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| REPORT ON DIGITAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT | | | |
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| **Priority area:** - Action Plan, Regional Initiatives and ITU-D Study Group Questions  - ITU-D Resolutions and Recommendations  **Summary:**  This document provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) since WTDC-22 related to digital skills and capacity development. It includes training activities carried out through the ITU Academy and its ITU Academy Training Centres programme, the Digital Transformation Centre Initiative, as well as research and policy work related to digital skills.  **Expected results:**  WTDC-25 is invited to note this document.  **References:**  WTDC Resolutions [37](https://www.itu.int/pub/D-RES-D.37-2022), [40](https://www.itu.int/pub/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=D-RES-D.40-2022), [73](https://www.itu.int/pub/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=D-RES-D.73-2022), [87](https://www.itu.int/pub/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=D-RES-D.87-2022) (Rev. Kigali, 2022) | | | |

**Introduction**

This document provides an overview of the work undertaken by the BDT since WTDC-22 related to digital skills and capacity development. It includes training activities carried out through the ITU Academy and its ITU Academy Training Centres programme, the Digital Transformation Centre Initiative, as well as research and policy work related to digital skills. It highlights the impact the activities have achieved in terms of strengthening digital capacities across the ITU Membership and contributing to closing the digital divide through digital literacy training in remote and underserved communities. The work has been carried out in close collaboration with partners from a range of different stakeholder groups.

**ITU Academy**

The [ITU Academy portal](https://academy.itu.int/) is the main gateway to ITU capacity development and training activities. It offers ICT professionals and policy makers access to capacity development opportunities using various methodologies and tailored to different learning styles, such as online instructor-led, self-paced or face-to-face courses. Its comprehensive training catalogue covers a large array of topics relevant to the ITU membership, such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, e-waste, spectrum management, digital transformation, satellite communications, emergency telecommunication, data governance, ICT measurement, policy and regulation, wireless and fixed broadband and others. The platform plays a central role in promoting digital capacity development, which is key to ensuring inclusive and secure telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development – one of the core priorities for the ITU-D as outlined in the Kigali Action Plan.

Over the past years, the ITU Academy has experienced strong growth (see Chart 1). Between 2023 and 2025, the ITU Academy nearly doubled its community, expanding from 35,000 to 75,000 registered users. Today, over 80% of participants come from developing countries, and the share of women among new users has risen to 40%, almost twice the level recorded in 2019. Over this period, over 400 courses were delivered, 70% online – enabling scale and accessibility - and the remainder face-to-face – enabling intensive exchange among participants. Completion rates have consistently exceeded industry benchmarks, rising from 68% for face-to-face courses and 28% for online courses in 2023, to 90% and 45%, respectively, in 2025. These gains reflect sustained efforts to enhance the quality of courses and strengthen engagement with learners. In total, more than 15,000 certifications were issued, recognizing participants’ achievements and providing them with credentials to advance their careers.

**Chart 1: ITU Academy registrations**

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The ITU Academy catalogue is in constant evolution alongside the fast-moving technology landscape, with new courses added on artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, data governance, and other emerging fields. ITU Academy courses provide practical knowledge that participants can apply directly in their institutions as well as non-technical skills, such as teamwork and collaboration across groups, sectors, organizations and countries.

Participants consistently report over 90% satisfaction rates, but the real measure of success lies in the tangible results. Post-training assessments, collected since 2024, show a notable increase in the skills of the participants, who reported a higher level of proficiency after completing the course, as well as a high application of the knowledge gained from the training, in their current jobs.

These outcomes translate into real-world change: alumni have, for example, strengthened national cybersecurity monitoring systems, aligned internal processes with new data protection laws, contributed to drafting e-waste regulations, and developed broadband strategies for underserved areas. Many also go on to mentor colleagues, run internal workshops, or revise institutional frameworks, multiplying the benefits well beyond the individual learner.

Finally, over this period, the ITU Academy has undergone a major technical and design transformation to deliver a smoother, more intuitive, and data-driven learning experience. The platform’s refreshed interface offers clearer navigation, and many processes, from course setup to certification, have been automated, reducing administrative workload and speeding up delivery.

As a result, the ITU Academy platform now enables faster course launches, greater consistency across regions, and stronger integration with tools such as digital credentials or the automatic translation of the platform into all six official UN languages, powered by an internally designed ITU tool.

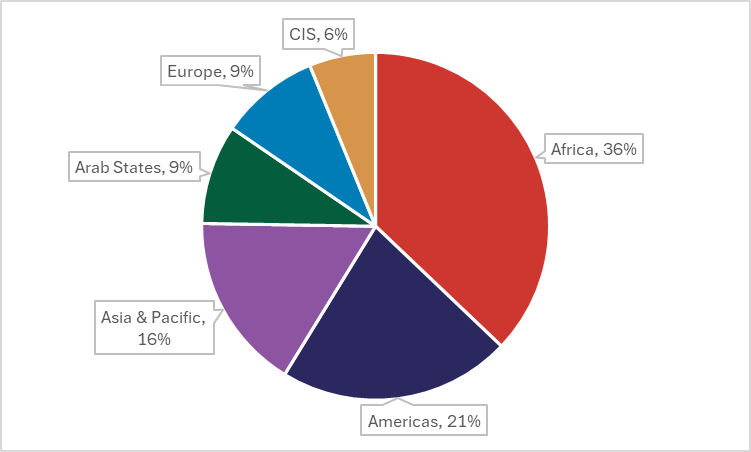
Finally, expanded data analytics through Power BI dashboards track enrolments, completion rates, and learner feedback, supporting evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement. Together, these advances have made the ITU Academy more accessible, efficient, and connected, a platform that not only delivers high-quality learning but also strengthens ITU’s global capacity development impact.

**ITU Academy Training Centres**

In 2023, ITU launched the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATCs) programme, following the outcomes of WTDC-22 where ITU’s membership adopted the revised Resolution 73. ATCs are internationally recognized institutions that offer high-quality training to intermediate and senior personnel, with a strong focus on the needs of developing countries. The institutions participating in the programme remain the core capacity development partners of the ITU, delivering nearly 40% of all courses on the ITU Academy platform (the remaining ones being organized by ITU, followed by other partners). This network anchors the ITU Academy in a diverse ecosystem that combines global reach with regional expertise. ATCs deliver courses on the most important topics identified by ITU’s membership, including policy and regulation, network infrastructure, spectrum management, cybersecurity, emerging technologies, digital inclusion, and digital services.

Since the launch of the programme in January 2023 until the beginning of October 2025, 146 courses were implemented by the 14 ATCs, 3,500 participants receiving course certificates. The majority of course participants are from public sector entities (Ministries, Regulatory Authorities) and telecommunication entities, followed by academic institutions, the private sector and other organizations. Participants come from all Member States, with 81% from developing countries and the majority from Africa (see Chart 2).

**Chart 2: ITU Academy Training Centres course participants, by region**



All ATC courses are delivered through the ITU Academy platform. Information about these courses, including the full catalogue, as well as on the ITU ATC programme itself, is available on the [ITU Academy website](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/itu-academy-training-centres). In terms of the delivery modality, 83% of the ATC training courses are offered via an online, instructor-led methodology, which helps support the global outreach of the programme.

During the past years, BDT organized several training sessions aimed at the instructors of the 14 ATCs. These focused on how to conduct engaging instructor-led training (both in online and face-to-face environments), increase the range of tools used in order to deliver more interactive training, as well as optimal approaches for session design. The goal of the initiative was to impact the quality of the training courses, by improving facilitation, delivery skills and by allowing for exchanges of best practices among the participating institutions.

As part of the programme’s cycle, annual meetings have been organized with the participating institutions on a yearly basis, both online and face-to-face. In 2023, the first annual meeting of the ATCs took place in Geneva, Switzerland in October, followed one year later by the 2024 reunion in Manama, Bahrain. The most recent [annual ATC meeting](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/itu-academy-training-centres/events/atc-annual-meeting-2025) took place in June 2025 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. It reunited a total of 17 delegates from the 14 ATCs representing the partner institutions from Jamaica/Barbados, Peru, Brazil, Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, The Netherlands, Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, India and China. During the meeting, participants focused on analysing the ATC programme implementation to date, build on lessons learned regarding training course organization and management, provide updates on the ITU Academy revised guidelines and upcoming features, updates, discuss the training evaluation framework and learner feedback, as well as consolidate links between participating institutions to encourage networking and collaboration projects. The annual meeting was held in conjunction with the Global Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Workshop and was hosted by the Centros Tecnológicos Comunitarios (CTC), in collaboration with the Instituto Dominicano de las Telecomunicaciones (INDOTEL).

**Capacity development project**

Funded by the Global Gateway initiative of the European Union over a period of four years, ITU, in collaboration with UNDP, started implementation of the project [“Capacity Development for Digital Transformation”](https://academy.itu.int/partners/capacity-development-digital-transformation-project) at the end of 2023. The project supports the delivery of training to policy makers and government officials globally through the ITU Academy platform and aims to train at least 5,000 participants on 18 foundational topics related to digital technologies. The training courses are delivered by ITU, and in partnership with the ATCs, as well as other UN partners such as UNESCO, ILO and OHCHR.

Since the beginning of the project, a total of 51 courses in both face-to-face (F2F) and online modality were completed, and an additional 10 courses are to be delivered until the end of 2025. 2,954 participants, coming from 115 (mostly developing) countries, were trained, with a participant satisfaction rate of 96%. All courses fall under the 18 topics specified in the project, with a total number of applicants surpassing 7,702.

**School connectivity project**

Through the project “Capacity development to accelerate school connectivity in collaboration with the Giga Initiative”, which was launched in 2024, BDT supports Member States’ school connectivity efforts by providing tailored training courses delivered through the ITU Academy. The training courses cover the entire school connectivity journey from early inception and planning to infrastructure mapping and modelling, to financing and procurement, to technical implementation and connectivity monitoring, drawing upon ITU’s broad expertise in ICT connectivity and enabling environments. Courses are offered both in-person at the Giga Connectivity Centre in Geneva, and online through instructor-led, self-paced, and blended approaches. To implement the project, BDT works closely with the ITU General Secretariat as well as with UNICEF, ITU’s partner in the Giga initiative.

**Digital Transformation Centre Initiative**

The [Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative](https://academy.itu.int/index.php/main-activities/digital-transformation-centres-initiative) was launched in September 2019 by ITU in partnership with Cisco, with the objective of supporting countries to strengthen the digital capacities of citizens, particularly those in rural and the underserved communities. The Initiative operates through a global network of national institutions, the Digital Transformation Centres (DTCs), which have a mandate to deliver digital skills programmes in their countries. The DTCs operate nationally and demonstrate proven capacity, infrastructure and experience to implement training at basic and intermediate levels.

The number of DTCs has grown to 14 in total, covering Africa, the Americas, the Arab States and the Asia-Pacific regions (see Chart 3). Since the start of the DTC Initiative in 2020 until the end of June 2025, over 610,000 (53% female) course participants have been provided with basic and intermediate digital skills training through the Initiative (see Chart 4).

**Chart 3: Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) countries**

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**Chart 4: DTCI course participants by gender**

Beyond achieving gender parity in the Initiative’s overall reach, it is important to highlight that the training delivery has grown in underserved and rural communities served by the DTCs. This includes students, persons with disabilities—particularly those with visual impairments—youth, and MSMEs. Additionally, trainers and teachers received capacity-building support to ensure the delivery of high-quality training within these communities.

The number and type of partner who has joined the Initiative has continued to grow. The number of DTCs is now at 14 DTCs, with more organizations expected to join the Initiative. In addition to initial training content partners, Cisco and HP, the DTC Initiative welcomed a new training content partner, ST Microelectronics Foundation, who has brought several training courses to complement the existing DTC Initiative training content, including "Introduction to Computer Basics for Persons with Visual Impairments'' (ICBVI), ''Tablets for Seniors'', among others. Currently, five DTCs are delivering the ICBVI training (Ghana, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda), with more DTCs expected to be fully trained to deliver the ICBVI training course.

ITU continues to strengthen its collaboration with current partners of the Initiative. Telecommunications companies have become partners of the DTCI, namely Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison (Indonesia), Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT), and Airtel (Africa) to support the work and capacity development interventions of the DTCs.

Under the Initiative, ITU and Cisco facilitate networking opportunities for the DTCs by organising face-to-face workshops and virtual meetings every year. These meetings contribute to strengthening the global DTC network and provide a platform to discuss the implementation of the Initiative, review the progress and achievements made, and explore new ideas to support the work of the DTCs. In 2023 and 2024, the Global DTC Workshops were respectively hosted by the Department of Information and Communication Technology (the DTC in the Philippines) and the ICT Training and Development Center under the Ministry of Communications and Informatics (the DTC in Indonesia) in collaboration with Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison. These regular meetings serve as an opportunity for the DTCs to regularly engage with each other and have contributed to further strengthening the DTC community.

In 2025, the DTC workshop was hosted by the Centros Tecnológicos Comunitarios (CTC), the DTC in the Dominican Republic, in collaboration with the Instituto Dominicano de las Telecomunicaciones (INDOTEL). It was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATCs) with the objective of encouraging collaborations within the DTC-ATC network, share best practices to ensure a continued quality of training offer, and support the work of these capacity development programmes.

**DTC project**

The Norwegian Government and ITU supported the Digital Transformations Centres (DTC) Initiative through two projects: “Boosting Digital Skills through Digital Transformation Centres” phase 1 (2021-2023) and phase 2 (2024-2025).

Phase 1 of the project supported the DTC activities, in particular in Ghana, providing training to over 22,000 citizens of which 68% are women by the end of the project. The DTC in Ghana exceeded almost every target set for the project and impacted the lives of citizens across all 16 regions in the country. Notable achievements under this project include supporting 155 Community ICT Centers (CICs) and school cyberlabs to implement digital skills training, renovating five CICs and equipping 10 CICs with computers and accessories, the establishment of 31 Coding Clubs, and the training of 220 instructors in Ghana. An impact study conducted at the close of the project showed that almost 82% of beneficiaries self-reported experiencing improved wellbeing and livelihoods as a direct result of their participation in the training. Other observed impacts included: reduction in regional disparities in access to digital skills training, improved interest of schoolchildren - especially young girls - in STEM fields, and improved capacity of local ICT training centres. The [project documentary](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LstagoSBHfQ)[[1]](#footnote-1), developed at its conclusion, details the impacts on beneficiaries and their lived experiences.

In addition to Ghana, the project supported other DTCs scale their capacity development interventions. ITU organized training of master trainers on both the Cisco and HP LIFE training courses for representatives from all DTCs. By the end of the project, DTCs in 9 countries received support to build training capacity in their countries through train-the-trainer programmes and 4 DTCs received support for the delivery of basic and intermediate digital skills training in rural and underserved communities.

Phase 2 of the project aimed at strengthening the DTC Initiative. DTCs are supported in the delivery of both basic and intermediate digital skills training, while also strengthening their long-term capacity through train-the-trainers programmes to ensure consistent, high-quality face-to-face training. Additionally, a training impact methodology has been piloted and made available to DTCs to help them evaluate the impact of their activities under the DTC Initiative. Furthermore, the project is in the process of equipping three local ICT training centers each in Uganda and Zambia with new equipment such as computers, printers, and projectors, with delivery expected by year-end 2025.

Highlights from the two DTC projects include the following (as of September 2025)[[2]](#footnote-2):

* All DTCs have been supported to implement citizens training, training of trainers, outreach activities and/or equipping centres through the two projects.
* The DTCs in Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Morocco, Pakistan, the Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zambia received support to train underserved communities on basic and intermediate digital skills[[3]](#footnote-3).
* The DTCs in Senegal, Ghana, Pakistan, Uganda, and Zambia were supported to conduct community outreach activities to create greater awareness on the importance of digital skills, including for persons with visual impairments.
* ITU and DTCI partners supported DTCs in Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda in building their institutional capacities through train-the-trainer interventions, reaching 919 trainers (38% female).
* Through the partnership with ST Foundation, training content is available to DTCs to train persons with visual impairments through the course ''Introduction to Computer Basics for Visually Impaired Persons (ICBVI)''. The DTC in Ghana has trained over 70 trainers and subsequently delivered the training to almost 600 persons (47% female) with visual impairments. The DTC in Pakistan was supported to train visually impaired trainers along with sighted trainers, bringing the total number of DTCs who have completed the training to four DTCs. In April 2025, the DTC in Uganda has started implementing the ICBVI programme with a first train-the-trainer activity for visually impaired and sighted trainers.

**Digital Skills Forum**

The ITU Digital Skills Forum is the core global event for the ITU membership and other stakeholders to discuss the most pressing needs that must be addressed to ensure that universal digital skills can be achieved, and the global digital skills gap be closed.

The [ITU Digital Skills Forum 2024](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/digital-skills-forum/) took place in Manama, Bahrain, from 17 to 19 September 2024. It was organized by ITU and hosted by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Under the theme “Developing skills for digital transformation” the Forum brought together over 700 participants from 66 countries, comprising physical and remote participation, from public and private organizations, universities and research institutions, and other regional and international organizations. The Forum was preceded on 16 September 2024 by the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATC) annual meeting.

The Forum addressed the most pressing needs that must be addressed to ensure that universal digital skills can be achieved, and the global digital skills gap be closed. Participants discussed key pertinent issues related to:

* Bridging the digital skills divide.
* National digital skills frameworks for policymaking.
* Digital skills for jobs.
* Industry perspective on skills needs.
* Digital innovators and entrepreneurs.
* Skills for a safe and secure use of digital technologies and online information.
* Skills for the green and digital transition.
* Future skills requirements in the age of emerging technologies.

At the end of the meeting, the key outcomes of the Forum, along with recommendations on how to tackle the emerging skills gap, were presented by the Chair.

Further information, including the agenda, the presentation slides, highlights, media information, videos and photos, the Chair’s Summary Report and the Final Report of the Digital Skills Forum, are available at: <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/meetings/digital-skills-forum/>

**Digital Skills Toolkit**

The [ITU Digital Skills Toolkit 2024](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/research-publications/digital-skills-toolkit) was launched on 17 September, at the Digital Skills Forum 2024. The toolkit offers a comprehensive, step-by-step guide to support the ITU membership to create effective national digital skills strategies and policies. This practical resource offers actionable insights and examples, making it a valuable tool for countries at all stages of digital development.

The publication is divided into three parts:

* Part 1 focuses on understanding digital skills, covering digital skills frameworks and the evolving importance of these skills for inclusion and economic opportunities.
* Part 2 provides a detailed roadmap for creating a national digital skills strategy: integrating digital skills into broader digital transformation efforts, assessing needs, engaging stakeholders, creating strategies for digital skills development of both citizens and the workforce and monitoring implementation.
* Part 3 offers examples of digital skills strategies and programmes from around the world, serving as inspiration for countries developing or updating their own strategies.

Designed for use by policy-makers and other stakeholders, such as partners in the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and academia, the toolkit draws on the previous edition published in 2018. It has been thoroughly reviewed and updated to reflect developments in the digital era since then.

**Digital Skills Campaign**

ITU continues to lead the [Digital Skills Campaign](https://academy.itu.int/index.php/main-activities/ilo-itu-digital-skills-campaign) in partnership with ILO. The Campaign was launched in 2016 as one of the thematic priorities under the ILO Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. It seeks to equip young women and men with the skills needed for the digital jobs of today and tomorrow. In 2021, the target was revised from commitments to train 5 million young people to training 25 million by the end of 2030.

All commitments focus on job-ready, transferable digital skills, a combination of technical and soft skills that are aligned with the national and global market demand. Many of the trainings include work experience (e.g. internships and project-based learning) and job placement services to maximize employment outcomes and maintain close relationships with employers. As part of the Campaign, ITU disseminates best practices and guidelines through knowledge products such as the [Digital Skills Toolkit](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/research-publications/digital-skills-toolkit) and the [Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/research-publications/digital-skills-insights/digital-skills-assessment-guidebook).

In June 2023, ITU and ILO convened a meeting of the campaign partners as well as potential partners to exchange knowledge, share best practices and identify synergies among partners. The meeting also provided an opportunity to review progress made to date and identify innovative ideas to accelerate progress. The meeting brought together representatives from partners of the Digital Skills Campaign as well as partners of the Decent Jobs for Youth Initiative, engaged in capacity and skills development activities for youth.

As of March 2025, the campaign had received commitments to train more than 23 million young people with digital skills by 2030. The 19 partners who have made commitments under this initiative come from a range of sectors including government, development banks, NGOs, UN Agencies and the private sector.

**Group on Capacity Building Initiatives**

BDT maintains and supports the work of the [Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI)](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/gcbi), which was established pursuant to Resolution 40 adopted by the WTDC-10, and revised at WTDC-22, to advise the Director of the BDT on matters related to capacity building.

The group, which comprises two members from each region, meets annually, to discuss pertinent topics related to digital skills development and undertakes work in between meetings which provide inputs to BDT’s work in this field.

In 2023-2025, the Group has focused on the following activities, among others:

* Providing inputs to the revision of the ITU Digital Skills Toolkit.
* Reviewing the ITU/BDT training needs assessment questionnaire.
* Conducting desk research on national digital skills strategies.
* Promotion and scaling of ITU capacity development activities in the regions.

The work of the group is reported by the GCBI Chair to the annual meetings of TDAG.

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1. See the [impact story](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/digital-impact-unlocked/revolutionizing-lives-with-dtc-in-ghana/) and [project documentary](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LstagoSBHfQ) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Updates on the latest activities conducted by the DTCs are available on the [DTC news webpage](https://academy.itu.int/itu-d/projects-activities/digital-transformation-centres-initiative/dtc-news). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. More information on these digital literacy programmes is available in the following impact stories: “[Empowering indigenous people in the Philippines through digital literacy programmes](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/digital-impact-unlocked/empowering-indigenous-people-in-the-philippines-through-digital-literacy-training-programme/)" and “[Driving digital empowerment in the Dominican Republic through the DTC Initiative](https://www.itu.int/itu-d/sites/digital-impact-unlocked/driving-digital-empowerment-in-the-dominican-republic-through-the-dtc-initiative/)”. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)