

# ORAL PAPER PRESENTATION 6: GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL POLICY

## An introduction of the assistive technology R&D for older people with disabilities in Korea

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**Purpose** Older people with disabilities mostly found difficulties in their communication, mobility, self-care (Lim, Song, Kweon, & Ro, 2022). Use of assistive technology could make older people more independent and reduce the physical care burden of caregivers (Mortenson et al., 2012). Korean government started to the first Assistive Technology (AT) R&D from 2020-2023 for older adults and people with disabilities (Kim, An, Ro, Kweon, & Eun, 2022). In this study, we will introduce AT R&D for older people with disabilities in Korea and discuss future plans for the AT R&D. **Method** The AT R&D in Korea is classified into two categories such as economic and social value projects considering the market need for AT and industry characteristics. There are ten economic value projects mainly performed by companies, universities, and research center to make a commercially available AT product (figure 1). The AT open platform operated by the National Rehabilitation Center (NRC) in pursuit of social value collects ideas of appropriate assistive technology (AAT), develops it with consumers, and shares the results as an open-source format through the open page ([www.nrc.go.kr/at\\_rd](http://www.nrc.go.kr/at_rd)) (Kim, Lim, Lee, & Eun, 2021). Among the current AT R&D including economic/social value projects, three researchers in NRC discussed and organized which projects are the AT devices for older people with disabilities according to the ICF major classification (WHO, 2001). **Results and Discussion** There are seven projects directly related to enhancing quality of life of older people with disabilities out of ten economic value projects overall. The economic value projects can be classified into the activity and participation in ICF such as d3 communication (P8 Augmentative and Alternative Communication System, P9 Hearing AT), d4 mobility (P2 Li-on Battery for AT, P4 Soft Robotics for people with stroke, P6 Stepless AT), d5 selfcare (P3 Changing Place Toilets), and d9 community, social and civic life (P10 leisure). There are also fifteen AAT devices have been developed within the scope of social value project. The AT devices can be classified into the activity and participation in ICF are d3 communication (remote call bell, lip mouse), d4 mobility (walker, grip bar, sling, special seating, universal holder, package tearing aids), d5 selfcare (wearing socks, nail clipper, one-handed hair tie, shoelace aids), d6 domestic life (Electric plug aids), and d9 community, social and civic life (gardening tools). In the next generation of AT R&D starting from 2024, the place where older adults, caregivers, developers, and policy makers meet using the AT open platform will continue to operate. The areas of activities and participation according to ICF will be expanded from the existing areas to all areas such as d1 learning and applying knowledge, d2 general tasks and demands, d7 interpersonal interactions and relationships, and d8 major life areas. Furthermore, future R&D items for older adults including those activity and participation were identified through the 2030 Future Vision Scenario (NRC, 2022).

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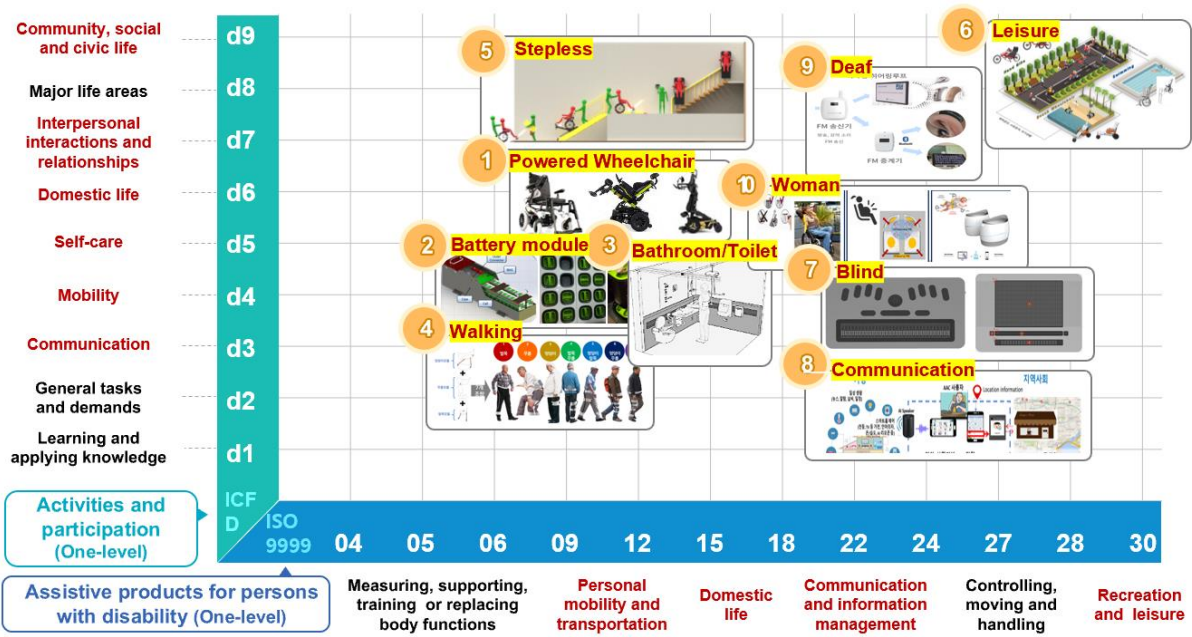
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ICF: International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health  
 ISO9999(International Standard): Assistive products for persons with disability - Classification and terminology

Figure 1. Assistive Technology R&D Projects for Economic Value