institution, please consider the following questions: (i) how does the proposed investment contribute to new solutions that **advance gender-inclusive climate investment**; (ii) is your idea **innovative** and can it be **scaled**?; (iii) will the investment be **commercially viable**?; and (iv) what are some **risk factors and their mitigants** (e.g. macro-economic, environmental and social, corporate governance, etc.)?

We hope that through this challenge you will be able to learn more about impact investing, including what it is like to work on investment projects at a development finance institution. Please send questions to iichallenge@ifc.org.

Good luck!

*****End of Competition Description*****