

WHO Progress Indicators for access to assistive technology

Member States informal
consultation: 14:30 – 15:30
25 March 2025

*Medicines and Health
Products Division*



Assistive technology – diversity to meet all needs



Agenda

1. Opening remarks
 2. Background on assistive technology and the Progress Indicators
 3. Overview of 2021 Progress Indicator process and findings
 4. Preparing for 2025 Progress Indicator survey
 5. Question, answer, discussion
-

Background

Today,
2.5 billion people
need assistive technology.
That's 1 in 3 of us.

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Assistive products

A sub-set of health products that should be available through Universal Health Coverage

Six 'streams' of products

Many assistive technology users use more than one product, across different streams



2018 WHA Resolution on assistive technology (WHA71.8)

*“Recognizing that inclusion of assistive technology, in line with countries’ national priority and context, into health systems is essential for realizing progress towards the targets in the **Sustainable Development Goals relating to universal health coverage....**”.*

Urges member states to take action, in line with national priority and context, in specific areas

Requested WHO to prepare a Global report on assistive technology; provide necessary technical and capacity building support for Member States, in line with national priorities; contribute to the development of minimum standards; report on progress every four years through to 2030.



2022 Global report on assistive technology



“Access to assistive technology deserves greater attention now than ever before.... Assistive technology empowers and enables...

It is a pre-condition for realization of the CRPD and achievement of the SDGs. Put simply, assistive technology is a life changer.”

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
WHO Director-General
Ms Catherine M. Russell, UNICEF
Executive Director

Global report - ten recommendations

Improve access to assistive technology within **all key development sectors**

Ensure that **assistive products are safe, effective and affordable**

Enlarge, diversify and improve **human resource capacity**

Actively **involve users** of assistive technology and their families

Invest in **data and evidence-based policy**

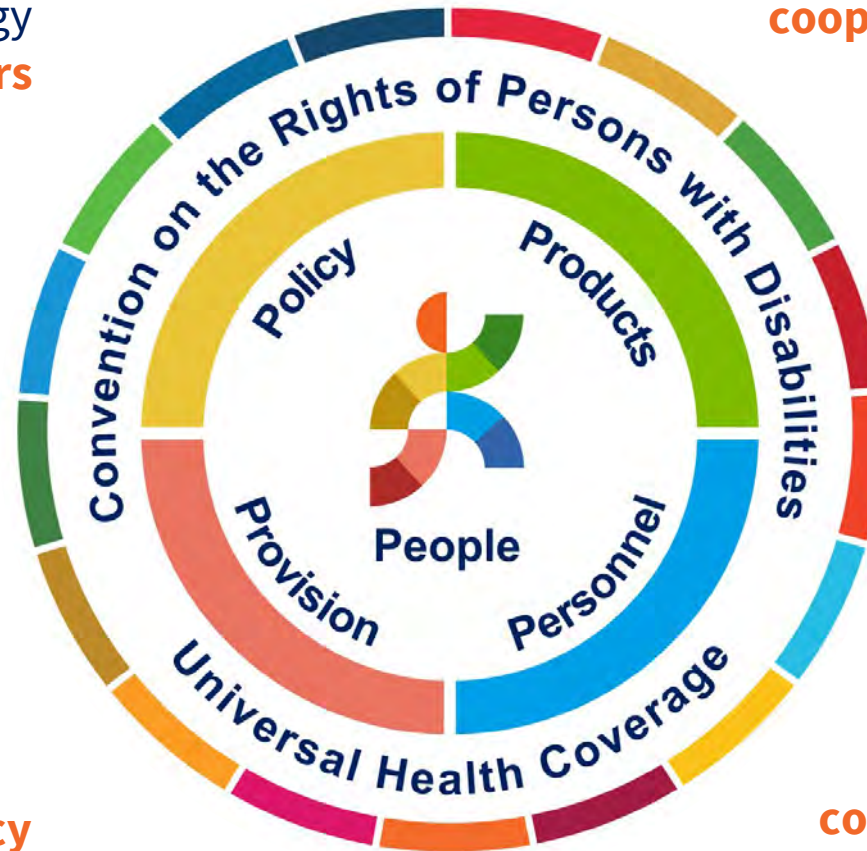
Provide technical and economic assistance through **international cooperation**

Include assistive technology in **humanitarian responses**

Develop and invest in **enabling environments**

Invest in **research, innovation** and an enabling **ecosystem**

Increase **public awareness and combat stigma** surrounding assistive technology use



Progress Indicators for Access to Assistive Technology

Ten high-level questions

Request to Member States to
complete every four years

Align with the WHA71.8 actions
and Global report on assistive
technology recommendations

**Potential for multiple use of
the data**



Overview and findings of the 2021 Progress Indicator Survey

 World Health Organization

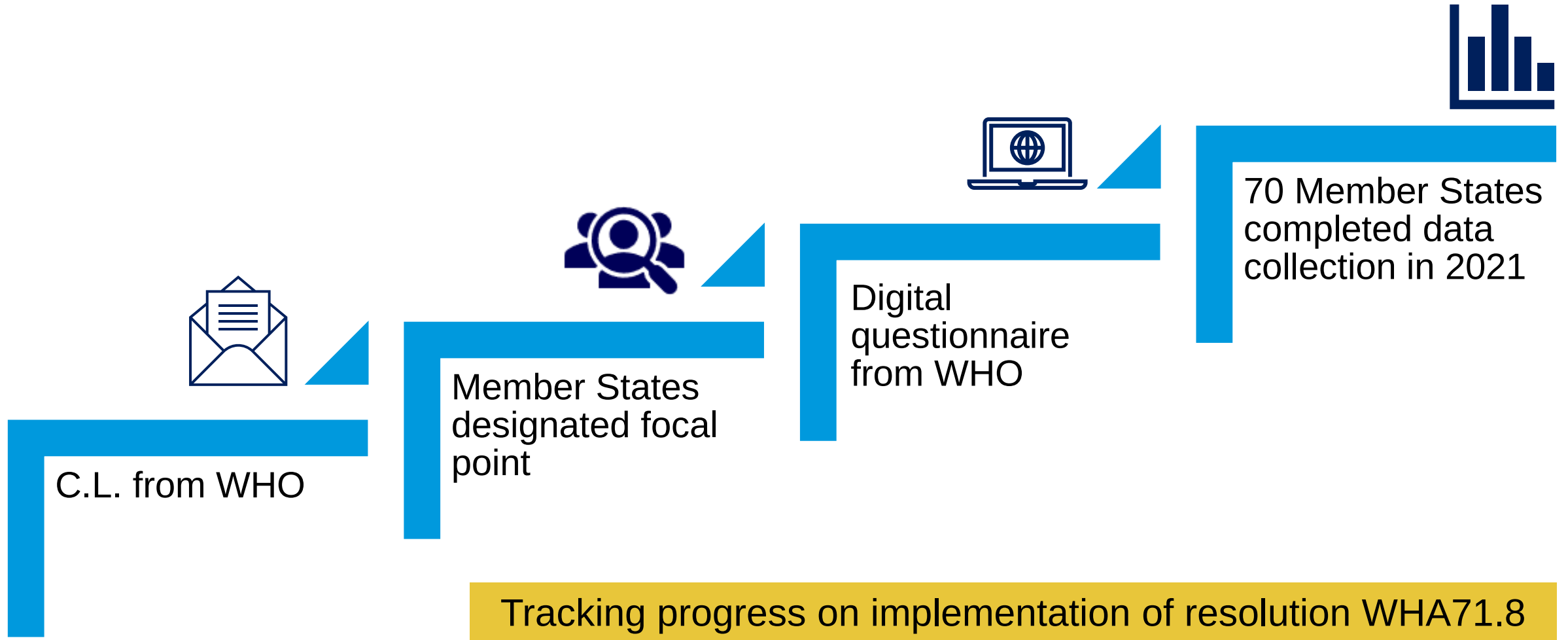
1\$ invested in AT =
**9\$ IN RETURN TO
FAMILIES AND
SOCIETY.**



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2021 Progress indicators for access to assistive technology



Progress Indicators

A world map with countries colored in blue or grey. Blue countries include Canada, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Belgium, Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, China, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Australia, and New Zealand. Grey countries include Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Australia, and New Zealand.

13 Low income

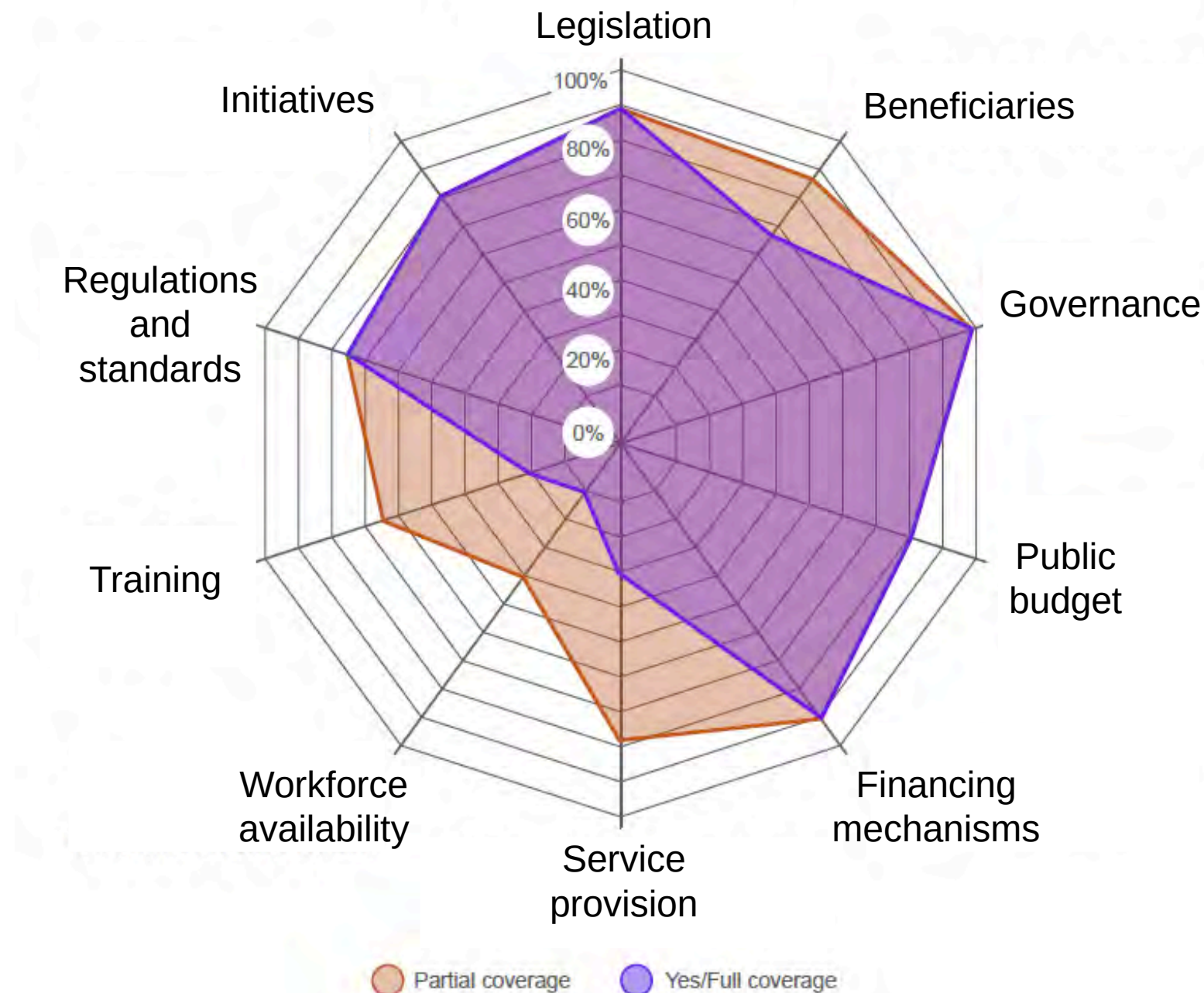
Key messages informed the *Global report on assistive technology*

Governance for assistive technology in almost all countries, mainly in health.

Legislations and **budgets** in health and social services.

Financing mechanisms in place.

Greatest weaknesses seen in **service delivery** and **workforce**.



Preparing for the 2025 Progress Indicator Survey



Review and update of the progress indicators

Progress Indicator survey will be repeated in 2025

Update of the indicators underway to capture (where feasible) recommendations from the Global report on assistive technology

Refinements will be minimized to enable comparison of results

Tracking progress on WHA71.8: action areas for Member States (in line with national priorities and contexts)

- (1) Develop, implement and strengthen **policies and programs**
- (2) Ensure adequate and trained **human resources**
- (3) Ensure access to **appropriate products and safe use**
- (4) Develop **priority assistive product list** and minimum standards
- (5) Promote or invest in **research, development and innovation**
- (6) International and/or regional **collaboration for manufacturing, procurement and supply** of assistive products
- (7) Collect population-based **data**
- (8) Promote or invest in **inclusive and barrier free environments**
- (9) Promote inclusion of assistive technology within **emergency response**

Ten indicator questions cover:

1. Legislation
2. Financing
3. Responsible ministries/authorities
4. Population coverage
5. Geographic coverage
6. Financial coverage
7. Human resources
8. Education and training (of the workforce)
9. Regulations and standards
10. Special initiatives



Indicator 10: Special initiatives

This indicator captures action on many cross-cutting areas of work and/or themes relevant to improving the reach and quality of assistive technology for all those in need.

The 2021 list has been slightly expanded to capture recommendations from the global report.

10. Which of the following assistive technology initiatives does your country promote, facilitate, support or invest in?

10.1) Actively improving the safety, effectiveness and affordability of assistive products

[WHA71.8 (3), Global Report recommendation 2]

10.2) Collection of data on population-based needs for assistive technology to inform evidence-based policy

[WHA71.8 (7), Global Report recommendation 6]

10.3) Promotion or investment in research, innovation, systems and product design

[WHA71.8 (5), Global Report recommendation 7]

10.4) Active involvement of users of assistive technology in policy, planning, research, innovation and implementation of assistive technology initiatives

[Global Report recommendation 4]

Indicator 10: Special initiatives

This indicator captures action on many cross-cutting areas of work and/or themes relevant to improving the reach and quality of assistive technology for all those in need.

The 2021 list has been slightly expanded to capture recommendations from the global report.

10. Which of the following assistive technology initiatives does your country promote, facilitate, support or invest in?

10.5) Actively building workforce capacity such as: integrating assistive technology training in pre-service training of health and other sector workers; promoting accreditation of training; task shifting strategies

[WHA71.8 (2), Global Report recommendation 3]

10.6) Increasing public awareness of assistive technology and/or reducing stigma associated with assistive technology use

[Global Report recommendation 4]

10.7) Promotion or investment in enabling physical and virtual environments, services, support, relationships and attitudes – maximizing effective use of assistive technology

[WHA71.8 (8), Global Report recommendation 8]

Indicator 10: Special initiatives

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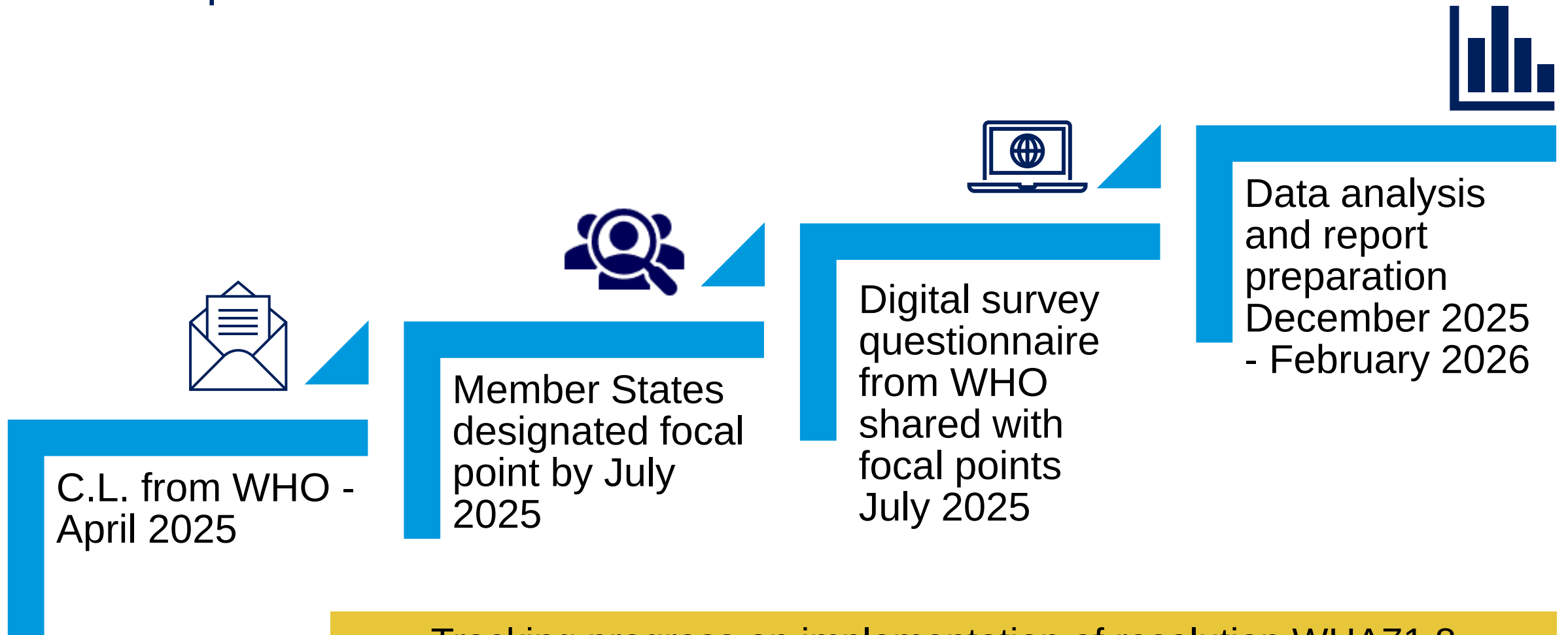
10. Which of the following assistive technology initiatives does your country promote, facilitate, support or invest in?

10.8) Systematic inclusion of assistive technology in humanitarian responses including emergency preparation, response and recovery
[WHA71.8 (9), Global Report recommendation 9]

10.9) International and/or regional collaboration on manufacturing, procurement or supply of products with a view to improving affordability across borders
[WHA71.8 (6), Global Report recommendation 10]

10.10) International cooperation including technical and economic assistance to support national efforts in other countries to improve access to assistive technology
[Global Report recommendation 10]

2025 Proposed timeline



Contributing to SDG Voluntary National Reporting

Equitable access to assistive technology contributes to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals – **in particular:**

Goal 1: No poverty

Goal 3: Good health and well being

Goal 4: Quality education

Goal 5: Gender equality

Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation

Goal 8. Decent work and economic growth

Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Goal 10: Reduced inequities

Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals



Contributing to reporting on the CRPD

Article 7: Children with disabilities - *‘children have the right to express their views freely....’*

Article 9: Accessibility – *assistive technology goes hand in hand with an accessible environment (see Global Report on AT)*

Article 13: Access to justice

Article 19: Living independently and being included in the family

Article 20: Personal mobility

Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information – *see b) accepting and facilitating use of sign languages, braille, augmentative and alternative communication...*

Article 24: Education

Article 25: Health – *AT facilitates health and well being, prevents secondary complications, ensures access to health care....*

Article 26: Habilitation and rehabilitation

Article 27: Work and employment – *‘reasonable accommodation’ includes having access to the right assistive technology*

Article 29 and 30: Participation in political and public life AND cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

Article 32: International cooperation

Article 33: National implementation and monitoring – *33.3. Participation by persons with disabilities...*

Questions, answers and discussion



World Health
Organization



Discussion

Technical questions:

- Are there other 'special initiatives' that could be reported on under indicator 10?
- How to capture geographic coverage? (2021 asked MS to provide number of districts with coverage)

Implementation questions:

- What can WHO do to facilitate Member States' completion of the Progress Indicator Survey?
- How can data gathered for the Progress Indicator Survey be used to serve other purposes – such as completion of Voluntary National Reporting for the SDGs?

Indicator 10 special initiatives (summary)

safety, effectiveness and affordability of assistive products

data on population-based needs

research, innovation, systems and product design

involvement of users

building workforce capacity

public awareness and stigma

enabling environments

inclusion of assistive technology in humanitarian responses

collaboration on manufacturing, procurement or supply of products

international cooperation including technical and economic assistance

Thank you!

For more information and links to resources

For further information please contact Kylie Shae, Team Lead, Access to Assistive Technology, Division of Medicines and Health Products, WHO – shaek@who.int

Links to resources

[WHO and UNICEF Global report on assistive technology](#)

[Assistive technology data portal](#) on the Global Health Observatory

[WHO Assistive technology data toolkit](#) ([rATA](#), [ATA-C](#), [Progress Indicators](#))

[WHO Training in Assistive Products](#) - online training modules targeting primary health workers

[WHO Wheelchair service training](#) packages - in-person training targeting secondary and tertiary level health personnel



[WHO, ISPO and ISWP Wheelchair provision guidelines](#) (2023)

[WHO Assistive products specifications](#)

[WHO and UNICEF Manual for public procurement of assistive products](#)

[WHO Model Priority assistive products list](#) (update due end 2025)

[WHO and ISPO Standards for prosthetics and orthotics](#)

[WHO Initiative for Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology \(GATE\)](#)