



Deafblind

International **DbI**

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

deafblindinternational.org

50 Main St, Paris, ON N3L 2E2 Canada

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A YEAR OF CHANGE

Frank Kat, President of Dbl

The Board and Management Committee (ManCom) of Deafblind International herewith presents the Annual report for 2019.

Last year can be best characterized as a year of change. Dbl is an international not-for-profit membership organisation. Every 4 years at the general meeting composition of the Board changes - the President, Vice-Presidents and other new members of the Board are elected through the election procedure organised by the Election and Nomination Committee. At the Annual General meeting in August 2019 the new Board, President and Vice Presidents were elected and appointed for the period of next 4 years. Newly elected and appointed were also Treasurer, Secretariat, Information Officer and Network Coordinator. The General meeting took place during the Deafblind International World Conference in Australia.

2019 was also a very productive year. The first steps were made towards organising the first conference in Africa and starting the African Researchers' Initiative. To be able to continue the work they started after election both ManCom and the Board met more often after the General meeting – most often through online Zoom conferencing, because that way of meeting enabled more members to get involved and attend the meeting. New working groups and committees (Communication Committee, Funding Committee) were initiated.



The main focus of Dbl is to connect individuals who are deafblind, their families, professionals, researchers and any other relevant partners in the field. Since times are changing more rapidly than ever before, the new ManCom and new Board introduced a new strategy to bring together and connect all the relevant players in the field under the slogan Dbl "THE point of connection, worldwide".

This annual report will give you the necessary information on the important facts and activities of 2019.

REACHING OUT: COMMUNICATION & AFRICA

Mirko Baúr, “Strategic” Vice-President

The first 4.5 months in my new role for Dbl have been invested in progress along the new strategy. Doing so, important steps have been achieved regarding Dbl’s outreaching communication and our African projects. Besides that, collaboration has begun with ICEVI, as a member of its ExCo and of the newly formed committee for children with multiple disabilities and/or deafblindness.

OUTREACHING COMMUNICATION

Based on the strategy, a new Dbl committee was established, the Com(munication)Com(mittee), responsible for the outreaching communication of Dbl and its development. It has met online once a month ever since.

PASSIONATELY ACTIVE ARE:

Dmitry Polikanov (i.a. Dbl Information Officer)
Eugenio Romero Rey (i.a. Editor of the Spanish Dbl Review)
Graciela Ferioli (i.a. Dbl Social Media Pioneer)
Mirko Baúr (i.a. Chair ComCom)
Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks (i.a. Dbl Communication Ambassadors Coordinator)
Trees van Nunen-Schrauwen (i.a. Dbl Network Coördinator)



REGARDING STATISTICS THE FOLLOWING CAN BE MENTIONED:

Facebook: In April 2018 there were 2022 people following Dbl on Facebook, in April 2019 2420, in February 2020 3053 and by the end of April 2020 3160.

Instagram: Dbl started to use Instagram in Nov 2018. In February 2020 we had 280 followers, by the end of April 2020 327.

Website: Since taking over in September 2019 the numbers for visitors and page views have increased every analyzed month. We will have a fuller picture with the analysis of 2020 by the end of this year.

AFRICAN PROJECTS

In October 2019 Maria Brons, Dbl’s treasurer, and I attended the 7th Africa Forum on Visual Impairment in Addis Ababa. The trip was also used for networking towards Dbl’s first African Conference in 2021 and for an agreement with our Board-Member Pawlos Kassu Abebe from Addis Ababa University on the ToR for Dbl’s African Researchers’ Initiative on Deafblindness (ARI). The trip was indeed successful, also thanks to a very good collaboration including Marianne Riggio, Katie Holland and Angela Affran from Perkins International. By Christmas 2019 Dbl’s African Researchers’ Initiative on Deafblindness ARI was launched and Pawlos Kassu Abebe was supported by a Research Advisory Committee (AC ARI).

ITS MEMBERS ARE:

Prof. Dr. Marleen Janssen, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Dr. Meredith Prain, Senses Australia, Australia
Dr. Daniel Dogbe, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana
Victor Locoro, Kyambogo University, Uganda
Pawlos Kassu Abebe, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (Chair AC & Coordinator ARI)



Currently the AC ARI is finishing its peer reviewing of 32 abstracts that were submitted in response to the corresponding call. Ten abstracts will be selected from the entries and those selected will be provided with a research grant of 500 Euros each. The researchers who submit their research in due time will be further sponsored with an additional 700 Euros to present their research at the 1st African Dbl Conference on Deafblindness scheduled to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, October 6-8 2021, Kenya Institute of Special Education KISE. And yes, that conference will happen. After a trip to Nairobi in February 2020 there is a very active Planning Committee in place.

MEMBERS ARE:

Edwin Osundwa, Sense International Country Representative Kenya (Chair)
Hannah Mwangi, Executive Director Nairobi Family Support Services
Kevin Sudi, Programme Manager, Kenya Country Office, CBM International
Mary Maragia, Head Deafblind Unit Kilimani Primary School/Perkins International
Peter Oracha Adoyo, Associate Professor Special Needs Education (Sign Language Option), Maseno University/Council Member KISE (Kenya Institute of Special Education, Nairobi)
Stella Kamau, Jofreshua Achievers Special Center Services/Perkins International
Wilson Masinza, Kenya National Association of the Deafblind KNADB
Lydia Chege, Deputy Director KISE (Kenya Institute of Special Education, Nairobi)

The conference will connect persons with deafblindness, parents, families, practitioners and researchers all across the continent and beyond. And it will connect hands-on workshops with the latest research.

Doing so it will present the 10 brand new African research projects, made possible by Dbl's ARI. It will serve as a platform and exchange hub for young researchers from all over the world by including Dbl's Young Researchers' Conference.

And it will connect with the immediately preceding Helen Keller World Conference of the World Federation of the Deafblind WFDB, also taking place in Nairobi. So: Save the date!



Deafblind
International Dbl

Deafblind International is proudly announcing its **1st African Conference** Nairobi, Kenya, October 6-8, 2021



OUR VISION: THE POINT OF CONNECTION

We are an international not-for-profit membership organisation focused on deafblindness. We are connecting individuals who are deafblind, their families, professionals, researchers, universities, national and international agencies and any other relevant partner in the field.

We have a constitution and are managed by a volunteer Board from around the globe. We are passionate on bringing together and connecting all the relevant players in the field: To make a real difference in the lives of persons with deafblindness around the world. The quality of services and policy for persons who are deafblind is the key to sustainable development, education.

The key word is connection, connecting worldwide and improving access to the necessary information and to raise awareness of deafblindness, to have it recognised as a unique disability, so central to our work is, networking between all stakeholders, sharing of information on a global & local scale, supporting specialized knowledge, skills, competencies and promoting inclusion and good quality-services for children and adults of all ages who are deafblind.

Therefore our focus for the period 2019-2023 is:
To be THE point of connection in deafblindness worldwide.

STRATEGY

- Connecting through proactive internal and external communication
- Connecting through collaborations with the relevant international organisations
- Connecting through stimulating research and learning from each other
- Connecting through enhancing our culture of diversity and inclusion

GOALS 2019/2020 PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION

The necessary reorganisation (see below) is completed and works well from the point of view of those directly involved. A draft for the new website and the design of the digital Dbl Review is discussed.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

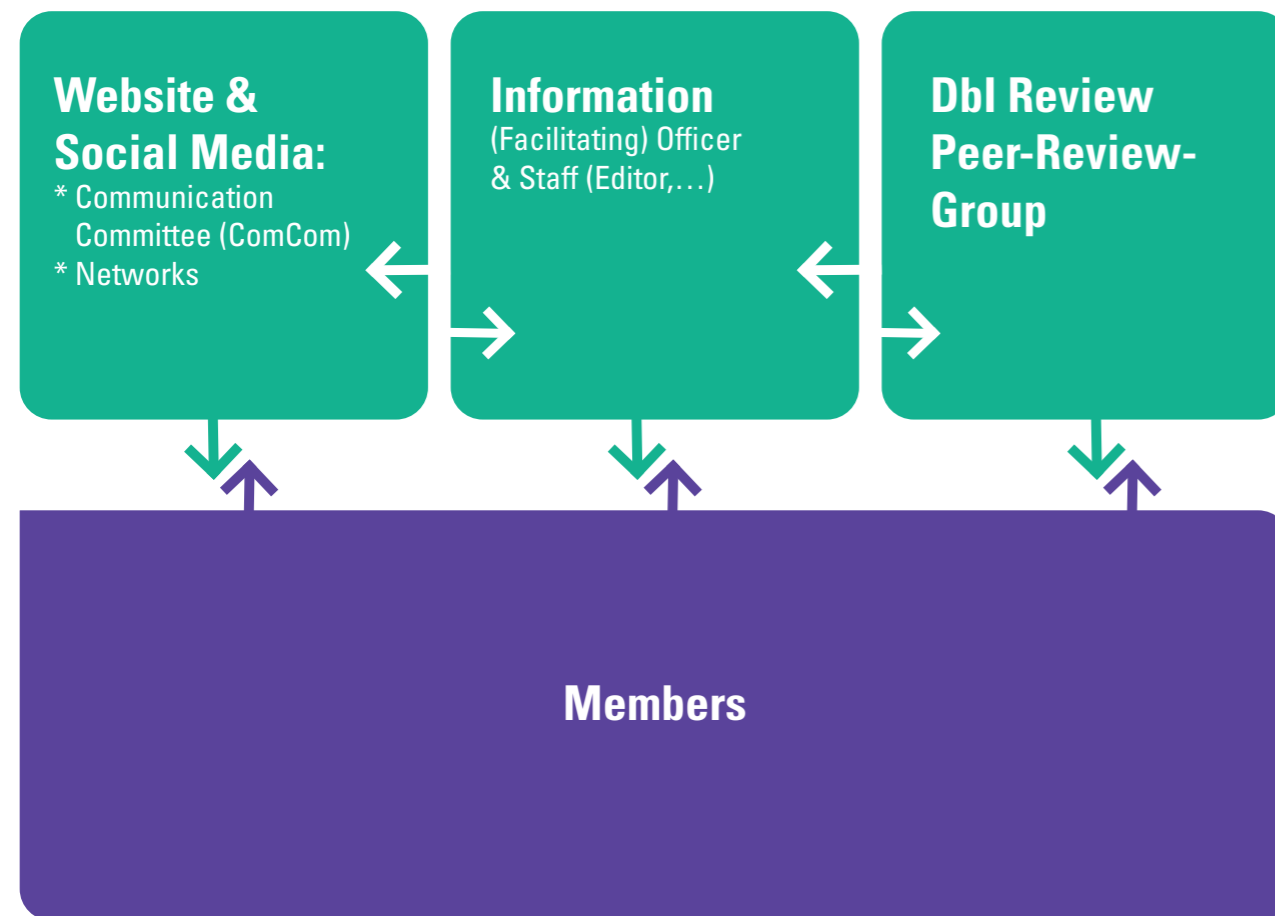
The relevant partners are determined on the basis of a context analysis.

STIMULATING RESEARCH AND LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

Networks have a small Dbl budget by 2020.
The African Research Initiative (ARI) has started.

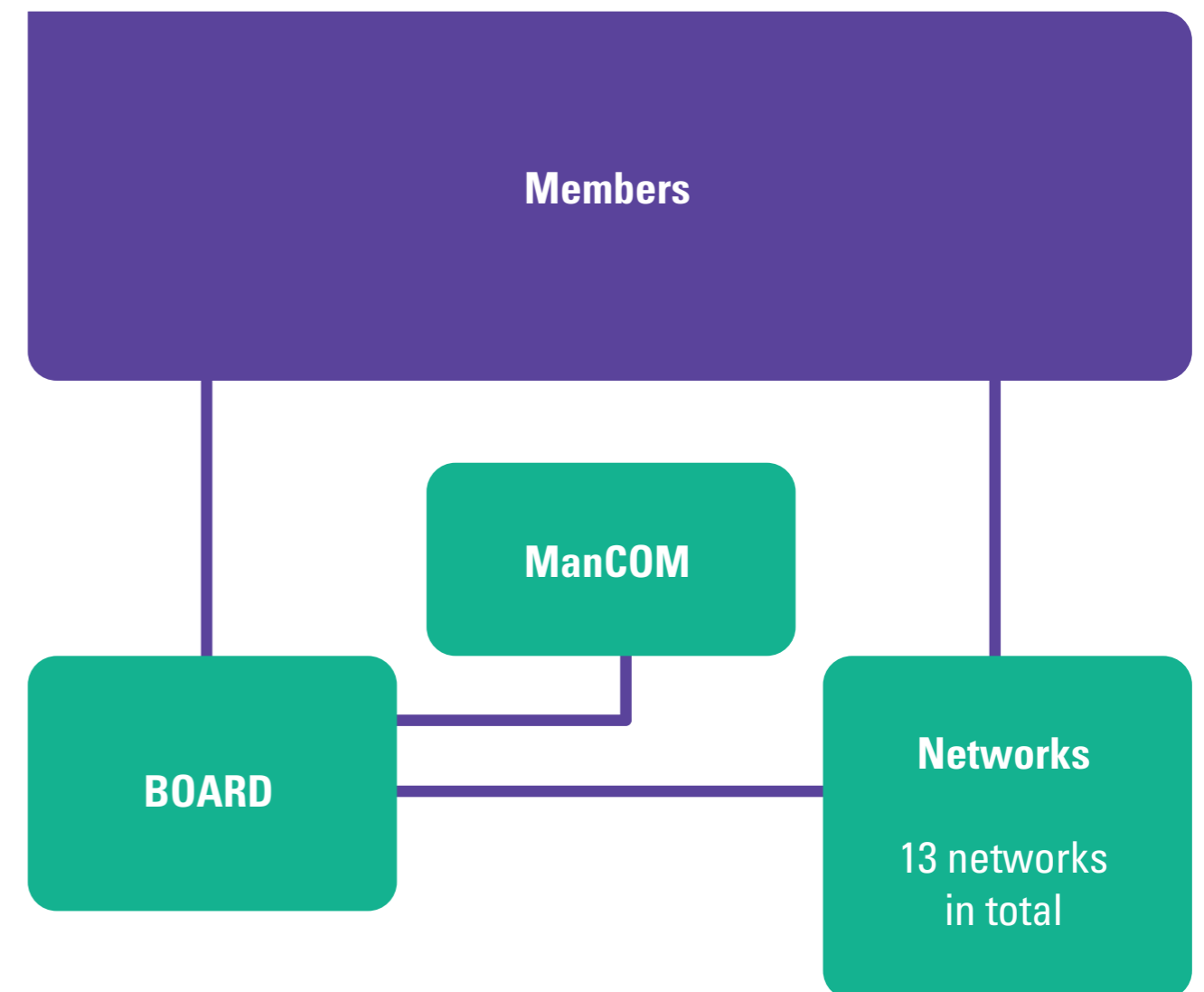


ENHANCING OUR CULTURE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



THE ORGANISATION: MANCOM, BOARD, NETWORKS, COMMITTEES

Members are the backbone of DbI, through members we can reach others, share new insights and build necessary networks. Members can have a place on our Board after election, and the board chooses a management committee every 4 years. Detailed information can be found in our constitution and our policy and procedure book.



DEAFBLIND INTERNATIONAL BOARD ENDING IN 2019

ManCom 2019

President: **Gill Morbey**
Vice Presidents: **Bernadette Kappen**
Frank Kat
Diversity Officer: **Dennis Lolli (Perkins)**
Secretariat: **Gary Daly**
Comm. Officer: **Stan Munroe**
Past President: **William Green**
Treasurer: **Maria Brons**
Networks: **Trees van Nunen-Schrauwen**
Development: **Knut Johansen**

NEW INCOMING BOARD 2020

ManCom 2020

President: **Frank Kat**
Vice Presidents: **Mirko Baúr**
Henriette Hermann Olesen
Secretariat: **Cathy Proll, Michelle Borton**
Information Officer: **Dmitry Polikanov**
Treasurer: **Maria Brons**
Networks: **Trees van Nunen-Schrauwen**
Development: **Jackie Brennan**

LARGE CORPORATES BOARD ENDING 2019

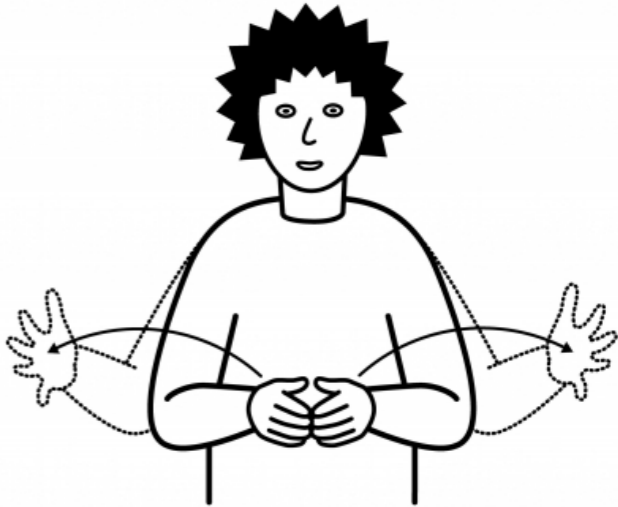
Able Australia
Senses Australia
Sensity
Sense UK
Christoffel Blindenmission
Visio
Deafblind Ontario Serv.
Lega del Filo d’Oro Onlus
Mo Gård
ONCE
Perkins
Royal Dutch Kentalis

Kate MacRae
Elvira Edwards
Cathy Proll
Gillian Morbey
Sian Tesni
Steven Scheffer
Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks
Rossano Bartoli
Lena Göransson
Eugenio Romero Rey
Marianne Riggio
Maria Brons

LARGE CORPORATES NEW INCOMING BOARD 2020

Able Australia
Senses Australia
Sensity
Sense UK
Christoffel Blindenmission
Visio
Deafblind Ontario Serv.
Lega del Filo d’Oro Onlus
Mo Gård
ONCE
Perkins
Royal Dutch Kentalis

Kate MacRae
Lisa Brennan
Cathy Proll
Richard Kramer
Sian Tesni
Steven Scheffer
Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks
Rossano Bartoli
Lena Göransson
Eugenio Romero Rey
Katherine Holland
Maria Brons



SMALL CORPORATES BOARD ENDING 2019

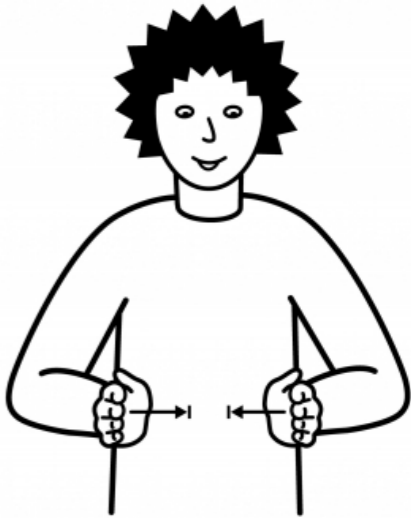
ANPSA
CDA
CDHL, Denmark
Deafblind Australia
FESOCE
Forsight Australia
German DB Consortium
Lighthouse School
NY Institute for SE
Nordic Welfare Centre
OHTB
Overbrook School f/t Blind
PI Latin America office
Sense Scotland
Signo Vivo
Tanne, Swiss FDB
University of Groningen

Dominique Spriet
Carolyn Monaco
Lars Soby
David Murray
Ricard Lopez
Trish Wetton
Jutta Wiese
Koh Poh Kwang
Bernadette Kappen
Maria Creutz
Ursula Heinemann
Jackie Brennan
Gloria Rodrigues Gil
Andy Kerr
Knut Johansen
Mirko Baúr
Marleen Janssen

SMALL CORPORATES NEW INCOMING BOARD 2020

ANPSA
CDA
CDHL, Denmark
Deafblind Australia
FESOCE
Addis Ababa Uni.
CRESAM
"Con-nection"
NY Institute for SE
Nordic Welfare C.
OHTB
Overbrook School f/t Blind
Eikholt RC.
Sense I. India
Signo Vivo
Tanne, Swiss FDB
Uni. Groningen
Texas School BVI

Dominique Spriet
Carolyn Monaco
Henriette Hermann Olesen
Meredith Prain
Ricard Lopez
Pawlos Kassu
Sonja van de Molengraft
Dmitry Polikanov
Bernadette Kappen
Maria Creutz
Ursula Heinemann
Jackie Brennan
Roar Meland
Akhil Paul
Hakon Lie
Mirko Baúr
Marleen Janssen
Chris Montgomery



NETWORKS & DBI

Networks are recognized as one of the core activities of Deafblind International. In the constitution, one of the stated objectives of Dbl is to stimulate the development of networks of specialized professionals collaborating to benefit deafblind persons and their families.

Networks are international groups of individual members and/or organizations, schools and institutions approved by the Board from at least three countries that are mutually connected by language, culture, geographic location or objects and satisfy criteria to be determined by the Board. Networks, comprised of members of the organization, are permitted to cast votes in the election process and at the annual meeting. Some Networks become members of the Dbl Board.

Currently there are 13 Dbl Networks.



About Us

Conferences

Resources

Networks

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NETWORKS IN THE BOARD ENDING 2019

Acquired Deafblindness	Liz Duncan
CHARGE Network	Andrea Wanka
EDbN	Ricard Lopez
Outdoor Network	Joe Gibson
Usher Network	Emma Boswell
Youth Network	Simon Allison

NETWORKS IN THE BOARD ENDING 2020

Dbl Research NW	Walter Wittich
CHARGE Network	Andrea Wanka
EDbN	Ricard Lopez
Outdoor Network	Joe Gibson
Network of the Americas	Marianne Riggio
Youth Network	Simon Allison

TOTAL NETWORKS OF DBI

Acquired Deafblindness Network ADBN	Network of the Americas
Adapted Physical Activity (APA) Network	Outdoor Network
CHARGE Network	Research Network
Creative Arts Network	Rubella Network
Communication Network	Usher Network
European Deafblind Network (EDBN)	Youth Network (DbIYN)
Ibero Latin American Network	

MEMBERSHIP

We had 26 new individual members join in 2019 bringing us to a total of 211 individual members at the end 2019. Of those members, they are broken down in the following locations:



We had 3 new corporates join in 2019 – of those 1 is from France, 1 is from Denmark and 1 is from the United States of America.

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

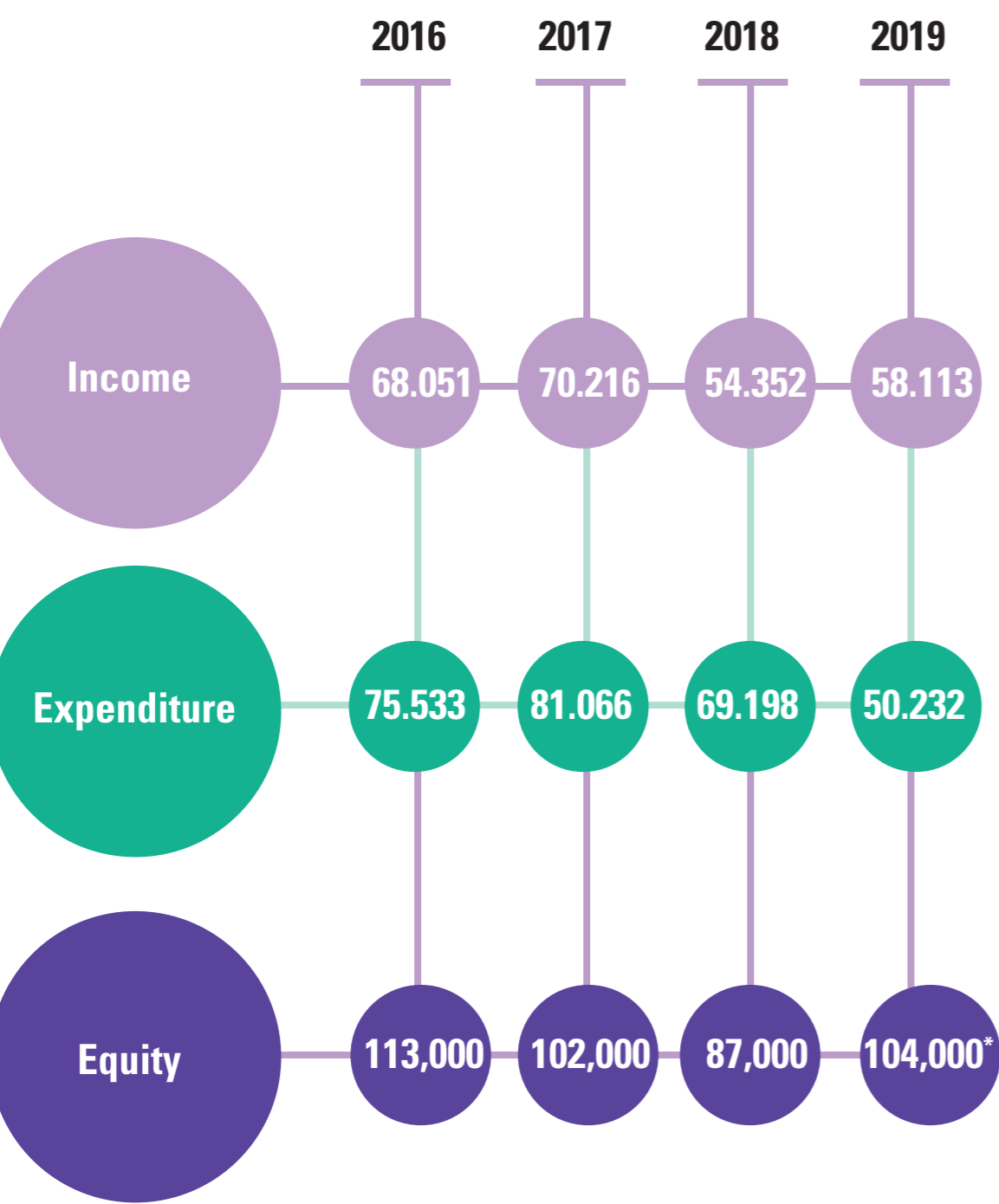
ManCom met face to face twice – once in Nairobi, Kenya and once in Australia. The Board met face to face once in Australia during the Outgoing Board at 9/08/2019 and Incoming Board at 10/8/2019 and 13/08/2019

The 17th Deafblind International World Conference 2019 was hosted by Able Australia, and held on the Gold Coast on the 12th till the 16th of August. The conference offered the most up to date information on Accessibility, Communication & Technology (ACT).

African Stakeholders group met once face to face in Nairobi Kenya, the 5th and 6th of March 2019 and later a meeting took place during the 2019 Africa Forum on Visual Impairment, October 7th - 11th. Both the Board and ManCom met once via Zoom.



FINANCIAL REPORT



*Represents Bankposition on 1 January 2020

LOOKING FORWARD

In order to move forward we will continue our focus as The point of connection. It is not only about finding information or making it accessible, it is also about influencing policymakers and being active partners at the places and events where policies are created for the future and therefore important for the deafblind community.

A consultative status for Dbl, maybe in a partnership with others, at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC), UNESCO and the disability related activities of UNICEF could be one of the steps for the coming years.

Dbl needs to be seen as the point of connection, knowledge and expertise for UN bodies. The first initiative in that direction is establishing the Dbl working group on ICF (International Classification of Functioning) disability for the World Health Organisation. This working group will establish a specific “comprehensive ICF core set” on deafblindness.

A global report on the situation of persons with deafblindness was written by the World Federation of the Deafblind. This report has been conceived as an evidence-based awareness raising tool, as well as to contribute to the global monitoring of both CRPD and the SDGs. Dbl and WFDB agree that it is valuable to support collaboration and alignment of strategic actions related to the awareness therefore Dbl and WFDB recently updated the Memorandum of Understanding with WFDB. Other partnerships of importance to Dbl will follow in 2020. Dbl’s Vice president, Henriette Hermann Olesen is coordinating, for example, the first steps on partnership with the World Federation of the Deaf and ICEVI.

Since March 2020 our lives as we know it, completely changed into a new reality. A new reality due to COVID-19 caused inclusion, participation, accessibility, diversity, equality of opportunities and non-discrimination to suddenly come under big pressure. As it might be difficult to cope with it for all of us, it is even more so for people with deafblindness. Day by day situation, rules and practice are changing.

As **The point of connection** we have the obligation - especially now - to find each other and stand together in these difficult times and ACT as a global community, a global family.

