Disability in Niger

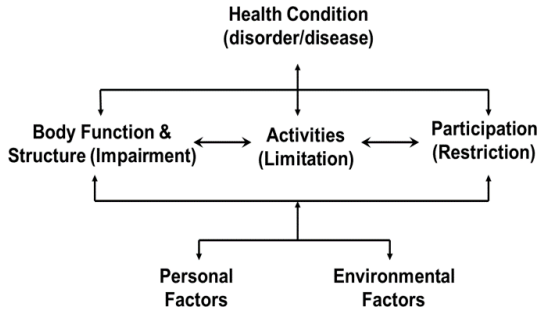
The Importance of Disability

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 contexts[1]. 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 Organization[2], 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

Niger Data on Disability and Methods

The data used in this analysis report is primarily taken from the third Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions (EHCVM) carried out by Niger's National Statistics Institute (INS). The data from the short set questionnaire of the Washington Group combined with the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are used in the production of the tables.

In order to meet harmonisation requirements, the National Statistical Institutes of the WAEMU Member States have opted for a one-stop survey organised in two waves. With this in mind, Niger organised the collection operations for the first wave from 17 November 2021 to 13 February 2022 and those for the second wave from 3 June 2022 to 31 August 2022.

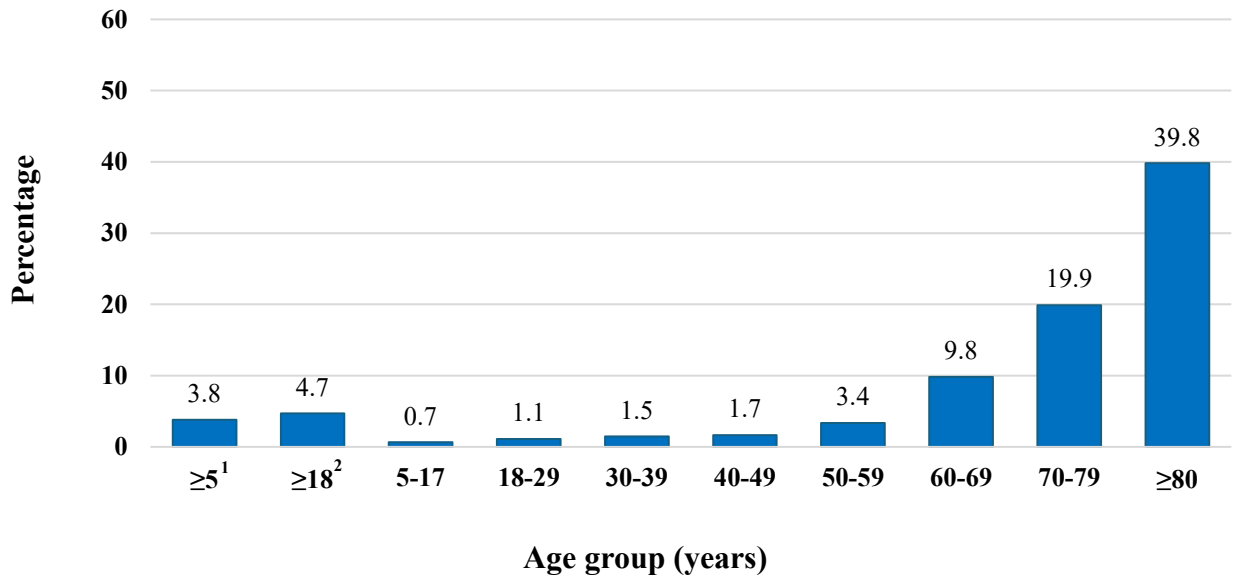
During these waves, a sample size of around 6,960 households spread over 580 Primary Units (PUs) in all eight regions of the country was selected. In the first stage, 580 Enumeration Zones (ZD=UP) were selected in proportion to their size (in terms of number of households), and in the second stage, 12 households were drawn at random from each sample ZD. The eight (8) administrative regions constitute explicit strata. For more information about the Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, please refer to the 2021 General Report.

The point estimates and corresponding variances for this analysis have been calculated to account for this sampling design. All estimates are based on self-reporting and comply with data presentation standards. Some of the estimates reported here are age-adjusted using the 2020 world population[3] to facilitate cross-country comparisons.

Prevalence of Disability

- The age-adjusted prevalence of disability in the population aged 18 and over is 4.7%.
- The prevalence of disability increases with age, from 1.1% among 18–29 years to 39.8% among those aged 80 and over, a difference of 38.6 percentage points.

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



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

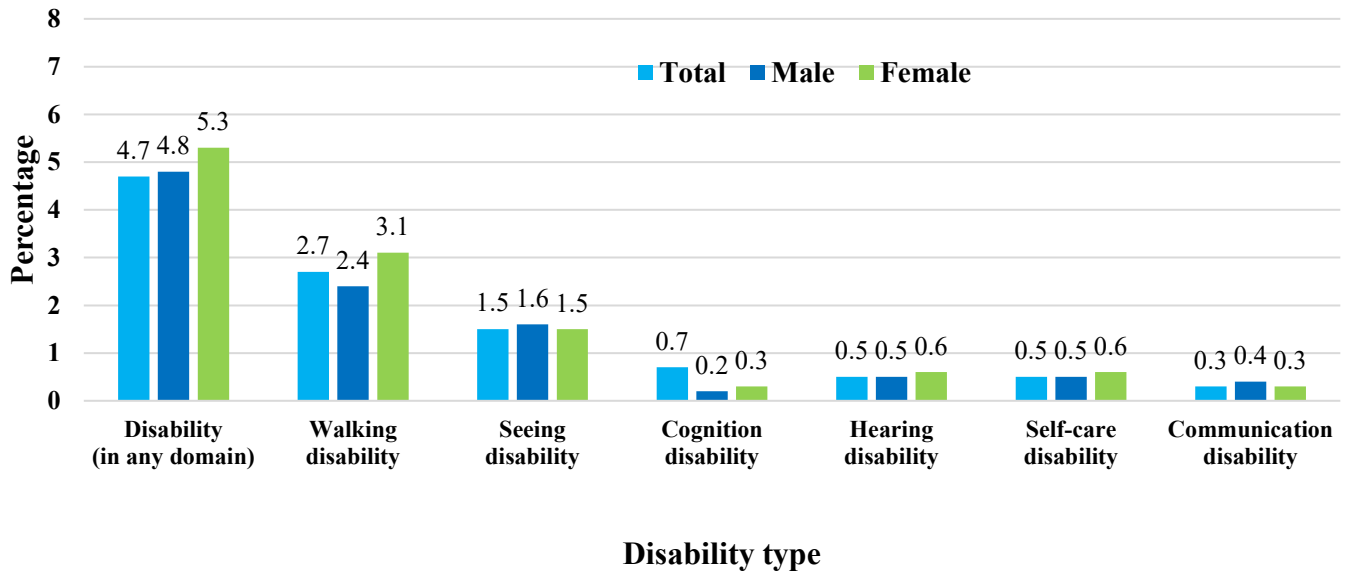
[2]Total for ≥18 is age-adjusted using the 2020 world population (available at: World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and ≥80 years.

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 with disabilities.

Data source: National Statistics Institute in Niger, Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, 2021.

- The age-adjusted prevalence of disability is higher among females aged 18 and over (5.3%) than among males in the same age group (4.8%).
- More females than males have hearing disabilities and walking disabilities (0.6% versus 0.5%; 3.1% versus 2.4%, respectively).
- There are smaller differences between females and males in other domains of functioning, including communication, cognition, 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, Niger, 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: National Statistics Institute in Niger, Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, 2021.

Outcomes Disaggregated by Disability

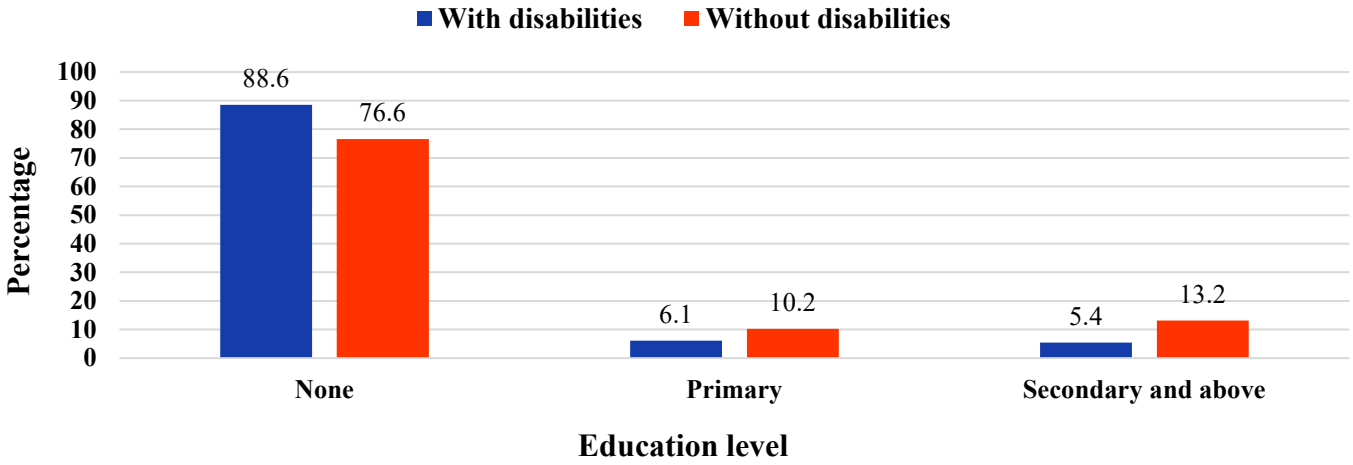
Disaggregating data by disability status allows for the comparison of outcomes for people with and without disabilities and is a necessary first step towards addressing disparities. Outcome indicators, such as educational attainment and employment, any of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals[4], or specific programmatic objectives, can be monitored over time to determine if gaps exist between those with and without disabilities and whether those gaps are increasing or decreasing across time. In this section, data on educational success are disaggregated by disability status.

Educational Attainment

- Adults with disabilities are more likely to have no formal education, compared to adults without disabilities. More than 8 out of 10 adults (88.6%) aged 18 or over living with disabilities have no formal education. This situation may be due in part to the fact that disability can limit access to education.

- Among adults without disabilities, 13.2% have secondary education or higher, whereas among adults with disabilities this proportion is only 5.4%.

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

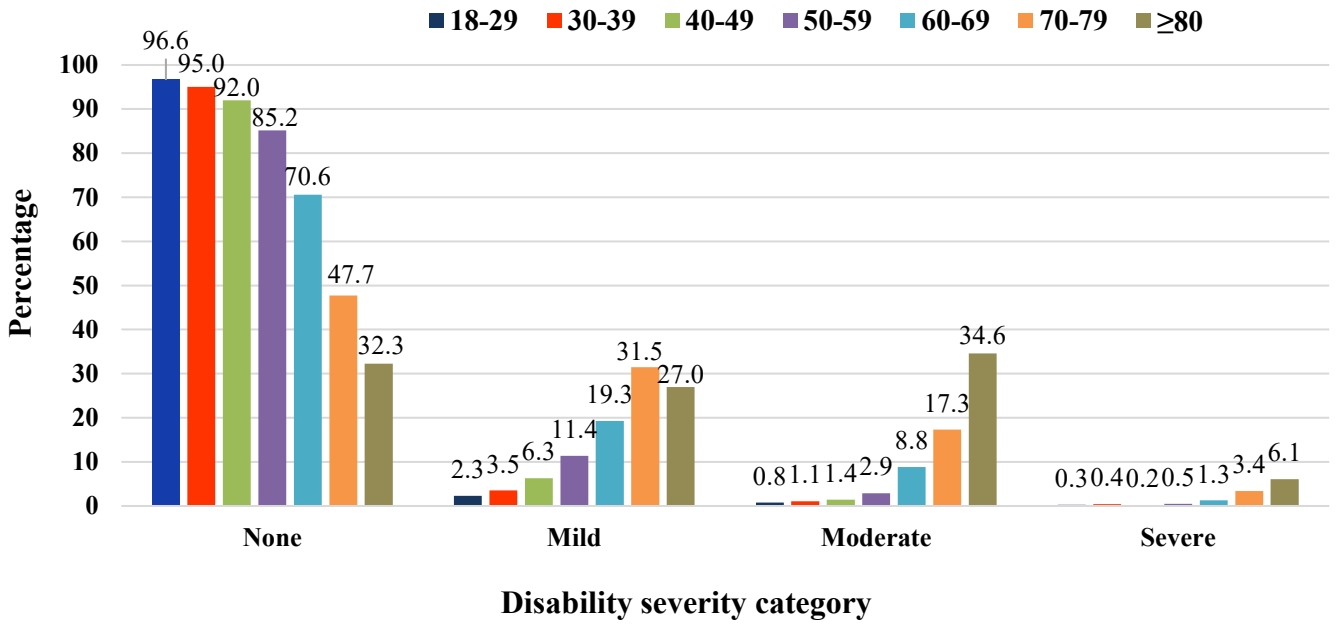
Data source: National Statistics Institute in Niger, Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, 2021.

Severity of Disability

- According to the literature, disability increases with age. Older people (aged 60 or over) are also more likely to have severe disabilities. In fact, 6.1% of people aged 80 and over, 3.4% of people aged 70-79, and 1.3% of people aged 60-69 have more severe difficulties, compared to less than 1% of adults aged 18-59.

- The percentage of adults aged 60-69, 70-79, and 80 and over experiencing moderate difficulties was 8.8%, 17.3% and 34.6%, respectively, compared to less than 5% of adults aged 18-59.

Figure 4. Severity of disability, by age: percentage of the population 18 years and over, Niger 2021



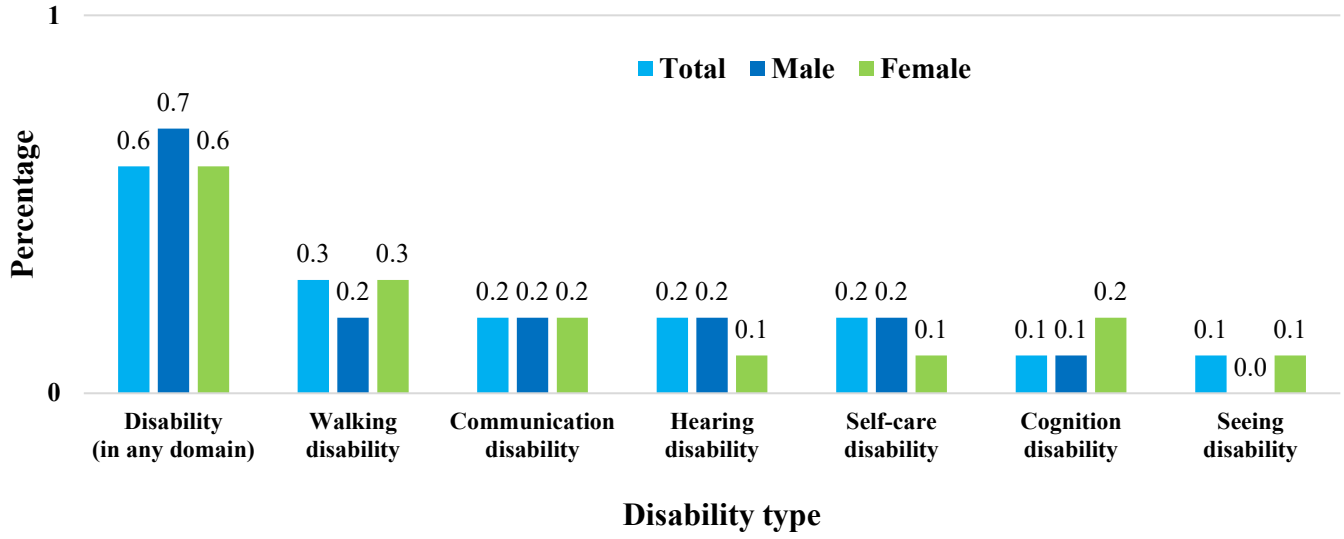
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. The disability severity indicator expands the two disability indicator 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: National Statistics Institute in Niger, Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, 2021.

Prevalence of Disability in the 5-17 Age Group

- Disability rates increase with age and are lowest among children. Less than one per cent of the population aged 5-17 has disabilities, and male children (0.7%) are just as likely to have disabilities as female children (0.6%).
- Difficulty walking is the most commonly reported disability in this age group.
- Male children are just as likely as female children to have communication disabilities (0.2%), while female children are more likely to have disabilities in the domains of walking (0.3%) and cognition (0.3%).

Figure 5. Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain: age-adjusted percentage of the population 5-17 years, by sex, Niger, 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: 5-9, 10-14, 15-17 years.

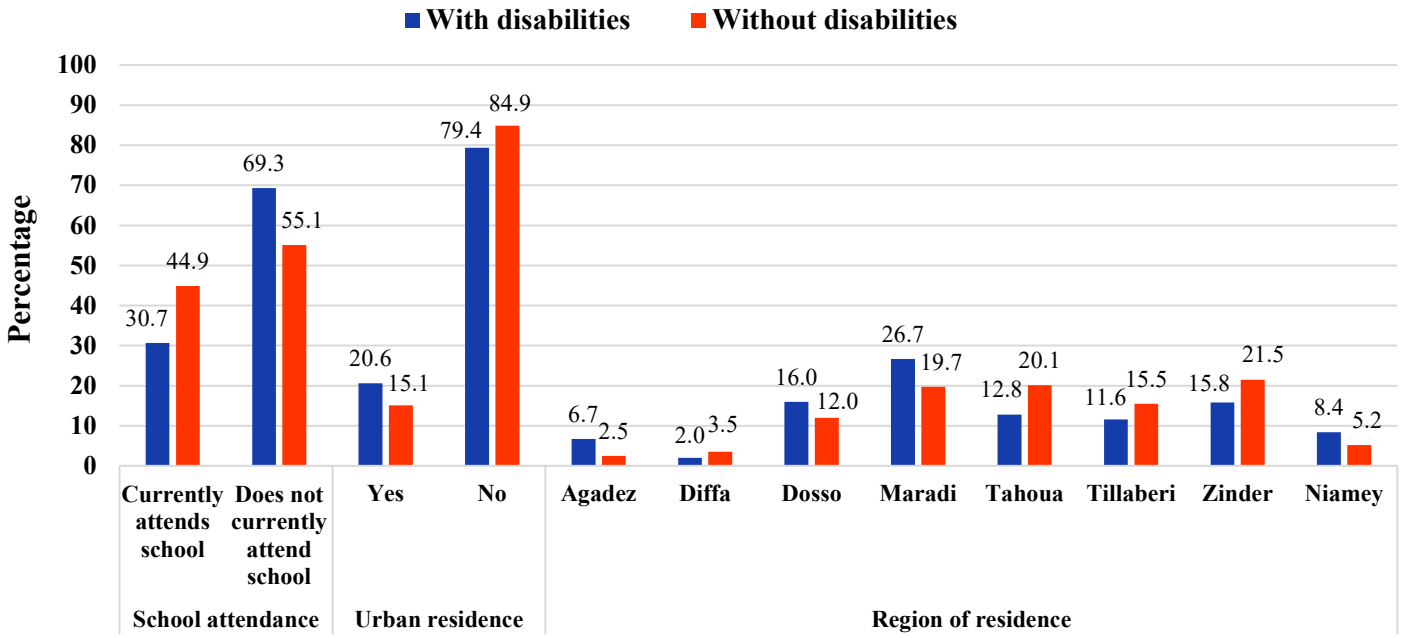
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated "a lot of difficulty" or "cannot do at all" 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: National Statistics Institute in Niger, Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, 2021.

Outcomes Disaggregated by Disability in the 5-17 Age Group

- Children with disabilities may face significant barriers to accessing school.
- Just over 2 in 5 children aged 5-17 (44.9%) without disabilities attended school, compared with 30.7% of children living with disabilities.
- Among children living with disabilities, 26.7% are from the Maradi region, 15.8% are from the Zinder region and 11.6% are from the Tillaberi region.

Figure 6. School attendance, urban residence, and region of residence by disability status: percentage of the population aged 5-17 years, Niger, 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: National Statistics Institute in Niger, Harmonised Survey of Household Living Conditions, 2021.

References

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Appendix 1: Processing and analysis team

No.	First and last names	Institution
01	Youssoufa OUSSEINI LAMOU	INS
02	Djabar Dine ADECHIAN	AFRISTAT
03	Steve Bertrand MBOKO IBARA	IFORD/Brazzaville Group

Appendix 2: Analysis tables.

Table DS.1: Unadjusted prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain by socio-demographic characteristics: population aged 18 and over, Niger, 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]
	Seeing	Hearing	Walking	Communication	Cognition	Self-care	
Sex							
Male	1.27	0.49	1.89	0.36	0.64	0.42	3.88
Female	0.80	0.44	1.73	0.24	0.37	0.36	3.00
Region							
Agadez	3.02	0.45	3.84	0.10	0.82	1.51	6.61
Diffa	1.00	0.07	2.04	0.36	0.62	0.49	3.23
Dosso	0.81	0.35	1.49	0.30	0.86	0.48	3.26
Maradi	0.73	0.30	1.40	0.36	0.40	0.29	2.45
Tahoua	1.00	0.50	2.28	0.35	0.32	0.39	3.95
Tillaberi	0.95	0.43	1.88	0.32	0.76	0.40	3.43
Zinder	1.12	0.88	1.41	0.13	0.24	0.14	3.31
Niamey	0.98	0.13	1.96	0.34	0.34	0.53	3.32
Urbanicity							
Urban	1.01	0.16	2.02	0.28	0.45	0.46	3.47
Rural	1.00	0.53	1.75	0.29	0.49	0.37	3.36
Age							
18-29 years	0.15	0.36	0.31	0.25	0.30	0.19	1.12
30-39 years	0.24	0.30	0.58	0.35	0.40	0.14	1.46
40-49 years	0.48	0.43	0.76	0.13	0.10	0.13	1.65
50-59 years	0.66	0.42	1.98	0.14	0.24	0.43	3.35
60-69 years	3.46	0.82	4.39	0.49	1.41	1.17	9.84
70-79 years	6.78	1.26	14.08	0.59	1.20	1.78	19.89
80 years and above	17.58	2.39	27.36	1.14	7.61	4.01	39.81
Level of education							
None	1.19	0.58	2.07	0.34	0.52	0.46	3.89
Primary	0.43	0.02	1.15	0.22	0.48	0.18	2.04
Secondary and above	0.33	0.15	0.70	0.05	0.28	0.10	1.40
Employment status							
Employed	0.78	0.43	1.44	0.13	0.23	0.13	2.73
Unemployed	0.71	0.00	1.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.48
Family worker seeking employment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Family worker not seeking employment	0.28	0.30	0.16	0.09	0.23	0.14	1.08
Inactive	2.53	0.77	4.73	1.07	1.64	1.53	8.09
Has a bank or other account							
No	1.01	0.46	1.80	0.30	0.48	0.39	3.39
Yes	0.65	0.44	1.57	0.00	0.49	0.22	3.21
Occupational categories of main employment							

0	2.81	0.86	5.17	1.19	1.85	1.52	8.81
Senior executive	0.28	0.00	0.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.63
Middle management/supervisory staff	0.52	0.00	1.06	0.04	0.86	0.33	2.36
Skilled worker or employee	1.33	0.00	0.27	0.46	0.00	0.46	2.06
Unskilled worker or employee	0.44	0.77	0.40	0.27	0.00	0.00	1.61
Labourer or assistant labourer	0.06	0.05	0.56	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.67
Paid intern or apprentice	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unpaid intern or apprentice	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Family worker	0.28	0.30	0.16	0.09	0.23	0.15	1.10
Self-employed worker	0.66	0.42	1.50	0.11	0.24	0.19	2.70
Employer	2.11	0.40	2.10	0.12	0.13	0.00	4.31
Total	**1.00**	**0.46**	**1.80**	**0.29**	**0.48**	**0.38**	**0.38**

[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, Niger, 2021.

Socio-demographic characteristics	Percentage distribution by disability status[1]		Severity of disability					Population size
	Without disability	With disability	None	Low	Moderate	Severe	Total	
Sex								
Male	42.9	49.6	88.5	7.6	3.2	0.7	100.0	430,5174
Female	57.1	50.4	90.0	6.9	2.5	0.6	100.0	566,0855
Region of residence								
Agadez	2.9	5.9	80.0	13.0	6.2	0.8	100.0	302,972
Diffa	3.3	3.1	91.6	5.1	2.6	0.7	100.0	326,707
Dosso	12.3	11.8	90.0	6.6	2.9	0.4	100.0	1,224,292
Maradi	18.6	13.3	91.1	6.4	2.0	0.6	100.0	1,837,596
Tahoua	18.8	22.0	89.5	6.5	3.3	0.7	100.0	1,885,486
Tillaberi	16.9	17.2	88.4	8.1	3.0	0.5	100.0	1,689,087
Zinder	19.5	19.1	89.1	7.6	2.6	0.7	100.0	1,945,148
Niamey	7.6	7.4	89.5	7.2	2.7	0.6	100.0	754,742
Urbanicity								
Urban	19.0	19.5	89.0	7.4	2.8	0.7	100.0	1,895,467
Rural	81.0	80.5	89.4	7.1	2.9	0.6	100.0	8,070,562
Age group								
18-29 years	33.0	10.7	96.6	2.3	0.8	0.3	100.0	3,211,611
30-39 years	25.0	10.7	95.0	3.5	1.1	0.4	100.0	2,441,822
40-49 years	18.2	8.8	92.0	6.3	1.4	0.2	100.0	1,786,286
50-59 years	12.5	12.5	85.2	11.4	2.9	0.5	100.0	1,240,920
60-69 years	7.5	23.6	70.6	19.3	8.8	1.3	100.0	802,616
70-79 years	3.1	22.2	47.7	31.5	17.3	3.4	100.0	372,288
80 years and above	0.6	11.5	32.3	27.0	34.6	6.1	100.0	96,550
Don’t know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0
Level of education								
None	76.6	88.6	88.2	7.8	3.2	0.8	100.0	7,669,448
Primary	10.2	6.1	92.4	5.5	1.9	0.1	100.0	1,001,583
Secondary and above	13.2	5.4	94.1	4.5	1.3	0.1	100.0	1,294,998
Employment status								
Employed	62.4	49.9	89.5	7.8	2.5	0.3	100.0	6,170,709
Unemployed	0.9	0.7	94.1	3.4	2.5	0.0	100.0	91,587
Family worker seeking employment	0.3	0.0	99.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	25,575
Family worker not seeking employment	19.2	6.0	94.4	4.5	1.0	0.2	100.0	1,864,206
Inactive	17.3	43.4	83.5	8.2	5.9	2.3	100.0	1,813,951
Less than 5 years	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0
Has a bank or other account								
No	97.7	97.8	89.5	7.1	2.8	0.6	100.0	9,736,547
Yes	2.3	2.2	84.8	12.0	2.9	0.3	100.0	229,482
Occupational categories of main employment								
0	15.4	42.4	83.2	7.8	6.5	2.6	100.0	1,625,086
Senior executive	0.3	0.1	93.6	5.7	0.6	0.0	100.0	33,692

Middle management/supervisory staff	1.3	0.9	87.6	10.0	2.4	0.0	100.0	124,684
Skilled worker or employee	0.9	0.5	90.4	7.6	1.3	0.7	100.0	88,223
Unskilled worker or employee	4.0	1.9	94.6	3.8	1.2	0.4	100.0	393,505
Labourer or assistant labourer	1.1	0.2	93.0	6.4	0.6	0.1	100.0	106,477
Paid intern or apprentice	0.6	0.0	99.1	0.9	0.0	0.0	100.0	54,143
Unpaid intern or apprentice	0.3	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	31,518
Family worker	18.8	6.0	94.5	4.3	1.0	0.2	100.0	1,829,342
Self-employed	51.7	40.9	89.1	8.2	2.5	0.3	100.0	5,117,799
Employer	5.6	7.1	87.6	7.9	4.3	0.2	100.0	559,861
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**89.4**	**7.2**	**2.8**	**0.6**	**100.0**	**9,966,029**

[1]Having at least one question marked as “A lot of difficulty” or “Cannot do at all”.

Table DS.3: Unadjusted 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, Niger, 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[2]	
	Seeing	Hearing	Walking	Communication	Cognition	Self-care		Without disability	With disability
Sex									
Male	0.03	0.18	0.21	0.15	0.13	0.21	0.66	--	--
Female	0.11	0.15	0.32	0.17	0.16	0.13	0.64	--	--
Region									
Agadez	0.10	0.63	0.74	0.32	0.36	0.27	1.74	2.5	6.7
Diffa	0.00	0.06	0.16	0.14	0.04	0.03	0.38	3.5	2.0
Dosso	0.16	0.11	0.21	0.27	0.13	0.17	0.86	12.0	16.0
Maradi	0.08	0.26	0.38	0.19	0.21	0.11	0.88	19.7	26.7
Tahoua	0.04	0.07	0.17	0.00	0.07	0.08	0.41	20.1	12.8
Tillaberi	0.03	0.26	0.09	0.23	0.14	0.08	0.49	15.5	11.6
Zinder	0.07	0.08	0.28	0.07	0.11	0.33	0.48	21.5	15.8
Niamey	0.05	0.20	0.67	0.54	0.40	0.49	1.05	5.2	8.4
Urbanicity									
Urban	0.10	0.25	0.36	0.30	0.25	0.22	0.88	15.1	20.6
Rural	0.06	0.15	0.25	0.14	0.13	0.16	0.61	84.9	79.4
Age									
5-9 years	0.07	0.19	0.23	0.20	0.18	0.17	0.60	--	--
10-14 years	0.05	0.16	0.15	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.47	--	--
15-17 years	0.12	0.09	0.67	0.30	0.36	0.41	1.26	--	--
School enrollment status									
Currently attends school	0.11	0.16	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.45	44.9	30.7
Does not currently attend school	0.03	0.17	0.43	0.24	0.22	0.27	0.82	55.1	69.3
Total	**0.07**	**0.16**	**0.27**	**0.16**	**0.15**	**0.17**	**0.65**	**100.0**	**100.0**

[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".