ITU, UNDP and the EU announce a EUR 4 million capacity development project

Geneva, 18 September 2024 - The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the European Union (EU) recently announced a EUR 4 million 'Capacity Development for Digital Transformation' project, which aims to train policymakers and government officials to strengthen their abilities to support a human-centric digital transformation.

Funded through the EU Global Gateway, the project was announced during the ITU Digital Skills Forum, held in Manama, Bahrain, from 17-19 September 2024, under the theme 'Developing skills for digital transformation.'

"This trilateral partnership between ITU, UNDP, and the EU offers a unique opportunity to support digital transformation efforts of developing countries," said Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau**. "**This initiative is not just a significant milestone for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector but also a testament to the power of multilateral collaboration; it is a critical component of our shared vision for a connected, inclusive, and sustainable digital future. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the European Union and to UNDP and all our partners for their unwavering support."

"Sufficient digital capacity within governments is essential for driving inclusive digital transformation. This initiative aims to empower government officials and policymakers worldwide by providing them with the skills needed to design and implement effective and inclusive digital transformation policies," said Robert Opp, UNDP's Chief Digital Officer. "Our focus is on making these trainings accessible, particularly in the least developed countries, to address the unique challenges of local digital transformation."

"Together with ITU and UNDP, the EU reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and a human centred digital future. This project will help prepare nations to shape inclusive digital policies, ensuring that no one is left behind. As such, it supports a digital transition which supports economic and social development, based on the open Internet, good governance and human rights," said Thomas Juergensen, Head of Trade and Economic Affairs of the EU Delegation to Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In line with ITU's mission to connect the world and ensure no one is left behind, the four-year project aims to train at least 5,000 professionals—primarily from developing countries—through a combination of face-to-face and online training courses organized under the umbrella of the ITU Academy. The training courses are organized in collaboration with the 14 ITU Academy Training Centres and other United Nations agencies.

To date, the project has already completed several face-to-face and online training courses focused on digital transformation, digital infrastructure, and emerging technologies. These include a summer school on digital transformation for sustainability held in the Netherlands in collaboration with UNU-MERIT, a training program on excellence in digital government in South Africa with the University of the Witwatersrand, and a course on digital transformation in the public sector in Kenya with the African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute.

Several additional training courses are planned for the coming years, covering various key topics.

About the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs), driving innovation in ICTs together with 193 Member States and a membership of over 1,000 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations. Established in 1865, it is the intergovernmental body responsible for coordinating the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoting international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, improving communication infrastructure in the developing world, and establishing the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems. From broadband networks to cutting-edge wireless technologies, aeronautical and maritime navigation, radio astronomy, oceanographic and satellite-based earth monitoring as well as converging fixed-mobile phone, Internet and broadcasting technologies, ITU is committed to connecting the world. Learn more: www.itu.int.

About Global Gateway

Global Gateway is the European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure connections in digital, energy and transport sectors, and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the

world. It is fully aligned with the UN's Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the Paris Agreement. Across the world, Global Gateway aims to mobilise up to 300 billion euros in investments between 2021 and 2027 with a mix of grants, concessional loans and guarantees to de-risk private sector investments. Through a 'Team Europe approach', Global Gateway will bring together the EU, its Member States and their financial and development institutions to mobilise the private sector to leverage investments for a transformational impact. Learn more: Global Gateway (EU)

About UNDP

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. Learn more at undp.org or follow at @UNDP and @UNDPDigital.