

## Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology

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### Priority Assistive Products List launched at the 69th World Health Assembly



The Priority Assistive Products List (APL) was launched at a side event of the 69th World Health Assembly, by Saira Afzal Tarar and Margarita Guevara, Health Ministers from Pakistan and Ecuador. The side event was hosted by the Governments of Pakistan, Ecuador, Germany, Ireland, China, Republic of Korea, United States of America, and Zimbabwe.

It provided a great opportunity to raise awareness and support amongst other Member States prior to the WHO Executive Board discussions at the end of May.

The 50 products were finalized at a consensus meeting on 21-22 March which was attended by 70 participants. They represented every WHO region and included people working in service provision and at policy level, researchers, representatives from organizations for older people and people with disabilities, and users of assistive technology. Discussions were based on the results of the Global Survey and Delphi exercise.

The Global Survey succeeded in capturing the views of people who need and use assistive products across the world. Respondents voted for the 50 most priority assistive products from a list of 100. 44% of respondents were older people and/or people with disabilities and 161 countries were represented. The International Disability Alliance, WHO collaborating centres and other partners worked hard to disseminate the survey and ensure that the views of people from diverse linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds were heard. WHO would also like to thank USAID for their generous support towards the development of the APL and the GATE initiative.

The [Priority Assistive Products List](#) is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, with Portuguese coming soon.

### Assistive technology is on WHO's agenda for the first time



Improving Access to Assistive Technology was Agenda item 6.2 of WHO's 139th Executive Board meeting. The agenda item was proposed by Pakistan who also asked for a draft resolution to be proposed to the 70th Session of the World Health Assembly. The Executive Board agreed for the agenda item to be included on the rolling agenda. WHO submitted a report to inform discussions.

The [report](#) provides an overview of the current scenario in relation to need, access, barriers and possible solutions.

The Government of Pakistan has since put assistive technology on the agenda of this October's WHO Eastern Mediterranean regional committee meeting and is asking for a regional resolution as a precursor to a global resolution.

### International Standards Organization (ISO)

The department of essential medicines and products (EMP) has been nominated as the focal group within WHO for ISO. WHO and ISO are in the process of discussing a 3 year (2017-2020) collaborative action plan. As part of this, the GATE team is in discussion with ISO about updating ISO terminology (ISO 9999, ISO TC 168 and TC 173), and developing minimum standards for products listed on the APL.

### Conference of States Parties



The overarching theme of the 9th session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) was *Implementing the 2030 development agenda for all persons with disabilities: Leaving no one behind*.

There were six side events on assistive technology, reflecting a growing interest and awareness in the area. Chapal Khasnabis introduced the APL at a side event organised by the International Disability Alliance and spoke alongside speakers from UNICEF, Government of Philippines, USAID and Rehabilitation International. Chapal also introduced GATE at a second side event, organised by the Governments of Israel and Argentina.

### Intern opportunities with the GATE team at WHO Geneva



The GATE team has grown over the summer and welcomed two interns - Rebecca Brodmann and Kaitlyn Gulock. Rebecca is from Canada and is currently completing a Master of Public Health at Queen's University. Kaitlyn is from Japan and is studying International Relations at the University of Edinburgh. They are working closely with the team by contributing to the writing of technical documents, creating a literature management tool on assistive technology and helping out on a variety of other projects. Rebecca had the opportunity to attend the 69th World Health Assembly and assist the team at the side event.

Both agree that an internship with GATE is an invaluable learning and professional development experience, in addition to the abundant benefits of completing an internship with WHO – including networking opportunities, educational seminars, attending high-level meetings and expanding your public health knowledge and experience tremendously. Lastly, Geneva is a beautiful city with incredible travel opportunities and diverse people.

The GATE team welcomes eager students studying in the fields of public health, rehabilitation sciences, assistive technology, or international development. For more information and to [apply for a WHO internship](#), please visit the WHO website and send a copy of your application to our [email address](#).

## Updates and Links

### Wheelchair Training of trainers package (WSTPt)



The WSTPt has been piloted in Kenya and South Africa and a third and final pilot is planned for Thailand in September 2016. The project is being coordinated by Leadership, Management, and Governance Project, with funding from USAID. The International Society of Wheelchair Professionals (ISWP) is also piloting an assessment tool which will be used to gain ISWP accreditation.

The first two pilots brought together participants, trainers and observers from over 17 countries, providing valuable feedback towards ensuring the universality of the final package. Pictured: WSTPt-basic participants with their certificates at the end of the Kenya pilot

### WHO Stands for Prosthetics and Orthotics Service Provision (POSP)

The first draft is currently being reviewed and is on track to be launched at the [ISPO 16th World Congress](#) in Cape Town, South Africa, in May 2017.

### Links

The first [WHO Fact sheet on assistive technology](#) is on the WHO website.

## Upcoming events

15 - 16 September 2016

[ISO technical committee 173 meeting](#), Sao Paulo, Brazil

