NAME OF TWG or CoP | TWG on Empowerment and Equity for Diverse Communities – Persons with Disabilities Sub-Group
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MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS | Partners, including: World Bank; Burton Blatt Institute, Syracuse University; G3ict; among others.
Co-leader(s) | Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo (World Bank) & Janet Lord (BBI)

**Outputs for 2015**

On occasion of the Eighth Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Global Forum on Law, Justice and Development and the World Bank together with the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) at Syracuse University and the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict) hosted a side event titled “Connecting the Last Mile: Addressing Legal and Policy Gaps in ICT.” This event addressed the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in surmounting access barriers that inhibit the participation of persons with disabilities in society. Panelists discussed law, policy, and social measures that States Parties may adopt to ensure ICT accessibility consistent with CRPD requirements, sharing best practices from policy and practice, including in the context of model policies and practices, disability inclusive development, political participation and voting, and economic return on investment for governments. The panel was moderated by Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, Global Disability Advisor, World Bank who laid out an overview of the importance of accessible ICT within the development framework. Axel Leblois, President and Executive Director of G3ict, talked about the critical role laws and policies play in enabling accessible ICTs in all domains, and shared examples of several effective policy models and frameworks. Co-moderator Janet Lord, Senior Vice President, Human Rights and Inclusive Development, BBI spoke about how ICT was breaking barriers to electoral and political participation for persons with disabilities. Deepi Samant Raja, Consultant on Disability-inclusive Development offered an economic perspective and argument for enabling access to ICT for persons with disabilities due to the positive return of investment on education, employment, financial participation, and citizenship outcomes for persons with disabilities. Rosemary Kayess, Director of the Human Rights and Disability Projects at the Human Rights Centre, UNSW Law joined the panel as a discussant, noting the role of the CRPD in stimulating law and policy developments in ICTs.

In addition, members participated in consultations regarding the Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy, including in Washington DC (Spring) and in New York (June). Continued participation in this process is a priority for 2016.
Other activities (forthcoming) include:

An additional event will occur this fall at the Law, Justice and Development Forum Week. In an event entitled, Accessible Technology for Persons with Disabilities - Addressing Legal and Governance Gaps, participants will run a Knowledge Café. Its objective is to facilitate reflection on the role of law and governance in bridging the gaps between the potential of technology for the socioeconomic development of persons with disabilities and its realization. The Café will discuss the development of relevant policy and regulation, and the governance structures needed for their effective interpretation and implementation. It is scheduled for November 17, 2015, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm.

Strategic Planning for 2016 is currently underway and inputs are being solicited from participating members. Knowledge products likely to be developed include material on (1) access to justice (supplementing the prior contributions of members); (2) election law and regulation; and (3) enhancing compliance with disability law through the development of regulatory frameworks.