EVENT SUMMARY

BUILDING BRIDGES | 2025
30 SEPT–2 OCT
GENEVA

SIFI AT BUILDING BRIDGES 2025

FROM CATALYTIC IDEAS TO COLLABORATIVE ACTION

SIFI
SDG Impact Finance Initiative

Building Bridges 2025 once again demonstrated why Geneva has become a unique nexus where global finance, policy, and purpose converge. This year, the **SDG Impact Finance Initiative (SIFI)** was deeply embedded across the week's programme — not only contributing expertise to panels and workshops, but actively shaping the dialogue on how blended finance can move from promise to performance.

From liquidity challenges and de-risking mechanisms to nature finance and innovation showcases, SIFI's presence reflected its expanding role as a trusted platform for collaboration between public and private capital providers.

Over three days, SIFI advanced the blended finance conversation through insights, partnerships, and action-oriented dialogue:

30 Sept — Media Briefing: Announcement of Cycle 4 Winners under SIFI's Innovation Window, recognising six pioneering blended-finance solutions tackling local-currency barriers and promoting inclusive growth across emerging markets.

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1 Oct — **Catalysing Sustainable Private Investments with De-Risking Strategies** (Base Foundation, UNDP, IMD): **Lena-Katharina Gerdes** (Program Manager, SIFI) moderated a dynamic discussion on how de-risking instruments can unlock private capital for sustainable development.

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1 Oct — **Unlocking Capital Flows: Solving Liquidity Challenges for Impact Investments in Emerging Markets** (co-hosted with the London Stock Exchange).

Guillaume Bonnel (CEO, SIFI) presented the topic of liquidity as a constraining factor on the growth of impact investing. Following opening remarks by **Christian Frutiger** (Ambassador, Assistant Director General, Head of Global Co-operation Department, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), a panel discussion featuring **Adrian Rimmer** (Director Sustainable Finance & Investment, London Stock Exchange), **Safeya Zeitoun** (CEO, Tameo), **Marko Roeder** (Head of Investment and Finance Solutions, Ursimone Wietlisbach Foundation), **Philippe Valahu** (CEO, Private Infrastructure Development Group), **Sylvain Goupille** (Founder and Managing Director, Octobre), and moderated by **Lisa Sachs** (Director, Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment), provided insights on liquidity challenges and solutions from a diversity of sectors. Participants then worked in small groups to develop practical pathways to address liquidity challenges and unlock capital flows.

The discussions yielded several key insights on (il)liquidity in impact investing:

- Liquidity remains a systemic constraint: The lack of functioning secondary markets and exit mechanisms traps capital in long-term vehicles, discouraging new investors and limiting the scale of impact finance, especially in emerging markets.

- Data transparency and standardisation are prerequisites for tradability: Without consistent valuation methods, transaction-level reporting, and comparable impact metrics, investors cannot price risk or confidently trade impact assets.

- Blended finance must evolve to directly address liquidity: Public and philanthropic capital can play a catalytic role by providing first-loss tranches, concessional equity, or acting as guarantee buyers to facilitate exits and crowd in private capital.

- Building domestic capital markets is essential for sustainability: Developing local investor bases, regulatory capacity, and funding ecosystems will help anchor liquidity solutions within emerging markets rather than relying solely on external flows.

- Innovation should target structural barriers, not novelty for its own sake: Tools like securitisation or fund-of-funds models can enhance liquidity only if they resolve fundamental issues of valuation, data reliability, and risk-sharing.

- Cross-actor coordination is the key enabler: Creating liquidity requires alignment among governments, DFIs, asset managers, and data providers around common standards, shared platforms, and a unified approach to transparency and market-building.

SIFI will use these insights to inform its activities supporting the impact investing ecosystem.

1 Oct — Initiative for Scaling Blended Finance (Swiss Bankers Association & UNEP FI): **Guillaume Bonnel** and **Benjamin Vermont** (Market Development Associate, SIFI) represented SIFI at the inaugural workshop focused on stronger institutional alignment across the blended-finance ecosystem.

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1 Oct — SIFI Cocktail Reception: After all the sessions, the reception gathered SIFI's ecosystem partners, grantees, and collaborators. **Josien Sluijs** (Independent Executive President, SIFI) welcomed guests and underscored the need for continued coordination among catalytic capital providers and market actors.

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2 Oct — Debt-for-Nature Swaps: Mobilising Private Investors (IISD): **Guillaume Bonnel** spoke on structuring high-integrity, investable mechanisms linking debt sustainability with nature outcomes.

Throughout Building Bridges, SIFI also held a series of bilateral meetings with donor agencies, investors, and ecosystem partners to explore new collaborations and future Calls for Proposals under its Innovation and Investment Windows.

From innovation showcases to closed-door workshops, SIFI's presence this year reflected its growing role as a bridge between ideas, capital, and implementation — turning blended-finance concepts into measurable, scalable impact.

SIFI SDG Impact Finance Initiative

The SDG Impact Finance Initiative (SIFI) is an international platform that mobilises catalytic capital to unlock private investment in emerging and developing economies. Through its three-window model, SIFI drives blended finance solutions deploying catalytic capital, fuelling innovation, and strengthening ecosystems to ensure finance delivers for both people and planet.

We partner with governments, foundations, and investors to enable capital to flow with scale, confidence, and integrity delivering measurable impact and sustainable returns, while supporting long-term international economic development.

www.sdgimpactfinance.org