



Investing in rural people

Executive Board

President's report on a proposed grant under global/regional grants to the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization for the Strengthening of Borrowers' Capacity on Environmental, Social and Climate Best Practices 2 (SUSTAIN2)

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Action: The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation contained in paragraph 18.

Technical questions:

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I. Background and compliance with the IFAD Regular Grants Policy

1. Key challenges in identifying emerging safeguard risks and maximizing development outcomes are: (i) low levels of knowledge among the relevant national agencies and project management units (PMUs) in recognizing and addressing safeguard risks, particularly those related to discrimination, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, labour and working conditions, climate risk, security and procurement; and (ii) weak engagement of PMUs in knowledge networks to enhance learning of environmental, social and climate (ESC) aspects across IFAD projects.
2. The second grant for Strengthening of Borrowers' Capacity on Environmental, Social and Climate Best Practices (SUSTAIN2) is an extension of the first SUSTAIN grant, which was launched in March 2022 and is currently under implementation. The first SUSTAIN covers three IFAD regions: Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa. Given the high priority accorded to the Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) and ESC sustainability in IFAD projects, this new grant (SUSTAIN2) will cover the remaining two IFAD regions, namely Near East, North Africa and Europe (NEN) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). SUSTAIN2 builds on key lessons learned during SUSTAIN and integrates these lessons into its approach.
3. The proposed programme is in line with the goal and objectives of the IFAD Regular Grants Policy.¹
4. The International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ITCILO) was identified as the grant recipient through direct selection, as approved on 31 July 2023 during the Operational Strategy and Policy Guidance Committee meeting on grants.

II. The proposed programme

5. The overall goal of the programme is to better promote equitable, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable rural transformation in order to leave no one behind in low-income countries, lower-middle-income countries and upper-middle-income countries in NEN and LAC. The objectives are to: (i) strengthen the ability of borrowers, recipients and partners to meet ESC standards, and to manage reputational, litigation and financial risks by applying rigorous, proportionate ESC provisions; (ii) bridge the skill gaps of direct and indirect target groups involved in mainstreaming and compliance; and (iii) share knowledge on the value and purpose of ESC mainstreaming and compliance to promote behavioural change.
6. The target groups will comprise:
 - **Direct target groups:** PMUs; senior government officials assigned to project oversight; national staff from ministries of agriculture, environment and other

¹ See EB 2021/132/R.3.

relevant sectors; ESC regulatory bodies; ESC consultants; contractors; and non-sovereign operations (NSOs) personnel.

- **Indirect target groups:** at least an additional 1,000 beneficiaries to be reached through communication activities, including four massive open online courses (MOOCs) to be implemented in four languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish), encompassing government officials, ESC regulatory bodies, ESC consultants, contractors and NSOs.

7. The programme will be implemented over two years and will have the following components:

Component 1 - Development of capacity-building programme on ESC

- 1.1 **Gap analyses and training needs assessments** will be conducted jointly by ITCILO and IFAD at the beginning of the project, focusing on representative countries in Arabic, English, French and Spanish speaking groups in the two regions.
- 1.2 **Gaps and needs in borrowers' ESC frameworks.** ITCILO will analyse and identify the needs, challenges and gaps in ESC training in IFAD-funded projects in countries in both regions. The gap analysis focuses on capacities to implement IFAD's ESC safeguards. The analysis will include major trends at regional level and highlight any country-specific findings that should be considered when tailoring the training material.
- 1.3 **Tailored modules.** The training programme will include seven customized e-learning modules or online modules (OLMs) in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, building on the nine SECAP e-learning modules and addressing regional context and audience needs:
- Module 1: Basic overview: Fundamentals, concepts, principles of ESC considerations in country strategies and projects
 - Module 2: ESC in the IFAD project cycle
 - Module 3: Introduction to IFAD's nine standards (technical notes) and the SECAP screening tool
 - Module 4: Diving into each of the standards as required, including submodule 1 (biodiversity conservation), submodule 2 (resource efficiency and pollution prevention), submodule 3 (cultural heritage), submodule 4 (Indigenous Peoples and historically underserved local communities), submodule 5 (labour and working conditions), submodule 6 (community health and safety), submodule 7 (physical and economic resettlement), submodule 8 (financial intermediaries and direct investments) and submodule 9 (climate change)
 - Module 5: ESC and procurement in the project cycle
 - Module 6: Project-level grievance redress mechanisms
 - Module 7: Stakeholder engagement

The training programme consists of four phases. In phase 1, participants undergo a one-day training with a live webinar and self-guided OLMs over a period of a week. Phase 2 spans six weeks of tutor-led online learning, featuring tests, case studies and webinars, with validation tests for certification. Phase 3 involves a five-day face-to-face training session in Turin, emphasizing practical case studies and community-building among selected participants. Phase 4 focuses on training of trainers over three days, aiming to develop participants into ESC trainers through microteaching sessions. The programme leverages experienced tutors from IFAD, ITCILO and the International Association for Impact Assessment.

- 1.4 **Deployment of SUSTAIN2 digital platform.** The seven OLMs will be accessible through the ITCILO eCampus as an online learning platform that allows the publication of self-guided lessons, assignments and case studies, a communication forum, and publication of tools and manuals.
- 1.5 **Refine knowledge management plan and develop communication plan to guide grant activities.** This consists of developing an integrated communication plan to enhance SUSTAIN2 visibility, and to promote participation in and utilization of knowledge products.

Component 2 – Delivery of capacity-building

8. All phases will be delivered in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.
9. ITCILO's proposed methodology for capacity-building is based on the following:
- **Intelligent mix of learning modalities.** The ITCILO learning approach combines various modalities, including competency frameworks, learning objectives, weekly OLMs, and a mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities and face-to-face workshops.
 - Participants are busy professionals with diverse profiles and entry levels. To cater to their adult learning needs, a variety of approaches will be employed, including videos, virtual classrooms, asynchronous and synchronous activities, audio-visual materials, case studies, gaming and simulations.
10. The proposed training approach is modular and weekly, spanning four to five weeks. Participants need to dedicate around 7.5 hours per week per module, with approximately 75 per cent of activities designed as asynchronous for flexible scheduling. The remaining 25 per cent involves live, synchronous sessions, consisting of a virtual class per week lasting 90 to 120 minutes.

Component 3 – Knowledge management, outreach and community of practice

11. Component 3 focuses on knowledge management, outreach and communities of practice and is structured in two subcomponents: 3.1 sustained operations and 3.2. joint learning events.
- 3.1 **Sustained operations.** ITCILO will create and enhance an integrated Moodle platform (see component 1) for information and networking. The platform facilitates capacity-building, communication and experience-sharing among participants, fostering communities of practice in multiple languages. Activities are mainly asynchronous, with webinars organized every two months. A yearly working paper will compile IFAD project best practices.
- 3.2 **Joint learning events.** To increase the project outreach, four MOOCs will be implemented to provide the fundamentals of SUSTAIN2 training to a minimum of 1,000 people from the target groups. One MOOC per language will be implemented. The MOOCs will include a mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities and will involve up to 250 participants each.

Component 4 – Programme management

12. ITCILO will use an approach inspired by the Manifesto for Agile Software Development:
- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools;
 - Working the learning products or courses over comprehensive documentation;
 - Client collaboration over contract negotiation; and
 - Responding to change over following a rigid plan.
13. As a United Nations organization, ITCILO follows rules and procedures akin to those of IFAD in financial management, reporting, auditing and procurement. Aligned with

United Nations values, ITCILO emphasizes gender equity, environmental protection and dialogue among development stakeholders, as embedded in the ILO Constitution² and ITCILO strategic plan. In collaboration with IFAD, ITCILO will establish a monitoring and evaluation system during the initial project months, incorporating indicators from the logical framework, Kirkpatrick Model and outreach activities to meet both organizations' needs.

III. Expected outcomes/outputs

14. The programme is expected to have the following outcomes/outputs:

Outcomes	Strengthened borrower ESC institutional frameworks and implementation capacities that embrace and enforce international good practices	Improved ESC skills among direct and indirect target groups for effective project preparation and implementation	Enhanced partnerships and knowledge-sharing between and within regions to nurture environmental and social sustainability
Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gap analyses and training needs assessments done in two regions 2. Gap and needs in IFAD borrower ESC framework and integrated technological tools done in two regions 3. Selection criteria for PMUs fully established 4. Nine tailor-made training programmes customized or adapted for seven target groups in Arabic, English, French and Spanish 5. Nine customized e-learning modules developed for seven target groups 6. Digital platforms developed to host the training programmes 7. Knowledge management plan refined 8. Communications plan developed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Up to 445 government staff from PMUs, key sector ministries and ESC regulatory bodies, consultants, constructors and NSOs trained and IFAD-certified in two regions 2. Two high-level learning events developed and implemented in Turin, including a training of trainers event 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Up to 1,000 PMUs, key sector ministries, ESC regulatory bodies, consultants, constructors and NSOs with improved ESC skills through active participation in MOOCs 2. Global event implemented in collaboration with other multilateral financial institutions and United Nations organizations 3. Communities of practices for PMUs, key sector ministries, ESC regulatory bodies, consultants, constructors and NSOs established 4. Dedicated website developed in collaboration with IFAD

IV. Implementation arrangements

15. The project's implementation will involve collaboration with ITCILO's regular budget staff, who will allocate part of their time to the project. Additionally, two project-based staff will be hired, along with consultants, to optimize resource utilization. Leveraging its extensive experience in global capacity-building projects, the project will tap into ITCILO's network of ILO offices, specialized development networks and experts. A dedicated core team of five members, based in Turin, will manage the project, supplemented by external collaborators, including consultants, instructional designers, online coaches and trainers. The Information and Communication Technologies Services Department will provide support for the implementation and administration of the project's learning platform. This collaborative approach aims to maximize in-house expertise, ensuring timely and high-quality delivery of project outputs.

Members of core team

Joel Alcocer, Development and Investment Programme (DEVINVEST) Manager, part-time

Diego Alonso Portugal del Pino, DEVINVEST Associate Programme Officer, part-time

Tha'er Ziyadneh, DEVINVEST Associate Programme Officer, part-time

One project officer, full-time

One administrative assistant, full-time

16. In terms of project coordination, a coordinating committee will be established, composed of members from the ITCILO core team and IFAD staff. This committee will adhere to the agile approach and will convene every two weeks for coordination meetings.

² [Key document - ILO Constitution.](#)

17. There are no deviations from the standard procedures for financial reporting and audits.

V. Indicative programme costs and financing

Table 1
Costs by component and financier
 (United States dollars)

<i>Components</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>ITCILO</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Development of capacity-building programme on ESC	326 768	44 850	371 618
2. Delivery of capacity-building	880 731	-	880 731
3. Knowledge management, outreach and community of practice	82 850	9 600	92 450
4. Programme management	98 540	95 550	194 090
Overheads and management fees	111 110	-	111 110
Total	1 500 000	150 000	1 650 000

Table 2
Costs by expenditure category and financier
 (United States dollars)

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>ITC ILO</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Salaries and allowances	536 560	150 000	685 560
2. Training	569 246	-	569 246
3. Travel and allowances	41 190	-	41 190
4. Consultancies	241 893	-	241 893
Subtotal	1 388 889	150 000	1 538 889
5. Overheads and management fees	111 110	-	111 110
Total	1 500 000	150 000	1 650 000

VI. Recommendation

18. I recommend that the Executive Board approve the proposed grant in terms of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: that the Fund, in order to finance, in part, the Strengthening of Borrowers' Capacity on Environmental, Social and Climate Best Practices 2 (SUSTAIN2), shall provide a grant of one million five hundred thousand United States dollars (US\$1,500,000) to the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization for 24 months upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented to the Executive Board herein.

Alvaro Lario
 President

Results-based logical framework

Annex 1: Logical Framework

Results hierarchy		Indicators			Means of verification			Assumptions
		Indicator	Baseline	End target	Source	Freq.	Respons.	
Goal	To position IFAD to better promote equitable, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable rural transformation in order not to leave no one behind in low-income countries (LICs), lower-middle-income countries (LMICs), and upper-middle-income countries (UMIC) in two regions – Near East and North Africa; and Latin American and the Caribbean - by strengthening Borrower frameworks and capacity through ESC best practices for greater beneficial development impact and results.							
Development objective	1. To strengthen Borrowers' ability to meet ESC standards, and manage reputational, litigation & financial risks by applying rigorous, proportionate ESC provisions;	Average DEM+ score of participating borrowers projects	TBD	5	SECAP DEM+ rating	Yearly	IFAD	IFAD integrate ESC standards in project operations
		Kirkpatrick's Level 4 indicators						
	2. To bridge skill gaps of direct and indirect target groups involved in ESC mainstreaming and compliance;	Kirkpatrick's Level 2 indicators	TBD	TBD	Inception report/Final evaluation report	Inception/End of project	IFAD	
		Average test score of participants	TBD (inception phase)	TBD	Inception report/Final evaluation report Pre-Test/Post-Test report	Inception/End of project Yearly	ITCILO	
3. To share knowledge on the value and purpose of the ESC mainstreaming and compliance to promote behavioural change.	Kirkpatrick's Level 3 indicators		TBD	TBD			ITCILO	
			TBD(inception phase)	TBD	Inception report/Final evaluation report	Inception/End of project	ITCILO	
Outcomes 1 Components 1	1. Strengthened Borrowers' ESC institutional frameworks and implementation capacities which embrace and enforce international good practices	SECAP rating during implementation of IFAD funded projects with participating borrowers	TBD	TBD	IFAD supervision mission report	Inception/End of project	IFAD	Staff turnover in IFAD funded project PMUs does not increase
	2. Component 1: Development of Capacity Building Programme on ESC requirements	Number of active practitioners who are competent on the SECAP requirements (Certified in the training programme)		445	Training report	Yearly	ICTILO	
Outputs Component 1	Output 1.1: Gap analysis and training needs' assessment.	Approved gap analysis report	0	1	Gap analysis report	Inception	ICTILO	
	Output 1.2: Establish gaps and needs in Borrower ESC Framework Output 1.3: Seven tailored Online Learning Modules (OML) developed in English, French, Spanish and Arabic	Number of tailored made OML in English, French, Spanish and Arabic Number of toolkits shared on the online platform	0	7	Online Learning Platform on the eCampus	Once-off	ITCILO	

Results hierarchy		Indicators			Means of verification			Assumptions
		Indicator	Baseline	End target	Source	Freq.	Respons.	
	Output 1.4: Online platform is set up to share web-based toolkit and ESC consultant roster available Output 1.5: Knowledge management plan established	Approved knowledge management plan	TBD 0	TBD 1	Online Learning Platform on the eCampus Knowledge management plan	Yearly Once-off	ICTILO ICTILO	
Outcomes 2 Component 2	Improved ESC skills of direct and indirect target groups for effective project preparation and implementation Component 2: Delivery of capacity building	Kirkpatrick's Level 2 indicators Average test score of participants Number of active practitioners (disaggregated by language and sex) who are competent on the SECAP requirements (Certified in the training programme)	TBD(inception phase) TBD 0	TBD TBD 445	Inception report/Final evaluation report Pre-Test/Post-Test report eCampus training report	Inception/End of projet Yearly Yearly	ITCILO ITCILO ITCILO	IFAD-OPEN data is available tom explore and measure improvements in procurement practices
Outputs Component 2	Output 2.1: Delivery of programme in English. Output 2.2: Delivery of programme in French. Output 2.3: Delivery of programme in Spanish. Output 2.4: Delivery of programme in Arabic. Output 2.5: High-level interregional event in Turin. Output 2.6: Training of Trainers in Turin	Number of participants the training (disaggregated by language and sex) Number of participants in the high-level interregional event (disaggregated by language and sex) Number of participants in the training of trainers (disaggregated by language and sex)	0 0 0	445 80 40	eCampus training report Participants list/Activity report Participants list/Activity report	Yearly Once-off Once-off	ITCILO ICTILO ICTILO	Participants remain motivated to complete four programmes Project managers make themselves available for completing their learning track
Outcomes Component 3:	Enhanced partnerships and knowledge sharing between and within regions to nurture environmental and social sustainability Component 3: Knowledge, management and community of practice	Number of consultants registered in the platform Number of active users of the platform	0	TBD	Project Final Evaluation	Once-off Once-off	ITCILO ITCILO	Communities and beneficiaries, engaging in IFAD funded projects, procurement and SECAP related activities are

Results hierarchy		Indicators			Means of verification			Assumptions
		Indicator	Baseline	End target	Source	Freq.	Respons.	
			0	TBD	Project Final Evaluation			more and more digital
Outputs Component 3	Output 3.1: Sustained operations.	Number of bi-monthly webinars	0	9	List of participants/Activity report	Yearly	ITCILO	ITCILO capacity to innovate continue through ICTS and ODPS programmes
	Output 3.2: Intra-regional visits conducted	Number of participants (disaggregated by language and sex) in the bi-monthly webinars	0	TBD	List of participants/Activity report	Yearly	ICTILO	
	Output 3.3: MOOCs	Number of social media campaigns	0	TBD	List of participants/Activity report	Yearly	ITCILO	
		Number of intra-regional visits conducted	0	2	Activity report	Yearly	ITCILO	
		Number of MOOCs in the four languages	0	4	Online Learning Platform on the eCampus	Once-off	ITCILO	