

IGF 2017 Reporting Template

- Session Title: **Universal Design and Creating an Accessible Global Digital Future**
- Date: 19 December 2017
- Time: 15:00 – 16:30
- Session Organizer: Andrea Saks, G3ict, [DCAD](#) Coordinator and ITU-T [JCA-AHF](#) Chair
- Chair/Moderator: Andrea Saks
- Rapporteur/Notetaker: Kaoru Mizuno

- List of Speakers and their institutional affiliations:

- Gunela Astbrink, Women With Disabilities Australia
- Shadi Abou-Zahra, World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
- Muhammad Shabbir, Islamabad Pakistan Chapter
- Francesca Cesa Bianchi, Vice President, Institutional Relations, G3ict
- Andrea Saks, DCAD Coordinator and ITU-T JCA-AHF Chair

Note: the following speakers planned to give talks remotely, but due to technical problems, especially inaccessibility of the remote participation tool (Webex), they could not participate unfortunately.

- Gerry Ellis, Feel The Benefit
- Masahito Kawamori, ITU-T Q26/16 Rapporteur, Keio University

- Key Issues raised (1 sentence per issue):

First of all, we (=DCAD) didn't have enough time to test remote participation, as there was a previous session (IGF-SA Annual General Assembly during lunch break) lasted until 14:50, recently inserted in the lunch break before this workshop, while DCAD was not aware of this change since it reviewed the schedule in the end of September 2017. DCAD has been repeatedly asking for enough time before the workshop, as there were remote participants with disabilities who need time to connect and test before the session.

Secondly, at the workshop room (XXVII), there was only one screen to display both real-time caption stream and meeting documents. Displaying meeting documents are helpful for everyone to follow the discussion, especially for persons with disabilities, with hearing difficulties. In addition, this only one screen was not able to be shared with the remote participants.

Ms Andrea Saks, DCAD coordinator and the moderator of this workshop, firstly stressed the need to improve the accessibility of remote participation, as Webex is not accessible for persons who are blind and which caused the withdrawal of Mr Gerry Ellis's remote participation as a panellist. This also has been a problem repeatedly at previous IGF meetings.

We need to change dramatically how we approach and prepare meeting for all persons with disabilities to be able to participate both remotely and onsite. Please take into account the ITU technical papers on remote participation and accessible meetings below:

- [FSTP-ACC-RemPart](#) "Guidelines for supporting remote participation in meetings for all" (10/2015)
- [FSTP-AM](#) "Guidelines for accessible meetings" (10/2015)

- If there were presentations during the session, please provide a 1-paragraph summary for each presentation:

Ms Gunela Astbrink introduced the principles and practice of universal design which is defined by UNCRPD. The term derives from building design, such as ramps for delivery trolleys, which is vital for wheelchair users. This concept is applicable to many other design disciplines including ICT, like online ramps. The universal design is necessary for persons with specific needs, but also everyone can benefit from it. She detailed concrete examples to seven principles of universal design, and highlighted the importance of interoperability of assistive technologies as persons with disabilities may have additional interfaces to access information.

Mr Shadi Abou-Zahra, highlighted the importance of web accessibility as the web is now the predominant interface to the internet and technologies are continually converging on the web. Next Generation Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) address mobile and connected devices, augmented and virtual reality, and many more current and future technologies on the internet.

Mr Muhammad Shabbir explained the accessibility situation in Pakistan where persons with disabilities are increasingly contributing to many professions, thanks to ICT technologies and change in policy. He concluded his presentation by highlighting the importance of collaboration among international stakeholders which is also mentioned in UN CRPD.

Ms Francesca Cesa Bianchi presented the G3ict DARE Index (a new benchmark tool on ICT accessibility covering 119 CRPD signatory countries) and G3ict activities for closing the global gap.

Ms Andrea Saks presented standardization efforts at ITU for an accessible global future, on behalf of Mr Masahito Kawamori who could not do so remotely. ITU-T Question 26 of Study Group 16 (Q26/16) develops international standards on accessibility to Multimedia Systems and Services for persons with disabilities. Some new standards include: ITU-T F.921 audio-based network navigation systems for persons with vision impairment, ITU-T H.702 accessibility profiles for IPTV systems, and ITU-T F.791 accessibility terms and definitions. She highlighted the importance of international standards on accessibility for interoperability, to lower the cost and to eliminate barriers to market entry.

Presentation slides are available [here](#) under the [DCAD webpage](#) hosted by ITU.

- Please describe the Discussions that took place during the workshop session (3 paragraphs):

How can the collaboration be made to close the gap on accessibility between developed and developing countries, especially the availability of assistive technologies. The participants shared examples of projects worldwide and agreed to get in touch for more details.

- Please describe any Participant suggestions regarding the way forward/ potential next steps /key takeaways (3 paragraphs):

Universal design should be considered from the beginning of the conception of any ICT technologies. For example, nowadays the web is the predominant interface to the internet, the web accessibility is important and the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)** of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) are adopted by many countries to improve the web accessibility. For accessibility of multimedia systems and services, international standards are actively developed by ITU-T Q26/16. Such accessibility standards are important, to improve interoperability, to lower cost of operation/purchase, and eliminate barriers to development and market entry.

Accessibility is not only for persons with disabilities, but everyone can benefit from it. It is important to ensure persons with disabilities are included in decision making process, including planning, design and implementation phases. ICT technologies should be accessible for everyone with the same cost.

It was agreed to start work to improve remote participation, by testing/comparing several tools, and by developing guidelines.

Gender Reporting

- Estimate the overall number of the participants present at the session:

Around 20 participants

- Estimate the overall number of women present at the session:

Around 10 women

- To what extent did the session discuss gender equality and/or women's empowerment?

Gender equality and women's empowerment are underlying topics of the session, as women and girls with disabilities suffer multiple disadvantages, being excluded on account of their gender and their disability.

- If the session addressed issues related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment, please provide a brief summary of the discussion: