
Memorandum of understanding between the Committee on Sustainability Assessment, the International Security and Development Center, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Sudan and IFAD – Information note

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Useful references: Memorandum of understanding between the Committee on Sustainability Assessment, the International Security and Development Center, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Sudan and IFAD ([EB 2024/141/R.10](#))

Action: The Executive Board is invited to take note of the executed memorandum of understanding between the Committee on Sustainability Assessment, the International Security and Development Center, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in the Republic of the Sudan and IFAD.

Technical questions:

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Memorandum of understanding between the Committee on Sustainability Assessment, the International Security and Development Center, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Sudan and IFAD – Information note

1. At its 141st session held in April 2024, the Executive Board authorized the President to finalize and sign the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between IFAD, the Committee on Sustainability Assessment (COSA), ISDC – International Security and Development Center (ISDC) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Sudan (MoAF).
2. The purpose of the memorandum is to establish a mutually beneficial framework for cooperation between IFAD, COSA, ISDC and the MoAF, with a view to facilitate collaboration in common areas of interest, particularly to:
 - a. Advance and operationalize agile methods and tools for understanding food systems resilience in fragile settings; and
 - b. Provide governments and actors in fragile contexts with near real-time data to plan, target and deliver support to food system actors to enhance the resilience of food systems and supply chains more effectively.
3. The MoU was signed by IFAD, COSA, ISDC and MoAF and entered into force on 31 October 2024, the date of the last signature.

Signed memorandum of understanding between the Committee on Sustainability Assessment, the International Security and Development Center, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Sudan and IFAD

Memorandum of Understanding between The Committee on Sustainability Assessment, the International Security and Development Center and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in the Republic of the Sudan and IFAD

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter the "Memorandum") is entered into by and between the Committee on Sustainability Assessment (COSA), the ISDC - International Security and Development Center gGmbH (ISDC), the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of the Sudan (MoAF), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (each a "Party"; together the "Parties").

WHEREAS COSA is a neutral non-profit dedicated to helping organizations understand their core sustainability by designing and implementing systems for measuring the performance and impact of sustainable agriculture programs. COSA is developing and testing agile monitoring systems, blending technology and rigorous metrics, that make rapid, evidence-based decisions possible. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's AgDev Program, the goal is to help improve outcomes and strengthen the learning or understanding of its investments. A key objective is to get reasonably rigorous data into the hands of decision-makers with much greater frequency than is possible with standard evaluations to improve and accelerate program outcomes.

WHEREAS ISDC is an independent non-profit academic research institute focused on improving lives affected by conflict, fragility, and emergencies. With a belief in data's power to alleviate suffering, ISDC leads micro-level quantitative research in these settings globally. Collaborating with the UN and governments, it delivers policy-relevant research and tools for measuring fragility's impact on decision-making, livelihoods, and behavior. Its expertise in fragility measurement, applied microeconomics, and research will provide the theoretical underpinnings and validation of the measurement tools.

WHEREAS The MoAF is a federal ministry in the government of the Republic of the Sudan and the technical lead agency for the IFAD-funded projects. The MoAF aims to promote positive changes in rural areas through increased production, farmer training, promoting agricultural entrepreneurship, promoting products processing techniques, the creation of jobs in agriculture and non-agricultural rural areas, and building the capacity of producers' organizations. The MoAF is also responsible for the formulation of strategies, policies and legislation that enable agricultural development. The MoAF, is the lead project agency for the IFAD financed Sustainable Natural Resources and Livelihoods (SNRLP). The SNRLP development objective is to increase production, secure access to natural resources for vulnerable users and improve the sustainability of natural resources related livelihoods through scaling up community-based natural resources governance and management practices, technologies, and business models.

The MoAF has an oversight role on the SNRLP implementation and is responsible for carrying out changes to the implementation of the project in partnership with IFAD based on

monitoring and evaluation data about project performance and based on the changes in the external environment to ensure the project remains relevant and effective and complies with the provisions of the signed financing agreement. The SNRLP became effective on 4 February 2021 and is planned to complete on 31 March 2027.

WHEREAS IFAD is a specialized agency of the United Nations and an international financial institution, established by an international agreement (i.e. the Agreement Establishing IFAD) with the objective of mobilizing additional resources to be made available on concessional terms for agricultural development in developing Member States. In fulfilling this objective, IFAD provides financing primarily for projects and programmes specifically designed to introduce, expand or improve food production systems and to strengthen related policies and institutions within the framework of national priorities and strategies.

THE PARTIES TO THIS MEMORANDUM:

CONSIDERING the common interest of the Parties in promoting agricultural development and food security in IFAD developing countries, according to their respective mandates and consistent, where applicable, with their membership;

IN VIEW OF the Parties' intention to undertake and advance practical and science-based measures to better understand the resilience of food systems value chains in fragile and conflict-affected situations.

SEEING that COSA is piloting agile data systems to improve and enhance the resilience of farmers and supply chains to a changing climate and to related socio-economic and political shocks and that the Parties are well-placed to pilot, test, and scale these tools, and disseminate knowledge gained from this initiative.

NOTING that COSA will work closely with IFAD and ISDC to rapidly mobilize the collection and analysis of key data in Sudan and that specific work to be undertaken, beyond sharing information and concepts, will be agreed separately with specific terms of reference and a contractual agreement with the implementing Party(ies).

RECOGNISING the benefits of cooperation between them, as may be consistent with their respective policies and rules, for achieving their shared objectives; and

DETERMINED to establish a strategic and operational cooperation to best serve their common objectives;

Therefore, in furtherance of the aims set forth above, the Parties have entered into this Memorandum of Understanding.

I. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Memorandum is to establish a mutually beneficial framework for cooperation between the Parties, with a view to facilitating

collaboration in common areas of interest particularly to: 1) Advance and operationalize agile methods and tools for understanding food systems resilience in fragile settings, and; 2) Provide governments and actors in fragile states with near real-time data to plan, target, and deliver support to food system actors to enhance resilience of food systems and supply chains more effectively.

II. AREAS OF COOPERATION

2.1 In accordance with their respective mandates, policies and rules, the Parties will seek opportunities for collaboration in a number of areas, including but not limited to, the application of agile technology for modernizing monitoring and evaluation in the SNRLP and understanding food systems resilience. The methodology foreseen will pilot a simplified and agile resilience measurement framework in the context of food systems and value chain projects in fragile and conflict affected situations (FCAS). The Parties intend to adapt the current IFAD M&E Core outcome indicators (COI) methodology and the COSA resilience survey to the context of fragile and conflict affected settings, developing rigorous fit-for-purpose tools. Given the challenges of in-person data collection in FCAS, the methodology will aim to be flexible, agile, and focused on key actionable indicators at the macro, meso, and micro levels. To this end the collaboration is expected to include the following activities :

- **Review the methodology for agile monitoring:** review and conduct a stocktake of existing approaches to food systems resilience measurement in agriculture and fragile contexts, leading to agreement about a clear global set of multi-dimensional resilience indicators to measure value chain and food systems resilience in fragile contexts. The review will also aim at simplifying the IFAD COI questionnaire and the COSA resilience survey in the context of FCAS and how to adapt it to measure resilience and adaptation to shocks. Agility will also be achieved by replacing one-off with more frequent and smaller rounds of data collections.
- **Pilot Agile technology** through the design of the technical specifications that permit low-cost and reliable information gathering via an array of tools such as computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI), computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI), interactive voice response (IVR), and WhatsApp.
- **Build trust and deliver results** : The Parties intend to share information with beneficiaries in the form of advisory services or other information to be decided on a case-by-case basis based on need, the prevailing context and the budget; apply a high frequency, seasonal and modular approach built to not only collect data but also continuously provide data and information with farmers during the overall intervention

period to improve delivery of interventions (including advisory) and project effectiveness; use CATI or IVR technology modes to gather relevant data, which will facilitate high-frequency data collection at lower cost than in-person interviews. Results will allow the Parties to identify whether the re-packaging, analysis, and provision of data to the farmers in the form of personalized agricultural advisory via digital extension or advisory services incentivizes information sharing, increases trust, perceived quality of advisory services, and use of recommended practices.

- **Scale-up, share knowledge, and application with critical stakeholders:** Develop and share near real-time results with key stakeholders, linking the agile data approach with the SNRLP Management Information System (MIS), so that evidence can be used by implementers, supply chain managers, and decision makers within projects to improve services delivery and engage in adaptive implementation.
- **Develop discussion papers** and knowledge management tools that illustrate the outcomes and insights gained. This will include elucidating the importance of a simplified set of indicators for food system resilience in vulnerable settings and detailing their operation via flexible and agile technologies.

III. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The Parties will keep each other informed and, whenever necessary, consult each other on matters of mutual interest, which in their opinion, are likely to enhance their collaboration.

IV. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Parties hereto will exchange relevant information and data on matters of common interest to them and collaborate in the collection, analysis and diffusion of such information and data, subject to their respective policies and procedures relating to disclosure of information.
- 4.2 The Parties may disclose to the general public this Memorandum and information related to this Memorandum in accordance with their respective policies. However, the Parties agree that all documents or information exchanged between the Parties in the course of the implementation of this Memorandum will not be disclosed to third parties by the Party receiving such documents or information without prior written consent of the other Party, with the exception that processed data in aggregate form only that excludes personal data, including the identity of farmers, co-ops, and firms that contribute to the data, may be shared with the project funder.

V. USE OF NAME AND EMBLEM, FORM OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- 5.1 No Party will use the name or emblem of another Party, or any abbreviation thereof, in connection with its business or for public dissemination without the prior expressly written approval of the other Party in each case.
- 5.2 The Parties will first consult with each other concerning the manner and form of any publicity or acknowledgement of the other Party's support regarding any activities undertaken pursuant to this Memorandum.
- 5.3 The Parties agree to maintain the privacy of all confidential information and any personal data belonging to or processed by any and all Parties. Such information or data may not be used or disseminated without the express approval of the relevant Party or Parties

VI. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- 6.1 The Parties will agree in writing to jointly own any intellectual property rights that may arise in any work resulting from the collaborative activities undertaken under this Memorandum

VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 7.1 This Memorandum reflects the views and intentions of the Parties to cooperate on a non-exclusive basis, expressed in good faith, but without the creation of any binding obligation or the incurrence of any liability on the part of any of them.
- 7.2 It is understood and agreed that nothing in this Memorandum: (a) will constitute, or be construed as an offer, promise or undertaking by the Parties to finance all or in part any activity identified in or pursuant to this Memorandum; (b) shall be construed to create a joint venture, partnership, agency relationship, employment relationship, or any other relationship that may result in vicarious liability between or among the Parties; (c) shall be construed to create any commitment on the part of any Party to give preferred treatment to the other Party in any matter contemplated under this Memorandum.
- 7.3 Any activity that may be identified by the Parties under this Memorandum will, as appropriate, be subject to separate supplementary arrangements or agreements to be concluded between the Parties on a case-by-case basis which will detail the specific form and content of the activities,

address the obligations and liabilities of each Party in relation to those activities and the terms and conditions applicable thereto.

- 7.4 Any differences arising out of, or in connection with, the interpretation or application of any provision contained in this Memorandum will be resolved amicably through consultations between the Parties.
- 7.5 Nothing in this Memorandum, or relating thereto, shall be construed as constituting a waiver, renunciation or other modification of any of the rights, privileges, immunities and exemptions enjoyed by IFAD under the Agreement Establishing IFAD, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations, and under any other document, international treaty or convention, or international customary law.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION

- 8.1 Each Party will designate an official (hereinafter referred to as "Official") who will be responsible for conducting relations under this Memorandum on its behalf. For the said purpose and until further notice, COSA will be represented by its lead Agile researcher, ISDC will be represented by its Director and the Director of ISDC's "Behavior" Research Program and MoAF will be represented by the M&E Officer of the SNRLP and the Director of Foreign Funded Projects Unit of the International Cooperation Division of the MoAF. Until further notice, IFAD designates as its Official for the above-mentioned purpose Rasha Omar, Country Director, Sudan and Alessandra Garbero, Lead Regional Economist, NEN.
- 8.2 Any notice or other communication to be given or made under this Memorandum will be addressed and sent to the attention of the Officials at the addresses below or such other address as either Party designates by notice to the other Party:

For:

For IFAD:

Rasha Omar and Alessandra Garbero
International Fund for Agricultural Development
Via Paolo di Dono, 44
00142 Rome
Italy
E-Mail: r.omar@ifad.org ; a.garbero@ifad.org

For COSA:

Louise Salinas, Senior Director Finance and Operations
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For ISDC:

Professor Tilman Brück and Dr Wolfgang Stojetz
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For MoAF:

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IX. EFFECTIVENESS, DURATION, TERMINATION AND AMENDMENT

- 9.1 This Memorandum shall become effective upon signature thereof by the Parties, following the approval by the IFAD Executive Board.
- 9.2 The Memorandum is effective from the date of its signature and remains in effect until changed or terminated by either organization through mutual consent.
- 9.3 The Memorandum may be terminated by either Party by giving at least ninety (90) days' advance written notice to the other Party. Any termination of this Memorandum shall be without prejudice to the orderly

completion of any ongoing cooperation activity and any other rights or obligations of the Parties under any legal instrument executed pursuant to this Memorandum.

- 9.4 The Parties to this Memorandum shall consult each other on any amendment required regarding the terms of this Memorandum. Any such amendment shall be made in writing and shall become effective after signature by both Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, COSA, ISDC, MoAF and IFAD, each acting through their duly authorized representative have executed this Memorandum in duplicate, in the English language.

COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT



Name: Louise Salinas
Title: Senior Director Finance and Operations

Date: 21 October 2024
Place: Philadelphia, PA USA

**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**



Name: Alvaro Lario
Title: President

Date: 31 October 2024
Place: Rome, Italy

**ISDC -INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND
DEVELOPMENT CENTER GGMBH**



Name: Prof. Tilman Brück
Title: Founder and Director

Date: 22 October 2024
Place: Berlin, Germany

**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND FORESTRY, THE REPUBLIC OF SUDAN**



Name: Dr. Abubakr Omar Al-Bushra
Title: Minister of Agriculture and Forestry

Date: 23 October 2024
Place: Portsudan - Sudan