



# INCLUSIVE

AFRICA CONFERENCE 2021



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**Theme: Advancement of Digital Accessibility & Assistive Technology in Africa**

## **Knowledge Development**

September 30, 2021

[www.inclusiveafrica.org](http://www.inclusiveafrica.org)

# The Keynote Speaker

## Eric Kneeder, Ambassador, US Embassy in Kenya

- This year's theme Advancing Digital Accessibility and Assistive Technology Inclusion in Africa comes at a particularly important time. Over the past year and a half, the pandemic has altered the way we do business. We have worked from home relying on online platforms and technology to meet each other, conduct research and business deals, and to manage our personal and professional lives. As we consider the future of interaction and innovation, it is vital that we ensure all members of our communities have equal access and the ability to use computer assistive technology tools and resources.
- The US Embassy in Kenya is proud to collaborate with the US and Kenyan partners on inclusive programs to bring together diverse audiences to share their talents. We are prepared to partner with any group that considers the interests of people with disabilities. By working together to improve digital accessibility in Kenya and the whole of Africa, we will unlock the hidden potential of every person to contribute to a brighter future of the continent and the world.
- In the words of President Biden, discrimination against people with disabilities is not just simply unjust, it hinders economic development, limits democracy, and erodes societies. This is true when it comes to any form of discrimination, whether on the basis of race, gender, class, ethnicity or tribe. Inclusive societies are successful and resilient because they harness the full range of backgrounds, cultures, perspectives, skills and experiences of their population. Everyone can advance together.
- Ultimately, inclusive solutions benefit everyone. Just as a well-placed ramp can assist both someone using a wheelchair and someone pushing a baby stroller, everyone can share in the advantages of effective closed captioning or e-reader software. By working together to improve digital accessibility and assistive technology inclusion in Kenya, and in all of Africa, we will unlock the hidden potential of every person to contribute to a brighter future for the continent and for the world.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGqRAcudAbg>

**Resource-** [Chargé d'Affaires Eric Kneeder - U.S. Embassy in Kenya \(usembassy.gov\)](https://usembassy.gov)

# Keynote #1

## Cobahms Asuquo, Nigerian music producer, singer/songwriter/ musician

- Assistive Technology for me is any form of technology that can assist me or any person with a disability to perform simple tasks that will require the use of senses which may be deficient for that person.
- Assistive Technology has been a big part of my career and life. For example, assistive technology helps me to edit by myself using basic software.
- I became aware of the need of Assistive Technology when I got introduced to the computer.
- Assistive Technology has been a big part of my career and my life.
- I have had an interesting life in my career in music. It has been filled with hope and dreams.
- The beauty of Assistive Technology is that it has allowed me to do so many things that ordinary people could not do.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAAJqZ2yzoc>

**Resource-** [Cobhams Asuquo](#)

## Keynote #2

### Christopher Patnoe, Head of Inclusion and Accessibility at Google

- I am responsible for bringing to Google the global perspective of people with disabilities. Google is completely embedded in the digital space. It is who we are. Assuring that we achieve digital accessibility allows us to reach all of our users.
- Accessibility is included in Google's mission statement - to organize the world information and make it universally accessible to all.
- Google takes the accessibility responsibility very seriously and humbly. We have learned the best way to help everyone is to understand the needs of all our users, This is especially true for people living with disabilities. We do this by working to ensure the Africans with disabilities are included and involved in Google's design to development processes. To build together in ways that are culturally relevant and well suited for the needs of the African communities.
- Africa is an important market for Google with 1.2 billion people in the continent, it is crucial to advance the technologies that are inclusive for all.
- If there are to be technologies for Africans with disabilities, they must be designed and built by African with disabilities to be successful.
- Inclusive Africa Conference provides an exciting opportunity for google to share it is accessibility mission and also listen to those who are experts when accessibility features fail.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAAJqZ2yzoc>

**Continued...**

## Keynote #2

# Christopher Patnoe, Head of Inclusion and Accessibility at Google Continued...

### Resource Links:

- Visit our Google Accessibility site: [google.com/accessibility](https://google.com/accessibility) to learn more about accessibility and Google products
- Check out the Google Accessibility Help Center: [g.co/help/accessibility](https://g.co/help/accessibility)
- Explore the Android Accessibility Suite: [android.com/accessibility/](https://android.com/accessibility/)
- Learn about Chrome OS Accessibility: [goo.gle/a11y-chrome](https://goo.gle/a11y-chrome)
- Learn about G Suite Accessibility: [g.co/GSuiteAccessibility](https://g.co/GSuiteAccessibility)
- Help Google make projects more accessible by signing up to participate in user research studies at [g.co/userresearch/join20](https://g.co/userresearch/join20)
- Find out how your community can [partner with us](#) to help shape the future of accessibility at Google
- Visit our Google Accessibility YouTube Playlist: [g.co/a11yvideos](https://g.co/a11yvideos)
- Explore our EDU a11y site: [edu.google.com/accessibility](https://edu.google.com/accessibility)
- Stay updated by following us on Twitter [@googleaccess](https://twitter.com/googleaccess)

# African Celebrity Inclusion Influencers ...

## Fungai Mutsinze – Musician, Producer and Media Personality

- I am a visually impaired and from Malawi. I am a musician and also a media practitioner. I can actually say that I do not have many challenges. It got my first laptop with assistive technologies when I went to University and using assistive technologies have helped me in so many ways.
- Assistive Technologies that assist people with different disabilities help me to read through my messages and respond accordingly. I advise people to familiarize themselves with assistive technologies.
- Most people with disabilities are very intelligent and have the potential. When we choose to exclude, we are losing out.

Resource- [\(132\) Fungai Mutsinze - I Believe - YouTube](#)

## Crystal Asige - Singer, Songwriter & Performing Art

- I was not born blind, but due to a glaucoma diagnosis in my teen years I gradually lost my eyesight. My biggest challenge as a teenager losing my sight, was being able to study. Using assistive technology completely changed the game.
- I cannot express enough how much I have been able to reach higher heights through assistive technology. It has helped me download applications, such as Be My Eyes and Smart Scribe, that make my life easier.
- I am able to film my own content using a smartphone thanks to assistive technology.

Resource- [\(132\) Crystal Asige - YouTube](#)

Recorded Video- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Et4yhCKUoDs>

# African Inclusion Influencer

## Julius Mbura, Advocacy and Legal Officer, inABLE

- I am a lawyer and I work for disability rights. I am from Kenya and am a VIP - visually impaired person. My disability is not a limitation.
- I was not born blind, computer I first lost my sight at age 10 and learned how to use assistive technology at inABLE's Computer-Labs-for-the-Blind program. Then in 2019, I lost my vision again. Assistive technology is important to me. It's my technological lens.
- I came to the realization that my disability is not my limitation when I got into the University and interacted with people with of diverse backgrounds. Today, I say that I am privileged to be part of the best of both worlds- the sighted world and the blind universe.
- Using Assistive Technology from a young age, helps children that are blind and visually impaired to reach their potential. We are in a digital era, and it is high time we embraced everything digital accessibility that would bring inclusion from policy level.
- Assistive Technology is freedom for people with disabilities, and it's what I attribute my success to and the reason why I am independent. I am among the new blind. If we can't see the sky, then it's not our limit!

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tt3ELXSbQmM&t=13s>

**Resource-** [\(132\) Julio Supercharge - YouTube](#)

# Education Panel

**Topic-** Building back better- what do educational institutions need to consider post COVID?...

## Moderator:

Deepti Samant Raja – Social Development Specialist, World Bank

## Panelists:

- Ronald Kasule – Co-Founder and CEO, Dasuns
- Lizzie Kamukwamba Kapansa – Lecturer, Zambia Institute of Special Education, ZEMISE
- Fred Haga – Director, Special Education, Ministry of Education, Kenya

Recorded Video- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xf9rUYsIMw>





# Education Panel

## Ronald Kasule – Co-founder and CEO, Dasuns

- I am a beneficiary of assistive technology myself, as a 40-year-old person living with disabilities and moving around with a power wheelchair, without it, I feel so much disabled. The reverse is true as I can run my own errands without anyone's help.
- Covid-19 pandemic caused significant disruption for people not only in Uganda, but across the African continent and beyond. For persons with disabilities, this pandemic worsened the pre-existing marginalization and exclusion resulting into lower social economic status. Specifically talking about the deaf, the barriers faced in Uganda could be categorized into three basic themes- technological barriers, inaccessible formats, and language/ literacy barriers.
- Even before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, persons with hearing impairment have been struggling to cope within the poorly equipped social economic structures that does not adequately respond to their support requirements. The Covid-19 pandemic has posed more challenges for them as they face their greatest isolation as a result of the counter restrictive measures where many fail victims of the situations that have not been made understandable to them. For instance, social distancing measures do not consider people with deaf blindness who only communicate through touch and their available technology solutions have not advanced.
- The virtual world is only accessible to people with required infrastructure in terms of the digital equipment and technologies. Unfortunately, most of the people with disabilities tend to fall on the wrong side of the digital world with no means of access to such digital devices let alone the literacy skills required to effectively operate them.
- Government and other stakeholders have played a crucial role in terms of information sharing through television, radio and internet, as well as education institutions considering online learning. The few deaf colleges with access to these platforms still find them less useful given the inaccessible audio-visual content shared through them.
- A review of the Covid-19 virtual conferences and meetings that has been conducted across the low-middle income countries has found that about 64% of 123 low and middle-income countries had sign language interpretation available and one out of the five major international organizations provided sign language interpretation during their conferences and press briefings.
- Disasters like Covid-19 can act as catalysts to drive forward progress in aftermath. We need to first embrace the commitment to build back better and deliver to our promise to leave no one behind by working with people being left behind in order to understand their unique challenges.

# Education Panel

## Lizzie Kamukwamba Kapansa, Lecturer – Zambia Institute of Special Education

- The biggest challenge that -- [feedback] -- here at home and -- connectivity -- is one of the biggest challenge. If you do not have Internet at the place you live, you are not connected. When looking at the different homes, you will find that they are not included in the learning. We need to look at how do we have WiFi accessible in different or closer regions.
- Most learners do not have the devices, which is a challenge for the people with disabilities. We need to look at that and provide devices to learners that cannot get them.
- Looking at laptops and smartphones, they are needed. They are very expensive, so it is difficult for learners with disabilities and from poor background to get them.
- Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown made us stay at home and when trying to follow news in the television, it was a challenge since most of them did not have translators.
- Parents need to be empowered and to accept

Recorded Video- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xf9rUYsIMw>

Resource- [ZAMISE](#)

# Education Panel

## Fred Haga, Director Special Education, Ministry of Education Kenya

- When COVID struck last year, one of the most important lessons was that children, especially learners with disabilities and special needs who found themselves without access to learning material and content and without the support their parents, who had not interacted with the devices required to help these children to learn. We also found that most of the devices in schools with digital learning programs were actually left at school when a child with disabilities stayed at home.
- It is important that we provide devices and ensure that they reach the individual level learners with disabilities and that we better inform stakeholders, ministries, governments and organizations. All learners with disabilities using devices, also need the skills to operate the devices. They should have support. Up until to now, many families have supported learning, even things like Braille. There were lots of marginalizing of people with disabilities.
- Going forward it is important to plan inclusively, even as we implement and invent different programs. We need to remember that there is a significant population of learners that require a different learning approach. This inclusive approach also needs to be part of in the budgeting process.
- Therefore, going forward, stakeholders and other relevant participants need to include people with disabilities in the educational planning, and it is critical that assistive technology is available to learners with disabilities.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xf9rUYsIMw>

**Resource-** [Case Study – inABLE.org](https://www.inable.org/case-study)

# Employment Panel

**Topic-** Closing the disability employment gap – how technology can increase employment opportunities for Africans with disabilities

## Moderator:

- Yetnerbersh Nigussie- Children with Disabilities Specialist, UNICEF, Eastern and South African Office

## Panelists:

- Paul Kasimu - Chief Human Resources Officers, Safaricom PLC
- Luke Muleka- Co-founder, Signs TV
- Ntshavheni Netshituni, Chair - Person- South African Disability Alliance

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csei-MmXy7Q>

# Employment Panel

## Paul Kasimu - Chief Human Resources Officers, Safaricom PLC

- At Safaricom, we believe that Disability Inclusion is part of business ethos. It is a business imperative and a human right. Safaricom is driven by three Ps, by order of importance: purpose, people before profit. In there, it is our believe that we should not leave anyone behind, whether in employment or service provisions.
- Our commitment to diversity inclusion is embedded in everything we do including our strategy, our mission and as we seek to become a technology company, we believe that inclusion should be at the forefront of that agenda. We believe in the constitutional dispensation and the requirement that organizations seek to have a representation what is in the general community in the workplace. The target is 5% for people with disabilities to be employed.
- Economic e is vital empowerment for people with disabilities. Giving them job opportunities and decent opportunities so that they can rely on themselves is imperative. We must work to eliminate stigma and discrimination, which runs from family setting to the schools and even work environment.
- To champion and focus on facilitating availability of affordable assistive devices for people with disabilities, we joined the Global Disability Network led by LIO.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csei-MmXy7Q>

**Continued...**

# Employment Panel

## Paul Kasimu, Chief Human Resources Officer, Safaricom PLC continued...

- One of the major challenge we have is understanding the scope of the problem we have. We don't seem to understand how big is the problem is and what is the nature of the problem in Kenya. This is why we ask the Government to provide real insights.
- How do we drive our mindsets from leadership to team members? We need to find a way to equip people with disabilities to be able to take up opportunities and ensure assistive technologies are affordable.
- The Digital recruitment system at Safaricom is accessible for people with disabilities. We have looked at social enterprise events to ensure everyone is included to allow our people to thrive. We have customized workspaces for our employees with disabilities
- Another area we have looked at is medical coverage for our employees to allow them get comprehensive medical benefits covers for their disability needs, such as eye care, physiotherapy, crutches.
- At Safaricom look closely at our products and services. For instance, we introduced the Interactive Voice recognition solution to give our customers a new way to access MPesa transactions easily, especially the blind and visually impaired.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csei-MmXy7Q>

# Employment Panel

## Luke Kizito Ojiambo Muleka- Founder Signs TV/ Innovator/Social Entrepreneur/Speaker/Leader

- I am the founding manager Director of Signs Media Kenya Limited, a company that operates Signs TV and has a sign language interpreter application. In my view, I see four types of barriers when it comes to people with disabilities: 1) Attitudinal 2) legal 3) structural and 4) technological.
- The people with disabilities need to have the right attitude and culture to be absorbed into employment, while employers need the best attitude and culture to absorb people with disabilities into the job market. Organization need to go an extra mile and try and inculcate this through the whole organization right from the management level, for them to understand the importance of having right attitude toward persons with disabilities because remember, most organizations are structured and proposition on return on investment and the shareholder is always looking at that return on investment in everything we are doing as organizations.
- In Kenya, we have had legal framework that guides us. In the Constitution of Kenya Article 54 is very clear about discrimination irrespective of disability. We also have the Persons with Disability Act, which establishes National Council for Persons with Disabilities to encourage organizations to interact. At Signs TV, for example, we have made the structure adjustment to accommodate persons with disability. This goes all the way from how the building is structured to accommodating and fully considering the needs of all of our employees.
- Signs TV employs people with various disabilities and provides the assistive technologies they need to be able to work well in our organization. We have full time sign language services available. Of Signs TV's 34 employees, 19 are persons with disabilities. We are looking at about 50%, headed to 60% of employees are persons with disabilities arrange of disabilities.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csei-MmXy7Q>

**Resource-** [Home - SIGNS TELEVISION- LEADING SIGN LANGUAGE BROADCASTER \(signstv.co.ke\)](http://signstv.co.ke)

# Employment Panel

## Ntshavheni Netshituni- Chairperson, South African Disability Alliance (SADA)

- Some scholars have noted that while in the United States, one computer is shared by only two people. In Africa, one computer is shared by almost 6,000 people. Also, academics acknowledge the computer gaps that makes persons with disabilities to be relatively functional with greater independence. There is a lot of barriers on the use of technology. Particularly in Africa.
- The gap between those with access and those without access to technology devices, is a problem when it comes to school access. Particularly in higher education. And for them to be addressed, collaboration is very important.
- Inclusive employment refers to all activities which enable an individual to gain access to work. The activities undertaken and mechanisms used by handicapped international's inclusive employment sector aim to promote employment. For people with disabilities, this is important. The policy provides several fundamentals for ensuring that employment becomes inclusive. And includes the aspect of reasonable accommodation. Opportunity to work, which is everyone who intends to work must be able to find sustainable employment.
- In productive work, which remuneration should be equal -- must not be discriminated against during and preemployment. There must be social protection at work. And workers must be treated with respect and I am going to speak to what reasonable accommodation is. At our workplace. It is notable that reasonable accommodation goes to an extent of providing individual based access to an environment. And that should be designed in a manner that accommodates individual with a personal or respective leads. It means an appropriate modification or adjustment that doesn't impose a disproportionate or undue burden on the employer.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csei-MmXy7Q>

**Resource-** [SADA – South African Disability Alliance](#)



# Financial Services Panel

**Topic-** Digital accessibility in financial services – exploring the current state of digital accessibility in banks across Africa and what still needs to be done

## **Moderator:**

- Nuru Mugambi, Public Affairs Director and Sustainable Finance Lead – KBA

## **Panelists:**

- Giuseppina (Pina) D’Intino, Principle owner of Aequum Global Access Inc An accessibility practitioner and advisor
- Tamara Cook, CEO – FSD Kenya
- Samuel Munana, Executive Director – Rwanda National Union of the Deaf
- Simon Munde, Executive Director – The Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi

**Recorded Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGCBBdgigmY>

**Resource-** [Official Presentation - Digital Accessibility for PWDs v Final - REMEDIATED.pdf \(kba.co.ke\)](#)

# Financial Services Panel

## Giuseppina (Pina) D'Intino, Principle of Aequum Global Access Inc., an accessibility practitioner & advisor

- I am the co-owner of a company called Global Access and have a deep passion to speak about accessibility and to see how organizations can be accessible to people with disabilities. My journey started when I lost my eye-sight at the peak of my career working in the banking sector. I asked myself why I could not access my financial services after losing my eyesight.
- There is a balance that needs to be attained. You have customers who are very independent and others who don't have low access to adaptive tools. For them, solutions need to be more simplistic. Challenges can be addressed by making sure industries, like banks include more persons with disabilities throughout the creation process of products and services.
- Financial accessibility innovations are at an incredible level right now. Banks must make sure that the solutions they develop are responsive to meet both the extreme ends of all customers.
- Challenges can be addressed by making sure industries, like the banks, include more persons with disabilities and their environments consult with persons with disabilities throughout the creation of their products and services. As well as ensure that when they start accessibility standards in their environments these processes are maintained and sustained.
- It is important the people are held accountable for accessibility? What type of investments is made towards accessibility? How do you measure success?

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGCBBdgigmY>

**Resource -** [Preface - Pina D'Intino - Aequum Global Access](#)



**inABLE**  
powering potential

# Financial Services Panel

## Tamara Cook, CEO- FSD Kenya



- FSD supported the Kenya Bankers Association [financial services accessibility research](#) project, in partnership with inABLE. As a result, we now know that in Kenya we have 83% financial inclusion. We saw that 92% of people with disabilities are comfortable going into the branch, and 72% are using the ATM. However, only 34% are using that mobile banking app and 23% are using the app.
- What's interesting is when you look at how they rate the ease of use, 31% of people find mobile banking easy to use. And 34% use it. There's something quite clearly connected between whether somebody finds it easy to use and whether they use it.
- Privacy is quite important, especially for people with disabilities. Sometimes they are asked to do things either with a helper or have something read out loud where other people can hear. That's not appropriate and needs to be addressed.
- The technology works on the mobile banking side, but other issues like ease of use, privacy, and some of the other things that need to be improved.
- Bank notes currency can be hard to distinguish for a person with visual impairment. How can this be improved? That's a macro problem, and in fact, Kenya's new notes do have ability to be able to tell them apart for people who have visual impairment. This problem needs to be addressed at the government level. Different sizes can be used, bumps can be used, seals can be used. The other option, of course, is by using digital tools to transact.
- I want to emphasize how important it is to involve people with disabilities in the design and user acceptance testing of these products. It's not just a research thing that we will be at the very end, but it's involving them at the beginning and throughout when there are changes so that the customers are delighted. Customers with disabilities are absolutely delighted to use this. Now this is for the customers with disabilities. We also know that there are a lot of people with disabilities who are not customers of banks.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGCBBdgigmY>

**Resource-** [Financial Sector Deepening Kenya | 7th FSD Kenya public annual lecture 2021 – Professor Bitange Ndemo to deliver FSD Kenya's 2021 annual lecture](#)

# Financial Services Panel

## Samuel Munana, Executive Director, Rwanda National Union of the Deaf

- In Rwanda, it is very easy to access the services at the bank using a mobile phone, and many people have smartphones. However, as a deaf person, there may be a barrier as in terms of education. Many of deaf people need to be better informed on how to use that mobile banking services or that mobile banking exists.
- We need to change people's perceptions and mindset so that they can understand that people with disabilities are capable, and we need to employ more of them in various sectors.
- The banks need to mobilize the deaf people for them to be able to access those services. They can have videos on how to access mobile banking with a translators so that they can understand how to use them.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGCBBdgigmY>

### Resource Links:

- [Rwanda National Union of the Deaf \(rnud.org\)](http://rnud.org)

# Financial Services Panel

## Simon Munde- Executive Director, The Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA)

- The financial service sector should consider persons with disabilities as a very good market. And the most important thing is the involvement of persons with disabilities themselves they are designing and executing products and services. Hence, the importance of them even recruiting persons with disabilities.
- Set up a structure, a disability mainstreaming community. In other institutions they combine gender and disability mainstream. And within that committee, let's make sure that they have a person with a disability who is an employee to support them as they make decisions so that disability will not be left behind. Always engage persons with disabilities as they are making decisions so that even the products that are coming out should be products that actually take into consideration issues of disability.
- I have even heard that some banks are actually making decisions to remove the speech software from the ATMs, because they are saying that others are saying the ATMs are making too much noise. You cannot be talking of too much noise, while it is actually an aspect of accessibility. The banks should not react based on the voices from the majority.
- The banking sector and financial services in Malawi have improved for people with disabilities, especially on physical accessibility. We have seen the growth of mobile money. FEDOMA has implemented some level of financial accessibility for people with disabilities. Most of our groups that have been established by FEDOMA, are using mobile money in terms of keeping and saving of their money. People with disabilities are able to transact directly from mobile money to their banks.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGCBBdgigmY>

**Resource Links -** [FEDERATION OF DISABILITY ORGANISATION IN MALAWI – From Exclusion to Inclusion \(fedoma.org\)](https://www.fedoma.org)

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

**Topic:** Mobile assistive technology innovations – How we foster African solutions?

## **Moderator:**

- Sara Basson, Accessible Googler Experience and President, Disability Alliance – [Google](#)

## **Panelists:**

- Monica Desai, Global Head of the Connectivity & Access Policy group at Facebook
- Rama Gheerawo, Director, The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design, Royal College of Art
- Kim Viljoen, Senior Advocacy and Market Engagement Manager, Assistive Tech, Mobile for Development, GSMA
- Bernard Chiira, Director – Innovate Now Assistive Tech Accelerator
- Nadav Yesod, Director of Global Communities – Tikkun Olam Makers (TOM Global)
- Millicent Agangiba, Lecturer and Executive Director, Inclusive Tech Group

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

## Monica Desai, Global Head of the Connectivity & Access Policy group at Facebook

- Prior to joining Facebook, spent over a decade in senior positions at the US Federal Communications Commission including as Chief of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau which develops all policies and rules in connection with accessibility issues
- Accessibility has been a significant part of my career and that is why I am so proud to work at Facebook, a company that is constantly working to improve accessibility of our products and diversity and inclusion in our work force
- Facebook's mission is to give people the power to build communities and bring the world closer together, and that of course includes people with disabilities
- Hundreds of millions of people need or are choosing to use accessibility tools to experience the information and the connection that happen on Facebook. For example, more than 440million people use an increased font size when viewing the Facebook App on mobile devices
- Making our products accessible for persons with disabilities is really very critical to getting our mission right. We take seriously our commitment to accessibility and have built a variety of tools to enhance access to our services. First example is the automatic alt text which is an AI driven tool which uses object recognition to generate a description of photos to enable people using screen readers to hear a list of items the photo may contain. We launched the first version in 2016.

**Recorded Video** - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

**Resources** - <https://www.facebook.com/accessibility>

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

## Monica Desai, Global Head of the Connectivity & Access Policy group at Facebook continued...

- As of August this year, more than 80% of images displayed on Facebook and Instagram contain automation alt text.
- Another example is our automated captioning tool. Automated captioning makes it easy and simple for creators to add captions, Captions are generated with the press of a button and then can be reviewed by content creators and edited so that they have full control. It is one of the best ways to make captioning available for videos on Facebook. Automated captioning is available for Facebook Live, workplace live, and Instagram TV.
- Facebook has dedicated a centralized accessibility team to define, develop and distribute user accessibility requirements, training best practices, tools, technologies, metrics and other support to advance accessibility of work throughout the company.
- Accessibility is treated as a horizontal function within the company. This means that accessibility is embedded in the different departments that touch the product lifecycle including design, research and engineering as well as policy and legal, resulting in an important cross-functional effort to promote accessibility in our products.
- Earlier this year, the team engaged with a number of advocacy organizations and other accessibility stakeholders to understand the impact of COVID-19 for persons with disabilities.
- We look forward to working with inABLE and the disability community generally to improve the accessibility of Facebook and technology more broadly.

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)



# Mobile Assistive Technology panel

**Rama Gheerawo, Director, The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design, Royal College of Art**

- Inclusive Africa has two words. This are two powerful concepts coming together. One concept and one country,.
- Inclusive because we need a world that is much more inclusive of people of all abilities and needs with a diversity and an equity that we need to shout from rooftops.
- Inclusive design includes including the needs of the widest number of people in any invention or innovation
- Creativity is a human right, but access to creativity is often denied to communities of color. This is why it is important that these ideas are seeded in Africa that they are not inflicted but Africa becomes an instigator, an author, a pathfinder for solutions. We have already seen that in terms of mobile networks, mobile delivery, where Africa has leapfrogged many other nations and we see how that can be applied across communities of different abilities
- Inclusive Design can make technology better for people of all ages, abilities, genders and races
- Africa has a role to play in leapfrogging the world of accessible tech forward

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

## Resource Links

- Full [recorded speech from Interaction Latin America 2018](#). Talk on Inclusivity, Tech and UX
- Website for the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design: [www.hhcd.rca.ac.uk](http://www.hhcd.rca.ac.uk)
- Rama talking at TEDx NHS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzymKIKESwE>
- Links from the HHCD: <https://linktr.ee/HHCD>

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

## Kim Viljoen, Senior Advocacy and Market Engagement Manager, Assistive Tech, Mobile for Development, GSMA

- 2019 GSME Intelligence Consumer survey shows that a disability gap in mobile phone ownership exists across all markets included in the survey. This means that people with disabilities are less likely to own a mobile phone compared to people without disabilities.
- The African region presents varied disability gaps in mobile ownership. For example, in Kenya, the mobile ownership gap is 7%, while in Nigeria it is 44%.
- Smartphones presents a far more useful tool for people with disabilities, due to embedded accessibility features. But the smartphone gaps are even much wider. For example, in Kenya the mobile ownership gap was 7%, while smartphone ownership gap is 63%. And in Nigeria it is 80%.
- Women with disabilities are at even greater risk of exclusion as it is evidenced by the large gender and disability gaps . For example, in Uganda, women with disabilities are 51% less likely to own a mobile phone than a man without disabilities.
- Even when people or people with disabilities own mobile phones, we find that their awareness of mobile internet is lower than people without disabilities. Unfortunately, as a result of this, several other barriers exist. We are seeing large disability gaps on mobile internet usage. For example, in Nigeria, people with disabilities are 75% less likely to use mobile internet than people without disabilities.
- There are several barriers that need to be addressed: access to accessible devices and services, affordability and relevance of content and services , knowledge/skills.

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

**Resource-** [GSMA | Assistive Tech | Mobile for Development](#)



**inABLE**  
powering potential

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel



## Bernard Chiira, Director – Innovate Now Assistive Tech Accelerator

- Everyone is trying to use a mobile phone because you can do a lot of functions . What does it mean for those that do not have access? What does it mean if a software is created without thinking of those who need it?
- The question of assistive technology stems from a lack of understanding of why disability inclusion is good in the first place. Once a country or a continent understands the value of inclusion, it is a no-brainer because it brings everyone to the fold. If you are looking for an example of how mobile technology impacts economic progress in Africa and especially Kenya, the money transferred through mobile platform MPesa is close to the country's GDP.
- We have a perfect breeding ground for collaborations. Everyone has a role to play. This is a question of policymakers. There is good work been done by GSME and the report they wrote on disabilities and mobile assistive technologies. More industry players need to participate so that we can understand the numbers that can look at and get to see where the gaps are at.
- We can unlock value for people who have been traditionally excluded from participation and that return on investments makes sense. There is a research that was done by Art Scale that shows that the return on investments for Assistive Technologies is 9:1.
- Assistive Technology covers both physical and digital accessibility. Moreover, mobile digital accessibility allows one to access of all kinds of information. The question is, are we doing enough to actually reach everyone? We have to think about the needs of people and their capabilities to meet these needs from a manufacturing perspective and create those industries. That is what manufacturing pioneers in Kenya are doing in their own small way. How can we invest more into that industry to bring in new cheaper technologies? Can 3d printing be leveraged to make assistive technology more affordable? As long as we have to pay heavy taxes attached to materials that are required to manufacture assistive technology, then we will still have a problem.
- We can't celebrate the advancement of technology, if a huge segment of the society is not benefiting.

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

**Resource-** [Innovate Now - Africa's 1st Assistive Technology Venture Accelerator \(atinnovatenow.com\)](http://atinnovatenow.com)

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

## Nadav Yesod, Director of Global Communities Tikkun Olam Makers (TOM Makers)

- It's already a cliché, but it's so true that nothing about us without us, it makes sense. I cannot design a solution for someone sitting in a wheelchair without having a person in a wheelchair assisting me and advising me and leading the way.
- Humans have been making solutions since the beginning. It is something as societies we gave up and handed it over to someone else. By not being able to self-manufacture to create solutions, we basically allowed for someone else to choose what would be the solution that we have access to. At the end, only things that make profit will be created.
- At TOM, we believe that it should not be only when it is mass production or based on profits, that we offer solutions. By promoting open-source solutions, we are allowing for both the creation and transfer of solutions and knowledge from one corner of the earth to the other.
- Manufacturing capabilities are coming back to the societies at the local levels. Also, big picture innovations that sound impossible a decade ago, like space tourism, is happening now. We need to harness the talents that exist in our communities. Document the solutions by digitizing the solution being provided.

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

### Resources Links

**PJ Prosthesis-** <https://tomglobal.org/project?id=5e6f8f2b94711e10b13ebdff>

**Cup holder for crutches -** <https://tomglobal.org/project?id=5ca3885cb506a2297168a9a1>

**Dice Box -** <https://tomglobal.org/project?id=5cb6f1f5b506a2297168b06b>

**Text2Speech Assist -** <https://tomglobal.org/project?id=5d778933b810e413a528107c>

**EZ-Pad -** <https://tomglobal.org/project?id=5e14738ed848736b095543ff>

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

## Millicent Agangiba, Lecturer & Executive Director, Inclusive Tech Group

- Statistics show that about 15%-17% of people who need Assistive Technology have access, in some countries access is as low as 2%.
- There is a lack of expertise to ensure that we can provide or produce safe and efficient Assistive Technology or products. This is partly because there is little research going on Assistive Technology in Africa, and these technologies are very much involving. We are not able to catch up to the rest of the world.
- There is also a lack of funds or inadequate funding. This is a big challenge for developers in Africa. Many times, we notice that developers in Africa tend to focus only on the software and not the hardware. People tend to design one thing over and over.
- There is a design reality gap. The end-product that designers' design does not match the reality. At the end of the day, we all need technologies that are useful and appropriate for persons with disabilities, within our context.
- Developers are not well informed. There is a lack of quality data on persons with disabilities. We cannot get the numbers and the kinds of assistive technologies needed to the developers so that they can create a product ready for the market.
- The issue of sustainability is an issue for developers. There is a notion, especially in Ghana, that the technologies need to be developed and donated.
- There is also lack of legal framework on developing in most African countries. Governments need to put sustainable strategies in Africa and more money is needed for research.

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8\\_yJhy\\_ko](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA8_yJhy_ko)

**Continued...**

# Mobile Assistive Technology Panel

**Millicent Agangiba, Lecturer and Executive Director, Inclusive Tech Group Continued...**

## Resource Links

- Computer Literacy Training for Persons with Disabilities- <https://bit.ly/3kkWcK0>
- Inclusive Tech Group brings together experts from Southern, Eastern and Western Africa to discuss Assistive Technology Innovations on the African Continent- <https://bit.ly/3CrXF7w>
- Web Accessibility for the Blind during and Post COVID-19- <https://bit.ly/3EzAjp4>
- Advocating for Inclusive Education- <https://bit.ly/2VQyvQo>
- Support Digital needs of Persons with Disabilities- <https://bit.ly/2Xvl87r>, <https://bit.ly/3tTiRAI>

# 2021 Digital Accessibility Innovation Award Winner Preview

## Hudson Asiema, Co-founder of Elimu plus/ 2020 Winner

- The Fingerspelling application has three features, the first one is learning, the second one is quizzes and the third one is word puzzles/games. Fingerspelling is used by deaf people to help them learn how to communicate people's names. For example, if a deaf person doesn't know your sign name, they can use fingerspelling.
- The research and report done by inABLE as part of the Digital Accessibility Award benefit helped us improve the user experience. From the user feedback we learned that the game and the challenges needed more levels. Also, because the games are not only for children, but also the adults learning to finger spelling as well, we change of app description from finger spelling for children to finger spelling for beginners.

**Recorded Video-** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZ2RCOOAQ3s>

### Resource Links

- <https://youtu.be/LB1EeyrJYwA>
- <https://youtu.be/LB1EeyrJYwA>

# Keynote #3

## Caroline Casey, Founder and creator, Valuable 500

- We cannot have inclusive countries or an inclusive society, if we do not have an inclusive business. Inclusive business creates inclusive societies . What business values, the society will value
- Disability for 1.3 billion people globally is such a huge task. It cannot be resolved by governments, policymakers , and charities alone. It needs the most powerful force in our planet which is business. This is for business to recognize the value of people with disabilities and their families not only as talents and employment but as suppliers and as customers and as an insight for innovation
- In creating Inclusive Africa, we need to have an Inclusive African business ecosystem. With the Valuable 500 companies, we only have only a few that are headquartered in the continent of Africa. However, we have so many of our 500 Valuable companies who have a presence in the countries in Africa
- The Valuable 200 Companies represents 20 Million employees globally, it represents 41 countries, 64 sectors, and the power of a trillion in revenue
- What we are encouraging our Valuable 500 companies, who are headquartered outside of our African countries, is to link in on the ground in Africa to see what inclusive business looks like there.
- Every culture is different. Every country is different. Every industry is different. We can have a global intention for our Valuable 500 companies, but we must be able to adopt the solutions , the intelligence, and the innovation and the commitment must be locally focused.
- Inclusive business takes time, disability business inclusion takes innovation. The most important thing it takes commitment and innovation.

**Recorded Video-** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2-2atf6n\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2-2atf6n_Q)

**Resource-** [The Team | The Valuable 500](#)



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