

Towards Strengthening the Understanding and Use of Assistive Technology for Mobility in Uganda

Martina Lukin, Physiopedia • Angela Patterson, Creighton University (Primary Presenter) • Shala Cunningham, Radford University • Herbert Omoding, Physiopedia • Rachael Lowe, Physiopedia

Background

Access to assistive technology (AT) is a global challenge, with people in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) facing additional barriers.

Only 5-15% of people who require assistive devices have access to them in low-income countries

Limited availability and few trained personnel

Objective

Provide rehabilitation professionals in Uganda with the knowledge and skills to assess, provide, and promote the use of assistive technology for mobility.



IRETT
International Rehabilitation
Education and Training Toolkit

Methods & Results

Training Approach

Hybrid Training Model

Online coursework and asynchronous discussions

Online synchronous mentoring sessions

In-person hands-on training

Evaluation Methods

- Self-perception surveys on knowledge and implementation skills
- Pre-training and post-training assessments
- Focus group interviews to explore experiences

Key Findings

Quantitative Results

Mean scores increased from initiation to completion

No statistically significant changes in perception

Qualitative Insights

Limited access to AT in Uganda

Course inspired creative use of available equipment

Participants learned to adapt supplies

Participants focused on the intent of devices and replicated functions with locally available materials, guided by mentor examples of equipment adaptation.

Conclusions & Impact

Primary Conclusion

Education and clinical training promoted the use of available assistive technology to support mobility in Uganda, even without improving overall access to devices.

Mentors demonstrated creative adaptation techniques, focusing on device intent and function replication with locally available materials.

Practice Implications

- Training can empower clinicians to work effectively within resource constraints
- Focus on functional outcomes rather than specific equipment increases accessibility
- Mentorship and creative problem-solving are critical for LMIC contexts
- Hybrid training approaches effectively deliver knowledge across distances

Key Takeaway

When access to assistive technology is limited, training rehabilitation professionals to creatively adapt available resources can significantly improve mobility outcomes for people with disabilities.

Contact Information

Angela Patterson, OTD (Primary Presenter)

angelapatterson@creighton.edu

Department of Occupational Therapy

Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, USA

This work was made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the “Learning, Acting and Building for Strengthening Rehabilitation in Health Systems” (ReLAB-HS) activity, implemented by John Hopkins University. The contents of this work are the sole responsibility of Physiopedia and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.