



Editorial Suggestions Prepared by the G3ict Work Group on Digital Accessibility Standardization and Harmonization (DASH) to Include Disability Rights and Digital Accessibility as per Art. 9 of the CRPD in the United Nations Global Digital Compact: rev1 (draft V.1) of 15 May 2024.

19 May 2024

Proposed language to enhance the digital rights of 1.3 billion persons with disabilities, including women, youth, and older persons in the Global Digital Compact: rev1 (draft V.1) of 15 May 2024. Current gaps of GDC: rev1 (draft V.1) that can be addressed fall in three categories:

1. The current GDC: rev1 (draft V.1) does not clearly reference the digital inclusion and accessibility dispositions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and SDG goals, indicators, and targets related to Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons.
2. Persons with disabilities represent 16% of the world's population across all target groups identified by the GDC, including women, youth, and older persons, and most at risk of digital exclusion or living in poverty. Given their demographic weight and their specific digital accessibility requirements, Persons with Disabilities should be clearly identified throughout the GDC and not implicitly referenced under the generic term "marginalized populations." This is most relevant to the GDC as digital accessibility innovations for persons with disabilities (as noted by the Interim Report of the UN AI Advisory Body) can have one of the greatest positive impacts on social and economic inclusion if properly promoted.
3. Finally, the term "Accessibility," as defined by Article 9 of the CRPD, needs to be contextualized in the current draft to ensure its proper interpretation and specified in several instances.

To address the above gaps, the DASH Work Group recommends the following adjustments (underlined in yellow) to the GDC: rev1 (draft V.1):

1. Section - 8 "PRINCIPLES".

Purpose: Adding an explicit reference to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

(c) *Human rights-based*: This Compact is anchored in international law, including international human rights law. All human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights and fundamental freedoms, must be respected, protected, and promoted online and offline. Our cooperation will harness digital technologies to advance these rights, including the rights of the child, the rights of persons with disabilities, and the right to development and the right to participation.

Advancing the Rights to Digital Access for Persons with Disabilities

G3ict - GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR INCLUSIVE ICTs

Five Concourse Parkway, Suite 3000, Atlanta, GA 30328

Telephone: +1678-534-8518

www.g3ict.org

2. Section 8. (f) – Specify the meaning of “Accessibility”

(g) *Accessible*: Accessible and affordable digital technologies are essential to enable every person to participate fully in the digital world. Our cooperation will promote digital accessibility and assistive technology availability for persons with disabilities, older persons, as well as illiterate persons, and will support linguistic and cultural diversity in the digital space.

3. **Section 11. (g)** – Identify and include persons with disabilities, older persons, marginalized communities, and persons in vulnerable situations and their respective needs in the development and implementation of national and local digital connectivity strategies (SDGs 10 & 11).
4. **Section 13. (b)** – Increase the availability and accessibility of digital technology platforms, services, software, alternative user interfaces, assistive technologies, and educational curricula in diverse languages and formats (SDGs 4 & 10).
5. **Section 16.** – We consider digital public goods and infrastructure to be key drivers of inclusive digital transformation. We recognize the need to increase investment in digital public infrastructure and their successful development through the participation of all stakeholders and through procurement policies promoting inclusive digital equipment and services.
6. **Section 17. (b)** – Promote the adoption of open standards for interoperability and digital accessibility to facilitate the use of digital public goods across different platforms, systems and assistive technologies (All SDGs).
7. **Section 18.** – We recognize that equitable, inclusive, and affordable availability of access to digital technologies can unlock the potential of the digital economy for every society particularly those of emerging and developing economies. We recognize digital access to encompass opportunities for the acquisition and development of knowledge, research, and capacity as well as technology transfers on mutually agreed terms.
8. **Section 21.** – Add paragraph (j) “(j) Promote digital accessibility and inclusion-related capacity building and skilling in national digital transformation strategies (SDG 4, 8, 11).
9. **Section 43 (b)** – Strengthen efforts to collect, analyze and disseminate relevant, accurate, reliable, and disaggregated data for better monitoring and policymaking to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, while respecting privacy and data protection. We will aim for a 50 percent increase in the data available to monitor the SDGs, disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other relevant characteristics (SDGs 5 & 10).

These improvements will align the GDC with the CRPD and SDGs. Clear guidance within the GDC is critical to foster international cooperation, ongoing scientific research, and innovation toward ensuring accessible, affordable, and interoperable digital accessibility-related technologies. History tells us that unless disability is explicitly referenced by instruments intended to enable access for all, access for persons with disabilities is overlooked – as evidenced by the fact that most of the most frequently used public and private websites continue to be inaccessible.

The DASH Work Group and G3ict are available to discuss any of these suggestions or proposed alternatives.

DASH Work Group <https://g3ict.org/dash/about-dash-working-group>

G3ict Home Page: <https://g3ict.org/>

For questions, contact: Francesca Cesa Bianchi, VP Institutional Relations and Advocacy, G3ict at fcesabianchi@g3ict.org