

# Workshop report

## Workshop on ICT Accessibility for Persons with Disability

Event for disabled people's organizations and media

12-13 December 2017

Yangon, Myanmar

Prepared by Myanmar Independent  
Living Initiative and LIRNEasia



This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Canada and the Department for International Development UK.



## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Resource persons .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Participants .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Evaluations .....</b>	<b>9</b>

## Introduction

Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI), established in 2011, is a self-help organization led by disabled persons that has been working at various levels and fighting for equal rights, inclusion and independent living of people with multiple types of disabilities in Myanmar. MILI promotes disability access in employment, education, health, disaster-risk reduction, social-enterprise, social, political, electoral and public sectors.

LIRNEasia is a pro-poor, pro-market think tank established in 2004. It has been working on catalyzing policy change through research to improve people's lives in the emerging Asia Pacific by facilitating their use of hard and soft infrastructures through the use of knowledge, information and technology.

Myanmar ICT Development Organization (MIDO), established in 2012, uses Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a tool for the development of the country by narrowing the digital divide in Myanmar; using ICT for the country's development and the safeguarding of human rights; and encouraging the emergence of good Internet policies for ICT users.

The three organizations organized a two-day workshop on ICT Accessibility for people with disabilities (PWDs) on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017, bringing together PWDs and members of the tech community in Myanmar.

This workshop had the following objectives:

- a) To provide an opportunity for the disabled community to learn about ICT accessibility for the disabled
- b) To allow those working in the ICT sector to learn about the issues the disabled community face
- c) To identify the problems faced by the community in gaining accessibility
- d) Working up a draft document of recommendations to be presented to the Members of Parliament the next day.

All the objectives were achieved. The course saw the participation of numerous DPOs, representing individuals with multiple disabilities, as well as members of the tech community. The Myanmar National Association for the Blind (MNAB) spoke on the progress made in developing an open-source text to speech engine (TTS) in the local language.

Strong efforts were made to ensure participation of representatives of the mobile telecom companies. Two indicated they would attend, but in the end none did.

The organizers provided the following to facilitate meaningful and effective participation of all the participants.

- Accessible ramp to the stage and podium for speakers and participants on wheelchairs
- Sign language interpreters for the deaf participants
- Caption typing service for the deaf participants unable to use sign language

- Simultaneous interpretation in Myanmar and English

## Resource persons

- **Nirmita Narasimhan is a Senior Fellow and Policy Director at G3ict** working in the areas of policy research and advocacy related to IP reform and technology access for persons with disabilities. She is involved in drafting the Indian National Policy for Electronic Accessibility and also works closely with different departments of the Government of India to bring accessibility into their policies and programmes. She has authored several reports on accessibility, which are being used by policymakers worldwide. She has also presented papers on ICT and Accessibility at international fora like the IGF. She has also participated in the World Blind Union Treaty negotiations at WIPO. Nirmita has won several awards for her work, one of which was the National Award for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, which she received from the President of India in December 2010. Her educational background includes degrees in Law, German and Music. She has prepared research reports in the capacity of ITU accessibility expert, on making mobile phones and services accessible for persons with disabilities in Nepal and Afghanistan. These reports study the existing legal and policy framework for e- accessibility in these countries and makes specific policy recommendations for these.
- **Rohan Samarajiva is the founding Chair of LIRNEasia**, an ICT policy and regulation think tank active across emerging Asia and the Pacific. He was CEO from 2004 to 2012. His most recent co-authored book (2013) is entitled “Information Lives of the Poor,” and was published in English, French, Spanish and Burmese. Samarajiva was Team Leader at the Sri Lanka Ministry for Economic Reform, Science and Technology (2002-04) responsible for infrastructure reforms, including participation in the design of the USD 83 million e Sri Lanka Initiative. He was Director General of Telecommunications in Sri Lanka (1998-99), a founder director of the ICT Agency of Sri Lanka (2003-05), Honorary Professor at the University of Moratuwa in Sri Lanka (2003-04), Visiting Professor of Economics of Infrastructures at the Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands (2000-03) and Associate Professor of Communication and Public Policy at the Ohio State University in the US (1987-2000). Samarajiva was Policy Advisor to the Ministry of Post and Telecom in Bangladesh (2006-09).
- **Htaike Htaike Aung is co-founder and Executive Director of MIDO** the only ICT-focused non-governmental organization in Myanmar. She has been involved in Myanmar’s Internet propagation events since the introduction of the Internet to the public in Myanmar. Htaike Htaike is also a digital security trainer for human rights defenders in Myanmar, and is currently a DeBoer fellow.

- **Nay Lin Soe, Co-Founder and Counselor of MILI** is a person with physical disability and wheelchair user. He also serves as advocate for disability rights and has experience working with disability movement for 15 years. He was the recipient of the 2016 Charles T. Manatt Democracy Award, awarded by the International Foundation for Democratic Systems. He is the joint-secretary of the Disability Advisory Committee charged with drafting national disability law. He has done and delivered numerous disability inclusion trainings for UN agencies, international NGOs, local NGOs, government ministries, media organizations and DPOs in Myanmar.
- **Yu Ya Thu, Co-Founder and CEO of MILI** is a person with physical disability. She has worked for disability movement for 12 years. She is an advocate and trainer for disability rights and women rights. And she is a member of national committee for the rights of PWDs in Myanmar. She has delivered disability trainings for various organizations in local settings.
- **Maung Myint is a consultant of MILI.** He formerly worked for the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, retiring as a Director of the Ministry. His areas of expertise is the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and legal frameworks.
- **Yu Yu Swe is a coordinator of MILI and the head of program & quality of MILI Political Institute.** She formerly worked for the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, retiring as a Director of the Ministry. She has experience in delivering disability inclusion lectures and her area of expertise is facilitating inclusive training.

## Participants

The event saw the participation of representatives from over 12 DPOs, allowing for a broad number of user comments to be heard. Web developers were amongst those attending the course.

**Table 1: Participants at event**

Name	Designation	Organization	12-Dec	13-Dec
Aung Lwin Oo	Developer	Kyeemyindaing Blind School	✓	✓
Aung Soe Win	Vice President	Kyeemyindaing Blind School	✓	✓
Bran Nan	Teacher	Myanmar Christian Fellow of the Blind (MCFB)	✓	✓
Chan Myae Aung	Marketing Officer	MILI	✓	✓
Chit Nyein Thu	Volunteer	Eden Centre for Disabled Children (ECDC)	✓	✓
Eaindray Kyaw Kyaw	Office Staff	MILI	✓	✓
Eaint Thazin Myat	Developer	Creative		✓

Gayani Hurulle	Research Manager	LIRNEasia	✓	✓
Hsu Wai Phyo	Manager	Creative		✓
Htaike Htaike Aung	Executive Director	MIDO	✓	✓
Lwin Myo Tun	Computer Chief Instructor	Association for Aid and Relief - Japan	✓	✓
Maung Myint	Consultant	MILI	✓	
Mya Thida	Principal	School for the Deaf of Department of Social Welfare	✓	✓
Myint Thuzar	Staff	Kyeemyindaing Blind School	✓	✓
Myo Min Aung	Communications Officer	MIDO	✓	✓
Namali Premawardhana	Communications Specialist	LIRNEasia	✓	✓
Nay Lin Soe	Counsellor	MILI	✓	✓
Nyan Kyaw Aung	Website Developer	Individual Expert on Website	✓	✓
Nyein Chan Ko Ko	Tech Expert	Phandeeayar		✓
Pyae Phyo Aung	Media Officer	MILI		✓
Pyae Phyo Paing	N/A	MNAB	✓	✓
Rohan Samarajiva	Chair	LIRNEasia		✓
Salai David	Program Advisor	Myanmar Deaf Community Development Association (MDCDA)	✓	✓
Saw Jamewas	Staff	Myanmar Christian Fellow of the Blind (MCFB)	✓	✓
Saw Manine Phaung	Audio Engineer	MILI	✓	✓
Thein Htike	Volunteer	School for Disabled Children, Yangon	✓	✓
Theint Theint Phooe	Project Manager	MILI	✓	✓
Thiha Htet Naing	Manager	Bindez		✓
Tin Nwe Oo	Chairperson	Yangon Association of Hard of Hearing		✓
Wanna Kyaw Swar	CEC	Shwe Minn Tha Foundation, Myanmar	✓	✓
Yatanar Htun	Co- Founder	MIDO		✓
Ye Win	Project Manager	iSchool- Myanmar	✓	✓
Yu Ya Thu	CEO	MILI	✓	✓
Yu Yu Swe	Coordinator	MILI	✓	✓
Dr Yu Ya Myo Myint	Member	Myanmar Christian Fellowship of the Blind	✓	✓

		(MCFB)		
Zay Ye Htut	Manager	Bindez		✓
Zayar Min	Project Facilitator	MILI	✓	✓
Zin May Aye	Member	Future Stars Intellectual Disability Self Advocacy Organization	✓	✓
Zwe Phone Pyae	Student	University of Computer Studies, Yangon (UCSY)	✓	✓

Twenty-four media outlets also attended the event. The coverage of the event can be found in Annex 1.

**Table 2: Attendees from media outlets**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Media outlet</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Media outlet</b>
Ar Kar Phyo	Skynet Media	Khin Thuzar Win	MRTV
Aung Pyae	Myanmar Media7	Min Ti Han	Akonthi
Aung Thura	Mmalin	Phyo Lae Yi Win	MRTV4
Bo Bo Min	MNTV	Phyu Thin Khaing	Union Daily
Eainsi	Trancom	San Yu Maung	MNTV
Haymar Kyaw	Skynet	Saw Htee	MITV
Haymar Win	DVB	Soe Thu	Mizzima
Hnin Yu Khine	Myanmar Platform	Thar Chan Myat	News Watch
Hsu Mon Aung	MRTV	Theingi Kyaw	Skynet Media
Htaike Nanda Win	Kamayut Media	War War Min	MRTV
Htet Akary Kyaw	MITV	Zaw Min Thu	Unity
Htet Myat	7day	Zaw Myo Naung	Skynet

## Workshop proceedings

The workshop was designed to maximize interactions between the different participants at the event. While the first day of the workshop focused largely on the resource persons imparting knowledge to the participants, the second allowed gave space for them to voice their difficulties in ICT accessibility and put forward suggestions for improvement of accessibility, given the knowledge acquired in the previous sessions. The panel discussion on the 13<sup>th</sup>, in particular, brought to light a plethora of issues faced by different groups. The discussion has been summarized in Annex 2. An interactive session led by Nirmita Narasimhan also led to recommendations being drawn out to present to Members of Parliament and other stakeholders. They have been outlined in Annex 3.

**Table 3: Workshop proceedings**

<b>Date and time</b>	<b>Session details</b>
<i>12<sup>th</sup> December 2017</i>	
0830-0900	Registration
0900-0930	Opening remarks- Gayani Hurulle, LIRNEasia Welcome remarks- Nay Lin Soe, Myanmar Independent Living Initiative
0930-1015	Overview of people with disability in Myanmar- Yu Ya Thu, MILI
1015-1045	Coffee break
1045-1130	Introduction to the concept of accessibility issues- Nay Lin Soe, MILI
1130-1215	ICTs in Myanmar-Htaike Htaike Aung, MIDO
1215- 1315	Lunch
1315- 1330	Energizer
1330-1400	Myanmar's national and international commitments- Maung Myint, MILI
1400-1530	Implementing digital accessibility- a global perspective- Nirmita Narasimhan, G3ict
1530-1600	Coffee break
1600- 1700	Group work (preparation for panel discussion)
<i>13<sup>th</sup> December 2017</i>	
0900-1000	Pragmatic first steps in ensuring accessible ICTs- Rohan Samarajiva, LIRNEasia
1000-1030	Coffee break
1030-1130	Panel discussion- Experiences of ICT accessibility for persons with disability - Aung Lwin Oo - Nyan Kyaw Aung - Salai David - Lwin Myo Tun Moderated by Yu Yu Swe, MILI
1130-1200	Myanmar text to speech engine- Pyae Phyo Paing, MNAB
1200-1300	Lunch
1300-1530	Discussion on next steps Led by Nirmita Narasimhan, G3ict
1530- 1600	Coffee break
1600-1630	Certificates Closing remarks- Rohan Samarajiva, LIRNEasia, Nay Lin Soe, MILI Group photo



## Evaluations

The participants rated the sessions and speakers at the course on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being abysmal and 5 being excellent. All the sessions and speakers received good ratings from the participants. (See Figures 1 and 2)

Figure 1: Speaker ratings

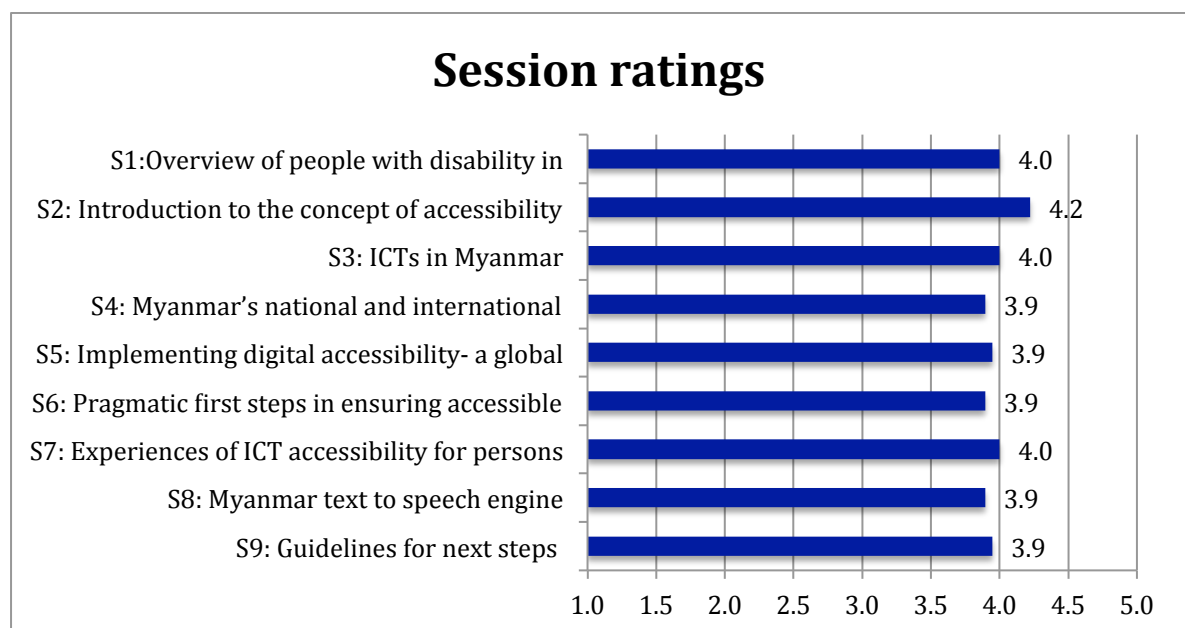
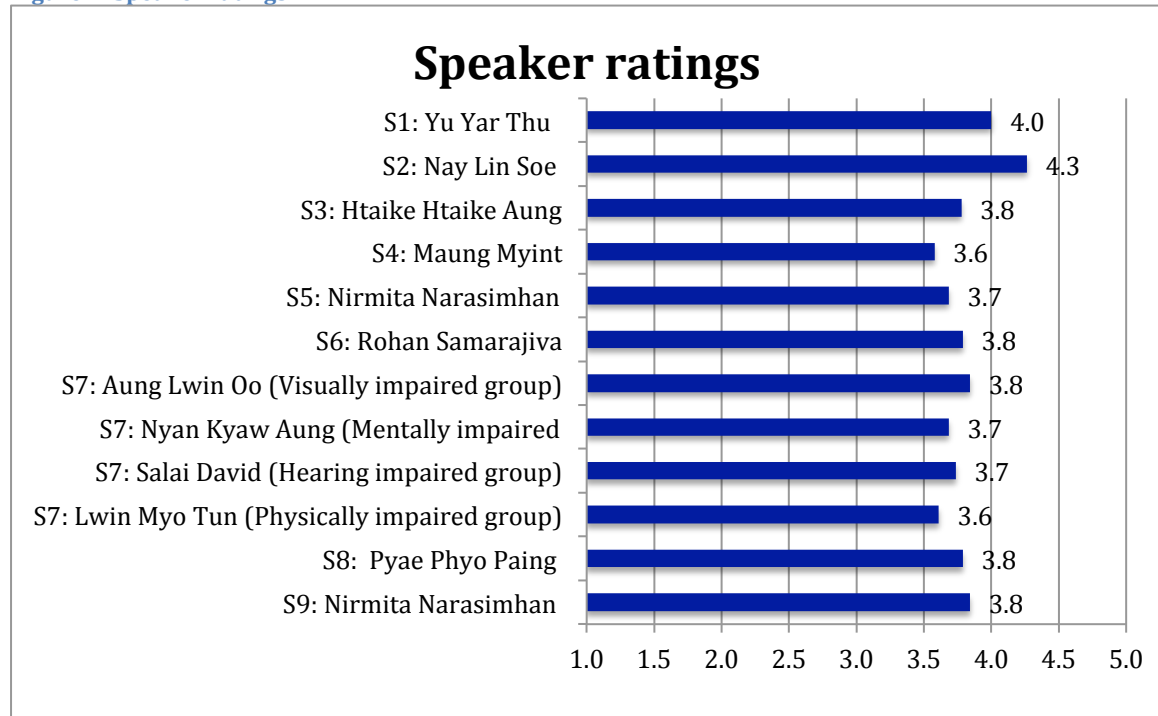


Figure 2: Session ratings

## Annex 1: Media coverage

Table 4: Media coverage

Date	Name of Publication	Title (English)	Type of publication
13-Dec-17	7 Day TV	<a href="#">The government and Parliament will be made aware of to have better accessibility for disabled persons</a>	Web
13-Dec-17	Akonthi	<a href="#">Workshop conducted to regard ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	Web
13-Dec-17	Central News Bureau	Persons with disability are vulnerable when accessing ICT	TV
13-Dec-17	Central News Bureau	<a href="#">Persons with disability are vulnerable when accessing ICT</a>	Facebook
13-Dec-17	Kamayut Media	<a href="#">Easiest technology needed for people with disability</a>	YouTube
13-Dec-17	MCN TV News	<a href="#">People with disability are excluded when accessing ICT in Myanmar</a>	YouTube
13-Dec-17	MCN TV News	<a href="#">The information media in Myanmar have little access for people with disability</a>	Facebook
13-Dec-17	mcntv.biz (MCN)	<a href="#">The information media in Myanmar have little access for people with disability</a>	Web
13-Dec-17	MITV (TV Channel)	<a href="#">Efforts for the disabled: Workshop on ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities</a>	Broadcast
13-Dec-17	Mizzima TV	<a href="#">www.mmsignlanguage.com website to learn sign language</a>	YouTube
13-Dec-17	MRTV	<a href="#">Workshop conducted to regard ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	Web
13-Dec-17	MRTV (TV Channel)	<a href="#">Workshop conducted to regard ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	TV
13-Dec-17	MRTV News	<a href="#">Workshop for ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	YouTube
13-Dec-17	MRTV News	<a href="#">Workshop for ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	Facebook
13-Dec-17	MRTV Radio	<a href="#">Workshop was held to tackle the issue of ICT accessibility for disabled persons</a>	Radio
13-Dec-17	Myanmar Platform Web	<a href="#">Disabled persons need to have better reach for ICT technology</a>	Web
13-Dec-17	Skynet Up-to-Date Channel	<a href="#">Workshop on ICT accessibility for persons with disability</a>	TV
13-Dec-17	Unity Journal	<a href="#">How to overcome ICT challenges for the disabled</a>	Facebook
14-Dec-17	For Info News	Workshop on ICT accessibility for people with disability	TV

14-Dec-17	For Info News	<a href="#">Workshop on ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	Facebook
14-Dec-17	MCN TV News	<a href="#">Government need to support the disabled to get the job</a>	YouTube
14-Dec-17	MNTV	<a href="#">Organizations need to support with ICT access for people with disability</a>	Facebook
14-Dec-17	MNTV (TV Channel)	<a href="#">Actions from Organizations are needed to enhance ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	TV
14-Dec-17	MNTV News	<a href="#">Actions from Organizations are needed to enhance ICT accessibility for people with disability</a>	Web
16-Dec-17	For Info News	Discussion with members of Parliament for ICT Accessibility for the disabled	TV
16-Dec-17	For Info News	<a href="#">Discussion with members of Parliament for ICT Accessibility for the disabled</a>	Facebook
20-Dec-17	Transcom Journal	<a href="#">Workshop on ICT accessibility for persons with disability</a>	Print
21-Dec-17	MRTV	Is there an education gap for people with hearing disabilities?	TV
21-Dec-17	MRTV	<a href="#">Is there an education gap for people with hearing disabilities?</a>	YouTube

## Annex 2: Discussion points from panel discussion

Panelist Name	Discussion Points
Aung Lwin Oo (Representative of participants with visual impairment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Usage of phone pre-paid card and instructions on refilling process are not accessible for visually impaired persons</li> <li>- Difficult to know when phone messages have been received as there is no voice message services on it</li> <li>- Telecom services such as usage of data package, promotion programs should be accessible for everybody- visually impaired persons should be able to access without personal assistance or call center services</li> <li>- The websites including those of government ministries are not accessible as they are using various Myanmar font types. Text-to-speech software can read only one standard (Unicode) Myanmar font. Making small modifications on existing websites can allow these to become useable websites for visually impaired persons. Many developers are unaware of this difficulty.</li> <li>- Public transportation and public's general services also need to improve accessibility for inclusion of PWDs through ICT technology. Improvements should be made in the following areas: bus services, train services, taxi services, traffic lights, map location, bank, mobile application software and other public services.</li> <li>- Need to organize more workshops like this to raise</li> </ul>

	<p>awareness targeted to telecom services companies, digital service companies, government stakeholders and improve people' understanding on inclusive ICT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need not only financial support but also technical support from local and international community to improve accessibility in ICT in Myanmar.</li> <li>- Should form an accessibility working committee urgently.</li> </ul>
Nyan Kyaw Aung (Representative of participants with intellectual impairment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Persons with intellectual disability have different IQ level according to type of their disability. Some intellectual disabled persons can access in ICT like computer. But they have challenge to use keyboard and can't remember different fonts. Otherwise they can't keep in mind no longer time and also some can't use computer mouse.</li> <li>- Need to formulate simple and short cut ways to teach these groups to use ICTs.</li> <li>- Through ICT, like teaching tools can overcome barriers for PWDs. But currently, lots of software are still not available in the local language. Language barriers must be broken down.</li> <li>- Parents and teachers of intellectual disabled persons should participant in accessibility working committee as others to fulfill their community need.</li> <li>- Government should give reduce taxes for learning tools, teaching aids and assistive devices of PWDs.</li> </ul>
Salai David (Representative of participants with hearing impairment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to promote awareness on that sign language is essential for deaf people. Sign language service is not available everywhere and enough yet therefore it is challenged for hearing impaired people to access public services such as banking, hospital, court, transportation, entertainment program and broadcasting services etc.</li> <li>- Access to call center services and information is challenging to hearing impaired persons.</li> <li>- Making video calls makes it possible for hearing impaired persons to communicate. However, it is only a possibility for smartphone owners, and the cost of the data required to make video calls makes the process expensive.</li> </ul>
Lwin Myo Tun (Representative of participants with physical impairment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public telecenter services lack proper awareness on how to use accessible technologies to PWD customers.</li> </ul> <p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital law should be inclusive and PWDs should involve in consultation and along the law making process.</li> <li>- Need to form ICT accessibility committee for PWDs working together with different stakeholders including DPOs leaders</li> <li>- Accessibility committee should prepare and work on comprehensive report to reflect on current situation of PWDs and ICT</li> <li>- Need to organize national Accessibility Campaigns</li> </ul>

## Annex 3

### Summary of Group Works on Telecommunication, Website & Application and Television Channels

<b>Telecommunication Group</b>	
Identified Key Stakeholders	Ministry of Transportation and Communication, Telecommunication service providers such as Telenor, Ooredoo and MPT, etc.
Strategies to be Undertaken	Will build up concrete and strong network with technical community and service providers to get technical and financial support from relevant key stakeholders. Then, should develop and promote screen reader software, text-to-speech engine for visually impaired persons and also continue to develop sign language-to-Myanmar language & Myanmar language-to-sign language software for hearing impaired persons as well. In the meantime, special data package of telecom services would be requested- with the availability of cheaper data, hearing impaired persons and visually impaired persons would be able to use ICTs more.
Time period	Within 2 to 3 years
Monitoring	Will organize monitoring group with representatives from four types of disabilities together with technical communities and make regular monitoring and evaluation on progress.
<b>Website and Applications Group</b>	
Identified Key Stakeholders	Ministry of Science and Technology, ICT Companies, Myanmar Computer Association, Members of Parliamentarians
Strategies to be Undertaken	Will lobby to add material on inclusive ICTs into the curriculum of Computer University. Final year students of university can be encouraged to develop the project papers on ICT accessibility can be recommended. In addition, game software, web developing and ICT events would be innovative to be inclusive for PWDs.
Time Bound	A soon as possible- will monitor regularly during three years
Monitoring	Regular
<b>Television Channel Group</b>	
Identified Key Stakeholders	Ministry of Information, Government and private TV channels.
Strategies to be Undertaken	Firstly DPOs leaders will lead to form Accessibility Network in together with 50% from different relevant stakeholders and 50% from DPOs. Then, Accessibility Committee will be formed under the Myanmar Federation of PWDs (MFPD) to lead for continuous development of accessibility policy in line with UN-CRPD and disability rights law.
Time Bound	Accessibility Network to be be formed in the first three months. Then, Accessibility Committee under the MFPD will be formed in next three months phase. The accessibility policy will be developed Q3 and Q4 from the beginning.
Monitoring	Accessibility Network will monitor progress.