

Increasing awareness about assistive ICTs among persons with disabilities

Some persons with disabilities (PWDs) have heard about ICT solutions for certain problems they face, but many have not. And even those who are aware may not use such solutions day-to-day. Those in the older generation, particularly, are unaware of these solutions and do not see the significance of using them. Simple video clips including audio and video can be used to create awareness about the importance of these solutions and how to access and use them.

Summary of Recommendations

Short term: Produce open-access videos to educate PWDs and their immediate social circles on tech solutions which enable independent living. These videos can be disseminated via mainstream media (TV, radio etc.), social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber) and especially through targeted campaigns across associations and organizations representing PWDs.

The Research

- LIRNEasia conducted a nationally representative survey among 15-65-years-old PWDs in Nepal to understand ICT access and use. Four hundred PWDs from 400 households in 100 wards in all 7 provinces were interviewed between August and October 2018. The questionnaire was designed based on the Washington Group on Disabilities Questions. The results are nationally representative with 95% confidence interval and ± 9.8 margin of error.
- LIRNEasia conducted qualitative research in Provinces No. 1, 2, 3 and 5 in urban and rural locations. The research was designed to understand how ICTs can help ensure independent living for PWDs in Nepal. Grounded theory was applied to identify key themes emerging in interviews of 174 PWDs and nine key informants.

Key Findings

- 1.6% of the population aged 15-65 reported as a PWD
- Only 3% of PWDs have special mobile phone packages
- Only 32% of PWDs owned mobile phones, a significantly lower number than the 72% among the general 15-65 population. Among those with phones only 41% own smartphones (compared to 52% in the general population)
- The greatest perceived uses of a mobile phone are the ability to manage social and family relations (33% of PWD mobile phone users) and the possibility of contacting others in an emergency (32% of PWD mobile phone users)
- Low adoption of assistive features freely available on mobile phones:
 - 39% of those with visual disability did not use any assistive features on their phone
 - 50% of those with hearing disability did not use any assistive features on their phone
 - 44% of persons with difficulty in self-care did not use any assistive features on their phone

 **More Information:** <http://bit.ly/NPtech4PWD>

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