ITU Workshop on: “E-health services in low-resource settings: Requirements and ITU role”
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Title: “The Accessibility Imperative for e-Health: Demographic Realities and Barriers to Usage”

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ABSTRACT:

While e-Health applications and services can bring considerable benefits in low resource environments, persons with disabilities who represent large segments of the population including but not limited to the elderly, may be excluded from such services if essential e-accessibility features are not available. Latest data from the WHO and World Bank report point to a global disability prevalence of 15%, or one billion persons, two third of which live in developing nations. While solutions exist, few countries have implemented programs to ensure that Information and Communications Technologies used for e-Health applications and services are accessible to persons with disabilities. The ratification by 126 countries of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, however, create an emerging global legal framework which will impact all e-Health applications and services as national legislations are progressively aligned with the Convention. The author makes several recommendations for ITU and WHO to issue guidelines to ensure that e-health projects are designed with accessibility features, promote accessibility standards among e-health application developers, and include ICT accessibility criteria when procuring e-Health projects.