

# GOVERNMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH

## Department of Information Technology

### Notification

Bhopal, dated 03.12.2012

### **Accessibility of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Electronic Content for Persons with Disabilities**

The Government of Madhya Pradesh is pleased to notify this circular directing all ministries and government agencies to implement ICT accessibility in all public communication and services.

#### **Background**

According to estimates from census 2011, 2.1 per cent of India's population is living with a disability.<sup>1</sup> India has a literacy level of 64.8 per cent.<sup>2</sup> Madhya Pradesh has a disabled population of 2.3 per cent as per Census 2001,<sup>3</sup> and a literacy level of 70.63 per cent. Hence, a very large demographic of persons with disabilities, illiterate and elderly persons who are presently unable to access government information and services provided electronically and over the internet will benefit from implementing ICT accessibility.

#### **Legal Framework**

The mandate to implement ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities stems from:

- The Constitution of India<sup>4</sup>
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>5</sup> (UNCRPD)
- The Biwako Millennium Framework<sup>6</sup>
- Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region.
- The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.<sup>7</sup>
- The Indian Copyright Act, 1957 as amended in 2012, specifically section 52 (1)(zb)<sup>8</sup>
- The Right to Information Act, 2005 (specifically section 3)<sup>9</sup>

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1. [http://censusindia.gov.in/Census\\_And\\_You/disabled\\_population.aspx](http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/disabled_population.aspx)
  2. [http://censusindia.gov.in/Census\\_And\\_You/literacy\\_and\\_level\\_of\\_education.asp](http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/literacy_and_level_of_education.asp)
  3. <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/madhya+pradesh.html>
  4. <http://lawmin.nic.in/coi/coiason29july08.pdf>
  5. <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>
  6. <http://www8.cao.go.jp/shougai/english/biwako/contents.html> and [http://www.unescap.org/stat/meet/widsm4/session4\\_biwako\\_millennium\\_framework.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/stat/meet/widsm4/session4_biwako_millennium_framework.pdf)
  7. <http://www.thenationaltrust.co.in/nt/images/stories/pwdact1995.pdf>
  8. <http://lawmatters.in/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Indian-Copyright-Act--2012.pdf>
  9. <http://righttoinformation.gov.in/webactrti.htm>

- Guidelines for Indian Government Websites formulated by the National Informatics Centre in January 2009
- Draft Consultation Paper on National Policy for Electronic Accessibility formulated by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology

### Key Terminology:

**Accessibility** is a measure of the extent to which a product or service can be used by a person with a disability as effectively as it can be used by a person without that disability.<sup>10</sup>

**ICT accessibility** covers accessibility of electronic infrastructure and services, which broadly includes hardware, software, user interface and content.

“**Universal design**” means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal design” shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed. See Article 2 of UNCRPD.

“**Reasonable accommodation**” means “necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.” See Article 2 of UNCRPD.

The **Unicode Standard**<sup>11</sup> is the internationally accepted standard for the representation of digital text on various platforms. It assigns a unique code for every character irrespective of platform, program, font or language. Standardizing digital text content in compliance with Unicode allows for greater interoperability, assures greater accessibility and eliminates error in processing and ensure lossless transmission of data.

Accessible formats include, Braille, audio, Daisy, accessible PDF, HTML, large print, etc. Accessible formats can be accessed by persons with disabilities directly or with the help of assistive technology. Whether a format is accessible or not will vary depending on the purpose for which the work is to be used and the person who is using it.

**Assistive technology** refers to technology that enables persons with disabilities to access information, communication or the environment.<sup>12</sup>

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10. e-Accessibility Policy Toolkit for Persons with Disabilities, available at [http://www.e-accessibilitytoolkit.org/toolkit/eaccessibility\\_basics/accessibility\\_and\\_the\\_purposes\\_of\\_icts](http://www.e-accessibilitytoolkit.org/toolkit/eaccessibility_basics/accessibility_and_the_purposes_of_icts)

11. <http://unicode.org/>

12. G3ICT eAccessibility Toolkit, [http://www.e-accessibilitytoolkit.org/toolkit/promoting\\_assistive\\_technologies/introduction\\_assistive%20technologies](http://www.e-accessibilitytoolkit.org/toolkit/promoting_assistive_technologies/introduction_assistive%20technologies)

## **Implementation Strategy**

All ministries and government agencies in the state of Madhya Pradesh are required to implement ICT accessibility through the following ways:

1. Make their websites compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 within one year.
2. Ensure that all content in the public domain is available in accessible formats.
3. Adopt E-Pub as the distribution format for documents and publications for all public documents and text books.
4. Use the Unicode font as the standard for all regional language content.
5. Make reasonable accommodation wherever necessary. For instance, in the case of websites, this can be done by ensuring that alternative accessible content is available wherever it is not possible to make the original content accessible and ensure that both are updated simultaneously.
6. Ensure that tender documents or guidelines issued to web developers for development and maintenance of websites should specify the need to adhere to accessibility requirements.
7. Ensure that principles of universal design are part of all procurement processes.
8. Ensure that all relevant persons in charge of website development or providing information and services receive adequate training in ICT accessibility.
9. Display information about any special services/ schemes/ initiatives for persons with disabilities on their website in an accessible manner wherever relevant.
10. Cooperate with persons with disabilities and their organisations to enable their access to public infrastructure, services and information.

All ministries and government agencies are requested to comply with this order and appoint a nodal officer as a focal point for monitoring compliance.