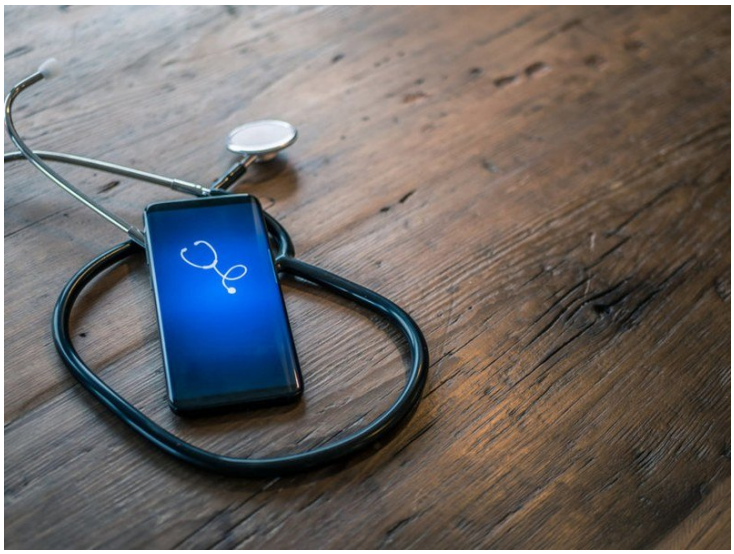
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ASIA EDITION

ITU, WHO collaborate with IT sector to defeat COVID-19

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The collaboration will start in the Asia Pacific region and then roll out globally



The World Health Organization (WHO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with support from UNICEF are set to work with telecommunication companies to text people directly on their mobile phones with vital health messaging to help protect them from COVID-19. These text messages will reach billions of people that aren't able to connect to the internet for information.

Now more than ever, technology must ensure that everyone can access the information they need. The collaboration will start in the Asia Pacific region and then roll out globally. The goal is to reach everyone with vital health messages, whatever their connectivity level. An estimated 3.6 billion people remain offline, with most people who are unconnected living in low-income countries, where an average of just two out of every ten people are online.

ITU and WHO call on all telecommunication companies worldwide to join this initiative to help unleash the power of communication technology to save lives from COVID-19. This initiative builds on current efforts to disseminate health messages through the joint WHO-ITU BeHealthy BeMobile initiative.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is the first pandemic in human history where technology and social media are being used on a massive scale to keep people safe, productive and connected while being physically apart.

Health workers are utilizing telemedicine to diagnose patients and hospitals rely on being connected to coordinate and triage them. Resilient and trustworthy telecommunication networks and services are essential, as more countries, companies and individuals turn to digital technologies to respond to and cope with the impact of COVID-19.

Building on their longstanding collaboration, ITU and WHO are committed to identifying and scaling best evidence-based digital health solutions and to leveraging frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data to diagnose, contain and predict outbreaks better and faster.