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| Regional Commonwealth in the field of Communications (RCC) |
| CIS Regional Initiative project "Development of digital skills of persons with disabilities/special needs" |
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| Agenda item: Item 8**Summary:**Currently, all countries are moving to a digital economy and the range of professions without digital skills is shrinking. The COVID-19 pandemic, forcing everyone to reconsider the methods and technologies of work organization, has further accelerated the transition to digital technologies in all spheres of human activity, exacerbating the already difficult situation of persons with disabilities (PwD), significantly reducing the total number of jobs, and adding digital skills in priority recruitment requirements. Thereby, the development of digital skills for PwDs has become even more urgent than ever before. This regional initiative is intended to determine the conditions for the sustainable functioning of digital skills development services for PwD and to develop appropriate recommendations.Expected results:1. Analytical material that will allow to quantify the problems and determine the ways to solve them on an ongoing basis, support measures, including state support.2. Recommendations for the development of digital skills of PwD.3. Network of training centers for PwD.Reference:N/A |

**I Introduction**

The ITU regional initiative “Providing access to telecommunication services for persons with disabilities” for the CIS countries, approved at WTDC-14, was implemented in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2015-2018.

As a result, an information and training center for people with disabilities (PwD) was established at the Institute of Electronics and Telecommunications in Bishkek, which became a part of the ITU Center of Excellence (CoE). Further experience of the operation of this center has shown that, indeed, PwD face enormous, often insurmountable, difficulties in their access to modern ICT services.

Currently, all countries are moving to a digital economy and the range of professions without digital skills is shrinking. The COVID-19 pandemic, forcing everyone to rethink work methods and technologies, has further accelerated the digital transition in all spheres of human activity, exacerbating the already plight of PwD, significantly reducing the total number of jobs and adding digital skills to priority recruitment requirements to work. Therefore, the development of digital skills has become even more urgent for PwD than before.

The experience of the center for PwD at the Institute of Electronics and Telecommunications has shown that in the Kyrgyz Republic, even though the number of PwD is growing, there is no organized support for their training in digital skills. Most likely, this is also not yet set up to the proper level in other CIS countries. This problem is extremely urgent.

**II Proposal**

The Kyrgyz Republic proposes the following regional initiative for the period 2021-2024: “Development of digital skills of persons with disabilities/special needs”.

**III Goals and objectives of the proposed initiative:**

The aim of the regional initiative is to determine the conditions for the sustainable functioning of services for the development of digital skills of people with disabilities and to develop appropriate recommendations.

As part of the implementation of the above-mentioned regional initiative, it is planned to solve the following tasks:

1. A detailed study of the problems of PwDs related to their digital skills training.

Analysis of the causes and possible solutions. The study should also cover remote or hard-to-reach areas.

2. Creation of a small network of training centers for PwD and testing on such a network of possible solutions to emerging problems.

**IV Expected results:**

1. Analytical material that will allow to quantify the problems and support measures, including state support, for their solutions on an ongoing basis.

2. Recommendations for the development of digital skills of PwD.

3. A network of information and training centers for PwD.

4. Methodological support of information and training centers for PwD.

5. Training of trainers for such specialized information and training centers and their remote branches.

**VII Projects proposed for implementation**

Include the development of analytical material to research the problems of PwD related to their digital skills training, especially in remote and hard-to-reach areas; determination of possible ways to solve the identified problems; creation of a small network of information and training centers for PwD, which will allow testing possible solutions to emerging problems; training of trainers for such information and training centers and their remote branches as a sub-regional initiative for the CIS countries.

The results of the implementation of this project can be disseminated in the CIS countries.

**2021-2022**

Project №1 "Development of analytical material for the study of the problems of PwD related to their digital skills training."

The study will help to conduct an in-depth analysis of the causes and possible ways to solve them on an ongoing basis, to quantify the problems and support measures, including state support. The project should also cover remote/hard-to-reach areas. Based on the results of the study and analytical material, the recommendations will be prepared for the development of digital skills of PwD.

**2023-2024**

Project # 2 "Creation of a small network of training centers for PwD"

Training centers for PwD are mainly concentrated in big cities, and in remote areas they are practically absent, which further exacerbates the situation of PwD and limits their access to ICT, to education and further employment opportunities.

Within the framework of this project Creation of a small network of training centers for PwD, it is planned to create a small network of training centers for PWDs with their localization in remote areas as well. The created network will not only create favorable conditions for the access of PwD to ICT but will also help to test “possible solutions to emerging problems and recommendations”, which were prepared based on the developed in 2021-2022 analytical material. Based on the testing results, it will be possible to correct the previously developed recommendations.

**2024**

Project # 3 Training of trainers (organization of training sessions, seminars) for such information and training centers and their remote branches.

**VIII Required funding and potential partners**

**Required funding**

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| **№** | **Description** | **Amount** | **ITU** | **Partners**  |
| 1 | Development of analytical material for the study of the problems of PwD related to their digital skills training |  |  |  |
| 2 | Creation of a small network of training centers for PwD |  |  |  |
| 3 | Training of teachers (organization of training sessions, seminars) for such information and training centers and their remote branches |  |  |  |
|  | **Overall for the project** |  |  |  |

**Potential partners:**

1. Profile ministries and departments of the CIS countries;

2. Institute of Electronics and Telecommunications, Kyrgyz Republic.

**Countries involved:**

1. Kyrgyz Republic

2. Republic of Uzbekistan

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