

Minutes - 16th ATscale Board Meeting 3&4 June 2026

Decisions, next steps, timelines

At the board meeting, the board...

- **Approved the continuation of the Made AT Kenya project** with the new successor entity (Motivation MCT Africa) for the remaining committed and undisbursed US\$105,000, subject to the entity passing UNOPS due diligence and risk mitigation measures. Board member Manfred Stoifl expressed serious reservations on taking the decision on the basis of the available information but trusted the Secretariat to follow-up and obtain more details from the implementing partner.
- **Agreed in principle to the proposed Co-financing Policy** thresholds and framework. The Board requested the Secretariat to review legal feedback from WHO (regarding governance roles) and circulate a revised version for a final decision between board meetings.
- Requested the Secretariat to put together a process and timeline for a **small task team to explore how the partnership can adjust to the changed environment** for the next strategic cycle, with an update expected at the next meeting
- Agreed to a proposal from CADTC to co-host the **2027 board meeting in Beijing** alongside the Care & Rehabilitation Expo China 2027. The Secretariat will come back to the board if logistical implications cannot be met.

By written process between board meetings, the following was adopted:

- Change to By-laws (reduction in number of board meetings from 3 to 2 per year) - adopted 12 January 2026.
- Cost-saving plan - Secretariat costs - Phase 1 - adopted 26 January 2026.
- Board's no-objection approval for the direct selection of Momentum - Wheels for Humanity (MWH) through a cost extension of the existing grant agreement for 296K successfully mobilised from the Government of Japan, via the UNOPS Palestine Country Office under the Japan Supplementary Budget (JSB) for assistive technology support in Gaza - adopted 4 March 2026.

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

Board chair Jon Lomøy and co-chair Jose Viera welcomed the participants, welcomed participants and especially board members participating for the first time.

It was established that the necessary quorum was reached and the draft agenda was adopted. The minutes from the board meeting held on 26 and 27 November 2025 - which had already been accepted through a written process - were reconfirmed as adopted.

Board Health discussion

A facilitated session was held as a deliberate check in on the board's relational and strategic health as requested at the June 2025 retreat to reflect on the changing environment and how it affects ATscale and its multi-year strategy. A review of the recent board survey showed widespread agreement that the external funding environment had changed dramatically, but that there was no agreement yet on how the board should adapt and react to it.

The board discussed the natural tension between operating as a unified team versus representing specific constituencies. Members reflected on the need to adapt to a landscape dominated by earmarked funding. Suggestions were raised to form a small task team and to conduct "ecosystem listening discussions" to explore how the partnership can adjust to the changed environment. As ATscale moves toward developing its strategy beyond 2027, members emphasized the importance of maintaining global advocacy efforts, in as much as possible.

General update ("Since we last met...")

The CEO reported that global disruptions have directly impacted operations. Despite a tight financial environment, programmatic progress continues: the Zambia programme successfully restarted, countries with the first scale-up programmes made strides toward completion, and the Pacific Island countries finished their inception phases.

On Pillar 2 (Global Enablers), the Secretariat highlighted the launch of the final policy brief on AT and Gender Equality at the CSW70 in New York and the technical report on AT and Trade that was published and launched in collaboration with the European Union. Under Pillar 3 (Advocacy), efforts focused on preparing the 2025 Annual Review, building momentum for World AT Day, and successfully launching a new digital campaign in partnership with Global Citizen.

The Secretariat also remarked on its Phase 1 cost-saving plan; many staff members moved to part-time or home-based arrangements, saving approximately \$500,000 without requiring job abolishments, though this has not been without challenges.

Annual Review 2025

The Secretariat presented the 2025 Annual Review, showing a 53% year-over-year growth in global AT reach. Cumulatively, ATscale-supported programmes have reached 2.57 million people with assistive technology. While 91% of the 315,000 distributed products were for vision, the portfolio is diversifying, with wheelchair provision surging by 137% and making up 12% of the total portfolio. Additionally, 13,721 personnel were trained and 550 organizations (mostly government and OPDs) were strengthened.

Financially, 2025 was highly volatile. The initial budget of \$33.9 million was revised down to \$11 million due to the loss of USAID funding and delays in signing the MBZFH grant.

The Board commended the strong country-level impact but noted that ATscale remains far from its strategic goal of reaching 50 million people, recognizing that the initial target was based on funding assumptions that did not materialize. Discussions highlighted the need for realistic target adjustments and finding better ways to communicate the "ripple effects" and systemic changes triggered by ATscale's global public goods.

Co-financing policy

To foster long-term sustainability and domestic ownership, the Secretariat proposed a formalized Co-financing Policy for scale-up programmes. The policy introduces a tiered contribution requirement over three years (with Year 1 as a buffer): 20% for Low-Income Countries, 30% for Lower-Middle-Income Countries, and 50% for Upper-Middle-Income Countries of the overall grant. Admissible funds include domestic revenues and loans.

The Board expressed strong support for the policy's principles, thresholds, and flexibility. However, WHO flagged concerns regarding the governance roles between the Board and the Secretariat regarding exceptions and enforcement. The Board requested the Secretariat to integrate WHO's feedback and circulate the final policy for written approval.

Mid-year review and adjustments to 2026 plan

The Secretariat provided an update on the 2026 operational plan, detailing how activities have been split between those continuing with existing funds and those contingent on the receipt of new resources.

The first wave of scale-up programmes (including Kenya, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Senegal) and the Pacific Island Countries are largely on track, with Phase 1 ending in several countries this year. The Zambia programme experienced delays as it took longer to sign the donor agreement but is now restarting. Additionally, ATscale's

humanitarian pre-positioning mechanism was extended to Gaza utilizing support from the Japanese Supplementary Budget.

While some initiatives within Pillar 2 (Global Enablers) are moving forward (such as the AT Market Intelligence Platform), a significant number of planned global public goods remain on hold due to the lack of flexible, unearmarked funding that could be allocated to them.

Despite budget cuts, the Secretariat successfully advanced the Global Citizen partnership, launched the new ATscale website, and distributed small grants to support OPDs across three regions in organizing World AT Day events.

The revised 2026 projected income stands at \$29.9 million. However, actual financial commitments currently sit at just 7% of the \$23.9 million revised budget. The Secretariat noted that this low commitment rate is due to waiting for the MBZFH funds to officially clear before signing and dispersing the associated country grants.

The Board was updated on the "Made AT Kenya" project, a market-shaping investment to manufacture high-quality wheelchairs locally. While significant technical milestones were achieved—including finalized designs, ISO-aligned quality systems, and installed production equipment—the implementing partner, Motivation Charitable Trust UK, unexpectedly entered liquidation.

The Secretariat proposed dispersing the remaining \$105,000 to a successor entity, Motivation Africa, to finalize market entry. The Kenyan government expressed readiness to fast-track the new entity's registration. While the private sector constituency had strong reservations due to a lack of transparency regarding previous asset expenditures, a clear majority of the Board supported continuing the project to protect the existing technical investments, subject to strict due diligence.

Partner Updates

FCDO updated on an internal restructure with nearly all staff moving roles, alongside reductions in the UK's ODA targets to 0.3%. The disability team is very impacted with most likely only two or three members of staff covering disability and LGBT+ rights combined going forward. FCDO is still trying to secure a contribution for 2027 but it will most likely be very modest.

DFAT maintained its ODA budget with a slight increase, confirming that disability and gender equity remain key priorities, particularly in the Pacific.

UNOPS briefed the Board on the UN80 Initiative examining a potential merger between UNDP and UNOPS, noting that Member States remain skeptical of a full integration. Operationally, the UN Web Buy+ platform is developing a prostheses product catalogue, and an increase in hosted entities in Geneva is expected to lower ATscale's shared support costs.

WHO provided an update on restructuring, normative guidance, and regional milestones. The AT team has officially merged with Medical Devices and In-Vitro Diagnostics, creating opportunities to integrate sensory and mobility screenings into the 40-agency Global Diagnostic Coalition. Globally, the Global Roadmap for AT is out for final public review, the updated 68-product Priority Assistive Product List (APL) is complete, and the AT Data Toolkit is in its final editing phase. Regionally, the South Pacific Community formally adopted the VAKA-AT strategy alongside the world's first regional APL. Additionally, supported by the Government of Ireland, WHO is rolling out digital AT implementation projects in 11 countries and will co-host a major Global Expo in Dublin in February 2027 focusing on workforce capacity and AT.

Resource Mobilization - updates and strategic discussion

The Secretariat highlighted efforts to diversify funding amid a constrained environment shifting toward national interests and aid for trade-type earmarking.

- MBZFH (UAE): The multi-country grant is pending final UAE cabinet sign-off.
- Mastercard Foundation: ATscale is part of a consortium to co-create a 25 million "YouthAbilityAfrica" programme and discussions are on-going about a larger programmatic coordination role for ATscale for this programme.
- Regional / Thematic: The Secretariat is partnering with PAHO on a Latin American co-investment platform, submitting proposals to Geneva-based funds (FAGI) for global public goods, and advancing extensions for three scale-up country programmes with CIDCA (China).

The Board praised the creative and resilient fundraising efforts.

AOB

The board discussed a proposal from the CDPF to hold the 2027 board meeting in Beijing during the Care & Rehabilitation Expo China 2027, responding positively.

Closed session

A closed session between board members and the ATscale CEO took place.

Participants

Organization	Representatives and delegates
CDPF/CADTC	WU Xiaogao XIE Ganlin
DFAT	Margot Morris
FCDO	Daryl Lloyd
IDA	Jose Viera Jarrod Clyne
Indonesia	Siti Nadia Tarmizi (<i>online</i>)
Kenya	Andrew Toro
PDF	Sainimili Tawake
Private sector constituency	Manfred Stoifl
Unaffiliated Board Seats	Jon Lomøy Phyllis Heydt (<i>online</i>)
UNICEF	Dennis Soendergaard (<i>online, morning Day 1</i>) Gopal Mitra (<i>online, afternoon Day 1, Day2</i>)
UNOPS (ex-officio)	Jean-Francois Laurent
WHO	Kylie Shae
ATscale secretariat	Pascal Bijleveld (ex-officio member) Barbara Goedde (note taker)