MyRight ● Accessibility

- A pre-condition for inclusion

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MyRight ● Accessibility policy

Admitted by MyRight's board 2015-03-18

Basic principle

MyRight shall strive to make all its work accessible to all. This means that operations, information and service shall be adapted so that persons with impairments can participate in planning, implementing and monitoring projects in accordance to MyRight's guidelines for partnership and international development cooperation.

Accessibility is pre-condition to inclusion

Persons with disabilities shall have the opportunity to participate in MyRight's work regardless of bodily functioning. This includes:

- Accessible venues
- Accessible meetings, seminars and other events
- Accessible documents (format, language, colour, shape and lay-out)
- Accessible IT-platforms (websites, databases)
- Inclusive treatment which respects everyone's equal value
- The right to interpreters, assistants and guides during travels aimed for development cooperation.

Limitations

Accessibility is about eliminating a variety of barriers so that everyone can access information and take part in communications and operations. Thus an accessible approach often includes that one particular content needs to be presented and communicated in different ways since the thing which may work for some is inaccessible to others.   MyRight's ambition is to, as far as possible, is to find solutions which cater for everybody's individual needs.

MyRight ● Accessibility Guidelines

Accessible meetings, seminars and conferences

Choice of venue

The way to the venue
Check

- That taxis and other vehicles can stop near the entrance

The way into the venue and indoors environment
Check

- That there is a ramp if there are stairs to the entrance;
- That the doors are wide enough for wheelchair entrance (standard 80 cm wide);
- That doors are easy to open and doesn't have high thresholds;
- That there are functioning elevators if the room is on a higher floor;
- That toilets are accessible to persons with disabilities;
- That larger surface of glass and staircases are marked for partially sighted persons.

Also remember to

- Signpost the meeting room where necessary
- Ahead of time offer guidance from the entrance of the venue to the meeting room

The meeting room
Check

- That the acoustics are conducive to persons with hearing impairments
- That the podium or panel arrangements can be reached by wheelchair users;
- That there are microphones if needed
- That sing language interpreters are appropriately places and have appropriate lighting, even if the room is darkened for film viewing or slide shows;
- That there is space and arrangements for note takers if necessary

Also remember to

- Check the technology before the event starts
- Prepare places for persons using wheelchairs

- That passages between chairs and tables are passable for persons using wheelchair or those partially
- Reserve appropriate seats or places for interpreters:
- Avoid messy backgrounds or sources of light behind speakers and interpreters;
- Place materials, refreshments at a height a place which is easily accessible to all;
- Avoid flower and other strong scented things.

Group rooms

Remember
- Also group rooms have to be accessible
- To take consideration to needs for interpreters and assistants when selecting groups.

Facilitators, Speakers and participants

Invitations
- Ask participants to inform if they have accessibility needs such as hearing loops, sing language interpreters or other assistance;
- Ask participants to avoid strong scent out of respect for persons with allergies. (formulation: In order for all to be able to participate in the meetings we kindly ask you to avoid strong perfumes and products)
- Ask participants to notify if they have requirements for special foods;
- If you are planning to send out material ahead of the event, remember to mention it already in the invitation;
- Give a clear description of the location of the venue.

The agenda
- Start by informing about emergency exits at the venue in the case of fire and information about toilets and accessible toilets.
- The agenda should include regular breaks
- Both starting time and finish time should be clear from the agenda and adhered to;
- Respect the scheduled times. It is important to do so with respect to guides, assistants, interpreters and so on. It is also important for persons with pain and persons having to concentrate to look at interpreters and so on.

Speakers and facilitators

- Documents which are to be used during the meeting shall be distributed to participants and interpreters in good time (at least a week) prior to the event. If documents are given at a meeting, they should also be available in Braille where needed.
- Material sent to participants should be in accessible formats. The most accessible format is word without tables. Scanned documents are not accessible for persons with visual impairments. (for more information on accessible document, see page 9)
- Remember to inform external speakers and facilitators that documents have to be accessible to avoid additional work to remake document which are to be distributed.
- When using power point or writing on flip charts of white/black boards, all information should also be read out loud.
- If participants are to produce written notes during a workshop or meeting, please remember to have mixed groups.
- Elect one person to take notes and minutes for everyone as persons using interpreters have to watch the interpreter and are therefore unable to take notes for themselves.
- Inform external speaker and facilitators to speak clear and at a speed which makes interpretation possible. Check so that interpreters have the time to translate everything that is being said.
- If there is a smaller meeting, always have a verbal round of introduction so that everyone knows who is present and where they are sitting.

Interpreters

- Before you book and interpreter, ask those who needs the translation if they need their own interpreter or if they can share. When you book and interpreter you should tell them who they are interpreting for. If there is documentation and materials for the meetings these should be sent to interpreters in advance.

Personal treatment

General
- Always address to the person who is concerned, not to their guide, interpreter or assistant.

Persons who are partially sighted
- For planned visits, offer guidance from a convenient location, the street, entrance and so on.
- Offer your arm for guiding. Let the person who is partially sighted grab your arm and not the other way around. Tell the person when there are stairs and other obstructions in the path. If you need to leave the person, guide them to a wall, chair or other solid point. Notify when you leave.
- For visits, walk up an introduce yourself.
- Notify when you enter a room and inform what you are about to do. Also notify when you leave.
- If you serve food, describe how the food is places by using a 'clock' reference.

Persons who are hard of hearing or deaf
- Maintain eye contact with the person you are speaking to so that they can read your lips.
- Do **not** talk to several people at the same time.
- If possible, turn off all noise in the background.
- Remember that the interpreter is not only a tool for deaf people to understand what is being said to or around them but also a tool for hearing people to be able to interrupt an ongoing conversation between deaf. It means that hearing persons has the right to utilize the interpreter to be able to participate in conversations.

Persons with intellectual impairment and learning difficulties
- Speak simply and confirm that the person has understood what you have said.
- Do not ask leading questions.

Persons with physical impairments
- Preferably sit down when you speak to someone using a wheelchair.

Accessible documents

Documents which are accessible to some may not be accessible to others. It could, for example be information which for a sighted person is easily read and summarised in tables or rows, but difficult for someone who is partially sighted or blind. If we know the individuals who will receive the information, we can adapt it accordingly. If we do not know the target group, we need to work with different formats for equitable access to information.

Word
Word is the most accessible format. (Save as Word 97-2003-document).
Headlines should be in Arial and body text in Times New Roman. The font size should not be smaller than 12. For partially sighted persons, Arial 14 is the most used font
Use the tools when making bullet points and lists instead of the keyboard.
Avoid complicated tables and graphs.
Do **not** use images if the document is to be read by a screen reader. Al logotype is also an image.
Sometimes document which are adapted for partially sighted persons inaccessible for persons with full vision. IN these cases, make to versions of the document. Remember to save the document under a name which reflects the type of accessibility.

Excel
Excel may be needed for certain documents containing figures or a lot of tables or log frames. Merged cells may be hard to read with screen readers and for persons who are partially sighted or blind a table in Word may be a more accessible option. Excel cells pasted into in a Word document is not accessible.

Pdf
Scanned documents are **not** accessible and there is no way to make them accessible. Therefore, avoid its use.
Word-files which are saved as Pdf can be made accessible but avoid using tables and graphs which reduce accessibility.
To send signed documents, we sometimes have to send scanned documents. In these cases the name of the document should contain clear information about which document it is and as far as possible be complimented by a Word document containing the same information. The email should make it clear which two documents that belong to each other.

Power-point
Power-Point can be accessible depending on its contents. If the information should be distributed, test the accessibility first or edit the content into a Word document. If Power-Point is used during a meeting or work-shop, all text should be read out loud and all content or visual descriptions described. All documents which are handed out in any meeting should be available in Braille where relevant.

Google docs

If you want to make notes which you want to share with everyone during a meeting, Google Docs may be a good option. The advantage with Google Docs is that all participants can view and share the document. Persons who are partially sighted can read it from their own devices simultaneous to it being shown on a big screen to those with full vision. For blind persons, it may be good to use Drop Box to share documents. To find a system this works best, always as participants of their preference.

Translations

For project and programme related information the basic principle is that the needs of the target group shall direct the need for translations. Translation is both about language; Swedish/English/Spanish/sign language and level of language (easy read).

MyRight shall in its communication with member and partner organisations always strive to use as easy a language as possible. This is not the same as 'easy read'. If a target group is in need of or requests 'easy read' policies, instructions or other information, MyRight shall (as possible with available resources) translate the requested texts to 'easy read'.

Documents produced by MyRight, shall (where necessary) be available in Swedish, English and Spanish. Translation to Spanish can, due to limited resources, sometimes be done locally in Nicaragua or Bolivia.

If a project group, due to a specific impairment, needs to translate documents and correspondence to access information from its partner organisations, MyRight should approve such translations. Cost-effective solutions shall be based on the needs of the target group.

MyRight shall develop a working routine to translate important documents such as agreements and its appendices, policies, guidelines and instructions to the relevant sign language of our programmed countries. This is to reduce the work load on our country coorindators and to ensyre that all relevant persons in deaf organisations have access to information when it is needed. The agreements with deaf associations should be accompanied by a film where the partner organisations confirm that they have received an understood the content of the agreement.

MyRight's programme officers and country coordinators shall, where deemed important, complement written information with physical meetings, alternatively Skype meetings, with representatives from the deaf associations. Through a dialogue with sign language interpretation, the deaf organizations are given the opportunity to ask questions and MyRight can be assured that the information has been understood.

Recommendations for an accessible language

- Use straight left marginal
- Divide the text into paragraphs. It is better to have several short paragraphs than a few long ones. Use sub-headings
- Write in as simply a language as you can
- Use SVO word order: Subject, verb, object if this is relevant in the chosen language.

  Write: MyRight's member organisations submit reports in August
  Do not write: In August submissions of reports are given to MyRight.

- Write short sentences.
- Avoid subordinate clauses (also called dependent clauses), often following a subordinate conjunction (after, although, as, once before, if, unless, then, since, when, until, whereas, while and so on) or a relative pronoun (that, who, whoever, whose, whichever, whom and so on,)

- Avoid writing 'one', 'people', Instead write who is being referred to.
- Use active verb forms rather than passive verb forms.
  Write; The NDFN **teaches** parents sign language
  Do not write: Parents are **being taught** sign language by the NDFN.

Or

  Write: MyRight prioritized accessibility
  Do not write: Accessibility is being prioritized by MyRight

- Always type out abbreviations

  i.e. – that is, in other words

  etc. – and so on, and the rest (abbreviation for etcetera).

  e.g. – for instance, for example

Terminology

Always start with the principle of 'persons with disability'

Use: a woman with visual impairment, a child with albinism and so on.
But use: A deaf man

More in the MyRight document "Code on the Presentation of Persons with Disabilities in the Media" *http://myright.ba/people-with-disabilities-in-the-media*

Accessibility- a pre-condition when working with MyRight

For consults, facilitators, speakers and so on

All MyRight's work should be accessible. Therefore, it is important that everyone who works with MyRight knows what accessibility is. Speakers and facilitators shall conduct themselves in a way which allows everyone to participate on an equal basis.

- Always address to the person who is concerned, not to their guide, interpreter or assistant.

- Documents which are to be used during the meeting shall be distributed to participants and interpreters in good time (at least a week) prior to the event.

- Material sent to participants should be in accessible formats. The most accessible format is word without tables. Scanned documents are not accessible for persons with visual impairments. Word is the most accessible format. (Save as Word 97-2003-document). Use the tools when making bullet points and lists instead of the keyboard. Produce a copy without images and tables for persons with visual impairments when necessary. Scanned documents are not accessible for persons with visual impairments. If you want to send out a Power Point, also send out the same information in a word document, where necessary.

- Start by informing about emergency exits at the venue in the case of fire and information about toilets and accessible toilets. The exit plan should include how a person with visual impairment or a wheelchair user should exit in the case of emergency.

- Respect the scheduled times. It is important to do so with respect to guides, assistants, interpreters and so on. It is also important for persons with pain and persons having to concentrate to look at interpreters and so on.

- If participants are to produce written notes during a workshop or meeting, please remember to have mixed groups. Remember that persons using or sharing interpreters also will need to do so during group work. The hard of hearing may need to access a hearing loop also during group work.

- Elect one person to take notes and minutes for everyone as persons using interpreters have to watch the interpreter and are therefore unable to take notes for themselves.

- Speak clear and at a speed which makes interpretation possible. Check so that interpreters have the time to translate everything that is being said. When using power

point or writing on flip charts of white/black boards, all information should also be read out loud.

- If there is a smaller meeting, always have a verbal round of introduction so that everyone knows who is present and where they are sitting.