Background

What is IGAP?

- IGAP is a 10-year roadmap launched by WHO to effectively address neurological conditions and improve the lives of people with epilepsy and other neurological conditions worldwide. It consists of 5 strategic objectives and 10 global targets.

Why is IGAP important?

- First ever global action plan on epilepsy and neurological conditions
- Unanimously approved by all 194 member states of the World Health Assembly
- Unique multisectoral, person-centred, evidence-informed, human rights, and life course approach
- Includes epilepsy specific objective “to strengthen the public health approach to epilepsy”

How is IGAP relevant to you?

- IGAP speaks directly to the mission, needs, and aspirations of the global epilepsy community. It is therefore a powerful tool to support, guide, and promote our work moving forward. In this practical guide, we outline a series of proposed actions to support IBE chapters and our community in optimally leveraging IGAP.

IGAP in Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective (SO) / Global Target (GT)</th>
<th>Relevance for Epilepsy Community</th>
<th>Proposed Actions for IBE Chapters</th>
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</table>
| **SO 1: Raise policy prioritization and strengthen governance** | ➢ Over 50 million people have epilepsy worldwide; 80% live in LMICs  
➢ Epilepsies are in the top 5 causes of neurological disability  
➢ The majority of those affected receive no or insufficient treatment  
➢ Low public awareness of epilepsy as a treatable brain condition  
➢ Insufficient government action (<30% of LMIC have national plans) | ✓ Use the IBE Advocate’s Toolkit for policy advocacy actions (position papers, letters) holding governments accountable  
✓ Unite chapters nationally for epilepsy awareness campaigns  
✓ Engage key stakeholders (PWE, Ministries, WHO, ILAE) to define national IGAP priorities  
✓ Build partnerships within neurology, NCDs, and intersectorally - beyond health |
| **GT 1.1:** 75% of countries have National Plans/Policies/Strategies for neurological conditions | **GT 1.2:** 100% of countries have functioning Awareness/Advocacy Programmes for neurological conditions | |
| **SO 2: Provide effective, timely and responsive diagnosis, treatment, care** | ➢ Epilepsy treatment gaps remain high (>75% in many LMICs)  
➢ Antiseizure medicines are highly affordable ($5/person/year) and effective (for 70% of all epilepsies)  
➢ Insufficient neurological workforce (0.1 per 100,000 people in LMIC) and lack of tools (EEG) impair diagnosis | ✓ Policy advocacy actions to hold governments accountable  
✓ Build health system capacity via educational interventions (e.g., for community health workers, teachers, traditional healers, and the public)  
✓ Partner with local ILAE chapters |
| **GT 2.1:** 75% of countries have included neurological conditions in UHC benefits package | **GT 2.2:** 80% of countries provide essential medicines / technologies for neurological conditions | |
| **SO 3: Implement strategies for promotion and prevention** | ➢ 25% of epilepsies are preventable  
➢ Preventable causes include stroke, infections (e.g., meningitis), birth trauma, and other brain injuries  
➢ Fostering brain health³ and development can improve outcomes and quality of life | ✓ Raise awareness on epilepsy prevention (campaigns, educational activities)  
✓ Position epilepsy within wider policy dialogues (establish cross-links to UN SDGs², WHO NCD agenda) |
| **GT 3.1:** 80% of countries have ≥1 functioning prevention / brain health promotion programme | **GT 3.2:** Global targets for prevention of neurological disorders are achieved | |
| **GT 3.3:** 75% of countries have functioning awareness and prevention programmes | **GT 3.4:** 100% of countries have functioning UHC benefits programmes | |

10-Year Goal

“To reduce the stigma, impact and burden of neurological disorders, including their associated mortality, morbidity and disability, and to improve the quality of life of people with neurological disorders, their carers and families.”¹

Abbreviations: EEG= electroencephalogram; LMIC= low- and middle-income countries; NCDs = non-communicable diseases; PWE= people with epilepsy; SDGs= sustainable development goals
IGAP in Practice (continued)

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<td>SO 4: Foster research and innovation and strengthen information systems</td>
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<td>GT 4.1: 80% of countries routinely collect indicators for neurological conditions</td>
<td>- Robust epidemiological data on epilepsy are lacking in most countries</td>
<td>✓ Know your community! Conduct needs assessment to identify real priorities / unmet needs</td>
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<td>GT 4.2: Global research on neurological conditions doubles</td>
<td>- Most existing research does not include the voice of people with epilepsy</td>
<td>✓ Get involved in IBE’s forthcoming Global Epilepsy Needs Survey</td>
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<td>- Beyond medical variables, indicators for quality of life and lived experience are needed</td>
<td>✓ Exchange knowledge and best practices with other IBE chapters, including research activities (via IBE Knowledge Hub)</td>
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<td>- Generating this data is critical to address unmet needs and narrow the inclusion gap</td>
<td>✓ Lobby governments for increased research funding</td>
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<td>SO 5: Strengthen the public health approach to epilepsy</td>
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<tr>
<td>GT 5.1: 50% increase in epilepsy service coverage</td>
<td>- Epilepsy-related stigma exists at all societal levels, impairing quality of life and social wellbeing</td>
<td>✓ WHO and all member states have committed to this epilepsy-specific objective: leverage it to the maximum!</td>
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<td>GT 5.2: 80% of countries have replaced discriminatory legislation</td>
<td>- Myths, false beliefs, and misinformation around epilepsy are prevalent and key barriers to healthcare seeking</td>
<td>✓ Raise awareness on / advocate against discriminatory legislation</td>
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<td>- Discriminatory legislation must be removed to eradicate stigma and safeguard human rights of people with epilepsy</td>
<td>✓ Use the IBE Stigma Reduction Toolkit6 for interventions (e.g., in schools, workplace)</td>
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<td>- Generating data around epilepsy are critical to improve health outcomes</td>
<td>✓ Build lived experience repository for use in social media/campaigns</td>
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What IBE is doing about IGAP
- Aligned with IGAP, IBE has launched its Strategic Plan 2022 - 26, focusing on 1) advocacy/awareness, 2) knowledge creation, 3) capacity-building, and 4) strong partnerships.
- IBE has extended the IGAP-supporting Epilepsy Cascade Target, ensuring that “100% of people with epilepsy will experience an improvement in their quality of life.”
- IBE has contributed to the WHO Epilepsy Technical Brief, launched as a technical complement to IGAP.
- Aligned with IGAP, IBE is launching 3 flagship projects in 2023:
  ✓ IBE Global Advocacy Action – policy advocacy across regions
  ✓ IBE INVOLVE – involving people with epilepsy in all activities
  ✓ IBE Knowledge Hub – connecting our IBE chapters
- IBE is partnering closely with ILAE, WHO, OneNeurology and others to make IGAP a success.

Key Takeaways: Make IGAP work for your chapter!
- IGAP provides a global mandate to close inclusion, treatment, prevention, and research gaps in epilepsy.
- IGAP is a powerful tool to support your policy advocacy agenda and a key to hold policymakers accountable.
- IGAP serves as an overarching framework: make it your own by leveraging those elements that matter most to your country, chapter, and community.
- IGAP is only the beginning: consider complementary policy frameworks (WHO NCD agenda, UN SDGs5) to make epilepsy central in global policy dialogue.
- IGAP adoption does not equal implementation: we must now put words into action to achieve our goals.

References & Tools
(1) Draft WHO Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders 2022 – 31
(2) Improving the lives of people with epilepsy: a technical brief
(3) Optimising brain health across the life course: WHO position paper
(4) IBE Strategic Plan 2022 – 26
(5) IBE Editorial | The WHO intersectoral global action plan and epilepsy cascade target: Towards a roadmap for implementation
(6) IBE Advocate’s Toolkit - IBE Stigma Reduction Toolkit
(7) The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals