

Prepositioning of Assistive Products for Humanitarian Emergencies

Decision Tree for AT Kit Release

Assistive technology is an essential component of the humanitarian emergency and recovery response for people affected by crises, including displaced persons and refugees. In addition to persons already using assistive products, it is likely large-scale humanitarian crises will result in persons with injuries or newly acquired impairments, for whom the use of assistive technology is also necessary. As it is not often prioritised, access to AT remains challenging in humanitarian settings¹. Given the large need for assistive products, it is vital that assistive technology be included in emergency preparedness and planning², including the prepositioning of assistive devices and related products³ to support rehabilitation services.

Global entities such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Humanity and Inclusion (HI) and Motivation have existing programmes that provide emergency supplies of assistive products to affected areas. For example, WHO provides a Trauma and Emergency Surgery Rehabilitation Kit (TRK)⁴, containing a small number of assistive products for use by up to 50 trauma patients after surgical care. ICRC and HI also have a limited number of assistive products prepositioned. However, it is clear that the current global capacity for AT prepositioning must be strengthened to address the scale of the unmet need, and to improve the speed and quality of assistive technology provision within humanitarian emergency responses.

ATscale's assistive products prepositioning programme was designed in consultation with key global partners to coordinate and complement existing efforts, having identified gaps in provision. The programme is currently financed by a revolving fund, where requestors are asked to pay where possible for part or all of the kit cost. The AT kit contents, including adult- and child-sized wheelchairs, crutches and toilet/shower chairs to benefit approximately 400 people in a population of 10,000, have been revised in consultation with partners to optimise their effectiveness and usefulness in humanitarian settings. The approximate cost per kit is US\$25,000. The agreement was signed with the selected partner, Momentum Wheels for Humanity, in December 2024 and AT kits were first released through Consolidating Logistics for Assistive Technology Supply & Provision (CLASP) in response to the earthquake in Myanmar in March 2025.

The intended recipients of the kit contents are those affected by UNICEF-designated Level 2 and Level 3 Emergencies⁵. As there are often multiple emergencies of this severity ongoing at any one

¹ World Health Organization (2023) *Strengthening rehabilitation in health emergency preparedness and response: policy brief*. Geneva, Switzerland. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2024). *UNHCR guidance on facilitating access to assistive technology and rehabilitation*. Geneva, Switzerland.

³ Inter Agency Standing Committee (2019), *Guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action*.

⁴ [https://www.who.int/emergencies/emergency-health-kits/tesk-rehabilitation-kit-\(trk\)-2025](https://www.who.int/emergencies/emergency-health-kits/tesk-rehabilitation-kit-(trk)-2025) [accessed 20/06/2025]

⁵ <https://www.corecommitments.unicef.org/level-3-and-level-2-emergencies> [accessed 23/06/2025]

time, a decision tree has been developed to help guide any decision on where, when and how many kits are released, as well as to which requesting partner, should there be more than one inquiring. This tool has been developed considering common logistical and operational barriers to humanitarian aid distribution⁶, and in discussion with experienced humanitarian experts. It includes provision for consultation with global partners during the decision-making process, to ensure efforts are aligned and coordinated, consistent with core humanitarian principles⁷.

AT Kit Contents

The kit contents as of August 2025, as agreed with Momentum Wheels for Humanity in consultation with humanitarian experts and partners, is listed in Table 1.

AT Kit for Humanitarian Emergencies		
Item	Size	Quantity
Elbow Crutches	Large	30 pairs
	Medium	30 pairs
	Pediatric	20 pairs
Axillary Crutches	Large	16 pairs
	Medium	16 pairs
Canes (walking sticks)	Standard	100
Walkers (walking frames)	Adult Tall	50
	Adult Small	20
Replacement Ferrules (rubber tips)	19mm/22mm/28mm	694
Toilet and Shower Chairs	Standard	70
Manual Standard Wheelchairs, with comfort cushions	16"	20
	12"	5
Manual All-Terrain Wheelchairs, with pressure relief cushions	400mm	35
	300mm	25
TOTAL	437 assistive products per kit	

Table 1: AT Kit Contents (August 2025)

⁶ P. Kumar Tarei et al., "Analysing barriers to humanitarian logistics for distributing relief aid in pre- and post-disaster situations", *Int. J. Disaster Risk Reduct.*, vol 104, 2024, doi:10.1016/j.ijdr.2024.104388

⁷ <https://emergency.unhcr.org/protection/protection-principles/humanitarian-principles> [accessed 23/06/2025]

