Internet Society

Accessibility toolkit

Linking Internet usage by people with disability
to key international policies and programs

The
Internet
Is For
Everyone

Introduction

The Internet Society likes to say, "The Internet is for everyone."

This means two things:

Firstly, the Internet must not lock anyone out, because it is intended to include us all.

Secondly, the Internet Society needs to keep up its efforts until everybody has the opportunities that the Internet brings to only some of us today.

In doing so, we must accept the fact that people with different abilities have different experiences. With this in mind, our role is more vital than ever, as we strive to ensure the Internet is compatible with all those ways of experiencing the world.

The Accessibility Toolkit, of which this booklet is a part, shines a light on how people with disability use the Internet, the barriers they encounter, and solutions available through national, regional and global policies and programs.

The Internet Society's Accessibility Special Interest Group is how our community comes together to address these issues, find and share improvements, and keep pushing towards that goal of the Internet for everyone. This is part of making sure that the Internet is a resource to enrich people's lives, and a force for good in society.

I recommend this booklet to anyone wishing to get a quick overview of global actions to benefit people with disability who are using, or want to use, the Internet.

Andrew Sullivan
President and Chief Executive Officer

Global Accessibility Drivers

International treaties, standards and guidelines promote an inclusive society and act as drivers for improving accessibility.

4 Quality Education

Guaranteeing equal and accessible education by building inclusive learning environments and providing the needed assistance for persons with disabilities.

8 Employment

Promoting inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment allowing persons with disabilities to fully access the job market.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

10 Social, political and economic inclusion

Emphasizing the social, economic and political inclusion of persons with disabilities.

11 Transport

Creating accessible cities and water resources, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems, providing universal access to safe, inclusive, accessible and green public spaces.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UN urges governments, private sector, civil society—in fact, everyone to take part in building a prosperous society for all.

Goal 4 – Quality education

Goal 8 – Employment

Goal 10 – Social, political and economic inclusion

Goal 11 – Transport

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

Governments that sign and ratify the UNCRPD are obligated to abide by all the Articles. Relevant here are:

Article 9
Accessibility to ICT

Article 21
Access to information

Over 180 governments have ratified the Convention.

UN Disability Inclusion Strategy

UN agencies setting a global example through a policy and accountability framework to accelerate change on disability inclusion.

W3C Web Accessibility Initiative

Guidelines declared by some governments as mandatory.

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 – ISO/IEC 40500
- Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines
- User Agent Accessibility Guidelines

Marrakesh Treaty

This treaty by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) means that countries that ratify the treaty can make an exemption to their Copyright Act to allow production of books in accessible formats.

Public procurement

ICT accessibility features included in governments' procurement guidelines encourage suppliers to make their products and services more accessible.

The following guidelines and standards apply:

- USA (Section 508)
- European Union and Australia (EN 301 549)

Universal design for an inclusive world

Seven principles of universal design lead to better design for everyone.

One Story With A Global Context

People with disability across the world strive to overcome barriers and make their community more accessible.

This personal story links with global drivers to achieve an accessible community. Accessibility champions can make this happen in their own countries.
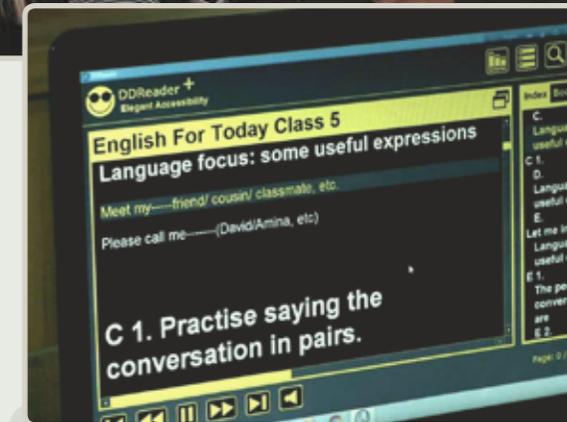
Vashkar Bhattachearjee has a visual impairment and from his own early difficulties learned the importance of accessible textbooks for students with disability.

Encouraging the Bangladeshi government to adopt and implement the globally recognised multimedia DAISY system using open source software means that students with disability have more opportunities for a quality education (one of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**).

If the Bangladeshi government ratifies the **Marrakesh Treaty**, it will mean an even broader selection of accessible books available for Bangladeshis with disability.

Vashkar's work with the government means that its web portal uses **W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** to make information and services accessible.

The Bangladeshi government has signed and ratified the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** and there is more to be done.

Making A Difference

The Internet Society has funded disability projects in countries across the world through Beyond the Net. Training in ICT usage, Internet radio programs and accessible publications online are just some of these projects.

Additional support has been provided through the ISIF Asia Award. People with disability have obtained Fellowships to participate in key international meetings.

ISOC's Asia Pacific Bureau has stimulated accessibility programs in the region including Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Chapters play their part in working with their local communities to foster accessibility.

Everyone Can Contribute

Individuals and organisations can increase and enhance accessibility to the Internet for people with disability.

Here are some ways to start:

1 Develop technologies that incorporate inclusive design

2 Make use of W3C's Web Content Design Guidelines

3 Encourage governments to abide by the Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

4 Make sure that accessibility is supported at a senior management level

5 Incorporate accessibility when developing technical standards and guidelines

6 Include people with disability in consultation and decision-making

7 Organise disability awareness training in your organisation

8 Use guidelines for arranging accessible meetings (online or face-to-face)

9 Develop communications materials with accessibility in mind ie captioned videos, clear fonts and good contrast in online and printed material

New technologies including the Internet of Things make huge impacts on society.

Let us make them accessible, available and affordable for everyone.

Internet Society

Founded by Internet pioneers, the Internet Society (ISOC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the open development, evolution, and use of the internet.

Working through a global community of chapters and members, the Internet Society collaborates with a broad range of groups to promote the technologies that keep the Internet safe and secure, and advocates for policies that enable universal access.

The Internet Society is also the organizational home of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).

Learn more internetsociety.org