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INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE OF THE ILO:

Evaluation of the Strategy Consultancies of the Centre

Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2023 - 2024, the International Training Centre of the ILO (the Centre) significantly expanded its strategic consultancy portfolio to meet the evolving needs of ILO constituents and institutional clients. This external evaluation assessed ten strategy consultancies conducted by the Centre across Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia and interregional contexts. The evaluation was guided by OECD's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation (OECD DAC)¹ and utilized a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) approach aligned with Guidelines for auditing management systems ISO 19011:2018 (ISO 19011:2018)².

The consultancies were designed to complement the Centre's training services by offering tailored, high-impact institutional support in areas such as digital transformation, strategic planning, performance assessment, and employment governance.

Key Findings:

Relevance: The consultancies demonstrated high responsiveness to constituent needs and alignment with ILO strategic priorities, including promotion of decent work, digital innovation, and capacity development. Tailored approaches and context-sensitive solutions were key strengths.

Coherence: Strong synergies were found between some consultancies and the Centre's training activities, though cross-programme coordination and alignment with broader UN initiatives were inconsistently documented.

Effectiveness: Most consultancies met their objectives and produced impactful outputs such as strategic frameworks, digital platforms, diagnostic assessments, and employment-focused tools. Success was linked to participatory approaches, technical customization, and effective stakeholder engagement.

Efficiency: Resource use was generally appropriate, with projects leveraging existing tools and local capacities. However, documentation of actual costs and administrative processes was limited, constraining comprehensive efficiency assessment.

Impact and sustainability: Several of the strategy consultancies contributed to broader policy change, institutional strengthening, and improvements in service delivery. Notable examples include the integration of decent work principles into Mozambique's Forestry Regulation and the digital transformation of the Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC) in Zambia. The lasting impact of these consultancies was most evident where they were embedded into national policy frameworks, underpinned by strong institutional ownership and supported by scalable tools and processes. However, not all consultancies reached this level of durability—some faced limitations due to

¹ OECD. (2010). *Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series. OECD Publishing.

² International Organization for Standardization. (2018). *ISO 19011:2018: Guidelines for auditing management systems*. ISO Publishing. <https://www.iso.org/standard/70017.html>

insufficient follow-up, political volatility, or constrained resources, highlighting the need for more systematic sustainability planning across the portfolio.

Conclusions:

The evaluation confirms that the Centre's strategic diversification into consultancies represents a proactive response to emerging capacity development needs. While demonstrating flexibility and methodological depth, the Centre needs to address systemic gaps in strategic framework integration and follow-up mechanisms.

The documentation review found that tools and mechanisms meant to support the quality assurance of the Centre's consultancy services were available but inconsistently applied or insufficiently developed, weakening the ability to consistently demonstrate their contribution. This structural gap limits the Centre's ability to fully evidence the strategic value of consultancies, even where relevant connections exist in practice. This gap was particularly evident in project proposals and final reports, which rarely articulated connections to institutional priorities despite staff being able to describe these links when interviewed directly. With stronger cross-programme collaboration and standardized practices, successful models could be effectively scaled and replicated, particularly when embedded into partner systems with ongoing advisory support.

Furthermore, the evaluation found that institutional integration of consultancy outputs was uneven. While some consultancies were embedded into national systems and reinforced by strong ownership, others remained at the planning or pilot stage—constrained by limited follow-up, resource gaps, or organizational silos. These barriers were often predictable but not sufficiently addressed in project design, highlighting the need for clearer sustainability strategies and institutional readiness assessments.

Recommendations:

Short-Term (0–6 months)

- Enhance visibility and verification of strategic alignment in the approval process
- Establish a consultancy knowledge repository
- Implement systematic post-consultancy reflection and learning

Medium-Term (7–12 months)

- Extend the existing Quality Management Framework to strengthen quality assurance
- Strengthen cross-program collaboration mechanisms
- Integrate consultancies within training services

Long-Term (13–24 months)

- Establish a sustainable financing model for consultancies
- Strengthen an integrated approach to consultancy impact assessment
- Establish structured follow-up support mechanisms

FOREWORD

This evaluation was conducted as part of the Centre's commitment to continuous improvement and quality assurance of its services. It comes at a critical juncture as the Centre expands its portfolio beyond traditional training activities to include strategy consultancies that strengthen institutional capacity development.

The consultancies evaluated represent an important strategic direction for the Centre, responding to the evolving needs of ILO constituents and other institutional clients in an increasingly digital world. By examining these services against established evaluation criteria, the Centre demonstrates accountability to stakeholders and a commitment to enhancing the impact of its interventions.

We extend our gratitude to all stakeholders who contributed to this evaluation, including the Centre staff involved in designing and delivering the consultancies, representatives from beneficiary institutions, and ILO colleagues who provided valuable insights. Their candid feedback and reflections have been instrumental in developing a comprehensive assessment and actionable recommendations.

1. ABOUT THE EVALUATION

1.1 Purpose and scope

This evaluation examines the strategy consultancies delivered by the International Training Centre of the ILO (the Centre) during 2024. The evaluation was commissioned by the Office of the Director of Training to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of these consultancies, in accordance with the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and UNEG Norms for Evaluation.

The scope encompasses a representative sample of 10 strategy consultancies implemented by the Centre in 2024. These assignments included institutional capacity assessments, advisory services on digital transformation strategies and digital capacity improvement, and performance reviews. These consultancies were delivered to ILO constituents and other institutional clients as part of the Centre's portfolio diversification strategy outlined in the 2022-25 Strategic Plan.

The evaluation aims to:

- Assess the performance of strategy consultancies against established evaluation criteria
- Identify good practices and lessons learned to inform quality improvement and potential scaling
- Formulate recommendations to enhance the quality assurance framework and standardization the Centre consultancy services
- Support strategic decision-making regarding the future programming of the Centre's institutional capacity development offer.

The primary users of the evaluation are the Board of the Centre, the Training Department, and relevant internal units. The findings will inform the Centre's management decisions on strengthening the Centre's advisory services and embedding quality standards across future consultancies.

1.2 Methodology

The evaluation followed a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) approach, adhering to the principles and practices outlined in ISO 19011:2018. This structured approach ensured a systematic, transparent and robust evaluation process.

Data collection was conducted through:

Desk research: A comprehensive review of relevant documentation, including:

- The 2022-25 Strategic Plan³ and Programme and Budget proposals for 2024-25⁴ Technical proposals, final reports, internal monitoring reports and performance data from the 10 strategy consultancies (see the overview below)⁵
- Feedback collected from beneficiary's post-consultancy interviews
- Previous evaluations of the Centre's services⁶
- ILO policy documents and strategy frameworks⁷

Table 1: Overview of consultancies sampled for the evaluation.

No.	CODE	TITLE	BENEFICIARY	REGION
1	E2518317	Advisory service for the development of a membership plan in ADIH - Association Des Industries d'Haïti	ADIH – Association Des Industries d'Haïti	AMERICAS, Haiti
2	E1517489	Development of a National TVET Strategy (2024 - 2029) for Rwanda	Expertise France - TVET stakeholders	AFRICA, Rwanda
3	E1717716	MT2.2: Develop Public Expenditure Review draft report	Ministry of Labour	AFRICA, Mozambique
	E1717717	MT4.2: Analysis and review of Forest regulation towards including employment and decent work targets	Ministry of Labour	AFRICA, Mozambique
4	P1717533 - E1517582	WS1-E: Employment impact assessment of sectoral policies	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition	AFRICA, South Africa

³ International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization. (2021). Centre's Strategic Plan for 2022-25. International Training Centre Publishing. https://www.itcilo.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/CC%2085_2_1%20EN%20rev.pdf

⁴ International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization. (2021). Programme and Budget proposals for 2024-25. International Training Centre Publishing. https://www.itcilo.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/CC%2085_2_1%20EN%20rev.pdf

⁵ Internal database provided by International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization

⁶ International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization. (2024). Implementation report 2022-23. International Training Centre Publishing. https://www.itcilo.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Implementation%20Report%202023_EN_web.pdf

⁷ Internal database provided by International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization

	P1717533 - E1517583	WS2-E: Employment review of Master Plans	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition	AFRICA, South Africa
	P1717533 - E1517584	WS4-E:Sector dialogue for industrial development	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition	AFRICA, South Africa
	P1717533 - E1517585	WS5-E:Local Skills Networks	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition	AFRICA, South Africa
	P1717533 - E1517594	WS3-E: Technical assistance on employment monitoring	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, National Economic Development and Labour Council	AFRICA, South Africa
5	E1717182	Advisory services offered towards the implementation and outreach with the eCampus and KGRTC website	Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre	AFRICA, Zambia
6	E9716980	Civil Society Organization network mapping: Towards transformative partnerships with civil society organisations - Phase II	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	INTERREGIONAL
7	E3717663	Institutional Diagnostic Assessment of the Academy of the Department of Social Welfare and Development - Phase 1	International Labour Organization	ASIA, Philippines
	E3717664	Institutional Diagnostic Assessment of the Academy of the Department of Social Welfare and Development - Phase 2	International Labour Organization	ASIA, Philippines
8	E9718234	Coaching on MS Project for ILO project "Moztrabalha"	International Labour Organization	Interregional
9	E4718344	Post Retreat Action Plan: Strengthening organizational capacity	International Labour Organization	Europe and Central Asia
10	E9517692	Global FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Global Environment Facility	Interregional

Detailed overview of included documents is annexed to the report.

Stakeholder interviews: A total of 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted with:

- Centre staff involved in the design and delivery of consultancies (8)
- Representatives from beneficiary institutions (3)

Table 2: Overview of consultancies interviews

No.	CODE	TITLE	Activity Manager/Client	Date
MTG 1	E3717663	Institutional Diagnostic Assessment of the Academy of the Department of Social Welfare and Development - Phase 1	Guillaume Mercier, Activity Manager and Chief, Organizational Development and Project Services Programme	4.4.2025
MTG 1	E3717664	Institutional Diagnostic Assessment of the Academy of the Department of Social Welfare and Development - Phase 2	Guillaume Mercier, Activity Manager and Chief, Organizational Development and Project Services Programme	4.4.2025
MTG 1	E9718234	Coaching on MS Project for ILO project "Moztrabalha"	Guillaume Mercier, Activity Manager and Chief, Organizational Development and Project Services Programme	4.4.2025
MTG 1	E4718344	Post Retreat Action Plan: Strengthening organizational capacity	Guillaume Mercier, Activity Manager and Chief, Organizational Development and Project Services Programme	4.4.2025
MTG 2	E9716980	Civil Society Organization network mapping: Towards transformative partnerships with civil society organisations - Phase II	Paridhi Pathak, Activity Manager, Organizational Development and Project Services Programme	7.4.2025
MTG 3	E1517489	Development of a National TVET Strategy (2024 - 2029) for Rwanda	Razafimandimby Noemie, Activity Manager, Employment Policy and Analysis Programme	7.4.2025
MTG 4	E1717182	Advisory services offered towards the implementation and outreach with the eCampus and KGRTC website	Nicole Pallares Ferrer, Activity Manager, Learning Innovation Programme	8.4.2025
MTG 5	E1717717	Advisory services offered towards the implementation and outreach with the eCampus and KGRTC website	Paolo Salvai, Activity Manager and Chief, Employers' Activities programme	8.4.2025

MTG 6	E1717716	MT2.2: Develop Public Expenditure Review draft report	Mueller Bernd, Activity Manager and Chief, Employment Policy and Analysis Programme	8.4.2025
MTG 6	E1717717	MT4.2: Analysis and review of Forest regulation towards including employment and decent work targets	Mueller Bernd, Activity Manager and Chief, Employment Policy and Analysis Programme	8.4.2025
MTG 6	E1517584	WS4-E:Sector dialogue for industrial development	Mueller Bernd, Activity Manager and Chief, Employment Policy and Analysis Programme	8.4.2025
MTG 6	E1517585	WS5-E:Local Skills Networks	Mueller Bernd, Activity Manager and Chief, Employment Policy and Analysis Programme	8.4.2025
MTG 7	E1517594	Institutional Diagnostic Assessment of the Academy of the Department of Social Welfare and Development - Phase 2	Rute Mendes, Activity Manager, Employment Policy and Analysis Programme	10.4.2025
MTG 8	E9517692	Global FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan	Chandni Lanfranchi, Activity Manager, Sustainable Enterprises and Economies Programme	11.4.20025
MTG 9	E3717663	Institutional Diagnostic Assessment of the DSWD Academy - Phase 1	Client: Hassan Khalid, Country Director, International Labour Organization	14.4.2025
MTG 10	E9517692	Global FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan	Client: Barbara Feng, Communications Officer and Jeff Griffin, Coordinator of the GEF Program, both from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	14.4.2025
MTG 11	E1717182	Advisory services offered towards the implementation and outreach with the eCampus and KGRTC website	Client: Sophia Joseph Riboul, Executive Director, ADIH – Association Des Industries d'Haïti	21.4.2025

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data. This approach allowed for the triangulation of findings from different sources, enhancing the validity and reliability of conclusions. The evaluation tracked and qualified change along the service cycle using the following results chain model:

INPUTS → OUTPUTS → OUT-TAKES (INTERIM OUTCOMES) → OUTCOMES → IMPACT

Where:

- Inputs describe the activities performed and resources used to generate results
- Outputs refer to the immediate results or deliverables
- Out-takes capture emerging change
- Outcomes express lasting change directly attributable to the outputs
- Impact relates to the long-term lasting change

To ensure compliance with international standards, the evaluation adhered to United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) general norms for evaluation, including utility, credibility, independence, impartiality, ethics, and transparency.

1.3 Limitations

While the evaluation sought to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Centre's strategy consultancies, several limitations should be acknowledged:

Recency of interventions: Some of the interventions reviewed were completed only recently, making it challenging to fully assess their medium to long-term impact and sustainability. The short time elapsed since project completion meant that many outcomes were still emerging, and the durability of changes could not yet be determined with confidence. This particularly affected the ability to evaluate lasting institutional changes and the extent to which recommendations had been successfully implemented by client organizations.

Availability of baseline data: For several consultancies, limited pre-intervention baseline data was available, constraining the evaluation's ability to measure change precisely. This reflects the relatively recent introduction of strategy consultancies to the Centre's service portfolio and the ongoing refinement of monitoring systems for non-training activities.

Generalizability: The 10 consultancies evaluated represent a specific subset of the Centre's institutional capacity development services. Findings should therefore be interpreted with caution when applied to other components of the Centre's service portfolio.

These limitations have been taken into account in formulating the findings and recommendations, with careful attention to the strength of evidence supporting each conclusion.

1.4 Overview of how data sources contribute to the Evaluation

The following table outlines which data source is providing data for a specific section of the evaluation report and to what extent:



Table 3: Data Sources Overview

Section	Document Sources	Interview Sources	Scope
2.1 Background and context	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Comprehensive coverage
2.2 Types of strategy consultancies	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Comprehensive coverage
2.3 Alignment with 2022-25 Strategic Plan	All activity-specific documents	Staff interviews with relevant insights	Alignment inconsistently documented
2.4 Links to ILO mandate	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Strong coverage
3. Relevance	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Strong coverage
4. Coherence	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Strong coverage
5. Effectiveness	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Uneven coverage across activities
6. Management Arrangements	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Strong coverage
7. Efficiency	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Variable coverage
8. Impact	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Limited evidence for longer-term results
9. Sustainability	All activity-specific documents	All interviews	Uneven coverage

2. ABOUT THE CENTRE STRATEGY CONSULTANCIES

2.1 Background and context

The International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (the Centre) has traditionally focused on delivering high-quality training programmes to strengthen the capacity of ILO constituents and other stakeholders. However, in recent years, the Centre has recognized the need to diversify its service portfolio to address evolving institutional capacity development needs that extend beyond conventional training interventions.

This strategic shift is articulated in the Centre's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan, which emphasizes the expansion of advisory services and strategy consultancies as complementary approaches. Several drivers prompted this diversification:

1. Recognition that sustainable institutional capacity development often requires tailored advisory support beyond standardized training offerings.

2. Growing demand from ILO constituents for specialized guidance on digital transformation and organizational change management.
3. The Centre's accumulated expertise in learning innovation and institutional capacity development that could be leveraged for consulting services.
4. Opportunities to strengthen the Centre's financial sustainability through diversified revenue streams.

In this context, the Centre launched its strategy consultancy portfolio, initially focusing on digital transformation readiness assessments, advisory services for digital capacity improvement, and institutional performance reviews. These consultancies are designed to support organizations in navigating technological, organizational, and strategic challenges while aligning with the ILO's decent work agenda and contributing to sustainable institutional change.

Table 4: Profile of the sampled strategy consultancies' beneficiaries

Organization	Type	Region	Institutional Context	Capacity Development Need
Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) / DSWD Academy	Government Agency	Philippines / Asia	Establishing as regional training center	Institutional diagnostic assessment and strategic roadmap
Association des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH)	Employers' Organization	Haiti / Caribbean	Operating in highly unstable political and economic environment	Membership development strategy and digital services
Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC)	Government Agency	South Africa / Africa	Well-established with sophisticated analytical capabilities	Employment impact assessment methodologies and monitoring systems
Kitwe Vocational Training Centre (KGRTC)	Training Institution	Zambia / Africa	Developing digital capacity	E-learning platform development and digital transformation
FAO-GEF Program	UN Agency	Global (140 countries)	High-capacity organization with global reach	Strategic review, partnership mapping, and planning facilitation
Rwanda TVET System	Government Agency	Rwanda / Africa	Transitional system seeking formalization	National TVET strategy development (2024-2029)

MozTrabalha (Mozambique government agencies)	Government Agencies	Mozambique / Africa	Navigating post- election transitions and security challenges	Sustainable forestry regulations, employment provisions, and digital tools
National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC)	Tripartite Body	South Africa / Africa	Established social dialogue institution	Employment governance and stakeholder engagement

The strategy consultancies evaluated in this report were implemented between 2023 and early 2025, spanning Africa, the Americas, Asia, and interregional contexts. They engaged a diverse range of clients, including employers' organizations, government ministries, ILO country offices, UN agencies, and specialized training institutions. Delivered in a variety of institutional environments—from politically unstable settings to transitional economies and established systems—these consultancies respond to specific needs by providing tailored technical support aimed at enhancing service delivery and supporting strategic planning processes.

These consultancies form part of the Centre's broader capacity development approach, complementing its learning services. This integrated approach reflects the Centre's commitment to establishing itself not only as a global learning institution but also as a trusted advisor capable of delivering context-sensitive, results-oriented support in an increasingly complex global landscape.

2.2 Types of strategy consultancies

The strategy consultancies evaluated in this report represent a diverse yet coherent portfolio of institutional capacity development interventions. While tailored to distinct client needs and contexts, the consultancies can be broadly categorized into five types, each addressing specific dimensions of organizational transformation. These categories reflect the Centre's integrated approach to institutional strengthening, which combines strategic foresight, digital innovation, and participatory methodologies.

Table 5: Summary of Strategy Consultancy Projects

No.	Client	Country/Region	Objectives
1	Association Des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH)	Haiti / Caribbean	Develop a membership plan to strengthen organizational capacity in a fragile context, including digital services and membership retention strategies
2	Expertise France - TVET stakeholders	Rwanda / Africa	Develop a National TVET Strategy (2024-2029) through desk review, stakeholder consultation, and validation processes
3	Ministry of Labor (MOL)	Mozambique / Africa	Develop Public Expenditure Review draft report (MT2.2) and analyse forest regulation to include employment and decent work targets (MT4.2)
4	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) and NEDLAC	South Africa / Africa	Implement multiple workstreams: employment impact assessment of sectoral policies (WS1-E), employment review of Master Plans (WS2-E), sector dialogue for industrial development (WS4-E), local skills networks (WS5-E), and technical assistance on employment monitoring (WS3-E)
5	Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre Training Centre (KGRTC)	Zambia / Africa	Provide advisory services for implementing and expanding outreach with the eCampus and KGRTC website
6	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Interregional / Global (140 countries)	Conduct CSO network mapping to build transformative partnerships with civil society organizations
7	Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)	Philippines / Asia	Conduct institutional diagnostic assessment of the DSWD Academy (Phases 1 and 2) to establish it as a regional training centre
8	ILO Maputo - MozTrabalha project	Mozambique / Africa	Provide coaching on MS Project for efficient project management and monitoring
9	ILO Budapest	Europe and Central Asia / Europe and Asia	Develop post-retreat action plan to strengthen organizational capacity
10	FAO - Global Environment Facility (GEF)	Interregional / Global (140 countries)	Facilitate development of Global FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan

Note: Throughout this evaluation report, we refer to the specific consultancy projects by their corresponding number as listed in the "Summary of Strategy Consultancy Projects" table above. For example, "Consultancy 1" refers to the ADIH membership plan project in Haiti, "Consultancy 4" refers to the multi-workstream PE4DW project in South Africa, and so on. This numbering system is consistently maintained throughout the document to facilitate clear and concise reference to each case.

Category 1: Digital Service Enhancement and Implementation

This category encompasses consultancies that support the development, operationalization, and institutionalization of digital tools and platforms. These interventions are typically designed to modernize service delivery, enhance user engagement, and improve internal processes. Activities include:

- Assessing digital readiness and infrastructure
- Designing and implementing learning management systems and websites
- Training staff in digital content creation and platform administration
- Developing digital solutions for member services, data collection, and reporting
- Creating sustainability guidelines and user manuals

Three consultancies fall within this category, including the KGRTC eCampus initiative in Zambia (consultancy 5), the ADIH e-learning platform in Haiti (consultancy 1), and the project management coaching for MozTrabalha in Mozambique (consultancy 8). These interventions demonstrate the Centre's capacity to leverage digital transformation for institutional strengthening, especially among training institutions and employers' organizations.

Category 2: Strategic Planning and Policy Development

Consultancies in this category are aimed at enhancing strategic clarity and operational focus within organizations. They facilitate the development of evidence-based strategies and policy frameworks aligned with national priorities and international standards. These engagements typically involve:

- Sectoral and institutional diagnostics
- Stakeholder consultation and participatory planning
- Development of multi-year strategies with implementation roadmaps
- Integration of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- Alignment with decent work and sustainable development frameworks

Notable examples include the development of the Rwanda National TVET Strategy (consultancy 2) and the formulation of the FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan (consultancy 10). These consultancies produced validated strategic documents and action frameworks, enabling clients to address emerging challenges and capitalize on institutional opportunities.

Furthermore, the Centre supported the Association des Industries d'Haïti (consultancy 1), an employers' organization operating *"in an environment marked by persistent instability, characterized by political and economic turmoil, widespread insecurity, and the fragility of state institutions"*. Similarly, the MozTrabalha project in Mozambique (consultancy 8) offered strategic support to government entities amidst post-election transitions and security challenges.

Category 3: Institutional Assessments and Diagnostic Reviews

This category includes comprehensive reviews of organizational structures, systems, and capacities. The objective is to identify operational bottlenecks and formulate actionable recommendations for institutional improvement. Typical components include:

- Internal document reviews and governance analysis
- Stakeholder interviews and focus group discussions
- Assessment of service delivery, resource use, and performance metrics
- Identification of capacity gaps and organizational development needs
- Proposals for restructuring or systems strengthening

Examples include the DSWD Academy diagnostic assessment in the Philippines (consultancy 7) and the employment monitoring diagnostic in South Africa (consultancy 4). These consultancies generated detailed institutional analyses, informing reform strategies and capacity-building interventions.

Category 4: Membership Development and Network Mapping

These consultancies focus on improving organizational representativeness and stakeholder engagement. They address the need for robust membership structures and dynamic partnership ecosystems by providing:

- Analysis of membership profiles and engagement levels
- Development of member recruitment and retention strategies
- Design of member services and benefits
- Mapping of partnerships and civil society networks
- Training on stakeholder management and relationship-building

Two consultancies exemplify this category: the ADIH Membership Plan in Haiti (consultancy 1), which aimed to revitalize member engagement strategies, and the FAO CSO Network Mapping project (consultancy 6), which supported the development of tools and training materials for building transformative partnerships.

Category 5: Policy Implementation and Employment Impact Analysis

This category involves consultancies that support the operationalization of employment-related policies and the integration of decent work considerations into broader development strategies. These typically include:

- Employment modelling and forecasting tools
- Integration of employment outcomes into sectoral policy design
- Technical assistance for monitoring employment impact
- Capacity building for policy implementation and evaluation
- Recommendations for enhancing employment-centred governance

Consultancies in this category include the PE4DW South Africa workstreams (consultancy 4), which provided technical support on employment impact analysis across key industrial sectors, and the employment-related components of the

MozTrabalha project (consultancy 8), which focused on translating sector policy into employment outcomes.

While each consultancy is context-specific, they share a common foundation: the pursuit of sustainable institutional capacity development through tailored, co-created, and contextually relevant solutions. Many consultancies span multiple categories, illustrating the Centre's integrated approach. For example, the DSWD Academy (consultancy 7) combined diagnostic review with recommendations for digital enhancement, while the ADIH membership development plan (consultancy 1) incorporated strategic planning elements.

Across all types, the Centre emphasizes participatory methodologies, iterative learning, and co-creation with client institutions. As one interviewee explained, *“we co-design anything we're doing with them, because they're the people who are going to be using it forever”*. This collaborative ethos underpins the Centre's strategy consultancy portfolio and reinforces its role as a trusted advisor in complex and dynamic institutional environments.

3. FINDINGS: RELEVANCE

3.1 Alignment with the 2022-25 Strategic Plan

The documentation and interviews provide clear indications that consultancy services are considered a strategic growth area for the Centre. The decision to take on consultancy projects is made based on alignment with the Centre's strategy and priorities. For example, in the case of the consultancy 7, there was a clear alignment with Centre's strategic focus on data-driven services, which is a portfolio the organization is strongly invested in.

The Centre has established a comprehensive Master Results Chain framework for its various service categories, including advisory services. According to this framework, advisory services progress from inputs (count of activities along the advisory service cycle), through outputs (count of institutional clients served), out-takes (satisfaction, knowledge increase, emerging consensus), to outcomes (improved institutional capacity) and ultimately impact (stronger institutional structures to support decent work and social justice). This results chain is designed to systematically align consultancy work with the Centre's broader strategic objectives.

“There are quality assessment tools available for consultancy projects. We have a comprehensive quality assessment framework with KPIs and checklists developed. For courses, pre- and post-assessment tools are systematically integrated into the E-Campus platform, making them easy to use.”

However, the approach to quality assurance for consultancy services appears inconsistent across programs. Even though quality assessment tools are available, findings show there's a significant gap between awareness and implementation, which varies across programs, with many staff relying on their own methods rather than institutional systems.

One staff member suggested: *"While training activities have automatic evaluation procedures, consultancies lack consistent evaluation. Using the Centre's existing evaluation tools more systematically would improve quality assurance."*

In summary, while consultancy services appear to be a strategic priority for ITCILO, there is a need to strengthen and standardize quality assurance processes. The organization has developed frameworks, but awareness and implementation vary significantly across programs, with many staff relying on their own methods rather than institutional systems.

3.2 Links to ILO mandate and strategic priorities

The strategy consultancies delivered are firmly anchored in the broader mandate and strategic priorities of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This alignment ensures that each intervention contributes meaningfully to the ILO's overarching mission of promoting decent work and social justice, while reinforcing institutional capacities at the national and sectoral levels. Across the evaluated portfolio, multiple consultancies demonstrate clear and often multi-dimensional connections to the ILO's normative and strategic frameworks.

Support to ILO Constituents

At the core of the ILO's identity is its tripartite structure, which brings together governments, employers, and workers to jointly shape labour policies and programmes. The Centre's strategy consultancies reflect this structure by directly serving the Organization's core constituents. Several of the evaluated projects were implemented in partnership with ministries of labour, employers' federations, and workers' institutions. For example, the ADIH consultancy in Haiti (consultancy 1) supported an employers' organization in strengthening its membership model and service offering—an intervention that directly contributes to enhancing employers' capacity to participate in social dialogue and advance decent work principles.

Similarly, in Mozambique, the employment-centred institutional reform was addressed, contributing to the inclusion of *"explicit references to occupational safety and decent work"* in the revised national Forestry Regulation (consultancy 3). The intervention *"promoted social dialogue and gender equity"* — pillars of the ILO mandate.

Institutional Capacity Promotion of Decent Work

The Centre's 2022–2025 Strategy Framework emphasizes institutional capacity development as a critical enabler for the effective promotion and implementation of decent work policies. Strategy consultancies delivered by the Centre respond directly to this priority by modernizing the operational frameworks of client institutions, improving governance models, and enhancing organizational effectiveness. Whether through the diagnostic review of the DSWD Academy in the Philippines (consultancy 7) or the Employment Monitoring system design in South Africa (consultancy 4), the consultancies strengthen the foundations for more effective and accountable institutions.

Digital Transformation and the Future of Work

The Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work⁸ calls for a human-centered approach to technological change—an area where the consultancy portfolio plays a key operational role. The KGRTC eCampus project in Zambia (consultancy 5) and the MozTrabalha (consultancy 8) digital coaching sessions exemplify how the Centre supports digital transformation through tailored advisory services. These interventions not only address infrastructure gaps but also build institutional readiness to adopt digital learning systems, streamline service delivery, and align human resource development with the demands of a changing world of work.

Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

The consultancies also advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁹, particularly in areas directly linked to the ILO's custodianship, such as SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 4 (Quality Education). Several activities, including the PE4DW initiative in South Africa (consultancy 4), explicitly identified their alignment with relevant SDGs and developed impact indicators accordingly. Activities also contributed to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by reinforcing public institutions' capacities to implement employment and skills strategies.

Reinforcement of the Global Coalition for Social Justice

The Centre's institutional capacity-building consultancies are also aligned with the emerging agenda to advance the Global Coalition for Social Justice. By supporting clients in the development of inclusive strategies, performance improvement plans, and stakeholder engagement tools, the consultancies strengthen the institutions that are critical to delivering equitable, rights-based development outcomes. These efforts are particularly evident in consultancies that addressed employment governance, organizational restructuring, and the integration of gender and social inclusion frameworks.

Alignment through Operational Practice

In several cases, alignment with the ILO mandate is built into the very fabric of the consultancy's design. As one staff member noted, *"the team works almost exclusively on ILO projects, so alignment with ILO mandates happens automatically"*. Another response emphasized the importance of coordination with ILO headquarters to ensure cohesion: *"We would always check the approval with headquarters first."* This practice helps ensure consistency with normative guidance and avoids duplication.

In projects implemented for non-ILO clients—such as the FAO CSO Network Mapping (consultancy 6) or the FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan (consultancy 10) — direct references to ILO priorities were less explicitly stated in the documentation.

⁸ International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization. (2019). ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work. International Training Centre Publishing. <https://www.ilo.org/about-ilo/mission-and-impact-ilo/ilo-centenary-declaration-future-work-2019>

⁹ United Nations. (2015). Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations Publishing. <https://sdgs.un.org/publications/transforming-our-world-2030-agenda-sustainable-development-17981>

Nevertheless, these consultancies addressed key themes such as inclusive development, stakeholder participation, and institutional effectiveness. These areas are highly consistent with ILO Enabling Outcome A (enhanced knowledge, innovation, cooperation, and communication to advance social justice) and Outcome B (improved leadership and governance), thereby contributing meaningfully to the ILO's broader strategic orientation and the coherence of the UN system as a whole.

Knowledge Leadership and Global Influence

Finally, the consultancies operationalize the ILO's commitment to knowledge leadership. By translating technical standards, policy insights, and global best practices into context-specific advisory services, the Centre contributes to institutional learning across a diverse range of clients. As seen in the Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2), which was aligned with the newly adopted ILO Skills and Lifelong Learning Strategy¹⁰ 2030, the Centre plays an instrumental role in disseminating ILO knowledge across national planning systems.

Through these interlinkages, the Centre's strategy consultancies not only complement the Centre's training activities but also serve as a vital mechanism for extending the ILO's strategic influence. By reinforcing institutions' ability to implement decent work policies, engage in social dialogue, and adapt to emerging challenges, the consultancies represent an important evolution in the Centre's contribution to the ILO's global mandate.

3.3 Response to constituents' needs

The strategy consultancies evaluated in this report demonstrate a strong degree of responsiveness to the needs of ILO constituents and other institutional clients. Across diverse contexts and institutional settings, the consultancies were found to align well with identified priorities, emerging challenges, and specific capacity development requirements. While the depth and formality of the needs identification process varied across engagements, the majority of consultancies were clearly rooted in institutional demand and tailored to address context-specific challenges.

Needs Assessment Processes

The evaluation revealed that formal needs assessment processes were a common feature across the consultancy portfolio. Seven of the ten consultancies included structured diagnostic phases, typically involving document analysis, stakeholder consultations, and interviews to surface institutional priorities and capacity gaps. For instance, the DSWD Academy assessment in the Philippines (consultancy 7) was underpinned by a rigorous diagnostic process involving *"18 key informant interviews, 8 focus group discussions, and 2 surveys"*. Similarly, the KGRTC digital transformation consultancy in Zambia (consultancy 5) was based on a prior institutional scan conducted in 2019, which informed the design of the intervention.

Client interviews reinforced the value of this diagnostic approach. As one representative noted, *"the team took the time to really understand our institutional*

¹⁰ International Labour Organization. (2023). The ILO strategy on skills and lifelong learning 2030. ILO Publishing. <https://www.ilo.org/publications/ilo-strategy-skills-and-lifelong-learning-2030>

history and challenges before proposing solutions, which made their recommendations much more relevant than previous external consultants we've worked with." However, the evaluation also found that the depth and rigor of needs assessments varied across consultancies. While some were informed by formal data collection and comprehensive analysis, others relied more on iterative dialogue or longstanding relationships, as in the case of the FAO-CSO Network Mapping (consultancy 6), where needs *"emerged organically"* through ongoing collaboration.

Alignment with Constituent Priorities

Across all ten consultancies, there was strong evidence of alignment with the strategic priorities of client organizations. Document analysis confirmed that each consultancy proposal made explicit reference to relevant policy frameworks or institutional strategies. For example, the Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2) was directly aligned with the newly adopted ILO Skills and Lifelong Learning Strategy 2030, while the PE4DW employment impact assessment in South Africa (consultancy 4) responded to a government request to support employment modelling for sectoral strategies.

In the case of ADIH in Haiti (consultancy 1), the consultancy addressed the organization's need to *"review its value proposition"* in a fragile socio-political context, where advocacy was limited and financial sustainability was at risk. These examples illustrate how the Centre's interventions were not only demand-driven but also strategically aligned with constituent mandates and institutional reform efforts.

Client interviews confirmed that the consultancies addressed priority institutional needs. All three client representatives interviewed provided positive feedback about the relevance of the services. As one client noted following an organizational retreat, having *"everyone together in a constructive dialogue was helpful"* for shaping their institutional direction. The DSWD client also confirmed the consultancy addressed their needs, noting that *"the report was well-received by DSWD and subsequently shared with development partners"*.

3.4 Customization of services

The customization is a defining strength of the Centre's strategy consultancy portfolio. Rather than applying standardized models, the Centre consistently tailors its methodologies, recommendations, and deliverables to reflect the unique characteristics of each client organization. This emphasis on customization enhances the Centre's ability to deliver relevant and implementable solutions, strengthening its position as a trusted partner in institutional capacity development.

Contextual adaptation

The evaluated consultancies demonstrate strong contextual adaptation across diverse settings. In Haiti, the consultancy with the Association des Industries d'Haïti (ADIH) featured highly contextualized elements, such as recruitment strategies focused on *"industrial zone engagement"* near the Dominican Republic border and sector-specific outreach targeting *"Oil, Wine, Water, and Pasta"* sectors. A related job matching service proposal included a security-sensitive design that *"prioritizes candidates based on their ability to safely and reliably reach workplaces amid local security concerns"*.

In Rwanda, the TVET strategy development approach (consultancy 2) was customized through *"desk review, online and face-to-face stakeholder consultation, interactions with on-going projects and initiatives, drafting of the TVET strategy and implementation plan and review and validation through regional and national consultations"*.

For the South Africa Employment Impact Assessment (consultancy 4), the model was based on *"Quantec EasyData, used by the DTIC for over 20 years"* to ensure compatibility with existing systems. Similarly, the skills network pilots targeted *"electric vehicle technologies and artisan training, respectively"* based on local priorities.

Client feedback reinforced the value of these contextual adaptations. One client described the process as *"definitely collaborative"* with the Centre providing *"helpful questioning"* and guidance.

Methodological flexibility

The consultancies demonstrated methodological flexibility to accommodate client realities. For the FAO CSO Network Mapping project (consultancy 6), mapping variables were *"co-designed with country input and refined based on prior mappings"*, while country-specific maps for *"Libya, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia were tailored to national contexts"*.

Staff interviews emphasized this flexibility. One staff member noted that for the KGRTC project (consultancy 5), *"the whole consultancy nature of KGRTC was we co-design anything we're doing with them, because they're the people who are going to be using it forever"*. Another staff member described using *"active listening"* and *"helpful questioning"* to clarify FAO's vision for a successful retreat (consultancy 6).

Resource-appropriate solutions

Many consultancies incorporated realistic solutions within client resource constraints. The ADIH membership development plan (consultancy 1) included specific numerical targets based on the organization's current situation, with both *"realistic"* and *"optimistic"* scenarios. For the DSWD Academy in the Philippines (consultancy 7), the diagnostic considered *"income classification considerations"* noting that *"TARA provision is focused on lower-income units while technical assistance may be sufficient for 1st and 2nd income class LGUs"*.

Some resource constraints were acknowledged as challenges. One client mentioned that *"the funding allocated for this project was not substantial. So, we had to work within those financial constraints"*.

Cultural and organizational sensitivity

Cultural and organizational sensitivity was evident in consultancy approaches. The FAO-GEF retreat facilitators (consultancy 10) helped *"diffuse tensions where necessary"*. For the ADIH consultancy in Haiti (consultancy 1), risk mitigation strategies included *"relationship-building through a listening-first approach"*.

One client noted the value of preparatory engagement: *"I'm very happy with the entire project. It was extremely well-organized."* Another emphasized that the external facilitation created *"a neutral environment for discussions about challenging issues"*.

Some limitations were identified. One staff member noted that more work was accomplished during face-to-face work than in online collaboration, highlighting the value of in-person engagement for building understanding.

4. FINDINGS: COHERENCE

4.1 Compatibility with the Centre and ILO activities

The evaluated consultancies show varying levels of integration with other the Centre and ILO activities, with some demonstrating strong synergies while others operate with minimal connections to broader institutional initiatives yet in alignment with the Centre's mandate and the ILO Policy or Enabling Outcomes.

Several consultancies demonstrated explicit integration with the Centre training programs. In Haiti (consultancy 1), the Centre provided *"access to at least two training packages that ADIH will be able to provide to its company members"*. For KGRTC in Zambia (consultancy 5), the project *"built upon KGRTC's prior participation in eLearning Design Labs and Gender Academy programmes, reinforcing systemic capacity"*.

The FAO partnership mapping methodology (consultancy 6) *"is now used as examples in the Centre courses"* and *"has been incorporated into the Centre's internal strategy development and resource mobilization approach"*. Similarly, a staff member working on the FAO-GEF retreat noted that *"knowledge gained from the retreat informed subsequent training programs, such as the planned Rural Development Academy"* (consultancy 10).

Integration with ILO activities was also evident in several consultancies. The Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2) showed stronger integration, stating that *"these two key program interventions provide the ILO with unique policy and programming insights into the TVET and skill system in Rwanda, which will contribute substantially to the development of the foreseen national TVET strategy"*.

In Mozambique, MozTrabalha (consultancy 3) *"has been integrated with ILO's broader technical cooperation framework. Training workshops were co-organized with ITC-ILO, combining local delivery with advanced sessions in Turin for selected tripartite 'champions'"*.

Staff perspectives on integration varied. One staff member highlighted those consultancies *"often emerge from training relationships"* noting that *"we first enter into contact with clients through some training or events. And then comes consultancy"*. Another emphasized the value of combining training and advisory services, describing it as an approach that *"differentiates the Centre from traditional consultancy firms"*.

The evidence indicates that while strategy consultancies vary in how closely they link with other Centre activities, most are well aligned with the ILO mandate and address the needs of its core constituents. Rather than integration for its own sake, the emphasis is on strategic coherence — and the consultancies largely demonstrate relevance and complementarity in advancing the ILO's objectives.

4.2 Synergies with other capacity development services

The evaluated consultancies demonstrate varied levels of synergy with other capacity development services, both within the Centre and with external partners.

Several consultancies leveraged complementary expertise from different the Centre programs. For the KGRTC project in Zambia (consultancy 3), *"the gender team conducted a gender marker and audit, while other teams worked on energy efficiency and green jobs aspects of the content"*. For the DSWD Academy assessment (consultancy 4), the team *"count with the insights and feedback from colleagues of other the Centre departments such as finance, facilities, IT, etc. to fully leverage from the Centre's in-house knowledge and expertise"*.

Synergies with external capacity development services were also evident. In Haiti, the membership development plan for ADIH (consultancy 1) suggested *"exploring partnerships with organizations such as GIZ and SEQUA, which could contribute educational content and support for online training programs"* and potential collaboration with *"international donors, development banks, and corporate sponsors to sustain and expand training initiatives"*.

In Mozambique, MozTrabalha (consultancy 8) *"leveraged synergies with GAPI (business development services), UEM (technical training and biomass R&D), and international partners (e.g., FAO, Casa Real, Empowa) to scale interventions"*.

The DSWD Academy assessment (consultancy 4) examined potential synergies with existing networks including *"Core Group of Internal Specialists (CGIS)", "Resource Pool of External Experts (RPEE)"*, and professional accreditation bodies like the *"Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)"*.

However, several staff identified limitations in cross-program synergies. One noted that *"most consultancies remain within the Employment Policy Analysis Program (EPAP program) without significant cross-program cooperation"*, while another observed *"cross-departmental knowledge sharing about consultancies is limited"*.

The evidence suggests that synergies between strategy consultancies and other capacity development services within the Centre do exist and can significantly enhance project value—particularly where expertise from different programmes is intentionally combined. Examples include coordinated input from the gender, energy, and learning teams in Zambia (consultancy 5), and alignment with digital and financial teams in the DSWD assessment (consultancy 7). However, these examples remain limited in number. Most consultancies continue to operate within individual programmes, with only three of the ten evaluated consultancies explicitly documenting cross-departmental collaboration in their methodology or implementation. While spontaneous collaboration occasionally occurs through personal networks or overlapping mandates, systematic mechanisms to foster, track, and reward such collaboration remain underdeveloped. Strengthening cross-programme integration—particularly through shared planning tools, joint consultancy design frameworks, and coordinated client engagement—represents a clear opportunity to enhance both efficiency and strategic coherence.

4.3 Alignment with United Nations system initiatives

Several consultancies contributed to specific SDGs, particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). The South Africa PE4DW project (consultancy 4) explicitly identified its contributions to these SDGs.

The DSWD Academy project (consultancy 7) in the Philippines explicitly contributed to *"the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-28, particularly Strategic Priority 1: 'Human capital development, inclusion, and resilience building' and 'Outcome 1' regarding increased resilience through improved access to social services and protection."*

Similarly, the FAO CSO network mapping (consultancy 6) *"directly fed into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) and Common Country Analyses (CCA), supporting cross-agency coherence"*.

In Mozambique, MozTrabalha's (consultancy 8) *"work on circular economy (biomass, alternative materials) feeds into Mozambique's climate and sustainable development strategies, with ILO leading UN efforts on 'just transition' planning within the country's climate action agenda"*.

The client interview for the DSWD project (consultancy 7) emphasized the importance of the *"one UN approach"* and avoiding the Centre operating as an independent entity, noting this consultancy *"supported efforts to reduce duplication across multiple agencies"*.

However, many of the consultancies contain minimal information on alignment with broader UN system initiatives. While there are references to past funding for ADIH (consultancy 1) from "UNDP, IFC, ILO, and UN women" and strategies to approach "technical cooperation agencies," "development Banks," and "UN agencies" for funding, specific information on how these consultancies align with or contribute to UN system-wide initiatives or frameworks is often limited.

5. FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS

5.1 Achievement of objectives

Most consultancies achieved their primary objectives in terms of delivering agreed outputs, with substantial contributions to ILO's strategic outcomes. The consultancies supported a range of ILO priorities including "strong, representative and influential tripartite constituents and effective social dialogue," "full and productive employment for just transitions" (the most frequently addressed outcome), "sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work," "enhanced knowledge, innovation, cooperation and communication to advance social justice," and "improved leadership and governance." While the quality and completeness of deliverables varied across projects, most demonstrated clear alignment with these strategic outcomes. Objectives for the Centre strategy consultancies are typically co-developed with the client, though the degree of co-creation can vary depending on the consultancy type, institutional context, and pre-existing relationships. In many cases, the Centre initiates the process with a diagnostic phase or needs assessment, which includes stakeholder

consultations, document reviews, and focus groups. These assessments help surface institutional priorities, which then inform the formulation of objectives.

The evaluation found that:

- In 7 out of 10 consultancies, objectives were developed through a joint process involving the Centre and the client, often formalized in Terms of Reference or inception reports.
- In some cases (e.g. DSWD Philippines - consultancy 7, PE4DW South Africa - consultancy 7), objectives were refined through multi-stage engagements, including workshops and validation sessions.
- Occasionally, objectives are predefined by the client, especially when the consultancy is part of a larger donor-funded programme or technical cooperation framework (e.g. FAO - consultancy 6 or DTIC South Africa - consultancy 4).
- The Centre staff emphasized a “*co-design ethos*,” noting that “*we co-design anything we’re doing with them, because they’re the people who are going to be using it forever.*”

This collaborative approach ensures that objectives are not only aligned with institutional mandates and context but also increase the ownership and sustainability of the resulting outputs.

The ADIH consultancy in Haiti (consultancy 1), which spans 2024 and is expected to be completed by the end of March 2025, is not yet finalised. While new courses have been prepared and the platform is set up, the official launch is still pending.

The Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2) was completed and “technically validated by a technical working group” although “*political adoption was delayed as the government decided to merge it with their national education policy review*”. This integration into national policy was considered a positive indicator of impact.

For the MozTrabalha project in Mozambique (consultancy 8), notable achievements included “*the integration of employment-focused provisions into Mozambique’s new Forestry Regulation, which was developed through a tripartite process with worker and employer inputs, and now includes explicit references to occupational safety and decent work*” and the development of a “*Public Expenditure Review on Employment (ERPE) and Pro-Employment Budgeting Toolkit*”.

The South Africa PE4DW project (consultancy 7) achieved varied results across its workstreams. For the *Employment impact assessment*, the consultancy delivered a customized employment multiplier model and trained 24 DTIC and stakeholder participants. For the *Employment monitoring* activity, the team completed system assessment and action plan but couldn’t fully support implementation due to time constraints and challenges with key personnel.

Client satisfaction was generally positive, with the DSWD client (consultancy 7) expressing that the report was well-received and shared with development partners. In contrast, feedback from the FAO-GEF retreat (consultancy 10) indicated that, although the facilitation itself was successful and delivered as planned, the final report

did not fully meet expectations and required significant additional input from the FAO team before it could be considered ready for broader dissemination.

5.2 Capacity strengthening outcomes

The evaluated consultancies demonstrate varying degrees of capacity strengthening outcomes, with most showing evidence of enhanced individual and institutional capabilities, though the depth and documentation of these outcomes varies across projects.

In South Africa's PE4DW project (consultancy 4), capacity gains included *"DTIC staff learned to interpret input-output and employment data, Master Plan task teams gained tools for reviewing employment effects, Monitoring and Evaluation officers engaged in results-based management and dashboard design, and local networks fostered new collaboration between training providers and employers"*.

For the MozTrabalha project in Mozambique (consultancy 8), capacity strengthening outcomes included training for *"more than 100 individuals across 20 institutions"* with specific results for local organizations and tripartite bodies.

The KGRTC Zambia project (consultancy 5) delivered *"training webinars covered Moodle admin tools, content creation, user management, and analytics"* resulting in KGRTC successfully conducted self-authored courses and managed the backend system independently following the handover. Training webinars are included in the consultancies' portfolio not as standalone learning events, but as integrated components of a broader institutional capacity development process. This integration reflects the Centre's broader shift toward blended and demand-driven service models, where the line between "training" and "consultancy" is defined by the degree of co-creation, customization, and institutional embedding.

For the FAO partnership mapping project (consultancy 6), sessions 1-3 developed skills in scoping, Kumu use, map creation, and sustainability with a train-the-trainer approach empowered regional staff to update maps independently.

The DSWD Academy diagnostic (consultancy 7) did not aim to directly strengthen capacity but did contribute to institutional planning capabilities. The client noted that *"the government independently developed a project document that aligned with the Centre's own prepared document"*.

Client feedback confirmed capacity gains. The ADI client in Haiti (consultancy 1) noted the value of *"learning from the Centre consultants' experiences in similar situations"*.

5.3 Effectiveness across different beneficiary groups

The limited information on differential effectiveness across beneficiary groups suggests this may be an area for improvement in the Centre's consultancy approach. More systematic analysis of how outcomes vary across different stakeholder groups could enhance understanding of consultancy impacts and guide future interventions.

The South Africa PE4DW project (consultancy 4) noted differences in how benefits were distributed: *"In automotive, benefits were concentrated among large firms with access to analytics and subsidies. Employment-focused strategies reached SMEs and*

local producers more effectively. TVETs gained visibility through, but operational alignment is still evolving. Smaller unions and informal groups were better represented post-WS4 roadmap development”.

For the MozTrabalha project (consultancy 8), the tailored support worked for youth, women, and informal sector workers. For instance, 20,339 youth received support through different self-employment programs, exceeding targets.

The KGRTC Zambia project (consultancy 5) addressed the needs of both administrative and instructional staff.

5.4 Success factors and challenges

The documentation identifies various success factors and challenges that influenced the effectiveness of the consultancies, providing insights into the contextual factors that shaped outcomes.

Common success factors across the initiatives included strong stakeholder engagement, committed leadership within client institutions, and effective alignment with sectoral or market-specific needs. Participatory approaches that fostered ownership and validation among diverse actors were particularly impactful. Projects also benefited from the availability and use of quality national data, standardised yet adaptable methodologies, and clarity of process design. Robust internal coordination, combined with timely technical support and capacity-building from external partners, further enabled successful implementation and sustained results.

Challenges:

Common challenges across the initiatives included political instability and institutional transitions in client countries, which often disrupted continuity and decision-making. Technical and human capacity limitations within beneficiary institutions further constrained the implementation and sustainability of activities. Several projects experienced significant data-related issues, including fragmentation, lack of disaggregation, and insufficient systems for evidence-based planning. Siloed institutional structures and overlapping mandates created coordination challenges, while weak mechanisms for follow-up and institutional learning reduced the long-term impact of workshops and advisory services. In addition, financial constraints and technological barriers—such as inadequate digital infrastructure or limited access to necessary tools—hampered both client institutions and the Centre’s capacity to maintain consistent engagement and support. These challenges reflect broader systemic issues that require long-term, adaptive solutions.

6. FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS OF MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Roles and responsibilities

The evidence suggests that roles and responsibilities are generally well-defined across the consultancies, though the level of detail and formality varies. Effective definition of roles appears to contribute to successful implementation.

Various levels of detailed information are seen from examples:

- For the ADIH consultancy in Haiti (consultancy 1), roles included description of the team, responsible for implementation, ADIH Executive Director and his counterpart work with the Centre; ADIH Board being involved in the process, particularly in relation to the presentation and adoption of the membership plan.
- In the Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2), roles were clearly delineated between the Centre Work Team, and senior consultants.
- For the MozTrabalha project (consultancy 8), roles were delegated according to specific tasks (e.g. SEJE led the NEP/PAPE coordination, MITSS managed labour-related policy, MTA steered the Forestry Regulation), meanwhile EPAP department from the Centre facilitated technical advisory role.
- In the South Africa PE4DW project (consultancy 4), roles were distributed between the Centre, ILO Pretoria, DTIC, and local partners.

Staff interviews provided additional insights on roles and responsibilities. One staff member emphasized that *"the centrepiece in the design is the terms of reference. We made very clear what we're going to do, the scope, and also what the client's contribution is"*.

6.2 Implementation arrangements

The implementation arrangements are generally well-structured across the consultancies, with phased approaches, clear methodologies, and regular client engagement. The consultancies are showing a range of approaches adapted to specific consultancy needs and contexts.

For the ADIH consultancy in Haiti (consultancy 1), *"the consultancy was structured in phases, including baseline assessment, development of the membership plan, revision of the strategic plan, and follow-up actions on digitalization"*. The team maintained regular weekly meetings and remained flexible given the challenging context.

In the Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2), the proposal provides detailed implementation arrangements including desk review, online stakeholder consultation, face-to-face workshops, and validation processes with specific deliverables and timeline.

For the MozTrabalha project (consultancy 8), national implementation was coupled with local pilots (e.g., biomass plant in Maputo; soil-cement classrooms in Beira). Multilevel governance allowed testing while informing national policy.

In the South Africa PE4DW project (consultancy 4), all five consultancies followed clearly phased methodologies with different approaches for each workstream.

For the DSWD Academy diagnostic (consultancy 7), implementation included "literature review, 18 key informant interviews, 8 focus group discussions, and 2 surveys with stakeholders.

6.3 Cross-programme coordination

The cross-programme coordination within the Centre varies significantly across consultancies, with some showing effective collaboration while others operate primarily within the individual programmes.

The Rwanda TVET Strategy (consultancy 2) showed evidence of cross-programme coordination: *"The Centre and ILO's skills teams, in Turin and Pretoria respectively, will join forces in the delivery of this assignment with the support of an international consultant and in close coordination with the ILO Country Office in Dar-es-Salaam and Project Office in Kigali".*

For the KGRTC Zambia project (consultancy 5), *"the consultancy built on KGRTC's involvement in ICD initiatives and the Centre eLearning design labs, maintaining continuity with past interventions".* Additionally, the project was implemented with coordination between Learning Innovation Programme (LIP) and Sustainable Enterprise and Economies (SEE) programmes.

However, for most consultancies, there is limited evidence of systematic cross-programme coordination within the Centre. Staff interviews generally indicated limited collaboration. One staff member noted that "we still work in silos, and there was no follow-up on the Centre's recommendation", which was a reference to similar recommendation from previous evaluation of the Centre's training programmes. Another mentioned that "most consultancies remain within the programme without significant cross-programme cooperation".

7. FINDINGS: EFFICIENCY

7.1 Resource allocation

Interviewees report that the Centre's resource allocation practices for strategy consultancies are generally pragmatic and responsive to project complexity. While detailed budget data and efficiency metrics are inconsistently documented across projects, the evaluation identified emerging patterns and several examples of both effective allocation and operational challenges.

Resource allocation practices appear to be well-adapted to the size, scope, and structure of each consultancy. Interviewees emphasized the flexibility of the Centre's internal systems—particularly the MAP database—for project coding, task tracking, and deadline management. This allows for timely contracting and budget management, with one staff member noting that "in many cases, we can issue that contract within two or three days," contrasting this efficiency with longer ILO procedures.

Across the consultancy portfolio, three broad trends in resource allocation were observed:

Budget scale and variation

- Small-scale consultancies, such as the ADIH membership strategy in Haiti (consultancy 1), operated on modest budgets (e.g. €8,100), focusing on discrete deliverables and limited staff time.
- Mid-size initiatives, including the KGRTC eCampus development (consultancy 5, €40,145) and the FAO CSO mapping consultancy (consultancy 6, €55,736), allocated resources across multiple components such as webinars, coaching, and digital tools.
- Larger projects, such as the PE4DW programme in South Africa, were segmented into multiple workstreams (consultancy 4) and reportedly reached total allocations of up to €300,000.

Resource allocation methods and staff planning

- Small projects generally relied on fixed time commitments from a limited number of staff (e.g. “6 one-hour meetings” in consultancy 1).
- Larger projects utilized role-specific classifications (e.g. P5, P3, G-Staff for consultancy 8 in Mozambique) and tracked time by the day.
- The Centre’s internal Management of Activities and Participants database (MAP) provided standardized documentation of activity information, including activity codes, participant data, and administrative details. While MAP serves as a central repository for activity information and supports administrative processes, it is not designed as a project management or progress tracking tool. Staff supplemented MAP with additional tools and methods for project management functions, particularly for larger initiatives where activity managers needed to oversee specific subcomponents of delivery.

Cost-efficiency measures

- In Zambia (consultancy 5), the €40,145 budget covered platform development, staff training, technical handover, and follow-up support, leveraging in-house the Centre expertise to minimize external costs.
- In South Africa (consultancy 4), use of existing national datasets (e.g. Quantec, StatsSA) and Excel-based tools enabled customized outputs without requiring high-cost proprietary software.
- In Mozambique (consultancy 8), cost efficiencies were gained by embedding tools like EmPIA and the employment budgeting toolkit into national planning cycles, and by using local trainers and the Centre’s eCampus for delivery.
- For the FAO CSO Network Mapping project (consultancy 6), the use of the open-source Kumu tool significantly reduced overhead and allowed for internal replication.

Not all initiatives achieved optimal financial execution. In some cases, inefficiencies were noted, such as the reallocation of earmarked budgets—originally intended for institutional development—to other expenditure categories like infrastructure, limiting their strategic impact. Overall, resource allocation strategies were tailored to the specific needs and contexts of each project, rather than adhering to a standardized funding formula. Revenues generally covered or exceeded costs, with financial margins adjusted based on client characteristics and the type of services provided. This reflects a flexible and demand-responsive financial model where resources follow complexity—

allowing the Centre to maintain financial sustainability while delivering tailored advisory services.

7.2 Resource utilization

The documentation provides limited information on actual resource utilization during implementation of the consultancies. While planning documents outline intended resource allocation across projects, the evaluation found inconsistent tracking of how these resources were ultimately deployed. This represents an important complementary perspective to the resource allocation practices described in Section 6.4.

Staff referenced using the Centre's internal Management of Activities and Participants database (MAP). However, MAP primarily serves as an information repository rather than a comprehensive project management system. To effectively track resource utilization during implementation, staff supplemented MAP with customized monitoring approaches tailored to their specific project needs.

Staff interviews revealed diverse approaches to resource management. One staff member reported using *"a clear list of tasks with completion dates and sometimes employs traffic light monitoring systems for larger projects,"* demonstrating how the Centre's flexible administrative framework enables adaptation to project complexity. Another confirmed that activities are systematically coded in MAP with deadlines and automated reminders for budget activation and key milestones.

The evidence suggests generally efficient resource utilization across the consultancies, with efforts to maximize value through strategic use of the Centre capabilities and appropriate tools. However, the limited documentation of actual resource utilization compared to plans represents a gap in assessing efficiency comprehensively.

7.3 Value for investment

While documentation on comprehensive cost-benefit analysis is limited, available evidence suggests that many consultancies delivered strong value for investment based on the quality of deliverables, efficiency of execution, and positive client feedback.

For the PE4DW project in South Africa (consultancy 4), multiple high-value outputs were delivered—including analytical models, pilot designs, and a validated M&E roadmap—indicating efficient use of resources for policy-relevant outcomes. The KGRTC digitalization consultancy in Zambia (consultancy 5) similarly produced a fully operational e-learning platform, staff training, and sustainability materials within a modest budget of €40,145. The FAO partnership mapping consultancy (consultancy 6) delivered reusable tools and methodologies, contributing to internal institutionalisation and cross-country replication at low cost. In several cases, clients described the Centre as more cost-effective than other service providers. For instance, the DSWD client in the Philippines (consultancy 7) reported high satisfaction with timeliness and value.

Despite these positive indications, staff interviews also revealed concerns about the underlying financial model for consultancies. One staff member noted that consultancy work *"consumes approximately 45% of our time but generates only 23% of revenue,"* raising questions about the long-term sustainability of the current approach. This

imbalance between time investment and financial return may reflect the bespoke and labour-intensive nature of consultancies, especially when accompanied by extensive co-design and follow-up.

Overall, although many consultancies appear to deliver strong value in terms of outputs and client satisfaction, the current financing structure may require review to ensure sustainability as the portfolio expands.

7.4 Administrative processes

The documentation contains limited information on administrative processes related to the consultancies, though some insights are available on procedural aspects, their efficiency, and challenges encountered.

For the KGRTC Zambia project (consultancy 5), deliverables were adjusted efficiently to accommodate changes in project timelines.

In the FAO partnership mapping project (consultancy 6), contractual arrangements followed standard UN procedures. Two amendments effectively extended project scope and duration. When delays occurred due to a change in focal point at FAO, *"a no-cost extension was processed"* through a formal amendment procedure.

For MozTrabalha in Mozambique (consultancy 8), *"delays in approvals due to elections and changes in government structure impacted training rollout and policy finalizations"*.

Staff interviews provided additional insights on administrative processes. One staff member noted that *"budget monitoring was handled by the program assistant in coordination with Financial Services"*. Another mentioned that *"the Contract and Financial Administration (CFA) tool used for formal contractual processes"*.

Some administrative challenges were highlighted:

- an unclear procedure to request support from technical experts, indicating administrative process gaps in accessing expertise,
- centralization & time management are challenges in training management and organization,
- staff highlighted organizational challenges in systematically monitoring and evaluating consultancy projects, with multiple staff members noting limited institutional mechanisms for consistent tracking and follow-up compared to the Centre's more established processes for training activities.

The limited information on administrative processes suggests this may be an area that receives less attention in consultancy documentation and evaluation. The available evidence indicates generally functional administrative processes with some challenges in timely approvals, reporting, and accessing expertise.

7.5 Potential efficiency measures

Staff interviews provided added value perspectives on potential efficiency measures. One staff member suggested *"having a framework that outlines the essential components and assessment points for consultancy projects could help ensure consistency and quality"* while emphasizing that such a framework should complement

existing quality mechanisms (like the PDCA cycle and results chain) but be co-created with staff rather than imposed top-down, allowing sufficient flexibility to accommodate the diverse nature of consultancy projects.

Another staff member suggested developing *"a much more systematised, coordinated support structure"* for implementing consultancy projects.

The limited information on potential efficiency measures specifically for the consultancy process suggests this may be an area for further exploration and development. The available evidence indicates opportunities for standardisation, better knowledge sharing, improved digital tools, and more effective in-person collaboration.

8. FINDINGS: SUSTAINABILITY

8.1 Conditions for sustainability

Across the portfolio, several institutional and contextual conditions emerged as critical for the long-term sustainability of strategy consultancies. While most consultancies delivered high-quality outputs and generated momentum for reform, some important gaps remain—either because they were beyond the scope of the consultancy or due to limited follow-up capacity on the client side. These include:

- structural or resource-related limitations that were not fully addressed during implementation,
- coordination and institutional alignment challenges that hinder integration into routine practice,
- political or external disruptions that affected timing or continuity,
- weak monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, limiting institutional learning and accountability.

Examples across the portfolio highlighted these challenges. In some cases, the absence of formal performance targets, centralized M&E frameworks, and stakeholder coordination mechanisms delayed or limited the institutionalization of reforms. Elsewhere, political transitions or security issues led to disruptions in planned rollouts and delays in policy implementation. Other projects encountered limitations in sustaining digital tools or systems due to inadequate IT staffing, financial provisions, or institutional commitment. Additionally, internal deficiencies—such as missing competency-based tools or limited M&E capacity—impacted long-term institutional development efforts.

These examples reflect broader, recurrent sustainability risks across the consultancy portfolio. Many interventions stopped short of establishing robust institutional mechanisms, financial models, or cross-departmental coordination systems to carry the work forward.

Finally, the documentation of these risks and gaps was uneven across consultancies. While some final reports included structured risk assessments or recommendations for post-project action, others lacked detail on unresolved issues or institutional responsibilities. This variability underscores the need for more systematic approaches to exit strategies, sustainability planning, and client follow-up.

These findings underscore the importance of embedding sustainability planning, follow-up mechanisms, and risk mitigation strategies into the design and closure phases of consultancies—an area where future guidance, templates, and institutional support could substantially enhance long-term impact.

8.2 Methodological integration, replication, and scale-up

Many consultancies incorporated mechanisms for replication and scale-up, particularly where methodologies were standardized and designed for broader application. The FAO partnership mapping approach (consultancy 6) was replicated across Africa, the Caribbean, and Mexico, with SOPs institutionalized and focal points trained for continued internal use. South Africa's PE4DW project (consultancy 4) produced a replicable toolkit—EmplA, dialogue frameworks, and Local Skills Network (LSN) templates—intended for use across multiple sectors. Similarly, the KGRTC model (consultancy 5) was structured for adoption by other SADC-region training institutions.

Mozambique's sustainability efforts were strengthened through the introduction of regulatory instruments—such as tax guides and procurement norms—and through the development of scalable business models in sustainable construction and biomass energy (consultancy 8). The Haiti ADIH consultancy (consultancy 1) integrated financial sustainability measures (e.g., paid services and donor mapping) and provided digital platforms to support future growth.

The Philippines DSWD Academy (consultancy 7) blended learning system and strategic partnerships (e.g., TESDA, DAP) also positioned the consultancy for institutional scale-up. However, several interviewees noted that full realization of scale-up potential required continued investment, political stability, and clear institutional mandates. Staff also flagged the challenge of reactive work patterns limiting strategic follow-up.

9. FINDINGS: IMPACT

9.1 Contribution to long-term change

The Centre strategy consultancies demonstrated varying levels of contribution to long-term change, with the strongest and most sustained impacts observed in projects that embedded results into formal policy frameworks, institutional systems, or scalable tools. The MozTrabalha consultancy (consultancy 8) exemplifies systemic change, with employment, safety, and gender provisions incorporated into the revised Forestry Regulation and sustained stakeholder engagement through initiatives like the UEM–BioPower–GAPI partnership. Similarly, the South Africa PE4DW project (consultancy 4) informed DTIC's sectoral employment planning through scenario simulations and embedded tools such as EmplA into national policy cycles.

Continuity was enhanced in these cases through regulatory enforcement (e.g., MozTrabalha implementation decrees - consultancy 8), multi-year planning (ADIH membership strategy - consultancy 1, DSWD Strategic Map 2028 - consultancy 7). The KGRTC e-learning platform (consultancy 5) became self-sustaining through autonomous management of the platform, manuals, and backend systems. The DSWD project in the Philippines (consultancy 7) integrated consultancy outputs into policy

instruments, institutional roadmaps, and budget frameworks, signalling long-term relevance and internal commitment.

However, one client noted that while their retreat outputs were successfully delivered, there was minimal follow-up beyond administrative interactions after project completion. Staff from multiple projects acknowledged gaps in formal follow-up mechanisms, with impact often only tracked through ad hoc updates or client-led initiatives.

9.2 Benefits reported by stakeholders

Strategy consultancies generally receive positive feedback from stakeholders, though clients identified a few areas for improvement at the institutional level, including stronger coordination with ILO country offices, clearer communication of service offerings beyond training, and more robust documentation of outputs.

Consultancy benefits were widely reported across projects, with client testimonials highlighting satisfaction with the Centre's technical support, adaptability, and relevance of outputs. The ADIH client in Haiti (consultancy 1) praised the strategic value of the membership plan, while the DTIC in South Africa (consultancy 4) expressed appreciation for customized policy tools and clarity of roadmaps. Mozambique stakeholders noted strengthened integration of employment planning and advocacy capacity amongst employers.

Institutional capacity improvements were most clearly evidenced in projects with measurable outcomes. MozTrabalha (consultancy 8) documented significant gains in formalization and enforcement, including over 359,000 workers enrolled in social protection systems and more than 30,000 labour inspections conducted. KGRTC (consultancy 5) gained technical autonomy in course development and digital system management, and FAO (consultancy 6) institutionalized its mapping methodology through internal documentation and country office communication packages.

In South Africa (consultancy 4), uptake of tools and the establishment of sectoral task teams demonstrated policy-level learning, while the Philippines DSWD Academy (consultancy 7) showed high client ownership, with the government independently preparing an implementation document.

9.3 Pathways to long-term impact

Impact pathways were strongest where consultancy outputs were systematically integrated into organizational operations. In Mozambique, budgeting tools were adopted by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (consultancy 8), while in South Africa (consultancy 4), EmplA indicators were used in DTIC performance planning. The Philippines DSWD project (consultancy 7) grounded implementation in the Strategic Map 2028 and institutionalized knowledge systems through established administrative orders. In Zambia, KGRTC (consultancy 5) embedded digital platforms into core training activities, while FAO integrated mapping (consultancy 6) into partnership management practice and internal reporting systems.

Client ownership emerged as a critical driver, particularly in cases where institutions independently expanded or adapted the Centre-developed tools. For instance, the Philippines government replicated and adapted the consultancy output into its own

national implementation roadmap (consultancy 7), and FAO independently developed communication tools based on the mapping methodology (consultancy 6). Rwanda's TVET Strategy (consultancy 2) and Haiti's ADIH plan (consultancy 1) each presented structured pathways toward national impact and financial continuity.

Despite notable successes in technical delivery and stakeholder engagement, institutional integration of consultancy outputs was uneven across the portfolio. While some projects saw clear adoption of tools, frameworks, and strategies within client institutions, others remained at the planning or pilot stage, hindered by structural constraints or a lack of follow-through mechanisms.

The evaluation identified multiple barriers to sustainable implementation across the consultancy portfolio. In one case, despite strong alignment with national plans and delivery of actionable frameworks, institutional uptake was hindered by administrative bureaucratic inertia, limited coordination, and insufficient M&E resources in the client organization. Another project successfully facilitated dialogue and planning but saw limited integration of outputs into client systems, with deliverables requiring significant revision before becoming actionable. In a third example, a well-designed membership strategy remained unimplemented due to regional political and economic instability beyond the consultancy's scope.

These patterns demonstrate how institutional readiness, coordination mechanisms, and external environments significantly influence sustainability outcomes regardless of technical quality. Many barriers were predictable, highlighting the need for more robust implementation planning and risk assessment during design phases.

These examples point to a critical insight: many of the barriers to institutional integration were predictable. Several consultancies operated in contexts with known governance challenges, weak institutional infrastructure, or limited fiscal flexibility. While these risks were sometimes acknowledged during diagnostic or inception phases, they were not always reflected in design adaptations, risk mitigation strategies, or resource planning. In particular, exit strategies and sustainability mechanisms—such as costed follow-up plans, long-term staffing commitments, or integration with existing monitoring frameworks—were often absent or underdeveloped.

From an efficiency perspective, this raises valid concerns. The value of high-quality outputs is reduced when institutions cannot absorb or apply them, and a number of consultancies invested considerable time and expertise into processes that ultimately lacked institutional traction. However, it would be reductive to conclude that these initiatives were inefficient. In many cases, consultancies served catalytic purposes, opening policy windows, creating reference models, or building relationships that may support future reform—even if immediate uptake was limited.

Overall, the variability in integration reflects a deeper need for institutional readiness assessments, context-sensitive delivery strategies, and more deliberate planning for post-project sustainability. Future consultancies should include structured approaches to stakeholder capacity, political economy analysis, and integration risk—ensuring that outputs not only respond to demand but are also deliverable and maintainable within the institutional realities of the client.

9. GOOD PRACTICES

Among the wide-ranging the Centre strategy consultancies, four stand out as best-case practices due to their exceptional performance across distinct evaluation dimensions—innovation in approach, proven effectiveness, responsiveness, and sustainability—each excelling in different ways and offering transferable insights.

In the face of profound socio-political disruption, the **Haiti ADIH Membership Development** (consultancy 1) demonstrated how responsiveness and contextual tailoring can become a strategic advantage. ADIH operates in one of the most unstable environments in the world. Rather than attempting to apply generic models, the consultancy focused on redefining ADIH's value proposition around services and practical support, knowing that traditional advocacy would be unfeasible. It introduced a membership development strategy rooted in a nuanced understanding of local constraints—offering flexible membership tiers, sector-focused outreach plans, and digital tools tailored to the realities of insecurity. This included a novel job-matching platform that prioritizes safety in commute feasibility. Importantly, the plan was not just designed—it was approved by the board and scheduled for multi-year execution. The integration of the Centre e-learning materials and a membership management system positioned the organization for long-term digital growth and income diversification. In a volatile setting, this consultancy turned strategic vision into an actionable and locally embedded recovery plan.

In contrast, the **PE4DW programme in South Africa** (consultancy 4) represents a comprehensive, systems-level transformation initiative, illustrating how complex multi-stakeholder processes can be coherently managed and scaled. Over a single year, the Centre supported five interlinked workstreams targeting everything from employment diagnostics and policy revision to inclusive governance and local skills ecosystems. The signature EmplA model gave DTIC policy analysts a practical, sector-specific simulation tool that is now used to assess employment impacts up to 2030. These models, along with sector task teams, social dialogue structures, and pilot local skills networks, have been woven into national policymaking cycles. The consultancy was delivered through a hybrid format combining advisory support, participatory workshops, and institutional coaching—yielding outputs of both immediate operational use and long-term institutional integration. DTIC has incorporated dashboard indicators into its Annual Performance Plans, and sectoral planning processes now explicitly consider employment targets. This initiative exemplifies strategic coherence and institutional embedding, with consultancies engineered to leave behind systems—not just reports.

On the digital transformation front, the **Zambia KGRTC eCampus initiative** (consultancy 5) stands out for its clarity of purpose and long-term impact with modest resources. Tasked with improving KGRTC's reach and efficiency, the consultancy focused on two outcomes: digitalizing training delivery and enhancing online visibility. Within a EUR 40,145 budget, it delivered a fully functional Moodle-based platform, trained administrative and pedagogical staff, and handed over customized manuals and templates. The consultancy's success rested on its intense co-design approach—every step, from content creation to platform management, was tailored to user capacity and embedded in KGRTC's routine operations. By the consultancy's end, KGRTC was

independently designing and delivering online courses and managing its digital infrastructure. More importantly, the centre became a regional exemplar in digital learning for energy training—replicable across other institutions in Southern Africa. This case illustrates how digital capacity can be scaled sustainably through tailored training, institutional coaching, and a robust handover model.

Finally, the **Mozambique MozTrabalha** (consultancy 8) showcases institutional innovation anchored in real-world policy change. While its coaching on MS Project was one part of the story, the wider consultancy's impact was felt in the transformation of regulatory frameworks and monitoring systems. Through the Centre's support, MozTrabalha embedded decent work provisions into national forestry regulations—an unprecedented move that introduced labour protections into a previously informal and unregulated sector. Formalization efforts led to hundreds of thousands of workers being registered with the national social security system (INSS), while labour inspection efforts expanded significantly. The project also introduced performance-based budgeting tools and connected fiscal policy to employment targets—an often-ignored linkage in development programming. Tools like the Tax Guide for Forestry SMEs and the pro-employment expenditure review reflected a deep institutional buy-in and built lasting capacity. What elevates this case is the layered approach: it moved from technical assistance to policy reform to digital inclusion, creating a reform trajectory that is both practical and transformative.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents actionable recommendations to strengthen the Centre's strategy consultancy services based on the evaluation findings. These recommendations are organized by implementation timeframe—short-term, medium-term, and long-term—and focus on enhancing quality standards, deepening integration with the ILO mandate, improving collaboration, and ensuring sustainable impact. Each recommendation addresses specific gaps identified while building on existing institutional strengths.

Short-Term (0-6 months)

Recommendation 1: Enhance visibility and verification of strategic alignment in the approval process

While the evaluation found limited explicit documentation on how strategy consultancies align with the Centre's 2022-25 Strategic Plan, this is not necessarily due to a lack of alignment. In practice, strategic alignment is a requirement: all activities must identify a relevant ILO Policy or Enabling Outcome at inception through the MAP system. Consultancies also consistently align with the needs of ITCILO constituents and UN organizations, as shown in both project design and implementation.

However, the absence of consistent and explicit references to strategic objectives in consultancy proposals and reports limits the Centre's ability to fully demonstrate and communicate its institutional contribution. To address this, the Centre should make the existing alignment mechanisms more visible and verifiable during the consultancy approval process.

Rather than introducing new administrative requirements, the Centre should reinforce strategic alignment as a formal check within the existing approval workflow. Project managers should briefly articulate how each proposed consultancy advances one or more Strategic Plan objectives, building on the mandatory outcome coding in MAP. Management should verify and document this alignment as part of the final approval step.

As noted by a staff member during interviews, consultancies must reflect the Centre's mandate, with "priorities driving resources, not resources driving priorities." This light-touch verification would ensure that the consultancy portfolio collectively supports the Strategic Plan, improves internal coherence, and facilitates more consistent reporting on contributions to institutional performance indicators—without imposing additional administrative burdens.

Recommendation 2: Establish a consultancy knowledge repository

The evaluation revealed inconsistent knowledge sharing across programs, with valuable methodologies, tools, and lessons often remaining within individual programmes. As one staff member noted, "there is no knowledge management function" for consultancies. The Centre should create a digital repository for consultancy resources that enables systematic documentation and cross-program access.

This repository should include technical proposals, methodological approaches, assessment tools, and final reports from completed consultancies. It should be searchable by theme, client type, and geographical region to facilitate retrieval. As noted by one interviewee, "we should have some toolkit or some space where we discuss what each of us is doing" in consultancy work. The repository would serve this function while reducing duplication of effort and enabling cross-fertilization of approaches.

Implementation of the repository should be led by the Centre's Learning Innovation Programme (LIP) in close collaboration with the Quality Assurance focal point in the Office of the Director of Training, which already manages key quality assurance tools and has demonstrated strong capacity in knowledge system design. Building on existing resources—including the PDCA cycle, the standard results chain, the consultancies quality assurance toolkit (with its five standard questionnaires), the intranet page "How to assure the quality of consultancies," the consultancies-related KPIs in the Programme and Budget, and the 2023 "Coachbox" tool developed by LIP—the repository can serve as both a technical reference and a practical support environment for project managers.

The Coachbox platform, in particular, offers a customizable workspace that integrates the consultancy lifecycle into a structured user journey—from planning and stakeholder engagement to delivery, reflection, and follow-up. This tool can form the foundation of the repository's structure, ensuring coherence with ongoing digital innovation efforts at the Centre.

As a starting point, the repository should document exemplary consultancies from this evaluation—such as MozTrabalha, the ADIH membership development plan, and the

PE4DW initiative in South Africa—which showcased strong methodologies and impactful outcomes. These cases can be used to populate the repository with sample deliverables, TORs, tools, and lessons learned, serving as templates and inspiration for future assignments.

By curating and standardizing institutional knowledge in this way, the Centre will improve knowledge continuity across teams, reinforce quality assurance practices, and promote internal learning across programmes.

Recommendation 3: Implement systematic post-consultancy reflection and learning

The evaluation found inconsistent practices for capturing lessons from completed consultancies and translating them into organizational learning. While some projects conducted structured reflections, others lacked formal mechanisms for reviewing processes and outcomes. As one staff member observed, "reactive, activity-based workflow makes systematic follow-up challenging. After completing one activity, we quickly move to the next without dedicated time for tracking outcomes."

The Centre should implement a standard post-consultancy review process that includes a facilitated reflection session with the project team and documentation of key insights. This process should address both technical content and project management aspects, with particular attention to adaptations made during implementation. These sessions would create valuable opportunities for identifying improvements to consultancy methodologies and documenting innovative approaches.

Dedicated time and resources for these reflections should be incorporated into project planning and budgeting from the outset. The insights generated should be systematically documented and shared through the proposed knowledge repository, creating a virtuous cycle of continuous improvement. As demonstrated by the FAO retreat project, where staff noted the importance of "clarifying facilitation methodologies" for future work, structured reflection can yield valuable learning that enhances subsequent consultancies.

Medium-Term (7-12 months)

Recommendation 1: Extend the existing Quality Management Framework to strengthen quality assurance for strategy consultancies

The evaluation found significant variation in consultancy documentation, methodological approaches, and quality assurance practices. While the Centre's Quality Management Framework from February 2023 provides a solid foundation for capacity development services broadly, it needs specific extensions for strategy consultancies to address their unique requirements and ensure consistent quality.

The Centre should build upon its established framework by developing consultancy-specific annexes or supplements that provide practical guidance tailored to the distinctive needs of strategy consultancies. This extension should include more detailed quality standards for different consultancy types (digital transformation,

strategic planning, institutional assessments, etc.), process guidance for key consultancy phases, and templates for critical documents such as terms of reference.

As one staff member noted during interviews, "having a framework that outlines essential components and assessment points would help ensure consistency and quality." Another emphasized the importance of clearly defining "what we're going to do, the scope, and also what the client's contribution is" in consultancy agreements. The existing framework's Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle provides an excellent structure, but staff need more specific guidance on how to apply this to the diverse consultancy types identified in the evaluation.

This framework extension should be developed through a consultative process involving experienced staff from different programs, drawing on proven approaches from successful consultancies like the DSWD Academy assessment and the South Africa PE4DW initiative. It should maintain sufficient flexibility to accommodate the "unique client, unique context, unique stakeholders, needs, and expectations" that characterize consultancy work, as one respondent emphasized.

Implementation responsibility should be assigned to the Office of the Director of Training, working with the Quality Management Unit as specified in the existing framework, and with a working group comprising representatives from each program to ensure relevance across diverse consultancy types. This approach would leverage the Centre's established quality management processes while addressing the specific needs of its growing strategy consultancy portfolio.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen cross-program collaboration mechanisms

The evaluation identified limited cross-program coordination as a persistent challenge, with most consultancies operating primarily within individual programmes despite potential complementarities. Several projects demonstrated the value of integrated expertise, such as the KGRTC Zambia project where "the gender team conducted a gender marker and audit, while other teams worked on energy efficiency and green jobs aspects."

The Centre should establish formal mechanisms to facilitate cross-program collaboration for consultancies requiring diverse expertise. These mechanisms should include designated collaboration points in the consultancy lifecycle, protocols for engaging expertise from different programs, and financial arrangements that equitably distribute both contributions and benefits.

The current financial incentive structure appears to discourage collaboration, as noted by one programme manager who observed that "if we do consultancy, we invoice our staff time and are paid for this staff time engaged in the assignment," creating competition rather than cooperation. The Centre should explore models where contribution to fixed costs can be shared proportionally based on time invested, as implemented successfully in the gender strategy project mentioned by one interviewee.

By strengthening collaboration mechanisms, the Centre can deliver more comprehensive solutions to clients while making more efficient use of its diverse

expertise. This would enhance the Centre's distinctive value proposition as a provider of integrated capacity development services.

Recommendation 3: Integrate consultancies with training services

The evaluation found varying levels of integration between consultancies and the Centre's core training services, with some demonstrating strong synergies while others operating as standalone interventions. Given that consultancies often emerge from training relationships, with one staff member noting that "we first enter into contact with clients through some training or events, and then comes consultancy," there is significant potential to strengthen these linkages.

The Centre should develop a more systematic approach to integrating consultancy and training services by:

1. Creating pathways where consultancy insights inform training content, as seen with the FAO partnership mapping methodology that "is now used as examples in the Centre courses"
2. Designing consultancies with explicit connections to relevant training offerings, similar to the MozTrabalha approach where "training workshops were co-organized with ITC-ILO, combining local delivery with advanced sessions in Turin"
3. Establishing feedback loops where training participants identify institutional needs that could be addressed through consultancy services

As emphasized by one programme manager, consultancies provide opportunities to "always look for the next level to remain up to date with what participants ask us." By more deliberately connecting consultancies with training, the Centre can enhance both service streams while strengthening relationships with institutional clients.

The Learning Innovation Programme and Training Department should jointly lead this integration effort, with input from all programs offering consultancy services. This approach would capitalize on the Centre's distinctive advantage of providing both individual and institutional capacity development.

Long-Term (13-24 months)

Recommendation 1: Establish a sustainable financing model for consultancies

The evaluation identified tensions between the Centre's financial requirements and the resource demands of quality consultancy services. As one programme manager observed, consultancies "consume approximately 45% of their time but generate only 23% of revenue, raising questions about the sustainable financing model." Another noted that "consultancy services will never generate as much as training" yet are "useful and important pushing us to innovate and remain connected with reality."

The Centre should develop a comprehensive financing model for consultancies that balances financial sustainability with strategic importance. This model should:

1. Establish differentiated recovery expectations for consultancy services compared to training activities, recognizing their distinct cost structures and revenue potential
2. Create mechanisms for cross-subsidization where appropriate, enabling strategically important consultancies with lower recovery rates to be balanced by higher-recovery activities
3. Develop clear criteria for assessing the strategic value of consultancies beyond direct revenue, including relationship building, innovation potential, and contribution to institutional learning

As one programme manager suggested, "if you want to have space for these interesting consultancy services, you have to recalibrate what targets you put to units." This recommendation responds directly to this observation by creating a more nuanced approach to financial planning for consultancies.

The model should be developed by the Centre's Financial Services in close collaboration with program managers, with guidance from the Director of Training to ensure alignment with institutional priorities.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen an integrated approach to consultancy impact assessment

The evaluation found limited documentation of longer-term consultancy impacts, with most reporting focusing on immediate outputs rather than outcomes or systemic changes. To strengthen the Centre's understanding of consultancy effectiveness, the Centre should develop an integrated approach to impact assessment that establishes standard indicators for different consultancy types while allowing for customization to specific contexts.

Organize annual peer learning exchanges where clients share implementation experiences and quantifiable results, serving as both evaluation mechanisms and knowledge-sharing opportunities. The MozTrabalha project demonstrates the potential value of systematic impact assessment, with documented results including "359,000 workers enrolled in social protection systems" and the incorporation of decent work provisions into national regulations. Similar outcome documentation for other consultancies would strengthen the Centre's ability to demonstrate value to stakeholders.

Implementation should be led by the Centre's Office of the Director of Training in collaboration with program managers, with a phased approach beginning with high-visibility consultancies and gradually extending to the broader portfolio.

Recommendation 3: Establish structured follow-up support mechanisms

The evaluation found that while the Centre delivers high-quality consultancy outputs, systematic follow-up support is often limited by resource constraints and competing priorities. As one staff member noted, "many of my colleagues, when I talk to them, for them it stops—their deliverable submitted, validated, they're paid. But for us, this is where organizational development starts."

The Centre should establish structured mechanisms for providing ongoing, light-touch support to consultancy clients during implementation of recommendations. This support could include:

1. Periodic virtual check-ins at key implementation milestones, as implemented with the ADIH Haiti consultancy where staff maintained regular contact despite challenging circumstances.
2. Access to responsive technical guidance when clients encounter implementation challenges, similar to the approach taken in the FAO partnership mapping project where casual guidance was provided on map administration.
3. Facilitation of peer learning between similar institutions implementing comparable changes, building on the networking emphasis seen in the MozTrabalha project.

These follow-up mechanisms should be explicitly incorporated into consultancy designs and budgets from the outset. As the DSWD Philippines client noted, ongoing engagement helps ensure "whether the recommendations are practical and implementable, making adjustments as needed."

By formalizing this follow-up support, the Centre can enhance the sustainability of consultancy impacts while strengthening relationships with institutional clients. This approach would also generate valuable feedback on recommendation implementation that could inform future consultancy designs.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Structured Interview Question Table

This annex presents a structured table of core interview questions used in the Centre consultancy evaluations. Questions are grouped under key evaluation criteria to guide qualitative assessments.

Relevance – Are we doing the right thing?

What were the main needs the consultancy was aiming to address?

How were these needs identified (e.g., needs analysis, partner requests, diagnostic tools)?

To what extent were the consultancy objectives aligned with the strategic goals of the Centre and the client's institutional priorities?

In hindsight, were there any missed opportunities to align better with stakeholder or system-level needs?

Was the consultancy co-designed with the client or beneficiaries?

To what extent were gender, inclusion, or rights-based considerations integrated into the design?

Coherence – How well does this intervention fit?

How did this consultancy relate to other Centre or ILO interventions in the same context?

Were synergies explored with other services or actors (e.g., training, digital briefs, policy frameworks)?

Were there any overlaps or contradictions with other ongoing initiatives (internally or externally)?

How did the consultancy reflect the Centre's cross-cutting drivers (e.g., innovation, gender, social dialogue)?

Did the consultancy align with the client's internal policies, plans, or existing change processes?

How do you ensure you have adequate expertise and development resources to support their service portfolio?

Were other departments or external partners meaningfully engaged to ensure institutional buy-in?

Effectiveness – Are the objectives being achieved?

What were the intended outputs and outcomes of this consultancy?

Were those outputs delivered as planned? If not, what were the reasons?

What are the observable changes at the individual, organizational, or system level?

To what extent did the client use the deliverables (e.g., strategy document, diagnostic tool, capacity plan)?

How were beneficiary feedback or monitoring tools (e.g., surveys, Slido, interviews) used to track results?

Were short-term changes tracked using KPIs or interim outcome indicators (out-takes)?

Were challenges or mid-course corrections addressed and documented during implementation?

What does your client onboarding process look like in concrete terms?

Efficiency – Are we using resources well?

Were the time and resources allocated sufficient to deliver quality outcomes?

Did the project stay within budget and timeline? If not, what caused delays or overruns?

Were internal tools (e.g., MAP, KPIs, QA templates) used to manage and monitor progress?

Could the same results have been achieved in a more cost-effective way?

Were there any delays or scope changes — and how were these managed?

Did the consultancy deliver added value relative to its cost and effort?

Impact – What difference does the consultancy make?

Have you observed any lasting behavioural, structural, or policy changes in the client institution?

How has the consultancy influenced the Centre's visibility or credibility in the client's context?

Were there any unexpected positive (or negative) consequences?

Were there signs of influence on broader systems, policies, or networks beyond the immediate client?

Did the consultancy generate knowledge products or good practices for replication?

Sustainability – Will the benefits last?

What steps were taken to ensure the client could maintain or scale the consultancy outcomes?

Were local capacities strengthened to continue implementation without the Centre's support?

Are there mechanisms or follow-up activities in place (e.g., mentorship, additional support, toolkits)?

What would be needed to ensure the benefits are sustainable in the long term?

Has the client allocated resources or taken concrete steps to sustain the results (e.g., budget, personnel, integration into work plans)?

Were the tools or processes institutionalized (e.g., turned into policy, routine practice, or added to systems)?

Optional Meta-Questions

If you could redesign this consultancy from scratch, what would you do differently?

What would you replicate or avoid in similar future consultancies?

What good practices from this consultancy could be shared or replicated in future services?

What feedback have you received from the client or participants post-consultancy?

Was data privacy, ethics, and stakeholder dignity upheld throughout the process?

**Annex 2: International Training Centre of the ILO. Evaluation of the Strategy
Consultancies of the Centre. Terms of reference.**



INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE OF THE ILO, TURIN

Evaluation of the Strategy Consultancies of the Centre

Terms of reference

About the International Training Centre of the ILO

1. The [International Training Centre](#) is the capacity development arm of the [International Labour Organization](#) (ILO). The ILO is a specialized agency of the [United Nations](#) (UN) system with a mandate to **promote social justice through decent work for all**, and the Centre offers individual and institutional capacity development services to support its constituents worldwide in making the social justice agenda actionable. The main target groups of the Centre's capacity development services are ILO constituents – workers' and employers' organizations and governments. The Centre also offers capacity development services for ILO staff, staff of other UN agencies and ILO partners with a mandate to promote social justice, among them government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The Centre's capacity development services are human-centred and rights-based, promoting fundamental principles and rights at work and strengthening tripartism and social dialogue. The Centre plays a key role in the implementation of the [2019 ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work](#) and supports ILO constituents in facilitating future of work transitions and promoting employment-right growth in line with the [2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The Centre derives its mandate for the delivery of individual, institutional and system-level capacity development services from the [2019 ILO Capacity Development Strategy](#) and is one of the network hubs of the innovation eco-system defined by the [2023 ILO Innovation Strategy](#). The Centre is in the frontline when it comes to extending technical support to ILO constituents under the umbrella of [the Global Coalition for Social Justice](#), launched by the Director General in 2023.

Background

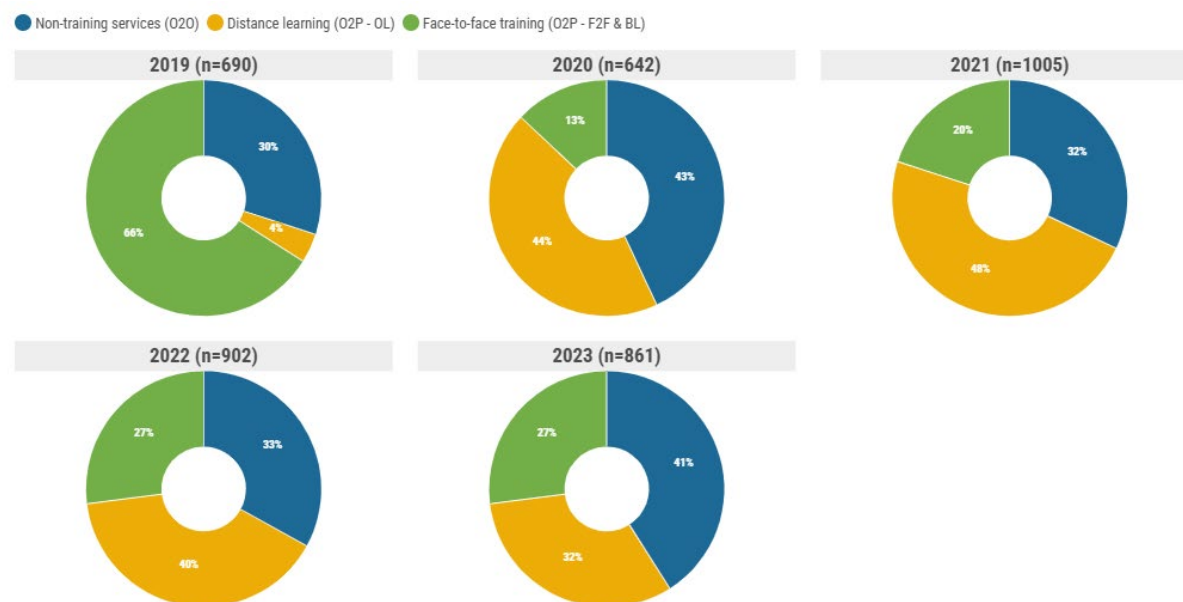
1. The Centre's capacity development service portfolio is modelled on the UN common-capacity development approach and is guided by the ILO capacity development strategy issued in 2019. Whereas in the past the principal focus was on individual learners, the new operational model draws a distinction between **individual capacity development** services intended to improve the performance of individual learners, **institutional capacity development** services designed to strengthen the capacity of organizations representing the ILO constituents and other ILO partners, and **system-level capacity development** to increase the holding capacity of the environment within which individuals and organizations interact. The Centre's capacity development services can be grouped on these three levels of the capacity development grid. The three system levels are interdependent but at the same time have a distinct capacity development dimension.

Figure 1. The Centre's service portfolio grouped by system level

	Overall objective: Promote decent work and social justice			
	Immediate objective	Primary means of action	Intended outcome	Unique feature
Individual capacity development	To strengthen the delivery capacity of individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service training Masters studies 	Increased functional and technical skills, resulting in improved individual performance	Portability (skills move with the individual)
Institutional capacity development	To strengthen the delivery capacity of organizations (representing the individuals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data-driven strategy advisory services Product development support (including platform solutions) 	Improved institutional capacity to operate in a sustainable manner	Anchored at organizational level through processes and tools
System-level capacity development	To strengthen the holding capacity of the system (within which organizations and individuals interact)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation of dialogue events and conferences Knowledge management and innovation support Communication and advocacy campaigns 	A more enabling and rights-based environment for interaction between individuals and institutions, and between systems	Focus on the "rules of the Game" incl. intangibles such as values and perceptions

- In the course of the 2022-23 biennium, the ratio of training to non-training services stood at 60:40, in line with the target set in the [Programme and Budget Proposals](#) for the 2022 – 2023 biennium (2:1).

Figure 2. Breakdown of activities by category (2014-2023)



Source: Management of Activities and Participants (MAP)
Self-guided courses not inserted in MAP are not counted. All blended courses are counted as f2f.

- The figure below illustrates the asset weight in the service mix as of end 2023, in terms of activity numbers, activity outreach, contribution to fixed costs, and client satisfaction.

It shows that technical and functional skills training dominates in terms of number of activities but that non-training activities make an important contribution to outreach and financial performance. This implies that quality management for learning services and for non-training capacity development services is *equally* important.

Figure 3. ITCILO's Service Mix (2022-2023 biennium)



4. In 2024, the Centre expanded its portfolio of advisory services, reflecting a growing demand for consultancies on digital transformation strategies. Notable examples include advising the ILO Decent Work Support Team for Eastern Europe and Central Asia on digital capacity improvement interventions and the Civil Society Organizations network development strategy developed for FAO.
5. Recognizing the increasing importance of advisory services in its portfolio, the Centre has decided to commission an external evaluation of its strategy consultancies to assess their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement in an attempt to establish and standardise a quality assurance approach to these services. The Terms of Reference of this evaluation are described in the following.

Purpose of the evaluation

6. The purpose of the evaluation is to:
 - Provide the Centre with evidence of the relevance, validity, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of its strategy consultancies.
 - Identify good practices, lessons learned, and provide recommendations for the improvement or scale-up of the Centre's strategy consultancies.
7. The evaluation findings will inform decision-making on the future programming of the Centre concerning its strategy consultancies.

Scope of the evaluation

8. The evaluation will assess the Centre's strategy consultancies delivered in 2024. A representative sample of 11 activities has been drawn for this purpose.

Clients of the evaluation

9. The main clients of this evaluation will be:
- The Board of the Centre;
 - The Training Department of the Centre;
 - Internal ITCILO units outside the Training Department (FINSERV, ICTS, FIS/PATU)

Evaluation criteria

10. The evaluation will focus on the [six evaluation criteria](#) proposed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD DAC)'s Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet). The **relevance** of the sampled activities to beneficiary needs, their **coherence**, the activities' **efficiency**, **effectiveness**, **impact** and **sustainability** will be assessed.

Figure 4: The six OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) Evaluation Criteria



Refer to the following list of assessment criteria and the corresponding evaluation questions.

Assessment Criteria	Questions to be addressed
<i>Relevance</i> : The extent to which the objectives and design of the activity respond to the beneficiaries' requirements and needs, as well as to partners' and donors' policies and priorities.	IS THE INTERVENTION DOING THE RIGHT THINGS? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How well did the activity operationalize the 2022-25 strategic plan and the 2024-25 Programme & Budget of the Centre, and the higher level ILO 2022-25 Strategy Framework and 2024-25 Programme and Budget?

Coherence: The compatibility of the activity with other activities that serve the ILO mandate and its core constituents	<p>HOW WELL DOES THE INTERVENTION FIT?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the activity serve the ILO mandate and the needs of the ILO core constituents?
Effectiveness: The extent to which the activities immediate objectives were achieved, taking into account their relative importance.	<p>IS THE INTERVENTION ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVES?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What results have been achieved (or expected to be achieved) /what progress has been made (or expected to be made) by learners since the implementation of the activities? Which gaps remain and how could these be addressed through follow-up activities? To what extent have the activities and the used tools been an effective instrument to strengthen the capacity of ILO constituents and other ILO development partners? Are there any differential results across groups?
Effectiveness of management arrangements: The extent to which management capacities and arrangements put in place supported the achievement of results	<p>HOW WELL WERE THE ROLES ASSIGNED?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the roles and responsibilities of Centre officials, including programme management, who were responsible for the implementation of the activities clearly defined and understood? Were the current arrangement for implementing the activities effective? Were the activities coordinated across technical programmes?
Efficiency: The extent to which the resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) were economically and timely converted to results	<p>HOW WELL ARE RESOURCES BEING USED?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the resources invested into the delivery of the activities been used in the most efficient manner? How economically were resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time etc.) converted to results? Did the results justify the cost? What time and cost efficiency measures could have been introduced without impeding the achievement of results
Impact: The strategic orientation of the activities towards making a significant contribution to broader, long-term, sustainable development changes, and whether the changes have been durable/were replicated by beneficiaries	<p>WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE INTERVENTION MAKE?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the participants' perceived benefits from the activities (differentiated by groups)? What evidence exists of participants benefiting from the activities? What actions might be required for achieving long-term impact?
Sustainability: The extent to which the net benefits of the activity continue, or are likely to continue	<p>WILL THE BENEFITS LAST?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How likely is it that the results of the activities will be maintained or up-scaled by the beneficiaries?

11. The evaluation should comply with [UNEG](#)'s general Norms for Evaluation¹.

¹ Norm 1: Internationally agreed principles, goals and targets

Norm 2: Utility

Norm 3: Credibility

Norm 4: Independence

Norm 5: Impartiality

Norm 6: Ethics

Norm 7: Transparency

Norm 8: Human rights and gender equality

Norm 9: National evaluation capacities

Norm 10: Professionalism

Methodology

12. In the Centre, Monitoring and Evaluation is considered a function of service quality management. In line with the definition used by the [International Standards Organization \(ISO\)](#), the Centre defines *quality* as the totality of features and characteristics of a service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.² *Quality management* refers to the systematic application of processes and tools to assure quality at each step of the service delivery cycle, as prescribed by the relevant ISO quality standards.³

13. To manage the quality of its strategy consultancies, the Centre takes inspiration from [ISO 21502:2020\(E\) standard for project, programme and portfolio management](#). In line with this standard, each strategy consultancy assignment of the Centre is treated like projects and their design and delivery is structured along the ISO Plan-Do-Check- Act cycle. Seen through this quality management lens, monitoring is a means to measure progress towards intended outcomes on a recurrent basis **while evaluations, examine the extent to which outcomes were achieved**. Monitoring is consequently conducted at all stages of the service delivery cycle **while evaluations usually take place at the CHECK stage to check on results**. The Centre has mapped a results chain for advisory services in order to clearly distinguish between related inputs, outputs, out-takes and outcomes; this evaluation is to assess the entire service cycle but with focus on out-takes and outcomes.

14. In order to track and qualify change along the service cycle, the Centre uses the following model for monitoring and evaluation purposes:

INPUTS -> OUTPUTS -> OUT-TAKES (INTERIM OUTCOMES) -> OUTCOMES -> IMPACT

Whereby:

- **Inputs** describe the activities performed and resources used to generate results;
- **Outputs** refer to the immediate results or deliverables;
- **Out-takes** or intermediate/interim outcomes capture an emerging change;
- **Outcomes** express lasting change directly attributable to the outputs and flowing from the out-takes;
- **Impact** relates to the long-term lasting change.

15. The figures overleaf illustrate the standard-specific quality conditions for advisory services and the key performance criteria along the results chain.

² ISO 8402:1994 Quality management and quality assurance Vocabulary, withdrawn and revised by ISO 9000:2000 Quality management systems -- Fundamentals and vocabulary, March 2004

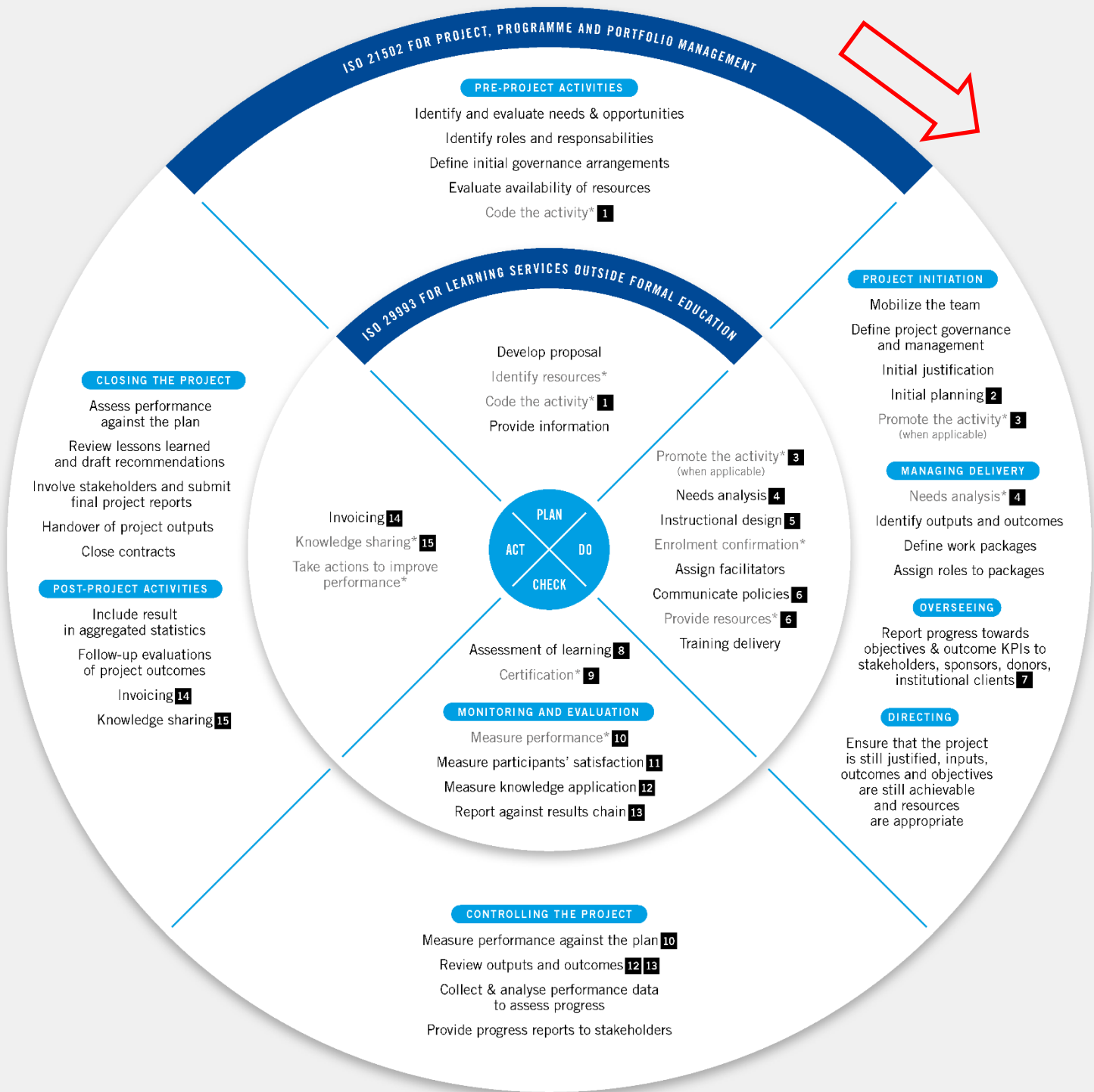
³ ISO 8402:1994 Quality management and quality assurance Vocabulary, withdrawn and revised by ISO 9000:2000 Quality management systems -- Fundamentals and vocabulary, March 2004

Figure 5: Standard-specific conditions for advisory services (consultancies) along the PDCA cycle

MASTER PLAN-DO-CHECK-ACT CYCLE

Standard-specific conditions
along the PDCA Cycle

- 1 Management of activities and Participants (MAP)
- 2 Design thinking toolkit, Project management tools (Microsoft Teams, Atlassian Jira, Slack, shared google sheets, etc.)
- 3 Institutional website, Official social media channels, Email campaigns, Partners'/ stakeholders' channels
- 4 Pre-knowledge assessment tests (eCampus), registration information (OARF), upfront surveys, focus group discussions, Interviews with key informants, customer panels, desk research on secondary data
- 5 Pre-event participants' survey
- 6 Institutional scan, learning services requirements scan, online training feedback survey
- 7 eCampus, DL community of practice, DL quality assurance checklist, three-tier certification framework, The Compass Toolkit, Digital facilitation toolkit, etc.
- 8 Institutional website
- 9 eCampus
- 10 Data dashboards Ex. Google Data Studio
- 11 Post-knowledge assessment tests (eCampus), formative and summative assessments, capstone projects



- 9 Digital Credentials (Accredible)
- 10 Process (operational-level) indicators***
- 11 Sprint meetings
- 12 End-of-activity participants' questionnaire (Eval, eCampus)
- 13 Post-event participants survey, post-exhibition visitors survey, post-exhibition exhibitors survey
- 14 Performance evaluation of capacity development consultancies, VR consultancies feedback survey
- 15 Annual external evaluations including surveys and focus group discussions
- 16 Results based management framework (Key performance indicators**)
- 17 As per ITCILO's Financial Services internal systems and procedures
- 18 Web stories, web news, communities of practice, Social media, newsletters
- 19 Closure review

* The action does not make part of the ISO standards but has been added by the ITCILO as an additional control point.

** Key performance indicators track aspects of project performance that point towards effectiveness (doing the right things).

*** Process indicators mainly track project efficiency (doing things the right way).

Figure 6: Service-specific performance criteria along the results chain for advisory services (consultancies)

MASTER RESULTS CHAIN

Service-specific key performance indicators



	INPUTS ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS IMMEDIATE RESULTS	OUT-TAKES INTERIM OUTCOMES	OUTCOMES DIRECT INFLUENCE	IMPACT ¹ INDIRECT INFLUENCE
DEFINITION	The activities performed and resources used to generate results	The immediate results or deliverables	An emerging change	A lasting change directly attributable to the outputs and flowing from the out-takes	The long-term lasting change
QUESTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was done? Which activities were carried out? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who do you expect to reach with the activity? Did the activity reach the target audience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the message received? Did the activity meet the expectations of the target audience? What is the instantaneous effect on the target? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the general objective(s) achieved? Did the activity lead to the expected results? Did the activity change the perception/behaviour of the audience? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did the activity positively impact the society in the long term?
MEASURE Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	Count of activities implemented	Outreach indicators measuring (qualitatively and quantitatively) the extent to which the activity reached the right target audience	Recall indicators measuring the extent to which the activity satisfied, captured the attention of target audience, or raised knowledge and awareness	Performance improvement indicators measuring the extent to which the activity led to either an increased awareness, an evident action taken or a desired change in the target audience perception/behaviour/attitude	Define the long term changes which the service helped achieve for the promotion of decent work and social justice
TRAINING	Count of components/modules of training activity	Count and breakdown of training participants ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants satisfaction with the overall quality of training activities Percentage of participants who acquire new knowledge during training 	New knowledge application post training	Increased functional and technical skills, resulting in improved individual performance
COMMUNICATION	Count of activities performed and resources created as work packages ³ within the campaign	Outreach expressed in number of people actively engaging ⁴ with the campaign	Sustained engagement ⁵ as a proxy for emerging behaviour change	Lasting behavior change ⁶	Shifts in value systems and perceptions in society, that contribute to decent work and social justice
EVENTS	Count of event components	Count and breakdown of events participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants satisfaction with the overall quality of the event Increased knowledge of the main topic of the event Number of connections established as a result of the event An emerging consensus on a discussed strategy 	Lasting behavior change ⁷	Lasting change in society that contributes to decent work and social justice
ADVISORY SERVICES	Count of activities along the advisory service cycle	Count of institutional clients served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with the overall quality of the advisory service Increased knowledge of the addressed topics An emerging consensus 	Improved institutional capacity to operate in a sustainable manner measured against technical, financial, and governance parameters	Stronger institutional structures to support decent work and social justice

1 No KPIs are currently defined.

2 Including breakdown by training modality, gender, geographical distribution, and professional context. In addition to average course completion rate, number of certificates issued, and percentage of returning participants.

3 Count of webpages created, social media pages set-up to promote the activity and its outcomes, Number of web news published, Number of e-newsletters sent, Number of articles in the press, Number of publications disseminated.

4 Engagement is assumed to take place if a recipient of a communication & advocacy message has responded by variably posting, sharing, following, commenting, or mailing a written answer. The minimum threshold for engagement is at least one such reaction but projects might choose to raise the bar and emphasize on more sustained interaction including by way of multi-level engagement.

5 Sustained engagement is assumed in cases where participants go one step further and actively commit to change. In the context of communication and advocacy projects, this is captured by tracking the share of participants who accept campaign challenges, commit, and make campaign pledges, or reach out for establishing partnerships or alliances.

6 Behavior change is defined as performance improvement after treatment. Behavior change is typically qualitative, like shifts in societal value systems, qualified by way of surveys and tracer studies. Ex. Call to action, Adoption, endorsement, ratification, etc.

7 Ex. Adoption of an idea presented at the event, new projects/ideas/innovations, an agreement on the implementation of a new strategy, an initiative has gained more traction and a bigger audience, a start-up has attracted funding and support, a new community of practice has been created, policy makers have been shown new evidence that they adopt to address solutions.

16. Using the information above, the evaluator is to outline the framework of the proposed evaluation methodology in the technical proposal. At the outset of the assignment, the framework is to be further elaborated in an inception report. It is expected that the evaluator will apply a combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods that draw on both hard and soft evidence and involve multiple means of analysis. In principle the following methods are proposed:

- **Desk review** the systematic analysis of existing documentation, including quantitative and descriptive information about the activities, including final reports about their outputs and outcomes, and other evidence.
- **Online survey (if needed):** responses from stakeholders will be sought to questions designed to obtain in-depth information about their impressions or experiences of the activities.
- In-depth **interviews** with internal and external stakeholders, and institutional clients.

Deliverables

17. The main deliverable of the assignment is an evaluation report, with statistical annexes. Refer below for a draft timetable of activities.

Deliverables	By
Inception Report: Describing the conceptual framework planned for undertaking the evaluation, including the evaluation questions	March 2025
Data Collection: Conducting desk research, interviews with stakeholders, and collecting relevant data	March 2025
Online survey (if needed): Administering an online survey to gather additional data	March 2025
Draft evaluation report: Presenting preliminary findings and analyses	April 2025
Final evaluation report: Incorporating feedback and presenting final conclusions and recommendations	April 2025

18. The Evaluation Report will be structured as follows:

Cover page with key intervention and evaluation data

1. Executive Summary
2. Brief background on the project and its logic
3. Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
4. Methodology
5. Review of implementation
6. Presentation of findings
7. Conclusions
8. Recommendations
9. Lessons learned and good practices

Annexes: ToR, questionnaires, list of informants, statistical annexes

19. All the above-mentioned outputs will be delivered in **English**.

Management and responsibilities

20. The contract between the evaluator and the Centre will be signed by the Director of the Centre

and the contractor will accordingly report to the Office of the Director. The evaluation will be carried out with the logistical and administrative support of the Quality Assurance focal point in the Office of the Director of Training.

Quality assurance

21. The evaluator will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. It is expected that the report shall be written in an evidence-based manner such that all observations, conclusions, recommendations, etc., are supported by evidence and analysis.

Qualifications of the Evaluator

22. The evaluator will have the following competencies:

- **Demonstrated experience** in conducting evaluations of advisory services and consultancy projects, preferably in the context of international organizations.
- **Experience in evaluating institutional capacity development services** and digital transformation initiatives.
- **Strong knowledge of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methodologies** and data analysis techniques.
- **Familiarity with the International Labour Organization (ILO) mandate and operational framework**, including its tripartite structure and policies (preferred but not mandatory).
- **Excellent report-writing skills in English** with the ability to present complex findings concisely and clearly.
- **No conflict of interest with ILO or ITCILO** that would compromise the objectivity and integrity of the evaluation.

Selection of the evaluator

23. The evaluator will be selected through a "**Call for Proposals**" process in which candidates will be invited to submit both a **financial and technical proposal** detailing their approach to conducting the evaluation.

24. The **selection criteria** for the final appointment of the evaluator will be:

- **Skills and experience** of the evaluator, including past experience in similar evaluations.
- **Quality of the proposal** in terms of relevance, clarity, feasibility, and methodological rigor.
- **Cost-effectiveness** of the proposed approach.



Knowledge
INNOVATION
Centre

Knowledge Innovation Centre is a social enterprise of international community experts working on the crossroad of education, technology and quality assurance, improving educational pathways to fit the future needs.



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