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| **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **30th Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland, 19-23 June 2023** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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| Chairperson, 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-22, 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. Kigali, 2022), on the Group on Capacity Building Initiatives  WTDC Resolution 73 (Rev. Kigali, 2022), on ITU Academy Training Centres | |

The Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI) was established pursuant to Resolution 40 which was adopted by the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2010 (WTDC-10), and revised at WTDC-22, to advise the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) on matters related to capacity building.

**Report on the 9th GCBI meeting (20-21 May 2021)**

The GCBI held its 9th meeting on 20-21 May 2021. The meeting was held virtually. Eleven (out of twelve) GCBI members attended on the first day and three members were absent on the second day.

The group discussed the work of GCBI since its last meeting, in particular the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on capacity development activities in the regions. It also reviewed the main ITU-D capacity development activities implemented since the last meeting. GCBI members were briefed about the steep growth of online training delivered over the ITU Academy platform, with 50% more participants trained in 2020 compared to 2019. Members were also briefed about the Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) initiative, which was launched in September 2019 in partnership with Cisco, with the objective of supporting countries to develop digital skills at basic and intermediate levels, particularly in the underserved communities. Finally, a discussion took place with respect to the final report on the feasibility study to establish an ITU training institute as well as the strategic review of the Centres of Excellence programme.

At the end of the meeting, GCBI adopted the following key outcomes of the meeting:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased reliance on the Internet and use of technology to work and learn. This has fast-tracked learning, especially at basic digital literacy levels.
2. In the short term, there has been an increase in demand for specific digital skills, specifically those skills that can enable individuals to participate in the digital economy and access services during periods of lockdowns.
3. Online learning is generally accepted as a mode of training and learning across the regions. As a result, countries had to develop national standards and guidelines for online learning, transform educational platforms and develop training materials to support online learning.
4. There are still many households around the world without Internet access and computers at home necessary to engage in online education.
5. There is a growing demand for automation, AI, cybersecurity, VR and digitization which will spur demand for a wide range of workers such as robot repair technicians and 3-D printing engineers. This change in labour demand will require a major retraining effort.
6. Digital skills of trainers have to be enhanced to cope with not only the digitization but the need to develop more independent learners required by the online learning environments.
7. Regions are updating their skills agendas to focus on addressing emerging digital skills needs and build resilience based on the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare to provide access to education, training and lifelong learning in times of crises. Countries are developing strategies to ensure job-ready skills are delivered to their citizens and to create opportunities to sustain existing jobs through re-training.
8. Capacity and digital skills development has been included in several of the Regional Priorities in preparation for WTDC highlighting the importance of the topic for most countries.
9. GCBI members commended the final report of the feasibility study to establish an ITU Training Institute, its level of depth and thoroughness and number of recommendations provided. They noted that not all GCBI members were consulted as part of the study. They considered several of the short-term recommendations as useful and pointed out that further discussions will be required. They observed the significant improvements made and high quality of the ITU Academy platform. They expressed interest in staying involved in the discussions on the implementation of the recommendations.
10. GCBI members proposed that a strategic review of the CoE programme should address the following items, among others: the training topics and their relevance, quality assurance, good practices and the CoE selection process. The quality of the programme could be strengthened through developing common standards and frameworks, improved monitoring and benchmarking focusing on quality, exploring new ways of teaching and learning, developing common strategies for promotion of courses, searching for partnerships and enhancing the dialogue with CoEs.
11. The full report of the meeting is available [here](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/gcbi/meetings/9th-meeting-group-capacity-building-initiatives).

**Report on the 10th GCBI meeting (6 December 2022)**

The GCBI held its 10th meeting on 6 December 2022. Due to the number of ITU conferences held in 2022, the GCBI meeting had been postponed to the last quarter of 2022. The meeting was held virtually and was attended by nine (out of twelve) GCBI members. It was the last meeting of the current 4-year cycle.

GCBI members highlighted key developments that occurred in their respective regions since the last meeting. They stressed that the question of digital literacy and skills had been discussed during the WTDC-22 and the PP-22, with many Resolutions referring to the importance of capacity development. One of the challenges was to measure the concrete impact of capacity development activities. A solid needs assessment at the early stage can help to provide targeted and impactful activities.

ITU provided an overview of the CoE programme cycle closure and the transitioning to the new ITU Academy Training Centres (ATCs) programme as per WTDC Resolution 73 which was adopted at WTDC-22. The resolution mandated the ITU to re-brand the CoE programme, implement the recommendations contained in the CoE Strategic Review report and change the operational processes and procedures document.

GCBI members were also provided with an update on the Digital Transformation Centres Initiative (DTCI). Phase 1 of the DTCI ended in 2021 and Phase 2 started with a kick-off workshop held in Geneva in March 2022. 13 DTCs had been selected as part of Phase 2. Between 2020 and 2022, the DTCI had trained over 150,000 participants from underserved communities across four regions, of which 58% were female.

Finally, GCBI members were informed of recent progress made towards developing a harmonized approach for capacity development across the ITU. In early 2022, ITU established an intersectoral task force to work on harmonizing capacity development across ITU. The task force has the objective to consolidate all ITU capacity development work under the framework of the ITU Academy.

At the end of the meeting, GCBI adopted the following key outcomes of the meeting:

1. The importance of capacity and digital skills development is continuing to grow among ITU Member states as evidenced by discussions during WTDC-22 and PP-22 which referenced capacity development and digital skills development. This increases the need for ITU to scale efforts in supporting member states to address capacity development and digital skills needs in their countries.
2. Members of the GCBI who participated at WTDC-22 contributed to the revision of Resolution 73 and in this meeting emphasized that members are anxious to see the new ATC programme. This is going to increase the focus on this group by the membership who are expecting an increase in digital skills development interventions.
3. The GCBI has an opportunity to have a more prominent role with the ITU Academy now supporting and guiding new players. This requires measuring impact which begins with assessment at the early stages of training course planning.
4. The ATC programme is an excellent continuation of the CoE programme and its focus on online delivery is the appropriate focus as this form of delivery attracts more participants, from diverse backgrounds.
5. The nature of content is evolving, and there is a need to maintain flexibility to embrace changes and to avoid re-inventing the wheel. Assessment is key to all training programmes, and it is important to integrate assessment tools into the platform.
6. ITU should consider virtual labs for the ITU Academy to attract partners.
7. The group noted that the DTCI should continue and considered it as a good initiative that has a potential for long term sustainability. Members emphasized that the right level of content is key for adoption. The Bloom’s taxonomy should also be used as a key tool for determining the appropriate levels of courses.
8. The work on harmonizing capacity development across the ITU is a good step in implementing the recommendations of the feasibility study and recommendations from decision making bodies, in particular the ITU Council. This will contribute to the value add that ITU is providing to its members.
9. The full report of the meeting is available [here](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/gcbi/meetings/10th-meeting-group-capacity-building-initiatives).

**Updates on membership of the GCBI**

According to the GCBI terms of reference, and in line with WTDC cycles, GCBI members shall serve for one term (one four-year period), and can serve for another term, after which they may no longer be eligible for appointment.

The current four-year cycle ended in 2022. Therefore, the ITU secretariat launched a call for nominations for GCBI membership in early 2023. Regional telecommunication organisations were invited to coordinate the selection of candidates from their region and propose two names to the Director, BDT, as stipulated in Resolution 40.

The list of GCBI members for the cycle 2023-2026 is provided in Annex 1.

**Annex 1**

**List of GCBI members, 2023- 2026**

| **Region** | **Name** | **Functional title** | **Affiliation** | **Country** |
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| **AFR** | Ms Anne Chantal Ngondji | Head of Research and Cooperation Division | Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Postes, des Télécommunications et des TIC (SUP’PTIC) | Cameroon |
| Mr Mohamadou Arabani Saibou | Senior ICT Capacity building, Training, Research and Consulting Expert / Founder and Managing Director | SMA Consulting Group | Niger |
| **AMS** | Ms Andrea Mamprim  Grippa | Specialist in Regulation of Public Telecommunications Services | ANATEL | Brazil |
| Ms Agustina Brizio | Undersecretary of Information Technologies, Secretariat of Public Innovation | Oficina Nacional de Tecnologías de información (ONTI) | Argentina |
| **ARB** | Dr Mustapha Ben Jillali | Full Professor Senior Member | Institut National des Postes et des Télécommunications (INPT) Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) | Morocco |
| Eng. Majid Al Madhloum | Head, Digital Capacity Building & Awareness (DCA) | Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) | UAE |
| **ASP** | Mr Tao Zhiyong | Professor, Director of Graduate School | Wuhan Research Institute of Posts & Telecommunications (WRIT) | China |
| **EUR** | Dr Toni Janevski | Full Professor | Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEEIT), Ss. Cyril and Methodius University | Republic of North Macedonia |
| Dr Lidia Stepinska-Ustasiak | Counsellor, Head of Social Policy Unit | Office of Electronic Communications (UKE) | Poland |
| **CIS** | Ms Kristine Gyonjyan | Director | Union of Operators of Armenia | Republic of Armenia |
| Mr Anton Alekseev | Director | JSC "Giprosvjaz" | Republic of Belarus |

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