



ITU Academy
TRAINING CENTRES

ATC Global Annual Meeting

17-19 October 2023

Geneva, Switzerland

- Final Report -

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Introduction

The ITU Academy Training Centres (ATCs) first annual meeting took place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 17 to 19 October 2023. Organized by the Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division, BDT/ITU, it brought together 19 representatives of 13 ATCs and ITU staff from BDT Thematic Priorities areas (the full list of participants is available under Annex 1 of this report). The event was envisioned as a working meeting and most of the sessions were planned to ensure an increased level of interaction between the participants. Several selected sessions were open for remote participation (to ITU regional Capacity Development focal points, other ATC stakeholders).

The event aimed to take stock of the first year of the ATC programme, explore innovative ideas to support the work of the ATCs, as well as strengthen collaboration among centres, and between ITU and the Centres.

It also focused on informing participants about the ITU Academy revised guidelines and upcoming features and created a space for sharing of best practices in terms of optimizing course quality and training approaches. A questionnaire was distributed to the participants prior to the event to better gauge the expectations as well as to collect suggestions regarding the topics of relevance (see Annex 2); the inputs were incorporated to finalize the programme for the meeting.

The detailed agenda, presentations, related materials, as well as the official photos are [available on the event's website](#).



Tuesday, 17 October

The meeting was opened by Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division, ITU, who welcomed the welcomed participants, after which she invited Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), ITU, to deliver the opening remarks.

Welcome remarks from the BDT Director

Dr Zavazava welcomed all participants and reminded attendees that bridging the digital skills gap is as crucial as connecting the 2.6 billion people who are still offline. In this sense, he recognized that achieving meaningful connectivity and bridging the digital skills divide are the two main challenges that the BDT is trying to address through the ITU Academy, the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATC) and initiatives such as the Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative.

He congratulated the representatives of the ATCs for their achievements and commitment and noted that the work they have accomplished so far will be instrumental in the shared journey towards closing the digital skills gap. He also emphasized that the strength of the ATC programme does not lie in the potential of each centre alone, but rather in the power of all ATCs as a network of institutions.

The BDT Director prompted ATC representatives to be proactive in their approaches and encouraged them to exchange experiences, ideas, and perspectives throughout the ATC annual meeting and beyond. He took the opportunity to share with attendees the five thematic priorities of the BDT, which are universal and meaningful connectivity, an enabling environment, digital transformation, partnerships and resource mobilisation, cybersecurity, and child online protection.

He concluded his remarks by thanking participants and wishing them fruitful deliberations.

ATC programme overview

In this session, Ms Susan Teltscher took the floor and provided key highlights about the ATC programme. Her presentation focused on the positioning of the ATC flagship programme within the ITU Capacity Development strategy, updates on the evolution of the programme thus far and the plans for 2024. She highlighted the importance of the ATCs in helping implement the BDT core mandate (strengthening capacities in the field of ICTs, in particular in developing countries), as well as its varied offer in terms of training topics (cutting across all ITU areas of work). The presentation also included an overview of the timeline for the programme and a quick look at the current institutions which joined the ATC programme.

In terms of facts and figures to date, based on the numbers from the ITU Academy platform which hosts the entire external-facing training catalogue of the organization, 38 training courses were part of the ATC umbrella at the time of the meeting (with 24 of them already implemented, and a further 14 planned for the rest of the year). The updates captured the good geographic spread of the programme with regards to the participants and a prevalence on online instructor-led courses in terms of preferred delivery methodology. It also highlighted room for improvement in terms of participants' gender balance (76% male, 21% female), as well as increasing the rates of certification (positioned at 52% from the total number of enrolled learners).

For the 2024 plans, Ms Teltscher highlighted the upcoming Digital Skills Forum, a core global event for ITU membership and other stakeholders, provisionally planned for 17-19 September 2024 in Bahrain. In addition, the presentation informed on a new ITU project funded by the European Commission, focused on "Capacity

development for the digital transformation”, for which ITU is planning to reach out to the ATCs as potential partners to deliver training. This generated questions from the participating ATCs who inquired about the possibility to add new topics to the list stipulated by the EC project. This was further detailed informing the ATCs that the pre-set list of broad areas is quite comprehensive and that specifics can be further discussed; a specification was also made that the funds are to be directed towards the delivery of courses, and not their development. Questions also sought clarification on the process of selecting the ATC for the EC project; this was parked for later discussion as the programme is to become operational from 2024 and the full details clarified at a later stage. The updates concluded with the notification that the ATC programme will likely open applications for the seats which are available (a total of 16 ATC is allowed under the provisions of the programme), taking into consideration the training needs of the ITU membership.

The presentation session was wrapped up with highlighting the objectives for the meeting: getting to know each other (ATCs and ITU representatives), strengthening of collaboration between participants, sharing best practices and learning from each other, as well as providing a forum for discussion.

‘Meet and Greet’ session for the ATCs

This segment of the meeting focused on networking and allowed the participants to interact with each other in a dynamic round of introductions which involved both ATC representatives as well as ITU staff. It laid the basis for a collaborative atmosphere and framed the event as highly participatory.

Expectations mapping and working commitments

To set the stage for the event, the participants were asked to highlight their expectations with regards to the outcome of the meeting and to capture aspects that would contribute to the event being a success for them. The inputs received revolved around several common themes: the need for networking, collaboration, experience sharing and active participation.

To help achieve these goals and establish a common ownership for the event, attendees were subsequently asked to capture their personal commitment to make the meeting a success and to highlight concrete actions they would take towards this purpose. The contributions reflected the openness of the participants to actively contribute, share lessons learned, offer expertise, and build partnerships.

ATC showcase gallery

Ms Halima Letamo, Senior Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU, facilitated the session and provided instructions and guidance to participants. A set of 13 posters were displayed around the room, providing details about each institution (facts and figures, areas of innovation and of collaboration, methodology for training course delivery, contact information). These information materials had been developed by the participants prior to the meeting according to a shared template. During the session, ATC representatives were allocated 40 minutes to explore the poster gallery and learn more about the work of other institutions. They were invited to leave questions on each poster, using sticky notes. Afterwards, representatives were asked to go back to their own ATC poster and revisit the questions left by other centres. They were given 10 to 15 minutes to provide responses to each question on a post-it and were instructed to choose one or two questions to share with the rest of the group in the plenary.

Ms Letamo acknowledged the variety of questions, reactions, and ideas that were shared through the posters. She reminded participants of the purpose of the session, which is to identify each ATC’s competency

and strength, and explore potential collaboration areas between the centres. ATC representatives were given three minutes to share what they have learned from other ATCs or answer a question that was addressed to them. Several questions were then covered in plenary, during the discussion segment of the session.

Below is a summary of interventions by the ATCs:

- The representative of **NRD Cybersecurity** (Lithuania) reminded participants that their Centre is part of the private sector and indicated that capacity development, training and knowledge sharing only represent one component of the centre's programme of work.
- The representative of **INICTEL-UNI** (Peru) provided additional information on micro-learning - small learning packages (bite size/short modules) which are hands on (involvement of labs) to prevent learners from being overwhelmed and synthesize the topics in an experimental learning. With regards to target groups, INICTEL-UNI is working with vulnerable populations and Persons with Disabilities (physical and visual impairment), as well as rural communities. In terms of partnerships, the centre previously collaborated with INATEL (Brazil) on training needs analysis and looks forward to furthering partnerships in capacity development.
- **CAICT** (China) specified that they are open to collaborating with other ATCs and welcomed further discussions with each centre. As the questions received were related to funding, the ATC representatives clarified that since training is not a business line for CAICT, customers could be industry, government as well as end users.
- **NTIPRIT** (India) resorts to experiential learning, a learning process through which course participants are prompted to learn through actions, and where instructors create an enabling and action-oriented learning environment. As part of the Government, NTIPRIT collaborates with other government entities (e.g. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology - MeitY) and the national regulation authority.
- **CERT-MU** (Mauritius): In terms of collaboration, as CERT-MU provides training in cybersecurity, working together with all regions is necessary to reach a certain level of preparedness. The representative invited other ATCs to share their expertise in cybersecurity to support capacity development. During the course design, planning and delivery phases, CERT-MU seeks input from industry experts and requests them to share their expertise and perspectives from the private sector. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted the Centre to explore ways and platforms for online training delivery.
- The representative of **UWI** clarified a comment made on the ATC's social media presence and online visibility. Currently, the challenge for UWI is to conduct the ITU ATC trainings in five campuses across the region. The mission for the ATC is now to develop a platform and consolidate its identity and branding as an ATC. In terms of learning methodologies, UWI is looking into contextualising the learning of enrolled participants (via problem-based learning, practical scenarios, simulations etc). The representative also expressed interest in collaborating with other ATCs.

To wrap up the session, Ms Letamo highlighted similarities that emerged from ATCs' interventions, namely innovative ways in terms of training delivery, as well as new methods of learning (i.e. micro learning). Suggestions were also provided on how to consolidate the centres' branding and increase their visibility through marketing and promotion. With regards to training delivery mode, she recognized that while the benefits of online learning continue to grow, it has not yet completely replaced face-to-face/offline training

delivery. Ms Letamo encouraged ATCs to continue engaging with and learning from each other to address existing challenges.

Ensuring course quality

Mr Emil Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU, facilitated the session and invited participants to break into four groups to reflect on the question: “How can we continue to ensure ATC training course quality going forward?”. Participants were split into four groups with mixed representation so as to allow interaction between the various ATCs. They were encouraged to brainstorm and capture the ideas and group them per common threads/categories. The emerging discussions focused on the following areas: training needs actions to define the skills and knowledge gaps of trainees more specifically, selection of participants, visibility and promotion of the courses, training design, tools and platforms, course delivery, and certifications. Salient points captured during the conversations were:

- Target the **skills of trainers** and the need to develop a pool of adaptive and flexible experts; instructional technologies and pedagogy training may be conducted by ITU for ATC trainers.
- **Delivery:** the importance of maintaining content up to date; keep learning in short bites; introduce participatory models and case studies to ensure all participants are engaged and given the opportunity to contribute.
- **ATC collaboration:** develop joint courses; synchronizing learning methodologies between the ATC; promote communication between ATCs with similar expertise for deep cooperation; resource sharing and developing toolkits for the Centres.
- **Evaluation and impact assessment** and building on evaluation results for iterative design (improve courses)
- The **course review process** should include both technical experts and experienced tutors to guarantee both content correctness and appropriate angle of view and technical depth.
- Invite **industry experts** as guest speakers to explain applicability of the specific areas of the course.
- **Introduction/orientation sessions** for learners as part of the course, which would focus on the requirements for certification, clarify learner participation, interactions, present course materials.

At the end of the session, following a plenary debrief, the groups were requested to select their top action from the list of recommendations. These included: shifting more responsibility for learning to the course participants; enabling a body of experts to check course quality before, during and after delivery of training; development of a common toolkit for online provisions; more direct involvement of ITU experts in the development of courses and aligning/synchronizing the curriculum to international standards. Participants were then asked to vote for the approach they felt would yield most impact on ensuring and increasing course quality. Consequently, the action which received the most votes was that of investing more time on the design and delivery approach in order to allow for a shift of the responsibilities to the learners.

Wednesday, 18 October

Evaluation framework

The session was led by Mr Emil Iuga, who opened the session with presenting the Kirkpatrick model of learning impact evaluation. The presentation detailed the four levels in the model (Reaction, Learning, Behaviour, Results) to frame the conversation during this session. Participants were asked to share in plenary

the means they apply to their courses in order to evaluate training. Responses highlighted practices which include questionnaires posed to participants, followed by data analysis and by examining how to modify the (expectations for) training – this was acknowledged as a great example of iterative design. The group was further asked to share actions or examples of Level 3 evaluation practices. **UNU-MERIT** indicated that they use this level, specifically looking at the use of badges to enhance programmes. They highlighted that post-training follow-ups are bounded by resources and finances, and that it is not always possible to conduct them. **AFRALTI** recognized that this is a challenge, most often related to sponsors as there is a call to follow-up after the training with trainees who have been sponsored. They highlighted, however, that this practice is proving difficult and needs a lot of commitment, especially since once a consultant has finished his/her work it is difficult to keep them engaged.

The presentation continued by providing the participants an update on the current approach for the ITU Academy and changes that will be implemented from 2024. The mandatory revamped online evaluation at the end of each training course contained several new elements, such as: using a 4-point scale in order to remove neutrals to have more reliable data, text labels for increasing clarity of answer options, methodology-specific questions, the introduction of the Net Promoter Score (NPS) metric, and a shift towards more qualitative data. It also includes more specific questions which target training value, training delivery, training setup, learning objectives, as well as facilitator delivery skills. Several clarifications were made regarding the process of the evaluation: the ITU Academy team is to always be the one to add the final mandatory evaluation to the training courses; the results need to be captured in the final training course report and interpreted (avoid a copy-paste exercise) which in turn will lead to an iterative design for the course. In terms of augmenting knowledge evaluation (Level 2), the ATCs were encouraged to include assignments and mandatory social/peer contributions which should be instructor moderated (for better knowledge retention). The recommendations further specified that all knowledge checks should be targeted at the learning objectives of the training course.

Questions from the attendees focused on clarifying the mix of both qualitative and quantitative questions in the standard Level 1 evaluation form, automating parts of the end training report in the future, as well as calling ATCs to still analyse the data (vs using AI tools for automating qualitative feedback). The presentation illustrated several of the results to date from the five completed ATC courses, highlighting very positive results with regards to training value, clarity of learning objectives, instructor quality. Areas of improvement from the results included: the communication regarding course logistics, schedule, and the clarity of the payment process for the training course fee.

The session then focused on ATC exchanges, as the participants were asked to reflect on how the training evaluation methodology for the ATC programme could be enhanced to better demonstrate training impact. The self-reflection was followed by interactions in pairs, then in groups of four to allow for cross-fertilization of ideas; the plenary debrief then captured several of these exchanges (see below areas of focus).

- The difficulty to adjust the course design in the case of short 4–5-day courses but with the potential to do so for future cohorts. This generated the idea of creating tracks (e.g. engineering track), thus offering participants to do 4-5-day courses over an *extended* period (months, years) with the next courses building on the previous ones in terms of level, complexity of the topic. This would also allow the possibility to make design changes to the subsequent courses and to also [track] behaviour changes in participants (at Level 3 of the evaluation framework).

- The evaluation should also aim to gauge whether final assignments were helpful for the participants' learning process. Additionally, when moving to Levels 3 and 4, the timing of the evaluation could depend on the intensity of the training. Exploring whether the post-training evaluation can be integrated into the ITU Academy and if spot checks can be incorporated at times throughout the delivery of the training was also mentioned.
- In terms of the modality (and usability) of the feedback system, explore allowing the participants to give audio feedback for qualitative questions.
- Engaging the learners (weeks) after the training to have a more honest reflection of the training (in addition to the end-training evaluation form). Delegate this role to a dedicated team which would work on the follow-up with participants after the training (possible, as long as there would be available resources).
- Consider implementing quick progress evaluation tests, by using a method akin to a traffic light system (in addition to the already-established evaluation methods).

As part of the closing for the session, a quick poll was conducted on the number of questions the ATCs use in their Level 1 evaluation for their other courses; answers indicated a range from 5-20 questions. The session was closed by recognizing the many ideas which came up and by encouraging reflections on the practicality of how to apply them.

[ITU Academy: new features and revised guidelines](#)

Ms Celia Pellet, Associate Capacity Development Officer, ITU, and Ms Guiomar Levi-Setti, E-Learning Officer, ITU, facilitated the session which consisted in a two-part presentation and discussion on the new features of the ITU Academy platform and the operational guidelines for the programme.

ITU Academy new features:

Ms Levi-Setti delivered a presentation on the ITU Academy new features and provided an overview of the development process, which is undertaken in close consultation/collaboration with the ITU Academy service provider, ATCs and ITU team. Since the launch of the ATC programme, the following features were added to the ITU Academy platform: a designated web page for each ATC, a tailored registration and payment process for each Centre, addition of course-related features (gender, country, age), and the addition of user-related features (profile fields such as nationality, date of birth, etc). She clarified that phase 1 of the automation of the ITU Academy is underway, with training outlines being fully automated, while data management and e-mail automation is in progress.

In the second part of the presentation, Ms Pellet shared the team's plan to enhance features related to accessibility and inclusiveness (translation to six languages, accessibility of plugins), add features related to the ATC programme, and continue with phase 2 of the automation (end of training report, data, etc). She reminded the audience of the big picture, which is front-end users, enhancing user dashboard and introducing learning paths.

The presentation also covered the payment process. The current situation was summarized whereby once users register for a course on the ITU Academy, they are requested to make a payment upon approval of their registration to access the course. The ITU Academy team has been exploring solutions to make the payment process more flexible, such as the removal of the approval step, the possibility to submit group

applications (when learners are from the same institutions) as well as the introduction of a “late payment” option to allow users to pay after the start of the course.

The session continued with a Mentimeter poll through which participants were invited to share ideas on the ITU Academy functionalities they would like to see in the future. Suggestions included the following: access to more data, application questionnaire, automation in evaluation, download the list of applicants with all details, improved search, increase interaction from course participants, link between participants accounts and invoice numbers, multi-stage evaluation, orientation session (instructor-led or via a short video), quick introduction to Moodle learning analytics. As some of the suggestions captured by participants are already available on the ITU Academy, Ms Pellet proposed that they could be shown/demonstrated to the ATC focal points at a later stage. Participants additionally recommended to revisit the timeline of the ATC course announcement, promotion, registration and roll-out. Currently, potential course participants may lose a learning opportunity if their payment is not made on time. To solve this issue, attendees advocated for a “late payment” option to allow learners to enrol in courses before payment, as well as the possibility to extend the registration deadline as a solution.

Another challenge raised by the ATCs is that the Learning Management System used on the ITU Academy (Moodle) does not provide all information/data to the course coordinators. To exemplify, they mentioned access to the list of participants but lacking the information regarding what courses they are linked to. ITU Academy team informed that a new version of Moodle will be available from next year and might provide easier access and flexibility.

Discussion on the ATC operational guidelines

For the next segment of the session, Ms Pellet invited participants to reflect on the ATC programme operational guidelines, and to discuss in groups what matters require additional clarifications. Interventions from ATC representatives included propositions for the ITU-ATC team to have access to a list of resource persons and experts, with contact information and related areas of expertise, who can be contacted by the ATCs. ATCs also discussed cross-regional visibility, and the possibility for courses run by each ATC to be promoted to and by the other centres. The participants also highlighted that the question of assessment also required clarification on the operational guidelines, and to explicitly mention that the minimum passing score for courses is 70 per cent. In addition to the Teams channel which was established by the ITU-ATC team as a working platform to communicate and monitor progress made on the courses, ATC representatives called for the set-up of an informal communication channel (e.g. group chat) to share contacts and expertise.

ITU Academy revised guidelines

The last segment of the session presented the new ITU Academy guidelines. During the interactions, it was recognized that although a full guidance on how to organize a course on the ITU Academy is available, it exists on different platforms, documents, or e-mails, which may not always be comprehensive or clear for course organizers so there is a need for a centralized document to provide this information. Ms Levi-Setti then provided more context on the objectives of the revised guidelines, which aim to increase course quality, enhance harmonization and consistency between courses, improve communication with the ATCs, and reduce the time spent on understanding ITU Academy technicalities.

ITU Thematic Priorities (TPs): presentations and interactions with the experts

During the afternoon of day 2, participants had the opportunity to interact with the subject matter experts from several of BDT's key Thematic Priority (TP) areas, specifically: Cybersecurity, Policy and regulation, Future networks & spectrum management, Digital Services. ITU experts from these four divisions joined the event and delivered presentations followed by interactive sessions with the participants per each topic (full list of the participating ITU experts is available under Annex 1). For the first part, the guests gave a brief introduction about each of the TP setup, activity areas of focus, future projects, and upcoming training needs. These were followed by several rounds of Q&A and networking between the ATC representatives and the experts, in dedicated spaces according to area of activity.

The presentations delivered by the experts captured their work in the field and priority areas in terms of training requirements, as detailed below.

- **Cybersecurity:** highlighted ITU's role in cybersecurity, its development work across incident response, strategy, inclusion, data and advocacy. It detailed products and services in providing capacity building and technical assistance via: project implementation through partnerships, training mentoring, fellowships, content development, TTX, workshops, on-the-job training, establishing networks of practice and support, and guidelines. The presentation also clarified the cyber capacity gaps and detailed current initiatives and their impact to date for both technical and policy support provided and specialized training.
- **Policy and Regulation:** provided an overview of the objectives and focus areas of activity, present and future priorities, and topics as well as their impact. It highlighted training needs such as: emerging technologies, regulatory innovations, mechanisms for consumer and stakeholder engagement and feedback, regulatory and institutional framework. Several current training initiatives were exemplified, such as the Digital Regulation Training, handbook and platform, the Business Planning for Infrastructure Development applying 5G Networks online training course. The presentation concluded by sharing relevant tools and resources available to ATCs on the topic.
- **Future Networks & Spectrum Management:** detailed the main focus areas - the Reliable Connectivity for Everyone and the Network & Digital Infrastructure initiatives - and highlighted the work of the Division in this direction. The ITU experts shared present and future priorities from the catalogue of activities e.g. AI for infrastructure, connectivity stack, last/middle mile toolkits, satellite communications, spectrum sharing innovation, open ran awareness, IMT 2020 deployments and mentioned the need for future training courses on these topics. The presentation also captured the TP's existing training activities on Spectrum Management, Network Design, Conformance and Interoperability, as well as on Future Networks.
- **Digital Services:** the presentation illustrated the main objective, focus areas and challenge resulting from the TP's work in the field, before listing their main initiatives - GovStack, Open Source, Be Health-Be Mobile, Smart Villages. It further detailed the approach methodology for the capacity development activities: guidance and templates, e-learning modules, communities of practice and in-person trainings. The presentation also provided the ATCs with information regarding the TP's awareness workshops, structure and deliverables of their deep-dive programmes, before highlighting the upcoming priorities for their area of activity.

The discussions in the dedicated sessions between the ATCs and the TP experts were organized across three rounds during which representatives from the various institutions in the room had the opportunity to rotate

and interact according to the area of interest and topics for their planned courses. The themes which came up during the conversations pertained to each ATC's priorities and specific need for information, and included the following:

- Available resources (self-paced online courses, manuals, guidelines, toolkits) available to ATCs in each respective area.
- Current practices, examples and capacity development actions ATCs are employing; potential collaborations frameworks for future common projects.
- Methodology for training delivery, e.g. exploring the use of use case scenarios, TTXs, drills, exploring the delivery master classes instead of standalone training, including perspectives and considerations for developed and developing countries.
- Legal frameworks, compliance with ethical guidelines, data management, interoperability standards.
- Applying common criteria in the training approaches for the subject matter; managing applications.

Following the group sessions, as part of the plenary debrief for this session, Ms Halima Letamo invited ATC representatives to share their main takeaways from the day. Several highlighted ITU's capacity to support ATCs in delivering courses by bringing expertise and tailoring/aligning courses in accordance with international standards. Participants also mentioned that ATCs can leverage ITU's expertise to enrich training offerings and enhance training course quality. They expressed appreciation for the inputs brought by ITU experts and highlighted the learnings and sharing that has been taking place among ATCs themselves.

When invited to share their findings on the interactions with the ATC representatives, the TP experts captured the usefulness of the sessions in keeping informed about the course offerings within the programme. Ms Yolanda Martinez, Senior Project Coordinator, Digital Services Division expressed her appreciation on the brainstorming ideas that came up, focused on co-designing new courses to improve regional integrations (exploring topics such as aggrotech, smart vehicles, AI governance, smart cities, IoT), as well as on the development of basic development skills for public servants.

Ms Caroline Troein, Cross Thematic Programme Officer, Digital Networks & Society Department, mentioned that the conversations focused on concrete items related to what the ITU can offer in the subject area of cybersecurity capacity development, going beyond traditional courses and more towards exploring simulation exercises. She also highlighted that many of the discussions were aimed at mapping future training needs and expressed her excitement to seeing the new partnerships resulting from these interactions.

Mr Vladimir Daigele, Programme Officer, Future Networks and Spectrum Management (Access) Division, noted that the discussions in the group were wide-ranging, from new technologies, interconnected cars to exploring training needs in more detail. He noted that the conversations were also aimed at potential collaborations to design courses at different levels: from basic ones, focused on awareness-raising for the general public, to developing an advanced course offering (e.g. focused on technologies to connect rural areas), depending on target countries.

Ms Letamo encouraged participants to continue reflecting on their journey as an ATC and reminded attendees that "digital knows no boundaries". She also encouraged participants to continue exploring "out of the box" approaches that challenge existing practices.

Thursday, 19 October

Focus on methodology and delivery

This session explored how to improve course delivery for an optimal learning experience in online instructor-led courses (as the most common methodology across all ATC training courses). Participants were grouped into four stations, each one focusing on a specific topic/question. During the subsequent plenary discussion, the main ideas that came out of the groups were presented. These included the following:

- **How do you ensure learner engagement during the/your online instructor-led sessions?**

Much of the discussions under this question focused on the duration of the courses. The group members mentioned that sessions could include 20-30 minutes learning videos, reflections after 30 minutes, and should last a maximum of 2 hours with breaks in between. Each session should be followed by quizzes and exercises. Participants also stressed that assignments and exercises should be interlinked and build on each other. The use of Menti-type tools was considered useful, to get more reflection, diversity and feedback on how the learners are doing. Finally, there should be a limit to the size of the group, although this may differ a lot from topic to topic. Whether 10, 20 or 50 learners in a group, the instructor should be in a position to answer all the questions in order not to lose the attention of the learners.

- **What actions do you take to reduce participant drop-out rates in online instructor-led courses?**

Under this question, attendees noted that some flexibility should be granted to the course participants since they may have conflicting schedules. Short, synchronous sessions (15-30 minutes) could be combined with asynchronous activities, such as videos. Other suggestions made included giving assignment and exercises, either in-class or for the next session, which should be closely related to the learners' day-to-day work. Finally, instructors should follow up with learners who dropped out to find out the reasons and to make sure they are not linked to technical problems.

- **How do you boost peer learning approaches in online instructor-led courses?**

To have the same understanding of the question, participants agreed that this was about making sure that course participants learn from each other. They debated that the issue could be addressed by using breakout rooms and allocate moderators, and the ideas to be shared with the entire group afterwards. Other suggestions included: learner-led forums and looking at other learners' postings; flipped classrooms; external chat rooms where learners can communicate with each other; interactive live lectures and peer engagement; group exercises which should be organized around time zones; role plays, virtual platforms and e-labs; and using tools such as Menti boards and quizzes.

- **What are your best approaches you use and *could use* for increasing course registrations and participants' diversity?**

The discussion on this question was structured in two parts. First, participants mapped what ATCs are currently using. Second, they provided ideas on what has worked well so far and what could be done to increase registrations and course diversity. This included the creation of an alumni network and WhatsApp groups, promotion on social media targeting specific groups, and working with partners and human resources departments in regional associations or labour unions. Participants

also stressed the importance of cross-sharing of course offerings among the ATCs, which could be facilitated by ITU. Some bottlenecks that impact the diversity were also identified, in particular the small share of female course participants. This could be addressed, for example, by encouraging female applicants and providing them with discounts. Finally, varying the types of course offerings to include more free, short trainings was mentioned, along with importance of offering courses in multiple languages, as it would allow to attract participants from different regions.

Commitments and action planning

Participants were asked to think back and reflect on the sessions and the discussions in which they participated during the event and to identify one thing that they would start doing, stop doing and continue doing after the event's closure and once they return to managing their ATC's activities and courses. Several actions shared in the plenary focused on:

- The use of Menti for knowledge assessment, modify long sessions so that they would not run more than 30 minutes without a pause for interaction with participants, and initiate follow-up interaction with dropout learners in order to facilitate their rejoining.
- More learner focus, adjust timings to accommodate more time zones and align to the global nature of the programme; insist on peer learning so as to allow participants to go beyond individual tasks; continue to support learners via established communication channels.
- Aim to increase the number of certifications by reducing the duration of online sessions and continuing to do individual follow up with each with each participant (which yields a good return on investment for the Center).
- Start new cooperations with the other ATCs to leverage the expertise and capacity of the programme's network.
- Increase interactions during the courses, ensure learner engagement; modify assignments to be more problem-based, practical, train instructors on conducting online sessions, bring in more elements of experiential learning in the design of the courses.

Closing session

Ms Susan Teltscher provided a summary of the ATC meeting and takeaways from the perspective of the Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division. She highlighted that the objectives of the meeting were met as she summarized the main areas of focus on the agenda. These pertained to strengthening collaboration between the ATCs and ITU and sharing of best practices, providing inputs on the future direction of the programme and having a clear understanding of its key priorities. She summarized the participants' expectations as shared on the first day and noted that the event provided space for knowledge exchanges, engagement, experience sharing, networking, group discussions and more in-depth familiarization with the competencies of each ATC.

In terms of the follow-up actions, she captured the continued focus on ensuring training quality, with the need to be innovative in the ATC training approaches, build on the evaluation training results and adapt as well as improve the course content. She highlighted that ITU's commitment is to strengthen the review of the course curricula as well as initiate a renewed training needs analysis for our membership (as part of the 2024 EC capacity development project). Ms Teltscher also addressed the need to assist the ATCs in their use of the ITU Academy by sharing the improved platform finalized guidelines, as well as conduct preparatory training about the platform. She expressed her hope that on the planning and the delivery of the curriculum

for future courses, ATCs will build on the ideas and suggestions from the discussions with the subject matter experts, and also on the discussions with the other representatives about strategies to ensuring learner engagement, increasing participants and reducing drop-out rates.

Her final remarks focused on reiterating that the ATC is ITU's flagship capacity development programme and that jointly with the institutions in the room it can be moved forward while at the same time further strengthening the quality of the training. She pointed out that 2023 had been an excellent start of the new programme and that there was plenty of space for growth and innovation as it moves into the next year. She stated that the ultimate goal of the programme was to ensure a strong and high-quality ITU capacity development approach that meets the expectations and needs of the ITU membership. In terms of what is upcoming for 2024, ATC representatives were reminded of the next annual meeting scheduled for September, as well as of a virtual get-together in Q1/Q2 of the same year.

Ms Sofie Maddens, Chief, a.i., Digital Knowledge Hub, Telecommunication Development Bureau delivered the closing remarks for the event. She stressed the importance of the role which the ATCs play in bridging the skills divide and reiterated ITU's commitment to working with the institutions participating in the programme, collaborate in order to connect the dots, share the resources as well as the expertise available. She closed the meeting by thanking the CSD team for the organization of the event and by acknowledging the work that was put into this first ATC annual meeting.

Meeting evaluation

At the end of the event, participants were asked to share their feedback on the meeting by responding to an online survey which consisted of ten questions. The survey was answered by 95% of the attendees and responses were overwhelmingly positive both in terms of the value of the content and the organization of the meeting.

Value of the content: the quality of the meeting was rated as “Excellent” (88%) and “Good” (12%) by the respondents, as illustrated below (Figure 1). The positive feedback was further amplified by the ranking of the quality of the presentations, which were considered “Excellent” (76%) and “Good” (24%) as seen in Figure 2.

Figure 1: Overall assessment of the workshop

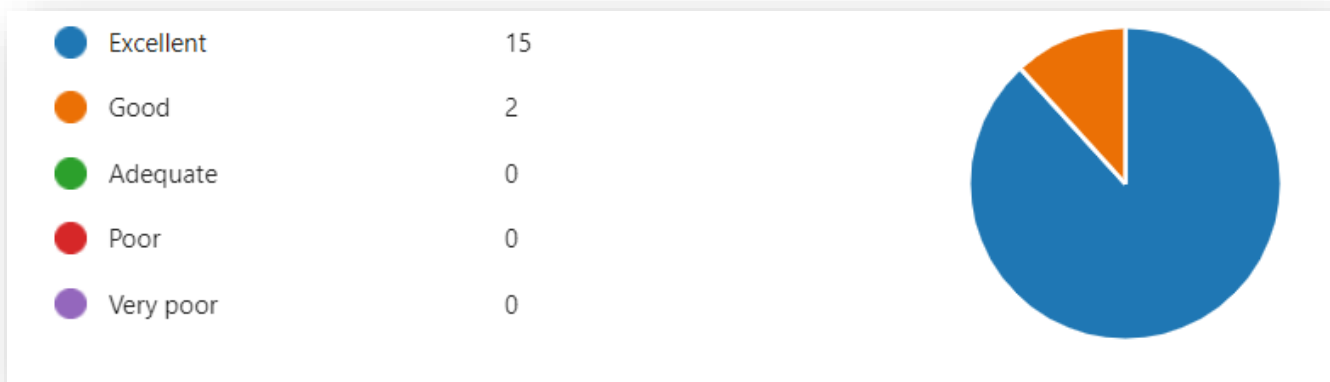
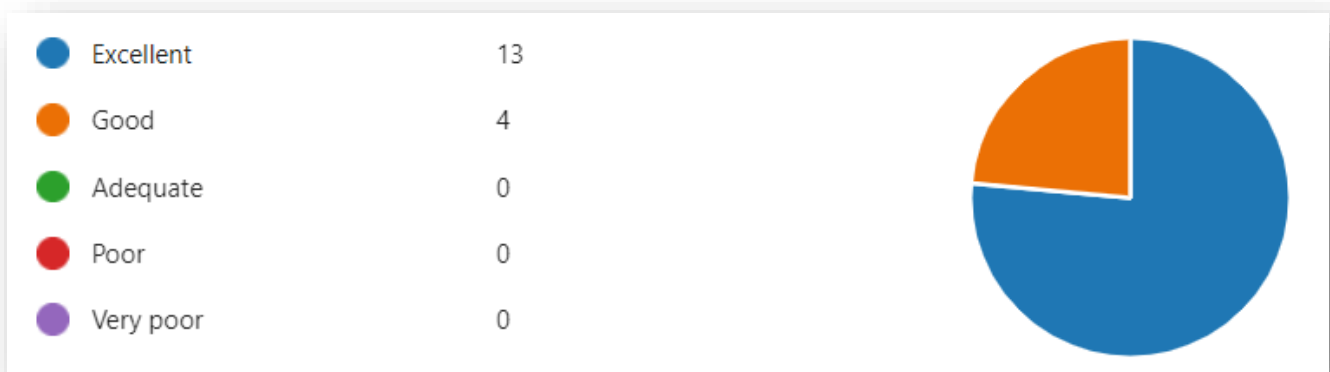
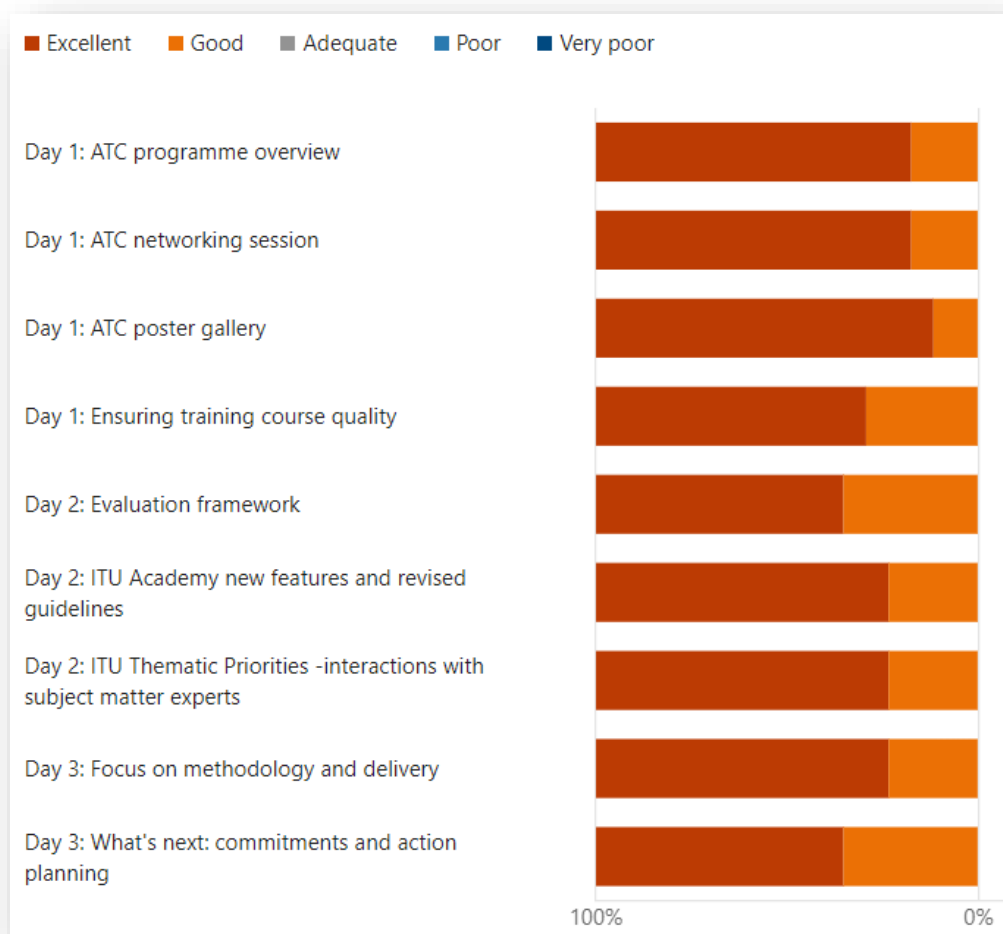


Figure 2: Quality of the presentations



Participants were also asked to rate both the quality and usefulness of the interactive sessions, for each agenda item separately (Figure 3). The highest ranked were the ATC poster gallery information session (“Excellent”, 88.2%), networking and programme overview (rated “Excellent” by 82.4% of the respondents), followed by the sessions on the ITU Academy new features and revised guidelines, interactions with the Thematic Priorities experts, methodology and delivery best practices. It is notable that every content item received only ratings of “Excellent” and “Good” from all respondents.

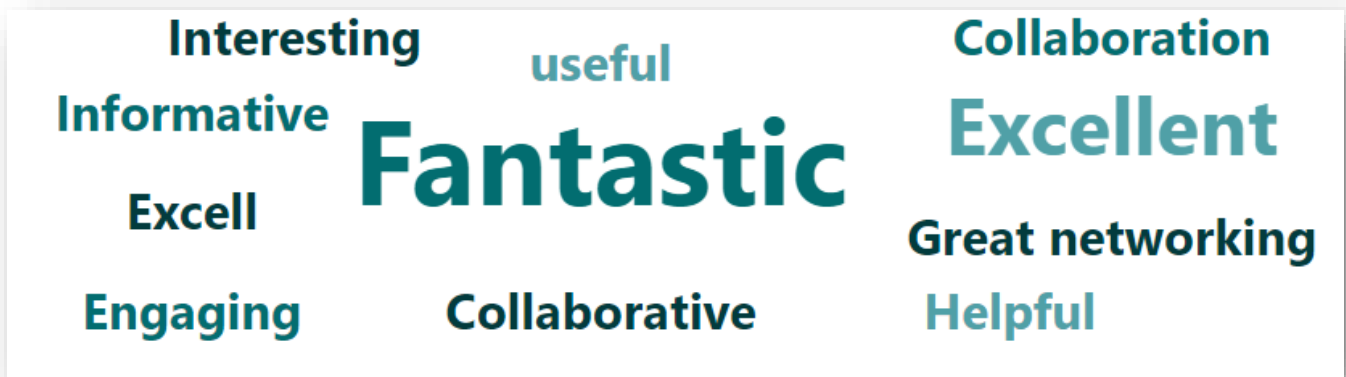
Figure 3: Quality and usefulness of the sessions



Planning and organization: in terms of the meeting setup, 88% of the respondents considered it “Excellent” and 12% “Good”. The quality of the event’s facilities/venue was seen as “Excellent” (82%) and “Good” (18%), while the duration was labelled “Just right” by 82% of the participants, with 18% indicating it was “Too short”. The perception of the communication related to the meeting was also positive with 82% considering it “Excellent” and 18% rating it as “Good”.

Highlighted inputs: the participants also provided qualitative feedback, stressing the interactive nature of the event, its collaborative nature, and the quality of the facilitation. Suggestions for future similar events mentioned more time allotted to interaction with topic experts relevant to specific participants, as well as increasing the focus on deeper collaboration between ATCs with similar areas of expertise.

Figure 4: The meeting experience in one word according to the participants



Annex 1: Participants

ATC representatives

	ATC name	Country	Representative(s)
1	African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute (AFRALTI)	Kenya	Mr Jonathan MWAKIJELE
2	China Academy of Information and Communications Technology (CAICT)	China	Ms Li FU Mr Bo YANG
3	Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius (CERT-MU)	Mauritius	Mr. Kaleem Ahmed USMANI
4	Digital Bridge Institute (DBI)	Nigeria	Mr Mohammed AJIYA Mr Paulinus Okechukwu UGWOKE Mr. Gwa MOHAMMED Mr. Daniel MABWEH
5	Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Capacitación de Telecomunicaciones (INICTEL-UNI)	Peru	Ms Iris PRETEL
6	Instituto Nacional de Telecomunicações (Inatel)	Brazil	Mr Frederico DA SILVA
7	Link Centre/University of the Witwatersrand	South Africa	Ms Lucienne ABRAHAMS
8	National Institute of Telecommunications (NIT)	Poland	Mr Sylwester LASKOWSKI
9	National Telecommunications Institute for Policy Research, Innovation and Training (NTIPRIT)	India	Mr Ravi Kumar MATHUR Mr Atul SINHA
10	NRD Cyber Security	Lithuania	Ms. Ruta JASINSKIENE
11	Tallinn University of Technology (TALTECH)	Estonia	Ms Silvia LIPS
12	The University of the West Indies	Barbados	Ms Sandra MAYNARD
13	United Nations University-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)	The Netherlands	Ms Cristina MANCIGOTTI

ITU staff

	Name	Functional Title
CSD team:		
1	Ms Susan TELTSCHER	Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division
2	Ms Halima LETAMO	Senior Capacity and Skills Development Officer
3	Ms Robyn FYSH	Senior Project Manager
4	Mr Emil IUGA	Capacity and Skills Development Officer
5	Ms Celia PELLET	Associate Capacity Development Officer

6	Ms Guiomar LEVI-SETTI	Junior E-learning Officer
7	Ms Sara BENNOUNA	Junior Digital Skills Officer
BDT Guests / Experts:		
1	Mr Cosmas Luckyson ZAVAZAVA	Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau
2	Ms Sofie MADDENS	Chief, a.i., Digital Knowledge Hub, Telecommunication Development Bureau
3	Ms Yolanda MARTINEZ	Senior Project Coordinator, Digital Services Division
4	Mr Walid MATHLOUTHI	Head, Future Networks and Spectrum Management (Access) Division
5	Mr Vladimir DAIGELE	Programme Officer, Future Networks and Spectrum Management (Access) Division
6	Ms Caroline TROEIN	Cross Thematic Programme Officer, Digital Networks & Society Department
7	Ms Kristina HOJSTRICOVA	Cybersecurity Project Officer (Cyber4Good), Cybersecurity Division (Resilience)
8	Ms Carmen PRADO WAGNER	Senior Programme Officer, Regulatory & Market Environment Division

Annex 2: Agenda inputs (pre-meeting) questionnaire

We are looking forward to welcoming you to this event which brings together representatives of the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATCs) that started operations in 2023. We envision a practical, working-style meeting focused on sharing best practices from the first year of the programme, discussing training approaches, and networking for joint activities.

In order to help us further tailor the agenda, we would be grateful if you could please provide us with your inputs below - we very much appreciate it!

1. Your full name
2. ATC name
3. How would you rank the following topics that are planned for the ATC meeting? (drag to rank, placing the most important ones at the top):
 - Networking with the other ATCs
 - Dedicated sessions with the ITU subject matter experts
 - Ensuring quality in ATC courses
 - ITU Academy new features and development roadmap
 - Training evaluation within the ATC programme
 - Best practices in training course delivery
4. Your comments to the topics proposed:
(open text field)
5. Any *additional* topic/aspects that you would like to propose for the discussions:
(open text field)

Annex 3: Event agenda

ITU Academy Training Centres (ATC) Global Annual Meeting

17-19 October 2023, Varembé Conference Centre (CCV), Geneva, Switzerland

Objectives:

- Take stock of the first year of implementation of the programme
- Explore innovative ideas to support the work of the ATCs
- Strengthen collaboration among centres, and between ITU and the Centres
- Share best practices in terms of optimizing course quality and training approaches
- Inform on ITU Academy revised guidelines and upcoming features

Participants:

- Representative from the ITU Academy Training Centres ([ATCs](#))
- ITU Capacity and Digital Skills Development team
- ITU Thematic Priorities Subject Matter Experts (selected sessions)
- ITU Regional capacity development focal points (based on availability)

Agenda Outline¹:

Tuesday, 17 October 2023

Time ²	Agenda item
08:00-09:00	Arrival / Registration (Pick up your badge at ITU Montbrillant building reception) <u>Address</u> : 2 rue de Varembé, Google Maps link ; see also – ‘How to get the ITU’ page
08:30-09:30	Welcome coffee Varembé Conference Centre
09:30-09:50*	Welcome of attendees / Opening remarks: Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava , Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)
09:50-10:00*	Agenda / Logistics
10:00-10:10*	Quiz: 2023 ATC programme facts and figures
10:10-10:45*	Introduction: ATC programme overview and objectives of the meeting 2023 status report – planned/implemented courses, schedule Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division (CSD-BDT)
10:45-11:00	Coffee break
11:00-12:00	ATC Networking session ATCs representatives, ITU participants
12:00-12:25	Mapping expectations for the meeting & working together Establishing a working culture for the meeting.
12:25-12:30*	Wrap-up morning session
12:30-13:30	Lunch (<i>offered on the premises</i>)
13:30-15:15	ATCs poster gallery Showcasing each ATCs profile, portfolio, innovation & collaboration areas, training approach.

¹ Items marked with * are eligible for remote participation. To access, please first register for the event [here](#) (create a new account if you are a new user), then login [here](#) to access the Zoom sessions.

² Please note that changes to the proposed sessions duration or format might still occur.

15:15-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-16:50	Ensuring training course quality Best practice exchange from the ATC network, CSD guidelines.
16:50-17:00*	Closing Day 1 / Summary takeaways
17:30-19:00	Welcome reception <u>Venue</u> : ITU Tower building, 53 Av. Giuseppe Motta (Google Maps link), <i>Satellite</i> restaurant, 15 th floor

Wednesday, 18 October 2023

Time	Agenda item
09:30-09:45*	Welcome / Highlights from previous day Day 02 Agenda
09:45-10:45*	Evaluation framework New ITU Academy evaluation form (Level 1), results to date. ATC network best practice exchanges.
10:45-11:00	Coffee break
11:00-12:25*	ITU Academy – new features and revised guidelines Overview of platform development roadmap, discussion on updated guidelines.
12:25-12:30*	Wrap-up morning session
12:30-13:30	Lunch (<i>offered on the premises</i>)
13:30-14:40*	ITU Thematic Priorities – presentations from the subject matter experts Invited ITU representatives from various divisions (Cybersecurity, Policy and regulation, Future networks & spectrum management): areas of priority, resources, training needs.
14:40-15:15	ITU Thematic Priorities – interacting with the subject matter experts (Round I) Group sessions for ATC and ITU interactions.
15:15-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-16:00	ITU Thematic Priorities – interacting with the subject matter experts (Round II) Group sessions for ATC and ITU interactions.
16:00-16:30	ITU Thematic Priorities – interacting with the subject matter experts (Round III) Group sessions for ATC and ITU interactions.
16:30-16:50*	Debrief
16:50-17:00*	Closing Day 2 / Summary takeaways

Thursday, 19 October 2023

Time	Agenda item
09:30-09:45*	Welcome / Highlights from previous day Day 03 Agenda
9:45-10:45	Focus on methodology and delivery Best practice exchange for an optimal learning experience in online instructor-led courses.
10:45-11:00	Coffee break
11:00-12:10*	What's next: commitments and action planning Concrete steps going forward, mapping individual commitments.
12:10-12:30*	Summary and closing remarks