



Pacific Group on Disability Statistics [PGDS] Terms of Reference

Background

The **Washington Group on Disability Statistics** (WG) is a UN city group established under the United Nations Statistical Commission. The WG was constituted to address the need for cross-nationally comparable population based measures of disability. Its mandate is the promotion and co-ordination of international co-operation in the area of health statistics focusing on the development of disability data collection tools [see Appendix 1] suitable for censuses and national surveys. A main objective of the WG is to promote the inclusion of the standard disability measures (WG-SS, WG-ESF, CFM) into national statistical survey systems allowing for the routine disaggregation of outcomes (i.e. employment and education) by disability status.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is supporting the institutional capacity of the WG [administered through University College London – UCL]. The aim is to improve the collection and analysis of disability statistics globally by strengthening the WG's capacity to broadly disseminate and provide technical assistance to support the consistent implementation of the WG's existing data collection tools.

With support from DFAT, the WG is promoting the establishment of Regional Disability Statistics Groups [Regional Groups] fashioned after the WG that would carry on the work of the WG at a regional level. Regional Groups are a consortium of National Statistical Offices (NSOs), working in consultation with civil society and advocacy groups supporting the implementation of the WG tools and methodology in the region.

Previously, the WG had conducted an Implementation workshop in the Pacific Island region [Fiji: 13 - 15th July 2016] where the establishment of a Regional Group was first proposed. This was followed by discussions with representatives from the region who attended WG meetings in Sydney Australia [October/ November 2017] and Rome Italy [November 2018].

Formation of a Pacific Group on Disability Statistics [PGDS]

The Samoan Bureau of Statistics [SBS] volunteered to take on the role of leading the establishment of the **Pacific Group on Disability Statistics**.

A small **Working Group** was constituted [see below] that identified the initial activities to be undertaken by the **Pacific Group on Disability Statistics (PGDS)** and drafted a Terms of Reference.

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The Working Group has evolved into a **Secretariat** for the **PGDS** as a support mechanism for SBS.

The initial work plan for the **Pacific Group on Disability Statistics** includes:

- a) securing membership from WG member [and non-member] countries in the region,
- b) developing and adopting a scope of work and Terms of Reference,
- c) organizing meetings as needed, and
- d) working with member countries through NSOs, civil society, researchers and advocates to meet their needs, and to ensure careful monitoring and evaluation of the pilot process to inform the establishment of future centers.

For more information on the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, visit:

<http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>.

This Terms of Reference refers to the establishment of a regional group among Pacific Island countries.

Membership

Membership in the **PGDS** consists of representatives from country NSOs [list of countries appended in Appendix 2], regional and international organisations and DPOs, as well as national ministerial Disability Focal Points from respective countries.

While the focus of the PGDS will be on Disability Statistics, it will also be important to include those with intersectional interests, for example, women and gender, poverty etc.

It should be noted that there is a Regional Reference Group on Disability chaired by Pacific Disability Forum and the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) (Secretariat) that leads coordination on the implementation on the Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PFRPD). Every attempt will be made avoid any duplication of efforts or potential conflicts among these entities.

Funding

Initial funding for activities related to the PGDS and its work plan will be provided through a DFAT grant to the WG administered through University College London (UCL). Future financial arrangements will be discussed once the PGDS will be formally established.

Scope of work

The scope of work for the “Pacific Group on Disability Statistics” will be to support member countries in the production and use of reliable, valid and comparable disability statistics through facilitation, cooperation, engagement and capacity building, including through South-South and peer-to-peer collaboration. The PGDS will coordinate multiple activities among member countries to achieve its goals. These would include but not be limited to:

i. Enhanced cooperation and facilitation

- Identification of focal points in each country/organization
- Establishment a network and database of key stakeholders

ii. Engagement of stakeholders

- Finalizing annual/routine meeting schedule for key stakeholders

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- Mapping existing and ongoing disability data available in each country (including administrative data sources) along with the methodology or tools used for collection of disability data such as the Washington Group(WG) tools
- Undertake SWOT analysis in each country to identify needs and existing knowledge gaps

iii. Strengthening and Capacity building

- Provide training workshops/webinars to data producers and users that would include data collection, analysis and dissemination using the WG tools,
- Support cross-country collaboration (South-South/peer-to-peer) through knowledge and information sharing in disability statistics in general and the use of the WG tools more specifically,
- Standardization of analytical tools and methodologies with the goal of delivering standard products for dissemination.

Outputs/Deliverables

- 1) All data collections [census and nationally representative surveys carried out by the country NSOs] in the region to include the WG tool[s] and implement them as intended in the 2020 round of census or by 2030.
- 2) Data are analysed in a consistent and uniform manner – according to devised standardized regional templates in the 2020 round of census or by 2030.
- 3) Results are disseminated according to region-specific framework by 2030.
- 4) A Regional Guidebook to Improve Disability Data Collection and Analysis in the Pacific Island Region [based on the Guidebook developed for the Arabic-speaking region: <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/regional-guidebook-disability-data-arab-countries>] [*Draft contents of the Guidebook to be presented to the regional meeting in July 2020*]
 - It was suggested that a Regional Guidebook include Glossary of relevant terms in both plain and local languages.
 - Current analytic guidelines are available in SPSS, SAS and CSPro. If there is regional need for guidelines in Stata, these can be developed.
- 5) A regional Disability Monograph is generated by 2030.

Appendix 1

Washington Group Tools

Since its inception in 2001, the WG has developed and tested several data collection tools to be used for the collection of internationally comparable disability statistics. These include the WG Short Set on Functioning (described in detail below), the WG Extended Set on Functioning for adults 18 years of age and over, and the WG/UNICEF Child Functioning Module for children 2 through 17 years of age. In addition, other tools currently under development include the WG/UNICEF Module on Inclusive Education and a disability module intended for use in labor force surveys developed in collaboration between the WG and the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WG SS)

A major accomplishment of the WG has been the development, testing and endorsement of a short set of questions that can be used on censuses, sample-based national surveys, or other data collection platforms, for the primary purpose of informing policy on the full inclusion of persons with disability into civil society. These questions provide a cost effective way to determine overall disability prevalence rates and to understand the situation of people with disabilities across a range of demographic and socio-economic indicators. The information obtained will provide valuable, internationally comparable evidence to inform effective policies and programs to support people with disabilities.

The WG questions have been extensively tested in all regions of the world, both cognitively and in the field in order to ensure their validity and universality. The set includes questions on six core functional domains: seeing, hearing, walking, cognition, self-care, and communication.

Each of the six questions has four response categories: (1) No, no difficulty, (2) Yes, some difficulty, (3) Yes, a lot of difficulty and (4) Cannot do it at all. With these response categories, the WG questions fulfil two specific data needs:

- to describe disability data as a continuum of functioning based on graded responses, and
- to define a cut-off (or a set of cut-offs) to calculate disability prevalence and to disaggregate outcome indicators (e.g. access to education, employment) by disability status to determine if people with disability are participating in society at equal levels to those without disability.

The Short Set of questions has been recommended by the United Nations Statistical Commission and the Council of European Statisticians as the means to collect information on disability in the upcoming 2020 round of censuses. Furthermore, this set of questions has been endorsed by an Expert Group convened under the auspices of United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) as the means to disaggregate outcome indicators by disability status, which is vital for evaluating the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Appendix 2

There are 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (SPC member countries) in the Pacific region. [French-speaking countries are indicated with *]:

1. American Samoa
2. Cook Islands
3. Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
4. Fiji
5. French Polynesia*
6. Guam
7. Kiribati
8. Marshall Islands
9. Nauru
10. New Caledonia*
11. Niue
12. Northern Mariana Islands
13. Palau
14. Papua New Guinea
15. Pitcairn Islands
16. Samoa
17. Solomon Islands
18. Tokelau
19. Tonga
20. Tuvalu
21. Vanuatu
22. Wallis & Futuna*