



Disability in the Central African Republic

The Importance of Disability

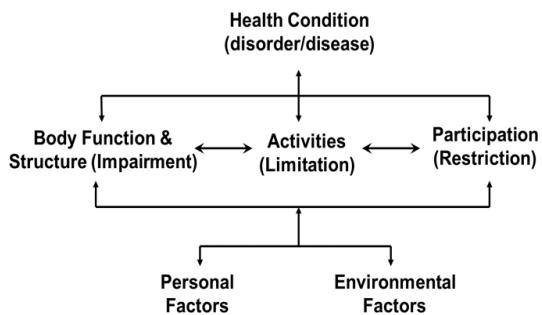
Disability is both a multidimensional concept and experience. Disability can affect anyone at any time – from birth through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.

Worldwide, many people with disabilities do not have equal access to education, employment, and health care. In addition, those with disability may experience barriers to participating in civic and social life activities.

Defining Disability

No single definition of disability exists. Definitions vary depending on the purpose for measurement. Moreover, the nature and severity of disabilities can vary greatly depending on cultural contexts¹. Yet, data on the size and characteristics of the population with disability, which also allow for cross-cultural comparisons, require standardization in both the conceptualization and the measurement of disability.

The ICF Model of Disability



The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), developed by the World Health Organization², provides the necessary and consistent definition of disability. According to the ICF model, disability arises from the interaction between an individual and

that individual's contextual (personal and environmental) circumstances. Thus, the degree to which participation in life activities is restricted depends on the interaction between the individual's functioning (ability to perform basic functional activities) and the environment.

The Washington Group

The Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG), a city group established under the United Nations Statistical Commission, was formed to address the need for population-based measures of disability by promoting and coordinating international co-operation in the area of health statistics, focusing on disability data collection tools suitable for censuses and national surveys.

The WG has developed, tested and adopted the Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS) to collect such data. The questions use the ICF as a conceptual framework. The WG-SS is comprised of 6 questions measuring difficulty functioning in basic actions, with response categories that capture the full spectrum of difficulty functioning, from mild to severe. Disability is defined as having “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one WG-SS question.

The WG Short Set on Functioning

1. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?
2. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?
3. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
4. Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?
5. Do you have difficulty with self-care, such as washing all over or dressing?
6. Using your usual language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?

Response categories: No difficulty / Some difficulty / A lot of difficulty / Cannot do at all

Central African Republic Data on Disability and Methods

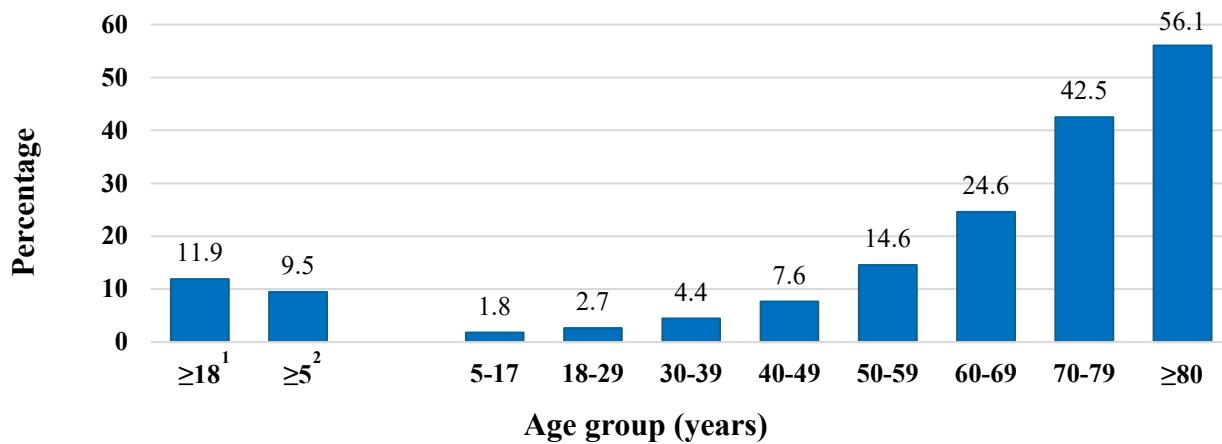
The data used to produce this report comes from the Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions (EHCVM) carried out in the Central African Republic in 2021, with the support of the World Bank. Its main objective is to lay the foundations for a permanent system for monitoring and evaluating household living conditions in general and the poverty reduction programme in particular.³

The survey involved a sample of 5,941 Central African households, drawn from a two-stage stratified sample. The sample was drawn in such a way that, within each specific region, there was proportional distribution between the prefectures and between urban and rural areas. Data collection was carried out in two waves each lasting 65 days, for more information please visit: <https://www.icasess.org>. Some of the estimates reported here are age-adjusted using the 2020 world population⁴ to facilitate cross-country comparisons.

Prevalence of Disability

- The age-adjusted prevalence of disability in the population aged 18 and over is 11.9%, while in the population aged 5 and under it is 9.5%.
- The prevalence of disability is 1.8% among 5–17-year-olds.
- In the population 18 years and over, the prevalence of disability increases with age, from 2.7% among 18–29-year-olds to 56.1% among those aged 80 and over, a difference of 53.4 percentage points

Figure 1. Prevalence of disability: age-adjusted and age-specific percentage of the population 18 years and over and by age group, CAR, 2021



¹Total for 18 years and over is age-adjusted using the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](https://www.un.org)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

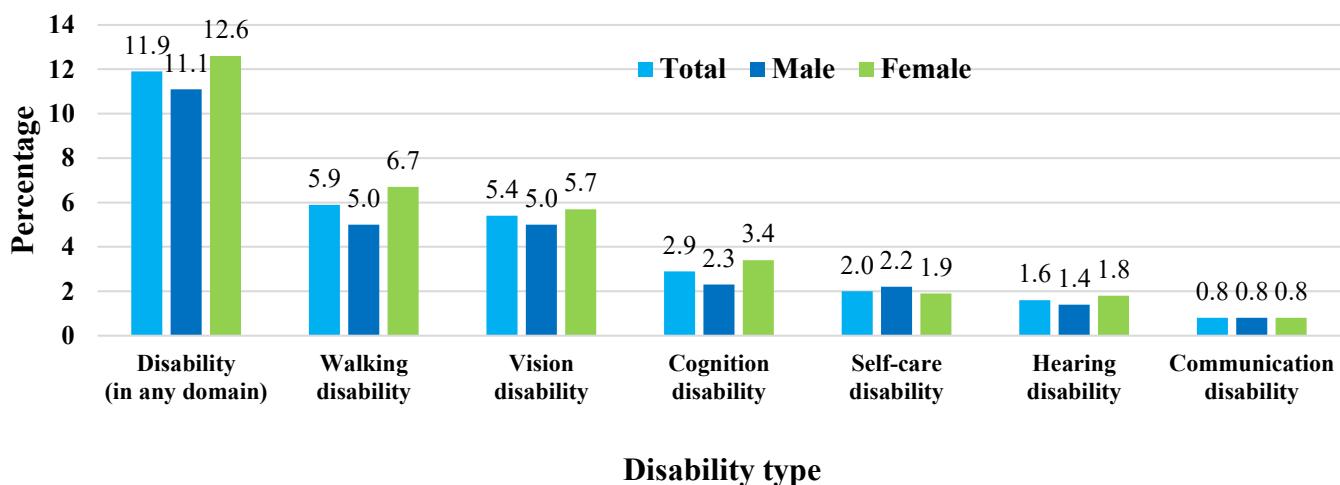
²Total for 5 years and over is age-adjusted using the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](https://www.un.org)) using the following age groups: 5–17, 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities.

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVCM, 2021.

- The age-adjusted prevalence of disability (in any domain) is higher among females aged 18 or over (12.6%) than among males in the same age group (11.1%)
- More females than males have vision difficulty, walking difficulty or cognition difficulty (5.7% versus 5.0%; 6.7% versus 5.0%; 3.4% versus 2.3%, respectively).
- There is little to no difference between females and males for the following types of disability: hearing, communication, and self-care.

Figure 2. Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, by sex, CAR, 2021



Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as having disability (in any domain). Disability in each domain is defined by a response of “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” in that domain.

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVCM, 2021.

Outcomes Disaggregated by Disability

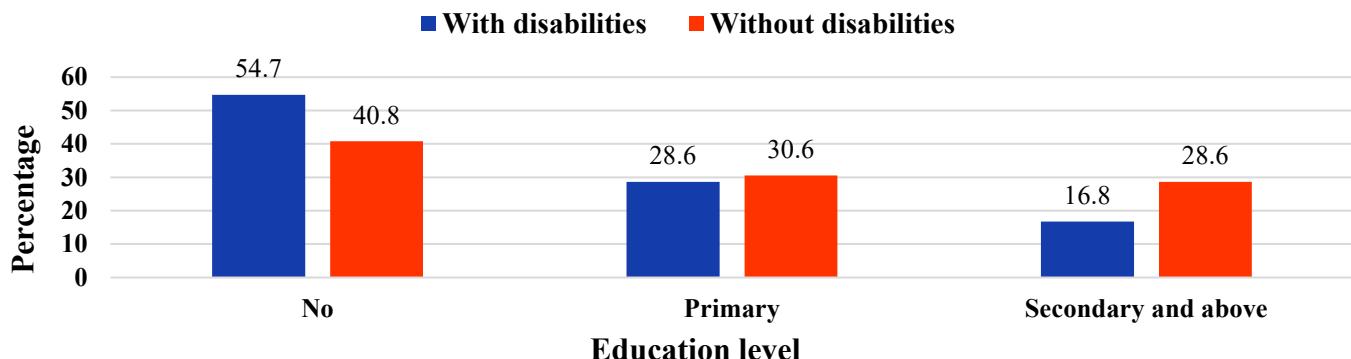
Disaggregating data by disability status allows us to draw comparison between outcomes for people with and without any disabilities, and is a necessary first step in tackling disparities. Outcome indicators, such as educational attainment, one of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals⁵ or specific programmatic targets, can be tracked over time to determine whether gaps exist between people living with and without disabilities and whether these gaps are increasing or decreasing over time. In this section, data on educational attainment and employment status in the last seven (07) days are disaggregated by disability status.

Educational Attainment

- Just over 5 out of 10 adults (54.7%) aged 18 or over with disabilities have no formal education, compared to 40.8% of adults without disabilities.

- Among adults without disabilities, 28.6% have secondary education or higher, whereas among adults with disabilities this proportion is only 16.8%.

Figure 3. Education level by disability status: percentage of the population 18 years and over, CAR, 2021



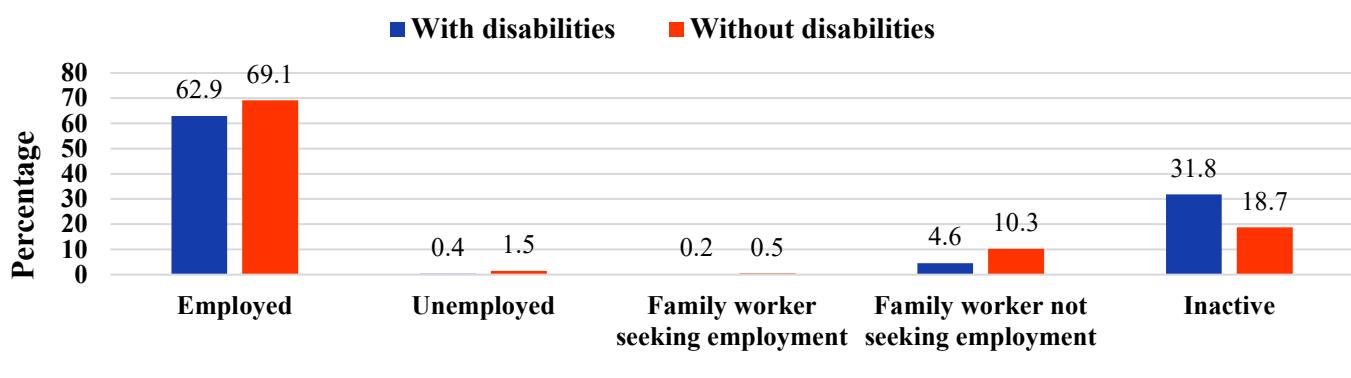
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities.

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVCM, 2021.

Employment Situation

- Among people without disabilities (69.1%) were employed during the last 7 days, compared with 62.9% of people with disabilities.
- Among people with disabilities, 31.8% were inactive, compared with only 18.7% of people without disabilities.

Figure 4. Employment situation in the last 7 days by disability status: percentage of the population 18 years and over, CAR, 2021



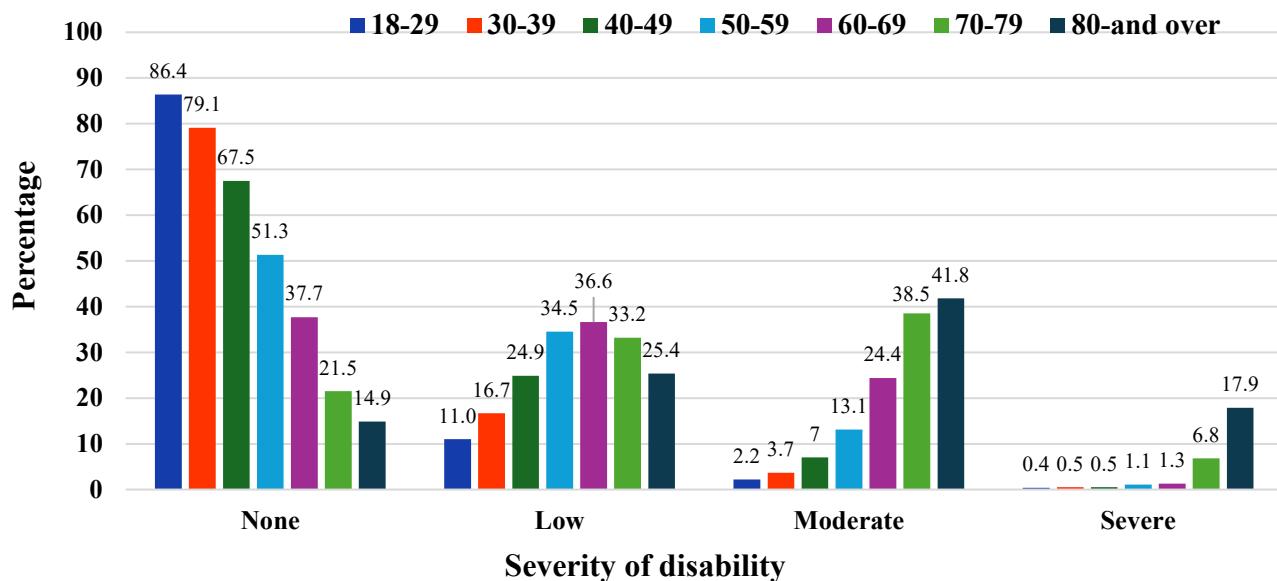
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities.

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVCM, 2021.

Severity of Disability

- Older adults (aged 70-79 and 80 or over) were more likely to have severe disabilities. In fact, 17.9% of people aged 80 or over and 6.8% of people aged 70-79 reported more severe difficulties.
- The percentage of people aged 70-79 and 80 and over with moderate difficulties was 38.5% and 41.8%, respectively.

Figure 5. Severity of disability, by age: percentage of the population 18 and over, CAR, 2021



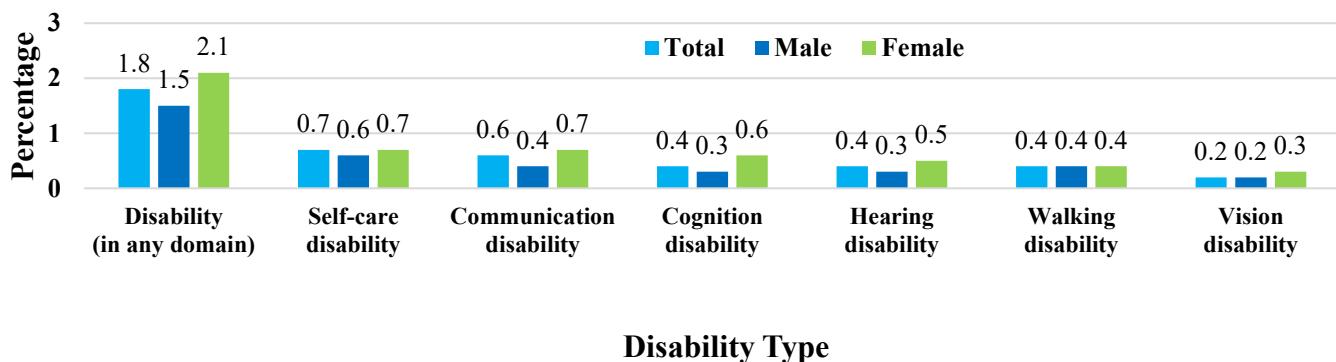
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. The disability severity indicator expands the two disability indicator categories ("with disabilities" and "without disabilities") into four categories based on the highest level of difficulty reported in all six domains. The measure better reflects the full range of functioning in the population. A continuous disability severity score (SS-Sco) is calculated by assigning values to the responses to each of the six domain questions, then summing the values across the domains. The values assigned to the responses to each domain are: No difficulty = 0; Some difficulty = 1; A lot of difficulty = 6 and Cannot do at all = 36. After summing across all domains, thresholds are set at different levels of the disability spectrum to create severity categories. The resulting disability severity indicator is based on the following categories: SS-Sco = 0 corresponds to "No difficulties"; SS-Sco = 1 - 4 corresponds to "Mild difficulties"; SS-Sco = 5 - 23 corresponds to "Moderate difficulties" and SS-Sco = 24 - 216 corresponds to "More severe difficulties".

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVMC, 2021.

Prevalence of Disability in the 5-17 Age Group

- The percentage of children aged 5-17 with disability (in any domain) was 1.8%, and female children (2.1%) were more likely to have disabilities than male children (1.5%).
- The most common types of disability were self-care difficulty, communication difficulty, and cognition difficulty.
- Female children are more likely than male children to have difficulties hearing (0.5%, compared to 0.3% among males), communicating (0.7%, compared to 0.4% among males) and in cognition (0.6%, compared to 0.3% among males).

Figure 6. Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain: percentage of the population 5-17 years, by sex, CAR, 2021



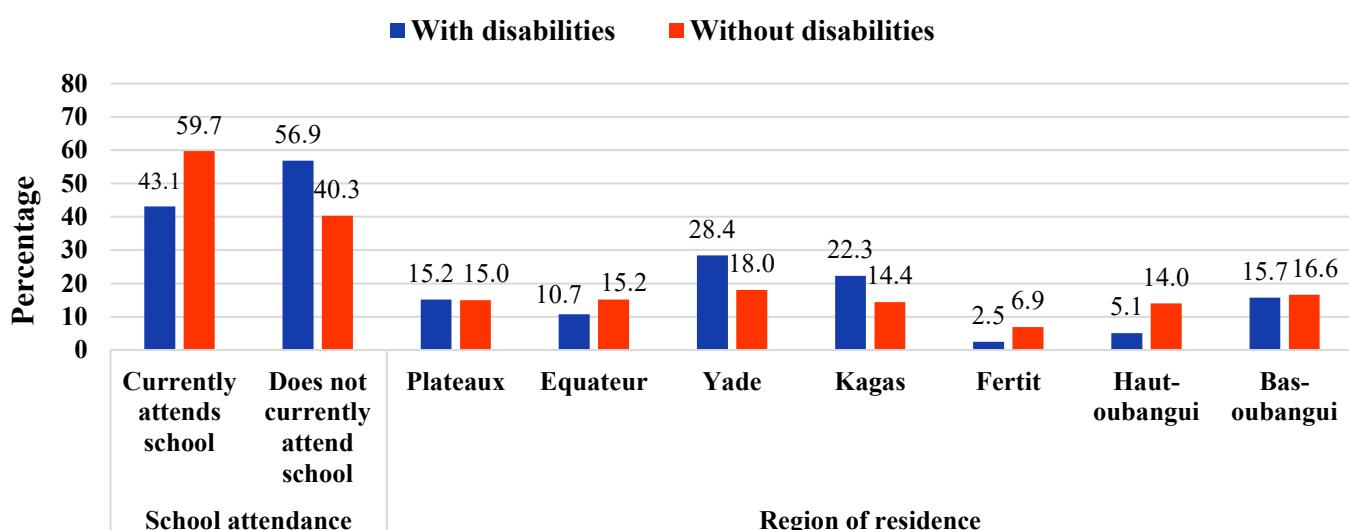
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities.

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVCM, 2021.

School Attendance and Region of Residence

- There appear to be high barriers to access to school for children with disabilities.
- Almost 6 out of 10 children aged 5-17 without disabilities (59.7%) attended school, compared with around 4 out of 10 children aged 5-17 with disabilities (43.1%).
- Children with disabilities were most likely to reside in the regions of Yadé (28.4%) and Kagas (22.3%).

Figure 7. School attendance and region of residence by disability status: percentage of the population 5-17 years, CAR, 2021



Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities.

Data source: Central African Institute of Economic Statistics and Social Studies (ICASESS), EHVCM, 2021.

References

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Appendix 1: Processing and analysis team

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Appendix 2: Analysis tables

Table DS.1: Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain by socio-demographic characteristics. CAR. 2021

Socio-demographic characteristics	Percentage of the population aged 18 or over with disabilities in each domain ¹						Percentage of individuals with disability (in any domain) ²	Population size		
	Seeing	Hearing	Walking	Communication	Cognition	Self-care				
Age-adjusted prevalences based on the 2020 world population										
Sex										
Male	5.04	1.41	5.05	0.75	2.31	2.18	11.10			
Female	5.69	1.75	6.70	0.80	3.43	1.85	12.65			
Total	5.38	1.60	5.91	0.77	2.89	1.98	11.94			
Unadjusted prevalences										
Sex										
Male	2.48	0.95	3.00	0.61	1.56	1.25	7.27	6,755		
Female	2.58	1.05	3.16	0.50	1.93	1.18	6.92	7,554		
Region of residence										
Plateaux	3.45	1.14	3.36	0.86	1.82	1.14	7.36	2,202		
Equateur	3.13	1.23	2.92	0.67	2.00	0.77	7.48	1,970		
Yade	2.54	1.09	3.30	0.32	2.26	2.63	8.78	2,492		
Kagas	3.15	1.60	4.12	0.86	2.35	2.35	9.90	2,033		
Fertit	1.20	0.48	2.05	0.24	1.08	0.36	3.85	970		
Haut-oubangui	1.46	0.67	2.99	0.49	1.34	0.49	5.49	1,810		
Bas-oubangui	2.03	0.64	2.52	0.36	1.21	0.43	5.40	2,832		
Urbanicity										
Urban	2.33	0.79	3.22	0.46	1.68	0.77	6.43	6,573		
Rural	2.68	1.16	2.98	0.62	1.81	1.55	7.59	7,736		
Age										
18-29 years	0.45	0.59	0.78	0.43	0.85	0.67	2.66	6,157		
30-39 years	1.06	0.48	1.75	0.42	1.12	0.75	4.43	3,564		
40-49 years	2.31	1.11	2.69	0.72	1.49	1.15	7.64	2,221		
50-59 years	4.86	1.40	6.84	0.33	4.20	2.06	14.58	1,317		
60-69 years	10.73	2.87	11.93	0.76	4.53	2.42	24.62	713		
70-79 years	27.17	5.51	24.41	2.36	8.27	8.27	42.52	265		
80 years and over	40.91	10.61	39.39	6.06	19.70	13.64	56.06	67		
Level of education										
None	3.38	1.70	4.22	1.00	2.39	1.73	9.27	6,123		
Primary	2.55	0.66	2.65	0.20	1.49	1.10	6.64	4,341		
Secondary and above	1.24	0.32	1.86	0.27	1.08	0.54	4.28	3,845		
Employment over the last 7 days										
Employed	2.27	0.80	2.28	0.39	1.53	0.80	6.49	9,809		
Unemployed	0.53	0.00	1.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.14	196		
Family worker seeking employment	0.00	1.64	3.28	1.64	1.64	0.00	3.28	70		
Family worker not seeking employment	0.76	0.83	0.83	0.23	0.53	0.76	3.32	1411		
Inactive	4.53	1.83	7.12	1.29	3.27	2.97	11.50	2,823		

Has a bank or other account								
No	2.52	1.02	3.08	0.57	1.78	1.24	7.13	13,839
Yes	2.78	0.43	3.21	0.00	1.07	0.43	6.00	470
Occupational categories of main employment								
Senior executive	1.54	0.00	4.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.62	67
Middle management/supervisory staff	3.14	0.00	1.05	0.00	0.52	0.00	4.19	196
Skilled worker or employee	1.51	0.00	2.71	0.30	2.11	1.51	6.93	363
Unskilled worker or employee	2.75	0.72	2.32	0.87	1.16	2.89	9.41	748
Labourer or assistant labourer	1.91	1.27	1.91	0.64	1.91	1.27	7.01	193
Paid intern or apprentice	0.00	0.00	1.01	0.00	1.01	0.00	2.02	105
Unpaid intern or apprentice	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.65	0.00	4.65	48
Family worker	0.72	0.87	0.94	0.29	0.58	0.72	3.32	1,458
Self-employed	2.40	0.90	2.32	0.38	1.52	0.66	6.39	7,875
Employer	1.14	0.28	2.56	0.00	2.27	0.28	5.68	357
Total	2.53	1.00	3.08	0.55	1.75	1.21	7.09	14,309

¹ Having a response of "A lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all" in the domain.

² Having at least one question marked as "A lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all".

Table DS.2: Percentage distribution of socio-demographic characteristics by disability status and severity of disability by socio-demographic characteristics: population aged 18 and over. CAR. 2021

Socio-demographic characteristics	Percentage distribution by disability status ¹		Severity of disability				Population size
	Without disability	With disability	None	Low	Moderate	Severe	
Sex							
Male	47.3	48.6	74.1	18.8	6.3	0.8	100.0 6755
Female	52.7	51.4	74.7	18.3	6.3	0.7	100.0 7554
Region of residence							
Plateaux	16.4	17.1	73.0	18.6	7.3	1.1	100.0 2202
Equateur	14.5	15.4	68.6	23.7	7.0	0.8	100.0 1970
Yade	16.2	20.4	70.6	21.4	7.1	0.9	100.0 2492
Kagas	12.7	18.2	75.6	15.7	7.8	0.9	100.0 2033
Fertit	6.4	3.4	85.2	11.4	2.8	0.6	100.0 970
Haut-oubangui	12.4	9.5	77.8	16.9	4.9	0.4	100.0 1810
Bas-oubangui	21.4	16.0	76.3	17.8	5.3	0.6	100.0 2832
Urbanicity							
Urban	43.8	39.5	77.5	16.4	5.3	0.7	100.0 6573
Rural	56.2	60.5	71.8	20.3	7.1	0.8	100.0 7736
Age							
18-29 years	45.3	16.3	86.4	11.0	2.2	0.4	100.0 6157
30-39 years	25.5	15.6	79.1	16.7	3.7	0.5	100.0 3564
40-49 years	15.4	16.8	67.5	24.9	7.0	0.5	100.0 2221
50-59 years	8.3	18.7	51.3	34.5	13.1	1.1	100.0 1317
60-69 years	4.0	17.2	37.7	36.6	24.4	1.3	100.0 713
70-79 years	1.2	11.4	21.5	33.2	38.5	6.8	100.0 265
80 years and over	0.2	3.9	14.9	25.4	41.8	17.9	100.0 67
Level of education							
None	40.8	54.7	72.6	18.4	7.7	1.3	100.0 6123
Primary	30.6	28.6	72.7	20.7	6.2	0.4	100.0 4341
Secondary and above	28.6	16.8	79.3	16.2	4.2	0.3	100.0 3845
Employment status over the last 7 days							
Employed	69.1	62.9	72.3	21.3	6.0	0.4	100.0 9809
Unemployed	1.5	0.4	84.7	12.8	2.6	0.0	100.0 196
Family worker seeking employment	0.5	0.2	84.3	11.4	2.9	1.4	100.0 70
Family worker not seeking employment	10.3	4.6	86.5	10.0	3.2	0.3	100.0 1411
Inactive	18.7	31.8	74.8	13.6	9.1	2.4	100.0 2823
Has a bank or other account							
No	96.5	97.0	74.6	18.3	6.3	0.8	100.0 13839
Yes	3.5	3.0	69.6	24.3	5.7	0.4	100.0 470
Occupational categories of main employment							
Senior executive	0.6	0.5	65.7	29.9	4.5	0.0	100.0 67

Middle management/supervisory staff	1.8	1.2	73.0	22.4	4.6	0.0	100.0	196
Skilled worker or employee	3.1	3.5	72.7	20.7	6.3	0.3	100.0	363
Unskilled worker or employee	6.2	10.0	71.1	20.2	8.4	0.3	100.0	748
Labourer or assistant labourer	1.5	1.7	81.3	13.0	4.7	1.0	100.0	193
Paid intern or apprentice	1.0	0.3	80.0	18.1	1.9	0.0	100.0	105
Unpaid intern or apprentice	0.4	0.3	81.3	14.6	2.1	2.1	100.0	48
Family worker	13.4	7.1	86.1	10.3	3.2	0.3	100.0	1458
Self-employed	68.7	72.4	72.2	21.5	5.9	0.4	100.0	7875
Employer	3.3	3.1	70.6	23.2	6.2	0.0	100.0	357
Total	100.0	100.0	74.4	18.5	6.3	0.8	100.0	14309

¹ Having at least one question marked as "A lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all".

Table DS.3: Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain by socio-demographic characteristics and percentage distribution of socio-demographic characteristics by disability status: population aged 5-17. CAR. 2021.

Socio-demographic characteristics	Percentage of the population aged 5 – 17 with disabilities ¹ in each domain						Percentage of individuals with disability (in any domain) ²	Percentage distribution by disability status		Population size
	Seeing	Hearing	Walking	Communication	Cognition	Self-care		Without disability	With disability	
Age-adjusted prevalences based on the 2020 world population										
Total	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.7	1.0			
Unadjusted prevalences										
Sex										
Male	0.16	0.33	0.40	0.44	0.29	0.64	1.51	50.4	42.1	5992
Female	0.29	0.50	0.40	0.70	0.55	0.70	2.10	49.6	57.9	5919
Region of residence										
Plateaux	0.18	0.49	0.61	0.79	0.37	0.31	1.83	15.0	15.2	1639
Equateur	0.12	0.36	0.42	0.30	0.18	0.42	1.27	15.2	10.7	1674
Yade	0.35	0.45	0.30	0.96	0.55	1.41	2.82	18.0	28.4	2288
Kagas	0.44	0.63	0.38	0.69	0.63	1.19	2.76	14.4	22.3	1884
Fertit	0.13	0.13	0.27	0.00	0.27	0.40	0.67	6.9	2.5	914
Haut-oubangui	0.00	0.26	0.13	0.26	0.33	0.13	0.66	14.0	5.1	1671
Bas-oubangui	0.28	0.39	0.61	0.55	0.50	0.50	1.71	16.6	15.7	1841
Urbanicity										
Urban	0.24	0.53	0.53	0.67	0.44	0.44	1.69	41.2	38.6	5296
Rural	0.22	0.33	0.31	0.50	0.40	0.82	1.88	58.8	61.4	6615
Age										
5-9 years	0.19	0.19	0.28	0.63	0.39	0.71	1.73	49.3	47.2	5922
10-14 years	0.28	0.28	0.46	0.44	0.36	0.51	1.80	35.6	35.5	4208
15-17 years	0.24	0.24	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.90	2.04	15.2	17.3	1781
School enrollment status										
Currently attends school	0.15	0.32	0.18	0.34	0.17	0.35	1.31	59.7	43.1	7040
Does not currently attend school	0.34	0.54	0.72	0.90	0.79	1.13	2.52	40.3	56.9	4871
Total	0.23	0.41	0.40	0.57	0.42	0.67	1.80	100.0	100.0	11911

¹Having a response of "A lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all" in the domain.

²Having at least one question marked as "A lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all".