

7TH MEETING OF THE GROUP ON CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES (GCBI)

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

19-20 MARCH 2019

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI) held its 7th meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, from 19 to 20 March 2019.

The meeting was the first to be held following the call in 2018 by the BDT Director for the nomination of new members to the group by the regional bodies after the end of tenure of several members. As a result, eight members of GCBI were nominated as new members while four members from the previous cycle were re-nominated.

The meeting was attended by nine GCBI members. Ms Andrea Grippa from the Americas and Ms Ainura Sadyrbaeva from the CIS region participated remotely. Mr Babou Sarr from the Africa region could not attend. The group welcomed the presence of Mr Roberto Hirayama, from Anatel, Brazil, who participated as an Observer.

The group endorsed the appointment of Dr Lidia Stępińska-Ustasiak, Counsellor, Head of Social Policy Unit, Office of Electronic Communications (UKE), as the new Chair of GCBI. The group also welcomed the re-nomination of Ms Gladys Ogallo, CEO & Founder, Virtual Human Resources Services, Kenya, as Vice Chair.

The group noted the regional presentations made by the experts on the skills gaps within their regions and the priorities in capacity building arising therefrom. The group also discussed the future work of GCBI in its advisory role to the BDT Director, and made a number of constructive suggestions.

The key outcomes of the meeting are:

1. Capacity building is a core activity of the Development Sector. There is a need to develop a general framework for capacity building in ITU, which could include:
 - a) An analysis of capacity building initiatives in all sectors to aggregate all topics and avoid overlaps;
 - b) Developing a taxonomy/classification of capacity building activities which reflects the objectives of all ITU sectors and their priorities;
 - c) The creation of a common catalogue of all capacity building initiatives, under the framework of the ITU Academy;
 - d) Providing a definition of different levels of skills and what they entail (e.g. basic, intermediate, advanced digital skills);
 - e) Defining the main target audiences and identifying ITU's competitive advantage in capacity and skills development.
2. The ITU Academy platform has proven to be a reliable source and useful tool to deliver training courses and promote ITU's capacity development activities and should be further strengthened and enhanced. New approaches, such as learning-by-doing, and new channels, such as posting short learning videos, could be explored.
3. ITU needs to strengthen its existing capacity building programmes and incorporate capacity building needs for people/communities at the grassroots level, and in order to address groups for whom lack of skills is the main barrier to digital inclusion. In this regard, there is a need to establish programmes that complement the Centres of Excellence programme (which

focuses primarily on training professionals in the ICT industry) and which focus on the development of basic and intermediate digital skills. Training-of-trainers should be a core element of such a programme.

4. Capacity building activities should go beyond topics identified in the Regional Initiatives or the priority areas of the Centres of Excellence. While alignment between Regional Initiatives and capacity building is important, there is also a need to look at skills requirements in a more holistic manner. The experience and knowledge from developing countries should also be considered in the design of training activities.
5. There is a need to carry out digital skills assessments at the national level which will inform the capacity building needs in countries and regions. This includes establishing a set of measurements for assessing digital skills levels, and for setting targets of what needs to be achieved through capacity building and training. ITU should support countries in this regard.
6. GCBI members should engage the regional bodies that appointed them to collect comprehensive information relating to the situation of skills gaps and capacity building needs in their regions as input to their work. Other relevant stakeholders in the area of capacity development should also be involved. Stronger connections with regions will bring better identification of potential skill gaps and, as result, more accurate strategic advice to the BDT Director.
7. There is a need to propose new ways of stocktaking to enhance GCBI's advisory capacity using an evidence-based approach. To facilitate and harmonize the process of stocktaking across regions, a new tool (online or offline) could be created for standardized information gathering with indicated areas of interests, categories of capacity building initiatives and deadlines.
8. Partnerships between industry, government and academia need to be reinforced in the area of training and capacity building to ensure the alignment of training activities to industry requirements. In this regard, ITU should continue to partner with stakeholders in the delivery of capacity development activities.
9. ITU should continue to provide a global platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange in the field of capacity building and digital skills development through ITU regional and global forums to share the training resources and infrastructure worldwide.

The outcome of this meeting will be reported by the Chair of GCBI to the next meeting of TDAG, which will be held in Geneva from 3 to 5 April 2019.

The next GCBI meeting will take place in the first quarter of 2020. The exact dates and venue of the meeting will be provided at a later stage.

The final draft report of this meeting will be circulated to GCBI members for comments by 29 March 2019. GCBI members are invited to submit comments within one week thereafter. The final report will then be posted on the GCBI webpage by 15 April 2019.

Dr Lidia Stępińska -Ustasiak, Chair, GCBI

Geneva, 20 March 2019