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| Chairman, Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI) | | | |
| Report on the work of the Group on  Capacity Building Initiatives(GCBI) to TDAG | | | |
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| **Summary:**  This document covers the work undertaken by the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI). The group was established pursuant to Resolution 40 which was adopted by the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2010 (WTDC-10), and revised at WTDC-17, to advise the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) on matters related to capacity building.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to note this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.  **References:**  WTDC Resolution 40 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), on the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives  WTDC Resolution 73 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017), on ITU Centres of Excellence  PP Resolution 169 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) on admission of Academia to participate in the work of the ITU | | | |

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1. **Report on the 8th GCBI meeting (1-2 June 2020)**

The GCBI held its 8th meeting on 1-2 June 2020. The meeting was held virtually. All GCBI members attended.[[1]](#endnote-1)

The group discussed the work of GCBI since its last meeting, in particular the inputs to an ITU Capacity development glossary of terms”; it also reviewed the main ITU-D capacity development activities implemented since the last meeting. GCBI members were briefed about the feasibility study to establish an ITU training institute that was to be undertaken in 2020.

Most of the discussions during the meeting focused on Covid-19 implications on capacity development and GCBI members shared regional perspectives.

At the end of the meeting, the following conclusions were reached:

* The Covid-19 pandemic has changed drastically people’s way of life around the world, and greater reliance is now placed on the use of digital tools for work and learning.
* The pandemic has also exposed the digital gap between countries both in terms of the availability of digital infrastructure, and the skills required to use that infrastructure for learning purposes. Strategies need to be developed to address these gaps, and training and capacity development will be a crucial part of those strategies.
* In many developing countries, where many people are unconnected due to lack of affordable and high-quality Internet services, the top strategic priority is to improve access. There is a need to develop the capacity of policy makers to develop and adopt innovative and flexible enabling policies and regulatory regimes that encourage provision of affordable and high-quality access, through creating and encouraging private public partnerships.
* In countries where connectivity is available, but people are not using the Internet, priority should be given to develop the digital skills necessary to fully leverage digital products and services for usage areas such as work, learning and health. There is a need to implement digital skills programmes at the national level to ensure that nations develop digital competent citizens, in particular, among vulnerable and marginalized groups.
* The pandemic has highlighted the need to develop specific training programmes on digital technologies targeted at specific sectors, such as health and education.
* GCBI members expressed appreciation for the launch of the Digital Transformation Centres Initiative and acknowledged the role this could play in strengthening digital skills and supporting digital inclusion and bringing into the digital economy the marginalized and underserved populations.
* There has been a huge increase in the demand for and use of online platforms for remote learning over the COVID-19 period. There is need to develop skills to conduct remote teaching and remote learning on the part of trainers and learners, respectively. The group encouraged Centres of Excellence to use the ITU Academy and/or other online learning platforms more and avoid disruptions to training such as those caused by COVID-19. ITU was urged to strengthen the capacity of Centres of Excellence (CoE) to run training online using the ITU Academy platform and to convert existing content into online training materials.
* The shift to online or distance learning and skills development should not be seen as an emergency response only. Rather, training providers such as CoEs should seize this opportunity to create long-term positive impacts and develop greater resilience. Cross-regional collaboration among training providers was encouraged.
* The launch of the ITU Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook 2020 was timely as it will be a useful tool to assist countries assess their digital skills supply, demand and gaps and develop appropriate strategies and programmes to address those gaps. It should be presented widely across all regions.
* The group welcomed the submission of the draft Glossary of ITU Capacity Development Terms compiled by Secretariat based on the inputs from the work of the task groups of GCBI. This document will help standardize and harmonize capacity development activities within ITU and assist in establishing quality standards for the different training and capacity development activities. Members of the group will submit their comments in writing for consideration in the final document.
* In view of the impending study on the assessment of ITU capacity development activities and feasibility to establish an ITU training institute, the group considered it prudent to shape any plans for GCBI’s future work based on the outcome of that study. The group welcomed the invitation by the Director BDT to make its input to the study and looked forward to the opportunity to contribute.

1. **Feasibility study on the establishment of an ITU training institute**

Between July and December 2020, Jigsaw Consult carried out a feasibility study on the establishment of an ITU training institute, following a request from Council 2019. GCBI members were consulted as part of the interviews carried out by Jigsaw Consult during the study and provided input. The final report of the study was shared with GCBI members as an input to the 9th GCBI meeting.

1. **9th GCBI meeting**

The 9th meeting of GCBI will take place on 20-21 May 2021 and will be held held virtually.

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1. For the list of GCBI members, see <https://academy.itu.int/main-activities/gcbi/membership> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)