Annex A: Collecting, analysing, reporting and using Washington Group - Short Set of Questions to collect disability data in Ukraine

This guidance is developed as a companion to [Draft: Guidance on collecting, analyzing, reporting and using disability data in Ukraine](#) which provides recommendations on key times to use the Washington Group Short Set of Questions (WG-SS), along with guidance on other question sets to use in Ukraine. Please read the other document prior to reading this guidance.

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Understanding the Washington Group Questions

The WG-SS is a set of six questions developed by the United Nations Statistical Commission's Washington City Group on Disability Statistics for use in national censuses and large population surveys. The WG-SS is also the internationally recognized method to ask about disability in humanitarian settings. The WG-SS asks about six core domains of function; that is, the questions seek to determine how much difficulty an individual has in performing basic functions (walking, seeing, hearing, cognition, self-care and communication), rather than asking about disability directly.

The WG-SS are designed to identify the greatest number of persons at risk of experiencing barriers to participation through the fewest possible questions, allowing the questions to be easily integrated in census/surveys. The questions rely on a method of self-reporting rather than clinical assessment and can be administered by data collectors who do not need to have a background in health. The questions are specifically designed to avoid referring to "disability", which can be understood differently across cultures and communities.

The WG-SS has some limitations; they are not designed to be used for children. If this is a consideration, use [The Washington Group/UNICEF Module on Child Functioning](#) instead. In addition, some persons with disabilities, including some individuals with psychosocial disabilities, might be missed during data collection efforts. If this is a consideration, use the [WG Short Set on Functioning-Enhanced](#). If you require more detailed information on persons with disabilities, consider using [The Washington Group Extended Set on Functioning](#).

Note: WG-SS is a set of questions to identify the greatest number of persons at risk of experiencing barriers to participation and to identify people at risk of being excluded. They are not a tool specifying or diagnosing specific medical needs. **This information does not help with referrals, nor with understanding the type of disability a beneficiary has; it just indicates whether or not they are likely to have a disability.**

Where possible, talk to and learn from others who have used the questions. In addition, there are several online courses that support understanding, like ´Collecting Data for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action´ online training course (approximately two hours, available in English). The e-learning is available on: disasterready.org (access requires an account).

Using WG-SS in data collection tools

See: HI Flow chart - planning the use the WGQs in English , HI Planning checklist - Using the WGQs in English for tools to assist with planning to use the WG-SS.

Data collection tools will need to be adapted to include the WG-SS. Experience has shown that the way the questions are asked can influence the accuracy of the results. Find below some Dos and Don'ts regarding the Washington Group Questions usage:

DO'S	DON'TS
To avoid raising expectations of services or benefit, it is recommended to include the questions within the demographic questions section of the data collection tool being used.	Do not assume you know the answer to a question through observation (for example, because a person is a wheelchair user) or skip any questions. Do not make assumptions about an individual's difficulties.
It is important to use the questions exactly as written, including the official introduction that refers to a health problem (avoiding specific reference to the word "disability").	Avoid explanations that may have negative connotations, imply disability or change the meaning of the question. Standard responses to questions and aids (for example photos) for administering the questions should be developed prior to any interviewing.
Read out each question, one at a time and exactly as written. Do the same also for the response categories, reading out the response categories as written.	Do not use the word disability in the survey at any point.
If respondents are not sure about the meaning of a question, you can briefly explain further.	Do not use a screening question prior to the WG-SS (for example, do not say "the next question asks about disability" or " are there any persons with disability in this household that I can ask these disability questions to?").
Ensure that answers are recorded exactly as provided.	Do not translate 'on the go.' Prepare ahead by having translated version of the WGSQ on hand to use if needed.

Using WG-SS in telephone and internet surveys

The WG-SS is **suitable for use in telephone and internet survey formats**; see Using the Washington Group Tools to Assess the Impact of COVID-19 on Persons with Disabilities for more information on data collection mode (including telephone and internet surveys) considerations in light of COVID-19.

Using WG-SS at household level

The WG-SS was designed to be administered at the individual level; however, humanitarian action data is often collected at household level. While it is possible to use the WG-SS this way, it increases the chances of missing

persons with disabilities. To minimize this bias, see the recommended approaches in [HI Factsheet #2: Collecting data in humanitarian action using the WG-SS at household level](#) and [Guidance on using the Washington Group Questions in MSNAs](#) pp 3-4.

> Note: Household heads should never asked a filter question (for example: "do you have persons with disabilities in your household?").

Training data collectors before administering WG-SS

One of the main challenges of using the WG-SS is that enumerators do not ask the questions correctly, resulting in inaccurate and unusable data. Before using WG-SS in surveys it should be ensured that enumerators receive quality training on disability inclusion, the questions and conducting the surveys. Key concepts to cover in training include:

- An introduction to disability inclusion, including the rights-based approach and understanding of barriers experienced by persons with disabilities
- Asking questions in a respectful way
- Dos and don'ts regarding the WG-SS
- Asking the questions to a proxy
- Tips on how to interview persons with disabilities

More information can be found at [For Enumerators - how to ask WGQS](#) . There is a training package for enumerators online that provides guidance, session plans and activities to deliver training to enumerators on using the WG-SSs in humanitarian action. The package has been designed to be adapted to the audience as necessary and can be found on the following webpage: https://humanity-inclusion.org.uk/en/projects/disability-data-in-humanitarian-action

Analysing disability data from WG-SS

The standard analysis of the WG-SS is to record someone as having a disability if they answer **"Yes – a lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all" to at least one of the six questions**. In other situations (for example baseline surveys where you are looking to inform program design), you may choose to record someone as having a disability if they answer "Yes - some difficulty" or "Yes – a lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do at all" to at least one of the six questions.

> Tip: During data analysis, it is useful to create a new binary variable column (Yes/No) indicating whether the individual has disability status (lot of difficulty and cannot do at all). This will allow you to count the number of respondents who are classified as having a disability and will also allow for disability disaggregation for all other data. See [WFP Mainstreaming of disability disaggregation: A phased approach](#) for a visual example of new binary variable column on p15.

When undertaking analysis of your survey data, **disability status can be used to**:

- disaggregate other survey results (in a similar way to data disaggregation by gender or geographic location). For example, disability status can help you understand whether persons with disabilities are experiencing unemployment at a higher rate than persons without disabilities or accessing health services through your programme at a similar rate to persons without disabilities. Programme activities can then be adjusted accordingly.
- collect proxy data on disability, resulting in the ability to report the percentage of persons with disabilities in your sample. This data can be used to ensure that the general and specific requirements of persons with disabilities in the population are considered, and appropriate resources are available to meet these requirements.

Using and reporting disability disaggregated data

In reports **disability prevalence** should be **included in the demographics section** of the report rather than an additional separate section named disability.

In addition, in many cases it is **not recommended to present data from each area of functioning**, unless disaggregating the difficulty area is a key part of the survey. Using the data recorded in the binary variable columns, report numbers of persons with disabilities and persons without disabilities in the demographic section. And ideally **other findings should be disaggregated by disability**. For example, barriers to livelihoods findings being disaggregated by disability. See IOM Iraq's Using Washington Group Questions to collect disability data for visual example of recommended format of how to present disability data in Demographics section (and what to avoid) on p6, and an example of how to present a finding disaggregated by disability on p7.

Important: Do not link the question domain (seeing, hearing walking etc.) to an impairment or type of disability (e.g. difficulty seeing=visual impairment/disability). This will not lead to correct or reliable data, as multiple difficulties could be present in all impairments e.g. persons who cannot see also often report difficulties to walk

Part B: WG-SS in English and a Ukrainian translation
English:
"The next questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities because of a health problem":
"Do [you/he/she/they] have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses? Would you say….*[read all response categories]*
   □ NO – no difficulty   □ YES – some difficulty   □ YES – a lot of difficulty   □ Cannot do at all"

"Do [you/he/she/they] have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid? Would you say….*[read all response categories]*
   □ NO – no difficulty   □ YES – some difficulty   □ YES – a lot of difficulty   □ Cannot do at all"

"Do [you/he/she/they] have difficulty walking or climbing steps? Would you say….*[read all response categories]*
   □ NO – no difficulty   □ YES – some difficulty   □ YES – a lot of difficulty   □ Cannot do at all"

"Do [you/he/she/they] have difficulty remembering or concentrating? Would you say….*[read all response categories]*
   □ NO – no difficulty   □ YES – some difficulty   □ YES – a lot of difficulty   □ Cannot do at all"

"Do [you/he/she/they] have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing? Would you say….*[read all response categories]*
   □ NO – no difficulty   □ YES – some difficulty   □ YES – a lot of difficulty   □ Cannot do at all"

"Using [you/he/she/they] usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood by others? Would you say….*[read all response categories]*
   □ NO – no difficulty   □ YES – some difficulty   □ YES – a lot of difficulty □ Cannot do at all"
Ukrainian:
Please note: The following Ukrainian translation of the WG-SS has not been 'cognitively tested' as per the Washington Group protocols but this one of the translations currently being used by humanitarian actors.

Опитування Вашингтонської групи з функціональних питань інтерв'юеру: «Наступні запитання стосуються труднощів, які можуть виникнути під час виконання певних дій

[Вам/Йому/Їй] важко бачити, навіть в окулярах? Ви б сказали… [Читайте категорії відповідей]
□ Без труднощів □ Певні труднощі □ Дуже важко □ Зовсім не можу

У [Вас/Нього/Неї] труднощі зі слухом, навіть при використанні слухового апарату? Ви б сказали… [Читайте категорії відповідей]
□ Без труднощів □ Певні труднощі □ Дуже важко □ Зовсім не можу

[Вам/Йому/Їй] важко ходити чи підніматися по сходах? Ви б сказали… [Читайте категорії відповідей]
□ Без труднощів □ Певні труднощі □ Дуже важко □ Зовсім не можу

[Вам/Йому/Їй] важко запам'ятовувати чи зосередитися? Ви б сказали… [Читайте категорії відповідей]
□ Без труднощів □ Певні труднощі □ Дуже важко □ Зовсім не можу

У [Вас/Нього/Неї] труднощі з самообслуговуванням, наприклад, умивання або одягання? Ви б
сказали… [Читайте категорії відповідей]
□ Без труднощів □ Певні труднощі □ Дуже важко □ Зовсім не можу

Використовуючи [Вашу/Його/Її] звичайну мову [Ви/Він/Вона] мають труднощі спілкування, наприклад, з
розумінням почутого або бути зрозумілим іншими? Ви б сказали… [Читайте категорії відповідей]
□ Без труднощів □ Певні труднощі □ Дуже важко □ Зовсім не можу

Part D: Additional disability data resources

Further general information on the Washington Group Questions
- HI Factsheet #1: Collecting data in humanitarian action using the Washington Group Questions
- WGQs - Frequently asked questions in English
- The Washington Group Short Set on Functioning: Question Specifications
- Washington Group on Disability Statistics website

Other sets of Washington Group Questions
- The Washington Group/UNICEF Module on Child Functioning covers children between 2-4 years and 5-17 years old.
- Washington Group Enhanced Set of Disability Questions are located inside the Analytic Guidelines. This set includes additional questions on upper body functioning, anxiety and depression.
- The Washington Group Extended Set on Functioning is a matrix of additional optional domains that can be added the WG-SS when space is available (domains include vision, hearing, mobility, cognition, affect (anxiety and depression), pain, fatigue, communication, upper body functioning). This extended set is rarely used in humanitarian action due to its length, although it does provide more detailed information on disability.

COVID-19
- Using the Washington Group Tools to Assess the Impact of COVID-19 on Persons with Disabilities

Mental Health and Psychosocial Disability
- HI Factsheet #3: Collecting data on persons with mental health and psychosocial disabilities in humanitarian action using the WGQs.

Temporary Injuries and Causality
- HI Factsheet #4: Understanding temporality and causality when collecting data in humanitarian action using the WGQs

Other Resources on using disability data
- IASC Guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action has information on collecting and using disability data on pages 23–31, and 192–198.
- Practice note: Collecting and using disability data to inform inclusive development identifies principles, practices and approaches to guide agencies in effectively collecting and analysing data related to disability, and using this to strengthen disability inclusion within programmes.
- Research for All: Making Research Inclusive of Persons with Disabilities advice and practical steps for practitioners, researchers and policymakers guidance provides case studies, checklists and tools to ensure inclusive practices in the research cycle.
- WFP Mainstreaming of disability disaggregation: A phased approach
- IRC Inclusive client responsiveness – disability disaggregated data section pp 29-36
- UNICEF Producing disability-inclusive data: why it matters and what it takes

Note: This resource utilizes guidance by Humanity and Inclusion and IOM Iraq.