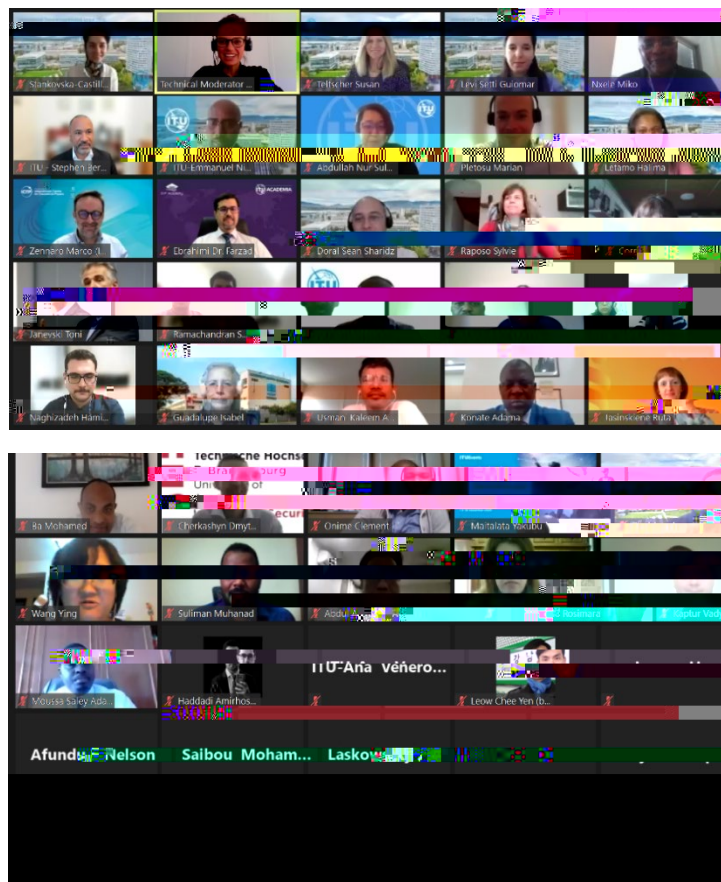




Centres of Excellence Network Global Meeting

05-06 May 2021

REPORT



INTRODUCTION

The Global Centres of Excellence (CoE) Meeting took place on 16 May 2021. It was organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

The meeting was attended by 54 participants representing ITU CoEs from all the six ITU regions, as well as representatives of the Group on Capacity Building (GCB) and the ITU Secretariat. The meeting was the first global meeting of the network since its launch in 2001, organized as part of ITU's efforts to facilitate collaboration between institutions in the ITU CoE network, as well as a response to a request by CoEs to exchange insights with other CoEs, especially those in other regions. The meeting therefore organized for CoEs to share experiences, discuss pertinent strategic issues concerning the performance of the network.

Opening Session

The Global CoE Meeting was officially opened by Stephen Bereaux, Deputy Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau, ITU, followed by Ms Lidia St pi ska-Ustasiak, GCBI Chair, and Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Skills Development Division, ITU

Mr Stephen Bereaux welcomed the CoEs to the meeting acknowledging representation of many CoEs to the meeting. He stated that the COVID19 pandemic has made it difficult for people to meet physically however, it has provided an opportunity for virtual meetings such as this one, which allows more colleagues to participate. This is also an indication that mandates have to be re-evaluated and adjustments made to meet the changing demands of the digital world. For the ITU CoE network this means inter dialogue with each other to understand the shifts that are obviously happening in digital skills requirements and to plan how to address these collectively.

Ms Lidia St pi ska-Ustasiak noted that the world has been able to observe the rise of digital which includes the adoption of enterprise transformation, development of remote education and the impact of these on different sectors. This had introduced new conditions which require a new upskilling narrative and coherent digital skills strategies. She called on CoEs to think together about how they can contribute

Agenda item 1 Training analysis, hot topics and new trends in training delivery

During this session, presentations were made on the following topics, 1) Priority areas and IOT for training courses by Marco Zennaro, ICTP, Italy. 2) Best practices in training needs analysis by Rod Kossonou, ESAT, Ivory Coast 3) New trends in online training by Mohamed Ba, Digital Innovation Ecosystem, ITU. These presentations are available [here](#).

The issues that emerged from these presentations are as follows:

Hot topics for digital skills development come from two main applications of 5G and satellite connectivity. These are aligned to most ITU CoE priority areas and will consist of topics such as 5G IoT cases, smart cities, connected health, sensors from unlicensed connectivity for the next billion, among others. Emerging new topics are observed around the area of application of AI and these include topics such as applications with networks, low carbon footprint, AI societal impact and ethical issues.

Training needs analysis is enhanced by ensuring consistent availability of data that should be gathered from potential target groups for the training. The data can be collected from organisational training plans, studies of training needs reports, recommendations from organisational training plans, etc.

- CoEs should begin by identifying the potential participants to their courses, whether students, new employees, experienced employees in the sector or general public.
- CoEs should use feedback forms after the courses to evaluate how the content was matched to the expectation of the course in order to develop new course content.
- Use artificial intelligence to analyse data during the training to find out what was most interesting during the training and develop future courses based on that.
- Use international best practices and standards to identify areas of interest or areas that are most required and develop courses based on this.
- Check requirements for practical or hands-on components in training to improve the chances of meeting the needs of students.

(Group 3) What are the current changes that CoEs implement in online training, what works well and what doesn't work? The main points raised were:

- CoEs have been forced by COVID to go online, some were more prepared than others for this change. This also means a complete change in the teaching strategy.
- Most CoEs learnt how to use different technologies and online learning and teaching tools.
- Online learning allows for scaling and reaching out to more countries.
- Use of web-based training software can help standardise content.

In relation to the target group CoEs indicated that their main target groups are policy makers and Government officials 30% of the responses, closely followed by the private sector at 28% and regulators at 25% of the responses

During this session presentations were made on the following topics 1) Recruitment and retention of experts for training delivery by Guadalupe Sifuentes, UNCTE, UNI, Peru and 2) Marketing and promotion of courses (pre and post-promotion) by Sylwester Laskowski, NIT, Poland. The presentations are available [here](#). They were followed by a Q&A session. The issues that emerged from this session are as follows:

The use of external experts to deliver training provides the CoEs with access to expertise that may not always be available in their institutions. Using external experts also brings into the institution different perspectives which can strengthen the knowledge of the CoE on the topic. Due to the large amount of information on experts available in the market today, recruiting an expert is 0.6 (n)-0.6 (t5) (u)0.5 (r)

expertise, undertaking validation checks of their credentials, but also ensuring that the offer being made will be attractive. Once the job is done, it is important to provide recognition for the work of the experts and maintain a good relationship with them. This helps build a pool of experts for the institution.

Marketing of courses requires a sound strategy that begins with identifying the requirements of the clients, creating the solution, setting the right price, delivering on the promise, making follow-ups and maintaining contact with the clients. Marketing also requires innovative actions and some initial investments in terms of time and even resources. There are benefits to letting the client try the product before they buy. CoEs can offer free content to encourage clients to buy paid courses. It is also critical to build coalitions to create synergy and strengthen credibility. The key to marketing is intensive communications such as:
1. Informing customers about all planned courses at the beginning of the year
2. Starting active promotion of the specific course one month before it begins

tools such as audio capsules, interactivity tools, collaborative tools, complex tools such

(Group 2) How can CoE ensure formative assessment is achieved during online learning activities? What

The participants were also invited to take a final poll to indicate how they feel about the meeting using one word. The following shows the reactions of participants to this question.

Follow-up action

A number of suggestions were made during the meeting discussions concerning possible follow-up actions

1. ITU to create a database of experts/institutions that could be accessed by all CoEs.
2. The CoE programme

Closing

Closing remarks were delivered by Myra Abdullah Lim, Chief Digital Knowledge HBD, ITU. In her remarks, she encouraged the CoEs