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Disability statistics

Joint report of the Secretary-General and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics

Summary

The present report, which was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2021/224 and past practices, describes ongoing and planned activities on disability statistics carried out by various offices of the United Nations, including the regional commissions of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization, as well as by the World Bank Group and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2022/1.



I. Introduction

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which poverty eradication is highlighted as an overarching goal, is very promising for persons with disabilities. It is in the context of the 2030 Agenda and of the principle of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, that various agencies and organizations are undertaking activities with the objective of promoting a better life for persons with disabilities. The activities are aimed at helping countries to collect relevant data on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development agenda, so that those countries may adopt targeted actions for improving lives.

2. The present report describes activities on disability statistics that are carried out by various offices of the United Nations, namely, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as by the World Bank Group and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, a city group under the aegis of the Statistical Commission.

II. Activities by United Nations organizations

A. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

3. ECLAC has continued its efforts to support the national statistical offices and national disability entities in the region in the collection, analysis and dissemination of disability statistics.

4. In 2021, ECLAC has supported the activities of the Buenos Aires group as technical secretary, as part of the work of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The Buenos Aires group was established recently to strengthen the measurement of disability in national statistic systems. In addition to contributing to the organization of meetings, ECLAC is working on a proposal for the regional harmonization of disability measurement in educational administrative data on the basis of regional diagnosis. This is being done after the countries participating in the group identified the main priority actions. A final report will be presented to them in December 2021.

5. In addition, ECLAC is providing technical assistance to national-level counterparts on the measurement of disability in censuses, specifically for indicators to measure disability at the national level, including disaggregated data by territory. In Paraguay, assistance was provided on the measurement of disability in the censuses. A first meeting, with civil society participation, was held with the National Statistics Institute. At that meeting, the country's progress was presented and the first recommendations were made on the technical approach to the issue. Subsequently, ECLAC presented the status of progress in the region and the international recommendations regarding the measurement of disability in censuses at a meeting attended by more than 40 people representing various social organizations and the State. In Uruguay, assistance was also provided on the measurement of disability in censuses through meetings with the team of the National Statistics Institute of Uruguay. ECLAC also participated in a virtual workshop with technicians from the National Statistics Institute and civil society organizations for persons with disabilities on the formulation of questions to identify people with disabilities in the next population and housing census. Lastly, in Colombia, ECLAC provided technical assistance to the High Presidential Council for the Participation of People with

Disabilities in the development of the National Observatory for the Social and Productive Inclusion of People with Disabilities.

6. In 2021, ECLAC is also continuing to analyse the availability, quality and comparability of disability statistics. ECLAC has carried out exercises in this regard to evaluate the status of disability measurement in Latin America on the basis of surveys and has observed that the regional statistical system faces considerable challenges to advance harmonized measures of disability for the entire region. Currently, most of the multipurpose surveys in the countries of the region do not collect information to identify and characterize the population with disabilities. Among the countries that do, the surveys are done in a non-comparable way, as conceptual and operational differences arise.

7. Going forward, ECLAC expects to continue these activities. In addition, it expects to incorporate new data on disability into the CEPALSTAT portal. For those purposes, the availability, quality and comparability of statistics on disability in various sources of official data from the countries of the region will continue to be analysed. ECLAC is also working on a chapter entitled “The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with disabilities and their rights” for a technical document of the fourth Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean entitled “The sociodemographic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean”, which is expected to be ready in March 2022. Lastly, ECLAC is preparing a document on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in national statistical systems, mainly by considering, from a rights perspective, the participatory mechanisms that are used, or would be used, at the different stages of censuses and surveys. A final draft of the document is planned for December 2021 and the final document should be ready in 2022.

B. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

8. ESCAP is preparing for the final review to measure progress and take stock of the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022. As part of the review, ESCAP has launched a national survey among member States, focusing on targets and indicators of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The findings of the survey will inform the regional analysis on the status of disability-inclusive development in Asia and the Pacific, feeding into a high-level intergovernmental meeting on disability in 2022. ESCAP will continue to support capacity-building in member States through technical cooperation projects, in order to improve the reliability and comparability of disability data, in accordance with goal 8 of the Incheon Strategy.

9. The Incheon Strategy and the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, which had been adopted by all member States and associate members in the region, are instruments to guide the third Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022. The Incheon Strategy is a time-bound, disability-inclusive development strategy, consisting of 10 goals, 27 targets and 62 indicators. As the third Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities draws to a close in 2022, ESCAP has launched the final review of the Decade. Building on the 2017 midpoint review that led to the establishment of baseline data according to Incheon Strategy indicators, the aim of the final review is to update the data on the Incheon Strategy indicators, thereby ensuring an evidence-based approach to charting the next phase of disability-inclusive development.

10. To undergird the final review process with disability data and statistics, ESCAP conducts a national survey among members on the state of disability-inclusive development and the implementation of the Incheon Strategy. The national survey

collects information on: (a) the achievements and challenges in advancing disability-inclusive development over the past Decade; (b) institutional frameworks for mainstreaming disability inclusion within Governments, including national statistical systems; and (c) core details and data related to the Incheon Strategy targets and indicators. The outcome of the national surveys will facilitate the mapping of disability-disaggregated data in order to analyse the progress made in the implementation of the Incheon Strategy.

11. Following the circulation of the national survey among members, ESCAP held consultations to brief members on the national survey and the final review process. The informal consultations assisted participants, including national disability focal points, international experts, national statistics offices and representatives of United Nations agencies in identifying challenges, lessons learned and good practices for generating and utilizing disability data. Through the consultations, ESCAP identified the need for the provision of technical support to members in conducting the survey. ESCAP has since provided technical assistance in order to sensitize government officials on disability data, examine institutional and statistical capacity of Governments, and facilitate the process of disability data collection for the national survey.

12. In 2020, ESCAP released a new publication entitled “Technical guide: from indicators to action – operationalizing the Incheon Strategy indicators to support disability-inclusive development”. This knowledge-based product builds on the findings and analysis of national technical cooperation on disability statistics in 17 ESCAP member States, supplementing the earlier *ESCAP Guide on Disability Indicators for the Incheon Strategy*. The publication is focused on technical guides for national statistical offices, line ministries and related stakeholders. Detailed technical information is provided on collecting and analysing disability data for measuring and reporting against the Incheon Strategy indicators.

13. ESCAP will continue to support its member States in tracking progress towards the final review of the third Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities. As part of the final review process, an analytical review, including a national survey, will be conducted and inform a high-level intergovernmental meeting in commemoration of the conclusion of the Decade in 2022. In parallel, ESCAP will maintain its efforts to provide technical assistance at the national level to strengthen the national capacities of ESCAP members for improving the availability and quality of disability data.

C. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

14. Through its disability statistics programme, ESCWA has provided technical assistance to national-level counterparts on various issues pertaining to disability measurement and statistics, as many countries in Western Asia are in the process of implementing new rounds of household surveys and preparing for censuses for the 2020 round following a halt of statistical activities on account of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The activities have mainly focused on supporting countries in disability methodologies for sampling, compiling and measuring. In this context, ESCWA conducted a workshop on the population censuses in Iraq,¹ and provided technical consultation and advice to Egypt on its 2021 stand-alone disability survey.

¹ See www.unescwa.org/events/national-meeting-disability-statistics-iraq.

15. In addition, ESCWA published the technical paper, *Disability Framework: 115 Indicators to Bridge the Gap between Policy and Statistics*,² in which it underscored the importance of evidence-based policymaking and encouraged Arab Governments to compile reliable and comparable disability data for tracking progress towards the achievement of their goals and targets. The disability framework maps disability-related indicators to three major development frameworks: the 2030 Agenda, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.³

16. In the light of the need to leave no one behind and to provide more information on persons with disabilities and their living conditions, ESCWA has included the Washington Group short set of questions on functioning in its 2020 publication *Violence Against Women Survey: Implementation Toolkit – Complete Stand-alone Survey*.⁴

17. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the health risks posed by the virus in weak social protection systems that leave a large group of older persons without protection, ESCWA published a policy brief in 2020, with a focus on disability and gender, entitled “The impact of COVID-19 on older persons in the Arab region”.⁵

18. ESCWA capacity development and technical cooperation activities contributed considerably to establishing baseline data for the ESCWA disability statistics database and dashboard. The ESCWA database hosted on the leave no one behind data portal contains 48 indicators in three areas: population, education and work.⁶

19. ESCWA has utilized disability data collected from countries as inputs for the *Arab Gender Gap Report 2020: Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals*.⁷ A chapter on disability included analysis to show differences between women and men in the prevalence of disability and the socioeconomic characteristics of women and men, with or without disabilities.

20. ESCWA has also launched an online register for disability statistics in the Arab countries,⁸ with links to survey reports and questionnaires. The interactive register also provides up-to-date information, including from disability surveys and modules implemented in the Arab region. A dashboard consolidates the information and provides insight on the types and periodicity of surveys and censuses conducted in the region.

21. In 2021, ESCWA initiated a second round of data collection, with 12 countries having conducted new surveys or censuses since 2017. It has developed a fully automated data collection tool, including content verification, and has expanded the coverage of policy areas to include three more areas in addition to population, education and work: access, benefits and health. The number of indicators has almost doubled from 48 in 2017 to 95 in 2021, which represents a 100 per cent increase from the 2017 base year.

² See www.unescwa.org/publications/escwa-disability-framework-115-indicators-bridge-gap-between-policy-and-statistics.

³ The Framework is the outcome of the first joint meeting between ESCWA and statisticians, policymakers and disabled people’s organizations, entitled the Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disability statistics on the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab Region, which was held in 2018. See <https://archive.unescwa.org/events/expert-group-meeting-improving-disability-statistics-sustainable-development-goals>.

⁴ See www.unescwa.org/publications/violence-against-women-survey-implementation-toolkit.

⁵ See www.unescwa.org/publications/impact-covid-19-older-persons-arab-region.

⁶ See <https://data.unescwa.org>.

⁷ See <https://publications.unescwa.org/projects/aggr/index.html>.

⁸ See <https://www.unescwa.org/tools/disability-statistics>.

22. During the period 2020–2021, ESCWA developed a stand-alone household survey questionnaire on persons with disabilities, to respond effectively to the 2030 Agenda. The dedicated survey questionnaire will make it possible to collect more information and therefore identify the needs of persons with various types of disability of different levels of severity, the barriers and daily challenges that they face and their specific needs that are not common to all citizens. The new data collection tool will produce more reliable data for evaluating programmes and policies and identifying suitable inclusive interventions that would respond directly and more effectively to the day-to-day requirements of their lives, changes of environment and context, and to the 2030 Agenda.

23. The development of the questionnaire involves the collaboration of ESCWA, the Casablanca group⁹ of the Washington Group, comprising Arab national statistical officers, and partners and stakeholders, such as policymakers and disabled people's organizations, to address policy questions and improve on existing instruments, with a view to providing in-depth information on persons with disabilities, identifying the needs, barriers, time use and daily challenges of various types and severities of difficulties. ESCWA will present the first draft of the stand-alone questionnaire during the second Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disability Statistics on the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab Region in 2022.

24. In 2021, ESCWA was invited to give presentations on the status of disability measurement in the region, on disability statistics and the 2030 Agenda at regional and international conferences. ESCWA has also become a partner in the groups Inclusive Data Charter and CBM Global Disability Inclusion.

D. International Labour Organization

25. In the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted by the General Assembly in December 2006, the Assembly sets forth, in article 27, on work and employment, the right of all persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others, that is, to have the same employment opportunities, remuneration and labour rights as people without disabilities. The Convention also includes provisions on the collection of statistical data (art. 31). Labour market indicators for persons with disabilities are essential for developing, monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes for ensuring labour rights.

26. Similarly, in the 2030 Agenda, the General Assembly recognizes persons with disabilities as one of the vulnerable groups, calls for their empowerment and commits to enhancing capacity-building support to developing countries to increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by disability. Member States referred directly or indirectly to disability in targets 1.3 and 8.5 of the outcome document dated 1 August 2015 (see Assembly resolution [70/1](#)) and subsequently in indicators 1.3.1, 8.5.1 and 8.5.2 (see Assembly resolution [71/313](#)).

27. Promoting equal opportunity and treatment in employment is also a central element of the decent work agenda of ILO. In its 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, it indicates that various forms of equality and non-discrimination must be considered as cross-cutting issues in the strategic objectives of decent work. In its manual, *Decent Work Indicators: Guidelines for Producers and Users of Statistical and Legal Framework Indicators*, ILO proposes the development of an indicator for the evaluation of the employment situation of

⁹ In 2017, the Arab countries established a group on disability statistics, the Casablanca group, that aims to develop and improve statistics on persons with disabilities in the Arab region and to keep pace with the international development of disability statistics.

people with disabilities, under the substantive element of the decent work agenda “Equal opportunity and treatment in employment”.

28. In order to provide data for monitoring progress towards Sustainable Development Goal target 8.5, the ILO Department of Statistics has begun systematically compiling and disseminating the unemployment rate by disability status on an annual basis. Additional indications, including working age population, labour force participation, employment and unemployment, disaggregated by disability status are available at <https://ilostat.ilo.org>. Data on average hourly earnings by disability status are not widely available. Data on social protection needed for monitoring progress towards Sustainable Development Goal target 1.3 are compiled mainly through the ILO Social Security Inquiry,¹⁰ the ILO Social Protection Department’s annual collection of administrative data from national ministries of labour, social security, welfare, finance, and others.

29. However, comparing the labour market characteristics of persons with and without disabilities is not sufficient. While disaggregating outcome indicators will allow identification of the gaps in the work experience of persons with and without disabilities, it will not provide the information necessary to reveal the barriers and facilitators that drive those outcomes. This information is needed for the proper development of policies to rectify outcome gaps. Therefore, ILO in collaboration with the Washington Group, has developed a labour force survey module that collects additional information regarding obstacles that people with disabilities face in the labour market. This module consists of three sections (barriers and workplace accommodation, attitudes and social protection) and covers the following variables: (a) facilitators; (b) family support; (c) work schedule and work task arrangements; (d) workplace adaptations; (e) employers’ attitudes; (f) workers’ attitudes; (g) disability certification; (h) cash benefits; and (i) in-kind benefits.

30. The module was endorsed by the Washington Group at its 19th annual meeting, in 2019.

31. In addition to the labour force survey module, ILO has prepared a full set of documentation containing methodological guidelines for facilitating the implementation, compilation, dissemination and usage of data on disability for the module. The documentation, which includes model questionnaires, national adaptation guides, the labour force survey integration guide and the variable integration guide, is available on the ILO website at <https://ilostat.ilo.org/resources/lfs-resources>.

32. In order to promote disaggregation of the key labour market indicators, the Washington Group short set on functioning (for the working age population) has been incorporated into the ILO labour force survey model questionnaires.

33. As part of the project entitled “Including people with disabilities in the Arab labour market”, which covers the period 2020–2023, ILO collaborated with ESCWA in assisting countries in the ESCWA region to generate reliable data on the employment situation of persons with disabilities. Similar activities, including capacity-building, are ongoing in Bangladesh and Kenya.

E. United Nations Children’s Fund

34. In the past year, the data work of UNICEF in the area of disability has been focused on providing continuous technical assistance and support for the collection of child disability data through the conduct of UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator

¹⁰ For more information on the Social Security Inquiry, visit www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowTheme.action?id=10.

Cluster Surveys in several countries. In addition, UNICEF has established the Centre of Excellence on Data for Children with Disabilities to help fill data gaps, improve the accessibility of data and promote data use. The Centre will also foster collaboration, the standardization of approaches to data production and dissemination, and the coordination of data activities. Lastly, in November 2021, UNICEF launched the “global report on children with disabilities” project.

35. Using the latest available data, UNICEF has put together a global report on children with disabilities, entitled *Seen, Counted and Included: Using Data to Shed Light on the Well-Being of Children with Disabilities*. The publication covers more than 60 indicators of child well-being, from nutrition and health, to access to water and sanitation, protection from violence and exploitation, and education. The report also includes the first-ever global and regional estimates regarding children with disabilities. The report builds on internationally comparable data from 42 low- and middle-income countries. It also builds on over 100 data sources to estimate the number of children with functional difficulties globally and by region. According to the new report, nearly 240 million children worldwide have disabilities. Children with disabilities are 49 per cent more likely than children without disabilities never to have attended school, 51 per cent more likely to feel unhappy, and 24 per cent less likely to receive early stimulation and responsive care.

36. Historically, attempts to protect the rights of children with disabilities have been hampered by a lack of data. More recently, there has been a renewed focus on generating reliable and internationally comparable data on such children, prompting the development of new tools for data collection. These include the module on child functioning, released by UNICEF and the Washington Group in 2016. It has also resulted in a substantial increase in the availability of data on children with disabilities over the past five years, which fosters data analysis and contributes to increased knowledge generation.

37. To capitalize on the current momentum, UNICEF has established the Centre of Excellence on Data for Children with Disabilities. The Centre will help to fill data gaps and meet the growing need for coordination, high-quality oversight and technical expertise in the field. It will support a broad range of activities to build the capacity of data producers and data users, facilitate the development of new methods and tools, and support data collection, data analysis, data interpretation and use, and knowledge generation.

38. The mission of the Centre is to enhance stakeholders’ ability to make timely and data-driven decisions regarding children with disabilities. To achieve this mission, it will engage in a wide variety of activities, drawing on the principles of partnership, innovation and inclusivity. The Centre is guided by a strategic advisory group composed of key stakeholders, who advise it on its activities and provide general direction.

39. The Centre is currently in its inception phase, which will last from 2021 to the end of 2022. During this period, it is looking to support new and innovative projects to foster the utilization of data on children with disabilities. To that end, it has launched several calls for proposals for projects relating to data analysis, data visualization and capacity-building. After the inception phase, the Centre will engage in a number of activities and partnerships aimed at addressing existing gaps.

40. To achieve the objectives referred to above, work over the next four years will be focused on four main areas and related activities as set out below.

41. The first, methodological development, will involve:

- (a) Identifying best practices on inclusive sampling methods;

(b) Identifying innovative approaches for inclusive data collection and generating recommendations on how to implement them;

(c) Developing tools to support, update and standardize the use of the modules on child functioning and inclusive education;

(d) Developing new data collection tools on access to and utilization of services.

42. The second, support for data collection, will involve:

(a) Supporting the conduct of surveys to collect data on children with disabilities by providing funding, coordination, quality oversight, technical assistance and follow-up;

(b) Supporting the strengthening of administrative systems to generate data on children with disabilities by providing financial and technical support for the integration of the module on child functioning into administrative data systems;

(c) Supporting disaggregation of data for children with disabilities for programming design, monitoring and reporting on results.

43. The third, support for data analysis, will involve:

(a) Developing tools to facilitate analyses of data from the modules on child functioning and inclusive education;

(b) Organizing dedicated training sessions, for representatives of national statistical offices and researchers, on the analysis of the modules on child functioning and inclusive education;

(c) Launching calls for proposals and competitively selecting the most promising data analysis approaches to promote the use of data on children with disabilities;

(d) Partnering with selected academic research institutions for data analysis projects and courses;

(e) Sponsoring young statisticians from national statistical offices and researchers aiming to write their doctoral research on children with disabilities;

(f) Sponsoring fellowships and visiting scholar exchanges to promote knowledge transfer between experts and young researchers and statisticians.

44. The fourth, promoting data use for advocacy and policymaking, will involve:

(a) Developing tools to promote the dissemination and use of data, including through the accessible visualization of complex analyses, so that the information can be readily understood by policymakers, advocates, civil society organizations and programme professionals;

(b) Organizing dedicated training sessions focused on data interpretation and data use for advocates, civil society organizations and programme professionals.

F. World Health Organization

45. WHO has a long tradition in the conceptualization and measurement of disability. An important milestone was achieved with the endorsement of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health by all WHO member States at the fifty-fourth World Health Assembly in 2001 (see World Health Assembly resolution 54.21).

46. The work of WHO on disability statistics relates to the global and national monitoring of needs, the barriers and inequalities faced by people with disabilities and updates on that work in the period 2020–2021. In that context, WHO has been supporting countries to collect disability and functioning data at population level using the model disability survey, a population-based household survey. Two versions of the survey are currently available: a stand-alone version as a dedicated survey on disability and a brief version that could be used as a module and integrated into existing household surveys.

47. The model disability survey has been implemented nationwide as a dedicated disability survey in Afghanistan, Chile, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Qatar, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka. The brief version of the survey was implemented as a module with the Gallup World Poll in India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Tajikistan. The survey has also been implemented regionally in Cameroon (Adamawa), Pakistan (Balochistan) and the United Arab Emirates (Dubai). WHO provides its member States with technical support throughout the implementation process, with a strong focus on sustainable capacity-building strategies for national or regional statistical offices.

48. In the 2020–2021 period, WHO has continued to support member States in collecting disability data through the survey. Chile and Georgia are currently implementing the model disability survey at the national level. Chile is the first country to carry out a second round of data collection using the survey, having completed the first round in 2015. WHO has provided technical support and training to both countries to prepare the data collection and analyse the data. The reports and data from the surveys in Chile and Georgia will be made available in 2022.

49. WHO has developed a short instrument, the Functioning and Disability Disaggregation Tool, which can be integrated into existing surveys to allow for data disaggregation by disability. The instrument, which contains 11 questions, is derived from the model disability survey and is specifically designed to be used as a tool for the disaggregation of other indicators by disability. A full manual for the survey will be published at the beginning of 2022. WHO is currently integrating the Functioning and Disability Disaggregation Tool into its STEPwise Approach to Non-Communicable Disease Risk Factor Surveillance (STEPS) survey instrument as a separate module and is planning to include it in its next implementation round of the World Health Survey.

50. WHO is currently developing a report entitled “Global report on disability and health” on the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities. The report was requested by Member States in 2021 through World Health Assembly resolution 74.8 on the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities. Following the same methodology, the global report will include an update of the global and regional prevalence estimates on disability in the WHO *World Report on Disability 2011*. The report is expected to be published in December 2022.

III. Activities by the World Bank

51. The World Bank Group continues to make considerable progress on the 10 commitments¹¹ that it has made to accelerate global action towards disability-inclusive development. Two of these commitments specifically relate to data and statistics: one is aimed at scaling up disability data collection and usage, guided by the Washington Group short set on functioning, and the other at introducing questions on disability in the Women, Business and the Law project to better understand the

¹¹ See www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/07/24/world-bank-group-announces-new-commitments-on-disability-inclusion.

economic empowerment of women with disabilities. Since the update contained in the previous report (E/CN.3/2020/34), the World Bank has conducted several activities and initiatives that directly correspond to those two commitments, as elaborated below.

52. On the basis of *Disability Measurement in Household Surveys: A Guidebook for Designing Household Survey Questionnaires*,¹² published in January 2020, the World Bank has promoted the use of the Washington Group short set on functioning in household surveys and censuses. Specifically, the World Bank has provided technical assistance for the inclusion of the short set in World Bank-supported household surveys and censuses, such as the Mongolia Household Socioeconomic Survey, the Maldives Household Income and Expenditure Survey, the Tajikistan Household Budget Survey, the West African Economic and Monetary Union Regional Harmonized Surveys and the Kyrgyz Republic population and housing census. Data collection in these surveys and censuses has been expanded for several disaggregation dimensions, thus increasing the availability and quality of microdata on people with disabilities.

53. The Women, Business and the Law project examines how laws and regulations promote women's employment and entrepreneurship. The pilot research on the rights of women with disabilities¹³ was published in September 2020 and an accompanying blog¹⁴ was published on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in 2020. Data is available on the website of the Women, Business and the Law project, available at <https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/wbl-data>.

54. The Women, Business and the Law project is in the process of scaling up research to 190 economies and expanding its scope, having obtained a grant from the human rights, inclusion and empowerment umbrella trust fund. As part of this work, additional research questions were distributed on the protection of the rights of women with disabilities under family law, labour law and legislation on violence against women. These data were collected in the middle of 2021 and the World Bank is currently in the process of analysing it. Publication of the results is planned for the first half of 2022.

55. The additional research questions of the Women, Business and the Law project are as follows:

(a) Is there a law or policy that mandates reasonable accommodation for workers with disabilities?

(b) If the answer to the previous question is yes, does it mention women with disabilities?

(c) Are there incentives in law or policy for businesses to employ persons with disabilities (e.g. quotas, tax breaks, wage replacement, etc.)?

(d) If the answer to the previous question is yes, do they mention women with disabilities?

(e) Is there a law on gender equality or non-discrimination under which the rights of women with disabilities are specifically recognized and protected?

¹² See www.worldbank.org/en/programs/lms/publication/Disability-measurement-in-household-survey-a-guidebook-for-designing-household-survey-questionnaires.

¹³ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/517421606767152867-0050022020/original/WBL2020DisabilityTopicNote.pdf>.

¹⁴ See <https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/only-one-fourth-economies-worldwide-recognize-rights-women-disabilities>.

(f) Is there a law on persons with disabilities that specifically protects and promotes the rights of women with disabilities?

(g) Does the law provide support to women with disabilities in the exercise of their parental rights and responsibilities (e. g. the extension of maternity leave, financial aid, legal protection to keep custody for children, etc.)?

(h) Does the domestic violence law explicitly address women with disabilities?

(i) If the answer to the previous question is yes, does it also establish accessibility to services for women with disabilities who are survivors of violence?

(j) Is there legislation on sexual harassment against women with disabilities?

56. A self-paced e-course, “Collecting Data on Disability Inclusion”, has been developed together with the Open Learning Campus of the World Bank Group and Sightsavers. The work has been guided by two experts on disability-inclusive data and has been peer-reviewed by internal and external experts in this field. The e-course consists of nine modules and the core audience includes World Bank task team leaders, clients, statisticians, organizations of persons with disabilities and other development partners. The aim is to provide technical knowledge on disability disaggregated data to support inclusive development. The course has been available as of December 2021.

57. The World Bank Group assists countries in collaborating with other stakeholders and national Ministries of Education in integrating disability into the Educational Management Information System so that countries can design and deliver systems and services to improve the learning and meet the needs of children with disabilities. The pilots were conducted in Latin America, Asia and Africa, adapting the Washington Group/UNICEF module on child functioning to local contexts, and the work is continuing with follow-up investment where possible (such as in Guatemala and Nicaragua). In April 2021, the World Bank published guidelines on disability inclusion in education sector investment, including data considerations,¹⁵ on the basis of its experience and lessons learned.

58. The World Bank Group conducted an assessment and screening of questionnaires for the nationally representative household surveys and censuses, covering 134 low- and middle-income countries between 2009 and 2018. From the assessment of 629 survey and census questionnaires, the research indicated that 23 countries had household surveys and censuses that included questions from the Washington Group short set on functioning and 29 countries had household surveys and censuses that included questions that were similar to the short set. A subsequent analysis of disability data was conducted, including disaggregation of Sustainable Development Goal indicators by disability status, to improve the use of existing underutilized data. The resulting research papers were published as part of the World Bank working paper series.¹⁶

¹⁵ See <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/712711627321467972/pdf/Criteria-for-the-World-Bank-s-Disability-Inclusive-Investment-Project-Financing-IPF-in-Education.pdf>.

¹⁶ These papers are available at <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/745481618324212396/invisible-or-mainstream-disability-in-surveys-and-censuses-in-low-and-middle-income-countries> and <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/398321618325378227/inclusive-statistics-human-development-and-disability-indicators-in-low-and-middle-income-countries>.

IV. Activities by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics

59. The Washington Group was constituted as a city group in 2001. It was established to improve the quality and international comparability of disability statistics and has some 162 country members and partners, including multiple United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs, and organizations of persons with disabilities. Twenty-one annual meetings have been held using a regional rotation system to facilitate attendance. The 2021 annual meeting was held virtually because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

60. The Washington Group has developed multiple question sets that address different aspects of disability statistics and incorporate the definition of disability in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These include the Washington Group short set on functioning, the enhanced short set on functioning, the extended set on functioning, the module on child functioning and the labour force survey disability module. The sets have been developed collaboratively with partners and widely tested to ensure that they generate internationally comparable data relevant for policy and programme development and evaluation. They are extensively documented, including through guidance on implementation and analysis. The redesigned website of the Washington Group is optimized for accessibility and contains all updated documents, frequently asked questions and topical blogs to assist data collectors and users.¹⁷

61. The Washington Group short set on functioning consists of six questions assessing difficulties in core domains of functioning to identify those people who, in the absence of appropriate accommodations, are at greater risk of participation restrictions than the general population.¹⁸ The short set on functioning is therefore well suited to disaggregating data related to the Sustainable Development Goals. Having a disability is defined as “having a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do” in at least one of six core domains of functioning. Adding the short set to an existing survey allows for internationally comparable disaggregation of all indicators generated by that survey.

Short set on functioning

62. The short set on functioning has been included in: (a) censuses or surveys in over 111 countries; (b) projects supported by international aid programmes; (c) the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses (rev. 3)¹⁹ and the 2020 censuses of population and housing of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)²⁰ and ECLAC;²¹ (d) Demographic and Health Surveys; (e) some 70 Living Standards Measurement Studies sponsored by the World Bank and some 70 UNICEF-supported

¹⁷ All Washington Group documents, as well as detailed information on the Group and the rationale, development, testing and use of all its tools, can be found at www.washingtongroup-disability.com.

¹⁸ See <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/question-sets/wg-short-set-on-functioning-wg-ss/>.

¹⁹ United Nations publication ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/67/Rev.3.

²⁰ ECE, Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2020 Censuses of Population and Housing, 2015.

²¹ ECLAC, “Aspectos conceptuales de los censos de población y vivienda: desafíos para la definición de contenidos incluyentes en la ronda 2020” (2019). Available at https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/44944/1/S1900856_es.pdf.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (see below); (f) data collection in humanitarian settings; and (g) the work of multiple United Nations agencies, NGOs and academia.²²

Washington Group enhanced short set on functioning and the extended set on functioning

63. The enhanced short set on functioning and the extended set on functioning include additional domains not included in the short set on functioning and collect more information in some domains, as well as information on the impact of mobility assistive devices on functioning. The enhanced short set includes the additional domains of “affect” and “upper body functioning”; the extended set also includes pain, fatigue and upper body functioning. Both sets have scaled response categories to describe the level of functioning in each domain, similar to those used in the short set on functioning. The extended set has been implemented in 33 countries, with an additional 3 countries reporting plans to include the set in 2022 surveys.

Washington Group/International Labour Organization labour force survey disability module

64. The labour force survey disability module addresses the policy interest of ILO in establishing and monitoring the effectiveness and impact of national legislation, programmes or policies to promote equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities. The module was endorsed at the 2019 annual meeting of the Washington Group and has been integrated into the ILO model labour force survey questionnaire. ILO recommends the routine inclusion of the labour force survey disability module into the labour force survey questionnaire and the inclusion of the expanded module, including on barriers to employment, every two to five years.

Washington Group/United Nations Children’s Fund module on child functioning

65. The module on child functioning was adopted in 2016 and addresses functioning among children of 2 to 4 years of age in eight functional domains and among children of between 5 and 17 years of age in 12 domains. The module on child functioning and the short set on functioning (for the population aged 18 and above) have been incorporated into UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys that are currently at various stages of implementation in 71 countries.

Washington Group/United Nations Children’s Fund module on child functioning (teacher version)

66. The teacher version of the module on child functioning is designed to be responded to by teachers and is currently undergoing testing by Washington Group partners. In response to an increased interest in using the teacher version of the module in a variety of contexts, including humanitarian emergencies, the Secretariat convened a meeting in September 2021 to promote an exchange of knowledge among partners regarding their experience with the module and plans for evaluations.

²² The short set has been used by: (a) United Nations agencies: the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF, ILO, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the World Food Programme, WHO and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; and (b) international NGOs: CBM, Humanity and Inclusion, Save the Children and Sightsavers.

Washington Group/United Nations Children's Fund module on inclusive education

67. The module on inclusive education includes questions in three domains regarding school attendance and learning; attitudes towards education for all children; the accessibility of the physical environment, transportation to/from school, information, communication and programmes; and affordability. An out-of-school component is also included. Cognitive and field testing is scheduled for 2022, and the module is due to be finalized in late 2022.

Technical assistance and capacity-building

68. The Washington Group is developing regional and national capacity in disability measurement and data analysis and dissemination, as well as strengthening capacity among civil society organizations. The Group has conducted in-person workshops and webinars to support these efforts, but travel restrictions have led to increased participation in webinars and individualized virtual consultations with partners. In the 2020–2021 period, the Group has provided direct technical assistance to national statistical offices and other national public entities in seven countries and has responded to requests for information and for the translation of the tools, given presentations at conferences and seminars and contributed comments and inputs to the consultations and documents of its partners.

69. Recently, the Washington Group has been engaged in building capacity in disability data collection and analysis at the country and regional levels. To date, there are six active regional disability statistics groups,²³ with two groups based in Africa supported by an agreement with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany.

Planned activities for 2022

70. The Washington Group will continue its efforts to support regional disability statistics groups to advance the work among countries that share a common language or culture and common disability data challenges.

71. The following were identified at the 21st annual meeting as the next steps to be taken: (a) test psychosocial functioning questions; (b) develop questions on transportation; (c) finalize an age-adjustment guidance document; (d) facilitate exchanges on experiences with the teacher version of the module on child functioning and develop module evaluation guidance; (e) address the need for a focused disability survey; (f) address the use of the Washington Group tools in humanitarian contexts and disasters; (g) advance the plans of the regional disability statistics groups; (h) convene a midyear meeting in 2022; and (i) explore additional avenues of communication among the members.

72. The Washington Group disseminates its work products through its website (www.washingtongroup-disability.com) and scientific publications.

²³ The Washington Group regional disability statistics groups comprise: the Brazzaville group (French-speaking countries of Africa), the Buenos Aires group (countries of Latin America), the Casablanca group (Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East and North Africa), the Kathmandu group (South-Asian countries), the Pacific group (island States of the Pacific) and the South/East Africa group.

V. Summary and conclusions

73. The present report provides information on ongoing and planned activities of the various entities with regard to disability measurement and statistics. These activities, which are in the context of the 2030 Agenda, are intended to help countries to generate good quality data on disability for forming and monitoring policies aimed at ensuring that persons with disabilities are not left behind.
