ATscale—meeting the global need for AT through an innovative cross-sector partnership.

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**Background:** Today, over 1 billion people need at least one form of assistive technology (AT), but 90\% do not have access to the AT they require. The number of people who need AT is expected to grow to more than 2 billion people by 2050. Despite evidence and consensus around the huge unmet need for AT globally, research shows a wide range of systemic, underlying environmental challenges and cross-cutting factors contributing to the challenge in matching appropriate supply and demand for AT. While progress has been made in improving many aspects of AT delivery, the sector has been fragmented and under-resourced for some time. The environment is poised for change, as countries begin recognising the necessity of AT coverage to realise commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. To uphold these commitments and influence the complex systems for AT access, a broad set of stakeholders across sectors is needed to invest in and coordinate a multi-faceted, systematic approach spanning market shaping, capacity development, and policy reform.

**Method:** In early 2018, consultations and initial landscape analyses were conducted to better understand the barriers and scope of challenges to increasing access to appropriate, affordable AT, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. This included review of past interventions and approaches, as well as discussion about current barriers observed throughout the AT ecosystem. Information gathered through this process was considered in a series of meetings and workshops to develop a framework for a new partnership model with the potential to address these gaps.

**Key results:** An understanding that transformational change requires market shaping approaches to address supply and demand-side barriers, supported by an enabling environment, emerged from the broad consultation and analysis. Building this enabling environment must include galvanising political will, mobilising resources, increasing awareness, addressing policy, and strengthening systems and service delivery. Accomplishing this requires a cross-sector partnership acting as a catalyst for change, amplifying existing work, and coordinating and mobilising global stakeholders. In July 2018, this vision was realised with the launch of ATscale, the Global Partnership for Assistive Technology, at the Global Disability Summit. Eleven organisations joined ATscale’s Forming Committee with a goal of reaching 500 million more people with life-changing AT by 2030. ATscale has established its initial strategy and has set out to develop a long-term operating model. Several early interventions to support the ATscale strategy are being undertaken by AT2030, a UK aid funded programme.

**Conclusion:** This Partnership will enable partners working in distinct sectors to collaborate with a unified mission, facilitating complementary approaches, innovation, and capacity building. The coordinated approach of convening a broad range of leading stakeholders across sectors will increase access to affordable, appropriate, and high-quality AT products and services, leveraging current and past work to address the entire AT ecosystem. The initial work, including

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the strategy overview, already reflects diverse perspectives and the opportunity provided by a collective effort, supporting the global community to have an impact greater than the sum of its individual parts.

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Tweetable abstract: Meet #ATscale, an innovative cross-sector global partnership aiming to reach 500 million with AT by 2030 by addressing market shaping and the enabling environment #ATscale #globalpartnership #AT2030 #500Mby2030