Brief model disability survey:

2019 results for India,

Lao People's Democratic Republic

and Tajikistan

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1 Introduction

The world is facing important trends associated with an increase of disability in populations, especially a rise in noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and the rapid ageing of the world population. Estimates from the WHO *World report on disability (1)* show that 15% of the global population experiences significant disability.

The level of disability in countries and regions is influenced, however, not only by trends in health conditions but also by physical, human-built, attitudinal and sociopolitical barriers, such as the negative attitudes of others, inaccessible transportation and public buildings, poor social support or limited access to health services.

The challenges that disability creates for people's lives and well-being are compounded by a critical lack of access to assistive devices that would enable individuals to lead autonomous, dignified and productive lives. Assistive devices are powerful tools that maintain and improve an individual's functioning and independence, promoting overall well-being. However, WHO estimates that currently only 1 in 10 people in such need have access to assistive products.[1] This gap between prevalence of individuals living with disability and the deficit in access to assistive devices is striking.

Interventions are essential. Interventions that target disability in a country can be directed at improving or optimizing functioning of individuals, such as through provision of rehabilitation services, or at lowering environmental barriers, for example through dedicated transportation, employment or accessible health care policies.

Good quality and comprehensive disability data are essential. Policy development and planning of public health actions and services require a precise understanding of disability, including

[1] See: https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/assistive-technology

detailed information on needs for assistive technology, inequalities, barriers and needs faced by persons experiencing different levels of disability.

The Model Disability Survey (MDS) was developed to collect such data. Data generated by the MDS are being used by countries to quantify the impact on disability of health conditions or impairments, and of the environment, and also to better understand the degree to which individuals with disability have access to, and use, assistive devices. This allows countries to determine which interventions and policies will likely produce the most benefit for different sections of the population.

2 Methodology

2.1 Sample design and sample size

In the three countries where the study was conducted (India, Lao People's Democratic Republic[2] and Tajikistan), the Brief Model Disability Survey (Brief MDS) was included as a module within the Gallup World Poll *(2)*. Since 2005, The Gallup World Poll has regularly surveyed people in over 160 countries, representing more than 99% of the world's population aged 15 years and older, using randomly selected, nationally representative samples.

The sampling frame in the World Poll included the total non-institutionalized population aged 15 years and older. For this study, oversamples were conducted in Lao People's Democratic Republic and Tajikistan. A brief description of the sampling design in all three countries is