**Reading Without Seeing**

**(Antarchakshu – The Eye WithinTM)**

**The A B C of Inclusive Publishing**

**Compiled By**

**The Xavier’s Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC)   
For**

**The DAISY Forum of India (DFI)**

In today’s day and age the reader profile is constantly changing and is getting far more complex.

Visually impaired persons are avid readers too. Surprised? Yes, you read correctly, being blind does not mean you cannot read. It’s just that they read differently from the way sighted people do. Blind and low vision persons employ a number of alternate formats to access the printed word—like Braille, e-texts, audio and DAISY.

With amendments to Copyright Acts across many countries in the world, the Marrakesh (WIPO) Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled, and the Copyright Amendment Act, 2012 in India, legal access to create accessible content is now opening up.

In spite of this, the visually challenged still face a huge ‘book famine’ as massive time and effort is required to convert a book into an accessible format from scratch. This challenge can be effectively mitigated through publisher relationships and effective publisher partnerships.

This booklet is an attempt to initiate the process of building a constructive partnership between the publishing community in India and the world of the print-disabled within the framework of the Copyright Amendment Act, 2012 in India.

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT THE PRINT-DISABLED READER?**

Today, Print-Disabled persons are in careers and roles as diverse as the sighted.

The Print-Disabled head organizations, are well educated and involved in research.

The Print-Disabled persons are avid Readers for work and pleasure.

**HOW DO THE BLIND AND LOW-VISION READERS READ?**

* Using Braille/Large Font Material/Electronic and DAISY Documents/Audio Material.
* Based on level of vision and preferences, persons with blindness and low vision prefer different formats.
* If material is available in one of the above-mentioned formats there is no dependence on human readers.
* Blind and low vision users also use other technologies such as Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Softwares to convert hard copy material into soft copy. However this makes the process extremely time- and resource-consuming and also sighted-editor dependent.

**WHAT CAN A PUBLISHER DO?**

**If the blind and low vision readers read independently what is the problem?**

Today the blind and low vision readers have a host of technological solutions available to them

which can enable their independent reading for educational, professional and recreational purposes. However, in order for these technologies to work, they need the book available to them in a format that can be accessed by the technologies they use, i.e. they need material available to them in **‘Accessible Formats’**

If material is not available in accessible formats, the reader has no other option but to physically convert the book into an accessible copy – either through scanning and editing, creation of DAISY books, getting it audio-recorded, etc. All these options are extremely time- and resource-intensive.

Today less that 1 % of books are available in accessible formats creating a huge ‘Books Famine’ for the print-disabled.

**What do we need from the publishers?**

* To promote ‘Inclusive Publishing’ (Inclusive Publishing entails content creation in Accessible Formats)
* To ensure that books are ‘Born Accessible’
* To ensure that the mainstream E-Books published by the publishers incorporate accessibility.
* In the event that the publisher can do neither, to facilitate creation of accessible content by sharing e-content with organisations working for the print-disabled.

**Who are the Print-Disabled groups for whom inclusive publishing is needed?**

People with print disabilities are those who cannot read standard print because of

a. Visually Impairment: Blind or Legally Blind

b. Learning Disability: Individuals with specific language learning impairment and Individualized Education Programmes (IEP), needing text modifications

c. Physically Challenged: Cannot hold a book or turn pages

These Disabilities are certified by appropriate governmental authorities

**What types of accessible formats can a publisher publish in?**

Two important alternative formats to print are accessible e-text and talking books. Accessible e-text can be read on digital devices such as smartphones, tablets and computers with the help of screen-reading software. Accessible e-text is also required to produce braille books.

**Is there a Best format/standard which is recommended?**

The best standard for digital version of any publication would be EPUB 3 format. Publishers need to adhere to accessibility guidelines while preparing EPUB 3 books. ([http://www.idpf.org](http://prolinks.rediffmailpro.com/cgi-bin/prored.cgi?red=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Eidpf%2Eorg&rediffng=0)). Recommended standard for Audio Books is DAISY 2.02 with MP3 compression. ([www.daisy.org](http://prolinks.rediffmailpro.com/cgi-bin/prored.cgi?red=www%2Edaisy%2Eorg&rediffng=0))

**How do I actually produce the recommended standard? What are the key steps to be followed?**

There are several ways of producing accessible EPUB 3 books. While creating a digital master for normal print book publishing, we can follow some formatting guidelines to create accessible EPUB. These guidelines can be incorporated at many different stages of production:

- Authors can follow formatting guidelines in MS word or Open Office word processing software.

- Type setters can follow mark-up guidelines in DTP software such as Adobe Indesign, CS6, etc.

- If you already have an inaccessible master, an accessible version can be created by data processing companies at a cost of about Rs 20 to Rs 25 per page.

**Does one need specialized training to learn accessible format creation? If so, where can one learn?**

Online documentation and tutorials are available at [www.daisy.org/daisypedia](http://prolinks.rediffmailpro.com/cgi-bin/prored.cgi?red=www%2Edaisy%2Eorg%2Fdaisypedia&rediffng=0).

DAISY Consortium: [www.daisy.org](http://prolinks.rediffmailpro.com/cgi-bin/prored.cgi?red=www%2Edaisy%2Eorg&rediffng=0) or DAISY forum of India: [www.daisyindia.org](http://prolinks.rediffmailpro.com/cgi-bin/prored.cgi?red=www%2Edaisyindia%2Eorg&rediffng=0)  can conduct one- or two-day training for this.

**Can I make a book accessible at birth? How?**

Yes. Simply use Unicode-based font for Indian language text. Mark digital documents as per guidelines such as the use of appropriate Heading styles, proper table formatting, use of ordered and unordered list, etc. In this way the master digital file itself can be used to produce accessible EPUB 3 books.

**Do I need a special/separate accessible book or can I make my mainstream e-book accessible?**

The ideal is to make the mainstream e-book accessible. There is no negative effect of an accessible book on the mainstream e-book. In fact it is a value-add, making the mainstream book more readable and navigable.

**Will making an e-book accessible compromise the visual look and readability?**

No, in fact, incorporating accessibility guidelines would increase readability of digital books on all kinds of digital devices or different screen sizes. All visual effects and layouts can be used without compromising any accessibility requirement.

**Is it legal to make such accessible formats?**

Yes. India amended its Copyright Act in 2012. The current Copyright Amendment Act, 2012 makes it legal for print disabled persons and organisations working for them to create and share between them Accessible copies on a not-for-profit basis. The said exceptions are under the clauses 52 (1) (zb) and 31B.

**Will it cost me extra to publish an accessible book?**

If accessibility is part of the production strategy an Accessible Book would not mean any significant incremental cost in production.

**Am I expected to provide the accessible books free? Or can I charge for them?**

As a publisher who is into publishing business for profit the law does not bar you from charging for the accessible books. However, it is expected that the charge of an accessible e-book cannot be greater than its mainstream counterpart. Ideally there will be only a single E-book which itself would be accessible to one and all, and the same can be priced as per your pricing policy

**Where do I sell accessible e-books?**

You may sell them through your regular channels of business.

**What are the safeguards to ensure there won’t be unauthorised usage amongst users?**

The risks attached with regards the piracy of an accessible e-book are the same as those attached with the regular e-book. Legal action against a violator of copyright of an accessible book remains the same as that for a regular e-book.

**What can I do if I wish to actively participate with the Inclusive Publishing Movement in India?**

If you would like to know more about Inclusive Publishing or partner with us in any way to ensure books are in reach of the print-disabled community in India, feel free to contact us at the details mentioned in the booklet. If you would like a detailed FAQ on Inclusive Publishing mailed to you, drop us an email at info@xrcvc.org or info@daisyindia.org.

**About Us:**

**THE XRCVC and DFI:**

The Xavier’s Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC), part of the St Xavier’s College, Mumbai, is a state-of-the-art support and advocacy unit working to create an inclusive society for visually challenged people across India. To know more about us please visit our website—[www.xrcvc.org](http://prolinks.rediffmailpro.com/cgi-bin/prored.cgi?red=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Exrcvc%2Eorg%2F&isImage=0&BlockImage=0&rediffng=0). The XRCVC’s aim is to ensure that vision loss or impairment only remains a physical condition which can be overcome rather than go on to become a disability for the visually challenged.

Working with publishers to create the necessary awareness about the why and the how of inclusive publishing is a core area of the XRCVC’s work. It has engaged with leading publishers across the country and has worked towards creating accessible content for print-disabled persons through its active role in the Daisy Forum of India (DFI) (see [www.daisyindia.org](http://www.daisyindia.org)), an umbrella body of over 90 organisations working in the print access field.

**CONTACT US**

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