



ITU CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE NETWORK OF THE AMERICAS REGION

DRAFT REPORT OF THE 5TH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

31 AUGUST 2021

1. INTRODUCTION AND OPENING

The mid-year virtual Steering Committee review meeting for the ITU Americas Centres of Excellence (AMS CoEs) was held on 31 August 2021. This was organized as a virtual meeting with Steering Committee members connected via Zoom. The convening of the meeting had been agreed during the 1st Steering Committee meeting, which was held from 14 - 15 February 2019. The meeting was organized by ITU and was chaired by the current Steering Committee Chairman, Ms Andrea Grippa.

The participants to the meeting were:

- Andrea Grippa, representing ANATEL, Brazil (Chairman of Steering Committee and also Member of GCBI);
- Mónica Correa, representing ANTEL, Uruguay
- Marco Lorenzatti, representing UBP, Argentina;
- Frederico Trindade and Rosimara Salgado, representing INATEL, Brazil;
- Isabel Guadalupe, Iris Pretel and Daniel Diaz, representing INICTEL-UNI, Peru;
- Armando Cabrera, representing UTPL, Ecuador.

From ITU, the following participated in the meeting:

- Bruno Ramos (Regional Director, R.O. for the Americas)
- Susan Teltscher (Head of Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division);
- Mike Nxele (Senior Capacity and Digital Skills Development Officer);
- Halima Letamo, (Capacity and Skills Development Officer)
- Elena Stankovska-Castilla (Junior Capacity and Digital Skills Development officer);
- Sylvie Raposo (Capacity Development Admin. Coordinator);
- Guiomar Levi-Setti (Junior E-Learning Officer);
- Rodrigo Robles, Programme Officer, RO-AMS);
- Caroline Brandao (Administrative Assistant, RO-AMS);
- Ana Varela (Administrative Assistant, RO-AMS);

The Chairman welcomed the participants to the meeting and ITU explained the objective and the procedures to be followed in conducting the meeting. The ITU Regional Director for the Americas, Mr. Bruno Ramos delivered the opening remarks and explained the main objectives of the meeting that consisted of reporting the implementation of training activities during the past 8 months and presentation of training plans for the next 4 months. The Regional Director highlighted that the meeting provides the Centres of Excellence the opportunity to present and discuss their activities, exchange experiences, learn from each other and strengthen their collaboration, with the aim of creating synergies among the network of CoEs in the Americas. Likewise, the Regional Director highlighted the effort and dedication of the CoE that despite the current circumstances there has been good training. The training has been the best tool to get ahead and invited the CoE to continue supporting the region.

He also recognized the work done by Mrs. Alicia Cuba of ANTEL, Uruguay, a very dear and dedicated person and mourned her passing.

The Chair of the meeting, Ms. Andrea Grippa thanked ITU for organizing this mid-year SC meeting, invited ITU to continue providing support to CoEs and highlighted the importance of capacity building for the ICT sector in the Americas. She thanked members of the SC and commended CoEs' work and efforts to continue delivering trainings despite having gone through the most difficult and challenging times due the COVID-19 pandemic. She also recognized that this crisis provided an opportunity for CoEs to accelerate the adoption of the online trainings.

The head of Capacity and Digital Skills Development, Ms. Susan Teltscher welcomed participants and mourned the passing of Ms. Alicia Cuba of ANTEL, Uruguay and offered her condolences to the family. Ms. Teltscher highlighted that the pandemic has had an impact on the training activities and recognized the efforts of the CoEs to cope with the situation. She referred to the main objectives of the SC meeting and recalled that this is the third year of the current cycle where CoEs have the opportunity to express their ideas, concerns, review the 8 months of implementation and evaluate what should be improved as well as to agree in the training plan for the remaining 4 months of the year. She informed the CoEs that a strategic review will be carried out this year by a consultant.

Following the welcome remarks of MS Teltscher, the ITU Programme Officer Mr. Rodrigo Robles gave an overview of all the trainings planned, implemented, postponed and upcoming. He also noted the impact and challenges faced due to COVID-19 which resulted in several trainings postponed. Then, each CoE was given the floor to provide information on implementation of courses in the past eight months and on the courses planned for the next four months in the following order: ANTEL, INATEL, INICTEL-UNI, UBP and UTPL.

2. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRAINING COURSES DURING THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS

ANTEL/Uruguay

ANTEL had four training courses planned for the year. ANTEL and UBP joined forces to carry out the "*Hackthon: Los Jóvenes y la Innovación para acelerar la Transformación Digital*". This course was implemented from 26 MAY –3 JUNE and counted with 61 participants. The other three courses were postponed, and they will be implemented in the 2nd semester.

Current status ANTEL:

Training topic	Original date	Implemented (Y/N)	New date	N. participants	End of training report
Hackthon: Los Jóvenes y la innovación para acelerar la Transformación Digital	11 MAY	Y	26 MAY	61	Received
Gestión de la Innovación	1 MARCH	N	9 NOV	-	Not submitted
Conceptos generales de 5G y de las tecnologías relacionadas	7 JUNE	N	4 OCT	-	Not submitted
La protección contra las Radiaciones no Ionizantes en los Tiempos del 5G	6 SEPT	N	1 NOV	-	Not submitted

INATEL/Brazil

INATEL initially planned four courses for the year 2021. Currently, they have two trainings implemented and two courses with the ongoing status. The course “*Conocer 4G*” implemented from 5 to 9 May with 50 participants and “*Principales casos del uso de la tecnología 5G e IoT*” implemented from 26 July to 1 August with 142 participants. The course “*Tecnología Celular 4G – LTE*” is ongoing from 23 August to 7 November with 4 participants and “*5G y el Internet de las Cosas: Tendencias y Aplicaciones*” is ongoing from 2 August to 12 September 2021 with 7 participants. During the meeting, INATEL requested to offer again the four courses for the remaining months of the year with scheduled dates according to the following table:

Current status INATEL:

Training topic	Original date	Implemented (Y/N)	New date	N. participants	End of training report
Conocer 4G	3 MAY	Y	5 MAY	50	Received
Tecnología Celular 4G - LTE	10 MAY	ONGOING	23 AUG	4	Not submitted
Principales casos del uso de la tecnología 5G e IoT	26 JULY	Y	26 JULY	142	Received
5G y el Internet de las Cosas Tendencias y Aplicaciones	2 AUG	ONGOING	2 AUG	7	Not submitted
Conocer 4G	20 SEP	N	-	-	Not submitted
Tecnología Celular 4G - LTE	27 SEP	N	-	-	Not submitted
Principales casos del uso de la tecnología 5G e IoT	25 OCT	N	-	-	No submitted
5G y el Internet de las Cosas Tendencias y Aplicaciones	1 NOV	N	-	-	No submitted

INICTEL-UNI/Peru

INICTEL-UNI had two trainings planned for the first semester of 2021. The course “*Análisis Forense Digital*” initially planned for April was rescheduled twice due to lack of participants and it was implemented from July 19 to August 19, 2021 with 7 participants. The course “*Sistema de Gestión de Seguridad de la Información*” has been postponed for the second semester for the same reason and it is intended to be implemented.

Current status INICTEL-UNI:

Training topic	Original date	Implemented (Y/N)	New date	N. participants	End of training report
Análisis Forense Digital	1 APRIL	Y	19 JULY	7	Received
Sistema de Gestión de Seguridad de la Información	1 JUNE	N	18 OCT	-	Not submitted

UBP/Argentina

UBP had five trainings planned for the year 2021 but decided to join efforts with ANTEL and carried out the “*Hackthon: Los Jóvenes y la Innovación para acelerar la Transformación Digital*”. This course was implemented from 26 MAY – 03 JUNE and counted with 61 participants. One more course was planned for the first semester “*IoT: Conceptos y Aplicaciones*” and it was implemented from 26 JULY to 27 AUGUST with only 2 participants.

For the second semester four courses have been rescheduled with the intention to be implemented and one more course will be offered again “*IoT: Conceptos y Aplicaciones*” according to the request made by UBP during the meeting.

The UBP highlighted that they will need support and engagement from local government. They also expect from ITU to share the countries training demands since they are not having the estimated results despite the efforts made in marketing.

Current Status UBP:

Training topic	Original date	Implemented (Y/N)	New date	N. participants	End of training report
Hackthon: Los Jóvenes y la innovación para acelerar la Transformación Digital	11 MAY	Y	26 MAY	61	Received
IoT: Conceptos y Aplicaciones	8 JUNE	Y	26 JULY	2	Not submitted
Seguridad en Entornos de Internet de las Cosas (IoT)	19 OCT	N	4 OCT	-	Not submitted
Innovacion Abierta	14 SEP	N	11 OCT	-	Not submitted
Tecnología Blockchain Aplicada a las Smart Cities	10 AUG	N	8 NOV	-	Not submitted
Del IoT a la Analítica de Datos	20 APR	N	11 OCT	-	Not submitted
IoT: Conceptos y Aplicaciones	13 SEP	N	-	-	Not submitted

UTPL/Ecuador

UTPL planned two courses for the second semester of the year. They highlighted that the country has faced presidential elections, authority changes and Covid19 continues to be an issue. For these reasons and the lack of participants, both training courses were rescheduled for October and November respectively and intended to be implemented.

Current status UTPL:

Training topic	Original date	Implemented (Y/N)	New date	N. participants	End of training report
E-Gobierno y E-Gobernanza Aplicada a Ciudades Inteligentes	02 AUG	N	04 OCT	-	Not submitted
Gobernanza e Integración de Datos en Ciudades y Comunidades Inteligentes	06 SEP	N	01 NOV	-	Not submitted

3. REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR TRAINING COURSES FOR THE NEXT FOUR MONTHS

Mr. Rodrigo Robles was invited to present all courses proposed for the remaining 4 months of the year and he invited the Steering Committee to approve the training plan.

He underlined that many participants register to the courses but for different reasons they are unable to make the payment. ITU has looked for solutions to solve bank transfer problems and will continue supporting participants as well as CoEs. He emphasized that it is very important to find out an administrative method to solve payment issues.

The Table with planned training courses for the remaining months of the year is attached to the report as **Annex 1** and reflects new dates and prices agreed with the CoEs.

UBP informed to SC that will reduce costs offering 30% discount to a specific organization with 15 participants for both courses “*Internet de las Cosas: Conceptos y Aplicaciones* and “*Seguridad en Entornos IoT*”. To encourage registration, UBP will promote at least 10 half fellowships for the rest of their training courses and analyze the strategic impact.

4. ITU QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS

The Chair of the meeting invited the Mr. Robles to give an overview of the Quality Assurance Process introduced by CSD.. The presentation focused on the roles and responsibilities of both ITU and CoEs. He highlighted that the QA was developed for ITU to join efforts and keep the quality of the CoEs and make sure that the participants obtain the best of both ITU and CoEs. He explained the steps to be followed once the CoE submits the course Outline. First, it should be sent to the Americas Regional Office, where content is analyzed according to the regional demands, then the AMS RO will send it to the thematic priority coordinator for the outline to be analyzed, make recommendations if necessary or offer some material according to past experiences. The course outline comes backs to the CoE to add the comments and adjust the material accordingly, then it should be submitted to ITU to prepare the final outline. Mr. Robles recalled that the QA was developed in 2020 and approved by the CoEs. He also underlined that the process should be carried out before the next SC.

5. TRAINING IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19 – CoE UPDATES

Mr. Robles guided the meeting through a discussion on training in the context of COVID-19 and opened the floor for CoEs to share updates based on a Guiding Questions: Face-to-face vs Online training mode.

- a. How can we better engage with participants to support the expected level of learning in online trainings?

ANTEL brought to the attention that while courses are free, participants would enroll with due responsibility, on the other hand the cost of courses are expensive. Encouragement from the instructor or trainer side is vital as well as the use of video conferences to develop a better relationship with the participant. Feedback from ITU is also important to analyze the regional demands. Also, ANTEL emphasized that it would be valuable to receive the ITU contact list for the CoEs send promotional material.

INICTEL-UNI stressed the need to assist the payment for participants. They also agreed with ANTEL to stop delivering courses free of cost, which would discourage participants without commitment. On the other hand, attractive paid courses should be offered. Also, recommended to have flexibility iconsidering that sometimes there are changes while the course is taking place.

With reference to the ITU Contact List, Ms. Halima Letamo, ITU Capacity and Skills Development Officer, explained that ITU is very sensitive with data protection and some contacts do not allow to share their information for promotion. She also advised CoEs not to wait for the SC to take place to inform or discuss about any

need or issue that may arise. She encouraged the CoEs to approach Mr. Robles, capacity Developer to talk about what is taking place in the Americas region.

UBP underlined that some organizations might be unaware of the value that ITU brings and recommended for this purpose to prepare a strategy in order to have regulators, service providers closer to ITU and CoEs through webinars. This would give the opportunity to offer the training courses and at the same time listen to their concerns. UTPL concurred with UBP about trying to spread the ITU Brand to reach more clients.

b. Are participants more engaged in face-to-face trainings than online trainings?

ANTEL stated that the face-to-face training courses already made a transition to online trainings due to Covid-19. ANTEL underlined that video conferences are now a very useful and important tool even though participation is less effective.

INICTEL-UNI expressed that blended learning has been more welcomed, offering online theory and face-to-face practice. Covid-19 has demonstrated that online learning is possible, but participants might be unhappy and feeling that are left by themselves during the training.

UBP stated that face-to-face learning without doubt is the best way but considering the circumstances, online training should be strengthened. A follow-up with the participants should be encouraged during the training.

c. Is the quality of interactions (engagement) between participant and instructor higher in a face-to-face training or online training?

INICTEL-UNI indicated that it is easier to identify needs when the training is face-to-face. Participants have the opportunity to interact, express their point of view or feedback for improvement. The online training interaction is made via e-mail messages or chat but the follow up is very important to identify participants' involvement in the course and at the same time the participants feel that the training is not automated and that there is a human behind.

ANTEL manifested that face-to-face training courses are the best option, but online learning has arrived and must be strengthened for better results and more people could be reached.

UBP believe that the key to success is to train the instructors to define what tool to use depending on the purpose of the training course. The online training has time flexibility compared to video conferences. UBP emphasized the importance of the correct pedagogy to encourage greater participation.

d. The overall achievement of learning outcomes. Face-to-face or Online?

UBP shared that participants should have the opportunity to apply what they have learned through concrete deliverables. The Hackathon was a good example. Participants were highly motivated to apply their knowledge.

INICTEL-UNI concurred with UBP and underlined that technology plays an important role in today's society and blended learning has come to stay. Also, pointed up the importance to develop pedagogy tools so that participants feel satisfied with the training. CoEs should base learning on cases, projects with concrete deliverables for a successful training. In this way, participants will share their achievement.

ANTEL agreed with INICTEL and UBP statements and emphasized the need to have varied proposals and directed at specific age for successful trainings with basic and advanced courses. The hackathon was mentioned as a good example and recommended to be proposed each year.

UTPL expressed the importance to make significant changes with a creative approach. To find the way to be more efficient, to follow up and to accompany the participants.

INATEL pointed out that training courses should be aligned with the demand of local industry and markets. Also, participants need a practical view of the course content.

6. FOLLOW-UP TO THE GLOBAL CoE MEETING

Ms. Halima Letamo, highlighted that currently promotion is carried out by ITU and CoEs. The issue of promotion has been raised because of the need to reach more participants. She recommended to use de SC to plan promotion strategies, monitor any progress and share the way CoEs have experienced their promotion.

Ms. Letamo introduced the proposal to organize short Capacity Development webinars for CoEs to enhance their competencies in different areas. ITU recommends short and focused webinars, addressed to CoE focal points and trainers, one topic per webinar and one or two experts per webinar. For this purpose, a survey will be sent to each CoE.

7. CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Teltscher, Head of CSD, thanked all involved in the SC meeting and underlined the importance to hear the issues from each CoE. She recognized the difficulty to carry out the courses during the pandemic. All comments were well noted and it was recommended to CoEs to get in touch with the Programme Officer, Mr. Rodrigo Robles to raise any issues. She recalled that another meeting is coming at the end of the year and CoEs should share their course outlines ahead of time before the SC. Ms Teltscher wished the all the best to everyone and adjourned the meeting.

Annex 1

Table of training courses for the period September to December 2021

COURSE DESCRIPTION	CoE	DATE	PRICE US \$
Internet de las Cosas: conceptos y aplicaciones *	UBP	13 SEP – 10 OCT	220
Sistema de Gestión de Seguridad de la Información	INICTEL	18 OCT – 18 NOV	150
Conocer 4G	INATEL	20 - 26 SEP	0
Tecnología Celular 4G – LTE	INATEL	27 SEP – 12 DIC	200
Conceptos generales de 5G y de las tecnologías relacionadas	ANTEL	04 – 29 OCT	150
Seguridad en entornos IoT *	UBP	04 OCT – 31 OCT	200
e-Gobierno y e-Gobernanza en Ciudades Inteligentes	UTPL	04 OCT – 05 NOV	125
Innovación Abierta	UBP	11 OCT- 07 NOV	160
Del IoT a la Analítica de Datos	UBP	11 OCT- 07 NOV	180
Principales casos del uso de la tecnología 5G e IoT	INATEL	25 - 31 OCT	0
5G e IoT: tendencias y aplicaciones	INATEL	01 NOV - 12 DEC	150
La protección contra las Radiaciones no Ionizantes en los Tiempos del 5G	ANTEL	01 – 26 NOV	200
Gobernanza e Integración de Datos en Ciudades y Comunidades Inteligentes	UTPL	01 – 26 NOV	125
Tecnología Blockchain Aplicada a las Smart Cities	UBP	8 NOV – 05 DEC	180
Gestión de la Innovación	ANTEL	09 – 27 NOV	75

*UBP 30% discount