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# Best Practices in Improving Awareness and Advocacy for the Visually Impaired

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Xavier's Resource Centre for the  
Visually Challenged (XRCVC)

Dr Sam Taraporevala  
Executive Director, XRCVC

Krishna Warriar  
Consultant, XRCVC

# Outline



- The Concept of Advocacy | Awareness is a vital prerequisite
- The Rationale
- Who is Responsible?
- The Method – Some Basic Principles
- Nature of Advocacy
- The XRCVC Experience – Some Examples
- Key Challenges along the way
- Concluding Remarks

# The Concept and Rationale



“It is the planned and systematic influencing of individuals, organizations and governments; thoughts, attitudes, behaviours, policies, systems, programmes and laws by persons and organizations representing a particular social issue.”

# Essential Ingredients of Advocacy



- Awareness of Rights
- Awareness of Self
- Spreading Awareness within various stakeholders including the Community
- Effective Action

# The Rationale



- The Human Rights Case
  - The Need to Sensitize

# Who is Responsible?



## Two Types of Advocacy

- Informal
- Formal

# The Methods



- Awareness
  - a. Individual – One to One
  - b. Organizational – Specific Authorities and Personnel
  - c. Public Awareness through simulation approaches

# The Methods...contd..



## ■ The Legal Course

- a. Public Interest Litigation (PIL)
- b. Lobbying for legislative change: To make existing legal frameworks inclusive, eliminate the discriminatory ones and ensure effective implementation of already existing laws.
- c. Policy formulation and modification: Through addressing policy makers, law makers, public officials and community service providers.



# Basic Principles



- Keep it simple
- Use laws wherever possible
- Importance of networking
- Use of representations
- Start with the basics
- Importance of success cases and practical examples
- Importance of follow-up

# Nature of Advocacy



- Advocacy is primarily a human-intensive process
- The advocacy team needs to imbibe key effective characteristics:
  - a. Resilience
  - b. Patience
  - c. Persistence
  - d. Pro-Activeness
  - e. Quick Response Time

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# The XRCVC Experience — Some Examples

- Financial Access
- Print Access
- Education Access
- Antarchakshu®



How awareness generation through  
**Antarchakshu® – The Eye Within**  
helped boost our work!

# Financial Access



- Accessible ATMs
- DMAT Rules and NSDL
- RBI Circular
- IBA Guidelines



An Accessible ATM being tested at Delhi Airport

# Print Access



- Copyright Act, 1957
- Publisher contact programme
- Bookshare and Inclusive Library Models including Sugamya Pustakalaya

# Educational Access



- Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Circular on Science Education
- University of Mumbai – Psychology
- Physiotherapy – The Mainstream challenge
- Scribe Guidelines

# About Antarchakshu®



From 2006, XRCVC has reached out to **over 37,000 people** through its awareness programmes conducted all over India and abroad.

## THE VARIANTS

- The traditional mega event
- The sit-down approach
- The customized approach
- Antarchakshu® online

Simulation: a note of caution

# How Antarchakshu® has evolved



The traditional mega event



The sit-down approach



The customized approach



Antarchakshu® online





# Key Challenges along the way



- The more macro the issue the more diffused the results
- Bureaucratic Roadblocks including transfers
- Unimplemented rules
- Ongoing Funding
- Timing of Legal Redressal is key and the process can backfire if not timed properly
- Often in the end it is a moment that decides and to that extent the out of control nature of the situation can overwhelm

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# Concluding Word about Advocacy and Awareness



- A powerful tool often not recognized in work but can have lasting impact.
- Collective constant advocacy processes can form the key to long term sustainable work.



***THANK YOU***