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>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: Can you see the caption? Perfect. I can't see it but if you do that's the most important.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: I can't.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: For me it just appears in the screen.

>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: Yeah, it should appear.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: No it's not on mine.

>> DEBORA LEAO: For mine I had to click the closed captioning. But for me it's working now.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: He is with the speaker to be correct. And Seta?

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Hello?

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Yes. So to pronounce your whole name correctly Setareki, did I do that right?

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Yes.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: I will state it with ‑‑ okay. And your last name is ‑‑

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: It is like the mother Nawai.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Macanawai. I will say it with confidence. Go ahead.

>> DEBORA LEAO: No, I had a presentation for my part. But I don't know if ‑‑ would you prefer me to do with slides or without them? I can do either way. But if we're doing slides I would like to just test.

>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: Debora, since you have slides I will name you cohost. You will hear a sound once in awhile. Don't worry about this. You need to be cohost to be able to share your screen.

>> DEBORA LEAO: All right. If you can do that now so I can try to share to make sure it is working.

>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: Now you should be a cohost. You can test.

>> DEBORA LEAO: You can see my screen, right?

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Yes. Perfect.

>> DEBORA LEAO: Cool.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Achulube, can you hear us? Achulube, if you are talking to us, you are muted. Can you hear us? I know ‑‑ I can see you in the meeting.

>> Hello.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Hi. Perfect. And you are together, right?

>> Yeah, we are together with Christina. Yeah.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Yeah, we have to start. Very well. Thank you. So we are going to let the guests in now. Just a very quick check.

>> Yes.

>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: Yes, we have an issue. Our interpreter ‑‑‑or.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: What's the issue?

>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: Our interpreter is not here. So we will need to wait. I will send a message to the those waiting in the room that we are waiting for the interpreter to arrive. He is here. I give you a few seconds and we just open.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thanks. It seems that Pratima is not with us. If she does not appear in the coming minutes, Seta would you be willing to talk about risks and opportunities? Otherwise we only talk about risks and not about opportunities.

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Yes. Can do.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Seta, can you hear me?

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Yes. Can you hear me?

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: If she doesn't appear, then we will go that way. But if not, then yes. I can hear you. I think we're ready.

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: If not, then I will step in for Pratima.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you.

>> ANGELIQUE HARDY: So now I will turn on the recording. And then I will admit everybody. I will be on mute from now on.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: Thank you. I'm going to make a start. I'm going to welcome everybody to today's workshop which has been organized by the OPD partnership Working Group. Although I am still aware that a lot of people are still joining but if we don't make a start, with at least the welcomes we are going to run out of time. My name is Jazz Shaban. I'm one of the co‑coordinators of the OPD partnership task team. My colleague, Marieke Boersma, I'm going to completely ruin your ‑‑ the pronunciation of your surname, is going to be ‑‑ who is from the community intervention task team is going to be moderating. And we greatly together welcome, everyone to this workshop where looking specifically at participation within the civic space. I'm going to start with a few little bits of housekeeping before we move in to the main discussion.   
 So please do note that this session is being recorded. And will be uploaded on to the IDD, whatever that is Youtube channel, after this session. There will be captioning and ISL interpretation. That's going to be happening throughout. The link to the captions has been inserted in to the chat box. So just click on that and it will come in a separate window. We do want this to be a very interactive session. Quite alongside the discussion from our panelists. So please post any questions you have in the chat box. And if there is any clarification needed I will call out. Please do add your name and your organization in the chat box when you are adding questions because obviously that helps us kind of identify kind of the context that's with the question. So that's great.   
 And that's also useful for the recording and also for the reporting afterwards. If you do need to intervene during the Round Table, please do use the raise hand icon. I will just put a note again in the chat box and the Moderator and myself will give you the floor.   
 Okay. So that's all the house keeping sorted out. I'm going to pass on to Marieke to take us through a lively discussion.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you Jazz. And welcome, everyone. We are happy to have you in it looks good numbers present at this webinar. I would like to start with a thank you to two other people. You have seen Jazz already who has been part of the organization of this webinar. There is two other people, Ruby is present today. She has also put a lot of work in to the organization of this webinar. And Karen who is a part also of CBID task force together with myself. So this is a webinar organized both by the DPO task group as well as the CBID task group.   
 So I'm happy ‑‑ very happy to be with you all. For those that didn't catch it yet, my name is Marieke Boersma. And I'm one of the co‑Chairs of the CBID task group.   
 The topic of civic space is an important topic to both of our task groups. And we both, both of the task groups, not we both people, felt it would be important to share with you examples from people in the field and I think we managed quite an exciting combination of people from different corners of the world. And a special thank you to our participant from Fiji for who it is already passed 10 in the evening. And who is joining us today. So we're very happy to be able to give you a glimpse in to what is happening around participation in the civic space from different corners of the world, and yeah. We're looking forward to that.   
 We ‑‑ I'm not ‑‑ I can't see at the moment of people coming in. We have invited four speakers to this Forum and I haven't seen one of our speakers coming in yet. I will introduce her. If she does not manage to connect we have already decided how we are going to take care of that amongst the other three speakers. So the four speakers will give a bigger introduction of their selves in a bit.   
 I'm just going to introduce their names and where they're from. And then they will each have around four minutes to introduce themselves. After that we will let them present some of their experiences through some questions and after that there will be space for you to interact with our speakers and with each other, sorry, through questions. So I'm very happy to introduce our speakers to you. Setareki Macanawai is from the Pacific Disability Forum and based in Fiji. We hope that Pratima Gurung will still join us from the Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network in Nepal. We have Augustino Lado from the South Sudan Union of Persons with Disabilities. And we have Debora Leao from CIVICUS based in South Africa. So I will give the floor now to you, and let's do it in the same order as I announced you now. So please Seta, will you introduce yourself in about four minutes' time? Thank you.

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Thank you Marieke. I hope I'm coming out clearly through the ‑‑ the platform.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Very clear. Thanks.

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: I'm from Fiji. As Marieke said Setareki Macanawai is my name or Seta for short and I work with the Pacific disability Forum as a CEO for a little over ten years now. And the ‑‑ also want to thank the organizers, IDDC and particularly the task groups, the two groups that are responsible for this particular session. We are a regional Disabled Peoples Organization DPO, OPD, working across 22 Pacific island countries. The U.S. territories and the French Pacific territories in this region. Membership of about 70 members. Majority of which are organizations of Persons with Disabilities.   
 Both these ‑‑ the organizers of this particular session, we do identify with the two groups within IDDC in terms of CBID. We have set up the Pacific CBID Regional Forum and also of course has been a regional OPD, organization of Pacific focus on capacity building of organizations and services that we do provide.   
 We do work closely with CBM and IDDC member in our region, New Zealand, Australia. This topic is very close to our work, to our hearts. I was going to say as well in terms of disability inclusion for our work to succeed, we need to be working with our partners and in the space, the Civil Society space. We are hearing about it. We have seen it. It is definitely shrinking and it's ‑‑ it is a good topic for us to be talking and share experience this evening. Thank you Marieke.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Seta, for this introduction and for setting the scene. Augustino will you come next and introduce yourself?

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: Thank you very much. Yeah. I'm glad to be a part of this platform. My name is Augustino Lado. Person of South Sudan Union of Persons with Disabilities. South Sudan Union of Persons with Disabilities is still I think one year it was established in 2016 and it is also registered as a legal entity in 2012. It is eight OPD organizations of Persons with Disabilities who are based here in (inaudible). Also looking forward to brig the other OPDs from the states.   
 In fact, we are working in collaboration with partners, like, for example, light For the World and CBM and humanity and inclusion. These are some organizations that we are working together. In fact, we are ‑‑ of course, we are still starting ‑‑ we are still in square one. And we are working hard to infringe or to empower our OPDs to advocate for their rights for the inclusion of ‑‑ full inclusion in a civic space and also in any public arena. And, of course, we in South Sudan we are still behind. We have a lot of good ‑‑ a lot of negative attitudes towards people with disabilities. So these are the areas that we are working on awareness raising that remove these barriers so that people with disabilities are also given full participation in the civic space and also in the public arena. As any person in society.   
 So this is what we ‑‑ this is the role of the DPOs. It is awareness raising to empower them socially and economically. So this is a brief about South Sudan Union of Persons with Disabilities.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Augustino. Great to hear. And I think that's one of the nice things of this group, we have very new and new groups and experience of engaging freshly in this civic space and people who have done so for many, many years.   
 So I would like to move on to Debora, please introduce yourself.

>> DEBORA LEAO: Hi. Good afternoon or evening or morning everyone. So my name is Debora Leao. I work as a researcher of CIVICUS which is a membership alliance with more than 9,000 members in and around 175 countries.   
 Our membership is made up of organizations of individuals that are committed to strengthening civic participation in Civil Society around the world and as part of that mandate to promote the space for Civil Society we produce research on the trends and developments affecting civic space. So our key program for this is CIVICUS which is where I work. It draws information from our partners around the world in 196 countries. So our goal is to share reliable, up to date data on the state of Civil Society freedoms in all countries and provide a basis for comparison for the situation between them. Which we believe allows us to learn about the ways in which our right to participate is being either realized or challenged. So this allows us to draw attention to countries to support Human Rights defenders in countries around the world. Our work is really focused on international advocacy. So in my case, for instance, I focus on research, and advocacy in the countries in the Americas. And as one example of work that we have done is working with organizations in Nicaragua to produce report on restrictive laws that were passed, especially at the end of the last year and harassment that journalists, activists, students have faced in the last three years. We use this to advocate at the Human Rights Council to support monitoring of the crisis there. We also work with local society and lawyers of particular families to highlight cases of persons who have been imprisoned for their activism. We created a campaign that you can all look for. But it advocates for the release of political prisoners and calls attention to the situation that they face in multiple countries, especially in light of the COVID‑19 pandemic. So this is just an example of our work around civic space. We also run several different programs aimed to support Human Rights defenders by providing them with training and security, building resilience and advocating and campaigning for their rights. And so this is just a sample of what we do and later I will present a little bit of the findings that we have had around how civic space around the world is being respected or challenged.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Debora. As I said quite a variety of people and variety of experience. So I'm really looking forward to your presentation in a few minutes. I have seen that Pratima is with us. Welcome, Pratima. Would you be so kind to introduce yourself as well?

>> PRATIMA GURUNG: Thank you. Thank you. So good afternoon. And I don't know, good evening, and good morning, to all of my friends over here. So I'm very much thankful for IDDC for providing this opportunity. I'm Pratima Gurung and I work for Indigenous Persons with Disabilities in my country and I do work at the regional and global level. Right now I represent the national organization called national disabled women Association of Nepal which works for young and indigenous women with disabilities. And for me in the ‑‑ to ‑‑ in today's event I'm asked and suggested to present more about the challenges and the prospectives from an intersectional lens. I will be highlighting the focus on those areas because we work on Indigenous Persons with Disabilities who comprise ‑‑ all around the globe. And 1.3 million Indigenous people with disabilities in my country. We know that people with disabilities face discrimination in public and private sphere and when this reality and struggles are again added from gender and indigenous or ethnic identity it forms ‑‑ it further aggravates the compounded form for exclusion of Persons with Disabilities having multiple identity. We work on the most marginalized group, is underrepresented groups at the grassroots level and national level. And also at the global level. And when we talk about how do we work on the grassroots level one of the things that we highlight is about the inclusion intersectionality and Human Rights based approaches is one of the fundamental core we have been highlighting and we work with the different constituencies. So primarily we work with four constituencies and also with the different CSOs and we try to bring the lens of inclusion, disability, intercultural perspectives and gender perspectives. This is how we have been working at the grassroots level. And that grassroots level is again further linked at the global level. So when it comes to our work within the disability constituency I would like to highlight some of the few things and then that can be further added in the next presentation. So one of the realities that we have so far faced from our brothers and sisters and within the disability movement and constituency we are told that will we need to demand our rights, we need to demand our space within the indigenous movement. So this is what we have been requested by the disability movement and constituency and vice versa. This happens in our day‑to‑day lives. So when this kind of challenges are faced in our day‑to‑day realities as indigenous Persons with Disabilities ‑‑ we know we are a Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Disabilities are not homogeneous group. And when we look at disability, disability is a diverse, complex and sensitive and evolving concept. But for us have multiple and intersecting identities. We are still questioning and ‑‑ these statements, where are these statements framed for whom. And who have we related this statements and when. So for us it is very time to rethink about what kind of work have we done so far. If we look at the national policies that are framed as a national label, we see the national policies are framed in a very monolithic which is framing a single approach and that does not address the heterozenity and diversity of disability. I will pause here and we can have further conversation in the next ‑‑ what do you say? The next question. Thank you.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Pratima. And thank you also for setting that scene and adding in the diversity and intersectionality. Thanks a lot. So now that we know our speakers, I would like to move back to Debora and ask, I know you have prepared a presentation to tell us a bit about CIVICUS and what is the state of the civic space today and do you have any examples of it? Debora, over to you.

>> DEBORA LEAO: I think you should be able to see my screen now. Before I go in to the details of our finding about civic space, I think what's important is to highlight for those not familiar ‑‑

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: We mainly see your notes and not so much your presentation anymore.

>> DEBORA LEAO: Sorry about that. All right. So our research is a collaboration between around 20 research partners that are regional organizations that then work for local, national and international organizations to collect data on civic space in different countries that we cover. And as I said we are a dynamic online tool. We provide information that comes from these variety of sources but it is important to say that we put the greatest weight on the sources that come from local and national level because I believe that these are the people who best know the situation of civic space in their countries.   
 Sorry. I don't know ‑‑ so what is it that we monitor exactly? We monitor the ‑‑ what we call civic space. Freedoms of Assembly of Association and expression. Underpinned by the state's duty to protect these freedoms. So that's what our definition of civic space is.   
 And we create a rating system through which each country is put in to one of our categories. Open being the countries where the civic space freedoms are best respected. So what have we found? Unfortunately the research that we've conducted in the past few years have shown that civic space is actually declining around the world. As you know a lot of the people in the world, around 87% live in countries that we rate as closed. That means that their ability to organize, to speak out, to fight for their rights faces severe restrictions. Conversely it means that only 3.4% of people live in countries that have open civic space, where their freedoms are mostly respected.   
 And so in the past year, in the past few years really, we can't really talk about civic space without talking about protests. And what we see is people taking to the streets in Nigeria, Belarus, the U.S. around the world to demand change, right? But as they have done so we found the Governments have aked often to restrict these rights. In the past year the violation of civic freedom that we most frequently documented, with excessive use of force, meaning teargas, illegal force, are the most common tactics Governments to restrict the protest. This is part of a bigger context where we see states acting more and more to silence descent. Among the most common violations that we've recorded has been, for instance, harassment and intimidation which are tactics often used to silence activists and journalists and others speaking out on issues of corruption, environmental degradation, and political persecution. Censorship in 2019 was a top violation and last year was the third top. Attacks on journalists and detention of Human Rights defenders as well as restrictive laws which affect all of these different freedoms. We also know this is uneven crisis. Everyone is affected by shrinking civic space. Journalists are also among those that are very commonly targeted.   
 And we also know that certain groups face more restrictions or face bigger challenges when trying to exercise their rights in different regions. So woman have been among the forefront of both the people fighting for rights but also those who face violations and online harassment and other types of violations.   
 It depends a lot on (inaudible). In Americas environmental groups, Indigenous People have one of the groups very commonly targeted as well. People fighting for labor rights especially in Europe and Central Asia, and people who defend LGBTQI+ rights in different countries. When it comes to people with disabilities our research still has a long way to go. Where we have most frequently recorded people with disabilities and restrictions to civic space has been individuals. In El Salvador we recorded groups of veterans protesting and speaking about the fact that they have experienced the civil war and they believe that peace and democracy is something that they need to defend. So we are seeing groups coming out. We have seen individual activists being affected by restrictions. So just last month, for instance, in the UK we were ‑‑ young teenager with learning disabilities protesting against the police bill in the UK who was despite the fact that she identified herself as somebody with a disability was mistreated by police who used excessive force to obtain her. In this case of this photo, for instance, we know there have been some cases where organizations representing people with disabilities and people with disabilities have faced specific challenges. In Poland in 2019, especially parents of children with disabilities they occupied Parliament for over a month. But during that month authorities acted to restrict the protests as much as they could not only by restricting access to the bathroom within the Parliament because they were staging a sit in but also by restricting, for instance, the access of children's physiotherapists to the protest as well.   
 So while we know there are different aspects that we still need to develop research on this, I think it is very important to have this kind of conversation that we're having now because it is clear that we still need to learn a bit more and develop a more intersectional lens when using research on civic space. And finally before I go even though our findings are or top headlines, paint a bleak picture, I would say this a story of who ‑‑ because what we have seen in the past years is that people who have taken to the streets, who have spoken up about issues and their rights have been able to move things towards change in the past two years. We had some examples within the monitor that we recorded. For instance, Chile, just now have the election for their constitutional Assembly which is a direct result of the last protests in 2019. We saw black lives matter in the U.S. and different countries and people being incredibly resilient, even who face very strong restrictions. Before I close the presentation I want to say that actually this is a story of how civil society has continued to resist despite the shrinking civic space. And that is a good way to set up a recommendation.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Debora. Thanks for setting the scene. And setting our scene. We in IDDC usually talk about disability specifically but it is really great to set that within the global scene of civic space. And I already saw in the comment thanks for the very nice pictures and the presentations to reflect that. So thanks a lot.   
 I would like to move on to Augustino, and Augustino I would like to ask you, so your network of organizations of people with disabilities is quite new. You are one‑year‑old. I think if I I'm not mistaken, you are also living in the newest country in the world, I might have missed another new country but I don't think so. And I would like to ask you how have you gone about energizing the network of diverse organizations with Persons with Disabilities to collectively get involved in the civic space alongside other social justice movements to influence your Government? The floor is yours, Augustino.

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: Thank you very much for the question. As I already put it in, affect of civic space for us in South Sudan is still very narrow. However, the realization of the rights of people with disabilities and involvement in the civic ‑‑ in the civic space are the components of our advocacy program.   
 We have in effect done a number of awareness raising campaigns in collaboration with our partners here in Duba to strengthen the involvement or the network of our OPDs alongside the other social justice actors to influence the Government to ratify the regional and international policy on the rights of people with disabilities. And also to implement our domestic policies to ensure the full involvement of Persons with Disabilities in decision making and participation in all spheres of life as enshrined in the international proposal, in fact, like it is also like ‑‑ it is already the Sustainable Development Goals' agenda that no one is left behind.   
 In fact, still it is a challenge of us. However we've managed to influence our networking. Now we we've realized that there are some changes. And we are now involved in a civic space arena. However, we have a lot to do because mostly of our OPDs are based here in Duba. We need to see that OPDs that are coming up in the states are also strengthened so that they can also work alongside with the social justice actors to influence their state Government for their realization and full involvement in civic space and even the public arena as any citizen in South Sudan. In fact, we are working closely with the partners as I mentioned before here in South Sudan and also with the other civic, the social justice actors. For example, like safe for which is a community empowerment progress organization, and also for that, the Foundation for democracy and accountable governance. These are the social actors that we are working close with them so that we at the end of the day may be involved fully in civic space. This is a preview of what I can mention. Anyway, we have realized some changes done before that people with disabilities are now somehow involved and able also to air out their grievances and the community is now starting to realize their participation and decision making.   
 Of course, sometimes people with disabilities their potential are not realized. But now with the coming of our DPOs, people have realized that Persons with Disabilities have a potential when they are given space and opportunities to participate. So this is what we have done. And we are still working a lot to see that people with disabilities are fully involved in civic space and decision making.   
 And also the participation in all aspects of life, like any citizen in the country. So this is briefly what I can tell you. I don't know whether I have answered you. Thank you very much.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Augustino and thank you for sharing these experiences from South Sudan. I especially like the way you highlighted that entering the civic space needs both the understanding of the space you are entering, but also the confidence and empowerment in this case people with disabilities to know that they can and have the capacity to enter that space. So thank you very much for sharing your experiences.   
 I was just wondering, Seta would you like to add anything on this same question from your quite longer, slightly longer experiences from Fiji in one or two minutes?

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Yes. The keys that Augustino mentioned for Persons with Disabilities or their representative organizations, the work has to be done first. The Persons with Disabilities, the capacity initiative developed, they have need to be confident, they need to be informed, they need to be empowered. To be able to participate effectively and represent the issues alongside other Civil Society in advocating to Governments. And that's something that we are ‑‑ we have been and we continue to work with our members in the ‑‑ in the Pacific. The realization that Persons with Disabilities we are ‑‑ we don't leave necessary ‑‑ we ‑‑ part of a community. And issues outside of need not to be ours alone. Recognizing that and acknowledging and equipping ourselves appropriately will then be able to equip us with the right tools to then engage. Because for many reasons, Persons with Disabilities may not have the education background, may not have the ‑‑ undergone the training of but one thing that they need to know their own lived experience and taking to that space. And I think one other point is still, it's still in the same vain, in areas of Persons with Disabilities, how do the representative of the collective of the disability movement, visual impairment of physical disability speaking, representing the disability community. And it's a skill. It's an experience on how to make sure that when at least one opportunity you actually representing the collective voice. And that, too, can be very difficult in this context. So it is acknowledging that capacity needs to be built for Persons with Disabilities to be able to participate effectively and confidently. And also the need for them to maintain that united front because opportunities do not ‑‑ are minimal. And when there is an opportunity to advocate, making sure that it is the representative voice of Persons with Disabilities. So it's actually all Human Rights of all Persons with Disabilities in that opportunity. That would be my additional. Thank you.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Seta. Some very good additions and experiences. I like to especially your sentence to recognize that the fight does not need to be yours alone.   
 Thanks a lot for these additions. I would like to move on to Pratima. And Pratima, would you be able to share with us based on your experience on working in the intersectionality. You already raised it in your introduction. What do you consider to be risks and challenges when working with the disability movement in coalition with other social justice movement actors. So Pratima, the floor is yours.

>> PRATIMA GURUNG: Thank you, thank you for your question again. So for me from an individual label and from an institution label I would say that working on intersectional and multiple groups, the first challenge that we have is within our constituency. And when I say within our constituency I would like to frame, the first is an individual with a label, including women with disabilities or Indigenous People or LGBTIQ with disabilities do not understand about the overlapping and multiple and intersecting identities they have. They do not know about the impact, the various types of impact in their daily lives. They are not able to articulate their identities and they even do not know what does that mean in their lives.   
 So this is one the challenges at the individual label. But at the same time we have also the other challenge that is related within our constituency. For example, if you take the context of Nepal, the issue of Indigenous People with disabilities it is still accepted as a human right issue or rights of Persons with Disabilities in the context of Nepal. That's one of the challenges that we have. When it looks to other countries, in Asia I see the same kind of challenges. For Bangladesh, they are still not recognized by the state. That's the kind of challenges that we face within our own constituency. But at the same time we also have a challenge working with a different CSOs and working with other constituency, like the women constituency, because most often we find that the narratives of marginalization are mostly framed by people who are in power. It is predominate identity and predomnate space a that matters who is holding the power to whom when it comes to groups like multiple and intersecting identities the use of power is very much limited. And as a result we see that there is limited participation of those underrepresented groups. So these are the kind of challenges that we have so far been facing is groups with multiple and intersecting identities. But however having said all these challenges I would like to highlight that we also do have the opportunity sometimes and if we can use this limited opportunities that we have as a multiple and intersecting identities, we can say and we have proved that we can influence the different movements and different CSOs and this is what we have done so far at the national level to the global level. Build allies and networks within the different constituencies and we have been continuously being very loud and proud. We are proud of what we have. And we are accepting and we are acknowledging and admitting our identities is an Indigenous Persons with Disabilities within the disability, within the indigenous and the other CSO movement. That has opened the avenues for us. Today we are not only able to highlight ourselves as a marginalized group, but we have provided solutions. We have paved the ways that we are contributors in the society that we live and in the family that we live. So that is why we are ‑‑ we have ‑‑ we have framed those narratives and for that what we have so far done at the national to the global level is we have been vocal. We have been very much strategic working with different allies. And this is what we have seen. So we have applied different kinds of strategies and different kinds of methods in doing our advocacy from global to the national level at the grassroots level. And in that regard I would like to highlight that meaningful participation and respect for the diversity of all Persons with Disabilities is very much crucial. The second thing that I would like to emphasize is about the respect of individual and collective rights. When it comes to Indigenous People, sometimes our identities are overlapped and sometimes we feel that we are nowhere. And that's why we urge all our brothers and sisters, all our allies and also the constituency so we can reach the most marginalized groups, including individuals with disabilities and leaving no one behind. Thank you.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Pratima. I can hear from you that you ‑‑ you have many years of activity. And I love the way that you are speaking about this issue. I'm going to break our flow a little bit, it is a nice flow on to Seta, because your made the nice shift from the challenges to the opportunities. Seta, would you mind coming in again and sharing the opportunities that you have seen in the work you have done in Fiji and especially in working in coalition with other social justice movement actors?

>> SETAREKI MACANAWAI: Okay. Yes. Yes. Thank you Pratima for sharing as you always do, the wonderful experience intersectionality and multiple identity of Persons with Disabilities and cut across to gender and indigenous and to Nepal. Opportunity, yes, certainly for us and I hear this question in my mind back to when we first started the work in Fiji and in the Pacific, where in trying to ‑‑ when forming SDGs, developing or discussing SDGs and this open Forum, and even prior to that, when we talk about in our case the small islands developing states, those discussions and those conversations. Where disability is not until lately became a stakeholder group. So a Persons with Disabilities and one of the major groups working in the UN. In those spaces where we are not represented, when we do not have a seat at the table, this is the business of alliance building. How do we then get allies on board that are at those spaces where we are not. In working with our partners largely Civil Society, main Civil Society in growing the work on the disability inclusion, the recognition of rights of Persons with Disabilities, even way back in the 1990s in this region. It was not ‑‑ it is a very new phenomenon. Already at an unlevel playing field. It is already Pratima talks about the balance of power, the balance of power. Coming to that space we just have to navigate the space with a lot of wisdom. And also the opportunity also to realize that we ‑‑ if we cannot go to the end, there may be an opportunity to meet in the middle. So we have then peak allies, largely, the women's groups. As you know there is a NGO major group. So we ‑‑ the work that we did in the region is largely with other NGOs and asked them to be our voice when they are at the table and they are talking to Governments in the region. We attend their meetings. We are part of their methods. In doing that it rubs off on you as an emerging group. As something somebody new to that field. You get to learn and see and hear how to operate safely successfully, effectively in these kinds of spaces. For me I then fast forward to probably last year, Pacific Disability Forum myself as focal point, focal point of Pacific regional NGO alliance platform, all the regional NGOs that address very different issues, women, economy, gender, environment, the church, you name it. Trade unions, education. And to be able to be rubbing shoulders with those leaders and then asking them and again the issue of the twin‑track approach, the mainstreaming, for them to include in their work of Persons with Disabilities, so share the load as I said earlier, this fight need not be ours alone. It is navigating the space, what I found that has really helped. Organizations based in Fiji when we go to different countries we connect our newly established organizations that's often the reality. OPDs are often one of the newer emerging groups that may be forming as an organized group in a country. The help for them is available in that country. And usually from other NGOs. So we connect those dots and encourage them to build alliance with the allies because as said they could be well assisted supported by their own peers who may be related to, they talk the same language, same culture. And that's how think we manage to grow in the region, in the work that we do here. But also to grain traction in to the work.   
 I talked about SDG and I will finish here. We were not allowed in some of those spaces. I talked about the small undeveloping states because we don't have a person at the table. So we talked to the indigenous group, we talked to the youth group, we talked to the women's group. If we could be sharing their space at those tables and that's how we were able to get our voice through.   
 That's for ‑‑ that's all from me for now. Thank you.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Seta, for these experiences. And making sure you are there sounds like an important message to me. And if you are not there, making sure you get the opportunity to be there through others. I would like to give the space before we go in to answering the questions, first to Debora and then to Augustino to give shorter reaction on the two presentations we had now from Seta and Pratima.   
 And as I give the word to Debora, go ahead. I have seen some questions already. Pose your questions in the chat so we can start the discussion after that.   
 Thank you. Debora.

>> DEBORA LEAO: Yeah. Thanks. Thanks. Very similar to what others have said. In previously before joining CIVICUS I worked on youth advocacy in Brazil. And the ways that we found to work in areas where we didn't have too much expertise were, for instance, partnering and working coalitions was probably the strongest way. As a youth group we wanted to advocate for protection of environmental rights and for policies on climate change. And we had no expertise on litigation, for instance. So we partnered with lawyers organizations, particularly Human Rights organizations. And then also environmental groups to create basically a legal case, much like in other countries where young people sue the state for the protection of the environment and adoption of stronger poll sis. In this regard when a consumer work at CIVICUS and researching improving our research on people with disabilities in civic space is a question already on this. To be honest I think spaces like this is what we are missing a little bit from our side where we can engage with OPDs who have expertise. And I think to be honest, our challenges are sometimes quite basic in terms of just making your materials accessible, we know that our platforms particularly inclusive and has to be improved in this regard.   
 So we absolutely need to draw on the expertise of organizations representing people with disabilities and working directly with people with disabilities to make sure that our research, our toolkits, our information on civic space, on protecting our rights is accessible to everyone. So yes. Spaces like this and continuing the conversation is very important.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much, Debora. I have seen already a question from IDA. So you can jump on in a moment. Augustino, would you like to still share some experience you or challenges you had in working together with the social justice movement and then we'll move to the questions.

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: Yes. Thank you very much. In fact, we experienced some challenges, to mention some, the negative attitude due to decision barriers, negative attitude of society towards people with disabilities is one of the challenges that we are going through. People recognize that a disability is cross‑cutting issue. And sometimes they take it that disability is a girl's ‑‑ so that the community is sometimes they are not ‑‑ they are not ready to interact with Persons with Disabilities. They cannot accept Persons with Disabilities even in the social gathering. These are some of the things that I ‑‑ that are in fact, are facing people with disabilities. And also the issue for Asia and South Sudan, one of the challenges is maybe also reasonable accommodation. Diversity of people with disabilities, like hearing impaired. We are lacking interpreters. So most of people with hearing impaired, they cannot access, they are not able to interact with the community and this is also one of the risks. And ‑‑ so far they do not forget full information because of what's going on because of the lack of interpreters. So this kind of people are not in fact, the ‑‑ they are not included in the society. And one will say poverty is risky. Because people see that people with disabilities cannot contribute. And also lack of capacity building one of the challenges because many people with disabilities are not informed about their rights in the society.   
 So this also poses a risk because they ‑‑ they are not able so express their rights or needs in society. And also the problem, also one of the risks, especially here in our communities you see sometimes self‑values has been going for a long years under conflict. And still after now they are still ‑‑ there is some community conflict that's going along in our communities. So these are some of the risks, sometimes that they cannot expose people with disabilities to interrupt. If movement is also one of the risks because here we are sometimes, most of us we are confined within the centers. We are not able to go down to the rural areas, outskirts because of the insecurity. So these are risks that confine us not to interact with the grassroots communities. And mostly of our ‑‑ of the people with disabilities, some of them are in the rural areas.   
 So it is not easy to get with them. And as I mentions is, sometimes accessibility also is one of the challenges. That sometimes we are not able sometimes to access some of the facilities. And also for the ‑‑ especially the ‑‑ those who using sometimes the physical disability. Movement is a problem because of the distance. So there are sometimes let out in many occasions. Yes. So these are the challenges. After we need to see that people with disabilities are given opportunities, their capacity are built and empowered, socially and economically so that they would be accepted in society.   
 So ‑‑

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you.

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: I can put as risks that are facing us.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thank you very much. I would like to hand over to Jazz to prompt us towards the questions. So we can start some more interaction. Jazz, the floor is yours.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: Hello. That's been a great set of presentations. Thank you very much everyone for making them. Going to make it a little more interactive. It is not about me reading out questions from the chat box. So I'm going to dye straight in and hopefully I will kind of represent them as well as I can. If I can't then I will probably ask you to put your mic on and give a bit more. The first one is from IDA and she would like to know how organizations like CIVICUS could partner with OPDs to improve the research and data collection on civic participation of Persons with Disabilities. And if you actually have faced any challenges in reaching OPDs. So I'm going to sling that one to Debora to answer. Many thanks.

>> DEBORA LEAO: Thanks. On the challenges, I will start with that. To be honest challenges is that we don't work with partners who specialize in this area to be honest. We work with partners that are looking more at the regional level. We need to do more. Ways that we have done that before, met with people with disabilities but say information on refugees, for instance, is by creating thematic research where we partner with organizations working with directly refugees and with refugees themselves to produce research and understanding the policies that are needed to make sure they can fully exercise their Civil Rights and what are the specific challenges they are facing. We are trying to do that with youth. And we have done that with refugees. We are open to any partnerships to do that. And I think a general challenge to be honest is to conduct research with an intersectional lens as Pratima was saying but takes in to account different groups and different challenges and the ways that we need to make sure that all of these different people are able to fully exercise their rights.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: That's brilliant. Thank you very much for that response. I'm going to sling us on to the next question because they are coming in. But do keep them coming in. That's really brilliant. The next question is from Adna. Many thanks for your question. It is for Augustino. So it's about the participation of DPOs in the civic space which obviously we have heard, certainly isn't happening and therefore have you got any insights prepared about in terms of strengthening how DPOs can actually be strengthened and how you actually deal with issues of stigma within the space and DPOs engaging. So Augustino if you can respond to that, that would be brilliant. You are on mute at the moment if you are talking. Augustino? I mean I think this is probably a general question.

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: Yes.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: Hi. Respond to that. Brilliant.

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: Yes. Of course, I mentioned, I talk about capacity building but I do not mention something about education. In fact, we as ‑‑ as the network of Persons with Disabilities we are lobbying for the signing of inclusive education policy. Because mostly of our members with disabilities are not attending classes. They are cut out because there is no inclusive policy. So we have been lobbying for the signing of this policy and now as I talk the policy has already been signed. And it is going to be disseminated across the country. So that any learner with disabilities are accommodated in any school like any kid. Because in fact, one of the challenges here in South Sudan is the issue of education. And also the modern technology. A few of us can access computers because ‑‑ and majority in fact, cannot. So this is all about the education, the policies, inclusion policies, is already signed and we are going to disseminate across the countries so that any, any learner with disabilities is adopted without any hindrance. This is what I wanted to talk about, about the issue of education here in South Sudan for Persons with Disabilities particularly.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: That's brilliant. Thank you very much. And I think that's ‑‑ I mean very helpful insight indeed. There is actually an interesting question here from Alison Marshall from census international and she is asking specifically about any examples of successful alliances between OPDs and women's organizations working together, particularly looking at things like sexual and reproductive health and rights. I'm guessing this is probably a good question for Pratima to answer if you are willing and able to respond to that one.

>> PRATIMA GURUNG: Thank you for your question. I would like to give a concrete example of Nepal where we have worked with indigenous women consortia. It consists of three national organizations and also 84 distinct Province and local chapters here in Nepal. We as organization of women with disabilities we have work very closely with them, with the international instrument that is CEDAW. We have work the in the CEDAW and we have framed the issue of sexual health and reproductive rights and focusing on women with disabilities. And by doing the cross movement collaboration and also the networking and alliance with them, one of the very concrete examples that we have received in the concluding observation for the Member States in 2018 that clearly highlights about the issues and challenges faced by multiple and intersecting groups like indigenous, minority people and also women with disabilities and that has opened avenues for to work in collaboration. Not only in terms of preparing the report for the CEDAW report, and working in close collaboration and knowing about their perspective from our perspective. So now it has opened avenue for us to work on the ground for the implementation of the CEDAW. Thank you.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: That's brilliant. That's very, very practical example there. Particularly useful. Do keep your questions coming. We got another question actually from Marie, fellow Leonard Cheshire colleague. Specifically asking about education being one of the important vehicles for driving attitudinal changes. Augustino, this question is about you. Could you say more about the progress that's been made by SSUDP it is the newest of DPOs in South Sudan in driving inclusion education policy in South Sudan general education.

>> AUGUSTINO LADO: Yes, I think we in fact, representatives of people with disabilities, even before the union was formed, we've been pushing for these policies, for example, UNCRPD and the national inclusion ‑‑ national disability inclusion policy and also the inclusive education policy. We have been lobbying the ministry, particularly the Ministry of Our partners and the Ministry of Education to see that this policy a signed and ratified. So stated some time, some minutes ago, the policy is already signed. And work remains is now to be launched and then after launched, it will be disseminated across South Sudan to the ten states of South Sudan. Even including the three administrative areas in South Sudan.   
 Because these policy vehicle as I have said before, one of the challenges that we are not able to participate fully it is because of lack of education. As you see is the long sitting war in South Sudan it has impacted the public and the country. Mostly the people who are affected, Persons with Disabilities. So this is why we have been lobbying strongly to see that inclusion education policy is ratified. So that any, any disability learner can join any school because here sometimes we have only ‑‑ we have someone school, education center for the blind and we have started integrating our learners to the school here in Duba, in the capital city. But when you go down to the states, mostly are Persons with Disabilities, particularly the hearing impaired and the visually impaired are not enrolled in schools. This is because there is no reasonable accommodation. There is no sign language that teachers who are trained so they can handle these learners with hearing impaired, there is no Braille in the states. The only few people, learners with disabilities who are going to classes are near Duba. Because of the existence of education center for the blind, there was established a vision, regional Association of the blind and that school has been upgraded in to a primary school. So many learners with visual impairment are learned there and we start to integrate them in to mainstream school. Some teachers are not able to accept the hearing impaired or visual impaired because they can't handle them. Included in education system of the country.   
 So this I think we pave the way for learners with disabilities to be enrolled in schools. So this is what I briefly I can say. Thank you.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: That's brilliant. I just noticed in the chat box that the South Sudan inclusive education policy is already signed and will be launched next month. We are almost through with the questions. There is one question that you can think ‑‑ it is quite a good one to wrap up on from Ruby Holmes and also we have worked together with this session.   
 So Ruby says thank you very much for all your presentations. What are the recommendations that we are supporting the next generation of youth in the civic space. Very important question. I am wondering who to give that to. My gut is to ask Debora to speak to that. But also I think that Pratima you could usually also give a good perspective on that as well. So who ‑‑ who is happy to speak to that first?

>> DEBORA LEAO: I can give two cents. We know from our research in civic space that it is among the groups that are often impacted. If only because we know that youth often play a big role in protesting, for instance. But also, of course, as Human Rights defenders themselves. I feel from our side we need to do nor to make sure this our movements are inclusive but producing accessible materials, for instance, on people's rights so that people are able to learn about their rights in different ways.   
 And also now having been a youth activist that often Human Rights research or Human Rights advocacy, so is not really made for youth. Young people want to engage much more on activism and much more learn through videos. So we need to make sure that our movements are catering to young people's demands and young people's leadership. And particularly to young people with disabilities. But I think I can learn a lot more from the other speakers on the panel about that as well.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: That's great. Thank you. Pratima, did you want to say, just add briefly to what Debora has been saying there?

>> PRATIMA GURUNG: Yeah, just to add on to what Debora has said. I wanted to highlight that what we have realized so far in the whole disability movement, in the whole CSO movement, one of the gaps that we have highlighted is about the single identity. If we are framing in a single identity, that will not work. So we have to break the silos of the single identity within the box and by saying that I just wanted to highlight the gap of the whole CSO movement including the disability movement is we have not realized to build the synergy of indigenous network which is crucial to bring young people with disabilities with us. And by that I would say promoting and enhancing their leadership is very much crucial but at the same time I would also just want to highlight that young people are very much advanced than us. The technology has made us in a very different mood in a very different world. So realizing their issues understanding their problems and understanding the challenges and understanding the way they want to do the advocacy is very much crucial. Otherwise if we say that the advocacy that we have been doing and the advocacy that they need to be done if we framing that narrative that will not work. So that is why we need to understand the values and also the challenges that youth are facing at this moment and for that I would say that we need to also provide a space that how do we enable young champions. So we need to build a space to create young champions they will be asking allies and networks not only within the disability movement but within the overall marginalized and CSO movement. This is what I want to add. Thank you.

>> JAZZ SHABAN: That's fantastic. Thank you very much. I think that kind of brings us to the end of the questions. Many thanks everyone who have added your questions to the chat boxes and in particular many thanks to the willingness of our panelists for responding. I thought I would do a little summing up really. Just four key points and I'm going to be very quick really.   
 So I mean firstly obviously in what we are hearing today is we are looking at a shrinking space in terms of the civic space, with increasing violations of freedoms and participation. So with that shrinking space it is becoming much harder for minority voices or the diversity of voices to actually come through. And in energizing that civic space we need, you know, new groups to be able to emerge and engage. But there does need to be understanding from the social justice movement and the civic space but also needs to be increased confidence by people with disabilities to actually engage in those spaces. Very important. In terms of challenges of identity and power, this also requires a civic space to make room for intersectionality. And giving greater diversity to the voices and moving much more away from the signal, the single identity and that kind of homogeneous kind of group. Recognizing diversity and encouraging and making spaces for much more voices.   
 And in terms of ‑‑ awful lot of opportunities that were raised, that I think the one that resonated with me most was really something that Augustino I think said which was that in terms of looking at the future, you know, really does require an awful lot of wisdom in order to redress the imbalance of power and wisdom on all levels from all sides. I think this has been a really, really helpful and enlightening session today and a big thanks to everyone. I'm going to hand back to Marieke to close the session and to give thanks. But many thanks.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: Thanks a lot, Jazz. So after this great summary, all that is left for me is to say thank you. First of all thank you to the IDDC membership and especially to the Secretariat for making this webinar possible. You are behind the scenes. And I know you do a lot that we don't necessarily notice. Also thank you to Karen, Ruby, Jazz and task groups who organized this. But most of all thank you Debora, thank you Augustino, thank you Seta and thank you Pratima. It has been great to share and for you to share your experiences with you. I have learned a lot and I was very inspired and I have the feeling from the chat and the questions that others were as well.   
 For everyone a lovely evening, lovely weekend, and thanks for joining us today. Bye‑bye.

>> Thank you. Bye‑bye.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Stay well.

>> MARIEKE BOERSMA: You, too.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you, everyone.

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