Collecting data on persons with disabilities under UNHCR’s mandate

Washington Group Annual Meeting
2021
Humanitarian contexts
Prevalence data

Syria 27%
Jordan 21%

1 in 5
One in five women is likely to experience disability during her life.

46%
46% of persons aged 60 years and over have a disability.

1 in 10
One in ten children is a child with a disability.

15%
An estimated 15% of the world’s population have a disability.

Infographic: Inter-Agency Standing Committee
How was UNHCR identifying persons with disabilities?

- Specific Needs Codes: “An attribute or situation that requires particular notice, intervention or follow-up”
- Prioritized for registration interview
- Referred to Protection staff
- Persons with disabilities are among the 7 groups to be prioritized for registration
Total persons of concern in EHAGL Region: 4.7M | Total with disabilities: 74K (1.5%)

Age and gender breakdown

- **0-4**: F (48%) 1% M (52%) 1%
- **5-11**: 4% 5%
- **12-17**: 4% 6%
- **18-24**: 5% 6%
- **25-49**: 17% 17%
- **50-59**: 5% 6%
- **60+**: 12% 11%

Specific Need sub-category breakdown

- **Visual impairment (including blindness)**: 28%
- **Physical disability - severe**: 12%
- **Physical disability - moderate**: 25%
- **Other (Hearing Impairment, Mental disability moderate/severe, Speech impairment etc.)**: 35%

Breakdown by CoA

- **Uganda**: 22K (4%) 1.5M
- **Ethiopia**: 14K (2%) 814.5K
- **Sudan***: 14K (1%) 1.1M
- **Kenya**: 10K (3%) 516.2K
- **South Sudan**: 4K (<1%) 321.5K
- **Rwanda**: 4K (3%) 125.7K
- **United Republic of Tanzania**: 4K (1%) 264.5K
- **Burundi**: 2K (2%) 80.6K
- **Djibouti**: < 1K (2%) 33.1K
- **Somalia**: < 1K (2%) 25.4K

Sudan disability figures only includes those registered in proGres. 40% of the total population in Sudan are not registered in proGres.
Why were the codes for Disability changed?

• Previous codes used visual cues to identify persons with disabilities > unreliable method
• Resulted in under-reporting of disability
• UNHCR made a public commitment on integrating the Washington Group Questions at registration
Codes appear first

Multiple records if multiple difficulties

Questions for children – UNICEF WG

Answers reflect recommended cut-off

6 WGQs + Emotions & Behaviour and Upper Body mobility

Removed mentions to assistive devices

Official translations EN-AR-FR-SP

Specific Need (837-00054512)
A paradigm shift in identifying persons with disabilities at registration

Pre-identifying *impairments* using visual cues

Assigning a code based on assumptions

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Recent data using the Washington Group Questions

Disabilities by Difficulty Level

- Self-Care
- Remembering and concentrating
- Communication
- Hearing
- Emotions and behavior
- Upper Body Mobility
- (blank)
- Vision
- Lower Body Mobility

Severity Levels:
- Blue: A lot of difficulty
- Black: Cannot do at all
- Yellow: (blank)

Disabilities by Top 10 Country Operations

- Sudan
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Mexico
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Kenya
- United Republic of Tanzania
- Uganda
- Lebanon
- Jordan

Severity Levels:
- Lower Body Mobility
- (blank)
- Emotions and behavior
- Communication
- Self-Care
- Vision
- Upper Body Mobility
- Hearing
- Remembering and concentrating
Other efforts in monitoring disability inclusion

- Indicators for targeted interventions: “% of persons of concern with disabilities who receive services for their specific needs”.
- Mandatory disaggregation of core impact and outcome indicators by age, sex and disability.
- Disability “marker”.
- Discapacidad y Movilidad Humana
- The power of inclusion-Mapping the Protection Responses for Persons with Disabilities Among Refugees in MENA
- UNHCR Global Report 2020 - UNHCR Flagship Reports
A public commitment

• 2018 – ‘UNHCR will incorporate the Washington Group question set into its continuous registration process to improve identification and protection of persons with disabilities’

“It’s good to see the Washington Group questions on disability have been integrated into proGress now, (a recommendation I made as rapporteur from the UNHCR-NGO consultations back in 2017 😊) ”
Resources

- The Washington Group on Disability Statistics - Home
- UNHCR Guidance – Identification of persons with disabilities at Registration and other data collection efforts
- Resettlement Assessment Tool – Refugees with Disabilities
- IASC Guidelines, Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, 2019 | IASC
- Refworld | Need to Know Guidance: Working with Persons with Disabilities in Forced Displacement (EN-AR-FR-SP)
- UNHCR - Working with Persons with Disabilities in Forced Displacement Facilitator's Guide