

Mada Reviews: Accessible Gaming & Wonder Tree

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In cooperation with its partners, Mada Center works to identify the needs of persons with disabilities for assistive technology and digital access solutions in Arabic. The center has supported start-ups and entrepreneurs to localize technological devices and solutions through the Mada Innovation Program, with the aim of improving digital accessibility for PWDs at the local, regional and international levels.

In recent years, gaming has become increasingly prevalent with the advent of mobile gaming, gamification in the workplace and greater uptake of augmented reality technology by people of all ages. Gaming is no longer limited to a niche segment of teenagers and children; games today can be seen in multiple settings being used by a multitude of different audiences. Accessibility to the gaming space is no longer a luxury, it is a necessary component of creating an inclusive digital ecosystem. Gaming today is part and parcel of what is referred to as digital content, and, as such, is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

One of the main obstacles facing the accessibility of gaming is the general absence of legislation in this area. Unlike access to information and media, there is no explicit legislation outlining the need to making games accessible. Even in countries where there are laws that regulate video games, such as South Korea and the United Kingdom, there is no explicit mention of accessibility yet. The result is that initiatives to make games accessible are driven by conscious designers and developers, and not by national initiatives.

When it comes to people with functional limitations, there is an even further added element to gamification – and that is the use of games within a rehabilitation setting. In conjunction with international accessible gaming experts, Mada Assistive Technology Center initiated efforts to raise awareness about how gaming can be made more