IDDC Accessibility Guidelines

1. Introduction

The **IDDC Accessibility Guidelines** are a part of the **IDDC Communications Toolbox** which supports our communication actions in a way that consistently promotes the IDDC brand and our shared objectives, values, beliefs and principles. By having a consistent and positive approach to communication we magnify our voice as a network working with and for persons with disabilities. Other documents in the IDDC Communications Toolbox include the IDDC Branding Guidelines and IDDC Communications' Templates. The IDDC Communications Toolbox can be found in the members area of the IDDC website.

Included in this document you will find guidance on:

- Who should use these guidelines
- Creating accessible documents and presentations
- Ensuring accessibility of events

2. Who should use these accessibility guidelines?

These guidelines should be used by the IDDC Board, Secretariat and Task Group (TG) members who are representing IDDC or responding in an IDDC capacity.

These guidelines on creating accessible documents should be followed when producing IDDC communications such as publications, policy or position papers, letters, invitations or programmes for IDDC events etc... (in both print and web formats).

Beyond accessible documents, IDDC should promote the use of good practices of accessibility and create a more inclusive and accessible environment at events organised as IDDC.

If you have a query as to when and how these guidelines are applied, please contact the IDDC Secretariat or respective TG link on the IDDC Board.

3. Creating Accessible Documents

Below are some basic accessibility rules to follow when drafting documents in Microsoft Word format. Many of these points can also be applied to presentations in Microsoft PowerPoint and to accessible web editing.

Font, style, and paragraphs

- **Use Arial font** with a **minimum font size of 12** for body text. Should Arial not be available, opt for the **sans serif fonts** (such as Calibri or Verdana)

- **Use formatting styles such as Heading 1, Heading 2,…** as applicable and use a Table of Contents to create structure in the document.
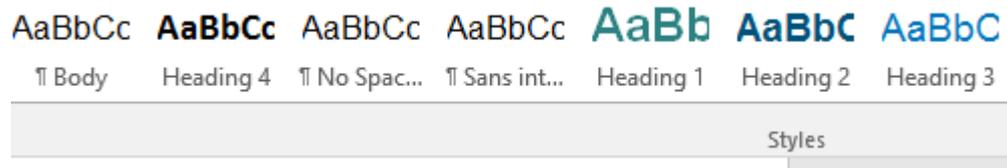
  - o Note: for IDDC communications, the formatting and colour styles are set out in the IDDC Branding Guidelines and in the templates.
- **Avoid** writing in CAPITAL LETTERS, using *italics* and underlining. If you want to place emphasis on a word or a sentence, it is best to use **bold**.
- Always **align text left**; never justify text or use columns.
- **Do not split words across lines of text using hyphens**; instead place the whole word on the next line.
- **Use the paragraph styles function to add spaces both before and after**; avoid creating extra spaces between paragraphs using the 'Enter' key.
- Where hyperlinks are embedded in text, **use the proper hyperlink function**.
- When creating a list or providing a schedule, **use the built-in features** for **numbers or bullet points** in order to create 'real' lists.
- If using colours, **ensure sufficient colour contrast** between the text and the background.

Content

- Always **write acronyms and abbreviations in full the first time they are used** in the text, e.g. International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC). Where there are a lot of acronyms and abbreviations in a text, provide a list of acronyms and abbreviations.
- Ensure that all images and logos are in line with the text; make sure that there are **no images running over or under the text** as this makes text more difficult to read.
- Ensure that **all images and logos are assigned an Alt text** (provide a short description of any useful information which is in the image).
  - o For decorative images, the assigned Alt text should be left blank, which indicates to the screen reader to skip this information.
- **Where possible, avoid tables**. However, if tables are needed, make them accessible by using the built-in features:
  - o Organise the content in the table/columns so that it can be (logically) read from left to right with a single row at a time (ideally, all rows in the table should have the same number of cells, and cells should not be left empty but if there is no content then use a hyphen instead);
  - o Include appropriate column headers to describe the content of each column (chose style options/table tools/header row -> add your header information);

- Use simple table structures, and where possible split large tables into smaller sets of tables;
- Provide a short description of the content of the table using the Alt Text function (see Table properties), and/or a narrative introduction before the table which describes the structure of the table;
- Avoid using blank cells for formatting, and avoid the merging and/or splitting of cells.
- **Avoid using text boxes**; instead use borders and shading functions to make a box.

Useful resources or websites for more information

- Templates for different types of IDDC documents including styles templates for Word and Powerpoint documents can be found in the IDDC Communications Toolbox on the Members Area of the IDDC website.
- In Microsoft Office, use the Accessibility check (go to File > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility). Accessibility errors and warnings are listed in a panel on the right along with suggestions on how to resolve the issues (where possible).
- Tool for checking colour contrast: WebAIM contrast checker[1]
- For advice on accessibility features in different versions of Microsoft Office, see also the website of Accessible Digital Office Document (ADOD)[2] Project
- Making Word documents accessible[3] – advice from Microsoft Office
- Making PowerPoint presentations accessible[4] – advice from Microsoft Office
- Making Excel sheet accessible[5] – advice from Microsoft Office support
- For advice on ensuring accessibility of web content, see the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)[6] which provides shared standards for web content accessibility.
- Any Surfer[7] an organisation which provides advice and trainings on accessibility of documents and websites

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[1] WebAIM contrast checker: http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker

[2] Accessible Digital Office Document (ADOD) project: http://adod.idrc.ocad.ca/

[3] Microsoft office advice on accessible Word documents: https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Make-your-Word-documents-accessible-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US

[4] Microsoft office advice on accessible PowerPoint presentations: https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Make-your-PowerPoint-presentations-accessible-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US

[5] Microsoft office advice on accessible Excel spreadsheets: https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Make-your-Excel-spreadsheets-accessible-6cc05fc5-1314-48b5-8eb3-683e49b3e593?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US

[6] Website for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG): https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php

[7] AnySurfer website: http://anysurfer.be/en

4. Accessible Presentations

The guidelines below on accessible presentations are adapted from the [Guidelines for Making Accessible Presentations](#)[8] from the World Blind Union.

Colors and fonts

- Use a high-contrast colour scheme for persons with low vision, colour blindness and dyslexia, such as white text on a dark background or dark text on an off-white background. The highest brightness contrast is between black and white.
- Examples of Good text and background colour combinations are:
    - IDDC colours on a white background
    - White text on a dark green background
    - Yellow text on a dark blue background
    - Yellow text on a black background
    - Pink text on a black background
    - White text on a dark blue background
    - Do not use a multi-coloured background.
- Ideally, slide headings should be in font size 48 while text found in the body of the slide should be in font size 40. Never use less than font size 32 unless it is for personal notes and page numbers. As in documents, use sans serif fonts, and use bold for emphasis.

Amount of information and text per slide

- There should be a maximum of six lines of text/bullet points with only five/six words per line. Always justify text to the left.
- Use line spacing of 1.5.
- Slides should be simple with no more than 3 different blocks of information.

Figures and graphs

- Figures and graphs should be explained in words to the participants.
- Use only one figure or graph per slide.
- Separate text from image: place text above, below or beside the image. Do not use text wrapping.
- Use brightness and contrasting colours in the same way as you would with text.

Videos and animations

- Ensure that videos include captioning and voice-over

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[8] Guidelines on making presentations accessible from the World Blind Union: http://www.worldblindunion.org/English/resources/Documents/wbu-visual-presentations-guidelines.pdf

- Avoid animations (such as animated gifs) if possible. If not, be sure to describe the animation in words to the participants.

Oral support during slide viewing

- When you introduce yourself, explain the format of the session, including when you will take questions. For example, make it clear if you are willing to accept questions and comments during the presentation, or if you would prefer to take questions when you are finished presenting.
- It is helpful if all text presented on slides is read aloud by the presenter.
- It is helpful to explain the slide in a descriptive manner so that the audience understands where to look. For example, "on the screen you see a diagram with four blocks. The block in the lower right corner …"

Handouts

- Ensure that handouts are available in different formats, such as large print and electronic copies, for audience members who use screen readers and voice over to download onto their laptops.

5. Organising Accessible Events

Preparation of the event

- Persons with disabilities know best their specific needs, so include them in event planning and preparation is an important step in preparation.
- Identify an accessible venue – if possible visit the venue to check accessibility using the Accessibility Checklist for Events (part of the IDDC Communications Toolbox, see below in Annex 1).
- Identify accessible transportation to and from the event as well as accessible hotels near the venue.
- Ensure the invitations and registration forms are in an accessible format.
- At the time of registration, ask whether participants have any specific accessibility requirements, and whether they will be traveling with a personal assistant or their own sign language interpreters.
- Share information on the venue including information on accessible transport.
- Ensure speakers/facilitators are given guidelines on how to create accessible presentations (see the section on Accessible presentations in these guidelines).
- Ensure speakers/facilitators share a copy or outline of their presentation in advance.
- Before the start of the event, ensure that the room is clear of any barriers and objects that could cause obstruction
- Ensure that clear evacuation protocols are explained to all participants at the start of the event.

Participation in the event

- Identify a focal person for accessibility for the event.
- Raise awareness on accessibility with any external staff involved in the event.
- Provide as needed: sign language interpreters, velotypist, large print and electronic version of key documents (This is helpful for those who are using screen readers).
- Ensure participants (and speakers) use microphones when speaking, and speak slowly and clearly.
- If food and drinks are available offer straws and assistance as needed.

Sign language interpreters

- Ensure that enough sign language interpreters are available (for events lasting more than an hour, or involving panels and multiple speakers, interpreters will work in teams).
- Provide the interpreters with background information on the event.
- Share any presentations and speeches in advance (check with interpreters for timing, and inform the speakers/facilitators in advance).
- Do not speak directly to the interpreter; speak to the deaf or hard-of-hearing person as you would in any conversation.
- These are the main highlights, so please also follow Sign language interpreter Guidelines from the European Union of the Deaf[9].

Further information on inclusive meetings and events

- Accessibility Checklist for Events – see Annex 1 below
- Accessible meetings or events[10], CBM
- Inclusive Communication for Disability Manual[11] Make Development Inclusive
- Disability-inclusive consultations and events in Inclusion Made Easy[12], CBM
- Access for All[13], Save The Children
- Accessible Events Checklist[14] – Disability Services Commission of the Government of Western Australia

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[9] Sign Language Interpreter Guidelines from the European Union of the Deaf: http://www.eud.eu/about-us/eud-position-paper/sign-language-interpreter-guidelines/

[10] Accessible Meetings or Events by CBM and Make Development Inclusive project: http://www.inclusive-development.org/cbmtools/part3/1/Accessiblemeetingsorevents.pdf

[11] Inclusive Communication for Disability from Make Development Inclusive project: http://make-development-inclusive.org/toolsen/02_healthlink.pdf

[12] Inclusion Made Easy guide by CBM: http://www.cbm.org/article/downloads/78851/CBM_Inclusion_Made_Easy_-_complete_guide.pdf

[13] Access for All: http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/access_for_all_1.pdf

[14] Accessible Event Checklist by Government of Western Australia: http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/Global/Publications/Understanding disability/Built environment/Accessible events checklist.pdf

- [Guide d'aide à la conception d'un bâtiment accessible](#)[15] – Agence Wallonne pour l'Intégration des Personnes Handicapées (AWIPH)

6. Inclusive Facilitation

If you followed the previous sections of these accessibility guidelines, you are already on your way to ensuring that the event you are organising is inclusive. The remaining question is about inclusive facilitation of meetings. These guidelines below will introduce some main features of inclusive facilitation.

General etiquette

- Talk respectfully and positively about persons with disabilities.
- Do not hesitate to use the words disabled, disability, or persons with disabilities while discussing disability. Primarily, call persons with disabilities by their name. If they have a preference as to how to address their disability, they will let you know. Use positive, humanising language (i.e. persons, people). Avoid generalisations.
- Talk directly to the person with a disability, not to his assistant.
- It is okay to refer to "people without disabilities". Do not refer to them as "normal" or "healthy".

Communication

- Be eloquent and audible. Do not speak too fast.
- Take disability into account when interacting with persons with disabilities.
- Provide a range of communication formats so that everyone gets a chance to communicate in some way. For example, if you are using an image, describe what can be seen in the image you are presenting.
- Use simple language, and avoid jargon.
- Use body language and facial expressions to get your point across.

Further information:

- Light for the World's [Disability Inclusion Lab](#)[16] regularly offers trainings on inclusive facilitation.
- Some of the links in the previous section on organising accessible events also include information about inclusive facilitation.

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[15] Guide d'aide a la conception d'un batiment accessible by AWIPH in Belgium:
http://www.awiph.be/telechargement/logement-accessible.pdf

[16] Light for the World Inclusion Lab: http://lab.light-for-the-world.org/

Annex 1: Accessibility Checklist for Events

Choosing the venue

Entrance

All participants should be able to enter the venue through the same entrance. The conference venue and facilities should ideally be checked by a qualified person to ensure accessibility.

- Can taxis or vehicles transporting a person with a disability stop within 10/15 metres (m) of the entrance?
- Are there car parking bays reserved for disabled people within 30 m of the entrance?
- Is the footpath to the entrance passable for people using wheelchairs?
- Are any steps leading up to the entrance door complemented with a suitable ramp?
- Any ramps at the entrance or within the building must not be too steep or too long – the gradient should not exceed 1:12
- Does the entrance door have a free passageway/width of 90 centimetres (cm)?
- Does the door opening have a threshold (doorstep)? If so, is it no more than 25 millimetres (mm) high and is it inclined?
- If the door is heavy, it is equipped with an automatic door opener?
- If there is a designated smoking area outside, is it at least 15 m from the entrance?

Indoors

All participants and speakers must be able to make their way to all of the facilities which will be used during the conference, for instance, group rooms, restaurants and toilets.

- Is the entrance threshold level with the outside? If there is a step/threshold at the entrance of the doorway, is it no more than 25 mm in height and is it inclined?
- Are the door frames of any doors within the building at least 90 cm wide?
- If any of the doors are heavy, do they have an automatic door opener?
- Are any corridors at least 1,5 m wide?
- Can participants make their way through the venue without using stairs or steps?
- If there are stairs or steps, is there a complementary ramp/lift?
- Are any steps marked so that they can be seen by people with a visual impairment?
- Do all stairs have handrails?
- Are any lifts (if they are required) at least 2,1 x 1,1 m in size?
- Is the area in front of the lift at least 1,5 x 1,5 m?
- Are any buttons/sign posts in the lift accessible for people with a visual impairment?
- Are there accessible toilets in the venue? (see below for more specific criteria)

Conference rooms

Everyone must be able to address an audience and participate as a member of the audience. Make sure that there is uniform lighting which does not dazzle, and that the room has modern facilities and climate control.

- Is there enough space for participants who are wheelchair users to move freely? There should be passageways of 1,5 m between tables/chairs and the walls
- Is the height of the tables between 72-85 m, to allow enough space for a wheelchair user to slide comfortably underneath
- Can the podium be easily reached by wheelchair users (step-free or with a suitable ramp)?
- Are there portable microphones available?
- Is there a hearing loop system installed? And if not, can one be made readily available if needed?

Group rooms / Breakout rooms

Accessibility should be as good as it is for the conference centre as a whole.

- Are there audio systems to enable people with hearing impairments to participate? Or is such equipment readily available if needed?
- Are the group rooms also furnished in such a way which enables people using wheelchairs to participate and move freely?

Toilets

There should be accessible toilets relatively close to the conference rooms.

- Is the toilet situated on the same floor as the conference rooms?
- Is the width of the door frame to the toilet 90 cm?
- If the door of the toilet opens inwards, is the space large enough for the person in a wheelchair to shut the door once inside?
- Is there 85-90 cm of space at least one side of the toilet?
- Is there a grab rail next to the toilet? And is it at the height of roughly 80 cm from the ground?
- Is the toilet at the height of 48-50 cm from the ground?

Dining room / Restaurant during the conference:
- If there is a dining room / restaurant, is it located on the same floor as the conference rooms?
- If it is located on a different floor, is there a suitable ramp/lift to be able to access to the dining room / restaurant? And is it relatively close by?

Choosing the hotel

When overnight accommodation is required, all participants should be able to stay in the same hotel so the chosen hotel should be accessible and should have accessible hotel rooms available. The conference venue and facilities should ideally be checked by a qualified person to ensure accessibility. Many of the accessibility

factors regarding the hotel should be similar to those listed above for the venue in terms of access to the building itself and access to any dining facilities available on-site. Below are some more specific criteria regarding the accessible hotel rooms.

Hotel building

- Is there step free access in all common areas such as the reception, dining rooms, bathrooms and terraces?
- If there are steps, is there a suitable complementary ramp or lift?
- Any ramps at the entrance or within the building must not be too steep or too long – the gradient should not exceed 1:12
- Are any lifts (if they are required) at least 2,1 x 1,1 m in size?
- Is the area in front of the lift at least 1,5 x 1,5 m?
- Is there enough space for a turning circle (turning area) of 1,5 m in diameter in necessary areas such as to allow wheelchair users the excite necessary rooms?
- Is the width of any doors at least 90 cm wide?
- If any doors are heavy, is there an electric door opener?
- Is the width of any corridors a minimum of 1,5 m?
- Does the hotel have a non-slip floor surface or carpets with a firm low pile of 6 mm or less? Carpets should be avoided as much as possible because they create friction making it harder for manual wheelchair users to move freely and they are also not good for people with allergies or hypersensitivity.

Hotel rooms

- There should be at least a few rooms with any chosen hotel which are accessible for participants who are wheelchair users.
- Are there accessible rooms available in the hotel? How many?
- Are there accessible twin rooms available in the hotel? This is because some wheelchair users travel with their assistant and require there assistant to sleep in the same room
- Is the width of the doorframe to enter the hotel room at least 90 cm?
- Is there a turning area in the hotel room of 1,6 x 1,6 m? Is there a turning area in the room 1,6 x 1,6 m between the bed and the window?
- Is it possible to enter the bathroom? Again, is the width of the door at least 90 cm? And is there enough of a turning space to enter and exit the bathroom?
- Is the height of the bed 48-50 cm from the ground?
- Is the height of the toilet 48-50 cm from the ground?
- Is the height of any light switches and handles between 80 cm and 1 m from the ground?
- Is there a telephone and a light switch beside the bed?
- In the bathroom, is there an accessible toilet? Is there an accessible bath/shower?