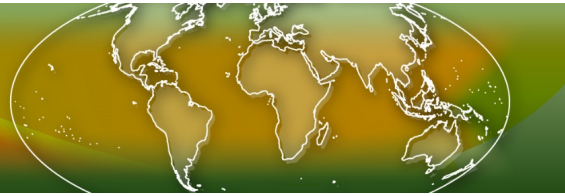


GLADNET

Global Applied Disability Research and  
Information Network on Employment and Training



# GLADNET: Promise and Legacy

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December, 2018

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## 1 Preface

The Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training (GLADNET) was launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1995, in cooperation with over 50 social policy research centres, governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in disability-related employment programmes from over thirty countries around the world<sup>1</sup>. Major organizations of persons with disabilities were also represented – the World Blind Union, the World Federation of the Deaf, Inclusion International (formerly the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap (ILSMH)) and Disabled Peoples International (DPI)<sup>2</sup>.

GLADNET's lifespan was little more than a generation (1995 – 2018). What's of interest is that it survived beyond its first few years of existence. It could easily have died early on, given a significant change in nature of support from its initiating body. That it didn't speaks to the aspirational nature and relevance of the vision prompting its formation.

It's in pursuit of that vision where GLADNET left its mark. This document focuses on its legacy, beginning with a brief review of context within which it was initiated.

## 2 A Time of Change

During the 1980s and 1990s, several significant change forces combined to spur the establishment of GLADNET. Changing ways of conceptualizing disability led to revisions in disability-related policies and services throughout the world. In parallel, a revolution of information and communication technologies transformed patterns of work and communication globally. And, within the International Labour Organization, a shift in focus created space to experiment with bringing these forces together – seeking to harness new forms of communication technology to foster policies and practices consistent with a new understanding of disability.

### 2.1 Changing understanding of disability

By the early 1990s, a dramatic change was evident in the way in which disability and related issues were viewed. Rather than being seen as a personal problem or tragedy requiring medical or charitable action, there was a growing recognition that very many barriers to the participation of people with disabilities in all sectors arise from the way in which society is built and organized, and the way in which people think about disability and the assumptions they make.

To a significant degree, this change was propelled by the emergence of strong local, regional and international disability self-advocacy organizations part of Disabled Peoples International, Inclusion International (previously named 'International Society for the

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> International Rehabilitation Review, 1995.

Mentally Handicapped’) and others, building on the ‘Normalization’ principle developed in Scandinavia and the independent living movement of North America.

Termed the social model of disability, this emerging approach emphasized that lack of inclusion of disabled people in society is due to the environment and society, rather than the individual's impairment. This approach recognizes that the limitations faced by disabled people are due to barriers created by the environment and by other people's erroneous expectations and negative attitudes regarding disabilities. It contrasted with the medical model in which the focus is on a person's ‘impairment’ and associated inability.

This emerging approach was reflected in a range of international initiatives – including the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, 1982; the ILO's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention (No. 159) and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 168, 1983); and the UN Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, 1993, all of which focused on rights and the equality of opportunities and treatment.

Its emergence marked a time of considerable change in disability-related policy and services worldwide. An important element of the new approach was an emphasis on mainstreaming – including people with disabilities in general programmes and services – in place of the predominant approach up to then, in which disability issues were the concern of specialized institutions with essentially social welfare or social protection objectives.

This transition gave rise to challenges in countries at every level of development, including those where considerable progress had already been made in introducing modern disability policies and programmes. Much discussion and debate was taking place, and individual countries were requesting the ILO and other centres of expertise to provide technical advice and support on a range of matters including legislation, workplace policies, equitable vocational training and employment models, as well as information on the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of programmes<sup>3</sup>.

## **2.2 Rise of Electronic Information and Communication Technologies**

The rise and widespread adoption of new electronic information and communication technologies had an equally disruptive effect on the way things were done. The mid-1970s through the 1990s saw development of increasingly smaller, more powerful and more affordable personal computers, aided by increasingly efficient communication protocols, in particular, development of the hypertext transfer protocol (http) around 1990 which became the foundation of data transmission on the World Wide Web, and development of Internet search engines in the late '90s<sup>4</sup> that made the Web increasingly accessible. Traditional hard copy communication increasingly gave way to electronic communication through the Internet; print documents, though not obsolete, increasingly gave way to electronic documents accessible through the Web; and print journals gave way to electronic

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<sup>3</sup> For example, the UN affiliated European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research hosted three International Expert meetings in the early 1990s titled, respectively: “Vocational Rehabilitation and Sheltered Employment” (1990); “Employment and Integration of Persons with Mental Handicaps” (1991); and, “Mandatory Employment or Equal Opportunities? Employment policies for People with Disabilities” (1994).

<sup>4</sup> While Yahoo and similar search engines emerged just as GLADNET was being developed, the potential of the Google approach to accessing information didn't become evident until the early 2000s.

journals, thereby altering how libraries saw their function. Such changes presented the opportunity and, eventually, the necessity to experiment with new forms of networking and facilitating the exchange of information internationally.

## **2.3 Shift in ILO focus**

In the early 1990s, major developments affecting ILO Member States were the ending of the Cold War, giving rise to the need for structural adjustment in countries transitioning to market economies; and the spread of globalization, affecting the production and trade of goods moving outside of national boundaries, and hence beyond national laws and standards. In light of these trends, the International Labour Office (the Office) shifted its predominant focus from direct running of employment-related technical cooperation projects funded by external donors, to increased promotion of its International Labour Standards (ILS), to the provision of policy and programme advice to governments and to enhancing capacity of countries to promote employment and training opportunities based on the ILS. Technical cooperation projects continued, though the focus changed with an emphasis on a limited number of themes and on increasing the capacity of governments and government agencies and to develop laws, policies and programmes in consultation with employers', workers' and non-governmental organizations with ILO support.

This shift was reflected in the work of the ILO's Vocational Rehabilitation Branch (REHAB), that moved from mainly running projects aiming to support developing countries to improve training and employment practices for people with disabilities by handing down experiences from the 'developed world'<sup>5</sup>, to a more general approach in stimulating adoption of policies and practices in line with ILS, in particular Convention No. 159 concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 168). REHAB sought to respond to the increasing number of requests from ILO Member States to advise on effective laws, policies and programmes to promote the access of people with disabilities to training and employment. Given its limited resources, it set out to harness the resources of countries, organizations and individuals that might contribute to the attainment of this ambitious goal.

## **3 Emergence of GLADNET**

It was in such a changing context that GLADNET emerged – not as a fully formed concept, but as one that developed over time. Willi Momm at ILO REHAB was actively exploring the new Internet and how it might be used<sup>6</sup>. The vision was to set up a network involving collaborative research and enabling sharing of information that could be drawn on in the development of policies and approaches to training and employment that would enable people with disabilities to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

The aspiration was to establish a means of contributing to better understanding of the types of policies and programmes that are most effective in promoting training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities, in terms of equality of opportunity and costs. Once good practice examples had been identified through collaborative international

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<sup>5</sup> From reflections of Willi Momm, former Chief of the ILO Vocational Rehabilitation Branch, May 2018

<sup>6</sup> Recalled by one of Momm's colleagues, Bob Ransom, who, along with Willi Momm and Carl Raskin, explored the possibility of Internet payment mechanisms for membership fees – an idea before its time.

research efforts, the network which became GLADNET would share resources and information among countries, thus promoting the implementation of effective policies and programmes.

Guidance would also be given to countries in the developing world or in transition to a market economy, in formulating or adapting disability legislation, policies and programmes. In this way, the Office, with the aid of the network, would respond to the 1995 World Summit for Social Development's Programme of Action, calling for universities and research centres to intensify their analytical work, to collect data and exchange information on policies and programmes to combat social exclusion.

### **3.1 First steps**

In 1994, ILO REHAB carried out a survey to explore the potential for a global disability network. Affirmative responses were received from 129 centres in Europe, North and South America and Asia. With this response, ILO Member States were invited to a consultative meeting in Geneva scheduled for 6 – 8 February 1995. Fifty-three (53) organizations involved in disability-related policy, programme, research and advocacy participated at their own expense.

Several conclusions were drawn, following enthusiastic discussion.

- Firstly, it was agreed to proceed with establishing a global applied disability research network on employment and training (GLADNET). The aim was to link professional contacts across countries without hierarchical structures, held together by a common vision and a will to exchange experience, to identify successful practice and policies and to feed that newly gained knowledge into improvements at the level of national or organizational policies.
- Secondly, an information base would be set up.
- Thirdly, steps would be taken to secure funding for disability-related research projects.
- Finally, 10 research projects were identified as potentially contributing to the ILO goal of developing concrete, practical outcomes positioned to influence policy. As well, an international team of coordinators was identified (one for each project), with additional team members recruited following the meeting<sup>7</sup>.

Between May and November following the 1995 meeting, three issues of a newsletter, GLADNET News, were prepared and distributed, promoting the GLADNET idea as an International Labour Office Initiative. And, the ILO proceeded with establishing the GLADNET InfoBase. It was envisaged that funding for GLADNET activities such as the InfoBase would come from membership fees or contributions, donations and charges for overhead costs on funded research projects.

Later that year, in December, the first indication that GLADNET would not be permanently housed in the ILO took the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreed between the ILO and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board (CLFDB). Under this MoU, the Office undertook to hold overall responsibility for the development and direction of GLADNET; while the CLFDB would host the administrative and coordinating unit of

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<sup>7</sup> Listed in GLAD\*NEWS Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1995. See also Section 5.1.2 below.

GLADNET responsible for its day-to-day running, employing a full-time network coordinator and establishing and managing a Trust Fund to finance GLADNET activities.

A follow-up meeting a year later (1996) in Malta was attended by 27 delegates from 13 countries, again at their own expense. Progress to date was reviewed and adjustments made to the overall purpose and structure of GLADNET. By this time, the REHAB had concluded that further devolution of GLADNET was desirable if not necessary<sup>8</sup>, a direction supported by participants, although this development took many by surprise and was not exactly sought. Following the meeting, REHAB personnel explored possible legal frameworks to house GLADNET as an international non-governmental organization, as well as to give it proper international status and provide a platform for fund-raising. After considering several options it was decided to proceed with registering GLADNET in Switzerland, with Bylaws drafted by the ILO in accordance with the Swiss Civil Code.

### **3.2 GLADNET comes to be independent**

Decisions taken at the Malta meeting set the stage for the 1997 meeting in Montreal, termed the founding General Assembly of GLADNET. Draft Bylaws of the GLADNET Association were reviewed and accepted with some amendments, and the first Board of Directors was elected<sup>9</sup>, putting GLADNET on the road to becoming an independent association, based in Switzerland, and bringing to an end the MoU between the ILO and CLFDB.

A Letter of Agreement between ILO and GLADNET in 1998 outlined how the REHAB would support GLADNET in the transition period. To assist with the challenge of securing on-going support for its activities, foreseen through membership fees as well as possible project-related funds, an ILO grant would be provided for the maintenance and enlargement of the GLADNET network of member organizations, the maintenance and development of the website, facilitation of cross-national research activities and operational costs of the GLADNET InfoBase, including the salary of the Executive Director. In addition, the Letter of Agreement outlined the in-kind staff contribution of ILO REHAB to the development and maintenance of the InfoBase (in particular through employment of an InfoBase manager for a 3-year period), as well as continuing to provide technical guidance to the Association, propose joint research activities, provide documents for the InfoBase, and participate in GLADNET meetings as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. GLADNET, in turn, agreed to give the ILO privileged access to its member research institutions, and promote and facilitate the implementation of ILO research programme activities in cooperation with GLADNET members, as well as providing the ILO with information about the research activities of GLADNET members and disseminate the results of ILO and Joint ILO/GLADNET research projects through the GLADNET InfoBase.

The Letter of Agreement expired at the end of 1999, with GLADNET assuming the management of the InfoBase as of 1 January 2000. The expiry of the Agreement coincided with a significant reorganization within the ILO, during which REHAB, the ILO Branch instrumental in the founding of GLADNET and its InfoBase, disappeared as a separate entity. In a meeting of GLADNET's Chair and Executive Director with the new ILO Director General,

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<sup>8</sup> As in its technical cooperation projects, the ILO undertook to initiate new developments which would in time be taken over by relevant agencies at national or international level.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 2 for a list of GLADNET Board Members in successive years.



GLADNET was assured of its importance and the ILO's continuing support, but given the changes that had taken place within the organizational structure, it appeared, from the GLADNET perspective, that the Disability portfolio had lost its status in the ILO, as commitment to this ILO initiative was in practice greatly reduced.<sup>10</sup>

The ILO REHAB did continue to provide some support to GLADNET, though at a reduced level, through in-kind personnel time, participation in GLADNET meetings, the submission of publications for inclusion in the InfoBase, provision of support to the membership expansion efforts and, most recently, through a small grant to fund acquisition of source documents for a specific section on the InfoBase on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### 3.3 GLADNET by numbers

As an international non-governmental organization, GLADNET was a membership-based organization. In its first full year (1998) there were 66 members paying the fee of US\$200. In the three following years the number grew to 85, 86 and 83 members respectively. That turned out to be the peak. In subsequent years membership was more modest, fluctuating in a range between 30 and 60. Adding to the number in later years was achieved through use of 'group memberships' of 5 or 10 persons with group fees of US\$750 and US\$1000, respectively.

While the total membership was modest in number, there was a reasonable distribution of members from high-income though not low-income countries – notably Western Europe and North America (including one from the Caribbean), but also from Australia/New Zealand, along with Japan and Hong Kong from Asia. Representation from Africa and South America was difficult to obtain – partly for financial reasons (cost of membership, travel costs, etc.) and partly for reasons of language (S. America being Spanish or Portuguese-speaking, and many African countries French-speaking); and perhaps other reasons. Typical membership distributions selected from several years' data are illustrated below.<sup>11</sup> A 'side-bar' note is that both the Africa and S. America members had moved from high income countries; and, previously involved with GLADNET, sought to promote GLADNET there.

*Table 1. Membership Distribution for Selected Years*

	Africa	Asia	Austr/NZ	Europe	N. Amer/Carib	S. Amer	Total
Year							
1998		1	5	35	25		66
2001	1	6	4	36	36		83
2008	1	2	8	17	17	2	47

## 4 The GLADNET Mission

The primary objective of GLADNET, according to its Bylaws, was "to promote research and to collect, analyse and exchange information worldwide concerning disabled persons and the world of work, thereby increasing access of government officials, employers, trade unions, disabled persons and others to information useful for policy decisions and the

<sup>10</sup> In the new ILO organizational structure set up in 1999, the Disability Programme became part of the Target Groups Unit within the InFocus Programme on Skills and Employability.

<sup>11</sup>Data from GLADNET Annual Reports

development of practical measures and programmes to insure equal opportunities in training and employment for persons with disabilities.”<sup>12</sup>

The Bylaws specified that “GLADNET, in close cooperation with the ILO, will seek to:

- (a) promote, at international level, scientific analysis in support of legislative, policy and programme reform, having as a goal increased mainstream vocational training and employment opportunities for disabled persons;
- (b) facilitate the conduct of international comparative applied research with the aim of reinforcing effective strategies for the vocational training, integration and advancement of persons with disabilities in competitive employment;
- (c) facilitate and cooperate in the exchange of information, research and data amongst the international community of stakeholders concerned with the advancement of vocational training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- (d) promote the overall objectives of the ILO concerning the vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons, notably the promotion of policies that have the goal of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for disabled persons;
- (e) undertake any other action consistent with the objectives outlined in Article 4 of these Bylaws.”

For public consumption, these aspirations were simplified to say<sup>13</sup>:

GLADNET brings together research centres, universities, enterprises, government departments, trade unions, and organizations of and for persons with disabilities. The common goal is to advance opportunities for persons with disabilities.

GLADNET’s objective is to promote disability policy and program reform with emphasis on integrated training and employment options for working age persons with disabilities. These objectives are achieved through collaborative applied research projects, and by the global exchange of information via the Internet.

## **5 GLADNET Activities over the Years**

Following the 1997 Montreal meeting GLADNET built on the activities initiated by the ILO REHAB in prior years that can be broadly grouped in three clusters: fostering collaborative research, promoting exchange of knowledge and information, and communication with members and others interested.

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<sup>12</sup> Article 4, Bylaws of the Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training (GLADNET), adopted in Montreal (Canada) on 28 May 1997, during the formative General Assembly of the Association.

<sup>13</sup> From the GLADNET Brochure [http://www.gladnet.org/docs/GLADNET\\_brochure\\_2013\\_v1.pdf](http://www.gladnet.org/docs/GLADNET_brochure_2013_v1.pdf)

## **5.1 Fostering Collaborative Research**

GLADNET embraced ILO's goal of fostering internationally collaborative research resulting in development of concrete, practical outcomes positioned to influence policy, and there was an auspicious start. But, thereafter, this goal proved devilishly difficult to achieve.

### **5.1.1 Early Successes**

From the outset, GLADNET placed an emphasis on encouraging the cross-fertilization of research related to the employment and training of disabled persons. Coincidental to the emergence of GLADNET, two cross-country studies on disability policy were being initiated by ILO REHAB. With the birth of GLADNET, it became a convenient umbrella to host them.

The largest was a study of job retention and return to work carried out in collaboration with the ILO and co-sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada; Association Nationale de Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des Handicapés (AGEFIPH), France; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany; the National Institute for Social Insurances, the Netherlands; the Swedish Council for Work Life Research; the Department of Education and Employment, UK; the Post Office, UK; and the Social Security Administration, USA. This study broke new ground by examining the inter-relationships of public and enterprise policies and practices as they affect the retention and return to work of disabled workers.

Led by Patricia Thornton from the UK, the study resulted in an overall report as well as country reports for the sponsoring nations (Canada, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, UK and USA). In addition, there was a follow-up seminar in Washington (May 1998), the proceedings of which are part of the GLADNET Collection in the InfoBase.<sup>14</sup>

The second, also led by Patricia Thornton (along with Neil Lunt), was a comparative study of employment policies for disabled persons in eighteen countries. Its modest purpose was to revise and update a 1993 15-country study of disability employment policies, legislation and services. Its findings, too, had significance. Rather than small incremental changes over the intervening years that had been anticipated, it found that many countries had radically changed their policies in keeping with new directions.

### **5.1.2 Elusive Ambition**

Both studies were significant in their own right, but despite repeated effort in later years it proved an elusive task to launch additional comparative studies under the GLADNET umbrella.

A harbinger of the challenge became evident early on. During the 1995 Geneva exploratory meeting, ten research projects were identified as worthy of study, each with a project coordinator, with further team members to be added. The impressive breadth of subjects identified were:

- International comparison and evaluation of wage subsidy schemes (Erwin Seyfried, Germany);
- Inventory of supported employment strategies (Michael Kamp, Netherlands);
- Support to work strategies (Aldred Neufeldt, Canada);

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<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 5

- Distance learning and assistive technology for mainstream training (Fred McFarlane, USA);
- Transition from school to work and equitable access to generic training (Trevor Parmenter, Australia);
- Issues related to workplace measures and work capacity assessment (Irene Nijboer, Netherlands);
- Cost-benefit analysis of community-based employment models (John Wesolek, USA);
- Review and evaluation of return to work strategies, including changes to benefit systems (Monroe Berkowitz, USA);
- Review and expansion of study on “Disability and employment: the role of the employer” (Barbara Murray, Ireland);
- Harmonizing methodology and terminology (Ranjit Majumder, USA).

The more than 50 participants appreciated the breadth of potential research to be done, and potential for cross-fertilization. Despite promotion of the idea of collaborative comparative research via a newsletter GLAD\*NEWS, e-mail and other means, very little had been accomplished by the follow-up meeting in Malta (1996). So, that idea was shelved for the moment, with the focus instead being placed on InfoBase development and creating GLADNET as an international non-governmental body.

Once established, GLADNET again pursued the development of international comparative research, all with little success. Projects pursued include:

- Combating Discrimination in the Employment and Training of Persons with Disabilities – National and Cultural Considerations (1998). This was a joint GLADNET/ILO research proposal aiming to identify factors underlying discrimination experienced by people with disabilities in employment and training selected countries, to arrive at nationally and culturally specific strategies to combat this discrimination and to produce guides and hold seminars and workshops through community-based models.
- The Access project (1996), aiming to bring together centres of excellence in developing countries with GLADNET member organizations in industrialized countries, through twinning arrangements. The strategy was to increase access by national authorities and agencies to relevant information through use in the formulation of policy measures and programmes aiming to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Projet Accès (1998) was a GLADNET initiative which aimed to enhance the availability on the internet of documents in French language concerning the training and employment of persons with disabilities as well as increasing the use of the Internet by persons and organizations concerned with these issues, especially in Francophone Africa. This project was proposed by GLADNET in collaboration with McGill University; Centre de réadaptation professionnelle, France; Agence Wallonne pour l’intégration des personnes handicapées, Belgium; and Réseau de recherche pour la participation sociale, Université Laval, Quebec.
- Comparative study of Employment Policy and Practices contributing to Employment Non-Discrimination in five countries (1996). This was an ILO project to be carried out with GLADNET collaboration.

- Comparative Study on Effective Non-Discrimination Work Environments (1998). This was a proposal for research to be carried out jointly by Cornell University in collaboration with GLADNET, building on a comparative study underway involving two countries, the United States and the United Kingdom.
- Four collaborative projects targeted to the Arab Region following on the 2005 GLADNET meeting in Bahrain:
  - A proposal in collaboration with Rehabilitation International (RI) to the Ministry of Social Affairs in Bahrain for a project entitled A Community-Based Hub Approach to Support Development of Life-Span Services for People with Disabilities in Bahrain;
  - A proposal to the Arab Organization of Disabled Persons (AOPD) entitled Employment and Training Resources in the Arab Region;
  - A project entitled Disability Policy in the Gulf Cooperation Council States: Lessons from the Middle East;
  - A project entitled AOPD-GLADNET Collaborative Proposal was also proposed to Arab Organizations of Disabled Persons (AOPD) in August 2006.
- A Combating Unemployment Project proposal under the joint umbrella of GLADNET and RI (2008). Its purposes were to form a coalition whose members would sign a statement of cooperation in conjunction with the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and start supported employment, customized employment and self-employment pilots in different parts of the world. A number of international partners signed on,<sup>15</sup> but funding has proved elusive so far.

### **5.1.3 The Challenges**

These and other attempts at prompting comparative international studies encountered a number of challenges, at least one of which was identified early on. The report on 1997 activities presented at GLADNET's 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly observes:

“Though a number of initial projects were agreed to (in the 1995 Geneva meeting), the realities of work pressures in participants' home environments seemed to prevent any really major steps being taken.”<sup>16</sup>

The challenge for most, if not all, researchers and project leaders, was that involvement in GLADNET was pursued in ‘marginal time’ – that is, marginal to time demands of their regular employment. Allocating sufficient time to preparing a GLADNET proposal can be difficult unless the project has some significant relevance to other aspects of their work; unless, of course, international research had personal appeal for other reasons. For a project leader, it's further complicated if it involves coordinating proposal preparation with collaborating partners in other countries experiencing the same time-crunch, and in particular when they only have passing familiarity with each other.

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<sup>15</sup> Rehabilitation International, GLADNET, WASE (World Association for Supported Employment), IASSID (Employment Affinity Group of the International Association of Scientific studies on Intellectual Disabilities), European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), and other affiliates.

<sup>16</sup> The report was presented by the Chair, Dr Aldred Neufeldt.

A second challenge compounding matters was to identify a funding source (or sources) willing to provide funds for an international comparative study. Most funding agencies have a strictly defined mandate, where obtaining funds for a project not fitting into the given norm is difficult. The challenge for researchers was to pursue funds that not only met whatever criteria domestic grant proposal reviewers considered important, but also persuade them that funding should be provided in a manner allowing for international comparison.

This challenge is complicated even further when, in the absence of some overall inter-country agreement, it means that each project team member needs to pursue the risky prospect of seeking funds from granting sources in their own country or region, all with their specific interests.

A third challenge for some project proposals was that, even when one common funding source was found and a proposal written, it had to compete with other priorities that funding body considered. In the absence of high-level agreement between countries on a project's importance, such an application had little chance of approval since issues pertaining to disability have in the past faced an uphill climb to be accepted as a priority.

Reflecting on these challenges, the regrettable conclusion is that GLADNET of itself didn't have the moral heft to lift proposals to a level they'd be given particular attention by funding bodies. Whether it would have been different if the ILO had remained more closely identified with GLADNET is hard to say, but one would think its status as a specialized agency of the U.N. would at least have garnered some of the proposals more serious attention.

## **5.2 Knowledge and Information Exchange**

GLADNET developed a more successful track record in knowledge and information exchange, than in collaborative research. Two activities gave GLADNET legitimacy as a vehicle of knowledge and information exchange. One was formation of the GLADNET InfoBase, an electronic library of research and policy documents; the other was the incorporation of research presentations and updates as part of GLADNET Annual General Assemblies. Other formats were added later.

### **5.2.1 *The GLADNET InfoBase***

To facilitate exchange of knowledge and information, a specialized Global InfoBase on employment and training as it relates to disability issues was developed in 1996 by the ILO and GLADNET in partnership.

It was innovative for its time. A generation later that kind of resource is commonplace in general, though not on disability issues; but, in the mid-1990s electronic documents were still competing with 'hard copy' for legitimacy in information storage, and the World Wide Web and sophisticated search engines were just coming into their own.

The idea of the InfoBase was brought forward by the ILO to the 1996 Malta meeting. It was immediately embraced, one researcher describing the idea as an electronic library with collections of state of knowledge research in different 'rooms' each with its own topics, identified and curated by content experts.

Once established, the InfoBase was the only Internet based electronic library that included full texts of legislation literature, and research reports concerning the specialized area of disability, training and employment. Its purpose was to provide GLADNET members, NGOs, organizations of and for disabled persons, researchers and ILO constituents – ministries of labour, employers’ and workers’ organizations - with information useful to policy-making research as well as the formulation of effective measures to ensure access by individuals with disabilities to training and employment.<sup>17</sup>

#### *5.2.1.1 Original effort*

Following the Malta meeting, the ILO REHAB initiated InfoBase development by issuing a 3-year contract to a manager to identify and upload documents from their own ‘hardcopy’ holdings and other sources. The manager, joined later by a graduate student from the University of Calgary on an international experience grant, coordinated the gathering, obtaining of copyright permission and uploading of the relevant documents and publications onto the data base accessible through GLADNET’s website. On completion of this contract, the ILO REHAB handed over management of the InfoBase to GLADNET, which by then was an independent association based in Geneva, with its Executive Office in Canada. The InfoBase was opened to public access in June 1997, and by year end reported being accessed 1,000 times per month.

Subjects covered in the InfoBase include comparative analysis of national disability policies and services, telework, supported employment, self-employment strategies, mental health and employment, transition from school to work, return to work of workers disabled on the job, and disability management in enterprises. Over time, GLADNET collected and indexed a wide variety of documents, both published articles and grey literature produced by government agencies, professional organizations, research centres, universities, public institutions, special interest groups, and associations and societies with a goal of dissemination of current information. Types of documents include: reports, legislation and government documents, conference proceedings, manuscripts and statistical data.

#### *5.2.1.2 Incremental Growth of Holdings*

Following its launch for public access in 1997, the InfoBase has grown incrementally over the years.

The first significant increment in 2001/2002 added new information on employment rights legislation gathered by the ILO REHAB. With all of it ‘hard copy,’ it illustrated some of the challenges to populating the InfoBase library. While some was easily scanned for inclusion, about 350 pages weren’t of a quality to scan and needed to be keyed in. The ‘keying in’ provided employment to several individuals from the disability community, but extended the time to public release of new content.

A second increment followed adoption by the United Nations of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD). This prompted GLADNET to consider ways it might support its implementation. In 2007, with support of the ILO, GLADNET designed a special InfoBase of over 300 publications related to the implementation of 13 articles associated with the training and employment of people with disabilities. These publications include reports, policies, and research as well as practical guides, checklists, tools,

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<sup>17</sup> The InfoBase can be consulted at <http://www.gladnet.org/InfoBase.cfm>

information sheets, brochures and fact sheets concerning work and employment, international cooperation, habilitation and rehabilitation. This part of the overall InfoBase also includes a section on Frequently Asked Questions about the UNCRPD.

Recognizing that just adding related material to the database might not be sufficient to effectively promote use of these materials and desired related support for the UNCRPD, the GLADNET leadership proposed to establish a Thematic Working Group to monitor global and regional progress on the implementation of the UNCRPD in relation to Article 27 - Work and employment; Article 28 - Adequate standard of living and social protection; and Article 32 - International cooperation in the areas of training, work and employment. In the end, this Working Group did not come into being, although the concept could be revisited, given the wealth of information available through the periodic country reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other sources.

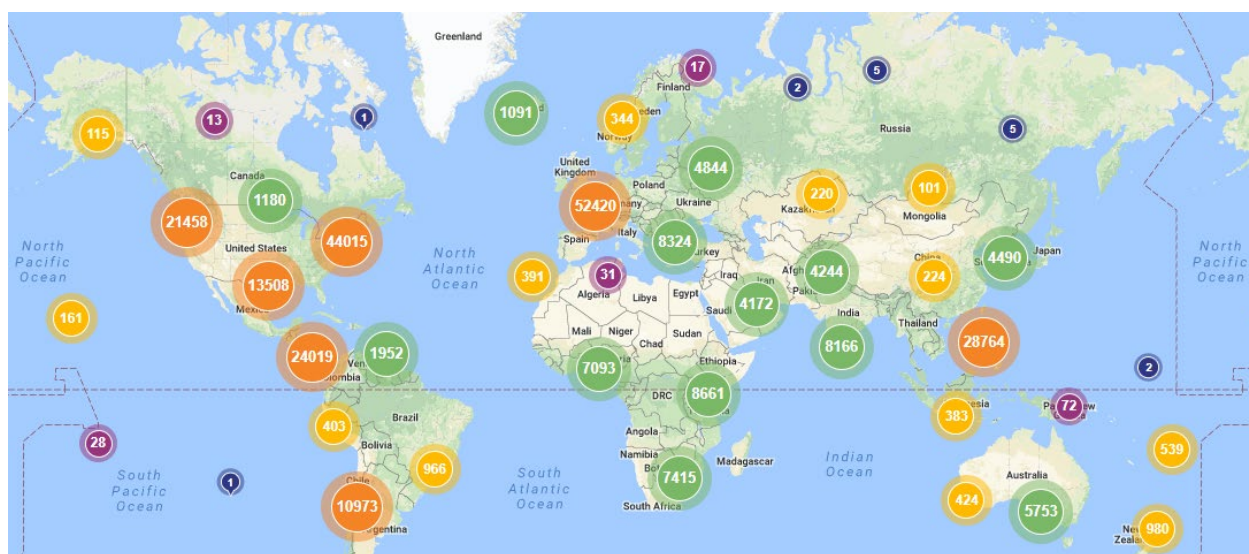
### 5.2.1.3 Breadth of InfoBase Use

From when first publicly available in June 1997, use of the InfoBase grew quite rapidly and has continued to be strong over the years, though with fluctuation from year to year. At the end of 1997, about 1000 contacts per month were recorded. Not available at that time was data on the number of downloads – a more robust evidence of use. From 2005 on download data is available. The growth in number of downloads is evidence of InfoBase usefulness.

**Table 2. GLADNET InfoBase: downloads from 2005**

Year	No. of document downloads
2005	4373
2007	36349
2009	36468
2013	52214
2015	68347
2017	77725

Just as interesting is where requests come from. The figure following summarizes downloads from 2005 to time of writing by world region. What’s notable is that people in all world regions have made use of the InfoBase, whether from high-income countries or low.





And, a scan of the ten (10) most frequently downloaded documents across all years listed below, illustrates that amongst the popular are documents of interest to readers in Hispanic countries.

**Table 3. GLADNET InfoBase: Most frequently downloaded documents**

<u>Document Title</u>	<u>Downloads</u>
Costa Rica: Ley No 7600 Igualdad De Oportunidades Para Las Personas Con Discapacidad	39332
What can we do to Fight Discrimination?	34023
Argentina: LEY 22.431 De Protección Integral para los Discapacitados	13908
Universal Design: Planning and Design for All	13767
Concepto, Características y Elementos del Empleo con Apoyo	12868
Mental Illness and Intellectual Disability	12826
Accueillir et intégrer un salarié handicapé psychique dans l'entreprise	10090
Promoting Training and Employment Opportunities for People with Intellectual Disabilities: International Experience	9888
Employment Policies for Disabled People in Eighteen Countries: A Review	9837
Disability, Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals: Relevance, Challenges and Opportunities for DFID	8971

### **5.2.2 Presentations and Networking at General Assemblies**

A highlight in the early years were GLADNET's Annual General Assemblies (AGAs) comprised of thematic meetings, followed by the Association's annual business meetings. While the business part needed to be done, it was the knowledge exchange part of the Assembly that attracted the interest. Beginning at the 1996 Malta meeting and until 2003, annual research presentations and seminars were held, often with a thematic focus. Themes were chosen in consultation with GLADNET members in the different countries hosting the meetings.

These face-to-face meetings provided members with the opportunity to meet and discuss specific topics regarding the training and employment of persons with disabilities. They proved to be a key element of the network, making later online communication more meaningful and immediate. More than that, as one researcher observed, they led to "enduring partnerships between a number of us that have led to some really productive research and ongoing support/communication".<sup>18</sup>

Given differing perspectives on disability-related employment and training issues, a wide range of themes and topics were covered. An impressive listing of presentations from researchers and keynote speakers from most world regions accrued over these several years. A listing of the themes covered and respective presentations is attached as Appendix 3.

When it became clear that attendance at GLADNET thematic seminars and AGAs was in decline, the AGAs and associated seminars were planned in conjunction with meetings organized by other international organizations – Rehabilitation International, the International Forum on Disability Management and Disabled Peoples International – in the hope that this would boost the popularity of GLADNET meetings. Later, when the Association moved on from this approach, which had only proved partially successful, online

<sup>18</sup> Nicholas Buys, Griffith University, Gold Coast Campus, Australia

seminars or Webinars were introduced as means of exchanging information about on-going or completed studies.

### **5.2.3 Changing Nature of General Assemblies**

GLADNET as a vehicle for presenting research ideas and findings fell off beginning about 2005. One contributor seems to have been the holding of General Assemblies in the context of, or in association with, other international organizations. A second was the shift to having virtual (online) General Assembly meetings. In different ways, both seemed to contribute to a decline in interest.

#### *5.2.3.1 Joint Meeting Perils*

GLADNET, like the ILO REHAB, had a broad cross-disability, cross-sectoral interest in its focus on employment and training. But a goodly number of GLADNET members also were involved in organizations with more narrowly defined disability interests. This led to an inevitable clash of allegiances and competition for time and funds to attend international meetings.

At one stage, Rehabilitation International (RI) sought to incorporate GLADNET and have it become the umbrella for the RI employment agenda. A meeting was held by the GLADNET Chair and a Board member<sup>19</sup> with the then RI President on the matter. While tempting, the GLADNET Board decided against this move, as it would have meant being viewed as becoming incorporated within a body that was seen (right or wrongly) as in competition with other voices for disability, such as DPI, Inclusion International, the World Blind Union or the World Deaf Union.

To accommodate the tensions, GLADNET sought to schedule its General Assemblies to be coincidental with meetings held by such other international organizations. These were to be rotated across the different interest areas in succeeding years – Rehabilitation International in one year, Disabled Peoples' International or the World Association of Supported Employment another, the International Federation on Disability Management yet another, and so on. GLADNET's hope was that, so doing would not only accommodate its own members' needs, but also attract new members.

While there's no evidence GLADNET membership increased as a result of such joint meetings, these meetings themselves seemed to work reasonably well as long as GLADNET organized its own presentations, with the support of the collaborating organization; and a sufficient number of researchers had an interest in the agenda of the collaborating organizations. When insufficient attention was given to keeping the 'GLADNET brand' both visible and unique in the context of others' meetings, for example by holding a thematic seminar, GLADNET's General Assemblies gradually narrowed to online business meetings.

#### *5.2.3.2 Challenge of Virtual Assemblies*

GLADNET began as an Internet-oriented organization – and, in many respects, sought to be a virtual organization from its inception. Its website, the InfoBase and information exchange vehicle GLADMail, all sought to serve and support its members virtually. Yet, with the

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<sup>19</sup> The GLADNET delegation who met with Lex Friedan, RI President, comprised Aldred Neufeldt and Munroe Berkowitz.

adoption of these and other new communications technologies, shifts also came in how people related to each other.

With the advent of electronic capacity to hold virtual meetings, and in-person attendance at General Assemblies flagging, GLADNET took the logical step of making its Assemblies virtual. The promise of the technology was that people from around the world could participate without having to spend their time and money in travel.

But, while access was increased, it came with a price – a narrowed band of opportunity for mutual exchange between participants. From the beginning of virtual Assemblies in 2009, they've almost invariably been of a business meeting format to which the technology lends itself well. This might include descriptions of research either underway (by individuals) or proposed for GLADNET, but not always. On only one occasion does there seem to have been an attempt to capture the 'information exchange' format with a formal presentation. The 2011 General Assembly incorporated a Keynote address: *The World report on disability – what does it say and how can we use it* (See Appendix 4).

#### *5.2.3.3 Introduction of online seminars (Webinars)*

To compensate for the cessation of thematic meetings, and also as an effort to generate much-needed income from non-members, GLADNET experimented with a new approach to Knowledge and Information Exchange: the introduction of virtual, online seminars named Webinars. Between 2010 and 2014, 15 such Webinars were broadcast on the Internet, a listing of which is included in Appendix 4. These were attended by around 415 participants overall.

## **5.3 Communication**

To its founders, GLADNET was an experiment in international collaboration, building on the potential of the Internet and related information and communication technologies. 'Hard copy' communication and in-person meetings played a not insignificant part, particularly early on, but the orientation leaned towards use of electronic means. First to be developed was a GLADNET Website and an electronic newsletter – GLADNET\*News. Shortly thereafter, e-mail was harnessed for exchanging information, in a service titled GLADMail. More recently Social Media technologies have been added.

### **5.3.1 GLADNET Website<sup>20</sup>**

The GLADNET website intent, as described in an early brochure, was to “provide a public medium where interested parties might share ideas, events, links, and information with a global perspective to arrive at joint approaches to common problems.” While in the heady days of 1990s website development, this might have reflected plausible aspirations, in retrospect, it proved overly ambitious. Websites continue to be relevant for sharing information about events, links and information, but have been superseded by social media when it comes to the sharing of ideas.

Nonetheless, with experience, GLADNET's website came to represent a respectable face to the enquiring world, providing a modest but sound reflection of the brochure's secondary promise that: “Visitors find descriptions of projects and events related to employment and

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<sup>20</sup> [www.gladnet.org](http://www.gladnet.org)

training for people with disabilities.” It provides information on GLADNET’s activities, services available, and links to a range of other organizations working to promote employment and training opportunities for people with disabilities. The number of these organizations at time of writing stands at 47.

To keep abreast of changing internet demands and opportunities, the GLADNET website was updated periodically. Initially it was developed and housed at the ILO. In 1997 after GLADNET’s incorporation it was moved to a server near the GLADNET Executive office in Ottawa (Storm Internet). After retirement of the Executive Director, Carl Raskin, in 2001, the University of Winnipeg<sup>21</sup> became host of the website at no cost to GLADNET, where it was updated and maintained under supervision of GLADNET’s Operations Manager at the University of Calgary. Again, with shift of the GLADNET Executive Office to Cornell University, the website was relocated to a server within the university where it was upgraded in design and function. From 2004 on, it continued to be hosted by Cornell University and the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability.

### **5.3.2 GLADMail**

GLADMail was started in 1996 as a moderated group e-mail service where its coordinator received informational messages and, if relevant to GLADNET’s purposes, distributed them to subscribers. Its purpose was to establish a sense of community knowledge sharing to advance opportunities for people with disabilities worldwide.

Though consideration was given to whether only GLADNET members might participate, in practice it was made available at no cost to all persons or organizations wishing to receive GLADMAIL messages. The thinking was that so doing would encourage people to join the Association, an aspiration that proved too optimistic.

Its role as a complement to the ‘Knowledge Network’ along with the Website and the InfoBase,<sup>22</sup> though, has been better achieved. In 2001 the number of GLADMail recipients numbered about 800 who received a total of 95 messages, almost all generated by members of the GLADNET community.<sup>23</sup>

The number of participants remained relatively sizable for a considerable time, then gradually diminished. In 2009 there were 694 participants receiving 213 GLADMail messages.<sup>24</sup> In 2017 there were 256 participants receiving 119 e-mail notifications.

Consistent with the initial aspiration of GLADNET as a means to promote research internationally, creating a ‘Knowledge Network’, GLADMail was initially thought of as a means of disseminating research information. In practice, that proved difficult to achieve. Though in its earlier days there were requests for information on best practices and other topics of research relevance, over time it became mainly a means for distributing general announcements from a relatively limited number of national and international organizations on topics related to disability, along with opportunities of employment from a number of universities and other sources.

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<sup>21</sup> The University of Winnipeg hosted, at no cost, the websites of a number of disability and other non-governmental organizations as a public service.

<sup>22</sup> From GLADNET’s 1999 Annual Report

<sup>23</sup> 2001 Annual Report, GLADNET.

<sup>24</sup> 2009 Annual Report from the GLADNET Chair

### **5.3.3 Newsletters and Research Digest**

A third communication medium initiated immediately following on the 1995 Geneva meeting was the publication of a newsletter consolidating information on GLADNET-related activities for the benefit of members and interested others. The first was compiled by Willi Momm of the ILO REHAB and Trevor Parmenter from Australia and released in May 1995. Titled GLAD\*NET News, at least two more were published during 1995, with subsequent editions released periodically through 2001. All were released on the newly developed GLADNET Website, circulated as an e-mail attachment, and made available in 'hard copy' for those desiring it.

Compilation of GLAD\*NET News from 1997 on was one of the roles filled by GLADNET's Executive Director, Carl Raskin, in consultation with the Board Chair. With move of GLADNET's administrative offices to Canada, GLAD\*NET News also became accessible via the Library of Canada where it was registered. GLAD\*Net News continued through 2001 when the Executive Director retired from his role. Time demands involved in preparing and publishing the Newsletter was more than a volunteer board or newly appointed part-time staff could reasonably carry on. The idea of a membership Newsletter was revived again in 2013 with three editions published on the GLADNET website in June and November 2013, and April 2014.

Beyond a news publication, GLADNET also thought to publish summaries of evidence-based knowledge on various subjects in an online GLAD\*NET Research Digest. Only one was produced – a pilot in 1999 (v.1 n.1, September), reviewing 117 abstracts of research on supported employment for the years 1997 – 1999. Its preparation involved the GLADNET Chair and Executive Director along with a Guest Editor, Fred McFarlane of San Diego State University. The effort involved in producing the first one seemed beyond what GLADNET was able to sustain.

### **5.3.4 Social Media**

Social media at the birth of GLADNET were still of a Bulletin Board System nature, where multiple users could post notes in a common space. While popular in some places, these didn't seem of much utility in promoting GLADNET's purposes.

The advent of more personally interactive media such as LinkedIn (2002), Skype (2003), Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005), Twitter (2006) and others raised the prospects of more meaningful exchanges amongst researchers of like interests and were adopted by GLADNET.

- GLADNET's YouTube channel provides access to several videos on good practice in the employment of people with disabilities.
- The Facebook page was created in 2014, building up 117 followers.
- A Twitter account was briefly used but is now suspended.
- The GLADNET group on LinkedIn was created in 2012 and had 35 members.

## **5.4 Administrative Support and Infrastructure**

Organizing of General Assemblies, preparation of newsletters, maintaining communication amongst members, promoting memberships, receiving membership fees and the many other activities described in this document require an administrative infrastructure. At the outset this was provided by the ILO REHAB. With evolution of the GLADNET idea, that

transitioned to a joint ILO-Canadian Labour Force Development Board agreement; and, in turn, the responsibility became that of GLADNET when it became registered as an international non-governmental organization (INGO) at the end of 1997.

#### **5.4.1 Day-to-day operations**

At the outset of its existence as an independent association, GLADNET’s activities and operation were coordinated by the Executive Director, Carl Raskin, whose salary was paid for through the original ILO start-up grant. Mr Raskin did an admirable job of pursuing the various GLADNET activities reported above from his home office in Ottawa, Canada. When it became obvious that revenue wouldn’t be sufficient to sustain the ongoing costs of an executive office, he graciously proposed to retire – an offer accepted with regret in 2001 since it meant loss of both the many connections he’d developed for GLADNET from within the ILO (where he’d been on secondment from the Government of Canada), and the enthusiasm he had for testing new opportunities for GLADNET. The responsibility for maintaining contact with Board and membership then shifted to the Chair, Aldred Neufeldt, based in the University of Calgary, later to Susanne Bruyère, at Cornell University, when she took over as Chair and to successive Chairs afterwards. The former E.D. continued to run GLADMail on a voluntary basis.

Voluntary effort has been a key characteristic of GLADNET’s operation for many years, with considerable contributions being made by the Chairs, former Board Members and ordinary members.

#### **5.4.2 Finances**

Modest membership meant modest financial income for GLADNET. Between 1998 and 2016 the total revenue per year received by GLADNET ranged from a high of \$84,105 in 1998 to a low of \$6,816 in 2010. The former reflected a grant from the ILO paid over two years, the first of \$60,000 in 1998, the second of \$20,000 in 1999. A smaller grant for a specific purpose was received from the ILO on one later occasion, and, at times, revenue was generated through GLADNET Webinars.

Examples of revenue for the three selected years cited above, plus one other, illustrate the kinds of revenue and total resources available over time for GLADNET activities.<sup>25</sup>

**Table 4. Revenue by Source for Selected Years (in US\$)**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Memberships</u>	<u>Grants</u>	<u>Webinars</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Total</u>
1998	23,622	60,000		483	84,105
2001	28,323			<b>721</b>	29,044
2008	9,400	7,217		<b>451</b>	17,068
2014	9,150		600	<b>48</b>	9,798

#### **5.4.3 Creative Use of Resources**

With such modest income, the organization sought to be both prudent and creative in use of resources. Following the retirement of the Executive Director in 2001, the executive

<sup>25</sup> Abstracted from GLADNET’s Annual Audited Financial Statements for the respective years.

office shifted to the University of Calgary, within the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies Programme, where GLADNET's Chair Aldred Neufeldt was a professor, and headed clinical and research programmes. The money management part of GLADNET was incorporated into tasks of personnel doing similar tasks on research or other projects, and a part-time Operations Manager was contracted to facilitate GLADNET communication and related roles (Val Lawton). In effect, the combination of GLADNET with other university-based programmes minimized withdrawals from GLADNET resources – an effective subsidy from the university.

A similar pattern followed when Susanne Bruyère became Chair of GLADNET. The executive office was transferred to Cornell University's Industrial and Labour Relations School (ILR) and the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability of which she was the Director. A similar creativity in use of resources was used, enterprising means of leveraging off of existing infrastructure as a way to extend GLADNET's efforts cost-effectively were made possible.

It's at the Yang-Tan Institute where the administrative offices of GLADNET have remained, even as the Chair position rotated successively to Donal McAnaney (Ireland), Michael Kamp (the Netherlands) and Fabrizio Fea (Italy).

Creativity in use of time and resources didn't happen only in maintaining the administrative support functions of GLADNET. Though data hasn't been gathered, it can be said with confidence that a good many current and former members of GLADNET, some on the board, others involved elsewhere, gave extensively of their time and resources in pursuing GLADNET's vision for collaborative research and the international sharing of information on effective training and employment policies, programmes and practices for persons with disabilities.

## **6 The GLADNET Legacy**

For an organization with a global footprint, GLADNET has always been of modest size – both in number of members and in financial assets at its disposal. Yet, despite such limitations, as this review of its experience shows, GLADNET's continuance through to 2018 (23 years in all) is, in many respects, a remarkable achievement. The closing remarks following provide summative observations on lessons learned that may have relevance to other organizations; lasting achievements of the GLADNET experiment; and comments on what might be feasible in future attempts to address the continuing importance of ensuring people with disabilities have a reasonable opportunity to participate as equals in the economies around the world, where-ever they reside.

### **6.1 Achievements**

GLADNET leaves behind several important achievements, linked to its vision and the main aims it set out.

#### **6.1.1 *Creating a virtual network***

In the early days of the Internet, GLADNET was established with the aim of linking professional contacts across countries, sharing a common vision and the will to exchange experience, to identify successful policies and practices and channel that knowledge into

improvements in national and organisational policies, programmes and services, for the benefit of persons with different types of disabilities. In the initial years of its existence, the Association brought together a range of interested members from different organizations and agencies, including researchers, university professors, government officials, representatives of enterprise, service providers and disability advocates. This continued as a vibrant network for many years, with impressive voluntary contributions being made by many members to GLADNET activities.

### **6.1.2 *Fostering comparative research***

A major aim of GLADNET was to promote collaborative research on effective approaches to promoting training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. At the outset, with the involvement of the ILO REHAB, a study regarding job retention and return to work was undertaken in several countries. Several research reports were published under this collaborative ILO/GLADNET research project and continue to be of lasting relevance. A further piece of research involved a review of disability-related employment policies, laws and services in 18 countries. The report of this study is among the most frequently downloaded publications from the GLADNET InfoBase. Linked to this experience, GLADNET illustrated the benefits and excitement of collaborative research, and the challenges involved.

### **6.1.3 *Knowledge exchange and enduring partnerships***

Another aim was to promote knowledge and information exchange on disability-related topics in employment and training. The InfoBase, accessible through the GLADNET Website, was set up to contribute to this aim. As a specialized collection of knowledge, it continues to be valued. It will continue to be accessible, thanks to the commitment of Cornell, the host university, to maintain it as part of its digital collection.

The value of knowledge and information exchange was also demonstrated through GLADNET's thematic meetings involving participants with diverse interests. Apart from the knowledge exchanges themselves, these meetings fostered the emergence of a network of people with a common interest that have endured over time. Those participating in GLADNET for more than one or two years continue as a mutually supportive global network of experts with knowledge of the breadth of issues related to disability and employment.

### **6.1.4 *Communicating***

Several means of communication were attempted to nurture information exchange – newsletters, a research review and emails. Of these, GLADMail has proved to be the most feasible, given GLADNET's limited resources, and has endured as an effective means of communication, although the content has changed over time.

## **6.2 Lessons**

### **6.2.1 *Timing is everything!***

Reviewing the experience of GLADNET shows that timing was crucial in the initiative to explore the establishment of the network. The decision was taken at a decisive time in the development of disability policy and programmes around the world, at a time when the



understanding of disability was dramatically changing and there was a pressing need for information on how to give effect to this new approach in training and employment programmes. This was evidenced by the high response to the survey carried out by the ILO REHAB in 1994, and the number of organizations that sent representatives, at their own expense, to the first meeting to discuss the possibility of setting up a network in Geneva, in February 1995. It is also evidenced by the significant amount of continued voluntary effort invested in the network by the successive Chairs, Board and general membership over time.

### **6.2.2 Feasibility of international comparative research**

While many pieces of collaborative research were proposed, later attempts to gain project funding proved unsuccessful, partially because GLADNET, as a service-providing international NGO, was not regarded as a target beneficiary by international donors and did not wield the moral or political weight to leverage funding from other sources. A further contributing factor was that GLADNET members were, of necessity, committed to their domestic research agendas, which are likely to have prevented them from committing time to GLADNET's international, comparative research interests.

Perhaps the foremost lesson to be drawn from the experience concerns the funding modality used in the ILO/GLADNET *Job Retention and Return to Work* project, where country studies were funded by national agencies, and the overview element through an internationally funded project. A further lesson to be drawn from this experience is the importance of partnering with an international organization engaged in applied research activities – such as an endowed foundation or a specialized agency of the U.N. like the ILO. A clear conclusion is that, in the absence of a funded staff, and relying on voluntary input, an association like GLADNET is unable to devote the resources required to a systematic project fund-raising effort.

### **6.2.3 Value of face-to-face knowledge exchange**

The thematic meetings were a valuable part of the GLADNET experience for members in the early years, providing the opportunity to be informed about research and initiatives being undertaken in different parts of the world to promote training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities, as well as to network and exchange experience with others committed to a valued and relevant vision. Collaborative meetings between GLADNET and other organizations only succeeded in attracting the attendance of its members when the GLADNET held a separate meeting and/or was co-sponsor of the overarching host event, and there was sufficient interest on the part of GLADNET experts in what the host organization had to offer. Over time, with the replacement of physical meetings with virtual on-line Webinars, GLADNET lost its immediacy and membership declined further. This experience illustrated the importance of face-to-face meetings in maintaining the vibrancy of a network association like GLADNET.

### **6.2.4 Limits to voluntary contributions**

The extraordinary contribution of GLADNET Chairs, Board and members to its continued operation over more than twenty years was remarkable. This voluntary input had its limits, though. GLADNET made several attempts to establish working groups to carry out specific tasks over time. At the outset, members were invited to take part in identifying and curating

content for the InfoBase. Later on, following the adoption of the UNCRPD, a proposal was made to establish a working group to monitor global and regional progress in its implementation, with respect to training and employment. While members expressed interest in these proposals, neither took off the ground, most likely due to competition of allegiances, time constraints, and the lack of funding to support these efforts.

### **6.2.5 *Need for sustained funding***

After the network became independent, with diminishing ILO support and primarily reliant on membership fees, GLADNET found it increasingly difficult to sustain a cutting-edge service, and ultimately to survive. The lesson to be drawn here, is that while GLADNET continued for over two decades through the commitment of its members to its vision and the networking opportunities it provided, an association of this kind needs stable commitment of funding beyond membership fees over time to enable it to continue its operations in a way that meets members' interests and sustains the minimum membership numbers required. Regarding the InfoBase, to build on this achievement and to enable its relevance to be maintained, a commitment of funds and the appointment of a coordinator would be required.

Although continued funding was minimal, GLADNET could survive thanks to its linkages to a succession of university bases, each with its own infrastructure which could be leveraged to provide needed administrative services cost effectively – most notably, the University of Calgary's Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies Programme, and Cornell University's Yang- Tan Institute on Employment and Disability in the Industrial and Labor Relations School.

### **6.2.6 *Breaking boundaries***

Importantly, GLADNET provides an example of daring to try to bring together and to shrink the margins between the narrow foci of different organizations and agencies with an interest in addressing challenges to sustainable employment of people with disabilities. Its invitation was to fill the gaps between, and overlaps of, their respective emphases, whether they were organizations of and for people with disabilities; organizations with a specific disability training or employment focus; or national or regional bodies. While only partially successful in this, lessons can be learned from its experience which could be of value in the future to any organization attempting to tackle this task.

## **7 Looking to the Future**

GLADNET was established at a time of great technological and social change affecting the world in general and people with disabilities in particular. Since its founding, such changes have continued, with the theme of disability moving in from the margins of debate to become an increasing part of mainstream discourse.

A prime example is the adoption by the United Nations of the UNCRPD in 2006 and its entry into force in 2008. While the UNCRPD may not have brought about major change in countries already at the forefront of implementing inclusive disability policies, for people with disabilities in many others of the 177 countries ratifying to date, the implication has

been revision of laws, policies, programmes and services promising changes in line with the Convention's principles and requirements.

With this, it may appear to many that the goal of including of people with disabilities in vocational training programmes of their choice, and in the open labour market, is on the road to being achieved. Yet significant challenges remain, even though of different dimensions. Some speak to questions on how to achieve UNCRPD's aspirations. Others to challenges now only dimly perceived but no less real, such as the impacting digital technology platforms and remote work.

## **7.1 Achieving UNCRPD's Aspirations**

A broad variety of questions on how to achieve the UNCRPD's aspirations remain to be addressed, many if not all of which would benefit from the collaborative, comparative research, international knowledge and information exchange and networking that GLADNET sought to promote.

Studies are needed, for example, on how mainstream vocational training centres are adapting their practices to prepare trainers and to enable people with different types of disabilities to enter and complete training courses. Particular attention should be paid to effective approaches to including people with specific types of disabilities in training and employment – in particular psychosocial and intellectual disability. Evaluations should be carried out on ways in which the potential of information and communication technologies is being tapped to enable people with all types of disabilities, including those in rural, remote locations, to benefit from training and earn a living through employment, including telework.

The UNCRPD and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework for such research. The UNCRPD requires States to recognize and give effect to the right of people with disabilities to participate in the labour market on an equal basis with others, and to acquire the vocational skills they need in order to benefit from this right. Progress of States Parties in implementing the UNCRPD is reviewed periodically by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, based on country reports submitted. These country reports provide a valuable source of data on the situation of people with disabilities in their respective countries and of steps taken by governments to give effect to the rights enshrined in the UNCRPD. These documents could be drawn on for research on effective practice in promoting mainstream training and employment opportunities.

Further sources of information for research on effective practice are the annual SDG progress reports. The SDGs set by the UN General Assembly for the period 2015 to 2030 include three of particular relevance: (a) ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities (Goal 4); (b) achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value (Goal 8); and (c) a goal striving to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including persons with disabilities (Goal 10).

## 7.2 Emerging Challenges<sup>26</sup>

Beyond UNCRPD/SDG framework-related research, other issues not yet fully appreciated are bound to arise on which internationally comparative research will be important, not the least of which is the changing nature of work and its implications for people with disabilities.

The digital innovation that spawned GLADNET has evolved to the point it touches every aspect of our lives and every sector of the economy. It provides previously unavailable access to knowledge, products, services, talent, and organizational relationships.

Technology enables improved matching between available labour and labour markets around the world. Digital talent platforms can further improve matchmaking between workers and jobs, holding the possibility of increasing labour participation rates by previously marginalized groups such as individuals with disabilities.

Based on such innovations, a “Gig Economy” has emerged in which temporary positions are common and independent workers are contracted for short-term engagements. Forms of work include “crowd-work” and “work-on-demand” via technology applications (apps) to match the supply and demand of products and services made available via websites or mobile apps. Many such jobs are based on technology platforms that allow more flexible matching of products and services with customers. The sector is significant and growing quickly. In principle, this might offer an opportunity to gain access to the labour market for those in rural areas and those with disabilities for whom lack of access to transportation makes travel to available labour markets not possible.

Flexible working arrangements and evolving digital platforms also enable existing organizations to meet current or anticipated challenges and needed business agility by giving employees choices in how and where they work, and to accommodate previously marginalized workers.

But while in theory the flexibility offered by flex-place, flex-time and other work innovations enabled by new digital platforms may be a boon, perhaps increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, they also hold the potential of resulting inequities. Digital platforms are ever changing, where those least able to remain abreast of them can find themselves left out, not to mention that more than half of the world’s population is still offline, limiting the potential for those most needing improved access to employment opportunities. And for many people with disabilities, the digital divide continues to be very real. In particular, the cost and the accessibility of digital products and services have been long-standing issues for people with disabilities, though with decreases in cost of technology and increasing awareness of the need for inclusive design there may be cause for some optimism that the benefits of the ICT revolution may become accessible to people with disabilities.

There are other challenges. An overarching concern is that emerging “Gig Economy” opportunities often are structured in a way that leads to a growing number of short-term employment arrangements with no job security, legal protections, or health and retirement benefits. Vulnerable workers such as women, older workers, young workers, and migrants

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<sup>26</sup> Section 7.2 is drawn in large part from a paper by Susanne M. Bruyère entitled “the Futures of Work and People with Disabilities” written for the “Many Futures of Work: Possibilities and Perils” Conference held in Chicago, IL October 5-6, 2017, sponsored by the Institute for Work and the Economy, available at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5910ee5d1e5b6ca37f0a53b0/t/5a8497eb0d9297891ab548ab/1518639083907/Bruyere+MFW+FINAL+%2812-12-17%29.pdf>

are disproportionately represented in these jobs (Halford et al., 2016)<sup>27</sup>. In addition, it is often presumed that stamina, travel issues, and physical access concerns mean that individuals with disabilities will be better served by working at home, perhaps as independent contractors or entrepreneurs. While some individuals certainly may be advantaged by opportunity for remote work and fewer or flexible work hours, it's not true for all. Routinely relegating such arrangements to people with disabilities may well lead to longer-term inequities in pay and advancement opportunities, as well as limiting opportunities for community participation and social inclusion. Those most at risk, as usual, are likely to be those who are not as cognitively or strategically equipped to respond to changing circumstances in the labour market such as those with psychosocial or intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

For these and other emerging changes in the nature of work, international comparative research will be invaluable, if not essential, in developing proactive economic development and workplace policies for use of new technologies to create opportunities for training and work, while being mindful of unintended inequities.

### **7.3 International Networking, Exchange and Collaboration in Research**

While GLADNET's time has come to an end, it demonstrated for a while that the notion of a global network was and remains relevant, and in the interests of men and women with disabilities as well as those who seek to promote their rights to training and employment.

The GLADNET experience was that bringing together the different disability advocacy, training and employment-related organizations in a spirit of collaboration, each with its inherent interests, was important to pursuing evidence-based solutions to common problems faced by disabled people – whether disability is acquired (as in workplace) or inherited, and irrespective of the type of disability. Resulting GLADNET dialogue suggested, for instance, that those primarily interested in 'disability management' issues had concerns in common with those primarily interested in 'supported employment', and that there is a connection between matters addressed by those interested in 'economic and social policy' and those interested in the immediate challenges faced by individual disabled people seeking (and maintaining) meaningful work.

Out of such diversity emerged an interdisciplinary network around the globe that contributed to productive research and ongoing support and communication. "Many of us would not have been brought together if not for GLADNET," says one researcher<sup>28</sup>.

The value of networking, international exchange and collaborative research seems well established. In GLADNET's absence, the question becomes, what can or will foster similar networks to address emerging issues such as those identified above and others? As a starting point, the GLADNET experience suggests at least two criteria are essential. First, the initiating body needs 'moral heft' to have credibility around the globe with ordinary people to governments on issues related to employment of disabled people. Second, such a body

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<sup>27</sup> Halford, S., Hudson, M., Leonard, P., Parry, J., & Taylor, R. (2016) "The New Dynamics of Work : A Scoping Study." Southampton, UK: Work Futures Research Centre, 2016. Accessed August 28, 2017 at <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/386748/>

<sup>28</sup> Nicholas Buys, Griffith University, Gold Coast Campus, Australia

needs access to funding sources that will give serious consideration to interdisciplinary research proposals advanced to address serious issues of the day.

As noted elsewhere in this document, timing was central to the successful initiation of GLADNET. Several developments – in understanding of disability, in information and communication technology, and within the ILO – coincided to make the initiative a success. All tapped into the global need for information on effective policies and programmes on the training and employment of persons with disabilities. The opportunity was grasped by one perceptive individual who realised the potential of the Internet and became the ‘torch bearer’ for this initiative.

The need for greater emphasis on collaborative international research is at least as pressing today as when GLADNET was conceived<sup>29</sup>. Policy development and transformation of policy into effective practice has not been driven by research to nearly the extent it could be, as evidenced, for example, by the low rate of adoption of innovations demonstrating positive impact on employment outcomes. Examples of such slow uptake can be seen in use of supported employment or disability management practices worldwide. Despite strong advocacy, employment outcomes across much of the developed world are still minimal as evidenced by labour force data. The underlying reasons need urgent research attention, but there are no collaborative networks in place to actively respond to disability-related employment issues as they emerge. Increasing prevalence evidence suggests, for instance, that mental health disabilities constitute one of the most serious employment-related issues world-wide.

A final lesson may be drawn from the GLADNET experience to inform future steps. The initial vision in 1995 was for researchers to join with leaders of those with the lived experiences of people with disabilities and those with experience in transforming research to practice, within the employer (business)-employee (labour)-government framework of the ILO to tackle employment issues of the day. When the International Labour Office reorganized itself and diminished its involvement with GLADNET, the core and essential channel to conveying research and best practices in a proactive way to business-labour-government at global and country levels also evaporated. Neither the disability advocacy sector nor researchers, on their own or in combination, were able to leverage in a consistent manner the broader global community needing this information into implementing the evidence-based changes to practice identified as effective.

That stands in contrast to the process leading to adoption of the UNCRPD by the United Nations some years later where, under the UN umbrella, governments, representatives of those with lived experience with disabilities and those with particular expertise pursued a common agenda. The UN umbrella provided the glue that kept all parties working towards a common end.

Something similar is needed to ensure the employment dimensions of the UNCRPD aspirations are realized. One option might be for the UNCRPD’s UN framework<sup>30</sup> to expand its scope. However, with employment only one of a sizable number of priorities being

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<sup>29</sup> Note to the authors from Trevor Parmenter, Professor Emeritus, Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney, 27 December 2018.

<sup>30</sup> Including the Inter-Agency Support Group for the CRPD and the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

pursued within the CRPD, that is not likely the most optimal. Since the UN's ILO REHAB was a critical initiator in the beginning of GLADNET, the UN and the ILO could be looked to again to serve as a catalyst in a renewed and expanded vision of needed next steps for change. However, the UN and the ILO alone cannot affect currently needed changes. Rather an alliance of such global organizations with the interests that they represent - the tripartite union of individual country governments, and representation from the interests of business and individual workers should be involved. In addition, more than ever, the voice of individuals with disabilities and their family members must also be at the table. The energies of each of these interests is essential to achieving the desired inclusion of people with disabilities in meaningful work around the world. With joint commitment, largely unconnected but important initiatives such as the ILO's Global Business and Disability Network<sup>31</sup> and the Harkin Disability Employment Summit,<sup>32</sup> both promoting inclusion of disabled people in regular employment, would be part of a larger strategy with other partners in promoting use of evidence-based approaches to employment of people with disabilities. Alongside educational strategies with business/employment leaders, those with lived experience with disability would have a focus for advocacy, policy makers at country and international levels would have support for development of inclusive policies based on research-based evidence, and events such as the World Economic Forum could be encouraged to include a focus on the employment of people with disabilities as part of their diversity and corporate social responsibility agendas.

At this point in time the future of work is a major topic of concern and debate. A new initiative such as described would build on the GLADNET legacy. It remains to be seen who will rise to the challenge of carrying the torch. The dream is worth the pursuit, and more likely to come true with collective action across these many interests!

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<sup>31</sup> An employer-led initiative that works to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in work <http://www.businessanddisability.org/>

<sup>32</sup> Brings together invited high-level business leaders and grass-roots implementers seeking to increase the employment of people with disabilities <https://www.harkinsummit.org/>

**Appendix 1. List of Organizations invited to meeting where GLADNET was initiated,  
Geneva, February 1995**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Australia	Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service, Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, Canberra
	Macquarie University, Unit for Community Integration, Sydney
Austria	Berufliches Bildungs- und Rehabilitationszentrum, Linz
	Oesterreichische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Rehabilitation, Vienna
Belgium	Fonds Communautaire pour l'Intégration Sociale et Professionnelle des Personnes Handicapées, Brussels
	Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven
	Toucan Europe Ltd, Brussels
	Vlaams Fonds voor Sociale Integratie van Personen, Brussels
Brazil	Associacao de Pais e Amigos dos Excepcionais de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo
	Associacao dos Deficientes Auditivos do Maranhao, Sao Paulo,
	Associacao Mineira de Reabilitação, Serra Belo Horizonte
	Associacao Niteroiense Deficientes Fisicos Presidencia (ANDEF), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
	Ministerio do Bem Estar, Coordenadoria Nacional Para Inegração da Pessoa Portadora de Deficiencia,(CORDE), Brasilia, Brazil
Canada	Advocacy and Resource Centre for the Handicapped, Toronto
	Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, Toronto, Ontario
	Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, Winnipeg
	Canadian Labour Force Development Board, Ottawa, Ontario
	Disabled Peoples International, Winnipeg
	Institute for Work and Health, Toronto, Ontario
	International Centre for the Advancement of Community-Based Rehabilitation, Queen's University, School of Rehabilitation Therapy, Kingston, Ontario
	National Institute for Disability Management and research, North Island College, Port Alberni, British Columbia
	Occupational Therapy Programme, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario
	Office des Personnes Handicapées du Québec, Québec
	Office for Disability Issues, Government of British Columbia, Victoria
	Research Network for Social Participation, Québec
	Roeher Institute, North York, Ontario
	University of Calgary, Rehabilitation Studies Centre, Calgary
Denmark	Roskilde University, Roskilde
European Union	European Commission, Directorate General Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, Integration of Disabled People, Brussels, Belgium
	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin, Ireland
Finland	Merikosi Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centre, Association for Pulmonary Disabled, Oulu
	Rehabilitation Foundation, Helsinki, Finland
	World Federation of the Deaf, Helsinki
France	Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse, Mulhouse
	Centre de Réadaptation Professionnelle et Fonctionnelle, Nanteau-sur-Lunain, Nemours
	Comité National Français de Liaison pour la Réadaptation des Handicapés, Paris
	Confédération Européene Pour l'Emploi des Personnes Handicapées (CEE), Metz



Country	Organization
	Fondation pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des Personnes Handicapées (AGEFIPH), Paris
	Institut des Jeunes Aveugles, Paris
	Institut Fédératif de Recherche sur l'Handicap, Paris
	Mission Insertion des Travailleurs Handicapés, Montreuil
Germany	Forschungsstelle für Berufsbildung, Arbeitsmarkt und Evaluation, Berlin
	Forschungsstelle Technologie und Arbeit, Universität Kaiserslauten, Kaiserslauten
	Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft Köln, Cologne
	Institut für Sozialforschung und Sozialwirtschaft E.V., Saarbrücken
	Sozialforschung und Gesellschaftspolitikm Cologne
Hong Kong	City University of Hong Kong, Kowloon
	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation, Pokfulam
Hungary	Soros Foundation, Hungary, Budapest University, Budapest
Ireland	I.T. Centre, Letterkenny, Co Donegal
	National Rehabilitation Board, Dublin, Ireland
	Vocational and Social Rehabilitation Studies Programme, University College Dublin, Blackrock, Co Dublin
Israel	National Insurance Institute, Bureau of Rehabilitation and Long-Term Insurance, Jerusalem
Italy	Assessorato della Sanita ed Assisenza Sociale, Aosta
	Centro di Ricerche Sociali, Rome
	Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali, Rome
	Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, Turin
	Fondazione Laboratorio per le Politiche Sociali (LABOS), Rome
	Instituto di Medicina del Lavoro, Milan,
	Instituto di Scienze Biomediche San Paulo, Milan
	Instituto Nazionale Previdenza Sociale, Rome
	Instituto per la Ricerca la Formazione e la Riabilitazione, Rome
	Instituto Superiore per la Prevenzione e la Sicurezza del Lavoro (ISPESL), Rome, Italy
	Ministry of Labour, Rome
	Unione Nazionale Mutilati Invalidi Civili, Rome
Korea, South	Dept of Public Administration, Vity University of Incheon, Incheon
Luxembourg	Ministère du Travail
Malaysia	Centre for Community Studies, Sempur, Kuala Lumpur
Malta	Employment and Training Corporation, Hal Far
	Ministry of Labour, Valletta
Netherlands	National Commission for Persons with Disability, Ministry of Home Affairs and Social Development, Santa Venera
	European Institute of Development of Human Resources, Willemstad
	Samenwerkende Revalidatiecentra Limberg, Hoensbroek
	TNO prevention and Health, Leiden,
	World Association of Supported Employment, Willemsted
New Zealand	Faculty of Social Sciences, Mass University, Palmerston North
Norway	Nordland Research Institute, BODO
Poland	Institute of Social Policy, Warsaw University, Warsaw,
	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Warsaw
	National Council of Disabled People, Warsaw
Russian Federatio	St Petersburg Research Institution, Upgrading Medical Personnel Experts, St Petersburg
South Africa	South African Disability Institute, Disabled People South Africa, East London
Spain	C.D: Desarrollo Proyectos Sociales, Findacikon ONCE, Madrid
	Faculty of Psychology, Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca

<b>Country</b>	<b>Organization</b>
	Fondacion Para El Desarrollo de Fonción Social de las Comunicaciones, Madrid
	Instituto Nacional de Servicios Sociales, Madrid
Sweden	National Social Insurance Board, Department of Research and Analysis, Stockholm
	SAMHALL AB, Stockholm
Switzerland	Ecole d'Etudes Sociales et Pedagogiques, Lausanne
	Institut für Sondepädagogik de Universität Zürich, Zürich
Thailand	Thammasat University, Faculty of Social Administration, Bangkok
	Thailand Foundation for the Welfare of the Mentally Retarded, Bangkok
United Kingdom	City University, Rehabilitation Resource Centre, London
	Policy Studies Institute, London
	Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, York
	Toucan, Manchester
	Trade Union Congress, London
	University of Greenwich, Disability Studies Department, Eltham, London
	University of Lancaster, Career Service, Lancaster
	University of Sheffield, Division of Education, Sheffield
United States	College of Education, San Diego State University, San Diego
	Disability and Health Economics Research, Bureau of Economic Research University of New Jersey, New Brunswick
	Rehabilitation and Research Training Centre, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia
	Rehabilitation Research and Training Centre, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond
	School of Education, Syracuse University, Syracuse
	Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute, University of Wisconsin-Stout Menomonie, Wisconsin
Uruguay	Accion Coordinadora y Reivindicadora del Impedido del Uruguay, Montevideo

## Appendix 2. GLADNET Board Members in Alternate Years

### 1997 – Board elected by participants at Montreal Founding Meeting

#### Two (2) Year Term:

Bruno Betz, Confédération européenne pour l'emploi des personnes handicapées (CEEH), France

Wing Tai Chan, City University of Hong Kong

Aldred Neufeldt, Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, University of Calgary, Canada

Trevor Parmenter, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, Sydney, Australia

Brendan Sutton, Inclusion International, Ireland

Edwin de Vos, IIA/TNO Prevention and Health, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

#### One (1) Year Term:

Gaston Harnois, World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation (WAPR), Montreal, Canada

Michael Kamp, World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), The Netherlands

Robert Laurenti, Employment and Training Corporation, Malta

Pierre Olivier, Centre de réadaptation professionnelle et fonctionnelle, France

Georges. Rovillard, Agence Wallone pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées, Belgium

Terry Sullivan, Institute for Work and Health, Toronto, Canada

#### Executive elected by the new board:

Chair: Aldred Neufeldt, University of Calgary, Canada

Vice-Chair: Michael Kamp, World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), The Netherlands

Secretary/Treasurer: Bruno Betz, Confédération européenne pour l'emploi des personnes handicapées (CEEH), France

### 1999 – Board

1. Aldred Neufeldt, Community Rehabilitation & Disability Studies, University of Calgary, Canada (Chair)
2. Michael Kamp, World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), The Netherlands (Vice Chair)
3. Wing Tai Chan, City University of Hong Kong (Secretary/Treasurer)
4. Lucy Wong Hernandez, Disabled Peoples' International, USA
5. Ryosuke Matsui, Hokuseigken University, Japan
6. Monroe Berkowitz, Rutgers University, USA
7. Trevor Parmenter, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, Sydney, Australia
8. Georges. Rovillard, Agence Wallone pour l'integration des personnes handicapées, Belgium
9. Pierre Olivier, Centre de réadaptation professionnelle et fonctionnelle, France
10. Brendan Sutton, Inclusion International, Ireland
11. Edwin de Vos, IIA/TNO Prevention and Health, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
12. Bob Ransom, ILO Ex-officio member:
13. Also attending - Carl Raskin – GLADNET Executive Director

### 2001 – Board

1. Aldred Neufeldt, Community Rehabilitation & Disability Studies, University of Calgary, Canada (Chair)
2. Susanne Bruyère, Programme on Employment and Disability, Cornell University, USA (Vice-Chair)
3. Edwin de Vos, IIA/TNO Prevention and Health, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Secretary/Treasurer)
4. Mireille Dopche, Agence Wallone pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées, Belgium
5. Lucy Wong Hernandez, Disabled Peoples' International, USA
6. Hiroshi Kawamura, Japan Society for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, Japan
7. Monroe Berkowitz, Rutgers University, USA

8. Beverly Beckles, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Trinidad and Tobago
9. Pierre Olivier, Centre de réadaptation professionnelle et fonctionnelle, France
10. Barbara Murray, ILO Ex-officio member.
11. Also attending - Carl Raskin – GLADNET Executive Director

#### **2003 – Board**

1. Aldred Neufeldt, Community Rehabilitation & Disability Studies, University of Calgary, Canada (Chair)
2. Susanne Bruyère, Programme on Employment and Disability, Cornell University, USA (Vice-Chair)
3. Edwin de Vos, IIA/TNO Prevention and Health, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Secretary/Treasurer)
4. Beverly Beckles, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Trinidad and Tobago
5. Monroe Berkowitz, Rutgers University, USA
6. Hiroshi Kawamura, Japan Society for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, Japan
7. Mireille Dopchie, Agence Wallone pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées, Belgium
8. Pierre Olivier, Centre de readaptation professionnelle et fonctionnelle, France
9. Barbara Murray, ILO Ex-officio member
10. Stig Larsson, HAREC – Handicap & Rehabilitation Research Centre, Lund Univ., Sweden
11. Donal McAnaney, Rehab Group Roslyn Park, Ireland
12. Nicholas Buys, Professor, Dean, Learning & Teaching, Griffith University
13. Ilene Zeitzer, President, Disability Policy Solutions
14. Moira Jones, Disabled Peoples' International, Canada – who participated for a couple of years
15. Also attending – Val Lawton, GLADNET Operations Manager

#### **2005 – Board**

1. Susanne Bruyère, Cornell University, USA (Chair)
2. Edwin deVos, NIA-TNO, the Netherlands (Vice Chair)
3. Donal McAnaney (Secretary/Treasurer)
4. Beverley Beckles, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Trinidad and Tobago
5. Monroe Berkowitz, Rutgers University, USA
6. Nick Buys, Centre for Human Services, Griffith University, Australia
7. Hiroshi Kawamura, Japanese Society for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, Japan
8. Stig Larsson, HAREC, Sweden
9. Donal McAnaney, Rehab Group Roslyn Park, Ireland
10. Barbara Murray, ILO, Switzerland (ex officio)
11. Aldred Neufeldt, Community Rehabilitation/Disability Studies Programme, Univ. of Calgary, Canada (Past Chair)
12. Bob Ransom, ILO, Switzerland (ex officio)
13. Ilene Zeitzer, Disability Policy Solutions, USA

#### **2007 - Board**

1. Susanne Bruyère (USA, GLADNET Chair)
2. Edwin de Vos (Netherlands, GLADNET Vice Chair)
3. Donal McAnaney (Secretary/Treasurer)
4. Stig Larsson (Sweden, GLADNET Board of Directors, and Chair RI Work and Employment Commission);
5. Michael Kamp (Netherlands, GLADNET Board of Directors)
6. Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, ILO, Switzerland (ex officio)
7. Aldred Neufeldt, Community Rehabilitation/Disability Studies Programme, Univ. of Calgary, Canada (Past Chair)
8. Ilene Zeitzer, Disability Policy Solutions, USA
9. Beverley Beckles, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Trinidad and Tobago

10. Monroe Berkowitz, Rutgers University, USA
11. Nick Buys, Centre for Human Services, Griffith University, Australia
12. Hiroshi Kawamura, Special Researcher, National Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Japan
13. Marc Maudinet, Director General, National Centre for Studies & Research on Disability & Social Misfit (CTHERHI), Paris, France
14. Mary Ennis, Executive Director Disabled Peoples' International (DPI)<sup>33</sup>

#### **2009 – Board**

1. Susanne Bruyère, Director, Employment & Disability Institute, Cornell University, USA (Chair)
2. Donal McAnaney, QualQuant Social Research, Dublin, Ireland (Vice Chair)
3. Michael Kamp, Director, Tact & Vision, (Secretary/Treasurer)
4. Ilene Zietzer, President, Disability Policy Solutions, Brazil (Membership Chair)
5. Leda Azevedo-Berger, Acessibilidade Brasil, Brazil
6. Nick Buys, Dean, Learning & Teaching (Health), Griffith University, Australia
7. Edwin de Vos, TNO, Work and Employment, The Netherlands
8. Fabrizio Fea, Italian Association of Supported Employment (AISE), Rome, Italy
9. Hiroshi Kawamura, Special Researcher, National Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Japan
10. Stig Larsson, Director HAREC – Handicap & Rehabilitation Research Centre, Lund University, Sweden
11. Marc Maudinet, Director General, National Centre for Studies & Research on Disability & Social Misfit (CTHERHI), Paris, France
12. Sophie Mitra, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and International Political Economy, Fordham University, USA
13. Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, ILO, Ex-officio member
14. Aldred Neufeldt, Director, Community Rehabilitation & Disability Studies, University of Calgary
15. Leda Azevedo Berger, Secretaria Municipal da Pessoa com Deficiencia, Prefeitura do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

#### **2011 – Board**

1. Donal McAnaney, QualQuant Social Research, Dublin, Ireland (Chair)
2. Michael Kamp, Director, Tact & Vision, (Secretary/Treasurer)
3. Stig Larsson, Director HAREC – Handicap & Rehabilitation Research Centre, Lund University, Sweden
4. Marc Maudinet, Director General, National Centre for Studies & Research on Disability & Social Misfit (CTHERHI), Paris, France
5. Sophie Mitra, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and International Political Economy, Fordham University, NY, NY, USA
6. Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, ILO, Ex-officio member
7. Mathilde Niehaus, Professor, Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Cologne, France
8. Ilene Zietzer, President, Disability Policy Solutions (Membership Chair), Brazil
9. Fabrizio Fea, Italian Association of Supported Employment (AISE), Rome, Italy
10. Thomas Golden, Associate Director, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University, USA
11. Trevor Parmenter, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, Sydney, Australia
12. Jun Yaeda, Associate Professor, University of Tsukuba
13. Extraordinary Members:

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<sup>33</sup> Mary Ennis replaced, by Board appointment, the vacancy of DPI predecessors including Moira Jones and Lucy Wong-Hernandez, the latter having been first elected in 1998.

- a. Past Presidents:
  - i. Susanne Bruyère (begins to serve as extraordinary member)
  - ii. Aldred Neufeldt (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
- b. Past Executive Member – Edwin DeVos (continues to serve as extraordinary member)

#### **2013 – Board**

1. Michael Kamp, Director, Tact & Vision, Netherlands (Chair)
2. Nick Buys, Dean, Learning & Teaching (Health), Griffith University, Australia
3. John Selander, Professor, Department of Health Sciences (HLV), Mid Sweden University, Sweden
4. Tobias Van Reenen, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of the Western Cape, Capetown, South Africa
5. Sophia Mitra, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and International Political Economy, Fordham University, NY, NY, USA
6. Barbara Murray, Senior Disability Specialist, ILO, Ex-officio member
7. Mathilde Niehaus, Professor, Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Cologne, France
8. Ilene Zietzer, President, Disability Policy Solutions (Membership Chair), Brazil
9. Fabrizio Fea, Italian Association of Supported Employment (AISE), Rome, Italy
10. Thomas Golden, Associate Director, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University, USA
11. Trevor Parmenter, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, Sydney, Australia
12. Jun Yaeda, Associate Professor, University of Tsukuba
13. Gary Shaheen, Syracuse University
14. Lynda Matthews, Senior Academic, Ageing, Work and Health Research Unit, University of Sydney, Australia
15. Mary Barros-Bailey, Bilingual Rehabilitation Counselor, Vocational Expert, Life Care Planner, Intermountain Vocational Services, Inc., USA
16. Extraordinary Members:
  - a. Past Presidents:
    - i. Donal McAnaney (completed last term, rotating into role as Past Chair)
    - ii. Susanne Bruyère (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - iii. Aldred Neufeldt (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
  - b. Past Executive Member – Edwin DeVos (continues to serve as extraordinary member)

#### **2015 – Board**

1. Michael Kamp, Director, Tact & Vision, Netherlands (Chair)
2. Thomas Golden, Executive Director, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University, USA (Secretary/Treasurer)
3. Wendy Coduti, Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling and Special Education, Penn State University, USA
4. Fabrizio Fea, Medical Director Associazione Scuola Viva onlus – Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Rome, Italy
5. Borja Jordan de Urries Vega, Professor, Instituto Universitario de Integracion en La Comunidad (INICO)
6. Lynda Matthews, Senior Academic, Ageing, Work and Health Research Unit, University of Sydney, Australia
7. Mary Barros-Bailey, Bilingual Rehabilitation Counselor, Vocational Expert, Life Care Planner, Intermountain Vocational Services, Inc., USA
8. Trevor Parmenter, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, Sydney, Australia
9. Lynn Shaw, Occupational Scientist, Vice President Academic, Pacific Coast University, Canada

10. Stefan Tromel, Senior Specialist in Disability Inclusion, ILO Ex-officio member
11. Jun Yaeda, Associate Professor, University of Tsukuba
12. Extraordinary Members:
  - a. Past Presidents:
    - i. Donal McAnaney (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - ii. Susanne Bruyère (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - iii. Aldred Neufeldt (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
  - b. Past Executive Members:
    - i. Nick Buys (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - ii. Edwin de Vos (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - iii. Ilene Zeitzer (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
  - c. Past Ex-Officio Member
    - i. Barbara Murray (continues to serve as extraordinary member)

## **2017 – Board**

1. Fabrizio Fea, Medical Director Associazione Scuola Viva onlus – Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities, Rome, Italy (Chair)
2. Thomas Golden, Executive Director, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University, USA (Secretary/Treasurer)
3. Wendy Coduti, Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling and Special Education, Penn State University, USA
4. Borja Jordan de Urries Vega, Professor, Instituto Universitario de Integracion en La Comunidad (INICO)
5. Michael Kamp, Director, Tact & Vision, The Netherlands
6. Lynda Matthews, Senior Academic, Ageing, Work and Health Research Unit, University of Sydney, Australia
7. Mary Barros-Bailey, Bilingual Rehabilitation Counselor, Vocational Expert, Life Care Planner, Intermountain Vocational Services, Inc., USA
8. Stefan Tromel, Senior Specialist in Disability Inclusion, ILO Ex-officio member
9. Jun Yaeda, Associate Professor, University of Tsukuba, Tokyo, Japan
10. Extraordinary Members:
  - a. Past Presidents:
    - i. Donal McAnaney (completed last term, serving as Past Chair)
    - ii. Susanne Bruyère (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - iii. Aldred Neufeldt (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
  - b. Past Executive Members:
    - i. Nick Buys (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - ii. Edwin de Vos (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - iii. Ilene Zeitzer (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
    - iv. Trevor Parmenter (continues to serve as extraordinary member)
  - c. Past Ex-Officio Member
    - i. Barbara Murray (continues to serve as extraordinary member)

### Appendix 3. GLADNET Thematic Meetings and Presentations

#### Malta, 1996

- The focus at this first meeting was on GLADNET as a tool to advance the implementation of the Social Summit Programme of Action and of Rule 7 (Employment) of the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability. Collaborative project proposals were also discussed – comparative analysis of national employment policies; telework and disability; supported employment; ideas 2000 project and the development of templates on employment. REHADAT (Germany) and RENET (Hong Kong) were also discussed. The proposed ILO Access project ‘Promoting training and Employment opportunities in developing countries – the role of GLADNET’ was also discussed, as was the proposed GLADNET Newsletter.

#### Montreal, May 1997

- The thematic focus at the seminar held in conjunction with the first GLADNET General Assembly was on review and discussion of on-going and proposed research projects – the Job Retention and Return to Work project, funded by agencies in different participating countries; the proposed Access project aiming to expand GLADNET membership in developing countries, for which funding was being sought; the Ideas 2000 project; Comparative Study of Employment Policies for Disabled Persons in 18 selected countries – an update of original work published in 1993.

#### Hong Kong, August 1998

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Assembly, took place in conjunction with the 12<sup>th</sup> Rehabilitation International Asia and Pacific Regional Conference and Campaign ‘98 for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993 – 2002. The meeting included a report on GLADNET activities, a review of on-going research projects and of proposals for which funding was being sought, including a proposal by Cornell University for a comparative study on Effective Non-Discrimination Work Environments.
- Keynote address: *Recent trends of vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabilities in Asia and the Pacific Region*. Prof. Ryosuke Matsui, Rehabilitation International Vice President, Asia-Pacific Region.
- Seminar Presentations:
  - *Job Retention/Return to Work* – Gabriele Stoikov, Voc Rehab Branch, ILO
  - *Income Generation* – Aldred Neufeldt, Univ. of Calgary
  - *Success Stories/Disabled People at work* – Monroe Burkowitz, Rutgers University
  - *World Association of Supported Employment* – Michael Kamp, World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), GLADNET Vice Chair
  - *REHADAT* – Samir Istanbuli, REHADAT
  - *Siguna Project* – Ray Ingram
  - *Proposed collaboration with Cornell University on comparative study on Effective Non-Discrimination Work Environments*– Carl Raskin, GLADNET Executive Director.
  - *Update on Project ACCESS* – Carl Raskin, GLADNET Executive Director.



## Geneva, May 1999

- The 3rd AGA took place following a technical meeting at ILO. Thematic sessions dealt with *Promoting Effective Employment Practices*, involving presentations on what is going on in different countries and a panel discussion on *Accessible Technology ('Cutting Edge Activities – current and future solutions)*. 40 participants from GLADNET member organizations in 13 countries were in attendance.
- ILO – Promoting Effective Employment Practices
  - Presentations on developments in different countries and a Panel Discussion on Accessible Technology
- GLADNET Research and Programme presentations
  - *Tele-activities and Tele-work* – Pierre Olivier and Jacques Alastuey
  - *Impact of Anti-discrimination Legislation in USA and UK* – Susanne Bruyère
  - *Strategies to increase employment opportunities for women with disabilities* – Ilene Zeitzer
  - *Cost-benefit analysis of supported employment in Canada* – Aldred Neufeldt
  - *Forestalling disincentives (to work for persons with disabilities)* – Monroe Berkowitz
  - *Inclusion International* – Brendan Sutton
  - *International Organization for provision of work for handicapped persons* – Mark Daymond
  - *World Association of Supported Employment* – Michael Kamp
  - *Reponses Initiatives femmes handicapées* – Marie Florence Batini
- ISSA Cross-international study on work incapacity and reintegration – Rolland

## Washington, D.C., May 2000

- The 4th AGA took place in Washington DC at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Keynote Address: *Disability and Employment - the American policy agenda*. Jonathan Young; Deputy Director, Office of Public Liaison, The White House
- Seminars:
  - *Employer Agenda* – Chair: Susanne Bruyère.
    - Susan Meisinger, EVP Society of Human Resource Management
    - William (Skip) Simonds, Director RTW Programme, UNUM-Provident Corp;
    - Roger Wells, Rotary Int'l Task Force on Employment of Persons with Disabilities
  - *US Policy Makers* – Chair: Monroe Burkowitz.
    - Richard Horne, Presidents Task Force on Employment of PwD;
    - Dinah Cohen, Director, Computer Accommodations Programme, Dept. of Defense;
    - Michael Greenberg, Dep Assoc. Commissioner, Office of Employment Support Programme., US SSA
  - *International Perspectives* – Chair: Mireille Dopche.
    - Stig Larsson, Director, Handicap & Rehab Research Centre, Lund Univ.;

- Alison Ward, Remploy Ltd., UK;
- Edwin DeVos, TNO Prevention and Health, the Netherlands.
- Discussion of Concept Papers:
  - *Knowledge Network*
    - It was agreed that this was an interesting idea but that design work was needed. A Working Group was established, involving Thibault Lambert, Roseangela Berman-Bieler, Carl Raskin, Mireille Dopche, Jacques Alastuey, Horoshi Kawamura. The idea would be raised again at the RI Conference in Rio de Janeiro.
  - *North-South Strategy*
    - Rotary International and Goodwill industries have encouraged idea to foster development in low-income countries. It was agreed that this strategy should be raised at the GLADNET Roundtable to be held at ILO on June 28 during the Geneva 2000 NGO Forum.

### **Geneva, June 2000**

- A GLADNET Roundtable Exchange on the theme '*Full Participation for All*' was held at ILO Geneva during the 2000 NGO Forum, held in conjunction with the Geneva session of the UN General Assembly to mark the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Summit on Social Development 1995, Copenhagen.
- Moderated by Robin Banks, lawyer and Australian disability rights advocate, the themes discussed were:
  - Disability as a priority
  - Sustainable livelihoods
  - Accessibility of education, training, technologies and care-giver supports
  - An implementation strategy to promote full participation, including a convention on the rights of persons with disabilities
  - An international strategy promoting the adoption of a convention, accessibility of education, training and technologies; poverty reduction, deinstitutionalization.
- Panelists:
  - David Henderson, Secretary General, Rehabilitation International
  - Lucy Wong Hernandez, Executive Office, Disabled Peoples International
  - Nancy Breitenbach, Chief Executive, Inclusion International
  - Nancy Riche, Secretary-Treasurer, Canadian Labour Congress
  - Gyorgi Sziraczki, Head, Target Groups Unit, In-Focus Programme on Knowledge, Skills and Employability, ILO
  - Robert Scott, Chair, Rotary International, Task Force on Jobs for Persons with Disabilities.

### **Kyoto, Japan, May 2001**

- The 5th AGA 2001 was held in Kyoto Japan, May 2001, attended by 79 participants from 12 countries. A technical thematic meeting preceded the AGA. Following a keynote address on *Employment and income generation of persons with disabilities in developing countries with special reference to information and communication technology*, presentations were made on the topics: *The IT agenda — Private Sector, Donor Agency and Consumer Perspectives; Youth*

*Employment and Older Workers Partnership Building and Good Practices; and GLADNET community programme and regional activities*

- Keynote Address: *Employment income generation of people with disabilities in developing countries with special reference to information and communication technology*. Yutaka Takamine, Project Expert on Disability, Social Development Division, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific.
- Seminars:
  - *The IT agenda – Private sector, donor agency & consumer perspectives*. Presenters:
    - *Focus on IT and development of Disability Info Resources (DINF) to capture journal and on-line research info*, Hiroshi Kawamura – Japanese Society for the Rehab of PwD
    - *Prop Station (training in employable skills via computers and internet)*, Nami Takenaka;
    - *PwD support systems*, Masako Okuhira, Japan Council of Independent Living Centres
    - *Takashimay Dept. Store, Osaka*, Toshihiro Wakita & Kayoko Tsuda –
    - *Donor perspective*, Takashi Ito, Nippon Foundation
    - *Best practices of info and communication. technology*, Monthian Buntan, Thailand Association of the Blind
  - *Youth Employment and Older Workers Partnership Building and Good Practices*
    - Susanne Bruyère
    - Barbara Murray
  - *The GLADNET Community (presentations on programme and regional activities)*:
    - JB Munro – A/P regional Chair, Inclusion Int'l
    - Beverly Beckles, CEO Nat'l Centre for PwD, Trinidad re: Caribbean
    - Michael Kamp – WASE
    - Aldred Neufeldt – GLADNET collaboration in knowledge network

**Geneva, December 2003**

- The 6th GLADNET General Assembly meeting was held following a thematic meeting at ILO Geneva in December 2003 on several themes: International Comparative Research on Policy and Work, and The Information Society, Disability and Work. The meeting was attended by 24 participants from 12 countries.
- Themes: *International Comparative Research on Policy and Work, and The Information Society, Disability and Work*
- Presentations – Dec. 8
  - *Transnational comparisons of disability management systems* – Donal McAnaney, Ireland
  - *Study of persons with disabilities starting their own businesses* – Stig Larrson, Sweden
  - *Performance indicators in public and private re-employment service providers* – Edwin de Vos, Netherlands
  - *Integration Management: New approaches....in companies* – Dorte Bernhard, Germany

- *Reintegration programme for clients with psychological problems in ICT domain* – Viktoria Arling & Will Spijkers, Germany
- *Mental health and work: extent of evidence based knowledge* – Aldred Neufeldt, Canada
- Presentations – Dec. 9
  - *Current practice in skills acquisition for people with disabilities* – Barbara Murray, ILO
  - *Mainstream business benefits of designing more accessible electronic & information technology* – Steve Jacobs, USA
  - *Presentation des basses de donnes Francophone sur le handicap du CTNERHI disponible sur l’Internat* – Marc Maudinet, France
  - *How is the Internet affecting the lives of disabled people?* – Michael Floyd, UK
  - *Information technology accessibility: implications for education and employment of people with disabilities* – Susanne Bruyère, USA
  - *The Global Information Network on Disability: a tool to share knowledge for sustainable livelihoods* – Moira Jones (DPI), Canada

#### **Winnipeg, September 2004**

- The planned AGA to be held conjunction with the Disabled Peoples International (DPI) Summit entitled *Innovative Strategies for Sustainable Livelihoods for People with Disabilities: Gaining a Global Perspective*, did not take place as there was not a quorum of GLADNET members in attendance.

#### **Manama, Bahrain, November 2005**

- The 7th AGA took place in on the theme *Doing the Right Things Right: People with Disabilities in the Labor Market’* in conjunction with the Rehabilitation International (RI) Arab conference. No GLADNET thematic meeting took place on this occasion.

#### **Brisbane, Australia, October 2006**

- The 8<sup>th</sup> AGA was held in, in conjunction with the International Forum on Disability Management (IFDM), entitled *Disability Management: Working for the Long Term*. No GLADNET thematic meeting took place in association with this AGA.

#### **Djerba, Tunisia, 2007**

- The 9<sup>th</sup> AGA was held in Djerba, Tunisia at the RI Arab-African Regional conference. Once again, GLADNET did not hold a separate thematic event.

#### **Quebec, Canada, 2008**

- The 10th AGA took place at the RI Global Conference on the topic *Disability Rights and Social Participation: Ensuring a Society for All*, held in Quebec City, Canada in 2008. A thematic meeting on Implementing the Right of People with Disabilities to Vocational Training was organized by the ILO in collaboration with GLADNET, the Centre Technique National d’Etudes et de Recherche sur les Handicaps et les Inadaptations (CTNERHI) and the Rehabilitation International Work and Employment Commission. The aim of the meeting was to identify elements of good practice in skills development for people with disabilities in countries around the world; to highlight areas in which more progress is needed

and examine attempts to address these challenges; and to formulate an agenda for action and research.

- *Thematic Presentations on Achievements and challenges in vocational training: 'Bird's-eye' views from Europe, Asia, Canada and the Arab States*
  - *Vocational training of persons with disabilities in Europe (La formation professionnelle des personnes handicapées en Europe)*. Dominique VELCHE, CTNERHI, France
  - *Training and people with disabilities: Asia Pacific Region*. Debra Perry, Senior Specialist, Disability Inclusion, ILO Geneva
  - *Achievements and challenges in vocational training: Bird's-eye views from different regions – Canada*. Yvan D'Amours, Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport, Government of Quebec, Canada
  - *Challenges facing skills development for people with disabilities in the Arab Region* Yousef Qaryouti, Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist, ILO Beirut
- *Good practice in skills development – What is the evidence?*
  - Examples from high-income countries: Australia, Canada and Europe
    - *Everyone counts... Diversity and its challenges* Brian Smyth-King, New South Wales Department of Education and Training, Australia
    - *Transforming vocational rehabilitation and training in the Canada Pension Plan Disability Programme - Future directions*. Jo-Anne Kuszniér, Director CPP Disability-Programme Design, CPPD, Ottawa, Canada
    - *Skill development through supported employment in two Western European countries* Michael Kamp, World Association for Supported Employment (WASE), the Netherlands
  - Examples from mid- and low-income countries: Brazil, Cambodia, Jordan and Lebanon
    - *Good practice in implementing public policies towards seeking employment for people with disabilities*. Leda de Azevedo, City Government, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
    - *Alleviating Poverty through Peer Training*. Sotha Ros, APPT Project, Cambodia
    - *The role of the Jordanian Vocational Training Authority in training people with disabilities*. Thafer Al Abed, Vocational Training Authority, Amman, Jordan
    - *Vocational training of persons with disabilities – The role of the Lebanese Union of Physically Disabled Persons*. Haïfa Chehayeb, LUPH, Beirut, Lebanon
  - Promoting good practice in skills development for persons with disabilities -
    - *The role of GLADNET (Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training)*. Susanne Bruyère, Chairperson, GLADNET; Representative of the RI, Commission on Work and Employment; Ilene Zeitzer, President, Disability Policy Solutions, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Michael Kamp, Director, Tact & Vision, Willemstad, the Netherlands; Donal McAnaney, for Stig Larsson RI Commission on Work and Employment, Sweden

## 2009 Onwards

- From 2009 onward, Virtual Online AGAs were held in November or December, in an effort to make the AGAs more accessible to the broader GLADNET membership. While the Virtual format didn't lend itself to the kinds of thematic presentations at prior Annual Assemblies, GLADNET participated in organizing two thematic conferences in Los Angeles and London thereafter.

### Los Angeles, September 2010

- GLADNET (2010, September 22). *Job retention and return to work in the context of the UNCRPD*. GLADNET seminar conducted and live-streamed at the International Forum on Disability Management Conference in Los Angeles, CA.
- Presentations:
  - *The UNCRPD and American Employment and Disability Policy*. Susanne Bruyère, Professor of Disability Studies and Director, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University
  - *Next steps in implementing the UNCRPD for developing countries: What donors need to know to help*. Ilene Zeitzer, President, Disability Policy Solutions
  - *Implementing the UNCRD within the European Union (EU): Progress and challenges in the field of employment and return to work*. Donal McAnaney, Senior Research Consultant, Work Research Centre, Dublin
  - *Implementing the UNCRPD in countries of Africa and Asia*. Barbara Murray, Manager, Equity Issues, Skills Development Department (IFP/Skills), International Labour Organisation
  - *Developing a national policy framework for early return to work in South Africa: Meeting international obligations and standards*. Professor Marius Olivier  
Director: International Institute for Social Law and Policy (IISLP) Professor Marius Olivier, Director: International Institute for Social Law and Policy (IISLP)

### London, September 2012

- GLADNET collaborated with the International Disability Management Research Network in organizing a joint meeting in London on the theme *Enhancing Durable Return - to - Work Post Disability Injury*.
- Presentations
  - *Enhancing Durable Return - to - Work Post Disability Injury*: Greg Murphy, School of Public Health and Human Biosciences, Melbourne, Australia
  - *Management of workplace fatalities: are institutional support and compensation responses helping or hindering the recovery of surviving families?*: Lynda Matthews, University of Sydney, Australia
  - *Employer Practices in Retention, Advancement and inclusion of People with Disabilities*: Susanne Bruyère, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University ILR School, United States of America
  - *The importance of good communication between workers on long term sick leaves and the workplace in the Return to Work process*: John Selander, Mid-Sweden, University, Sweden
  - *Rising disability claims during this recession*: Edwin de Vos, CHAMP Research & Consultancy, Netherlands
  - *Challenges regarding Veterans/ Veterans research*: Muriel Westmorland, Special Advisor to Veterans affairs Canada

- *New Successful Strategies in Inclusive Employment for People with Disabilities:* Brigitte van Lierop, Kenniscentrum Crossover and Frans Nijhuis, Maastricht University, Netherlands
- *Research of Samenspelproject, Haarlem: Teaching Youngsters of target group employee skills by sport and play:* Femke Reijenga, AStri Social Research, Netherlands
- *School-to-work transition of young people with disabilities: the need for harmonized data on a national and international level:* Dennis Klinkhammer, Employment and Vocational Rehabilitation, University of Cologne, Germany

## Appendix 4. GLADNET Webinar topics, by year

### 2010

- Parmenter, T.R. (2010, May 27). Employment and disability: A population left behind. GLADNET Online Seminar Series.

### 2011

- Golden, T.P. (2011, February 14). Transforming segregated services: Approaches to support strategic conversion planning of traditional programmes. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Golden, T.P. & Shaheen, G. (2011, October 10). Transforming segregated services part I: Setting the course for transformation by changing attitudes. GLADNET Webinar Series
- Posarac, A. (2011, October 28). World disability report: Key findings and recommendations. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Golden, T.P. (2011) Video-conference training for the ILO/UN Interagency Support Group on the topic Transforming segregated services: Approaches to support strategic conversion planning of traditional programmes.

### 2012

- Bruyère, S.M. & von Schrader, S. (2012, April 30). Best practices in recruiting and retraining an aging workforce: Intersection with disability considerations. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Brewer, D., Hinkley, N., & Karpur, A. (2012, June 11). Preparing youth with disabilities for careers after high school. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Mitra, S. & Murray, B. (2012, December 11). Advancing opportunities for people with disabilities: Addressing employment, education and economic disparities. GLADNET Webinar Series.

### 2013

- Mitra, S. & Murray, B. (2013, January 21). Disability and poverty in developing countries. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Ferraina, S., Kamp, M., Fea, F., & Zederloo, L. (2013, March 13). The evolving concept of sheltered workshops and the UNCRPD. EASPD and GLADNET Joint Series.
- Murray, B., Shaheen, G., & Tihic, M. (2013, April 15). Addressing the disability employment education and economic gap. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- McAnaney, D. (2013, May 15). Job retention and reintegration of workers experiencing mental distress. GLADNET Webinar Series.

### 2014

- Bruyère, S.M. & Young, J. (2014, May 12). Creating disability inclusive workplaces. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Bruyère, S.M. & von Schrader, S. (2014, June 9). Improving retention and advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Zeitzer, I. (2014, October 28). From concept to reality: Developing Countries' efforts to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Reflections from the field. GLADNET Webinar Series.
- Murray, B. & Groce, N. (2014, December 10). From alms to income: Begging as an overlooked issue of disability and poverty. GLADNET Webinar Series.



## Appendix 5. GLADNET/ILO Research Publications

- Albrecht, M. & Braun H. (1998). *International research project on job retention and return to work strategies for disabled workers: Study report: Germany*. ILO: Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/578/>
- Cuelenaere, B. & Prins, R. (1998). *International research project on job retention and return to work strategies for disabled workers: Study report: Netherlands*. ILO: Geneva. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/575/>
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- Grapin, P., Lambert, T., Fradin, N., Tizroutine, T., Jafflin, D., Halimi, C., & Coda-Vaillant, M. (1998). *International research project on job retention and return to work strategies for disabled workers: Study report: France*. ILO: Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/577/>
- Gunderson, M., Gildiner, A. & King, A. (1998). *International research project on job retention and return to work strategies for disabled workers: Study report: Canada*. ILO: Geneva. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/572/>
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- Thornton, P. (1998). *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Job Retention and Return to Work Strategies for Disabled Workers*. Vocational Rehabilitation Branch Employment and Training Department, ILO, Washington DC. (GLADNET Collection InfoBase). Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect/139/>
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