



# Short Set on Functioning (SS-F)



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## **SHORT SET ON FUNCTIONING**

The short set were developed based on the Washington Group Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS) which was developed, tested and adopted by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG). Considering the country context and applicability, the Short Set on Functioning was customized and is comprised of 6 questions in six core functional domains: seeing, hearing, mobility (walking and climbing steps), cognition (remembering and concentrating), self-care and communication.

While the WG-SS was not specifically designed for use among children it has been incorporated in the short set to meet the data requirement of the country. The questions are designed to collect information on the population aged 2 years and above for the four modules of seeing, hearing, mobility and communication and 5 years and above for cognition and self-care. For children aged 2-17, the primary caregiver should provide the information.

Each domain is covered separately and the full set of questions is appended at the end of this document

### **Administration of the Questions**

The same four category response options are used for the domains of seeing, hearing, mobility (walking and climbing steps), cognition (remembering and concentrating), self-care and communication. For these domains, it is recommended that the response options be read aloud as part of each question as follows:

- No, no difficulty**
- Yes, some difficulty**
- Yes, a lot of difficulty**
- Cannot do it at all**

Respondents may become familiar with the answer categories after the first few questions. In this case, the recommendation to repeat the categories can be relaxed. This is even more likely to occur when the questions are asked of multiple people in a household. If respondents provide responses using the required answer categories, the categories do not need to be repeated after every question. They should be repeated as soon as the respondent does not use the required category (e.g., responds 'yes') or after the second or third question.

Enumerators will require training in when it is appropriate to not read the answer categories.

**DOMAIN 1: SEEING**  
**(2 YEARS AND ABOVE)**

Do you wear glasses/contact lenses? Yes/No

If Yes:

Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses/contact lenses?

If No:

Do you have difficulty seeing?

Domain:

The purpose of this domain is to identify persons with varying degrees of vision difficulties. Seeing difficulties include problems seeing things in day or night, close up or far away, reduced ability to see out of one or both eyes and limited peripheral vision.

Rationale: Seeing is measured with the use of corrective lenses if those lenses are used. This is determined through the first question: Do you wear glasses? “Glasses” includes all corrective lenses (including reading glasses) and contact lenses. Sunglasses should not be considered. “Glasses” are both ubiquitous and, when properly prescribed and used, often correct the difficulty completely, restoring normal vision. In this way, glasses are close to being ‘within the skin’ and are considered to be like corrective surgery in the way they affect functioning.

If the question were to ask about difficulty seeing without the use of glasses, the resultant prevalence would be extremely high and would not identify a population at risk of participation restriction. For persons who do not wear glasses, the question just refers to seeing. For persons who report that they wear glasses, the question asks about difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses, which refers to seeing when the respondent has and uses glasses – NOT how vision would be if glasses, or better glasses, were provided to one who needed them.

The use of glasses that do not correct vision (difficulty seeing even if wearing glasses) would still be reported as a difficulty as would seeing problems where no glasses are worn.

## DOMAIN 2: HEARING

### (2 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Do you use a hearing aid?

If Yes:

Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?

If No:

Do you have difficulty hearing

Domain:

The purpose of the hearing domain is to identify persons who have hearing loss or auditory problems of any kind. This includes reduced hearing in one or both ears, or to distinguish sounds from different sources. Hearing refers to an individual using his/her ears and auditory (or hearing) capacity in order to know what is being said to them or the sounds of activity, including danger that is happening around them.

The question is intended to capture those who can hear the sounds but not those who do not understand or choose to ignore what is being said to them (i.e. the function of listening as opposed to hearing). Those concepts are captured in the communication domain.

Rationale: As was the case for seeing, hearing is evaluated with the use of hearing aids if these are worn. The use of hearing aids is not as ubiquitous as glasses/lenses, nor are they as successful in restoring hearing as glasses are for seeing.

When properly prescribed and used, however, they do aid in restoring normal hearing. In this way, hearing aids are close to being 'within the skin' and are considered to be like corrective surgery in the way they affect functioning.

If the question were to ask about difficulty hearing without the use of hearing aids, the resultant prevalence would be higher and would not identify a population at risk of participation restriction. For persons who do not use a hearing aid, the questions just refer to hearing. For persons who report using a hearing aid, the question asks about difficulty hearing even if using a hearing aid, which refers to hearing when the respondent has, and uses, that device – NOT how hearing would be if hearing aids, or better hearing aids, were provided to one who needed them.

The use of hearing aids that do not correct hearing (difficulty hearing even if using a hearing aid) would still be reported as a difficulty as would hearing problems where no hearing aids are worn.

- Included are problems hearing in any environment.
- Included are problems distinguishing sounds from different sources.
- Included are problems hearing in one ear or both ears.
- Any difficulty with hearing that is considered a problem should be captured.

### **DOMAIN 3: MOBILITY (WALKING AND/OR CLIMBING STEPS)**

#### **(2 YEARS AND ABOVE)**

Do you have difficulty walking and/or climbing steps?

Domain:

The purpose of this domain is to identify persons with varying degrees of difficulty walking and climbing steps. Both of these activities require a mix of strength, balance and the ability to control body movements against gravity. Walking is the primary mode used to move around and cover distances.

Walking refers to the use of lower limbs (legs) in such a way as to propel oneself over the ground to get from point A to point B. The capacity to walk should be without assistance of any device (wheelchair, crutches, walker etc.) or human. If such assistance is needed, the person has difficulty walking.

- Included are problems walking short (about 100 meters) or long distances (about 500 meters). For clarity 100 m could be explained with examples depending on the local environment.
- Difficulty walking any distance (100 meter) without stopping to rest is included.
- Difficulties walking can include those resulting from impairments in balance, endurance, or other non-musculoskeletal systems, for example, people who are blind or with severe loss of vision may have difficulty walking in an unfamiliar place.
- Included are problems walking up or down steps.
- Any difficulty with walking (whether it is on flat land or up or down steps) that is considered a problem should be captured.

## DOMAIN 4: COGNITION (REMEMBERING AND/OR CONCENTRATING) (2 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?

Domain:

The purpose of this domain is to identify persons who have some problems with remembering or focusing attention that contribute to difficulty in doing their daily activities.

Remembering refers to the use of memory to recall incidents or events. It means the individual can bring to mind or think again about something that has taken place in the past (either the recent past or further back). With younger people, remembering is often associated with storing facts learned in school and being able to retrieve them when needed.

Remembering should NOT be equated with Memorizing or with good or bad memories.

Concentrating refers to the use of mental ability to accomplish some tasks such as reading, calculating numbers, learning something. It is associated with focusing on the task at hand in order to complete the task.

- Included are problems finding one's way around, being unable to concentrate on an activity, or forgetting one's whereabouts or the date.
- Included are problems remembering what someone just said.
- Any difficulty with remembering, concentrating or understanding what is going on around them that they or family members (if the family member is the respondent) consider a problem should be captured.

*Note: difficulties remembering or concentrating because of common everyday situations such as high workload or stress, or as a result of substance abuse or alcohol are EXCLUDED.*

Remembering and/or concentrating should be based on attention span. For example, if the primary caregiver is asked if the child could remember what meal he/she has taken, played with, their remembering as well as concentrating ability could be discerned.

## **DOMAIN 5: SELF-CARE (5 YEARS AND ABOVE)**

Do you have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing?

Domain:

The purpose of this domain is to identify persons who have some problems with taking care of themselves independently. The question specifies washing and dressing because these represent tasks that occur on a daily basis and are considered basic activities across cultures.

Washing all over refers to the process of cleaning one's entire body (usually with soap and water) in the usual manner for the culture.

The washing activity includes cleaning hair and feet, as well as gathering any necessary items for bathing such as soap or shampoo, a washcloth, or water.

Dressing refers to all aspects of putting clothing or garments on the upper and lower body including the feet if culturally appropriate.

- Included are the acts of gathering clothing from storage areas (i.e. closet, dressers), securing buttons, tying knots, buttons, zipping, etc.
- Includes the choice of clothing appropriate to the environment and climate.
- Washing and dressing represent tasks that occur on a daily basis and are considered basic, universal activities.

Difficulty in washing or dressing can occur because of a variety of functional difficulties including, but not limited to, difficulties in upper body functioning (e.g., use of arms, hands and fingers), lower body functioning, balance, cognitive functioning (e.g., choosing the appropriate clothes for the occasion and weather conditions) or psychosocial functioning.

*Note: Distinguish between not willing to do and not able to do. Not willing to do does not mean an individual is not able to do, thus, he/she should not be considered as having difficulty in this domain.*

## DOMAIN 6: COMMUNICATION (2 YEARS AND ABOVE)

Using your usual language, do you have difficulty communicating, (for example understanding or being understood by others)?

Do you have to communicate through assistive device/sign language?

Domain:

The purpose of this domain is to identify persons who have some problems with talking, listening or understanding speech such that it contributes to difficulty in making themselves understood to others or understanding others. Two aspects of communication are measured through this question: understanding (receptive communication) and being understood (expressive communication).

Communicating refers to a person exchanging information or ideas with other people through the use of language.

The respondent's usual language is the means of communication that he/she normally uses. This is most often verbal, but may also be sign language or using assistive devices (i.e. computer-assisted communication and communication boards).

Communication difficulties can originate at numerous places in the exchange process. They may involve mechanical problems such as hearing impairment or speech impairment, or may be related to the ability of the mind to interpret the sounds that the auditory system is gathering and to recognize the words that are being used or an inability of the mind to compose a sentence or say a word even when the person knows the word and sentence.

- Included is the use of the voice for the exchange or using signs (including sign language) or writing the information to be conveyed.
- Included are problems making oneself understood or problems understanding other people when they speak or try to communicate in other ways.
- Hearing ability and communication are related but distinct domains. The degree and age of onset of hearing loss can affect communication differently.

*Note: Difficulty understanding or being understood due to non-native or unfamiliar language is NOT included.*

- If sign language is a person's usual language, he/she may have no difficulty communicating with others who also sign, but may experience a lot of difficulty or inability when communicating with those who do not sign. Respondents should report in terms of how they communicate most of the time (their usual language).

## ANNEXURE: SHORT SET QUESTIONNAIRE

### DISABILITY SHORT SET (ABOVE 2 YEARS)

1	Do you wear glasses or contact lenses ?	
	Yes (>>1b)	1
	No	2
1a	Do you have difficulty seeing?	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
	>>2	
1b	Do you have difficulty seeing even if wearing glasses or contact lenses?	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
2	Do you use hearing aid?	
	Yes(>>2b)	1
	No	2
2a	Do you have difficulty hearing?	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
	>>3	
2b	Do you have difficulty hearing even if using hearing aid?	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
3	Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4

4	Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating? (5 years and above)	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
5	Do you have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing? (5 years above)	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
6	Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?	
	No difficulty	1
	Some difficulty	2
	A lot of difficulty	3
	Cannot do at all	4
6a	Do you have to communicate through assistive device/sign language?	
	Sign language	1
	Computer-assisted communication	2
	Communication boards	3
	Others(Specify)	96
	No	4

