**United Nations International Day of**

**Persons With Disabilities**

**December 2, 2014**

**>>**> Good morning, excellencies, distinguished representatives, dear colleagues>> Good morning, excellencies, distinguished representatives, dear colleagues,

ladies and gentlemen a very warm welcome to one and all. My name is Afaf Konja and I am indeed happy and honoured to serve as moderator for today's important event on accessible new technologies. For persons with disabilities indeed crossing the digital divide. This event is part of many other events being organized today and tomorrow to commemorate the 2014 International Day of Persons with Disabilities of course that is held tomorrow December 3rd and we of course start with this very critical event today. The theme this year is sustainable development, this promise of technology. The international day will focus on what it takes, what it takes, the how-to to make an inclusive, accessible and sustainable society and development a reality for all. This lies at the heart of the work of the international community to build a new global development agenda that is truly transformative. Accessible new technologies have a great potential to improve the quality of life of more than one billion persons living with disabilities around the world today. Ladies and gentlemen, that is 15% of the global population, and 80% of them, 80% of those living with disabilities live in developing nations. Accessible new technologies can enable and accelerate the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the field of education, employment, civic engagement protection and entertainment. New technologies are capable of delivering that leapfrog promise for development we all aspire. The objective of our panel discussion today is to identify, exchange and examine good practices, best practices, lessons learned and the planning and implementation of policies and strategies to promote accessible technologies for sustainable development in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all. The three core issues of social development. As I introduce your expert panelists individually and for your kind review and attention the bios of our panelists are available on the division for social policy and development website. You can go to social.UN.ORG. That is, UNSDN.OOG. To fully ‑‑ that is in fact, inclusive of persons with disabilities, and in the post‑2015 developing framework I have the honor to invite the panelists. Each speaker has about ten to fifteen minutes to deliver remarks. It is, indeed, my pleasure to introduce our first speaker Ms. Daniela Bas, director for division of social policy and development of the United Nations department of social and economic affairs.
>> Thank you. And thank you also to Karen. She's borrowing me the glasses. All the technology but very important. I forgot mine I'm terribly sorry. Excellencies, distinguished representatives, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, and I see there are also some faces that are familiar to fee so allow me to say, friends. Well, I have been introduced as Daniela Bas and I have the honor to lead the division of social policy and social development that has the focal points for the whole United Nations system on youth, aging, the family, indigenous peoples, the people with disabilities. This is a big division and I think actually when we talk about new technologies and technologies in general, they apply to all of these various groups I just mentioned although today we're here to start celebrating the third of December, which is the day the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. So what I'm going to share with you about technologies, the new technologies today is focused on persons with disabilities, but I thought it was important to highlight that technologies and new technologies are extremely relevant also for these other groups of society I just mentioned. I believe that we have to go back to the year 1995 when ‑‑ don't worry, I have only ten minutes time, so ‑‑ when the world was summoned for social development, you know, took place and social integration was one of the areas that were highlighted together with eradication of poverty creation of jobs and decent work. Social integration continues to be one of the overarching objectives of all international development efforts. After all, United Nations is people centered so social integration is one of the most relevant pillars and mentions of the Copenhagen declaration of 1995, and in the Copenhagen declaration it was clearly recognized that access to and the use of technologies by individuals in general can help to fulfill social ‑‑ the social development goals. As we know the U.N. is committed to promoting sustainable and equitable development and has long taken ‑‑ a lead in promoting equality in promoting inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities through information and communication technologies as well. ICT. A key message. I would like to emphasize today, here, is that accessible new technologies are a cross cutting enabler for sustainable development for all people with or without disabilities. I will repeat it once more today in my short remarks. But today and tomorrow and hopefully the future, I hope that we can leave the DIS at home and bring the abilities. New technologies and technologies in general help to focus on the abilities. So we know that in 2006 there was the adoption of the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and there, again, the importance of accessible new technologies was reiterated. And then we moved from 95 to 2013, see I'm fast here. We move now to September 2013 when there was the high level meeting on ‑‑ as we call it disability and development may be shorter but it was focusing on the MBGs and the development after the MBGs. We have ‑‑ since then an outcome document which is very important and one of the areas relevant areas, of this outcome document focuses on accessibility. Again, accessibility to education as Afaf said to various areas of the life of a person, in this case, persons with a disabilities. From education, to health, to employment, to transportation, to communication, to leisure and fun. Now, despite all the achievements that, you know, we have preached in twenty years since Copenhagen as already said by Afaf there are around one billion with a percentage with some form of disability and the remaining 20% in developed countries so new technologies and assistive technologies can be very helpful in helping promoting inclusive societies and really integration of all people as long as all the new technologies and technologies are going to cover the whole globe and really create a net so that either developing or developed countries where there are also people with disabilities can really benefit of these technologies. Now when we talk about assistive technologies, I ask myself what are these assistive technologies? I'm not an expert. So maybe most of you know what they are but I would like to spell them out a little bit for those, like me, were not that familiar and now assistive technologies I found out, mean that ‑‑ they are gadgets that include anything that helps a person complete everyday tasks. So we're talking here about voice‑to‑text services screen readers and speech recognition that can promote empowerment, inclusiveness and participation of persons with disabilities in all areas of life. Mobile accessibility is a powerful tool that offers new opportunity to persons with disabilities to overcome physical or functional impairments and they allow to leave at home as I said the DIS and focus on the ability. So ladies and gentlemen, as I said, new technologies have the potential to become a significant driving force for sustainable and for inclusive development. And technology has been identified as one of the key enablers for accelerating the progress and also for realizing the U.N. post‑2015 global development agenda so by strengthening the interface between new technologies and disability, I believe this will be crucial for the achievements of the development goals also for persons with disabilities in the post‑2015 global development agenda. As developments and innovations emerge in the areas of technologies and new technologies these need to be made accessible and available to persons with disabilities, therefore, policymakers, regulators, operators and industry leaders, please do work together to make this a reality. Because the post‑2015 global development agenda is an agenda for all not some and this applies to new technologies that are already leading the contemporary world. They are leading the new market as well. So accessible technologies are not additional expenses. They are just necessary and are smart investments that generate opportunities for equal participation by all. We should ensure that assistive technologies become a key element of global, regional, and also national strategies to remove the remaining barriers by persons with disabilities. So from assistive technologies to technologies for all, from assistive to technologies for all ‑‑ and I give you a couple of examples of things that were invented and created for persons with disabilities, assistive technologies, and now they have become technologies for all. Let's go to my country. I'm Italian. Let's go to my country, to Italy, back two centuries ago. It's the year 1802 and it was developed, a particular machine known as typewriter. Enable his sister who was blind to write. Now we move to 1868 in the states, and another gentleman made further developments so that he invented the first typewriter for all. And it became commercially successful. Nowadays, it is not imaginable a world without boards. Now let's also think about another example of how persons with disabilities or disabilities, played a major role and inspired inventions. And I'm thinking now about Alexander Graham Bell. His wife and his mother were hearing impaired. And this triggered to him the interest and the fascination about sounds. Voices. And how these sounds and these voices could be transmitted to the point that in January 2015, Bell, made the first transcontinental telephone call. And now who can live without the smart phone at least in some parts of the world so what I'm trying to say here and I'm sorry if it's long but I thought it'd be good to give some examples than give policy speeches although I am requested to do that allow me to mix the two. Having said this, I really, really believe that there is a need to strengthen policies and regulations and development. New frameworks for accessible and affordable new technologies in close consultation and collaboration between private and public and nothing about us without us and that means persons with disabilities so as a final point we needed to ensure that accessible new technologies are include in the U.N. post‑2015 framework and in the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. I look forward to hearing examples and experiences from our panelists about technologies and how technologies can act as enablers for social development and for a development which is a sustainable for all. So I wish to hear now your speeches and thank you very much for having allowed me all this time. Thank you.
>> Thank you so much Daniela, I really like to underscore the examples that you gave and the inspiration that comes from a perceived disability if you will that we, as people, naturally have and the ideas and the inspiration and indeed the paradigm shift and global shift that occur from that so may this conversation inspire ideas to come forward. I now have the honor or interesting her excellency Ms. Karen Tan. Ambassador of the permanent mission of the republic of Singapore. The floor is yours.
>> Distinguished moderator and panelist, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, very good morning to all of you. I would first like to wish everyone a very happy International Day of Persons with Disabilities in advance which we will celebrate tomorrow. But this meaningful occasion gives visibility to the needs and rights of more than one billion persons with disabilities around the world but disability is only the first step. I think what we're talking about today is actions and actions will speak louder than words. This morning I will share Singapore's experience of crossing the digital divide of persons with disabilities. But since Singapore is still very much in learning mode on this issue I'm looking forward to hearing the other perspectives especially from other panelists as well as the floor. Start with a question. Have you been on a roller coaster ride? I think many of us have but most either love it or hate roller coaster rides either because we like the thrill or if you are like me you sick afterwards. So ‑‑ but we felt that. But many persons with disabilities cannot make such a choice because they do not have the option of ever going on one in their lifetime. I ask this trivial question to make a simple but relevant point persons with disabilities require special attention so they can enjoy the same quality of life as we do. The beauty about information and communication technologies is that they can be harnessed in significant way to improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities. Singapore a local school, the Asian women's welfare association school which caters to students with multiple disabilities and moderate to severe autism spectrum disorder has collaborated with one of our local university to set up a 3D immersive room simulating experiences through 3D technology it allows student to experience places which they may not have otherwise the opportunity of doing for example, going on a roller coaster ride or interacting with dolphins now I think you say this even for all sometimes we may not want to, you know, go through this interactivity with dolphins but we have this 3D technology which is accessible to all. There are also customized interactive 3D programs tailored to meet the learning needs of the students with the aim of developing students' confidence in communicating thoughts and preferences. Now this desire is for our country to be included in society and recognized and given full opportunity to become integral contributing members of society. To realize this vision we are currently implementing a plan in 2012‑2016, our national strategy. This plan was formulated out of consultations with many stakeholders including persons with disabilities as well as organizations that serve and support them. An important observation was that the notion of accessibility goes beyond physical accessibility and must include access to information and communication.

Technology was also identified as one of eight crosscutting issues that impacted persons with disabilities across their life cycle. The use of assistive technology which I will refer to as AT and thank you, Daniela for elaborating on that and ICT key enablers to help individuals overcome the challenges posed by disabilities. The Singapore government has stepped overall publicity for our road map. It is helpful for political leaders to lead this initiative from the front. For example our prime minister, announced new and enhanced policies to benefit persons with disabilities in key national speeches. The president of the society for the physically disabled Singapore, has recently become a nominated member of parliament and no doubt will continue her advocacy efforts on the needs of persons with disabilities in parliament. Singapore also ratified the convention of the rights of persons with disabilities in 2013 which we continue to publicize through various information channels so persons with disabilities are made aware of their rights so let's move onto the centers to access AT. We found that many persons with disabilities and their caregivers did not realize that AT devices could improve the productivity and quality of life of the persons with disabilities to begin with. One participant said I don't use devices. I don't have this kind of device. I don't know where to get it. If I have one I will use it so this is an actual participant saying that. A focus group discussion found that as many as 68% of respondents who are parents of persons with disabilities have never heard of AT although most indicated an interest to find out more. Among the AT users interviewed there was also a lack of awareness of the eligibility of funding for such as AT. Our findings showed we need to publicize to increase awareness we found it was important to provide physical premises for persons with disabilities to access AT. One such platform Singapore is what we call SG Enable and it is a one stop government agency for persons with disabilities which will see a new and integrated community space ready in 2015. This space will house the enabling innovation center which will have facilities such as text to speech software, a social innovation hub where people can share ideas and services for persons with disabilities. In addition, the info comm accessibility center, a local training facility managed by a local CSO and supported by a network of government agencies and private sector companies offered structured certification and industry relevant training across disability types. It is a good example of the strength of public, private partnership in such industries. The center comprises computer labs for various levels of ICT courses and training rooms for the program. Affordable training and customized courses for various levels some of which meet certification provided here at a subsidized rate of about 30‑40 U.S. dollars with the possibility of either further subsidies. The center also houses the first ever library in Asia with over 700 times of AT equipment ranging from software to augmented communication devices, low vision aids and switch adopt toys. This allows persons with disabilities to try out these assistive devices in everyday settings before deciding whether to purchase them. For example, a gentleman with a visual impairment that prevented him from reading his own handwriting was finally able to hold a job managing the inventory of three shops with a help of a desktop magnifier and a hand held video magnifier. Unfortunately, the high up front maintenance cost AT has a prohibitive effect on persons with disabilities. Their families, schools and employers. We recognize these challenges. The AT fund or ATF is a means tested financial scheme available to persons with disabilities to defray the cost of assistive device. These mobility and communication devices include wheelchairs and hearing aids and since 2012, we have doubled the lifetime cap of these subsidies from ten thousand U.S. dollars to 20 thousand U.S. dollars per individual. There is strong evidence to show that early intervention for children with disabilities improves the quality of life in the long‑term. This in turn helps them to maximize the potential to lead fulfilling and independent lives, access gainful employment and better integrate into the community providing quality education is thus crucial in the formative years of a child with disabilities and AT helps him or her to what we call level up. The government has worked to build and strengthen the ICT infrastructure and provide AT devices for pupils in our government schools. These device include frequency modulation equipment, braille notebooks, talking calculators, customized furniture and specialized software. The government also provides grants to provide educational support for students. An important part of these services is consultation with occupational therapists on AT. This helps the government school to better accommodate and support the learning needs of students with physical and all sensory impairments. Children who have greater disability challenges are enrolled in what we call special education schools but educational programs are tailor made for the needs of the students ICT as a key enabler for teaching and learning of the framework launched in 2012. One school uses iPad app to help students perform hand exercises and handwriting readiness as well as to facilitate the grip formation. No offense to you who use iPads to play games like candy crush during all the speeches that we have here in the U.N. but this seem to me a much more valuable way to use the device. The simpled a ministry of communication has provided a 3.8 million U.S. dollars from 2013‑15 to allow school to build an infrastructure and to foster a culture of innovation for ICT for teaching and learning and this helps education‑related ‑‑ AT devices in support services for students going to vocational training schools and universities. Let me talk about ‑‑ a little bit about employment. A key to the verbal for enabling our plan is to increase the employability of persons with disabilities but it is insufficient to merely equip them with skills. Unfortunately, many employers are reluctant to. Enhance the employment option the government has initiated the open door program. Recently enhanced in 2014, the program's aimed as supporting employers in the hiring, training and integration of persons with disabilities. The funding covers up to 90% of job redesign policy up to 200,500 of persons with disability hired. This gives workplace modification. Technology can allot substantial benefits in the area of service delivery. In the care sector technology enables care providers to deliver services faster and better at the same time clients benefit from the improved quality of care and enhanced supervision the sustainable enhancement for elder care and disability services fund or seed supports projects such as telehome, which allows those who live at home not to physical have made house visits. Each has an attached video camera managed by a case manager to check in on the senior. Such services can benefit persons with disabilities who are unable to leave their homes due to their disability conditions. Unfortunately, at present they are insufficient regular home‑based care service for persons with disabilities. This is one area where Singapore will continue to work on improving. It is possible that leveraging on the framework in appropriate situations can allow us to scale up such services and incorporate the best practices we learned. To conclude. I would like to quote, for people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible. End of quote. We have made substantial achievements to make things possible for those Singapore I appreciate this opportunity to share our experiences with you and I really look forward to hearing your views as well.
>> Thank you so much your excellency. I think we need to acknowledge and congratulate Singapore as a leader in such work and hope that we can see more partnerships because this global agenda is of course about partnerships of dealing with technology transfer and resource mobilization so the Singapore partnerships really tie into such phenomenal examples so thank you so much. I now have the pleasure to present and permanent representative of the permanent mission the kingdom of Morocco of the united nation to deliver remarks as the permanent mission of the kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations the floor is indeed yours.
>> Thank you very much and thank you very much for all this. It's a great opportunity to participant in this very interesting debate and while we still struggling in Morocco for access to information technology for all persons where I will be presenting the experience of Morocco for persons with disabilities. This is ‑‑ unfortunately, I'm going to make policy speech as was said by Ms. Bas but let me first by thanking the division of social policy and the U.N. department of social affairs for organizing this panel discussion on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Our meeting today is within this pursuing the high level reaching of disability in the 68 division on the 23rd of September to 2013. We believe that the report should follow for the opportunity for the disability development framework will be a road map for states and stakeholders for the promotion of people with disability and the access of local governments. The comments of Morocco include the persons of disabilities in their societies was illustrated last year in cooperation with the United Nations in the first of February 2013 of commercial consultation intake and express themselves on the world we want. These consultations focus on the priorities for the first 2015 development agenda. This was presented in March 2013 by the official U.N. residents coordinator in Morocco for the United Nations development group. Morocco has also hosted from July 2013 the disability conference and the organization. Which concluded we need to facilitate these persons and persons with great disabilities. In the same way, the Moroccan government established a partnership with the World Bank which aims to promote accessibility for persons with disabilities to public spaces and communication. By adhering to the declaration in 2000 Morocco developed many strategies in this represent. Morocco became more engaged in inclusion of disability in the government although the age of disability has not been considered very ambitious. These measures are particularly taken through several stages. Namely the social affairs and disability community, composed by the minister and social development and the five foundation. In this context the national administration for those with disability were used to conduct large‑scale initiative to promote inclusion of those with disability in all aspects of development through the communication of these centers thus in 2012 Morocco has 1347 centers on the legislative aspects special aattention was devoted to persons with disabilities in the constitution which were admitted for all forms of discrimination of all persons with disabilities. Similarly the government allowed those actions enabling the persons with disabilities in this society and addressing their needs. Since its ratification in 2009 of the U.N. convention of the rights of persons with disabilities and the social protocol, beginning with Morocco has made considerable effort to protect the rights of persons with disabilities including the promotion of economic rights. To prevent disabilities, Morocco has taken effective measures in all measures of the country such as conducting campaigns and disability awareness in this context there has been benefit from training programs and courses in the prevention of disabilities and of course for persons with disabilities. The Moroccan society has worked in the field of disability and are waiting for supporting the rights of persons with disabilities. The number of association has increased from 50 to nearly one thousand in 2011. They are those who want more independence through partnerships. For this minute the association have the to integrate the rights of persons with disabilities and national policies and public programs. Moroccan government currently working on mainstreaming these forms. This is used to introduce those who have a specific relation to fight all forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities. The strategic framework aims in particular to the participation of persons with disabilities in public and political life to protect them from discrimination in their environment and to promote their rights in society. In addition, the Moroccan government is working with social affairs set up by the minister and build that to increase the potential environment of persons with disabilities in the public service to reach these persons. Regarding the prevention of disability, the action plan for the integration of persons with disabilities was adopted for 2017 initiatives have been taken for promotion of prevention. In the minister it was established to promote communication. Like in the previous association within the working group Morocco is ready to work with members in order to integrate the disability and the rights of persons with disabilities in the global implementation. I thank you. Thank you.
>> Thank you so much your excellency. I think everyone's going to agree with me I want to acknowledge you and Morocco for underscoring the issue of discrimination. I think we can all appreciate this isn't talked enough. The issues of discrimination and feeling ashamed and the social stigma surrounding persons with disabilities I believe that is more crippling than the disability itself. And I think the more that we talk about it the more that we can work politically on social levels and academic levels and really even bring it out into the commercial words and movies and TV and just make these human beings included in our societies. I think this is very, very critical to really hone in on the issues of discrimination and truly having empowering ourselves and empowering people with disabilities from the government all the way down to the grass roots so thank you for that. I have the pleasure of introducing our next presenter Ms. Frances West chief accessibility officer of international business machines as we all know IBM.
>> Thank you. Well as the sole private sector representative I first wanted to thank the U.N. for giving me the opportunity to share our best practices and I want to thank Daniela for talking about accessibility from both from policy stand point and also from a private sector stand point is about smart investment and I also want to do thank Tan for defining what assistive technology is about. For company like IBM, we actually focus on things that are what we consider as information technology or IT. There is a slight difference between assistive technology and information technology in the best case scenarios that they actually come together. So one can broadly think about assistive technology as a technology and enable independent living. In other words it's focusing on making that individual quality of life better. But information technology is more about the environment, think of them as the business environment or enterprise environment and that's, of course, is what we focus on. IBM is a company that's over hundred years old and many of you probably don't hear about us as much anymore because if you are busy doing Candy Crush then you probably know more about the internet base, the consumer technology companies like Facebook, but we are the ‑‑ really the underpinning for government, for banks, for airlines, so we are kind of behind the scene what we call the infrastructure information technology company. And earlier we talked about the cost of the technology can be prohibitive so how does a company like IBM look at this kind of a topic? And because we are for‑profit it is for important to focus on the bottom line. To bring the cost of goods sold down and one way to do that either you reduce the cost of production of the goods or you increase the consumption of the goods so from that perspective, we really believe, have always believed the accessibility is about easy access for everybody. But we have had difficulty in articulating or getting the customers or our consumers to understand the kind of a paradigm shift that was mentioned until the mobile device came about. Everybody now who uses a cell phone or using an iPad or android device understand how important it is to enlarge the footprint size, to create the color contrast, you know, in, for example, bright sunshine, how important it is or ideal to have caption when you're at a busy airport and trying to listen into a conference call so all of a sudden the technology such as mobile and also by the way, cloud, computing has made accessibility a forefront topic. At IBM we've been working very hard in kind of almost making accessibility term disappear into what we call the customer or employee experience concept because if you believe that technology is there and by the way technology from the get go was developed or invented to help people with all kinds of situational disabilities there from that perspective you can imagine a world, not too far from now where everybody can have your technology adapt to you. In the way that you like it. The way you want it in what we call a personal preference model or what we call the hyper personalization scenario. And that is all becoming possible because of technologies such as cloud, such as mobile, such as analytics. Because one thing that's very important is to ‑‑ instead of having technology one size fits all that we're beginning to understand, you know, your preferences often you're beginning to experience that in the, for example, your Amazon book buying behavior but we think that needs to go further, for example we're working with airport, some of my ‑‑ our consultant that sits on the access board as transportation involves we're talking and thinking about once you're inside the airport the airport can be big and confusing for everything. Not just for persons with disabilities. How can you use combination of out door navigation and how can you navigate indoor, inside how can you find out where the elevator or accessible bathroom is. That kind of a fine‑tuning of the personal experience can be made very possible with technology that's at our ‑‑ at our disposal. Another thing is how do we really transform accessibility from a business perspective that you are ‑‑ if you're going to do accessibility you're just doing a for a small segment of people versus a segment of all, and, again, we actually believe that accessibility technology is probably the most innovative technology that's out there and it is not a coincidence that IBM, or my organization, for example, which is responsible for advising all lines of business within IBM whether it's internal like our CIO to the external product line to make it as accessible as possible to put the organization into IBM research because we believe that, you know, if you really truly want to work on accessibility technology you cannot be after thought. You cannot be after you developed something you amended something then you come back and say, well, I will make it accessible. You have to think about it from the point of inception. It's not even the concept level. You need to think through. That's why we're working, for example, with IBM Design organization and to see how can we have accessibility design in. Again, in this new world like mobile apps can be created in less than a week. Sometimes in days or hours. If you don't think about accessibility from the get go you will never have the chance to go back. That's what we work on. To give one example we have focus on working on toolings so that our developers by the way we have about 2,000 developers around the world. We operate 170 countries and many of the development hubs are, for example, in India, China, in Mexico. So how do you enable 200,000 employees, programmers, to understand accessibility. It's hard just to educate them and to tell them you need to give them tools so we, for example, recently have put some of our what we call a mobile checker tool. In other words when you develop mobile apps run through this tool that has preloaded all the latest standards, you all know the accessibility is very much a standard‑driven technology. It not only advise you that you are you are meeting the standards or not. In one case, one product we have is called tea leaves which really literally tries to read your experience and do the play back for the customer who designed the website or designed the mobile. We have embedded into the tea leaf tooling so that if the color contrast is not correct the tool comes back and says the standard recommendation of the color contrast should be 3.6 and right now you're at 2.1. Why don't you think about using a hotter pink for the cashmere sweater retail website so these are very fine and very nuanced but very, very advanced technology one has to build in. We also work very hard on what we call the employment or the enterprise technology, again, for companies in business it's very important for us to always hire talent so when we, for example, put out our employment application or talent applications who want to make it accessible as possible because we want to make sure that everybody with any kind of ability or disability when they, you know, look for that job and go online and click on that link to say I want to apply, that is accessible as possible.

So I talked about it's very important to understand the kind of differences between assistive technology and new information technology. And since U.N. is kind of a ‑‑ the really the highest level policy‑driven ‑‑ policy leader in the world ‑‑ one of the things that we've been working for G through ICT my colleague over there is really to promote the idea that in the accessibility technology world, we really need the government paying attention to the research and development aspect of technology. It's not just about implementation. And we think that a sustainable model is to invest on the front end of the research and development versus the back end subsidy because a subsidy type of model you are always chasing the technology, but if you invest in the front end and research end of innovation what you want to do is to give the people with disability ‑‑ actually what we call the first dip or first chance of using the technology. That in itself will create a competitive differentiation and that skills will make that person with that disability will make them more attractive in the labor market. We believe that the model has to begin to be not just shifted but reversed and it's possible now again because what we call the CAMS. The cloud, analytics, mobile and sociotechnology. This kind of a conversation will not be able to carry its wait, let's say, even five or ten years ago because technology has not evolved enough but now we're at the point it is very possible to convert these technologies and put people with disability as what we call the use cases as first and foremost, so this is the kind of work that we've been working on around the world and one more thing from the business perspective, almost every companies have what we call the employee resource program so we focus on, for example, different constituency, women, Asian, or African American, gay, lesbian, but the people with disability is one constituency that cut across everybody. We're all going to get there as we age and also this is very global topic. I just came back from Bologna literally, less than 36 hours ago because I was in Italy attending the Italian government's sponsored HANDMANIKA which is the largest assistive technology conference and it's just very reassuring to see the same kind of enthusiasm, the same kind of discussion occurring in Italy and also in a lot of young millennial are coming in. I think much more passionate about this topic so there is a lot of commonality and shared practices that can be had at a global level through an organization like U.N. and when you share best practices, technology, thus, you can drive the cost down with the raw adoption of technology in everything we do. Thank you.
>> Frances, thank you so much for sharing the innovation of IBM and also the sensitivity from development, research and development to the product and the conception to market, so thank you so much for that. I now have the distinct pleasure of introducing a dear colleague to my immediate left Mr. Gary Fowlie. Head of the liaison office of international telecommunication union. Gary.
>> Thank you very much and thank you colleagues, excellencies, delegates, thank you very much for this opportunity. I am going to do a bit of a traditional PowerPoint but before we get there, I will summarize our ITU‑G3ict model policy report because that's why I'm here is idea is ‑‑ behind this report was to create a bridge between policy and practice and what governments need to do to ensure that accessibility is enshrined in their working method, but I wanted to make up first a couple things that Frances and Daniela said because I think they made very important points as Daniela noted ICTs are crosscutting through development whether it's social inclusion or environmental sustainability and I think accessible ICTs are the cutting edge of that in enabling us to ensure that it's a test of the truth of that statement. I think in the long run and I also wanted to remind people that next year is a very important year for ensuring that this concept with accessible ICTs are enshrined. Next year, in September will be the sustainable post‑2015 summit where the goals will be outlined. Right now there are four references to ICTs as a crosscutting enabler.

Amongst the 17 goals and 169 targets. Which is going to come down a bit so we need your help to ensure that accessible ICTs are reflected in that the other important thing that will happen next year is the ten‑year review, mandatory ten‑year review. Which started actually in 1998, at the ITU with the concept of the information society but I think we've moved from an information society to a knowledge society. We talked about both of those. Now I think we're moving towards what I like to term as sustainable digital society and it'll only be as ‑‑ you measure I believe by how inclusive and sustainable our society is especially for people's with disability. And as I said the report that we're going to talk about now, if you can go to the first slide will give us an overview of how we put policy into practice. I think what Frances said, the need to ‑‑ for standards to have policy that governments set that will spur innovation and development. ICT's accessibility has always been a key driver in innovation from Alexander Graham Bell to things like Stephen Hawking and what he's brought to the needs for communication and a driver of innovation and spurred development for private and public sector and we can't undervalue that enough in fact I think we need to look at a group at how important that is and provide more proof for those who don't understand how important that is to innovation, growth, and a sustainable digital society. So ‑‑ that's ‑‑ you know, let's get back to the last one. I'd like to talk in more detail about how we transpose the ICT accessibility division in the international frameworks and we're going to look at the six of the modules. Four of the six modules that are in the report by the way that report will be downloadable from the 3Gict website and from the IT website. First of all, I think in every country the ICT sector is governed by national policies, legislations and regulations and it's that that sets the tone for both the private and public sector and it's in key to making the ICT accessibility a reality is to ensure that it's included in the enabling and regulatory framework. That means we have to up ‑‑ you have to lobby to update existing IT legislation and develop new policies. Many of the ICT accessibility policies were developed in earlier and may only refer to physical abilities and infrastructure so the idea of ICT accessibility needs to be added one of the places to derive this policy is through the government's public procurement laws. Governments are using this IT equipment and this will leverage the private sector to ensure that the accessibility components are included. Move to the next one. So take closer look at the report module one addresses changes needed to be exist in ICT communication law. It identifies different options for regulation. Some countries regulate through license conditions others by regulation and others still through what we call soft regulation where industry establishes codes of conduct and those codes of conduct basically become the methods of operation and the regulatory environment. However, this report identifies the need for ‑‑ to look at current, universal service and access frameworks. Many of you ‑‑ many of you are aware, excuse me ‑‑ many of you are familiar with universal access, policies for telecommunications, they are global requirements for the most part where you have to provide accessible access and affordable access to ICT and I think we need to look at the universal access ‑‑ we need to add a third pillar and that third pillar is ICT accessibility so we need to look at that the report covers that. How you might be able to do that. If we look at the legal policy regulatory framework, we need to obviously look at the definitions and revise those definitions. If persons with disabilities are not defined in a country ICT law that's the starting point obviously and, again, as just mentioned universal access and definitions need to be included in the concept of ICT accessibility. Likewise, I think probably the most important component or one of the most important components is consumer protection and emergency service laws must be revised to take into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities. And often that can be a very innovative place to begin not only the policy work but where the technology industry can come to the fore innovative solution will be right. Hopefully will be right if that policy is put into place and the member states industry rises to the challenge. The next component of the report is ‑‑ deals with the various media. The report is organized by different types of technologies because there's different issues depending on the type of technology you start with the mobile phone accessibility. This is the most obvious. All of you out there play Candy Crush since that's the theme of our ‑‑ Candy Crush for accessibility. I don't know, enough of that. Again, this is probably the easiest policy for a country to implement and one which promises the greatest impact due to the widespread uptake of mobile telephony communications. We have almost universal coverage with basic. We're a long ways away from universal access to the internet. If you ‑‑ however, fortunately the least developed countries of the U.N. banned together saying they will provide access to the internet by 2020. Regardless of what next year's sustainable summit might say I want to reinforce that one because it doesn't get mentioned enough and, again, finally I think mobile operators who use mobile phones need to recognize they ensure emergency access for people with disabilities and, again, that's to their advantage because it will not only increase their market but spur innovation in their domestic industries. Finally, TV and video programming. We've used these ‑‑ both these terms because some countries have not switched to digital ‑‑ television and video and have traditional one‑way broadcasting so you need to look at this. The key elements of this policy are to promote closed captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing and description for the blind and low vision and also those for foreign language programming. This calls for such access by different kinds of shows. For example, more ambitious targets for news programs and for broadcasters who may not jump at that opportunity instantly until the public broadcaster is ‑‑ leads the way. And, of course, all of this should be done in consultation with persons with disabilities otherwise it will not ‑‑ fulfill to its maximum potential and, finally, the final module is the public access to ICT services including pay phones and telecenters for most of us here that's something we never ever think of and in fact, pay phones have gone the way of the dodo bird and I think New York is in the process of removing its last public pay phone so not our experience everyday but very much the reality for people who are living in the developed world who take cards, mobile telecenters especially telecenters are essential in providing universal access so in that case we need to ‑‑ policy needs to focus on the replacement of that tech ‑‑ of that ICT equipment with accessible devices and workstations as the need come to the fore and that is a reality now, however the shift to, you know, the world is under satellite coverage, the potential of low cost affordable satellite delivered broadband. We're not ‑‑ haven't gotten there in terms of providing it to everyone but I think by 2020, we'll very much be in that position. Let's hope so. And it will make much of this discussion on policy a practice so in concluding I think we need to see the importance of developing the three points of the national regulatory and policy tools the need for consultation and collaboration another reason we're here and the immediate to conduct annual review to ensure that feedback is obtained going forward. And, again, focus on the practical solutions that may actually stimulate practical policy solutions that may seem like an oxymoron. Practical policy solution but really that's what's needed to stimulate innovation by the member states both in policy and industries. Thank you very much.
>> Gary, thank you so much for offering that deep perspective. It's true as governments enable the private sector then of course the information system and other stakeholders there's on interplay that will practically feed into the universal framework that you're speak of so thank you so much for that. I now have the pleasure of introducing Mr. CHAPAL from the department of the essential medicines and health products the World Health Organization the WHO the floor is yours.
>> Thank you. Your excellencies, Daniela, this is a brand new initiative on global cooperation of assistive technology called gate. So before coming here I didn't have any discussion with Daniela but you see some of my presentations match what she said in the beginning. How LATA back at home can come to work. And the only thing which can make LATA come to work is assistive technology.
[Pause].
>> It's wonderful when it works.
>> So assistive technology like wheelchair. Simple. Then ‑‑ this is a motorized scooter. And then in the working environment. It's not either ‑‑ or. All of us have to work together to make sure that ICT are in the working environment has to work together to ensure everybody at work. Next. So we say AT is the basic needs and basic rights. The first step out of poverty, the first step into work and employment. First step into education. First step towards inclusion and participation. Next. First step towards improved quality of life. And to enhance mobility and independence and freedom as we grow older. But the problem is 90% of people in need do not have access to AT. Only 3% of people in need have access to hearing aids in developing countries. So what we are talking about? The time has come to really change this situation. Availability and cost are the two major barriers for poor access to AT. Some of this motorized ‑‑ can I have the previous one? This motorized power wheelchairs are sometimes more expensive than what is discussed the prosthesis on the left is more expensive than a house people build so any of these products are owned, manufactured, sold, and all the controlled by six to ten companies. So it is overpriced and this is the major reason that many developing countries have small access. A need is increased. More age more assistive devices. In fact aging will blur the divide between disabled and not disabled. In the coming years we will not know who is disabled and not disabled. The whole demographic is changing and the more we age the lady on the right, she uses four assistive devices. Every every nine out of ten people once they reach 80 use assistive devices so what are we doing to realize articles related to access to AT of the CRPD. There are several articles that are mentioned. To implement article 32 of the CRPD in particular international cooperation on assistive technology. And to operationalize WHO's plan relating to improving access to AT so we formed gate. We want to unlock the gate to keep millions of people who are inside their house to come out of their house and be in the environment, be at work, be at school, like anybody else. So we had our first meeting on the fourth of July at Geneva and we brought all different stakeholders, industries, service providers, international organizations, institutions, researchers users, groups, and governments together and we said, look, here is the problem. 90% of people cannot access assistive technology. How to do it? So then we said that WHO in part match with industries in partnership with others has to develop this initiative. And first thing we said we'll make a list of 25 assistive products. So every country who has ratified the convention they have to ensure that these 25 products are available within the country. We have no more excuses. This is expensive or this is that. Now we have ratified the convention. You have to ensure these devices are available and accessible so WHO has a lot of experience of this on essential medicines, essential vaccines, essential medical devices so we are saying, now is the time to come to identify the most essential assistive devices and every country has to make those available. So we have started the process, we do systematic review to identify this 25 products and we want to keep it in six domains of AT, vision, mobility, hearing, speech, mental or cognitive and the crosscutting environment. If you don't look at the environment many of these devices will not work. So every product provides like with the generic medicine comes with a list of generic assistive devices. Invest to make these available and affordable in every country.

So what it is as assist member states whoever want to develop this kind of a model in their program to ensure that at least 15 these kind of assistive devices are available at the community level. Even by the local primary health workers or social workers or nurses. And the 20 most assistive products are available at the district level and 25 at the national level so every country should have a national assistive device program. That's our aim. So GATE aims to mitigate the digital and technological divide by south and north by improving access to AT. The photo on the left is from Malawi. The photo on the right from Norway. There's a 2,500 kilometer difference in between but the quality of life is quite vast and the major reason is they don't have an assistive device. They're still inside their house so we need to ensure that people have access to technology so their development becomes really inclusive to everyone everywhere and thank you very much.
>> Thank you. Excellent. This is so inspiring to hear. Just pragmatic solutions and how the WHO is leading the governments on the how to which is what we're speaking about today. For 90% of people disabilities cannot access the most basic like the 25 you mentioned and it's all possible it's a matter of creating those funds and making it happen so thank you so much for that pragmatic and very real example for GATE. Thank you. I now have the pleasure of introducing Mr. Axel LEBLOIS. Executive director of 3Gict.
>> Thank you very much. It is a great pleasure to be here today at the U.N. meeting. Actually, back in December of 2006, several of our friends in the room were organizing a meeting. We were part of the CRPD so as I was mentioned before, we are still like a landslide of U.N. data after all those years. So to make very quick on our background we started 3Gict eight years ago. With the motivation of ensuring that the disposition of the CRPD on accessibility and assistive technologies would be informative and of course that means for engineers like ourselves, governments and agencies can get these and I would say in France that the role of human agencies is critical in making the accessibility of these devices happen around the world and it's very simple. The first one is the more you harmonize around the world solutions the lower the cost and the more availability you have around the world for everyone for assistive technologies. Number two, if you look at assistive technologies or other technologies you'll say in every country you have three blocks of concerns. One is what we call the information infrastructure which is television, mobile phones, landlines, and those are typically regulated areas so the government has complete authority and a mountain of ability. Sometimes they are very few of them. Sometimes you don't have service providers. They can be sitting in a room much smaller than this one and you can transform the lives of millions of people with adopted regulations for accessibility mobile things for instance. The same for broadcasting. So this is one block. Now obviously here, partnership with ICT. We have embraced the whole topic of accessibility and has been one of the best years. Similarly, when you look at assistive technologies you find that the main challenge are in education, channels, community centers and the workplace environment. And, here, CHAPAL was very modest to get everyone together about really thinking about make these step to make things available. But you also have areas such as competent services which are actually in any country in the hands of millions of people because everybody is creating content everyday or services and most people are not aware that what they are doing for accessibilities. So these countries have special different type of government administrations and that's where U.N. agencies by actually providing content and support and toolkits and modern policies can actually help a great deal so having said that I want to talk about the number of oriented press. We have lots of focused industries and we had IBM. And we have companies like Google or Microsoft or other systems and AT&T and others. So we do a survey once a year with disability people international with how many countries can access these abilities. So we measure the country's commitments and the actual research for those with disabilities and here we have some interesting results which by the way the presentation will be in a folder but essentially there are some very interesting reasons here which I want to share. The first thing and this is good news. Good news for you in this time in particular. 85% of the countries we interview have a constitution article regulation defining the right of persons with disabilities. Fantastic success when you think a few years ago there was a few countries with such shorter regulations so the CRPD is having a profound impact worldwide. 65% of countries surveyed also have a government agency appointed for implementation and we know quite a few of them are around the world and those are varied people and are doing something about it and that's very good news and then there's the data point. One more data point. I don't want to give you too many numbers otherwise you'll go to sleep very quickly but you may know the nature of accommodation. It's very important. It's the cornerstone of the right of persons with disabilities who have access to accommodation and technologies. A few years ago almost no countries had such in the world of regulations. Now 62% of the countries which are ratified the convention have the accommodation. It's a fantastic movement forward so those are all the kind of ‑‑ and of course ‑‑ I'm very excited about the access to these. We ask the question two years ago, in 2012, on these 31% of the countries incorporated ICTs. So they were only talking about physical accessibility and transportation not ICTs. Now the good news is, and you can see the glass half full or half empty I'm not sure. But this past year that went 50% so half of the country have already acknowledged the fact that ICT is part of the definition of accessibility in a lot of regulations so that's all very good news. Now the bad news. And that's where this meeting is so important. That's where things like IT or UNICEF or all of those are so important. When you come to actual specific questions on specific areas of policies and problems, you ask, for instance, okay, we have the fantastic advancement for the hearing impairment which was hosted last year. How many countries have these inceptions in the regulation. Many have none. Right? So a lot of work needs to be done to push that to be actually effective in the countries. Do you have ATM or transportation that are accessible for customers with disabilities. If you are in line can you use an ATM to get money? Many places you can't do otherwise. Right? Well 69% of countries have no regulations or policies for that so that means these countries have no accessible automated banking. How many countries have services for fixed line services? 65% of countries have not. Which is absolutely incredible given the fact that the technology has been there for many, many years. It's well known, it's easy to implement. Except for wireless telephone. Many countries have no wireless telephone accessible. Websites. 46% are not doing something. But out of that 29 ‑‑ minimum implementation and 10% are very partial implementation so as you can hear from those numbers the relativity in the field is that the countries as we see are moving slowly to adopting the CRPD framework from the legal and regulatory perspective. The main definition which is excellent for this case but instead of policy and programs we have these gaps. That's why the ITU describes the modern policy for accessibility for telephony for accessibility we think is a very useful link between those CRPD which are quite difficult to implement and how to get that. So let me say one thing that I want to emphasize today because to me it is the post important roadblock that I can see. It's about people. When, in fact, you look at regulation that we've seen in the past years and which countries have been the most successful and I notified the valuables that actually explain the successful results but the international organization is very critical and the government agencies for the person with disabilities is very important, but the most important part is the participation of organizational of persons with disabilities and policymaking and legislation. If you don't have it there's no way to be successful. There is no way to to be successful so the cornerstone of the policy is about processes. If you are going to regulate the code of conduct for amnesty for broadcasting and multi‑telephony you have to engage the private sector the personal organization and if you don't do it and if you don't get them as part of the equation it will not work. Period. It is like ‑‑ the one plus one equal two so that's one thing. We ask in the policy report how many of those countries involve policymaking for accessibility. Well the result is 11%. 89% of the countries who are meeting do not ask any input. So it's a huge gap and I come to tell you right here, right now, and also in most developing countries that is the main objective today. So what we try to do over the past few years is provide as much information as possible free to the public, to the website. For policymakers for the past five years now and quite a few report to explain what are the basics of accessibility but also we announced a program to train these to be better leadership leaders. And there we do it in participation of these. But the beauty of it is you can see a lot of persons with disabilities in these countries do not realize how many technologies are available today that you can negotiate. They just have no exposure to it. And further more we observe that these have no idea about these technologies so the care is in complete dispersed way which is important the beauty of this organization was to identify the movement. Able to actually integrate all types of disabilities. That's why you're such a wonderful space but it's still a bit difficult. So that's a big concern. Now I would like to conclude with one call for action today and I took to her from the the meeting she said I want to be the first to say yes. I want to support this. So it's actually the following, if you want to be an architect today, you have to take an exam. Right? As part of your courses in most countries, you will have an exam on physical accessibility. In other terms you cannot be an architect unless you pass the exam on physical accessibility, stand out for accessibility and integrate accessibility. Right? That is a lot. There is not one university around the world today that makes it necessary for any degree to implement accessibility so we have to retry every year, hundreds thousands of these that develop in the marketplace without any notion of what you are putting out there for accessibility so this had to stop because it is the root cause that makes it difficult for the private sector to do the right thing and it's the root cause for those to say, how do I get this for assistive technology. So ‑‑ the call for action is let's get all those who are waiting to support the call of action to implementation around the world to actually make it compulsory to implement these courses. Thank you very much.
>> Excellent. Thank you for your passion and for being a true and live example of what it means to partner. This is a win, win example of how you can truly change the world so thank you for your intervention. I'm really sad to see that Frances has had to go but I do want to acknowledge here even though she is no longer in the room acknowledge her for her impeccable participation. I now give the floor to miss Dominica who is here on behalf of PR ZEMEK and first I believe we're going to be watching a video segment by Mr. KUOEMIREK and it is my understanding that she will also deliver a short statement if that is correct. Please. Shall we? .
>> (Video). One of of those is already working in the translation when we use video for interpreting and second one, we are ‑‑ we have a working better. This is ‑‑ automatic translation system and we use candid camera and now we use this one and we have the system that is able to translate sign language automatically. And in the other sect.
>> (Music).
>> The floor is yours.
>> Thank you. Excellencies, I am Dominique, representative for MIGAM.ORG. I wish to thank organizers for inviting us to celebrate together the united nation day for persons with disabilities. Special thanks to Ms. Daniela the director of development in the United Nations days who has believed in this initiative and for the support of OGLO. We believe so strongly in an inclusive society. A society for all. A society where nobody's left behind. This is the philosophy of MIGAM. Today I would like to showcase the project MIGAM which is still in development. It has already been acknowledged at the national and international level and it has received awards such as the new Europe one hundred as one of the one hundred outstanding challengers. And in 2013 it was selected amongst projects for the one sponsor award. The translator now called MIGAM is for hearing impaired persons for 70 million people sign language is their first language. Using movement recognition technology with the project enables automatic translation of sign language into spoken language. This application for persons with hearing impairment also has the aim of promoting integration and improving societies. Each person has the right to live full life as it is stated in the United nation convention on the right for persons with disabilities. This includes those with hearing impairment to have equal access to education and employment as well as access to cultural places like theaters, museums, libraries, tourist destinations and many others including hospitals and banks just to mention a few. Most people with hearing or speech impairments communicate with their hearing family, friends, teachers, colleagues using different means and most of time only have possibility to express themselves freely in their own language with other signers. This helps create a tight sense of membership and helps the unique perspective of performance arts and theater. As it was said sign language is art. Both however, sign language is an independent life language that to this day is relegated to a secondary status. Person with hearing and speech impairment struggle to be heard as citizens, voters, consumers and productive element of the vibrant interconnected society. Currently the only available option for bridging the language barrier for them and our mute users is by use of language interpreters which are necessary but we are limited in the number of interpreters. Limited in areas and topics and limited by the cost and schedules of human translators. The bottom line is that human interpreters cannot meet the demand or conditions required to provide an easy inexpensive service any more than a human can do the job with online translators for example. Our breakthrough solution is made possible by next generation technologies. We at MIGAM provide published sign language with our live online translator available at MIGAM.ORG. We help users resolve everyday issues providing live translation during doctor visits, making appointments or calling the locksmith this is only some of the obstacles phased by deaf person in their daily lives. Native signers will gain unprecedented freedom to communicate with the speak world without the need of human translators at anytime, any place and for any type of business. MIGAM is a bilingual project. In the rapidly changing world of technologies, MIGAM helps those achieve their personal and professional colleagues. Our team puts those with and without hearing impairments who share a common goal in creating an inclusive world for all where nobody is left behind. We strongly believe in the power of education which has a dominant influence on our lives. We give access to education that ensures the intellectual and professional advancement of deaf and hard of hearing individuals through sign language. We look at every person should enjoy equal opportunities therefore our efforts are meant to promote positive social change and remove any major obstacles coming in the way of person with disabilities. In our case, hearing impaired person that are the most marginalized and are due to inadequate education and difficulty in finding a decent job. We want to ensure that accessible and assistive technologies can be made available to person with hearing or speech impairments. And can be exercised their rights with an emphasis on quality, and affordability. This is the way that MIGAM will contribute in making a sustainable world.
>> Thank you so much for celebrating everyday with your work, with the rights of persons with disabilities so thank you for sharing. Well ladies and gentlemen, excellencies, distinguished representatives, dear colleagues it's time for our interactive portion and we'd like to basically take your interactions from the floor. I now invite the floor to intervene with your comments, your questions, to address, of course any individual panelist, so kindly identify yourselves clearly and indicate the panelist you'd like to address and first come first acknowledged so please ‑‑ go right ahead any hi, my name is Janice. I'm from the ‑‑ thank you. Hi. Sorry. My name is Janice. I'm from access innovation. Formally known as Hearing Access Program. One of the concerns that I had has been with hearing access. There's a lack of standards. Here in the U.S. it's called effective access but I would ‑‑ there is no one that really understands what that means. It's never been defined in any federal document other than a document I wrote with the national park service. That's it. So it's really a haphazard approach so I'm curious has there been, you know, I think visual impairment and physical access is a little easier to approach. They're more specific guidelines but the problem I find with access globally is that there's not a clear and consistent approach to what hearing access is and what the requirements are globally. And I would love to see some sort of document where we had some meat to the bones of the ratification to define what effective access or whatever the term is that's used globally to mean. Because it really boils down to three elements. It's having visual and audio and a qualified interpretation every time there's sound whether human or audio. It's very simplistic and making sure the accuracy rate on products is accurate. So is there anything that is being worked on that's similar like that that can be then used globally by providing each country to develop their own guidelines because it seems like a waste of time.
>> Is your question or concern addressed to anyone in particular?
>> You know, I know a few of their responses because I remember them. I'd be curious just to know just from the people I haven't had the pleasure of meeting from Singapore and Morocco because I know Axel's answers so I know their answers. Sorry if nobody else does but I do but I'd be curious to know what Singapore and more Morocco are doing to develop standards because the problem when you have the term effective access and I understand the need to be flexible as technology develops. That's wonderful but it also gives an escape hatch for people who don't want to implement the access necessary and it puts the burden on the people with disabilities to define it and fight it so it becomes an onerous task for the person who already has the disability to do out and fight the windmills.
>> So from a national policy perspective.
>> Well, I'm sorry, but I really don't know what is happening in the Singapore context. It's a very specialized area which as you can imagine those of us who represent governments do not have the fill range of answers to questions. I have no answer for you but I'm prepared to get one for you so if you give me your details I'll follow up on this.
>> Thank you for question. I don't really know what happened but as I presented in my segment, there is a committee between the ministry of disability and the (inaudible) but are working on many area of the ‑‑ of course ‑‑ about technology ‑‑ assistive information technology. We as I said, I said in the beginning we seeing that just the launching of this aspect in Morocco and of course in the development is coming slowly. Thank you.
>> I think so Daniela would like to respond as well as Gary.
>> It's not a real answer but it's a suggestion. Eric? I'm ‑‑ I would like also to involve you in ‑‑ the team in my division that deals with disability matters so unless, Eric you have an answer what I could say is that we could consider organizing a panel discussion or a forum. Bring together various actors and stakeholders and discuss about these very specific thing you suggested because I do believe it is indeed very important. As we heard there is something like 70 million people with hearing impairment around the world and they count. Even one would count for me. Millions even more. I'm sure it'd be an interesting dynamic discussion so Eric, I wonder if there is anything on your side?
>> Thank you. Thank you very much. And thank you very much. And I would just want to make sure I understand your question correctly and accurately. You talk about the mentioning the guidelines and technical guidelines or is it about quality of service. I notice in our ‑‑ in our kind of working for disability and I ‑‑ in my experience in the past in working in Asia and China I noticed some difference. I recognize this is like a merging issue. Insofar as implementation and convention and in terms of promoting sign language and sign language services is something not very popular in many part of the world. National sign language has been promoted in some countries. And now because of that option of convention. And some countries for example, New Zealand have official sign language as an official recognized sign language. The language in their national policy and legislation. Which is a very overarching movement we would be interested in organizing something with you. I have two specific questions I want to ask the panelists and first maybe regarding the initiative of GATE. Based on your knowledge and the information for example, the WHO assembly, and you already have this global action plan. To what extent do ‑‑ can you tell us in ‑‑ the consensus really in the member states in mitigating the gap, the divide between us in terms of making these assistive technology available and to particularly the people with disability in the south. Because it is very important because as you mentioned it's article 32 that talks about this particular area and it was very critical to the sustainable development. The ‑‑ what we were discussing in the states and discussing ‑‑ and already have this proposed goals to ‑‑ submitted to the assembly for consideration so particularly I noted the 17 they talk about technology and the means of implementation in that context and how you can help us to understand it and how you access the status quo and second question is ‑‑ I'm not sure if you can help us in terms of how many languages are in there. That in this technology, this software is helping us that is translated from spoken language to sign language or the other way from sign language to spoken language is it only in English or is it also available in France ‑‑ French or Russian, Arabic, Chinese, so this is something we also need to look into this because we in the United Nations we are providing services for proceedings, conferences, like this one so what kind of sign language we can count on this software, you know, so that will make all of our conferences services available as much as possible so this is quite very important because as you mentioned this is a cost issue and an availability issue. Thank you very much.
>> The access to assistive technology is comparatively new constituency in the "health agenda". The assistive tech meteorologist is being provided by different ministries in different countries. And administrative health is not necessarily the focal ministry who provides assistive technology so there is a lot of discussion going on with the ministry of health and ministry of education. The key is that access to assistive technology so that's why we're working with other ministries and agencies but best thing what happened in the resolution in last year and this year in the world when they approved this disability action plan for 2014‑2021 the action plan has only three objectives and one of the three objectives is access to assistive technology and there are specific indicators on it. So it is coming quite new but quite in a big way this agenda and that is why it moved from the traditional disability team to essential medicines and health department because we have seen this for people of all kind irrespective of their disability or non‑disability, age, and others. And we are thinking and we are hoping that countries that are already discussing this that in 2016 there'll be some kind of a resolution on the access to assistive technology in the worldwide assembly because some country will bring it in coming years in a big way because access to assistive technology especially because of this emerging aging population, we call it the 21st century new medicine so after 60 you take one more medicine and you need one more device. This can change and this need will drive WHO and other agencies to put more investment in this sector. So we have quite positive about it and if you see that the DG, she has managed to come tomorrow and made a statement that this would be one of the flagship programs in the coming years.
>> Thank you so much for your relevant questions and for your very astute answer I want to take the floor back to the first questions and concerns and give that to Gary to respond.
>> Thank you very much. To bring that back to that question if I understood correctly basically how do we develop ‑‑ if we're talking about a technical standard I would like to make some comments because I think there's an analogy on how that's actually done and what we just talked about in my presentation about bridging the gap between policy and practice if a member state is issuing a license for technology insists on a specific technical component maybe it's the closed captioning for visually impaired or hearing impaired. Not for visually impaired but for hearing impaired as one example and they insist on that in their licensing agreement with the broadcasters. Then that becomes domestic standard but if that is adopted by a number of member states then maybe that specific standard or another one that's technically different and often a global fight will ensue as to which one is the standard. At ITU one of our key components of our work is developing standards for interoperability and we will form a working group that will look at, for example, what that standard ‑‑ what the proposed alternatives for that standard and basically they will fight it out in a very technical way at the ITU to come up with a standard, I use the example of 3G, 4G definition. We had all kinds of standards so that's one where I think policy, domestic policy change can spur, you know, and it may take time and it will take time a global standard for technical interoperability. Am I getting to what you're looking at.
>> Yes, in fact, what I found fascinating because I started a program twelve years ago because I was unwilling to accept what was given to my daughter. The first doctor said don't worry there's special schools and it worked. She's at Brown, very special in my mind and I didn't understand when the Scandinavian countries. It was astounding but if she's in the UK she can go to Barclays bank and bank with no problem. If she goes to certain banks around Europe she has access but that was not coming across the pond because it was coming through building codes and when I approached the chairman of many banks for example and many other corporations like pharmacies like Walgreens who had it in England but not in Duane Reade here in New York but it will be in the next two weeks. It didn't make sense a lot of it seemed a lack of communication and shifting it from building codes to customer service and the chairman of the companies when I went to the world economic forum had no idea when you spoke to the European chairman to the American chairman that there was a lack ‑‑ they didn't know one had it and didn't have it. Europe didn't know it wasn't in America so it seemed like a complete lack of communication and when I tracked all of the access through photographs. I'd say here it is in Disney Hong Kong why not in Florida and make sure the symbols were the same across the world. I found that there really wasn't a lot of turf fighting in terms of we want this symbol and this symbol because there was definitely an understanding that we need to make the symbols the same because no one will understand it but Poland has amazing access but why if Poland has amazing access does Belgium not? They're so close together. The lack of communication, it just seemed like you needed one person to get the right people in a room to say okay, there's only so much for people with hearing loss you can do. You may be ‑‑ whether it's the right technology but if you need to translate you need to translate. And then figure out which is the right technology and which has the right, you know, accuracy rate. But the fact that you need for people who are deaf you need translation. If you have a mild hearing loss or a severe hearing loss you need a visual representation and if you have somewhere in the middle you need some way to bring it to your hearing aid. There was no dispute about that it was about what is the three‑pronged approach and have the consistency and nobody sees except for me as a mother in New York, all the ear symbols you see in New York is me. It seemed to me insane that some mother in New York of a child of a college student is doing this globally. It seemed to me bizarre. If we get all the right players in the room, we sat down, mapped it out and we track best practices, I can show everybody their country and show everybody what's going on but it makes no sense in Ireland, Australia, Spain, has great induction loops on the rail. The U.S. is saying we can't do it. Well if we can't do it how come they have it here and only when I take those photographs and go to the access ports do they say, oh, you know the MTA chairman is saying he can't do it. It's impossible. Really? How is this managed in Australia. Well, somehow ‑‑
>> They may have put the policy in place that will demand that and just to follow up on that because I think we want to get back on this question if you have for example a hearing aid device, a hearing assistive device, that is wi‑fi enabled. It doesn't work yet but if it does so you can go to any place in the world and have through wi‑fi access through your hearing aid have access to that assistive device.
>> That doesn't work.
>> If it's developed by ‑‑ you know, for innovation, technical innovation comes to the fore because somebody will see a market for this. Let me finish please. So what that will do is I think spur the need ‑‑ okay, it becomes ‑‑ it's an innovation that becomes a reality then becomes a policy. Okay, we see this. Some innovative policymaker goes we need to make sure this is part of the standard of our hearing devices and that standard could come through the international fore where there's a technical standard. To do that particular ‑‑ adopt that particular technology you have to use X frequency at, you know, and this is the interoperability component of it so, again, I think why it's important that you raise this issue is that your work could become an international standard if it spurs some innovation hopefully with all those other partners but, again the private sectors will demand you know, they want a global market but you can't sometimes get a global market or global standard just to put some perspective.
>> I just want to add one thing just to add clarity. Wi‑fi doesn't work because its a battery issue and until you figure out how to get more power into a battery but in countries like Spain it's becoming the standard.
>> And universal power access. We have a standard for universal adapters that was accepted five years ago. By it hasn't worked its way to the market yet. It's coming but hopefully sooner than later so we're not all carrying X number of adapters. But it's a very challenging process but one that clearly needs to be pushed further and it happens because of people like you.
>> And there you go. Coming to order. So ‑‑
>> That's what I was hoping. Thank you.
>> Let's go to Axel to respond I believe to the second question. Thank you so much.
>> Just a quick observation. First more many years persons with disabilities could not participant. So there were many issues to make sure that ‑‑ how the world is accessibility and all the work can share these persons with disabilities so you have more and more here the captioning of the meetings and all of this. But all we know for instance, the question on the hearing aids. The World Federation of the Deaf has a technical committee. The chairman of the committee is very knowledgeable about those issues. I would urge you to work with them because they are quite aware of those issues. The second observation, we have the observation from Singapore, thank you so much, and it tells us that in a country where you promote innovation and promote these technologies there's a great deal of components to activation in the country. There's a kind of relation of expertise and know‑how and connection to the world, and in Qatar the center for us and the center of technologies where they also have like Singapore where that's quite fantastic where the same notion is that the center we have the communication channel, the reputation channel, so it's like not just one ministry that dominates the whole thing but a shared center that's doing the job. In the case of Qatar we have those who have been trained where they actually can do basic tasks and can go back to the center for further expertise.

In the United States in fact, they got the same thing. They created fifty centers for ‑‑ in fifty states which I believe is actually the same thing. You get the sources for the transportation channel and so on and so forth so that notion of having a shared center particularly is critical for training of document. There's one thing that we see is that you can get the technology for free. If you don't have the services. It's like a record. Nothing will happen. So, just ‑‑ an observation.
>> Thank you so much. Next question?
>> Thank you Afaf. I'm representing her royal highness the executive director. I would like to point out and perhaps for a thought about a future forum, at the South‑South Expo held in Washington, D.C. there was an interesting booth on tourism and how tourism now you can, for example, people who may not be able to physically touch a computer keyboard can make choices by blowing on the screen so that if you're trying to make a hotel reservation let's say in Brazil you can actually stop the presentations and go to different places in Brazil, different hotels in Brazil and I believe, also, I want to acknowledge Morocco for facilitating the doctrine including eco tourism. Very well, congratulations. I think that would be an interesting level to bring to tourism in the private sector who obviously could be doing something more in terms of assistive technology. Thank you very much.
>> Maybe he should answer.
>> Okay. So ‑‑ my apologies first of all I didn't see your hand raised. Go ahead, Dominica and we'll go back to his question.
>> So thank you very much for your question. I think it is very important since we are talking about accessible technologies. So as I mentioned my statement Migam is still in development. But we have translated already Polish version and we have sign translators in Sweden and France and we are trying to get an English version. I believe in the future we can translate all the languages into sign language. Thank you.
>> Thank you.
>> Tourism?
>> Thank you very mentioning that. I am ‑‑ I have to thank, number one, Eric, so, today he has been mentioned quite a few times because a few months ago he came to my office and said ‑‑ there is an office here at the United Nations, and they deal with the south, south, and north south cooperation and he said I think we should do something. So we had a first meeting a few months ago with an office. And they were interested in disability and this would have been the first time to have the social pillar, not the economic pillar, the social pillar present in an expo that deals with business. And they were interested in the topic of disability. Now before joining the U.N. ‑‑ rejoining the United Nations three years and a half ago I represented my country at a European level on accessible tourism. And I have been also a radio and television broadcaster and author for major radio stations dealing with finance and business. But bringing there the topic of accessible tourism because tourism is one of the major industries in the world. And if you make it accessible to everybody, you start mapping the territory when mapping the territory you create jobs. By creating jobs you eradicate property and promote social inclusion which are the three mandates of the need. And on top of that last year thanks to the outcome document on disability and development, one of the major areas as we have said today is accessibility. You notice there is forums including accessible transportation and which is the industry that most needs transportation in not tourism? So from the angle of accessibility, we dealt with tourism otherwise we have the world of tourism organization but we looked at it from the accessibility viewpoint. And, finally, we were present, with the social pillar that took place at Washington, D.C. There was a forum on accessible tourism in many booths where there were representatives from different parts of the world showing what's happening in that field and that information. Because we are very proud of having brought to the expo the social pillar. Thank you.
>> Thank you so much any more reaction to this question in very well. Moving right along? Anyone else from the floor? Please. Go ahead.
>> Thank you very much. I just echo one of the panelists, the information ‑‑ the accessibility is a smart investment. I thinks this is very important. There should be a partnership in understanding an issue of accessibility because it cuts across different aspects in terms of disability and accessibility as a contributor. As an active member of our community. A contributor to development of their society. They ‑‑ otherwise, their potential could not be liberated and could put that away. Accessibility is not like we're doing something good just for them, just this small group of people. In fact it's 15% of the population. But in particular content of other people and the bigger picture, the bigger demographic picture. I'm talking about an accessible bus. Public transportation. We should think about the larger spectrum and the larger portion of the population. Aging people we already mentioned. People maybe, you know, temporary rarely injured. Some difficulty in their function and even ‑‑ everybody ‑‑ just the passenger like you and like me, they travel with the big suitcases for example. It's difficult to move with all these steps. If you have an accessible bus it's very easy so I think France is already given an illustrative example in mentions things in the airport in making big transportation input and we are, everybody, honestly, everybody may feel it's a difficulty to move around and find their way so accessibility is really smart. It's an inclusive and smart investment and it's something we can say an economic term is a public good so it's a public good. We need this investment and it helps and facilitates the possibility of people with disability and the larger population in this society. And eventually it can contribute to the ‑‑ the name I mentioned is job rich economic groups and development I would say.
>> Reactions from the panelists? For the benefit of those who just walked into this discussion we're at the interactive segment of this event so if you have any questions, comments or concerns now is your moment. Any further questions? Why not? Please. Go right ahead.
>> We understood I think we agreed that assistive technology ict are very important issue and these are technologic. Can you ensure this is part of the discussion. We're talking about enabling environment but how? We don't agree to what the enabling of the environment will produce. So basic things has to be granted and can we see that these cases are collected into the post‑2015 discussion. We are talking about 90% of people who do not have access to their basic need.
>> Thank you so much. On that thought. Since we have the graciousness of a few more minutes remaining what I'd like to do in light with that is give it back to the panelist for just a few minutes on a take away message from this very critical conversation. Daniela? The take away message will start today with you.
>> Let us leave the DIS at home and bring to the table the abilities.
>> Well I just wanted to say how useful this has been and the fact that I didn't get your name, the fact that you raise a very ‑‑ what I would imagine is a question that, you know, we would all, you know, be aware of. I'm quite surprised that you have had to do this, you know, kind of ‑‑ this all by yourself. It is not something that you are the only person with a daughter who has ‑‑ or child ‑‑ who is hard of hearing so it comes as a big surprise to me.
>> Me too.
>> I would imagine this is something that most of us, you know, experts or who deal with this issue are aware of. But it just shows that how useful something like this is. I will be the first one to admit this is not an area of which I follow very closely but after today, you know, there's a lot more awareness and there's a lot more, I mean, I feel that I can bring something back to Singapore as well. While we share I can take back quite a lot of out and there's so much out there that I hope we continue whether it's this conference that you're going to have or whether, you know, this ‑‑ this example of, you know, blowing, these are things of which I have not thought about, but it is a good opportunity and we should have these exchanges more often. So, thank you.
>> Thank you, ambassador.
>> With the discussion we have ‑‑ we noticed that we have a long way to go and of course there is no more we can do with the disabilities and we need to understand the document and everything that ‑‑
>> Thank you so much.
>> Next year is the year for us to decide what the post global concern decide what the post‑2015 development agenda is and time to review some of the information in society. So please try and make it a sustainable digital society that will only be sustainable if the needs of the disabled accessibility needs of the disabled are included and really lead the way in terms of ict innovation and development because what is good for a person with disability in terms of ict is really very, very productive and supportive and necessary for those ‑‑ for all people. So try and bring those two processes together if you have any influence please otherwise we'll have two tracks, two trains on two tracks and that's not good.
>> Thank you. Doctor?
>> We were talking about investment and I'm not talking about the small group I'm talking about the activity.
>> Thank you. G3.
>> We missed the vote with this before. Let's not miss it a second time. Especially since we know that disability is in poverty around the world and if you do not have a positive agenda that makes sense it has to include disability and it has to include assistive technologies.
>> Thank you.
>> So I would like to just say that we in Migam believe in equal opportunities and we believe that when private and public sector will work together we can make the work better. Thank you.
>> Excellent. Firstly, thank you so much to the panelists, to the organizers, to all of you for being here this morning for your participation, for your relevant concerns, questions, and comments. Allow me to close by emphasizing that we, in fact, do need to leave disabled at home because we are all differently abled. And we have different needs and unique and may I say special talents. We urge all persons and encourage all leaders and policymakers and all those with any social platform to include ‑‑ to discuss inclusion, rather, and share ideas openly as we've done today. And to raise public awareness about accessible and affordable new technologies so that this new development agenda will be one that is indeed inclusive that leaves no one behind. That is sustainable and that benefits all peoples, nation, and of course, our planet. I want to show my additional notes from last night to Daniela because I have here, and I'm so glad ‑‑ I love this you opened with it. As the youth so strongly say nothing about us without us. And let us leave persons with disabilities at home because so be it, for persons with disabilities, we are all abled and all special and thank you so much today.
>> Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).

 Mateo Estreme Estreme Saima Saima Wazed Hossain Hossain Atsuro Atsuro Tsutsumi Tsutsumi Tsutsumi Harry Minas Minas Akiko .

Of.

Good afternoon, we will start in one minute just please be ready.

Good afternoon. We would like to start know. Others will join us very soon. Welcome to this panel discussion on mental well‑being and development. My name is Akiko Ito. I am chief of secretary of persons with disabilities. The division of social policy and development and the department of economic and social care. I am very pleased to present to you this panel. We have a list of such distinguished panelists this afternoon from all over the world. I am also very pleased to say that this panel discussion has a contribution from the expert group committee on the same thing a panel discussion. This will be in disability but with a focus of disaster risk reduction that took place in Tokyo last week. The 26th of November so in this discussion we'll be able to have at this table this rich contribution of another expert group meeting which is on the important issue of including mental well‑being and mental health in society and development. I would just by way of introduction I would like to mention that this panel discussion is actually ‑‑ is taking place as part of our efforts in the past several years to actually promote inclusion of mental health and mental well‑being in all aspects of the work we do for inclusive society and inclusive development. We started this important issue with the WHO as well as innovations ‑‑ UNFBA and we also worked closely with World Bank, United Nations university, to bring together different sets of experts in this field for the past several years. We have a ‑‑ we have actually different information on enable so I hope you'll be able to visit this website to get more detailed information. Just to give you one example, we had an expert meeting in Japan. After the great earthquake in Japan in 2011 and we actually had very specific reference to the issue of inclusion of those with developmental disabilities and in the context of disaster risk reduction and there are a number of examples of how disability is not a burden. Disability is a resource in this context. How leaders in the community working together with people with disabilities, they were able to save many, many lives on the ground. So this is one of the examples that we wanted to bring to the ‑‑ to this panel discussion of how inclusion can advance inclusive society and saves lives in the case of disaster risk reduction so without further ado I would like to introduce to this morning deputy representative of Argentina who is the whole organizer of this important panel discussion and I would like to invite him to give some remarks.
>> Well, thank you very much Akiko and I would like to express on behalf of the mission of Argentina that there is is real pressure for us to participate so it's also an honor to be among so distinguished experts to discuss this issue that is very important to ‑‑ in light of discussions that we are going to have in the forthcoming months in ‑‑ in the post‑2015 agenda and I would like also to thank World Bank and the United Nations University for organizing this event. I totally agree with you when you said that this discussion, all discussions are going to take place in these days are very relevant and very important for all of us in the derivations that we have here in the United Nations. I'm not, unfortunately, an expert on mental health, and so I will offer some brief remarks on things here at the United Nations trying to deal with this issue and trying to mainstream questions relating to mental health and well‑being and, in particular, we regard to disabilities and also I will offer some very brief comments on the approach that we have in my country, in Argentina, that we are going to have also the opportunity to hear from our Bangladesh colleagues on their experience that they have in a very different part of the world and I believe that this is also the administration of the importance that we touch in many developing countries to raise this issue in an analytic way and with a human rights based approach.

So I believe the starting point for our discussions today is as you mentioned and it's also mentioned in the paper that we have for this event is the relationship among mental health, mental well‑being disability and development. And the need to strike the right balance and ‑‑ among these three dimensions. In particular we've got the post‑2015 development agenda. This is going to be our focus and negotiations for next year. As we all know the lack of focus on persons and most marginal ideas resulted in the relative neglect and ‑‑ that's why for Argentina and for other countries and I believe that's the same case with Bangladesh the central principle for this post‑2015 development agenda is that we should not leave anyone behind. And that equity should also be a major part in terms of success in ‑‑ when we are going to implement the post‑2015 development agenda. So even if ‑‑ I mean, economic and social developments are a priority to ‑‑ for all of us but our policies should be based on promoting an inclusive path to development and this question regarding inclusion is quite basic when we devise and when we craft our rules and our policies regarding in particular mental health disability and social inclusion. As mentioned before, this post‑2015 development agenda is a right space agenda and that's why we do believe that the human rights of everyone in particular the vulnerable groups should be fully taken into account.

But, unfortunately, so far the link between mental well‑being and disability with development has been in my opinion neglected by the work and the discourses that we've had at the United Nations so it's high time for us to address this issue. As increasingly recognized health is an essential component of an overall sustainable environment it is also clear that mental health is essential for human development and that improved population mental well‑being is an outcome of such. So conservation of mental health advances the objectives of equity, universal coverage well‑being and as I mentioned before holistic and an approach to health and human rights. So this is say the internal approach we have regarding this issue. How we did ‑‑ how we tried to manage ‑‑ to translate this into a national legislation and national approach is basically through revamping of our policies regarding mental health and the mental health system. In 2010 in my country, in Argentina, we ‑‑ a new bill on mental health and human rights was passed and this bill is I would say the cornerstone of the policies that we have in this regard. And this bill is very much based on the national convention on the rights of people with disabilities. This is one of the pillars of this role. And we decided to give this bill, this role, sorry, this convention, the ‑‑ constitutional purity in our system, so it's very much at the forefront of our concerns. In particular to strike the right balance as I said before. One of the issues is that we had to get rid of an approach that was an approach where internally people in institutions was considered to be the right approach, the right ‑‑ the right way of dealing with this ‑‑ with mental health and disabilities. But in the American system we decided through recommendations of the Pan American Health Organization that by 2020 we should get rid of mental hospitals in full region. In my country we are doing that. We are doing that progress in mainstreaming the general hospitals, for example, the questions regarding the dealing with mental health internally and that's why in the last year, in the last couple of years, this internals reviewed by 88% and also we increased the community‑based programs regarding these decisions. And also what is important is that when we change paradigms and this is about the change of paradigms in terms of what we are going to do in in my country and I hope in different countries maybe we are going to have the possibility of hearing other peoples' experience in this regard, we have to make sure that there are interdisciplinary interaction by all actors include agent the local level in order to make these policies consistent throughout our health system including at local and at the state level and also at the national level. And in ‑‑ in the case of my country, we establish a national commission on mental health and addiction and to articulate actions and policies in this regard. And I believe this is also a way of including all areas regarding this ‑‑ have some kind of competence on these questions in order to make this holistic approach a success. I believe that if we are to achieve this paradigm shift in mental health, we have to include people with disabilities and in particular with psychological and mental disabilities and we have to bring them back to the community. And this is all ‑‑ I believe the reason that ‑‑ why we do believe that inclusion is the best way to approach these questions. Inclusion is not only a question of the health system but it's also a question regarding the education system and this is also an area in which we face many problems and many challenges. And I wouldn't say that we solve all these problems with confidence. And at the same level, in all our countries. I would answer by making a very personal comment on my experience being a father of ‑‑ one of my ‑‑ actually my son, he has autism. He has been diagnosed with BDD. He is 11 years old and when we had to bring him to the educational system both in Argentina and in the United States we faced so many obstacles and really it's not exactly that if the right policies are in place you are going to be successful in terms of bringing people with disabilities and helping them to achieve their real potential, all of their potential. Developing countries are ‑‑ have many difficulties in this regard. And I experienced these difficulties myself. But also developed countries have the same kind of problems and face the same challenges. I hope that after ‑‑ when we had the interactive discussion here, we are going to be able to make or to address more in depth the challenges that remain at hand and I'm interested in hearing the experience in Bangladesh. To conclude we have to really make a difference when we see the next phases of the associations in the post‑2015 agenda. Mental health is one issue that should be there in a prominent way. We have to bring into effect and translate into policies and into production production this shift of the paradigm that we had in terms of how to tackle questions regarding mental health and disabilities. I very much welcome the ‑‑ what ‑‑ the work that has been done by the committee on the rights of persons with disabilities in this regard and I encourage the united nations and ourselves to work together in order to make these a reality when we have to put in paper next year some of ‑‑ precise commitments on how to deal with these issues. So thank you very much Akiko and thank you for this opportunity for Argentina to participate.
>> Thank you very much for your remarks. Indeed we have been reiterating the importance of including those with mental disabilities in the context of this work at high level with development and also emphasize the importance of including those invisible population and their perspectives including those with mental disabilities and intellectual disabilities so thank you very much. Now I would like to turn to another close sponsor. Permanent Mission of Bangladesh and I understand that Permanent Mission of Bangladesh is represented by the expert Miss Saima Wazed Hossain and she is ‑‑ she was appointed in June as an expert advisor and she's also chairperson of national advisory concerning the world health assembly.
>> Thank you Madam Akiko for intrusion me and for giving me this opportunity to share your story of Bangladesh. Mental health, being a mental health professional this is something extremely close to my heart. I'm very passionate about it and I worked towards it but I'm passionate about it not only because of being professional in this area but this is a very personal story for me. In 2000 my 46‑year‑old mother‑in‑law became within a year extremely clinically depressed and committed suicide despite all the resources that were available to her but not available to her in Bangladesh and living in a family with very highly educated and having all the financial resources and services were not accessible to her and so to me division is to create a better understanding of what mental health is. It's not just absence of a mental disease but to help the person have better coping skills, more resilience and the support when they need it because I believe in all of us at any point in time can go through some experiences in life that can lead to a mental health condition. So, just to ‑‑ so ‑‑ addressing mental health in these settings and in countries like Bangladesh I would like to give an overview of what these countries are faced with and some challenges we're faced with and go over a model we developed in Bangladesh. But I want to clarify that although we kind of start with autism spectrum disorders the ripple affects of that and the all encompassing change has positively affected all the disabilities.

So you know, when you talk about mental health disorders the primary thing we talk about is stigma but there's a lack of skilled professionals and infrastructure. And not just meaning not having the hospitals but infrastructure as far as not having the right kind of policies. Not having services available within the community and accessible tools for the person. This is 2005 global mapping of services for all disabilities and as you can see Southeast Asia has ‑‑ the least amount of any other part of the world so it's a very significant challenge for us. So specifically to Bangladesh, you know, we still ‑‑ the only mental health act that we have right now is the 1912 Lunacy Act by the British and we have one psychiatric hospital that was built in 1957. A national institute that was started in 1981 and so although we have a neurodevelopmental disability we have this that's just been passed mental health is not as well addressed as it could be since 1981 we have a well‑defined chain of referral system. As you can see that, you know, within district hospitals that we can have psychiatrists that can provide but as this graph shows the district hospital there's only one out of the seven that has actually a psychiatrist so we have a significant challenge of all psychiatric patients needing to come to us and receiving what we have.

There's been several studies that have been done in 2003 and 2009 of the last study in 2003‑2005 which was a national survey down so 16.1% adults have a mental health condition in Bangladesh. 2009 a survey was done to look at children and separating, you know, epilepsy and substance abuse and intellectual disabilities just mental health is 18.4% of the children population. So, you know, like I said, 156 million population so we've got 210 psychiatrists and, you know, not a lot of support for a family. And looking at the overall budget at mental health it used to be 2007 data shows .4% of the overall health budget and unpublished data they've been unwilling to share with me that hasn't come out yet has now been reduced to .25% of the health budget. Not a good sign in this conversation and hopefully this will change that. In 2011 we launched a massive campaign focusing on neurodevelopmental disorders and autism and through that awareness and exploring and developing white paper situation analysis of what is going on in the country we developed a model where we talked about identifying eight ministries that in one way or the other were involved with children with autism spectrum disorders. Suddenly, in Bangladesh anything with a disability was for social welfare so health matters, matters related to education, matters related to ‑‑ you know, buildings and rural development is concerned, they did not really have any allocation of funds. They did not have any policies. They really did not include that in the mandate so we developed this multi‑ministry model and also involved a lot of the NGOs and a few of the organizations. A lot of them are parent organizations and we brought them into the conversation and formulated a national advisory committee and a steering committee that has all the stakeholders kind of sitting together identifying what are the gaps, identifying what are the policies, programs and support, what can each ministry do and so now we're at ‑‑ because of the success because having this discussion and identifying, you know, what role do they play, what could be their part in an interaction in persons with disabilities and particularly those with autism spectrum disorders each ministry develop their own action plan and we're very fortunate that a person from the ministry of finance was very personally engaged in this because at the end of the day it has to be approved by the ministry industry of finance so having them kind of be a part of it from day one was very positive. So ‑‑ this is the model for increasing the capacity for all the disability services the first stage has been doing sensitization training and this training started even with the ministries we developed this with the steering committee and we had a four‑month period they developed an action plan. They received the sensitization training and not just about what the autism spectrum disorders are but all disorders and what challenges are faced and what are the inadequacies of the system and that's an ongoing process that we've been doing for about three years and this first stage of training has then been followed up with specialized training, helping individuals, and distinguished between the different disabilities and the third stage is training of the experts because even with our health professionals, even with our psychologists when it comes to, you know, autism spectrum disorders they're not as informed as we need them to be. So achievements in the disability issues for Bangladesh in 2010 we had the neurodevelopment center for autism and just a few weeks ago we learned that that's a full‑fledged institution now so that's really going to help with not just doing research but actually doing professionalized training in 2011. Like I said we had the conference and this was the first time that anywhere in the world, I mean, in Southeast Asia this was a huge conference of more than a thousand professionals talking about a specific disability, a declaration was signed, and this boosted not just the fact that it brought this disability to the forefront but it was a huge boost for parents and families because there's a stigma associated with disability in general and particularly with autism. Parents and families did not acknowledge it, and this kind of destigmatized it and brought everybody to the table and brought it out in the open.

In 2012 we go back to the situation analysis and in 2013 has been of course along with our two different policies we got ‑‑ we conducted a national survey where we screened almost 8,000 children from birth to nine years using a community health system. I wish I could say the data was very significant but what it showed us in this pilot study is that community health workers are well‑equipped to be trained to do this kind of screening. We may need a bit more training a because we're look at how we are defining autism and what they understand about the spectrum disorder but the data ‑‑ .08 versus 2.46 this is spread out and this is something we need to explore. Why is it so much lower in the rural setting? And of course, we have done a national disability survey. Am I running over time? Sorry. Achievements in mental health of course we've had a lot of awareness. We've developed a lot of manual. One of the things specifically for psychiatrists is the absence of having specific service providers. They constantly provide voluntary services we provide and they've also been doing training for the health professionals and it's just been, like, seven days to about two week‑long training for doctors. So achievements in disability policy. In neurodevelopmental disability protection trust act that was just signed last year and we updated the disability rights and protection act to be more in line with the CRPD so priority needs for Bangladesh is adoption of mental health policy and in a lot of ways emulating our planning and our steering committee using that for mental ‑‑ not ‑‑ unfortunately, you know, there's always been this dichotomy between policies and programs with persons with abilities and persons with disabilities and that's where you have to change you can't separate one from the other. Something that's all encompassing and inclusive, and of course on mental health within the national health policies and program and standardizing mental health professionals. Unfortunately psychiatrists are the only ones because they go through mental training they registered. Mental health psychologists there's no standardized training for them academic or experimental and there's no ongoing training which means that the mental health field has changed so much and how we conceptualize it. What kind of treatments we are formulating now and without that ongoing training these professionals collapse and of course the multidisciplinary team with community based centers as well as social centers that are run by social welfare. So this is our ‑‑ the only hospital as you can see it's not very large and I'd like to end with that vision for the population of 156 million and 16.1% of whom suffer some kind of mental health disorder we have just that one hospital and I'm sure it's not just Bangladesh many developing countries are faced with this kind of challenge so we need to kind of think about how can we take those suffering with ‑‑ in mental health conditions out of psychiatric centers and find a way to provide them the support and the coping skills and access evidence‑based treatment within the communities that they live in and not just for them but their entire families. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> Thank you very much and I would like to express my thanks to both sponsors. And I would like to turn us over now to our core organizers the World Bank Tokyo development learning center as well as United Nations university in addition to university international institute for global health I would like to ask the doctor to introduce the rest.
>> Thank you very much for your interest in this area and also I'd like to thank Mr. Ito for your strong presentations. Thank you very much. I'm very delighted that we can have this important panel discussion today with all of these, you know, global leaders in this area, mental health and disability. It's really timely I think because it's right after, the, you know, submission of open working groups draft which improves mental disability in the current draft so I'm looking forward to the discussion and without further ado I would like to to invite the doctor he has been the key person in the U.N. to talk about this issue of mental well‑being and disability and developing the framework in the U.N.. thank you very much for joining and the floor is yours.
>> Thank you. Thank you, Akiko and Takashi and ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to talk about the current status on mental health and mental well‑being and the disabilities of the new priority first I'd like to start with shocking number. Suicide death is about one million. War related death is about a third of suicide death and this is about half. This means number one, suicide death is higher than the deaths related to war. We have a security, we have a security council and a detail who are in countries for war and countries have police and a system. However, do we have systems for suicide prevention? Another comparison with suicide deaths with other priorities comparing with AIDS and malaria we can see suicide death should be also prioritized. And, in fact, globally, suicide is a leading cause of the death among young girls. Now I'd like to share some facts related to mental well‑being and the disability. According to OECD one out of two people experience mental illness in their life lives and one out of five patients who visit primary health care settings have a mental disorder this means health work workers on the ground have a huge pressure to treating mental disorders in many cases without provide training or essential drugs. As a result, about 80% of persons with mental disorders in developing countries do not receive any appropriate treatment, and these people with severe mental disorders die 20 years earlier than those without such conditions. These persons with mental or intellectual disabilities often face a severe human rights violations such as abuse, sexual violence, force of sterilization or even murder. Those persons with mental or intellectual disabilities are often neglected for instance the depression is a leading cause of disabilities according to the the statistics. Lastly, economic impact of ‑‑ not addressing according to ‑‑ not addressing the issues related to mental health is quite huge. The direct cost is more than 4% of GDP. Countries in blue do not have mental health policy so about half of countries do not have mental health policies in the world. Budget allocation for mental health within national health budget tend to be very low. Among low income countries less than 1% is allocated to mental health and even lower income countries and upper, mental health is only about 2 percent health budget which is way too small. This figures show the number of psychiatrists countries in red have less than one psychiatrist in one thousand people. Forty countries do not have any psychiatrists. For the issue related to mental health and mental well‑being and the disabilities, U.N. system has made several important efforts in the past, for example, the WHO constitution defines the health state the physical, mental, social well‑being, similarly the international economic social and cultural rights which is one of the most important human rights tools defined right to health as right to physical and mental health. So when we talk about the right of health and to mental health should always be included. Then the U.N. general assembly adapted the correlation of the rights of the mentally retarded persons in 1971 and the protections for persons with mental illness and include mental health care in 1991. This was a significant step forward in international community however, at the same time, it has been a long time since they were adapted. Some concept is these are updated. Then in 2006 CRPD was adopted which includes mental and intellectual impairments. In 2007, a key humanitarian response got together and developed a leadership with WHO guidance and guidelines on mental health in emergency settings was published as an outcome of UN collaboration and coordination. In 2010 U.N. and the WHO jointly issued a policy analysis of mental health and development which set foundation to include the mental well‑being and the disability in development aagenda. General assembly developed in 2007 world autism awareness day and world down syndrome day in 2011. The last year, U.N. and partners facilitate a U.N. group meeting on mental well‑being, disability, and development which recommended to include mental well‑being and disability in the post‑2015 development framework. In 2013, last year, the U.N. high level meeting on disability and development was also held in New York at the head of the state level and last week UN and partners held another expert group meeting on mental well‑being, disabilities and disaster risk reduction. Based on this efforts now the international community is discussing mental health well‑being in the post‑2015 developmental agenda as well as the possibly of the U.N. high level meeting of mental health. The group is planning to hold an international conference on mental health next year. The U.N. expert group meeting on mental well‑being, disability, and development was the first of its kind in U.N. history. There was recommended two key messages. First important to integrate mental well‑being as a key indicator for sustainable development especially post‑2015 development agenda. Secondly, the expert group meeting ‑‑ expert recommended to strengthen the protection and the promotion of rights of persons with mental or intellectual disabilities. The expert group meeting on well‑being and disability and disaster risk reduction was held as a process to prepare the world conference on the reduction plan in 2015 in Japan. The expert group recommended to the first recognized the mental well‑being and disability as a priority in DRR. The second, to include a mental well‑being and optimize ‑‑ to optimize the resilience in the framework for action two. The third include mental or intellectual disabilities in all the disability inclusive DRR. The fourth develop a global guideline on mental well‑being and disabilities in DRR and lastly, to establish a multistakeholder focus group on well‑being and disability in the U.N. system. In the discussion to develop post‑2015 agenda there's been an emerging consensus that the post‑2015 agenda should include mental well‑being and disability. As a result the proposed target for all these working group includes reduced noncommunicable diseases and health and well‑being as well as strengthen substance abuse prevention. Then ‑‑ so now the way forward. Mental health and well‑being is included in the SDGs. We need to ensure it will be included its the final SDGs. And we need to start preparing for its implementation. In addition, it is very important to include mental well‑being and the disability in the development priorities too. Such as framework. And further it is necessary to take measures and to take persons with intellectual disabilities and not leave them behind and all the disability inclusive development efforts and it would be very useful to develop a multi‑stakeholder working group on mental well‑being and disability in the U.N. system and develop guidelines. For that, we need to scale up knowledge sharing regarding successes and the failures to learn from other countries experiences. There are already solution packages which you can download from websites and I hope we can get together and start working on promotion of mental well‑being and disabilities as a key priorities in sustainable development.
>> Thank you for your presentation. The next speaker is a scientist for the department of mental health in WHO world health organization headquarters. He could not come to New York so he prepared a precorded PowerPoint presentation.
>> Good day. I'm pleased to share with you the perspective on mental health and the effective well‑being in emergency settings with an emphasis on disaster risk reduction. I will be focusing mainly on the major emergencies. I think most of you all know what we mean with that but to be clear I'm talking about natural disasters. Major industrial disasters and when people's lives are threatened. And some form is usually requested.

There are a range of global policies and resources that are relevant. There's the Sphere handbook which provides minimum standards for disaster response. It's globally the most widely used handbook for disaster response. IAC guidelines for mental health and social support. There is the WHO mental health global action plan which is endorsed by all member states. WHO and all ministries of health have endorsed that and which is in line with previous sphere guidelines and there is the WHO program which is the general care which is very relevant also in emergencies. Emergencies don't happen in a vacuum. We need no think that any community will have social problems, marginalized groups, unemployment, any group of people with psychiatric problems and the context in which disasters happen and then emergency will use new social problems and often new psychiatric problems but there is also some psychological problems that may look like psychiatric problems but are not like maybe people are scared or afraid on how they will handle their future because they lost their income. The basic of most international work on support in energy settings is the agency guidelines which enables coordination and identification useful practices, flags harmful practices. It also gives definition of mental health and psycho social support. A very inclusive definition that is protecting or promoting psychosocial well‑being.

Most well‑known slide. Under the IASC guidelines the most well‑known image is this image that shows the different services that are made available are complimentary to each other. We did a search to find out what people actually are doing to publish in 2011 and we found that basic counselling is the most intervention that's offered in emergency settings. Facilitating support for vulnerable individuals is the second most common. Child‑friendly spaces number three and number four supporting community‑initiated supports. Now before we get into DRR, disaster risk reduction just a quick outline about what should be done in an emergency for the mental health sector and assessing needs and resources and abling community members including marginalized people and the first one is making sure that people have been provided to other people. Number four is the care of people with severe mental health problems, mental disorders. Suggest that every health service should have at least one staff member that can provide care for these problems. Then the fifth point is always forgotten addressing the safety these. Let me just bring this in reality. We've seen disasters in recent years in Japan, in America in New Orleans in different places and we see it in poor countries, in rich countries, in many of these places institutions have not had enough attention in crisis. Unnecessarily ignored. The last point that is in the Sphere handbook is to use disaster. So disaster risk reduction is a complex concept but key elements of it are prevention and preparedness. Here are two documents that are really relevant to disaster risk reduction and the topic of this speech. The guidance neat on the disability and emergency risk management for health which was WHO and UNICEF that are part of this document and a specific note on mental health support from a disaster risk management perspective. Also, WHO and U.N., ISDR.

Now I would like to cover some of the main challenges of including mental health and psychosocial support in disaster risk reduction. First of all, as a mental health person I have to look at my own field and say that in terms of mental health causes a lot of confusion. That's because we as a field use this term in different ways and this causes confusion so mental health is used when we talk about addressing mental disability. Mental health is used also when we talk about improving psychological resilience and well‑being and even some of us use the term mental health when we talk about improving social well‑being. Now all these meanings are important but they all involve different actions and it's a lot to ask of the emergency DRR response colleagues to understand the finer points of how we use these terms. It's not surprising then that because that mental health is not sufficiently on the development agenda. There's many reasons for that but one of the key reasons includes our own use of language and our own conceptual complexities that mental health field has. And stigma is an important reason we know that stigma is something that makes it more difficult for including mental health and development agenda. We know that many countries have developed little in this so far. When when there are capacities there's something done in the mental health system and the emergency system.

So that there is ‑‑ there's not enough synergies between the two in terms of developing mental health support and what is useful in emergencies. Now what needs to be done. We need to give mental health priority without a doubt. This is more commonly known over the years but more needs to be done. We ask our disability colleagues who are strong community doing a lot of good things but we wish they would give more attention to mental disability and in terms of preparedness we think there's a number of things that need to be done. Decision makers, people who are district leaders who are responsible for emergency responses. They need to know what to do for mental health. They need to know it before there's an emergency so we need to orient our decision makers in what to do and that includes some very basic general things that decision makers have an influence on like informing the population of what's going on during a disaster. Making sure that the placement is keeping people together. Looking at ‑‑ check how people are doing in institutions. Another thing to be done for disaster preparedness is to make sure that when capacity mapping is done which is often done as part of development, that it ‑‑ the emergency preparedness element is included and during disasters we know that capacity mapping is really important to see what services are still functioning, which ones are not and what resources in in the community and accident disaster but before the disaster we can build capacities for these assessments to be done well. Particularly for psychological first aid which can be learned in half a day and be offered by teachers, by health staff, any key person in the community. Now we don't think we really need to train everybody but maybe if one day disaster will strike but you can have training teams that are ready to train others in psychological first aid so that could be part of this. In terms of indicators, well, mental health needs to be part of DRR policy without a doubt but not only does mental health need to be named and included, in addition, we need to make sure that the whole DRR world moves a bit ‑‑ it's more inclusive of the software, right? Now it's very hardware‑focused and making sure water is sanitation is done well but people who take these approaches need to take a bigger place in DRR. Now the indicators at the national level we want to make sure that decision makers are trained in what key actions to do more mental health support. We need to create capacity to map capacity and create capacity to orient psychological first aid where it's needed and ‑‑ now a big concept in disaster risk reduction is building back better. We believe in mental health has very good examples of building back better. We published a book last year on this with these settings and this is something probably where other areas and actually learn from us. So building back better is possible mental health because interest is usually not that high except after an emergency.

Let me conclude now. First of all to thank the inviters for letting me speak. And just giving a few key messages. First of all mental health needs are very high. These needs are often ignored. Clear guidelines and technical instruments are available. The response can be largely delivered by non‑specialized workers and emergencies can often be used as opportunities for mental health system reform, and if you do this work take care of yourself. You need to model to others that mental health is important. Thank you very much.
>> Thank you very much. The doctor is a key person in this area of mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings and he was the first co‑chair of the committee reference group on psychosocial support in emergency setting. Thank you very much, now I would like to invite Harry Minas. He's the director for the center of national health at the University of auburn and he's the director at research and training. Professor Harry Minas works on mental health culture and the leading expert in this area for the case. Thank you very much for joining the floor is yours.
>> Thank you very much. How do I turn this on in it's okay? Thank you very much, Takashi and thank you very much. I was delighted to have the opportunity to participate in this discussion and I am particularly delighted to hear the presentation from the permanent representative from Argentina and also on behalf of the permanent representative from Bangladesh with strong messages around mental health that will help with the final shape of the post‑2015 agenda. We heard a good deal about the many problems that exist in mental health particularly in developing countries but also the important message that this is not only in developing countries. There are many parts of developed countries where there are very vulnerable populations. They might be based on ethnicity, they might be based on region, rural, urban divide, and many other factors so that the ‑‑ the intent of the sustainable goals are for the whole of the world not only for the developing world. I think these are critical events in our thinking about those issues. We're here to discuss mental health, mental disorders, mental health and disability which we know are very closely related and the relationship goes by as people with mental disorders are ‑‑ experience disabilities very often and often very severe disabilities. But also people with other forms of disability particularly, when they experience exclusion, discrimination and the many other difficulties can also develop mental health issues so it's a two‑way relationship. With things like ‑‑ the question of disabilities I think this is becoming increasingly well‑known that among the top five broad grouping, health groupings that are associated with disability mental and health disorders are by far the largest ‑‑ what's referred to as years with disability. If ‑‑ that's the red bar on this chart if you look at the blue which is lives lost it seems very low for mental disorders this is probably a very significant underestimate because people with mental disorders die from suicide which is often recorded as accidental or other forms of death or injury and people with mental disorders the point has already been made live fifteen to twenty years less than the general population but they die from usually noncommunicable disorders. Usually because these are poorly recognized, poorly diagnosed and poorly treated if the person also has a primary disorder so on the certificate it says died from a stroke or from a renal complication from diabetes or some other NCD where the primary problem is a mental disorder. This is a very significant underestimate of premature death among people with severe mental disorders. Why invest in mental health and disability I think it's becoming a lot clearer now that the cost of continuing to neglect mental health and mental disorders is very real. The estimate from the world economic forum recently is that either ‑‑ the 20 years 2010 and 2030 the cost associated with NCDs is roughly 47 trillion dollars. Of that about a third is attributed to mental disorders. Most of the cost which is attributed to mental disorders is due to the fact of disability. It's due to continuing medical and social care but also the lost productivity which is associated with continuing disability, exclusion from access to productive work, exclusion from educational opportunities, execution from safe and affordable housing leading to very low participation in society. So we might reasonably expect that premature mortality and disability would result in a very substantial financial saving over a twenty‑year period and five trillion dollars is not a small amount of money. We are very clear about the relationship between mental disorders and disability but there are also very clear relationships with noncommunicable disorders and also with poverty. And I think a fair bit has already been said about the need for interdisciplinary thinking and interpectoral action. WHO is very active. There's now an action plan that was mentioned and Atsuro mentioned. There's a WHO action plan. But these have been developed essentially with the relevant communities participating in their development and there has been ‑‑ there is a lot of room for closer integration of these different approaches. We are now almost at the end of the process of developing the sustainable development goals the presence or absence of a clear sustainable health goal will make a big difference in the capacity to integrate. Next slide please. So what we need to do is to bring all of these different areas of action together and that can only be done with appropriate and effective governance arrangements. We talked about law. CRPD is going to be helpful but also clearer leadership in ministries in developing countries. Investment has to increase very substantially if we're going to make a real difference in terms of mental health and disability. There is a need to foster and support leadership at all levels and across all sectors in this more integrated way of thinking appreciating that people with NCDs are more likely to develop mental health problems. People with disability are more likely to be excluded and so are people with ‑‑ so we're dealing with a complex system. A system of interrelationships no one‑way causality and unless we can bring all of this together then we're going to continue to operate in silos in the way that the NDGs have been criticized for and if we're going to be clear that the SDGs are going to operate in a different way which is to bring together all the different areas in coherent programs at work. Then I think a mental health target as part of the NDGs is the kind of critical link that can bring those components together. I wanted to illustrate as I mentioned before we've heard a lot about the problems. I wanted to say a few words about the opportunities coming up. A few issues with the Asia Pacific region which is the area I mostly work. Just this month the Asia Pacific cooperation forum adopted the 2020 strategy and as part of that adopted the APEC roadmap to wellness. This is a particular significant step because APEC is not a health ‑‑ it's an economic forum. And the realization of the fact that health broadly not communicable disorders in particular but also that mental health constitute a significant break on economic and social development is I think what has got an organization like OPEC to say that health capital is as or as any other form of capital if we're going to be talking about poverty reduction, social development and all of those other issues so this is a quote from the preamble recognizing that health department is essential to development that it is a prerequisite for, an outcome of and an effective indicator of sustainable development that health and health equity are integral to public policies of all sectors that the value of health capital in an economic dwarfs any other form of capital. This is important for the continuing discussion of health and mental health in particular and disabilities as part of the sustainable development program. Next slide. Next slide, please. Yes. That's okay. I wanted also to mention a few developments in Vietnam where I work a good deal because they illustrate how rapidly things are moving in terms of national governments realizing the development and social implications of health and mental health in particular. So in Vietnam there's a national mental health strategy which is currently being developed that will be completed by early 2015. NCDs will be adopted early in the new year. Persons will disabilities was ratified last Friday on the 28th of November by the National Assembly. There's national surveys being done in the possibility of doing annual burden of disease so just in the past year or two there has been remarkable development in a country in which mental health has been relatively neglected in recent times. Next slide. So the message for us who are work in the Asia Pacific is that the Asia Pacific region is ready to act on a sustainable development ‑‑ a sustainable SDG mental health target. The community will be formed by next year. National governments and subnational governments I think are all ready to move on mental health. And a clear mental health target will focus, expand, and accelerate the sort of action which is already being taken. Next slide. The open working group has a provisional target 3.4 by 2030 reduced by one‑third premature mortality to prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well‑being. I think there are a couple of things missing from this current target and the most important thing missing is the mention of disability.

So reducing premature death is absolutely necessary but it's insufficient. We need also to focus on reducing disability burden by probably the same amount. So I would think that one opportunity is to say, well, could ‑‑ can this provisional target be rewritten so that it becomes more inclusive for mental health and also disability. Next slide. The fundamental SDG has been formed to advocate for the inclusion of a clear mental health target in the SDGs and this is the target that has been suggested the provision of mental health and physical health and social care services for people with mental health disorders imperative with services addressing physical health and there's two indicators also been suggested. This target has been adopted by the UK all party parliamentary group on mental health recommendation four in a report earlier this month. The lesson from the NDGs is that having a clear target increases political attention and commitment. It provides a clear focus on measuring and achieving a target. It increases investment from all sources. It enables a more coherent program of work to be developed. And is a focus for collaborative action as is being discussed across sectors and across disciplines and I think what a target can do is bring all of the many disparate things that are currently happening and focus those in a way that will be most helpful in relation to mental health and disability. So two possible mental health targets one that has been proposed by fundamental SDG and also possibly a rewritten revised current target 3.4. Next slide. Thank you very much. For your attention.
>> Thank you very much for your comprehensive presentation. Sorry that we are really behind schedule and we only have ten minutes that we can, you know, extend and we have three speakers so sorry to put you in difficult situations but with my apology I would like to invite our next speaker miss Upans. A human rights lawyer from Canada and has a background in disability and international development and she currently works as an advocate. The floor is yours.
>> Thank you very much. And thank you Miss Ito. I'm here to discuss with you the inclusion of those with development as we know there's a distinct relationship between disability and development with disability and poverty being mutually reinforcing conditions. People with disability and those with psychosocial disabilities have fewer opportunities for full participation in the social life of their communities. Stigmatization often results in discrimination. These people do not enjoy full rights such as the right to vote or exercise legal capacity or exercise cultural rights for employment and education. At the same time, the calls of living conditions that tend to characterize poverty increase an individual's likelihood of experiencing disability. Such as 80% of those with disabilities live in developing countries. Therefore there's a special importance of those in the context of development work as recognized in article 32 of the CRPD and as a relevance of the development agenda. This is especially so for persons with psychosocial disabilities who are often neglected in development discourse. That being said, the relationship between poverty and disability is not easily changed through the development process. Instead, a strategic approach to include development is essential. Given their significance to overcoming the poverty disability cycle, I'll focus on vocational training and on measure to protect and promote the right of persons with intellectual disabilities in the workplace. Target 4.5 of the proposed SEG calls for equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable. To realize the right of persons with disabilities to education, quality inclusive education must be made available on equal basis with others, and reasonable accommodations must be provided consistent with a goal of full inclusion. Through inclusive education and vocational training, students with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities can increase confidence and an expanded social network. In this way inclusive training may also have a positive impact on mental health. You learn from the individual strengths and perspectives that students with these disabilities possess. Programs addressing mental health disability, bullying, personal relationships should also be made available in mainstream education settings. To ensure access to training opportunities tailored advocacy efforts are needed to not impose a challenge those with psychosocial disabilities in mainstream programming. A common shortcoming of inclusive vocational training is that skills are often taught that are not exposed to the labor market. It's important to make sure that they are given training rather than just considered suitable for only certain tasks. I'll give you an an example that I'm familiar with. With the help of an ILO rehabilitation project public training centers start to include persons will disabilities in 1998 but their training programs. Initial resistance to inclusion among instructors and family members was one of the most significant challenges. Those challenges were overcome with months of advocacy efforts to which trainers were exposed to the initial trial period of accommodation. Newspaper and television media campaigns were also used to raise public awareness of those with disabilities and to inform people with disabilities about opportunities for inclusive training. During the first four years of operation eight people benefitted from the newly inclusive centers. Although most inclusive centers and 90% of private sector businesses that had employed persons with disabilities had enclosed as a result of the conflict in Iraq new curriculum was developed and in 2009 the government began to open dozens of additional centers. Despite the challenges in Iraq the essential operation in these centers during times when it's more active provides an important example a key to success of these training centers was that leading employers were involved at the outset to meet labor market demands and leading training for employment. Through the process of inclusion, training centers and equipment were upgraded, curriculums were improved. These changes enhanced the training for everyone involved including those with and without disabilities. From education training we move to income opportunities. One of the key factors of ensuring that those with disabilities develop from the development. Article 27 protects the rights of disabilities and target 8.5 of the proposed SDGs calls for full development of persons with disabilities. They also highlight that equal opportunities must be enshored including by promoting the appropriate action. Strategy to protect those with psychosocial disabilities in the workplace should include antidiscrimination laws that make it illegal to on the basis of their disability and to govern workplace behavior at a practical level what does this look like? Antidiscrimination policies should set out a commission to represent human rights and fostering inclusion. Include intellectual disabilities. Define the key concepts of discrimination and that it can be subtle and systemic and display that everyone in the workplace has the responsibility and managers have to stop the discrimination. In some situations people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities have the same level of benefits and privileges as others. Accommodation policies should be governed by individuals with dignity and full participation. They should indicate that employers and employees have to arrive at accommodation solutions and provide accommodation. Provide for monitoring mechanism. Explain the rights of employees to seek remedies and include a process of the periodic assessment to include the compliance of human rights laws. As we're hearing this afternoon there's many principles and guidelines developed from best practices that if incorporated could benefit people with disabilities. Still in order to fulfill the rights effectively work toward poverty alleviation equal access to quality education training and income generating opportunities for people with psychosocial disabilities should be supported by developing stakeholders and measures to ensure inclusion for the post‑2015 agenda. Including those with psychosocial disabilities through the development processes are high and I look forward to continuing this discussion with you.
>> Thank you thank you very much and few for your cooperation to make it really quick and I appreciate your settings on the legal aspects that is an important issue. And now I'd like to have two respondent to respond to all of these presentations. First respond sore Dr. Kamal. He is is research in Tokyo and Dr. Kamal interdisciplinary research focuses on identifying and remediating social and economic barriers. Dr. Kamal?
>> Thank you very much I know we have very limited time so I don't present a lot of statistics today because basically when I talk I basically give you a lot of statistics but whilst having said this I will not definitely disappoint you in a sense like Laura said, a lot of things about disability, poverty and the socioeconomic returns and also professor Harry discussed slightly the need of investment in disability. These actually are very crucial issues which I think we cannot discuss here more. So but having said this, while talking about disability and mental health or mental well‑being these three are very important but in a ‑‑ when disability recently got some space in development at first so even within disability there are several types and severity so the possibility is that mental ‑‑ people with mental difficulties are sometimes left behind even within disability. It's not because they are ignored but because they are not given the priority equally so our unintentional factors also are sometimes act as a negative consequences so we need to think more on this topic so it is very timely that this issue, mental well‑being and mental health and in relation to disaster risk reduction is raised in this discussion. I was also a part of the E ZM last time, last week held in Tokyo which brought some recommendations that has to be actually incorporated if we really want inclusion not as a word but as an implementation in the stage of implementation so within the disability if we properly invest on them and if we properly address the individual needs, I can give you several empirical evidences that they can be equally productive in the labor market so there's a lot told about economic returns. I have several papers that examine the returns in investment to education. The findings are very encouraging which we cannot discuss more here but I would kindly invite you tomorrow at 3 p.m. in conference room E, in which we will launch a book that focuses on disability, education, and employment in developing countries from charity to investment published by Cambridge university press and written by myself which focus on several empirical evidences for example, Philippines, Cambodia and other developing countries. For now I think I should limit my words but last but not the least it is equally important that we equally give priority to people with severe disabilities that includes mental or intellectual disability who have no problems with their disability more but more problems because of we not properly understanding their individual needs and because of recreating several disability barriers. We don't need to expect everything from, like, similar done by everyone but there is a diversity so if we could right person to the right job then they will be product and I've they will achieve socioeconomic well‑being and also be mentally well sound in terms of working and in terms of enjoying social inclusion and economic empowerment. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much, doctor and what time is tomorrow's session in conference room E.
>> It's at 3 p.m.
>> 3 p.m. Last but not least I'd like to invite Miss Kathryn Goetzke the president of CEO of analysis incorporated and also the founder of IFRET which is dedicated to reducing the stigma with depression. She has also served on advisory boards for the United Way. The breast cancer resource guide and a local food bank.
>> Thank you so much for having me here. Yeah, thank you very much for letting me speak today I'm really grateful and honored to be here today. I want to commend the United Nations especially in regards to the inclusion of AIDS. It did a lot for the stigma reduction in AIDS and I'm thankful for the post‑2015 development goals. We have a large mission and you have an opportunity to expand on a great vision for the world and I'm here on behalf of myself, and fundamental SDG which is for global health experts and ask that you strengthen mental health goals and add specific indicators measure progress so a lot of speakers today gave the why for doing that. There's adequate research for including mental health. The cost for not doing so. I think the human ‑‑ the human rights crisis alone must initiate serious and immediate action, so I was going to take a little more personal approach. Albeit it'll be abbreviated to tell you my story on why I am involved in it. My dad was my greatest mentor in life. He was energetic, brilliant, super committed to our family. We had great holidays together. He made a very impressive life for himself, finished his master's, provided us great experience we got to raft on the river with Sam Walton every year. Learn from that retail master. My dad insured that I got ‑‑ as you can imagine it was a devastation for me when I was at college and calling home and I heard an unrecognizable voice at the ere end a policeman and my father had taken his life so at that moment I lost my greatest hero. He was a person I loved more than anything in the world. And I wish I could tell you that my story of depression and suicide ended there even though tragic as it is but, unfortunately, as it is no surprise I struggle with depression and I spent years escaping with alcohol and other addictions which you know are silent burdens of the untreated depression. So even in my twenties after losing my father and never wanting anyone else to experience that pain I attempted to take my own life and I really believe it's a miracle that I'm here today. And that shocking wake up call got me to treatment. I went onto get an international masters in business. I worked for great companies. I have a product line in Lowe's we've sold over five million and I'm a living example in how getting treatment in mental health can have a positive impact on the economy I started my own foundation to get rid of the stigma. We use the sunflower as the international symbol for health and we write a curriculum for ten‑year‑olds that hope is a teachable skill. I write this as an advocacy on something that's taken a lot from my life and it's an understatement when I say that I've been blessed by my own access to health care so unfortunately most people don't have access the primary reason due to stigma. There are 400 million around the world who have depression and it's up to 85 to 90% that untreated. We lose a million people a year to suicide as they said. More than war and homicides and we now in the U.S. have one in nine kids self reporting suicide attempts prior to graduating high school. I believe the stigma is why my dad is not here today and my delay this treatment is the negative perception and I think the development goals are the place to start with stigma. We really need leadership from the top saying that it's okay to get mental health treatment and not just okay but we strongly support it. So I stand today in solidarity with depression survivors. Those impact of those they lost to suicide and those needing mental health support including those affected by Asperger's I'm here to say that modifying the goals with a strong target is the single most important thing that we can do to end stigma and ultimately provide access to care. It sends a clear message to the world from the top, the United Nations that there is no name in asking for health and that the world leaders believe in equality and human dignity for all. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> Thank you very much, Kathryn, for sharing your personal experience and your strong message and I really apologize for bad time management but I think we can have a few questions. Really quick question. So one or two if you have any questions could you raise your hand and identify yourself? Do you have any questions? Please?
>> Good afternoon my name is LEA and I work for UNICEF. I heard many times the link between disability, mental health, mental health, developmental impairment and so on. I've heard how you are connecting how we are connecting everything in the human rights agenda to ensure the rights of all people with mental health, mental impairment and so on. I also wanted to see in whatever ‑‑ guidance that you have developed, like I just heard the example from Kathryn from ten years old. From a UNICEF perspective this interests us. Whatever guidance you have prepared I wanted to hear if you've also been thinking about accessible formats for children ‑‑ for grown‑ups who are blind, who have an intellectual disability and who have (inaudible) because I'm convinced that children with disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory disabilities, also face higher risk of mental health issues and they need to know where the hope is and what to do to build up that hope so therefore we need to ensure that if we provide guidance that we make it accessible, that we don't exclude them for that guidance. I don't know if any one of you has an example of that.
>> Thank you very much for your intervention and UNICEF has been really a kind of leader in integrating mental well‑being and also psychosocial aspects into your work so thank you very much. I think now ‑‑ okay ‑‑ please.
>> Hi. This is not in my field which is why for me this is important so I don't know ‑‑ sorry. Enough about it but there was ‑‑ last week I think it was in the newspaper or I saw it on Facebook where someone was bipolar was screaming at a coworker and then tried to say that, you know, this had to do with his mental health and was seeking an excuse. I'm just wondering when I'm dealing with employers many times this is what they're afraid of. There's they're afraid of not just the person's own behavior and dealing with any legal consequences from the person's behavior but the ‑‑ the legal consequences of the ‑‑ another employee who may be ‑‑ bare the brunt of the person with the mental health disability. How do we overcome that issue because I think that's a real issue. I think that's a real issue especially in the United States is in the very litigious companies is dealing with the companies.
>> Thank you very much for sharing that issue and I think it is really important point that even in developed countries like the U.S. or Japan or anywhere there are many doubt existing in mental disabilities and intellectual disabilities, mental well‑being so we hope we can continue working on those issues also in developing countries. And regarding everything. So and due to the time limitation I have to close and I think we heard a lot of gaps existing in mental disability or intellectual disabilities and promotional well‑being in the world but at the same time we heard a lot of encouraging things like the member states kind of, you know, promoting well‑being into the post‑2015 development agenda and also we heard there are many tools and knowledge and experiences available to promote mental well‑being and to protect those with intellectual disabilities so I hope we can get together again and to continue our efforts together to realize mental well‑being on the ground and also dignity of persons with mental disabilities. Thank you very much for getting together today and for the participants and presenters.
>> Just to ‑‑ for your information if you have, again, any contribution or if you have any feedback to this panel please send it to ENABL@UN.ORG. We have also requested your information so you are already part of this informal network on mental well‑being and disability so I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter in the future. Today's the eve of international day of persons with disabilities and we have after this panel discussion we have another one enabling working environment. Tomorrow is official day official International Day of Persons with Disabilities and we have the opening with a number of activities, panel discussions on the promotion of technology and the disaster risk reduction and human interaction which will take place through lunchtime. We have also panel discussion on SDG and disability because SDG as well as the book launch that was already mentioned. And in the evening we have U.N. enable film festival so not many different activities and I hope you can join us in all these activities. Thank you. Thank you very much.
>> (APPLAUSE).

.
>> We have a few technical difficulties we have to deal with at the moment but let's slowly start. Good afternoon. We have the eve of International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Which is annually commemorated on the third of December every year and this year we have a full program as you see N. the program you have actually copies I guess when you enter this room I think you might ‑‑ I you already found programs for this year's international day. We have full programs for two full days this year. This panel discussion is on creating an enabling work environment so we are going to start now by introducing ourselves first. My name is Akiko Ito. I am chief of the secretariat on the persons with disabilities on the task force of accessibility at the United Nations headquarters. I would like to introduce my fellow colleagues, panelists, that afternoon, first, Kevin Cassidy. Mr. Kevin Cassidy from ILO. Dr. Clarence Brown and Elaine from bar clay's. Miss Betty Gate. And Mr. KAPEL from UNICEF. So we have very distinguished panelists this afternoon.

So at the beginning, I ‑‑ I'm sorry. I, yes, of course, and then miss VENA of course from habitation international. I'm sorry, I was not following the order. So we have one, two, three, four, five, six panelists altogether. So at the outset I would like to just say a few words about creating ‑‑ thousand this panel discussion relates to this year's international day event. We are now an international community. We are preparing for new development framework for post‑2015 development framework and all the work activities that we have been engaged in as an international community. Again, we already started with NDGs in relation to realization of all persons with disabilities. We've had high level meeting on disability development last year that took place in conjunction of reaching the gap between the commitment that has been made in relation to the convention and the rights of persons with disabilities and also convention ‑‑ also the commitment to realization of all development goals for all persons inclusive development and how we ‑‑ how this gap can be narrowed in the response of the international committee was that through the outcome document of the high level meeting on disability development which address specifically this gap and then also provided guidance in terms of how we should move forward to advance disability inclusion in all aspects of developing society and just recently, you may have already heard in the other panel discussions you may have read already that open booking general assembly submitted propose Al on the development goals which contains 21 references on disability with increased visibility and it reflecting the global interests in political disability development. Disability has been again one of the central issues in terms of discussing how we can balance inclusive development and we have made a lot of advances in promoting inclusive development so far. In, as you can see, in, you know, in many of the progress that we have made, in including expressed commitment expressed by the international community doing this 69th session of general assembly the international community has specifically adapted this resolution as a way forward to advance disability inclusion. Especially in relation to enabling environment. We have ‑‑ so in this context, we would like to ‑‑ I would like to also mention that U.N. system has made advances in accessible ‑‑ promoting accessible work environment around the world and also U.N. facility, services and policies in 2000 the CEB made up of the system organization adapted policies on the United Nations workplace. This was creating the work environment that would enable persons with disability to work effectively based on fair practices that promote respect for human dignity. This also included reasonable accommodation measures that would eliminate physical communications, technical and other barrier to promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in the U.N. workplace. In June this year, the U.N. secretary general made a policy to enable the work environment for staff with disabilities for the U.N. secretariat based on the departmental efforts of the United Nations secretariat. We worked together to achieve this important goal so this panel discussion will exam different strategies that will successful utilize technology for all including persons with disabilities. I would like to mention some of the key questions. One, what are the obstacles and challenges to creating an enabling environment. Number two, what works, best practices and lesson learned number three, what major stakeholders such as governments, civil society, organizations, academia, private sector as well as persons with disabilities and their organizations can take to create an accessible work environment so in this panel discussion we would be examining these questions through the presentation initially by our colleagues who are panelists and then we'll like to involve all participants to explore how we can actually take steps in order for us to create further enabling work environment. So without further ado, I would like to first call on Mr. Kevin Cassidy to present his views on this issue as well as that of that IO. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much and thank you for inviting me. We have employed opportunities for people with disabilities and as a rights based institution the IOCs challenges face first and foremost as a human rights issue however it's also an economic issue as the exclusion of disabled people from the labor market comes at a high cost to all economies. It is estimated that the global GDP lost annually due to a person with disability who don't have access to the labor market an estimated 2 trillion dollars so it is a very serious social rights and economic issue. There are approximately 386 million persons of working age with disabilities and unemployment, unfortunately, is much higher than those persons without disabilities. In some cases as high as 80% in OACD countries the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities was 14% compared to 7% among non‑disabled people. People with disabilities find it difficult to get jobs for a number of reasons. Inaccessibility to building, public transport and the mistaken assumption that those people with disabilities cannot work. We will contribute to have a more equal basis with others and this process also promotes inclusive and sustainable development. This flexible of telework now open up and offer people with limited mobility the possibility of training from home or from a central location. New technologies enable workers with disabilities to be competitive in the market and enable those who are unable to in the past able to earn a living. However, we have to recognize that there is a digital divide between higher and lower income countries and between different groups within countries. People with disabilities particularly in developing countries are left out either because ict solutions are not designed in an exclusive way or because some of the assistive devices are not affordable to them or unavailable. Now I would like to turn my attention to what the ILO is doing in particular. Over the past few decades the ILO has put increased attention on the use of technologies, knowledge sharing inclusive and accessible and we hope that this increases the opportunity for persons with disability to participate more fully and contribute to the world of work. From our normative work some of you may know we have standards on convention 142 and recommendation 195 and our revocational 159 and these are particularly persons with disabilities with lifelong learning. This helps those with disabilities through the code of practice. Which provides a practical guidance to management on disability issues in the workplace. The code calls for authorities to facilitate contact between workers and employers and relevant professional agencies as well as disabled persons, organizations to exchange information regarding management in the workplace and including techniques and technology for the adaption of workplaces. Technical cooperation projects which is the life blood of many agencies. The ILO has a number of them in Africa and Asia through a number of supported programs by the government of Ireland and these programs the shorthand is propel which stands for promoting rights and opportunities for people with disabilities in employment through legislation. As an example in Ethiopia, the propel program works with the Ethiopian center for disability and development and is helping recent graduates with disabilities to find employment in selective regions. It includes CV writing, confidence building but it also looks at strategies that include technological innovation for the post of of vacancies by governmental organizations and private organizations on the ECD's website and these job vacancies that are shared with people who are not normally able to access this information. If someone has a sensory impairment one of these groups we had a success rate of 76% who are employed by governance and private sector directly out of the university so we're very confident that this project is moving forward in the right direction. Propel after a few years as also produced an online guide achieving equal employment opportunities with persons with disabilities through legislation which helps to improve the capacity of governance in collaboration with workers and employers to support equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities. The ILO also participants for inclusive ICTs to help facilitate the implementation on the rights of persons with disabilities. Our work focuses mainly on raising awareness on effective policies and initiatives. Facilitating the sharing of information, fostering the harmonization and standardization and supporting policymakers through bench marking. More recently, we've established a partnership called the global disability network which brings together multinational enterprises, employers, disabled persons organizes to share the conviction that persons with disabilities have talents and skills that can enhance virtually any business the network shares the knowledge and good practices and exchanges information on what multinational corporations actually can do to harness the power of technology to recruit, to train, to place women and men with disabilities in gainful employment. The network has employed a series of best practices and has include youth with disabilities and this highlights how ict can train workers with disabilities. The network has also recently developed an online assessment tool which can assist in employers in assessing their inclusion programs and practices the tool is primarily intended for multinationals but can be used at the global level and also at the local level providing a company with a global overview of the the current inclusion practices and the next steps towards a harmonization of more inclusive national workplace. The general will announce tomorrow the adoption of an ILO disability action plan. This strategy will ensure that a key component of our crosscutting work to promote equality and ensure protection of all forms of discrimination. The ILO is leading by example through a staff survey and I believe it's the first of its kind in the U.N. system. It should also be noted as I think was mentioned just a little while ago that the working group has made explicit references to those with disability and a decent work goal and this is a reminder that employing work opportunities is essential if no one is to be left behind in the new division. The ILO is committed to working in partnership with our constituents who are largely employers and workers organizations but also with the U.N. system, civil society organizations more broadly to make the process of technology a priority for businesses everywhere. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much, Mr. Cassidy and based on your function now as a communication officer we really appreciate it. I would now like to then move onto Dr. Clarence Brown an occupational therapist with the World Bank and also he was also ‑‑ a senior medical officer in ‑‑ for the organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons. So without further ado the floor is yours.
>> Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to come here today. The perspective that I would share with you today is one of the person responsible for the implementation of a disability management plan in the World Bank group. I am an occupational health physician so most assessments and most requests associated with disability in the workplace do flow through my unit. I wanted to try and give a perspective of what we do. Actually on the ground with our various programs that are in place to ensure that the World Bank is seen as an opportunity for all persons to be employed. And I'll run through a few slides today to try and demonstrate that process. So in the World Bank we have a dedicated unit that looks at the occupational health requirements of those persons with disabilities. Noting that most persons with disabilities either come to us through recruitment at the time of selection or as a result of injury, accident or illness during employment and during the response of that query we have a procedure or process in place that will gather information to identify the degree of impairment, whether or not there are any restrictions associated with that impairment across the range of employment opportunities within the bank, whether or not there can be any modifications required to the job, whether or not there is a necessity for adaptive technology and detailed personal assistant to enable the staff member to facilitate their role within the bank.

We have an accomplished set of guidelines and procedures that we follow through. We apply these across all the bank group both centrally in headquarters and distantly in country office locations. A significant part of our program is associated with those with a temporary disability in returning to work but also in those who have permanent disability either as a result of injury, accident or illness during their employment period. We strive to be a leader in our disability program and in our accommodations of people with disabilities in the workplace. This is managed through integration between health services, HR, and management to come to an appropriate task and effective role for persons with disabilities. Noting that the program that I manage is in place to ensure that there is no added cost to the hiring unit. And so any cost associated with the employment of a disabled person is actually covered separately from the employment contract that is undertaken with the person. This, of course, further breaks down any barriers associated with employing a person from an organizational perspective who may have additional requirements. And those accommodations can be minor or they can be substantive in terms of a full‑time personal assistant required to travel with the staff member as needed on operational missions. On a more global perspective the bank has been involved in ensuring accessibility to bank buildings for a number of years. Specifically in cooperation with our facilities, management, and real estate services departments we ensure that at minimum, most of our locations where reasonable, have accessibility features like ramps, doors, restroom conveniences, resting conveniences, etc. All of those things now built and programmed into our real estate selection process. We do have a systematic process in moving towards accommodating persons with disabilities. I am fiscally responsible for the expenditure I associated with these accommodations. We do in most cases require at least some basic documentation of the disability we like to obtain that so that we can ensure that we are doing the most for our staff by knowing specific requirements by discussing with treatment providers but assessing as required and then putting forward a plan of approach that would meet the requirements of the staff member as well as the business needs of the unit. Next slide please. So in terms of how did this come about, critical was the implementation of the policy. Critical was the senior management adoption of such a process, meeting our millennium goal for diversity and inclusion. Establishing the infrastructure to be able to support these types of situations. Establishing connectivity with specialists, adaptive technology capability so we can assess and provide technology whether it be for persons with century deficits, mobility deficit, physical deficits to be able to engage the workplace to their full capacity. Communications and awareness is a critical part of our ongoing process with featured websites, featured presentations, and specific events. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of our program is critical. Our annual expenditure on specific accommodations associated with disability can range between 120,000 dollars per annum. It's important that we do not stigmatize persons with disability by actually asking those persons to come forward. We're passive in the sense that we propagate information about our programs and those where the staff member believes that they could obtain benefit, noting that at the time of recruitment there is specificity in our recruitment procedure in the most confident way for the staff member or future staff member to be able to identify that they may have a workplace disability in that sort of scenario they are put in direct contact with the health services department where we would engage on a one on one evaluation discussion with the staff member on what their specific requirements are and how we could best meet those requirements. It's always a question that my HR colleagues ask me is that how many disabled people are employed in The World Bank Group? To be honest I do not know. The reason for that is we do not track people as a person with a specific indice that we want to track. I can record and tell you how many people have applied for specific funding associated with a disability but it is a process where they have the right to come forward to identify the disability or otherwise integrate into the workplace as they feel comfortable doing. The Bank does not have any particular specific criteria to hide disabled we'd rather flip that around and say this any person can be hired by the technical competencies and fulfilling the need of the job description and we will deal with whatever accommodation is required. If the person is found to be suitable for that position so that basically wraps up my short presentation and I understand that we'll have questions on the round table and I'd be more than happy to participate and facilitate any answers as I can. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much Dr. Lee Brown. I would now like to turn to Miss Venus who is the general of habitation international and was the first person with disability to ever occupy this post. And prior to joining the habitation international Miss Venus was among the leaders of the global disability community and was a chairperson of disabled people international. She was also actively involved in the negotiation work of the international rights convention and she also has many decades of working in the field from the level of her own community, from her own community and at national and global levels so she's one of the very important global level leaders in promoting again, creating this enable work environment. Thank you.
>> Thank you so much, Miss Ito. Good afternoon everyone. It is an honor and pleasure to be at this panel. My organization has been working for 92 years this year and we're enabling goals for those with disabilities to enjoy life in their eyes. So now today I will not be speaking as RI secretary general but as Venus, a woman with a disability from a developing country who has been advocating for like, two decades, Akiko, when I first did this thing Akiko was a young lawyer diplomat. And she's still very young. Well, tomorrow we celebrate yet another day of International Day of Persons with Disabilities and what makes this year's celebration really important is the fact that we are very near to 2015 when we shall end NEGs which will move onto the launching of the new development framework of the sustainable development goals which promises the potential of being inclusive. Being able to work is a big deal for persons with disabilities. This is an aspiration for every disabled person regardless of which part of the world regardless of which part of the world she or she comes from. If someone is managing their own finances he or she can direct the course of his or her life and would enjoy better recognition and treatment by the community and people whom he or she interacts on a daily basis. The ability to earn an income gives the person the ability to say how his or her life is ran and have more dignity and self‑worth and the ability to lead the life that he or she wishes. In spite of the many challenges the opportunities have become more and more available as a result of the many take holders who realize the CRPD division have to be appreciated and pursued collectively just like what we're doing today. Many years ago, I never expected I would ‑‑ I, as a person with a disability, a woman from a developing country would be able to interact with all of you expert and friends. After the CRPD, six years after it has been adopted and subsequently implemented things have really changed. And I, for one, have worked in this field for many years. I would say congratulation to all of us. Things really, there have been changes which we really appreciate as a global community of people with disabilities. Now challenges, the inclusion of those with disabilities in employment. I will speak based on my own experience not an expert because I am not one. People with disabilities are often subjected to employment practices that are discriminatory leaving many of us to do jobs that we will not get paid. We are expected to deliver the same amount and quality of work in exchange for smaller wages compared to those without disabilities. While it is accepted that it is the disabled people's right to have employment the extent to which this right is fulfilled is in entirely different standards that often focuses on the inability rather than the ability to fulfill the assigned tasks. In the South African federation of disabled people defines a right based approach as levelling the playing field so that persons with disabilities can access jobs and other services. It calls for rights‑based approach for the removal of physical and social barriers for thinking policies and attitudes and for politics to walk the talk by making sure these resources are made available for initiatives on universal design, accessible technology and coordinated public/private program to facilitate inclusion. As contributing members of the development of their communities. These person haves so much to contribute but they have to be provide reasonable accommodation which so many people do not understand and support has to be given to be able to harness the potential to the fullest extent possible. If we are to effectively contribute to development as an exercise of right investment has to be made to build their capacities to become product and I've contributing members of their communities. This means that a progress in poverty production as it relate to persons with disabilities have to be developed. One that integrates policies which are people‑centered development outcomes. In the context of developing countries, this means, for example, in raising the funding for education and training including vocational and on the job training so that needs of people with disabilities at working age can be better at rest and the conclusion realized. The gender dimension also needs to be considered so that women who are excluded can have access to employment that is putting an end to the triple discrimination we face on account of our poverty, gender and disability. It may also mean getting rid of the often repeated cliche that the disability related concerns are expensive and unsustainable. If persons with disabilities are to be finally included in development this should not stand in the way of inclusion. The conditions needed to enable such enjoyment of right including the right to work and earn an income has to be met and provided regardless of cost and other considerations. It is an understatement to say that persons with disabilities have much to contribute but are rarely given the opportunity to do so. In the United States, where we have the Americans with disabilities act to ADA, now in place for over two decades persons with disabilities account for only 5.5% employed nationwide. They represent an important segment of the industries work force. Workplace inclusion goes beyond simply employing individuals who created an environment where every employee is valued for what he or she can contribute to the organization. Structures, values, policies, and day‑to‑day practices all influence the degree to which employees with disabilities feel truly valued, appreciated and included in their workplaces. All important factors in improving job performance, increased satisfaction and employment commitment. A study conducted by the consortium lead by the institute at Syracuse university showed three areas that impact organizations disability inclusion. One, a strong recruitment training and advancement opportunities which involves targeted recruiting persons with disabilities. Manager training and education on persons with disabilities, targeted career advancement of persons with disabilities, opportunities that are readily available to employees with disabilities and monitoring and coaching opportunities that are made available to employees with disabilities. Another key policy is established procedures for accommodations and funding for accommodations. Organized recordkeeping. Universally designed accommodations and able to return to work and management services.

And the third key policy area is strong positive corporate culture including the ‑‑ at the level of top management. Top management commitment to hiring people with disabilities, availability of disability networks and adversity policy that includes disability are all important to having more persons with disabilities become part of an organization's work force. In conclusion, I wish to state that everyone has a role in creating a sustaining a culture of inclusiveness of employees with disabilities. Effective workplace inclusion practices increase job satisfaction, productivity, commitment and the feeling of belonging that all contribute very successful business creating an inclusive workplace for people with disabilities does not just make good sense, ladies and gentlemen, more importantly, it is the right thing to do. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much, Ms. ILAGAN and also the points you made in terms of how we need to look into different layers for differently positioned persons with disabilities for creating truly enabling working environment. Now I would like to turn to Miss Elaine Draper director of Barclays bank. She has been part of Barclays UK in a variety of positions within both the corporate and retail banking divisions. Since 2012 Miss Draper has been leading a program on initiatives to deliver successful banking and I would like to measure that we've had the great pleasure of working together on issues of financial inclusion.
>> Thank you. I'm delighted to be here and I was so excited to see the theme of the discussions today the promise of technology because I truly believe that technology does have the potential to eliminate historic barriers. We've heard today that there's many elements that need to be in place to create enabling work environments such as the accessibility of building or occupational health services, etc. But I'd like to focus on three elements that we have found with Barclays in the UK where technology has a key role to play that's the creation of open and inclusive culture within an organization, improving access to lifelong learning and development and improving access to assistive technology and support tools while this case study will be UK based we believe it'll be applicable to many public and private organizations if we first look at culture, and it was a perfect segway in there about it does start with culture and from executive sponsorship. I believe that employment people with disabilities is because we value a diverse work force is the fundamental foundation of successful and sustainable employment. Where we have found that technology has a role to play in delivering this mindset change, it's actually within internal social media so more and more larger organizations like Barclays in the UK we have 30,000 colleagues working. We have internal social media. What that has enabled is that we have a ‑‑ we've ‑‑ for quite a long time we've had a disability network both for colleagues that have disabilities but also colleagues that want to support and promote the employment of people with disabilities but they are geographically spread. With social media we've been able to have positive storytelling which has been very powerful and one of the campaigns we've run there year was called this is me. And colleagues told their stories of the work that they did, their life experiences, and then by the way, the challenges they faced on a day‑to‑day basis whether that was a mental health issue or a physical disability challenge. It's also enabled awareness training for managers. One of the biggest pieces of feedback we've had is that line managers felt unsure or nervous how best to support colleagues with a disability. They didn't know how to start a conversation about the support a colleague might need. Again, we've been able to use the internal social media to help support line managers and create discussion forums and at times it's been really challenging and we've had some really brave colleagues who have been happy to share their stories and encourage that discussion forum and that internal social media has probably been the biggest change that we have been able to deliver to change that mindset and the culture. Moving to learning and development, we know that outside of formal education training is a large barrier for those with disabilities. The more you can digitize training the easier it becomes to tailor and adapt it to different needs of people with disabilities. Barclays runs a program called life skills. It's targeted at young teenagers transitioning to work so particularly from 15‑23 year‑old is the target audience. Historically though that has been focused on mainstream education. What we've now been able to do because more and more of this program has digital content is we've worked with key charities in the UK to tailor the ‑‑ either tailor the way that the material is presented to meet the needs of young people with different disabilities or tailor some of the content to meet their needs and this has now been able to do at minimal additional effort or cost and the more we move to digital provision the greater the potential to share and ensure that everyone has equitable access to lifelong learning and development. One of the biggest new essential skills for young people is computer coding. The ability to build website or app. This actually in the UK it's coming into the national curriculum in schools this year. We've worked with charities to ensure that additional support and coding skills is available to young people and children with disabilities. Coding clubs are the modern day chess clubs. But actually we have to ensure that they are accessible. If young disabled people don't get that access to the same training and the changing skills in the workplace they will be left behind and it's essential that we use technology to ensure equitable access. The final element is around access ‑‑ once a person with a disability is in the work force it's really important they then have access to the right technology or other support tools they need to do their jobs. Historically, we had ‑‑ run a very bureaucratic process. Banking, we live a checklist, we live a form, and we had a very bureaucratic process to enable colleague to get access to the support tools that they needed. We're moving to digitize that access and move to self service so you can have a referral to the occupational health team to understand your health need but once you've had that assessment actually you can select and self serve for the support you need. When we first talked to our HR team about making that a self service being totally open and honest the people who manage the HR process, their comment back to me was, well, people will order more things, the cost will go up and I was thinking, isn't that a good thing that people are ordering more support tools? But it was actually we discovered this bureaucratic process was a way of actually actually inadvertently unintentionally restricting the amount we're actually providing and here, again, was a cultural change that we had to say, actually, make this self service. Trust our employees, people are not going to order things they don't need. If at some time in the future we do find some small cases of abuse we'll tackle it but we got to start by empowering colleagues and the principle has got to be that if we're an open and inclusive culture that if you need something to help you do your job then you can choose and you can get it. And the more that you can make that available online and through digital, the more that you can pass the control back and decision‑making back to the individual rather than have a chain of command which in a large organization has historically been one of the hidden barriers for persons with disabilities. One of the key questions posed to the discussion panel today is what role does the private sector have in encouraging and improving the work life of those with disabilities. What I have seen in the last few years is the promise of technology and this is a UK case study but it will resonate and have applications to any large organizations we must use technology to drive cultural change that winning the hearts and minds and showing how helping people see how they can have a truly open and inclusive environment the fundamental cornerstone of improving opportunities and technology particularly internal social media has the way of connecting colleagues and really driving cultural change. The other key element is lifelong learning and development. The pace at which the nature and requirement for roles is changing is ever‑quickening. We have to ensure there is equitable access to lifelong learning and development and, again, technology has a significant role to play in that, thank you.
>> Thank you very much for sharing very concrete examples from leading global financial institutions like Barclays and would actually discuss more later in terms of, again, questions and other issues. I would like to now turn to Miss Betty a founder and past president of GATE. The global alliance and technology environment. Working towards development of the international standard standard and accessibility so now we hear from an expert in accessible technologies and perhaps you can gives your views in terms of the preceding presentations from your expert point of view.
>> Thank you very much Akiko for the lovely and intimidating introduction. It's my pleasure to be here today, thank you so much for the invitation. I'm here to speak about enabling work environments on behalf of GAATE which is a global alliance on accessible technologies and environments. GAATES was formed seven years ago. It's an international consortium for people who work to promote accessibility in the work environment, electronically, and habitat transportation. Just by way of introduction, some of the work that we've done we developed a guide on inclusive disaster risk reduction in the Asian Pacific region last year and one of the key focuses of that publication was on accessible broadcasting and early warnings in accessible formats so that everybody receives information on potential disaster emergencies and disaster recovery. We also did a report for UNESCO on the use of assistive devices for children in schools. We developed a guide on accessibility, on the accessibility provision of the CRPD called a monograph which we did. And we have developed a toolkit on key indicators of accessibility of the CRPD for Norway. So we're involved in a number of different initiatives that relate to accessibility of one kind or another. But today we're going to talk about employment and assistive devices. As Venus said employment is the most important thing perhaps after health. Everybody wants to work. Everybody, whether they have a disability or not needs to work to be able to support themselves to be able to take their place in society. And enabling work environment is one that is inclusive of all people considered the principles of universal design which is seamless design that is inclusive of everyone when they have a disability, whether they're an older person, whether they have a guide dog, whether they can see or whether they can't or whether they're just getting a little bit older like myself. So today we ‑‑ we'll just have a quick overview of some of the U.N. CRPD articles that relate to employment and assistive devices of course there's the article 27 on work and employment which is a guiding article on employment within the convention. There is of course the general overriding obligation of universal design which sets out right at the outset that the universal design are the guiding principles that are applicable to all articles of the convention. Article 9, more specifically, goes into to look at what are the accessibility issues that relate to full inclusion of persons with disabilities and speak to built environment transport, habitat, information and communication technologies. And article 11, situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies which I've already spoken of a little bit. What are the enablers? Really this morning we heard a lot about technologies that were developed for persons with disabilities that are mainstream. But I can't emphasize enough, every time I see some new technology that is being introduced I think back to, oh, yes, right, remember when we used those TTYs that were the size of a refrigerator so I could type to a deaf person. The ‑‑ we spoke this morning about the typewriter, the remote control and I was just delighted this morning to hear IBM say that when they're developing something the first dip they do is they look at how persons with disabilities would be able to use that software or that technology. There is a lot to learn by looking at the development of technologies from all different directions. And that has been the history of very successful assistive devices. So we have the most successful assistive device which is the mobile telephone. It can be do everything. It's audio and it's text and our family it's our friend it's our work but most importantly, it's available in the format that we wish. It really is a wonderful model of accessibility and it has been a great facilitator of employment particularly in the developing world. Our universal design is definitely an enabler. A facility that has been designed with the principles of the universal design in mind is a seamless environment that accommodates everyone the principles of universal design are very well‑known and they apply to products, goods and services, and environments. Another enabler of course which is what we're all talking about is communication technologies and information technologies. These level the playing field and provide access to employment for so many people that were not able to find employment before. Another enabler is reasonable accommodation which Venus also spoke to. We think about reasonable accommodation as being like changing your workstation. But for somebody who works in a food production industry in Bangladesh or something the accommodation was just to change the workplace a little bit, so she was able to work and earn an income so it doesn't have to be a great big huge expensive accommodation. Benefits of sustainable ‑‑ excuse me, I've lots of allergies so ‑‑ I cough a lot. Benefits of sustainable employment well‑being in the workplace, well‑being of everybody positive disability, awareness raising, increased employment of persons with disabilities, economic dependence. And I speak to some of those ‑‑ excuse me. Well‑being in this workplace. This doesn't just mean control of the temperature or the humidity in your room but having a sense of well‑being in your workplace knowing that you are safe, knowing that there is an emergency plan to get you out in the event of an emergency. This is an important component of universal design that has gotten very little attention and is extremely important. Awareness raising, there's nothing better to promote employment of persons with disabilities than having penal with disabilities already employed. It is a great comfort to people like in your bank to actually have an employee to say, yes, they weren't really that much of a trouble were they, they're quite a good employee aren't they so awareness raising is a subtle thing but we have found employment of persons with disabilities really makes some really good headway in terms of awareness raising. Economic independence. Everybody wants to be economically independent. We have a new cohort of persons who are older who are returning and maintaining their place in the workplace. And they want to continue to have the economic income and with age as we all know comes some or many different limitations, agility, hearing, sight, etc. Our reduced dependence on the state. Years ago I did the cost of rebuilding a school versus the long‑term cost to the country. So the cost of having that child ‑‑ a child be able to go to school and making that school accessible to them was something like 500 or I think 700 dollars whereas the cost of the state of that child not going to school was thousands of dollars. Like terms of thousands of dollars in terms of them being on the state. Her mother had to stay home with her and she wasn't able to work so there's a really good cost benefit analysis which seems so obvious. Excuse me. Excuse me, sorry. Somebody has perfume on and I'm not able to talk very well so I apologize. The cost of assistive technologies everybody talks about and thinking oh, they're going to be really expensive but it is found that the average cost of assistive technologies provided in places like the U.S. assistive device loaning bank, Canadian one and others is somewhere between one hundred and two hundred dollars. It's not a big cost. The cost of designing a workplace to be accessible I do believe it was the World Bank who did a study on the difference between building the building that is accessible and meets universal design criteria and the cost of not doing it was as little as one or two percent. So as long as you're able to get in there when a building is new the cost of making the workplace accessible is extremely low. The future is technology. I couldn't emphasize more. We're living in a technology world. And we are going to continue to be more and more reliant on technologies. And it is a tremendous equalizer and really a tremendous asset for the future of employment of persons with disabilities. Although the numbers from the U.N. CRPD committee reports the number of people being employed around the world is still rather dismal. I think with the use of technology we're going to see that change so I have a picture up on the screen of an accessible ‑‑ back one please if somebody can do that. Back. Sorry. Yeah. That's an accessible radio. Which is used ‑‑ it was used in community multimedia and it was audio but it has a text display in the far right hand corner so people who were deaf were able to benefit from the weather forecast. It makes a difference to be able to know that information. Very simple, very basic accommodation of different formats. Automatic door opens. Security is such a big issue but we have contactless access cards which are just wonderful and that technology is ‑‑ we're going to see that increasing. We will all have this little magic card with us. Not only our phone but it'll probably be in our phone. Yes, I spoke about the phone already. And how accessible it is in all of the various features that are available on it. Some of them are voice over, zoom, hearing aid compatibility. Guided access, face time, it just goes on and on and of course I'm out of date. The phone does much more today than it did yesterday. Assistive technology in our phone we're using smart phone technology all of these were initially there primarily those with mobility disabilities to assist in closing the curtains, adjusting the time on their thermostat for their heat to come on. It's all around us. It's a when we're using and we have people with disabilities and their developers of these assistive technologies to thank. Scanners that will read information for people who are blind. That's all here now and personal environmental control which we're all using in our own homes. We are now starting to see interactive signage where people are able to do finding in museums and receive information in the format they want with a simple device that just reads the signals as they go around and it doesn't bother anybody else they just receive the information either audibly or text format and, finally, building technologies are buildings, are using all kinds of system to control our environments. To control how much air comes in, to control the temperatures, they're going to control a whole lot more. The building industry and architects and engineers are using technologies increasingly in building design and doing it for a cost effective reason that are than as accessibility reason but we can all benefit from that. So in closing I apologize for coughing so much, I'm sorry I can't help it, but I look forward to having ‑‑ answering any questions that you might have.
>> Thank you very much. So we are very much appreciative of learning of concrete examples of how we can bridge the gap between the ‑‑ of course the CRPD's commitment, the goal of inclusive development with technology, with accessible technology and accessibility is defined in the world of the United Nations as a mean and goal of development so thank you very much for this presentation I am now moving to the final speaker Mr. GOPAL. He works as a program specialist with UNICEF and his work involves mainstream implementation with UNICEF but today he will speak as a staff member with disabilities. With the ‑‑ of the United Nations of agency. And we will mention of course the progress made in the work of UNICEF but I ‑‑ but we specifically ask him to discuss accessibility at the United Nations as a staff member. It's also partly because he is an important member of interdepartmental task force. We have made a lot of progress since the last four years since we established ourselves as a task force in accessibility which resulted in the bulletin this June and we are now at the point where this bulletin on inclusive inclusion in the workplace we need to have a roll out to make the United Nations secretariat more accessible so in this context I would like GOPAL to discuss how you have viewed the progress so far and then, of course, taking into account, of course, all of those important elements that have been discussed already by the proceeding speakers. Also we had ILO as a central agency in creating an inclusive environment. We learned from ILO's many decades of experience. Also the World Bank, as a global development bank of course it has enormous impact on inclusive development and it has now making a lot of progress within its institution and Venus spoke again from the standpoint of a person ‑‑ a leader with a disability and how she sees in promoting enabling work environment could contribute to levelling of the ‑‑ levelling of the playing field. And also Barclays UK Miss Draper gave us a view of the corporate world which is now beginning to discover persons with disabilities as a potential, again, client as well as a group of potential clients as for also part of the work force for future business in the context. And so now I'm asking GOPAL to give us some short remarks.
>> Thank you, Akiko. Well, I've been asked to speak as Akiko said as a staff member with a disability. Essentially reflecting on walking the talk. We are expect the world to be inclusive. We ourselves are inclusive as agencies. Speakers before me, colleagues, friends, have mentioned about a whole lot of issues which are extremely important to ensure an enabling work environment. We have heard about culture for organizations. How is a culture built? One of the key components, or two components are awareness and capacity, so let me start with a small excerpt of a staff orientation on disability that we have produced as UNICEF for entire global staff. Fred, if you have the video can we play it?
>> (Video).
>> Statements are used for different parts of around the monitor.
>> (Video).
>> A boy from Tanzania they should take him to school. A girl from Armenia. Had the right to go to school to be treated well, to go out with friends. To do physical exercise.
>> (Video).
>> Thanks. Well, that's just an excerpt you can download the full video from our website at UNICEF.ORG. The reason I show this to you is twofold. Firstly, it's people who make it and design programs. It's people who build building, right? So unless we are able to instill or create the awareness among people both colleagues internally and externally and at the same time focus on building the capacity we cannot expect the world around us to be inclusive. That's number one. Number two, if you observe in the video, if even if you close your eyes and watch the videos you can get the message it comes across quite clearly because there was a voice over in that video and even if you can't hear there was sign language in the video. We talk about accessibility, we need to make our communication accessible and it is possible. It's not rocket science. It's possible to do it without much cost. And if you plan it from the beginning, as speakers have highlighted earlier it does not cost much. A personal reflection, two years back when I came to New York to join UNICEF like most people I had hopes and apprehensions that one has before joining a new organization. Being a person with disability some of that apprehension was will I be welcomed and will the building be accessible but the first day I stepped in the building the way the front desk people ‑‑ starting from the front desk colleagues, the security colleagues, they greet you and welcome you, the moment I entered the building on my first day, the way my teammates welcomed me and ensure that I adapt as quickly as possible was absolutely amazing. Right? Then I thought, oh, why did I have those apprehensions in the first place, it did not cost money so when you talk about inclusion, enabling work environment it does not cost much always. Some of my team members are here and not everyone I guess we all come together and make the environment, the work environment around us welcoming and interesting and exciting to work in. A few months back when I was training with my new guide dog right here under the table, I wanted to come across into the U.N. complex, the secretariat complex with the dog and I shot a quick e‑mail to my friend, Fred, who is part of Akiko's team about who to contact to get passes and etc. and he said just before the general assembly and he put me in touch with the security colleagues here and in no time I got a reply that your pass is waiting you for you and the trainer and you can enter into any entrance you want. So I mean, what is great is the responsiveness. As a part of the department task force you maybe are aware that the U.N. has put a lot of effort into making the secretariat complex accessible and as part of the phases of the work the users are involved in the organizations. DBOs, staff members with disabilities, we are included. We went to what Fred calls walk overs to the complex to see and suggest how better it can be done so my point is we have come a long way. There is no doubt about that. However, there is always room for improvement. The CRPD tells us that often the values are more disabling than the impairment itself and enabling the work environment is one which systematically addresses the barriers, the attitudes in the environment and the institution frameworks, policies, simulations, etc., at UNICEF we have been working hard in our 2011 global staff survey 3.4% of the staff indicated in a self proclaiming question to having had a disability that which amount to about 400 staff members globally. In UNICEF that have a disability. In 2014 survey we included extended questions on disability and accommodation required by staff members and not only that, that staff survey itself was made accessible so that staff members with disabilities can access the staff survey with different assistive technology. In 2011 UNICEF like other agencies, like, for example, the World Bank as was mentioned before issued an executive directive on employment of persons with disabilities. It was put together ‑‑ it was accompanied by disability accommodation fund which can be used by staff members to very different technology and other accommodations to perform on an equal basis with others. We are also currently implementing two directors. One of them is focusing on accessibility of UNICEF premises on how premises around the world, including headquarters and country offices can be made accessible and there are interesting examples. The point is that when culture inclusion sets in, staff members across the world come up with innovative solutions. For example, just two months back a colleague in the Latvia office made the U.N. premises accessible by just spending five hundred dollars it's not at all a question of cost. We are also with the help of IP accessibility policy which ensure that the procurement is accessible and when we talk about inclusion we have to ensure that it is not really about assistive technology about the wheelchair about the talking software, about a crutch or a hearing aid, right? It's about making everything accessible, everything that we do. So when we devise our complex accounting system we may think who is the person with the disability who is using it. Two weeks back in one of the offices a colleague with a disability came over who was ‑‑ an accounts officer. One of the brightest members of the team but he's losing his eyesight so he's afraid he'll not be able to work on the accounting software because no one had paid attention to accessibility in the first place when it was designed so it requires a transformation in the mindset it's not about cost. We have come a long way. There is room for improvement. Case in point, the recruitment form that we use the P level and the new form. It is extremely difficult to complete it if you are using a screen reader the security course that you have to take to in fact join your work, you know? That is not accessible so there is room for improvement. Much has been done much more needs to be done however the good part is that there is a lot of momentum. The government has been like never before. Today is better than yesterday and yesterday was better than the day before yesterday and the day before yesterday was better than five years back. The moment we change our thinking cap and think that okay, it's possible and we change the way we look at things, we find new ways of coming up with solutions. And Venus was talking about coming in from the top. In 2013 we were delighted in UNICEF that 103 offices reported work in the annual report the previous year it was only 85 so we were briefing our executive director on how happy we were that 103 offices reported specifically work on children with disabilities. He was quite happy but only question he asked is that which of the 27 countries which did not report because I would like to see that all countries report. That is the way, that's the learning for us and that's the way I think we should look at things. I will leave you with a thought to end with. We say that 15% of the world comprise of people with disabilities. That means that when we go to a college where one thousand students are studying we should see 150 students with disabilities. When you go to a village gathering where 250 people gathered we see 30 people with disabilities. When we are in the subway where there are a hundred people there are 15 people with disabilities and similarly, in any workplace, whenever you go to the workplace, where you see a hundred people working we have to see fifteen people with disabilities. Food for thought. Do we see them? Unfortunately, not. But what we can do is to take small steps to make that a reality. It's never too late. Lest start today. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).
>> Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for helping us to also bring all those contributions that we learned from our panelists together which is like cementing again, role of awareness, of being ‑‑ having awareness and also promoting awareness, building on a culture of inclusion in any institution that, you know, we are part of and thank you for your presentation. Now I would like to open up this panel discussion to you to all those in this panel. First I'd like to ask if you have any questions to any of our panelists. Yes? Please introduce yourself.
>> My name is Josh Goldstein from the center of financial inclusion and ‑‑ I thought all the panelists did a great job and my question and concern is when we're talking about enabling a work environment, we're really talking about formal sector employment and since outside of China and the developing world, most employment opportunities is self‑employment opportunity where there isn't really a specific workplace that is going to be reformed, it's really just one person and maybe a family member running a small business. It seems to me that we need to, as we put together these post‑millennium development goals that for example, that the ILO prepares trainings for people who are going to be working in the informal sector not just the formal sector that otherwise we're going to miss a lot of people with disabilities who are whose only opportunity to work is self‑employment opportunity and that requires different sets of tools and trainings. I just came back from Africa where 80% of the work is in the informal sector and it's a real challenge to think about people with disabilities where there's so many people without disabilities that are not able to get any formal sector employment at all so I just like to see how folks on the panel would address that part of the population who don't have a workplace that can be modified that are not part of a formal sector situation. Thank you.
>> Thank you. Any of our panelists who want to respond to this question?
>> Sure. Thank you very much for raising that issue. I was sitting here just thinking about as I was rattling off the conventions of the ILO had which is a good starting point but when we look at the persons with disabilities and a range of other issues we're looking at children, indigenous peoples, always the ILO has been on the forefront of that if you look at our conventions we've been dealing with these issues decades sometimes before the U.N. grappled with these issues and I think that's main by because the world of work is such a unique entry point where you're dealing with people from all different walks of life so I think it's really quite an important issue to deal with in the world of work because that's where we spend most of our time in our days as adults. The ILO is dealing with informal sector and is an agenda item in our conference next year and there's a number of reasons why it's important to deal with the informal sector. Firstly because you don't have protections when you're in the informal sector whether you're a person with disabilities or not. Also the person is not contributing to the tax base which is paying for all the protection services necessary to create an inclusive and sustainable society. So informal sector is something that's very much on the radar for the ILO. There's many countries where it's even 92% of the economic activities in the country are from the informal economy. How do we provide trainings for the people in the informal economy but as you say it's not only just persons with disabilities although sometimes you'll see a disproportionately large number of people because they are easily exploitable. It is on our agenda, we are working towards that and I think by three or four years we will have a device on how to deal with the informal economy and once you have that international framework then you're able to move forward with your technical cooperation in order to address issues such as training and opportunities for people to have gainful employment.
>> Thank you.
>> Thank you.
>> Any other input. So now next question. Please?
>> Thank you, Akiko. I'm from Australian mission. I'm always, I get very revved up when I see GOPAL on a panel because he always inspires with his remarks and something you mentioned when you talk about awareness and capacity I sort of come at this from somebody who sits in negotiations rooms here at the U.N. and it's a fascinating but sometimes frustrating process to negotiate these various resolutions that we do and I can't underscore enough the importance of people with disabilities work that we do and I think the fact that more and more people with disabilities are able to access the building that we're in today helps with that but I just wanted to for somebody who benefits enormously from the voice and the perspectives of people with disabilities I think the more doors we can open to include them in our ‑‑ amongst our colleagues, but also to recognize that words matter and the language we use matters and I've just seen in the four years that I've been in New York the incremental change that we've managed to realize in the resolutions that we've got. One of the big achievements this year was about data collection and the importance of data collection and what that's going to mean not just for the open working group and the post‑2015 development agenda but just for the day‑to‑day work that we do here so I was really encouraged to hear about the World Bank statistics. It may not been the number of people who self identifies who has an identify but you can measure it in different ways but also the staff survey and particularly how excited we get about the data that comes out of that so speaking from the member state community I think if we can just keep encouraging the collection and the desegregation of data that would be enormously helpful for our work.
>> Thank you very much. The statistics is one of the top priorities of the international community which has been reiterated over the past decade. In recent years the need became quite urgent and also it is a fundamental basic for all the work that we are doing here including making work, enabling work environment possible because without having data and this analysis we are not able to make a case for making the work environment inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities. So, yes. Please.
>> Hi, I'm from the Hearing Access Program. I was wondering is there a breakout of data that any country for the U.N. is collecting that breaks out the people that are employed in the disability industry versus non‑disability industry job. And what I mean by disability industry is when someone with a disability is working to the promotion of access it's like the ADA became the self‑employment act so if we want to talk about giving people with disabilities employment we need to talk about giving people with disabilities jobs in like Barclays bank in the non‑disability section. In the IB section or something that doesn't relate is there anyone collecting data because I know this has come up at the U.S. Access Board whether or not that data exists and I wonder if you've seen anything like that because it'd be interesting to see are we really making progress in real employment versus just the, like, bills like the ADA creating employment. I don't know if that's clear.
>> Okay. Mr. Cassidy respond to this question?
>> Sure in terms of gathering data, I mean the ILO really relies upon building capacity at the national level so we are working with the national statistical offices to improve their methodologies and those are involved and we don't always have the same terminology so I think there's a lot of ground work that needs to be done but we do gather ‑‑ desegregated data by sex, by disability, so there is that data gathering but, unfortunately, it's not well developed. And I think that we do have a lot of distance to go in order to have that. But in terms of people with disabilities outside the disability industry as you would call it I would say and it's probably back to the question earlier about training is that we do training for people on entrepreneurship and it's persons with disabilities and without disabilities. And they're not separated into different groups. They're together. We've done training for example in disaster situations. Where people were injured during the tsunami and had to deal with those disabilities and were also included into our livelihood programs so sometimes it takes a crisis like that to be able to quantify the audience. So I think there's a lot on the table and there's a lot of fundamental issues we need to address but I do think we see a lot of people outside what you consider traditional jobs because we're not making that discrimination and it would be awful for us to compound the levels of discrimination that they already face but separating them into persons with disabilities or not. It is moving forward but obviously not as fast as we'd like it.
>> Thank you very much. Yes, Mr. Brown.
>> The World Bank group and cooperation with the WHO in 2011 actually commissioned a very extensive report on disability worldwide and you might find some of your statistics and answers in their publication. Yeah.
>> Thank you very much. At the global level, again, once again, the issue of statistic ‑‑ disability statistics and monitoring evaluation but we are still in the process of strengthening the data statistics especially, you know, this is in the context of making this disability statistics more, you know, accessible, more easy to understand, because we have received many questions about ‑‑ so how many people in this world because we have general approximation with one billion persons but we do need to still to work with the technical bodies into technical bodies such as statistical commission to be able to provide global, again, improved global guidelines for being able to collect the data and statistics concerning the situation of persons with disabilities and economic social development. Yes? Yes. Please. Please introduce yourself.
>> Thank you. Thank you very much and my name's Eric and I also work in the secretariat in the department of social affairs here in the united nation. I have this question to our panelist perhaps Dr. Brown and Kevin ILO or maybe also bar clay because I heard very often you mention these key words inaccessibility and reasonable accommodation. And the extension point of view of how the organization is establishing some mechanism or reasonable accommodation fund to address this concern because so far the United Nations Secretariat we do not yet have any such a mechanism. Such in the facility that allow us to use the resource if you have resource in many cases there are no resources available so you have to address this on an ad hoc basis. You have the civil society and support and all so this is something I'd say we'd have to address as an organization so maybe you can help and elaborate a little bit more about how you operationalize these ideas and reasonable accommodation organization in terms of providing recommendation and make your facility, your services and a process accessible to persons with disability within the organization and of your external partner. Thank you.
>> Okay, then, Miss Draper first.
>> So I think Betty mentioned earlier the actual average cost is not large. I think you used the figure of 180 pounds with Barclays. This is not significant when you look at the cost of employing new recruits overall it is not significant cost. And I think that is one of the myths that we have worked to overcome. And it really is promoting all the different types of accommodations which can be very straightforward and very simple and low cost to deploy and that promotion and making it available, easily accessible, the information, one of the key developments that we have done in the move towards self service and self‑selection of the support you would need is looking to create a new app so that within ‑‑ we have a policy where colleagues in the UK can bring their eighteen devices to work so if you have a smart phone or a tablet at home you can as actually acces the HR services through your own device so we're building an app so that you can just search for all the different types of support tools and you can self‑select anything that I believe would make your job easier and of course there is the professional occupational health support available as well to talk to but making it accessible is a really easy for people to actually select the support they need is really important and so reassure and educate managers that we are not talking high cost accommodations. The average cost is very small.
>> Mr. Brown?
>> Thank you. Eric, you've got a very interesting question, I can relate to you. How the system developed within the World Bank and certainly spend time with you talking offline and I think today we already shared some of the policies and procedures with your group but I would say that it originated from upper level management particularly man dated by one of the presidents of the group then relegated down to management structure inclusive of the responsible vice president for human resources acknowledging that and then delegating that specific responsibility to health services department. Based on community consensus amongst the various World Bank group experts including those in social development. Disability, health services, to create a framework, i.e. the guidelines that we use and then to lobby member state to establish funding for this, what we call our disability accommodation fund. That is not an open book. But there is a present no limit to the extent of our expenditure on that particular fund. Meaning that I do not have a fixed budget associated to that cost but as the need arises the budget increases. And as mentioned previously, our expenditure on an annual basis can vary depending on the needs of the persons or the operational commitment. Following through it can be small amounts like mentioned from colleagues or we can move to sustainable amounts of employment of an assistant full‑time in an appropriate grade to assist a disabled person throughout the period of their employment within the World Bank so that could amount to many years of salary, etc., which would be accommodated under this fund. That is probably the most extreme example but operationally disabled persons in our organization also travel. Travel is an essential part of the business needs of the unit and the fund come to support those people with regards to special transfers, seating, cares during their overnight or overnight stays in hotels. Specialized transfer equipment in terms of transportation to and from locations. Projects, etc. And so they're all a part of our accommodation, the disability accommodation framework both from the very simple to the more complex and sustained requirement with the underlying principle and I think this is a key component at least from my perspective in the World Bank that the employment of a disabled person does not impact the cost of running the unit. So that is, I think ‑‑ distracts any management responsibility with regard to budget in that sense. From any type of activity and that really empowers the manager and the staff member to fully perform within the workplace because cost is not a factor in evaluating. Now I don't want to take too much time but also that cost needs to be reasonable with regards to the needs of the organization and the needs to the unit. And so there is an evaluation associated with that. But, generally, you know, it's acceptable and recommended amongst the needs and requirements because some people have skills that are essentially needed in field location so they go and do their job.
>> Thank you very much. Yes. Sorry. Yes, please.
>> Hi, my name is Jess from down syndrome international and I have a question for Kevin Cassidy and I think I'll ask some of the other panelists. I wonder if you guys work with other consult with other organizations in the industry. For example, Mackenzie and company which is one of the premiere international consulting firms that have done a study about employment with people with down syndrome that has very strong data about why it's actually very beneficial to employ those with down syndrome. Walgreens which I think most of you know about has a lot of data about the financial benefits as well as the social HR benefits in terms of retention bottom line so there is some data out there and I think there's across the global there's valuable data that could be aggregated.
>> We have a number of partners from the civil society, from the business community. As many know we are a tight‑knit organization. The work we do through our our business network is specifically with employers I don't know in depth what kind of studies have been undertaken so far. There is a website that has, as I said a knowledge base that can be drawn from. But when there is good data, certainly, think it's important to draw from whether we're drawing from the Mackenzie report in particular I'm not sure but we are working with employers to see what the costs and opportunities are and looking at costs to help employers navigate their way much better and we welcome those partnerships and our expert unfortunately couldn't come today I'm sure she would be able to give more insight onto that but certainly I'm happy to put you in touch with our people and see if there's some synergies there.
>> Thank you very much.
>> Yes, Josh, again, this is for Dr. Brown. If I understood you at the very beginning, you said you ‑‑ the World Bank aware that it doesn't disaggregate data around the number of employees with disabilities I understand you're trying to be respectful of the privacy of each person but I would argue that you mention the very good world report on disability done by you and the World Health Organization I think it really is incumbent on you to try to establish your own eternal baselines and to make that data available to others because I think part of what we're doing is around advocacy and I think if the World Bank doesn't take the lead doing this on this aggregation I think it sends an unfortunate message to other institutions that I think really need to know better what they're doing internally.
>> Maybe if I clarify it's not that we don't know who's identified as disabled it's just that we respect their opinions and their wishes as to whether or not they want to be counted in any sort of aggregated information source. The back end of that is that we do know everybody in our workplace is who is disabled to any sort of extent on the basis that we are able to obtain that information for security and safety purposes. So every person with a disability who may not actually come forward requiring accommodations is still known to us and we actually reach out to the persons or we actually engage our security services to be aware and to engage persons who may have some form of temporary disability and certainly those with permanent disabilities but not ‑‑ but may not utilize accommodation services are certainly known so we do have that information but it's not something that we are actively engaged in propagating. We do actively engage those aggregate numbers of persons who actually utilize the fund but in totality we say within the bank population. I'm not saying it's not something we won't do in the future but it's just something we're doing at the moment.
>> I'm just saying for the leadership role.
>> Thank you very much. Yes. Please.
>> Thank you. I'm from the general admission. Firstly I would like to thank the panelists and I would like to add my voice and having a job is the prerequisite for life. A job also gives you a sense of dignity and this applies to persons with and without disabilities. On this regard we have a national action plan. This plan includes a total of 32 measures aiming at the improvement of the employment plan of persons with disabilities. There's a program that includes initiative and under this program there's a hundred million euro that is for better innovation for those disabled people and for the labor for young person's with disabilities and the inclusion of the competencies of the chambers of industry, commerce, craft and agriculture and in Germany the working life of persons with disabilities and the framework of the vocational rehabilitation is for financial benefits. This comprises a wide range of working life in order to give persons with disabilities the possibility to find adequate and suitable jobs they are able to maintain the question I would have liked to direct to the panelist as well as the audience was what you addressed already. Germany's significant point to decrease those with disabilities and this in respect we'd be interested in getting more detailed strategies of out‑of‑state policies and more backgrounds of other countries. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much for this contribution and we also appreciate very much of your sponsorship to this panel discussion and we hope to also contribute to your, again, what ‑‑ your request or your plan to be able to extensively like look into different examples, you know, in this particular field. So I would like to then now open to other questions. I open the floor to questions. Yes? Anyone?
>> I could just answer.
>> Okay. Sure. Please.
>> Thank you very much for that interesting question. I just have a suggestion to make to you as something you might find very useful is if you look at the CRPD committee reports that countries are submitting, they provide information on some fantastically interesting best practices and initiatives that are being carried out around the world and the delta center in Norway is doing a project examining those reports and I think that it's going to be a great ‑‑ an increasingly a great source of information for all of us using those country reports.
>> Any other questions? No questions? I then would like to return to our panelists just to give us a few minutes of your final remarks. You could actually give a little bit more information as to what you've already presented or you could also comment on each other's presentation or perhaps any final remarks on this issue. So now we'll actually go back to GOPAL. Please?
>> Well, I've not much time. I just want to respond to Eric's question. I totally agree with the points made by the fellow panelists it has to be located within the division of human resources the human resource issue. It is important that it is they who are in charge of it and not the disability section or the disability unit of any organization. That's how we mainstream. Top level management support or blessing is important. It has to be insured to a what is important. There should be a mechanism which guarantees a regular replenishment of the fund periodically on a needs basis and as I mentioned before it is important that in the case of UNICEF for example, important that all parts of the organization know about the funding. Sometimes it happens that there's a fund but no one knows about the fund. We have seen that happen and lastly, it is important to ensure that accommodation needs of staff members do not become responsibility of individual units and sections because it then amounts to sections of asking for more money and money ‑‑ funds not related to the immediate programs and so on so that's all I have to say.
>> Thank you. And miss Betty?
>> Thank you, Akiko. My closing thought is that we ought to use and recognize the CRPD for the fantastic opportunity it provides us working in this field of employment and accessibility. It is a wonderful guiding document that is making a difference around the world. It is making a difference in terms of awareness such as employment opportunities understanding the role of assistive devices and how that can provide an opportunity to someone to work independently as Josh said or for a company the CRPD is going a great job driving this and we all have to use it more as tool to promote to the employment of persons with disabilities. So ‑‑
>> Thank you very much. Miss Draper.
>> Thank you. I think today has really highlighted that the sharing of stories is essential, so sharing both within organizations to sustain inclusive cultures but but also across sectors across the public, private and third sectors also across countries and I think the more that we can do so I'm really interested Betty you mentioned the work happening in Norway to disseminate and share the best of what's happening across the world is really essential and the more we can make that available it's critical and technology has such a role to play in promoting and sharing those stories. Today has been really informative. I thank all the participants and the member states and I look forward to continues to work and support the work that everyone is doing.
>> Thank you. Mr. Brown?
>> I think my closing remarks really would focus from the perspective of an in‑house facility and capability of an employment organization. The World Bank, the U.N. Secretariat funds and programs, etc., we as organizations are generally involved with those laws and regulations of the house country because that's the status thing is afforded to organizations like ourselves which to a certain extent isolates us from the legislation associated with the disability like the ADA or the disability discrimination act in the UK or various UK and other national international legislation. Which could be considered a bit of a problem. So, therefore, how do you structure and how do you implement such rules or regulations or laws within internal international organizations where, otherwise, those laws would not be applicable and it comes back to the issue of senior leadership, mandating particular policy and directive which would clearly define the organization's response with best practices which could be married to laws, etc. We at the bank are truly cognizant of the fact that our program is not perfect and that we would like to be better aligned to recommendations of international law associated with the ADA or disabilities discrimination act or any one of the laws within ‑‑ that could be utilized as excellent benchmarks for such programs. And that's some of the work that we're moving forward to to continue implementing applicable laws within internal organizations like ourselves. So, thank you very much for the opportunity to participate. I will ‑‑ the organizers have my contact details and I'm more than happy to respond to e‑mail requests in the future. Thank you.
>> Thank you very much. I'm very happy to be in this panel and I learned a lot from my panelists here and the audience that we don't always have the right answer to the questions but it pushes us in the right direction. We welcome the member state to work with us on lessons learned. We have a number of mechanisms and repositories for that and by and large as we spoke about earlier work is not just a source of income and that is embedded in the ILO's work agenda and something we're really pushing forward for. It's about creating an inclusive and stable society so we will talk about the implications of the greater role for decent work. In terms of the private sector I look forward to further conversations about what we can do and maybe joining our business network which is largely driven by the businesses not by the ILO which is the way I think it should be and thirdly and lastly is that tomorrow as I mentioned the director general of the ILO will announce in his message on the international day for the disability inclusion strategy and action plan and challenge the U.N. to take up that strategy as well and say how far we can go with that. Thank you very much.
>> Thank you very much and Miss Venus ILAGAN.
>> It is a pleasure to be part of this panel and we thank all of you for having shared with us all the things you're doing and hopefully we'll continue the dialogue and in doing so I would like to say that, you know, persons with disabilities should not just be looked at consumer of services or users of services. They are the experts of their own situation so that, you know, when you do anything make sure that they're included in trying to discuss what are the things that needs to be done. The working with persons with disabilities is not going to happen over night but it's heartwarming to note that more and more are becoming aware and more committed. One other thing that we should look into is how much resources have gone into these efforts for disability because while there are new players in the field it remains that what is needed is not really met so I think it's an effort of continuing the dialogue and talking about making more noise so that more people would come on board and assist in this process. Persons with disabilities are very happy. I would say that with my dialogue so some of my colleagues over the years and they were very happy about what's happening but, of course, there's that ‑‑ there's that caution at the back of their mind that how soon are we going to enjoy the rides. Sometimes they become very, very frustrated because things do not happen at the speed that they hope it will happen but, of course, we are very happy. That things are starting to move. As I said many many, times I'm happy that I see these changes. Thank you very much. It's a partnership.
>> Thank you very much. I think it was a very, again, important, again, contribution that you just had made that the eve of international day of disabled persons which will be officially opened tomorrow morning at ten o'clock. After this, just as a way of ‑‑ just to give you information from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. today in conference room four we have a film screening we stand alone. This is a very important screening. It features young amputee soccer players from Liberia and will be followed by an interactive discussion by the producer and the Liberian and we have the opening from ten o'clock until 11:30 p.m. we have also the panel discussion with disability sustainable development from 11:30 to 1 p.m. we have the sustainability and development goals. From 11:30 to 12 p.m. there's a press conference on the disaster risk reduction. From 1:15 to 2:30 p.m. in conference room four there'll be a panel discussion on the disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action coorganized by the foundation and sponsored by Japan. 3‑4 p.m. conference and book launch on disability in developing countries organized by JAKA and from 3 to 6 p.m. tomorrow in conference room four we have U.N. enable film festival this year organized by DES and also UNESCO. At 6:30 there'll be a reception at the permanent mission of the republic of Korea. We have a full program tomorrow so we have many more activities so we hope to be able to welcome you in all of those events or any of those events and thank you very much for your participation this afternoon.
>> (APPLAUSE).