

Brief Model Disability Survey (Brief MDS)

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE SEPTEMBER 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	2
2	How is disability defined in the Model Disability Survey?.....	2
3	How can the Brief MDS be incorporated into an existing survey?	2
4	How is disability measured in the Model Disability Survey?.....	3
5	Which tables are generated with the Brief MDS?	5
6	Appendix.....	7
7	Contact.....	24

1 Introduction

This implementation guide has been prepared for users of the Brief version of the **Model Disability Survey (MDS)**, a general population survey tool developed by the World Health Organization and the World Bank in collaboration with a diverse group of stakeholders.

The MDS is grounded in the **International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)** and its **core goals** are to:

- Provide detailed and nuanced information on the lives of people with disability;
- Allow comparison between groups with differing levels and profiles of disability; and
- Provide the evidence needed by policy-makers to identify which interventions are required to optimize the inclusion and functioning of people with disability.

While the **MDS** is a full general population survey, the brief version of the MDS (“Brief MDS”) was developed to be integrated in health and other specific surveys to facilitate easier and straightforward, continuous monitoring of functioning and disability in a region or country.

The **Brief MDS** therefore includes only **fundamental MDS modules** necessary to describe disability – module 3000 environmental factors; module 4000 functioning; and module 5000 capacity and health conditions – and a reduced number of questions.

As the **Brief MDS** is not a stand-alone survey, this implementation guide does not include the usual manual information (for example, how to conduct interviews or approach households), but focuses on introducing the **Brief MDS** and its goals as well as on providing a straightforward question-by-question guide in the appendix.

A detailed manual of the **Model Disability Survey (MDS)** is available at <http://www.who.int/disabilities/data/mds/en/>.

2 How is disability defined in the Model Disability Survey?

The definition of disability in a survey is of core importance because it will influence the numerical results, for instance the rate of persons with severe disability. In the MDS – an ICF based survey – disability is understood as:

- **The outcome of an interaction between a person’s health condition(s) and the physical, human-built, attitudinal and socio-political environment in which the person lives.** It is not solely the result of an internal attribute of the person due to impairments or health conditions.
- **A continuum, ranging from no disability (or full functioning) to very high levels of disability.** Disability is therefore a matter of degree, and the experience of disability is diverse and universal.
- **Etiologically neutral.** The nature and degree of disability cannot be directly inferred from health conditions. Etiological neutrality ensures parity between disability arising from physical and mental health conditions.

3 How can the Brief MDS be incorporated into an existing survey?

The Brief MDS can be added as an additional module to an existing specific survey. The WHO recommends that the parts of the Brief MDS remain together and in the same order within the larger survey. If the existing survey is a health-survey, then the question about specific health conditions (B5013) in Module 5000 Capacity is no longer necessary.

4 How is disability measured in the Model Disability Survey?

For disability measurement purposes, two key ICF concepts are used in the MDS: capacity and performance. **Capacity** is the synthesis of all the intrinsic physical and mental functioning of a person, determined by his or her health conditions or impairments. Persons with especially severe capacity difficulties have specific needs that must be addressed to avoid severe problems with performance. **Performance** represents the outcome of the interaction between the individual's capacity and features of the physical, human-built, attitudinal and socio-political environment in which the person lives. Performance is the operationalization of disability under the ICF and is the core focus of the MDS.

Because disability is understood as the outcome of the interaction between a person with a health condition and aspects of the environment, it is essential to collect information on the presence of **health conditions or impairments** and on environmental factors. **Environmental factors** are broadly defined in the MDS as all external factors that affect the individual's lived experience of disability, such as assistive devices, family support, attitudes of peers, the health care system or the design of places to socialize in the community.

Details of the collection of information on capacity, performance, environmental factors and health conditions in the **Brief MDS** are presented below.

4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Environmental factors are measured in the **Brief MDS** in two sections.

Module "**3000A Environmental Factors**" is placed at the beginning of the **Brief MDS** and encompasses nine questions about:

- Hindering or facilitating aspects of the environment;
- Family and social support;
- Attitudes of others.

Module "**3000B Personal Assistance and Assistive Products**" is placed at the end of the **Brief MDS** and includes specific questions that are generally relevant only to the part of a sample experiencing higher levels of disability. Section 3000B encompasses questions about use and need of personal assistance and assistive products.

4.2 PERFORMANCE

Performance is measured in the Brief MDS in the section "**4000 Functioning**" using 12 questions asking how much of a problem the person experiences in the following domains:

- Mobility (walking a kilometer, getting where you want to go and using public or private transportation);
- Self-Care (being clean and dressed, toileting and looking after your health);
- Energy and drive (feeling tired and not having enough energy);
- Dealing with stress (coping with all the things one must do);
- Cognition (remembering important things in day-to-day life);
- Household tasks (getting household tasks done);
- Community participation (joining community activities);
- Work and education (getting things done as required at work or school);

4.3 CAPACITY

Capacity is measured in the Brief MDS in the section "**5000 Capacity & Health Conditions**" using 12 questions asking how much difficulty the person has because of a health condition in:

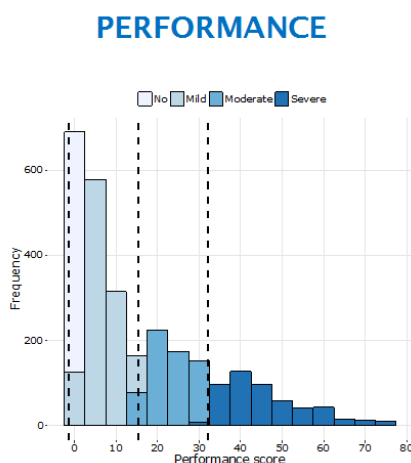
- Seeing (at a distance);
- Hearing;
- Mobility (walking or climbing steps);
- Cognition (remembering or concentrating);
- Self-care (washing or dressing);
- Energy and drive (sleeping);
- Household tasks;
- Community participation (joining community activities);
- Affect (feeling sad, low, worried or anxious);
- Interpersonal relationships (getting along with people who are close);
- Pain.

This section starts with the question “How would you rate your health today?” to support respondents focusing their attention on health. The last question of this module asks about the presence of a health condition.

4.4 What data can be produced with the Brief MDS?

4.4.1 Distribution of disability in the population of interest.

A **continuum** ranging from low to high levels of disability is generated. The distribution is used to monitor disability in the country – through general population surveys, such as household surveys – or to examine the level of disability in specific populations – through specific surveys, such as labor force surveys. The distribution can be stratified by gender and age, as well as other relevant indicators.

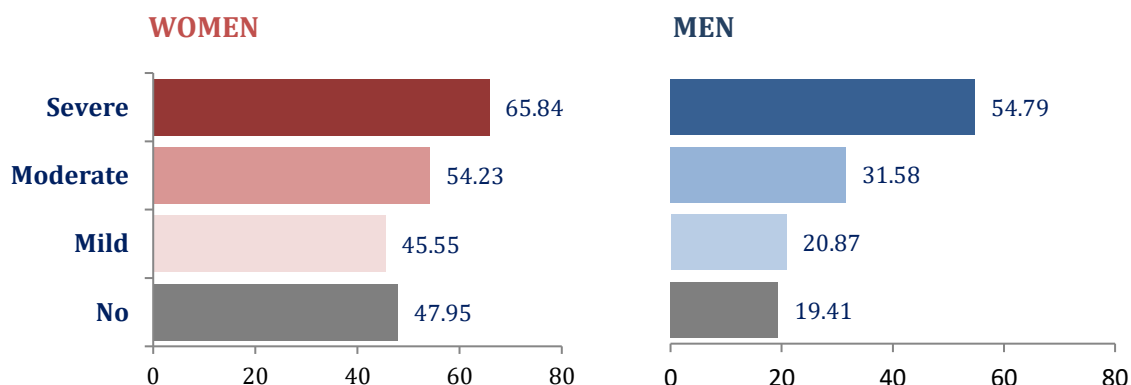


The continuum is a metrical scale developed using Item Response Theory (IRT) with questions from Module 4000. The scale is then linearly transformed to range from 0 (lowest level of disability) to 100 (highest level of disability). WHO offers technical support to develop the metrical scale of disability for each country.

4.4.2 Definition of groups experiencing mild, moderate or severe disability for disaggregation purposes.

The disability distribution can be partitioned using specific, fit for purpose thresholds, to identify the groups experiencing severe, moderate and mild disability in the sample. These groups can be used to disaggregate **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** indicators by disability. As an

illustrative example, for SDG goal 8, indicator 8.5.2: “*Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities*”, the percentage of unemployed persons disaggregated by **gender** and **level of disability** (severe, moderate, mild, no) would be presented as below.



WHO currently recommends the cut-offs below. However, it is important to note that any cut-off must be fit to purpose and might differ depending on the goals of the survey in which the Brief MDS has been incorporated.

Target group	Cut-off criteria
No disability	Score < Mean – 1SD or Score = 0
Mild disability	Mean – 1SD < Score < Mean
Moderate disability	Mean < Score < Mean + 1SD
Severe disability	Score ≥ Mean + 1SD

4.4.3 Information on basic aspects of the environment, barriers and needs associated with different levels of disability.

The Brief MDS includes a very brief set of key questions on general aspects of the environment, social support, attitudes of others, use and need of personal assistance, and use and need of assistive products. Information on these indicators, disaggregated by disability level, can be estimated and provide a general understanding of barriers and needs faced by persons in their day-to-day life. WHO provides regions and countries with tabulation syntaxes to report environmental factors.

5 Which tables are generated with the Brief MDS?

This guide provides countries with templates of the tables that can be generated with the brief MDS. Some important points about these tables are:

- Questions B4001 to B4012 are exclusively used to build a scale of disability while questions B5002 to B5012 are exclusively used to build a metrical scale of capacity.
- The scale of disability will be then parceled using pre-defined cut-offs to define the groups with none, mild, moderate and severe disability for disaggregation purposes.
- If it is of interest for the country, selected questions can be reported individually. However, it is important to stress that these questions have been selected based on their suitability to create a valid and reliable score, and do not necessarily report the most important functioning domains of a population.
- All indicators, both from the Brief MDS and from the specific survey in which it was integrated, will be disaggregated by disability level, namely none, mild, moderate and severe levels;

- Since capacity is also measured in the Brief MDS, indicators can also be disaggregated by capacity level (no, mild, moderate and severe difficulties).
- Indicators that can be generated from the Brief MDS refer to the following aspects of the environment:
 - Questions 3001 to 3004 ask about aspects of the general environment;
 - Questions 3005 to 3007 ask about social support;
 - Questions 3008 and 3009 ask about the attitudes of others;
 - Questions 3010 to 3012 ask about use and need of personal assistance;
 - Questions 3013 to 3015 ask about use and need of assistive technology.

Tables templates are provided in the appendix.

6 Appendix

6.1 Templates of tables generated with Brief MDS data

6.1.1 Template – disaggregation by disability level (performance)

Indicators	Disability level							
	No problems		Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%

6.1.2 Template – brief MDS indicators disaggregation by disability level (performance)

6.1.2.1 General aspects of the environment

Table 1: Persons endorsing that different aspects of their general environment are hindering or very hindering (response options 4 or 5) disaggregated by disability level.

Indicators	Disability level							
	No problems		Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Places for socializing or for community activities								
Shops, banks and post office								
Transportation								
Dwelling								

6.1.2.2 Social support

Table 2: Persons endorsing that getting help from family members, friends and neighbors is hard or very hard (response options 4 or 5) disaggregated by disability level.

Persons endorsing it is hard or very hard to get help from:	Disability level							
	No problems		Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Close family members								
Friends and co-workers								
Neighbors								

6.1.2.3 Attitudes of Others

Table 3: Persons endorsing not or not at all regarding being able to make own choices and feeling respected by others (response options 1 or 2) disaggregated by disability level.

Persons endorsing not or not at all regarding:	Disability level							
	No problems		Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Making own choices about day to day life, for instance where to go, what to do, what to eat								

Persons endorsing not or not at all regarding:	Disability level								
	No problems		Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Feeling respected by others, for instance being valued as a person and listened to									

6.1.2.4 Personal assistance

Table 4: Persons endorsing that they have, have but need more, or don't have but need personal assistance (response option yes) disaggregated by disability level.

Persons endorsing that they:	Disability level								
	No problems		Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Have personal assistance for day to day activities at home and outside									
Have but need more personal assistance for day to day activities at home and outside									
Don't have but need more personal assistance for day to day activities at home and outside									

6.1.3 Assistive technologies

Table 5: Persons endorsing that they have, have but need more, or don't have but need assistive products (response option yes or selection of one or more assistive technologies) disaggregated by disability level.

Persons endorsing that they:	Disability level					
	Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Use assistive products						
Use but need more assistive products						
Don't use but need assistive products						

Table 6: Most used assistive products disaggregated by disability level.

Assistive products	Disability level					
	Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Canes or Sticks						
Crutches, axillary or elbow						
Orthoses, lower limb, upper limb or spinal						
Pressure relief cushions						
Prostheses, lower limb						
Rollators						
Standing frames, adjustable						
Therapeutic footwear; diabetic, neuropathic, orthopedic						
Tricycles						
Walking frames or walkers						
Wheelchair						

Spectacles; low vision, short distance, long distance, filters and protection						
White cane						
Hearing aids						
Others						

Table 7: Most needed assistive products by persons, who have or have not any assistive product, disaggregated by disability level.

Used assistive products	Disability level					
	Mild problems		Moderate problems		Severe problems	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Canes or Sticks						
Crutches, axillary or elbow						
Orthoses, lower limb, upper limb or spinal						
Pressure relief cushions						
Prostheses, lower limb						
Rollators						
Standing frames, adjustable						
Therapeutic footwear; diabetic, neuropathic, orthopedic						
Tricycles						
Walking frames or walkers						
Wheelchair						
Spectacles; low vision, short distance, long distance, filters and protection						
White cane						
Hearing aids						
Others						

6.2 Question-by-question guide

The following section contains guidance about what each question is referring to and how to prompt the respondent, if necessary. The questions are presented in the order in which they are asked in the survey. The tables provide guidelines for completing each questions. The questionnaire can be found in Section 6.3 on page 20 of this guide. Respondents may refer to “show cards” for some questions, which are cards with images used to facilitate the selection of a response. They are provided by the WHO.

6.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS – Module 3000A

The purpose of questions B3001 to B3004 is to identify hindering or facilitating factors in the environment that may influence health-related day-to-day problems so that specific interventions can be designed and developed. Response options are on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means “very easy” and 5 means “very hard.” The interviewer should read aloud all response options to the respondent and circle the response option selected.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B3001	To what extent do places where you socialize and engage in community activities make it easy or hard for you to do this?	The respondent should evaluate diverse aspects of places he or she visits to socialize and engage in community activities such as the design and construction of the buildings, the accessibility of entrances and exits, and the amount of space and facilities available.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B3002	To what extent do the shops, banks and post office in your neighborhood make it easy or hard for you to use them?	The respondent should evaluate diverse aspects of shops, banks and the post office in the neighborhood such as the design and construction of the buildings, the accessibility of entrances and exits, and the amount of space and facilities available.
B3003	To what extent does the transportation you need or want to use make it easy or hard for you to use it?	The respondent should evaluate diverse aspects of the transportation he or she needs to use such as the availability and accessibility of means of transportation, the amount of space available or how “barrier-free” it is.
B3004	To what extent does your dwelling, including the toilet, make it easy or hard for you to live there?	The respondent should evaluate diverse aspects of his or her own dwelling such as the amount of space available, cleanliness, opportunities for privacy, facilities available (such as electricity, running water), and the quality of the construction of the building (such as roof leaks and dampness).

The table below provides guidelines for completing questions B3005 to B3007, which relate to family and social support. Response options are on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means “very easy” and 5 means “very hard.” The interviewer should read aloud all response options to the respondent and circle the response option selected.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
Should you need help, how easy is it for you to get help from:		
B3005	a close family member (including your partner)	Respondents should evaluate how easy it is for them to get help from close family members such as parents, children or partners.
B3006	friends and co-workers	Respondents should evaluate how easy it is for them to get help from friends and co-workers.
B3007	neighbors	Respondents should evaluate how easy it is for them to get help from neighbors.

The table below provides guidelines for completing questions B3008 and B3009, which relate to the attitudes of others to the respondent. Questions are based on the Disabilities Module of the WHOQOL-BREF. Response options are on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “completely.” The interviewer should read aloud all response options to the respondent and circle the response option selected.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B3008	Do you make your own choices about your day-to-day life? For example, where to go, what to do, what to eat.	Respondents should evaluate to what extent they can make own choices about day-to-day life, for example where to go, what to do, what to eat.
B3009	Do you feel that other people respect you? For example, do you feel that others value you as a person and listen to what you have to say?	Respondents should evaluate to what extent they feel that other people respect them.

6.2.2 FUNCTIONING – Module 4000

Questions B4001 to B4012 refer to respondent’s overall problems in daily life. “Problems” means not getting things done in the way the person wants or not getting things done at all. These problems may arise because of the person’s health or because of the environment in which the person lives. They may also arise because of the attitudes or behaviors of people around the

person. **In this module, it is therefore essential to prompt respondents to keep in mind people who help them, any assistive product they use or any medication they take when answering each question.**

Respondents are required to answer how much of a problem they experience on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means “no problem” and 5 means “extreme problem.”

For all questions the interviewer should read aloud all response options to the respondent, use a show card if necessary, and circle only one response option.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B4001	How much of a problem is walking a kilometer for you?	Walking a kilometer usually corresponds to walking the length of ten football fields or ten city blocks. Example: A person cannot walk a kilometer because he or she would need crutches for that and does not have them → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering that crutches are not available.
B4002	How much of a problem is getting where you want to go for you?	Problems include moving around outside the house to get to different places, such as the workplace or places of worship. Problems could be mobility limitations, anxiety associated to leaving the house or lack of accessible transportation, for example. Example: A person with severe epilepsy can only go out accompanied by somebody else but family and friends have very little time → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering the need of having personal support and the lack of time of family and friends.
B4003	How much of a problem is being clean and dressed?	Respondents should consider activities such as gathering clothing from storage areas (e.g. closet, dressers), putting clothes on, securing buttons, tying knots, combing hair, and brushing teeth. Example: A person with Parkinson’s disease has no problems getting dressed and clean because of the help of a personal assistant → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering the help of the personal assistant.
B4004	How much of a problem is toileting?	Toileting includes regulating urination, defecation, menstrual care, and cleaning oneself afterwards. Example: A person with rheumatoid arthritis has important problems toileting and uses assistive devices that make toileting possible → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering the assistive devices.
B4005	How much of a problem is looking after your health, eating well, exercising or taking your medicines?	Looking after one’s health includes eating well, having regular health check-ups, exercising or taking prescribed medicines. Example: A person with substance abuse issues can look after his or her health with the support of community care → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering community care.
B4006	How much of a problem is feeling tired and not having enough energy?	Problems include reduced level of energy and vitality that affects daily life, for instance fatigue. Example: After a stroke a person feels easily tired and the supervisor at work does not allow regular breaks → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering the situation at work.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B4007	How much of a problem is coping with all the things you have to do?	Problems include not being able to keep up at work or school, being late for appointments, or not being able to get housework done. Example: A person developed problems coping with all the things she/he has to do after an injury leading to chronic pain and now relies on the support of friends and neighbors → The respondent should describe how big the problem is taking into account the support of friends and neighbors.
B4008	How much of a problem is remembering to do the important things in your day to day life?	This question refers to problems recalling things that are important to him or her, such as important appointments and deadlines. Example: A person with Parkinson's disease who has significant memory impairments uses an alarm clock to remember medication intake time → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, taking into account the support of the alarm clock.
B4009	How much of a problem do you have with getting your household tasks done?	Problems involve all aspects of maintaining the household and needs of the household or family, including physical, financial, and psychological needs. Examples of household tasks are cleaning the living area, washing and drying clothes, using household appliances, storing daily necessities and disposing of garbage. Example: A person with spinal cord injury using a wheelchair has no problems getting housework done because a personal assistant takes care of it → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering the personal assistant.
B4010	How much of a problem do you have with joining community activities, such as festivities, religious or other activities?	This question includes being involved in town meetings, fairs, and leisure or sport activities in the town, neighborhood or community. Example: A person in a wheelchair has no problems joining festivities because of the support of the family and the accessibility of places in the neighborhood → The respondent should describe how big the problem is considering the support of the family and the accessibility of the neighborhood.
B4011	How much of a problem is using public or private transportation?	This question includes using transportation to move around as a passenger, such as riding the train or being driven in a car, bus, rickshaw, or private or public taxi. Example: A person in wheelchair cannot use public transportation because it is not barrier-free → The respondent should describe how big the problem is, considering that public transportation is not barrier-free.
B4012	How much of a problem is getting things done as required at work or school?	This question includes performing the expected job-related tasks to keep an occupation, trade, profession or other form of employment, as well as working cooperatively with other students and completing assigned tasks and projects. Work example: A person with diabetes can no longer perform work tasks as required and gets no support from her or his boss → The respondent should describe how big the problem is considering the lack of support at work from her or his supervisor. School example: A person with depression can no longer complete tasks as required and gets no support from her or his teachers → The respondent should describe how big the problem is considering the lack of support from her or his teachers.

6.2.3 CAPACITY – Module 5000

Questions B5002 to B5012 refer to problems in day-to-day life exclusively because of health issues. The entrance question B5001 requests the respondent to rate his or her own health and was selected as the first question in order to encourage respondents to focus on health. The last question of this section asks about the presence of a health condition or impairment, and should not be asked if the brief MDS has been included to a health survey.

Respondents are required to answer how much difficulty they have on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means “no difficulty” and 5 means “extreme difficulty.”

For all questions the interviewer should read aloud all response options to the respondent, use a show card if necessary, and circle only one response option.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B5001	I will start with a question about your overall health, including your physical and your mental health: In general, how would you rate your health today?	Respondent should evaluate his or her general health including physical and mental health using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means very good and 5 means very bad.
B5002	How much difficulty do you have seeing things at a distance [without glasses]?	An example of seeing things at a distance is seeing across the street. The respondent should consider difficulties seeing arising only from health problems and not consider glasses or contact lenses. Example: A person has difficulties seeing things at a distance but uses glasses → The respondent should describe how big the problem is without considering the glasses.
B5003	How much difficulty do you have hearing [without hearing aids]?	This question targets hearing limitations or difficulties of any kind arising from health problems, for instance difficulties hearing in a noisy environment, or difficulties distinguishing sounds from different sources. Example: A person with a hearing impairment has important difficulties compensated by a hearing aid → The respondent should describe how big the difficulties are without considering the hearing aid.
B5004	How much difficulty do you have walking or climbing steps?	The question targets difficulties walking short or long distances or difficulties walking up or down steps because of a health condition or impairment. Example: A person cannot walk short distances because of important problems with balance arising from a stroke → The respondent should describe how big the problem is without considering any support received or devices used to walk short distances.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B5005	How much difficulty do you have remembering or concentrating?	The question includes difficulties concentrating on what one is doing, forgetting what month it is or forgetting what someone just said because of a health condition or impairment. Example: A person with Parkinson's disease has significant difficulties remembering medication intake time → The respondent should describe how big the problem is without considering any device to help take medication on time.
B5006	How much difficulty do you have washing all over or dressing?	The question targets difficulties cleaning one's entire body including cleaning hair and feet, as well as difficulties putting on clothing or garments that arise because of a health condition or impairment. Example: A person with a side paralysis after a stroke has significant difficulties dressing him- or herself → The respondent should describe how big the difficulties are without considering any help or assistive devices.
B5007	How much difficulty do you have sleeping because of your health?	Respondents should evaluate the difficulties they have with sleeping, such as difficulties falling asleep or waking up too early, because of their health. Example: A person has difficulties falling asleep and uses relaxation techniques to handle them → The respondent should describe the extent of the difficulties without the use of relaxation techniques.
B5008	How much difficulty do you have doing household tasks because of your health?	Respondents should evaluate the difficulties they have doing household tasks, such as doing laundry, cleaning or putting out the garbage, because of their health. Example: A person with spinal cord injury has important difficulties getting housework done but has a personal assistant who takes care of it → The respondent should describe the extent of the difficulties without the help of the personal assistant.
B5009	Because of your health, how much difficulty do you have with joining community activities, such as festivities, religious or other activities?	The question includes being involved in town meetings, fairs, leisure or sport activities in the town, neighborhood or community. Respondents should evaluate the difficulties they have in joining community activities because of their health. Example: A person in a wheelchair can join festivities because of the support of the family → The respondent should describe the extent of the difficulties without the support of the family.
B5010	How much difficulty do you have with feeling sad, low, worried or anxious because of your health?	Respondents should evaluate the difficulties they have with feeling sad, low, worried or anxious because of their health. Example: A person with important memory impairments feels very often sad and anxious but gets support from the spouse → The respondent should describe the extent of the difficulties without considering the support from the spouse.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B5011	Because of your health, how much difficulty do you have getting along with people who are close to you, including your family and friends?	Getting along with people who are close includes showing respect, warmth, appreciation, and tolerance in relationships, responding to criticism and social cues in relationships, and using appropriate physical contact. Respondents should evaluate difficulties they have because of their health. Example: A person has increasing difficulties getting along with people who are close after a stroke but can handle these interactions when the spouse is present → The respondent should describe the extent of the difficulties without considering support of the spouse.
B5012	How many bodily aches or pains do you have?	Respondents should evaluate how many bodily aches or pains they have because of their health. Example: A person has chronic pain and uses meditation techniques to cope with it → The respondent should describe how much pain he/she has without using meditation techniques.
B5013	Do you currently have any of these diseases or health problems?	This question is not necessary if the brief MDS has been included to a health survey. The interviewer should use show card B003 and circle all mentioned diseases or health problems. The list of health conditions proposed focuses on the most burdensome health conditions worldwide and should be tailored to national needs to capture the most prevalent or serious health conditions in the national or regional setting.

The table below describes each of the health conditions listed as a response option for question B5013.

Response option No.	Health condition or impairment	Guide for completion
1	Vision loss	<p>Vision loss is the absence of vision or a decreased ability to see to a degree that causes <u>problems not fixable by usual means, such as glasses</u>. It can happen either acutely (i.e. abruptly) or chronically (i.e. over a long period of time) for instance due to cataracts, a disease in which the lenses of the eyes become cloudy and opaque, causing partial or total blindness. The term blindness is used for complete or nearly complete vision loss.</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term “vision loss,” describe it as problems with vision, even when using the best possible corrective lenses or glasses.</p>
2	Hearing loss	<p>Deafness, hearing impairment, or hearing loss is a partial or total inability to hear caused by many different factors, including but not limited to age, noise, illness, chemicals and physical trauma.</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term “hearing loss,” describe it as having diminished sensitivity to the sounds that are normally heard.</p>
3	High blood pressure (Hypertension)	<p>Hypertension or high blood pressure is a persistent elevation of the pressure in the arteries that may impair heart, brain or kidney function over time.</p>
4	Heart disease, coronary disease, heart attack	<p>Heart disease or angina (angina pectoris) is a symptom indicating chronic heart disease.</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the terms, describe the condition as the presence of temporary pain in the chest that can radiate to other parts of the upper body, mainly to the left arm.</p>
5	Stroke, e.g. cerebral bleeding	<p>Strokes are caused by disruption of the blood supply to the brain. This may result from either blockage (ischaemic stroke) or rupture of a blood vessel (haemorrhagic stroke).</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term "stroke," explain that it is an injury to the brain – usually a sudden and severe attack. It can cause permanent or temporary paralysis (inability to move, usually down one side of the body) and loss of speech.</p>
6	Diabetes	<p>Diabetes is also called diabetes mellitus or “high blood sugar.”</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term “diabetes”, describe the condition as a chronic (or long-term) condition whereby a person has problems producing insulin. Insulin helps to turn what we eat into the energy we need to survive and to maintain the correct levels of sugar in our blood. People with diabetes eventually develop a high blood sugar level, which can lead to problems with blood vessels, eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart.</p>

Response option No.	Health condition or impairment	Guide for completion
7	Arthritis, arthrosis	<p>"Arthritis" is a disease of joints (for example, fingers/wrists, knees, hips, lower back). Common symptoms are swelling, stiffness, redness, heat and/or pain.</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term "arthritis," describe the common symptoms: swelling, stiffness, redness, heat and/or pain in fingers/wrists, knees, hips, or lower back.</p>
8	Chronic bronchitis or Emphysema	<p>Chronic bronchitis is part of a breathing disease called COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). Bronchitis means swelling in the air passages that connect the windpipe (trachea) and lungs. This inflammation means the walls of the bronchi are swollen and filled with extra sticky mucus. Airflow into and out of the lungs is partly blocked because of the swelling and extra mucus.</p> <p>Emphysema is also part the lung disease called COPD. The part of the lungs where oxygen is exchanged is damaged - and usually means the person has shortness of breath and a barrel-shaped chest.</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term "chronic lung disease," describe it as problems with breathing - usually including cough and sputum production. This does not include asthma (see the next option).</p>
9	Asthma, allergic respiratory disease	<p>Asthma is a disease characterized by recurrent attacks of breathlessness and wheezing, which vary in severity and frequency from person to person. In an individual, they may occur from hour to hour and day to day. This condition is due to inflammation of the air passages in the lungs and affects the sensitivity of the nerve endings in the airways so they become easily irritated. In an attack, the lining of the passages swell causing the airways to narrow and reducing the flow of air in and out of the lungs.</p> <p>If the respondent does not understand the term "asthma," describe it as recurrent attacks of breathlessness and wheezing.</p>
10	Back pain or disc problems	<p>Back pain is pain felt in the back that may have a sudden onset or be chronic. It can be constant or intermittent, stay in one place or radiate to other areas. It may be a dull ache, or a sharp, piercing or burning sensation. The pain may radiate into the arms and hands as well as the legs or feet, and may include symptoms other than pain. These symptoms may include tingling, weakness or numbness.</p>
11	Depression	<p>"Depression" can be characterized by a feeling or spell of dimly low spirits: blues, dejection, despondence, doldrums, downheartedness, dumps, funk, gloom, glumness, heavy-heartedness, melancholy, miserableness, mournfulness or unhappiness over a period of time (weeks, months or years). Although depression is common, it often goes undetected because it may be attributed to a person's physical, social or economic difficulties.</p>

Response option No.	Health condition or impairment	Guide for completion
12	Anxiety	“Anxiety” is an unpleasant state of inner turmoil, often accompanied by nervous behavior, such as pacing back and forth, somatic complaints and rumination. Anxiety is a feeling of fear, worry and uneasiness, usually generalized and unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing. It is often accompanied by restlessness, fatigue, problems in concentration and muscular tension.
13	Amputation	Amputation is the removal of a body extremity by trauma or surgery. As a surgical measure, it is used to control pain or a disease process in the affected limb, such as malignancy or gangrene. A transplant and prosthesis are the only options for recovering the loss.
14	Trauma	Trauma relates to road traffic accidents or events/accidents in the home, school or workplace that result in bodily injury that limits activities. If the respondent first answers “No”, probe by saying: <i>“Trauma could have been an accident in which you were involved either as the occupant of a motor vehicle, or when you were riding a motorcycle/scooter, rickshaw or bicycle, or walking.”</i>
15	Tinnitus	Tinnitus comprises a ringing, roaring, or buzzing in the ears that lasts for five minutes or longer over at least 12 months.
16	Others	Ask the respondent whether he or she has any other health condition or disease not mentioned in the list.

6.2.4 PERSONAL ASSISTANCE AND ASSISTIVE PRODUCTS – Module 3000B

The purpose of questions B3010 to B3015 is to collect information regarding the use and need of personal assistance and assistive products. The interviewer should circle the response options selected.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B3010	Do you have someone to assist you with your day-to-day activities at home or outside?	This question targets the presence of people assisting the respondent with day-to-day activities at home or outside, such as cleaning, washing oneself, cooking, eating, dressing, shopping or using transportation, including family and friends but also paid helpers. FILTER: If the respondent answers “No” (5), the interviewer should skip to question B3012.
B3011	Do you think you need additional assistance with your day to day activities at home or outside?	This question targets the need of additional assistance with day-to-day activities at home or outside, such as cleaning, washing oneself, cooking, eating, dressing, shopping or using transportation, including family and friends but also paid helpers. FILTER: When this question is answered, the interviewer should go to question B3013.
B3012	Do you think you need someone to assist you?	This question targets the need of assistance with day-to-day activities at home or outside, such as cleaning, washing oneself, cooking, eating, dressing, shopping or using transportation, including family and friends but also paid helpers.

No.	Question	Guide for completion
B3013	Do you currently use any of these assistive products?	<p>The interviewer should use show card B004, which includes pictures, and circle <u>all</u> mentioned products.</p> <p>FILTER: If the respondent answers “None” (1), the interviewer should skip to question B3015.</p>
B3014	In addition to what you use, do you think you need any other assistive products? Which ones?	<p>This question targets the need of additional assistive products. The interviewer should use show card B004, which includes pictures, and circle <u>all</u> mentioned products.</p> <p>FILTER: If the respondent answers this question, B3015 should be skipped, and the survey is then completed.</p>
B3015	You told me you do not use assistive products. Do you think you need any of these?	<p>This question targets the need of any assistive product. The interviewer should use show card B004, which includes pictures, and circle <u>all</u> mentioned products.</p>

6.3 Brief MDS Questionnaire

Module 3000A: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS								
I am going to ask you some general questions about your environment and your social relationships. I want you to answer the following questions on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means very easy and 5 means very hard. INTERVIEWER: USE show card B001.								
	1 Very easy	2	3	4	5 Very hard	8 Don't know	98 Not applicable	
B3001	Do places where you socialize and engage in community activities make it easy or hard for you to do this?							
B3002	Do the shops, banks and post office in your neighbourhood make it easy or hard for you to use them?							
B3003	Does the transportation you need or want to use make it easy or hard for you to use it?							
B3004	Does your dwelling, including the toilet, make it easy or hard for you to live there?							
B3005	Should you need help, how easy is it for you to get help from a close family member (including your partner)?							
B3006	Should you need help, how easy is it for you to get help from friends and co-workers?							
B3007	Should you need help, how easy is it for you to get help from neighbours?							
I want you to answer the following two questions on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all and 5 means completely.								
	1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 Completely	8 Don't know	98 Not applicable	
B3008	Do you make your own choices about your day-to-day life? For example, where to go, what to do, what to eat.							
B3009	Do you feel that other people respect you? For example, do you feel that others value you as a person and listen to what you have to say?							
Module 4000: FUNCTIONING								
In the next questions, I want to understand the kinds of problems you experience in your life. By problems I mean not getting things done in the way you want to or not getting them done at all. These problems may arise because of your health or because of the environment in which you live. They may also arise because of the attitudes or behaviours of people around you. Please think about the last 30 days, taking both good and bad days into account. For each question, please tell me how much of a problem is it for you on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 means no problem and 5 means extreme problem. Please take into account your health and people who help you, any assistive devices you use or any medication you take. INTERVIEWER: USE show card B002								
	1 None	2	3	4	5 Extreme	8 Don't know	98 Not applicable	
B4001	How much of a problem is walking a kilometer for you?							
B4002	How much of a problem is getting where you want to go for you?							
B4003	How much of a problem is being clean and dressed?							
B4004	How much of a problem is toileting?							
B4005	How much of a problem is looking after your health, eating well, exercising or taking your medicines?							
B4006	How much of a problem is feeling tired and not having enough energy?							
B4007	How much of a problem is coping with all the things you have to do?							
B4008	How much of a problem is remembering to do the important things in your day-to-day life?							

B4009	How much of a problem do you have with getting your household tasks done?	1	2	3	4	5	8	
B4010	How much of a problem do you have with joining community activities, such as festivities, religious or other activities?	1	2	3	4	5	8	
B4011	How much of a problem is using public or private transportation?	1	2	3	4	5	8	
B4012	<i>INTERVIEWER: If the respondent is currently not working or in school, select 98, not applicable.</i> How much of a problem is getting things done as required at work or school?	1	2	3	4	5	8	98

Module 5000: CAPACITY & HEALTH CONDITIONS

I have asked you many questions about kinds of problems you experience in your life. The next questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities only because of your HEALTH. Please think about the last 30 days taking both good and bad days into account.

	1 Very good	2 Good	3 Moderate	4 Bad	5 Very bad
B5001	I will start with a question about your overall health, including your physical and your mental health: In general, how would you <u>rate your health today</u> ?				

The next questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities because of a HEALTH PROBLEM. I want you to answer the following questions on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means no difficulty and 5 means you cannot do the activity. Please answer these questions WITHOUT taking into account any help. **INTERVIEWER: USE show card B002**

	1 None	2	3	4	5 Extreme
B5002	How much difficulty do you have seeing things at a distance [without glasses]?				
B5003	How much difficulty do you have hearing [without hearing aids]?				
B5004	How much difficulty do you have walking or climbing steps?				
B5005	How much difficulty do you have remembering or concentrating?				
B5006	How much difficulty do you have washing all over or dressing?				
B5007	How much difficulty do you have sleeping because of your health?				
B5008	How much difficulty do you have doing household tasks because of your health?				
B5009	Because of your health, how much difficulty do you have with joining community activities, such as festivities, religious or other activities?				
B5010	How much difficulty do you have with feeling sad, low, worried or anxious because of your health?				
B5011	Because of your health, how much difficulty do you have getting along with people who are close to you, including your family and friends?				
B5012	How much bodily aches or pain do you have?				
B5013	Do you currently have any of these diseases or health problems? <i>INTERVIEWER: USE show card B003 and circle all mentioned diseases or health problems.</i>				

1) Vision loss	7) Arthritis or arthrosis	13) Amputation
2) Hearing loss	8) Chronic Bronchitis or Emphysema	14) Trauma, <i>Interviewer: relates to road traffic accidents or events/accidents in the home or school that resulted in bodily injury limiting activities</i>
3) High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)	9) Asthma, allergic respiratory disease	15) Tinnitus (<i>ringing, roaring, or buzzing in your ears that lasts for 5 minutes or longer over the last 12 months</i>)
4) Heart disease, Coronary Disease, Heart Attack	10) Back pain or disc problems	16) Others
5) Stroke	11) Depression	
6) Diabetes	12) Anxiety	

Module 3000B: PERSONAL ASSISTANCE AND ASSISTIVE PRODUCTS			
B3010	Do you have someone to assist you with your day to day activities at home or outside?	1 YES	5 NO If 5, go to B3012
B3011	Do you think you need additional assistance with your day to day activities at home or outside?	1 YES	5 NO Go to B3013
B3012	Do you think you need someone to assist you?	1 YES	5 NO
B3013	Do you currently use any of these assistive products? <i>INTERVIEWER: USE show card B004 and circle all mentioned products.</i>	If 5, go to B3015	
	1) None 2) Canes or Sticks 3) Crutches, axillary or elbow 4) Orthoses, lower limb, upper limb or spinal 5) Pressure relief cushions 6) Prostheses, lower limb 7) Rollators 8) Standing frames, adjustable	9) Therapeutic footwear; diabetic, neuropathic, orthopaedic 10) Tricycles 11) Walking frames or walkers 12) Wheelchair 13) Spectacles; low vision, short distance, long distance, filters and protection 14) White cane 15) Hearing aids 16) Others	
B3014	In addition to what you use, do you think you need any other assistive products? Which ones? <i>INTERVIEWER: USE show card B004 and circle all mentioned products.</i>		
	1) None 2) Canes or Sticks 3) Crutches, axillary or elbow 4) Orthoses, lower limb, upper limb or spinal 5) Pressure relief cushions 6) Prostheses, lower limb 7) Rollators 8) Standing frames, adjustable	9) Therapeutic footwear; diabetic, neuropathic, orthopaedic 10) Tricycles 11) Walking frames or walkers 12) Wheelchair 13) Spectacles; low vision, short distance, long distance, filters and protection 14) White cane 15) Hearing aids 16) Others	
B3015	You told me you do not use assistive products. Do you think you need any of these? <i>INTERVIEWER: USE show card B004 and circle all mentioned products.</i>		
	1) None 2) Canes or Sticks 3) Crutches, axillary or elbow 4) Orthoses, lower limb, upper limb or spinal 5) Pressure relief cushions 6) Prostheses, lower limb 7) Rollators 8) Standing frames, adjustable	9) Therapeutic footwear; diabetic, neuropathic, orthopaedic 10) Tricycles 11) Walking frames or walkers 12) Wheelchair 13) Spectacles; low vision, short distance, long distance, filters and protection 14) White cane 15) Hearing aids 16) Others	

7 Contact

The long and brief MDS are available at: www.who.int/disabilities/data/mds/en/

For further information, resources (including the full MDS manual) and technical support, please contact:

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