

Third Meeting Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG)

Use of terms and definitions

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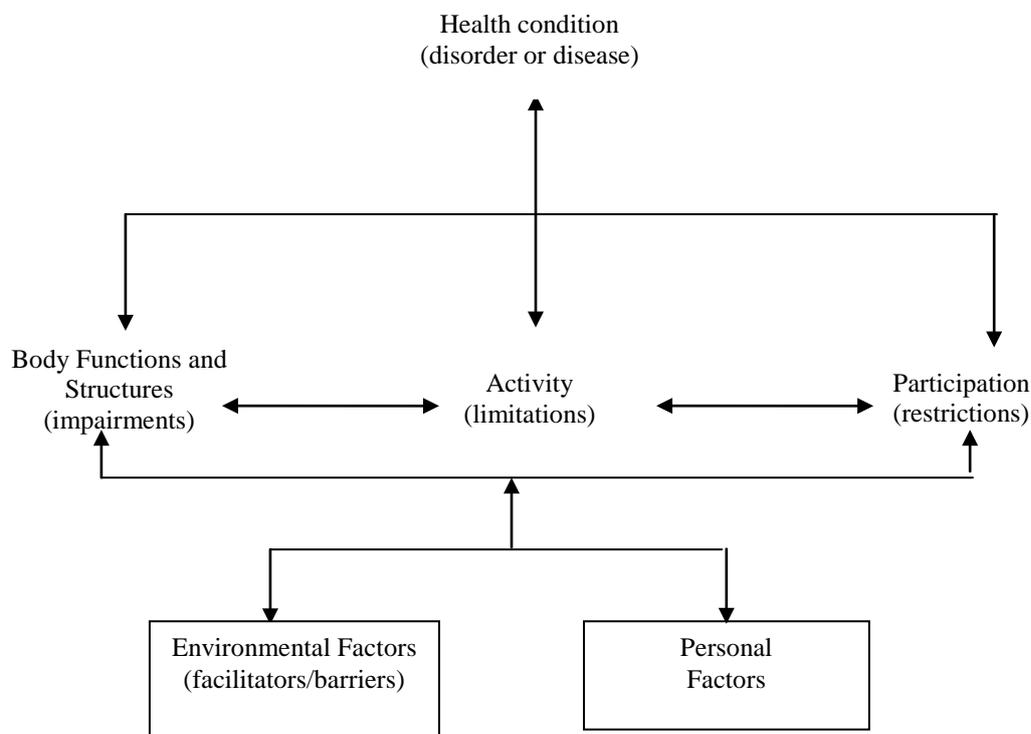
Introduction

In June 2001 an international seminar on statistics and measurement of disability was organized by the UNSD in New York. Main conclusions were:

- agreement on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)* as the framework for disability measurement and
- UNSD authorized to establish a city group on disability statistics/measurement.

We are now in the preparation of the third meeting of this city group, named Washington Group after the city of the first meeting. Because of the first conclusion mentioned above and the terminological confusion we met during the meetings it was decided by the planning group to ask the chairs and the authors/presenters for the third meeting to use ICF-terms and definitions. For this reason this paper includes a short overview of key terms and their definitions. We invite everybody to use the internationally agreed common language and by doing so avoid confusion, even if you don't like the ICF that much.

Interactions between the components of ICF



ICF key terms, definitions and chapter titles

Body functions / impairments

Definitions:

Body functions are the physiological functions of body systems (including psychological functions). Impairments are problems in body function or structure such as a significant deviation or loss.

Chapters:

1. Mental functions
2. Sensory functions and pain
3. Voice and speech functions
4. Functions of the cardiovascular, haematological, immunological and respiratory systems
5. Functions of the digestive, metabolic and endocrine systems
6. Genitourinary and reproductive functions
7. Neuromusculoskeletal and movement-related functions
8. Functions of the skin and related structures

Body structures / impairments

Definitions:

Body structures are anatomical parts of the body such as organs, limbs and their components.

Impairments are problems in body function or structure such as a significant deviation or loss.

Chapters:

1. Structures of the nervous system
2. The eye, ear and related structures
3. Structures involved in voice and speech
4. Structures of the cardiovascular, immunological and respiratory systems
5. Structures related to the digestive, metabolic and endocrine systems
6. Structures related to the genitourinary and reproductive systems
7. Structures related to movement
8. Skin and related structures

Activity / activity limitations
Participation / participation restrictions

Definitions:

Activity is the execution of a task or action by an individual.

Activity limitations are difficulties an individual may have in executing activities.

Participation is involvement in a life situation.

Participation restrictions are problems an individual may experience in involvement in life situations.

Chapters:

1. Learning and applying knowledge
2. General tasks and demands
3. Communication
4. Mobility
5. Self-care
6. Domestic life
7. Interpersonal interactions and relationships
8. Major life areas
9. Community, social and civic life

Environmental factors/facilitators/barriers

Definition:

Environmental factors make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives.

Environmental factors may be a facilitator or a barrier.

Chapters:

1. Products and technology
2. Natural environment and human-made changes to environment
3. Support and relationships
4. Attitudes
5. Services, systems and policies

Personal Factors

Definitions:

Personal factors are the particular background of an individual's life and living, and comprise features of the individual that are not part of a health condition or health states, such as: gender, race age, fitness, lifestyle, habits, coping styles, social background, education, profession, past and current experience, overall behaviour pattern, character style, individual psychological assets, and other characteristics, all or any of which may play a role in disability in any level.

Functioning/disability

Definitions:

Functioning is the umbrella term encompassing body functions, structures, activities and participation.

Disability is the umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions.

* World Health Organization, International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, Geneva, 2001

