INNOVATION
QUARTERLY UPDATE

INCLUDES
Opportunities and calls for collaboration

http://
UNInnovation.network
Info@UNInnovation.network
@UN_Innovation

The UNIN "Innovation in the UN" Update includes highlights from the innovation activities of UNIN members. All members are invited to contribute. This update includes contributions from:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations · IFAD Investing in rural people · International Labour Organization · INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND · ITC International Training Centre · International Trade Centre · ITU · UNAIDS · UNDP Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

UN environment · UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · UNFPA · GLOBAL PULSE · UN HABITAT · UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency · ICC international computing centre · unicef

unicri advancing security, serving justice, building peace · UNIDO · UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE · UN WOMEN · UNWTO World Tourism Organization · WFP World Food Programme · World Health Organization · WIPO WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION · WMO

CEB · DCO · DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, POLICY AND COMPLIANCE · DPPA Preventing Conflict. Sustaining Peace · UNITED NATIONS ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific · UNOG THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA · UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY · UNOV/UNODC
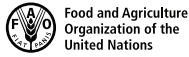
In alphabetical order

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

▶ **UNIN and WFP's Innovation Accelerator** hosted the first Interagency Innovation Bootcamp for innovators from 11 different UN Entities. Since then, several of the projects have been further developed and successfully launched, including UNIDO's SDG Impact Investment Platform, Young UN's conecta and the Atrium.

▶ The UN Behavioural Insights (BI) Week took place at UNHQ and UN offices around the world. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNITAR, UN Women and UNIN invited experts in the field of BI to share insights on how BI could be applied to the SDGs. To maintain momentum, UNIN will launch a UN BI Group in 2020!

▶ **In partnership with** the Resident Coordinator and the WFP Innovation Hub, UNIN launched the Tanzania Innovation Safari, a "slow-motion" bootcamp designed to meet the needs of country-level innovators. Innovators from 11 UN Entities are working with local innovation experts to identify problems, develop and test ideas. The Safari will culminate in an Innovation Pitch Night in January 2020.

▶ **Inspired by the Secretary-General** and supported by colleagues from 30 UN Entities, UNIN and the CEB Secretariat developed the UN Innovation Toolkit. The toolkit provides guidance along the dimensions of Strategy, Partnerships, Architecture, Culture and Evaluation.

▶ **UNIN hosted discussions** to surface good practices for setting up innovation functions and showcased successful innovations UN Entities are taking to scale.

The UN Innovation Network is an informal, collaborative network of innovators from UN Agencies. To find out more about the UNIN, please visit our website, where you can also subscribe to our mailing list.

INNOVATION

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

▶ **The Council of FAO has approved** the establishment of an Office for Innovation. The new unit will further consolidate and strengthen FAO's innovative spirit, including innovation of mindset, innovation of cooperation models, and innovation of application by digitalisation. It will help ensure that FAO applies modern science and technology and adopts innovative approaches when facing new situations and challenges. Areas of focus will cover sustainable agriculture, including agroecology, biodiversity, biotechnologies, and Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).

International Labour Organization

▶ **ILO established the Business Innovation Unit (BIU)** to be an internal thought partner, providing expertise, supporting staff with innovation, strategic problem-solving and team development. The BIU is an alternative to external consultants. Using in-depth knowledge of the ILO, it takes a people-centred approach to identifying and shaping changes in strategies, processes and team dynamics.

▶ **ILO implemented iTrack-Skills**, a free text-messaging tool created for graduates of vocational institutions to empower their participation in designing and adapting training programmes that respond to their needs. Responses are used to improve training programmes and the employability of people until they are gainfully employed.

▶ **ILO also launched** the SKILLS Innovation Facility to identify, develop and test innovative solutions addressing major skills challenges. Through Skills Challenge Calls, Innovation Labs and the Innovation Connections Network of innovators, the Facility identifies potential solutions to skills challenges, supports developing and testing prototypes, and facilitates knowledge sharing among innovators to create change.

Photo: FAO

IFAD — Investing in rural people

▶ **In 2019, IFAD established the Change, Delivery and Innovation Unit** (CDI) to help deliver better results quicker. The new Unit represents an investment to support innovation and find new ways of having more impact. The CDI will help lead the rollout of the UN Innovation Toolkit within IFAD in 2020.

▶ **A key initiative for CDI in 2019** was the launch of IFAD's first Innovation Challenge. CDI ran the challenge as a global competition via an online platform to allow all IFAD colleagues across country offices to participate and vote on the winners. IFAD funded ten proposals to test new ways of doing things, including through ideas involving Geographic Information Systems, machine learning, virtual reality and even board games. The first group of IFAD Innovators will use funds from the Challenge to complete their projects by the end of 2019, after which IFAD will look at scaling up results.

Photo: ILO

International Monetary Fund

▶ **During the World Bank & IMF Annual Meetings**, IMF Staff finalist teams from the Big Data for Surveillance Challenge pitched their ideas to a group of judges and the audience who casted their vote to represent one "virtual judge." The winners will receive funding of up to USD50,000 towards their project and will be invited to participate in the IMF iLab Accelerator Program.

▶ **The IMF's Innovation Lab** in collaboration with the Knowledge Management Unit launched an AI experiment with IBM Watson as a cognitive advisor for cross-country policy advice. Economists and experts alike can participate in helping train the model on IMF content.

Best of 2019

Photo: ITC-ILO

ITC International Training Centre

▶ **After working intensively** for more than a decade on Learning Innovation, ILO-ITC adopted innovation as a cross-cutting driver in its Strategic Plan. This will result in the construction of a fully fledged Learning Innovation Lab to be launched in 2020. ILO-ITC invite colleagues from across the UN and beyond to come to Turin to accelerate innovative thinking on complex interdisciplinary challenges.

▶ **ILO-ITC's foresight expertise has led to** a successful collaboration with UNESCO in a dedicated Futures Lab for the UN High-Level Committee on Programmes. Creating synergies across agencies in thematic innovation expertise is one of the results of this innovation network. Soon a network of foresight practitioners will be launched through the HLCP.

▶ **You can join the** Forum on Capacity Development for training institutions jointly organised by ITC-ILO and UNSSC.

ITU

▶ **The** AI Commons **initiative** was announced at the 3rd AI for Good Global Summit and will provide an open framework for collaboration and a decentralised system to democratise problem solving with AI. AI adopters will connect with AI specialists and data owners to align incentives for innovation and develop AI solutions to problems. The 4th AI for Good Global Summit will be held from 4 - 8 May 2020.

▶ **A Focus Group on 'AI for autonomous and assisted driving'** FG-AI4AD was created at ITU-T to work towards the establishment of international standards to monitor and assess the performance of the AI 'Drivers' steering automated vehicles. Building trust in automated vehicles is a prerequisite to their success in reducing 1.3 million road deaths each year. The Focus Group's primary objective is to validate that the driving behaviour of automated vehicles presents evidence to justify this public trust. The group is open to all interested parties.

International Trade Centre

▶ **In October 2019, the Innovation Lab hosted** the Accelerate 2030 global finalists in partnership with the Geneva Impact Hub, and introduced a mentorship programme between the finalists and ITC staff, which will stretch over the upcoming months. Ten ventures had the chance to present their sustainable business ideas in a pitching session.

▶ **The Innovation Lab launched** a new podcast series in December 2019. Trade Forward brings conversations with experts who give their insights on the intersection of innovation in trade and development. Stay tuned!

▶ **Part of the Lab's mission** is to unleash creativity at ITC. One of the activities promoted happened in October 2019 when the Lab hosted a training on "Agile Management Methods", facilitated by expert trainers from Agilist, focusing on values such as trust, flexibility, empowerment and collaboration. From this training ITC staff will be able to share the methodology among their teams.

#AIforGood
Accelerating progress towards the SDGs

Photo: ITU

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

Best of
2019

Photo: UNAIDS

⊛ UNAIDS

▶ In May 2019, UNAIDS launched the Health Innovation Exchange, a platform that identifies challenges faced by countries and connects them with innovations that have high potential for impact towards SDG3 "Good Health & Well-being", as well as facilitates investments for sustainable implementation. Since then, the Exchange has delivered:

- A global innovation marketplace visited by
  50+ Ministers of Health
- USD80million brokered in potential funding
  for innovations
- A database of high-impact innovations ready to scale
- New production sites for innovations facilitated
  in eight countries
- Radical price reduction of rh-insulin in lower-middle income countries negotiated
- Cross-sectoral partnerships for health systems innovations in Ethiopia facilitated
- India innovation growth accelerator launched in partnership with Government of India and Tata Social Alpha

UN
DP
Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

▶ The Accelerator Lab Teams are now firmly embedded within UNDP's existing country teamed and working across a range of SDGs. The new Lab Team Members bring a breadth of new skills and experiences to accelerate development:

- 70% of the Lab Teams bring experience from the private sector, research and government
- 45% have an understanding of data science, big data, machine learning and AI
- 50% of the Teams have experience on ethnographic research and citizen-generated data

▶ **With the teams established**, the Network has also developed action plans for all 60 Labs. To learn more about the Labs, the teams and what they are working on, follow the Accelerator Labs on Twitter (@UNDPAccLabs), keep up with the blog or read a few of the latest pieces here:

- A glimpse into LinkedIn data to understand
  Serbian labour out-migration
- An atlas of local solutions in Democratic
  Republic of Congo
- The informal journey to experimentation

UN
environment

▶ **This year, UNEP presented** the environment pillar of the UN Solutions Summit, a catalytic initiative lifting innovators advancing the SDGs, culminating at UN headquarters during the UN General Assembly. The UN Solutions Summit is hosted by the UNLocal2030 initiative in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and organised by shift7 and UN Foundation, in cooperation with the Global Innovation Exchange. 1,400 applications were submitted from 141 countries. 10 extraordinary SDG solution makers were selected after a review process involving the co-organisers, UNEP, and two independent Selection Committees. As the leading UN environmental authority, UNEP helped narrow the field of environmental innovations from hundreds of solutions to the challenges facing our planet. Winners presented their projects in the SDG Media Zone, and benefitted from mentorship sessions across an additional 2 days with Acceleration Partners. UNEP's ASG Satya Tripathi, provided a keynote address on the first day.

Photo: UNDP

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

▶ **In the past 20 years**, more than 1.35 million people have died as a result of natural disasters, and many of these deaths were preventable. To save lives and support first responders and decision-makers, UNESCO is leveraging new technologies to create a set of disaster response tools as part of its I-REACT project. The tools utilise drones for improved mapping, wearables for geographical positioning, augmented-reality for communication and information visualisation, as well as a mobile phone app for situational information sharing. Supported by machine learning algorithms and advanced semantic techniques, the mobile app analyses social media and reports real-time crowd-sourced data. Reflecting three years of development, the I-REACT core technology will be released as a free, open-source software for larger adoption and use. Take a look at an introductory video here.

Asking questions

Accessing information

Finding Health Services

Connecting to social media

Best of 2019

Image: UNFPA

Photo: UNICEF

UNFPA

▶ **UNFPA launched its global challenge for** new innovations to ensure sexual and reproductive health for all and end unmet need for family planning. Eight UNFPA teams joined a bootcamp and design sprint with WFP Innovation to apply design thinking and rapidly prototype their solutions. Teams mined big data to uncover pregnancy myths, tested digital approaches for youth to access SRH information beyond schools and clinics, and designed ways for facilities to track health commodities in real-time. Take a look at the key takeaways here.

▶ **For the** Nairobi Summit on ICPD25, UNFPA organised the Pamoja Zone, an interactive space with community leaders and activists, and featured lightning talks by experts showcasing new data innovations. Participants got hands-on training with a new global population data platform, and joined a mapathon to identify girls at risk of female genital mutilation. The Nairobi Summit also held an interactive session on scaling digital innovations to reach universal health coverage.

GLOBAL PULSE

▶ **In 2019, Global Pulse worked to unearth** new ways to measure changes in social cohesion, develop predictive modeling of migration crises and natural disaster impacts, and predict the emergence of discriminatory discourse, hate speech and polarisation from fake news and deepfakes imagery and video.

▶ **Global Pulse built** software platforms using AI to automatically count structures in refugee settlements (PulseSatellite), help analyse social media and radio content for indigenous languages (Qatalog), and inform response following natural disasters (MIND).

▶ **Efforts of the UN Privacy Policy Group**, co-led by Global Pulse, led to the development and implementation of the first UN Principles on Personal Data Protection. Global Pulse improved its Risks, Harms and Benefits assessment tool, a checklist to help minimise the risks and maximise the positive impacts of data and AI, available to all practitioners.
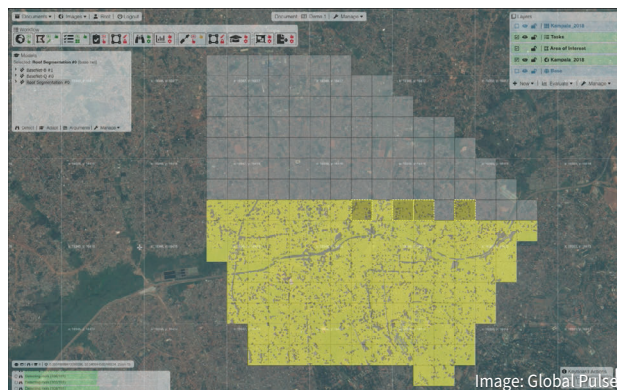

Image: Global Pulse

Photo: ICC

Best of
2019

UN⊕HABITAT

▶ **In 2019, UN-Habitat strengthened its focus** on frontier technologies and innovation as part of the development of a new strategic plan 2020-2023: UN-Habitat published a report showing how video games and mixed reality can be used for public participation in urban design and make smart cities more inclusive. It used mobile apps as part of large-scale public participation processes in Latin America to monitor SDG11. A project in Nairobi used Internet of Things sensors to monitor pit latrines and septic tanks in low-income settlements.

▶ **In Southern Africa**, UN-Habitat used the innovative City Resilience Action Planning Tool (CityRAP) to assist 28 cities in 11 countries strengthen risk reduction efforts. A new podcast told the story of 580 young women in Somalia's booming construction sector. The themes of World Habitat Day, World Cities Day and the UN-Habitat Assembly related to innovation – providing opportunities to advance ideas on urban innovation and smart cities.
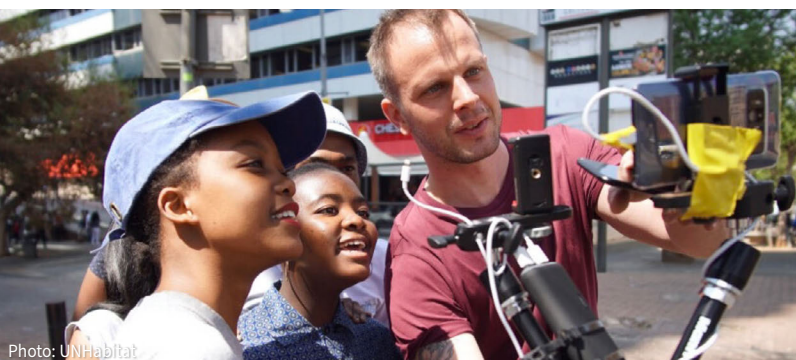

Photo: UNHabitat

ICC | international computing centre

▶ **UNJSPF and ICC partner** together are streamlining secure pension processes worldwide. ICC and UNJSPF have partnered and created a solution to digitise the UN Pensions Fund's Certificate of Entitlement (certifying that beneficiaries are who they say they are, are still living, and reside at registered locations) process with blockchain, biometrics and a mobile app.

▶ **ICC has built a** data lake for UN OCHA, a raw data repository to be used across 30 country offices in the five regions where OCHA coordinates humanitarian financing, policy, advocacy, and information management.

▶ **UNHCR and WFP with ICC**, have unveiled plans for a UN Digital Solutions Center, with cutting-edge technologies to address common operational challenges faced by both Agencies and the wider UN.

⊕ UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

▶ **This year,** UNHCR's Innovation Service began its regional expansion with an extended team based out of Kenya and new colleagues based in Rwanda and Panama. While the Service has always supported a network of innovators across the organisation – this move formalises new regional capacities to support UNHCR's field operations.

▶ **In response to the Venezuela situation**, the Service has been supporting digital inclusion by bringing in dedicated resources and implementing a number of projects underway in the region covering enhancing digital access across Colombia, Peru, and Brazil, in cooperation with NetHope, telecoms regulators and mobile operators.

▶ **The Innovation Service was selected** to support UN Global Pulse's first cohort of the Data Fellows. In 2019, the team hosted one of the Fellows who supported UNHCR's Project Jetson experiment which aims to predict the number of IDPs arrivals in the different regions of Somalia and refugees at the Ethiopian border.
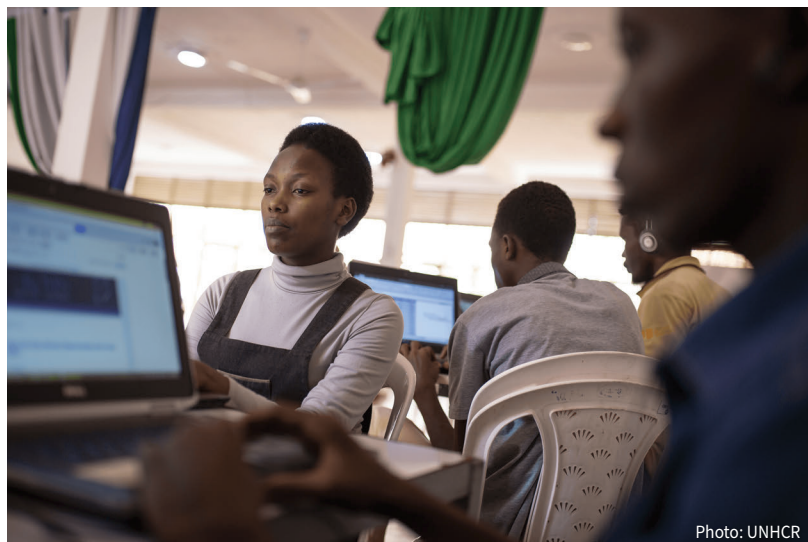

Photo: UNHCR

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UN INNOVATION NETWORK

unicef ⬤

▶ UNICEF launched a **CryptoCurrency Fund** and is now able to **receive, hold and disburse** donations of cryptocurrencies (Ether and Bitcoin) through this **first-of-its-kind** Fund in the UN.

▶ UNICEF expanded its network of **drone testing corridors** and further invested in developing an ecosystem for drones to deliver opportunities for children: UNICEF announced the first cohort of drone investments through its Venture Fund and launched West Africa's first **drones for good corridor** in Sierra Leone. UNICEF's Drones Programme was selected as one of the 25 best practice projects invited to the **Expo 2020 Dubai**.

▶ In 2019, UNICEF and ITU launched **GIGA**, a **GAVI** for Gigabytes. GIGA aims to finance connectivity for every school in the world and provide safe, useful, open-source tech to young people. The GIGA initiative received a **WIRED25** Award and is a Secretary-General endorsed collaboration with several countries signed on as leads/pathfinders and a range of **opportunities for collaboration**.

Photo: UNICEF

Photo: UNIDO

UNIDO

▶ Following UNIDO's participation in the UN Innovation Network's **interagency innovation bootcamp** that helped boost progress on the development of UNIDO's SDG Impact Investment Platform (SIIP), the project team proceeded to **present the Platform at the 18th General Conference of UNIDO Industry 2030: Innovate, Connect, Transform our Future**, held in November in Abu Dhabi. A blockchain voting tool was used for the first time, enabling the audience to vote for companies of their choice, after each company presented its own business proposal and pledged SDG impacts. To further its innovation work, UNIDO joined forces with Vienna University of Economics and Business to create an innovation space, in addition to partnering with other Vienna-based Organisations in collaborating on topics such as behavioural analysis and finance innovation, including robotic process automation.

unicri
advancing security, serving justice, building peace

▶ UNICRI held an opening **ceremony** of its **Centre for AI and Robotics** in The Hague at the Peace Palace in July in the presence of Member States, international organisations, academia and industry. The Centre, which is operational since 2017, seeks to advance understanding of AI, robotics and the broader ecosystem of related technologies, from the perspective of crime, justice and the rule of law, and to explore their use for social good and contributing to a future free of crime.

▶ The UNICRI Centre and INTERPOL issued a **report** on how law enforcement can benefit from AI, while at the same time avoiding possible pitfalls; convened a **global meeting** on AI for law enforcement at INTERPOL's Innovation Centre; and, together with the Data Science Initiative, challenged researchers to develop technical tools at the **Hackathon for Peace, Justice and Security** and follow-up **workshop** to support law enforcement, judiciary, and media to identify **deepfakes** created with a generative adversarial network.

Photo: UNIDO

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

Best of 2019

Photo: UNWomen

UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE

▶ **A UNSSC highlight was the launch** of the UN Innovation Toolkit - developed by the Chief Executives Board in collaboration with UNIN, and now hosted by the College. The Toolkit features an online diagnostic, linked to UN-derived Tools, and is available system-wide.

▶ A launch event, held in Madrid, saw participants examining the Toolkit and tasked with 100-day challenges centred around its mainstreaming. Speakers included Jens Wandel, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Reforms, and Dr Frederik Pferdt, Google's Chief Innovation Evangelist. Via a recorded message, the UN Secretary-General said: "Innovation across the UN system is essential for us to deliver at a scale and pace needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030"; words echoed by other UN leaders.

▶ **The UNSSC is now collecting stories** of use, and will be designing learning products which further augment the Toolkit. We look forward to collaborating with UNIN and its members.

UNWTO
World Tourism Organization

▶ **In 2019, UNWTO launched** three Global Start-Up competitions, which received applications from 5,000+ entrepreneurs from over 150 countries. The top finalists secured more than USD 20 million funding from investors within the UNWTO network, participated in an acceleration programme, connected with local and national governments to pilot and scale-up projects.

▶ **Other highlights include:**
  - The creation of the first start-up network for the tourism sector
  - The development of twelve Tourism Tech Adventure Forums focused on developing the tourism innovation ecosystem
  - The establishment of 30+ new public-private partnerships focused on innovation
  - The creation of the UNWTO Innovation Hub Network
  - The creation of 2 regional innovation hubs in Europe and Latin America
  - The creation of the Tourism Online Academy
  - The launch of first Tourism Minister Summit focused on investments
  - The creation of a Tourism Investment Network with more than 200 active investors worldwide
  - The development of the foreign direct investment guidelines in tourism with the Financial Times

UN WOMEN

▶ **UN Women co-hosted the** UN behavioural Insights Week, presenting several case studies from Uruguay and Georgia (using BI to increase teachers' reporting of violence against children and women) and hosting a workshop on the types of problems that are amenable to applying Behavioural Insights.

▶ **In collaboration with UNDP**, UN Women completed the REACH pilot project in Tonga and Samoa, introducing innovative mobile service delivery model to visit rural communities and providing them with information on their social, economic and legal rights.

▶ **UN Women officially launched** its new publication Leveraging digital finance for gender equality and women's empowerment during the UN General Assembly.

UNWTO POWERED BY ie UNIVERSITY
TOURISM ONLINE ACADEMY

Photo: UNWTO

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

INNOVATION

Photo: WFP

World Food Programme

▸ In 2019, the WFP Innovation Accelerator supported 35 innovations to disrupt hunger across 30+ countries, growing its total portfolio to more than 60 projects. Eight of these are currently being scaled-up, including H2Grow, WFP's hydroponics project, which expanded to 7 countries, reaching over 10,000 people, and which was featured at the 2019 UN General Assembly and Paris Peace Forum.

▸ The Innovation Accelerator hosted eight bootcamps to provide innovation training, mentorship and support to 56 teams, including our first-ever bootcamps outside of Munich in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and San Francisco, USA, helping to support the global innovation ecosystem.

▸ The Accelerator also championed new partnerships to drive progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, leveraging our innovation knowledge and expertise to offer innovation services with new external partners including the UN Innovation Network, UNFPA, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Cargill.

WIPO
WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

▸ WIPO is using a speech-to-text system to significantly reduce costs and time required in producing records for WIPO meetings. These records are now regularly published online.

▸ WIPO's AI-based systems, principally WIPO Translate and WIPO Speech-to-Text, are increasingly in demand, driving significant licensing activity in 2019, including new UN and IP office partnerships.

▸ WIPO's one-stop shop experience for innovators and creators, the WIPO IP Portal, launched in September 2019 and provides a seamless single sign-on experience to WIPO's full range of IP services.

▸ A WIPO project to provide large-scale hosting of the Organisation's ICT applications in the cloud progressed during 2019 with a number of high-priority applications migrating to the new infrastructure.

World Health Organization

▸ The WHO Africa Innovation Challenge selected 30 innovators applying fresh thinking to unmet health needs in Africa.

▸ This year's Innovate4AMR challenge addressed antimicrobial resistance in low-resource healthcare settings. Ten winning teams attended a capacity building workshop at WHO and received 3 days of mentorship on their projects from WHO experts.

▸ New WHO partnerships, including Google Fit and FIFA, are encouraging people to get moving, in line with WHO recommendations on physical activity.

▸ The WHO Academy aims to transform lifelong learning in health by bringing together the best health expertise, learning science and technologies to save lives, serve the vulnerable, and keep the world safe from health emergencies. Prototypes will be showcased at the May 2020 World Health Assembly.

WMO World Meteorogical Organization

▸ The WMO HydroHub, which is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, awarded CHF100.000 to Northern Widget LLC for the best contribution to its Innovation Call on Operational Hydrometry end of 2018. Since then, WMO has collected feedback from the user community to ensure that the proposed solutions are tailored to meet the needs of least-developed countries. A telemetered data logger and an array of sensors are now ready for deployment in Bhutan and Afghanistan. Designs aim at low-cost and low-maintenance solutions while providing ample power supply and data storage, fully sealed and ruggedised housing, and modularisation of the different components to improve scalability. The ongoing use of open licenses and documentation in national languages enable local manufacturing and maintenance independent of foreign aid.

Best of 2019

UNGA Resolutions
Automatic Information Extraction
and Knowledge Elicitation

Image: CEB

UNITED NATIONS

CEB — Chief Executives Board for Coordination

▶ CEB's High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) focused on the future of business operations, UN system workforce and finance, and on improving the wellness of personnel, embracing sustainability and harnessing information from data and documents. The Akoma Ntoso initiative on machine-readable documents, led by HLCM with UN-DGACM and FAO, was enriched by a partnership with Microsoft and a successful crowdsourcing challenge, as well as the development of SDG digital identifiers for Linked Open Data format (in collaboration with UN-DESA and UN-DGACM).

▶ CEB's High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) launched two forward-looking initiatives. An informal HLCP Foresight Network, led by UNESCO, will serve as a system-wide platform promoting foresight capacities. A pilot cross-entity predicative analytics exercise, led by UNHCR, will focus on the inter-connectedness of displacement, climate risks, food insecurity, increased violence and threats to livelihoods in the Sahel region.

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

▶ Discussions in a series of informal consultations across UNHQ departments and two design-thinking workshops reinforced the need to nurture a new working culture with a non-siloed approach to innovation and business transformation. A strategy for innovation in the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance was developed to focus on raising awareness of innovative concepts and practices, ensuring staff skills are fit-for-purpose, and co-creating a culture open to innovation and measured risk-taking.

▶ A series of innovation briefings were held including speakers from UNDP, UNICEF, SwissLeap, and others. A workshop with the UK's Policy Lab, which is focused on bringing innovative and people-centred approaches to policy development, took a deep-dive into policy-making, co-creation, and building a culture to drive business transformation and innovation in the Secretariat. DMSPC's goals are to empower staff, create safe spaces in which creativity and innovation can thrive, ensure broad buy-in, and change long-held mindsets and behaviours both at the personal and institutional level.

DCO — Development Coordination Office

▶ Innovation is at the heart of UN reform efforts and since the Secretary-General's Report of December 2017 this has included a new expanded role for UN resident coordinators to cultivate innovation and partnerships as inclusive approaches for reaching the 2030 Agenda.

▶ In 2019, the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Sri Lanka launched, Unlocked a trilingual online space that crowdsources citizen opinions to inform policy makers. The platform brings together diverse stakeholders to talk about real issues that impact everyday lives in Sri Lanka and reached over 1000 people through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram in five months. Similarly, the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Kuwait launched a monthly UNTalk Series bringing together online and offline communities including UN entities, the World Bank and IMF with national partners, civil society and the International Community.

Photo: DCO

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

INNOVATION

UNITED NATIONS

DPPA DPO

▶ **Throughout 2019, DPO expanded its efforts** towards data-informed strategic decision-making within the peace and security pillar, including through the creation of a Data Action Plan, data innovation in reporting to the Security Council and the General Assembly, and new approaches to Performance Measurement and Situational Awareness.

▶ **Innovations in Member State reporting** were primarily driven out of the DPPA-DPO Information Management Unit and included data-driven infographics and one-pagers on UN Missions distributed to Security Council, visualisations of progress made under the Action 4 Peace initiative, data-driven Country Profiles, and a data-driven dashboard on Official Development Assistance related to peacebuilding in collaboration with the Peacebuilding Support Office.

▶ **For onboarding all 14 Peacekeeping Missions** onto the UN iSeek intranet and fully integrating the Missions into the internal communication platform for all UN Staff, two colleagues, Ms Christina Goodness and Ms Avishan Bodjnoud, were awarded the Secretary-General's Award for Staff Engagement – congratulations from the team!

DPPA DPPA

▶ **In 2019, DPPA launched** various cross-disciplinary innovation projects in the peace and security context, such as the Social Media Analysis and Natural Language Processing Project, AI for Peace, enhanced storytelling through Virtual Reality, new methods of political-economy analysis through the DPPA/DPO Oil Working Group, the E-Analytics Guide on using new technologies for conflict prevention and peace-making, Digital Mediation Toolkit.

▶ **Responding to needs from the field** and the call of the Secretary-General to keep up with the scale and speed of innovation, DPPA has established the Innovation Cell, a dedicated capacity to explore, pioneer and leverage new methodologies in support of its mandate delivery, incl. digital technologies, behavioural insights, immersive visualisation, and other cross-cutting means. The Innovation Cell serves as a catalyst for forward-thinking initiatives across the peace and security pillar and the DPPA/DPO's field presences to strengthen the UN's conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding effort in this spirit.

Screenshots from 360° VR video on the work of the UN in Iraq

Image: DPPA

ESCAP
UNITED NATIONS
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

▶ **ESCAP's Environmental Management System** is a set of sustainability policies. In 2019, ESCAP was the first to ban of single-use plastic in a UN compound. This prevented over 1 million items from becoming waste. Policies also helped reduce carbon emissions by 8%, energy usage by 10%, and water usage by 18%.

▶ **ESCAP's Technology and Innovation Chief**, Jonathan Wong, received the inaugural Schwab Public Social Intrapreneurship Award at the World Economic Forum for

ESCAP's work supporting governments to harness the power of social innovation and entrepreneurship.

▶ **ESCAP's new** Resource Efficiency Simulation Tool (REST) uses data to enable countries to simulate the potential economic, social and environmental gains of enhancing material, energy and water use efficiency. REST helps awareness raising and advocacy among policymakers. In the past 6 months, REST reached over 1000 users.

UN INNOVATION NETWORK

UNITED NATIONS

UNOG
THE UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE AT GENEVA

▶ UNOG hosted a Dragon's Den, an idea pitching forum in October 2019, modelled on the TV show Dragons' Den. 16 ideas were submitted by staff and five teams were shortlisted to pitch their ideas to a panel of senior management experts. Two winning entries (audience and dragons' choice) were selected for prototyping. You can watch the video of the event here.

▶ The SDG Lab, in collaboration with the Swiss private finance community and other stakeholders, organised an interactive, community-driven sustainable finance week focused on innovation and collaboration. Building Bridges Week featured 31 events by 52 partners and 1000+ attendees.

▶ The Department of Conference Management's Innov8 team coordinated with experts from NYU and George Washington University to deliver a five-part AI Webinar Series for more than 120 UN Geneva staff to gain introductory knowledge of AI and identify how it could be applied in their daily work.

**UNITED NATIONS
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▶ OICT and the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, with support from SAP and Deloitte, launched Reboot the Earth to allow over 1,000 youth across the world build solutions to fight climate change. The winners presented their solutions at the UN Youth Climate Summit.

▶ Unite Ideas, the public engagement / crowdsourcing platform, has reached a significant milestone: 10,000 registered users! The platform is open to all UN Entities to post innovation challenges.

▶ OICT, UNICEF and Finland organised a conference on Frontier Technologies for accelerating the Sustainable Development to provide the stakeholders with a platform for exchange of best practices and experiences on the use of Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain.

▶ OICT will soon launch Alba, an AI-based ChatBot. Alba will have a number of practical functionalities upon launching (e.g. email, calendars, news, FAQs) and OICT will work with other UN departments to build new skills for Alba throughout 2020.

United Nations Office at Vienna
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNOV/UNODC

▶ The UNOV/UNODC Innovation team launched the "New Technologies Speaker Series" through an internal collaboration on the topics of artificial intelligence, blockchain and big data. These events, led by experts in their fields, brought more than 100 participants to each session, generating ideas and dialogue among staff.

▶ UNOV/UNODC joined UNIDO and IAEA to host the Vienna chapter of the UN Behavioural Insights Week. More than 130 staff members joined Professor Erich Kirchler, Head of the Department of Applied Psychology at the University of Vienna, in this interesting session.

▶ The Innovation Team is translating ideas into action through a forthcoming strategy document that focuses on technology, organisational agility, new ways of working and creating an enabling environment for innovation.

Photo: UNOG

Opportunities & Calls for Collaborations

TechLunch with us

ITU and UNIN are launching a new series of monthly TechLunches in New York to demystify new technologies (i.e. blockchain, AI, IoT, cloud-computing), introduce them to a non-technical audience within the UN; and show how such technologies are relevant to the SDGs. If you are an expert in a frontier technology and would like to share your knowledge, please reach out.

Join the #NewWork movement

The Department of Management Strategy, Policy & Compliance and the UN Office in Geneva will expand the #NewWork movement Secretariat-wide. The initiative aims to enable the shift toward a more client-oriented, data-driven, innovative and strategic workplace culture. It aims to mainstream best practice and embed continuous learning by sharing lessons learned and identifying new opportunities to scale up successful projects. We invite you to join the #NewWork network!

Share your stories

UNHCR is always looking for great stories, ideas, and opinions on humanitarian innovation and creativity for our digital and print publications. If you have one you'd like to share with us, send us an email!

Apply to the Health for All Film Festival

In 2020, WHO will host the first-ever Health for All Film Festival to raise awareness on important health issues. Submissions are open until 30 January 2020 - share your ideas with us!

Participate in the Anti-Corruption Innovation Challenge

The International Monetary Fund and IBM Research launched the first public Anti-Corruption Innovation Challenge, which is seeking collaborative solutions from member country authorities, civil society organisations, and staff from the Fund and other international organisations. The initiative is sponsored by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs. IMF's iLab welcomes the opportunity to explore inter-agency collaboration on new innovation challenges in 2020.

Engage across borders and institutions to tackle the problems around corruption

Join the challenge

ANTI-CORRUPTION

INNOVATION
Image: IMF

Help connect every school in the World

UNICEF and ITU launched GIGA, an initiative to connect every school to the Internet, and every young person to information, opportunity and choice. UNICEF and ITU are inviting other UN Entities to collaborate in the initiative.

Tap into AI expertise

Given WIPO's growing expertise in artificial intelligence systems and the growing interest across the UN network in these applications, the WIPO Secretariat is ready to share its knowledge with any organisation to help them optimise translation and conference meeting activities. To discuss collaborations, please contact us.

The UN Innovation Network is an informal, collaborative network of innovators from UN Agencies. To find out more about the UNIN, please visit our website, where you can also subscribe to our mailing list.

UN INNOVATION NETWORK