



DRAFT Report

4th Steering Committee Meeting of the ITU CoE Network in the Arab Region

Hammamet, Tunisia, 13-14 November 2017

Opening Ceremony

In his opening remarks, Mr Brahima Sanou, Director of BDT, welcomed the meeting's participants and highlighted the importance of capacity building for the work of ITU-D. Mr Sanou recalled the new CoE strategy and its three key elements, which are the network dimension, the global scope of the programme and the need to take into account the changes in the sector and priorities.

Eng Ebrahim Alhaddad, Regional Director of the ITU Arab Regional Office, welcomed everybody to the meeting and thanked CERT for their hosting of the event and for their warm reception, hospitality and excellent organization of the meeting. Mr AlHaddad, highlighted that the meeting will consider ITU Arab CoEs network related operational aspects, including the performance for this year's operational plan with challenges the network is facing and opportunities for future work.

Mr Naoufel Ben Said, General Director of CERT- Tunisia, thanked Mr Brahima Sanou, Eng Ebrahim Al Haddad and Dr Cosmas Zavazava for joining the opening session of the meeting and welcomed the CoE representatives. He highlighted the longstanding cooperation between CERT and ITU and the history of CERT labs in the C&I programme.

Dr Cosmas Zavazava, Chief of Department, Projects and Knowledge Management, highlighted the importance of capacity building, in particular since we are now at a cross road, with new technologies arising such as Big Data, IoT and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and we need to build capacity in those areas. Dr Zavazava mentioned that in 2018 there will be an evaluation of the CoE programme and the invitation to the ITU membership to apply for the next CoE cycle. He invited the Steering Committee to provide feedback in order to refine the CoE strategy.

The outgoing Chair of the Steering Committee, Mr Abderrahman Rafi, SG of INPT-Morocco, thanked everybody in the meeting, with special thanks to Mr Sanou for attending the opening session. Mr Rafi shared some data regarding the ITU Arab CoEs operational plan for 2017, including the implemented activities as of November 2017. He also informed the meeting that INPT and CERT will sign a MoU as part of implementing one of the objectives of the Arab CoEs Network.

Handover of the chairmanship of the Arab CoEs Network SC from INPT-Morocco to CERT- Tunisia:

According to the strategy of the ITU CoE Programme, the host of the Steering Committee meeting shall assume Chairmanship of the Steering Committee for that year. Based on this, the Chairmanship of the CoE Steering Committee for the Arab regions was handed over to CERT-Tunisia.

Ms Wala T. Latrous, Director of International Relations of CERT-Tunisia, accepted the appointment to be the Chair of the Steering Committee. As the new Chairman, she welcomed the participants of the

meeting. She asked the DG of CERT and SG of INPT to come to the stage to sign the MoU with attendance of the Mr Brahima Sanou, Eng Ebrahim Alhaddad and Dr Zavazava. A MoU was signed between INPT-Morocco and CERT-Tunisia.

The Chairperson then invited the meeting participants for group photo and coffee break.

Session 1: Review of the report of the 3rd Steering Committee meeting

The Chairman of the meeting, Ms Latrous, invited Eng Mustafa Al Mahdi to present the draft report of the 3rd SC meeting. Mr Al Mahdi presented the meeting outcomes of the 3rd SC meeting. The chairperson asked the participants if they have comments on the draft report. Then the meeting approved the report with the consent of all.

Session 2: ITU Centres of Excellence Strategy implementation and current capacity building activities

Dr Susan Teltscher, Head of the HCB Division, ITU, provided an overview of recent capacity building activities carried out by ITU and highlighted forthcoming activities. The presentation included:

- An overview of the training activities planned and implemented by the CoE network globally and in the Arab region, between 2015 and 2017. The data showed that while there has been an increase in training activities during this time period, there is a major gap between training activities planned and those actually implemented. This was also one of the main discussion items following the presentation (see below).
- An update of the training materials developed by ITU and available for delivery by the CoEs. These training programmes include the following: SMTP and Quality of Service Training Programmes are completed and ready for delivery; ICT and Climate Change is completed and under editing; IoT is under preparation; Internet Governance is in the initial stage.
- Partnerships with the private sector and academic institutions. In particular, the ITU-Academia Partnership Meeting held in Budapest in September 2017 was mentioned, which provided an excellent opportunity for CoEs to meet with academic institutions from all over world and discuss possible future collaboration.
- The preparation of the next CoE cycle 2018-2021. As part of the preparatory process, the CoE Strategy and Operational Processes and Procedures documents will be reviewed by ITU. CoEs and SC members were invited to contribute to the review. To this end, a feedback form/questionnaire will be sent to CoEs by the end of 2017. Comments and suggestions will be taken into consideration when refining the documents for the next cycle. A timeline for the review and selection process of the next CoEs was presented. The review will also take into account the outcomes of WTDC-17, in particular the ITU-D contribution of the ITU Strategic Plan and the ITU-D Action Plan, as well as the agreed upon Regional Initiatives.
- Finally, Dr Teltscher informed participants of the 2018 Capacity Building Symposium, which will take place in July 2018 in the Dominican Republic, and invited everyone to participate in the event.

The presentation was followed by a lively debate. In particular, the following issues were raised:

A number of questions were raised concerning the application process involved in the selection of the new CoEs, and concerning the performance evaluation of the current CoEs. Some participants emphasized that application forms for the new cycle needed to be filled out properly, accompanied by the required supporting documents, and deadlines needed to be respected. Performance evaluation will be carried out in 2018 and will include both quantitative and qualitative indicators. CoEs are invited to provide input on the criteria that should be considered.

CoEs shared their experience in implementing training courses, including the challenges they are facing. These are related to the low number of registrations for courses which subsequently have to be cancelled. It was agreed that promotion and marketing was very important and more efforts needed to be done in this regard. Morocco mentioned that they are facing a particular administrative problem related to hiring external experts, which needs to be addressed.

The performance of CoEs in the region is very unequal, with two Centers performing at a high level, and 3 Centers performing at a low level. There is room for sharing experience and success stories among the CoEs in the region so that others can benefit from those.

A suggestion was made that CoEs from all regions should meet regularly (not only from one region) in order to share experience, discuss common problems and challenges, and benefit from each other. This could be done once the new cycle is in place.

There was a discussion around the topic of priority areas. CoEs were of the view that one priority area is not enough and that other topics may come up over the 4-year period where CoE may want to offer training courses as CoEs. Repeatedly offering the same courses may attract less clients over time.

Dr Teltscher thanked all CoEs for their constructive comments and informed them that their concerns will be taken into consideration when preparing the next cycle. A questionnaire will be sent out to CoEs by the end of the year which will allow them to further elaborate on challenges and suggestions.

Session 3: Performance of ITU Arab CoE Network and lessons learnt

Eng Mustafa Al Mahdi presented the performance report of the implementation of the CoE activities up to 10 November 2017. His presentation covered the following items:

- The role of the regional Human Capacity Building (HCB) focal point
- Opportunities and challenges for capacity building in the Arab region: how capacity-building activities are organized in the region
- ITU Arab CoE network:
 - CoE activities in the ITU Arab regional homepage
 - Activities of the CoE network in the Arab region
 - Results
- Lessons learnt

Mr Al Mahdi highlighted the following challenges and opportunities for implementing activities under the Arab CoE Network:

Challenges:

- Security situation in the Region as main obstacle for the level of participation
- Lack of HCB programme funding
- National regulation related to fee payment or experts recruitment
- Promotion of the activities
- Some CoEs due to national regulations are not allowed to receive any cash directly to their treasury
- Late submission of ITU standardized templates of the activities
- Registration for face-to-face courses not done in the platform
- Lack of using the ITU standardized templates and documents required to close training activities.

Opportunities:

- New partnership on HCB programme (Intel (BB), One net (Satellite regulation))
- High demand for training activities in Arab region, especially LDCs

- Sustainable development using ICT tools

In addition, Mr Al Mahdi answered the related questions to the following points:

- Status on the implementation of the proposed activities of 2017
- Update on online registration
- Update on fee payment, specifically the online fee amount in which the meeting suggested that it should be calculated according to the number of training days
- ITU standardized working documents for CoE activities (invitation letter, training outline, info note, report for end of the activity, activity evaluation report and payment report).

Session 4: Presentation by ITU Arab Centres of Excellence Network Members

The members of the Arab States CoE network made their presentations as follows:

Eng Atif Hamad, SUDACAD-Sudan representative, made the first presentation. The key issues covered by this presentation were that:

- In 2017, SUDACAD implemented 6 activities covering 189 participants. Two of those activities were online training workshops implemented over the ITU Academy e-learning platform.
- 4 additional activities are to be implemented before the end of the year 2017
- US embargo has been lifted opening a window for new challenges and opportunities.
- Sudacad's plan for 2018 includes 8 activities covering important topics such as Cloud Computing, AI, Risk Management for ICT applications & services implementation and more.

A presentation by Dr Mustapha Benjillali, Professor at INPT and the newly appointed CoE project Focal Point, and Mr Abderrahman Rafi, SG of INPT and GCBI Member, presented the local infrastructure, organization, and context of INPT's CoE. For instance, the following points have been highlighted and discussed:

- INPT is a well-renown education and training institution at the regional level (Maghreb/Arab, West Africa and West Mediterranean). It offers various training programmes at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. Its training facilities are adequate for both on-campus and online trainings and events.
- The presentation reminded the participants that under the previous format, INPT implemented an average of 3-4 trainings a year. Under the new CoE model, INPT has been proposing 4-5 trainings a year, with a lower implementation rate (1-2 trainings per year).
- The presentation summarized the main difficulties and challenges. National regulation and procedures (experts rates, high overheads, cash payments, etc) are a limitation, and do not help in building/maintaining an active pool of experts and trainers. Other issues related to communication and marketing, the online registration process, and linguistic considerations, can also explain the relatively reduced numbers of participants.

To solve these issues, and enhance the performance of the CoE, the representatives of INPT's CoE made the following propositions:

- Implementation of a new, more flexible approach at INPT to cover expert's charges.
- Necessity to secure at least 12 participants for each planned activity.
- Consideration of French-speaking African countries in all INPT's CoE calls/trainings (more than just broadcasting the calls), by defining new collaboration frameworks and bi-lateral

cooperation agreements. From this perspective, the presentation highlighted the success of the model INPT has been adopting in its Engineering program over the last three years, in collaboration with many Sub-Saharan governments. This can be considered as a motivation, and an inspiring model to be extended to the CoE activities.

- Need for more support and effort from all parties in the communication effort, to reach larger numbers of potential participants.

The presentation was also an opportunity to present the 2018 planning of INPT's CoE trainings:

- Online training on "5G, IoT, and m-Payment — Emerging Technologies and Eco-Systems" in February 2018.
- Collaborative event in May 2018 (the possibility around Satellite Communications with ITSO will be discussed).
- The planning (with title, exact dates, and abstracts) of three face-to-face activities to be communicated to ITU by December 15.

A presentation by Ms Rym Ben Ammar Guizani, Head of International Cooperation Department at CITET, followed. In this presentation the following issues emerged:

- A joint Regional ITU Training Workshop on ICT for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in the Arab Region was organized in collaboration with CITET in Tunis during 12-13 July 2017. The participants were very interested in the sessions and had come-up with many recommendations on issues around use of ICTs for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- A bilateral meeting was held between representatives of ITU and CITET to discuss perspectives of cooperation.
- CITET's membership to ITU as an academic institution was successfully submitted
- Interest of CITET to join ITU Centers of Excellence network for the Arab States for next cycle as CoE on ICT and Climate Change
- Interest of CITET to contribute to other activities related to climate change mitigation and adaptation at regional and global level
- Interest of CITET to participate in CoE activities during 2018 as a reference centre in the field of Environment and CC. Joint training workshops will be organized specifically with CERT and CIFOD'Com.

A presentation by Ms Houda Jarraya, Head of Marketing & International Relations Department at CIFODE'COM, reminded participants that CIFODE'COM started collaboration with the ITU in 2012 when several training workshops had been organized in the optical fibres field for several Arab countries (Palestine, Mauritania, Yemen, Iraq, United Arab Emirates).

In 2014, CIFODE'COM was ranked 1st on the Arab region and 6th on the international level in the broadband field and finally CIFODE'COM has been chosen as an Arab Center of Excellence for the period 2015-2018 in the area of broadband.

During this year (2017), CIFODE'COM organized 6 workshops as an Arab Center of Excellence.

For these workshops, they registered participations from several Arab & African countries, such as Egypt, Lebanon, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Morocco and Tunisia. The number of participants for these workshops varied between 4 and 11 participants.

The main difficulties faced when implementing these workshops were to achieve a higher number of participants - whether from Arab countries or Tunisia - despite the deployed communication efforts.

For Tunisian companies the reduced number of participants comes from the fact that training especially for public companies are governed by calls for tenders, it is therefore not always possible for Tunisian companies to participate in these trainings.

For the Arab market, and since trainings in broadband field are already organized since 2012, they conclude that the market is starting to show signs of saturation.

To solve these issues, and enhance the number of participants for training workshops, the representative of CIFODE'COM CoE made the following propositions:

- For OP2018, new training topics will be integrated, such as mobile access or mobile development, where CIFODE'COM has acquired an important experience especially by managing national projects such as the project MDEV Tunisia. A more detailed operational plan will be submitted to the ITU before the 15th of December and will be discussed with ITU representative before this deadline.
- Need for more support from all stakeholders, especially on the communication side, to reach a higher number of potential participants especially from the Arab region.
- For 2018, they are seeking to consolidate partnerships with others CoEs especially by organizing joint training workshops:

Ms Houda informed the meeting about a workshop related to Internet governance that is planned to be organized in cooperation with SUDACAD with a possibility to increase the fee for this workshop (from 300 USD to 500 USD per participant) to cover the expenses related to this workshop and in order to make the training action beneficial for both CoEs.

Ms Houda confirmed that two workshops related to ICT& Environment will be organized with CITET.

Furthermore, as a part of promoting CoEs participation in ITU regional and global capacity building events, CIFODE'COM took part and hosted the regional forum on future networks for Arab States, which was held in Tunisia on 21-22 February 2017.

Ms Houda showed the willingness of COFDECOM for hosting other ITU capacity building activities or events in 2018.

Ms Wala T. Latrous, Director of International Relations, CERT-Tunisia, informed the meeting that they had planned two training sessions in 2017. The first one was canceled due to lack of participants. The second one (on QoS) was supposed to be held back-to-back with the SC meeting, however, it also had to be canceled due to lack of registrations. It may now be held at the end of December.

For 2018, so far two training activities are planned (on QoS and on Cybersecurity). CERT is also considering holding an e-learning course which would have to be tested beforehand though.

Session 5: Draft Report of the 4th Steering Committee meeting

The Chairperson presented the draft report with the main points discussed, draft recommendations and decisions that have emerged during the discussions as indicated in the below sections:

5.1 Main points discussed and recommendations:

1. There is gap between planned activities and implemented activities in the region as whole.
2. In the network, there is unequal performance among CoEs where some are performing well and others not.
3. There is an interest to have more than one priority areas for each CoE.
4. SC members expressed their willingness to revise the fee model, specifically for online courses.
5. Fees for online training need a different model taking into consideration the length of the training course.
6. CoEs are interested in benefiting from partnerships between ITU and other entities in the field of capacity building.
7. Promoting CoE activities is key factor for the success of the network.
8. CoEs expressed their interest to participate in the review of the CoE Strategy and Operational Process and Procedures (OPP) documents in preparation for next cycle.
9. The meeting thanked SUDACAD for their efforts and for their excellent work they are doing as ITU CoE and recognized SUDACAD as the best performing CoE in the region.
10. The meeting noticed that there is a low level of participation from Arab countries in some course implemented.
11. The meeting noticed that some priority areas might not be of interest to members from the region.

Recommendations:

1. CoEs should assess the challenges they are facing and work together with ITU to find solutions to overcome these challenges.
2. CoEs should provide feedback to the ITU on the review of the CoE Strategy and the Operational Process and Procedures (OPP) documents in preparation for the next cycle.
3. CoEs should promote their activities using different promotion mechanisms, including social media tools, and should target customers regionally (Arab and Africa) and globally.
4. CoEs asked ITU for more visibility of their activities among the African members, especially sub-Saharan African/Francophone countries.

5.2 Meeting decisions:

The below table shows the main decisions made by the meeting:

1	Time limit for finalization of OP2018	It was decided that all Centres should send their final 2018 course proposals by 15 December 2017.
2	Deadline for issue of invitation letters	It was decided that the timeline for issue of invitations should be - 2 months for face-to-face programs, and - 2 months for online training programs
3	Course materials	CoEs were encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge with ITU and others by sharing materials for courses that they have developed.
4	Experts and content	CoEs agreed to ensure international practices in the training content and agreed to send the CVs of the experts along with training syllabuses to the ITU Regional Office one month before the course for verification and approval.
5	Training materials developed by ITU	CoEs expressed interest in using materials developed by ITU. The CoEs will get in touch with ITU to discuss further.
6	Implementation of courses	CoEs noted that they have not implemented many courses this year. They indicated that this is because of low numbers of participants and no marketing strategy. CoEs agreed to work hard the following year and implement at least 4 courses each.
7	Use of ITU Academy platform for online training	CoEs decided that they need to start implementing training using the online learning platform. CoEs indicated that they do not know how to use the platform. ITU can provide assistance to CoEs wishing to run a course online.
8	Promotion	It was agreed that all Steering Committee members, CoEs and partners should promote all the CoE courses. The CoEs should identify key stakeholders in the country and send invitations to them specifically.
9	Training fees	The Steering Committee approved the following ceiling of training fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face: USD 100 per day per person • Face-to-face joint activities (between CoEs): 150 USD per day per person • Online training: USD 100 per person per course
10	ITU CoE revenue model	The Steering Committee decided to retain the revenue sharing with ITU, of 20 % to the ITU and 80% to the CoE.
11	CoEs Strategy and Operational Process and Procedures (OPP) documents	CoEs are invited to provide input, comments and suggestions.

The Steering Committee agreed that all issues have been adequately captured.

Session 6: Closing Remarks:

The Chairperson, Ms Wala T. Latrous, gave closing remarks. She thanked ITU for continued support to the CoE network. She also thanked the participants for active participation in the meeting and wished everybody a safe journey back home.

Dr Susan Teltscher, Head of the HCB Division, ITU, on behalf of ITU thanked CERT for hosting the meeting and the participants for their effective participation and engagement and the fruitful discussions the meeting had. Dr Teltscher encouraged the meeting's participants to provide inputs, suggestion and thoughts on the ITU Strategy and Operational Processes and Procedures documents in preparation of the next cycle.

Annexes:

Annex1: List of participants

Annex 2: Agenda

ANNEX 1

4th STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE ITU CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

ARAB REGION

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Designation	Institution	Country	Email Address
Mr Brahim Sanou	Director of ITU-BDT	ITU	Geneva	
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Mr Abderrahman Rafi	Secrétaire Général GCBI Member	INPT	Morocco	rafi@inpt.ac.ma
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AGENDA

Day1 13 November 2017	
08:30-09:00	Registration
09:00-09:30	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Eng Ebrahim Alhaddad, Regional Director of ITU Arab Regional Office- Mr. Naoufel BEN SAID General Director of CERT- Tunisia- Dr. Cosmas Zavazava, Chief of Department, Projects and Knowledge Management- Statement by the Outgoing Chair of the Steering Committee, Mr Abderrahman RAFI, SG of INPT-Morocco- Confirmation of the Chairman of the Steering Committee- Approval of the Agenda
09:30-09:40	Group Photo
09:40-10:30	Session 1: Review the report of the 3rd Steering Committee meeting <p>This session will review the report of the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting. The meeting is requested to adopt the report of the 3rd Steering Committee meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Outgoing Chair of the Steering Committee, Dr Abderrahman RAFI, SG of INPT-Morocco
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-12:30	Session 2: ITU Centres of Excellence Strategy implementation and current capacity building activities <p>This session will brief the participants on the progress of ITU CoE programme implementation, and developments in ITU's capacity building activities, including the ITU Academy platform and its development. It will also discuss future work, in particular concerning the new CoE cycle 2018-21 per the outcomes of the WTDC-17.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dr Susan Teltscher, Head, Human Capacity Building Division, ITU- Discussion
12:30-14:00	Lunch break
14:00-15:30	Session 3: Performance of ITU Arab CoE Network and lessons learnt <p>This session will brief the participants on the performance of the ITU Arab Centres of Excellence until mid Nov 2017, opportunities and challenges to improve the performance of the Network, key achievements and lessons learnt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Eng Mustafa Al Mahdi, Regional HCB coordinator- ITU Arab Regional Office- Discussion

Day2 14 November 2017

09:00-10:30	Session 4: Presentation by ITU Arab Centres of Excellence Network Members This session will include presentations by the ITU Arab Centres of Excellence Network Members including feedback on what has worked well and what problems they have encountered. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Representatives from CoEs
10:30-11:00	Coffee break
11:00-12:30	Session 5: Draft Report of the 4th Steering Committee meeting & Next Steering Committee Meeting (Place and Date) This session will provide the key inputs and subjects to be included to the draft report of the 4 th SC meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- CoE Network members
12:30-13:00	Session 6: Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dr Susan Teltscher, Head, Human Capacity Building Division, ITU- Ms Wala Turki Latrous, Cooperation & Marketing Director, CERT, Tunis