



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



United Nations Climate Change
Technology Executive Committee

TEC-UNIDO Paper on Climate Technology Incubators and Accelerators

Session 3: Fostering Endogenous Innovation through Incubators and Accelerators

Africa NDE Forum, Thursday 26 March 2026



Background of climate technology I&A paper

Objective

- **Provide an overview** of climate technology I&A in developing countries
- **Identify practical pathways** for the development of funding proposals that incorporate I&A and seek to build effective ecosystems for start-ups
- **Offer policy insights** from the development and operation of I&A

Key elements

- Mapping of **30 climate technology I&A in developing countries**
- **Selection criteria:** geographic coverage, thematic scope, stages of support, service offerings, financing models, and the actors involved



Geographic distribution



Africa Insights

- *Strong regional accelerator presence: e.g. ClimAccelerator Africa, Catalyst Fund, 500 Global*
- *Prominent national hubs: e.g. Ghana Innovation Climate Centre (GCIC), Kenya Climate Innovation Centre (KCIC), UM6P StartGate*

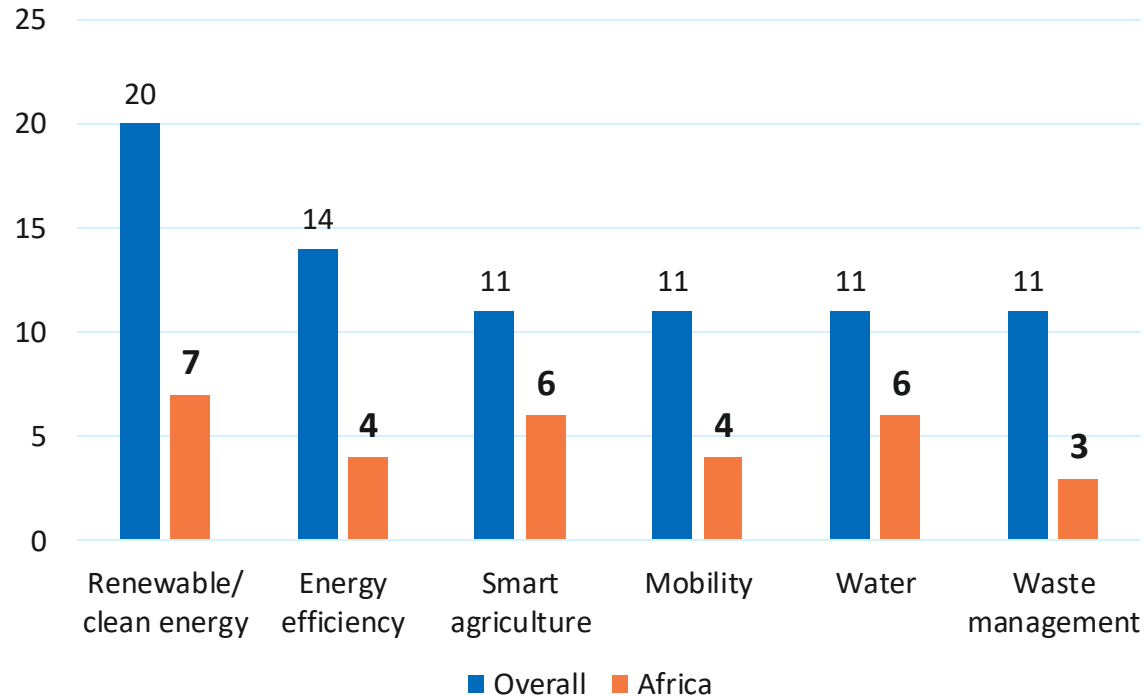


Typology of I&A

Type of I&A	Characteristics	Overall	Africa
Incubators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longer-term programmes supporting ideation, research-to-prototype development, early business formation, lab access, mentorship, market discovery, and founder skills building.• Common in university settings, donor programmes, and national hubs.	5	2
Accelerators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timebound, cohort-based programmes focused on validation, pilot preparation, investment readiness, and early commercialization.• Often function as “readiness engines”, preparing ventures to absorb blended or commercial capital and enter procurement or pilot partnerships.	17	5
Hybrid models	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combine incubation and acceleration within a single institutional structure.• Particularly important in developing countries where early-stage pipelines are thin and ventures require continuity across multiple TRL stages.	8	2



Sector focus





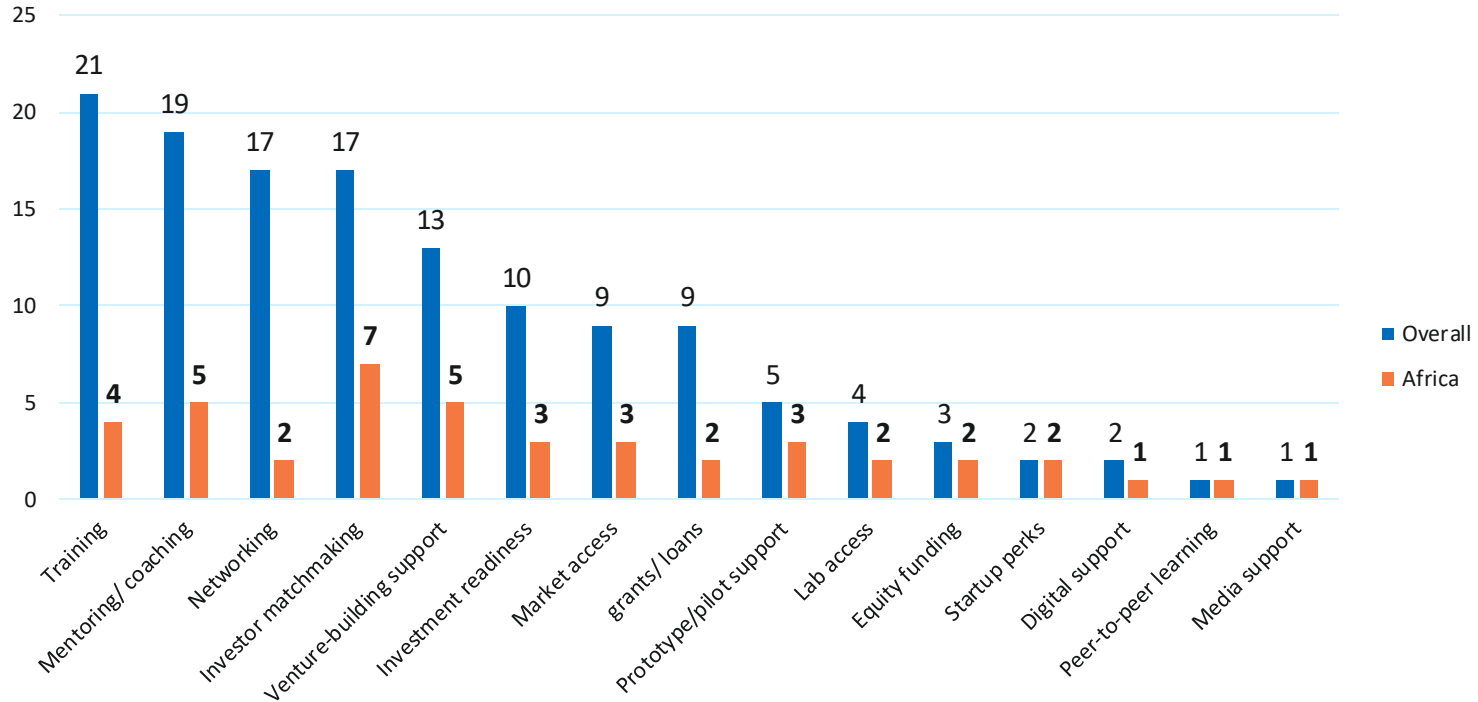
Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs)

- Most support **concentrated** at TRL 3–6 (prototype → validation)
- Few late-stage TRL 7–9 accelerators
- Some TRL 1–3 early programmes feeding pipeline

Africa I&A / TRL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
500 Global				X	X	X			
Benibiz 2	X	X	X						
CATAL1.5°T				X	X	X			
Catalyst Fund				X	X	X			
ClimAccelerator Africa			X	X	X	X	X		
CTCN Youth Climate Innovation Programme			X	X					
GCIC			X	X	X				
KCIC			X	X	X	X	X		
UM6P StartGate		X	X	X	X				



Service offered





Financing and business models of Africa I&A

- Dominated by **public & multilateral funding** and **no private-only models**
- **3 offer grants:** ClimAccelerator Africa, 500 Global and UM6P StartGate
- **3 offer equity:** Catalyst Fund, KCIC and CATAL1.5°T
- **Small to medium cohorts** : 15 to 40

Africa I&A	Model
CTCN Youth Climate Innovation Programme	Multilateral
Catalyst Fund	Private, Multilateral
Benibiz 2	Public
ClimAccelerator Africa	Public
GCIC	Public, Multilateral
KCIC	Public, Multilateral
CATAL1.5°T	Public, Multilateral
UM6P StartGate	Public, Private
500 Global	Public, Private, Multilateral



Emerging models identified

- **Corporate-anchored and university-anchored hubs:** technologies de-risking
- **Donor-backed early-stage incubation models:** entrepreneurship capacity building
- **Network-based models:** scaling support across regions
- **Youth dedicated programmes:** pipeline and early skills building

Africa I&A	Model
UM6P StartGate	Corporate-anchored and university-anchored hubs
Catalyst Fund	Donor-backed early-stage incubation models
GCIC	
KCIC	
ClimAccelerator Africa	Network-based models
500 Global	
CATAL1.5°T	
Benibiz 2	Youth dedicated programmes
CTCN Youth Climate Innovation Programme	



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Thank you!

Climate Technology Innovation

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 UNIDO Climate Tech Innovation

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