



UN GLOBAL PULSE ACCELERATOR

The United Nations' programme for turning promising
innovative solutions into real-world impact at scale

COHORT 3 – 2025





*With effective scaling,
promising innovative
solutions can move beyond
perpetual pilots and unlock
their full potential for
widespread change.*

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1. WHAT IS THE UN GLOBAL PULSE ACCELERATOR?

It is the United Nations' programme to accelerate exceptional UN-led innovative pilots, helping them reach more communities through adaptable delivery models and future-fit strategies.

The programme's evidence-based curriculum supports teams in fostering a 21st-century results-oriented culture, grounded in scalable and responsible technology, sustainable financing, innovative partnerships, and cutting-edge skills.

The Accelerator is developed based on key findings from a [2022 UN system-wide study](#) by UN Global Pulse.

2. WHO IS THE UN GLOBAL PULSE ACCELERATOR FOR?

The Accelerator is open to all **UN teams** with **innovative, pilot-tested solutions** that show evidence of positive outcomes and are ready to scale their impact.

Note! Projects run solely by non-UN entities, or those only endorsed, branded, or funded by the UN, will not be considered.

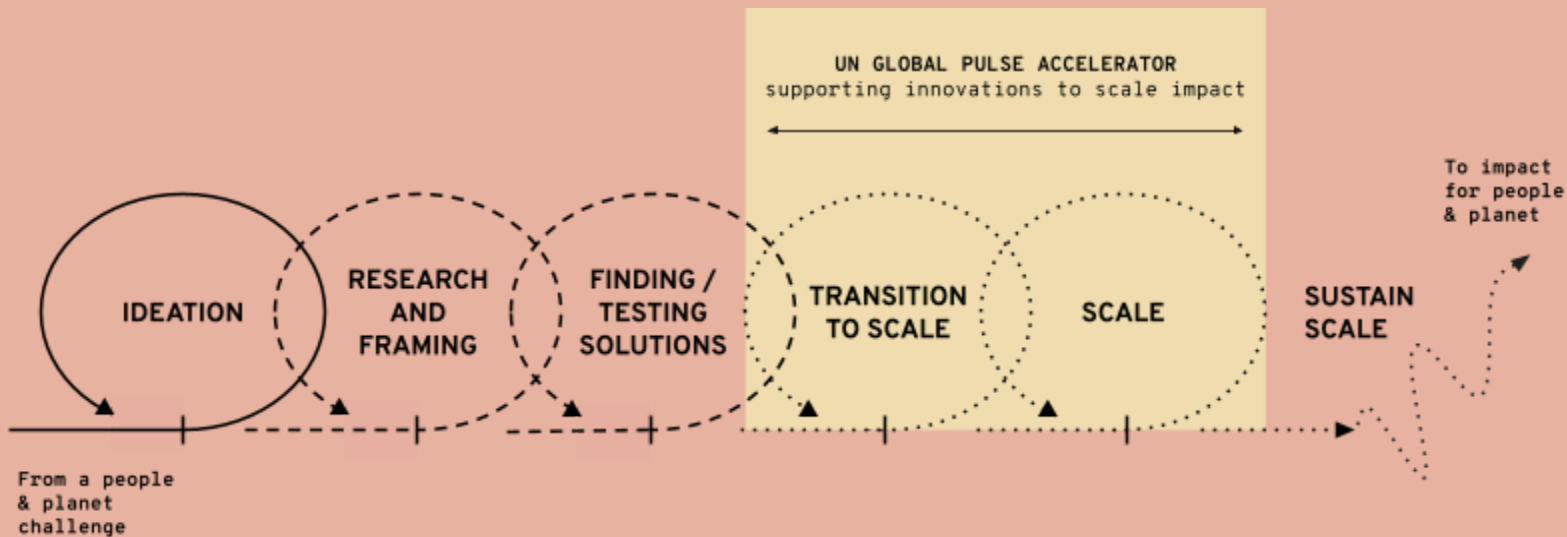
So far, 14 UN-led teams from 8 different UN entities have gone through the Accelerator, working on a diverse mix of innovative solutions. **Read more about the teams here:** [Introducing the First Cohort](#) 1 and [Second Cohort 2](#).

WHAT QUALIFIES AS AN INNOVATIVE, PILOT-TESTED SOLUTION?

To qualify, projects must be led or co-led by a UN entity and it must have been **piloted at least once in a real-world setting**. This means the solution has gone beyond a concept or prototype and has been tested in practice, with its effectiveness and feasibility assessed. **Additionally**, a solution must **demonstrate tangible impact for people and the planet** by creating or adapting a product, service, process, or system that adds new value, whether by addressing an existing problem, seizing an opportunity, or responding to an emerging need. The innovation can be entirely new or new in its specific context.

Applicants must be able to provide concrete evidence of these outcomes.

The UN Global Pulse Accelerator focuses on piloted solutions that are ready to transition to scale.



3. WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACCELERATOR?

The Accelerator programme is looking for innovation projects in three thematic areas. These themes were chosen as they reflect urgent global priorities where innovation can create significant, scalable impact across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- ✓ **Digital Inclusion:** we are looking for innovative solutions that bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to digital technology while safeguarding against risks and promoting digital inclusion and upskilling.
- ✓ **Job Creation and Livelihoods:** we are looking for innovative solutions that create decent work opportunities and/or establish robust social protection systems to reduce inequalities and to eradicate poverty
- ✓ **Climate and Biodiversity Crisis:** we are looking for innovative solutions that address climate change and/or biodiversity loss to ensure a sustainable, equitable, and secure future for all

Your application will be considered if your innovation project

- ✓ Has been piloted at least once in the local context of the challenge it seeks to solve, with evidence of positive outcomes.
- ✓ Demonstrates how these cross-cutting themes: human rights, gender equality/ women empowerment, diversity and inclusion are taken into account.
- ✓ Clearly demonstrates a co-creation and human-centered approach, such as meaningful engagement for input from end users, affected populations or other local ecosystem actors

We encourage applications that

- ✓ **Collaborate with other stakeholders across the UN System, as well as governments, private sector partners and civil society organisations**
- ✓ **Address challenges and/ or have team member(s) actively working in any of the [listed priority countries](#). Applications from countries outside this list will still be considered if they demonstrate alignment with the selection criteria.**

What are the priority countries?

Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zambia

- ✓ **Demonstrates the application of one or several [UN 2.0 Quintet of Change](#) capabilities in the project and/or its design**

What are the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change skills ?

A dynamic combination of cutting-edge skills and forward-thinking culture based on a powerful fusion of data, innovation, digital, foresight and behavioural science expertise. In addition to innovation, here are the other Quintet of Change skills:

Data: Building modern data expertise to improve how the UN collects, handles, governs and uses data from more diverse sources for better insights and action.

Digital: Developing digital expertise to create digitally enabled solutions that improve connectivity, service delivery, collaboration and decision-making.

Strategic Foresight: Instilling strategic foresight by employing structured methods to navigate change, imagine better futures and make better decisions today.

Behavioural Science: Nurturing behavioural science to foster knowledge of how people act and make decisions, to create better choices that work in harmony with human nature.

4. WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THE ACCELERATOR?

A STRATEGIC JOURNEY TOWARD SCALING

Selected teams will join a hands-on, in-person workshop from **6–10 October 2025 in Finland**. The Accelerator supports nine UN-led teams to craft future-fit strategies for scaling their innovative solutions.

Throughout the programme, participants will be:

- Guided by a **pool of multidisciplinary experts**
- Introduced to key partners across **public and private innovation ecosystems**

Supported in analysing scale readiness, identifying strategic gaps, and mapping potential routes to scale

TAILORED SCALE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

During the in-person workshop, teams will:

- Assess how ready their project is to scale
- Identify organizational and ecosystem enablers
- Develop a long-term vision and actionable scale strategy
- Define short-term milestones
- Pinpoint internal strengths and gaps to be addressed

PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

Where applicable, teams will receive brokering support to explore partnerships across:

- The wider UN system
- Government counterparts
- Civil society, academia, and the private sector

ACCESS TO THE SCALE CATALYST GRANT

After the workshop, three teams with the most compelling scale strategies will receive:

- A Scale Catalyst Grant of USD 60,000
- Tailored technical support and strategic mentoring from UN Global Pulse to implement their scaling strategy

5. WHAT EXPENSES WILL UN GLOBAL PULSE COVER FOR THE WORKSHOP WEEK IN FINLAND?

In line with United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) rules and regulations, UN Global Pulse will cover **expenses related to the workshop series from 6 to 10 October 2025 in Finland** as follows:

- a. Travel tickets**
- b. Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA)**
- c. Terminal Expenses (TE)**

Travel Arrangements

Travel arrangements for the workshop week will be made for participants to arrive in Helsinki in the evening prior to the start of the programme and to depart the day following the conclusion of the workshops. Flights will be booked in economy class, in line with UNOPS standard travel policies.

Please note that the full DSA may be adjusted based on the official programme and any meals provided during the workshop. Any additional expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the participant.

6. WHAT WILL YOUR TEAM NEED TO COMMIT TO?

Participating teams must:

- Be composed of **3 people working directly on the project who can commit time to participate in the workshop series from 6 to 10 October 2025 in Finland.**
- Aim to maximise the potential impact of their innovation while demonstrating alignment with organizational priorities.
- Have support and endorsement from their relevant supervisors / management to continue their scale journey.
- If selected as a grant recipient, be able to enter into a UN-to-UN agreement and commit to the mentoring phase.

Are remote participation options available?

Unfortunately, **we are not able to accommodate remote participation. All three members must be able to travel to Finland for the workshop week.**

7. HOW DOES MY TEAM APPLY?

To apply for the programme, please fill in [this application form](#) by **May 27, 2025, midnight EST.**

CAN MY TEAM APPLY WITH MORE THAN ONE PROJECT?

Yes. Make sure to submit a separate application for each innovation project.

WHAT DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED?

No additional documents are required beyond the application form. However, you may choose to upload **up to three supporting materials** to strengthen your application. We particularly welcome documents that **describe pilot projects, highlight results, or include evaluations or reports.** Please note that lengthy submissions may not be reviewed in full, so we encourage concise, relevant materials.

HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED?

We will contact shortlisted applicants in mid-June to invite them to an **interview**, which will take place at the **end of June**. While we appreciate all applications, **we are only able to reach out to shortlisted teams**. If you have not heard from us by the end of July, you can assume that your application was not successful.

WE WERE CONTACTED FOR AN INTERVIEW, HOW SHOULD WE PREPARE?

If your team is shortlisted, you will be invited to an interview. Please note that an interview invitation does not guarantee selection for participation in the Accelerator Programme.

WHEN

Interviews will take place at the **end of June** and will last approximately 30 minutes.

WHAT TO EXPECT

You will not be required to present or pitch your project. Instead, the **selection committee will ask clarifying questions based on your application** to better understand your project, its potential and the team behind it. Please be prepared to discuss the details of your project, including its goals, impact, and any key insights during the pilot phase.

8. I HAVE A QUESTION THAT WAS NOT ANSWERED IN THIS DOCUMENT. WHO CAN I CONTACT?

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

events@unglobalpulse.org

We also encourage all interested applicants to attend an **information session** to learn more about the programme and have the opportunity to ask questions. Register below for one of the four upcoming sessions:

- May 8, 2025 at 01.00 EDT / 07.00 CEST / 12.00 ICT - [register here](#)
- May 12, 2025 at 09.00 EDT / 15.00 CEST / 20.00 ICT - [register here](#)
- May 20, 2025 at 01.00 EDT / 07.00 CEST / 12.00 ICT - [register here](#)
- May 21, 2025 at 09.00 EDT / 15.00 CEST / 20.00 ICT - [register here](#)

Want to hear more about the experiences of previous participants and get a sneak peek into the Accelerator curriculum?

Join our webinar, hosted in collaboration with the UN Innovation Network Scaling Group, on **Wednesday, May 14 at 10:00 AM CEST / 3:00 PM ICT.**

We'll share key insights from the Accelerator's approach to drafting impactful scaling strategies. You'll also hear directly from the two previous grant recipients, FAO's BioDAF and WFP's SheCan, as they reflect on their scaling journeys. [Register here!](#)

