Second global consultation for the WHO-UNICEF Global Report on Assistive Technology (GReAT)
27-28 October 2021

Programme overview

Background

GReAT mandate

The Seventy-first World Health Assembly resolution WHA71.8 calls upon WHO to prepare a Global Report on Access to Assistive Technology (GReAT) in the context of an integrated approach, based on best available scientific evidence and international experience. This report will:

- Highlight the status of access to assistive technology (AT);
- Draw attention to the need for and benefit of AT, including the return on investment;
- Recommend actions that will improve access to AT, especially in resource limited settings;
- Support implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- Help ensure Universal Health Coverage is inclusive.

GReAT development process

Initiated in January 2019, the development of GReAT has been guided by the WHO/UNICEF Steering Committee, an 18-member Expert Advisory Group, and global AT stakeholders. The report is being prepared by an Editorial Committee. The report has been informed by background papers, case studies and user stories contributed by global stakeholders at the first GReAT global consultation (Geneva 2019).

The draft report includes population survey data providing a picture of AT access from over 30 countries as well as WHA71.8 progress indicators as reported by Member States. The Expert Advisory Group, WHO and UNICEF technical units along with external AT experts have provided critical review throughout the drafting process. Consultations in each of the WHO six regions before the second global consultation will further contribute to building this report. The figure below summarizes the key milestones:

Purpose and expected outcomes

The second GReAT global consultation is an important opportunity for AT stakeholders to learn how consultations and research to date have shaped the draft report, and to provide feedback to assist in finalising this milestone document for publication in 2022. During the consultation, GReAT topics will be introduced and recommendations will be critically reviewed by participants. Importantly, a call-for-action will also be launched to implement the recommendations. Expected outcomes are:

- Strengthened global, regional and local relevance of GReAT recommendations; and
- Identification of next steps to improve access to AT, and roles and responsibilities of different AT stakeholders towards these.

Participants

Attendance is by invitation. Participants have been selected to ensure diverse, equitable and balanced representation considering geography, setting/context, sector, gender, and AT focus. Participants will include up to 400 people from government and non-government, advocacy and user representative bodies, service providers, research and training institutes, industry, development agencies and others.

How will the consultation work?

The consultation programme consists of plenary and break-out sessions. Plenary sessions can be watched in real-time during the consultation or downloaded/streamed from the consultation platform at any time during the consultation and for 30 days after it closes. There will be moderated break-out sessions on six key topics related to the GReAT recommendations, for interactive discussion in smaller groups. Each break-out session will last ninety minutes and will include discussion on the recommendations, and key action areas and roles of different stakeholders in improving access to AT. Each participant may join one break-out session for every topic (up to six break-out sessions in total). Break-out sessions will be held in the afternoon of day 1 and are repeated in the morning and afternoon of day 2, to help participants across global time zones to take part.

The consultation platform also includes an online forum for participants to network, post messages and comments throughout the consultation. There is a dedicated plenary session on day 2 to discuss questions and comments posted by participants.

Language, accessibility and materials

The consultation will be held in English with simultaneous translation of all plenary sessions into all UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish), and International sign language. Plenary sessions will also be captioned in English. Break-out sessions will be held in English with English captioning. A short information note (in English), including the GReAT draft recommendations, will be shared with participants before the consultation.

Provisional programme

Day one: 27 October 2021

Time (CEST)	Sessions
08:00 – 08:30	Consultation platform open (technical support available via email and chat)
08:30 – 08:45	**Opening plenary session:** • Message from WHO • Message from UNICEF • Message from donor • Message from EAG Chair • Message from Lead Editor

08:50 – 10:10	**Plenary session 2:**
	• Understanding AT
	  o What is AT and who needs AT?
	  o AT user perspectives
	• Access to AT – global indicators
	  o Global picture on population access and system readiness
	  o Country presentations on rATA survey findings

10:10 – 10:20	Break

10:20 – 12:15	**Plenary session 3:**
	• Reducing barriers to AT
	  o Barriers in accessing AT & current solutions
	  o Case studies on good practice of improving access to AT
	• Creating an enabling environment
	  o Holistic perspective on enabling environment
	  o Case studies on enabling environments
	• Recommendations for improving access to AT
	  o Recap WHA resolution and recommendations for improving access to AT
	• Global stakeholders' actions

12:15 – 12:30	**Instructions for the parallel discussion sessions**
12:30 – 13:45	Break
13:45 – 15:15	**Parallel break-out session 1:** Topics 1 – 6
15:45 – 17:15	**Parallel break-out session 2**: Topics 1 - 6
17:45 – 19:15	**Parallel break-out session 3:** Topics 1 - 6

Day two: 28 October 2021

Time (CEST)	Sessions
08:00 – 08:30	Consultation platform open (technical support available via email and chat)
08:30 – 08:45	**Opening plenary session – day two**
09:00 – 10:30	**Parallel break-out session 4:** Topics 1 - 6
10:30 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 12:10	**Plenary session 4:** • panel discussion responding to participant questions
12:10 – 12:20	**Plenary session 5:** • Launch of the call-for-action • Closing of the consultation
14:30 – 16:00	**Parallel break-out session 5:** Topics 1 – 6
16:30 – 18:00	**Parallel break-out session 6:** Topics 1 – 6