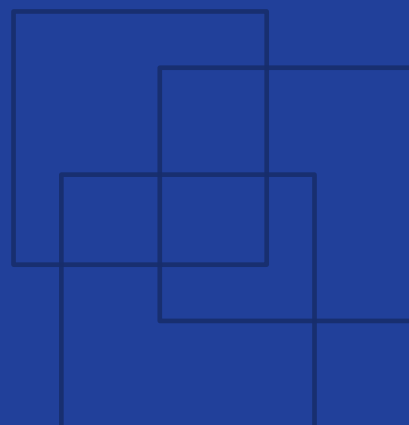




International
Labour
Organization

Setting up your factory for FIT

An introduction for the factory



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Factory Improvement Toolset

The Factory Improvement Toolset (FIT) is an innovative self-facilitated, activity-based learning approach designed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to create more decent and sustainable employment. FIT supports manufacturers in global supply chains to improve productivity, competitiveness and working conditions by upgrading production systems and factory practices.

FIT has been developed to be a sustainable, time- and cost-efficient option for supporting factories to enhance productivity through improved business practices and working conditions. FIT focuses on areas of production improvement and actions to be taken specific to each participating factory. It can be utilized as stand-alone learning tools or to complement other training programmes.

With each module lasting no more than 2.5 hours, FIT enables factories to train personnel, whilst minimizing interference with production realities. The easy-to-use methodology makes it possible to rapidly scale the implementation to reach a large cohort of trainees across multiple production facilities.

Working in small groups, participants review real-life situations and engage in discussions to determine improvements to be made in factory without an external trainer or specialist. This self-facilitated, activity-based and highly participatory learning approach positions participants as both student and teacher and makes the toolset self-tailored to the needs and interests of each group.

About this module

The FIT module 'Setting up your factory for FIT' is designed for garment manufacturers to prepare for the FIT process. Participants will work to complete a number of steps that will help them become more familiar with FIT. This module takes about 2.5 hours to complete.

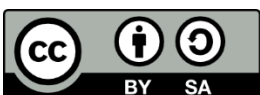
Upon completion of the training, participants should have:

- Understood the FIT programme and the conditions that needs to be in place in the factory for the programme to be impactful.
- Prepared for the FIT process by setting up the FIT team and identifying the factory's needs.
- Understood how to prepare for and run FIT sessions in the factory.
- Learnt how to track and measure FIT results.
- Identified any remaining actions to be taken in order to set up the factory for the FIT process.

The **Factory Improvement Toolset** of the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** are developed and provided by the ILO's **Enterprises Department**.

Authors: Sara Andersson, Alix Machiels, Charles Bodwell

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Guidelines for successfully using the training tool

Read out-loud

The FIT tool is designed for participants to take turns reading the instructions in the modules out loud to the group. At least one member of the group should be selected in the beginning of the session to take this responsibility.

Work as a group

Always work in groups of 5-7 during a FIT session. The programme will not be successful if participants work independently or do not collaborate with each other.

Be active

Encourage everyone in the group to actively contribute to the discussion. Ensure that no single group member dominates the discussion or does not participate at all.

Monitor the time

Select one member of the group to monitor the time for each activity and remind the group when it is time to move to the next exercise.

Complete the action plan

Complete the action plan at the end of the session. This will help ensure that FIT results in improvements in the factory. Review the plan a while after the session to make sure that actions in the plan has been completed accordingly.

Icons

A set of icons is used throughout the modules to provide easy to recognize reference points for different tasks within each session and activity.



Read out loud

One member of the group should read out loud to the rest of group.



Knowledge link

Knowledge and skills are linked to other FIT learning resources and support.



Time allotted

Indicates how much time each sessions and activity should take.



Supplies needed

Indicates that supplies may be necessary to complete the session.



Begin step-by-step instructions

Indicates that the step-by-step instructions for an activity are beginning.



Think about it

Indicates additional information for the participants to think about.

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Session 1

Business case study

Goals

Preparing you for the type of discussions you will have with other group members throughout the learning module and understanding the benefits of being exposed to different perspectives.

Understanding better how FIT can help you improve your factory and how to prepare for the process.

Session 1

Overview



One member should read the full session out loud to the rest of group



15 minutes



Learning manual, pens, markers and poster paper

A business case study presents a real-life situation for learners to reflect on and discuss with other group members. By discussing the case, students learn from others' ideas and perspectives, and develop an understanding of the topic at hand within the workplace.



One group member reads the case study out loud



The whole group discusses the case study



Everyone develops a deeper understanding of the topic

Activities

Activity

1



15 minutes

Case study review and respond

The case study below presents a situation that could happen in real life.



Instructions:

- 1) As a group, listen to one member read the case study below while following along in your learning module.

Nia is a new factory manager at the HS garment factory. She spots several problems in the factory. For example, quality inspectors do not check all garments in the final inspection. This has resulted in buyers increasingly rejecting shipments. Workers are also complaining about the conditions in the factory, and especially the lack of clean staff facilities such as lavatories.

Nia decides that several changes are needed in the factory. She asks a friend who is managing another factory what she can do. “I would recommend you to use the Factory Improvement Toolset (FIT) developed by the ILO. It is low-cost and easy-to-use and can help you make necessary improvements in your factory”, her friend tells her. “But remember that factory improvement is a continuous process and not a quick fix.”

Nia decides to use FIT for her factory as well. She invites supervisors from two departments and suggests FIT as a way to improve operations. The supervisors approve of the suggestion. They then together select the FIT modules that seem best suited to the needs of the factory. Over the next few months, Nia is busy overseeing the factory improvement process. She regularly meets with the supervisors who are responsible for making sure that their teams apply their new knowledge and implement new practices. After a few months, the factory has made several improvements and Nia is happy. “We are going to work to continuously improve our operations using FIT” she says.

- 2) Together, discuss Nia’s situation by answering the three questions in table 1 on the next page.

Table 1. Questions about Nia's situation

1. What is Nia doing to improve the situation in the factory?

2. What do you think Nia and the staff did right to improve the situation in the factory?
Why was she successful?

3. What does Nia's friend mean by "factory improvement is a continuous process and not a quick fix"?

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Session 2

Learning about the topic

Goals

Understanding what a factory improvement process is, and how FIT can help you improve the factory.

Preparing for the FIT process by setting up your FIT team and identifying your FIT needs.

Understanding how to prepare for and run FIT sessions in the factory.

Learning how to track and measure your FIT results.

Session 2

Overview



One member should read the full session out loud to the rest of group



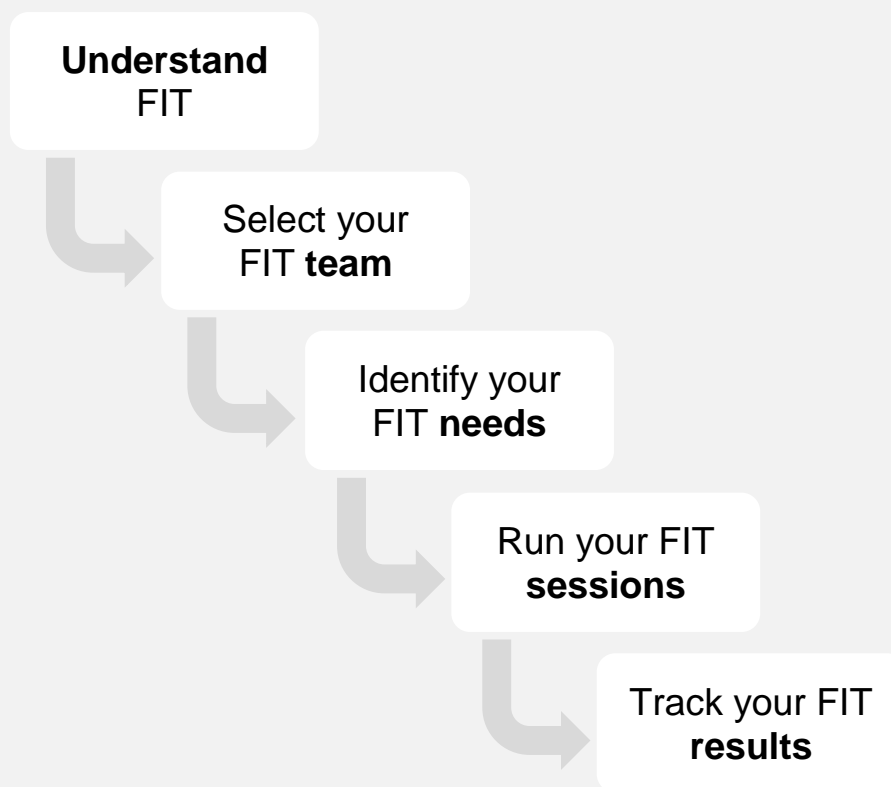
110 minutes



Learning manual, pens, and markers

If you take this module, it means that your factory has decided to engage in a FIT factory improvement process. Good for you!

Factory improvement should be a continuous process, one where factory teams regularly consider and take actions in order to enhance the performance of their factory. In this module, you will learn more about continuous improvement and how you can use the ILO's FIT programme for this purpose. The module will cover the five different steps below.



Activities

Activity

2a



15 minutes

What is continuous factory improvement?

In this activity, you will discuss what a continuous improvement process is and how FIT can help drive continuous improvement in your factory.



Instructions:

- 1) Individually, think for a minute about the meaning of 'continuous factory improvement'. Then, take turns and describe what you think it is to the rest of the group.
- 2) Together, discuss in the group to find out if anyone has been involved in a factory improvement process before. If this is the case, let the person share with the rest of the group:
 - What activities took place?
 - Was the initiative successful or not? Why?
 - What did you learn from this process?
- 3) Together, discuss why your factory is using FIT and what you want it to result in. In table 2 below, write down how you hope that FIT can benefit your factory.

Table 2. How a factory improvement process can benefit your factory

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Activity

2b



15 minutes

Introduction to the Factory Improvement Toolset (FIT)

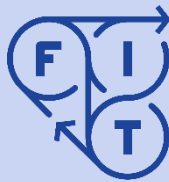
FIT was designed by the ILO to support garment factories. In this activity, you will learn more about FIT and how FIT tools can be used to introduce continuous improvement in a factory.



Instructions:

- 1) Have a participant read aloud the text box below.
- 2) Together, complete the quiz about FIT in table 3 on the next page by circling what you think are the right answers. Then, compare your answers with the solutions provided on the bottom of the page. TIP: More than one alternative can be correct!

Introduction to the



**Factory
Improvement
Toolset**

FIT was developed by the ILO to help factories improve their productivity, working conditions and competitiveness. There are more than 50 different FIT modules. Each module takes 2 - 2.5 hours to complete. The FIT approach is designed for both managers and workers.

When taking a FIT module, participants are divided into small groups of 5-7. The groups discuss real factory situations, share knowledge and experiences with each other and work together to identify improvements to be made in their factory.

The group learning methodology has many benefits for participants. For example, it helps participants improve their problem-solving ability and creativity. It also helps develop the teamwork and social skills of participants.

FIT was designed to help factories solve problems and make improvements. During the FIT sessions, participants discuss and apply new knowledge on their own factory. At the end of the FIT session, participants must come up with an action plan. This is an important part of FIT, as it is the action plan that will guide factories on how to make improvements in the factory after they have completed a FIT session.

Table 3. The Factory Improvement Toolset quiz

1. Why did the ILO develop the FIT programme for garment factories?	a) To improve their productivity b) To improve their competitiveness c) To improve their working conditions
2. How many FIT modules are there?	a) 20 b) 35 c) 50+
3. How long does it take to complete a FIT module?	a) 1 day b) 2 - 2.5 hours c) 6 hours
4. Who should participate in FIT sessions?	a) Managers b) Workers c) Both managers and workers
5. How many participants should be in each group when running a FIT session?	a) 3 - 4 b) 5 - 7 c) 9 - 12
6. What are participants doing during an FIT session?	a) Discuss real factory situations b) Share knowledge and prior experiences c) Identify improvements to be made in the factory
7. What are a special feature of the FIT methodology?	a) Takes a lot of time b) Expert-led c) Highly participatory
8. Why should factories use FIT?	a) It is time- and cost-efficient b) It helps factories identify problems in the factory and to come up with solutions and an action plan c) It improves participant's creativity, problem-solving ability and teamwork skills
9. Why is the action plan that participants develop at the end of a FIT session important?	a) It is testing the knowledge of participants b) It is a plan for how factories can make improvements in the factory after the session c) It must be completed because it is part of the FIT module

Solutions: 1. All 2. C 3. B 4. C 5. B 6. All 7. C 8. All 9. B

Activity

2c



15 minutes

Select your FIT team (1)

In the following two activities, you will learn about the key actors that should be involved when running a FIT programme. In this first activity, you will discuss the roles of the FIT coordinator and the factory improvement team.



Instructions:

- 1) Have a participant read aloud the text box below. Then, discuss the following questions:
 - What are the potential consequences of not having a FIT factory coordinator when running FIT in your factory?
 - Why do you think it is useful to have a factory improvement team that could support the FIT coordinator?
- 2) Together, read through the list of practices in table 4 on the next page, and put a ✓ in the column on the right if you think it is a good practice. Then, compare your answers with the solutions provided on the bottom of the page.

The FIT coordinator and factory improvement team

The FIT factory coordinator is responsible for FIT in your factory. He/She manages the programme and will for example schedule sessions, print modules, invite facilitators and participants (in the case study in Session 1, Nia acts as the FIT factory coordinator).

The FIT factory coordinator should not work alone. Sometimes, it might be good to set up a small team that can meet regularly to review the factory's progress. The primary responsibility of this factory improvement team is to follow-up on action plans developed in the FIT sessions to ensure that they are being implemented. The team should preferably consist of both workers and supervisors / managers as well as of both women and men.



Another resource for your factory is the FIT service provider. This is the organization that initially introduced FIT to you. In case you want external support to run FIT in your factory, you should get in touch with this organization.

Table 4. Good practices for your FIT factory

Good practices	✓
1. The factory coordinator should be appointed immediately after you have decided to run FIT in your factory.	
2. The factory coordinator should preferably be a senior manager.	
3. The factory coordinator should have good organizing skills and needs to be a good communicator.	
4. The factory coordinator should have strong support from senior management.	
5. Both workers and supervisors / managers should be represented in the factory improvement team.	
6. The factory improvement team should consist of representatives from all the different departments participating in the FIT sessions.	
7. The factory improvement team should preferably not consist of more than ten people.	
8. The proportion of the factory improvement team members that is female should be equivalent to the proportion of the workforce that is male.	
9. The factory improvement team should meet regularly, at least once a month, to follow-up on the progress made after every FIT session.	
10. The meetings should be hosted by the FIT factory coordinator.	

Solutions: 1. ✓ 2. ✓ 3. ✓ 4. ✓ 5. ✓ 6. ✓ 7. ✓ 8. ✓ 9. ✓ 10. ✓

Activity

2d



15 minutes

Select your FIT team (2)

To use FIT, you also need someone that can run the sessions. That is the FIT facilitator. Facilitation means the process of making something possible or easier. In this activity, you will learn more about this important role.



Instructions:

- 1) Have a participant read aloud the text box about the FIT facilitators below.
- 2) Have a participant read aloud the seven tips on good facilitator behaviour in table 5 on the next page.
- 3) Together, discuss: Who could be the facilitator when running FIT sessions in your factory? How could you prepare facilitators to run FIT sessions in your factory?

The FIT facilitator

The FIT facilitator helps to run FIT sessions in your factory. The role of the facilitator is to make it possible for participants to learn from the FIT toolset. This does not mean that the facilitator is supposed to teach participants or do the work for them. Instead, his/her role is to help the group understand how FIT works.

The FIT facilitator could be an external person or someone from the factory. Sometimes, the FIT coordinator and FIT facilitator will be the same person. It is the responsibility of the FIT coordinator to identify suitable FIT facilitators for the factory.

This is the difference between a teacher and a facilitator:

Teacher

A teacher lectures to the class.
Information flows from teacher to students.
Relationship with students are formal.
Teachers often prioritize one right answer.

Facilitator

A facilitator encourages discussion.
Information flows from multiple directions.
Relationship with participants is informal.
Facilitators encourage and value different perspectives.

Table 5. Tips on good facilitator behaviour

A facilitator allows the FIT session to be noisy and encourages all group members to share ideas, opinions and experiences.

A facilitator encourages shy or quiet participants to share and give opinions.

A facilitator tries to intervene as little as possible in the group discussions.

A facilitator creates a safe and inclusive learning environment.

A facilitator makes sure decisions are made jointly in the group.

A facilitator prevents participants from monopolizing the discussion in their group.

A facilitator ensures activities are completed in time and that groups do not skip any steps.

A facilitator lets groups take breaks when they need it.

A facilitator energizes the group and ensures everyone stays active.

A facilitator is always respectful of all participants and encourages them to respect each other, regardless of gender, religion, ethnic group, sexual orientation, or other.

Activity

2e



15 minutes

Identify your FIT needs

Factories about to start their FIT programme are recommended to select 5 – 6 modules to begin with. It is important to make sure that these modules are well suited to the factory’s needs. In this activity, you will learn different ways to identify the needs of your factory.



Instructions:

- 1) Together, discuss the following questions:
 - Does your factory have a good understanding of which factory areas need improvement?
 - If yes, what are those areas?
- 2) Have a participant read aloud the five different methods for selecting modules in table 6 below. Then, discuss:
 - What method could you use to select modules for your factory?
 - Are there other ways you could select FIT modules that best suit your factory’s needs?

Table 6. Methods to select FIT modules

1. Discuss what FIT modules are best suited to the factory’s needs with the senior management team.	2. Discuss what FIT modules are best suited to the factory’s needs with the factory improvement team.
3. Ask someone from outside the factory with good knowledge about factories to give advice based on your factory’s situation.	
4. Use feedback and documentation from buyers assessments and audits.	5. Use the FIT learning needs analysis tool.



The ILO is offering a [free online learning needs analysis tool](#) for factories that have a hard time deciding what modules are suitable for them. Contact the ILO or a FIT service provider for more information about this tool!

Activity

2f



15 minutes

Run your FIT sessions

Once you have selected your FIT modules, it is time to think about scheduling sessions and inviting participants. In this activity, you will discuss this preparatory step.



Instructions:

- 1) Together, brainstorm and write down all the things that you think are important to consider when scheduling FIT session in your factory in table 7 below.
- 2) Together, discuss the following questions:
 - How will you identify who is best suited to participate in the session?
 - How will you make sure that the factory staff join sessions and actively participate?
- 3) Together, read through the list of best practices for running sessions in your factory in table 8 on the next page. Then, discuss: In what venue could you organize FIT sessions, and at what time?

Table 7. Brainstorming

Example: Invite both women and men to the sessions

What to think about when scheduling FIT session

Table 8. Best practices for running FIT sessions

Venues should be safe and allow groups to work in small circles.

Venue should be close to factories if not delivered in-factory, as this will make participants more willing to attend.

One copy of the FIT module should be printed for each participant ahead of the session.

Additional action plan templates should be printed ahead of the session.

There should be pens for participants to take notes.

Sessions should be organized during work hours. Try to identify opportunities to run FIT without interfering too much with the production schedule.

Sessions should provide a safe space to voice out concerns regarding existing workplace practices and policies.

Sessions should be organized so that women can participate. Try to consider their needs. For instance, family responsibilities such as picking children up from school may affect women's willingness to participate if the FIT session is organized too early or late in the day.

To select participants, read the module(s) so that you know what will be covered in the session. You should also consult with the supervisor / manager of the department covered.

A mix of workers and supervisors / managers should participate in the sessions.

Activity

2g



20 minutes

Track your results

Have you ever heard the phrase “What gets measured gets done”? Tracking progress is a critical part of any improvement process. In this module, you will learn more about the FIT monitoring system and why measurement is so important.



Instructions:

- 1) Together, read through the list in table 9 below, and put a ✓ in the column on the right if you think it is a reason why measurement is important. Can you think of other reasons? Compare your answers with the solutions provided on the bottom of the page.
- 2) Together, read through the text box on the next page. Then, discuss:
 - What is your factory currently measuring in the factory? (For example: sales, volume produced)
 - Do you think your factory can improve how you measure results in the factory?

Table 9. Reasons for why measurement is important

Reasons	✓
1. To evaluate the success of the changes made in the factory.	
2. To communicate the result of the changes made in the factory.	
3. To learn more about why the changes made in the factory were successful.	
4. To make revisions if some results are not in line with what the factory would like to achieve.	
5. To help staff understand and support the changes made in the factory.	
6. To create motivation, if people can see that their efforts results in improvements in the factory, they will feel more inclined to continue.	

Solutions: 1. ✓ 2. ✓ 3. ✓ 4. ✓ 5. ✓ 6. ✓

Monitoring the FIT improvement process

To help you measure the results of your FIT improvement process, the ILO has developed tools for you to be able to measure your factory's performance before, during and after you completed the FIT programme.

The FIT programme is measured in 3 different steps:

- **Before.** Before you run FIT in your factory, you need to collect information about your factory's performance. It will document how things were before FIT, so that you compare it with the final results.
- **During.** When running FIT in the factory, information will be collected about the sessions. The facilitator will distribute surveys after FIT sessions to get immediate feedback from participants.
- **After.** At the end of FIT, you will evaluate whether FIT resulted in changes in the factory. This includes looking at both changes in practices and whether this led to increased productivity and improved working conditions.

To help your factory with measurements, the ILO has developed several resources, such as a monitoring guide and tools that are easy to use. You should also talk to your FIT service provider, as they might be able to help you.

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Session 3

Your action plan

Goals

Summarizing and revising the new knowledge gained.

Identifying any remaining actions to be taken in order to set up the factory for the FIT process.

Session 3

Overview



One member should read the full session out loud to the rest of group



20 minutes



Learning manual, pens, and markers

Throughout this module you have learnt about FIT and prepared for the start of your FIT factory improvement process. Together, you have completed the following steps:

**Understand
FIT**

**Select your
FIT team**

**Identify your
FIT needs**

**Run your FIT
sessions**

**Track your FIT
results**

In this last session, you will review a checklist to make sure you have completed all actions required to start your FIT process. In case all actions are not yet completed, you will draft your action plan outlining when this will be done and by whom.

Activities

Activity

3a



5 minutes

Preparation checklist

In this activity, you will review the checklist as a next step to ensure that you have done everything to set up your factory for the FIT improvement process.



Instructions:

- 1) Together, go through the list of actions in table 10, and put a ✓ in the right column if you have completed these actions in your factory.

Table 10. Factory improvement checklist

Actions	✓
1. Assign a FIT factory coordinator if you do not already have one in your factory. (This person will be overseeing the following steps.)	
2. Establish a FIT factory team consisting of both managers and workers.	
3. Decide who should be the facilitator(s) for your factory's FIT sessions, and explain their role to her/him/them.	
4. In case you would like external support to run FIT, involve a FIT service provider.	
5. Identify the factory areas that you would like to focus on in the improvement process. (For example, storage room, systems or HR practices).	
6. Decide on the FIT modules that you would like to complete in the factory improvement process. (If you need assistance, use the FIT learning needs analysis online tool.)	
7. Plan the logistics under the lead of the FIT factory coordinator. Set up a time plan for when to organize FIT sessions in your factory and invite participants.	
8. Decide when and how often the factory improvement team will meet to review the progress made in the different areas focused on. It is recommended that committees meet at least on a bi-weekly basis.	
9. Familiarize yourself with the FIT monitoring system. Develop a plan for how to make sure you measure results in your factory. If you work with a FIT service provider, ask for their support.	

Activity

3b



15 minutes

Your action plan

In this activity, you will think of ways to apply your new knowledge to eliminate bottlenecks in your factory by drafting your own action plan.



Instructions:

- 1) For activities in the checklist that you have not yet completed, fill in the action plan in table 11. You should ensure all actions in the checklist are completed before you organize your next FIT session.

Table 11. Orientation to the Factory Improvement Process – Action Plan

Problem identified	Our factory still need to complete some actions on the checklist before we can continue with the FIT programme in my factory.			
Solutions identified	Action(s) to be taken	Person responsible	By when?	How will improvements be measured?
Example: Select FIT modules for factory	- <i>Share FIT Tools Catalogue with the improvement team</i>	- <i>FIT factory coordinator</i>	- <i>12 February</i>	<i>No. of modules selected</i>
	- <i>Organize meeting to agree on modules together</i>	- <i>FIT factory coordinator</i>	- <i>19 February</i>	

Setting up your factory for FIT

The Factory Improvement Toolset (FIT) is an innovative self-facilitated, activity-based learning approach designed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to create more decent and sustainable employment. FIT supports manufacturers in global supply chains to improve productivity, competitiveness and working conditions by upgrading production systems and factory practices.

FIT is being piloted in Asia under the regional Decent Work in the Garment Sector Supply Chains in Asia project funded by the Government of Sweden.

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