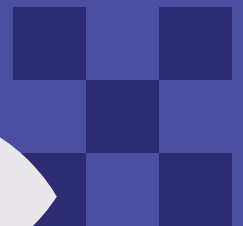
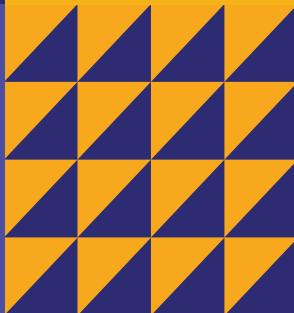


BLUEPRINT FOR
DISABILITY INCLUSION
**TEN-FOLD PATH
TO ACCESSIBILITY
@WORKPLACE**

DECEMBER 2024



Supported By



Knowledge Partners



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Background and Context 04

CHAPTER 2

Accessibility Provisions in the RPWD Act, 2016 06

CHAPTER 3

Business Case for Accessibility 09

CHAPTER 4

Tenfold Path for Ensuring Accessibility @Workplace 12

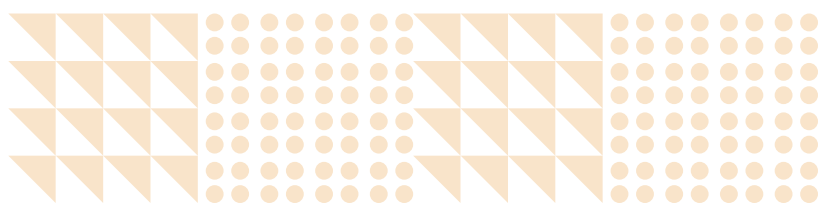
CHAPTER 5

Accessibility Practices of Companies 24

- Accenture: A Holistic Approach to Disability Inclusion 25
- ANZ GCC's Commitment to Disability Inclusion 27
- Atos: An All-Round Approach to Disability Inclusion 29
- Barclays: Setting a Benchmark in Disability Inclusion 30
- Bharti Real Estate: Approach to Accessibility Practices 31
- HGS: Leading the Way in Disability Inclusion 32
- Microsoft's Digital Accessibility for Disability Inclusion 33
- NatWest Group: Championing Accessibility and Inclusion 34
- Nestle's Commitment to Disability Inclusion 35
- WTW: Building an Inclusive and Accessible Workplace for All 36

CHAPTER 6

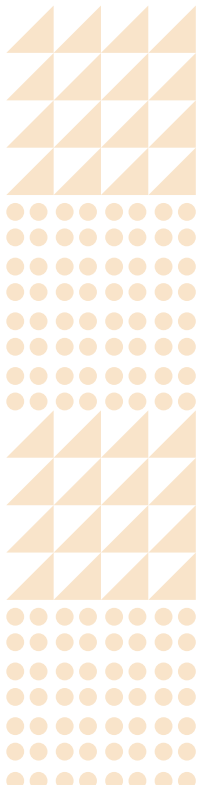
Photo Gallery – Universal Design @ Workplaces 39





1

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT





Accessibility is essential for creating inclusive environments where everyone can participate fully and equally. True accessibility means promoting inclusion across physical, digital, social, educational, and occupational areas, benefiting everyone and enhancing overall user experiences. Universal Design or Inclusive Design represents a framework that anticipates and meets a wide range of user needs, supporting independence and dignity for all.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), people with disabilities make up 15% of the global population—a significant demographic often overlooked as both a talent pool and a consumer market. Inaccessible environments and systems restrict businesses' ability to engage with this group and tap into its potential. Accessibility is also essential to meet the needs of older adults, children, LGBTQI+ individuals, those with temporary disabilities, and various situational challenges. In reality, accessibility supports everyone and improves user experience overall. For example, a sign board designed with good color contrast, captions in a film, or well-spaced text enhances readability for all.

Accessibility is a fundamental human right, supported by legislation worldwide, including in India. The Indian law, The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, mandates accessibility and requires the public and private sectors to ensure that their built environments, transportation, services, and communication are accessible within a given timeframe.

Companies are increasingly acknowledging that accessibility is vital for promoting diversity and inclusion and ensuring legal compliance. Many are keen to take action,

with some making substantial progress while others continue to face challenges, often relying on trial-and-error approaches.

To promote accessibility within corporate India and offer practical guidance for accelerating progress, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has collaborated with DEOC Accessibility Services Private Limited (for the built environment) and BarrierBreak (for digital accessibility) to develop an accessibility compendium. This resource is designed to help organizations adopt best practices, achieve regulatory compliance, and create sustainable, accessible spaces for all users.

To develop the compendium, CII engaged members of the CII-India Business & Disability Network (IBDN) to gather insights into their accessibility efforts. Ten companies at various stages of their accessibility journeys shared details on how they are approaching accessibility within their organizations. They are Accenture, ANZ, Atos, Barclays, Bharti Real Estate, HGS, Microsoft, NatWest, Nestle & WTW.

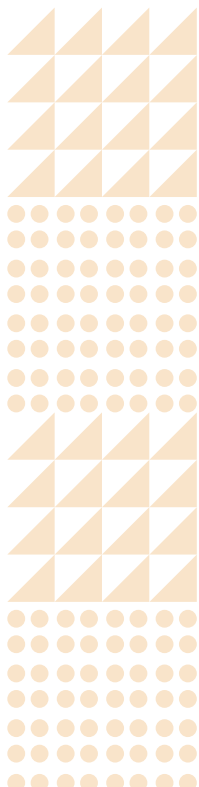
The insights and approaches shared by the companies were analysed and the common good practices were derived, leading to the creation of a ten-fold path to guide organisations towards Accessibility.

The compendium will serve as a valuable tool for Diversity and Inclusion and Human Resources professionals, facility and IT managers, and businesses by providing practical strategies and actionable steps for making their work environment accessible. This document should not be looked at as a substitute to accessibility standards but only a guidance to organisations embarking on or already implementing accessibility in their organisations.



2

ACCESSIBILITY PROVISIONS IN THE RPWD ACT, 2016





India enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act in 2016.

Sections 40 to 46 of the RPWD Act lay out specific accessibility provisions for the built environment, transportation, ICT, services, and consumer goods, detailing standards and timelines for compliance:

- Section 40 mandates the central government to formulate accessibility standards for physical environments, transportation, information and communication, and other public services and facilities.
- Section 42 requires all content—audio, print, and electronic media—to be available in accessible formats, including audio description, sign language, and closed captioning. It also mandates that electronic goods and general-use equipment adhere to universal design principles.
- Section 44 stipulates that establishments must meet accessibility standards to receive construction approval, completion certificates, or occupancy permits.
- Section 45 mandates that all existing public buildings must be made accessible within five years from the notification date of the rules.
- Section 46 requires that all services, including those offered by private organisations, comply with accessibility standards within two years from the rules' notification date.

To clarify the term, "public building," the Act (Section 2 w) has defined it as any government or private building accessible to the public, covering facilities for education, employment, commerce,

utilities, religious and cultural activities, medical services, law enforcement, judicial purposes, and transport hubs like railway stations, bus terminals, airports, and waterways. Thus, commercial buildings and workspaces are also public buildings under this law.

Similarly "public facilities and services" have also been defined in the law (Section 2 x). It includes all forms of delivery of services to the public at large, including housing, educational and vocational trainings, employment and career advancement, shopping or marketing, religious, cultural, leisure or recreational, medical, health and rehabilitation, banking, finance and insurance, communication, postal and information, access to justice, public utilities, transportation.


To clarify the term, "public building," the Act (Section 2 w) has defined it as any government or private building accessible to the public, covering facilities for education, employment, commerce, utilities, religious and cultural activities, medical services, law enforcement, judicial purposes, and transport hubs like railway stations, bus terminals, airports, and waterways.

Another important definition relevant to accessibility is 2 (f) where “communication” is defined to include means and formats of communication, languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, signs, large print, accessible multimedia, written, audio, video, visual displays, sign language, plain-language, human-reader, augmentative and alternative modes and accessible information and communication technology.

There are additional Sections in the Act that reinforce accessibility. Section 21 requires establishments to create and publicly notify an Equal Opportunity Policy which includes accessibility. Furthermore, Section 3 prohibits discrimination based on disability with Section 2(h) clearly stating that denial of reasonable accommodation is discrimination.

In fact, accessibility is fundamental to the realisation of all rights outlined in the Act.

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और जबकि उक्त अधिसूचना की प्रतियां 21 जून, 2022 को जनता के लिए उपलब्ध कराई गई थीं;

और जबकि उक्त अधिसूचना के संबंध में जनता से प्राप्त आपत्तियों और सुझावों पर केंद्र सरकार द्वारा विचार किया गया था;

अब, इसलिए, दिव्यांगजन अधिकार अधिनियम, 2016 (2016 का 49) की धारा 100 की उप-धाराओं (1) और (2) द्वारा प्रदत्त शक्तियों का प्रयोग करते हुए, केंद्र सरकार दिव्यांगजन अधिकार नियम, 2017 में संशोधन करने के लिए एतद्वारा आगे और निम्नलिखित नियम बनाती है, अर्थात्:-

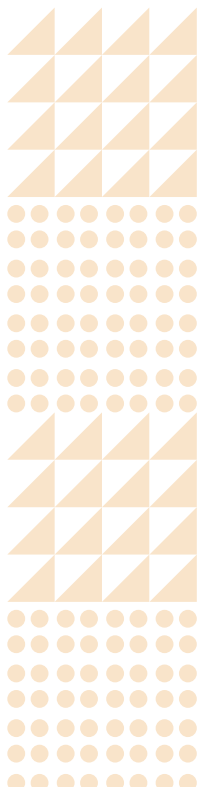
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Figure 1 RPWD Act Rules 2023



3

BUSINESS CASE FOR ACCESSIBILITY



Prioritizing accessibility is not just about compliance; it's a strategic business decision that offers a wide array of benefits across customer satisfaction, employee performance, brand value, legal compliance, and financial growth. Digital accessibility ensures that your websites, mobile apps are usable by everyone, thereby unlocking new market and reinforcing your brands commitment to inclusion.

Enhanced Customer Reach and Satisfaction

An accessible environment expands a business's potential customer base, attracting not only individuals with disabilities but also their families and older adults. By accommodating diverse needs, businesses can provide a better customer experience, enhancing loyalty and satisfaction.

Increased Employee Productivity and Retention

An inclusive, accessible workplace fosters a supportive environment for employees with disabilities and diverse needs, improving employee morale, productivity, and job satisfaction. Accessibility in the workplace—ranging from adaptive technologies to accessible workspaces—helps employees perform at their best, driving engagement and reducing employee attrition. Companies with accessible workplaces tend to retain top talent, reducing recruitment and training costs over time.

Legal Compliance and Risk Mitigation

Meeting accessibility standards helps businesses avoid legal risks, fines, and reputational damage. Proactive compliance ensures that businesses adhere to ethical standards and legal requirements, safeguarding against

potential lawsuits or non-compliance penalties. Ensuring compliance with accessibility standards, such as the Harmonised Guidelines for buildings and WCAG 2.2 for digital platforms, helps businesses mitigate legal risks associated with inaccessibility. By integrating accessibility from the start, companies demonstrate corporate responsibility and commitment to human rights.

Enhanced Brand Image and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Investing in accessibility initiatives elevates a company's reputation as a socially responsible organization. Businesses that prioritize inclusivity demonstrate a commitment to diversity and equality, aligning with the values of modern consumers and employees. Accessibility initiatives strengthen a brand's image, improving customer loyalty, market perception, and competitive advantage. This commitment to inclusivity also appeals to investors and stakeholders who prioritize social impact and sustainable practices.

Future-Proofing and Adaptability

Accessibility ensures that businesses are ready to meet evolving legal standards and the needs of a diverse, aging population. An accessible built environment is adaptable and future-proof, anticipating the needs of a diverse, aging population and a workforce that increasingly demands flexibility. Designing spaces that can be easily adapted as needs change reduces the need for costly retrofits and ensures continued functionality as individuals age or as the workforce becomes more diverse. This long-term adaptability ensures business continuity, reduces overhead costs, and minimizes disruptions to operations.



Financial Performance and Return on Investment

Numerous studies show that organizations focused on diversity, inclusion, and accessibility experience better financial outcomes. Accessibility can drive growth by attracting a wider customer base, increasing employee satisfaction, and reducing operational costs. Accessible spaces are often more efficient, requiring less modification over time. Accessible digital platforms improve user engagement and conversion rates, directly impacting the overall performance of the workforce. Research also indicates that businesses prioritizing accessibility outperform competitors in key financial metrics such as profitability, market share, and return on investment (ROI).



Innovation and Competitive Advantage

Accessibility initiatives like voice-controlled interfaces or AI-powered accessibility tools foster innovation by encouraging organizations to think creatively and inclusively. By adopting accessible technologies and practices, businesses can lead the way in developing new products, services, and processes that serve a wider audience. This competitive advantage not only helps businesses differentiate themselves in the market but also positions them as industry leaders in inclusivity and sustainability.



Social Impact and Community Engagement

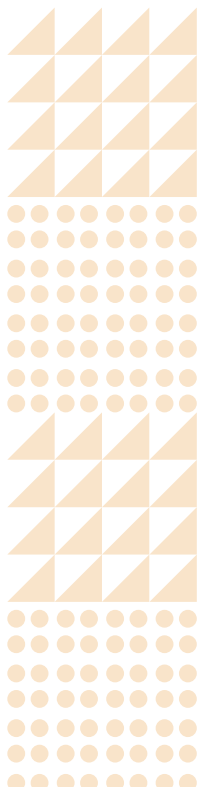
Accessibility creates positive social impact, enabling individuals with disabilities to fully participate in society. By investing in accessible infrastructure and services, businesses contribute to the broader goal of building equitable, inclusive communities. Companies that focus on accessibility also benefit from increased community support and loyalty, further strengthening their position as trusted, responsible organizations.


Accessibility can drive growth by attracting a wider customer base, increasing employee satisfaction, and reducing operational costs. Accessible spaces are often more efficient, requiring less modification over time.



4

TENFOLD PATH FOR ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY @WORKPLACE





As a precursor to developing this compendium, members of CII-IBDN were approached with a questionnaire asking them to share their approach to accessibility and the steps they have taken to promote it. The responses received contributed to the creation of this Tenfold Path, designed to guide organizations in achieving compliance with the mandates of the RPWD Act while embedding accessibility as a core element in both operational and greenfield design projects.

Here are 10 essential steps companies can take to ensure their buildings are fully accessible, integrating accessibility across all aspects of their planning, design, and operational processes. This approach ensures that accessibility is embedded as a fundamental element in every phase of development and ongoing business practices.

Establish Leadership Commitment

For accessibility to be a true organisational priority, leadership must champion it, integrating it into core values and practices. Companies that excel in accessibility are guided by leaders with a clear and visible commitment to this goal.

Examples of Leadership driving accessibility:

- Championing accessibility in internal communications and public forums.
- Appointing CXO-level leaders to oversee and drive accessibility efforts.
- Establishing regular progress reviews with cross-functional teams.
- Allocating dedicated budgets to fund accessibility initiatives.
- Engaging actively with stakeholders—customers, employees, and advocacy groups—to gather insights and improve strategies.

Set Up a High-level Accessibility Council and Team

Establishing a high-level council to spearhead accessibility initiatives ensures sustained progress.

Here are key considerations for setting up an Accessibility Council:

- Ensure the Council is chaired or sponsored by senior management.
- Include cross-departmental senior representation (e.g., HR, IT, Facilities, Business Heads).
- Involve individuals with disabilities, emphasising representation of women with disabilities.
- Secure a dedicated budget and resources for accessibility initiatives.
- Engage in developing the council's vision, mission, and strategy for accessibility.
- Hold regular meetings to review progress and address challenges.
- Publish reports to document progress and maintain accountability.

Incorporate Accessibility in Policies

Formulating a clear commitment to accessibility in writing is essential for establishing a strong foundation for driving accessibility across the organisation. This includes not only creating a dedicated accessibility policy but also integrating accessibility principles into other relevant policies.



Figure 2 Engagement on accessibility with all stakeholders

Some of the policies that should explicitly incorporate accessibility include:

- **Equal Opportunity Policy:** The Policy should clearly outline accessibility mandates across all sections, with a dedicated section that specifies how the organization will ensure equal access to its physical and digital environments, as well as its communication. The policy should also commit to providing reasonable accommodations and establish a defined process for employees to request and receive the necessary accommodations to support their participation in the workplace.
- **Procurement Policy:** Include a statement that all goods and services procured must meet accessibility standards. Additionally, establish a formal process to assess and verify the accessibility of products or services before procurement decisions are made.

- **Travel Policy:** Specify that all travel arrangements, including accommodations and local transportation, must be accessible for employees with disabilities, whether for work-related travel, relocation, or local commuting.

For accessibility to be a true organisational priority, leadership must champion it, integrating it into core values and practices. Companies that excel in accessibility are guided by leaders with a clear and visible commitment to this goal.

- **Recruitment Policy:** Integrate accessibility into the recruitment process, ensuring job applications, interviews, and onboarding procedures are accessible to all candidates, including those with disabilities. Develop a system enabling candidates with disabilities to request reasonable accommodations for participating in the selection process.
- **Communication Policy:** The policy / guidelines should state that all internal and external communications, including websites, mobile applications, emails, presentations, documents, and videos, are accessible to individuals with disabilities. All materials should use accessible templates with proper heading structures, screen reader support, alternative text for images, and clear formatting. Videos should include captions, sign language and audio descriptions, while information should be made available in multiple formats, such as braille, large print, and electronic versions. Provision for sign language interpreters, live captioning, and other assistive services must be prioritized for meetings and events. The policy should emphasize the use of clear and simple language, avoiding jargon or complex terminologies, to enhance inclusivity.
- **Emergency-Related Policies:** Ensure that emergency procedures, including evacuation plans and disaster response strategies, incorporate provisions for employees and customers with disabilities. Additionally, establish a system for maintaining a database of employees with disabilities and create Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for each individual, outlining the specific assistance they may require during emergencies.

Integrate Accessibility into Processes

Policies will remain on paper without processes or guidelines to ensure their implementation. Therefore, accessibility standards and workflows—such as design briefs, playbooks and standard operating procedures—are crucial in maintaining consistency and ensuring accessibility is embedded in all works undertaken. For example, while it is important to state in the policy that we will lease an accessible building, this commitment will not be fulfilled unless accessibility is established as a key criterion and an accessibility consultant conducts the necessary due diligence. Similarly, the Equal Opportunity policy may state that reasonable accommodation will be provided, but without a clear system for requesting, providing, or evaluating accommodations, it could take months to fulfil the request.

The processes that need to be detailed include:

- **Collecting Data on Disability:** Establish comprehensive forms, process flows, and ensure confidentiality aspects are addressed to protect sensitive information.
- **Procurement and Vendor Contract:** Ensure that Request for Proposal (RFP) documents, vendor registration forms, and the scope of work/product specifications, vendor contracts include accessibility requirements. The process flow should incorporate third-party checks and feedback from users with disabilities.
- **Reasonable Accommodation Guidelines:** Develop clear guidelines, forms, and an interactive process flow

for requesting and providing accommodations, ensuring timely and efficient handling.

- **Design Guidelines/Playbooks:** Create detailed accessibility requirements for both physical and digital environments. Physical space guidelines should address accessibility features for exterior and interior spaces, while digital guidelines should ensure the accessibility of websites, applications, and software interfaces. These guidelines should align with standards such as the Harmonised Guidelines 2021 for the built environment, WCAG 2.2, IS 17802 as published by the Bureau of Indian Standards for digital.
- **Personalized Emergency Evacuation Plans:** Develop and maintain personalized emergency evacuation plans with appropriate forms and process flows, ensuring regular updates and maintaining confidentiality throughout the process."

Conduct Accessibility Audits/ Reviews

The first step towards implementing accessibility is to assess the current state, which can be effectively achieved through an accessibility audit. This audit should evaluate both physical and digital environments to identify existing barriers, assess compliance with relevant standards, and highlight areas for improvement, providing specific recommendations. Access audits should be conducted for both existing and proposed infrastructure to ensure comprehensive accessibility planning and implementation.

A. Accessibility Standards

Access Audit is done based on accessibility standards.

The standards for ensuring accessibility in India, as outlined in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Rules, include the Harmonised Guidelines and Standards for Universal Accessibility in India, 2021 for the built environment. For the digital environment, the applicable standards are the Accessibility Guidelines is IS 17802, published by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

There are also specific guidelines for various types of buildings developed by different Ministries (**Acts, Rules & Regulations | Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) | India**).

Accessibility Guidelines and Standards for Higher Education Institutions And Universities

Accessibility Code for Educational Institutions

Accessibility Standards and Guidelines for Banking Sector

Accessibility Standards and Guidelines Police Stations Prisons and Disaster Mitigation Centres

Guidelines for Accessibility Standards in Port Sector

Guidelines for Accessibility of Railway Stations

Accessibility Standards and Guidelines for Civil Aviation

Guidelines on accessible and inclusive piped water supply

Accessibility Features for Roads, Buildings and Public Facilities in Rural Areas

Bus Body Code

Accessibility Standards for Health Care

Guidelines on accessible Sports Complex and Residential facilities for sportspersons

Accessibility Standards by Ministry of Culture (Monuments/Sites, Museums, Libraries)

Apart from the above, there is National Building Code 2016 which has accessibility requirements in different chapters and detailed guidelines in Clause 13 of Part 3. There are also international guidelines which can be referred for making places friendly for people with neurodiversity (PAS 6463:2022- Design for the mind – Neurodiversity and the built environment – Guide)

For digital infrastructure, the Indian Standard IS 17802, developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), provides detailed technical specifications to ensure accessibility in ICT products and services, covering areas like software, hardware, and assistive technologies.

The Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW) provide accessibility guidelines that are in line with the global WCAG principles.

The National Policy on Universal Electronic Accessibility (NIUA) aims to ensure equal access to electronics and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for people with disabilities.

B. Accessibility Professionals

Audits should be carried out by qualified accessibility professionals who possess both in-depth knowledge of relevant standards and practical experience in developing effective solutions to address barriers.

The Government of India has empanelled accessibility auditors for the built environment. It is essential for persons with disabilities to be included in the audit team to provide valuable user perspectives. Accessibility is a technical specialisation. National Building Code 2016, in part Zero, mentions that accessibility professionals must be part of the development team, alongside other consultants such as MEP, landscape, lift, fire, and others.

For digital accessibility, qualified accessibility professionals with in-depth understanding of guidelines such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and hands-on experience in spotting and resolving obstacles in digital platforms should perform digital accessibility audits. It is very important to include testers with disabilities in the audit process to provide valuable user perspectives and ensure real world usability.



Figure 3 Access audit professionals comprising universal design architects, cross disability specialists and persons with disabilities

C. Accessibility Audit of Built Environment

Audits are not just limited to existing buildings it is also to be done for proposed buildings. The audit assesses both the positive features and existing gaps, providing specific recommendations to address barriers. In existing buildings, certain barriers may be challenging to address due to structural/site constraints; in such cases, programmatic solutions are suggested to ensure accessibility without compromising the dignity of individuals. Therefore, accessibility should not be treated as a simple checklist exercise of marking compliant and non-compliant items—it requires a thoughtful, nuanced approach to create inclusive environments.

The procedure for conducting an access audit of an existing building includes:

Gaining an understanding of the building's layout and functions.

Conducting a comprehensive survey that covers all internal and external areas and faculties and services by a team including accessibility experts, architects and persons with disabilities.

Conducting user interviews to gather insights and perspectives.

Preparing an audit report that includes findings and actionable recommendations.

Holding a session to review the findings and discuss the next steps.

The procedure for reviewing new buildings includes:

- Defining accessibility requirements and providing a design brief during the concept stage.
- Reviewing architectural drawings at various stages, including concept design, detailed design, and Good for Construction (GFC) stages.
- Reviewing material boards, fixtures, furniture, appliances, and signage to ensure they meet accessibility standards.
- Conducting interim site visits during the construction phase to monitor compliance.
- Performing a comprehensive post-construction audit to verify that accessibility requirements have been fully implemented.



Figure 4 Site visits for checking progress



Figure 5 Accessibility professionals reviewing a design



Figure 6 Measuring door opening force during an access audit



Figure 7 Person with locomotor disability assessing a space during access audit

D. Audit of Products and Services

Products and services are an integral part of building audits and can also be assessed independently. The procedure includes:

Gaining a clear understanding of the function and purpose of the product or service.

Evaluating the product or service based on universal design principles to ensure inclusivity.

Asking targeted questions to map and understand the user journey for individuals with different disabilities.

Referring to specific guidelines and standards relevant to services to ensure thorough and compliant evaluations.



Figure 8 User testing of vending machines

E. Audit of Digital Infrastructure

Digital accessibility necessitates a multidisciplinary approach in which accessibility professionals, developers, and designers work together to recommend solutions and fix the barriers. The procedure entails extensive testing of digital information, mobile applications, and websites utilizing both automated and manual testing methods.

Evaluate current digital assets to identify barriers and ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

- Perform accessibility audits of websites, apps, and other digital products and services by an external accessibility consultancy firm.
- Engage accessibility professionals and users with disabilities to ensure accurate feedback.
- Analyze the reports and work on the recommendations to address gaps.

Create an Accessibility Implementation Roadmap

Once access audits are conducted, organisations must develop a roadmap with short-term and long-term goals based on audit findings. Priorities should be given to high impact and critical areas for improvement and taken up for execution immediately. Subsequent phases could include low-priority items which could be tackled through reasonable accommodations and programmatic changes till such time they are implemented. It is imperative to set realistic timelines and budgets for each goal to ensure that progress is achievable.

The accessibility implementation roadmap for the built environment should include:

Defining Scope of Work: Develop a comprehensive scope of work based on

expert recommendations, ensuring client consultation and formal approval.

Design and BOQs Development: Create detailed design documents and Bills of Quantities (BOQs) aligned with accessibility standards.

Construction Support: Provide guidance and oversight during the construction phase to ensure adherence to accessibility requirements.

Post-Completion Audit: Conduct a thorough audit after project completion to identify any remaining barriers and confirm compliance.

For digital accessibility, the roadmap could include:

- Prioritizing high-impact areas, such as customer-facing platforms, for immediate attention.
- Setting realistic timelines and budgets for implementing each recommendation.
- Continuously updating and enhancing accessibility measures as technologies and standards evolve.

Digital accessibility necessitates a multidisciplinary approach in which accessibility professionals, developers, and designers work together to recommend solutions and fix the barriers.



Implement Training and Awareness Programs

Provide comprehensive training on accessibility guidelines and tools to all relevant employees, including architects, engineers, designers, developers, content creators, and IT and real estate professionals, ensures accessibility is integrated into their work. Training of support staff who provide services and human assistance is an essential component of accessibility, ensuring they are equipped to effectively support individuals with different disabilities.

- Customized training should be provided to various stakeholders, including employees, managers, leaders, security personnel, and housekeeping staff, to build their capacity and raise awareness about accessibility and inclusion.
- It is essential for these training sessions to be structured and facilitated by experienced professionals and people with disabilities who possess expertise in the field.
- The training delivery can be tailored based on the required frequency and format, such as e-learning modules, training-of-trainers programs, or establishing a training calendar that ensures comprehensive coverage for all stakeholders.
- Periodic training sessions are vital for reinforcing learning, maintaining awareness, and updating knowledge to reflect the latest practices and insights in accessibility.



Figure 9 Training session in progress for security personnel



Maintain, Monitor and Improve Continuously

Once implemented, accessibility must be maintained as an ongoing priority within an organization. It is not a one-time project but should be embedded as a fundamental part of everyday operations. Infrastructure, whether physical or digital, has a life cycle that requires regular updates, upkeep, and maintenance. Additionally, accessibility work evolves as standards are updated, and innovations in products and services continue to emerge. Therefore, staying informed about new developments, technologies, and best practices is essential. This can be achieved through a structured monitoring mechanism to ensure that the organization remains compliant and up-to-date with current accessibility standards and advancements.

Few measures that could help monitor and lead to continuous improvement include:

- Periodic audits are also a requirement by the law and accessibility standards to ensure continued compliance. Update systems and processes as new technology and accessibility standards emerge.
- Collect employee and customer feedback to improve accessibility practices and evolve strategies as needed.
- Facilities need to be maintained on a regular basis for the function that they were originally designed for. For example, a unisex accessible toilet must be maintained at all times like one maintains the single sex toilets. It should not end up being a space used by Janitors or a storage space which defies the original intent.
- Communication about availability of accessibility features on a site is an

important way to let all involved in the building maintenance process know about how to maintain these through incorporating manuals for specialised equipment/features in facilities handbooks and making SOPs around these.



Engage with the Community

Maintain a user-centric approach, which requires active engagement with disabled people's organisations, participation in conferences, and learning from industry best practices. Given that accessibility is a dynamic field with continuous advancements, staying connected with the community ensures that you remain informed about the latest standards, innovations, and trends. This involvement helps keep your practices current and aligned with evolving user needs.

Involving people with disabilities in driving the accessibility agenda can be enhanced through the following approaches:

- Representation in Accessibility Councils: Ensure that people with disabilities are included as active members of accessibility councils or committees to provide valuable insights and contribute to decision-making processes.
- Engagement and Dialogue: Regularly engage in open conversations with employees with disabilities to understand and address their specific accessibility needs, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and inclusivity.
- Partnerships with Disability Organizations: Collaborate with reputable disability organisations to gain expertise, share best practices, and develop impactful programs that support accessibility initiatives.

- Inclusive Hiring Practices: Recruit people with disabilities into key roles within departments such as facilities, IT, HR, and procurement. Their perspectives

and experiences can drive the accessibility agenda effectively and integrate inclusive practices across the organisation.



Figure 10 CII IBDN National Conference on Empowerment of PwDs



Champion Accessibility and Publicise Achievements

On successful completion of milestones in the journey along achieving accessibility, one must publicise accomplishments internally and externally to showcase commitment and share learnings to strengthen the overall accessibility eco-system. This builds momentum and motivates further progress in the inclusion space.

Few ways in which once could celebrate success are as follows:

- Internal and external communications should be developed to share case studies, stories, or testimonials from employees or customers with disabilities

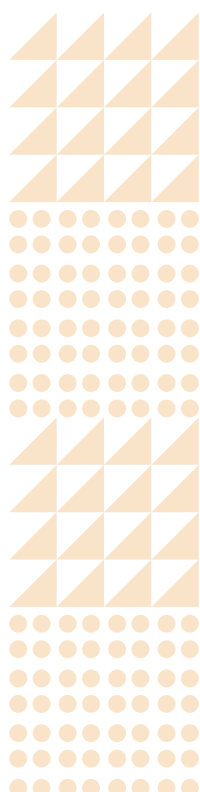
to demonstrate the positive impact of accessibility efforts.

- Regular communications could entail sessions for employees, social media posts to create awareness on accessibility framework within the organisation, internal communications campaigns such as newsletters, mailers, personal connects, webinars, etc.
- Actively promote the importance of accessibility through public speaking, social media campaigns, and participation in conferences and discussions. Use your voice to highlight the benefits of an inclusive society for everyone.



5

ACCESSIBILITY PRACTICES OF COMPANIES





A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

Accenture integrates accessibility into every facet of its operations, championing inclusivity through infrastructure, digital initiatives, leadership engagement and culture of inclusion.

Aligned with the RPwD Act 2016, Accenture in India ensures its facilities meet stringent accessibility standards using the Accenture Design Intent (ADI) and Base Building Specifications (BBS). Accessibility audits are conducted bi-annually, achieving a compliance rate of 90%.

Digital accessibility is a cornerstone of Accenture's inclusion strategy. The company adheres to WCAG 2.2 Level AA standards, ensuring its websites, digital documents, and mobile apps are accessible to all. Testing combines automated tools and manual assessments, while features like screen reader compatibility, keyboard navigation, and optimized color contrast enhance usability. The "Accessibility by Design" strategy integrates these principles into development processes. Procurement contracts include accessibility clauses, and collaborations with vendors like Microsoft enhance digital tools.

Accenture has created dedicated spaces with 36 Accessibility Centers across the globe for people to learn about and experience assistive technology that enables accessibility in the workplace. This center includes

assistive technology for all types of disabilities including home grown technology, Dhvani, a speech-text and text-speech conversion software.

Streamlined process for providing reasonable accommodation - Accenture has a dedicated platform for requisitioning all reasonable accommodation requests with end-to-end guided support by trained case managers. These reasonable accommodation requests are centrally funded and enabled for people with disabilities. Special technical services and priority technical support is enabled to people with disabilities with Accessibility Virtual Express Lane, Sign Language enabled helpdesks and chatbot enablement for assistive technology related queries

Leadership plays an important role in disability inclusion. Global and regional Accessibility Councils, along with the India Disability Inclusion Council, spearhead initiatives like recruiting persons with disabilities (PwDs) and creating Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). Leaders act as visible role models, sharing personal journeys and advocating for inclusion internally and externally.

A culture of inclusion is nurtured through inclusive policies and benefits, sensitization sessions, disability etiquette training, storytelling and allyship.

- Policies supporting flexible work arrangements, transportation, and additional leave cater to the needs of people with disabilities. To support accessibility for people with disabilities beyond the workplace, we provide medical insurance coverage for the purchase of personal assistive devices for our people and their family.
- Accenture in India has a wide network of more than 18000 disability inclusion allies who are trained to support and advocate for disability inclusion. Allies are invited to join a Sign Language Club to learn and practice sign language. In addition, workshops, virtual sessions and online learning modules enable ongoing sign language training for teams. Celebrations such as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and the Global Accessibility Awareness Day promote respect for diverse abilities.

- In addition, our facility support staff and drivers are also sensitized on disability etiquette and inclusion. Accenture has dedicated trainings, resources and programs to equip and train people managers to support people with disabilities.

Accenture emphasizes employee engagement and feedback. Regular connects, ERG meetings, and one-on-one interactions with PwDs provide valuable insights to refine inclusion efforts. Partnerships with nonprofits, industry bodies, and knowledge networks enhance hiring, training, and sensitization. Gender diversity is also prioritized, with dedicated efforts to create opportunities for women with disabilities.

By embedding accessibility into its infrastructure, technology, leadership, and culture, Accenture sets a benchmark for inclusive workplaces, enabling equal opportunities and ensuring respect for individuals of all abilities .



COMMITMENT TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

ANZ Group Capability Centre (GCC) is a model organization in promoting disability inclusion by prioritizing accessibility, digital inclusivity, leadership commitment, and employee engagement. Guided by its Accessibility and Inclusion Plan, and overseen by the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Council, ANZ ensures compliance with the National Building Code 2016 right from the design stage. Accessibility audits, conducted periodically, drive continuous improvements, addressing challenges like retrofitting older buildings by emphasizing early-stage accessibility integration.

ANZ's leadership plays a pivotal role in promoting an inclusive culture. Through active sponsorship of inclusion campaigns such as "Power up D&I, power down biases," the leadership not only sensitizes employees but also integrates disability inclusion into strategic discussions. Employees with disabilities are encouraged to take up leadership positions, influencing decision-making processes and shaping policies to ensure equity. Flexible work arrangements, accessible transportation, and tailored leave policies are provided to accommodate diverse needs.

The organization actively promotes digital accessibility, adhering to WCAG 2.1 A/AA standards and preparing for WCAG 2.2 compliance. Automated tools such as Ta11y, Accessibility

Insights, NVDA, JAWS, and Deque Axe are paired with manual testing methods like screen reader and keyboard-only testing to ensure thorough evaluations. Employees with disabilities are involved in both testing and leadership roles, enhancing strategies through their lived experiences. Role-specific training equips designers, developers, and testers with accessibility best practices, further supported by detailed confluence pages.

Additionally, all applications undergo rigorous accessibility testing, enforced by policies like VPAT creation and defect management via Jira, reflecting ANZ's dedication to equitable digital experiences. To enhance communication, GCC has developed a dictionary of banking terms in sign language, fostering seamless communication among employees with disabilities.

ANZ believes that there is immense value in diversity. By embracing different perspectives and life experiences, we strengthen our relationships with customers, drive innovation, and make better business decisions.

Cultural and behavioral inclusion is promoted through the Abilities Network, an Employee Resource Group that supports engagement, increases PwD representation, and conducts sensitization programs.

Regular training sessions and awareness campaigns emphasize respect for diverse abilities, creating a workplace where everyone feels valued. They have curated programs like UPTICK that unlocks the potential and increases capability and knowledge of our employees with disabilities. Through initiatives like the Star Awards, ANZ celebrates employees who make significant contributions to inclusion and diversity, with a special focus on PwDs.

ANZ actively incorporates feedback through annual surveys, maintaining high inclusion scores (84%+).

It also works towards building a community that is more inclusive and

supports social entrepreneurship which employ PwDs in their operations; encourages partner vendor to provide internships and entry-level jobs in non-traditional areas, such as cafeteria services, and conducts specialized recruitment drives, ensuring that PwDs have access to the same career opportunities as other job seekers. Through their Financial Literacy Program, MoneyMinded, ANZ has educated PwDs on financial management, helping them achieve financial independence.

Through thoughtful planning, inclusive leadership, and continuous engagement, ANZ GCC exemplifies a comprehensive approach to creating an accessible and empowering workplace for persons with disabilities.



AN ALL-ROUND APPROACH TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

Atos has adopted a comprehensive approach to disability inclusion, which spans multiple dimensions of its operations, ensuring a work environment that supports employees with diverse abilities. Atos also provides reasonable accommodation guidelines and personalized emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs), ensuring that all employees' specific needs are met. The company trains its facility staff in disability etiquette and sensitizes them to be proactive in addressing accessibility needs, contributing to a more inclusive and respectful workplace.

The company has a strong commitment to making its websites, software, digital documents, and mobile applications accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. By adhering to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1/2.2, Atos aims for Level AA compliance by 2025. Automated tools and manual testing are employed to ensure thorough accessibility checks, while user testing with individuals who have disabilities provides valuable feedback to improve usability. Atos also invests in training its IT and development teams on accessibility best practices, ensuring that digital inclusion is built into the company's systems and services from the ground up.

Leadership plays a critical role in Atos' disability inclusion efforts. Senior executives, including the Chief Diversity Officer and Vishal Pujar, Head of Digital Accessibility, actively champion the company's disability inclusion agenda. This is demonstrated through their active participation in DEI initiatives, leadership of awareness campaigns, and regular updates on the company's progress in creating an inclusive environment. **Atos encourages engagement through its "Drop-in" sessions, where employees can share stories and experiences, further supporting a culture of inclusion and belonging.**

Atos promotes disability inclusion through its Adapt Employee Resource Group (ERG), which raises awareness, educates staff, and provides a platform for employees to share their experiences. Feedback is actively sought from employees through surveys and DNA (Drop-iN@Atos) sessions, enabling the company to continuously refine its practices and address challenges faced by employees with disabilities. Atos collaborates with external organizations to enhance its disability inclusion efforts and ensure equal opportunities for all employees, including women with disabilities.

Barclays has established a comprehensive approach to disability inclusion and embedding accessibility into its infrastructure, digital services, leadership, and organisational culture. The organisation's commitment is reflected in its global workplace adjustments process, which addresses a wide spectrum of needs, including mobility, mental health, neurodiversity, hearing and speech impairments, and visual disabilities. Barclays has streamlined and enhanced the workplace adjustment process, making it more efficient and reducing the time taken for colleagues to receive their adjustments. Barclays also continuously seeks feedback from all colleagues who use the service, including members of Reach, our Barclays Disability, Mental Health and Neurodiversity Employee Resource Group (ERG), which helps to identify ways to further improve the service.

In 2023, Barclays launched an Inclusivity and Accessibility working group within its Corporate Real Estate Services (CRES) function, aiming to remove barriers, and enhancing the workplace experience for disabled colleagues. This cross-functional group has supported the objective that colleagues with disabilities can work seamlessly. Digital accessibility through initiatives such as the Barclays App, which includes features like color inversion, screen reader support, and biometric login are also an area of focus. These features are designed with input from employees with lived experiences of disability, ensuring that all have access to inclusive digital services.

Barclays also emphasises behavioral and cultural accessibility, and partnering with organisations like WinVinaya Foundation and Youth4Jobs, has implemented inclusive hiring practices in India to hire individuals with disabilities. Through mentorship programs, including traditional and reverse mentoring, Barclays supports the professional growth of disabled employees, cultivating a culture of inclusion. Neurodiversity awareness is also a key focus, with events like Neurodiversity Week and initiatives such as the dyslexia support video launched in 2020. Barclays also provides colleagues with sign language training to support those with hearing loss.

Hybrid working models are offered depending on the nature of roles and also take into account any specific colleague needs (including disabilities). Through campaigns like "Count Me In" and surveys like YourView, Barclays encourages employees to self-identify disabilities and health conditions, ensuring that their needs are recognised and supported. Initiatives like "This is Me" a powerful story-telling campaign, which challenges stigma surrounding disability, allow colleagues to share personal stories and develop a deeper understanding across the organisation. Barclays also has a Disability and Conditions Resource Hub, which has consolidated resources, tool and insights for colleagues and people leaders on various conditions. Through these actions, Barclays sets a benchmark for disability inclusion in the workplace.

Bharti Real Estate demonstrates its commitment to accessibility by integrating inclusive features across its infrastructure and operations. All its buildings comply with NBC 2016 guidelines, incorporating provisions such as ramps, handrails, wheelchair-accessible washrooms, and elevators. The company has also adopted an Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policy, Equal Opportunity Policy (Rights of Persons with Disabilities), and Personalized Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to ensure safety for persons with disabilities. Regular training for facility teams emphasizes customer service and disability etiquette.

Accessibility audits are planned for new facilities, and Bharti Real Estate promotes inclusivity through staff sensitization programs and awareness campaigns. The company celebrates the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, involving employees in volunteering activities. All staff undergo Human Rights and Company

Code of Conduct training. Building staff are sensitized daily during shift briefings to remain customer-oriented, including towards persons with disabilities, alongside regular, structured training programs.

Bharti Real Estate is equally committed to promoting digital inclusivity, starting with its corporate website, which aligns with WCAG standards. The company has conducted internal audits using free tools, achieving a 65% compliance score, and has implemented a paid tool, User Way, to enhance accessibility for the visually impaired with features like a screen reader. Accessibility guidelines are embedded in Bharti Real Estate's Equal Opportunity Policy, and accessible documentation is prioritized to ensure equitable access for all users.

At Bharti Real Estate, these efforts are foundational to building a robust and accessible environment for both employees and customers.



LEADING THE WAY IN DISABILITY INCLUSION

Hinduja Global Solutions (HGS) is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible workplace for employees with disabilities. Regular accessibility audits, conducted in to verify compliance with Persons with Disabilities (PwD) standards. Biannual evacuation drills and the availability of fire evacuation chairs further enhance safety protocols.

HGS also prioritizes digital inclusivity by adhering to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level A and AA standards. Its platforms feature accessibility tools like alternative text, high-contrast options, and full keyboard navigability, ensuring usability for individuals with motor and visual impairments. Compatibility with assistive technologies such as screen readers reflects HGS' commitment to digital accessibility. Regular audits using advanced tools like the Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool (WAVE) extension maintain compliance and enhance the user experience.

While the organization encourages the inclusion and development of employees with disabilities, it currently has limited representation in senior leadership roles. However, HGS has one PwD employee in its technical services team who serves as a team manager. A dedicated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee amplifies these efforts by spearheading initiatives tailored to the needs of employees with disabilities.

To embed inclusivity into its culture, HGS conducts training on disability etiquette, launches awareness campaigns, and creates ally networks to advocate for diverse communities. Feedback mechanisms ensure that employees with disabilities can share their experiences, enabling continuous improvement.

HGS' integrated approach to disability inclusion demonstrates how businesses can create accessible environments, champion equity, and create a workplace where everyone can thrive.



DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY FOR DISABILITY INCLUSION

Microsoft has established itself as a global leader in improving digital accessibility to ensure inclusivity for individuals with disabilities. **The company's commitment is rooted in its comprehensive Digital Accessibility Policy, which is guided by three key principles: transparency, inclusivity, and accountability.** Microsoft recognizes the importance of creating accessible products and services that cater to over one billion people with disabilities worldwide.

One of Microsoft's standout initiatives is its integration of accessibility across all digital platforms, including websites, mobile apps, and web applications. The company adheres to leading accessibility standards such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 and 2.2, Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act, and EN 301 549. This ensures that its digital content is universally accessible, whether through accessible design in Microsoft 365 tools or features like screen reader support in Windows.

Microsoft also emphasizes the creation of accessible documentation. It offers accessible PDF guides, an integrated Accessibility Checker within Microsoft 365, and a suite of resources for users and organizations to create inclusive content. The company's Inclusive Design Toolkit provides best practices for designing digital experiences that accommodate diverse needs. This holistic approach extends to internal resources, as employees receive training and tools to sustain a culture of accessibility.

The company's accessibility strategy is not limited to product design but extends to its procurement practices. Microsoft actively engages with suppliers to ensure that the software and tools they procure meet high accessibility standards, guaranteeing inclusivity throughout the supply chain.

Through a combination of design, development, and procurement processes, Microsoft's digital accessibility efforts help break down barriers, providing equal opportunities for people with disabilities.



CHAMPIONING ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

NatWest Group demonstrates a strong commitment to accessibility and inclusivity through a holistic approach encompassing infrastructure, digital tools, leadership, cultural inclusion, and feedback systems.

Adhering to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, the company's Digital Accessibility Policy mandates that all customer and staff-facing applications are compatible with assistive technologies like screen readers and speech recognition software. Regular automated and manual accessibility audits are conducted to assess compliance with these standards, ensuring digital products are usable for individuals with vision impairments, hearing disabilities, and cognitive conditions. An internal accessibility team provides robust testing services and oversees adherence to digital accessibility standards. Additionally, the company integrates accessibility into its procurement process by requiring third-party vendors to meet these standards and undergo independent audits. Inclusive design principles are promoted through training for internal teams to promote sustainable digital inclusivity.

To prioritize safety, personalized emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are developed for employees with disabilities, complemented by regular fire drills and the provision of evacuation chairs

Leadership and cultural inclusion are equally central to NatWest Group's approach. The India Inclusion and Wellbeing Council, led by senior business leaders, champions diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the organization. Clear communication of DEI efforts, the

promotion of employee networks, and developing allyship are key strategies employed to build a culture of belonging. The company provides tailored support for employees with disabilities through assistive technologies, flexible work arrangements, and work-from-home options, encouraging self-disclosure of disabilities and ensuring reasonable accommodations.

Feedback is actively gathered through surveys, listening sessions, and employee network meetings, ensuring the voices of employees with disabilities are heard and their experiences addressed. Through its comprehensive strategy, NatWest Group exemplifies how organizations can lead in advancing accessibility and inclusivity at every level.

NatWest provides neurodiversity support through specialized partners for diagnosis and coaching for managers and colleagues, ensuring effective assimilation and performance. Advocacy is a priority, celebrated through events like GAAD, IDPD, Neurodiversity Week, and Enablefest, where they amplify voices through colleague stories and community support. The career development and mentorship programs empower persons with disabilities (PwDs), while their newly launched Carer's Network supports colleagues who are caregivers to PwDs. Inclusive hiring practices, such as Inclusive Interview Ambassadors, and learning initiatives like mandatory inclusion and disability support training, along with elective courses in Indian Sign Language, further our inclusivity efforts. All these are anchored by our robust Employee-Led Network, Disability Smart, which drives interventions and advancements in disability inclusion.



COMMITMENT TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

Nestlé India has integrated disability inclusion into its core operations to ensure that all employees have equal access to opportunities and resources.

A key element of Nestlé's commitment is its infrastructure improvements. The company has conducted accessibility audits across its factory locations, establishing a roadmap to complete retrofitting and improvements by 2026. At the Sanand factory, accessibility was incorporated from the outset. The first phase focused on retrofitting, followed by the inclusion of universal design principles in new construction. Similarly, the Nanjangud factory's new social block was built fully compliant with accessibility guidelines. These efforts are complemented by the renovation of the Nestlé Business Services (NBS) center, which followed universal design principles to ensure an inclusive environment for all employees.

Nestlé's dedication to digital accessibility is equally robust. The company has implemented a digital accessibility policy that aligns with global standards, ensuring its digital platforms are accessible to all. For employees with visual impairments, the company provides tools like JAWS screen readers. Furthermore, Nestlé is committed to procuring additional digital tools locally to support diverse

employee needs. The company's digital roadmap includes full compliance with accessibility guidelines, such as WCAG 2.1, ensuring inclusive digital experiences for all employees.

Leadership at Nestlé plays an active role in promoting disability inclusion. Senior leaders, including the Managing Director, champion inclusion through the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Council, which reviews progress and sets future goals. The company also conducts regular sensitization and disability etiquette training to create and sustain a respectful and inclusive workplace culture.

Nestlé's commitment extends to behavioral and cultural aspects. **The company provides Indian Sign Language (ISL) training for employees at the Sanand factory to ensure effective communication with its 22 deaf employees.** Additionally, Nestlé maintains open feedback channels with employees with disabilities, facilitating ongoing improvements and ensuring their needs are met.

Through these combined efforts, Nestlé India demonstrates a comprehensive commitment to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for all employees.



BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE FOR ALL

WTW demonstrates a strong commitment to infrastructural accessibility through comprehensive policies and practices. **This commitment is driven by their Workability Inclusion Network**, which focuses on disability and well-being at work, promoting understanding and removing barriers for people with disabilities, including those with neurodiverse conditions.

To ensure compliance with accessibility standards, WTW conducted an initial accessibility audit, using the 'Harmonised Guidelines and Standards for Universal Accessibility' as benchmarks.

In addition to physical changes, WTW has invested in sensitization training for leadership and staff, focusing on disability etiquette and neurodiversity awareness. The company has onboarded three colleagues from the neurodiversity spectrum and rolled out a targeted drive to hire persons with disabilities (PWD). Flexible work hours, hybrid work models, and tailored leave policies are part of their inclusive practices, ensuring accommodation for colleagues with disabilities.

Leadership plays a crucial role in driving these initiatives, with senior leaders actively sponsoring inclusion programs and discussing accessibility goals at industry forums, such as the Dive In festival. WTW's Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) goals cultivate a culture where all employees, regardless of their abilities, feel valued and empowered to reach their full potential.

Feedback is a critical aspect of WTW's approach. The company regularly collects input from employees with disabilities through engagement surveys and connection meetings, ensuring their experiences and needs are heard and acted upon. Furthermore, WTW collaborates with industry partners and knowledge organizations to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities and provide opportunities for diverse talent pools.

By integrating infrastructural improvements, cultural practices, and continuous feedback, WTW is successfully building a more inclusive, accessible, and supportive workplace for all.

LEADERS SPEAK



"At Barclays, we believe every employee, client, and stakeholder brings unique talents and perspectives to the table. We are deeply committed to fostering an accessible and inclusive environment that empowers people of all abilities and increases opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Our employee resource group, Reach, plays a vital role in raising awareness, attracting diverse talent, and supporting career development. Open to all colleagues, it champions disability inclusion and the promotion of mental health."

Praveen Kumar

CEO

Barclays Global Services, India

"We are committed to making Accenture an inclusive and accessible workplace for everyone, to enable them to thrive at work. We foster an inclusive culture for people with all types of disabilities (apparent and non-apparent) through a robust accessibility framework, inclusive benefits, tailored support, technology enablement and structured programs."

Parag Pande

Managing Director and Global Lead for Accenture HR Operations
Executive Sponsor – Disability Inclusion, Accenture in India



"Our commitment to equality is embedded in our organizational culture, and we are focused on creating an environment where all employees can thrive, regardless of ability."

Amanda Strong

Head Talent & Culture

ANZ Group Capability Centre

"At Atos, we are committed to delivering sustainable accessibility. Aligned with ESG Digital Inclusion is a social topic but for it to succeed it requires good Governance."

Vishal Pujar

Head Accessibility & Digital Inclusion GDC India
Atos





"At HGS, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where accessibility is a fundamental priority. Our commitment extends to conducting regular audits of our physical spaces to ensure they are fully accessible for persons with disabilities (PwDs). Additionally, our enterprise IT team works diligently to make all HGS digital platforms, including our website and intranet, digitally accessible. Accessibility empowers PwDs to thrive, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion while unlocking their immense potential. For companies, prioritizing accessibility drives innovation and inclusivity, ensuring every individual has equal opportunities to contribute, succeed, and grow in a truly equitable environment."

Shilpa Sinha Harsh

Executive Vice President – Global Corporate Communications
CSR, DEI and ESG, Hinduja Global Solutions

"Accessibility enables us to unlock the potential of every individual. At Nestlé, our commitment to thinking beyond drives us to prioritize the inclusion of persons with disabilities. By fostering an inclusive work environment and implementing practical measures, we aim to create meaningful and lasting impact, one step at a time."

Anurag Patnaik

Director – Human Resources
Nestle South Asia Region



"India, with the largest population in the world, also has the highest number of people with disabilities. Excluding this group from employment, amenities, and public services is counterproductive. They represent an untapped pool of talent, offering organizations a significant opportunity for inclusion and growth. We at NatWest are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where people of all abilities can thrive."

Sheetal Bathija

India Lead for Culture and Sponsor for Disability Smart
NatWest Group

"Creating a workplace where each colleague feels empowered and included is fundamental to our value system at WTW. This study is a vital step in identifying areas where we can improve and ensure that our spaces, tools, and experiences are welcoming and inclusive for everyone. By continuously striving to improve our accessibility standards, we reinforce our commitment to creating a culture of equity and opportunity for all."

Anupama Subramanian

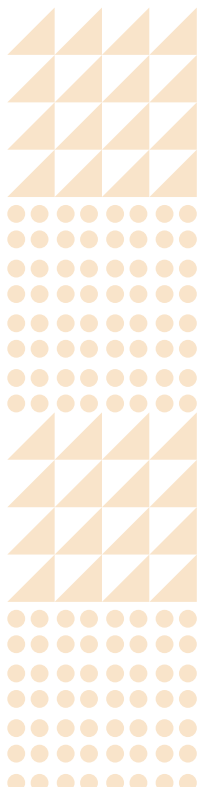
Director – India Global Delivery Center
WTW





6

PHOTO GALLERY – UNIVERSAL DESIGN @ WORKPLACES





"Pictures Speak a Thousand Words"

Here is a compilation where each image captures the essence of accessibility in workspaces, designed to serve diverse user groups. These visualizations, created by DEOC, demonstrate how accessibility standards can be effectively translated into real-world settings. Each render represents a commitment to inclusivity, showing implementation of standards that enable all individuals, regardless of ability, to engage in safe, comfortable, and functional environments. These examples are shared to inspire awareness and action towards accessible design in every workspace.



Figure 11 Reserved parking for persons with disabilities



Figure 12 Drop-off and building entry



Figure 14 Accessible Reception Counter



Figure 13 Steps with railings, colour contrasting nosing and tactile warning



Figure 15 Internal corridors with adequate width and handrails

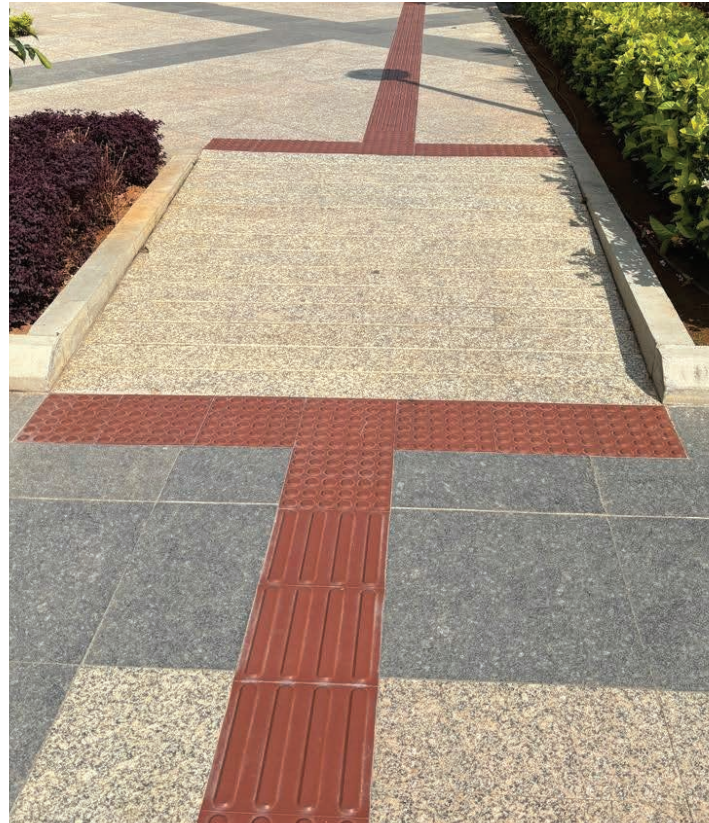


Figure 16 Tactile indicators along walkway



Figure 17 Urinal for Ambulant persons with disabilities—lower height urinal with grab bars



Figure 18 Gender neutral accessible toilet



Figure 19 Quiet Room/Sensory well-being space



Figure 20 Height adjustable workstation



Figure 21 Cafeteria dining table with appropriate knee and toe space



Figure 22 Lift with horizontal control panel, railings and emergency information in accessible format

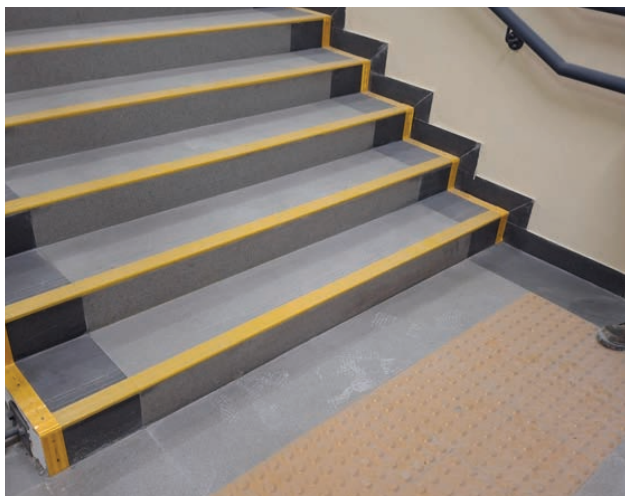


Figure 23 Staircase with colour contrasting nosing, railings at two levels and tactile warning



Figure 24 Signage with braille and raised lettering



Figure 25 Evacuation chairs for assisted evacuation



Figure 26 Induction loop system

ABOUT KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS

DEOC

DEOC is a trusted advisor for many corporations in the area of inclusion of people with disabilities in workspaces and educational institutions. We provide policy consultancy, accessibility and customised trainings in the area. We are a team of cross disability specialists, policy experts, universal design architects and technology experts. We have done extensive study on universal design, national/ international accessibility standards, UNCRPD and RPWD Act 2016. DEOC received the Javed Abidi Public Policy Award for Universal Design in 2018. We are one of the empanelled Access Auditors of Government of India. We are currently working with more than 80 corporations, Google, Amazon, Microsoft, HUL, Nestle, Brookfield, DLF, Embassy, several financial organizations, UN Organisations - UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO etc. to just name a few.

BarrierBreak

BarrierBreak, founded in 2004 in India, champions the idea that technology can empower people with disabilities and the elderly, enhancing their independence. Built on three foundational principles—harnessing the power of technology, fostering employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and operating as a for-profit social enterprise—BarrierBreak stands at the forefront of offshore digital accessibility testing and consulting.

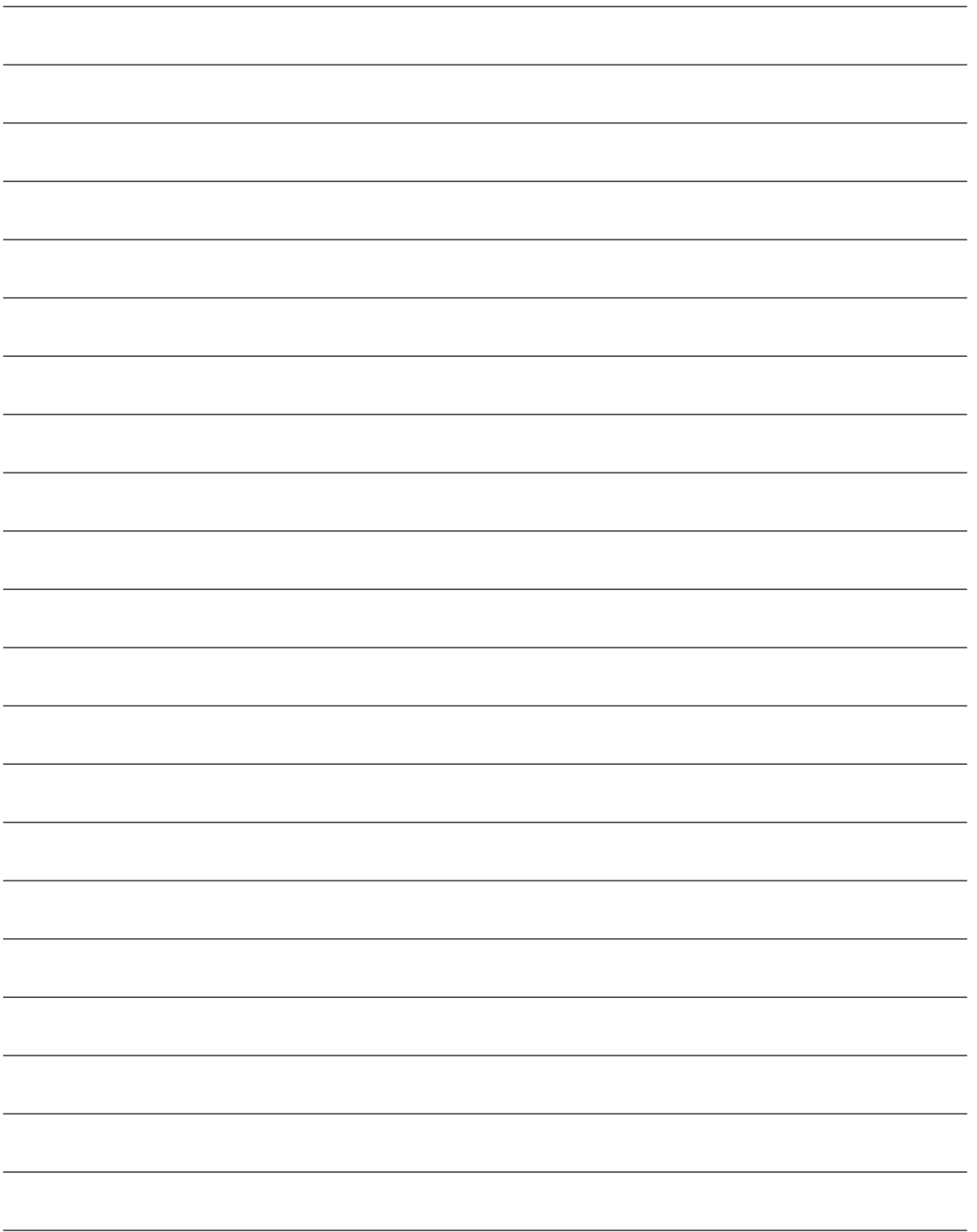
With a team of over 270 accessibility experts, the company is dedicated to crafting inclusive digital experiences that align with global accessibility standards. BarrierBreak ensures compliance with WCAG 2.2 and 2.1 guidelines, Section 508, and ADA, and provides expert assistance in developing Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs). By integrating accessibility into every stage of clients' development processes, BarrierBreak delivers reliable, cost-effective solutions that give clients a competitive edge in today's digital landscape.

SUPPORT PARTNER

About Barclays

Our vision is to be the UK-centred leader in global finance. We are a diversified bank with comprehensive UK consumer, corporate and wealth and private banking franchises, a leading investment bank and a strong, specialist US consumer bank. Through these five divisions, we are working together for a better financial future for our customers, clients and communities.

For further information about Barclays, please visit our website www.barclays.in





Confederation of Indian Industry

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering Industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

For more than 125 years, CII has been engaged in shaping India's development journey and works proactively on transforming Indian Industry's engagement in national development. With its extensive network across the country and the world, CII serves as a reference point for Indian industry and the international business community.

In the journey of India's economic resurgence, CII facilitates the multifaceted contributions of the Indian Industry, charting a path towards a prosperous and sustainable future. With this backdrop, CII has identified "Globally Competitive India: Partnerships for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth" as its Theme for 2024-25, prioritizing 5 key pillars. During this year, it would align its policy recommendations, initiatives, and activities with this overarching framework to facilitate strategic actions for driving India's global competitiveness and growth through a robust and resilient Indian Industry.

Confederation of Indian Industry

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The India Business and Disability Network (IBDN) is a CII initiative to facilitate inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and workplace diversity in India. The primary purpose of IBDN would be facilitating inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and workplace diversity in India. The IBDN is going to be a one-stop solution to promote employment of PwDs while responding to the needs of the private sector. The IBDN will give a platform for companies' mutual learning and experiences as well as context-based solutions and engagement with other stakeholders. Goal of IBDN: Promote and enable inclusion and equal opportunities for Persons with Disabilities at workplace through knowledge sharing, collaborative action, and improving technical skills of member organisations as well as to facilitate and assist companies in adopting products and services to create inclusive and accessible workplace.

Join the exclusive network for inclusion & mainstreaming of PwDs #CII4PwDs

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