



Education Resources

Frequently Asked Questions on the Child-Functioning Module – Teacher Version (CFM-TV)

Disability Data in Schools: Testing the Child Functioning Module –
Teacher Version (CFM-TV) in Emergencies and Protracted Crises
December 2023

ER | 11



**EDUCATION
CANNOT
WAIT**

QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: Why is it essential to collect data on children with disabilities in schools, especially in emergency settings?	Page 3
QUESTION 2: What kind of information about children will I get from the CFM-TV?	Page 3
QUESTION 3: What can I use the CFM-TV for in my program?	Page 4
QUESTION 4: I already have some data on children with disabilities. Why should I collect new data with the CFM-TV?	Page 4
QUESTION 5: If data is collected in schools, what about children with disabilities who do not attend school?	Page 5
QUESTION 6: How does the CFM-TV differ from the standard CFM?	Page 5
QUESTION 7: Are teachers as good as caregivers at answering questions on functional difficulties?	Page 6
QUESTION 8: What kind of teachers should I engage?	Page 7
QUESTION 9: Can I use the CFM-TV in any kind of school?	Page 7
QUESTION 10: What should I bear in mind when planning to use the CFM-TV?	Page 7
QUESTION 11: Why Should I Train Teachers? Can I provide self-reading materials instead?	Page 8
QUESTION 12: If the CFM-TV is self-administered, what is the role of the data collection team?	Page 8
QUESTION 13: How much time do I need to devote to training teachers and the data collection team?	Page 8
QUESTION 14: What should the training include?	Page 8
QUESTION 15: At what point of the school year should teachers collect data?	Page 9
QUESTION 16: How much time will it take teachers to fill out the CFM-TV?	Page 9
QUESTION 17: How many times do I need to use the CFM-TV in my program?	Page 9
QUESTION 18: How should I go about analyzing data generated with the CFM-TV?	Page 9

QUESTION 1

Why is it essential to collect data on children with disabilities in schools, especially in emergency settings?

Estimates indicate that there are approximately [240 million children](#) with disabilities worldwide. It is also estimated that children with disabilities represent [17%](#) of the 78.2 million crisis-affected children in need of educational support. However, the actual figure remains unknown. The absence of good-quality data makes children with disabilities invisible in terms of education in emergency programs, thus hindering effective planning and monitoring which would help these children exercise their right to a quality education. High-quality educational data on children with disabilities in emergency settings can indicate where the needs lie and allow action to be taken to enhance participation, learning, and achievement among these children.

QUESTION 2

What kind of information about children will I get from the CFM-TV?

Like other Washington Group (WG) tools, the questions in the Child Functioning Module - Teacher Version (CFM-TV) assess functional difficulties and the severity of these difficulties, i.e. challenges that children may face in their everyday environment when performing basic activities, such as walking and communicating among others. The CFM-TV does not aim to diagnose disabilities or identify impairments in bodily functions or structures. Nor it can help assess the environmental, attitudinal and institutional barriers that children with disabilities face. Other tools should be used for this purpose, including the newly developed [WG/UNICEF Inclusive Education Module](#), which is currently being tested.

Instead, the CFM-TV is intended to assess children's risk of exclusion, particularly in an educational setting, due to their **functional difficulties** to perform various activities in a specific environment. In this regard, it is in line with a rights-based approach, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Given that the CFM-TV specifically focuses on children, questions are tailored to assess activity domains that are critical for children's development, which are not adequately captured by other tools such as the WG Short Set or the WG Extended Set, since these tools focus on the adult population (18 or older). The questions in the CFM-TV are adapted from the standard UNICEF/WG CFM, which is addressed to caregivers rather than teachers. The CFM-TV has also been tailored to ensure that teachers focus on the functional difficulties of children in the school environment (go to [Question 6](#)).

QUESTION 3

What can I use the CFM-TV for in my program?

The data from the CFM-TV can help program managers monitor and report on implementation by providing estimates of the number of students with disabilities. Analysis of outcomes, such as outreach, enrollment, and learning, can then be broken down in terms of the degree of difficulty being experienced by such children. For the purposes of data disaggregation, children are categorized as having a disability when they experience a lot of difficulty or are completely unable to perform an activity in at least one of the functional domains covered by the CFM-TV. The CFM-TV data can also assist with planning at the school level and may help teachers gain a better understanding of their students' needs. In addition, these data can be utilized, as part of a wider vulnerability assessment, to determine who would most benefit from being targeted by specific educational initiatives: for example, scholarships.

QUESTION 4

I already have some data on children with disabilities. Why should I collect new data with the CFM-TV?

Using available data may be a viable option if the data meet the necessary quality and reliability standards and they were collected to assess and monitor the inclusion of children with disabilities. Hence, before using any such data, their quality and reliability must be carefully scrutinized. For example, it is vital to understand why they were collected (what was their purpose?) and how they were collected (what kind of questions were used?). If data were collected using questions about medical conditions and impairments (e.g. "Do you have a disability?"), or based on visual observation, you should refrain from using them for the purpose of monitoring inclusion and student participation. Similarly, if the rate of disability among students recorded is significantly lower than 10%, these data are unlikely to provide an accurate picture of the student population with disabilities. Furthermore, if such data were not collected for monitoring and reporting purposes (more specifically, if they cannot be disaggregated in order to enable results for children with and without disabilities to be compared) existing data should not be used for monitoring and reporting within your program.

Take a look at this [flowchart](#), which provides some guidance on whether you could and should make use of existing data, as well as indicating which tool would be the most appropriate according to the purpose of data collection and the particular target population (age group) involved.

QUESTION 5

If data are collected in schools, what about children with disabilities who do not attend school?

While the CFM-TV primarily focuses on collecting data about students with disabilities who are attending school, it can indirectly provide insights into the situation of out-of-school children with disabilities in an emergency or humanitarian context. For example, if the data highlight specific functional difficulties that are underrepresented or prevalent among children attending school, this information can inform community engagement efforts aimed at enrolling out-of-school children with disabilities. The data from the CFM-TV can provide valuable information that can be used to shape communication campaigns and outreach initiatives. Likewise, the under-representation of some groups of children with disabilities in schools may also indirectly point to the need to make the school environment more accessible and inclusive. Consequently, the CFM-TV can help direct efforts to increase enrollment of out-of-school children.

To get a clearer picture of children with disabilities who are not attending school, it is also possible to supplement the data collected in schools using the CFM-TV, by incorporating the CFM into [vulnerability/needs assessments](#). The CFM engages with caregivers rather than teachers, and it included more domains and questions than the CFM-TV (go to [Question 6](#)). Data from the CFM can also provide a different perspective on children's functional difficulties in specific domains such as physical and emotional well-being (go to [Question 7](#)).

QUESTION 6

How does the CFM-TV differ from the standard CFM?

The CFM-TV is an adaptation of the standard CFM (Child Functioning Module). The CFM-TV is a school-oriented, teacher-administered version of the standard CFM, focusing on specific domains relevant to the educational context and enabling more efficient data collection in classroom settings. The CFM includes a larger set of questions (24) spread across 13 functional domains, while the CFM-TV consists of a reduced set of questions (13) divided into 12 domains. The CFM is addressed to primary caregivers, preferably the mother, and has one set of questions focusing on children aged 2-4 and a further one targeting school-age children (5-17). The CFM-TV includes questions that focus on school-age children (5-17). Since it is shorter and self-administered, the CFM-TV may be easier to implement than the CFM in a humanitarian setting, as well as being particularly useful when it comes to educational programs in emergencies.

QUESTION 7

Are teachers as good as caregivers at answering questions on functional difficulties?

Pilot projects have shown that teachers can serve as proxy respondents in the CFM, providing information about their students' functional difficulties. Like caregivers, teachers spend significant time with students, making them suitable assessors. Nonetheless, teachers and caregivers may have different perspectives on the domains in which children experience difficulties. In this regard, caregivers tend to focus more on the physical and emotional well-being of their children, while teachers are more attentive to domains that concern children's participation in the classroom and the learning process. These two types of respondents may not always agree on specific domains, but they tend to agree when it comes to the domains in which children are experiencing no difficulty.



QUESTION 8

What kind of teachers should I engage?

The selection of the teacher compiling the CFM-TV will depend on the level of education. In primary schools in emergency settings, one teacher often covers all subjects, which means that that teacher spends 100% of his/her teaching time with the students to be assessed. In secondary schools, there might be more than one teacher. Hence, teachers spend less time with an individual class. As a rule of thumb, the CFM-TV should always be answered by somebody who is involved in at least 50% or more of the total teacher-student interaction time. Teacher assistants may also be selected as respondents, as long as they spend a significant amount of time with the students in question. Hence, you may engage with any type of teacher, regardless of their education background. However, the training they receive to ensure they know how to use the CFM-TV must be adapted and fine-tuned in accordance with their level of education, familiarity with inclusive education, etc.

QUESTION 9

Can I use the CFM-TV in any kind of school?

The type of school, whether it is inclusive, special, or segregated, can affect how teachers assess the functional difficulties that children experience. It is important to keep in mind that teachers may have varying levels of familiarity with disability depending on institutional factors and on whether (and in what conditions) children with disabilities can attend school. As such, teachers in different settings may have different benchmarks for what constitutes a disability. It follows that the comparability of data from different types of schools may be limited due to variations in the benchmarks teachers use in different settings. This issue can be mitigated through comprehensive teacher training, which should focus both on disability awareness as set out in the CRPD and how to use the CFM-TV in their specific settings.

QUESTION 10

What should I bear in mind when planning the use of the CFM-TV?

The data collection process should be planned to meet the **ethical standards and data protection principles** laid down in the organization's policies as well as in local laws and regulations. The engagement of relevant local actors should be sought to ensure compliance and gain clearance. As part of this work, you should **consider digitalizing data collection**. This approach offers benefits such as efficiency, real-time data entry, and improved data quality. Once again, it is important to comply with organizational guidelines and legal and ethical standards when it comes to data use and management. Successful data collection using the CFM-TV hinges on a **well-organized team**, including a Data Collection Coordinator responsible for overall coordination, Field Coordinators to manage activities on the ground, and Field Support Assistants to assist teachers and ensuring that the data collection process runs smoothly. **All of these individuals**, along with teachers, **should undergo comprehensive training** in order to master data collection procedures and gain a clear understanding of the CFM-TV. Finally, if the CFM-TV is not available in the language of instruction, a **translation** will need to be provided in order to maintain a person-centered approach and ensure data quality, in keeping with the [instructions and guidelines developed by the WG](#).

QUESTION 11

Why Should I Train Teachers? Can I provide self-reading materials instead?

The training for teachers using the CFM-TV promotes awareness messages and guarantees that teachers are acting in line with the rights-based model in the CRPD, thus ensuring a common approach to disability is being applied. Thanks to the CFM-TV, teachers will obtain a holistic picture of functional limitations (beyond those that are visible), which is vital for the gathering of good-quality data. Hence, training is designed to equip teachers with the necessary skills, as well as the confidence, to administer the CFM-TV, ensuring teachers are proficient in using digital tools (where applicable) and that they know how to leverage support mechanisms during data collection. Evidence from pilot projects on the use of the CFM-TV also shows that teachers themselves prefer in-person training rather than self-administered learning materials. However, written materials should be used as a backup for teachers during the data collection process.

QUESTION 12

If the CFM-TV is self-administered, what is the role of the data collection team?

The data collection team provides support in terms of the content of the CFM-TV, while also assisting teachers on the technical aspects of the process, for example, on the correct operation and use of digital devices. Furthermore, the data collection team plays a critical role in the validation of the data that teachers generate, as they are responsible for data quality assurance.

QUESTION 13

How much time do I need to devote to training teachers and the data collection team?

It is strongly suggested that the training of teachers be organized over two days, at least, and when possible, over three. This allows teachers to digest content-related and logistical information on the data collection process, including the use of any potential digital tool. The data collection team should receive the same CFM-TV training. The training for the team should also cover the data collection protocol in depth. Consequently, two different training courses could be held for these two groups. Alternatively, teachers and the data collection team could take the two-day CFM-TV training course together, but in this case the data collection team should receive the one-day protocol and logistics training ahead of the CFM-TV course. This is necessary to allow the support that teachers receive during data collection to be tested and simulated during CFM-TV training.

QUESTION 14

What should the training include?

The training should provide teachers with a sound understanding of the organization that is seeking to collect data with the CFM-TV, as well as the purpose of this exercise. Training should also include a disability awareness session discussing the importance of the inclusion of persons with disabilities, disability in the context of the CRPD, and how data on persons with disabilities are collected. This will provide teachers with enough information to explore the WG tools and to take a closer look at the CFM-TV: structure of the module, the domains and questions included. A large portion of the training should be dedicated to practicing with the CFM-TV while pilot-testing the use of digital tools (i.e. tablets, survey apps, etc.). This requires the participation of the data collection personnel who will provide field support to teachers during data collection. Training should also cover data ethics and protection, as well as providing teachers with a comprehensive overview of the logistics and schedule of the data collection process.

QUESTION 15

At what point of the school year should teachers collect data?

You should work closely with school administrators to discuss the timeframe and timing of data collection and ensure that teachers are kept informed. This will ensure that, as far as is possible, data collection does not disrupt the school's educational activities. Data should be collected after the start of the school year and teachers should have at least a month to get to know their students before filling out the CFM-TV.

Given that the program is implemented in emergency settings, class sizes may vary substantially, with new students being enrolled after the start of the school year. As a rule, you should always have teachers assess these new students, allowing teachers at least a month before assessing them. The time available to teachers to get to know their students is more important than class size. In this regard, research shows that the quality of teachers' assessment using the CFM-TV was not affected by the number of students they were teaching.

QUESTION 16

How much time will it take teachers to fill out the CFM-TV?

First and foremost, this will depend on the class size. A full assessment of a single child with the CFM-TV should take about 3 minutes. Teachers may thus spread the task over a number of days as they will probably take breaks while completing the CFM-TV. The scheduling and time allotted for data collection should factor in a degree of flexibility, which is necessary to assist teachers to fill out the CFM-TV.

QUESTION 17

How many times do I need to use the CFM-TV in my program?

Once teachers have received the necessary training, data collection with the CFM-TV can commence. When this process is being carried out for the first time, it is recommended that teachers assess students twice. The first round of data collection acts as a pilot test. Consequently, after the first

round of data gathering (a month after the start of the school year), there should be a 3 to 4-week break before the second round of collection, particularly in the context of large class sizes. This approach reduces the amount of guesswork involved in answering CFM-TV questions, and also allows teachers to familiarize themselves with the data collection process and identify any potential challenges or areas for improvement. As a result, data from the second session should be used for purposes of the program in this pilot phase.

In order to fully integrate the CFM-TV into the program, data collection should be repeated at the beginning of each successive school year and, where possible, every term. The repetition of this exercise provides useful information on the progress that children are making in terms of their well-being. Repeated use may also help reduce the stigma of disability, with teachers realizing that difficulties can be overcome and that their role is key in this process.

QUESTION 18

How should I go about analyzing data generated with the CFM-TV?

The first step is to define the cut-off point for identifying children with disabilities for statistical purposes. To estimate the proportion of students who are experiencing a functional limitation, the WG recommended a cut-off: "A lot of difficulty" or "Cannot do it at all" in at least one domain. Having a binary variable differentiating children with disabilities from those without disabilities (no difficulty or some difficulties across all domains) enables differences in education outcomes between these two groups to be analyzed. Finally, further disaggregation (i.e. by age and gender) may also be possible, depending on your sample size.

This cut-off point can be adjusted depending on the objectives of the program. For example, if the goal is to ensure equitable access to public spaces, the cut-off might extend to "Some difficulty", ensuring that even those with milder difficulties are included. It is important to underline that the WG questions were developed for statistical purposes only and should not be used for targeting assistance, particularly health services.