

# **Accessible Books Consortium**

**Implementing the objectives of the Marrakesh Treaty at a practical level**

Presentation to

**Sub-Regional Meeting for ASEAN Countries  
on the Marrakesh Treaty and the Production  
and Exchange of Accessible Books**

Singapore, November 1-3, 2017

# Content

- Marrakesh Treaty objective
- AE implementing Treaty provisions
- Options for import/export
- Accessible Books Consortium (ABC)
  - ABC areas of focus
- ABC Global Book Service
  - How it works
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## Marrakesh Treaty Objective

- Aspiration: ‘To help to **end the book famine** faced by people who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled. Currently only some 1-7 per cent of the world’s published books ever make it into accessible formats’. *World Blind Union (WBU)*
- Goal: ‘To create a set of **mandatory limitations and exceptions** for the benefit of the blind, visually impaired and otherwise print disabled’. *World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)*

# Implementing Treaty provisions

## AE establishes own practices:

- to determine that persons it serves *are* 'beneficiary persons'
- to ensure accessible format copies are made *only* to beneficiary persons or other AEs
- to discourage reproduction, distribution and making available of unauthorized copies
- to maintain due care and records of handling of alternative format copies, respecting privacy of beneficiary persons, and
- **to take advantage of Treaty input and export provisions to increase quantity of accessible books (braille, audio, e-text...) available**

# Options for import/export

AE determines how and with whom to exchange alternative format copies

*Some Approaches:*

- **Bilateral** contracts - with AEs in other countries whose collection content, format and language are of interest
- **Consortium** contract - with consortium in another country (Example – group of university libraries)
- **Accessible Books Consortium** (ABC) contract - with WIPO to participate in ABC Global Book Service for exchange of books among AE members worldwide

# Accessible Books Consortium

- Established by WIPO and key partners, June 2014, to increase the number of books in accessible formats for people who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled
- WIPO provides staffing for **ABC Secretariat**, which manages operations of ABC, in Geneva
- **ABC Board** consists of representatives of consumer groups (4), Authorized Entities and standards bodies (4), publishers and authors (4+1), and WIPO (1)
- ABC complements Marrakesh Treaty by offering practical implementation that supports the Treaty objective through three areas of focus

## ABC areas of focus

- **Capacity Building** – Advancement of technical skills in developing and least developed countries to support accessible book production  
(Topic of next presentation)
- **Inclusive Publishing** -- Advocacy and promotion to support the goal of 'born accessible' publishing
- **Global Book Service** -- International database of fully accessible books contributed by participating 'Authorized Entities' for the purpose of exchange

# ABC Inclusive Publishing

- Engages in advocacy and promotional work to support end goal of **'born accessible' publishing**
- Encourages **adoption of accessibility standards**, for example, use of the accessibility features of the EPUB3 standard for the production of digital publications
- Established and promotes **annual ABC International Excellence Award** to recognize outstanding leadership and achievements in advancing the accessibility of digital publications for persons who are print disabled



# ABC Global Book Service

- International exchange (import/export of accessible formats) key provision of Treaty
- ABC Global Book Service provides means for AE in one country to:
  - find and obtain accessible books produced by AEs in other countries
  - add the books to their collection,
  - make them available to beneficiaries in their own jurisdiction
- AEs use Global Book Service to increase their collection of accessible publications and to fill specific user requests

# ABC Global Book Service – How it works

- AE identifies titles it will contribute to ABC. Titles produced under national copyright exception or for which rights holder has granted permission are eligible
- ABC imports AE metadata into ABC catalogue
- Participants search ABC catalogue and select titles of interest
- For exchanges **involving countries where national law consistent with Treaty**, permission clearance process bypassed
- For exchanges **involving countries where national law *not* consistent with Treaty**, ABC seeks authorization from copyright owner prior to transfer of requested books
- When permission clearance addressed, system prompts AE to upload requested titles, then available for download by requesting AE

# Benefits of ABC Global Book Service

## Why ABC Global Book Service good choice for cross-border exchange

- ✓ **No fee or financial contribution** required from participating organizations
- ✓ Operational in 25 countries
- ✓ Shared database of alternative format titles contains 360,000 titles (and growing) in 76 languages
- ✓ Secure facility for requesting, uploading and downloading digital books across borders
- ✓ Automated processes to facilitate exchange
- ✓ Search criteria include author, title, language, format, date of production, books in progress, new listings. Filter to show only titles cleared for your country
- ✓ Permissions management system
- ✓ Reporting system for exchange statistics

## Benefits - continued

- ✓ **Available to *all* AEs** who meet participation criteria (on ABC website)
  - AE in country that *has* ratified Marrakesh Treaty
  - AE in country that has *not yet* ratified Treaty
- ✓ ABC assists new AE participants with implementation
- ✓ Pilot implementation in 2018 to allow end users of ABC participating organizations to search ABC catalogue directly
- ✓ **Fully operational today** - supporting import/export of accessible formats from multiple AEs worldwide

# Accessible Books Consortium

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Contact information for ABC Global Book Service:

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Thank you!

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