



**Statement of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
34th Session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Geneva, March 9, 2026**

Marrakesh Treaty

The [World Intellectual Property Organization](#) (WIPO) is the United Nations specialized agency that administers the [Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled](#). This humanitarian treaty makes reference in its preamble to the CRPD principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity, accessibility and full and effective participation and inclusion in society. The Marrakesh Treaty complements the CRPD's principles by allowing for two key provisions:

firstly, it requires Contracting Parties to implement provisions allowing for Authorized Entities to produce accessible format copies of literary works; and

secondly, it allows Authorized Entities to exchange such accessible format copies across borders.

Such accessible format copies are produced and exchanged by Authorized Entities without the need to request permission from the copyright owner, for the purpose of benefitting people who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled.

The Marrakesh Treaty was adopted in Morocco in 2013 and as of today, there are 102 contracting parties covering 128 countries since the European Union joined as one bloc.

The first country to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty was India, and the Treaty came into force on September 30, 2016, upon the accession of Canada, the 20th Member State.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the coming into force of the Marrakesh Treaty and we believe it is fitting that we are also celebrating the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the CRPD, we are reminded of the fundamental importance of equal access to information, culture, and education for all persons with disabilities.

We wish to highlight that joining the Marrakesh Treaty is the first step; what is critical is that the provisions of the Treaty need to be transposed into national law, so that people who are print disabled can fully benefit from the Treaty.

WIPO is ready to work with Member States to have them join the Treaty or to provide them with legislative advice for implementation of the provisions into national law.

Accessible Books Consortium

The [Accessible Books Consortium](#) (ABC) is a public-private partnership that was established in 2014. It is managed and funded by WIPO and seeks to increase the number of accessible format copies of works around the globe by implementing the objectives of the Marrakesh Treaty at an operational level.

More Braille, More Empowerment

We note that last year ABC joined many organizations in celebrating the 200th anniversary of the invention of braille. This year, ABC has joined the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment and the World Blind Union in a global braille literacy campaign entitled "More Braille, More Empowerment", which highlights braille as the foundation of literacy, independence, and full participation in society for people who are visually impaired. The campaign seeks to strengthen global commitment to braille by:

- Highlighting its continuing relevance in the digital era;
- Encouraging collaboration across countries and regions;
- Amplifying the voices of braille users worldwide, encouraging educators to learn and teach braille.

Braille is integrated throughout ABC's core activities – the ABC Global Book Service includes over 120,000 braille titles, our training programs fund digital and embossed braille production in developing and least developed countries, and our accessible publishing initiatives promote the use of technologies such as refreshable digital braille displays.

ABC has three main activities:

Training and Technical Assistance

ABC provides training in the latest accessible book production techniques. Once participants complete the ABC Online Course in Accessible Book Production, ABC provides funding to its partner organization so that its personnel can utilize their recently acquired skills to produce educational titles in accessible formats for students who are print disabled. The ABC model for training and technical assistance aims to equip organizations in developing and least developed countries with the ability to produce educational materials to be used by primary, secondary and university students who are print disabled.

From 2015 to 2025, ABC implemented TTA projects in 41 countries, collectively producing over 24,000 educational books in accessible formats.

ABC is currently collaborating with UNICEF and the DAISY Consortium on developing an AI Tool for speeding up the labour-intensive process of converting print publications into accessible format copies. Preliminary tests show that this AI Tool will significantly reduce production time enabling Authorized Entities to produce more accessible format copies of works while respecting Marrakesh Treaty due-care obligations.

ABC Global Book Service

The ABC Global Book Service provides Authorized Entities, with the ability to search, order and exchange accessible format copies of works across borders at no cost. The Service now includes 150 participating Authorized Entities, with more than 50 percent of all Entities

located in developing or least developed countries. [See our website for the list of Authorized Entities](#) that signed an agreement to join the Service. The ABC catalogue has 1.2 million titles in 80 languages available for cross-border exchange for those Authorized Entities located in countries that have both joined and transposed the provisions of the Marrakesh Treaty into national law.

ABC also offers a Beneficiary Application at no cost to participating Authorized Entities. The Beneficiary Application gives patrons of participating Authorized Entities located in countries that have both joined and transposed the provisions of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty the ability to search for, and immediately download, accessible format copies of works contained in its catalogue. There are over 540,000 accessible format copies available for immediate download in the Beneficiary Application.

Through a collaboration with Dolphin Computer Access, a developer in the United Kingdom of accessibility software, the ABC Beneficiary Application catalogue is now available in Dolphin EasyReader. EasyReader is a user-friendly app available for free on most reading devices.

For those Authorized Entities located in countries that have not yet joined the Marrakesh Treaty, or that have not yet transposed the provisions into national law, the ABC Global Book Service has about 25,000 titles (primarily in English and French) available for cross border exchange further to permissions granted by publishers.

[Accessible Publishing](#)

ABC promotes the production of “born accessible” works by publishers, i.e., books that are usable from the start by persons who are print disabled. Every year, ABC organizes the ABC International Excellence Award for Accessible Publishing to recognize organizations that provide outstanding leadership and achievements in the advancement of the accessibility of digital publications to persons with print disabilities. The winners of the 2025 ABC International Excellence Award for Accessible Publishing were announced during the World Blindness Summit held in September 2025 in São Paulo, Brazil.

The 2026 Award will be presented on April 13, 2026 at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, focusing on inspiring children's book publishers to make titles accessible to all young readers.

For further information about the Marrakesh Treaty or the Accessible Books Consortium, please contact Accessible.Books@wipo.int