

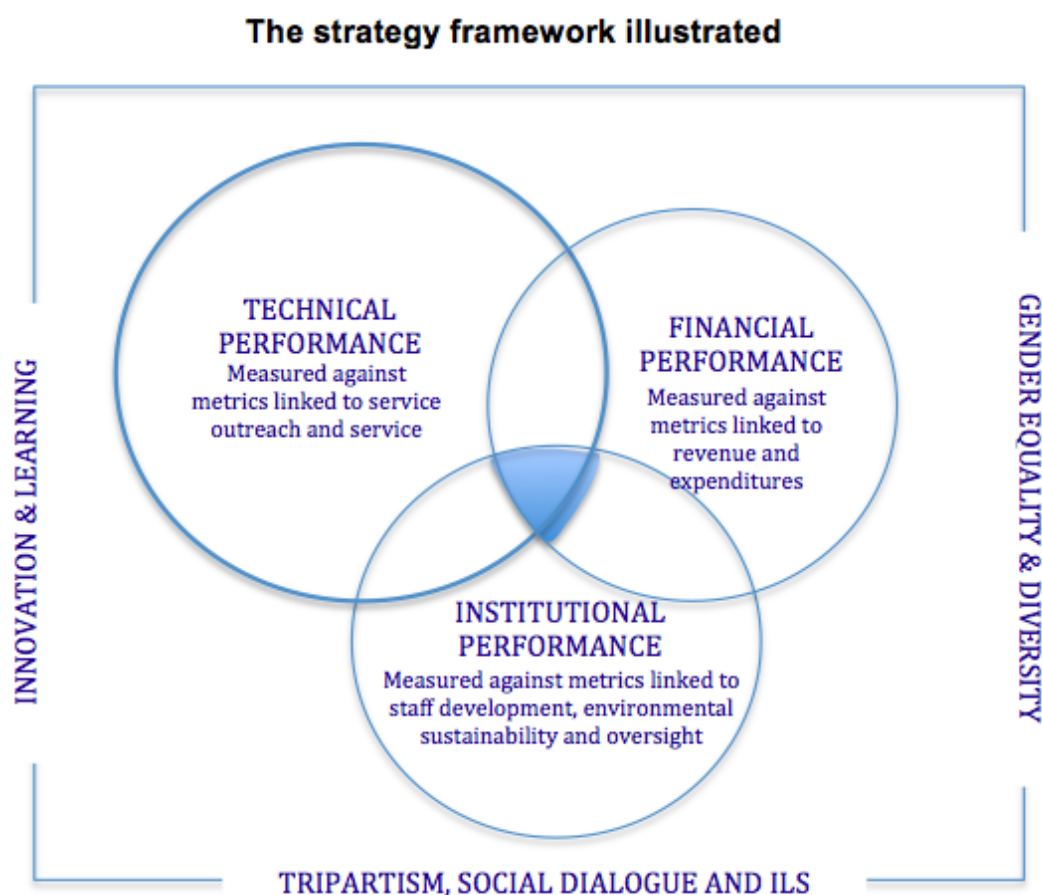
# CENTRE-WIDE ACTION PLAN TO PROMOTE INNOVATION AND LEARNING

## (2018-21)

October 2018

## I. Introduction

1. The 2018-21 Strategic Plan of the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (the Centre) identifies the promotion of Innovation and Learning as a cross-cutting policy driver of the Organization's strategy framework.<sup>1</sup>



Source: The Centre's Programme and Budget for 2018-19.

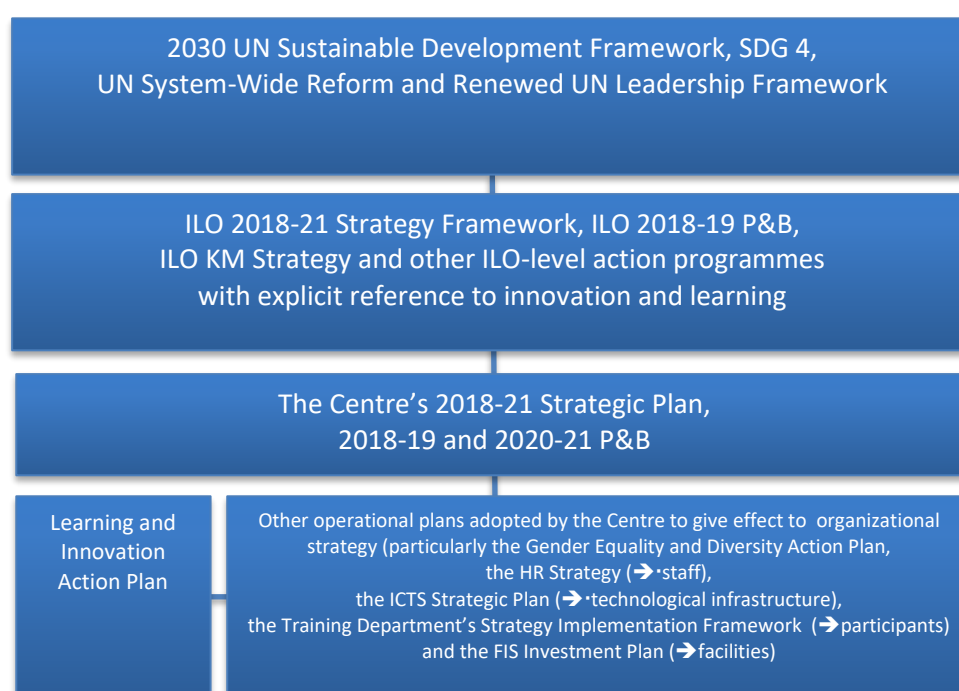
2. To give the cross-cutting policy driver full effect, the Centre has developed this Action Plan for the Promotion of Innovation and Learning. The Action Plan has a lifespan of four years (2018-21) and envisages a series of interventions to promote a culture of Innovation and Learning at the Centre and to facilitate an enabling environment for the further growth of its service processes and product portfolio.

<sup>1</sup> For further information, refer to the Centre's strategy framework for 2018-21, and the Programme and Budget for 2018-19 (Board documents CC 80/2/1 and CC 80/2/2).

## II. Context

3. Rooted in the Centre's Strategic Plan for 2018-21 and the Programme and Budget for 2018-19, the Innovation and Learning Action Plan gives effect to the cross-cutting concern for the promotion of Innovation and Learning. It is aligned with other operational plans adopted by the Centre, such as the Centre-Wide Action Plan to Promote Gender Equality and Diversity, the Human Resource Strategy, the ICTS Strategic Plan, the Training Department's 2018-19 Strategy Implementation Framework and the Facilities and Internal Services (FIS) Investment Plan.

### Contextual framework of the Centre's Innovation and Learning Action Plan



4. The Innovation and Learning Action Plan is championed by the Director of the Centre and its implementation is led by the Training Department's **Learning Innovation Programme** (formerly DELTA Programme), under the direct supervision of the Director of Training. The implementation of the Action Plan is the joint responsibility of all units of the Centre, and progress will be monitored by the Office of the Director of Training.
5. While developing the Action Plan, conclusions were drawn from what had (and had not) been successful in the past in promoting Learning and Innovation at the Centre. The Action Plan replicates the good practices of the Innovation Fund established by the Centre in 2012, takes into account the work done by the Innovation Function established in 2016 as part of the Distance Education and Learning Technology Applications (DELTA) Programme, and incorporates feedback from the Centre's activities in support of the ILO Centenary Initiative on the Future of Work.

## Objectives and lessons learned from the work of the DELTA Programme's Innovation Function

The Innovation Function of the former DELTA Programme contributed substantially to three important objectives:

- Create critical mass and innovation expertise in selected areas that could contribute substantially to the Centre's overall strategic plan.
- Unlock synergies and scale effects in the innovation efforts of the Training Department.
- Tap into specific support from ICTS, FIS and HRS, supporting growth in efforts to promote institutional innovation in learning technology and staff development.

The DELTA Programme's Innovation Function followed the innovation principles endorsed by the UNDP, UNICEF, USAID, Gates Foundation, WFP, WHO, HRP, OCHA, SIDA, the UN Foundation and UNHCR.



### Lessons learned

- Co-creation and co-design of the different innovation products, where DELTA played a facilitation role, has been key to the roll-out of the different initiatives. This means that Training Department staff have always been closely involved in the planning, development and implementation of innovation initiatives, taking into consideration user needs. The project process of the last two innovation rounds followed a design-thinking approach, whereby projects were developed in an incremental and iterative manner.
- Innovation projects need to be embedded in the technological, legal and regulatory framework of the Centre. This requires close consultation with the support services to ensure that subsequent scaling-up is possible.
- Designing for scale is a necessary ingredient. Innovations are usually limited to a series of pilot projects that can later be replicated and customized in other contexts. Systematic thinking on how this might be useful beyond the immediate project needs to be cultivated immediately. Replication usually takes place in the first year after the launch of a pilot project. Successful examples include MOOCs, Gamification and Foresight.
- The design of innovation projects should incorporate measurable milestones, documented in the outreach reports.
- The use of open standards, open data, open source and open innovation is important as we invest in innovation as a public tool. The cost and re-usability factors are two other arguments for using this open approach. An open approach ensures that innovations can be scaled up in larger communities and networks.
- Where possible, DELTA has used, modified and extended existing tools, platforms and frameworks. Re-inventing the wheel is a typical innovation syndrome that needs to be avoided. The creation of fast prototypes that reduce development time shows that innovation can happen quickly and that a prototype can then be refined and improved throughout its lifespan.
- The co-creation approach tries to ensure equity and fairness, and protects the interests of the end-users.
- An interdisciplinary approach combining diverse expertise has so far given the best results. Working together also promotes more coordinated and holistic approaches to the challenges of innovation.

### III. The meaning of “Innovation and Learning”

6. In the context of this Action Plan, the term “Innovation and Learning” refers to the process of *continuously improving the Centre’s service processes and product portfolio in anticipation of, or in response to, changing expectations of participants*. The underlying assumption is that a learning and innovative organization is more adaptable to its environment and stands a better chance of fully achieving its mission in a sustainable manner.
7. To stimulate Innovation and Learning across the Centre, the Action Plan promotes the adoption of new approaches, such as design thinking and lean/flexible methods in the development of its products and services, and opens up a creative space for both staff and participants to prototype innovative learning solutions and embark on experimental learning journeys. The emphasis of the Plan is thus on *learning how to innovate* or, in short, *Learning Innovation*.

### IV. Implementation pillars of the Action Plan

8. The Action Plan distinguishes four separate but interlinked and mutually reinforcing result areas:
  - a) *Products*: Interventions to develop new service products in anticipation of / response to changing circumstances;
  - b) *Staff*: Interventions to promote a culture of Innovation and Learning among the staff of the Centre;
  - c) *Infrastructure*: Interventions to upgrade the physical infrastructure on campus in support of tailored learning-innovation activities;
  - d) *Enabling environment*: Interventions to facilitate a supportive “eco-system” for the implementation of interventions linked to a) – c) above.
9. For each result area, one concrete outcome has been specified for achievement by 2021. For each outcome, the Plan goes on to specify a number of outputs or deliverables and, for each deliverable, a series of activity clusters. Progress in achieving the outcomes of the Innovation and Learning Action Plan is tracked using indicators that have been cascaded from the Results-Based Management Framework underpinning the Centre’s Programme and Budget for 2018-19.

The Innovation and Learning Action Plan is a “living document”, i.e. the intervention mix, the results-based management framework and the performance targets will be reviewed and refined during the four-year implementation cycle of the Centre’s Strategic Plan for 2018-21. Progress in implementing the Action Plan will be reviewed when developing the Centre’s Programme and Budget for 2020-21.

## V. Implementation stages

10. The Innovation and Learning Action Plan has a lifespan of four years, from 2018 to 2021. To guarantee effective implementation of the Action Plan, a distinction is made between an inception phase and an implementation phase. Inception phase interventions are intended to pave the way for activities during the implementation phase. The inception phase activities will be completed within four months of the launch of the Action Plan, while the activities of the implementation phase will be completed over the following three years, up to December 2021. The inception phase activities are listed below, while those of the implementation phase are listed in the plan detailed in the following pages.
11. The following inception phase activities have been identified:
  - **Launch of the Action Plan on the occasion of an Innovation Day:** The idea is to convene a one-day knowledge fair for all staff in order to display on-going and planned Centre-wide innovation projects and to formally launch the Action Plan.
  - **Desk review of existing processes, rules and regulations to promote Learning and Innovation introduced at the Centre since 2012:** The purpose of this stocktaking exercise is to document the institutional framework for the promotion of Learning and Innovation as part of the broader efforts of the Centre to establish a quality assurance framework for its operations. The desk review will identify intervention points for the refinement of the regulatory framework governing Learning and Innovation at the Centre. Where applicable, these regulatory reforms will be added to the activities of the “Enabling Environment” pillar of the Action Plan.
  - **Innovation Audit:** An innovation audit will be launched in parallel with the desk review. The audit should clearly identify the issues and obstacles facing innovation, as well as possible improvements and new approaches to maximizing our innovation capabilities. It should also encourage us to become a more innovative and entrepreneurial organization that welcomes and initiates change. The data and information derived from the audit will be used to strengthen the Centre’s overall innovation strategy and will feed into the review of the Turin Learning Approach. The following questions are key: “How many new products and services did we launch last year? How long does it take to progress from an idea with initial approval to its full implementation? What proportion of revenue comes from products and services launched in the last two years? How effective are we in generating new ideas? How healthy is our new product pipeline? What is the forecast value of developments in the pipeline? What resources, in terms of people, time and money, are we allocating to innovation?”.
  - **Refinement of the work plan for the implementation stage:** The work plan will further specify the activities of the Action Plan, setting out deliverables, targets, deadlines, responsibilities and budgets. A copy of the draft work plan, as of October 2018, is printed overleaf.

**ACTION AREA I: PRODUCTS****OUTCOME 1: The Centre has improved its rates of product innovation and product scale-up**

Outcome indicator: A.1. in the 2018-19 P&B  
 Target: 3 new products or services per year

Output indicators	Targets	Business owners	Key actions	Reference framework
Output 1.1	New products			
Indicator 1.1.1: Number of new training products to market  <i>Reporting requirements: to count as new, a training product must have been developed with financial support from the Innovation Fund and used at least once by the end of the reporting period (evidence of a NOAA required).</i>	Baseline (2017): 3  End line (2021): 16 (4 products per year)	TDIR, LEARNING INNOVATION	Launch of the innovation fund, which kick-starts the development of new products. The annual budget of the Innovation Fund is set at €200,000 per year. The Fund is to enable ITCILO to break new ground, test hypotheses, and use new methods and technologies.	
Indicator 1.1.2: Number of new products up-scaled  <i>To be considered up-scaled, a product must have been re-used at least once within 12 months of its market introduction.</i>	Baseline (2017): 1  End line (2021): 12 (3 products per year)	TDIR, LEARNING INNOVATION	Innovation Fund products from the previous year need to be scaled up in the normal portfolio of the Training Department.	Connect with the exit reports of the previous Innovation Fund

## ACTION AREA II: STAFF

### OUTCOME 2: ITCILO staff adopt a more innovation-oriented working philosophy

Outcome indicators: Indicator A.2. in the 2018-19 P&B  
Number of innovation initiatives implemented by staff

Target: At least 50 per cent of the Centre's open courses use e-campus  
At least 10 staff-led innovation projects linked to the Innovation Sprints have been implemented

Output indicators	Targets	Business owners	Key actions	Reference framework
Output 2.1	An institutional mechanism to stimulate an innovative approach to work among Centre staff			
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of <i>Innovation Sprints</i> held by the Centre	Baseline: N/A  End line (2021): 2 (one sprint held in 2018-19 and one in 2020-21)	TDIR, LEARNING INNOVATION, HRS	In collaboration with the Staff Development Committee, identify a consultant who could support the design and the delivery of an Innovation Sprint.	
Output 2.2	Training Department staff knowledgeable in the use of the e-Campus tool during training activities			
Indicator 2.2.1: % of Training Department staff trained in the use of the e-campus	Baseline (2017): T.b.d.  End line (2019): 100%	LEARNING INNOVATION, HRS ICTS	Together with HRS and ICTS, and drawing on resources from the staff development fund, design and deliver an in-house training programme on the use of the e-campus.	
Output 2.3	An innovation helpline			
Indicator 2.3.1: Number of staff using the innovation helpline	Baseline: N/A  End line (2021): 75 staff per year, starting in 2019	LEARNING INNOVATION	LEARNING INNOVATION will launch an "online coachbox", where colleagues and constituents can ask innovation-related questions. The coachbox data and input will also be the initial source for thinking about a diversified set of new learning services. Off-line coaching and informal knowledge exchange is already taking place and will now also be documented on-line.	



Output indicators	Targets	Business owners	Key actions	Reference framework
Output 2.4	A knowledge-sharing mechanism to stimulate innovative thinking among staff			
Indicator 2.4.1: Number of shifting-mindset sessions held	Baseline (2016): 2  End line (2021): 6 (two sessions per year, starting 2019)	LEARNING INNOVATION	LEARNING INNOVATION comes up with a tentative list of topics for shifting-mindset sessions.	Previous shifting-mindset sessions on virtual reality, drones and big data.

## ACTION AREA III: INFRASTRUCTURE

### OUTCOME 3: Increased institutional capacity to host dedicated-learning innovation activities on Campus

Outcome 3 indicator: Indicator A.3 in the 2018-19 P&B

Target: Learning laboratory functional by December 2019

Output indicators	Targets	Business owners	Key actions	Reference framework
Output 3.1.	A physical space dedicated to learning innovation, including virtual reality applications (the learning laboratory)			
Indicator 3.1.1: Development of a business plan for the lab	By June 2019	TDIR, FIS, LEARNING INNOVATION	Develop a business plan based on previous feasibility studies	<a href="https://vimeo.com/202369573">https://vimeo.com/202369573</a>
Indicator 3.1.2.: Refurbishment of Pavilion Africa 11	By December 2019	FIS	Redesign of existing refurbishment plans Commissioning of the refurbishment works	
Indicator 3.1.3.: Number of learning innovation activities in the learning lab per year	At least five dedicated lab activities per calendar year, starting 2010	LEARNING INNOVATION		

## ACTION AREA IV: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

### OUTCOME 4: Increased visibility of the Centre in the global Learning Innovation space

Outcome 4 indicator. The Centre's Learning Innovation activities are registered and acknowledged by the United Nations Innovation Network and other international networks dedicated to learning innovation

Target: At least 1 citation per year in publications by international networks dedicated to learning innovation

Output indicators	Targets	Business owners	Key actions	Reference framework
Output 4.1.	International partnerships with institutions promoting Learning Innovation			
Indicator 4.1.1.: Number of partnerships	Baseline : N/A Endline: 6 (2 partnerships per year, starting 2019)	LEARNING INNOVATION  PRODEV	Facilitate exchange visits and negotiate MoUs	
Output 4.2.	Better alignment with global best practice in learning innovation activities			
Indicator 4.2.1.: Number of benchmarking exercises	Baseline: N/A  Endline: 2 benchmarking exercises by 2021	LEARNING INNOVATION  Quality assurance function in TDIR	Develop benchmarking indicator catalogue  Facilitate a benchmarking agreement with one of the institutions linked to the Centre as a result of output 4.1.  Jointly implement the benchmarking exercise and jointly analyse findings to further refine learning innovation activities	

Output indicators	Targets	Business owners	Key actions	Reference framework
Output 4.3.	A voice in the global debate on learning innovation			
Indicator 4.3.1.: Number of articles posted every year on the Centre's learning blog	Baseline (2017): 20  End line (2021): 120 (40 articles per year)	LEARNING INNOVATION	An editorial plan will be developed that outlines the types of articles included on a weekly basis. This plan will be updated on a two-monthly basis in order to capture important trends.	
Indicator 4.3.2.: Number of blog visitors	Baseline: T.b.d. Endline: T.b.d.	LEARNING INNOVATION ICTS	Record and report annually the number of blog visitors.  Analyse numbers and refine blog offering in response.	
Indicator 4.3.3.: Number of references to the Centre's articles in newsletters or blogs released by the UN Innovation Network and other networks dedicated to the promotion of innovation	Baseline: N/A  End line: 5 references	LEARNING INNOVATION	We shall undertake targeted outreach throughout the UN Innovation Network, so that UN colleagues can share blog articles, depending on specific areas of interest.	<a href="https://www.uninnovation.network/">https://www.uninnovation.network/</a>