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The role of persons with disabilities in building the information society in the Arab world

Among the hundreds of millions of people using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the world, many of them are persons with disabilities.

In the Arab countries, ICT for persons with disabilities are not yet very common. But they remain the best means for them to increase awareness about their abilities and capabilities, and therefore, their rights to equal opportunities.

A computer with a speech output, connected to a Braille line, would give greater opportunities and wider means and possibilities in the field of education; both to disabled students and disabled teachers. The possibility of downloading different books from accessible web sites for disabled internet users is likely to enable them to study in new branches which were inaccessible to them without ICT like subjects such as sciences and math.

To ensure the empowerment of persons with disabilities in this new kind of society, called information society, some conditions must prevail:

National policies should:

- support the use of ICT in all stages of education a training of disabled people;
- Encourage research with view to develop, "arabize" and adapt ICT to the needs of the Arab disabled people.
- Support the efforts, already made, to provide ICT using Arabic.

In order to make progress in this field, legislation is needed, hence the importance of having an international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.