



unitar
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

E - LEARNING COURSE

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) FRAMEWORKS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Syllabus



About the Course

Due to the steep increase in public concern for climate and the environment, social justice, and corporate governance, it has become increasingly important for governments to adopt legal and policy frameworks that recognise, promote, and impose ESG standards, monitoring, and reporting schemes. While developed countries are moving forward on ESG-related frameworks, the developing world is still not ready to embrace ESG principles and practices that would motivate private sector entities operating within their borders to improve their role and performance in these disciplines.

In light of the recent adoption of standards and reporting requirements by the European Union, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) believes that public officials in all areas of the world will need to understand ESG vis-à-vis their roles as policymakers and regulators, especially in the creation of standards and reporting requirements in their national contexts.

The United Nations is committed to promoting the adoption of ESG frameworks that would improve the contributions of private sector entities across society and promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through this course, public officials will gain a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of ESG regulation and practice to leverage regulators' roles in drafting, legislating, and adopting policies relevant to ESG regulation.

In particular, this self-paced e-learning course aims to build the capacity of policymakers and regulators to foster policy coherence by applying knowledge and best practices to align ESG regulation with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national priorities and enhance the government's engagement.



Course Objective

This e-learning course aims to strengthen public sector leaders' understanding of ESG frameworks and advocate for creating legal and policy platforms that would allow their countries to leverage ESG in support of sustainable development.

It is expected that, by the end of this course, participants will be better positioned to:

- Explain what ESG is and its relevance to public sector decision-making processes.
- Identify critical environmental, social, and governance issues.
- Explain the different roles that the public sector plays and how each of these roles can influence ESG performance in a country.
- Apply ESG principles to the design, adoption, and implementation of national-level reporting and disclosure frameworks.
- Communicate the importance and impact of ESG frameworks in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Course Modules

1. Introduction to ESG and its Relevance in the Current Political Environment
2. Environmental Factors of ESG and Incorporating Them into Decision-Making
3. Social Factors and Considerations for ESG Frameworks
4. Governance Factors of ESG and Ensuring Good Governance Practices
5. Examining the Relationship between ESG Frameworks and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
6. Practical Applications of ESG Principles at the National Level and Future Considerations

Learning Methodology

This e-learning course is presented in English and is based on UNITAR's sound adult learning pedagogical principles. Each module is developed around the overall learning objectives and the learning objectives specific to each module. Each module includes an interactive presentation complemented by a set of practice quizzes followed by an objective graded quiz to be taken after completing the lesson to assess the knowledge and skills acquired.

Participant Profile

This course is designed to introduce Environmental, Social, and Governance frameworks to public officials who support sustainable development practices and decision-making in their roles as regulators and policymakers. Civil servants and stakeholders who support broader sustainable development initiatives could also benefit by understanding the future of public sector-imposed Environmental, Social, and Governance frameworks and reporting structures and how they will affect public and private sector operations.



Certification and Feedback

A certificate of participation will be issued to participants who complete all parts of the course. A certificate of completion will be issued to participants who achieve a minimum total score of 70% in the final comprehensive quiz.

Participants will be requested to complete a course evaluation at the end of the course. This evaluation can be accessed through the link in the "Course Evaluation" section on the course home page.

Module 1

INTRODUCTION TO ESG AND ITS RELEVANCE IN THE CURRENT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Define and explain the importance of each factor of "ESG".
- Communicate the role of public sector entities and their role in fostering and supporting stakeholder expectations.
- Understand the aim and relevance of risk assessments, management, mitigation, and intelligence.
- Describe the key international frameworks, standards, and agreements that support ESG integration and compliance.

Module 2

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS OF ESG AND INCORPORATING THEM INTO DECISION-MAKING



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Communicate critical components of an environmental materiality assessment.
- Understand how private sector impacts and risks inform public sector decision-making processes.
- Describe challenges associated with addressing environmental risks through public sector interventions.
- Identify critical considerations that affect the public sector's environmental footprint and performance.
- Explain the importance of proper environmental stewardship.



Module 3

SOCIAL FACTORS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR ESG FRAMEWORKS



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify social factors that are relevant to ESG frameworks and the public sector.
- Explain how public sector interventions can assist in social risk management and mitigation.
- Communicate the importance of prioritising and ensuring human rights in private-sector strategies.

Module 4

GOVERNANCE FACTORS OF ESG AND ENSURING GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify key governance factors relevant to the private sector.
- Explain critical aspects associated with good governance practices and strategies in the private sector.
- Understand how the public sector can guide and promote good governance in the private sector.



Module 5

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ESG FRAMEWORKS AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Explain the nature of the SDGs and ESG frameworks and their roles in supporting sustainable development.
- Describe how ESG frameworks can influence environmental, social, and governance performance in the public and private sectors.
- Understand the need for policy integration and coherence in promoting sustainable development.
- Examine the role of stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships in promoting ESG-aligned sustainable financing strategies.

Module 6

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF ESG PRINCIPLES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS



Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand the rationale for implementing ESG frameworks at the national level.
- Explain the roles of the Legislative and Executive Branches in helping countries draft, enact, and enforce national ESG frameworks and standards.
- Communicate the roles of international organisations, diplomats, and foreign ministers in promoting, supporting, and implementing ESG frameworks.
- Discuss data collection and reporting in the public sector in the context of ESG frameworks.
- Describe how ESG frameworks contribute to long-term value creation and improve effectiveness in the public sector.





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

*Strengthening human capacities
to advance sustainable development*



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