Leadership Role of Pakistan in improving access to Assistive Technology

rapid Assistive Technology Assessment survey (rATA)

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Country Context

- Pakistan is **5th most populous** country in the world (213M)
- Largest country in Eastern Mediterranean Region
- Administrative units:
  - **Five provinces**
  - Islamabad Capital Territory
  - Pakistan Administered Kashmir
- **18th Constitutional Amendment**
  - Provincial autonomy and constitutionally powerful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Population (Million)</th>
<th>Comparable Countries (population-wise) in Million</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>100.6</td>
<td>Philippines 102.3 / Ethiopia 101.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhawa</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia 32.2 / Afghanistan 33.4 / Morocco 34.8</td>
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<td>Sindh</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>Tanzania 55.2 / Myanmar 54.4 / South Africa 55.0</td>
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<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>Cambodia 15.8 / Senegal 15.6 / Zimbabwe 16.0</td>
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Leadership of Pakistan in Improving access to Assistive Technology

A journey of 840 days towards adoption of Global Resolution
Subject: Inclusion of Assistive Technology in WHO 138th Executive Board, Geneva

Dear Sir,

It is my pleasure to bring to your kind attention and through you to the Members of the Executive Board, an important issue with regard to access, availability and affordability of the assistive technology for the people in need.

As you know, the number of individuals with disability is rising globally. The causes of the physical disability are also on rise due to the conflicts and wars especially in the Asian and Middle Eastern regions. This situation is further deteriorated by the congenital and acquired diseases that result in various kinds of disabilities.

In addition, the growing population of the elderly, and persons with chronic disorders and the general healthy population with some form of functional impairment or decline equally benefit from the easy access to assistive devices and technology e.g. wheelchairs, canes, prosthetic and orthotic devices, spectacles, low vision aids, hearing aids, communication boards, assistive information and communication technology, and assistive robots. These assistive devices will substantially decrease the level of functioning difficulty in their lives.
Global Level
Launch of APL during 69th World Health Assembly

Jan 2016

Pakistan Government has recently launched a major initiative to provide universal health coverage to the most vulnerable population with a comprehensive National Health insurance initiative – the Prime Minister Program. The Programme is being implemented in a phased manner to cover 100 million people through health care facilities. Early data has identified that people with disabilities, chronic conditions (NCDs) and people collectively represent a large proportion of the vulnerable population. For this population, the need for technology as an important enabler and solutions is critical. While medical interventions play a major role in prolonging life, assistive technologies improve well-being and enable people to do the things that matter in life.

There is evidence that access to appropriate assistive products such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and other prosthetics allows to improve functional status, enhance the productivity levels, and in the long-term contribute to socio-economic benefits, enabling people to be healthy, independent, and productive, and reduce complications, and the need for care. However, only 8% of the population in need do not have access to assistive products and low availability, the problem being more acute in LMIC. It is time for the assistive technology sector to ensure there are products that are accessible and affordable to people in need and to ensure that these products are of high quality, well-maintained, and motivating.

May 2016
Regional Level
Adoption of Eastern Mediterranean Regional Resolution on AT

63rd Regional Committee Meeting
Cairo 3-6 Oct 2016

June 2016
Global Level
Draft Resolution shared during the 70th WHA

Development of a Health Assembly resolution and action plan for improving access to assistive technology

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report on assistive technology,

RECOMMENDS to the xth World Health Assembly, the adoption of the following resolution:

The xth World Health Assembly,

Recognising that at least 1 billion people need assistive technology and that as the global population ages, and the prevalence of noncommunicable diseases increases, this figure will rise to over 2 billion by 2050;

Recognizing that WHO’s definition of assistive technology refers not only to assistive products but also related systems and services that are needed in order for older people, people with disabilities and others in need to live a healthy, productive and independent life;

Aware that only 1 in 10 people in need currently have access to assistive technology, owing to a lack of availability, awareness, trained personnel, and high costs;

Noting that, for those in need, a lack of access assistive technology has a significant impact on education, livelihood, well-being and independence, as well as on families, communities and countries.

Being aware that the Sustainable Development Goals emphasize “leaving no one behind”, and that SDG target 3.8 cannot be achieved without the inclusion of assistive technology as an essential component of universal health coverage and of integrated people-centred health
Regional Level
Adoption of Islamabad Declaration on AT

64th Regional Committee Meeting, Islamabad Pakistan 9-11 Oct 2017
Subject: Designation of Global Ambassador for the Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology (GATE) Initiative

Dear Dr. Tedros,

The Government of Pakistan is deeply honored to have the opportunity to enter the cause of improving access to Assistive Technology at the global and regional level.

2. We are deeply encouraged by the overwhelming response of member states of the World Health Organization in coming forward to support this noble initiative. It may be recalled that a list of Assistive devices was launched by Pakistani Health Minister and Ecuador Health Minister along with senior representatives of all other countries in the sidelines of WHA in May, 2016.

3. We believe that a strong strategy including a Global Plan of Action and strong global advocacy is required to take forward the cause. Designation of a Global Ambassador for the Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology (GATE) Initiative would be an important step in eliciting sustained commitment to the cause by Governments and individuals including influencers and opinion leaders. We believe that a personality who has endured disability and has the ability to inspire through the spoken and written word would be the right fit for such a position.

4. In the above context, we would like to propose Dr. Sana Haque, a paraplegic, a medical doctor and motivational speaker as Global Ambassador for the Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology (GATE) Initiative. Dr. Sana Haque who suffered physical disability as a result of an accident, has set an example of courage and determination in completing her medical education and not letting disability stand in the way of realizing her dreams.

Contact

Global Level
WHO Global Champion on Assistive Technology

19 December 2017
WHO Executive Board adopts the Resolution

26 Jan 2018

Improving access to assistive technology

Draft resolution proposed by Algeria, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Iraq, Israel, Jamaica, Pakistan, Philippines, Zambia

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report on assistive technology, the

RECOMMENDS to the Seventy-first World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Seventy-first World Health Assembly,

(P1) Considering that one billion people need assistive technology and that, as the global population ages and the prevalence of non-communicable diseases increases, this figure will rise to more than two billion by 2050;

(P2) Noting that assistive technology enables and promotes the inclusion, participation and engagement of persons with disabilities, ageing populations and people with many health conditions in the family, community and all areas of society, including the political, economic and social spheres;

(P3) Recalling that 90% of those who need assistive technology do not have access to it, thereby having a significant adverse impact on the education, livelihood, health and well-being of individuals, and on families, communities and societies;

(P4) Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its ultimate aim of “leaving no one behind”;

(P5) Recognising that the inclusion of assistive technology is essential to realising the SDG targets of reducing to universal health coverage, inclusive and equitable quality education, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable, and provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, particularly for persons with disabilities;

3 Document EB142/CONF./2.
Global Level
Side Meeting: 71st World Health Assembly May 2018

Dear Stephen Hawking,

I have the pleasure to bring to your attention to an important issue with regard to access to assistive technology for persons with disabilities, aging population and those affected with communicable diseases. Today only one in 10 has an access to good quality and affordable Assistive Technology, globally.

Most recently, Executive Board of the World Health Organization in its meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland in the month of January, 2018 approved resolution titled “Improving access to Assistive Technology” moved by Government of Pakistan. This resolution will now be adopted by 198 Member States in the 71st World Health Assembly being held from 22nd to 28th May, 2018.

The resolution emphasized that considering one billion people need assistive technology and that as global population ages and the prevalence of non-communicable diseases increases, this figure will rise to more than two billion by 2050. Assistive technology will enable and promote the participation and engagement of persons with disabilities, ageing population people with co-morbidities in the family, communities in political, economic and social spheres.

The resolution pointed out that 90 percent of those who need assistive technology do not have access to it, thereby having a significant adverse impact on the education, livelihood, health and well-being of individuals, and on families, communities and societies.

It was emphasized that the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development and its slogan of “leaving no one behind” requires making efforts to support the differently abled so that can contribute to attaining Sustainable Development Goals.

Feb 2018
Development of Regional Framework on Assistive Technology, Islamabad 2018

- 22 countries of Eastern Mediterranean Region Participated
- First Region Globally

8th May 2018
Global Leadership of Pakistan in Improving access to Assistive Technology

Global Resolution “Improving Access to Assistive Technology” tabled by Pakistan and adopted by 194 Member States of World Health Assembly, Geneva, 26th May 2018

The Journey of 840 Days Completed
Visit of Honorable First Lady to WHO Headquarters, Geneva, August 22-24, 2019

- Chief Guest of International Consultation on Global Report on Effective Access to Assistive Technologies,

- Honorable First Lady Inaugurated and concluded the Global Conference (more than 200 participants from 100 countries)
MoU Between Government of Pakistan and China: Oct 2019

Improve Access to AT under the Framework of “Belt and Road Initiative” 2019

• Establish regular dialogues
• Exchange information on best practices & innovations
• Develop & implement pilot projects
• Strengthening local manufacturing
Rapid Assistive Technology Assessment Survey (rATA)  April 2019

• Pakistan is the first country, globally, to pilot rATA survey

• Objectives:
  ➢ to determine the proportion of people in need of an assistive products;
  ➢ to identify the type of assistive products;

• Sampling Methodology
  ➢ Two stage cluster sampling
  ➢ 16 districts over 9000 households and 63061 respondents

• Trainings workshop (50 surveyors trained)

• Field testing for rATA Tool (Islamabad and Karachi)

• Data Collection Process
Preliminary Data Analysis

Assistive Product Use

Among 62723 respondents 4498 (7.2%) currently use at least one assistive product.

Assistive Product Demand

Among 62723 respondents 8192 (13.1%) demand at least one assistive product.

* The presented prevalence of use and demand of AP is estimated without weighting.
23.5% respondents report having difficulty in at least one function domain
30.2% are current users of assistive product
53.2% demand at least one product

* The presented prevalence of use and demand of AP is estimated without weighting.
7. AT for few disability conditions : Government Response

Rapid Assistive Technology Assessment Survey (rATA)

**Providers**
- Private sector: 53.5%
- Self-made: 24.7%
- Friends or family: 18.2%
- Public sector: 3.7%
- Ngo sector: 1.5%
- Online: 0.1%

**Funding sources**
- Paid out-of-pocket: 93.7%
- Charity: 3.4%
- Government: 2.5%
- Employer/school: 0.6%
- Insurance: 0.1%

**Reasons for not having the assistive products needed (%):**
- Cannot afford: 67.5%
- Not aware: 24.7%
- Product not available: 15.1%
- Cost of product: 8.6%
- Technical expertise: 5.1%
- Other reasons: 4.6%

Source: Ministry NHSRC & WHO
Meeting called by the President of Pakistan on AT
Pakistan Bait ul Maal
“From Charity to Right Based Approach”

- Development of **National Priority Assistive Product List** based on WHO List (through Federal and Provincial Consultations)

- Launched by the **Honorable First Lady of Pakistan**

- Broaden the ambit by **inclusion of Assistive Products** in the domain of environment, communication and cognition

- Introduction of **WHO specifications** in the procurement system of PBM

- National Steering Committee on Assistive Technology notified
National Steering Committee Meeting Chaired by The President of Pakistan
Pakistan Bait ul Maal

• In 29-year history of Pakistan Bait ul Maal tender for customized wheelchairs launched based on WHO Specifications
• Inclusion of AT in the National Health Insurance Scheme and Social Protection Program (Free of Cost)
• Phase wise inclusion of 25 Priority Assistive Product List

“Say No to One size Fit for All”
Way Forward

• National **Strategic Action Framework** on Assistive Technology

• Development **Assistive Technology Program** (ICT Level)

• Establishment of **AT Centers** at the Provincial Level

• Allocation of **regular budget & setting up AT service provision systems**

• Train **personnel & develop local capacity** for manufacturing
Universal access to AT by 2030