

14th ATscale Board Meeting - 11 March 2025

Decisions, next steps, timelines

- Since the last board meeting, the revised strategy and 2025 plan have been adopted by written process which concluded on 16 December 2024
- The board agreed to the proposed adjustments which are placing certain activities on hold to make up for the \$7m shortfall due to loss of USAID funding.

Welcome, attendance, adoption of agenda and minutes of the last board meeting

Jon Lomøy welcomed participants and established that the necessary quorum was reached. The Chair especially welcomed the board members HE Yan from CADTC, Tessa MarcArthur from FCDO and Rebecca Kiptui of the Ministry of Health of Kenya who participated for the first time.

The draft agenda was adopted. The minutes from the board meeting held on 20/21 November 2024 - which had already been accepted through a written process - were reconfirmed as adopted. A request for decision points to be recorded more clearly in the minutes was noted. Since the last board meeting, the revised strategy and 2025 plan have been adopted by written process.

The Secretariat could not revise the by-laws to recognize WHO as a voting member of the Board in time for adoption at this board meeting. After review by the UNOPS legal team, the by-laws will be circulated to board members for approval by written process.

General update

Pascal Bijleveld provided an update on ATscale activities and developments since the previous board meeting, noting the continued work under its three strategic pillars while also managing the implications of the USAID funding situation, which was also discussed as a separate agenda item. He reported that ATscale has now reached over one million direct beneficiaries.

At the country level, “wave 1” countries are making progress. In Senegal, political transitions had caused delays, but implementation is now advancing under new leadership, with regional AT committees launched and training and procurement ongoing. A recent mission confirmed significant improvements, including a fully operational prosthetics and orthotics center. In the Pacific region, a mission to three countries was conducted in December, and the Call for Proposals was relaunched with a deadline of 30 April since DFAT has enabled the expansion of the programme to additional countries.

On global enablers, Pascal reported that the second global AT Market Report and online platform are nearing completion, with finalization expected by Q2 2025. ATscale participated in the China Care & Rehabilitation Expo and co-hosted a dialogue on international demand and supply. A



contract has been signed with Momentum for the prepositioning of assistive products for humanitarian emergencies, procurement is nearly complete and deployment discussions ongoing. There has also been progress on market-building enablers, including taxes & tariffs and market entry barriers. Work is advancing well on policy briefs covering women and girls, employment, climate, and education.

Pascal highlighted ATscale's recent advocacy and engagement activities, noting participation in the Global Labor Market Conference, the Riyadh International Humanitarian Forum, the Additive Manufacturing Strategies Conference, and the Zero Project Conference. Preparations for World AT Day 2025 are underway, building on last year's reach of 2.3 million people. A small grants initiative has been launched to provide 30 grants of \$800 each to OPDs and CSOs in LMICs. ATscale will also promote World AT Day at the Global Disability Summit, Walk the Talk Geneva, and the Inclusive Africa Conference.

On Board-related matters, Pascal reported that the Working Group on roles within the partnership is now moving forward with external facilitation, and preparations for the Board retreat in June are underway. He introduced new Secretariat team members, Karen, Julia, and Emma, and noted that the Secretariat is now stronger and more diverse.

Kathleen Bombell, DFAT, shared with the board the good news that they had been able to commit additional funding to expand activities to four more countries in the Pacific. For DFAT this is the first and largest investment in AT.

USAID developments and implications

Pascal reported that ATscale received a termination letter from USAID on 27 February 2025, along with thousands of other organizations, resulting in a \$7 million budget shortfall for 2025. He explained that no assumptions had yet been made regarding the long-term impact of this funding loss, given the volatility of the international context. However, he stated that the Secretariat had developed mitigation measures to ensure that ATscale could maintain its global visibility and momentum while balancing budget reductions. He outlined the key adjustments made in response to the funding shortfall, including spreading reductions across ongoing 'wave 1' programmes to minimize the impact on any single country. Programmes funded directly by USAID through UNOPS (not part of the pooled funding of ATscale) have been halted. This includes the vision programme in Zambia and the FHF implemented programme in Cambodia. The new programmes to start in Africa, the Middle East and Asia and the Pacific will not be impacted as they are supported by new funds from UAE and DFAT. New countries in Latin America may also be impacted if we cannot find alternative funding. Other new country programmes and the plans to support inclusive humanitarian preparedness in two countries will also be on hold.

Regarding pillar 2, most activities that had not yet started and were not absolutely essential to support ongoing country programmes are being put on hold while preparatory work for them can continue to be prepared in case other funding sources can be secured. The budget for some activities that will continue has been reduced. Activities on hold include the toolkit on selection of quality and affordable assistive products, scaling up regional AT distribution hub in Africa,



strengthening healthcare and social systems through integration of innovative wheelchair services and guidance on scaling up near vision (reading) glasses. He also explained that while most activities under Pillar 3 would continue, their scope would be reduced. The proposed adjustments sum up to 7m USD and are equivalent to the shortfall if there is no reversal of the termination letter from USAID. Pascal requested Board guidance on the proposed areas to hold off on or reduce until new funding sources could be mobilized.

Pascal stated that despite the USAID setback, ATscale's overall funding pipeline remains strong, although there are concerns regarding the flexibility of new funding sources. He outlined the Secretariat's resource mobilization strategy, which includes increasing the use of team capacity for fundraising, hiring consultants to work on specific areas, expanding engagement with foundations, private sector donors, and multilateral development banks, increasing participation in global philanthropy networks to access non-traditional funding sources and targeting high-net-worth individuals. He encouraged Board members to support resource mobilization by leveraging their networks, introducing ATscale to potential donors, and advocating for the organization at key events and conferences.

Board members agreed with the suggested adjustments and pointed out that these were aiming to minimize disruptions to ATscale's work. There was a discussion as to whether it was better to communicate larger cuts to countries now to increase planning certainty or to take a gradual approach considering each country's context. It was also clarified that the US could request reimbursement of some funds already received but that this was difficult given that it was a contribution to pooled funding and that the likelihood of this happening was regarded as low for the moment. A budget line for AT was still in the appropriations approved by US Congress but the probability of this leading to renewed funding for ATscale was deemed low. The hold on the implementation of global enablers (pillar 2) was seen as a case of missed or delayed opportunities rather than a risk to ATscale.

The need to diversify ATscale's funding was emphasized by board members who were willing to engage more. One-on-one engagement between the Secretariat and board members to identify ways to contribute to resource mobilization were suggested as a way forward. The dinner for Kenya-based potential donors in parallel to the November board meeting was highlighted as a possible event to replicate. It was also noted that the strain on public health systems due to the withdrawal of US funding would also make co-financing by programme countries more difficult. Cuts to ODA, such as those announced by the UK government will also mean there is more competition for fewer funds.

2024 Activity Update

Due to the advanced time, Pascal Bijleveld referred to the summary in the slides shared before the board meeting and invited questions including after the board meeting.

Executive Session

An Executive Session took place.

Participants

Organization	Representatives and delegates
CADTC	HE Yan
DFAT	Kathleen Bombell
FCDO	Sam Bullen Tessa MacArthur
IDA	Jose Viera Jarrod Clyne
Kenya	Rebecca Kiptui Patrick Amoth
Private Sector	Shona McDonald
Unaffiliated Board Seats	Jon Lomøy Ana Lucia Arellano Phyllis Heydt
UNICEF	Dennis Soendergaard Kristoffer
UNOPS (ex-officio)	Andrew Kirkwood
WHO	Deus Mubangizi Kylie Shae
<i>Excused representatives</i>	<i>Siti Nadia Tamizi and Resti Dwi of Indonesia</i> <i>Ashllah Mmusi of SAFOD</i> <i>Kalene Resler of USAID</i>
ATscale secretariat	Pascal Bijleveld (ex-officio member) Barbara Goedde (note taker) Satish Mishra