

Analysis Report

Access Israel

Association for the Advancement of Accessibility and the
Integration of People with Disabilities in Israel

Registered charity no. 580341204, est. 1999

Date of rating: November 2010

Rating valid until: November 2012

“ Accessible public buildings, open spaces and offices, “
and accessibility to technology are essential so that
people with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities
can be integrated with respect, equality and
”independence in all areas of life and society

(From the Organization's Vision)

Do Good, Better

Table of contents

Organizational Profile	3
Summary	4
Recommendations	5
Findings	6
Background	11



Organizational Profile

Contact details: 12 Hasharon Road, Sharona Center, Kfar Saba.

Postal address: P.O. Box 5171, Kfar Saba 44151 | Telephone: 09-7451126 | Website: www.aisrael.org

Founding chairman: Yuval Wagner, voluntary Acting Chairman since the organization was founded (1999)

Mission: To enable people with disabilities in Israel to be equally integrated in all aspects of life

Objectives:

1. To make public and commercial sites accessible, and to promote technological accessibility and accessibility to information and services for people with disabilities
2. To promote social equality for people with disabilities and to raise awareness of their integration as equals in Israel society
3. To raise awareness in the education system of the importance of accepting difference and improving accessibility
4. To raise awareness about accessibility among lawmakers, public authorities and the business community
5. To improve professional knowledge about accessibility
6. To create and distribute a database about accessibility for people with disabilities and their families

Target populations: People with disabilities, the general public | Budget (2010): 4.3m NIS | No. of staff: 16
| No. of full-time positions: 9 | No. of volunteers: 10-15

Main projects:

1. Education, publicity and awareness raising about accessibility through a range of projects
2. Forum for Accessibility Promoting Businesses in Israel – promoting accessibility in Israel's largest firms
3. "Know in Advance" – an online database about the accessibility of public places in Israel
4. Legislation, the establishment of standards and activities in different Ministries to promote accessibility

Areas of activity: The entire country

Certifications: Proper Management, 46a (Tax Relief), Arrangements for donations from overseas



Summary

About the organization

Access Israel was founded in 1999 with the aim of improving the full social integration of people with disabilities by promoting their accessibility to places, technology, information and employment. The organization acts on behalf of people with all sorts of disability by lobbying; by working directly with people from the business and municipal sectors in order to promote accessibility to public spaces; and through awareness raising and educational activities about accessibility and more. The organization operates throughout the country in order to change public attitudes about accessibility and accepting difference. The founder and Chairman of the organization since its establishment, Yuval Wagner, serves as its Acting Chairman on a voluntary basis. The organization employs 16 staff, some of whom have disabilities. The organization's offices are in Kfar Saba, and its budget in 2010 was 4.3m NIS.

Summary of the rating

Nearly 700,000 people in Israel have a disability that impairs their everyday functioning. Despite advanced legislation, many sites and services are inaccessible to people with disabilities. Access Israel was the first organization to raise the flag of improving accessibility in order to improve the quality of life of people with different kinds of disability. The organization strives to emphasize the efficiency and positive influence of accessibility, and to develop collaborations that broaden its spheres of influence. The organization is seen as having made a significant contribution to raising awareness of the issue and as having brought about the accessibility of thousands of businesses and public sites. The organization's representatives participate in making law and defining standards for the promotion of accessibility.

Access Israel has a clear conception of the change that it would like to instigate and how it should do that. Last year, following a process of strategic analysis, it decided to terminate some of its projects and to focus on those areas in which the organization has a relative advantage and which will help it achieve its vision as quickly and as effectively as possible. The organization is successful at expanding its spheres of influence by collaborating with bodies in both the business and public sectors, which in turn advance the change in attitudes that the organization wishes to bring about. The organization implements processes of measurement and learning, though its measurement of its social influence is partial and does not encompass all of its programs.

The organization's Board of Directors is involved and is committed to its success, though there is a notable lack of Board members who can help raise funds and make contact with influential figures who might advance the organization's aims. In Midot's previous rating (2008) we remarked that the organization's being voluntarily managed by its Chairman – instead of appointing a full-time CEO – might have a negative impact on its activities. In this report we find that the situation has changed: some of the day to day managerial responsibilities have been transferred to two senior employees, and this would seem to have reduced the dependence on the Chairman. The organization is financially



stable and its finances are meticulously and efficiently managed. Some of its monies are held in earmarked funds in order to ensure the continuity of its projects.

Recommendations

- **Measuring outcomes and social impact:** Today, the outcomes of only some of the projects are measured, mainly in the field of education. We recommend examining the outcomes of all programs in order to ensure that the organization's activities are successfully achieving their desired social influence and promoting accessibility.
- **Organizational focus and long-term planning:** Last year the organization decided to terminate some of its projects and to focus on activities in three main areas. Activities for the years ahead are discussed only in general terms. We recommend more clearly outlining the organization's future activities so as to complete the process of focusing the organization and in order to set longer term goals that will help realize the organization's vision.



Findings

Planning – Very Good

Access Israel has a clear vision that guides the organization's activities. Its operating model combines the promotion of physical accessibility with awareness raising activities among various target populations, as well as activities to advance legislation and the establishment of standards. All this is in keeping with the view that accessibility is a first and necessary step in integrating people with disabilities in society. The organization's operations are based on detailed and high-quality work plans. As part of the organizational change that Access Israel has undergone during the last year its fields of activity have been more clearly defined, and general objectives have been outlined for the years ahead. However, the organization is yet to consolidate a plan that lays out concrete targets that will help it achieve these objectives, and the financial means required to do so have not been defined either.

Performance – Commendable

The programs run by the organization are varied and include a wide range of operational methods that are capable of promoting the organization's objectives and realizing its vision. Last year the organization decided to terminate those projects in which it had no relative advantage and to focus its efforts on two main areas: education and awareness raising, and the "Forum for Accessibility Promoting Businesses in Israel". This is expected to contribute to the organization's focus, which in the past was hampered by its wide range of activities and target populations. The organization frequently follows up on the implementation of its work plan, and it would appear that a large majority of the tasks that had been set the year before were successfully carried out. The organization collaborates with figures able to instigate widespread change in the field of accessibility, such as municipal and national-level decision makers and leading business organizations. Turning them into agents of change for improved accessibility helps the organization to expand its spheres of influence and to create an overall change in attitude that will ultimately lead to the required levels of accessibility and integration of people with disabilities in society.

Learning and Measuring – Very Good

The organization's familiarity with its beneficiaries' needs is based on the information it gathers from its complaints hotline, as well as from its own occasional inspections of selected public sites. However, the organization has not initiated its own comprehensive survey of the entire public that it serves. This would enable it to offer different solutions to different needs. The organization intends to use its website to carry out surveys of internet users with disabilities and thus learn about their needs. The organization frequently measures its outputs, but only measures the social influence of a small proportion of its programs and then only in the immediate term. The organization implements lesson learning processes and is aware of the changes in its external environment and adapts its activities accordingly.



Leadership – Commendable

Access Israel's Board of Directors is involved in the organization, discusses strategy, and outlines policy. The members of the Board – some of whom helped to establish it – clearly contribute their abilities and experience to promoting the organization's objectives, but there is a notable lack of members who might help with fund raising and in committing influential bodies to the organization. The Chairman of the Board, who founded the organization, also serves as voluntary CEO. In Midot's previous rating (2008) we remarked that the Chairman's absence from the organization's offices and the use of telephone and email for day-to-day contact might harm the organization's activities and management, especially given its dependence on him for carrying out certain of its tasks. In this report we find that the situation has changed: the Manager of Education and Awareness Raising is also responsible for the everyday running of the organization. The new level of management appears to have drastically reduced the organization's dependence on its Chairman.

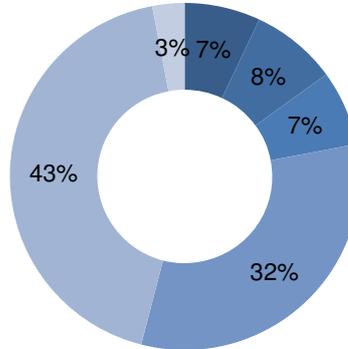
Finances – Commendable

In recent years the organization has been very stable financially despite it not having significant permanent funders. The organization's income is from contributions from businesses and private individuals, and the proportion of donations from philanthropic funds is relatively low. In recent years a significant part of the organization's income has been from accessibility consulting. The organization gradually terminated this activity last year, and so the upward trend in its income is expected to cease. This should not harm activities in other fields. The organization's cash reserves enable it to meet its commitments. Last year there were no appreciable cash flow or other difficulties. Some of the reserves are held in earmarked funds in order to ensure the continuity of its projects and to guarantee that earmarked donations are not swallowed up in every day expenses. The finances are carefully managed and budgetary targets are constantly monitored. There are clear procedures in place that ensure the proper use of the organization's money. The organization has a policy of paying its staff modest salaries, and the executives' pay is relatively low for the field. This policy might impair its ability to hire skilled and experienced staff in the future.



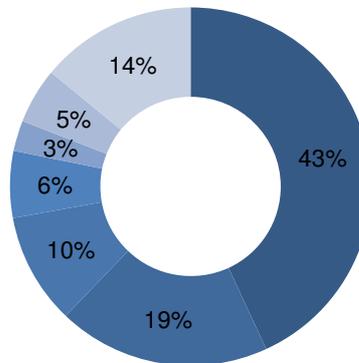
Main income sources (2010)

- Business philanthropy
- Institutional philanthropy
- Private donations from overseas
- Private donations from Israel
- Accessibility consulting and dissemination
- Awareness raising and education



Main expenditures (2010)

- Accessibility consulting
- Awareness raising and education – various projects
- Accessibility surveys, content and data collection
- The Center for Independent Living, together with JDC-Israel
- Forum for Accessibility Promoting Businesses in Israel
- Other
- Administration and general expenditure





General rating	Planning	Performance	Learning and Measuring	Leadership	Finances
Excellent	Very Good	Commendable	Very Good	Commendable	Commendable



The rating scale expresses Midot's estimation of the organization's chances of being effective in the future. An effective organization is one that succeeds in having a significant impact and bringing about change while maximally exploiting its resources.

Commendable

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Adequate

Low

Requires Improvement

Fail



Influence and the creation of social value

Access Israel was the first Israeli organization – and it remains the only one – to dedicate itself entirely to promoting accessibility for people with all kinds of disability. In recognition of his pathbreaking work in the field, the organization’s Chairman, Yuval Wagner, was awarded the 2006 Schwab Prize for Social Entrepreneurship. As a direct result of the organization’s work, hundreds of businesses and public sites have been made accessible, some of them in the framework of the organization’s “Access Israel Badge”. Experts in the field testify that Access Israel has had a profound effect on raising awareness of the importance of accessibility for people with disabilities, and the organization proved itself able to commit businesses to the issue of accessibility even before they were legally required to do so.

One of the objectives of Access Israel is to disseminate information about accessibility. To this end, together with the Israel Internet Association, the organization set up a website to help Internet site developers build accessible sites. The organization also operates older services, such as an online database on the organization’s own website which contains detailed information about the accessibility arrangements of public places and businesses in Israel.

The organization’s lobbying activities have had a number of successes, including a court ruling that enables disabled people to remove personal details from their disability parking permits; a government decision that all state events and ceremonies must be accessible to people with disabilities; and a petition to the High Court of Justice to require Ministries to conclude writing their accessibility ordinances. Along with representatives of other organizations, Access Israel representatives are party to parliamentary committee meetings in which new accessibility ordinances are formulated.

Access Israel's activities and beneficiaries

	Seminars at schools and municipalities	Forum for Accessibility Promoting Businesses in Israel	Public awareness raising activities
No. of beneficiaries (2010)	500-1000 pupils per month	33 firms	Exposure to hundreds of thousands of people per year
Frequency of intervention	3-6 events per month	Ongoing	4-8 events per month
Length of intervention	A few hours each time throughout the year		A few hours on a one-off basis
Depth of potential influence on the beneficiary’s life	Deep influence – change in attitudes and heightened awareness	Deep influence – change in attitudes and heightened awareness	Deep influence – change in attitudes and heightened awareness
Accumulative no. of beneficiaries	Thousands of pupils	Tens of firms	Hundreds of thousands



Ethics, supervision and transparency

No ethical shortcomings were found in the organization during the rating process. In its ethics declaration to Midot, the organization declared that there are no conflicts of interests among members of the Board or other stakeholders. The organization's Audit Committee does not play a central role, and its contribution is merely to approve financial and written reports. The organization's website includes detailed information about its activities, including financial reports, budgetary information, and work plans. The organization was extremely transparent with Midot's team as well.

Background

The social issue

According to recent estimates,¹ about 18% of Israelis aged 20-64 – or about 700,000 people – suffer from health or physical problems that limit their everyday functioning. In 1998 the Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law was passed, with its purpose being “to protect the dignity and freedom of a person with a disability, and to enshrine her/his right to equal and active participation in society in all the major spheres of life”. In March 2005 the law was amended and a clause was added that required that all public places and services be made accessible to people with all kinds of disability. Because of the expense of making existing public sites accessible, it was determined that the required adaptations would be spread over 6-12 years, at the end of which both the public and private sectors would have to be fully accessible. Although some ordinances for accessibility have been brought into effect, many places and services are still not accessible, thereby preventing people with disabilities from integrating into society with dignity and independence.

Environment

Organizations that deal with promoting accessibility:

- **Bizchut** - The Israel Human Rights Center for People with Disabilities, works to integrate people with disabilities in all areas of life and promotes the right to accessibility, to integration within the regular and special needs education systems, the right to housing in the community and the right to equality in the workplace.
- **Israeli Human Rights Organization of People With Disabilities** – Established in 1999, this organization works to prevent the discrimination of people with disabilities in the public and private sectors in all areas of life so as to pull Israel's disabled population out of poverty and discrimination.
- **SHEKEL** – Community Service for People with Special Needs. SHEKEL operates the Israeli Center for Accessibility with the aim of developing and promoting knowledge about accessibility and

¹ Adults with Disabilities, Denise Naon, Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute, June 2009.



improving the accessibility of the physical environment and services for people with disabilities. The Center provides professional consulting and training services for issues of accessibility.

- **Disabled Now** – The Movement for the Rights of People with Disabilities. The movement’s activities include removing obstacles to accessibility and raising awareness about disability.
- **Accessible Community** – The Department for the Disabled and Special Populations at The Israel Association of Community Centers runs the “Accessible Community” program in several dozen towns in Israel. The purpose of the program is to increase local and national accessibility – be that physical or social accessibility, accessibility to information and rights, accessibility to services, and so on.
- **Milbat** – Developing unique assistive devices for people with disabilities, and providing training and consultancy in the field with the aim of making adults and children with disabilities more independent and increasing their integration in the community via an accessible and adapted technological environment.

Within the Ministry of Justice there is a Commission for the Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities which was brought into being by the Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law, 1998. The Commission has been operational since 2000, and its objective is to realize the fundamental principles of the law, to advance equal opportunities, to prevent the discrimination of people with disabilities, and to encourage their integration and active participation in society. The Commission also runs the “Headquarters for the Integration of People with Disabilities in the Workforce” together with Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor.



The rating process

The rating process at Access Israel was carried out between June-October 2010. During the data collection stage, a number of different documents were received from the organization, and information was also gathered from online and other sources. We also drew on a questionnaire that was answered by 17 of the organization's staff. At the same time, interviews and conversations were held with various people:

- Yuval Wagner, Chairman of the Board of Directors
- Tzafrir Haklai, Member of the Board of Directors
- Rani Benyamini, Member of the Board of Directors and Treasurer
- Michal Rimon, Manager of Education and Awareness Raising and Vice-Chairperson
- Sigal Ratzabi, Manager of the Forum for Accessibility Promoting Businesses in Israel
- Rotem Burstein, Coordinator, Volunteers and Awareness Raising



Disclaimer

Midot strives to produce professional and impartial reports with the aim of promoting the effectiveness of the Third Sector and making information about Non-Profit Organizations available to social investors (donors) and the general public.

However, Midot's reports do not claim to replace the independent examinations and judgment of their readers when investing in an organization, donating to it, volunteering with it, making use of its services, or any other need. To this end, Midot takes no responsibility for the use of its reports as an exclusive mechanism for the sake of investing, donating, or for any other use by the report's readers or the organization.

The preparation of this report was based on information conveyed by the rated organization and/or publically available information or on other information that is expected to be reliable. However, Midot takes no responsibility for the accuracy or veracity of the information or the report, its completeness, its reliability or its content, which may change over time. Therefore, Midot will not be liable for any mistakes, deficiencies or gaps in the rating or the information. As mentioned, Midot will not be directly or indirectly responsible for the consequences of using the information contained in this report, including, but not limited to, an inappropriate investment in an organization, or an unproductive investment, or the loss of an investment or any other damage that might be said to have derived from making use of a Midot report.



Midot – Reflecting and Rating NPOs is a non-profit organization for the benefit of society. Midot wants to make effectiveness, a focus on outcomes, measurement and learning into key aspects of NPO management and part of the considerations of funding organizations – private donors, governmental offices, foundations and businesses.

Midot has chosen rating as a tool for advancing effectiveness and influence in the social world. Midot's rating method is a qualitative, professional and independent tool that enables us to evaluate an organization's chances of attaining social outcomes and a positive impact on its beneficiaries. The rating process is concluded with the publication of an analysis report, which includes the findings of Midot's social analysts. The report provides the social organization's leadership with a management tool that is geared to effectiveness, and presents information about the organization's chances of being effective to social investors. We hope that this report will be of use to you. Don't hesitate to be in touch with us for any further information.

