



Lessons learned

Disability-inclusive quality data collection: Strengthening the disability inclusion in humanitarian need assessments

Somalia

June 2024

LL 25-3



Background

The practice was collected as part of the 'From Guidelines to Action (FG2A)' project "supporting the operationalization and localization of **IASC Guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action**" funded by ECHO and CDP. This practice was collected from **REACH** Somalia.¹ This organization attended the review, adapt, action and learning (RAAL lab) in May 2023 with a Assessment Officer as a participant. The RAAL Lab is a capacity strengthening initiative and was used in combination with the adapted version of the **DRG Learning modules**, which were designed to operationalize the **IASC guidelines on disability inclusion**. During the RAAL Lab workshop the participant applied IASC guidelines to make their assessments disability inclusive. As part of the technical follow up process Humanity & Inclusion (HI) team collected best practices to understand better how the organization was taking forward the learning from the RAAL Lab.

What challenge is this practice addressing

Reliable information on persons with disabilities is scarce in Somalia and particularly data that is disaggregated by age, gender, and disability to monitor their access to humanitarian assistance, and data that provides information on the barriers and enablers, as well as disability specific risks faced and capacities they may have. It hampers government and humanitarian actors' ability to include them sufficiently in humanitarian responses. REACH as a leading agency to provide timely information on the humanitarian needs of displaced and vulnerable populations for making informed decisions and allocate appropriate resources, lacked tools to collect such data.

Before the participation in RAAL lab, the Multi-Sector Need Assessment (MSNA) 2023 tools did not include the Washington Group Questions. The assessment teams of REACH were not sufficiently skilled on disability inclusive data collection techniques.

1 REACH is a leading humanitarian initiative providing granular data, timely information and in-depth analysis from contexts of crisis, disaster and displacement. The work of REACH directly feeds into aid response and decision-making by providing accessible and precise information on the humanitarian situation of crisis-affected populations. REACH is responsible to conduct the multi-sector need assessment (MSNA) in Somalia.

How the practice developed

After attending the RAAL Lab workshop, the participant from REACH committed to adapting MSNA's tools to be disability inclusive and building capacity of their staff in line with the IASC guidelines on disability inclusion. They pursued the aim to strengthen disability inclusion in Humanitarian Needs and Response Plans in Somalia.

The REACH staff participated in RAAL Laboratory workshop, where the MSNA tools adapted to include the [Washington group short set of questions \(WG-SS\)](#) and more disability inclusive formulations of questionnaires to understand better the risks, capacities and specific requirements of persons with disabilities. While during the implementation of MSNA 2023 the Washington Group short set questions were excluded from the Multi-Sector Need Assessment (MSNA) 2023 by the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) because the ICCG decided to conduct a separate qualitative component of MSNA 2023 to analyze the situation of marginalized groups including persons with disabilities. However, the gaps remained for quantitative disability data in MSNA 2023. The tools were adapted to conduct key informant interviews (KIs), Focus group discussions (FDGs) and individual interviews with persons with disabilities, organization of persons with disabilities.

HI provided technical support to REACH through training of assessment teams on disability inclusive data collection techniques and conducting the disability inclusive KIs and FDGs. There were eight Key Informant Interviews conducted with Key Informants from organizations working with people with disabilities, including organization of persons with disabilities and eight individual interviews conducted with persons with disabilities in Afmadow, Baidoa, Mogadishu and Hargeisa Districts. The organizations of persons with disabilities were involved in adaptation of assessment tools, data collection and ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities.

The qualitative component pilot was initiated in consultation with the MSNA technical working group and the ICCG. The tools have then been shared for their input and validation. Once the data was collected, it was analyzed, and the key findings shared with the MSNA Technical working group (TWG) and UNOCHA.

REACH allocated resources to ensure reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities participating in the assessment (mainly transportation and accessible venues). Finally, the [Washington group short set of questions \(WG-SS\)](#) are included in the MSNA 2024. The training of enumerators is in progress at the time of writing this case study.

The practice was developed in collaboration with diverse stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, local communities, and humanitarian organizations, UN Agencies and Inter-cluster Coordination Group (ICCG).

What were the most significant results

The practice supported evidence-based decision-making for the 2023-2024 Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) process in Somalia. The [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan \(HNRP\) 2024](#) Somalia included the qualitative component's findings and recommendations for disability inclusive humanitarian action planning. It provided the qualitative analysis of the severity of population needs and examining the impact about persons with disabilities and to understand how persons with disabilities experienced crisis, identify barriers and the coping mechanisms they are using. The Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) and MSNA technical working group valued this qualitative analysis. REACH has also included Washington Group Questions in the questionnaires of Multi-Sector Need Assessment (MSNA) 2024 Somalia. The training of enumerators is in process by Humanity & Inclusion (HI) Somalia technical team.

What were key influencing factors or drivers for change

1. Participation of REACH in RAAL Lab learning session and REACH's commitment to implement the 4th must do action; disability inclusive data of the IASC Guidelines on disability inclusion
2. Provision of additional technical backup by Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
3. Advocacy by Disability Inclusion Working Group with ICCG which resulted in commitment of the key stakeholders including REACH, ICCG, and MSNA technical working Group for conducting qualitative analysis on situation of population groups most at risk of vulnerability, including persons with disabilities and finally inclusion of Washington Group Questions in MSNA 2024
4. Engagement with Organizations of persons with disabilities: REACH worked closely with Organization of persons with disabilities OPDs to support the process including the availability of key informant interviews from persons with disabilities and as well, as ensured the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities.
5. Collaboration with disability-inclusion specific organization who supported on adapting tools, guidance and trained assessment teams



Recommendations to facilitate the replication of this practice

1. RAAL Lab acquired first the skills and confidence of the REACH to adapt the tools and process, and discuss in the Working Group on adapting tools and process
2. REACH engaged OPDs in identifying participants for the qualitative data collection, from diverse backgrounds
3. Availability of OPDs and/or disability inclusion specialized actors are to provide additional technical backup
4. Training of assessment team is crucial to effectively collect data on disability and analysis
5. The disability inclusive data efforts should be coordinated effectively with Inter-Agency Cluster Coordination (ICCG), areas of responsibilities (AORs) and working groups
6. Coordinate effectively with the humanitarian response planners/managers for utilization of findings and recommendations of disability inclusive assessments

Point of view



The REACH's representative said, *“The qualitative analysis component for MSNA 2023 received very positive feedback from all the stakeholders and widely disseminated, referenced for many projects and programs planning”*.

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Cover Image

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The illustration takes place in the representative country office of the United Nations, a meeting place with leaders of the humanitarian organization, heads of government, and United Nations agencies. The environment is well organized.

In the meeting place, there is a bearded man holding a sheet with important information, a man in a wheelchair discussing accessibility issues with a woman, a black woman displaying a page with information, and a man with visual impairment discussing the content of a board on the wall with a woman who describes what it says.

On the table, there are several documents with figures and information related to the topic.

The evaluation report presented on the board shows that people with disabilities face multiple barriers, including attitudinal, institutional, communication, and physical barriers, to accessing humanitarian assistance and basic services in Somalia.

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The collection of case studies was a part of the '[From Guidelines to Action \(FG2A\)](#)' project, supporting the operationalization and localization of [IASC Guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action](#), funded by ECHO and the Center for Disaster Philanthropy.

The eight case studies come from protection and food security humanitarian organizations who are working on the Syria and Somalia responses. These organizations participated in Review, Adapt, Action and Learning (RAAL) laboratories on how to make food security or protection programming more disability inclusive. The RAAL Lab is a capacity strengthening initiative and was used in combination with the adapted version of the [DRG Learning modules](#), which are designed to operationalize [the IASC guidelines on disability inclusion](#).

The case studies demonstrate how humanitarian tools and/or operational practices were adapted to become more disability-inclusive.

We hope these case studies will contribute towards fostering inter-agency learning and enhance disability inclusive practices in humanitarian action. We would like to thank the participating organizations for their input and willingness to engage in this process. Please note that for reasons of security the names of organizations from some of the case studies have not been included.

Find out more by contacting us at inclusion@hi.org

