

## Delphi study to develop the WHO Model List of Priority Assistive Products (APL): second round completed by WHO.

Based on the success and learning of the Essential Medicines List (EML), WHO is developing a Model List of Priority Assistive Products (APL) to assist Member States to plan policies and programmes related to the provision of Assistive Products (AP). Like the Essential Medicines List, the main goal of this initiative is to identify the 50 most-needed assistive products, which every country should make available at an affordable cost for its citizens. Towards this, WHO initiated a three-stage Delphi study. In July 2015, 200 respondents took part in round one and identified 200 important assistive products. In September 2015, 178 respondents completed round two and identified 100 most needed assistive products. Based on the outcome of round two, WHO will initiate the final and third round of the Delphi study to identify the top 50 priority assistive products on 3 December 2015 - the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. On the same day, WHO will also launch a global survey to develop the APL in all 6 UN languages and 40 regional languages to ensure wider participation of users, potential users and non-native English speakers.

## GATE-Research Working Group



The first WHO-GATE research working group meeting took place in Budapest on 9 September 2015, with over 60 participants taking part. It was organised by the Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE), the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America (RESNA), Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands, and the Centre for Global Health at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

The main goal of this meeting was to support the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive global assistive technology research agenda and strategy. The meeting led to development of a global research agenda for improving access to high-quality affordable assistive technology. Consensus was reached upon five major research priorities that need global attention:

1. Evidence about effects, return on investment and economic impact of assistive technology
2. Service delivery systems and models, including best practices and evaluation criteria
3. Development of new, low-cost and high-quality technologies/devices
4. Capacity development and training in the field of disability research and assistive technology
5. Basic needs assessment at a community level, scoping the problem.

Based on the input from the meeting and further research, WHO in partnership will publish a White Paper on the assistive technology research scenario: Bridging the Gap, by 31 March 2016.

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



WHO, in partnership with the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is developing new Standards for Prosthetics and Orthotic Service Provision. The proposed standards will cover a key sector within assistive technology – prosthetics and orthotics services. Towards this, key experts from ISPO, USAID, International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and WHO had a think-tank strategy meeting in

Brussels from 14 to 16 September 2015. Discussion was mostly on how to improve access to the prosthetics and orthotics services. Discussion was also on the proposed structure and content of the forthcoming WHO Standards on Prosthetics and Orthotics Service Provision (POSP) and the GATE Initiative. During the meeting, ISPO kindly offered to be the lead agency in coordinating the GATE advocacy working group.

## Capacity building tool to improve wheelchair service provision

To improve access to wheelchair services worldwide, WHO has published a series of Wheelchair Service Training Packages (WSTP) for different levels of wheelchair service provision. However, to deliver these training packages effectively, WHO needs an army of well-trained trainers, with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, WHO is collaborating with USAID, Leadership, Management, and Governance Project of Management Sciences for Health, the International Society for Wheelchair Professionals (ISWP) and leading global wheelchair service providers to develop a universally applicable and standard Training of Trainers (TOT) package by 30 June 2016.

## GATE is opening the doors

Within a year, GATE has generated lot of interest around the world, but mostly from high-income countries, especially North America and Western Europe. The GATE community map provides a snapshot of the development of the assistive technology sector worldwide. Disability or ageing issues affect every country in the world and those people need assistive technology to remain active, independent, and productive.



The Government of Pakistan has made a formal request to include assistive technology in the forthcoming WHO Executive Board Agenda. This is a significant step towards improving access to assistive technology especially in low- and middle-income countries. This action is expected to facilitate much needed international cooperation on assistive technology (article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), with the end goal of universal access to high quality affordable assistive technology.

## Upcoming events

1. Global Conference on Assistive Devices & Technology: ASEM Plus in Beijing, China, 29-30 October 2015
2. WHO Prosthetics and Orthotics Service Provision (POSP) Standards Development Group Meeting in Mahidol University, Bangkok, 9-12 November 2015
3. GATE-Africa Regional Meeting at Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa, 25-26 February 2016.