**Global Network on Monitoring and Evaluation for Disability-inclusive Development**

**(MEDD Global Network)**

**Provisional Concept Note by DESA (The Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/DSPD)**

**Background**

The General Assembly Resolution 69/142, ‘Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond’, requested the Secretary-General, in coordination with all relevant United Nations entities, “**to compile and analyse national policies, programmes, best practices and available statistics regarding persons with disabilities, reflecting progress made in addressing the relevant internationally agreed development goals and the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), to be submitted to the General Assembly in a flagship report during 2018[[1]](#footnote-1)”** **(para 21b).**

In preparation for the UN flagship report to be submitted to the General Assembly in 2018, the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (DSPD/DESA) will produce a prototype with available data and information on the situation of persons with disabilities in economic and social development by the end of 2015. The development goals relevant for this report include the most recently adopted sustainable development goals (SDGs). According to the outcome document,[[2]](#footnote-2) the SDGs include:

* Seven targets which explicitly refer to persons with disabilities: SDG targets 4.5 and 4.a (education), 8.5 (employment), 10.2 (participation), 11.2 (accessible transport), 11.7 (accessible public/green spaces) and 17.8 (increase disability data).
* Additional six SDG targets with references to persons in vulnerable situations, which include persons with disabilities: SDG targets 1.3 (social protection), 1.4 (basic services), 1.5 (resilience to disasters), 2.1 (hunger), 6.2 (sanitation) and 11.5 (reducing impact of disasters).
* Two targets addressing discriminations (10.3 and 16.b) which would have negative impact on persons with disabilities.
* Other universal targets, i.e. “to be achieved by all,” including persons with disabilities.

The UN flagship report will require reliable data and statistics, information and analysis concerning the situation of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals. Although disability data remains insufficient to monitor the implementation of the international development goals for persons with disabilities, including the SDGs, and to monitor and evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the CRPD, a number of new initiatives are under way to address this situation (see section below and annex A).

The Global Network on Monitoring and Evaluation for Disability-inclusive Development is an informal network of experts, researchers and practitioners in disability policy, data and statistics, monitoring and evaluation. Building on the work, of the UN system and its partners, on the Millennium Development Goals and in monitoring and evaluation, this Global Network is expected to (i) serve as a resource for preparing the aforementioned UN flagship report; (ii) establish a basis for the future monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of a disability-inclusive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. DESA (The Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/DSPD), as the global focal point on disability of the United Nations system, is facilitating the Network and its first meeting in October 2015.

***National and international initiatives to strengthen disability data***

Approximately 100 countries have already included disability data in their last census and at least 40 countries are using the internationally comparable *Washington Group disability questions* in their census and/or surveys – these sources typically provide data on education and employment which can be used to monitor SDGs 4.5 and 8.5. As for data on participation in the labour force, more than 70 countries have collected these data for persons with disabilities in recent labour force or other national surveys. In addition, the Washington Group questions have been used (i) in the School-to-Work Transition Surveys conducted by ILO in 2012-3 in 28 countries[[3]](#endnote-1) (ii) to identify persons with disabilities in refugee camps;[[4]](#footnote-3) (iii) in the UNISDR Survey on Living with Disabilities and Disasters.

Several agencies are developing full surveys or survey modules on disability:

* WHO has developed the Module Disability Surveys (MDS) which have already taken place in three countries. The MDS collect information on performance and capacity limitations, as well as on work, education, health-care and use of assistive devices and personal assistance. The Washington Group questions are also included in these surveys.
* UNICEF is currently testing a disability module for children, based on the Washington Group questions, for inclusion in MICS – this module will allow to disaggregate the data collected through MICS (e.g. immunization, school attendance) and other surveys for children with and without disabilities.
* ILO is currently developing a disability module for inclusion in labour force surveys – data collected through this module will be key for evidence based policy making for improving the participation of persons with disabilities sin the labour force.
* UNFPA is initiating work to produce a statistical module on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of persons with disabilities, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
* The DHS Program is developing an optional module on disability for DHS questionnaires.

And a few others are working on disability indicators:

* UNISDR is developing a system of indicators based on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which includes disability.
* OHCHR is leading a UNPRPD project ‘Monitoring the CRPD in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda’ which aims at developing indicators for each of the articles of the CRPD.

In addition, UNHCR currently collects some data on disability but with limitations on coverage and scope. The agency will be working on strengthening disability data over the coming period, in order to better identify and record persons with disabilities among refugee populations.

During 2015-19, the UN Statistics Division through an Australian-funded project entitled ‘Strengthening disability statistics in the era of post-2015 development agenda’ will aim at enhancing the capacity of national statistical offices to produce and disseminate good quality and fit-for-purpose statistics on disability for evidence-based policy making and monitoring.

New forms of alternative data sources have been explored by UN entities and their partners, including crowd-sourcing indicators, to monitor the implementation of the international development goals for persons with disabilities.

**Aim of the MEDD Global Network**

This informal network aims to contribute to: (i) development of a compilation of available and reliable statistics to improve assessments of progress made for persons with disabilities within the context of the SDGs and the CRPD, and with a view to preparing for the upcoming 2018 UN Flagship report; (ii) monitoring of policy development and conducting policy analysis based on available data and statistics and other relevant information on the situation of persons with disabilities in the context of the SDGs and the CRPD. The Network could also facilitate the coordination among its members and exchange of good practices, in preparation for the 2018 UN Flagship report.

Among its first tasks, the Network is expected to:

1. assist in identifying the information on indicators and reliable available statistics concerning the status of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the international development goals, including the SDGs;
2. provide the assessment of progress towards disability-inclusive international development goals, including SDGs ;
3. discuss available information concerning alternative sources of data on the situation of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the international development goals, including SDGs.

**Participation in the MEDD Global Network**

The Network is open to experts, researchers and practitioners from the UN system, non-governmental organizations, particularly disabled persons’ organizations, with experience and expertise in the areas of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the international development goals, including expertise in policy-analysis, data, statistics, monitoring and evaluation relevant for disability-inclusive development.

**First meeting**

New York, 6-7 October (the updated agenda will be circulated in the first week of October)

**Annex A. Past and current initiatives to strengthen data on disability**

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| **Agency/entity** | **Initiative** |
| Countries | 98 collected disability data in last census; 33 of them used the Washington Group questions |
| 73 countries collected data on participation of persons with disabilities in the labour force in recent labour force or other nationally representative surveys |
| Demographic and Health Surveys (USAID/ICF International) | The DHS Program has recently developed an optional module on disabilities for DHS questionnaires, which is based on (but not identical to) the six Washington Group questions. This disability module was already tested in Ghana and some cognitive testing was also undertaken – it is pending final approval. |
| ILO | Used WG-6 in the School-to-Work Transition Surveys conducted in 2012-3 in 28 countries[[5]](#endnote-2). |
| Is currently developing a disability module for inclusion in labour force surveys. This module includes the WG questions. |
| OHCHR | Currently making efforts to initiate work on developing indicators for each of the articles of the CRPD and potentially linking these, nationally and regionally, to the indicators for the SDGs. |
| Sightsavers | Has been piloting methods, using the WG questions, for disaggregating by disability data on persons seek treatment in health centres. |
| UNDESA/DSPD/SCRPD | Engaging with partners to explore alternative data sources - like social media, cell phone data, data from mobile applications, crowdsourcing indicators, etc. - to monitor international development goals for persons with disabilities. |
| UNDESA/UN Statistics Division | Initiated an Australian-funded project entitled ‘Strengthening disability statistics in the era of post-2015 development agenda’ which aims at enhancing the capacity of national statistical offices to produce and disseminate good quality and fit-for-purpose statistics on disability for evidence-based policy making and monitoring. |
| UNFPA | Is initiating work to produce a statistical module on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of persons with disabilities, in the Post 2015 Development Agenda context. |
| UNHCR | Currently collects some data on disability but with limitations. Will be working on strengthening disability data over the coming period, in order to better identify and record persons with disabilities among refugee populations. |
| UNICEF | UNICEF and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics have developed a survey module on child functioning and disability for use in surveys and censuses. The module reflects current thinking around disability and can produce internationally comparable data. The module covers children between 2 and 17 years of age, and assesses activity limitations in the domains of speech and language, hearing, vision, learning, mobility and motor skills, and emotions. UNICEF and the WG are also working on the development of a manual to support implementation of the module. The module and manual are expected to be ready for actual data collection and use by countries at the end of 2015. |
| Is currently drafting the‘Guidelines on the measurement of child disability’, expected to be finalized in 2016. This document provides guidance for those considering collecting data on children with disabilities. |
| UNICEF and the Washington Group are developing a new survey module to measure the school environment and children’s participation in education. The module will measure the barriers and facilitators to education by children with/without disabilities. This module will complement the module on child functioning and disability. Together, they will provide a comprehensive measurement of disability - assessing activity limitations, as well as children’s interactions within their environment. The module will cover: attitudes, accessibility, getting to school, and affordability. Once finalized, the module will undergo cognitive testing and field testing. It is expected to be ready for actual data collection and use by countries in late 2016. |
| UNICEF and the Washington Group have developed training material and initiated a round of capacity building workshops on the measurement of child disability. The purpose of the workshops is to build/strengthen local capacity for data collection. Training involves National Statistics Offices, other Government staff, and local researchers, on concepts, models and measures of disability, survey design, data processing, data analysis, data dissemination, and data use. The workshops are taking place 2015 and 2016. Two workshops have been completed to date (a national one in Tunisia and a regional one for the CEE/CIS region). |
| UNISDR | Developing a system of indicators based on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which includes disability |
| In 2013, conducted a UN Survey on Living with Disabilities and Disasters which surveyed more than 5,000 persons with disabilities in 137 countries. This survey looked into factors related to how persons with disabilities cope with disasters – the survey used the Washington Group questions to identify the types of disabilities. |
| University of Sidney | The Washington Group questions have been used by researchers to identify persons with disabilities in refugee camps. |
| Washington Group | Endorsed WG-6 for inclusion in censuses and surveys. |
| WHO | Developed the Module Disability Survey, already conducted in three countries. |
| Collected disability data through the World Health Surveys in 2002-3 in 51 countries. Data on education, employment, access to water and sanitation collected in these surveys can be disaggregated by disability status. |

1. Henceforth this UN flagship report will be referred to as the ‘UN Global Status Report on Disability and Development’ (GSRDD). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Transforming Our World – Finalised Text for Adoption (1 August). Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/WCMS_234860/lang--en/index.htm> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
4. Smith-Khan, L. et al. (2014). To ‘Promote, Protect and Ensure’: Overcoming Obstacles to Identifying Disability in Forced Migration. *Journal of Refugee Studies* Vol. 28, No. 1 (advanced copy) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/WCMS_234860/lang--en/index.htm> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)