ONLINE   RURAL DEVELOPMENT

UNLOCKING RURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DATA AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

30 MARCH – 24 APRIL 2026
4 WEEKS, 40 HOURS

Information Note

International Labour Organization

ITC International Training Centre

**" From local data to global impact:
using emerging technologies
to ensure no rural community
is left behind. "**

OVERVIEW

Data powers development and is the fuel of emerging technologies which are the driving the global digital revolution and redefining the global future. Data offers a range of new opportunities to break down existing barriers to economic development and social inclusion and to help achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, rural economies located specially in the Global South, risk being left behind since vast datasets and robust data ecosystems are critical for emerging technologies such as AI-driven solutions.

As a response to both the promise and the challenges of digital transformation in rural economies in the Global South, the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) developed the "Unlocking Rural Development through Data and Emerging Technologies in the Global South", an online course focusing on how data can leverage initiatives to put emerging technologies into practice for sustainable rural development, aiming to bridge the digital divide by ensuring no one is left behind in the current landscape.

While emerging technologies hold immense potential for boosting productivity and improving livelihoods, their benefits have so far been concentrated in large-scale and high-income settings, which is a key barrier to the effective development and use of emerging technologies at a local level.

This course relies on **data principles** and on **emerging technologies** to leverage local data and innovation for inclusive growth in rural areas, contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals and social justice in rural communities.

OBJECTIVES

This online course on "Unlocking Rural Development through Data and Emerging Technologies in the Global South" is designed to adress critical questions around data and AI in rural development:

- How can we build and leverage on high quality, accurate datasets and digital infrastructure to ensure data systems are inclusive and drive rural developement?

- How can emerging technologies themselves help collect data from innovative sources and then process it to be really beneficial in rural communities?

- How do we ensure that emerging technology solutions work for everyone?

This course aims to foster a **human-centered approach** to digital innovation in rural areas. It will focus on **inclusive data collection and use**, and explore how **citizen-generated data and other non-traditional sources** are being integrated into existing systems to ensure that data also reflects the realities of marginalized communities, while emphasizing the importance of investing in data and infrastructure to benefit rural economies in the Global South.

By understanding successful cases and **demonstrating the long-term returns of investing in data systems**, attendees will be better equipped to advocate for stronger support and funding for digital transformation in rural and bring to work a clearer vision of how to leverage technology while safeguarding equity and social justice for rural populations.

TARGET GROUP

This course is designed for:

- the ILO's tripartite constituents;
- data and emerging technology experts;
- policymakers involved in rural development;
- policymakers involved in ITC and Infrastructure;
- practitioners from development partner agencies and international organizations;
- social innovators and entrepreneurs; and
- academia and members of civil society organizations engaged in addressing critical questions around data and emerging technologies in rural development.

A GLANCE AT THE COURSE

Unlocking Rural Development through Data and Emerging Technologies in the Global South will focus on:

- Data and Emerging Technology Principles
- How data can power sustainable initiatives, strengthen innovation ecosystems, and create more and better opportunities in rural economies.
- Highlighting practical approaches to applying AI-driven and other emerging solutions at the local level.
- Reflect on challenges of scaling data-driven initiatives and engage in a foresight exercise to envision future opportunities.

By exploring data principles, case studies, and practical tools, participants will learn how to harness local data and emerging technologies to foster inclusive rural development and bridge the digital divide, ensuring that the benefits of the digital revolution contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and social justice in rural communities.

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

This course is offered fully online through the ITCILO e-Campus platform **for 4 weeks**. Furthermore, once a week one online webinar will provide direct contact with experts from the industry and an additional opportunity for engaging with experts and peers.

Each module combines online materials, one weekly webinar delivered by experts and ITCILO facilitators and offline learning activities to allow participants dive deeper into each topic and share with their peers.

To receive the certification, participants need to complete and participate in at least 80% of the proposed actictives in a satisfactory manner on the ITCILO's eCampus.

Module 1: Data for Rural Development

- Understanding the role of data in powering development and emerging technologies
- Data principles: availability, accessibility, quality, and inclusiveness
- The data spectrum: from conventional to innovative data sources for tech innovation
- Exploring the digital divide and its impact on rural economies in the Global South

Module 2: Emerging Technologies for Rual Development

- Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (and other emerging technologies)
- AI and Emerging Technologies applications for rural development
- Case studies of technology applications in agriculture, health, and rural services

Module 3: Localizing Data and Innovation Ecosystems

- Leveraging local and community-generated data for sustainable solutions
- Case studies of data localization efforts
- Building robust and inclusive data ecosystems in rural areas though infrastructure

Module 4: From Data to Impact

- Linking data-driven solutions to the Sustainable Development Goals
- Strengthening local innovation capacity and addressing barriers to adoption
- Challenges on scaling

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Mar 30th - Apr 3rd	Apr 7th - Apr 10th	Apr 13th - Apr 17th	Apr 20th - Apr 24th
Module 1: Data for Rural Development	**Module 2**: Emerging Technologies for Rual Development	**Module 3**: Localizing Data and Innovation Ecosystems	**Module 4**: From Data to Impact
LIVE WEBINAR Apr 1st	**LIVE WEBINAR** Apr 8th	**LIVE WEBINAR** Apr 15th	**LIVE WEBINAR** Apr 22nd

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are kindly asked to send us a completed online registration form:
https://oarf2.itcilo.org/DST/A9719227/en

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Language: The course will be deliverd in English.

Course Fees: The course is fee-paying. Tuition: €1,055

Certificate: After successfully participating in at least 80% of the sessions and its activities, participants obtain an official ITCILO Certificate of Participation in Digital Credentials Format.

Contact: For further information, please email digitransform@itcilo.org

WITHDRAWAL, CANCELLATION POLICY, AND REFUNDS FOR OPEN COURSES

If an enrolled participant wishes or must withdraw from a course, they may choose to apply to a different course or be substituted by another candidate. The participant must notify the Centre, in writing, of their decision at least 14 days prior to the start date of the course. Cancellation of participation in regular courses will result in the following penalties:

- 14 days or more prior to the start date of the course: No penalty, 100% refund of amount paid less applicable bank charges
- 8 to 13 days prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 50% of course price, refund of residual amount paid (if any) less applicable bank charges
- 7 days or less prior to the start date of the course: Penalty of 100% of course price.

INFO

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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