



**Nepal Telecom**

# Perspective, Initiatives, Plans and Challenges in Making Telecom services accessible to the PWD

ITU-NTA workshop  
9<sup>th</sup> Nov 2012

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# Background

- Basic requirement for a meaningful life
  - Communication
  - Mobility
- If we can communicate => we are happy!
- If we can move => we are happy!
- But, we should also keep in mind that about 10% of the world population have some sort of disability that limits communication or mobility!!!



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# Fact Sheet – Nepal

- Definition of Disability by the Government
  - The Nepalese constitution defines persons with disabilities as persons who are mentally or physically unable or incompetent to lead a normal life.
- According to various disabled persons organizations in Nepal around 2.5 Million people have some kind of disabilities.
- Education
  - 68.2 % of persons with disabilities have no education
    - 59.6 % of disabled male population have no education
    - 77.7 % of disabled female population have no education
  - Nearly half of all children with disabilities have not been able to benefit from education services.



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# Impact of Disability (1)

- To the Individual
  - Increased requirement for safety & security.
  - Increased dependency for communication & mobility.
  - the most difficult challenges that PWD face might be the barriers that our society has put up - possibly attitudes, lack of appropriate services or support, alienation, physically difficult environments
- To the Family
  - Change of family routine, family members' roles
  - Increased manpower support, increased expenses
- To the Society
  - Special handling, special treatment, special effort
  - Decreased social activities
- To the Nation
  - Extra financial cost
  - Decreased human resources
  - Special handling, special treatment, special focus



# Telecom services and PWD

## Telecom services

- can offer individuals the ability to compensate for physical or functional limitations.
- Can enhances social and economic integration
- Can enlarge scope of activities available to them



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# Telecom services and PWD

- We know:
  - Deaf people have been able to communicate with entire world through e-mail and also sending and reading text messages via mobile phones.
  - Blind and visually impaired people can use e-mail to communicate widely but many programs are inaccessible. Blind and visually impaired people can read the books through their computers but special programs are required to read the texts and they can be expensive.
  - that the new technology has meant enormous opportunities for many people
  - tele-education can be open new doors to PWD



## What can we do to increase access to Telecom services for the PWD

- Change the social concepts
- Make clear cut policy and regulations for easy access of services to PWD
- Make disabled friendly infrastructure of the public buildings
- Make special quota for services PWDs and special rates
- Assign some special funds and adopt PWD friendly Technologies already available in the market.





# NT Initiatives (1)

- Disable friendly office environment as much as possible
  - Ramps in all major and upcoming NT buildings and all the service distribution counters
- NT has already recruited disabled man power to give equal opportunities in the ICT sector
- Reserve quota in
  - Entry level for all technical and non-technical staff
  - Every internal promotion for all technical and non-technical staff



## NT Initiatives (2)

These approach might also help the PWD

- Recharge cards purchase via online banking
- Bill Payments through the Recharge Cards various services
- Result enquiry, Bill enquiry etc through IVR Service
- Notice board services
- SMS services
- Upcoming Contact center has facility of Text to Speech and vice versa to facilitate the PWD

# NT's Planning

- NT is planning to involve disable person in the ICT sector as much as possible and trying to create disable friendly environment
  - Disable friendly offices and Building in all new constructing buildings
  - planning to involve PWD
    - As an ICT technicians,
    - Call agent in Contact centre and Service Counter
    - As a Storekeeper, Computer Typist, Office Assistants
- Disable friendly telecommunication equipments and telecommunication services



# Challenges in Making Telecom Services accessible to PWD in Nepal

- General Social Concept
- Lack of awareness of the potential of Telecom services.
- Lack of proper database regarding PWD
- Lack of PWD friendly devices in the market
- Absence of a clear-cut policy
- Shortage of adequate physical and financial infrastructure
- Lack of trained persons to develop and use assistive technology.
- Non-affordability of internationally available assistive technologies.
- Non-availability of assistive technology in Nepal.

# Finally . . .

The spread and accessibility of Telecom service to PWD should :

- minimize impact of disabilities
- make their lives as comfortable as possible

For this:

- Change in Social concept is a must
- The govt. policies to be made strong for the accessibility of telecom/ICT services to PWD and special funds to be allocated for this.

**And**

NT will be happy to serve and make this possible!



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**Thank You**

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