

AICPA & CIMA launch new certificate to help address ESG concerns in Africa

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AICPA & CIMA, which together form the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants, have announced the launch of a new educational certificate that provides foundational knowledge on critical topics related to ESG reporting, advisory, and assurance at their ESG: Implications on business and finance event in Cape Town on 17 January 2023.



The interconnectivity of the environment, business, and society, combined with finance and the [growing demand for ESG data](#) – driven by investors, lenders, customers, and, increasingly, policymakers – makes this a high-priority category for skills development within the accounting and finance profession in Africa. This is underscored by a [recent study](#) from the think-tank Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum and the South African bank Absa, which found that out of 26 surveyed African countries, 17 had sustainability-focused policies in finance.

The [Fundamentals of ESG Certificate](#) is available globally and is appropriate for accounting and finance professionals looking to obtain a baseline knowledge of ESG topics. The 9-hour course offers a grounding in the fundamental concepts of and the latest developments within the ESG field. Upon completion, certificate holders can display a digital badge on their online profiles.

Tariro Mutizwa, ACMA, CGMA, regional vice president – Africa at AICPA & CIMA, said:

“Africa boasts innumerable opportunities, it is [home to natural resources](#) ranging from arable land, water, natural gas, minerals, and forests. In addition, [60% of the continent's population is below the age of 25](#) and its workforce is rapidly growing. To effectively leverage these opportunities, Africa needs professionals with pertinent skills to address ESG concerns. Our new Fundamentals of ESG Certificate will help contribute towards this.”

Andrew Harding, FCMA, CGMA, chief executive – Management Accounting at AICPA & CIMA, said:

“The global business community is on the verge of momentous change in how companies address sustainability issues and interest in ESG is reaching a tipping point. This will fuel demand for accounting and finance professionals equipped with the necessary skills to advise business leaders on the ESG opportunities and risks this presents to their organisations. The new ESG certificate programme will help develop the skills of accountants and management accountants to serve the public interest and instil trust and integrity within the ESG field.”

Speaking on AICPA & CIMA’s ESG event in Cape Town, Tariro Mutizwa commented:

“It’s been a privilege to host our ESG: Implications on business and finance event with global and African accounting, finance, and business leaders here in Cape Town. I’d like to thank our speakers for sharing their knowledge and providing the audience with extremely valuable insights.” She added: “The message from our panel is loud and clear: ESG is now a key business transformation topic, and we all have a responsibility to help our organisations create a more sustainable and equitable future.”

AICPA & CIMA are developing a detailed learning roadmap for ESG. As the first step on that journey, the Fundamentals of ESG Certificate programme will provide course takers with the ability to:

- Identify the key aspects in each area of Environment, Social, and Governance
- Recognise the expectations of investors and the impact on business
- Assess the responsibility of businesses for key ESG issues
- Recognise the business case for implementing sustainable practices
- Identify the role of the accounting and auditing profession in sustainability
- Recognise the current sustainability reporting frameworks and reporting requirements

Pricing and further details of the Fundamentals of ESG Certificate are available on the [certificate homepage](#). For an array of other resources on sustainability and ESG, please visit aicpa.org/esg.

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