

FACTSHEET #1: COLLECTING DATA IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION USING THE WASHINGTON GROUP QUESTIONS



The Washington Group (WG) on Disability Statistics was tasked by the UN Statistical Commission to develop a set of questions to identify persons with disabilities for national statistical purposes.

After many years of testing, the WG produced the short set of questions designed to identify people who have difficulties in basic, universal activities and are at greater risk than persons without such difficulties of restricted social participation in an unaccommodating environment.

These universal activities include: seeing, hearing, walking, remembering or concentrating, self-care and communicating



WG Question sets

The WG have designed a range of questions sets:

- The **short set** (most commonly used)
- The **enhanced short set** (additional questions on upper body and MHPSS are included)
- The **Child Functioning Module** (designed with UNICEF)
- The **extended set** (when a lot more detail is required)

Why are these questions important?

1 They identify persons with disabilities as per the human-rights based approach



2 They do not stigmatise the respondent



3 They rely on self-reporting



4 They are internationally comparable



Want to know more?

- Check with the [WG website](#)
- Check out [Humanity & Inclusion's](#) learning resources on using the WGQs in humanitarian action



In humanitarian action, the WGQs gives us data on persons with disabilities that can, for example, help to:

Understand Demographics

Using the questions to collect data from a large population can give an idea of the number of persons with disabilities in a given area. This can be used to compare to national statistics, or to monitor against in programming.



Measure Access

The WGQs can be used to understand who is accessing (or not) a particular service or facility. This can be done either through regular monitoring activities, or by collecting data in the community and again at the service or facility for comparison.



Disaggregate Indicators

Data broken down by sex, age and disability is an informative way to understand whether project activities are reaching all groups. The WGQs are a simple, validated set of questions that can provide data to be used in this way.

