

## Extended Abstract

### Introduction

The number of forcibly displaced and stateless populations was 120 million by the end of April 2024 according to the Global Trends report of UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (UNHCR, 2024). Due to the increasing numbers of forcibly displaced populations, having access to high quality data is more important than ever to better inform policy makers, international organizations and governments institutions.

The Results Monitoring Surveys (RMS) is one of the cross-country household survey series implemented by UNHCR on forcibly displaced and stateless persons who are directly or indirectly assisted by UNHCR, including refugees and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees, stateless and others of concern. The RMS has been implemented in more than 60 countries to date since 2021.

The primary objective of the survey is to monitor impact and outcome level indicators on education, healthcare, livelihoods, protection concerns, shelter, and water and sanitation. The results contribute to an evidence base for reporting against indicators in UNHCR's multi-year strategies to key stakeholders.

The RMS uses the Washington Group on Disability Statistics module called WG Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS) which is a widely recognized module for disability statistics. The survey questionnaire includes both the WG-SS questions to identify persons with disabilities, as well as modules specifically focused on education in the context of forced displacement.

This paper explores the primary and secondary education participation among forcibly displaced children with a special focus on the children with disabilities using the RMS datasets that were collected in the past 3 years.

### Theoretical Focus

Disability significantly affects school attendance in developing countries, and forced displacement also has a negative impact on attendance. This study aims to examine whether the combined effects of forced displacement and disability result in an even greater impact on school attendance (Mizunoya et al., 2016). While there are not many resources on the subject, a study from South Africa shows that persons with disabilities in South Africa have lower educational attainment than those without disabilities (Moodley, 2019). On the other hand, only 65% of refugees are enrolled in primary education, with even lower enrolment at the secondary level, standing at just 42% (UNHCR, 2024).

We address the literature on this subject by exploring related crossroad topics. Primarily, the focus of this study is to quantitatively explore the interplay between forced displacement, disability, and educational participation to contribute to the literature on the subject.

## Data

The standard survey methodology of RMS requires a national-level representative probabilistic sample of displaced persons. Disaggregation variables for age, gender, and disability are available in the standard RMS questionnaire, and all indicators are disaggregated by age, gender and disability, and also on a sub-national level, depending on availability.

The disaggregation by disability among children is particularly pertinent when examining indicators related to the proportion of children (aged from 6 to 24 inclusive for standard RMS questionnaire) enrolled in both primary and secondary education within the dataset. The education module incorporates additional questions extending beyond mere enrolment statistics. By gathering data on details of attendance levels, type of school and if a child is attending school in the current school year, the survey seeks to better understand reasons for non-attendance. Options for non-attendance include: 'School not equipped for children with special learning needs' and 'Teachers and other school staff do not treat children with respect', among others. These can give an indication about the current needs and educational barriers for children with visible and/or invisible disabilities.

The below Figure 1 shows the countries where RMS took place. By the end of 2023, there were a total of 66 RMS completed all around world.

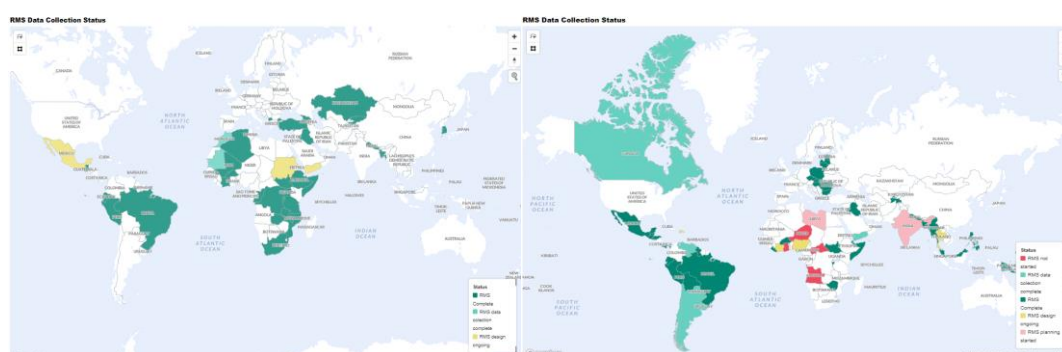


Figure 1. RMS 2022 and 2023 countries where data collection took place

## Research Methods

The survey asks the WG Short Set on Functioning for all household members aged 5 years and above). Using those, a variable called 'disability' is created with standard syntax and coded as a binary variable. This new variable is then used as a disaggregation variable along with age and gender. The primary and secondary enrolment rates are calculated from the RMS dataset along with the disability status of individuals who are 5 years and older.

We compile all existing datasets with disability module to have a global and regional understanding on the educational attainment practices among forcibly displaced population.

This study also comes with few challenges concerning statistical representativeness and precision. The sample size for children with disabilities is notably small, which may impact the robustness and generalizability of the findings.

### Expected Findings

Some datasets already show a significant difference among disabled and non-disabled refugees for primary and secondary school enrolment.

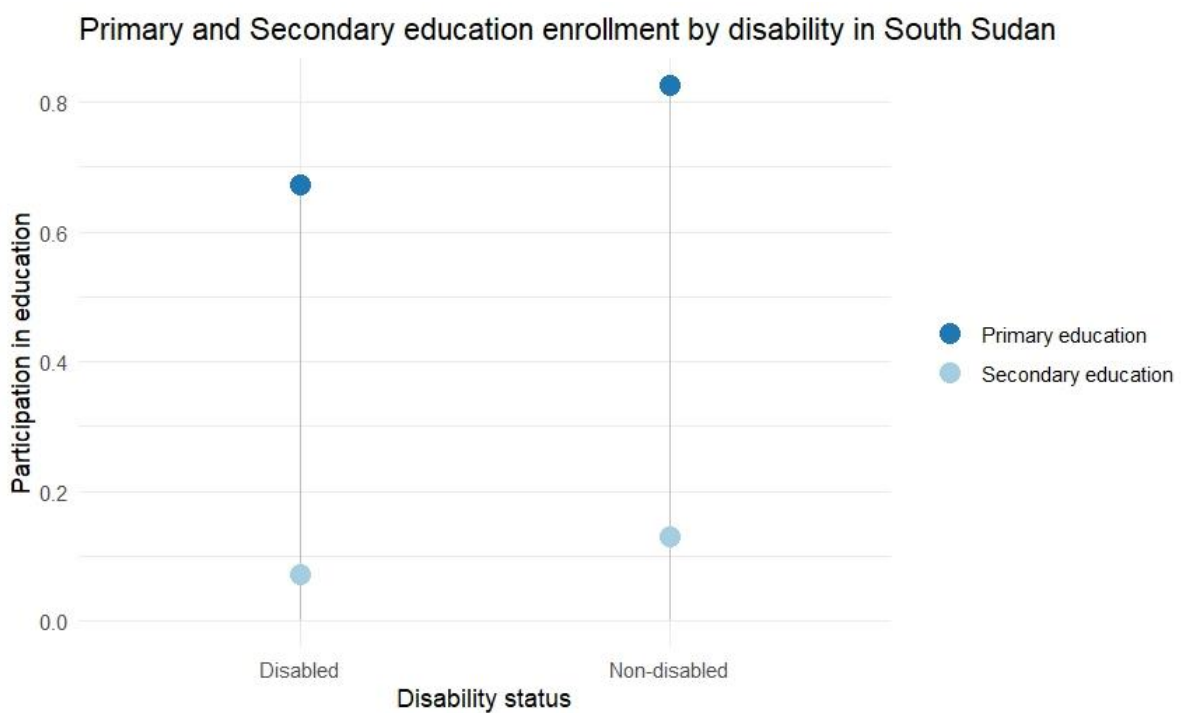


Figure 2. Primary and Secondary education enrolment by disability in RMS South Sudan 2023

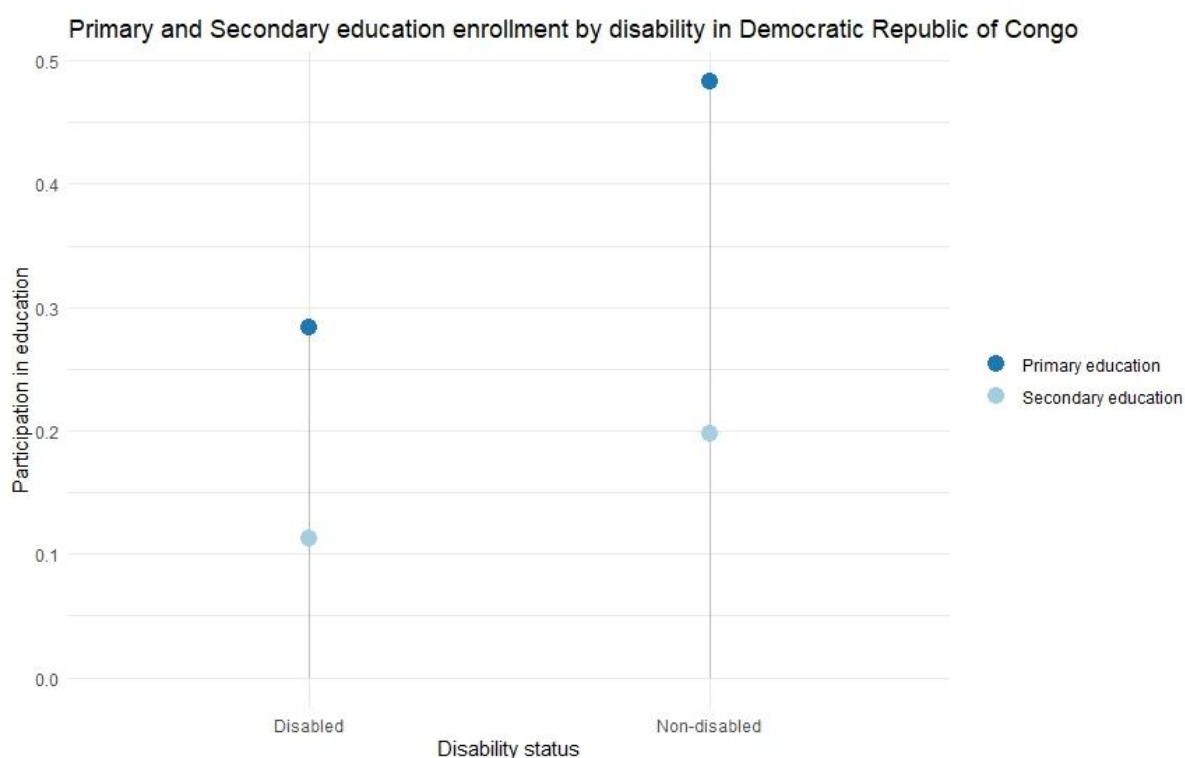


Figure 3. Primary and Secondary education enrolment by disability in RMS DRC 2023

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