

## **Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled (MVT)**

### **Assembly**

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**REPORT ON THE ACCESSIBLE BOOKS CONSORTIUM**

*Information document prepared by the Secretariat*

## INTRODUCTION

1. This is the seventh annual *Report on the Accessible Books Consortium* prepared in the framework of the Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
2. The *Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled* (“the Marrakesh VIP Treaty”) came into force on September 30, 2016, after ratification or accession by 20 eligible parties.
3. The Accessible Books Consortium (ABC) is a public-private partnership that seeks to implement the objectives of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty at a practical level. In June 2014, WIPO and a group of key partners launched ABC before the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR). ABC’s goal is to increase the number of books in accessible formats and to distribute these to people around the globe who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled.
4. ABC does not have a separate legal personality, rather it is an alliance of stakeholders led by WIPO. ABC has an advisory board that provides technical expertise and ensures transparency and fosters efficient communication with the stakeholder community. The board includes a total of 14 nominated members in the beneficiary, rights holders, authorized entity and donor constituencies. The following organizations hold permanent seats on the board:

DAISY Consortium;  
International Authors Forum;  
International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment;  
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions;  
International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations;  
International Publishers Association;  
World Blind Union; and  
WIPO (*ex-officio*).

## ACTIVITIES OF THE ACCESSIBLE BOOKS CONSORTIUM

### ABC Global Book Service

5. The ABC Global Book Service (“the Service”) manages the world’s most diverse and online catalogue of books in accessible formats available at no cost to libraries or people who are print disabled. The Service provides libraries for the blind, known as authorized entities (AEs) as defined in Article 2(c) of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty, with the ability to search, order and exchange accessible books across borders. The Service’s cloud-based technical platform enables participating AEs to pool their collective resources by sharing their respective catalogues and accessible digital files with each other.
6. The Service has over 650,000 titles in 80 languages available for cross-border exchange without the need for clearance formalities. Nearly 150,000 accessible digital files are available for immediate download by AEs.
7. A major milestone was recently reached when the 100<sup>th</sup> AE joined the Service. Of the 100 participating AEs, 46 per cent are located in developing or least developed countries (LDCs). Participating AEs delivered over 90,000 accessible digital files from the ABC catalogue to persons with print disabilities in 2020. See Annex I for the list of AEs that are members of the Service.

8. While the main ABC application is a library-to-library service (the “AE application”), ABC has now developed a Supplementary Application as a complement to its AE application, also provided for free. This Supplementary Application was launched in April 2021 and is proposed to participating AEs as a tool that they can provide to persons who are print disabled.

9. The Supplementary Application is a catalogue available for public searching, which gives the participating AEs’ patrons the ability to query and immediately download accessible format copies of titles contained in the ABC catalogue. AEs certify that the persons downloading digital files through the ABC Supplementary Application are print disabled as defined in Article 3 of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty. Currently, 23 AEs have agreed to the ABC Terms & Conditions for the Supplementary Application.

#### *Future ABC Global Book Service Activities*

10. ABC will continue to offer its new Supplementary Application to participating AEs that are located in countries that have ratified and implemented the provisions of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty. AEs that wish to join the Supplementary Application consent to provide their digital files to ABC to be hosted on the cloud, so that the digital files become available for immediate download by beneficiaries, as well as all participating AEs in the library-to-library application. ABC is making it a priority to encourage all AEs to offer the Supplementary Application to their patrons.

11. ABC also continues to discuss with key parties the establishment of a portal for a federated search, with the aim to provide a central location for the public search, discovery and exchange of the largest number of titles in accessible formats in the widest possible range of languages. Such a federated search capacity across a network of catalogues would further assist AEs and people who are print-disabled, by maximizing the number of accessible titles available for public search on various platforms, thus facilitating beneficiaries’ access to the widest range of titles.

#### Training and Technical Assistance

12. Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing travel restrictions, ABC training in the latest accessible book production techniques shifted from in-person trainings to an online platform. WIPO partnered with accessibility expert, the DAISY Consortium, to develop and host the ABC Online Course in Accessible Book Production. The English language version of the course was completed first and the course modules were subsequently translated by the WIPO Translation Division into French and Spanish and are currently being translated into Arabic.

13. A total of 87 participants from 43 partner organizations in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Morocco, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine and Peru have completed or are completing the ABC Online Course in Accessible Book Production in English, French or Spanish, respectively. The ABC Online Course, including interactive sessions with accessibility experts, will continue to be used for all on-going and future technical assistance projects.

14. Many of the trainees are themselves blind, have low vision or other disabilities. The course platform is designed to be inclusive, with navigable lesson content, accessible quizzes, described images and captioned videos. The course teaches participants how to make accessible books using production software that is also entirely accessible.

15. The ABC model for technical assistance aims to equip organizations in developing countries and LDCs with the ability to produce educational materials in national languages to be used by primary, secondary and university students who are print disabled. Since 2015, participants from over 250 organizations, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs),

departments of education and publishers, have received training in the latest accessible book production techniques.

16. ABC implemented 15 technical assistance projects in 2021 and is funding the production of approximately 4000 educational titles in accessible formats in national languages. Projects are ongoing or have been completed in:

Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

Additionally, technical assistance projects are scheduled to begin in the last quarter of 2021 in Kyrgyzstan, Philippines and Senegal.

17. Funds-in-Trust (FIT) are funding or have funded capacity-building projects in the following countries:

- FIT Australia: Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam
- FIT Republic of Korea: Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Philippines, Senegal and Uruguay.

All other projects are funded by the WIPO regular budget. WIPO continues to welcome FITs for ABC training and technical assistance projects.

#### *Future Training and Technical Assistance Activities*

18. ABC and the DAISY Consortium are planning the addition of a new module to be incorporated into the ABC Online Course. This innovative module will teach participants how to make accessible science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) materials using production software. Participants for this new module will need as a prerequisite to have already completed the first 10 modules of the ABC Online Course. The STEM module will also be inclusively designed.

19. The ABC Online Course, currently hosted by the DAISY Consortium's learning platform, will be transferred to the WIPO Academy's learning platform by the end of the year.

20. The ABC Secretariat will issue a *Call for Proposals* in the last quarter of 2021, inviting eligible organizations (or partnerships of organizations) located in developing countries and LDCs to send their applications to WIPO for technical assistance projects to be implemented in 2022-23. Geographical distribution will be taken into consideration in selecting the projects, in addition to the stated eligibility criteria.

#### Accessible Publishing

21. ABC promotes the production of "born accessible" works by publishers, i.e., books that are usable from the start by both sighted persons and the print-disabled. In particular, all publishers are encouraged to:

- use the accessibility features of the EPUB3 open standard for the production of digital publications; and
- include descriptions of the accessibility features of their products in the information they provide to distributors, retailers and others in the book supply chain.

22. Publishers and publisher associations around the world are invited to sign the *ABC Charter for Accessible Publishing*, which contains eight high-level aspirational principles relating to digital publications in accessible formats. The latest additional signatories of the ABC Charter are Wits University Press (South Africa), Bristol University Press (United Kingdom) and the

University of Michigan Press (United States of America). A complete list of ABC Charter signatories is found at Annex II.

23. ABC organized the annual *ABC International Excellence Award for Accessible Publishing*, which recognizes organizations providing outstanding leadership and achievements in the advancement of the accessibility of digital publications to persons with print disabilities. The shortlisted candidates in the Publisher Category for 2021 are:

- House of Anansi Press (Canada)
- Taylor & Francis Group (United Kingdom)
- University of Michigan Press (United States of America)

The shortlisted candidates in the Initiative Category for 2021 are:

- Dorina Nowill Foundation for the Blind (Brazil)
- National Network for Equitable Library Services (NNELS, Canada)
- Sao Mai Center for the Blind (Viet Nam)
- The Interdepartmental Steering Committee for the Promotion of Born Accessible eBooks to People with Disabilities (COPIL, France)

The winners of the ABC International Excellence Award will be announced during a ceremony on October 20, 2021, to be held for the first time at the Frankfurt Book Fair (FBF).

#### *Future Accessible Publishing Activities*

24. Further to requests from publishers for specific training addressing their needs, WIPO contracted with accessibility expert, the DAISY Consortium, to develop a Publisher module to be added to the ABC Online Course. This module will teach participants from the publishing sector – from both developed and developing countries – how to create “born accessible” books using professional publishing software, which differs from the software used by AEs to convert existing titles into accessible format copies.

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I: LIST OF 100 AUTHORIZED ENTITIES (AES) THAT HAVE JOINED THE ABC GLOBAL BOOK SERVICE

Those AEs marked with an asterisk \* have agreed to the ABC Supplementary Application Terms & Conditions.

1. Antigua and Barbuda: The Unit for the Blind and Visually Impaired (UBV)
2. Argentina: *Asociación Civil Tiflonexos* (TLF)
3. Australia: VisAbility
4. Australia: Vision Australia (VA)
5. Austria: *Hörbücherei* (HBOE)
6. Bangladesh: Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)
7. \*Belgium: Eqla (previously known as *l'Œuvre Nationale des Aveugles*)
8. \*Belgium: *Luisterpuntbibliotheek* (previously known as Flemish Library for Audiobooks and Braille) (LPB)
9. \*Belgium: *Ligue Braille* (LBB)
10. Bhutan: The Muenselling Institute (MI)
11. Bolivia (Plurinational State of): *Instituto Boliviano de la Ceguera* (IBC)
12. \*Brazil: *Fundação Dorina Nowill para Cegos* (DNF)
13. Bulgaria: The National Library for the Blind "Louis Braille 1928" (Louis Braille 1928)
14. \*Burkina Faso: *Union Nationale Des Associations Burkinabé pour la Promotion des Aveugles et Malvoyants* (UNABPAM)
15. Canada: BC Libraries Cooperative 2009, National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS)
16. \*Canada: *Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec* (BAnQ)
17. \*Canada: Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
18. \*Canada: Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA)
19. Chile: *Biblioteca Central para Ciegos* (BCC)
20. Colombia: *Instituto Nacional para Ciegos* (INCI)
21. \*Croatia: Croatian Library for the Blind (CLB)
22. Czech Republic: Czech Blind United (SONS)
23. Cyprus: Pancyprrian Organization of the Blind
24. Denmark: Danish National Library for Persons with Print Disabilities (NOTA)
25. \*Dominican Republic: *Asociación de Ciegos del Cibao de la República Dominicana* (ACICIRD)
26. Dominican Republic: *Biblioteca Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña* (BNPHU)
27. Dominican Republic: *Fundación Francina Hungría* (FFH)
28. Egypt: *Biblioteca Alexandrina* (BA)
29. Estonia: The Estonian Library for the Blind (ELB)

30. Finland: Celia Library (CELIA)
31. \*France: *Association Valentin Haüy* (AVH)
32. France: *BrailleNet*
33. \*France: *Accompagner Promouvoir et Intégrer les Déficients Visuels* (previously known as *Groupement des Intellectuels Aveugles ou Amblyopes*) (apiDV)
34. Germany: German Center for Accessible Reading (previously known as German Central Library for the Blind) (DZB)
35. Greece: The Hellenic Academic Libraries Link (HEAL-Link) (AMELIB)
36. Guatemala: *Benemérito Comité Pro Ciegos y Sordos de Guatemala* (BCPCSG)
37. Hungary: The Hungarian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (HFBPS)
38. Iceland: The Icelandic Talking Book Library (HBS)
39. India: DAISY Forum of India (DFI)
40. \*Ireland: NCBI Library and Media Center (NCBI)
41. Israel: The Central Library for Blind and Reading Impaired People (CLFB)
42. Jamaica: Jamaican Society for the Blind (JSB)
43. Japan: National Diet Library (NDL)
44. Japan: National Association of Institutions of Information Service for Visually Impaired Persons (NAIIV)
45. Kazakhstan: The Republican Library for the Blind and Visually Impaired Citizens
46. Kenya: Kenya Institute for the Blind (KIB)
47. Kyrgyzstan: The Library and Information Consortium (LIC)
48. \*Latvia: Latvian Library for the Blind (LNerB)
49. Lithuania: Lithuanian Library for the Blind (LAB)
50. Malawi: University of Malawi, Chancellor College (UOFM)
51. Malaysia: St. Nicholas' Home, Penang (SNH)
52. \*Malta: Malta Libraries (ML)
53. \*Mexico: *Discapitados Visuales I.A.P.* (DIVIAP)
54. Republic of Moldova: National Information and Rehabilitation Center of the "Association of the Blind People of Moldova" (ABPM)
55. Mongolia: The Mongolian National Federation of the Blind (MNFB)
56. Mongolia: The Braille and Digital Library for Blind, Metropolitan Library of Ulaanbaatar (UBPL)
57. Myanmar: Myanmar National Association of the Blind (MNAB)
58. Nepal: Action on Disability Rights and Development (ADRAD)
59. \*Netherlands: *Bibliotheekservice Passend Lezen* (BPL)
60. \*Netherlands: Dedicon
61. \*New Zealand: Blind Low Vision NZ (previously known as Blind Foundation) (BLVNZ)

62. Niger : *L'Union Nationale des Aveugles du Niger* (UNAN)
63. Norway: Norwegian Library of Talking Books and Braille (NLB)
64. Pakistan: The Pakistan Foundation Fighting Blindness (PFFB)
65. Palestine: Palestine Association of Visually Impaired Persons (PAVIP)
66. Poland: Central Library of Labour and Social Security (DZDN)
67. Portugal: *Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal* (BNP)
68. Qatar: Qatar National Library (QNL)
69. Republic of Korea: National Library for the Disabled in Korea (NDL)
70. Romania: *Fundația Cartea Călătoare* (FCC)
71. Russian Federation: Bashkir Republican Special Library for the Blind named after Makarim Husainovich Tukhvatshin
72. Russian Federation: Russian State Library for the Blind (RSL)
73. Russian Federation: St. Petersburg Library for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SPB)
74. Saint Lucia: St. Lucia Blind Welfare Association (SLBWA)
75. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: The National Public Library of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (NPLSG)
76. Sierra Leone: Educational Centre for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ECBVI)
77. South Africa: South African Library for the Blind (SALB)
78. Spain: *Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles* – ONCE (ONCE)
79. Sri Lanka: Daisy Lanka Foundation (DLF)
80. Sweden: Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (MTM)
81. \*Switzerland: *Associazione ciechi e ipovedenti della Svizzera italiana* (UNITAS)
82. \*Switzerland: *Association pour le Bien des Aveugles et malvoyants* (ABAGE)
83. Switzerland: *Bibliothèque Sonore Romande* (BSR)
84. Switzerland: SBS Swiss Library for the Blind, Visually Impaired and Print Disabled (SBS)
85. Tajikistan: The National Library of Tajikistan (NLT)
86. Thailand: The Christian Foundation for the Blind in Thailand (CFBT)
87. Thailand: National Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, TAB Foundation (TAB)
88. Tunisia: *Loisirs et Cultures pour les Non et Malvoyants* (IBSAR)
89. Tunisia: Tunisian National Library (BNT)
90. Uganda: Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB)
91. Ukraine: Ostrovskiy Central Specialized Library for the Blind (CLBU)
92. United Kingdom: Seeing Ear LTD (SE)
93. United Kingdom: Torch Trust for the Blind (TT)
94. United States of America: California State Library, Braille and Talking Book Library (CSL)
95. \*United States of America: The Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS)

96. United States of America: American Printing House for the Blind (APH)
97. United States of America: Braille Institute of America (BIA)
98. \*Uruguay: *Fundación Braille de Uruguay* (FBU)
99. Viet Nam: Sao Mai Vocational and Assistive Technology Center for the Blind (SMCB)
100. Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe National League of the Blind (ZNLB)

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II: LIST OF SIGNATORIES TO ABC CHARTER FOR ACCESSIBLE PUBLISHING

1. Al Fulk Translation and Publishing (United Arab Emirates)
2. Al Salwa Publishers (Jordan)
3. Al-Balsam Publishing House (Egypt)
4. Allen and Unwin (Australia)
5. *Arnoldo Mondadori Editore* (Italy)
6. Artanuji Publishing (Georgia)
7. *Associação Religiosa Editora Mundo Cristão* (Brazil)
8. Bakur Sulakauri Publishing (Georgia)
9. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. (United Kingdom)
10. *Brinque-Book Editora de Livros Ltda* (Brazil)
11. Bristol University Press (United Kingdom)
12. British Dyslexia Association (United Kingdom)
13. Dar Al Aalam Al Arabi Publishing and Distribution (United Arab Emirates)
14. Discover 21, Inc. (Japan)
15. *Distribuidora Record de Serviços de Imprensa S.A.* (Brazil)
16. *É Realizações, Editora, Livraria e Distribuidora Ltda* (Brazil)
17. *Ediciones Godot* (Argentina)
18. *Ediciones Santillana, Argentina* (Argentina)
19. *Ediouro Publicações Ltda* (Brazil)
20. *Editora Albanisia Lúcia Dummar Pontes ME* (Brazil)
21. *Editora Arqueiro Ltda* (Brazil)
22. *Editora Atlas S/A* (Brazil)
23. *Editora Bertrand Brasil Ltda* (Brazil)
24. *Editora Best Seller Ltda* (Brazil)
25. *Editora Biruta Ltda* (Brazil)
26. *Editora Bonifácio Ltda* (Brazil)
27. *Editora Carambaia EIRELI* (Brazil)
28. *Editora Casa da Palavra Produção Editorial Ltda* (Brazil)
29. *Editora Claro Enigma Ltda* (Brazil)
30. *Editora de Livros Cobogó Ltda* (Brazil)
31. *Editora e Produtora Spot 1 Ltda* (Brazil)
32. *Editora Filocalia Ltda* (Brazil)
33. *Editora Fontanar Ltda* (Brazil)
34. *Editora Forense Ltda* (Brazil)
35. *Editora Gaivota Ltda* (Brazil)

36. *Editora Globo S.A.* (Brazil)
37. *Editora Guanabara Koogan Ltda* (Brazil)
38. *Editora Intrínseca Ltda* (Brazil)
39. *Editora Jaguaritica Digital Ltda* (Brazil)
40. *Editora José Olympio Ltda* (Brazil)
41. *Editora JPA Ltda* (Brazil)
42. *Editora Jurídica da Bahia Ltda* (Brazil)
43. *Editora Lendo e Aprendendo Ltda ME* (Brazil)
44. *Editora Manole Ltda* (Brazil)
45. *Editora Nova Fronteira Participações S/A* (Brazil)
46. *Editora Original Ltda* (Brazil)
47. *Editora Paz e Terra Ltda* (Brazil)
48. *Editora Pequena Zahar Ltda* (Brazil)
49. *Editora Prumo Ltda* (Brazil)
50. *Editora Record Ltda* (Brazil)
51. *Editora Reviravolta Ltda* (Brazil)
52. *Editora Rocco Ltda* (Brazil)
53. *Editora Schwarcz S/A* (Brazil)
54. *Editorial 5 / ED5* (Brazil)
55. *Editorial El Manual Moderno Colombia S.A.S.* (Colombia)
56. *Editorial el Manual Moderno, S.A. de C.V.* (Mexico)
57. *Edizioni Piemme* (Italy)
58. Elsevier (United Kingdom)
59. *Elsevier Editora Ltda* (Brazil)
60. *GEN – Grupo Editorial Nacional Participação S/A* (Brazil)
61. *Giulio Einaudi Editore* (Italy)
62. *GMT Editores Ltda* (Brazil)
63. *Hachette Livre* (France)
64. HarperCollins Publishers (United States of America)
65. House of Anansi Press (Canada)
66. Hudhud Publishing and Distribution (United Arab Emirates)
67. *Imago Editora Importação e Exportação Ltda* (Brazil)
68. Intelekti Publishing (Georgia)
69. *J.E. Solomon Editores Ltda* (Brazil)
70. *Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda* (Brazil)
71. Kadi and Ramadi (Saudi Arabia)
72. Kalimat Group (United Arab Emirates)

73. Kogan Page (United Kingdom)
74. *Livraria do Advogado Ltda* (Brazil)
75. *LTC – Livros Técnicos e Científicos Editora Ltda* (Brazil)
76. Macmillan Learning (United States of America)
77. National Union of Book Publishers (Brazil)
78. *NC Editora Ltda* (Brazil)
79. New Africa Books (South Africa)
80. Nigerian Publishers Association (Nigeria)
81. Oratia Media (New Zealand)
82. *Pallas Editora e Distribuidora Ltda* (Brazil)
83. *Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial México* (Mexico)
84. *Petra Editorial Ltda* (Brazil)
85. PHI Learning Private Limited (India)
86. *Pinto e Zincone Editora Ltda* (Brazil)
87. *Planeta de Libros* (Spain)
88. *Publibook Livros e Papéis Ltda* (Brazil)
89. *Saber e Ler Editorial Ltda* (Brazil)
90. SAGE Publications Ltd (United Kingdom)
91. Sama Publishing, Production and Distribution (United Arab Emirates)
92. Santillana Colombia (Colombia)
93. *Santillana Educación S.L.* (Spain)
94. *Santillana México* (Mexico)
95. Silkworm Books Ltd (Thailand)
96. *SM México* (Mexico)
97. *Sociedade Literária Edições e Empreendimentos Ltda* (Brazil)
98. *Sperling & Kupfer* (Italy)
99. *Starlin Alta Editora e Consultoria EIRELI* (Brazil)
100. *Summus Editorial Ltda* (Brazil)
101. Sydney University Press (Australia)
102. University of Michigan Press (United States of America)
103. *Verlag Barbara Budrich* (Germany)
104. *Verus Editora Ltda* (Brazil)
105. Wahat Alhekayat Publishing and Distribution (United Arab Emirates)
106. Waw Publishing (United Arab Emirates)
107. Wits University Press (South Africa)
108. World Intellectual Property Organization

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