IFC International Finance Corporation
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Management Response

Evaluation of the IFC Green Bond Technical Assistance Program

By ICF Consulting Services Ltd.

June 30, 2025

1) Background

International Finance Corporation has retained services of ICF Consulting Services Ltd. for the External Review Mission of the IFC Green Bond Technical Assistance Program ("GB-TAP", or "the program"). The assignment had a contract duration period from 2018 to June 2026.

The GB-TAP was launched in 2018 with the objective of supporting green bond market development with a focus on financial institutions active in emerging markets. It was conceptualized as an Advisory Facility to complement the Amundi Planet Emerging Green One (AP EGO) Fund, the world's first emerging market green bond fund.

Development Objectives (Impact):
a) *Increase the volume and quality of green, social and sustainability bonds issued by emerging market financial institutions (EM FIs)*
b) *Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through projects financed by green bonds issued by EM FIs that receive GB-TAP interventions*

Project Objectives (outcomes):
a) *Green bond training programs delivered*
b) *Green Bond Principles dissemination and communication*
c) *Enhancing quality reporting*
d) *Knowledge sharing*
e) *Green bond / finance policy development*
f) *Technical assistance to green bond issuers*

Project Outputs (selected):
a) *Number of FIs, professionals (including female), and trainings*
b) *Number of knowledge products (research, case studies, materials, webinars, etc.)*
c) *Number of events as speakers, organizers, sponsors, etc.*
d) *Number of FI green bond issuers after disclosing ESG info on ESG book*
e) *Number of countries with policy development plans*
f) *Number of FIs receiving TA*
g) *Number of FIs with approved green bond frameworks*

The purpose of the evaluation was 1) to systematically assess the overall results and performance of the GB-TAP; 2) to ensure transparency and responsibility donor partners; 3) to provide valuable lessons and actionable recommendations that can inform the design, and implementation of future interventions related to green bond market development; and 4) to support the wrap-up of the current cycle of GB-TAP activities in order to inform the design of a follow-up program, which is under discussion between IFC and GB-TAP donor partners.

2) Appreciation of the Report: Structure, Methodology & Process

Structure: The evaluation report is well-structured with four main parts: Executive Summary, Introduction, Evaluation Findings, and Recommendations.

Methodology: The evaluation report adopts a mixed-methods approach to ensure comprehensive, in-depth and contextually relevant insights, including both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Three main research streams are utilized to accommodate the different nature of the program's various components:
1.Program-level Review – analyze the program and its six components as a whole
2.Structured Technical Assistance (TA) Assessment – provide in-depth insights into key components (1, 5 and 6) through 10 case studies of specific TA activities.
3. Comparative Analysis – benchmark GB-TAP against other peer initiatives to contextualize relevance, coherence and performance.

Four Types of Data Collection Methods:
1. Documentation Review – systematic review of internal IFC documents
2. Stakeholder Consultation – interviews with key informants and surveys to all GB-TAP beneficiaries
3. Case Studies – 10 case studies focused on TA activities for Component 1, 5 and 6 selected for their significance and diversity of context
4. Triangulation – internal workshops and synthesis processes used to align insights from different research methods to ensure that conclusions were corroborated by multiple sources

Evaluation Scope: GB-TAP is evaluated based on six comprehensive areas according to OECD DAC criteria – Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness & Impacts, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Additionality of IFC's Involvement.

Process: The evaluation report benefits from key aspects throughout the evaluation process:

1. Regular engagement with the GB-TAP team – biweekly calls to understand the purpose, structure and operations of the program; to ensure receipts of documents, evidence and other supporting materials; to raise and answer questions
2. Collect qualitative and quantitative data (see methodology section above for details)
3. Desk research, internal synthesis and analysis
4. Draft review and finalization – share draft report with IFC and collect feedback to address further clarification and ensure evidence accuracy; finalize the report and share with both IFC and donor partners in July 2025

3) Key Findings and Lessons Learnt

Relevance: GB-TAP was highly relevant to market needs, addressing critical barriers to green bond issuance in emerging markets. The program's six components were well-aligned with these challenges, offering a combination of executive training, technical assistance, and policy support.

Effectiveness: GB-TAP exceeded most of its performance targets, often ahead of schedule. Many alumni remain engaged through informal networks and follow-up training, and survey data shows strong ownership of knowledge gained.

Efficiency: The program delivered strong value for money. For every dollar spent, GB-TAP alumni issued approximately $1,538 in green, social, and sustainability (GSS) bonds. The program demonstrated fiscal discipline, reallocating resources to the most impactful components and adapting delivery models during the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain momentum.

Sustainability: Sustainability of results is promising but uneven. Many alumni remain engaged through informal networks and follow-up training, and survey data shows strong ownership of knowledge gained.

Impact: More than 1,300 professionals from 453 financial institutions were trained, and alumni issued over $10.8 billion in green bonds (and another $9 billion in social and sustainability bonds) – far surpassing initial expectations. The program also supported the development of 16 draft green finance policies across 14 countries and provided direct technical assistance to 43 financial institutions, resulting in directly mobilizing over $2 billion in green bond issuances.

Lessons learnt:

1. Strategic Program Design
Theory of Change (ToC) is essential: Future phases should start with a robust ToC that clearly links activities to intended outcomes and impacts. This helps guide design, implementation, and monitoring, ensuring the program remains focused and adaptable.

2. Integrated and Coordinated Interventions
Synergy between components matters: The program's impact is maximized when complementary interventions (e.g., regulatory support, issuer assistance, training) are deployed together in the same markets. Intentional, market-based deployment of IFC service offerings can drive systemic change.

3. Clear Beneficiary Selection
Transparent criteria needed: Beneficiary selection should be based on well-defined criteria aligned with program objectives and market readiness. Expanding support to real economy actors (not just financial institutions) could increase impact.

4. Scale and Sustainability
Design for scale: Partnerships, "train the trainer" models, and alumni engagement are crucial for embedding knowledge locally and extending reach. Sustainability indicators should track long-term impacts, such as repeat issuances and institutional adoption of program tools.

5. Thematic Expansion
Broader coverage is valuable: There is demand to expand beyond green bonds to other thematic bonds (social, sustainability, biodiversity, etc.), and to reinforce post-issuance phases like impact reporting. The program should remain responsive to market trends.

6. Market-Driven and Practical Approach
Stay connected to investors: The program's practical, market-driven approach and strong investor connections distinguish it from others. Future efforts should further bridge supply and demand, engaging private sector investors to reduce reliance on donor investments.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
M&E must capture systemic change: Impact indicators should go beyond alumni issuance and GHG reduction, reflecting long-term market transformation, behavior change, and institutionalization. Custom indicators and mid-cycle learning reviews are recommended.

8. Internal and External Coherence
Collaboration frameworks are needed: Formal mechanisms for collaboration within IFC/WBG and with external partners can enhance alignment, transparency, and shared objectives.

In summary: These lessons reflect the program's experience in building green bond markets in emerging economies. They highlight the importance of strategic planning, coordinated interventions, local capacity building, and adaptive management. The evaluation underscores that future technical assistance programs should be designed for systemic impact, sustainability, and continuous learning.

4) Shortcomings and other Important Considerations

1. Lean Delivery Team and Resource Constraints
The program operated with fewer staff than needed for most of the implementation period, which constrained the ability to deliver more trainings and support. This was flagged internally for several years before being addressed.

2. Contribution vs Attribution from Public Goods
While Component 1 training facilitated more than $19 billion in green, social and sustainability bonds issuance, the program played a crucial role in "contributing" to such market development – albeit with strong evidence from testimonials – rather than direct "attribution" as other market players also played role in these issuances.

3. Underutilization of "Train the Trainer" Model
The "train the trainer" approach was used only on a limited basis, despite its potential for cost-effective scaling and strengthening local capacity for long-term sustainability.

5) Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
A – Strategic					
Recommendation 1 **Develop a robust Theory of Change (ToC):** The next phase of GB-TAP should begin with the development of a clear and structured ToC and intervention logic. Starting from the impact that the Program wishes to achieve in its next phase, the ToC should articulate the causal pathways that connect the Program's activities to its intended outputs, outcomes, and long-term impacts	**Fully agree**	Partially agree	Not agree		
	Response: Fully agree				
	Measures GBTAP was designed as complementary intervention for the AP EGO Fund. Its ToC was therefore limited to the deployment of the Fund. In the next phase the program will serve the objective of capital mobilization via multiple investment vehicles and instruments. The team will take this recommendation to develop a more structured ToC, starting with market development and the end impact of capital mobilization and working backward on what needs to be there as conditions for this impact to happen.			GB-TAP team	
Recommendation 2 **Reinforce the synergies between the**	**Fully agree**	Partially agree	Not agree		
	Response				

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
components of the Program. For the next phase, the Program should adopt a more deliberate, strategic approach to deploying its tools— identifying where specific combinations of support (e.g., regulatory engagement, issuer-level technical assistance, and ecosystem-wide capacity building) can reinforce each other to drive systemic outcomes.	Fully Agree				
	<u>Measures</u> The next phase of the program will consider more intentional programmatic approach at country level to align broad-based training with policy support and issuer readiness building.			GB-TAP team	
Recommendation 3 **Clearly define the target beneficiaries and the underpinning rationale for their selection.** The selection of countries, markets, and beneficiaries should be directly informed by the ToC and supported by a set of well-defined criteria. There is also an opportunity to expand the target audience of the Program to real economy actors going beyond FIs, provided they are	Fully agree	**Partially agree**	Not agree		
	<u>Response</u> Partially agree. The selection of training beneficiaries in Component 1 was done mainly based on recommendations by IFC regional and country teams. The selection of countries in GBTAP was a combination of the donors' preference (i.e. donors' country priorities) and the demand for support on the ground.				
	<u>Measures</u> The program team can be more intentional in country selection and beneficiaries' selection based on a set of criteria agreed with the donors. The next phase will also be expanded in scope to benefit actors in the non-financial sector economy.			GB-TAP team	

<table>
<tr><th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th><th colspan="3">MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</th><th>RESPONSIBILITY</th><th>TIMING</th></tr>
<tr><td>appropriately mapped to desired results.</td><td colspan="3"></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Recommendation 4

Design the next phase of the GB-TAP for scale and sustainability. From its inception, the next phase of the GB-TAP should be designed with the objective of reaching scale and ensuring the sustainability of its results. This could mean broadening and strengthening partnerships, as well as systematically adopting and implementing a “train the trainer” (TOT) approach under C1 in collaboration with local universities or centers of expertise to expand the Program’s outreach and local anchorage.</td><td>Fully agree</td><td>Partially agree</td><td>Not agree</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Response</u>
Fully agree that the program can explore TOT approach. In the first phase, this was explored in LAC.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Measures</u>
In the next phase the program team will be more intentional in building local training partners in different regions to ensure that public training can be transferred to external partners for long term sustainability.</td><td>GB-TAP team</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Recommendation 5

Continue to expand the thematic coverage of the Program to intentionally integrate new topics while maintaining a core</td><td>Fully agree</td><td>Partially agree</td><td>Not agree</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Response</u>
Fully agree</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Measures</u></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
focus on thematic bond issuance	The next phase of the program will also cover new topics such as biodiversity, nature finance, circular economy as well as social sustainability in transition.				
B - Operational					
Recommendation 5 **Improve M&E to capture long-term market transformation and systemic influence** on the GSS bonds ecosystem and refine current methodologies for claiming alumni GSS bond to more accurately represent the GB-TAP's contribution to bond issuance considering external influences.	**Fully agree**	Partially agree	Not agree		
	<u>Response</u> Fully agree				
	<u>Measures</u> For the next phase the program team will work with M&E specialists of WBG and donors to refine the methodologies in evaluating market transformation impact, which is more complex, and in claiming bond issuance results from public training activities.				
Recommendation 6 **Introduce a mid-point evaluative learning exercise**	**Fully agree**	Partially agree	Not agree		
	<u>Response</u> Fully agree. GBTAP was designed with a mid-term evaluation. However, during the implementation, IFC and donors have agreed to waive this mid-term evaluation based on the periodical reviews the team conducted every 6 months. We agree that a mid-term evaluation is the best practice.				

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<tr><td></td><td colspan="3"><u>Measures</u>
The program team will build into the next phase design the mid-term evaluation/lessons learned documentation.</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Recommendation 7

Strengthen communications and outreach:

Enhance the GB-TAP’s online presence and communication efforts to increase awareness, attract a broader audience, and amplify the Program’s demonstration effect.</td><td>Fully agree</td><td>Partially agree</td><td>Not agree</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Response</u>
Fully agree.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3"><u>Measures</u>
The program team will consider how this can be implemented in the next phase leveraging AI technology and other existing platforms the WBG/IFC may have.</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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Washington, DC, June 30, 2025

Place, Date

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Name
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Washington DC, June 30, 2025

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