



# Why assistive technology matters for inclusive education

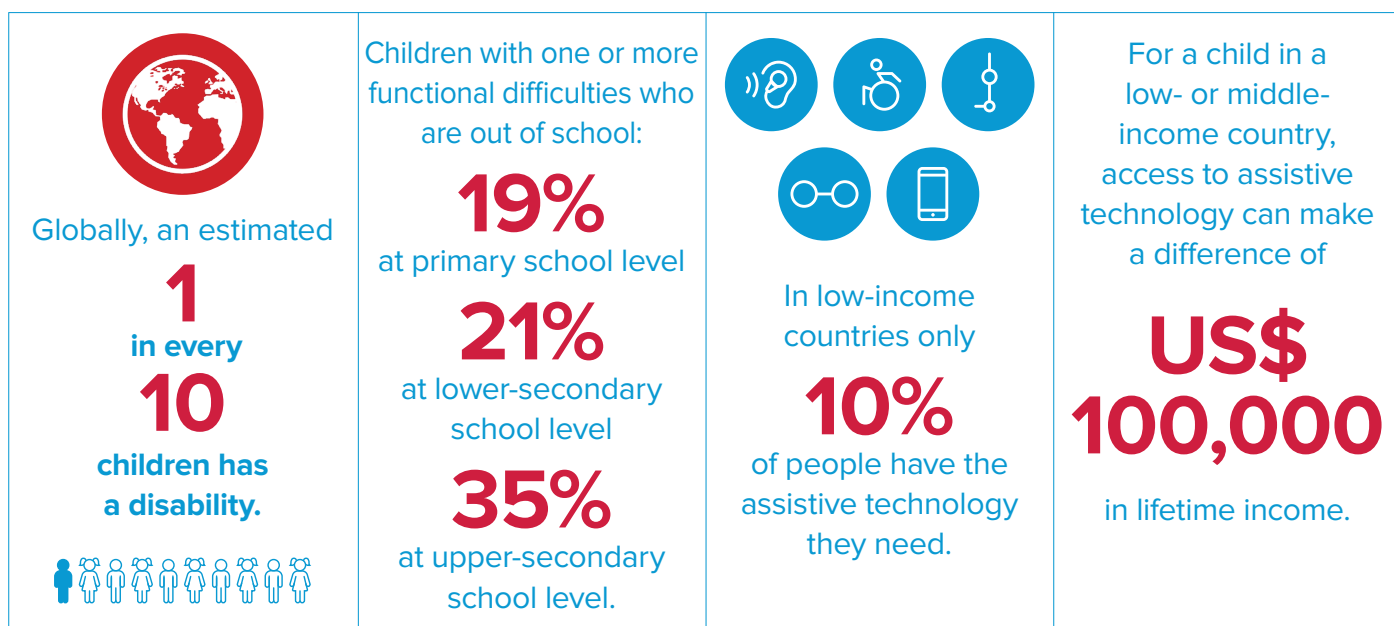
Teachers work with children with and without disabilities in an inclusive classroom in Djibouti. Access to assistive products facilitates participation in education.

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Globally, children in need of assistive technology are more likely to be out of school than other children, and they commonly do not receive the education they need. Wheelchairs and prostheses provide enhanced mobility and can help children attend school in the first place. Other assistive products such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, screen readers, braille, audiobooks and sign language resources help children perform better in class. For example, evidence shows the provision of eyeglasses significantly improves educational outcomes.

Assistive technology is crucial to facilitate access to and participation in education. It enables children to learn and thrive, and education systems to be inclusive and effective. Yet many children in low- and middle-income countries remain without access to the assistive technology they need.



# Why assistive technology matters for inclusive education

## Transforming education to reach all learners is needed to ensure resilient and inclusive education systems.

Timely access to appropriate, affordable, quality assistive technology can make the difference between enabling or denying a child's education. A large range of assistive technology can support children to attend school, learn and achieve beneficial lifelong outcomes. Approaches to include learners with disabilities, who are often those most at risk of neglect, stigma and abuse, can support the well-being and success of all learners.

## Education is a human right. Assistive technology facilitates access to education for children with disabilities and supports educational achievement.

The Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948) affirms in Article 26 that everyone has the right to education. The World Declaration on Education for All (1990) affirmed that every person - child, youth and adult - shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) affirms the right to education of persons with disabilities.

**Assistive technology interventions can have an economic impact over a whole lifetime.** In low- and middle-income countries, sustained provision of hearing aids, glasses, or wheelchairs to a person from childhood can increase their lifetime income by more than US\$100,000. When children gain greater independence through assistive technology and can attend school, carers and families have more time to work and earn an income. The economic benefits of assistive technology are widespread: every dollar invested in providing assistive technology can bring a nine dollar return.



*Inclusion is key to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and leave no one behind. There will not be full inclusion while people are unable to access assistive technology. Assistive technology cuts across all 17 SDGs and is particularly relevant to some.*

**Assistive Technology** is an umbrella term for assistive products such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, prostheses, eyeglasses or digital devices, and their related systems and services.

**ATscale** is a cross-sector global partnership with a mission to improve people's lives through assistive technology. It catalyzes action to ensure that, by 2030, an additional 500 million people in low- and middle-income countries get the life-changing assistive technology they need.

**Together, let's ensure access to assistive technology for inclusive education.**