ITU CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE NETWORK FOR THE AFRICA REGION

REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

14 JULY 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING

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1. INTRODUCTION AND OPENING

The virtual Steering Committee meeting for the ITU Africa Centres of Excellence (CoE) Network organized by ITU and held virtually on 14 July 2021 was attended by 28 participants including members from Centres of Excellence (CoEs) as well as ITU Secretariat. The list of participants is as attached to this report (see Annex 1).

Mr. Ali Drissa Badiel (Area Representative, ITU Area Representative for West Africa, BDT/ITU), on behalf of the Director for ITU Regional Office for Africa, welcomed the participants to the Steering Committee meeting and thanked CoEs for being able to continue delivering training during this most difficult year due to COVID-19 pandemic.

He highlighted the main objective of the meeting, which is to provide information on the implementation of training courses during the past 6 months, and to present and approve the training courses planned for the next 6 months of 2021.

He urged the Steering Committee members to reflect on issues and reasons for cancellation and postponement training courses and come up with plans to reduce these in the remaining half of the year.

He acknowledged that it is still a difficult journey to change from the traditional in-person training delivery format to effectively transition to delivering training courses online. He encouraged CoEs to continue delivering online courses to reach as many participants as possible across Africa and beyond.

He reminded that the shortage of ICT skills is one of the major factors inhibiting growth of the ICT sector in Africa; and capacity development is one of key driving factors of development and asked members of Steering Committee to continue working together to contribute to the human and institutional capacity development in the region.

He finished his welcoming remarks by wishing the participants fruitful, constructive, and good deliberations throughout the duration of the Steering Committee Meeting.

In a like manner, Dr. Kaleem Usmani, the chair of the Steering Committee, in his opening remarks, greeted and welcomed all participants to the steering committee meeting. He thanked ITU for organizing the mid-year SC meeting, a commendable role of providing continued support to CoEs to carry out their task of delivering capacity development activities in their areas of expertise.

He highlighted the importance of capacity development for the ICT sector to respond and address the shortage of ICT skills in Africa. He acknowledged a commendable role that the CoEs are playing in offering trainings and equipping human resources with relevant ICT skills required by different markets in the region.

He commended members of the SC and CoEs 'work and efforts to continue delivering trainings despite going through the most difficult and challenging times due the COVID-19 pandemic, which at the same time provided an opportunity for CoEs to accelerate the adoption of the online training delivery format since last year.

Ms. Susan Teltscher (Head of Capacity and Skills Development Division, BDT/ITU), after greeting and welcoming the participants to the SC meeting, she highlighted that since the last meeting held in December last year, not so much has changed with respect to challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought and how it has affected our training activities.

She appreciated the continuous CoEs' efforts to cope with the current situation and trying to move to online training and learning. She reminded that ITU has not had any face-to-face activities since March last year and it is going to continue to be the case for the rest of this year, and that this is going to be important when the SC look at the upcoming trainings as ITU do not yet accommodate any face-to-face training.

She recalled that this is year 3 of the current 4-year cycle CoE network, and mentioned that during mid-cycle review process launched at beginning of the year, ITU noted that some CoEs have challenges in the implementation of training activities partly due to COVID-19.

She said that looking at the training plans, still not so many courses were delivered this year in the Africa region, some courses were postponed, cancelled and that ITU is keen to hear how CoEs have been doing and what measures being taken to address these challenges.

She urged SC members to reflect on this situation as they are planning the training courses for the remaining 6 months so that we can plan what to be implemented.

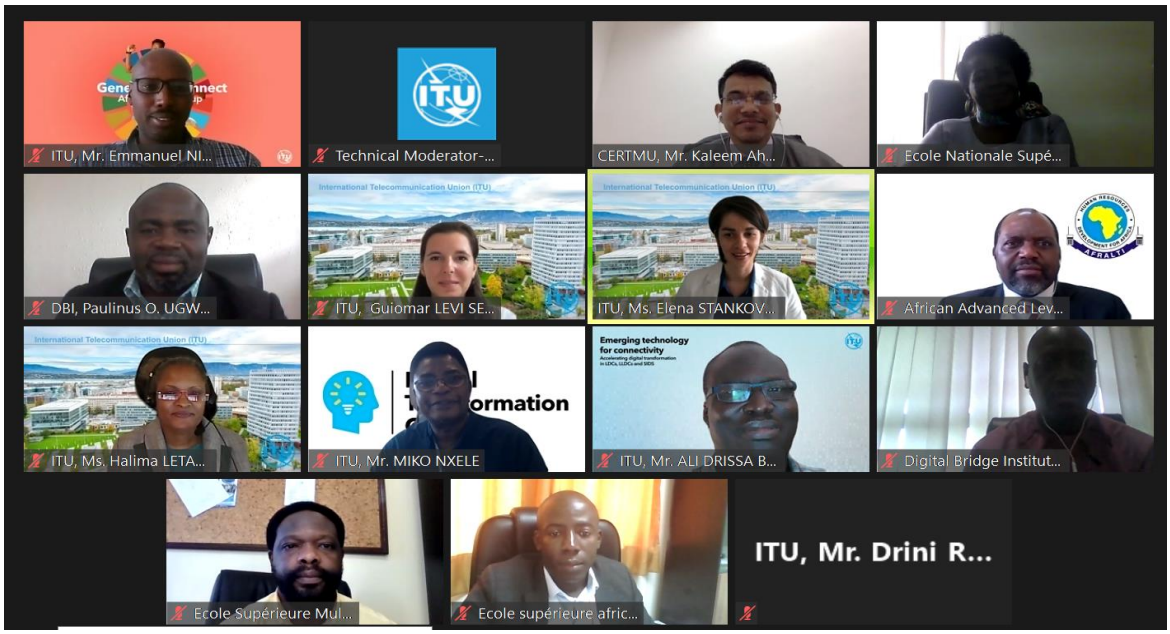
She encouraged CoEs to share their experiences with each other in the region to help and support other CoEs, including how COVID-19 has affected CoEs training deliverables.

She also mentioned the global CoE meeting held in May 2021 in which most CoEs participated and positively received, and appreciated their commitment to the initiative shown during the meeting.

She emphasized that; it is through programmes like this that ITU is able to achieve its mandate of building capacities in its member states. She further highlighted that the objectives of the meeting, just as the Chair has already mentioned, is for ITU to see what happened during the first half of the year and the SC need to come to agreement about the training plan for the second half of the year.

Before closing her remarks, she informed all CoEs that ITU is carrying out a strategic review of the CoE programme this year, based on the WTDC resolution 73 of the WTDC 17 that called on the BDT Director to carry out such a strategic review.

She mentioned that ITU will do the review of CoE programme in the second half of 2021 and will consider some of the views provided by the CoEs during the global CoE meeting and other previous meetings. She also said that CoEs will be consulted at some point as part of this exercise, and after there might be some likely changes that will be introduced in the programme.



2. COES PRESENTATION OF Q1&2 2021 IMPLEMENTATION OF COURSES AND TRAINING PLANS FOR Q3&4 2021

2.1 Presentation by ITU (Regional Office)

Mr. Emmanuel NIYIKORA (Capacity and Skills Development Regional focal point), gave an overview of the training activities implemented by the CoEs in Q1&2 2021. He presented to the SC members that from 34 trainings planned for 2021; CoEs implemented only 6 trainings so far that had 340 registered and 108 certified participants. He stressed that we are not doing well looking at the implementation status for the first 6 months of the year.

He emphasized just like other previous speakers that COVID-19 related challenges have caused cancellation and postponement of many training courses given that ITU still maintains the decision preventing face-to-face events including training activities until the COVID-19 situation improves.

He acknowledged the progress made by CoEs in Africa in improving the quality of training delivered online. He emphasized the need for CoEs in Africa to strategize better and attract as many potential participants as possible from the region.

He highlighted that there is a significant increase in number of participants from Africa expressing interest and participating in online courses planned by CoEs in other regions, Europe in most cases, which is a positive development from the region.

2.2 Presentations by Centres of Excellence

Centres of Excellence presented and provided information on implementation of courses in the past 6 months and the courses planned for the next 6 months.

2.2.1 African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute (AFRALTI), Kenya

Mr. Jonathan Mwakijele, Head, Management, Policy and Regulatory Unit, AFRALTI, made a presentation that focused on the courses implemented in Q1/Q2 of 2021 and training courses plan for 2021.

Implementation per CoE 2021 (implemented)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status	Number of participants registered	Number of participants certified	End-of training reports
Economic and Market-Based Methods of Radio Frequency Spectrum Management	online	1-Feb-21	26-Feb-21	implemented	51	49	received
Les méthodes économiques et le marché basés sur la gestion du spectre des fréquences radio	online	1-Feb-21	26-Feb-21	implemented	45	43	received
Digital Broadcasting Content Regulation in a Converged IP Environment	online	22-Mar-21	16-Apr-21	implemented	3	3	received

- In 2021, out of 5 trainings planned in the first 6 months, 3 were successfully implemented and 2 were not due to lack of participants and were postponed.
- The training course on Economic and Market-Based Methods of Radio Frequency Spectrum Management was delivered in English and French by AFRALTI and ESMT under the sponsorship of ATU (African Telecommunication Union).
- ESMT translated the course materials from English to French and delivered the training for French speaking participants in parallel with the same training course in English.

• The collaboration and working relationship between AFRALTI and ESMT was commendable.

Implementation per CoE 2021 (upcoming)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Radio Frequency Spectrum Economy and Market Valuation	online	16-Aug-21	10-Sep-21	postponed
Digital Broadcasting Masterclass	online	7-Jun-21	2-Jul-21	postponed
Economic and Market-Based Methods of Radio Frequency Spectrum Management(2nd Intake)	online	2-Aug-21	27-Aug-21	upcoming
Digital Broadcasting Regulation in a Converged IP Environment (2nd Intake)	online	6-Sep-21	1-Oct-21	Upcoming
Broadcasting Spectrum Management Masterclass	online	1-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	Upcoming

• 4 courses are planned, of which 2 were postponed from last semester.

• The course on Radio Frequency Spectrum Economy and Market Valuation is scheduled in August, but the course on Digital Broadcasting Masterclass is less likely to be delivered unless AFRALTI gets a special request from member states.

• The last two courses are the same courses that they already delivered in the first semester; they are engaging different countries and receiving some positive feedback from the region and some regulators in the Arab region.

2.2.2 Digital Bridge Institute (DBI), Nigeria

Mr. Paulinus Okechukwu UGWOKE, Head of Research, Education and Training, DBI made the presentation on behalf of the Institute. He gave the reasons for cancellation and postponement of some courses planned for semester 1 of 2021 and measures taken to address these challenges in the second semester for 2021.

Implementation per COE 2021 (First semester)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
International Computer Driving License (ICDL) Workforce Module	Face-to-face	26-April-21	30-April-21	Cancelled
Virtual Communication and Infographics	Face-to-face	21-June-21	25-June-21	Rearranged and postponed

• The first course on International Computer Driving License (ICDL) Workforce Module was cancelled despite having around 200 sponsored participants that wanted to attend it locally face-to-face but due to the decision of ITU to run all courses online, they declined.

• The second course on Virtual Communication and Infographics was also initially planned to run face-to-face and was converted into an online course and postponed.

Implementation per COE 2021 (upcoming)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Cyber Forensics and IT Risk Management (Online)	online	11-Oct-21	22-Oct-21	Upcoming
Virtual Communication and Infographics	online	9-Aug-21	20-Aug-21	Upcoming
Social Media Analytics and Management	online	6-Sep-21	17-Sep-21	Upcoming
Emerging Cybercrime Trends: Cybercrime Investigation and Mobile Forensics	Online	22-Nov.21	03-Dec.21	Upcoming

• 4 courses are planned for the 2nd semester and the CoE has interested participants that will register for these courses.
• The last course on Emerging Cybercrime Trends: Cybercrime Investigation and Mobile Forensics initially cancelled was restored per request of an organization that is interested to take it online.

• Issues highlighted are covid-19 related and insecurity in some parts of Nigeria where participants for their courses are coming from.

• Other challenges are related to internet access and lack of digital skills to take courses online in some parts of the Nigeria.

• Some tertiary institutions in Nigeria have registered interest in the CoE courses and they believes that they will get participants for the courses planned in 2nd semester

2.2.3 Ecole Supérieure Africaine des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (ESATIC), Côte d'Ivoire

Mr. RODOLPHE KOSSONOU, Head of training and continuous Education made the presentation that focused on reasons for restructuring and postponement of all courses planned in Q1/Q2 of 2021 and steps taken to address the challenges and deliver the training courses planned for 2021.

Implementation per COE 2021 (first semester)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Gestion des risques liés à la sécurité de l'information (Norme ISO/IEC 27005 : Risk manager)	face-to-face	10-Mar-21	12-Mar-21	Postponed
Sécurité du Cloud	face-to-face	3-May-21	7-May-21	Postponed
Sécurité des applications des services bancaires	face-to-face	7-Jun-21	11-Jun-21	Postponed
Conception des réseaux d'accès optiques	face-to-face	22-Mar-21	26-Mar-21	Postponed
Comprendre l'Internet des Objets (IoT): Principes, Normes, Ecosystème et opportunités économiques	face-to-face	19-Apr-21	23-Apr-21	Postponed
5G: Technologies et opportunités économiques	online	14-Jun-21	26-Jun-21	Postponed
La Protection des données à caractère personnel	online	6-Sep-21	20-Sep-21	Upcoming

• 5 courses planned face-to-face in first semester had to be postponed after ITU's communication informing CoEs to cancel face-to-face courses and convert them to online.

• It took time to mobilize staff and resources to start the process of converting the face –to-face courses to online courses.

• One course planned online did not take place due to lack of interested participants.

• Lessons learnt and recommendations from consultations with organizations and administrations participating in their face-to-face courses will be used to try to implement the courses postponed and converted to online.

Implementation per COE 2021 (upcoming)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Gestion des risques liés à la sécurité de l'information (Norme ISO/IEC 27005 : Risk manager)	online	25-Oct-21	8-Nov-21	Upcoming
Sécurité du Cloud	online	15-Nov-21	29-Nov-21	Upcoming
Sécurité des applications des services bancaires	online	27-Sep-21	11-Oct-21	Upcoming
Conception des réseaux d'accès optiques	online	22-Nov-21	6-Dec-21	Upcoming
Comprendre l'Internet des Objets (IoT): Principes, Normes, Ecosystème et opportunités économiques	online	11-Oct-21	25-Oct-21	Upcoming
Les Systèmes embarqués pour l'Internet des Objets (IoT)	online	6-Dec-21	20-Dec-21	Upcoming
5G: Technologies et opportunités économiques	online	8-Nov-21	22-Nov-21	Upcoming

• All face-to-face courses were reprogrammed into online courses and along with the online course postponed are planned to be delivered online during the second semester.

• They believe that their CoE staff and trainers are mobilized and prepared to take on the challenge and deliver all these courses during the remaining 6 months, at least 2 courses par month until December.

2.4 Ecole Supérieure Multinationale des Télécommunications (ESMT), Sénégal

Dr. André ONANA, the Chief of ESMT Management Department presented the implementation status of training courses planned in Q1/Q2 and training courses planned for the second semester.

Implementation per COE 2021 (Implementation status)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Informatique de l'audiovisuel : Transport, virtualisation et stockage	online	3-May-21	19-May-21	cancelled
Cadre réglementaire pour les services financiers numériques et les FinTechs	online	3-May-21	29-May-21	cancelled
Gestion du spectre pour la 5G	online	1-Jul-21	29-Jul-21	Rearranged &postponed
Management de projets digitaux : approches waterfall et agile (SCRUM)	online	5-Jul-21	30-Jul-21	cancelled
Applications et Modèles Economiques de la Blockchain	Online	1-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	upcoming

• He thanked ITU for organizing this meeting to review where we are in the implementation of planned training courses after first half of the year.

• He also thanked AFRALTI for the opportunity to collaborate in the delivery of spectrum management training.

• He acknowledged that ESMT as usual did not perform well in the first semester but believes that the second semester will be much better.

• Issues contributing to their underperformance include challenges faced by their target organizations and audiences including lack of trust in the value of online trainings.

Implementation per COE 2021 (upcoming)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Les mécanismes économiques et méthodes basés sur le marché de la gestion du spectre pour la 5G	online	4-Oct-21	29-Oct-21	Upcoming
Applications et Modèles Economiques de la Blockchain	Online	1-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	upcoming
Traitement distribué dans le Big Data	**online**	**1- Dec-21**	**17-Dec-21**	**upcoming**

• The CoE is seeing incentives and interests in their courses, which make them believe that they will be able to deliver training courses planned in the second semester.

• Experience gained while delivering the spectrum management course with AFRALTI showed that those online courses require a lot of time, which led them to reduce the number of courses planned from 5 to 3 to ensure they can successfully implement them.

• Even though there is a progress made in transitioning from face-to-face to online learning, a lot still needs to be done to educate target audiences to make them understand that online training courses are as valuable as face-to-face courses.

• ESMT is feeling confident that they will be able deliver the 3 courses planned during the remaining 6 months.

2.5 National Computer Board (NCB), Ile Mauritius

Dr Kaleem Usmani, Head of Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius (CERT-MU) made the presentation on courses they have managed to implement so far and courses they are planning to deliver in next 6 months of 2021.

Implementation per COE 2021 (implemented)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status	Number of participants registered	Number of participants certified	End-of training reports
Cyber Disaster Response: Development of Simulation Exercises	Online	21-Apr-21	23-Apr-21	Implemented	224	57/73	

• NCB switched to online mode of training due to the ongoing situation and successfully completed some courses already that attracted high number of registrations from Africa; and participants from other regions benefited from these training programmes.

• One course planned online was implemented in April, and attracted 73 participants from 13 countries, out of which 57 completed the final exam and were certified.

• One of the advantages NCB is seeing with online training programmes is that the outreach is easy and they are able to train many participants from different countries.

• Another reason is that these training programmes were free of charge, which attracts more registrations.

Implementation per COE 2021 (upcoming)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
An Introduction to Developing National Cyber Incident Response Plans	online	18-Aug-21	20-Aug-21	Upcoming
Building an effective cybersecurity team	online	24-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	Upcoming

• 2 training courses are planned online in the second semester, one in August

• Another important approach shared with colleagues is that NCB has been collaborating with partners so that they can give expert comments into the training topics, which they find very helpful

• They are also choosing and prioritizing courses that respond to countries and organizations' needs in the emerging area of cybersecurity, managed to get experts outside Mauritius to give like a half an hour lecture in their areas of expertise during the training to give their perspectives and share their experiences.

• Face-to-face has a different touch but at the same online trainings have been successful for NCB because they could reach large and diverse audiences. The only challenge is when the course has some hands-on sessions that required computer labs but they believe that this is also doable.

2.6 Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Postes, des Télécommunications et des TIC (SUP'PTIC)

Ms. Anne Chantal MVOGO, Chief of Cooperation and Research, presented the implementation status of courses planned in Q1/Q2 and courses planned for the second semester.

Implementation per COE 2021 (Implementation status)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status	Number of participants registered	Number of participants certified	End-of training reports
Gouvernance et sécurité de l'internet	Online	5-Apr-21	2-May-21	Implemented	7	4	Received
Régulation des services financiers : Fondamentaux des microfinances et de la FINTECH	Online	19-Apr-21	16-May-21	Implemented	10	9	Received
Transactions électroniques et la Monétique	online	2-Aug-21	29-Aug-21	Rearranged &postponed			

• Out of 5 trainings planned in the first semester, 2 were implemented, 1 was not and was rescheduled for in the second semester.

• When they were asked to migrate to online courses, they had challenges convincing their partner and target organizations to release their employees for an extended period more than the usual 3 or 4 days they normally give their employees to attend training courses.

• For the first training on « Gouvernance et sécurité de l'internet », some registered participants dropped from the training due to lack of internet terminals and access to attend the course and they remained with 4 participants.

• 2 organisations that registered for second course pulled out from participating when it was converted into an online course; there is a hope that next year they may revive their interest in the course.

Implementation per COE 2021 (upcoming)

Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
Transactions électroniques et la Monétique	online	2-Aug-21	29-Aug-21	Upcoming
Applications et modèles économiques de la BlockChain	**Face-to-face**	26-Oct-21	29-Oct-21	Upcoming
Enjeux techniques et juridiques de la large bande fixe et mobile	**Face-to-face**	16-Nov-21	19-Nov-21	Cancelled

• 2 Courses are planned for the second semester; the first one that was postponed from last semester is ready to be implemented from 2nd august.

• The second course is planned face-to-face hoping that the COVID-19 situation will get better, but if it remains the same, it will be migrated to online.

• They are approaching their partner/target companies and organisations trying to convince them to participate in their upcoming online trainings.

• The third and last course on "Enjeux techniques et juridiques de la large bande fixe et mobile" is cancelled after 3 companies that requested it refused to take it online.

Challenges: lack of internet terminals and access; lack of trust in online courses, trainers not prepared and well equipped to deliver online courses.

Questions and comments

Questions	Responses
How can Africa CoE Network leverage partnerships such as the successful collaboration between AFRALTI & ESMT to galvanize and look for sponsorships from national or regional organizations such as ATU or any other?	Jonathan answered that it is obvious that sponsored trainings attract high number of participants than self-sponsored courses, which can be seen from the number of participants (96) that attended ATU sponsored course. For this particular sponsorship opportunity from ATU, it was initiated after one of ATU's staff in charge of technical frequency spectrum aspects attended one of AFRALTI's course, which he liked the content and recommended it to all regulators technical personnel from the region and ATU managed to find budget savings to support this training.

	One of the issues is that these regional and national organisations do not know the training programmes offered by ITU Africa Centre of Excellence until some of their staff get a chance to participate. ATU being a regional body has English and French members states, and they were encouraged to provide sponsorship when they were informed that AFRALTI will partner with ESMT to deliver the training programme in English and French Other potential funding agencies might pick interest when training institutions such as CoEs can come together with a joint proposal. Dr. André complemented Jonathan's comments and highlighted some lessons learnt from the collaboration. He said that there is a possibility of getting training sponsorships if CoEs with support from ITU can engage regional organizations. This is something that needs to be discussed further
Discussion on face-to-face vs online training	Ms. Susan informed the participants that ITU still do not envisage having face-to-face training courses. She said that if there is a CoE that would want to deliver a face-to-face training in the 4th quarter, ITU will look at it on a case-by-case basis. She advised CoEs to contact ITU if they want to run a face-to-face in the 4th quarter. Mr. Paulinus from DBI thanked Ms. Susan for the update, and highlighted some of the challenges they are facing especially in Nigeria with online courses, where people want to leave their work and family locations and travel to other towns where they can fully concentrate on the training without distractions due work and family responsibilities
Mr. Kaleem asked if there is some sort of support from ITU to CoEs that do not have resources and budget to carry out online or face-to-face training programs. For example if trainers can be arranged from ITU side for that CoE to deliver that particular training	Mr. Emmanuel answered that in the current CoE operational model, there is no such provision but acknowledged the challenges being experienced by CoE that will provide some inputs into the planning for the next CoE cycle

3. PRESENTATION OF ALL PROPOSED COURSES FOR THE REMAINING 6 MONTHS OF THE YEAR

Mr. Emmanuel presented all training courses proposed by CoEs for the next 6 months of 2021. The chair invited the SC to approve the training catalogue for the coming 6 months if everyone agrees; and after seeing no objection from SC members, the chair declared the below training courses approved.

CoE	Courses planned	Delivery mode	Original dates	Final dates	Status
AFRALTI	Economic and Market-Based Methods of Radio Frequency Spectrum Management(2nd Intake)	online	2-Aug-21	27-Aug-21	upcoming
AFRALTI	Digital Broadcasting Regulation in a Converged IP Environment (2nd Intake)	online	6-Sep-21	1-Oct-21	Upcoming
AFRALTI	Broadcast Spectrum Management	online	1-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	Upcoming
DBI	Virtual Communication and Infographics	online	9-Aug-21	20-Aug-21	Upcoming
DBI	Social Media Analytics and Management	online	6-Sep-21	17-Sep-21	Upcoming
DBI	Cyber Forensics and IT Risk Management	online	11-Oct-21	22-Oct-21	Upcoming
DBI	Emerging Cybercrime Trends: Cybercrime Investigation and Mobile Forensics	online	22-Nov.21	03-Dec.21	Upcoming
ESATIC	La Protection des données à caractère personnel	online	6-Sep-21	20-Sep-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	Gestion des risques liés à la sécurité de l'information (Norme ISO/IEC 27005 : Risk manager)	online	25-Oct-21	8-Nov-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	Sécurité du Cloud	online	15-Nov-21	29-Nov-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	Sécurité des applications des services bancaires	online	27-Sep-21	11-Oct-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	Conception des réseaux d'accès optiques	online	22-Nov-21	6-Dec-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	5G: Technologies et opportunités économiques	Online	8 -Nov-21	22-Nov-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	Comprendre l'Internet des Objets (IoT): Principes, Normes, Ecosystème et opportunités économiques	online	11-Oct-21	25-Oct-21	Upcoming
ESATIC	Les Systèmes embarqués pour l'Internet des Objets (IoT)	online	6-Dec-21	20-Dec-21	Upcoming
ESMT	Les mécanismes économiques et méthodes basés sur le marché de la gestion du spectre pour la 5G	Online	4-Oct-21	29-Oct-21	upcoming
ESMT	Applications et Modèles Economiques de la Blockchain	Online	1-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	upcoming
ESMT	Traitement distribué dans le Big Data	Online	1-Dec-21	17-Dec-21	upcoming
NCB	An Introduction to Developing National Cyber Incident Response Plans	online	18-Aug-21	20-Aug-21	Upcoming
NCB	Building an effective cybersecurity team	online	24-Nov-21	26-Nov-21	Upcoming
SUP'PTIC	Transactions électroniques et la Monétique	Online	2-Aug-21	26-Aug-21	upcoming
SUP'PTIC	Applications et modèles économiques de la BlockChain	Face-to-face/online	26-Oct-21	29-Oct-21	Upcoming

Wrap up and takeaways from CoE presentations

• Online training mode is working very well for some CoEs; but it is difficult for other CoEs to transition from face-to-face to online mainly due to lack of staff and trainers with expertise to prepare and deliver online courses.
• Face-to-face training courses could not be implemented due to the pandemic.
• One positive takeaway that came out of this discussion is some CoEs that managed to collaborate and deliver joint training programmes, an approach that CoEs should look into strengthening going forward plan.

4. PRESENTATION OF ITU QA PROCESS

Mr. Emmanuel NIYIKORA presented a quality assurance process adopted last year internally for the development and/or checking of training materials to assure quality of the training materials that are delivered under ITU's name and according to ITU's mandate.

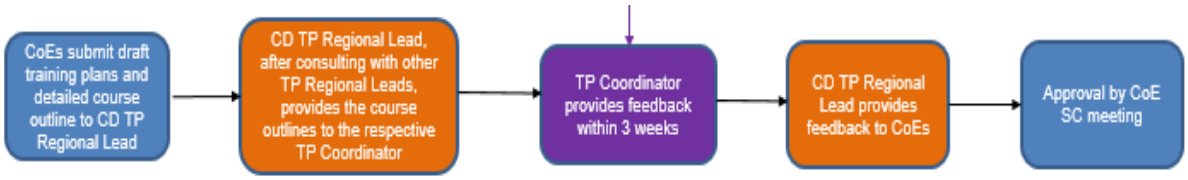
• The process for developing/checking CoE training plans and training materials entails that CoEs are expected to submit their draft training plans to the ITU Regional Capacity Development Focal Point (Emmanuel NIYIKORA) **two months before the date of the Steering Committee meeting**. Each course must be accompanied by a detailed course description showing the objectives of the course, the topics to be covered and the learning outcomes.

• ITU Regional Capacity Development Focal Point submits the course description to the respective Thematic Priority Coordinators leading the topic for their review and feedback.

• Thematic Priority Coordinators provides feedback within 3 weeks.

• ITU Regional Capacity Development Focal Point provides feedback to CoEs

• Training catalogue (all CoE training plans) approval by CoE SC meeting.



Questions and Comments

Questions	Responses
Mr. Kaleem, NCB asked if the first submission of CoE training plans have to come with a detailed description of each training courses. He also asked for clarifications on how to manage overlaps and similar course titles of training courses proposed by CoEs from the same or different regions.	Emmanuel clarified that draft training plans submitted to the ITU Regional Capacity Development Focal Point must be accompanied by a detailed course description showing the objectives of the course, the topics to be covered and the learning outcomes.

	On the overlaps and similar course titles of 2 different CoEs, he clarified that this situation should be avoided and a CoE that wants to run a course that is similar to an already planned course should first consult the CoE that planned to original course. The CoEs should agree on an approach to be taken to avoid misleading potential and interested participants; and to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts within the network. Ms. Halima urged CoEs to avoid using the same titles for courses because it creates confusion for the participants that sometimes enroll into a course when they wanted to enroll to a course for another CoE. She emphasized on the need to respect the principle of first to market, if a CoE has already advertised a course that appeal to you, just admit and be innovative to find another name that reflect the content of your course. This is one of the reasons why ITU wants to see the titles and course descriptions 2 months before the SC meeting to allow ITU to have an appreciation of CoEs proposed courses and their alignment to the content to ensure the sustainability of CoE training courses.
Jonathan asked if there is any possibility for CoE to add another area of expertise to the existing priority areas. He also asked if ITU could support AFRALTI and allow them to take responsibility of advertising the Masters of Communication Management under the partnership with UKTA especially in Africa.	On the question of adding a new area of expertise, Ms. Halima explained that priority areas are allocated at the beginning of the cycle and according to CoE strategy, it is expected that CoE maintains the same priority areas and be excellent throughout the duration of the cycle. She further said that there is a provision for emerging topics that are not covered by any CoE. CoEs can request to add a new emerging topic, which is reviewed to check if the CoE has expertise and resources to take on the additional responsibilities of delivering courses covering the emerging topics. On the question of coordinating marketing activities for the Master of Communication Management Programme, she responded to Jonathan that this Programme is outside the CoE provisions as it is coordinated and delivered under a different agreement; and she proposed to have a separate discussion outside this meeting.

5. TRAINING IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19 COE UPDATES

Mr. Emmanuel introduced the discussion on “training in the context of COVID-19”, and asked CoEs to share their updates, and experiences on Face-to-face (in-person) vs online training delivery. He shared following questions to guide the SC members through the discussion.

- How can we better engage with participants to support the expected level of learning in online trainings?
- Are participants more engaged in face-to-face trainings than online trainings?
- Is the quality of interactions (engagement) between participants and instructors comparatively better in a face-to-face training than online training?

Jonathan shared AFRALTI’s experience and told the meeting that since COVID-19 started, AFRALTI is running at least one course every month. Based on their experience of conducting both in-person and online training, they find that the quality of delivery and learning is quite a lot with online training with courses running for 4 weeks instead of 5 intensive days with in-person training. They believe that online training is equally able to give the same standard of learning required as an in-person training. The level of interaction is high with online learning through live lectures, forums, weekly quizzes, final assignment and evaluation. They are also using WhatsApp for easy interactions with students. They use Turnitin tool to ensure students’ assignments are not plagiarized.

Mr. Kaleem also shared NCB’s experience saying that online courses have benefits mainly because they can reach many participants from different regions easily than in-person courses. However, he highlighted some challenges with online training as well such as the limited duration of live lectures that cannot exceed 3hours; and it is difficult and demanding to prolong the course for an extended period like one month or more.

6. FOLLOW-UP TO THE GLOBAL COE MEETING

6.1 Plan for promotion of CoE courses

Ms. Halima presented on a “strategy for the promotion of CoE courses” which is one of two tangible follow up actions responding to proposals that came out of the global CoE meeting.

As a response to the recurring request by CoEs for support to promote courses, and the observation by CoEs during the Global meeting that they need to invest in marketing and promotion of courses, ITU proposes a “ plan for promotion of CoE courses” (Annex 1), to be implemented and progress reported in the next SC meeting.

She asked CoEs to take time after the meeting to look into the plan and reflect on it, see if there are activities that they may wish to be included, ITU will be happy to discuss and follow up. Initial reactions from CoEs were all in support of the plan and they promised to provide their feedback after taking time to read this very important plan.

6.2 CoE capacity development

Ms. Halima also made a presentation on a “proposal to organize short webinars for CoEs”. This is a proposal that came from CoEs on the need for capacity development for CoEs, and ITU developed a proposal based on following approaches:

- 1-hour webinars (keep them short and focused)
- Closed attendance to CoE focal points and trainers
- Cover on one topic per webinar
- 1 or 2 experts per webinar (prioritize depth than breadth)

She asked CoEs to share their immediate reactions to the plan, and also think around the questions below and share their feedback and thoughts that will help ITU to better plan for these webinars and make them relevant for CoEs.

Questions to consider are:

- How often could we have the webinars?
- Should the topics be subject specific (e.g. cybersecurity) or strategy focused (e.g. quality assurance in training)
- Which topics should we prioritize?
- Should the webinars be regional or global?
- Any ideas on how we can make the webinars relevant and responsive to the needs of the CoEs?

She asked CoEs to share their inputs and thoughts through Emmanuel, and the sooner the better.

7. CLOSURE OF MEETING

Ms. Susan Teltscher thanked all CoE participants for their active participation; and said that she hopes that there will be a face-to-face meeting at some point in the future. She thanked CoEs for sharing their experiences, views and updates on COVID-19, and encouraged CoEs to reach out to ITU whenever they have any concerns or challenges through Emmanuel in the region or any colleagues based at HQ. She ended her closing remarks by thanking Dr. Kaleem, the chair for his great job chairing the meeting and wishing CoEs success in implementing training activities planned in the second part of the year.

Dr. Kaleem Usmani, Chair of the Steering Committee, after making a quick summary of takeaways, thanked ITU team and CoEs for a productive and informative meeting. He reiterated that he believes that the constructive discussions will make training activities for the coming 6 months calendar a success. He ended his closing remarks by thanking all SC members for their active participation and contribution to the meeting.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Centres of Excellence:

- Dr. Kaleem Usmani, Mauritius, Chair of the Meeting
- Dr. André Onana, Senegal
- Mr. Rodolphe KOSSONOU, Côte d'Ivoire
- Mr. Jonathan P. Mwakijele, Kenya
- Mr. Paulinus Okechukwu UGWOKE, Nigeria
- Mr. Yakubu Maitalata, Nigeria
- Mr. Nelson AFUNDU, Nigeria
- Ms. Anne Chantal Mvogo, Cameroun
- Ms. Armelle Manko, Cameroun

ITU Staff members:

- Mr. Ali Drissa Badiel (Area Representative, ITU Area Office for West Africa)
- Ms. Susan TELTSCHER (Head, Capacity and Skills Development Division)
- Mr. Emmanuel NIYIKORA (Programme Officer, ITU Area Office for West Dakar)
- Ms. Elena STANKOVSKA-CASTILLA, (Capacity and Digital Skills Development Officer)
- Mr. Mike NXELE (Senior Capacity and Digital Skills Development Officer)
- Ms. Halima LETAMO (Capacity & Skills Development Officer)
- Ms. Levi-Setti Guiomar(Junior E-Learning Officer)
- Mr. Marian Pletosu(Junior Digital Skills Officer)
- Ms. Nikolishvili Gvantsa (IT Moderator)

ANNEX 2: Plan for promotion of CoE courses

Activity	Description	Medium	Impact	Implementer
Include courses as part of events.	If an event is held in X topic, when advertising the event, list the courses linked to that topic which are available on the ITU Academy platform, especially on the event website.	Event webpages and other promotional materials	This will expand the target market for the CoE courses	ITU
Promote participation of CoEs in ITU regional and global capacity development events	Provide a space for CoEs to showcase their work at ITU capacity building events.	Events	This will provide a regional and global marketing platform for CoEs as well as opportunities to network	ITU
Provide information on review of courses	On the ITU Academy website, provide information on reviews of courses done by attendees for public viewing.	ITU Academy website	This might encourage some participants to take the courses when they are re-run and improve visibility of the outcome of the CoE courses.	ITU
Send push messages on upcoming courses	Provide option for visitors of the ITU Academy to indicate their interest in receiving information on future courses. An update is sent to them once a month on the upcoming courses in the areas of interest they indicated.	ITU Academy website, emails	This will allow ITU to send targeted messages to potential participants who have indicated their preferences, thus increasing the chances of enrolment	ITU
CoEs to publish reviews of the courses by their respective attendees	CoEs encouraged to ensure end of course evaluations are analyzed, and results shared with ITU for publishing of the ITU Academy website	ITU Academy website	This will encourage other participants to take the CoE courses if they see they are well rated by previous participants	CoEs
CoEs to create social media promotional content.	CoEs to create snapshot videos and or ppt slides (social media compatible) of what the course will be about to be used on social media platforms	Videos and ppt slides	This will expand the target market for the CoE courses	CoEs
CoEs to use social media to promote courses.	Post at least 1 promotional message per course on 1 social media platform and tag ITU's respective accounts to increase visibility when advertising new courses	Social media platforms	This will expand the target market for the CoE courses	CoEs
CoEs to include variety of incentives for taking courses	CoEs can prepare their courses in modular version. If three courses are taken on the same topic one can earn a discount for the third module. Or discount applied for the second course taken with the same CoE .. e.t.c	Incentives highlighted on course catalogue	This will encourage the participants to return to the same CoE for additional courses	CoEs
Use the Steering Committee (SC) platform to plan promotional strategies and monitor progress	As part of the SC agenda, include a session on recommendations for new promotional strategies and report on progress made	SC meetings	Assessing progress on implementing the promotional strategies will allow planning for more strategies or re-aligning if necessary	ITU/CoEs