

# **CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE STUDY**

Findings and Recommendations

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# OUTLINE

- Background to Study
- CoE History and Overview
- Study Findings
- Recommendations



# OUTLINE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Programme Name, Principles and Objectives
- Programme Structure
- Selection of Centres: Criteria and Process
- Quality Assurance
- Accreditation
- Financing
- Transitional Arrangements
- Conclusion



# BACKGROUND TO STUDY



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# WTDC-10 Resolution 73 on CoEs

*resolves...*

that the activity of ITU centres of excellence should be continued, and strengthened with priorities determined by consultation with ITU membership,

*instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau*

1 to provide assistance for the work of the ITU centres of excellence, according it the necessary priority attention;

2 to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the programme, organizational and financial activity of ITU centres of excellence and, if necessary, to develop a plan of action to improve their work;

3 to facilitate the work of the ITU centres of excellence, providing them with the necessary methodological and informational support, including a database for exchanges of experts in the field,

*calls upon Member States and Sector Members of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector*

to participate actively in the ITU centres of excellence activity, including through the provision of financial support.

# STUDY TERMS OF REFERENCE

- To take stock of the current status and performance of Centres of Excellence
- To review and define objectives and strategy and develop a new approach consistent with available resources
- To define selection criteria and process
- To propose a financing and sustainability model
- To recommend how to build a network of training partners and other organisations, including universities

# STUDY METHODOLOGY

- Meetings with Director, Chiefs of Departments and HCB personnel
- Discussions with: Regional Directors, Regional Coordinators, selected Centres, selected clients, training specialists
- Desk research on CoEs and on training needs
- Questionnaire responses from Centres

# COE HISTORY AND OVERVIEW



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# HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

## Phase 1 : 1999 – 2006

- Initial focus on Afralti and ESMT
- Initial focus on institution building
- Spread to other regions, with significant regional differences
- Gradual shift to volume training

## Phase 2 : 2007 – 2011

- Delivery of volume training within five broad (almost all-embracing) thematic areas
- In principle emphasis on networking
- Regional diversity and programme development

# CURRENT PROGRAMME (2010)

Region	2010				
	Centres	Activities	Participants	Activities/ Centre	Participants/ Activity
AFR	6	24	553	4.0	23
AMS	23	34	825	0.9	39
ARB	4	9	161	2.3	18
ASP	6	10	314	1.7	31
CAR	6	9	227	1.5	25
CIS	4	9	523	2.3	58
EUR	6	9	201	1.5	22
LSP	6	11	307	1.8	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>3111</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>27</b>

# OVERALL STATE AT REVIEW TIME

## At present programme:

- Program grew organically
- No systematic evaluation
- No Quality assurance
- is in some instances supplier driven (by the providers of training)

## Future programme should:

- Growth closely managed focus on ITU priorities
- deliver real excellence, with strong quality assurance
- integrate with other ITU work
- deliver clear measurable value to ITU and Members

# OVERALL STATE AT REVIEW TIME

## Resolution 73:

- Membership wants CoE to continue
- CoE Networks are happy with the benefits and association with the ITU
- ITU is instructed to support the CoE
- Calls for partnership with member states in building CoE.

## Future programme should:

- Program success depended largely on funding from Surplus funds
- Source of funds is drying up/has dried up??
- Capacity building challenges in an evolving industry such as ICT are never ending
- deliver clear measurable value to ITU and Members

# STUDY FINDINGS



# CHALLENGES (1)

- Creating a vision for programme
- Defining excellence (excellence as an experience rather than aspiration)
- Prioritisation of training activities
- Selection principles of Centres
- Too many Centres delivering too few activities
- Quality assurance
- Promoting and protecting ITU brand

## CHALLENGES (2)

- Regional diversity valuable but also problematic
  - tendency for programme to be supplier-led
  - training institutes or universities, or organisations.
- Risk of dependency on ITU provided experts
- Risk of undermining other training providers
- The programme is not delivering something that is distinctively ITU or that leverages ITU strengths.
- It is mostly offering training activities which are available from other providers
- Excellence is not measured

# CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

- What do Centres say they value in the programme?
  - The ITU brand and apparent ITU endorsement (marketing value)
  - Access to experts
  - Access to study groups etc.
  - Opportunity to network with other Centres
- Large number of Centres are a problem:
  - Difficult to manage
  - Low value of programme to Centres (cf other programmes eg Cisco)
  - Less commitment from Centres to programme
  - No effective brand management or security: reputational risk for ITU



# RECOMMENDATIONS



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# CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW

- The New Programme should be developed in 2012 and introduced from January 2013
- It will be based **on four-year programme cycles**, with **smaller numbers of Centres** delivering activities which are focused on ITU and Member priorities
- It requires much **higher standards of quality assurance** and **new financial arrangements**
- The first full four-year cycle should take place in 2015-2019



**NAME OF PROGRAMME**

**CENTRE OF .....?**

**EXCELLENCE**

**OR**

**EXPERTISE**



**CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

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# DEFINING CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE (1)

- A premier institution that delivers excellence in training and capacity building in an assigned and specific field of ICT technology, policy or regulation
- Must be able to achieve demonstrable real-world results consistent with the unique requirements, standards and capabilities of the ITU
- Capacity building activities must enhance the performance of participants and their employing organisations and contribute to social and economic development

# DEFINING CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE (2)

- As high standards and superior performance in:
  - the quality of capacity building and training activities (content and programme)
  - the subject expertise and pedagogic abilities of training personnel and
  - the quality of facilities, equipment and accommodation

# PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

- The New Programme should have **clear objectives** which are consistent with ITU priorities that apply across all regions (while allowing for regional diversity where this is appropriate)
- It should have a clear **management structure** in which strategic leadership is exercised by ITU/BDT and operational management undertaken through Regional Offices.

# STRUCTURE OF THE NEW PROGRAMME

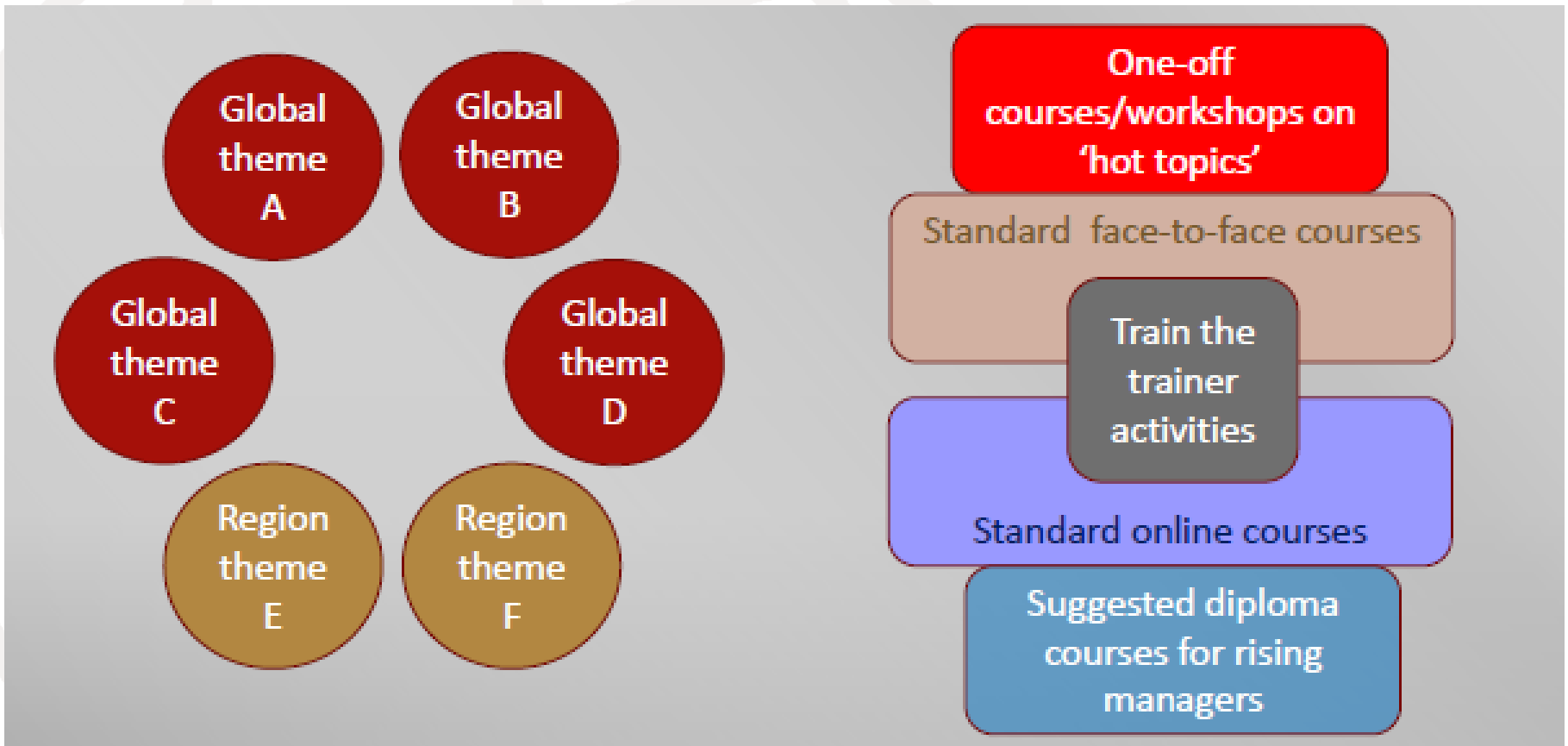
- It should be based on the priorities as set out by WTDC to cover the following four year cycle
- It should focus **on four to six core global themes** of priority to the members selected for the cycle
- Each cycle should start at the beginning of the calendar year following WTDC

Each region is allowed to select two regional themes in place of two of the six global themes identified.

# ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROGRAMME

## Programme themes

## Types of activity within themes





# SELECTION OF CENTRES (1)

- Centres should be selected based on their **ability to deliver activities in any of the chosen themes**
- Each centre should be selected for no more than two themes for the cycle
- Centre status expires at the end of the cycle.  
Renewal is not automatic
- A clear selection procedure must be administered by (initially) independent body (criteria in Annex)

# SELECTION OF CENTRES (2)

- There should be a maximum of 30 centres worldwide, grouped in 7 regions
- There should be a maximum of
  - 6 each in the AFR, ASP and AMS regions
  - 4 each in the ARB, CIS and EUR regions
  - 2 in the CAR region (consideration should be given to a PAC or SIDS regions)
- Centres should be selected by a competitive process for the four-year period of a programme cycle
- They should apply for Centres status for a particular programme theme (or up to two themes)
- Existing Centres should not automatically continue into the next cycle
- Centres should be designated as Centres for a specific theme (e.g. Centre of Excellence/Expertise in Spectrum Management)
- Centre status should apply only to that theme and to activities within the programme
- Centres should not be allowed to use Centre status to imply wider endorsement by the ITU or to market non-CofE activities

# SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

- Centres must make written proposals to the ITU demonstrating their capabilities to deliver training in any of the identified themes, and meet certain criteria (track record of expertise capability in particular theme, financial viability and sustainability, commitment to quality and excellence)
- Selection will be based on the Balanced Scorecard, and will involve visits to the institutions by ITU and external assessors

Financial viability and management

Commitment to innovation and learning

Commitment to quality and customer satisfaction

Quality of internal business processes

History of courses on topic

Familiarity with current issues on topic

Training staff with expertise on topic

Necessary facilities and equipment

Institutional quality and performance

Track record as a training institution

Expertise and competence in thematic area(s)

Business plan and proposals for implementation of Centre activities

History of course delivery

Quality of venue and facilities

Quality assurance in place

References From Satisfied Users

Understanding of ITU requirements

Quality of business plan

Quality of ideas for individual activities

Accessibility to participants from across region

# PROGRAMMES OF ACTIVITY

- Annual programmes of activity for these themes should be agreed by regional steering groups
  - They should be based on annual priority needs
- They should not be dictated to by Steering Committee meetings if those steering committee meetings are constituted by the training providers.



# POTENTIAL PROGRAMME THEMES

- Examples of potential programme themes:
  - Regulation policy and practice
  - Spectrum management
  - Broadband policy, development and deployment
  - New wireless technologies
  - Cyber-security
  - Emergency telecoms and climate change adaptation
  - Human resource development in the ICT sector

# PROGRAMME FOCUS

- Establish a distinct programme of ITU Leadership Fora, with events aimed **at top management** in government, regulation and industry, which should address the same themes as the Centres programme
- It is desirable to combine capacity building for top management and middle management in a single programme
- The Centres programme should focus on high quality capacity building which will enhance the performance of middle management and technical personnel



# QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Contracts with centres must include KPI's, with arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of centre performances, reviewed annually by regional offices and HCB
- At the end of each programme cycle, performance must be reviewed by independent evaluators



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# OBLIGATIONS OF CENTRES (1)

- To deliver a minimum specified number of activities, within the relevant focus theme, annually and over the four years of the programme cycle
- To cooperate with the Regional Office and other Centres to programme activities in a way that suits the needs of participants and users, through an agreed annual regional programme



## OBLIGATIONS OF CENTRES (2)

- To ensure that delivery reaches at least a minimum level of performance, set out in the contract, which is defined as 'excellent' and which can be measured through identified performance indicators and demonstrated learning outcomes
- To work with the ITU to monitor and evaluate performance, and ensure excellence through a process of quality assurance
- To engage with other Centres in regional and global networking within the programme

# COMMITMENT OF THE ITU (1)

- To support the development and marketing of activities within the programme
- To support identification and negotiation of partnerships/ sponsorships with third parties
- To make available ITU Academy resources and in-house expertise (from all ITU Bureaux)
- To support identification of experts to lead or participate in Centre activities

## COMMITMENT OF THE ITU (2)

- To promote and market activities through its Regional Offices and within the ITU membership
- To development a regional network of Centres and global networks of partners addressing the same focus theme in different regions
- To allow limited use of the ITU brand and logo in support of CofE activities

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# CERTIFICATES

- Certificates of attendance continue to be issued as per current practice, but that the signing of these certificates is delegated to Regional Directors
- Only certificates issued of achievement shall be submitted for the Director's signature



# ACCREDITATION (1)

- This is something that can only be done in close cooperation with some Universities and not as a primary focus of the ITU
- The ITU should explore the Open ECB Check system, used by some UN agencies



# ACCREDITATION (2)

## Implications

- Accreditation is more difficult to achieve for continuing professional development and for short courses than it is for academic programmes
- It can be sought for activities and/or for individual learning performance
- It requires testing of learning outcomes
- It requires academic validation, on terms which are largely set by accrediting agencies

## Suggested approach

- **Develop relationship with selected universities that might accredit.**
- Identify courses suitable for accreditation.
- Assess options for self-assessment and peer review.
- **Design curricula for appropriate courses, with accreditation agency involvement.**
- Agree arrangements with accreditation agency.
- Consider idea of ITU-accredited degree-level qualifications.

# ACCREDITING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ECB CHECK OPTION

- New arrangement for validating quality of continuing professional development courses of the type in CoE programme
- Backed by considerable number of agencies including UN agencies, WBI and ICT development agencies
- Focus on training delivery and learning outcomes rather than on curriculum
- Based on standard criteria, self-assessment and peer review
- Would seem suitable step for validating courses – could begin with piloting.



# FINANCING

- The programme should be **financially self-sustaining**, rather than drawing on core ITU funds.



# CURRENT FINANCIAL STATE OF COE

- No further funding is available from the ICT Development Fund
- No funding is currently earmarked in ITU operational budgets
- Almost all current projects have exhausted their funds.
- All activities should be fully costed and seek full cost recovery
- Income can be derived from 3 sources :
  1. from fees contributed by participants and their organisations for course participation;
  2. from sponsorship and partnerships between the ITU, Centres and other organisations;
  3. from the use of the Centres to deliver activities within other ITU programmes (which have separate funding and fit into the programme cycle's priority themes)

# FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Fees should be the default arrangement for financing CoE activities, and must be set to secure cost recovery, including payment of experts
- Fees should be collected by the Centres and not by the ITU



# ITU CAPACITY BUILDING FUND

- A Capacity Building Fund should be established from contributions from cooperating partners with special interest, to provide Fellowships support, provide experts and develop content
- In order to attract funding partners, the ITU should commit some SEED funds



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# OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

- The programme could benefit from forging stronger partnerships with other ICT related bodies and organizations, such as Regional Telecoms Associations, Regional Business Associations, and Regional Research Associations



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# SPONSORSHIP

- Sponsorship could be sought for:
  - individual activities or themes within the global or regional programme;
  - fellowships for individual participants

and could be:

- financial and/or
- in-kind

- Sponsorship could be sought from

- international funding agencies such as the European Commission, the World Bank and bilateral donors
- regional/global communications organisations such as associations of regulators, ITSO, APNIC, *etc.*
- telecommunications businesses and associations of businesses (such as GSMA)

# TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Actions for 2012 agreed at SC meetings for which funding exists should continue
- A competitive process to select centres to implement programme for the two year period 2013 to 2014, should take place in the year 2012

Thus, the reduction in the number of centres to the recommended levels starts in 2013.

- A needs assessment and identification of priority themes for 2015-2018 will be undertaken in 2014

# TRANSITIONAL FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- ITU should create a provisional transitional **financial programme support fund** for 2013 and 2014
- All remaining funds of the CoE within each project, be converted into seed funds for a Regional Programme Fund and be used to attract further funding, and keep the programme in that region running

This rewards regions who had judiciously managed their project funds and still had surpluses by time of project closure



# CONCLUSION

- The CoE has become an integral part of the BDT's capacity building efforts
- It has become a brand in its own right  
The strategy is designed to strengthen it.
- Being a partner driven process going forward requires that ITU as a primary partner put something on the table to drive the process



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**THANK YOU**

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