

UNHCR Specific Needs Codes – Disability Interview Guide

This guide is to support the use of the Specific Needs Codes for Disability presented in the table in page 2 and integrated in UNHCR proGres v4. It can be used as an *aide mémoire* during registration activities, protection interviews, vulnerability assessments and other relevant data collection efforts.

1. **Support identification of disabilities.** To improve identification of persons with disabilities at registration, the questions proposed in this guidance should be asked to **all persons** registered in proGres v4 or engaged in individual data collection efforts (e.g. surveys). Continuous registration can provide opportunities for identification of person with disabilities.
2. **Ask questions and select response categories based on answers.** In regular circumstances, it will take between one and three minutes to ask all questions set out below to identify persons with disabilities. Additional time may be needed where individuals require communication supports.
3. **Provide support if required.** For individuals who have difficulties communicating (understanding or being understood), it is important to first ask how they prefer to communicate (e.g. in writing, using a sign language interpreter, or with assistance from a support person).
4. **Collect individual data whenever possible.** The questions set out below are to be asked in individual registration and should where possible, be asked of all members of the household. Where operational exigencies do not allow, the questions should be posed to the focal point of the registration group or the adult members of the family (e.g. head of the household, primary applicant, or a trusted adult), on behalf of the individuals within the family/ registration group.
5. **Do not use the word disability.** It is important that no prior screening questions are asked (e.g. ‘do you have a disability?’) before asking the questions set out below. This is because disability is understood differently in different contexts and often carries stigma. Further, asking questions about disability may create expectations for assistance that cannot be met.
6. **Avoid making assumptions, including based on visual observations.** For example, if an individual is using a wheelchair or other mobility aid, do not assume that they are not able to walk. Instead, ask all the questions and collect answers.
7. **Informed consent procedures.** Like any other individual, persons with disabilities should provide informed consent (or assent, in case of youth under 18 years-old) before their data is collected and shared.
 - Usual processes for obtaining and recording informed consent may need to be adapted to an individual’s needs and preferences. For example, some individuals may need additional time to make decisions about sharing their personal data or may request assistance from a trusted support person.
 - In the case of children, consent should be, in most cases, obtained from the child’s accompanying parent, family member with parental responsibility, or legal or customary caregiver.¹
8. **Emergency registration:** In emergency settings with clear time and capacity constraints, a simplified version of the codes may be used. In this case, only for the emergency registration purpose, use the following question to identify persons with disabilities: ‘Does anyone in the family/group have a lot of difficulty with walking, seeing, hearing, or remembering? Would you say... [Yes]?’. As soon as possible, check sub-categories and use the guiding questions in SNC-DS entity.
9. **Use information for disability inclusion.** The questions do not provide proof of disability but will support identifying persons who may face barriers in accessing services, heightened risks of abuse or discrimination, or additional needs such as assistive devices. These actions may require additional assessment and referrals, including to disability certification processes in country if these are available for refugees with disabilities.

¹ Refer to paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 of the [Operational Guidelines on Data Protection](#) for further guidance on seeking consent from persons with disabilities and assent/consent in the case of children.

SPN sub-category	SPN Code	Washington Group Question for adult individuals	Washington Group Question for children
<p>Lower Body Mobility Person who has a limitation or difficulty in moving around on foot</p>	DS-LBM	<p>Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty > record in proGres Cannot do at all > record in proGres</p>	<p>Compared with children of the same age, does (name) have difficulty walking? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>
<p>Upper Body Mobility Person who has a limitation lifting or carrying objects and using their arms and/ or hands</p>	DS-UBM	<p>Do you have difficulty lifting objects or using your hands and fingers? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>Compared with children of the same age, does (name) have difficulty picking up small objects with his/ her hand? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>
<p>Vision Person who has vision difficulties, including seeing things close up or far away</p>	DS-V	<p>Do you have difficulty seeing? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>Does (name) have difficulty seeing? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>
<p>Hearing Person who has hearing limitations or difficulties of any kind with their hearing</p>	DS-H	<p>Do you have difficulty hearing? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>Does (name) have difficulty hearing sounds like people's voices and music? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>
<p>Communication Person who has difficulty with talking, listening or understanding speech such that it contributes to difficulty in making themselves understood to others or understanding others</p>	DS-C	<p>Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood by others? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>(Children 5 years and older) When (name) speaks, does he/ she have difficulty being understood or understanding others? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>

<p>Emotions and behavior Person who has difficulties in controlling emotions, as indication of mental health issues or psychosocial disabilities</p>	<p>DS- EB</p>	<p>Do you have difficulty controlling your emotions? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>(Children 5 years and older) Compared with children of the same age, does (name) have difficulty controlling his/her behaviour? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>
<p>Remembering and concentrating Person who has difficulties with recalling incidents or events, accomplishing tasks such as reading, calculating numbers, and learning something</p>	<p>DS-RC</p>	<p>Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>(Children 5 years and older) Does (name) have difficulty concentrating on an activity that he/she enjoys doing? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>
<p>Self-Care Person who has difficulties with the processes of cleaning one's entire body, and putting clothing on the upper and lower body</p>	<p>DS-SC</p>	<p>Do you have difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>	<p>(Children 5 years and older) Does (name) have difficulty with self-care such as feeding or dressing him/herself? Would you say... [No difficulty Some difficulty] A lot of difficulty Cannot do at all</p>