



Research on the feasibility of harmonising disability definitions and classifications across different data sources

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Background
- Research purpose
- Harmonisation/standardisation process
- Stakeholder engagements
- Comparative study (experimental design)
- Feedback mechanism
- Ratification structures
- Conclusion



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BACKGROUND

In South Africa, **disability appears as a variable** in a number of administrative data sets. However, within a particular Department the definitions and classifications used are often not applied in the same way and there is little if any standardisation across departments.



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DATA SOURCES IN THE DISABILITY SECTOR

Characteristic	Data source		
	Official household questionnaire survey data	Administrative data sets with no or limited elements of medical diagnoses	Administrative data sets completely dependent on a medical diagnoses
Classification purpose	Determining prevalence, nature and life circumstances. Used for target setting in national policies.	Reasonable accommodation.	Provision of social transfers such as grants and housing benefits.
Dominant model in classification	Social model focusing on degree of functionality rather than impairments per se	Mixed model	Medical/functional limitation model focusing on impairments
Examples of primary sources	General Household Survey 2009-2017	Department of Basic Education	Department of Labour
	Census 2011	Department of Higher Education	South African Social Security Agency (SASSA)
	Community Survey 2016	Department of Public Service and Administration/National Treasury	Department of Human Settlements
	LCS/IES	PERSAL data of Public Servants	Department of Health



RESEARCH PURPOSE

To investigate the feasibility of harmonising definitions and classifications across the three data source categories namely: **questionnaire surveys, administrative data sets with no or limited elements of medical diagnoses and administrative data sets completely dependent on medical diagnoses** **in order to improve disability statistics.**

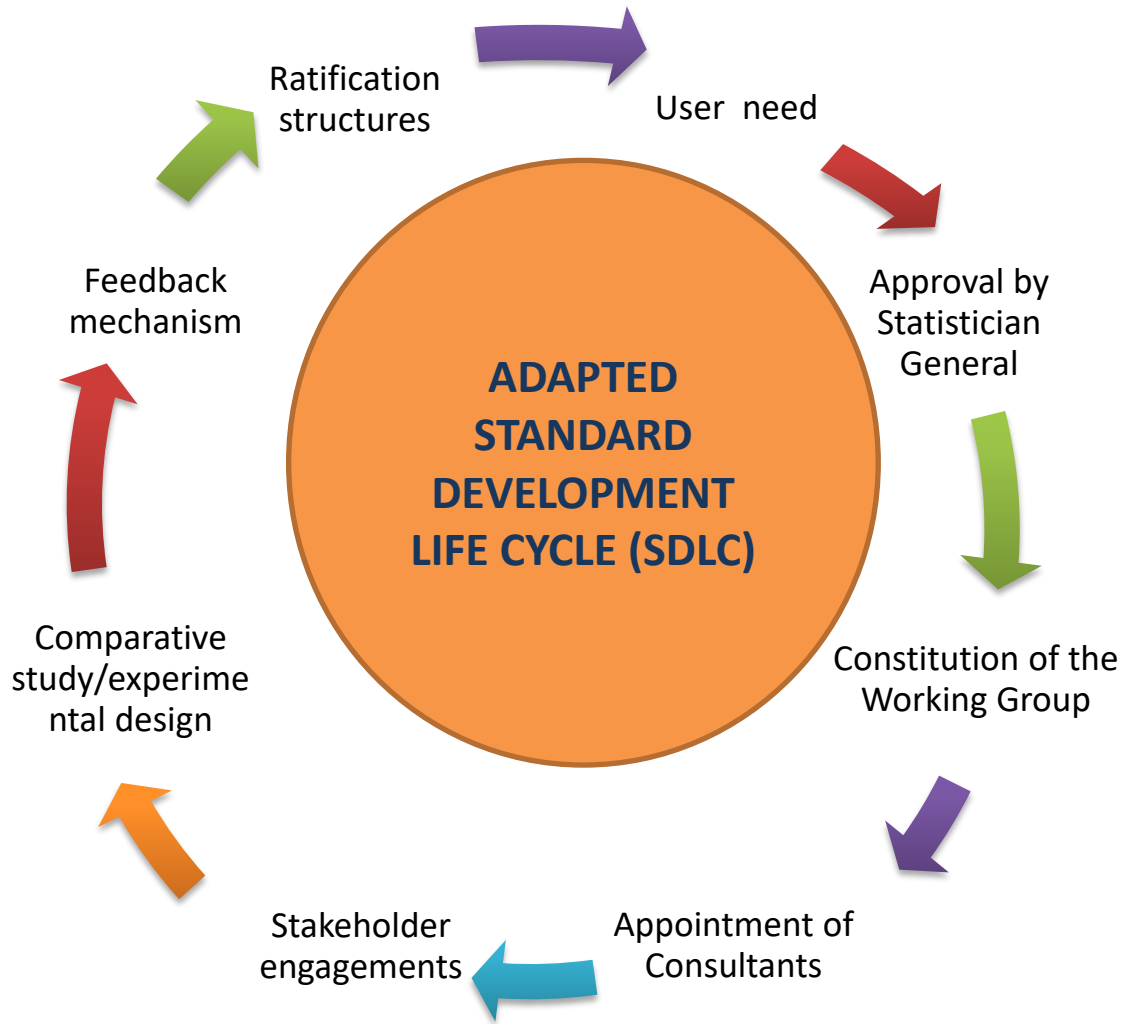


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HARMONISATION/STANDARDISATION PROCESS



WORKING GROUP (WG)

- Constitution of the working group is comprised of the standard developers, subject matter specialists, policy makers and policy implementers.
- The WG will work closely with the appointed consultants and also facilitate the engagements between consultants and various stakeholders i.e. DPOs and government departments.



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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENTS

- The lobbying for this project has been done in different platforms where disability sector and government departments were represented to galvanise them for support.
- WG will organise and facilitate an introductory meeting between consultants and all relevant stakeholders.
- Series of bi-lateral and multi-lateral engagements that will be organised by the WG and facilitated by the consultants which will be aimed at better understanding the administrative data systems and the classifications and definitions used by various government departments.
- Arrange one meeting for all the affected departments/institutions to interrogate the synergies between the recommendations (draft standard) made by consultants and the work done by departments



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COMPARATIVE STUDY

Comparative study between **the social/functioning and medical/functional limitation models** within the context of administrative data sets currently heavily reliant **on the latter**

Develop an experimental design that tests and compares the classification of persons with disability when using a set of questions focusing on functioning i.e. use of WG set of questions as opposed to the medical protocols

A Medical General Practitioner will be contracted to execute the medical tests that will form part of this component of the project

Comparative analysis through the matching process will be done to ascertain the extent to which the results talk to each other

The study will be done at the health care centres in two provinces



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FEEDBACK MECHANISM

Broader stakeholder feedback mechanism to provide feedback on the outcomes of harmonisation process.

- A meeting with all stakeholders (i.e. DPOs, NGOs and government departments) to provide feedback will be arranged once a report on findings of the research has been finalised by consultants.



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MAIN RESEARCH DELIVERABLES

- A report documenting test findings indicating whether it is feasible to make use of social/functioning definitions/classifications of disability in departments where the medical/functional limitation classification systems are currently being used.
- A conceptual framework that can be used for the harmonisation of the classifications and definitions of disability across as many datasets as possible. This should be done within the confines of the domain definitions as appears in the WPRPD
 - This will serve as a draft standard which will be used by WG to garner for buy-in from stakeholders both from disability sector and government departments



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RATIFICATION STRUCTURES

Formation of a lower level committee of all the affected departments

Disability Statistics Advisory Group

Formation of a structure comprise of all the DGs from the affected departments for approval (Clearance Committee)

Statistics South Africa: Standard Approval Committee

Statistician-General



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CONCLUSION

- The research will provide guidance on how the harmonisation of definitions and classifications across different data sources should be done to improve the quality of disability statistics in the country.
- The outcomes of the research will be used to operationalise the disability definition from the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPDs) to ensure that the harmonised statistical definition does not deviate from the overarching definition presented in the WPRPD.
- The study will recommend one or more classification systems that will have the necessary attributes to align to the WPRPD domain definition and which could be used across Government, depending on the specific needs of that department or entity.



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