ITU CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE NETWORK FOR THE ARAB REGION

DRAFT REPORT

OF THE

2ND STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

10-11 DEC 2019

Khartoum, Sudan

1. INTRODUCTION AND OPENING

The 2nd Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of the ITU Centres of Excellence for the Arab region for the 2019-2022 cycle was held in Khartoum, Rotana Hotel on 10-11 Dec 2019. The Meeting was organized by the ITU and hosted by SUDATEL Telecom Academy (SUDACAD) It was attended by 10 delegates including Centres of Excellence (CoEs), representative from Governments hosting CoEs, other ITU Member states, the ITU Secretariat and other agencies. The list of participants is attached to this report (Annex 1).

The meeting was officially opened by Dr Ahmed Hassan, Director General of SUDACAD. In his opening remarks, Dr Ahmed Hassan welcomed Outgoing Chairman of the SC, ITU representatives, members of ITU Arab CoEs Network Steering Committee, the representative of Sudan Telecom Regulatory Authority, and an observer from Advanced Computing Training Center (AASCTC). In his remarks Dr Ahmed Hassan highlighted the importance of cooperation among the regional and global network of the ITU CoEs. He also emphasized the importance of active participation of SC members on the implementation of the activities of the network.

Mrs Halima Letamo, Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division, ITU delivered the welcome remarks on behalf of the ITU. In her remarks, she thanked SUDACAD for hosting the meeting and acknowledged the productive relationship between ITU and SUDACAD. Ms Letamo highlighted that the ITU continues to make efforts to deliver on its mandate to build capacity and develop skills for its membership. She stated that the CoE network is one of the main channels that the ITU uses to deliver on this mandate. She highlighted the main objectives of this meeting which are to evaluate the performance of the CoEs in the region, to take stock of achievements and discuss challenges which the CoEs are facing.

The outgoing Chair, Dr Mohammed Alam, Consultant and Supervisor of Cybersecurity Programme, NAUSS delivered opening remarks. In his opening remarks he thanked SUDACAD for hosting the meeting and for the facilities provided for the meeting. Dr Mohammed Alam extended his thanks to ITU for its close collaboration with CoEs and SC members.

2. CONFIRMATION OF THE COE STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

ITU invited the meeting to confirm the Steering Committee Chair nominated by the hosting country as per stipulations of the CoE operational guidelines. The meeting confirmed the chairmanship of SUDACAD represented by Dr Ahmed Hassan, Director General of SUDACAD. Dr Ahmed Hassan thanked the meeting for the nomination and chaired the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting of the CoE Network for the Arab region (2019-2022) Cycle.

ITU recalled the composition of the Steering Committee of the CoE Network for Arab region for the cycle 2019-2022 as follows:

- Centres of Excellence: SUDACAD, NAUSS, CITET and S2T
- Member States: Sudan, Tunisia, UAE and Morocco
- ITU

3. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 2019 ACTIVITIES

Presentation by the outgoing Chair: Dr Mohammed Alam, Consultant and Supervisor of Cybersecurity Programme, NAUSS
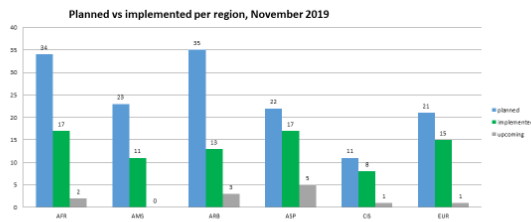
The outgoing chair shared the implementation level of the operational plan 2019 of ITU Arab CoEs Network. The performance reflected that 15 courses were implemented in total out of 35 planned courses. Dr Mohammed Alam highlighted some key issues which hindered the level of implementation of the activities planned for 2019. The issues were

1. No registered participants for the courses
2. Challenges with marketing of courses
3. Late submission of courses working documents (draft invitation letters, training outline, info note, etc.)
4. Late submission of end of course reports
5. Time frame for sending out invitation letters is short and should be increased
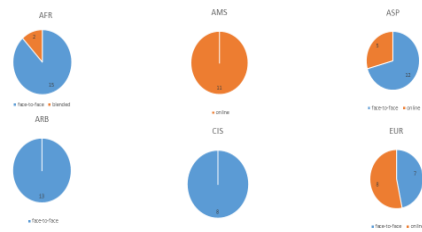
Presentation by ITU

Ms Letamo, presented an overview of the implementation of CoE activities, both globally and regionally. Details on the performance of the network and the Arab region CoEs are presented below.
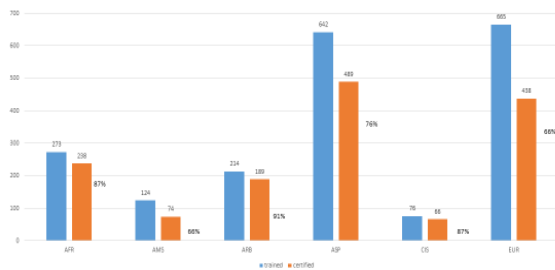
Courses implemented per region, 1st December 2019

Planned vs implemented per region, November 2019

Total planned, implemented and upcoming courses: 146:81:12
Not implemented: 53
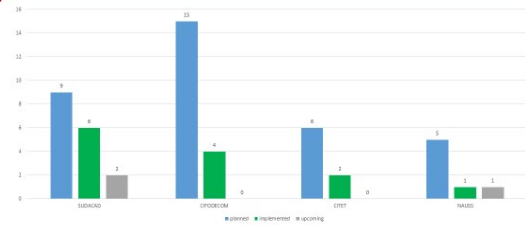
Modes of delivery (implemented courses), 1st December 2019
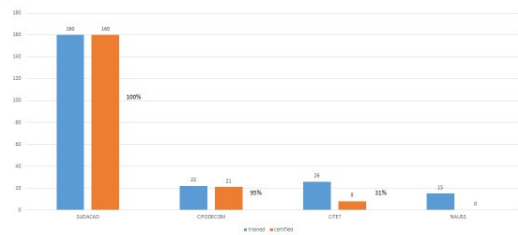
Participants trained vs certified, 1st December 2019

Total participants trained (CoE network): 1994
*certification data is based on end-of-training reports received

Arab region, courses implemented, December 2019

Arab region, participants trained vs certified, 1st December 2019

Presentations by Centres of Excellence

The Chair invited the CoEs to present their detailed 2019 activity report, including challenges faced in the implementation of training courses.

SUDACAD

Implementation status by SUDACAD

Sudacad implemented 8 courses in total. During implementation they realized that the course on Big data has high demand and therefore split it into two courses. The course on AI had no participants and efforts will be made to try and implement this course again in the future.

Courses Planned	Orignal Dates	Final Dates	Status	No of participants	End of training report
Big Data	April, 21-23	September, 3-5	Implemented	24	Received
Big Data	Not Planned	September, 10-12	Implemented	23	Received
SDN	June, 18-20	June, 24-26	Implemented	19	Received
Cloud Computing	July, 23-25	September, 17-19	Implemented	33	Received
Ultra M/W BB Internet Access	September, 3-5	September, 22-24	Implemented	28	Received
Artificial Intelligence	October, 8-10	Cancelled	Cancelled	0	NA
Internet Governance	November, 5-7	November, 26-28	Implemented	33	Received
FTTH	November, 26-28	Postponed to 2020	Cancelled	0	NA
PM for ICT Implementations	Not Planned	December, 10-12	Implemented		Received
Computer-aided Spectrum Mgt.	December, 17-19	December, 17-19	Implemented		Waiting

S2T

Implementation status S2T :

S2T implemented two courses in total. S2T is concerned with the number of participants registered for each training. 1 course was canceled because there was only 1 participant registered for the course. To market the courses S2T engaged partners in the region and in the Africa region, and expected that ITU will do more to assist in marketing the courses.

Courses Planned	Orignal Dates	Final Dates	Status	No of participants	End of training report
FTTx Outside Plant Design	06 -10 May 2019	06 -10 May 2019	Implemen ted	3	Received
Optical Network Design	23 -27 Septembe r 2019	23 -27 Septembe r 2019	Implemen ted	5	Received
4 G/ 5G Cellular Mobile Communicatio ns Technologies	22-26 April 2019	22-26 April 2019	Implemen ted	7	Received
Cybercrime Management: a proactive approach	10 -15 June 2019	10 -15 June 2019	Cancelled	NA	NA
Cyber security awareness & forensics	29 April- 03 May 2019	29 April- 03 May 2019	Implement ed	7	Received

CITET

Implementation status CITET :

CITET implemented 3 courses, CITET observed that there is still lack of awareness on the topic of ICT and climate change especially e-waste. CITET used social media to market their courses, and direct communication with potential stakeholders.

Courses Planned	Orignal Dates	Final Dates	Status	No of participants	End of training report
Environmental management system according to ISO 14001 standard	23 to 26 Sept. 2019	23 to 26 Sept. 2019	Implemented	8	Received
Application of Geographic Information System (GIS) in Environmental Management and Resources Protection	25 to 28 Nov , 2019	25 to 28 Nov, 2019	Implemented	9	Received

NAUSS

Implementation status NAUSS:

Nauss planned 5 courses and implemented 1. The one course that was implemented had 15 participants. The other courses delivered by NAUSS with different partneres attracts up to 100 particpants per course because the partners support the delivery of the programme by providing experts and other support to the institution. NAUSS tried to market their courses but had an expectation that ITU will do more in marketing thier courses. NAUSS mentioned that they had this expectation because when they became CoEs they were told that ITU had a platform and is linked to 193 member states. However they are not benefiting from this access to ITU membership.

Courses Planned	Orignal Dates	Final Dates	Status	No of participants	End of training report
Basic IoT Training	01-05 July	27-31 Oct	Cancelled	15	NA
Fundamentals of Cyber Security	21-25 July	3-7 Nov	Cancelled	15	NA

Advanced Cyber Security Training (CompTIA Security+)	21-25 Sept	24-28 Nov	Cancelled	15	NA
Digital Forensics	25-29 Aug. 2019	19-21 Nov 2019	Implemented	15	Received
Ethical Hacking (CIEH)	15-19 Dec 2019	15-19 Dec 2019	Cancelled	15	NA

All presentations will be made available on the website: http://academy.itu.int

The following issues were raised during the discussions:

- Participants in the region still prefer to register directly with the institutions and not through the ITU academy platform
- CoEs expected that ITU will bring more participants
- CoEs wish to see the value of partnership with ITU other than what ITU is doing right now, which is to post their courses in the platform.
- Marketing and promotion o courses should be intensified
- CoEs should support participants who wish to register through the ITU Academy platform
- CoEs should ensure that they have foreign participants in CoE courses

4. STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE COE NETWORK ACTIVITIES

Ms Letamo, presented a number of strategic and operational issues related to the global CoE network performance and implementation. These included:

- Issues related to the performance of some of the CoEs and how to address them
- The possibility of phasing out non-performing CoEs
- A global assessment of the current ITU capacity development activities, including the CoE network

- Operational issues related to the implementation of training, including the use of the ITU Academy platform

The outgoing Chair Dr Mohamed Alam presented a number of key challenges that he observed during the implementation of the OP2019 activities. These key challenges were discussed and the following points were made during the discussion:

- CoEs cannot justify to their institutions what value they are getting by being ITU CoEs as ITU is not supporting them with experts, marketing or funding
The ITU informed the CoEs that the ITU chose the self-sustainable approach the CoE network to ensure that the centres are not dependent on the ITU in their delivery as this is not sustainable. The ITU markets the CoE programme by sending invitation letters to member states in each region. Also campaigns are sent out every quarter. This is the reason why it is important for them to encourage their participants to register in the platform. This way the campaigns can reach a wider stakeholder network.

- There is no clarity on the templates provided by the ITU. CoEs need guidance on when and how to use these templates
The CoEs were encouraged to keep requesting for assistance from ITU whenever they come across something that is not clear. The templates were explained and the ITU regional office will continue to support the CoEs by explaining the use of the templates

- There is no clear place where the roles and responsibilities of the CoEs are, as the CA signed with ITU has very little on this
The CoEs were informed that the details operations of the CoEs is captured in the operational processes and procedures document which is available in the 6 UN languages in the ITU Academy platform. The CoEs were encouraged to read the document and inform themselves of the expected roles of the CoEs

- The region is still resistant to online learning and courses taken online are not trusted. The CoEs were encouraged the continue exploring delivery of online learning as it could help to demystify the value of online courses in the region if they deliver good quality courses.

5.   **TRAINING PLAN 2020**

Each CoE made a presentation on the training plans for 2020, including details on the content, expected target audience and price.

Following the presentations, the Steering Committee discussed and agreed on the ITU CoE network for the Arab region training courses for the coming year. The CoEs were encouraged

to implement some of their courses using the ITU Academy platform. The CoEs will consider this proposal.

1) SUDACAD

SUDACAD has planned for 7 courses to be delivered in 2020. While all the courses are planned to be delivered face to face for now, SUDACAD is planning to deliver at least 2 of the courses online.

I	Date	Course Title	# Trainees	Fees ($)	Mode of Delivery
1	March, 24-26	Agile Project Management for ICT Applications & Services	15	150	F2F
2	June, 23-25	Software Defined Network (SDN)	15	150	F2F
3	July, 28-30	Big Data	15	150	F2F
4	September, 22-24	Fiber To The Home (FTTH)	15	150	F2F
5	October, 27-29	Internet Governance	15	150	F2F
6	November, 24-26	Ultra Microwave Broadband Internet Access	15	150	F2F
7	December, 29-31	Cloud Computing	15	150	F2F

2) S2T

S2T is planning to deliver 11 courses in 2020. Taking into consideration the delivery levels in the region for the past year, the number 11 may be too high to begin with. S2T has been advised to look at the courses and ensure that they keep in the plan those courses that they are sure they will be able to deliver.

I	Date	Course Title	# of Trainees	Fees	Mode of Delivery
1	10 -14 February 2020	Fundamentals of Fiber and Optical Networks	15	500 USD	
2	13 – 17 April 2020	Optical access networks FTTH	15	500 USD	
3	15-19June 2020	Optical Network Design	15	500 USD	
4	14 -18 September 2020	FTTx Outside Plant Design	15	500 USD	
5	02-07 November 2020	Advanced technical overview of DWDM	15	500 USD	
6	07-11 December 2020	Optical Transport Networks	15	500 USD	
7	24-28 February 2020	5G Mobile Networks and Systems	15	500 USD	

	Date	Course Title	# Trainees	Fees	
8	16 -20 March 2020	Cyber security Fundamentals	15	500 USD	
9	27-31 January2020	Cyber security awareness & forensics	15	500 USD	
10	31 August-4 September2020	Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC)	15	500 USD	
11	02-06 November 2020	Wireless Security	15	500 USD	

3) NAUSS

NAUSS has planned to deliver 4 courses is 2020. All the courses will be delivered through face to face. NAUSS will use the strategies that they use to promote non-CoE courses to attract participants to CoE courses in the coming year. NAUSS will also consider appointing a focal person who can deal with ITU on the operational issues relating to delivery of courses.

I	Date	Course Title	# Trainees	Fees ($)	Mode of Delivery
1	February, 23-27	Basic Cyber Security Training (CompTIA Security)	15	500	
2	April 5-9	Advanced Cyber Security Training (CompTIA Security+)	15	500	F2F

	Date	Course Title	# Trainees	Fees ($)	Mode of Delivery
3	September, 13-17-	Basic IoT Training	15	500	F2F
4	November, 15-19	Ethical Hacking (CIEH)	15	500	F2F

4) CITET

CITET is planning to deliver 6 courses in 2020. CITET aims to implement more training sessions in the use of ICT tools to adress enviromental issues. CITET will make efforts to provide incentives for Innovation, research and development in the use of ICT for environmental sustainability and support the efforts of civil society and international organizations working in ICT for environmental sustainability.

I	Date	Course Title	# Trainees	Fees ($)	Mode of Delivery
1	10 to 13 Féb 2020	Energy management system according to ISO 50001 standard	15	500	F2F
2	16 to 19 March 2020	Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) management	15	500	F2F
3	13 to 16 April 2020	ICT and Eco-design: assessment of ICT services performance by using LCA tools	15	500	F2F
4	07 to 10 September 2020	Environmental management system according to ISO 14001 standard	15	500	F2F
5	19 to 22 October 2019	The role of ICT to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)	15	500	F2F

6	07 to 10 December 2020	Application of GIS in environmental management and resources protection	15	500	F2F

6.   UPDATE ON ITU ACTVITIES

Ms Halima Letamo gave an update on activities of ITU in capacity development, which covered the following:

- ITU Academy: more than 10'000 users and over 150 courses were advertised in 2019 (mostly by CoEs). CoEs were reminded that all participants should register in the platform even if they are attending a face to face course. To market the courses early, all CoEs are required to provide necessary documents to ITU not less than two months before the start date of the course;

- Partnerships: ITU continues to engage with partners in the work on capacity development. A new MoU was signed with Huawei, which includes possible collaboration between Huawei and the CoEs;

- Development of training materials: CoEs are strongly encouraged to make use of the training material developed by ITU for their course delivery;

- Digital Transformation Centres (DTC) Initiative: a new initiative launched by ITU in partnership with Cisco, to provide digital skills at the basic and intermediate level;

- ITU publication "Digital Skills Insights" 2020 edition: the call for papers is now open;

- Group on Capacity Building Initiatives (GCBI): GCBI is working on the development of a guide on capacity development taxonomies to help harmonize and standardize terminologies across ITU;

- 2nd ITU-Academia Partnership Meeting: took place from 2-3 December 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia, hosted by Georgia Institute of Technology;

Mr Mustafa Al Mahdi gave a presentation on the 2019 activities by the ITU Office for the Arab region, highlighting plans for 2020. These covered:

- The regional capacity building and skills developments activities,

- ICTs capacity building priority areas in Arab region,

- ITU regional initiatives on capacity building and partnerships

- How we can move from potential capacity building initiatives to effectiveness.

- Challenges for delivering capacity building and skills developments activities which include the following but not limited to:

    - Engagement of stakeholders outside ITU's reach

    - Lack of funding for capacity building and skills developments activities and projects by stakeholders in the region

    - Limited human resources

    - Instability in the region

7. **PRESENTATION BY PARTNERS**

Prof Hussein Sherief, Director of Almaahad Almutagadem Specialized Computing Training Center (AASCTC) based in Khartoum provided an intervention on the scope of work of AASCTC and its capacity building programmes and projects on Big Data, Cloud Computing, Data Center and Disaster Risk Reductions and Smart cities in Sudan and Africa.

8. **ADOPTION OF DRAFT REPORT**

Eng. Mustafa Al Mahdi presented the draft report of the meeting. Following brief discussions, the meeting agreed on the following:

a) The Steering Committee (SC) agrees to keep interacting during the year including holding of at least one online SC meeting during the year. The Chair and the ITU will facilitate the interaction.

b) The meeting agreed on the importance of using the ITU Academy platform and encouraged more delivery of online trainings. SC emphasized the need for all course participants (for both face-to-face and online courses) to register through the ITU Academy platform.

c) The Steering Committee approved the following ceiling of training fees:

- Face-to-face: Between 150-500 USD for 5 days per person.
- Online training: USD 100 per person per course regardless of number of days of training.

    The SC agreed to maintain an exception for SUDACAD based on the economic situation in Sudan, to continue determining fees on a course by course basis, and if need be deliver courses for fees below 150 USD.

d) A revenue share of 20% (ITU) and 80% (CoE) was agreed.

e) The SC noted that it is the responsibility of CoEs to actively promote their activities (in addition to ITU's promotion). The use of digital media platforms is key in this regard.

f) CoEs are highly encouraged to use ITU content, which is free to CoEs. CoEs are also encouraged to take into account the work of the ITU on each topic while developing content. The CoEs can visit the ITU Academy platform and see the training programmes that are already developed by ITU. If the CoE is interested in the materials they should let ITU know so that they can discuss the process of gaining access to the content.

g) As of 2020, no individual course invitations will be sent out by the ITU BDT Director. Instead, the Director will send a letter to its membership on a biannual basis (beginning of the year and mid-year) informing them of all courses that are planned in a particular region for the next 6 months.

h) In order to maintain effectiveness of delivery and quality assurance of the courses, it was agreed that the maximum number of courses offered should be limited accordingly.

i) The meeting recognized the performance of SUDACAD for 2019 which has been exemplary, and encouraging to others who could follow same example specifically the methods used to promote courses.

j) The next physical meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in November/December 2020 and kindly offered to be hosted by CITET, in Tunisia.

The meeting adopted the draft report. Which will be sent to them for review and finalized in the following two weeks.

Actions to implement
1. Hold a virtual SC meeting during the year

2. Provide supporting documents for courses not later than two months before the start of a course, using the templates provided by ITU

3. CoEs will actively promote courses for 2020 and use local media as well as social network platforms.

4. CoEs will promote the registration via the ITU Academy platform

5. CoEs will hyperlink the ITU Academy platform in their main homepages

6. ITU will produce a regional course catalogue to be shared with ITU member states and the CoEs

7. ITU will continue campaigns through sending out the list of upcoming courses to the ITU academy platform users

8. SUDACAD will contact ITU to arrange for remote training of SUDACAD contacts on the ITU Academy platform. CoEs who wish to deliver online training will do the same.

9. CLOSING

Eng Mustafa AlMahdi, delivered a closing remarks on behalf of ITU, followed by Dr Ahmed Hassan, Director of SUDACAD and Chair of the Steering Committee, who gave remarks and closed the meeting