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| **Source:** | Council of Disability Organisations of Mongolia .Firefly House NGO MongoliaPress mediaLive talks of PWDs of Mongolia  |
| **Title:** | ICTs are a Power  |
| **Purpose:** | To disseminate information and discuss.  |
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| **Keywords:** | ICT; Accessibility; Choice and Opportunity  |
| **Abstract:** | Artificial intelligence, assistive technology and accessible information platforms should be available for the persons with various types of disabilities all over the world.Not only for me, but also many of my friends who have various type of disabilities who wish they would be able to use those useful apps. For instance: a money reader, text reader, a Read and Write app etc. I fully agree with them. I even contacted the Apple Accessibility team and expressed our request to input Mongolian Cyrillic in addition to Russian Cyrillic. It is good to say that the Apple team responsibly answered my email informing us that our request had been submitted to the appropriate department though the actual response has not been made received yet. Why not?Because the apps are inaccessible language-wise, codification, and disability-wise, people who do not have sufficient command of the English language or other abilities and or people who have vision impairment, they cannot efficiently use very nice apps in their learning process. This is because only for the reason that the “buttons” are not accessible with screen readers. So persons with disabilities need access on equal basis and need to enable others to be able benefit from technological advances that offer much more |

**Do we really need to spend more on designing additional technology for special requirements?**

**Or should we make the existing applications of artificial intelligence universally accessible for all?**

**Accessibility issues should be possible in all settings including transportation, education, employment, medical places. ICTs have been critically addressed but unfortunately, tangible changes are almost seen as null in reality in Mongolia.**

***Employment***

**Employers say that PWDs are not qualified enough to be hired. Yes, that is true because every single individual come from variant backgrounds. However, it is very blurry and not clear to see what kind of qualifications they are talking about.**

**On the other hand, governments officials say that a list of workplaces that are suitable for certain type of disability should be created**

**Obviously, there is no one who is working on handling job placement, job maintenance and job retainment going through the required evaluation to determine and provide reasonable accommodations. There are quite a lot of examples that one PWD asked his or her friend company owner to hire his or her other friend, a PWD. However very soon the friend who was hired was fired.**

***Education***

**There are some parents think that special education schools should be established more instead of launching an inclusive education. The parents would not want to segregate their kids from society. This is because the learning environment and personnel are too inexperienced to receive the different kinds of children with various types of distinguishing needs.**

 **When there are disability resource centres, there should be at least one at all levels of education: primary, secondary, high and vocational, then, how can we provide reasonable accommodations.**

***ICT***

**Website accessibility and content accessibility are very poor.**

**Assistive technology developed and distributed as an open source and paid are not accessible language wise. Other than that, there are many applications developed using AI PWDs would benefit enormously.**

***Road and Transportation and public facilities***

**Buses do not announce bus routes for the people who are at the bus stops.**

**Not all the buses run the announcements for the passengers.**

**There are no buses accessible for wheelchair users and other limb impairments.**

**Public facilities that people use on daily basis like ATMs etc are not sound enabled or tactile.**

 **Tactile roads are made of poor-quality slippery materials. There are, that polls are encountered right in mid of the road, and sidewalks are very narrow and broken.**

**Only three traffic lights have sound in Ulaanbaatar. No other traffic lights have sound in any other cities of Mongolia.**

***Medical services***

**Especially for the deaf there is no possibility to receive an ambulance or any other emergency services.**

 **In overall, personal assistance service providers and prepared personnel are strongly required when PWDs need to have any medical services.**

* To share the best practices and achieve the sustainable goals all together, already existing products and technologies are desirable to be more accessible and usable in terms of language, codification and distinguishing characteristics of disabilities. Therefore, perhaps representing many other persons with disabilities in other countries, Mongolia would like to suggest followings based on our daily living practices:
* To turn artificial intelligence apps into accessible assistive apps for the persons with various types of disabilities and language-wise.
* To make money readers recognisable many more domestic notes including Mongolian.
* To efficiently utilise the AI apps in other infrastructure such as transportation, ATM etc.
* To launch the already existing apps for maintaining the safety of persons with disabilities for instance making all traffic lights sound, public transportation vehicles announce routes both for the passengers inside and outside.
* To create a centralised information platform where the persons with disabilities should be getting any information relevant to them.

To start an ever first disability resource centre for the students nationwide in Mongolia

To launch a technology for the deaf for medical and emergency cases.

To choose one subsidiary cities of Mongolia for making the city universally accessible for all.

Brief introduction

**Firefly House was established in February 2019 and paying more effort on building a comprehensive psychosocial rehabilitation model of and for the mentally challenged pwople of Mongolia as there is none existing but totally based on medical model.**

**Addition, being a general rehabilitation counsellor, its Founder who is me aims to improve and professionalise the actions taken to rehabilitate PWDs. With such purpose Firefly House joined a newly established Council of Disability Organisations of Mongolia. As requested by international sponsors and partners, the government of Mongolia – Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the President of Mongolia sent his Advisor who is working with focus on disability issues to civil society. In fact, there were two umbrella organisations who failed and used to fraud money from projects and programs using PWDs and there are needs for those who are still living very hard circumstances in terms of financial livelihood and social accessibility. Firefly House worked in an action group of the event to make reform which was open for all disability organisations. There are more than 700 disability NGOs including both in rural and urban areas. The action group called more than 200 those are in Ulaanbaatar the capital of Mongolia. For some reasons for an example if the phone was changed etc, we could gather only 84 NGOs and 35 out of total chose an alternative Forum which was proposed by the former senior leaders who formed previous umbrella organisation. Other votes were divided to 2 other alternatives which one is the newly established council.**

**Number of organisations who voted for the council came back and requested the council, the Forum was chosen by the 35 organisations.**

**Therefore, we gathered our supporters and formed our own council among them.**

**The council will set up its branches in provincial areas. The council has 8 Advisory Committees.**

 **Member disability organisations of the council are mixed of senior and youngsters and we will leave all the advisory committees open for future new members.**