**Input script by Karina Chupina (DRAFT)**

IN my presentation I would like to share examples of participation of people with disabilities in the context of COVID-19, including successful practices from the Case studies by UNDP Country offices which I supported as a consultant. These practices were a part of the UN PRPD (which stands for the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) Global Programme on COVID-19 Disability-Inclusive Recovery and Response.

**PRACTICES:**

I.        **IFHOH, WFD, IFHOHYP and WFDYS**

To overcome being cut from communication, deaf and hard of hearing youth and adult organisations joined voices together which doesn't happen very often. [IFHOHYP](link) (International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People) in cooperation with [IFHOH](link), [WFDYS](link) (World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section) and [WFD](link) issued a [joint statement calling for accessible communication during COVID-19](link).  IFHOH and IFHOHYP has also conducted a Global Survey on the [impact of COVID-19 on hard of hearing people](link). The most interesting practice is perhaps when IFHOHYP initiated the first [Global Inventory for Clear face masks](link) (you know, the masks that allow to see a person's mouth and to lip read). On the onset of the pandemic, no one knew where to find them as they were not commonly in use. And thanks to this inventory, organisations and individuals could find the masks' providers in their countries. Still, greater public awareness is required about the clear masks as well as market availability at competitive prices (most clear masks cost more than regular ones).

II.        **UNDP Case Studies from the UN PRPD Global Programme on COVID-19 Disability-Inclusive Recovery and Response**

This programme is conducted by the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and is meant to support countries to design and implement disability-inclusive response and recovery planning for COVID-19.

I supported UNDP offices in developing Case studies in 8 countries. Here are just a few examples of effective and meaningful participation by OPDs (organizations of people with disabilities):

1.  **In Dominican Republic,** National Disability Council and OPDs identified disability groups for COVID-19 assistance programmes and ran a successful intersectoral advocacy.

National Disability Council **meaningfully involved OPDs** in the situation assessment, which led to the **necessary evidence**, on the basis of which they developed Guidelines for policy measures for people with disabilities in COVID-19 – and also, a database of **more than 12,200** persons with disabilities in **vulnerable situations.** This database was then used for social assistance programmes. At the same time, National Disability Council actively advocated towards the state and was supported by the recommendations of the UNDP

Country office. This effort resulted in mainstreaming disability in social assistance programmes.

In **Cambodia**, OPDs engaged in developing and implementing in the National Disability strategic plans, and integrated disability-inclusive emergency response in this plan. This proved to be a very efficient step. OPDs were also involved in the situation analysis consultation, including identification of people with disabilities for access to vaccination. Finally, the OPDs network across Cambodia helped to identify PwD so that they could be nominated for the government social assistance scheme (IDPoor scheme). Within three months, 1264 new families with people with disabilities were included in this scheme.

**In Vietnam**, the practices explicitly addressed intersectional discrimination and barriers faced by women with disabilities during the pandemic. Partnerships with a variety of stakeholders were also crucial. OPDs and groups of GBV (gender-based violence) victims, in partnership with the UNDP, increased awareness on preventing GBV through evidence-based dialogues between journalists, attorneys, law students, leaders of OPDs, people with disabilities and their families. Also, the partnership between UNDP, Ministry of Health, national television, and OPDs led to a  public event for women with disabilities where they could speak out about their experiences of SGBV during COVID-19. Also in **Vietnam**, when, because of the pandemic, ministries had other priorities or faced program delays, it was critical for the UNDP offices to partner with the OPDs rather than directly with ministries.

In some countries where meaningful participation wasn't possible, like in Kazakhstan, the most common way of contribution by the OPDs was by taking part in the distribution of humanitarian aid, personal protective equipment, medicines, and importantly, they distributed reliable information about COVID-19 in accessible formats for people with disabilities.

## SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS:

**What OPDs need:**

o   Role of PwD and OPDs is critical in ensuring the targeted and inclusive response, but their participation, visibility and capacity is limited
o   Capacity-building in communications, governance, advocacy and policy work, and in some cases, better coordination between the OPDs of different profiles, expertise in monitoring, analyzing and collecting the data
o   To take the lead role as data collectors, including in the community-driven data collection, partners and initiators of disability-inclusive multi-stakeholder actions and programmes

**What OPDs can do:**

o   Developing methodologies and systems to collect disaggregated data on the impacts of COVID-19

o   Training government authorities on the specifics of assisting persons with various types of disabilities and addressing emergency crises in an inclusive manner

o   Monitoring the implementation of health emergency response actions to improve targeting of assistance, accountability and transparency of all stakeholders

o   For an improved intersectional approach, developing partnerships with other CSOs and organizations working with LGBTQ+, indigenous people, migrant communities, refugees

o   Assisting the the CSOs of various profiles, including humanitarian, relief, migration and climate action CSOs, in developing policy frameworks and programmes on disability inclusion

o   Strengthening their organizational capacity and OPD alliances for a more effective engagement in decision and policy making processes