



ITUAcademy
TRAINING CENTRES

ATC Annual Meeting

21 – 24 April 2026

Geneva, Switzerland

- Final Report –

Contents

About the meeting.....	4
Day 1 (Tuesday, 21 April 2026)	5
Opening session (joint ATC-DTC session)	5
ATC and DTC introductions and networking	6
Updates on the DTC and ATC programmes and objectives of the workshop (joint ATC-DTC session)	6
Mapping expectations together (joint ATC-DTC session).....	8
Day 2 (Wednesday, 22 April 2026)	9
Marketplace: Good practice framework for face-to-face training	9
Masterclass webinars (new ITU Academy format)	12
Common themes in training evaluation results (joint ATC-DTC session).....	14
Gamification: Innovative practices in training (joint ATC-DTC session)	15
Day 3 (Thursday, 23 April 2026)	18
“Ask me anything”: Solution-seeking activity (joint ATC-DTC session).....	18
Updates from the ITU team	19
ATC programme: Overcoming existing challenges	22
New tools for ATCs	23
Show and tell: Innovative practices in training design and delivery	24
Day 4 (Friday, 24 April 2026)	24
Looking ahead: Advancing the ATC and DTC programmes (joint ATC-DTC session)	24
Closing (joint ATC-DTC session)	27
Meeting evaluation.....	29
Content and conduct of the meeting:	29
Agenda items:.....	29
Joint sessions:.....	30

Ideas for improvement:.....	30
Event organization:.....	30
Annex 1: Participants	31
ATC delegates	31
ITU staff	32
Annex 2: Programme agenda.....	33

About the meeting

The ITU Academy Training Centres (ATCs) fourth annual meeting took place in Geneva, Switzerland from 21 to 24 April 2026. It was held in conjunction with the Global Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Workshop and was organised by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

The event brought together 44 participants comprising delegates from ATC institutions, as well as representatives from the DTCs and DTC partner organisations, along with ITU staff (the full list of participants is available under Annex 1 of this report). The event was envisioned as a working meeting with the sessions planned to ensure an increased level of interaction between the participants. Several sessions were organized jointly with the DTC delegates and leveraged the best practices in both programmes (a detailed agenda can be found under Annex 2).

The meeting aimed to inform on the ATC programme implementation to date, build on lessons learned regarding training course organization and management, provide updates on ITU Academy revised guidelines and upcoming features, updates, discuss the training evaluation framework and learner feedback, as well as consolidate links between participating institutions to encourage networking and collaboration projects.

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



Day 1 (Tuesday, 21 April 2026)

Opening session (joint ATC-DTC session)

Welcome remarks were delivered by Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau, ITU. He began by expressing his appreciation to the Centros Tecnológicos Comunitarios, the DTC in the Dominican Republic, for graciously hosting the Global DTC Workshop and ATC Annual meeting in Santo Domingo in 2025. He welcomed all representatives of the ATCs and DTCs, and partners, Cisco, ST Foundation, HP and the Digital Skills Factory to Geneva. Dr Zavazava recalled the adoption of the Baku Declaration and Action Plan at the ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC 2025) last November, emphasizing the critical need to continue investing in capacity building and digital skills development. In this context, he highlighted the importance of the DTC Initiative for making a significant impact and transforming the lives of their target beneficiaries across the globe.

Dr Zavazava further noted that there are still 2.2 billion people remaining offline as of 2025 and today's digital divides are defined by disparities in speed, affordability, reliability, and particularly skills. He reaffirmed DTC Initiative's commitment to close the digital divide and celebrated this ITU and Cisco-led programme reached the major milestone of 714,000 course participants (52% female) have been trained since the launch of the Initiative in 2019. He expressed his special thanks to all the DTCs for their dedication and tremendous efforts deployed on the ground to raise awareness on digital literacy. He also celebrated the expansion of the DTC network and welcomed the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence (MPAAI) as the DTC in Trinidad and Tobago, the Digital Bridge Institute (DBI) as the DTC in Nigeria, as well as the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) as the DTC in Malaysia.

Concluding his remarks, Dr Zavazava described the meetings as an opportunity to review progress under the DTC Initiative and ATC programme while strengthening collaboration across the global ICT capacity development community. He highlighted the positive outcomes of previous joint sessions from last year's meeting and noted that this year's agenda was designed to further encourage exchange between ATCs and DTCs participants. He encouraged delegates to actively engage, share best practices, and learn from one another.

Dr Zavazava's welcome remarks were followed by remarks from Dr Garif Yalak, Executive Board Member, Cisco Switzerland, who noted that partnership between ITU and Cisco has spanned the last two decades, with a shared focus on reaching underserved populations. Under this partnership, the Digital Transformation Centres Initiative was launched in 2019. He referred to the five-year review report released in October 2025 which documents the Initiative's progress and impact achieved since its inception. Dr Garif noted that the Initiative is more critical than ever in the context of evolving digital divide, which is shifting from a connectivity

gap to an artificial intelligence (AI) gap. Cisco is working through its Networking Academy platform, to ensure AI becomes a force for good. Dr Yalak encouraged participants to focus on access and value creation, to ensure that the knowledge exchanged in Geneva translates into impact in their countries. He closed by expressing thanks to ITU for the enduring partnership.

ATC and DTC introductions and networking

The first joint session was facilitated by Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU and Ms Robyn Fysh, Senior Digital Skills Officer, ITU to foster engagement and collaboration among participants. Attendees worked in pairs to exchange postcards, introduce themselves and their institutions, and shared insights on success factors in digital skills and capacity development. The activity encouraged participants to connect with new colleagues and exchange practical advice, creating a dynamic environment for peer learning and relationship-building across the ATC and DTC communities.

During the exchange debrief, participants shared the advice or “piece of wisdom” they received from other participants during interactions with other participants. Strong partnerships and government support were highlighted as critical to ensuring the long-term impact and sustainability of training initiatives. Capacity building was consistently identified as a central priority, with participants noting that successful programmes go beyond one-off training sessions to create continuous learning pathways and maintain engagement over time. Several contributions also highlighted the importance of inclusivity, particularly in reaching marginalized communities through innovative delivery models, such as leveraging existing public infrastructure like post offices.

Updates on the DTC and ATC programmes and objectives of the workshop (joint ATC-DTC session)

This session provided an update on the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATC) programme and Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative, situating both programmes within the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT)’s broader mandate to strengthen global capacity development and advance digital skills for inclusive digital transformation. The session featured a presentation by Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development, ITU, followed by an interactive Q&A segment with participants.

The presentation highlighted the complementary nature of the two programmes. The ATCs focus on advanced and policy-oriented capacity development, targeting policymakers and professionals across technical, regulatory, and strategic domains, while DTCs concentrate on digital literacy, rolling out basic and intermediate digital skills training interventions to reach citizens and communities, particularly in

underserved and remote areas. Despite their different target audiences, both programmes pursue a shared objective: strengthening national and global digital skills ecosystems across multiple levels.

Participants were updated on the maturity and scale of both initiatives. The ATC programme, launched in 2023 as the evolution of ITU's long-standing Centres of Excellence initiative, operates through an international network of ATC institutions delivering training via the ITU Academy. The programme provides broad thematic coverage across infrastructure, regulation, cybersecurity, and digital policy. In 2025, the ATCs supported the delivery of 169 courses. The programme has reached approximately 4,000 professionals since its inception, with around 90% of participants coming from developing countries. Female participation stands at approximately 30%, with ongoing efforts to improve gender balance in advanced technical and policy training. Participation from all ITU Member States underscores the global reach of the programme, which continues to benefit from institutional backing, including WTDC Resolution 73.

Updates on the DTC Initiative emphasized its community-centred and partnership-driven model. Launched in 2019, the programme operates through 16 Digital Transformation Centres across regions, working through partnerships with national institutions and private sector partners, the DTCs have trained over 700,000 participants, with 52% female participation. The programme has continued to expand its partnerships and delivery models, supported by the publication of a five-year review report and the launch of a new five-year strategy. Progress was highlighted in terms of scale, gender balance, strategic partnerships, impact reporting, and the introduction of more robust monitoring and evaluation approaches. The development of a new multi-year strategy was presented as important steps toward scaling impact and improving effectiveness.

Looking ahead, priorities include expanding institutional networks, improving operational efficiency and quality assurance, strengthening impact measurement, increasing visibility and leveraging partnerships to scale reach and sustainability of the two programmes. The presentation reflected on the added value of convening the ATC and DTC communities together, a format introduced the previous year. Ms Teltscher touched upon the methodology and session design of the two meeting programmes. While the Global DTC Workshop and ATC Annual meeting are mostly running in parallel, joint ATC-DTC sessions were included to bridge the two communities and create a platform for exchange. Participants welcomed the joint meeting as an opportunity to exchange experiences, share best practices, and reinforce a sense of shared purpose across programmes.

During the Q&A segment of this session, participants inquired about how ITU Academy delivery models and approaches could be better aligned, while recognizing the need for flexibility across diverse country contexts. Resource constraints, including funding and trainer availability, were identified as common challenges, prompting interest in stronger collaboration and knowledge-sharing between ATCs and DTCs, particularly

regarding instructor pools and expertise. Demand-driven planning emerged as another key theme. DTCs were recognized for their insight into local community needs, particularly for basic digital skills, while ATCs provide a global overview of demand for more advanced topics. Better use of data from both programmes to inform course development and strategic planning was seen as a significant opportunity. Finally, participants emphasized the importance of visibility, outreach, and coordinated communication, noting that stronger joint promotional efforts and closer engagement with partners are essential to ensure that training opportunities effectively reach intended audiences.

Overall, the session reaffirmed the strategic importance of both the ATC and DTC programmes, highlighted progress achieved, and underscored the value of greater collaboration, and community building in advancing ITU's capacity development objectives.

Mapping expectations together (joint ATC-DTC session)

The session was facilitated by Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior E-learning Officer and Ms Sara Bennouna, Junior Digital Skills Officer, ITU. It aimed to capture and align participants' expectations for the 2026 Global DTC Workshop and ATC Annual Meeting, using inputs from a pre-meeting survey which ATCs and DTC completed a few months prior to the meeting. The approach ensured that discussions were shaped by the needs, priorities, and practical realities of the two communities. The pre-meeting survey revealed a strong preference for a practical, solution-oriented meeting, with participants consistently emphasizing the value of peer exchange and applied learning. Across both programmes, there was a clear expectation that the meeting would go beyond information sharing to generate insights that could be directly applied in participants' own institutional contexts.

Participants expressed a strong interest in sharing best practices grounded in real implementation experience, as well as using the meeting as a space to collectively address shared operational challenges. While priorities varied slightly across programmes, they were complementary in nature. DTC participants placed particular emphasis on partnership engagement, including how partnerships are structured, managed, and leveraged for sustainability, while ATC participants were more focused on programme performance, course evaluation, and the use of results to inform future delivery. There was also broad interest across both groups in new and evolving training modalities, including hybrid formats and innovative learning approaches.

The session continued with an interactive exercise where ATC and DTC participants were asked to reflect on any changes or new methods applied in their training delivery over the past year. They highlighted ongoing adaptation in training content, design, and delivery. Many centres reported expanding course offerings to cover emerging topics, particularly artificial intelligence, alongside more frequent updating of existing curricula. Increased use of AI tools in course development, stronger alignment with identified learner needs, and closer consultation with partners were presented as important shifts. In terms of delivery and learning

experience, participants described a move towards more interactive and participatory approaches, including group work, discussion-based formats, applied assessments, and gamification techniques. The integration of multimedia elements and selective use of in-person training were also noted, reflecting efforts to enhance engagement and accessibility. These changes were seen as part of a broader transition away from lecture-based models toward more experiential and practice-oriented learning.

The facilitators also asked participants to share their expectations for the 2026 meetings, placing particular emphasis on specific outcomes and takeaways. Peer learning emerged as a cross-cutting priority. Participants emphasized the value of creating a structured space for exchange, discussion, and practical application, both within training activities and during the meeting itself. Collaboration and partnerships were also highlighted. In addition, participants expressed interest in gaining a better understanding of how training is implemented in different contexts, building professional relationships that extend beyond the meeting, and developing a clearer picture of how the work of ATCs and DTCs intersect and can support one another, including to enhance the global visibility of the two programmes. Several key thematic priorities were raised, notably resource mobilisation, long-term sustainability of the centres, train-the-trainer approaches for scaling impact, and the need to build and develop more robust and consistent impact measurement frameworks. Additional reflections touched on cross-cutting considerations such as child protection policies, the structuring of AI-related training at different levels, the integration of AI into existing training offers, particularly within DTCs, and growing interest in self-paced learning formats.

The session underscored a shared desire for a practical, collaborative, and forward-looking exchange, with outcomes that strengthen collaboration across programmes and translate into concrete improvements in training design, delivery, and impact.

Day 2 (Wednesday, 22 April 2026)

Marketplace: Good practice framework for face-to-face training

The objective of this session was to produce a list of guidelines, a toolkit of field-tested practices that work in real-life settings for the ATC-delivered in-person training courses. During the activity, the ATC delegates worked in four groups, each focusing on one of the stations in the room. Each station was hosted by an ITU host who captured the group's recommended practices in a pre-set template which included three categories: "what works", what to avoid" and "one golden rule/action". The stations focused on the key areas listed below, each facilitated by a host (staff member from CSD), as follows:

1. Preparation (logistics, visibility/comms, visa, participant selection) - what happens before participants enter the room. Facilitated by Mr. Ghazi Mabrouk, Project Officer.

2. Content design & structuring - what is trained and how it's structured. Facilitated by Ms. Praachi Kumar, Associate Capacity Development Officer.
3. Delivery and Engagement methods - what actually happens in the room to keep people engaged. Facilitated by Mr. Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer.
4. Assessment methods - how do you know learning is happening? Facilitated by Mr. Angel Draev, Senior Project Manager.

Following the activity, the takeaways were presented by the station masters who highlighted a summary of key discussions and reflections. The debrief highlighted a shared understanding that effective training comes from intentional alignment across design, delivery, and assessment. What emerged strongly is the need to think of training as a coherent experience, where each element builds on the other and responds to the realities of the participants.

The Station 1 discussions highlight that effective preparation is the foundation of successful course delivery. Outcomes are strongest when planning is initiated early, communication is targeted and consistent, and logistics are managed through structured and proactive coordination. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of clear corporate branding, timely participant selection, and well-organized travel and venue arrangements. Conversely, delays, fragmented communication, and inadequate planning were identified as key risks that negatively impact both participation quality and overall programme effectiveness. The conclusions emphasized that preparation must be approached as a coordinated and forward-looking process rather than a series of isolated tasks. Success depends on early decision-making, disciplined execution, and continuous communication across all stakeholders. Ensuring clarity in promotion, rigor in participant selection, and thoroughness in logistical planning significantly enhances both operational efficiency and participant experience. A consistent, structured approach to preparation ultimately enables higher-quality delivery and more sustainable programme outcomes.

Discussions at Station 2 emphasized that effective content design and structuring are central to achieving meaningful learning outcomes. Well-designed programmes are characterized by clear agenda structuring, balanced pacing, and logical sequencing that supports progressive learning. Participants highlighted the importance of incorporating active learning methods, such as group work and discussions, to enhance engagement and retention. At the same time, there was strong alignment on the need to avoid cognitive overload by ensuring content is realistic in scope and timing. Rigid, lecture-heavy approaches and poorly calibrated content were identified as key barriers to effective learning.

Content design should be approached as a dynamic and learner-centered process, where structure, pacing, and delivery methods are carefully aligned with participant needs. Prioritizing clarity, interactivity, and flexibility enables more effective knowledge absorption and engagement. Avoiding overly dense or

monotonous formats, while continuously adapting content based on group dynamics, is critical. A well-balanced approach to agenda design and delivery ultimately ensures that learning objectives are met in a practical, engaging, and sustainable manner.

The discussions at Station 3 underscored that effective delivery and engagement methods are critical to translating well-designed content into meaningful learning experiences. Success is driven by dynamic facilitation that actively maintains participant attention through variation in delivery, balanced pacing, and regular opportunities for interaction. The integration of theory with practical application was consistently highlighted as essential to reinforce learning. Participants also emphasized the importance of inclusive facilitation that accounts for diverse cultural contexts and varying participation styles. Conversely, overly theoretical, monotonous delivery and poorly managed group dynamics were identified as key barriers to engagement and learning effectiveness.

Participants highlighted that effective delivery requires a flexible and responsive approach that prioritizes participant engagement throughout the learning experience. The need for facilitators to actively manage energy levels, encourage inclusive participation, and adapt methods to suit group dynamics was also mentioned. Blending theory with practical application, while avoiding overly dense or passive formats, ensures stronger knowledge retention and participation. Ultimately, the groups concluded that skilled facilitation and thoughtful engagement strategies are central to creating an interactive, inclusive, and impactful learning environment.

Discussions at Station 4 highlighted that effective assessment is essential to verifying whether learning objectives have been achieved. A strong consensus emerged around the need to align assessment methods directly with intended learning outcomes, ensuring that evaluation is both relevant and meaningful. Participants emphasized the value of using a diverse mix of assessment approaches, including in-session checks, practical exercises, and group-based outputs, to capture different dimensions of learning. Continuous and formative assessment was preferred over one-off, high-stakes evaluations. At the same time, overly complex, poorly aligned, or excessively theoretical assessment methods were identified as barriers to accurately measuring learning impact.

Assessment should be integrated as a continuous and purposeful component of the learning process rather than treated as a final checkpoint. Aligning methods with objectives, while using varied and practical approaches, enables a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of participant progress. Incorporating opportunities for peer and self-assessment further strengthens reflection and engagement. Ultimately, well-designed assessment strategies not only measure learning effectively but also reinforce and deepen it.

The session concluded with reiterating that the inputs produced by the groups will be compiled in separate guidelines to build a toolkit which will be stored on the [ITU Academy Knowledge Hub](#) to serve as jointly built guidelines for future face-to-face training courses.

Masterclass webinars (new ITU Academy format)

This session was envisioned as a knowledge exchange for the ATC delegates and discussion on this new ITU Academy experiential format, scope, as well as topics. Moderated by Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, it invited a keynote presentation from one of the ATCs representative in the room, Ms Mindel van de Laar, United Nations University-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT).

The presentation opened with a note on format: given the larger audience size (up to 100 participants), interactions are intentionally limited. It highlighted Zoom as the preferred platform, particularly for African participants where it offers better connectivity. Ms. Van de Laar, further outlined that UNU brings together 30 institutions with varied thematic focuses, ensuring a rich mix of academic and practical perspectives. For the pricing of their Masterclasses, a small tuition fee is charged deliberately as the experience to date shows that when participants pay, they engage more seriously.

She further mentioned that tailor made sessions for larger audiences (300–500 people), are built around a specific topic and designed well in advance, with preparation beginning 2 to 3 months ahead. UNU-MEIRT's approach is to share course materials and readings beforehand, with the realistic expectation that participants will engage with them after the session rather than before. Speakers are matched with practitioners in advance, and the academic lead who helps prepare the session typically serves as the best moderator. Attendance is tracked, but active participation is not required. For participant management, smaller group formats (20–50 participants) are also used as these are more cost-effective, requiring only 1 or 2 professors rather than the 6 to 8 needed for larger sessions.

The presentation also put forward several Dos and Don'ts among these: Zoom as the most practical and accessible platform; limiting interactive tools (e.g. asking participants to log into Mentimeter is already a significant ask) so best to stick to one interactive platform only; prepare standard chat text in advance to facilitate smooth facilitation; participants tend to value the certificate more than the learning content itself (worth keeping in mind when designing incentives); open discussion works best with smaller audiences only; full cost estimation should account for preparation time, pre- and post-session coordination, and administration. For costing, a benchmark of around €30 was mentioned along with the point that, importantly, for masterclasses to be meaningful, the purpose must go beyond revenue generation.

In the discussion that followed the presentation, Mr. Fonseca-Ribeiro noted that ITU Academy aims to make its offerings as practical as possible, using case studies – though with very large audiences, a lecture-based approach becomes difficult to mitigate. Masterclasses offer a useful complement by enabling the introduction of new, high-interest topics. He also highlighted [a recent example](#) from the ITU Academy offer, on Generative AI, delivered in partnership with Singapore.

The delegates also discussed the added value of Masterclasses, given the volume of content already available, which generated three group discussions:

- Discussion 1 – Could masterclass webinars complement ATC trainings and what is the area where they could add value? The debrief of the groups highlighted that masterclasses can be complementary, but they require a dedicated budget for coordination and delivery – they should not be treated as a low-cost add-on. Their strength lies in helping contextualise broader training programmes. Additionally, the delegates pointed out that masterclasses are often used as promotional tools for other courses, helping institutions demonstrate subject matter authority. The group also noted that masterclasses and webinars are distinct formats and should not be conflated.

When discussing their value, the ATC representatives in the room also outlined that this depends heavily on the audience – they work well as an "appetizer" for those new to a topic but add little for those already familiar. They mentioned that there is also a risk of them becoming purely promotional if not handled carefully (e.g. a recorded video rebranded as a masterclass is not the same as a live session). They can add value in specific contexts but are not universally necessary. The ITU Academy team further clarified that the term "masterclass" emerged from a marketing context, and care must be taken to manage expectations accordingly. They added that some institutions – such as the European University Institute – use masterclasses as part of formal certification pathways.

- Discussion 2 – the delegates were asked to propose one topic for a masterclass to be delivered in 2026 –proposals widely indicated Artificial Intelligence as the main area of interest, with AI and cybersecurity also mentioned.
- Discussion 3 – participants explored what masterclasses could be organised jointly across ATCs. Ideas revolved around the cybersecurity area which lends itself well to joint delivery, given that multiple ATCs cover the topic. Delegates proposed a potential collaboration between WITS (South Africa) and INATEL (Brazil) as a concrete example, as well as joint masterclass between TalTech (Estonia) and NIT (Poland).

The session concluded following the debriefs from each of the discussions with a commitment from the ITU Academy team to provide updates on the next masterclasses planned as well as follow-up on the suggested collaborations between ATCs for joint sessions.

Common themes in training evaluation results (joint ATC-DTC session)

This common session saw ATC and DTC participants work in small groups to unpack common trends related to end-of-training evaluation results leading to best practices. Moderated by ITU staff Mr Alex-Kojo Boahoma, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Officer and Ms Praachi Kumar, Associate Capacity Development Officer, it fostered peer learning across both networks to discuss areas of successful training related to course design, delivery and set-up.

The participants worked in groups to each review a set of learner statements extracted from end training evaluations, capturing specific trends linked to design and delivery of courses and discuss whether they apply to ATCs, DTCs or both. Further, they were tasked with grouping these under two categories, areas of strength and areas of improvement, following their analysis.

The moderators subsequently invited the participants to work across four groups to discuss how the positive training evaluation trends can be replicated to maintain the current level of quality, and what can be improved. Each group was then invited to debrief in plenary, the following salient points were raised by the delegates:

- The tension between meeting KPIs and providing genuine support to learners, raised the following key points:
 - There is pressure to meet numbers, nonetheless, this can come at the expense of meaningful support – KPIs may need to evolve to better capture the quality of support provided, not just outputs
 - DTCs, as government institutions, help participants gain credentials, though recognition by private sector employers remains inconsistent
 - In terms of employability, balance is needed – not every outcome can or should be measured through a single lens
 - True training support means looking beyond KPIs to understand and address the actual needs of participants
- Areas for improvement:
 - **Logistics:** poor logistics directly impact training quality. Examples raised included difficulty getting participants to the venue on time, ensuring meals were served as scheduled, and managing movement between a hotel and a campus affected by traffic
 - **Assessment design:** mini-assessments should be concise, and participants should be required to present their results – this helps prevent misuse of AI tools. A dedicated assessment tool should be used for every training. Additionally, operating without assessment means "going blind" – it is essential, especially given how quickly technology evolves.

- **Recognition and certification:** international certification enables global mobility, but recognition of micro-credentials by governments remains an area needing improvement. Course content should also be better aligned with participants' actual needs, though conducting needs assessments is acknowledged to be challenging
- **A simplified interface, and the use of gamification** and design thinking to boost motivation and sustained engagement.
- Courses should be **iteratively improved** based on feedback from previous cohorts
- **Experimental approaches** were noted as a common thread between ATCs and DTCs – a shared strength worth formalising
- **Stronger partnerships** between DTCs and ATCs were recommended
- Proposal for a **shared platform** across DTCs and ATCs to exchange information, tools, and resources – seen as highly practical and impactful
- **Language accessibility** flagged as a significant area for improvement, particularly the need for more content in French to serve African countries
- **Needs analysis:** the importance of accurate information to map and reflect the user needs was repeatedly highlighted throughout the debrief. The DTC delegate from Morocco exemplified how outreach to multiple institutes has helped understand learner needs; a key motivator for students is employability
- Need for continuous **learning pathways** – from beginner to advanced levels along with the development of competency-based frameworks for structured learning progression
- **Communication:** the need for a formalised channel for ATC-DTC communication was brought forward by the delegates
- Suggestion to **incorporate volunteering opportunities** as an added incentive and a pathway to gaining practical experience
- **Micro-credential recognition** was identified as key – particularly exploring how universities could formally recognise these credentials, which could in turn open doors to volunteering and further experience

The session concluded with the moderators providing a summary of the main identified trends and highlighting the commitment needed from ITU as well as ATCs and DTCs to start implementing concrete actions to meet the goals emerging during the mapping of the improvement areas.

Gamification: Innovative practices in training (joint ATC-DTC session)

This knowledge exchange and discussion focused on incorporating gamification dynamics in ITU Academy training. It further offered the space to brainstorm on possible applications in other ATC and DTC training

courses during the rest of the year. The session was built around the experience of the ATC in Peru and presented by Ms Iris Magally Pretel Trejo, Training Specialist at the Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Capacitación de Telecomunicaciones - Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería (INICTEL-UNI).

The presentation outlined the training approach applied which was specifically designed for adult learners, primarily professionals and recent graduates with prior technical or academic experience. As such, Ms Pretel noted that the methodology differs from traditional academic instruction and instead aligns with principles of adult learning, emphasizing experience-based and practice-oriented engagement rather than theoretical coursework. A central pedagogical shift accompanying this approach was the repositioning of the instructor's role. The presenter highlighted that rather than acting as the primary source of knowledge, instructors function as facilitators, enabling participants to draw on their own professional experience. This dynamic thus allowed participants with varying levels of expertise to contribute collaboratively, which is particularly effective in gamified environments.

When detailing the context and motivation for using gamification, Ms Pretel outlined its particular suitability for blended or face-to-face training formats. For INICTEL-UNI, the 2025 challenge for the institution was twofold: to incorporate gamification in order to reduce cognitive load and better structure course content, and to improve the overall distribution and reach of trainings. An essential preliminary step regardless of the methodology was to identify which parts of a course lend themselves to gamification as, generally, not all content is equally suited. She shared two experiences, one pertaining to an escape room approach and a second one linked to the development of a board game to support and facilitate the learning experience.

The former provided a more immersive and dynamic experience, conducted in a controlled, distraction-free environment. Participants worked in groups to solve fictional connectivity problems set in a hypothetical national context. The activity was structured in three sequential phases, each requiring participants to solve a problem in order to progress. Throughout the exercise, participants worked collaboratively, distributing tasks and making strategic decisions under time constraints. The evaluation focused not only on achieving correct answers within the allotted time, but also on the effectiveness of group coordination and the overall approach to problem-solving. Ms Pretel concluded with reflections on the practical aspects of implementation. The escape room required significant preparation, including the design of phases, materials, and controlled environments, but relied on relatively simple and inexpensive resources such as paper-based tools. The experience highlighted both the potential and the challenges of integrating gamification into professional training, particularly in terms of time investment, instructional design, and balancing complexity with learning outcomes.

The board game element in the gamification approach was designed to align participants' baseline knowledge at the start of a course, given that learners come from very diverse professional backgrounds.

Establishing this common ground can take time but is essential before moving into more advanced content. Ms Pretel clarified that it was used as part of a blended course (one week online, one week face-to-face) and implied participants taking on different roles – government officials, promoters, and operators – each facing distinct challenges relevant to their role. Players acted within a simulated situation and needed to assess the impact of their decisions on the population, with the end goal being to maximise satisfaction across stakeholders. The ATC delegate also noted that, from a practical point of view, which impacted production, similarly to the escape room, the materials required to build the game were simple and inexpensive. INICTEL-UNI is expanding its approach in gamification by developing a subsequent board game around fibre optics, using a map featuring three distinct geographical environments – coast, mountains, and forest – each with different connectivity constraints, adding a layer of contextual realism to the challenges.

The conclusions of the session brought forward several lessons learned to facilitate the implementation of gamification in training. Notably, that game development is time-consuming and requires commitment, but is not technically complex, with the full process – from content analysis to gamified design – taking approximately 3 months. A key criterion is that preliminary work is essential, this involved the careful analysis of the course content to identify what can and should be gamified. The delegates' exchanges also outlined that board games are not designed to cover all course content – they serve a specific, targeted purpose within the broader learning journey. As a final point discussed, in terms of the evaluation of the game itself, the main recommendation was to not add a separate one for it as, given the volume of assessment already embedded in the course, this would create unnecessary burden for participants but rather capture the learners' feedback on it as part of the end training course evaluation.

The Q&A session which followed sought to provide additional clarifications on the essential mechanics and content components of the gamified approach. Participants inquired about the use of digital devices within the training, with Ms Pretel clarifying that the gamified components themselves are entirely analogue and do not involve technological equipment, however, noting that these activities represent only a portion of the overall course as the broader training includes both online and in-person components, as well as hands-on sessions with technical equipment. She specified that the purpose of the gamification is specifically to prepare participants for these later stages by ensuring a shared understanding of foundational concepts.

Further questions addressed the resources required for development and implementation with the presenter noting that the core team responsible for designing the gamified activities was small, initially consisting of two to three individuals. Development timelines ranged from approximately three to five months, depending on the complexity of the course. The process involved close collaboration with subject-matter experts, as well as iterative testing in which team members assumed different roles, including those of participants, facilitators, and stakeholders.

In response to questions regarding evaluation, it was explained that the impact of gamification is not measured separately but is integrated into the overall course evaluation framework. Feedback from participants indicated high levels of satisfaction and engagement, particularly given the novelty of applying gamification in a highly technical training context.

When asked how specific gamification methods are selected, two primary factors were identified. First, the level of technical complexity of the subject matter, as gamification can help reduce cognitive load in highly technical areas. Second, the specific needs and profiles of participants, ensuring that the chosen approach aligns with learning objectives and adds value to the training experience.

The discussion concluded with a question on scalability. The response acknowledged the challenge, noting that while gamification can be highly effective in small, controlled settings, scaling it to larger audiences remains complex and context dependent. The team recognized this as an ongoing area for exploration and development.

Day 3 (Thursday, 23 April 2026)

“Ask me anything”: Solution-seeking activity (joint ATC-DTC session)

This session, which was led by Ms Teltscher, ITU and Mr Alfie Hamid, Cisco, enabled a collaborative space for ATCs and DTCs to reflect on common challenges faced in the implementation of their training activities. Through peer exchanges and small group discussions, participants identified shared bottlenecks, explored feasible and context appropriate solutions, and examined how these approaches can be applied in practice. Discussions focused on three interconnected themes: course promotion and outreach, learner engagement and completion, and innovative approaches to delivery, including the use of AI.

During the plenary debrief, several key areas of convergence were identified. Across groups, a key challenge identified was the gap between high initial interest and low course completion. While demand for training is strong, particularly for free and online offerings. Participants observed that reduced accountability often leads to drop off before assessments or full completion. Effective responses highlighted the importance of proactive learner engagement, including targeted outreach, reminders, progress tracking, and sustained interaction between trainers and learners. Course design was also seen as critical, with modular structures, phased learning pathways, certification, and practical application helping to maintain motivation and relevance.

Moreover, successful outreach and retention strategies must be context specific. Highly localized, human centered approaches which leverage trusted intermediaries, community networks, digital ambassadors, and alternative communication channels, were often found to be more effective than digital campaigns alone.

Persistent operational constraints, including limited staff capacity and financial barriers, underscoring the need for stronger institutional partnerships and clearer communication on available support, was also highlighted.

Finally, while technology was discussed as an enabler, there was a shared understanding that it is not a standalone solution. Tools can support delivery, personalization, and assessment, but the real transformation depends on building human capability, trust, and systems around them. Across all groups, the emphasis returned to a simple but critical point: successful digital learning is as much about people, relationships, and context as it is about platforms and infrastructure.

Updates from the ITU team

The purpose of this brief session was to share information on the ATC programme performance in 2025. It further detailed the new provisions of the 2026 Cooperation Agreements and provided an update on the EC-funded courses as well as the introduction of the new ITU-UNESCO collaboration on AI capacity development.

The session transitioned into a continuation of the previous joint problem-solving exercise, with a specific focus on the ATC program. An update was first provided by Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU on the status of the ATC program and the ITU Academy. The main points outlined the program entering a new operational cycle, with renewal processes for cooperation agreements underway. In terms of program performance, 2025 was highlighted as the most productive year to date, with approximately 170 courses delivered under the ATC framework. Methodology-wise, online instructor-led courses continue to represent the core delivery modality, although there has been a steady increase in face-to-face training activities. English remains the dominant language of delivery, followed by Spanish and French, though efforts are being made to expand linguistic diversity. Participant outcomes were also reviewed. The number of certified participants is expected to reach 5,000 by the end of 2026, with strong growth observed in recent years. The presentation highlighted that the ATC network continues to play a central role within the ITU Academy ecosystem, contributing approximately 43% of all courses delivered on the platform. Participation remains globally distributed, with a strong representation from developing countries, aligning with the broader mandate of the program. However, gender balance remains a key area for improvement, with women currently representing approximately 25% of participants.

Assessment metrics for the programme indicate consistently high performance, specifically, following the introduction of an enhanced evaluation framework, including a Net Promoter Score (NPS), results show a strong upward trend, with 2025 reaching the highest recorded satisfaction levels. This reflects both course quality and the effectiveness of instructors across the network. Mr Iuga provided an update on the status of Cooperation Agreements (CA) emphasizing that participation in funded courses under the program now

requires the updated CA, as older frameworks are no longer applicable for such activities. The revised cooperation agreements introduced several key changes, particularly in relation to funded courses. A new mechanism, the Funding Authorization Implementation Document (FAID), replaces the previous purchase order system formalizing the commitment between ITU and ATCs for each course, outlining objectives, timelines, and financial arrangements. The change aligns the program with ITU's financial and regulatory requirements while maintaining flexibility in collaboration. It was further noted that the updated framework improves financial sustainability and operational efficiency making it easier for ITU project managers to engage ATCs across different initiatives, potentially expanding opportunities for partnerships beyond the ATC program itself.

A dedicated presentation delivered by Mr. Angel Draev, Senior Project Manager and Mr. Ghazi Mabrouk, Project Officer focused on the ongoing capacity development project funded by the European Union under the Global Gateway initiative. This four-year project aims to train at least 5,000 policymakers and government officials. Implementation began in 2024, with steady growth in training delivery: 14 courses in 2024, 24 in 2025, and 20 planned for 2026. As of the current reporting period, approximately 3,900 participants have been trained, with overall satisfaction rates reaching 96%. Certification rates stand at 84%, though lower completion rates in online funded courses remain a challenge. The project has also contributed significantly to the increase in face-to-face training and has enabled new forms of collaboration, including partnerships between ATCs and other UN agencies. Despite this progress, it was noted that not all ATCs are currently involved in the project, with active collaboration taking place with 10 out of 14 centers. Mr. Draev noted that efforts are ongoing to expand participation and strengthen engagement across the network. Looking ahead, the project is scheduled to conclude next year, with a gradual scale-down anticipated in its final phase to allow for reporting and financial closure. However, the possibility of extension remains under consideration, pending further decisions.

The discussion then moved to operational challenges, particularly regarding participant engagement in funded courses. It was acknowledged that dropout rates are higher in fully funded training, as participants may have lower commitment compared to paid courses. To address this, an accountability mechanism has been introduced, whereby participants who fail to complete courses may be deprioritized in future selections. While this system is currently applied in practice, it was noted that clearer communication and formalization of this policy may be required to ensure transparency. ATC delegates raised questions regarding collaboration opportunities and program structure. One question addressed the distinction between ATC-led and ITU-led courses. The presenter was clarified that this distinction relates to responsibility for delivery rather than location or modality, and that collaboration is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on expertise, project requirements, and available capacity.

Another question focused on the possibility of ATCs hosting ITU-led courses. This was acknowledged as a valuable suggestion, particularly in leveraging the institutional reputation and infrastructure of ATCs. While not currently standard practice, the idea aligns with broader goals of strengthening partnerships and may be explored further. Finally, concerns were raised regarding the transparency of accountability measures. It was emphasized that participants should be clearly informed in advance about the consequences of non-completion. While informal communication has taken place, there was agreement that a more structured and explicit approach such as including disclaimers during registration would improve clarity and fairness.

The session concluded with general agreement on the importance of continued collaboration, improved communication, and iterative refinement of both administrative processes and training methodologies to ensure the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

Following the previous session, Mr. Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU provided a brief overview for the ATC delegates on the Giga Project, an initiative focused on connecting schools to the internet, structured around four pillars: infrastructure mapping to identify where connectivity exists and where gaps remain, enabling governments to make informed decisions; designing the appropriate connectivity model for a given context; identifying and bundling funding sources to lower project costs and unlock access to strategic financing; managing procurement and agreements.

He outlined the role of ITU Academy which hosts both online instructor-led and in-person courses designed to cover the full range of competencies needed for school connectivity implementation, while also highlighting a key lesson from the project, namely that at the end of the day, it is more about how we train people than the technology itself.

Mr. Fonseca-Ribeiro framed the opportunity for ATCs and DTCs to expand their course development and delivery in alignment with Giga's needs. He pointed out that, should an ATC's expertise be relevant to a Giga topic, ITU Academy can match that content, expertise, and trainers to the Giga Learning Hub. ATCs can be asked to customise courses for the target audience in a given country, with project funding available to hire relevant experts. The overarching goal would be to strengthen the connection between ATCs and ITU through a less burdensome process. The questions which followed the presentation clarified that while Giga does not focus on research per se, it does however produce and share mapping data. They additionally outlined that Ministries of Education and Technology must formally engage with Giga (including data sharing agreements) to access fellowship benefits as the process is designed to be participatory.

In continuation of the updates provided to ATCs by the ITU Academy team, Mr. Angel Draev, Senior Project Manager, ITU took the floor to outline the main points of a newly launched cooperation with UNESCO on "AI & Digital Transformation". He specified that the programme was developed in response to demand from member states, by both organisations which are recognised leaders in the AI space. In terms of the roles,

ITU Academy would be aiming to take on the more operational role – course development and delivery while UNESCO would contribute to its distribution network and institutional reach. Mr. Draev further outlined the ways for ATCs to partner with the programme, expressing the team's availability to clarify any requests ATCs might reach out with as well as stressing that a more structured approach of asking ATCs to map their existing partners (who might be interested) could be more effective. The questions from the delegates promoted Mr. Fonseca-Ribeiro to point out that a needs assessment is essential before engaging and that ITU needs to understand each ATC's AI capacity and readiness, as this will allow to determine whether delivery is feasible within a given timeframe once a request is received. ATCs also suggested creating a talent pool to support delivery of the joint programme.

ATC programme: Overcoming existing challenges

Building on the ATC-DTC joint session with the same focus ("Ask me anything"), in small groups, ATCs were encouraged to share lessons learned from their own experiences, support problem solving issues for other ATCs, highlighting what has worked, what has not and why, to strengthen collective learning across centres. Participants were asked to identify and share their main challenge within the ATC programme. The ensuing discussion moderated by Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU surfaced a rich set of interconnected issues around demand, competition, pricing, data, and sustainability.

The first challenge mentioned by the participants was getting a better understanding of the market and demand for the training topics as ATCs face a lack of information in this area. The points raised indicated that while the ATC market is global, institutions do not yet have the tools or data to understand how the market interests vary by region and how to target it effectively. Mr Fonseca-Ribeiro raised a critical distinction highlighted that interest is not the same as demand – user curiosity does not automatically translate into enrolment or revenue and informed the delegates that ITU Academy has data on which users have only taken free courses, which could help inform this analysis but is not yet being fully leveraged. He additionally pointed out that there is a need to autonomise data analysis so that ATCs can access actionable market intelligence independently or maybe provide them with guidelines for more analysis autonomy.

Another challenge raised by the delegates pertained to the insufficient paying participants. The pricing tensions experienced by the participating institutions and are a result of struggling to attract enough paying participants to run courses viably – the minimum threshold can be 10 to 15 participants. A growing issue brought forward by the discussion was the internal competition: ITU and ATCs offer both free and funded courses alongside paid ATC courses covering similar content, putting pressure on the ability of the ATCs to attract fee-paying participants. Additionally, the competition can also occur between ATC paid and funded courses which further deepens the challenge. Delegates made the point that better market intelligence and clearer positioning could help reduce intra-network competition and allow ATCs to differentiate more

effectively. They also underlined that in the context of the supply side growing, with more courses available across the network, the question becomes how to attract users to the right offer.

The challenge of sustainability and funding was further expanded during the session with the ATCs pointing out the challenge which lies with ATCs that must generate their own revenue to remain sustainable, as these institutions are disproportionately affected by pricing pressures and low enrolment in paid courses. Ms. Draev emphasised that ATCs should more actively leverage their ITU affiliation to attract external funding and credibility – including being more visible on LinkedIn to promote courses and build their profile. Participants also noted that creating a stronger ITU-ATC brand identity could help unlock funding opportunities (e.g. World Bank) and additionally observed that the current KPIs do not capture the full extent of the leveraging that ATCs are doing – recommending that performance measurement needs to evolve.

The discussion also brought forward the matter of distribution, outreach and new communication channels. Ms Fonseca-Ribeiro expressed a desire for a closer relationship with regulators, and to better align ATC content with regulatory bodies' needs. The sharing of programme experiences also pointed out that opportunities and projects exist however responses and follow-through have not been consistently shared across the network. It also highlighted the value of finding local distribution partners, in addition to the recommendation that ATCs need to identify new distribution channels more broadly and explore new ways to communicate and promote their offerings.

The key recommendations deriving from the session was to provide ATCs with a framework to evaluate and optimise the balance between promotion (e.g. masterclasses), fees, course attractiveness, and participant allocation. Additionally to consider whether reducing barriers for paid courses – particularly for on-site or blended delivery – could improve uptake. The ITU team noted that building and sharing data intelligence with ATCs on user behaviour, course demand by topic and region, and the profile of free-only vs paying users can help assist the ATCs towards tailoring and targeting their offer. The general final agreement for the wrap-up of the session was to explore how to strengthen the ITU-ATC brand as a lever for funding and visibility.

New tools for ATCs

This session will showcase new tools that ATCs can leverage in order to increase participant engagement: Mentimeter and Miro. They will actively participate in the demoing of methods in which they can use the features available in each environment. Ms. Praachi Kumar, Associate Capacity Development Officer, led the brief conversation focused on showcasing these tools and explore ways to adopt them for instructor-led sessions. She announced that ITU Academy is in the process of securing a certificate or full access licence for Mentimeter, which would make the tool more accessible across the network. Delegates mentioned other tools currently in use across ATCs including Typeform, Kahoot, and whiteboard-based drawing exercises. Ms. Kumar introduced Miro as a recommended tool for ATCs, highlighting its benefits for collaboration and

specified that ITU Academy will be acquiring a license for the common use of the ATCs in their training courses. Cost and onboarding considerations were discussed with the delegates and noted as factors in encouraging wider adoption among instructors. The conclusion of the session captured the ITU Academy recommendation that ATCs adopt Mentimeter and Miro and actively introduce these tools to their instructors.

Show and tell: Innovative practices in training design and delivery

This session was built as an ATC 'show and tell' on innovative practices/exchanges in plenary (following a pre-set presentation format). Each presentation focused on the context in which the practice is applied, what problem it solves, how it works, why it works (evidence it works), biggest limitation and tips for applying it in different contexts. In choosing the idea, participants will select one which is transferrable/usable by other ATCs. Mr. Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, moderated this session in a 'rapid fire' format to allow for volunteer delegates to share their institution's practice.

While not all presentations were displayed in plenary, they remain available on event's [official page here](#). The following presentations are available from the ATCs highlighting their applied innovative topics :

- AFRALTI: use and inclusion of industry experts in the design, development and delivery of training courses
- CERT-MU: use of scenario-based and simulation training for hands-on training
- DBI: adaptive blended learning in Training of Trainers context
- EG-ATRC: using real regulatory tools in hands-on spectrum management training
- INATEL: leveraging structured 20 minutes breakout rooms in Zoom
- NRD CS: Table Top Exercise (TTX) – the unfortunate case of Mountlandia
- TalTech: Education Innovation Lab (*Spin*)
- UWI: incorporating real-world challenges in instructor-led sessions

Day 4 (Friday, 24 April 2026)

Looking ahead: Advancing the ATC and DTC programmes (joint ATC-DTC session)

This session consisted of a reflection exercise through which ATC and DTC participants looked back at the various sessions and drew key takeaways, best practices and how these can be applied in the context of their respective institutions. Participants were asked to provide their input on four areas related to the next steps following the conclusion of the event (see below).

The first area mapped the institutional priorities of the ATCs and DTCs in the room. Participants' reflections pointed to a shift from expanding training provision to building more responsive and future-ready systems. While increasing access remained a priority, the delegates pointed out that there is a strong emphasis on ensuring training is relevant, practical, and aligned with labour market needs. ATCs and DTCs are seeking to improve completion rates and outcomes by designing more demand-driven and adaptive programs that can evolve alongside industry requirements. This reflected a broader move toward more agile approaches. At the same time, sustainability and collaboration were seen as critical enablers of long-term impact. Participants highlighted the need for financially and operationally viable models, supported by stronger partnerships and coordinated efforts across institutions. The integration of digital transformation, particularly artificial intelligence, also emerged as a key priority, both as a focus area for training and as a tool to enhance delivery. Overall, the perspectives signalled a transition toward building resilient, collaborative, and forward-looking training ecosystems capable of adapting to ongoing change.

The second area captured the key takeaways or best practices that participants would be leaving with and start applying within their institutions. Participants identified a wide range of practical ideas and approaches from the meeting that they intend to apply within their institutions, with a strong emphasis on collaboration, innovation in learning delivery, and learner engagement. Many reflections highlighted the value of building stronger partnerships across institutions, including through joint promotion of courses, outreach initiatives, structured exchange programmes, and closer collaboration between training centres and stakeholders. Participants also emphasized the importance of contextualizing training to local realities and strengthening support systems for learners through mentoring, internships, and more targeted engagement strategies.

Another prominent takeaway was the importance of adopting more interactive and technology-driven learning methods. Participants expressed interest in integrating gamification techniques, scenario-based learning, and participatory group activities into their courses to improve learner motivation, engagement, and knowledge retention. The use of AI and digital tools also emerged as an area of growing interest, both in relation to training delivery and broader institutional processes. In addition, several reflections pointed to the need for stronger monitoring and evaluation practices. Overall, delegates indicated that they left the meeting with a strong focus on applying more collaborative, learner-centred, and innovative practices within their own institutions.

The third open question for the delegates mapped their needs in terms of the support needed from ITU to implement the respective changes. ATC and DTC representatives identified a strong need for sustained technical, financial, and institutional support in order to translate ideas from the meeting into concrete action within their institutions. Financial support emerged as a recurring theme, particularly to expand specialized training, support instructor travel, improve training infrastructure, and enable participation in funded projects and regional initiatives. Many delegates also emphasized the importance of stronger partnerships and

collaboration opportunities, including peer learning, exchange of instructors, and closer engagement between training centres, institutions, and ITU. There was a clear recognition that long-term collaboration and shared resources are essential for scaling impact and ensuring sustainability.

In addition to funding, participants highlighted the need for more targeted technical assistance and practical guidance from ITU. This included support in areas such as curriculum development, training methodologies, gamification, AI integration, monitoring and evaluation, and the development of learning pathways. Several participants expressed interest in structured guidance, toolkits, and best practice sharing to help institutions implement new approaches more effectively. The importance of strengthening institutional capacities through mentorship, specialized training opportunities, and access to expertise and networks was also stressed. Overall, the reflections underscored that participants see ITU not only as a convening partner, but also as a key source of strategic support, technical knowledge, and coordination to help institutions adapt and grow in a rapidly evolving training environment.

Lastly, the concluding question addressed to the ATC and DTC participants targeted their requirements in terms of what they wanted to see in their respective programme/initiative over the next 5 years. Participants expressed a strong desire to see the programme evolve into a more strategic, collaborative, and impact-driven platform over the next five years. Many reflections emphasized the importance of deeper and more structured collaboration among institutions, including expanded partnership opportunities, joint projects, stronger regional engagement, and more active exchange between training centres. Delegates also called for the programme to play a greater role in helping institutions align training offers with market needs and emerging global trends, while strengthening the visibility and practical impact of training initiatives. Several contributions highlighted the importance of positioning training not only as a learning activity, but as a pathway to employment opportunities, innovation, and broader digital transformation within institutions and communities.

There was also significant interest in expanding the programme's technical and operational support. Participants called for more specialized and locally relevant content, particularly in areas such as AI, cybersecurity, digital transformation, and innovative learning methodologies, including gamification. Others emphasized the need for stronger digital platforms, improved knowledge-sharing mechanisms, clearer coordination across ATCs and DTCs, and more sustained financial support to ensure long-term programme sustainability. Overall, the contributions envisioned a programme that is more connected, responsive, and future-oriented—one that not only delivers training, but actively supports institutional growth, regional collaboration, and the development of resilient digital ecosystems over time.

Closing (joint ATC-DTC session)

The closing of the Global DTC Workshop and ATC Annual Meeting started with a feedback session facilitated by Mr Alex-Kojo Boahoma. ATC and DTC participants emphasized the strong learning outcomes of the workshop, noting that sessions were highly valuable and relevant. This prompted questions on how to translate learnings into action at the national and institutional levels, particularly in sustaining engagement between the ATC and DTC communities.

Participants expressed their appreciation for the format and delivery of the meetings, which served as an effective platform for peer learning, and exchange. They commended the organizing team for designing interactive sessions and a high-quality programme focusing on innovation and sustainability. Several participants sought clarifications on the linkages between the ATC and DTC programmes, calling for continued engagement opportunities to strengthen the relationships between ATCs and DTCs and explore potential areas for collaboration.

During the feedback session, representatives of the ATCs and DTCs also raised practical challenges and forward-looking needs, including:

- The need for sustainable capacity support, particularly in cases where institutions lose trained instructors.
- A call for a shared or common platform to ensure continuity and enable resource-sharing between and across the two networks.
- The importance of strengthening synergies and coordination, given overlapping thematic areas between ATCs and DTCs.
- The need to create clearer incentives to encourage active collaboration between the two communities.

In her closing remarks, Ms Susan Teltscher, reflected on both the meeting outcomes and the broader evolution of the ATC and DTC programmes. Ms Teltscher further observed that 2026 marked the second occasion on which the ATC and DTC communities gathered, highlighting the significant progress achieved in terms of fostering stronger community engagement and collaboration. She reaffirmed her commitment to sustaining and strengthening these connections in future activities. The interactive approach adopted in the preparation and delivery of the meeting was also acknowledged as a positive aspect of the event, with high levels of participation and engagement observed throughout the sessions.

Ms Teltscher also expressed optimism regarding the future trajectory of the ATC and DTC programmes and their continued contribution to digital skills development. The evolution of the ATC programme was presented as a mature centre of excellence model, with strengthened management across the 14 centres

and clear improvements in training quality, alongside a positive outlook for its continued development. With regards to the DTC Initiative, special recognition was given to two colleagues who played crucial roles in the launch and development of the programme, Mr Mike Nxele and Ms Halima Letamo. Ms Teltscher recalled that Mr Nxele's role was essential to designing and launching the DTC Initiative, while Ms Letamo actively contributed to the development and growth of the programme following its pilot phase. She further noted that Ms Halima Letamo's conviction that sustainable progress begins with strengthening people's capacities has remained a guiding principle underpinning the work of the Initiative.

In his final intervention, Mr Alfie Hamid, Cisco noted that the 2026 Global DTC Workshop and ATC Annual Meeting demonstrated the depth of collective commitment and the value of contributions across the ATC and DTC communities. He conveyed a strong sense of shared purpose, where participants are committed to move forward together, with a spirit of openness and exchange serving as a basis for addressing challenges pertaining to digital skills development. Mr Hamid described the partnership with ITU as one of mutual benefit, built on shared objectives and complementary roles. Appreciation was expressed for the leadership of Ms Teltscher for guiding and sustaining the cohesion of the communities.

On behalf of the Director of the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), Dr Archana Gulati, Deputy to the Director, BDT, commended participants for their active engagement throughout the four-day workshop, noting that their contributions enabled the achievement of shared objectives related to knowledge exchange, capacity strengthening, and collaboration. She stated that the Global DTC Workshop and ATC Annual Meeting are a unique platform for experience-sharing, bringing together ATC and DTC representatives as key implementing partners whose perspectives ground the programmes in real impact on communities. Dr Gulati expressed appreciation to the ITU partners for their continued support and alignment with ITU's vision. BDT's ongoing commitment to advancing the ATC programme and DTC Initiative was reaffirmed, in line with its mandate under the Baku Action Plan, alongside a call for sustained collective engagement to accelerate digital skills development, bridge digital divides, and translate shared commitments into tangible outcomes.

Meeting evaluation

At the end of the event, participants were asked to share their feedback on the meeting by responding to an online survey. The survey was answered by all attendees and responses were overwhelmingly positive both in terms of the value of the content and the organization of the meeting. A summary of the main topics and the feedback provided by the ATC delegates follows below.

Content and conduct of the meeting:

Participants indicated their satisfaction with the ATC Annual Meeting, with over 80% rating it as Excellent or Good, while indicating that in terms of time allotted for discussions and participation while similarly rated high (at over 70%) more time would have been needed for this (with over 20% of the respondents communicating this preference).

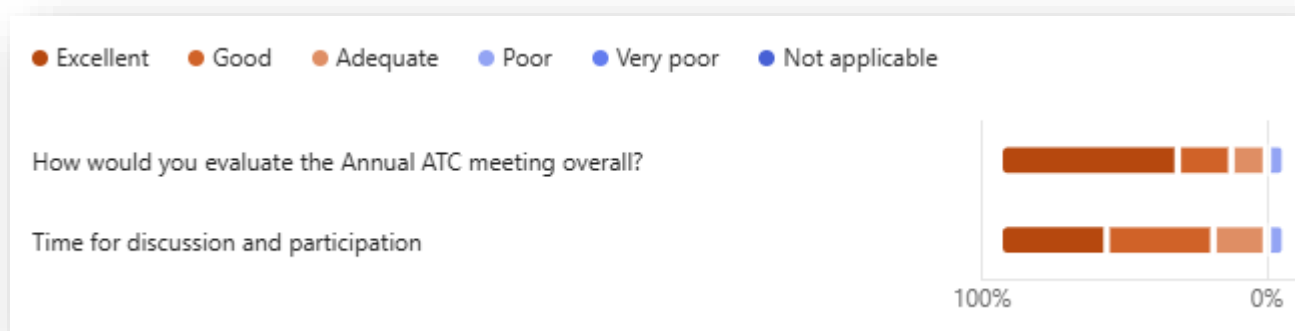


Figure 1: Overall assessment of the meeting

Agenda items:

When breaking down the agenda items dedicated to the ATC programme specifically, the delegates ranked highest the sessions which focused on updates provided by the ITU (on the overall programme as well as on ITU Academy-specific initiatives). These were followed closely by the sessions focused on good practices for face-to-face training and the show and tell format, during which ATCs shared innovative practices. The sessions with reduced value were indicated to be the ones focused on masterclass webinars and on overcoming existing challenges with delegates indicating more time needs to be allotted to discussing these at length.

Joint sessions:

The joint sessions with the DTC representatives were positively rated, with the highest ranked focusing on the programmes' updates, common themes in training evaluation, gamification experience exchange and advancing the ATC and DTC initiatives. Participants particularly appreciated the discussions focusing on collaborations, clarity on the objectives of the two programmes and exchanges of best practices.

Ideas for improvement:

The main theme which stood out from the feedback of the participants was related to the timing of the meeting, indicating more time to be allocated for the event itself as well as for the activities which are focused on interactivities between the delegates of the two programmes (both during the session and also in terms of social activities). Building in time for dedicated bilaterals between ATC representatives and CSD team members was also highlighted as a necessity.

Event organization:

The organization of the event rated high with the participants, notably in terms of the timeliness of the distribution of invitation/agenda/materials, quality of the event facilities and overall planning and organization of the event.

Figure 2: The meeting experience in one word according to the participants



Annex 1: Participants

ATC delegates

	ATC name	Country	Delegate(s)
1	African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute (AFRALTI)	Kenya	Mr. Jonathan Mwakijele Ms. Anita Natwati
2	China Academy of Information and Communications Technology (CAICT)	China	Ms. Li Fu
3	Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius (CERT-MU)	Mauritius	Mr. Kaleem Ahmed Usmani
4	Digital Bridge Institute (DBI)	Nigeria	Mr. Paulinus Okey Ugwoke Mr. David Sunday
5	Egyptian African Telecom Regulatory Training Center (EG-ATRC)	Egypt	Ms. Mona Ismail
6	Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Capacitación de Telecomunicaciones (INICTEL-UNI)	Perú	Ms. Iris Pretel
7	Instituto Nacional de Telecomunicações (INATEL)	Brazil	Mr. Daniel Andrade Nunes
8	Link Centre/University of the Witwatersrand	South Africa	Mr. Ntsibane Ntlatlapa Ms. Nokhanyo Yolwa
9	National Institute of Telecommunications (NIT)	Poland	Mr. Sylwester Laskowski Mr. Toni Janevski
10	NRD Cyber Security	Lithuania	Ms. Zivilė Nečejauskaitė
11	Tallinn University of Technology (TALTECH)	Estonia	Ms. Riina Palu
12	The University of the West Indies	Trinidad & Tobago	Ms. Lois St. Brice

13	United Nations University-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)	The Netherlands	Ms. Mindel van de Laar
----	--	-----------------	------------------------

ITU staff

Name CSD staff	Title
Ms. Susan TELTSCHER	Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division (CSD)
Mr. Emil-Eugen IUGA	Capacity and Skills Development Officer
Mr. Gustavo FONSECA-RIBEIRO	Junior e-Learning Officer
Ms. Praachi KUMAR	Associate Capacity Development Officer
Mr. Angel DRAEV	Senior Project Manager
Mr. Ghazi MABROUK	Project Officer
Ms. Sara Cambarau Ms. Aashnaa Rajiv Mehta Ms. Alice Varenio Ms. Liying Zhang	CSD Interns

Annex 2: Programme agenda

ITU Academy Training Centres (ATC) Global Annual Meeting

21-24 April 2026, Geneva, Switzerland

Time	Tuesday, 21 April 2026 (ITU Montbrillant Building, Innovation Hub)
12:00 – 14:00	Arrival and registration of participants <i>Participants arrive to the venue and pick-up their badges at the registration desk (ITU Montbrillant Building: 2, rue de Varembé, 1202, Geneva)</i>
14:00 – 14:45 (joint session)	Opening • Welcome remarks by Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau, ITU • Remarks by Dr Garif Yalak, Executive Board Member, Cisco Switzerland Moderator: Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Skills Development Division, ITU Group photo
14:45 – 15:30 (joint session)	ATC-DTC introductions and networking This interactive segment will consist of an energiser and warm-up exercise that will give ATC and DTC participants the opportunity to get to know each other or simply get reacquainted. In pairs, participants will meet each other to exchange postcards and share information and insights about their work and institutions. Their mission will be to collect as many postcards as possible by the end of the allocated time (30 minutes). Plenary debrief (10 minutes) Moderators: • Ms Robyn Fysh, Senior Digital Skills Officer, ITU • Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU
15:30 – 15:50	Coffee break
16:00 - 16:35 (joint session)	Updates on the DTC and ATC programmes and objectives of the workshop This session will provide an overview of the progress and key milestones achieved by each of the Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative and the ITU Academy Training Centres (ATC) programme, since the 2025 Global DTC Workshop and ATC

	Annual Meeting. It will also introduce the methodology of the two meetings, explaining the rationale behind the structure and design of the sessions. Mentimeter (5 minutes) Presentation (15 minutes) Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Skills Development Division, ITU Q&A (10 minutes)
16:35 - 17:00 (joint session)	Mapping expectations together The session will start with a quick debrief of the pre-meeting poll and will continue with an exercise to unpack participants' expectations of the meeting and build a common sense of accountability. Participants will be invited to reflect on progress made since the 2025 ATC-DTC meeting and share the key factors that they consider essential to ensuring a successful workshop. Moderators: - Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU - Ms Sara Bennouna, Junior Digital Skills Officer, ITU
17:30 – 18:30	Welcome cocktail: Satellite Restaurant, ITU Tower 15th floor
Time	Wednesday, 22 April 2026 (ITU Montbrillant Building, Innovation Hub)
09:00 – 11:00	Marketplace: Good practice framework for face-to-face training The objective of the activity is to produce a list of guidelines/toolkit of field-tested practices that actually work. For this, ATC delegates will work in four groups, each focusing on one of the stations in the room. Each station has an ITU host who will capture the group's recommended actions for the toolkit in a pre-set template. Stations: Station 1. Preparation (logistics, visibility/comms, visa, participant selection) - what happens before participants enter the room. - Mr Ghazi Mabrouk, Project Officer, ITU Station 2. Content design & structuring - what is trained and how it's structured - Ms Praachi Kumar, Associate Capacity Development Officer Station 3. Delivery & Engagement methods - what actually happens in the room to keep people engaged. - Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU Station 4. Assessment methods - how do you know learning is happening?

	Mr. Angel Draev, Senior Project Manager, ITU
11:00-11:20	Coffee break
11:20 - 13:00	Masterclass webinars ATC delegates will exchange and discuss on this new ITU Academy experiential format, scope, topics. They will also brainstorm on a draft programme for the rest of the year. - Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU - Ms Mindel van de Laar, United Nations University-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break (ITU cafeteria)
14:00 - 15:30 (joint session)	Common themes in training evaluation results conducive to best practices Working in small groups, ATC and DTC participants will unpack common trends related to end-of-training evaluation results leading to best practices. This session will foster peer learning across the ATC and DTC networks to discuss areas of successful training related to course design, delivery and set-up. Moderators: - Mr Alex-Kojo Boahoma, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Officer, ITU - Ms Praachi Kumar, Associate Capacity Development Officer, ITU
15:30 – 15:50	Coffee break
15:50 – 17:00 (joint session)	Gamification: innovative practices in training This session will focus on the best practices and approaches to gamification that the ATC in Peru - the Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Capacitación de Telecomunicaciones - Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería (INICTEL-UNI) has designed and integrated into its in-person workshops. Presentation (25 minutes) Ms Iris Magally Pretel Trejo, Training Specialist, INICTEL- UNI Open floor: Q&A and discussion (30 minutes) Moderator: Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU
Time	Thursday, 23 April 2026 (Giga Connectivity Center)
08:30 - 09:00	<i>Arrival and registration of participants</i>

	<i>Participants arrive to the venue and pick-up their badges (Campus Biotech, chemin des Mines 9, 1202, Geneva (Office B2.03))</i>
09:00 – 10:00 (joint session)	"Ask me anything": Solution-seeking activity (joint ATC-DTC session) This session will enable a collaborative space for the ATCs and DTCs to reflect on common challenges faced in the implementation of their activities. Through peer exchanges and guided discussions, participants will identify common bottlenecks, explore feasible and context-appropriate solutions, and examine how these solutions can be applied in practice. Moderators: • Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Skills Development Division, ITU • Mr Alfie Hamid, Head of Global Strategic Partnerships, Cisco Networking Academy
10:00 – 11:00	ATC programme: Overcoming existing challenges Building on the ATC-DTC joint session with the same focus ("Ask me anything"), in small groups, ATCs will be encouraged to share lessons learned from their own experiences, support problem solving issues for other ATCs, highlighting what has worked, what has not and why, to strengthen collective learning across centres. Preparatory work: Before the workshop, ATC participants will be asked to prepare 2-3 challenges that they would like to discuss and solve together with other DTCs. Moderator: Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU
11:00 – 11:20	Coffee break
11:20 – 13:00	Updates from the ITU team (60 minutes) This session focuses on information sharing regarding the ATC programme performance in 2025. It further details the new provisions of the 2026 Cooperation Agreements and provides an update on the EC-funded courses. The session will conclude with the introduction of the new ITU-UNESCO collaboration on AI capacity development. • Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU • Mr Angel Draev, Senior Project Manager, ITU • Mr Gustavo Fonseca-Ribeiro, Junior e-Learning Officer, ITU
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break (Giga Connectivity Center Cafeteria)

14:00 - 15:30	New tools for ATCs (25 minutes) This session will showcase new tools that ATCs can leverage in order to increase participant engagement: Mentimeter and Miro. They will actively participate in the demoing of methods in which they can use the features available in each environment. - Ms Praachi Kumar, Associate Capacity Development Officer, ITU Quick dive into innovation practices - Ideas worth stealing (65 minutes) This session is built as an ATC 'show and tell' on innovative practices/exchanges in plenary (following a pre-set presentation format). Each will focus on the context in which the practice is applied, what problem it solves, how it works, why it works (evidence it works), biggest limitation and tips for applying it in different contexts. In choosing the idea, participants will select one which is transferrable/usable by other ATCs. Moderator: - Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU
15:30 – 18:00	Social activity
Time	Friday, 24 April 2026 (ITU Montbrillant Building, Innovation Hub)
09:00 - 10:30 (joint session)	Looking ahead: Advancing the ATC and DTC programmes This session will consist of a reflection exercise through which ATC and DTC participants will look back at the various sessions and draw key takeaways, best practices and how these can be applied in the context of their respective institutions. Moderators: - Ms Robyn Fysh, Senior Digital Skills Officer, ITU - Mr Emil-Eugen Iuga, Capacity and Skills Development Officer, ITU
10:30 – 10:50	Coffee break
10:50 - 12:00 (joint session)	Feedback and open mic' (15 minutes) ATC and DTC participants will be invited to share their feedback on the meetings by responding to a short evaluation form as well as by sharing, in the plenary, their final thoughts, reflections and key takeaways. Moderator: Mr Alex-Kojo Boahoma, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Officer, ITU Summary and closing (40 minutes)

	• Meeting summary by Ms Susan Teltscher, Head, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division, ITU • Remarks by Mr Alfie Hamid, Head of Global Strategic Partnerships, Cisco Networking Academy • Closing remarks by Ms Archana Gulati, Deputy to the Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), ITU
--	---