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| INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION | | **Focus Group On Audiovisual Media Accessibility** |
| **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2009-2012 | | **AVA-I-047** |
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This is a brief summary of work in FG AVA since the first meeting on May 26. The purpose is to explain what we have done at the first FG meeting and since then, what we are proposing to achieve by the end of 2011 and how we intend to reach our objectives in 2012.

FG AVA Meeting 1  (May 26 2011) – what did we do?

At the kick-off meeting we reached consensus on the following:

* The interpretation of the Terms of Reference for FG AVA
* A vision for the outcomes of the FG AVA
* Five values that are to underpin our work
* The scope of the terms “audiovisual media” and “accessibility”
* Seven deliverables for FG AVA between May 2011 and December 2012
* The setting up of 10 Working Groups to provide inputs to these deliverables each with a coordinator/co-coordinator

Details of the decisions taken at the meeting and references to input documents can be found the minutes[[1]](#footnote-1).

From Meeting 1 to Meeting 2 – what have we done?

The FG AVA management group has focused on

1. Planning the activities of the 10 Working Groups (WGs)
2. Making the working processes of FG AVA more accessible to persons with disabilities
3. Raising awareness about the work of FG AVA

## 1. Planning the activities of the 10 Working Groups (WGs)

To get the work ready for approval at Meeting 2, we have done the following:

* Each coordinator was given a common matrix with 4 questions:

1. What is the current situation?
2. What visions do we have of media accessibility in 2015 and 2020?
3. What is currently stopping us from turning these visions into reality?
4. What actions are needed to sustain the moment to make these visions a reality?

* Each coordinator was asked to produce an input document explaining how they will address these 4 questions.
* The first WGs (WG A to WG E) have addressed specific access services and the accessibility of on-screen information services including Electronic Programming Guides (EPGs).
* WG F addresses Participation and Media as the FG was unsure about the accessibility of digital media such as electronic games and the way in which we interact with programs and services using peripherals such as remote control devices, touch and speech-driven interfaces.
* WG G, H and I address platform issues (i.e. broadcast TV, IPTV and mobile and wireless Internet to mobile and handheld devices). We are open to adding platforms such as electronic games subject to inputs from WG F and getting the approval at a forthcoming FG meeting.
* WG J addresses the metrics against which regulation of media accessibility could be conducted. There are several approaches here, so the aim is to explain the implications of the various approaches.

## 2. Making the working processes of FG AVA more accessible to persons with disabilities

FG AVA is a self-funded activity. Where possible we have to use existing logistics and infrastructure from the ITU in Geneva.

If we are to comply with our agreed values including the “nothing for us without us” paradigm for persons with disabilities, it follows that our meetings (both physical and virtual) and the tools we use to communicate between meetings should be accessible to persons with disabilities.

* We asked Mia Ahlgren and Mark Magennis to help improve the working processes:
* Analyze what we used at Meeting 1 using a SurveyMonkey questionnaire
* Identify issues with the existing procedures
* Suggest changes and replacement tools to improve the accessibility of the meetings for persons with disabilities
* Make improvements incrementally by administering the Survey Monkey questionnaire immediately after each meeting to get feedback.
* A new proposed Working Group on “Access of working procedures” (WG K) is being proposed at the 2nd FG AVA meeting (see input no. 28). The two proposed WGs coordinators are Ms. Mia Ahlgren and Mr Mark Magennis.
* The FG AVA management and secretariat have identified potential sponsors who could help fund live captioning and visual signing (where required) for Focus Group meetings where meeting hosts are not able to deal with this cost.

## 3. Raising awareness about the work of FG AVA

Raising awareness and engaging in an ongoing dialog with a wide range of accessibility stakeholders as we move forward, not just when we have finished the last deliverable, is going to be crucial to success.

The case for action of media accessibility is a complex one, influenced by national and regional circumstances. By starting a dialogue early, we hope to make the learning curve less steep for those who have yet to make media accessible.

We currently have a number of FG members from Europe, Japan and a few from North America and Africa. We need to broaden our geographical coverage.

The suggestion of the management group is to

* Take part in international forums to explain what FG AVA is, what we do and how we plan to liaise with other related bodies (within the economic constraints of a self-funded FG)
* Make the ITU report “*Making Television Accessible*” available to FG AVA members and to other stakeholders as soon as possible
* Publish preliminary findings on the public part of the website as soon as the FG is happy to do this
* Hold FG meetings not only in Geneva but at venues elsewhere
* Encourage recognized specialists to participate (virtually) in the various working groups, even if they do not have time or money to join the FG meetings.

The international forums we have taken part in – or plan to - so far include:

* ITU Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Digital Inclusion for All 21 - 23 June 2011, Singapore
* ITU-T events, FG AVA Presentation 25 July 2011, Gaborone, Botswana
* Joint ITU and Arab Information Communication Technologies Organization (AICTO) workshop on "Interoperability of IPTV in the Arab region", Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 20 – 21 September 2011
* Joint ITU/EBU workshop “How Can We Reach the Media Have-Nots of the Developed and Developing Worlds?” at 6th Meeting of Internet Governance Forum, 29 September 2011, Nairobi, Kenya
* National Seminar on Accessibility and TV, Gabinete para os Meios de Comunicação Social, 28 September 2011, Lisbon, Portugal
* Conference “Innovation for Digital Inclusion” organized under the Polish Presidency of the European Union Council, 5 - 7 October 2011, Gdansk, Poland
* Meeting of joint ITU-T and JTC 1 leadership meeting, 6 November 2011, San Diego, USA
* The M-Enabling Summit, 5 - 6 December 2011, Washington DC, USA

As the websites of most of these events contain useful resources of interest after they have been held, we have added links to them on the FG AVA website on the bottom right-hand side.

Meeting 2 – what are we going to do?

At Meeting 2 - apart from approving the agenda, minutes and other formalities - we need to reach consensus on the following:

* Work plans for each of the 10 Working Groups
* Accessible logistics for our work between FG meetings and at FG meetings themselves
* Sponsoring the access services at FG meetings
* Firm dates and venues for FG meetings 3, 4, 5 and preliminary dates for the remaining meetings
* Liaison with other bodies of relevance to our Terms of Reference.

## Work plans for each of the 10 Working Groups

Those who have registered for the meetings will be able to find the input documents we will discuss under point 5 of the agenda for FG meeting 2. We need to see if there is anything that we need to add or change. When each input document has been approved, we can use it as the Table of Contents (TOC) for the live drafts that each WG will be producing.

## Accessible logistics between meetings

Each of the WGs will be working autonomously in accordance with the work plans approved on September 15. Each WG is expected to produce a preliminary draft document for discussion on November 17 covering the first 3 of the four questions:

1. What is the current situation?
2. What visions do we have of media accessibility in 2015 and 2020?
3. What is currently stopping us from turning these visions into reality?
4. What actions are needed to sustain the moment to make these visions a reality?

The agreed structure will be uploaded to a simple collaborative working tool such as Google Docs[[2]](#footnote-2).

Those wishing to take part are expected to:

* Contact the coordinator of the WG or WGs to which they want to contribute
* Obtain a user name and password from the coordinator
* Contribute to answering the first three questions by fleshing out the points already included.
* Discuss differences of opinion either asynchronously (e-mail) or synchronously (phone, Skype or a forum like Adobe Connect for which ITU has a license).
* Agree to “freeze” parts of a preliminary draft for inclusion on the FG AVA website. These snapshots of the work can be used to discuss the findings with a broader range of stakeholders

For meeting 3, 4 and 5 of FG AVA we have received invitations to meet at venues in Spain, India and the US instead of Geneva.

## Sponsoring the access services at FG meetings

FG AVA is a self-funded activity. This means that when we hold FG meetings, we need to find sponsors for the access services (primarily live captioning and sometimes visual signing) for persons with disabilities who attend the meetings.

Currently we need to ask participants to sign up 4 weeks ahead of the meeting so we can make the necessary arrangements. It seems likely that our hosts for FG meeting 4 and meeting 5 will be able to cover the provision of access services themselves. This leaves us to find funding for meeting 3 and for meeting 6.

## Firm dates and venues for FG meetings 3, 4, 5 and preliminary dates for the remaining meetings

* **Meeting 3** will be hosted by the Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain on 17 November 2011.
* **Meeting 4** will be hosted by Centre for Internet Society in Delhi, India in March.  The preliminary date is in the first week of March 2012.
* **Meeting 5** will be hosted by Turner Broadcasting in Atlanta, USA.  The tentative date is on or just after April 20 (after NAB, the world’s biggest trade show for the broadcasting industry).
* **We have penciled in meetings for June, September and November 2012.** The chair will be providing an overview of these meetings and deliverables on September 15.

ANNEX 1 Vision

December 2012. FG AVA has successfully completed its work. The FG AVA roadmap with accessibility actions provides a solid basis for future work by the ITU and other key constituents.

The roadmap gives concrete examples of good practise. It shows how the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) can be applied to the delivery, use and enjoyment of digital AV media.

Persons with disabilities and their organizations feel that the Focus Group has made a difference.

ANNEX 2 Values

The Focus Group on Audiovisual Media Accessibility is:

* *Inclusive* (working with and for persons with disabilities using the principles of Universal Design)
* *Consensus-seeking* (identifying areas where there is agreement, and also those where there is none)
* *Evidence-based* (the rationale for our work should be explicit and supported by empirical studies)
* *Open* (actions recommended by the Focus Group should promote interoperability and be based on open standards)
* *Transparent* (the rationale for actions recommended by the Focus Group should be transparent)

1. Report of the first FG AVA meeting (Geneva, 26 May 2011) AVA-O-0001 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. We need to choose tools that also allow persons with disabilities to take part. We also need to review ITU document templates to make sure that Word and PDF files are properly structured so that they can be read by persons with visual impairments. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)