

# The Disability Data Initiative: Addressing the gaps in information on the inequalities that persons with disabilities face across and within countries

Sophie Mitra and Michael Palmer

AAC Inclusive Data Panel

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# Background

- Disability is remarkably common: one in ten children worldwide (UNICEF 2021) and one in six adults (WHO 2022)
- What do we mean by disability? Interactional and human rights understanding of disability:
  - Persons with disabilities as participants in society and the economy, and as citizens (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).
  - Focus on environmental barriers and resources availability and on the experience of functional difficulty (e.g. seeing, hearing, walking).
  - Disability is universally relevant.

# Background (Cont.)

- Practically, disability has been captured in household surveys and censuses through questions on functional difficulties (seeing, hearing, walking, cognition, self-care, communication).
- Disability is associated with socioeconomic disadvantages, including multidimensional poverty (United Nations 2019).
- Producing national and subnational statistics on the situation of persons with disabilities is important to monitor the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by national as well as local governments.
- Yet, there is a lack of information on the inequalities that persons with disabilities face across and within countries. National statistics offices rarely disaggregate statistics by disability status and survey or census reports often focus on prevalence rates.

# Mission

The Disability Data Initiative (DDI) provides analyses of disability data to help advance the rights of persons with disabilities and sustainable human development for all.

# Aims

## The Reports:

- map the availability of internationally comparable disability data by reviewing datasets and their disability questions globally, across world regions and over time.
- produce disability disaggregated indicators and prevalence rates at both national and subnational levels with survey and census data.

# Website

<https://disabilitydata.ace.fordham.edu/>

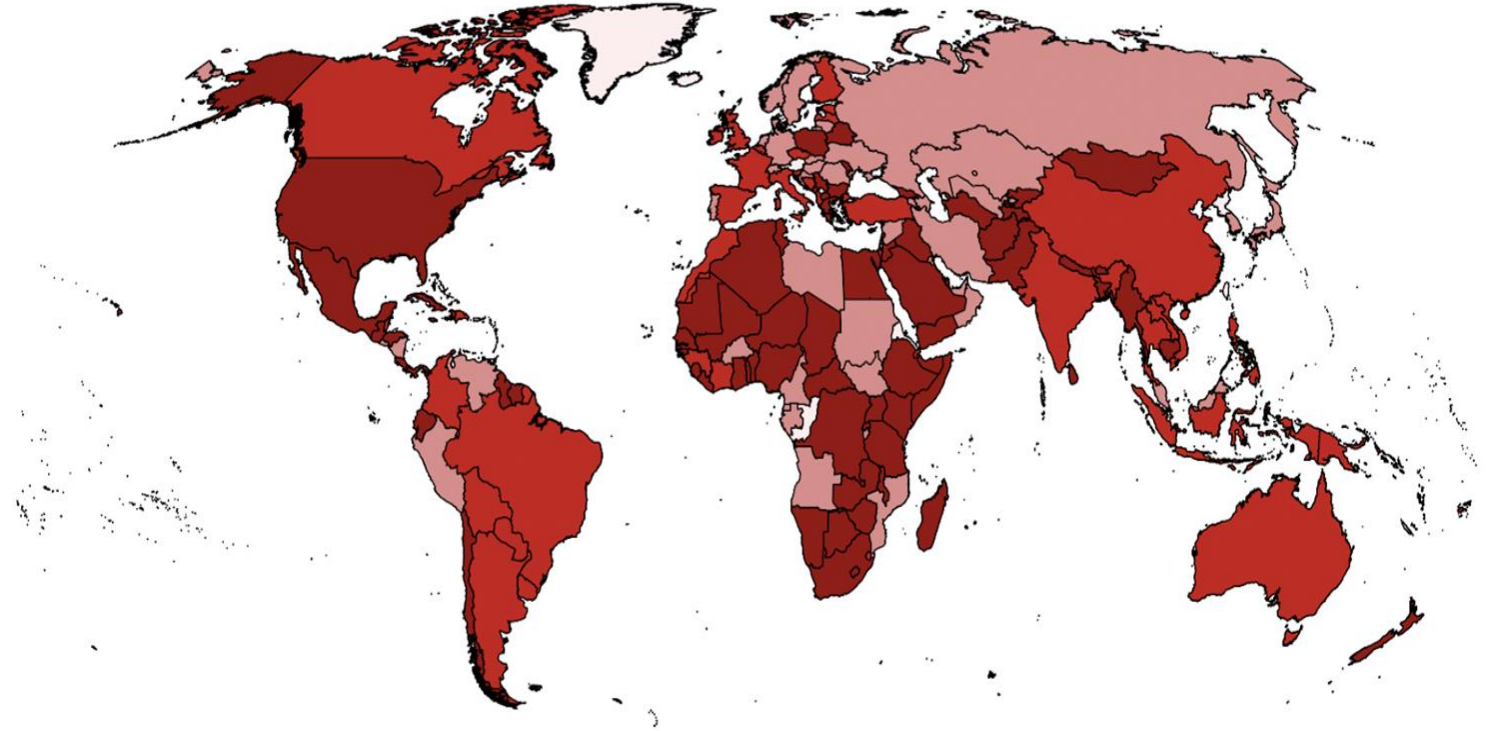


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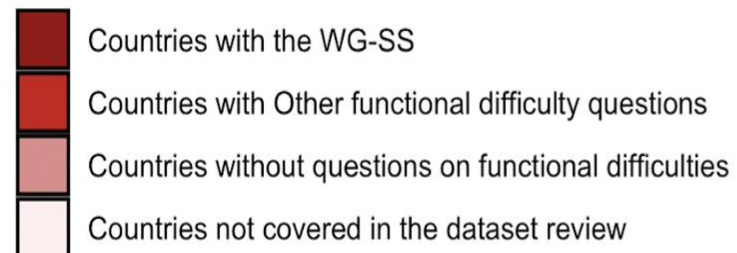
# Aim #1: Review of censuses and surveys questionnaires

- We reviewed 1,288 data sets and 2,616 data set-years from 188 countries and territories have been screened for disability questions.
- We find that two thirds of countries have functional difficulty questions in their surveys or censuses, but only one in five datasets have such questions. There is more work to do in terms of including functional difficulty questions in surveys and censuses.

# Aim #1: Review of censuses and surveys – Map



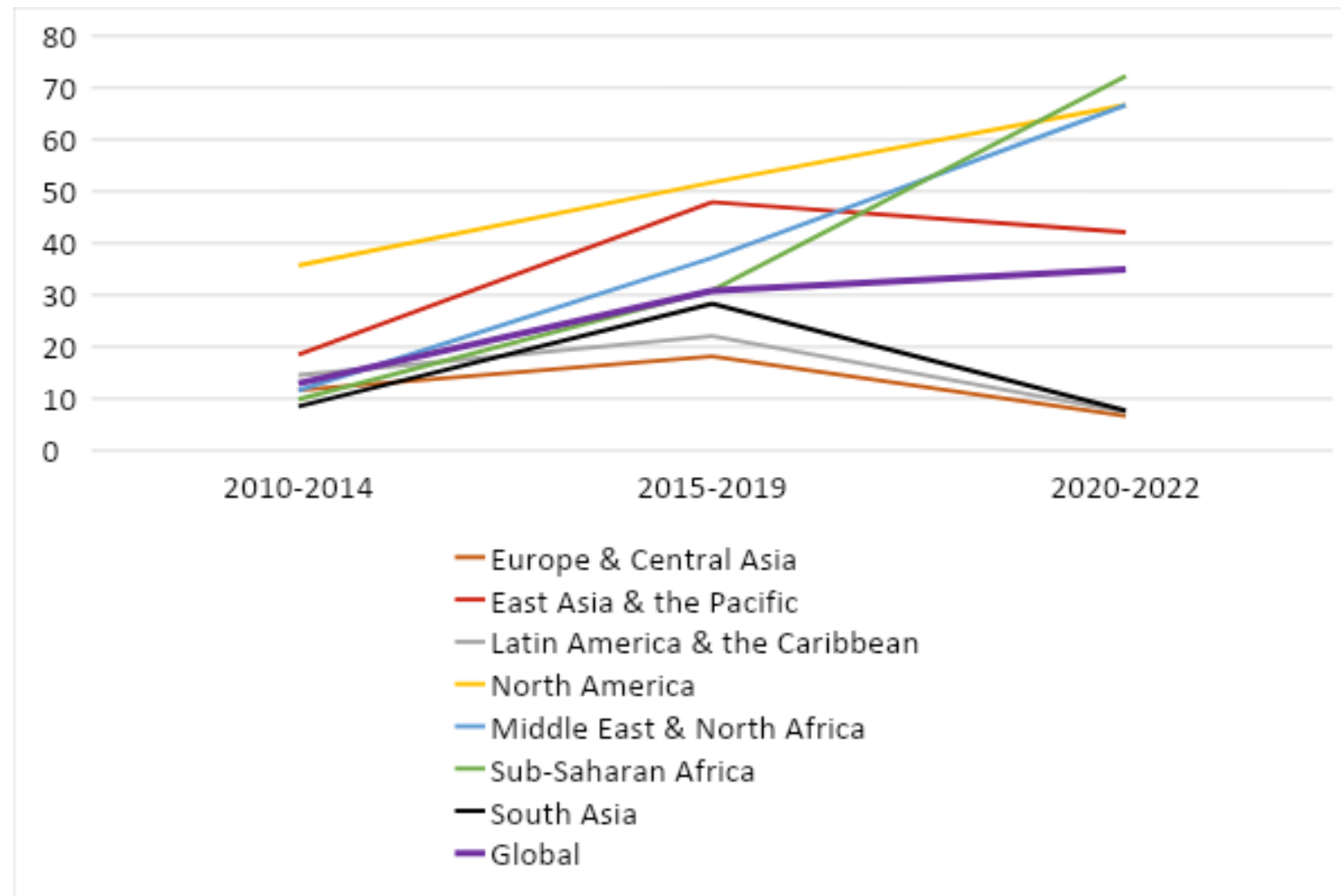
Legend:





# Aim #1: Review of censuses and surveys – Trends

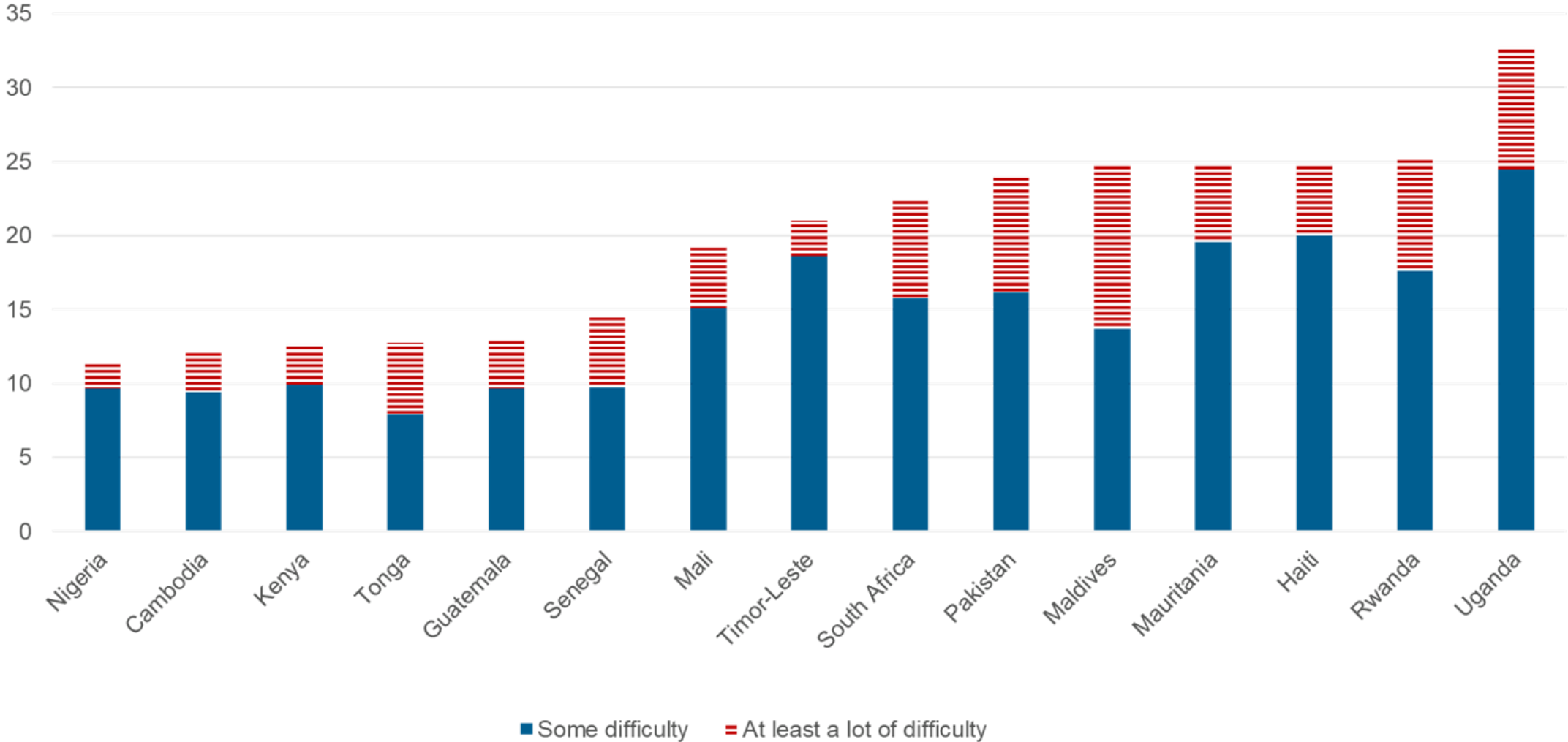
Share of datasets with functional difficulty questions globally and by region (excluding high frequency phone surveys)



# Aim #2: Produce disability disaggregated indicators and prevalence rates at both national and subnational levels with survey and census data

- Disability Disaggregation is possible using functional difficulty questions
  - for different levels of severity: no difficulty, some difficulty, a lot of difficulty/unable to do
  - combined with gender, rural/urban residence and by age group
  - at the national as well as subnational level with most datasets.
- We have produced such disaggregated indicators for more than 70 countries. Here are some of our results including those from East Asia/Pacific.

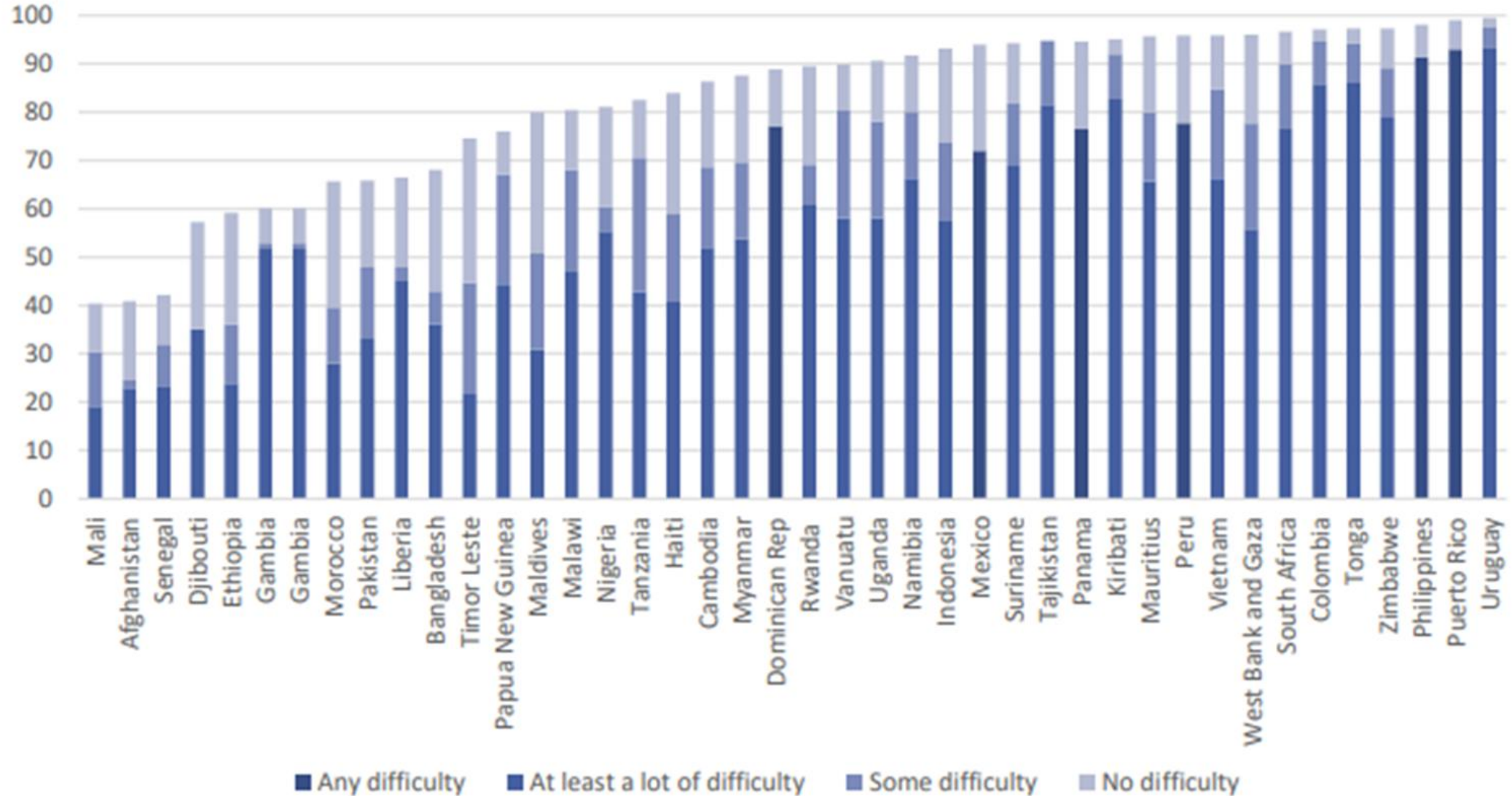
# Proportion of adults with functional difficulties (%)



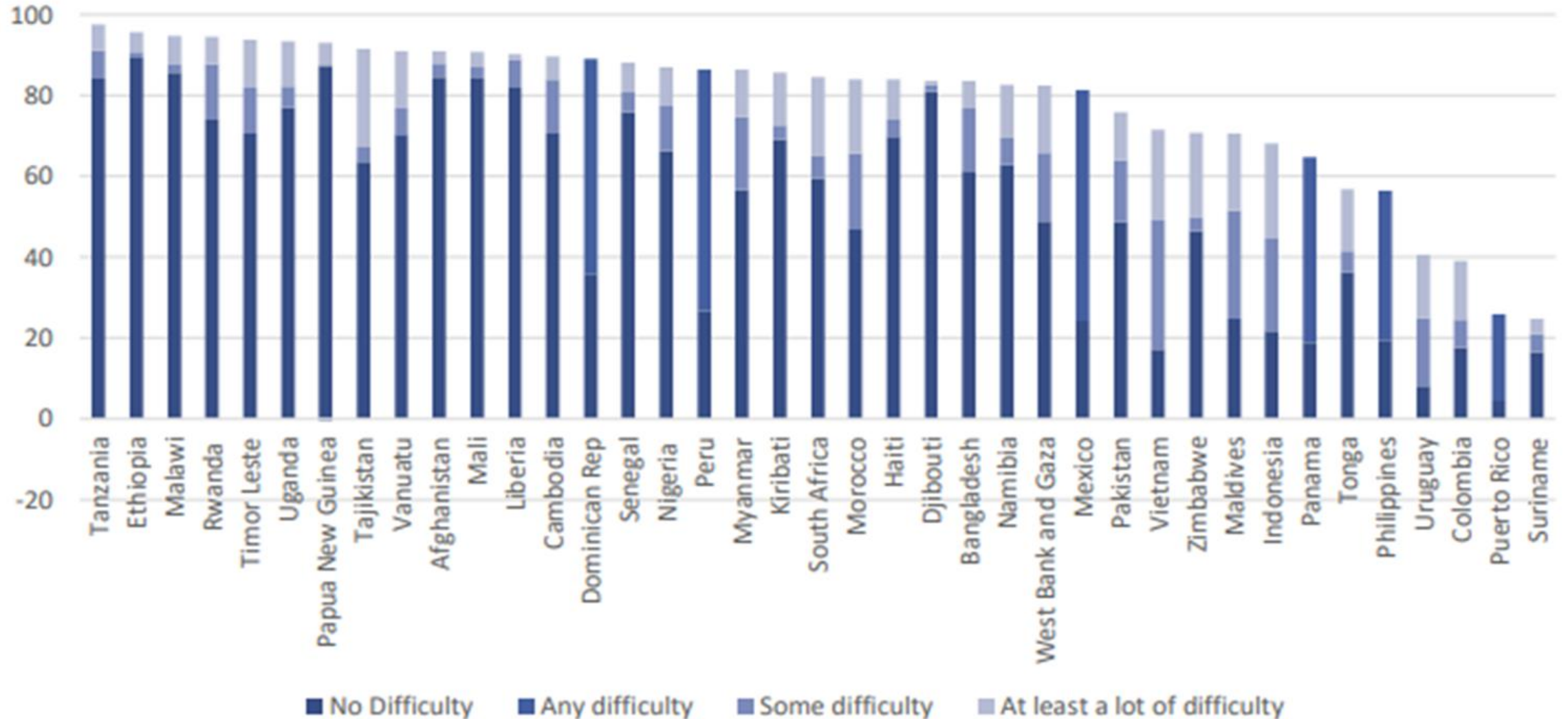
# Proportion of adults with functional difficulties (Cont.)

- Functional difficulties can be found in all six domains (seeing, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, communication) but seeing and mobility difficulties are the most commonly found.
- Functional difficulties are more common among women than men and among older people.

# Ever attended school rates (%)



# Multidimensional poverty rates (%)



# Multidimensional poverty rates in Timor Leste (%)

Figure 1: Timor-Leste: Multidimensional poverty headcount among adults with no, some and at least a lot of difficulty (%)

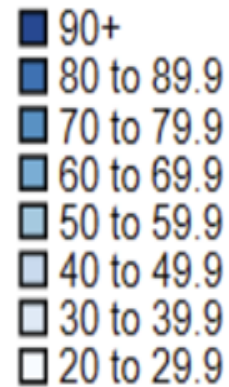
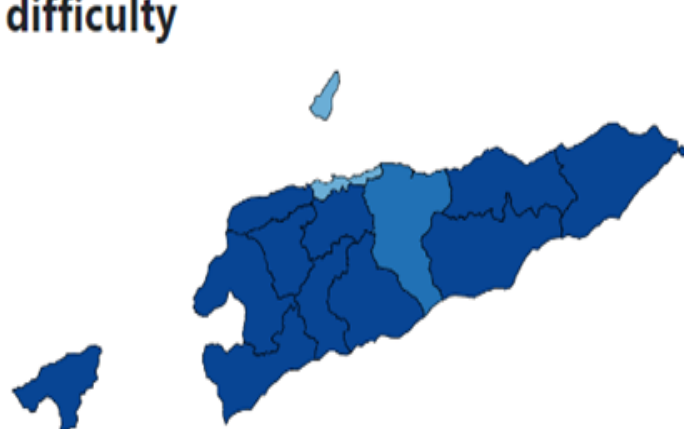
Figure 1a: Adults with no difficulty



Figure 1b: Adults with some difficulty



Figure 1c: Adults with at least a lot of difficulty



Source: Own calculations based on Timor-Leste DHS data (2018). The notes of Table 1 apply.

# Key findings on disability disaggregated indicators

Across countries:

- Lower educational attainment, higher multidimensional poverty
- the gradient by functional severity

These results hold within countries (not much difference across regions or districts within a country).



# Conclusions

- Household surveys and population censuses can and should be regularly used to collect data and to document and understand the inequalities persons with disabilities experience as well as subgroups by gender, rural/urban residence and age at national and subnational levels.
- We now have the tools to collect data and produce disaggregated indicators so that international development programs can be monitored and assessed in how inclusive they are of persons with disabilities.
- National governments and international organizations need to allocate more resources towards disability data analysis for national statistics offices and other relevant stakeholders to do the analysis of a growing body of data that can produce disability disaggregated statistics at both national and subnational levels.

# Thank you!

Comments are welcome!

[mitra@fordham.edu](mailto:mitra@fordham.edu)

[michael.palmer@uwa.edu.au](mailto:michael.palmer@uwa.edu.au)

This presentation is mainly based on the 2023 and 2021 Disability Data Reports which can be found at:

<https://disabilitydata.ace.fordham.edu/>



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