

## **Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability (DCAD) Annual report - 2019**

DCAD promotes participation for persons with disability in Internet governance and in the IGF. According to WHO, over one billion people have a disability globally. DCAD plays a key and ongoing role in the IGF by advising on and collaborating with the IGF Secretariat to ensure that both onsite and online facilities are accessible.

### **DCAD activities at the IGF**

DCAD organised a workshop/session in line with the 2019 thematic track of digital inclusion as well as participating in the Dynamic Coalition main session.

Topics discussed:

- ICT accessibility policy in education and employment for persons with disability
- Meeting the SDGs in terms of accessibility
- Accessibility of the onsite and online IGF facilities

### **Remote participation**

For a number of years, DCAD raised the inaccessibility, especially for persons with visual impairment, of the Webex conferencing system for remote participation. The ITU has studied accessible remote participation with work coordinated through JCA-AHF (Joint Coordinating Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors). DCAD members tested tools and found Zoom accessible, thus advocating that this tool be adopted for IGF. In 2019, this was achieved and the IGF Secretariat uses Zoom for remote participation during the IGF as well as inter-sessional meetings. It has made a significant difference to the successful involvement by persons with disability.

### **DCAD interaction with IGF Secretariat and the MAG**

DCAD members have given significant input to the IGF Secretariat and the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) in past years about accessibility issues but there were still issues with names and titles of certain chosen IGF workshops that were considered offensive to people with disabilities. We did some education of MAG members and IGF staff on accessibility issues. This year, we enhanced our ability when DCAD member, Gunela Astbrink was selected as an incoming member of the IGF MAG. Gunela's experience will bring further awareness on accessibility for persons with disability as part of her general tasks as a MAG member.

### **Planning for transition**

2019 was a year of transition for DCAD. The ITU is the original home for DCAD and supported DCAD since its beginnings in 2007 with Andrea Saks as Coordinator. However, due to changes in ITU, a new home was needed. Andrea Saks also considered handing over her role as Coordinator. DCAD members formed a new steering group during the Berlin IGF to discuss ways forward.

The ISOC Accessibility Special Interest Group offered to host the DCAD mailing list and website. Talks were held with this group but were not finalised until 2020.

During the DCAD session, the discussions revolved around expansion of the DCAD work to include:

- Active liaison with other Dynamic Coalitions
- Working with NRIs on improving accessibility
- Including accessibility in general workshops and sessions.

### **DCAD members' activities**

Over a number of years, DCAD members have encouraged the incorporation of accessibility in NRIs on an informal basis by either recommending ways for a national or regional IGF to be inclusive of persons with disability or by organising or speaking at sessions. Examples in 2019 are:

- Asia Pacific Regional IGF
- West Africa IGF
- NetThing (Australia)
- Pakistan IGF
- USA IGF

DCAD members plan to formalise this activity in 2020.

DCAD members held a number of accessibility events throughout the year including webinars, global accessibility awareness seminars and conferences such as M-Enabling Summit. ITU-related activities through JCA-AHF (Joint Coordinating Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors) informed DCAD's work.

Additionally DCAD members have been advocating for captioning and inclusion of persons with disabilities at many Internet Governance events during the past year, including ICANN, IGF USA, East Africa IGF and related webinars hosted by Internet Society chapters.