



COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

G3ict – Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From October 2016 To October 2018

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by G3ict President

26 October 2018

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict) reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Axel Leblois
President and Executive Director, G3ict

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Axel Leblois'.

Promoting the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Digital Age
GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR INCLUSIVE ICTs

6300 Powers Ferry Road, Suite 600-300, Atlanta, Georgia 30339, U.S.A.

Telephone: +1678-534-8518 | Fax: +1404-252-0628

www.g3ict.org

Part II. Description of Actions

What follows is a description of practical actions that G3ict has taken in support of the UN Global Compact during the period October 2016 - October 2018. The actions taken are related to the specific activities suggested for our type of organization, a Civil Society organization. These actions include engage with Global Compact Local Networks; join and/or propose partnership projects on corporate sustainability; engage companies in Global Compact-related issues; join and/or support special initiatives and work streams; provide commentary to companies on Communications on Progress; participate in Global Compact global, and local events.

G3ict – the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies – is an Advocacy Initiative launched in December 2006 by UN GAID, the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development, in cooperation with the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at UN DESA. Its mission is to facilitate and support the implementation of the dispositions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on the accessibility of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and assistive technologies. G3ict relies on an international network of ICT accessibility experts to develop and promote good practices, technical resources and benchmarks for ICT accessibility advocates around the world. It is incorporated as a tax -exempt nonprofit organization in the State of Georgia, USA, and headquartered in Atlanta. Since 2016, G3ict runs IAAP, the International Association of Accessibility Professionals which counts 1,700 members in 41 countries and offers training resources and the only available international certification in ICT accessibility for professionals.

Initiatives of the Global Compact regarding the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in relation to G3ict activities

Since its inception, the UN Global Compact agenda promotes Human Rights Treaties adopted prior to its formation and which form the basis of the commitments of its corporate members. However, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 8th Human Right Treaty, was only adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006 and opened for signatures on March 30th, 2007, several years after the Global Compact was formed. It covers the rights of one billion persons living with disabilities worldwide, of which two third live with severe disabilities, a demographic reality which impacts Global Compact members, corporations and governments alike. With 177 countries having now ratified the CRPD, Disability Rights should be an increasingly important Human Rights topic among UN Global Compact activities, a development that G3ict is eager and willing to support. Thus, G3ict has volunteered to participate and support the UN Global Compact in every occasion when the Global Compact engaged in activities related to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities such as web accessibility or workplace accommodation for persons with disabilities.

In particular, G3ict is extremely pleased to have actively participated in and supported the publication in 2017 and promotion in 2018 of the first UN Global Compact “Guide for Business on the Rights of Persons

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with Disabilities” which serves as an excellent foundation to engage more Global Compact members in implementing good practices in support of Disability Rights. Most notably, G3ict funded the production, copy editing and accessibility audit and remediation of the final UN Global Compact electronic report.

With the above historic perspective and evolution in mind, the following narrative covers the activities of G3ict with the Global Compact over the past two years, as well as G3ict activity metrics in promoting the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities relevant to the mission of the Global Compact.

G3ict has joined and support special initiatives and work streams

May-June 2016 – ongoing

G3ict helped forming the Disabilities Expert Group for compiling of a “Guide for Business on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” and supported its publication by providing copy-editing and design services, as well as distribution

The UN Global Compact and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have developed guidance that helps business understand, respect and support the rights of persons with disabilities in the workplace, marketplace and community. Through practical actions and case studies, the Guide illustrates how the rights set out in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) are relevant to business. The Guide provides a knowledge-sharing platform on how companies can align their business practices to be more inclusive and accessible, helping to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth and Goal 10 on reducing inequality.

A Disability Expert Group was formed to provide editorial input and advice to the Guide. The Expert Group included G3ict, Business Disability International, Council of Europe, Iberoamerican Organization of Social Security (OISS), ILO Global Business and Disability Network, UN DESA, UN OHCHR, The World Bank, International Disability Alliance, Ruh Global Communications, Specialisterne, This Ability Consulting, and DLA Piper.

On 14 September 2016, G3ict participated in the first Consultation of the Disabilities Expert Group; on 21 September 2016, G3ict contributed written comments to the first draft of the Guide. Our organization has helped compile company examples for possible inclusion in the Guide and funded the production, copy editing and accessibility audit and remediation of the final UN Global Compact electronic report, published in September 2017. G3ict is currently raising awareness about the Guide through web posting, social media references, and at various events such as webinars, conferences, and roundtable discussions.

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3 December 2018

G3ict supports the Second Edition of the Award Global Recognition “Good Practices for Employability of Workers with Disabilities,” promoted by the State of São Paulo Secretariat of Persons with Disability, in partnership with UN Global Compact/Brazil Network and ILO, UN Headquarters, New York

The São Paulo State Secretariat for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SEDPcD) and the Center of Technology and Innovation (CTI) of the São Paulo State, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Brazil at the United Nations will hold the second edition of the Award Global Recognition "Good Practices for Employees with Disabilities", in New York, on December 3, 2018, during the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The first edition of this international event took place on December 2, 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

G3ict is a proud supporter of the SEDPcD initiative, along with other partners and collaborators, including UN Global Compact/Brazil Network, ILO, International Disability Alliance, World Institute on Disability, RIADIS, International Council for Caring Communities, Brazil-Canada Chamber of Commerce, Câmara Mexicana, Amcham Brasil, Cámara Oficial Española de Comercio en Brasil, Câmara de Comércio e Indústria Brasil-Alemanha, i.Social, K4D, Ruh Global Communications.

The goal of the second edition of the Award is to give continuity to the process of identifying and highlighting good practices for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labor market in a global level, giving international recognition to the successful initiatives of companies that are positive examples in this important challenge of building an inclusive company, designed for all. These companies will be symbolically rewarded with a plaque and valued for their investments and strategies used to ethically and responsibly include professionals with disabilities in their staff. It is a great opportunity for them to become more attractive to the best talents and become a benchmark for other companies.

The selected companies to this second edition of the Award present at the Awards Ceremony in New York, will not only have international recognition through several channels of dissemination, but also their experiences will make part of a digital publication and an USB flash drive with videos of the finalist practices of this initiative, in Spanish, English and Portuguese, which will be elaborated by the São Paulo State Secretariat for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Center for Technology and Innovation of the São Paulo State Government.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

G3ict’s focus in advancing the UN Global Principles is promoting Accessibility as a key enabler of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities. To this effect, G3ict has enrolled the support and secured the active involvement of international institutions, major corporations and government entities and

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consistently supported those in their implementation of ICT and digital accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.

1. Partnerships with UN agencies for private sector and governments outreach

G3ict has worked closely the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in providing support to its sector members, corporations, telecom regulators and civil society organization by making available the ITU-G3ict Policy Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities, jointly published with the ITU technical reports on making mobile phones accessible and making television accessible. More recently, it has co-published with the ITU model policies for web accessibility, television accessibility, mobile accessibility, public access points accessibility and accessibility guidelines for procurement. Those model policies are based upon the principle of multi-stakeholder engagement which G3ict deems critical to the success of ICT and digital accessibility policies and programs. Metrics include downloads of the print version of the policy toolkit, downloads and unique visitors totaling more than 1,000 per month from multiple countries. The G3ict – ITU model policies are now translated and used in 6 languages: French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and widely referenced in all ITU and G3ict capacity building activities around the world. Smart Cities and IAAP

Similarly, G3ict has co-funded and developed a joint model policy on “Inclusive ICTs for Education” with UNESCO and in collaboration with the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. The model policy is used by UNESCO and G3ict around the world to promote accessible technologies in Education.

2. Partnerships with Corporations in promoting innovation and good practices

G3ict activities promoting the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are funded for the most part and designed in collaboration with large corporations which support its mission of promoting the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and related advocacy activities.

Policy Development

Those include public-private sectors dialogues on policy developments, as well as conferences promoting technology solutions for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Since its inception in 2006, G3ict has organized, sponsored or co-hosted more than 170 conferences and seminars on five continents with advocacy organizations, corporations and governments on ICT and digital accessibility solutions and good practices. As an example, each year, G3ict organizes the M-Enabling Summit in Washington, D.C., which gathers around 600 participants from corporations, advocacy groups and innovators to share best practices and latest innovations leveraging mobile technologies for the workplace, education and independent living. Other editions have included Australia, Italy and Russia, and most recently the launch of the first M-Enabling Forum Europe on 27 September 2018 in Germany, in collaboration with Messe Düsseldorf.

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IAAP – International Association of Accessibility Professionals, a division of G3ict

Private sector organizations face increasing challenges in making their products, services and own workplace digitally accessible to persons with disabilities. IAAP offers skills development resources and manages the only available international certification program in digital accessibility. Certification programs include core competencies in accessibility, web accessibility and procurement. With over 1,000 proctored test centers in 120 countries, IAAP is fully equipped to support global and local corporations in their pursuit of inclusive strategies for employment and products and services. IAAP membership of 1,700 professionals grows at a rate 25% per year since its inception, creating a much-needed profession of accessibility experts with well-defined qualifications.

Private sector involvement in G3ict programs and activities

More than 200 private sector companies have participated in G3ict activities over the past years including IBM, Microsoft, Time Warner Cable, Google, Adobe, AT&T, Orange, Target, ATOS, Sprint, Verizon, JP Morgan, Wells Fargo, Barclays, Oath, HP, Samsung, Canon, Vodafone, BB&T, Pearson, Deque, Disney, T-Mobile, Intuit, UPS, Bank of America, Verizon, Uber, Amazon, BeeLine (Russia), Canon, Allstate, Telstra (Australia), Walt Disney, Comcast, TurkCell (Turkey), CISCO, Crawford Technologies, SSB BART Group and Freedom Scientific, among others. G3ict also works closely with the Consumer Technology Association, CTIA-The Wireless Association, GSMA and national business associations which host its conferences and seminars such as the Indian Bankers Association, the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce or the Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

Smart Cities for All Initiative

G3ict and World Enabled Smart Cities for All initiative is developed in close cooperation with major corporations, Microsoft and AT&T notably. Its objective is to define the state of ICT accessibility in Smart Cities worldwide. The focus of this initiative is to eliminate the digital divide for persons with disabilities and older persons in Smart Cities around the world. Through partnerships with leading organizations and companies, we are creating tools and strategies needed to build more inclusive Smart Cities.

3. Global metrics

Globally, G3ict has consistently contributed since 2006 in promoting the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The latest G3ict DARE Index (Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index) is a global survey of 121 countries progress in implementing the dispositions of the CRPD on ICT and digital accessibility found the following indicators of progress. G3ict monitors country commitments (5 variables), capacity to implement (5 variables) and actual outcomes (10 variables) for persons with disabilities. All data points are provided by 121 local G3ict panels of experts.

As of 2018, among countries parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

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- 84% have a constitutional article, law or regulation defining the rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 63% have a definition of "Reasonable Accommodation" included in any law or regulation regarding the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 49% have a definition of accessibility which includes ICTs or electronic media in the country laws or regulations

Those results show the considerable advances of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities achieved around the world and of the recognition of the role of accessibility in realizing those rights. For instance, prior to 2006, date of adoption of the CRPD by the United Nations General Assembly, only three countries had a definition of reasonable accommodation in their legislations with little impact on private sector practices. Similarly, almost no country had an explicit definition of accessibility incorporating information and communications technologies in addition to the built environment and transportation.

While G3ict cannot claim that those positive changes are a result of its sole advocacy over the past 12 years, it is worth noting that G3ict is the only global organization that has been promoting those dispositions consistently for the past 12 years around the world with the active participation of leading public, private, and civil society stakeholders.

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