

Highlights from Juan Cobeñas – GEM Report event 26 September 2023

- I think that AAC equipment needs to be one of the elements of accessibility like braille or sign language. Students that use it to understand and to show their learning, so these programs of symbols should be also in the hand of each student so that they can prepare presentations, do assessments, and express whatever they need.
- The other thing is about the need that states have their leadership in the adoption of technology. I live in Argentina in South America, and many times, it is the private companies that exercise their leadership. This can only bring inequality, very expensive devices that may not be relevant and frustration because they promise miracles, and they don't give training. So what we need is leadership of the education authorities, a clear policy on technology training of decision makers, of supervisors, teachers, and all those in the education system that have to do with curricula and technology. Then teachers need to work with the health rehabilitation team in order to decide what training the student will have to use the devices, and also train the support person of the student. So training is the main element in the adoption of technology.
- The report makes a great point when it says to put the person in the center of the process, and to think about the outcomes for the person. Then I have to say that my situation is a difficult one because devices and smartphones and tablets are great but you need to have a way to access them. When your eyes don't work well and your hands do not respond and you cannot use your speech or your mouth abilities to blow, then you cannot access these devices yet. So what I would say is that training, low cost and strong policies about adoption of technology will center -- are the main steps to advance in the use and effective and equal use of technology.