"E-Participation of Social Groups as Means for Social Inclusion: Persons with Disabilities"

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Expert Group Meeting on E-Participation: Empowering People through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

International Telecommunication Union Headquarters
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“If anybody asks me what the Internet means to me, I will tell him without hesitation: To me (a quadriplegic) the Internet occupies the most important part in my life. It is my feet that can take me to any part of the world; it is my hands which help me to accomplish my work; it is my best friend – it gives my life meaning.”

Dr. Zhang Xu, Founder and Director of Bethesda Rehabilitation Ministry of Anshan, China
Topics

1. Why the e-participation of persons with disabilities matters
2. Challenges for the e-participation of persons with disabilities
3. Solutions and policy making to enhance the e-participation of persons with disabilities
Who Can Benefit from Inclusive e-Participation?

- One billion persons live with a disability, 2/3 with a severe disability*
- 80% in the developing world
- Over half of persons aged 65+ live with a disability, fast growing population segment**
- Disability affects all age groups: 13% of all public school students K to 12 in the United States live with a disability***

*WHO World Bank Report on Disability 2011
**U.S. Census Bureau
***U.S. Department of Education
Issue: Accessibility Barriers Limits the e-Participation of Persons with Disabilities

- ICT barriers affect persons living with sensorial, mental, intellectual and physical disabilities including the elderly

- For instance:
  - A television program or emergency announcement may not be signed or captioned for a deaf person
  - A web site or government data base may be inaccessible to a screen reader user
  - A bank ATM may be too high for a person in a wheel chair to operate its keyboard
  - A mobile phone may not offer alternative user interfaces for persons with dexterity issues, low vision or cognitive challenges
  - A computer program may not allow to use alternative input/output devices

Why the e-participation of persons with disabilities matters
Creating a Major Challenge Given the Pervasive Usage of ICTs:

- 6.5 billion mobile phones in use
- 2.3 billion Internet users
- 1.4 billion TV sets
- 1.2 billion Personal Computers
- 2.2 million ATMs or one per 3,000 persons worldwide
“NEW DELHI: In a first such exercise of its kind, the government has found that only two of its over 200 websites are disabled-friendly. The website assessment was carried out by the ministry of personnel last month through the National Informatics Centre on direction from the cabinet secretariat.

The government found that websites of only two ministries - ministry of external affairs and ministry of social justice and empowerment - were compliant to Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW), which is essential for making websites accessible to the disabled.”
Solutions are Available Today:

- Web sites
- e-books
- Television
- Computer interfaces
- Mobile and fixed phones
- ATMs and electronic kiosks
- e-government electronic services
- Public displays and messaging
- Digital interfaces for consumer products
But Are Not Made Available for Essential Services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation levels of dispositions among Country laws, regulations or government supported programs promoting digital accessibility, the use of ATs or provisions for reasonable accommodations for:</th>
<th>No Policy or Program</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>Substantial</th>
<th>Full</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judicial Information and Legal Procedure</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting systems</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Response Services</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable Accommodation at Workplace</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary and Secondary Education</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Challenges for the e-participation of persons with disabilities
Nor for the ICT Infrastructure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>Substantial</th>
<th>Full</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Building Displays</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyrights Exceptions</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless Telephony</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATM or Kiosks</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed line Telephony</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Talking Books</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Public Address Systems and Services</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Sites</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Challenges for the e-participation of persons with disabilities
First and Foremost, Persons with Disabilities Expect Equal Access to All Contents and Services

Focus Must be on Universal Access
Accessibility Imperative #1: Universal Design

- “Universal design” means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.*

- Universal Design strategies are effective and benefit all users as documented by G3ict among ICT industry leaders:
  - NTT DoCoMo
  - Microsoft
  - AT&T
  - Orange
  - Etc.

*CRPD Art. 2 - Definitions
Accessiblity Imperative #2: Assistive Technologies

- “Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed”*

- ATs requires a distribution and support ecosystem which represents a large cost component

- Availability of ATs is directly linked to income per capita around the world with severe gaps among developing countries

*CRPD Art.2 - Definitions
Required Policies and Programs for e-Participation of Persons with Disabilities:

1. Accessible information infrastructure (web, phones, TV, ATMs, voting machines etc.)
2. Accessible contents and services provided by private and public entities
3. Availability of an assistive technology and ICT accessibility eco-system in:
   ‣ Education
   ‣ Rehabilitation and community centers and
   ‣ Employment programs
Promoting e-Participation: Checking the 4 “As”

- Availability
- Accessibility
- Applicability
- Affordability

Solutions and policy making to enhance e-participation
• One third of the U.S. population has not adopted broadband at home although it is available in most cases
• 39% of those non adopters have some type of disability, more than twice the proportion of U.S. population living with a disability: 15%
• Only 35% of Senior citizens in the U.S. (those over the age of 65) have broadband-at-home
• Similar gaps in other countries: UK, close to 50% of non adopters live with disabilities, S. Korea, 25% gap

Source: FCC Report by John Horrigan, February 2010

Solutions and policy making to enhance e-participation
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Promoting the e-Participation of Persons with Disabilities with Accessible ICTs, Contents and Services

- Leverage relevant contents and services to foster usage including via training
- Support the development of contents and services with direct usefulness for persons with disabilities (example S.A. Portal)
- Social Media to:
  - Foster peer-to-peer exchanges to break isolation
  - Useful disability related information
  - Promote Disability Rights and advocacy.
- Promote low cost connectivity and community support

Solutions and policy making to enhance e-participation
Example: South Africa National Accessibility Portal

Developed by the CSIR Meraka Institute, in partnership with a representative group of Disabled Persons’ Organizations and the former Office on the Status of Disabled Persons (OSDP) in The Presidency.

Solutions and policy making to enhance e-participation
Example: Dowsyndrome.com

Solutions and policy making to enhance e-participation
Thank you for your attention

axel_leblois@g3ict.org

www.g3ict.org
www.e-accessibilitytoolkit.org
www.m-enabling.com