

**Transcript of the Making Accessibility Operational
in World Bank Operations
ESF Dialogue Series
February 2, 2022**

>> MANINDER GILL: Okay. Welcome, everyone. We're about to start now. Thank you so much for taking the time to join us this morning, afternoon, or evening, depending on where you are in the world for a discussion on making accessibility operational in World Bank operations and in development more broadly. My name is Maninder Gill, and I am Chief Environmental and Social Standards Officer in the Operational Policies and Country Support, Vice Presidency of the World Bank. I'm pleased to moderate the session. I am an Indian male in my late 50s with mostly grayish black hair with a bit of white. I'm wearing a light blue shirt with a light gray jacket and I'm connecting from my study at home with bookshelves behind me.

I want to extend a warm welcome to all of you for what is the first discussion in the new series on ESF dialogues that we are launching today, and it is wonderful to be starting with this important topic Making Accessibility Operational in World Bank Operations. This series, the ESF Dialogue Series is intended to be a convening platform that brings together key partners and stakeholders to discuss various environmental and social issues in development operations and more specifically in World Bank operations, and we plan to organize these discussions on a bi-monthly basis or once every two months.

Before we begin our discussion, I wanted to bring to your attention several accessibility features that we have available today. You should be able to see the international sign interpreter who will be spotlighted on the screen along with the speaker presenting at any given time throughout this discussion.

We also have captioning available in English. If you would like to access that, please go to the bottom of your screen and there is an icon that has CC for Closed Captioning, which you can click on and then select Show Subtitles. So it will say icon CC for Closed Captioning, and then you need to select Show Subtitles. If you also want to see the entire transcript, you can select Show Full Transcript also available in the same icon. And then you will see the transcript running on the right side of your screen. Additionally, we have provided a link in the chat box which will be a streaming link to the captions.

Kindly remain on mute unless you're called upon to speak. This will help to ensure full accessibility throughout the discussion. We are also requesting that while our speakers will keep their videos on, if others could please keep the videos off because of bandwidth reasons, unless of course you are asking a question, in that case,

please turn the video on and raise your hand and speak up.

So, we are planning to have about 25 minutes of speaker presentations, and then we'll have 30 to 35 minutes for question and answer. I think many of you have already submitted your questions, and thank you so much for doing that.

In addition, if you have a brief question, you could turn your video on, raise your hand, and we'll call upon you. You could also post it in the chat box, which may be an easier option if you would like to exercise that. Please do know that this session is being recorded, and this will be shared internally within the Bank and also will be posted on the Bank's external site.

So before I introduce the speakers in half a minute, I just want to say how delighted I am that we are having this conversation today. Given the importance of accessibility, which is a key prerequisite for fostering social inclusion, which is obviously a huge priority for the World Bank, for the development community as a whole, and for all of you. It is wonderful that we are able to come together today to discuss what it means to actually operationalize accessibility in products and programs supported by us and by other development partners. We will tell you more about what the World Bank is doing in this area, and we also hope to brainstorm on what more we can do collectively to further promote this critically important aspect of inclusion.

It is now my pleasure to introduce our speakers. We have with us Ed Mountfield Vice President for the Operations Policy Country Services Vice Presidency of the World Bank and Ed works across all regions of the bank, 7 geographic regions, coordinates the programming and bank's country services including products and program finances and advisory services and analytics. He oversees the World Bank's corporate policies on operations and country engagement, which includes the important policies related to Environmental and Social Framework, which you're very familiar with, and he also oversees the management of risk and operations. In addition to that, he does a lot of other things, but we don't have the time to go over those.

We're also delighted to have Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo with us, most of you know she's our Global Disability Advisor and works across the entire World Bank Group and she's been an activist, a champion, advocate, and a great promoter of inclusion more broadly and of disability inclusion in the World Bank for the past many years, and outside the bank as well, but it's great to have her with us today.

We are clearly delighted to have both of them with us, and Ed, we're really honored to have you to make opening remarks today. We know how much of a strong advocate you have been of the disability agenda, and we know that you want to do more and that's why this conversation is really important for all of us and especially for you, given your strong interest, and we are really grateful that

you are able to open this. Over to you, Ed.

>> ED MOUNTFIELD: Thank you, Maninder. It's an honor for me to be here and good morning, good afternoon, and good evening to everyone, and thank you for joining us. I'm Ed Mountfield and I'm an anglo Irish white male in my mid n 50s with green eyes and gray hair and sitting in my home office since we're currently working from home in our Washington offices due to the Omicron surge. I'm happy to be here to kick off the World Bank's inaugural session of the Environmental and Social Framework dialogue series, and we have a very important topic for discussion today which is making accessibility operational in World Bank projects and programs.

As many of you know, around 1 billion people, about 15% of the world's population have a disability, and disability prevalence is higher in developing countries, including people with disabilities in the development process and expanding opportunities for them is essential for equitable development and it's critically important for achieving the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoted shared prosperity.

While the entire world has been impacted by COVID-19, we recognize that the pandemic has exacerbated the already tenuous situations that people with disabilities experience in accessing inclusive health, education, accessible transportation, and other basic services.

As we continue to work towards ensuring an inclusive recovery from COVID-19, we need to design solutions that are accessible and address everybody's needs. The most basic form of inclusion relates to providing physical access to infrastructure and services when accessibility for all is built in and designed for a project, it can potentially be transformational. Designing accessible infrastructure, education programs and health systems could change the entire life trajectory of a person with a disability, their family, communities, and ultimately contribute to broader social inclusion. Accessibility is not only good for people with disabilities, but many other groups, including people with temporary challenges including elderly, pregnant women, and children.

The World Bank expressed commitment to inclusion through multiple mechanisms, key example is the Environmental and Social Framework or ESF and in particular our environmental and social standard number 4 or ESF 4 community health and safety?

AOther significant examples are the recently stepped up support provided by the International Development Association or IDA the World Bank funding for the poorest countries deepened the policy commitments to support inclusion. The World Bank's disability and accountability framework supports the mainstreaming of disability in World Bank activities and the 10 commitments to disability inclusion made by the World Bank Group at the first Disability Summit

held in London in July 2018.

Let me share some further details on some of these mechanisms. The disability inclusion and accountability framework lays out a roadmap for mainstreaming disability inclusion into the World Bank's policies, operations, and analytical work, and builds internal capacity for supporting clients and implementing disability-inclusive development. While the primary target of audience of the framework is bank staff, it's highly relevant to the bank's client countries, development partners, and people with disabilities, and I'm sure Charlotte will talk more about that.

Funding and IDA's 20th replenishment which was concluded in December 2021, includes commitments to support countries to address the inclusion of people with disabilities by promoting universal access to services supported by IDA in sectors such as education, health, social protection, water, urban, digital development, and transport. What this means is that IDA will monitor operations in sectors across the portfolio to ensure that we are meeting our commitments. This presents an opportunity to ensure systematic inclusion of people with disabilities in World Bank finance projects.

Perhaps most importantly, it's an opportunity to strengthen the capacity of governments that we work with to provide better support and support services to people with disabilities in their own programs. Our Environmental and Social Framework recognizes that people with disabilities are more vulnerable or disadvantaged and may both experience adverse impacts disproportionately and have greater constraints in accessing the benefits of a project.

To address this, several of the ESFs environmental and social standards which establish the standards that all projects supported by the World Bank are expected to meet, includes specific entry points for assessing and measures for mitigating potential vulnerability of people with disabilities.

The Bank has also developed several tools to help bank staff advance disability inclusion, and this includes the ESF good practice note on disability and on discrimination, a guidance note on including people with disabilities in water sector operations, and a forthcoming Technical Note on Accessibility which will be how to operationalize accessibility in World Bank projects.

I would like to share just a few examples of our work, in Rwanda, we've supported the government to build inclusive toilets, equip schools with ramps and install handwash stations and accessible Blackboards. In Ethiopia we supported access to assistive and accessible -- assistive and accessible technologies and projects, aiming to support skills development, entrepreneurship, and income generation. In Bangladesh, we've supported NGOs in assisting communities in setting up local disaster committees that include people with disabilities as full members and this led to the

development of disability-friendly warning mechanisms, such as colored pillars, accessible sheltering areas, and disability-sensitive evacuation drills. The Jamaica school social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities project is aimed at increasing the vocational skills and employability of adults with disabilities and improving service delivery for the special education needs of children with disabilities. The social safety net modernization project in Ukraine expands a targeted social safety net program that assists the most vulnerable and socially excluded people, one component of the project addresses the needs of orphans and children with disabilities in four selected regions.

Disability inclusion work has led to stronger engagement and consultation with people with disabilities and their organizations in our projects, strengthening their voices and participation in the design, delivery of development benefits. At the World Bank, we know that addressing systemic inequalities and improving accessibility for all is not always easy, but we along with our clients and partners such as yourselves, are committed to making the strongest efforts to do so. We've significantly ramped up our efforts to support people with disabilities over the past five years, and we're committed to further intensifying the efforts going forward.

While significant progress has been made, much remains to be done to address persistent and emerging accessibility barriers that sustain inequalities and exclude people with disabilities as well as other vulnerable groups from the development process. So I'm delighted to be here with my colleague, Maninder and my colleague Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo our Global Disability Advisor who is going to dive deeper and share perspectives on the Bank's work on disability and inclusion, drawing on the forthcoming accessibility technical note and share with us her thoughts and experience on how to apply universal access principles in World Bank projects and programs across sectors. So let me close by reiterating that working towards an accessible future is everyone's responsibility. We're committed to stepping up our efforts and with organizations of people with disabilities and Civil Society to work closely with us and hold us accountable along the way. We continue to look for opportunities to do better so that everyone we serve, including and especially those people with disabilities can benefit from green, resilient, and inclusive development. I look forward to today's discussion. Once again, thank you for being with us today.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thank you so much, Ed, for your very inspiring opening remarks, highlighting the Bank's commitment to the Disability Inclusion Agenda and to the importance of accessibility and your presence here is one reflection of that. Also, thanks for giving a bird's eye overview of what all the Bank

is doing and trying to do more of to promote disability inclusion.

Also, also emphasizing how accessibility and universal access is a fundamental building block of our efforts to promote social inclusion, and your very inspiring examples which we can find our colleagues on this call, they can find more information on our website. These are just a few of the hundreds of examples we have of very great work and innovating work which is happening, often in partnership with many of you for which we are most grateful.

I'm now going to turn to Charlotte. Charlotte, thanks a lot for not only, you know, being with us here today but as for spearheading this agenda for the past many years. Please do tell us more about the bank's work on disability inclusion and how we have operationalized accessibility in projects and programs supported by us and what we plan to do more. Thanks, over to you, share lot.

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: Thank you very much, Maninder. Thank you very much, Ed, for those remarks. I'd like to thank everybody for joining us today for this important event to discuss disability inclusion and accessibility in World Bank projects.

My name is Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, and I'm the Global Disability Advisor here at the World Bank and I'm a brown woman with long brown hair, I have green eyes, and I'm wearing a lavender color sweater with large hoops and black-rimmed reading glasses.

Today, I would like to present a glimpse of the journey the Bank is taking to progressively make our operations disability inclusive around accessible. Next slide, please.

Making sure that everyone can reap the benefits of development, including persons with disabilities, is at the core of the World Bank's mission. Disability-inclusive development is directly responsive to the World Bank's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity. Disability and Accessibility are cross-cutting themes in many of our policies and frameworks. Allow me to highlight a few of the main policies and commitments made by the Bank on disability inclusive development.

To start off with, we have the Environmental and Social Framework which embedding disability and nondiscrimination and universal access as cross-cutting issues. Similarly, we have the World Bank's Disability Inclusion and accountability framework which addresses disability as a cross-cutting issue. This document has been updated and will be available in March.

Further, we have the 10 disability-inclusive commitments made at the Global Disability Summit in electron do in 2018 and these guide the bank in advancing disability inclusion. In addition, as mentioned by Ed, disability is now a cross-cutting theme in IDA19 with six specific disability-inclusive commitments and will be part of IDA20. Next slide, please.

The next slide shows a picture of the World Bank's environmental social framework, it's the cover of the framework, and what's very important about this document, there are lots of very important aspects to it, but it stresses the need to empower and consult persons with disabilities to ensure that they participate in and benefit from the development process.

To support the Environmental Social Framework which I will refer to as the ESF, we have a good practice note on nondiscrimination and disability. In addition to that, we have a directive on addressing the risk and impacts of disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups, and this is important because it provides additional requirements and guidance for World Bank staff and our partners. If we can move to the next slide, please.

So, through the ESF, we have a number of entry points, and I'm going to focus on three, but I have to say that disability runs across all 10 of the standards within the Environmental Social Framework. So ESS1 is important because we look at the assessment and management of the environment and social risks impacts. The environmental and social assessment identifies risks and impacts on people with disabilities, along with requirements for mitigation and differentiated measures for addressing them. As we know, having differentiated measures is particularly important for persons with disabilities. This is done by undertaking a social assessment, that assesses and mitigates project risk to persons with disabilities and supports disability-inclusive design that is accessible and informed by inclusive stakeholder engagement processes.

The next standard that we have that's directly linked to advancing this agenda is ESS4, and that's the standard on Community Health and Safety, and this standard is particularly important in that it has an indicator that's linked to the IDA Results Monitoring System and it requires us to apply the concept of universal access for new buildings and structures in project design where technically and financially feasible. In addition to that, it extends to addressing aspects around the digital space, so this is a broad indicator that requires application of the concept of universal access.

And then we have ESS10 and ESS10 is the standard that looks at stakeholder engagement and information disclosure, and it requires specific measures and/or assistance to facilitate the meaningful participation of stakeholders, including persons with disabilities during our consultations. Now, that would be, for example, considering the means of participation, looking at the availability of information in accessible formats prior to the discussion or the consultation events, making sure that the consultation events themselves -- I'm sorry, the venues themselves are accessible, ensuring that we have translation services in place for hearing

impaired persons that might be part of those consultations.

These measures should be incorporated into the stakeholder engagement plan. And the development of an inclusive and accessible grievance mechanism.

Now, further to the entry points, we support -- we provide support to the operations through technical assistance during the project preparation and during project implementation, and so I'll just speak to a few of some of the projects that we have supported. One is a project on urban transport in Kiev, and we supported the team, the transportation team in addressing accessibility in the urban area around the station in Kiev. In West Africa a very different set of technical assistance. We looked at a project on digital identification and therein, we supported teams in three West African countries to ensure that persons with disabilities were able to receive their identification documents. And having an identification document, as we know, is really important in terms of how you then access services.

Another project that I would like to touch on is a project in Vietnam and the Vietnam project looked at urban upgrading, and what we did in this project is conduct a baseline assessment on the local context, but very importantly we engaged persons with disabilities. And what resulted from that engagement was that the design of the actual project changed substantially because you had the lived experience of the persons with disabilities informing the design of the project. And as a result, we developed a set of comprehensive guidelines on universal access, and we've provided trainings around universal access to both national and local government officials.

Another project that I just want to touch on is a very new project, but I think a very exciting project and one that we really look forward to learning more from. This is a project in Indonesia. This project is the Indonesia Institution Strengthening for Improved Village Service Delivery and it's supporting the Ministry of Villages to roll out a pilot called Desa Inklusif or Inclusive Villages. The underlying approach of this pilot is for an inclusive village that creates both space and opportunity for all village residents to participate equally and meaningfully in village development. Community empowerment is at the core of the pilot's approach, and it's translated through supporting activities to increase the participation of all the village community in realizing social justice. Target groups for this project include women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, customary law communities, minority residents, and the poor. The pilot is expected to be scaled up to neighboring villages. Experienced NGOs have been engaged to work with these villages in targeting groups and in testing and trialing inclusive approaches for their participation in local development. The pilot is targeted to be rolled out to 80 districts across Indonesia within the next two

years. As I said, we're watching this and hopefully we'll learn a lot from this very innovative new project.

Now, a lot of our work in terms of operationalizing accessibility and fostering and advancing disability inclusion has been the need to have a strong basis of knowledge in analytics, and so I mentioned the Good Practice Note on Disability, but in relation to that we recognize the importance of understanding the country context, and so to support that we have 16 country briefs on disability inclusion that also looks at various legal frameworks in the given country.

We've supported research on women with disabilities through women business and the law, and then we have a suite of sector-specific guidance notes, and just last December, we launched a flagship report on disability from Latin American and Caribbean region which is available and we'll put it in the chat box.

Now, it's great to have projects and it's also really important to have the analytics, and also very important that we make sure that our staff are skilled around disability inclusion and know how to address it in their projects. So to do that, we've embarked on a series of different trainings. We have training on disability inclusion to all the ESF staff. We have -- we recently -- well not recently, but at the beginning of the pandemic, we made a presentation to the ESF staff on remote stakeholder consultations for persons with disabilities, and shared in that presentation what are the different measures that you need to put in place to ensure that persons with a range of disabilities can participate.

We've also had a series of deep dives on accessibility. Most recently on ICT and on transport. If we can move to the next slide, please, Anna.

So this slide begins to talk about COVID. And what I wanted to just say here is that, you know, we've all been in this period of the pandemic, and so we felt it necessary to address the issue of around how COVID impacts persons with disabilities. We put out two particular pieces of work. One is a report that looks at the impact of COVID-19 on learners with disabilities, and that was supported by a survey that we did on the similar topic.

I should just step in here and say that there are already some projects that are beginning to include disability in their responses to the pandemic, and one example that sticks out is the example from Rwanda where the team has ensured that disability and differentiated measures for persons with disabilities is built into the package on pandemic supports to Rwanda, and that's just one example.

If we can move to the next slide, please. So this slide speaks to the Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework that I mentioned earlier on, and here I should just say that the main objective of this framework is to support the mainstreaming of disability in World Bank activities and investments. The framework

provides four main principles for guiding our work and engagement with persons with disabilities. Those principles are nondiscrimination, equality, accessibility, inclusion, participation, and partnership and collaboration. The framework outlines principles and provides a roadmap for disability inclusion and emphasizes the importance much internal capacity building. It demonstrates the World Bank's commitment to including disability in its policies, operations, and analytical work. It goes beyond that in that it identifies key areas in the various sectors, identifies entry points, and then provides guidance. The framework was launched at the UN at the Conference of State Parties and also launched at the first Global Disability Summit. As I mentioned earlier on, it is currently under review and we will be launching it shortly.

To support the framework, we have a platform for disability inclusion. If we can go to the slide on the 10 commitments, that would be great. Thank you. In 2018, on the occasion of the first Global Disability Summit, the World Bank together with other participant donors announced a set of 10 commitments to accelerate global action for disability-inclusive development in key areas, including in education, digital development, data collection, gender, post-disaster reconstruction, transport, private sector investments, and social protection. Consistent with the World Bank strategy to develop human capital globally, the 10 commitments are directed at the World Bank to increase its support to advancing disability-inclusive development.

The 10 Committed prompted teams to assess active and pipeline projects for disability includes. As a result, Global Practices such as the education global practice, the global practice for urban resilience and land, and social protection have developed a baseline against which to measure future progress. They have also put in place plans to improve disability inclusion in their respective sectors. In addition to that, the 10 Commitments led to the development of sector-specific guidance notes, including in education, disaster risk management, data, digital development, and these have supported World Bank project task teams and client counterparts to understand and learn about the practical ways to address disability inclusion in project design and implementation.

So these 10 Commitments have helped us to deepen our commitment and drill down internally to address disability inclusion. Next slide.

So I mentioned earlier on that one of the 10 Commitments was around women business and women with disabilities, and to support that commitment, Commitment Number 4, we launched a survey to better understand the economic empowerment of women with disabilities. Based on the results of the survey so far, and it's a global survey, we found that only one-fourth of economies explicitly recognize the

rights of women with disabilities. So the team is currently collecting additional data and will be conducting further analysis on the situation of women with disabilities, so please do stay tuned for more information on this aspect. if we can move to the next slide.

So the next slide is a slide that speaks to entry points through IDA19 and IDA20 that Ed mentioned. So IDA19 has provided a significant opportunity to ensure the systematic inclusion of persons with disabilities in World Bank projects by supporting and developing services provided to IDA countries. I should note that IDA assists 74 of the world's poorest countries, and in the IDA19 Financing and Policy package the focus is on five special themes, climate change, fragility, conflict and violence, gender, governance and institutions, and jobs and economic transformation. Beyond recognizing disability as a cross-cutting theme, IDA19 explicitly references disability in six of its policy commitments.

So that has been part of the existing IDA19 package, but again as mentioned by Ed, the IDA20 package has now been concluded, and under the human capital special theme, we have deepened the commitment and now have a standalone policy commitment on universal access, nondiscrimination, and inclusion. The commitment aims to support inclusive societies supporting at least 18 IDA countries to be disability-inclusive by implementing the principles of nondiscrimination, inclusion, universal access as per the ESF that we outlined, and this would be through the following sectors of education, health, social protection, water, urban development, digital development, and transport.

Now I did want to move on to the next slide and touch on the Technical Note on Accessibility. And you will see on the slide that we have a set of the 5 Thematic Factsheets, and the reason we decided to develop this note is that the issue around technical requests on accessibility is one that we constantly get from bank staff, and so we thought it would be useful to develop a note that would help and guide us in addressing and becoming fully accessible. We're in the process of finalizing the technical note, which focuses on accessibility. And as I said, we have 5 Thematic Factsheets that cover the following sectors, the urban sector, infrastructure, WASH, ICT, and transportation.

Now, the idea is that other sectors can refer to a combination of these five with very little needed specific contextualization. So for example, education can use the infrastructure and the ICT, or infrastructure and transport, so you can mix and match to ensure that you're getting the technical know-how for your project. This note will be launched in May, so please do stay tuned for its launch.

Now, if we can move to the next slide, and here what I would like to do is quickly begin to share with you some examples. The example that is on the screen is a digital accessibility in Rwanda, and this is an important project because it looks at developing basic

teaching and learning materials and processes for all children, and provides interactive textbooks for children, provides continuous professional development modules, looks at training Rwanda publishers on development of digital accessible books, and it looks at implementing the Merakesh treaty through network of libraries regionally to enable people print disabled to access information.

In the interest of time I would skip to the next slide. In this slide, I would like to just close by pointing out or sharing with you the application of the universal access in an urban transportation project in Tanzania, and this is a bus rapid transit project. What's excited about this project is that the planning and design of the project was extremely engaging and consultative. Civil Society organizations were engaged and as well as persons with disabilities. They had implementation and performance management tests, and this was done with persons with disabilities. And the final design has recommendations that address issues around lowering ticket windows for people in wheelchairs, adding disability-awareness signs in kiSwahili and including Braille on tickets. These are just a few of the examples that we have been delving into to ensure that we can operationalize accessibility and ensure disability inclusion.

And I want to just close my presentation off with a slide that has resources, and I know that many of these resources have been shared in the chat. Over to you, Maninder.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thanks so much, Charlotte. Thanks for a very detailed overview of what all the World Bank is doing and what the plans are, and many of those plans include and involve colleagues who are connected today as partners, so thanks to everyone for all of the efforts.

So we'll now turn to the question and answer session. We have quite a few questions that were sent in advance of the event, so Charlotte, maybe you could start with those, and then I saw a few in the chat which I will relay to you after you have a chance to address the initial set of questions. Over to you, Charlotte.

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: Okay. Let me just get those questions here. Okay. So one of the questions that we had was, what is your specific objectives related to disability-inclusive digital accessibility for developing countries? And that question comes from Wasyhun Damene from Ethiopia so I'll go ahead and respond to that and take the next question after that. Thank you very much for that question. Accessibility, as you know, crosses -- it's more than just the physical access. It's also very much about how we address technology and the digital space. So, we have commitment to, and in the commitment to, we ensure that all World Bank Finance Digital Development Projects will be disability sensitive, including through the use of universal design and accessibility standards.

We also know that social innovations have the potential to serve as a very powerful tool to break the trend and increase awareness, increase access and availability of opportunities to marginalized groups, and so innovative approaches are very central to our work around will be supported.

The information and communication technology really enables persons with disabilities to access a whole host of services, it could be education, it could be health care services, it could be e-governance, it could be banking, and so it's very important to ensure that digital development is inclusive of persons with disabilities.

Now, I'll give you an example that actually comes from Ethiopia that might be of interest. And this is the digital foundation's project, and it focuses on extending access to increase digital opportunities for persons with disabilities, and what it allows it to do is to really promote the availability to people with disabilities, people that are working in digital business, and provides people grants to ensure that they have access to digital technologies. So that's one example of how we're advancing inclusion through digital technology. Maninder, do you want me to go on to the next question?

>> MANINDER GILL: Yes. You could go on to the next. Yeah. I think why don't you take one more and then I'll come until with some additional questions that were posted in the chat.

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: Fantastic. This is a great question and it comes from Abdifatah Dhuhulow from Somolia and the question is how can organizations of persons with disabilities be included in the decision-making process? I think as I mentioned in my presentation, ESS10 that requires us to have stakeholder engagement and consultations is an important point to ensure that persons with disabilities are part of the process, and I mentioned the country briefs that we're developing, and within those country briefs, we list the key organizations of persons with disabilities. And the idea behind that is that it makes it easier for a task team leader who is working on a project to look at the list and say, we've got a number of projects -- we've got a number of organizations here, so how do we engage with them and make sure that the facilities, the venue themselves, are accessible. Great question, and really important point of being inclusive.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thanks, Charlotte. So, at this point let me ask everyone connected in case you would like to open your video and ask a question, please also feel free to do so. There was one question, Charlotte, by is what are the opportunities for NGOs to support inclusive education at local levels, especially focusing on the needs of young people to help make them competitive in the job's market, so I know there is a lot of work going on on inclusive education, so in case you want to answer that.

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: Thanks, Maninder, and thanks Bienvenue for the question. The bank is supporting -- well it has commitment to ensure that all bank finance projects are disability inclusive by 2025. And to do that, we have a guidance note, we have a criteria for our projects, and in addition to the work that's going on in the mainstream part of the education global practice, we have additional funds that support the work around inclusive education, and right now we have in Africa, at least 8 specific projects on disability inclusive education. And then we have some big projects in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Nepal that also address inclusive education. And so it's really important for us to ensure that children with disabilities are getting an education so that they can be in the job market and participate in that space.

We're also supporting a lot of work on jobs and employment and ensuring that persons with disabilities are part of that process. And often that may require us to have a targeted approach and focus on upskilling youth with disabilities, but then ultimately looking at how they can enjoy the larger and bigger labor market.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thanks, Charlotte. There is also a question from Matrika that emphasized the softer side that in addition to working on physical accessibility, we also need to work on attitudes and social barriers and, you know, political attitudes or constraints in addition to legal barriers. It's a great question and it's a great insight, and there is a lot of work going on in this area as well, and I'll turn to Charlotte. I remember a few years ago Charlotte put me in touch with a hotel chain in India which had said that they would have a full 10% or so of their workforce to include people with disabilities, and they wanted them invisible frontline jobs, not in the office and not behind the scenes, which I thought was remarkable. I visited them and in this very prominent chain you see people with disabilities in all jobs interacting with customers and sending a message that this not only promotes inclusion, but can be good for business, can be good for development, and I found that very inspiring. Charlotte, you may have additional insights on that as well.

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: It's a great question. It's a really good question. I think we're all working towards addressing those issues, right. And I think it's important that we have the analytics to break down some of those concerns. Right. So it's been very important for us to have the trainings. Now, the trainings are often technical, but in getting to know, once people get to know the percentage of persons with disabilities, I mean Ed referred to 15%, and often people are very surprised by that number and they think it's a much smaller group. And so getting the information out to people and getting people to see that this is not an insignificant group of people but rather it's a large part of your community, of your population, and therefore it makes

economic sense for you to include them in the work that you're doing.

But I do think that this is also a place and a space where organizations of persons with disabilities play a particularly important role. Working with your governments to ensure that they are, you know, more engaged, more aware, and there are some really good examples of where that's happening. And one country that I do want to spotlight in relation to this is Uganda where you have at the village level, you have representatives in village councils by law, you know, represented on the council, and that goes all the way up to parliament. And because you have is that voice in the participation in the room, you often see that the policies are more inclusive, the legislation is more affirming, and therefore development follows suit.

So I do think that having and addressing those issues around attitudes is an essential part of ensuring that we have disability inclusion and understanding what we mean by accessibility. It's not sufficient for us to hand over are a guide book to one of our project-implementing units and say to please make your buildings accessible. They need to understand what that means. Right. Because if they don't, what often happens is you've got a ramp, I use a wheelchair, and you've got a ramp that is just so high, the gradient is so high that you can't actually use it. So it's really inculcating what it is we're trying to achieve by addressing and becoming disability inclusive.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thanks, Charlotte. Matrika, you raised your hand if you would like to come in please, you could turn on your video or not. Yes, please.

>> MATRIKA: Thank you so much. The group of disability is underrepresented group and I think there needs to be some affirmative action, like I'm trying to reach World Bank also in the country of Nepal, so how can we make sure that no one is leaving behind the marginalized groups and those who don't have a voice like minorities, how the World Bank has global strategies and other strategies I'm curious to learn more about those. Thank you so much for the opportunity.

>> MANINDER GILL: Very good question, Matrika and something that we all need to work to address. So as one initial response, and then I'll turn to Charlotte. So one aspect of the Environmental and Social Framework that Charlotte highlighted was that all projects under the ESF are required to have a stakeholder engagement plan. And almost all the stakeholder engagement plans do have people with disabilities as a distinct stakeholder group that needs to be consulted, who needs to participate in the design of the development project and then continue during implementation.

So, by bringing these groups in, we are hoping that they will be the champions of and they will represent the underrepresented groups of people with disabilities, and so what our projects do is

to give voice to stakeholders who are people with disabilities and then rely on them to bring in specific issues that may be pertinent in a given project setting and context, and also specific groups who may, you know, who run the risk of being forgotten or overlooked. There are many examples where such groups that otherwise would not have, you know, would have gotten the essential focus and targeting, they were identified with the help of our allies of organizations representing people with disabilities. Charlotte, you may want to add to that?

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: Thank you, Matrika for that question, and I think just to highlight that, often when we think about disabilities or persons with disabilities, we think about persons with disabilities who have visible disabilities. Right. And yet we know that there is a substantial population that have invisible disabilities, and I would -- you know, I would say that we probably haven't done such a great job of reaching out to that population, and I do think that it's something that we are mindful of and working towards. And in that regard, we have in our inclusive education project, we have partnered with an NGO called Inclusion International that works primarily with children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. And the idea behind that is to really start to look at how can we design teacher training for this cohort of children, how do we provide supports for this cohort of children, and how do we scale up our knowledge on what we need to have in place to ensure that we're not excluding within the disability inclusion certain types of disabilities. And just to say that in Nepal, we do have some really interesting projects around inclusive education and I'm sure the team there would be happy to talk to you.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thanks, Charlotte. We know that Ed has a hard stop at 10:00 and he has to go to attend the World Bank Board of Director's Meeting so kindly turning to you, Ed, for a minute in case you have any insights for us before you leave.

>> ED MOUNTFIELD: Well, perhaps the conversation will continue a little bit, but let me just say that this is a very, very valuable and rich conversation for us. I want to just pick up on a point that Charlotte alluded to, which is the importance of inculcating disability thinking into the conversations in the countries in which we work, not just at the project level, not just making sure that our projects are inclusive, but as the ultimate goal is to build the awareness and capabilities and the institutions and systems and processes in the clients with which we work in governments, in the private sector, in community organizations, and in society at large so that we can build a more inclusive world and not just make sure that our projects are inclusive. So that's a bigger challenge, and of course we can only be part of the solution, but it's a very important thing for us to keep in mind.

Secondly, just to emphasize that as I said in my opening remarks, we're committed to stepping up our efforts and this engagement with you all and with organizations of people with disabilities and Civil Society is tremendously important for us and let's continue the conversation. We're happy to follow up offline, and thank you all very much for your questions. Back to you, Maninder.

>> MANINDER GILL: Thanks so much, Ed. Thank you so much for joining and giving us so much of your time. And as Ed emphasized, I think the work that needs to happen at the country level, all of you are critical partners in that, so we look forward to continuing that partnership with you and to building upon it.

In the chat Anna just posted the link to our community of practice, so in order to have a continuing dialogue and to become even stronger and closer partners, please join the Community of Practice so that we can continue this conversation and have other conversations in that setting.

So we've come to the end of our appointed time. Let me before I turn to Charlotte to close, let me profusely thank all of you for joining today from all parts of the world and participating active live and giving us -- not only listening to us, but giving us many ideas and suggestions on how we can improve and do better in this critically important agenda. We were not able to answer all of your questions, but we want to assure you that all of them have been noted. In the chat we have taken notes and you sent questions in add advance as well, and we will reflect upon all of those and then in the Community of Practice conversations, we will do our best to answer all of them.

So with this and a huge expression of gratitude for your commitment to the agenda and for being here today, let me turn to Charlotte for a very quick closing. Thanks.

>> CHARLOTTE McCLAIN-NHLAPO: So, thank you, Maninder, and more importantly thank you to everybody for joining us. You know, we have a lot more going on. This is just a snapshot of the work that we're doing. Please stay engaged. As Ed said, please hold us accountable. Reach out to country offices if you're in a country. We recognize that we can't do this alone and we're really always looking to partners and build up our networks and work towards this together. So, again, just a huge thank you from me. Thank you.

>> MANINDER GILL: Finally, a big thanks to our wonderful international sign interpreter who did a fantastic job. All of us took breaks and rested in between, but she had to be working throughout and hugely grateful and you did a fantastic job. Thanks, everyone. Until we meet again which we hope hopefully will be very soon. All the best.