

Inter-agency and Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disability Statistics in the Sustainable Development Goals

Workshop on establishing an Arab Disability Indicator Framework and improving data collection on persons with disabilities

Cairo, 18-20 September 2018
Hotel InterContinental Cairo Semiramis

REPORT

The very first time ESCWA brings together policy-makers, statisticians and DPOs to discuss Disability Statistics in the Sustainable Development Goals!

Summary Report

The Inter-agency and Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disability Statistics in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was held in Cairo, Egypt on 18-20 September 2018. This was the third meeting of a series for the Disability Statistics Programme launched in 2016 by ESCWA in its Statistics Division.

The workshop primarily aimed to develop an Arab Disability Indicators Framework to assist policy makers and statisticians to implement and monitor the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, the [Regional Guidebook to Improve Disability Data Collection and Analysis in Arab Countries: Implementing the Washington Group Questions on Functioning](#) was launched at this workshop.

The workshop brought together fifty-five participants who represented statistical offices, policy making bodies, UN agencies, and organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs). Twenty-two statisticians participated as representatives of statistical offices within the Western Asia region including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Sudan, Qatar, Tunisia, and Yemen. In addition, statisticians from the Washington Group, International Labour Organization (ILO), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS) were present. Twenty-three policy makers participated in the workshop as representatives from a variety of organizations and ministries with a focus on disability in the Western Asia region, including Egypt's National Council for Disability Affairs, Iraq's Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Jordan's Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (HCD), Kuwait's Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA), the International Disability Alliance, the World Health Organization, and others. Seven representatives from UN agencies participated including United Nations Women – Egypt Country Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United

Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and ESCWA. Three participants (Jahda Abou Khalil, Mervat Al-Samman, and Amro Abbas) represented organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) from the Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities (AOPD) and the DPI Arab Region.

During the first session of the workshop, the [Regional Guidebook to Improve Disability Data Collection and Analysis in Arab Countries](#) was launched. The regional Guidebook was developed in response to difficulties in standardization and implementation of the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS) and other related indicators used to capture data on persons with disabilities in Arab countries. When previously implemented, the WG-SS and other indicators manufactured results that were not comparable across countries, and the data collected was not disseminated for use. To ensure improvements in disability data collection in Arab countries, the regional Guidebook offers alternative strategies for the design, implementation, and analysis of disability data in Arab countries. It presents the Arab Washington Group Extended Short Set on Functioning (AWG-SS+) which seeks to collect disability data within eight domains: [original 6] seeing, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, and communication, adding 2 additional ones upper body questions on hands/fingers and arms.

. In addition, the regional Guidebook makes further recommendations to harmonize the comparability of disability data within the region. The launch of the regional Guidebook will allow for the collection, analysis, and availability of accurate and comparable disability data for the Arab region in the future.

During the second session, the implementation of the Washington Group Extended Set on Functioning included in the regional Guidebook was discussed. National statistical offices (NSOs) highlighted experiences and challenges in procuring accurate disability data, in addition to discussing future plans to improve data availability and comparability across Arab countries to ensure that no one is left behind. These discussions included presentations from [Morocco](#) on its Population and Housing Census from 2014, and [Yemen](#) on its National Household Budget Survey from 2014. Policy makers from Morocco and Jordan were then invited during the third session of the workshop to add their perspectives on the [difficulties of implementing disability policies](#) without quality data from the Arab region. They also highlighted the current needs of policy makers in relation to available resources and how NSOs can help to meet those needs.

The first day concluded with the fourth session, which assessed the availability of [disability indicators in SDGs](#) on the global and regional levels, allowing countries to also identify their role as data sources. Countries were invited to present their national plans to monitor SDG disability indicators. These open discussions helped in the development of the ESCWA Disability Indicators Metadata Handbook.

The second day of the workshop built upon discussions from the previous day regarding the [ESCWA Disability Indicators Metadata Handbook](#) by referring to the syntax used to produce relationships for demography, education, and employment indicators. To do so, representatives from [Palestine](#), and [Yemen](#) presented examples of using statistical software (STATA, SPSS) to produce disaggregated disability indicators in required

cross-tabulations Countries were invited to discuss and recommend improvements to the draft handbook.

The sixth session of the workshop addressed the [needs of those collecting disability data in the field](#), in terms of training, methods, and techniques to improve data accuracy. Representatives from Jordan, Tunisia, and Qatar were invited to share their experiences in accurate collection, analysis, and dissemination of disability data.

During the seventh session of the workshop, [Palestine](#) was invited to make a presentation proposal regarding the terms of reference of the CASA/ESCWA Group on Disability Statistics.

The eighth session of the workshop allowed for policy makers in the areas of poverty, health, violence, education, employment, accessibility, and sustainable cities to present a comprehensive overview of regional issues and priorities for persons with disabilities, localizing and enhancing the [Arab SDG disability indicator framework](#).

Workshop Resources

Session 1: Global and Regional Guidelines to improve disability statistics

- [The Washington Group on Disability Statistics](#)
- [ESCWA Statistics Division: Regional guidelines and Arab Washington Group Extended Short Set on Functioning \(AWG-SS+\)](#)
- [ILO: Labour market indicators for persons with disabilities for policy making and monitoring](#)

Session 2: Implementing the Washington Group Questions on Functioning in the Arab Region

- [ESCWA Statistics Division: checklist for implementation \(Arabic\)](#)
- [Yemen \(Arabic\)](#)
- [Iraq \(Arabic\)](#)
- [Morocco \(Arabic\)](#)

Session 3: Effective use of statistics in policy making and monitoring

- [ESCWA Statistics Division: Analysis of evidence for policy formulation \(Arabic\)](#)

Session 4: Disability indicators in SDGs and other development indicators

- [ESCWA Statistics Division \(Arabic\)](#)

Session 5: Methods to produce disaggregated cross-tabulated analysis

- [ESCWA Statistics Division: Metadata and Syntax Handbook](#)
- [Yemen](#)
- [Palestine](#)
- [Iraq](#)

Session 6: Field work training needs

- [ESCWA Statistics Division \(Arabic\)](#)

Session 7: Terms of reference of CASA/ESCWA Group on Disability Statistics: A proposal

- [Palestine \(Arabic\)](#)

Session 8: Arab SDG disability indicator framework

- [ESCWA Statistics Division: Disability Indicator Framework](#)