Helping children with disabilities join in and do the same things as other children
Who we are

We are UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO).

UNICEF works to make life better for children everywhere.

The World Health Organization works for better healthcare in the world.

What this booklet is about

This booklet is about things that can help children with disabilities join in and do the same as other children.

Life can be very hard for children with disabilities in the world.

For example, many children with disabilities:
• are poor
• do not go to school
• cannot join in with things.
This can stop them getting jobs or doing well when they are older.

It means they do not have the same chances as other children.

But there are things that can really help children with disabilities.

For example:

- wheelchairs
- hearing aids
- special computers.

There are many things like this that can help children with disabilities.

These things are called assistive technology.

But in this document we will just call them technology.
This technology is very important.

It can help children with disabilities do more and have a better life.

Children with disabilities have the right to have this technology.

But many children with disabilities in the world do not have the technology they need.

This can make life very hard for them.

We looked at:

• how this technology can help children with disabilities have a better life

• what needs to happen next.
What is this technology?

The technology is anything that helps people with disabilities do more things.

Some examples are:

• Wheelchairs or things that help people move around

• False legs for people who have lost a leg

• Hearing aids

• A board with words and pictures to help people show how they feel

• Computers that read out words on the screen

It is also about the support people need to use these things.
How can this technology help?

The technology can help children with disabilities do more things.

It can help children with disabilities:

• move around
• speak up
• look after themselves
• go to school.

For example the technology can help children:

• get to school
• see what the teacher writes on the board
• hear what the teacher says
• play with other children.
The technology can help children with disabilities:

• be healthy and happy

• do well at school

• get a job when they leave school

• take part in their community

• do more things on their own so they need less support.

The technology can save countries a lot of money.

For example, countries will have to spend less money on care and support.
The technology can also help families.

For example, many families cannot work because they have to look after children with disabilities.

The technology should be:

• right for each child
• free or cheap to buy
• easy to get and use
• good quality.
What needs to happen next

Lots of people should work together to give children with disabilities the technology they need.

For example:

• governments
• different countries
• local groups
• people with disabilities and their families.

There are some documents that talk about making life better for children and people with disabilities.

Lots of countries have agreed to do what these documents say.

This means making sure children with disabilities have this technology as well.

Countries need to make this happen.
Countries should make sure:

• there are good plans and laws about this technology for children

• children and their families have a say in plans and decisions about the technology

• everything is easy for children with disabilities to use like health centres, schools and transport

• there is enough money to make sure children get this technology

• more children and their families know about this technology.
Countries should also make sure:

• it is easy for all children and families to get the technology they need

• the technology is good and cheap for people to buy

• it is easy for people to use the technology.

For example, buildings should be easy for people with wheelchairs to use

• there is better information about what children need and what technology there is

• staff get the right training about this technology.
Sarah’s Story

Sarah finds it hard to walk.

She had to stay at home.

She could not go to school or play with other children.

Then Sarah got a wheelchair.

It meant she could do new things like:
• move around by herself
• meet other children
• go to school.

This made Sarah very happy.

It made life better for her family too.

Pictures by Photosymbols and Chapal_Khasnabis@WHO