From Exclusion to Empowerment: Role of ICTs to Access Information and Knowledge by Persons with Disabilities

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Globally, the number of persons with disabilities is not decreasing, but in opposite is increasing.

There are **over one billion** people with disabilities in the world, of whom between 110-190 million experience very significant difficulties.

This corresponds to about **15% of the world’s population** and is higher than previous World Health Organization (WHO) estimates, which date from the 1970s and suggested a figure of around 10%.

Technological revolution

- Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1945)

Other smart solutions

- Mobilecasting
- Videocasting
- Satellite Radio
- Digital Terrestrial
- Internet Streaming
- RSS
- Satellite and Cable
- Podcasting
- Photocasting
- blogging
- Internet Radio

151 countries have already ratified the UN Convention  
85 countries have already ratified optional protocol

Articles linked to UNESCO’s mandate:
5. Equality and non-discrimination
6. Women with disabilities
8. Awareness-raising
9. Accessibility
21. Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information
24. Education
27. Work and employment
29. Participation in political and public life
30. Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
31. Statistics and data collection
32. International cooperation
UNESCO’s approach – Building Inclusive Knowledge Societies

- Education For All
- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
- Access to Information and Knowledge
- Freedom of Expression

Access • Preservation • Creation • Dissemination

Pluralism • Inclusion • Diversity • Openness

Human Needs • Human Rights
One of the scenarios for empowerment

Integrated Approach

- Human Rights Based Approach
- Social – Charity Based Approach
- Medical Approach

- Education
- Enabling environment
- Health care
- Public policies
- Employment
- ICTs and AT

Universal Design for All
Few concrete examples...
Major areas of intervention Image from the brochure

- Normative instruments
- Research
- International cooperation
- Special initiatives
International conference
“From Exclusion to Empowerment: Role of ICTs for Persons with Disabilities”
24-26 November 2014, New Delhi, India
Structure of the entire event

- **International conference**
  - 8 Plenary sessions
  - 15 Thematic panels

- **Film Festival**
  - Film screenings
  - Media event(s)

- **Exhibition**
  - Showcase of IT&AT solutions
  - Workshop(s) and content development

- **Media events**
  - Online Print media

- **Supporting activities**
  - National stocktaking event (9-10 September 2014, New Delhi, India)
  - Other associated events
  - Materials /content developed

- **Special website**

- **Outcome Document and follow up activities**
Process of preparation and adoption of the Outcome Document by the Drafting Group

**International Conference**

- 15 parallel panel discussions:
  - Partnerships and sustainable development
  - Accessibility and technological solutions
  - Access to Information and Knowledge

- 15 moderators
- 15 rapporteurs

- 5 session’s reports:
  - Co-chair 1:
  - Co-chair 2:
  - Co-chair 3:

- Secretary to the Chair
- Advisors to the Chair
- Chair of the Conference

- Draft Outcome Document
  (adopted at the plenary session of the international conference)

- Executive Board
  - General Conference

- IFAP Council meeting
- IFAP Bureau meeting

2015
Inclusion of the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Post-2015 development agenda

High Level Meeting on Disability and Development (HLMDD)

23 September 2013

UN Inter-agency support group for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
A meeting of UN Member States, observers and representatives of entities of the United Nations system, as well as representatives of civil society, organizations of persons with disabilities and the private sector.

Resulting in an action-oriented **Outcome Document** in support of development goals for persons with disabilities, agreed upon by the global community and outlining actions to be taken.

This action-oriented document includes **strong provision on ICTs**, urging states to...

(e) Ensure accessibility, following the **universal design approach**, by removing barriers to the physical environment, ... services, **information and assistive devices, such as ICTs**, ... to achieve the fullest potential throughout the whole life cycle of persons with disabilities;

(o) Encourage the **mobilization of public and private resources** on a sustainable basis to mainstream disability in the development at all levels, ... **including by facilitating access to and sharing accessible and assistive technologies** ...;
Major documents, studies and reports

UNESCO World Report
‘Opening New Avenues for Empowerment: ICTs to Access Information and Knowledge for Persons with Disabilities’
(February 2013)

Joint report
‘The ICT Opportunity for a Disability-Inclusive Development Framework’
(September 2013)

Model Policy on Inclusive ICTs in Education for Persons with Disabilities
(February 2014)
Policy recommendations for UNESCO’s Member States on accessible, adoptive and affordable ICTs in education for Persons with Disabilities:

- National/regional education and information policies
- Linkages with other policies
- Existing Open Educational Resources
- Gender issues
- Open document format
- Web accessibility standards
- Impact and sustainability issues
- Budgetary implications and funding sources
- Successful cases studies at grassroot level

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002197/219767e.pdf
There was a particular focus on **policy** level

The ways in which the policy is enabling **practice**

But there also is a complementary focus on the ways in which ICTs are **enabling tools** for innovatory practice by various stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels
+ 18 major recommendations for action

- Inclusive ICT and policies
- Capacity building
- Accessible content
- Accessible infrastructure

Workplace → Community → Society

Lifelong learning

Individual
Model Policy for Inclusive ICTs in Education for Persons with Disabilities

SYSTEM LEVEL
Inclusive ICTs are seen as a tool to widen participation and increase educational opportunities and inclusion for learners with disabilities.

ORGANISATION LEVEL
- Educational organisations and all professionals working with them are effectively supported to use inclusive ICTs to widen participation and increase learning opportunities.
- Research and development initiatives that take 'user involved' as well as user 'control' approaches are supported.
- There is effective dialogue and consultation involving learners with disabilities and all key stakeholders.
- The implementation of an effective infrastructure for the use of inclusive ICTs in all education settings.
- Data for policy monitoring and evaluation is collected.

LEARNER LEVEL
- Inclusive ICTs are used as a tool for supporting participation in inclusive education and personalised learning opportunities.
- Inclusive ICTs are available to support learners with disabilities across different educational and lifelong learning settings.
Accessible ICTs and Personalized Learning for Students with Disabilities

- The report summarizes the multi-stakeholder discussion organized by UNESCO in cooperation with Microsoft in Paris from 17 to 18 November 2011.

- The discussion focused on challenges of and practical solutions for promoting personalization through technology in the classrooms for students.

- Successful case studies and recommendations show on how educators and students could use existing technological solutions in classrooms, and how UNESCO’s ICT Competences Framework for Teachers could be applied for teachers’ capacity building on issues related to the accessibility.

- The key recommendations on practical solutions for the use of accessible ICTs contained in the report target teachers, policy makers and administrators.

- It is now available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Chinese and Portuguese languages.

International cooperation -
World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
Internet Governance Forum (IGF)
Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP)
A unique opportunity for strategic debate and action oriented partnerships among various stakeholders.

An opportunity to collaboratively seek, identify, analyze, share, and create effective and durable solutions.

An open virtual space established for the promotion of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

http://www.wsis-community.org/
Guidelines for Inclusive Open and Distance Learning (ODL) using Accessible ICTs for Students with Disabilities
Thank you for your attention.

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