Training course outline

Title	How to ensure inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations
Modality	Online self-paced
Duration	2.5 hours
Training fees	Free of charge

Description	This self-paced online course on inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations has been developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This health crisis has revealed the importance of ensuring that every person can access and utilise digital information provided through digital platforms, which in these situations could be vital. The world is facing an unprecedented experience in which Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are, in certain circumstances, almost the only possibility for people to communicate with one another. The importance of accessing instructions and vital information during the COVID-19 pandemic period was crucial for all people. This pandemic exposed potential exclusion and inequalities in the digital world, particularly for persons with disabilities, migrants, illiterate or low literacy persons, and other vulnerable groups. It is essential that digital information products and services are designed, developed, and delivered in digitally accessible formats to ensure that all people, regardless of their gender, age or ability can access and benefit from technology. This training explains why it is essential that crucial digital information during crises and emergency situations be distributed and made available in digitally accessible formats to ensure that no one is left behind. It further presents how to ensure that digital information will reach all people, including persons with disabilities and particularly those with visual or hearing impairments that require alternative solutions such as screen readers, captioning or sign language to read and understand digital information. This training also provides examples and best practices of the diverse modes of communication available such as accessible websites, phones, radio, videos, leaflets, captioning, chats, etc. It also presents the importance of the availability and awareness of dedicated helplines, aiming to ensure that public health information is accessible (including relay services for people with hearing or visual impairments). Accessible digital elements are necessary to mitigate the impact of crises and emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, this course highlights the importance of delivering accessible digital information and communication across various digital platforms and in multiple formats during crises and emergency situations. It focuses on the importance of incorporating ICT accessibility when developing contingency and national emergency telecommunication plans at the local, regional, and national levels. *See this short ITU-D Video Tutorial "How to ensure inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations" in* <u>*English*</u>*,* <u>*French*</u> *and* <u>*Spanish*</u> *that introduces and explains the training topic.*

Code	21OS26235MUL-E

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will provide the learner with:

- A brief overview on how to ensure inclusive digital communications by personnel working in public communications such as government bodies and other relevant agencies.
- An understanding of the accessibility requirements needed to guarantee that digital communications are inclusive and therefore accessible to all people, including persons with disabilities and other persons with specific needs, older persons, as well as refugees and migrants.
- Knowledge on where to find more information and related resources on how to develop and deliver inclusive digital communications, such as standards and recommendations.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this course learners will:

- Develop an understanding of the importance of accessible digital communication during crises and emergency situations.
- Have examined the concepts related to inclusive digital communication and ICT accessibility.
- Be able to name and identify specific actions to ensure vital information is accessible for all people, including persons with disabilities, on various communication platforms.
- Be able to recognize the phases of a crisis to anticipate, mitigate, and problem solve effectively.
- Be able to describe the importance of inclusive digital communication during crises or emergency situations.

3. TARGET POPULATION

This course is recommended for all personnel working in public communications, particularly those called upon to provide information in crisis and emergency situations. This training course is designed for all stakeholders (including ITU members, ICT service providers, policymakers, and ICT stakeholders) or individuals who wish to enhance their knowledge on the topic of ICT Accessibility.

To ensure inclusive learning, this online self-paced training course has been designed and developed in digitally accessible formats and is, therefore, accessible to all people, including persons with disabilities, such as blind persons or persons with visual impairments, deaf persons and/or persons with hearing impairments.

4. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

No prior knowledge or qualification on the subject matter is required to complete this training course.

5. TRAINING COURSE CONTENTS

The course provides holistic knowledge on the topic of ensuring inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations in the following five (5) modules:

Module 1: Introduction and key concepts
This module provides learners with an overview of the importance of ensuring digital communication during emergency and crises situations. It highlights the significance of inclusiveness to acknowledge every segment of the population, including those living in poverty, elderly citizens, persons with disabilities, and all women and children. Key concepts such as digital communication, accessibility requirements and digital inclusion are also introduced.

Module 2: Emergencies, crises, and contingency plans
This module clarifies the differences between an emergency, crisis, hazard and disaster and their various impacts on society. Relevant information on how to develop contingency and emergency plans is also presented. This module introduces the National Emergency Telecommunication Plan (NETP) which includes regulatory framework for disaster risk management in four phrases; mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Lastly, this module covers the development of a crisis of emergency plan for inclusive digital communications.

Module 3: Communication platforms and effective communications for all
This module examines the importance of coordinating with different stakeholders. For example, this module presents the elements of who is responsible for the emergency communication to be delivered, the type of information to be communicated in such situations, and the platforms to be used. The modules also includes examples of communication, platforms, messages and alerts.

Module 4: Barriers to accessing vital digital emergency information, and the benefits of accessible ICTs
The module describes the challenges presented by Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for persons with disabilities. This section covers the central elements of accessibility requirements of various digital platforms. Examples of how this knowledge can be applied when considering the accessibility requirements of various digital platforms are also presented. This module keeps in mind the needs of all people, including those who have an auditory, visual, motor, or cognitive impairment. Lastly, the module highlights the benefits of accessible ICT for everyone.

Module 5: Digital platforms and actions to guarantee inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations
This module takes a closer look at several digital platforms and how ICT accessibility can eliminate some of the barriers faced by end-users, such as persons with disabilities. This module presents concrete examples of ensuring emergency information and communication that are usable and accessible to the broadest range of end-users. Actions to ensure inclusive communications on websites, television programming, social media and radio broadcasting are included in this module to guarantee no one is left behind.

7. TRAINING COURSE SCHEDULE

Module	Topic	Exercises and interactions
Module 1	Introduction and key concepts	• Examples of emergency and crisis messages and alerts are presented. • Understanding of the key stakeholders in communication platforms. • Examination of the significance of ICT accessibility for all.

Module 2	Emergencies, crises, and contingency plans	• Understand the definitions of crisis, emergency, and disaster. • Learn about the National Emergency Telecommunication Plan (NETP). • Gain knowledge on developing a crisis or emergency plan for inclusive digital communications.
Module 3	Challenges and opportunities for inclusive and digitally accessible environments and communities	• Gain an understanding of what information should be included in an emergency response, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. • Review examples of communication platforms, messages, and alerts. • Learn about the two modules of communication and their various accessibility requirements.
Module 4	How to ensure inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations	• Learn how common barriers are faced by persons with disabilities when accessing emergency information. • Understand the benefits of accessible ICTs for everyone through relevant examples.
Module 5	Digital platforms and actions to guarantee inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations	• Gain knowledge on ICT accessibility requirements in different digital platforms. • Learn about actions to ensure inclusive television programming, websites, short messaging service and cell broadcast, mobile applications, social media, and radiobroadcasting. • Obtain access to further information and resources.

8. METHODOLOGY (Didactic approach)

This course is delivered through a player which supports several accessibility features. All text is read out by a state-of-the-art text to speech engine. Volume can be adjusted and closed captions are available. The course player works with JAWS 16 and later, NVDA, as well as Voiceover and Talkback screen readers in a range of browsers.

9. EVALUATION AND GRADING

Each module contains its own quiz, presented at the end of each topic. The learner must answer all questions correctly to complete each module. The learner may attempt each question as many times as they wish.

After completing each module, the learner must take the final quiz to receive the course completion certificate from the ITU Academy. It is necessary to obtain a score of 60% or higher in each module to receive your ITU Academy Certificate for the course.

Please note that quizzes within the course do not contain their own audio or captions.

ADVICE FOR USERS WITH DISABILITIES

This course had been designed to be accessible for persons with disabilities. It is developed using the Articulate Storyline software in HTML5. The course is designed to be compatible with the JAWS, NVDA, Voiceover and Talkback screen readers used with Internet Explorer, Edge, Chrome, Firefox, and Safari.

The course uses a player which has the following buttons: menu, play, progress bar, repeat, closed captions, next and previous. The controls the learner will use the most are the play and next buttons.

The course contains its own audio. It is strongly recommended that screen reader users mute this audio by going to the volume control on the player interface and muting the audio. All text and any images that contain information are accessible. We recommend using the tab key to navigate through the content of each slide and to use the player controls to move between slides.

There are quizzes in the course to test your knowledge on ensuring inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations. All questions must be answered correctly before progressing to the next topic. We recommend using the tab key to navigate through the radio button choices and using the space bar to select a choice in the quiz. When the learner submits an answer, they must click on the onscreen control that will either move to the next slide or allow the learner to answer the question again.

10. TRAINING COURSE COORDINATION

ITU coordinator
Roxana Widmer-Iliescu