



ATLAS

COUNTRY RESOURCES FOR
NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS

SECOND EDITION



World Health
Organization





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FOREWORD

Global Burden of Disease data over the past 20 years show a large and growing burden of death and disability caused by neurological disorders. However, until recently, little was known about the resources available within countries to cope with this burden.

To fill this knowledge gap, WHO launched Project Atlas in 2000 with the objective of collecting, compiling and disseminating relevant information on health-care resources in countries. To assess country resources – and consequently country needs – WHO published the first edition of the Atlas of country resources for neurological disorders in 2004.

Prior to the Neurology Atlas, most information about resources for the care of people with neurological disorders was derived from few high-income countries, with little of it originating in the vast majority of lower-income countries. The Neurology Atlas was disseminated to ministries of health in all WHO Member States and to other stakeholders, and it has remained a valuable resource for health-care planners and others.

The second edition of the Neurology Atlas is intended to update the information provided in the first edition and show the extent to which such resources have grown, or otherwise, over the past 10 years. The information was collected from the answers to a questionnaire provided by 132 countries and two territories covering 94% of the world population. The World Federation of Neurology (WFN) collaborated closely in the collection and analysis of the data and the development of the second edition, with the active participation of leading neurology experts all over the world.

The second edition of the Neurology Atlas summarizes the current status of neurological services and provision of neurological

care in various parts of the world. As with the results in 2004, the data demonstrate that the available resources for neurological disorders in most countries of the world are insufficient compared with the known significant burden associated with neurological disorders. In addition, there are large inequalities across regions globally, and among groups with different levels of income. Low-income countries have extremely scanty resources.

We believe that the information presented in this updated edition will prove useful to a large range of readers, including policy-makers, health planners and specialists at both international and national level. The survey results in the second edition of the Neurology Atlas clearly illustrate the need for substantial increases in neurology services and training, especially in low- and lower-middle-income countries, in order to provide adequate care and to decrease inequities. This will only be possible with significant increases in allocations of financial resources for these services. Some of the data also demonstrate the potential role of international collaboration and partnerships in a concerted effort to improve neurological care and to increase and strengthen appropriate training programmes.

At the country level, the data summarized in the Neurology Atlas should help to highlight needs and stimulate national programmes and the development of strategies to improve the diagnosis and management of neurological disorders.

The Neurology Atlas represents the best information we could procure through extensive professional and institutional networks and sources. We are cognizant of gaps in information and possible inaccuracies. We will continue our work in this area to provide more complete, accurate and comparable information in the coming years.

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