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This document is submitted for information.

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| Telecommunication Development Sector  Study Groups | |  |
| Second Meeting of ITU-D Study Group 1 | |  |
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| Question 20-1/1: Access to telecommunication services and information and communication technologies (ICTs) by persons with disabilities | | |
| SOURCE | Brazil | |
| TITLE | Draft report on national legal and policy frameworks to promote ICT access by persons with disabilities | |
| Revision to Document No. RGQ 20-1/1/5 | | |
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| Action required: | Meeting participants are invited to consider this contribution which will be part of the report on “National Legal and Policy Frameworks to Promote ICT Access by Persons with Disabilities” | |

Abstract:

Description of the measures taken in Brazil to foster access to ICTs by persons with disabilities.

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Brazil, which is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, has proposed public policies aimed at achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities.

In the communication sphere, and specifically the area of telecommunication services, a number of actions are being pursued in order to break down the existing barriers. For example:

* A programme, established under Decree 6039 of 7 February 2007, to support institutions providing assistance to persons with hearing disabilities, with implementation of an individual fixed access point and telecommunication terminal for hearing-impaired persons, coupled with payment of the basic fixed telephony service subscription, using resources from the Fund for the Universalization of Telecommunication Services.
* On 7 August 2007, Anatel approved Resolution 477 approving the Short-Message Service (SMS) Plan for persons with hearing difficulties in the low-income bracket, and calling for a certain volume of messages at reduced cost. All personal mobile service authorities approved the plan while the regulations were still in the process of being revised. The revision also specified a maximum message response time to enable hearing-impaired persons to converse using such messages.
* On 20 April 2011, Anatel approved Resolution 564, whereby, upon request by the heads of public emergency services (police, fire service, ambulance service, etc.), providers are required, subject to the prevailing technological limitations, to route text messages from their subscribers to the respective public emergency services, without any type of remuneration for the providers handling such calls or messages to the emergency services.
* All fixed and mobile telephone service providers are required to have an intermediate communication facility to assist persons with hearing or speech disabilities.
* It is a requirement that at least two per cent of all public telephones, upon request, be adapted to accommodate people with mobility, hearing or speech impairments, and that 100 per cent of public telephones be adapted for visually-impaired persons.
* Installation in all ministries of the Federal Government of public telephones adapted to accommodate hearing-impaired persons.
* Meetings with institutions representing persons with disabilities for the purpose of improving the regulatory process with respect to accessibility.

Another important advance in the provision of telecommunication services in Brazil was the expansion of the networks of the Personal Mobile Service and Multimedia Communication Service, commonly used to provide broadband access.

Until 2007, only 2 125 of Brazil's 5 565 municipalities had fixed telephone network infrastructure capable of broadband connectivity. In 2008, and in response to that situation, the General Plan of Goals for Universalization of the Fixed Telephony Service was amended with a view to expanding the infrastructure, and by 31 December 2010 all of the country's municipalities were covered.

In late 2007, an auction was held for the frequency bands for the 3G component of the Personal Mobile Service, coupled with an obligation to provide the mobile telephony service to all seats (head towns) of Brazilian municipalities.

The expansion of telecommunication service networks brings with it an expansion of the opportunities for, and means of, communication by persons with disabilities, with the coverage rate in the seats of Brazilian municipalities now having reached 100 per cent.

However, much remains to be done, including popularizing use of the 3G mobile service, which would enable people with speech or hearing disabilities to communicate by means of sign language; implementing an intermediate communication facility based on sign language; and, first and foremost, formulating policies specifically aimed at assisting persons in the low income bracket.

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