AT-INFO-MAP

gkayange@safod.net

BY GEORGE MWIKA KAYANGE | SAFOD DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

What is SAFOD

- Formed in 1986 by persons with disabilities as a federation of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).

- Leading disability-focused network.

- Engaged in coordination of activities of DPOs in Southern Africa.

- We work in the SADC countries.

- Coordinate our programs and activities through our national affiliates.

About AT-INFO-MAP

- AT-Info-Map Project stands for Assistive Technology Information Mapping project (AT-Info-Map).
- Project awarded by Google Impact Challenge – *'big ideas that will use technology to expand opportunity and independence for people with disabilities'*.
  - Technology-based solutions
  - High risk/high impact
  - List of grants funded https://www.google.org/impactchallenge/disabilities/grants.html

AT-INFO-MAP: Project Vision

Aim: Map the availability of different types of assistive technology in Southern Africa.

Why?
- To connect persons with disabilities to AT available
- To increase availability of appropriate AT

What is the project doing?

- The project is currently capturing, organizing, and mapping availability of AT with a mobile app as well as a web-based database.

- Through this mobile data system, we aim to inform AT designers, producers, service providers, and policymakers about the local availability of AT.

- So that we can influence the increase in access to AT for people with disabilities

How did this project get started?

- Lack of awareness of what AT is available
- DPOs and people they serve were not sure how to access AT in southern Africa
- Inadequate availability of low-cost and appropriate AT in southern Africa

What solutions are we working on?

- AT-Info-Map
  - Develop an app that collects and provides information about available AT
  - Development of the web-based version of the database (https://assistivetechmap.org/)
- Education and awareness raising
  - What is AT?
  - How do people with disabilities benefits from AT?

Scope of AT-Info-Map

SAFOD and national DPO affiliates in 10 countries in southern Africa

- Pilot: Botswana in YR 1 – March 2016-March 2017
- Scale up in YR 2 and 3: Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Process of App development

- Iterative process from the ground up to identify an App solution that would be useful and used
- Ensure App complements other AT information available
- Developed different versions of App and gathered feedback to make modifications

Where to Download the App

☐ The AT-Info-Map app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store or from the App Store and can be installed on your Android or iOS phone, respectively.

How to Use the App

□ This is the home page of the app.

□ After downloading from Google Play Store or App Store and installing the app, users have the option to view the listings of AT suppliers and/or service providers by simply clicking on "View Listing" tab on the home screen.
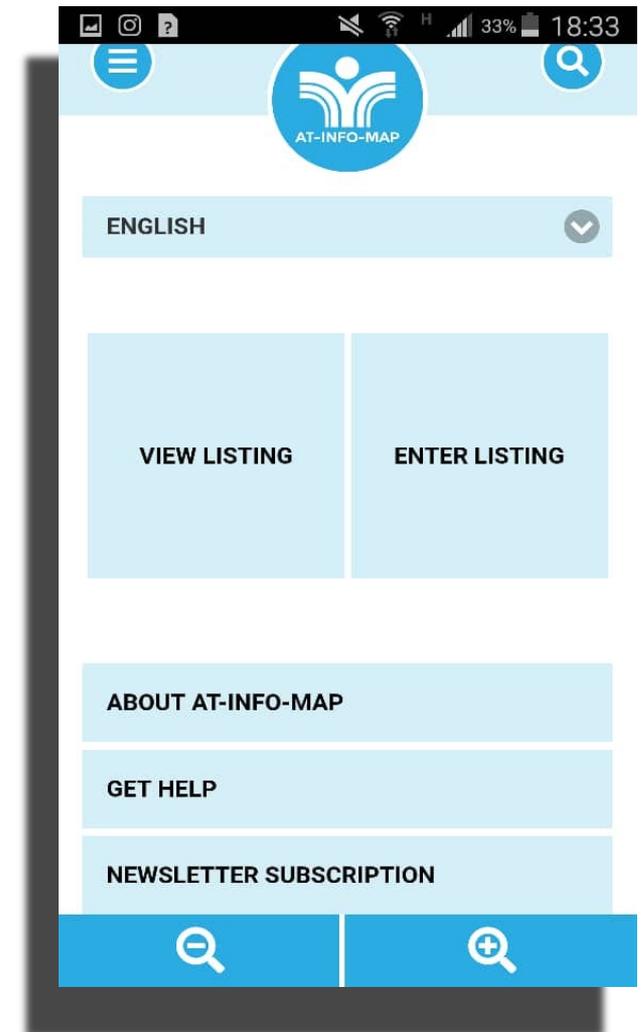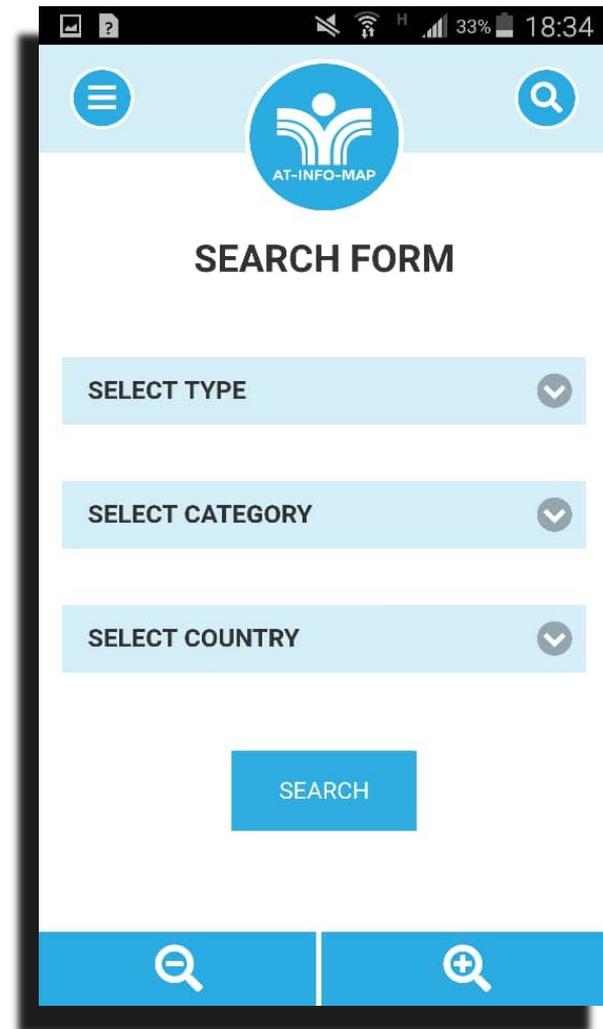
How to Use the App

☐ Or users can enter information about an AT supplier(s) or service provider(s) by simply clicking on "Entre Listing" tab on the home screen.
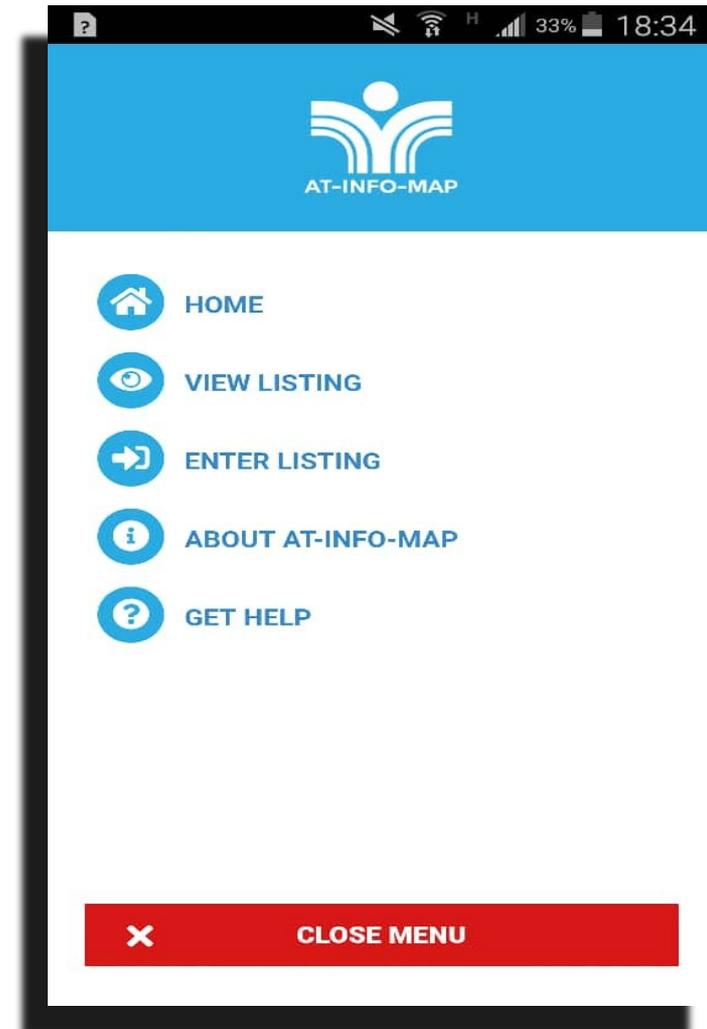
How to Use the App

☐ Alternatively, users can search fir either an AT supplier or disability services /organization.

☐ They can filter the search by "type" of AT, or category of service, or by country.
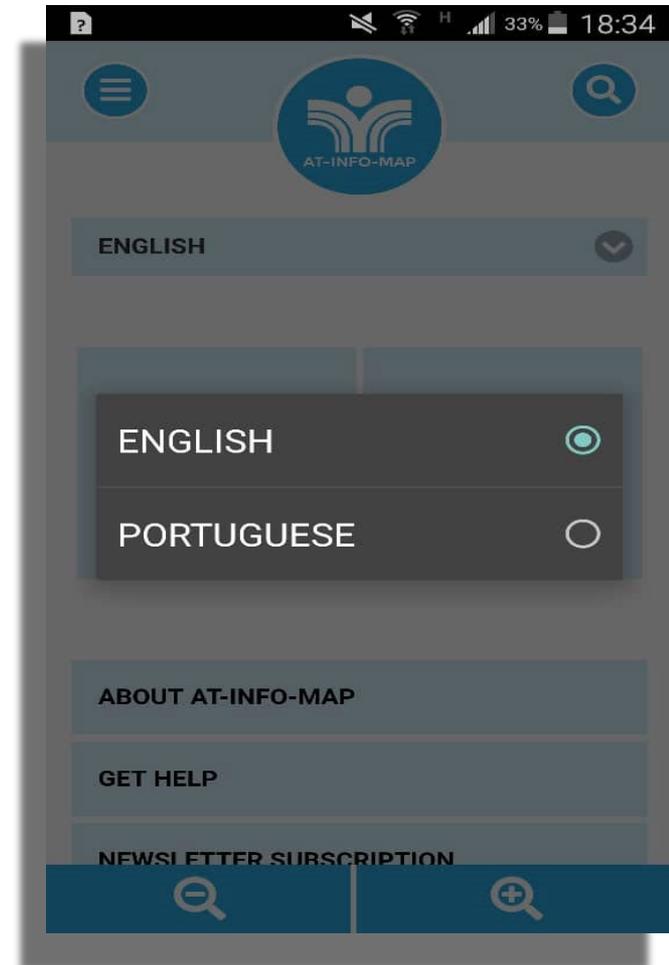
How to Use the App
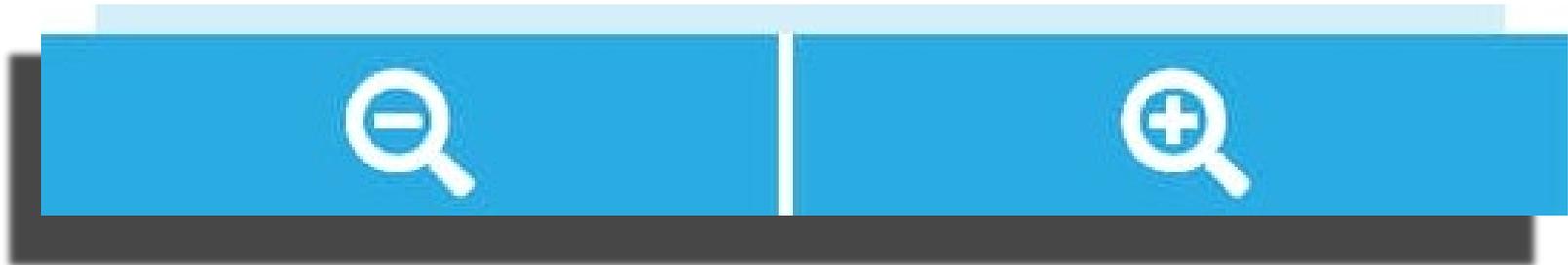
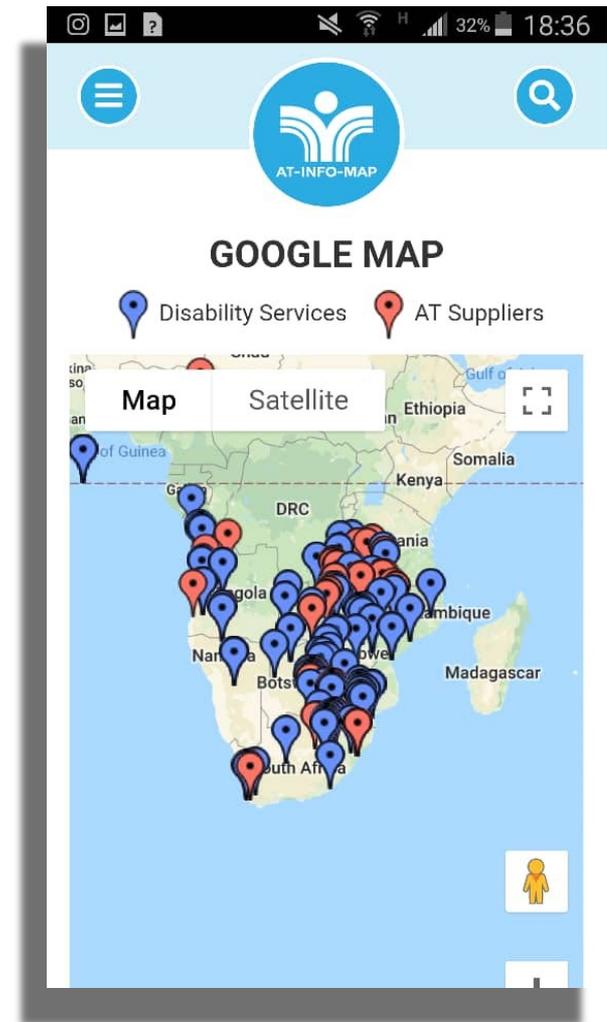□ The app interface has a feature that allows users to increase or decrease the size of text.

How to Use the App

☐ The app is currently available in English and Portuguese – Currently the project doesn't cover Francophone countries.
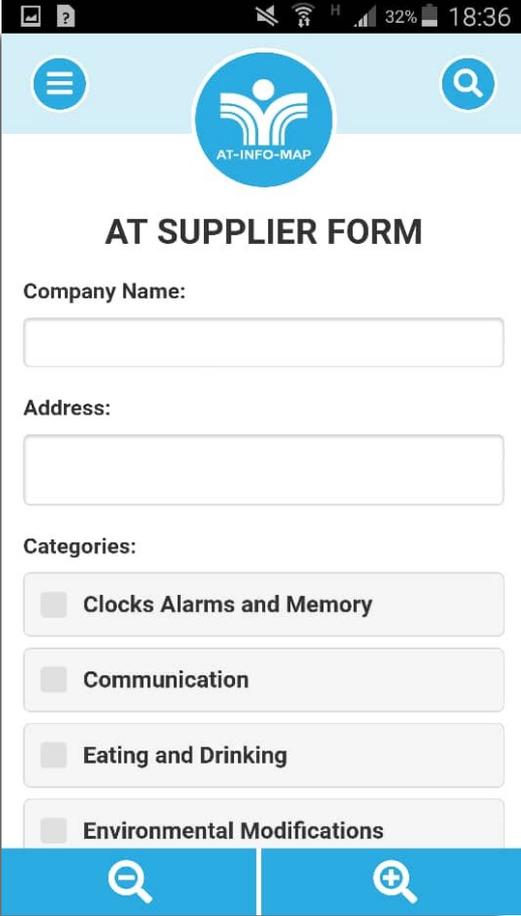
How to Use the App

☐ You can view listing on the Map; it lets you see all entries on the map.
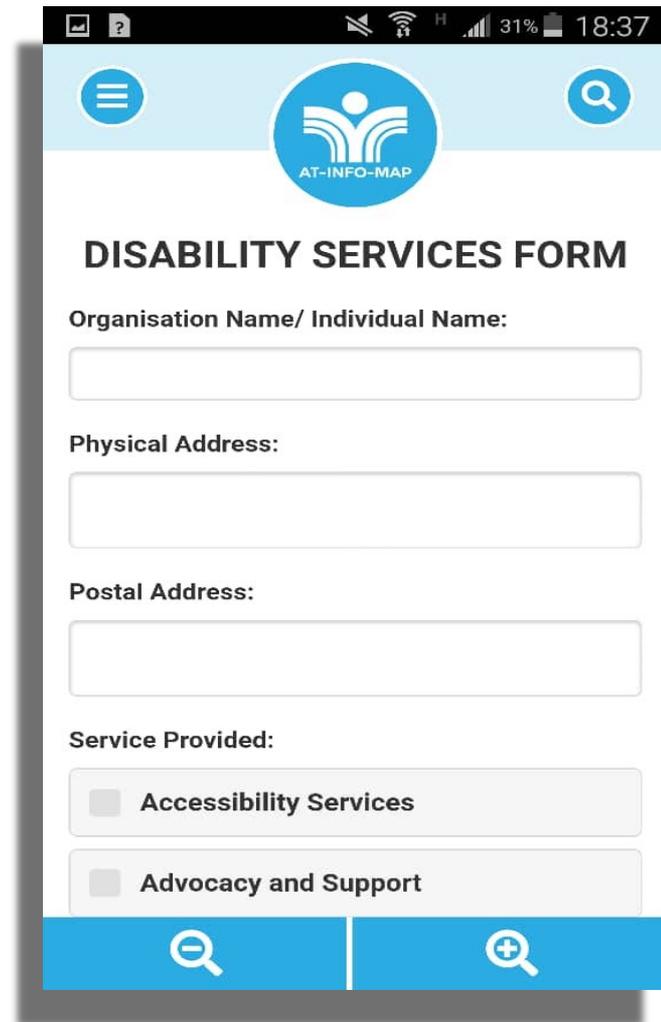
How to Use the App

- If you choose the "Enter Listing" tab on the home screen, it will take you to next screen which has two tabs
- The "AT Supplier Form" lets you to input information about an AT supplier.

How to Use the App

☐ The "Disability Service Form" lets you input information about a service provider.

Online Database

Challenges

- Despite having over 2000 AT suppliers and disability service organizations on both the mobile and web-based database, the main challenge is that with funding from Google expiring in early 2019, we do not have human resource to continue maintaining the database either on full time or part-time.

Future Plans

☐ So, as art of our plans, we are exploring innovative strategies for making the project sustainable.

☐ One such plans is to partners with corporations (e.g., from mobile industry) or other organizations who can provide sponsorship

Future Plans

- We are also looking at the possibility of integrating advertising on both the app and web database to generate some income that can help sustain the project.

- Such income generation activities will not only enable us expand the scope of our listing from the current town countries to all SADC countries, or even across the continent.

Future Plans

- We hope that if we can generate more operational income, we can then include other languages into the app, such as French (for francophone countries) and local languages like Swahili, Xhosa, Chichewa, Setswana, etc.

Future Plans

- In partnership with Loughborough University, we have also embarked on diversifying the means through which the listing can be accessed, by designing a AT Catalogue that can be printed:

- https://www.saate.org/AT-edirectory-catalogue-v3.pdf

- We hope to make the publication available accessible in various languages too and produce versions that are accessible to persons with various types of disabilities.

Future Plans

- Finally, we are exploring different business innovations that can be integrated into the AT-Info-Map but without losing the project vision itself.
- We are more focused on innovations that will help the project become sustainable.
- One of such examples is the application of the novel Business Integrated Industrial Design Innovation (BIID) process.

Future Plans

- This is because the BIID process will help SAFOD and its partners in effectively developing/adding new features / products in a more strustcured approach.

- By accessing a wide range of resources that can help us identify the procedures, challenges, and potential solutions at each stage of the NPD process.

Conclusion

- We believe that SAFOD cannot achieve most of our plans and ambitions on our own.

- Collaboration with other stakeholders like those present here in this webinar is, therefore, going to remain our driving force towards achieving the plans.

Questions and Feedback?

- Meanwhile, if you have questions about the project, or the app or web database, feel free to contact us:

George Kayange - gkayange@safod.net

www.atinfomap.org