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WORKSHOP 6

DISASTER AND DISABILITIES IN TERMS OF CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT

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>> MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. I think we should start the session. It's already 12:00. I hope everybody is energized. I think after the coffee you all are fresh and energetic. So this session, Disaster and Disabilities in Terms of Crisis and Management is something that came up as we wanted to talk about the real thing that was happening especially in Asia-Pacific as we are facing a lot of disasters. And Gunela motivated me to do a session about it, and here we are Asia-Pacific IGF is something more that we Asians are up for leadership about Internet Governance and we are here to talk about our issues and our voice.

I have a small audiovisual. It is about the earthquake, the 7.9 earthquake that hit Nepal on April 29th, 2015. So that was like quite devastating, and at that time when the earthquake happened, our Government was not prepared. We were listed in the earthquake green zone, but we were not prepared and things were very sad in terms of resource management, in terms of technology, in terms of communication, you know, things were not working out.

And especially when you talk about people with disabilities, there were people who should have been a priority, but they were like on the least stage. They were not even bothered, and this video shows and speaks about the real voices. I wanted to highlight this video

because these are the people who suffered the consequences and these were the real voices. So, you know, these people really speak about the things they went through. I think we should first see the video and then we will have the questions.

(Video)

We have a few of the presentations lined and you can, if you have any questions after the presentations, you can raise your hand and ask the questions and the speakers will be answering the questions.

So after the earthquake, you know, the situation was very tense in Nepal, and every day we used to see people saying that they had not received resources. They didn't have anything to eat. So what we did was me and my wife, we started a small relief operation where we started reaching out to people, distributing things that we had. And we started doing that and we started using Internet and social media before going to anyplace, we would put up the status, and people would come up and they would see I have this many resources, I have five packets of biscuits, and we even reached one of the major places where, which was the epicenter, and we did very big operations there. We provided people with food and other resources.

So it was just that we used Internet and during these operations we met all of these people. And meeting these people, you know, it was so fascinating that they were in pain and they would say that, you know, I'm like this, I have these resources. They would further say that, you know, please go and help other people, people who have spinal cord injuries, please help those kinds of people. And I think technology, for me, it completely changed when the earthquake happened. It changed to the point where I define technology for humanity with which I could communicate and get help for people.

And for them we are using technology today to voice the issues. So these are the issues here, and I think when you talk about crisis management and disasters, you know, these things are very unpredictable. So, you know, we need to further research. We need to talk. We need to do Civil Society communication, and we need to develop strategies to set minimum standards for facilitating people.

If you have any questions, I would love to answer the question. I guess I am lucky. Now, I would request Gunela, she is an expert in disability policy making and has been working at a national and international level for safeguarding the rights of disabled to do her presentation.

>> GUNELA ASTBRINK: Good afternoon, everyone. And I think the video we have just seen really highlights what people with disability experience in disasters. And I will talk a lot about various issues and policy and so forth, but to actually see people and what they have gone through really puts this into perspective. So I will, I'd like to start with some background. We know according to the World

Health Organization that around one billion people live with disability globally, and 80% live in Developing Countries.

So we are talking about a large number of people. Usually it's about 15% of the population regardless of the statistics that some countries collect that might state it's smaller. It depends very much on how the statistics are collected. We have seen the vulnerability of people with disability and their families.

Now, physical and information barriers, and, again, the video that Shreedeept showed also illustrated that. It also illustrated the social cultural attitudes and there is a lot of work that needs to be done in that area. And often disaster planning has not included people with disabilities. To hear the voices of people with disabilities themselves makes a big difference. Some critical issues, and this is based on surveys and consultations, persons with disabilities face higher risks than the general population in a natural disaster, and we can say that for obvious reasons.

If a person uses crutches or a wheelchair, it's harder to escape to a safe area. The mortality of people with disabilities proportionally could be twice as high as the general population in a disaster. People with disabilities are more likely to be left behind. It's just too hard. Humanitarian responses to people with disabilities may be less due to environmental, physical and social barriers, and, again, we saw that in the video.

And natural disasters may lead to injuries resulting in long-term disability. So it might be people didn't have a disability, and now they do have a disability, or they might have a light disability which turns into a significant disability. I'm going to talk a little bit about the Pacific region. We have heard about Nepal. If we look at the Pacific region, it's an extremely large area with a small land mass, relatively small population. The majority are small island developing states, and there are 22 countries or territories. So we are talking about a lot of sovereign nations. Transport and infrastructure costs as you can imagine are very high. And here is a map of the Pacific region. And that lists all of the 22 countries. You see Australia and New Zealand and then you see numbers and dots in the ocean.

That's basically the 22 countries. Now, I'd like to cover a case study in Fiji. This year category 5 Tropical Cyclone Winston hit Fiji very hard. It's been recorded as one of the strongest storms in the southern hemisphere, and there were surveys done by the Fiji Disabled Persons Federation after the cyclone and these are some of the findings. Persons with disabilities missed out on the distribution of humanitarian aid. So it's a similar theme to what we heard in Nepal. Distribution points were not accessible.

That's distribution points of aid. Information circulated on

the distribution points were not inclusive of or accessible to all persons with disabilities. Transportation and roads or means to access the distribution points were not accessible and available. And mobility aids were destroyed or damaged in the cyclone. So you can imagine if a person has a wheelchair and that might be damaged or destroyed. And as a follow-up, there is lack of disability disaggregated data. It's very difficult to get the data that's needed and that's something that needs to be addressed in the future.

Some other venues or cluster meetings after the cyclone were inaccessible. Some were, but a number weren't, which means that there was a lack of participation by people with disabilities, so their voices weren't heard when it came to what the next steps were. Now, the last one here, number 4, information on warnings and other disaster-related information and updates needs to be inclusive of all persons with disabilities. And that is something I will be covering through this presentation. For example, for the deaf community, information should be circulated by text messages.

In the Pacific in Fiji certainly a large proportion of the population do have mobile phones, so it's a very important way of distributing information, and also through captioned videos or sign interpreters on screen if that is appropriate. So in the Pacific there is a disaster inclusive disability inclusive disaster risk reduction network, and that focuses on raising awareness about physical infrastructure, disaster response services, public service announcements and emergency exits and evacuation centers. There are five Pacific Island countries involved and this is coordinated by the Pacific Disability Forum.

The role of the Pacific Disability Forum is as a regional disability advocacy body based in Fiji. They perform some very useful functions around capacity building, advocacy, and one of the areas they work in is capacity training for disability organisations on disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management. And they engage with Governments on inclusion of people with disabilities and disaster risk management. So, again, this is a theme coming through this about the involvement of people with disabilities and disability organisations to insure that proper steps are taken in future.

And if we look at the policy drivers, the obvious one is the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This has been signed and ratified by over 100 countries across the world and Pacific Island nations and certainly Asian countries have signed and ratified. Now, two Articles that are very relevant here is Article 9 which talks about the implementing measures to decide, develop, produce and distribute accessible ICT at an early stage. So these become accessible at minimum cost for people with disabilities.

And the other one relevant here is taking all necessary measures

to insure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters. And these obligations I should add are for States Parties, in other words, Governments.

So there is a link there to the particular website which outlines the UN Convention. Now, also there is the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, and last year a new framework updated the previous one, it's called the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. There are four key priority areas. I'm going to mention priority 4 which is enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

And it's actually an opportunity when you have buildings and infrastructure that previously was inaccessible for people with disabilities, when they are destroyed, if people with disabilities and disability organisations are part of the planning for reconstruction, those particular facilities in the future can be built with accessibility in mind. It's called Universal Design. And actually there was another tropical cyclone in Vanuatu, another Pacific Island country, and that's exactly what the disability organisation did there after the cyclone to encourage buildings to become more accessible when they were rebuilt.

This is a very long quote here, but important from the point of view of what we are talking about. So if you bear with me, I will read it out. This is to invest in, importantly, develop, maintain, and strengthen people-centred multi-hazard, multisectoral forecasting and early warning systems, disaster risk and emergency communications mechanisms, social technologies and hazard-monitoring telecommunications systems, develop such systems through a participatory process, tailor them to the needs of users, including social and cultural requirements, in particular gender, promote the application of simple and low-cost early warning equipment and facilities and broaden release channels for natural disaster early warning information.

Role of stakeholders, Governments have the primary responsibility, we know that. Sometimes it may not happen, unfortunately. And Governments should work together with relevant stakeholders. This includes a number of NGOs. And, again, from the Sendai Framework, there is a quote there about persons with disabilities are critical in the assessment of disaster risk and in designing and implementing plans tailored to specific requirements taking into consideration the principles of Universal Design. Now, just a couple of months ago, there was a World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, and there was a lot of preparatory documents and one of them was from Handicap International. And they did a lot

of work in surveys and consultations with people with disabilities, disability organisations and humanitarian providers.

There were 769 respondents and a report was put together and some of those critical issues I mentioned previously were covered in that report with statistics. At this summit there was a launch of a charter on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. So coming back to this region, so what are the concerns? Well, we need to increase staff more importantly, we need more support for participation of disability organisations and we need end-to-end early warning systems inclusive of people with disabilities. There are many other needs. If we look at early warning systems, information is vital. We saw that in the video.

Standard systems obviously make sense. There is something called the Common Alerting Protocol CAP, an XML base for exchanging public warnings between alerting technologies. A range of technologies can use this protocol. It's an ITU recommendation, X1303. And it's being adopted by many countries. Already the U.S.A., Canada, Italy and Australia there has been implementation in Sri Lanka and Thailand. And what's interesting with this is that content can be delivered in many different formats. It can be delivered by audio, video, text to mobile phones, radio, TV and sirens as appropriate. It can be delivered in different languages and it can incorporate obviously multimodal accessibility features.

Say, for example, a deaf person prefers getting information by text messaging on their mobile phone. That's obviously a good way of doing that, and there could be other ways as well. Now, it's very timely and in a month there will be a CAP implementation workshop in Bangkok between the 23rd and 24th of August, and that will cover a lot of practical issues about what's being done, some of the issues that need to be addressed, so if anyone can attend that, that might be very useful information.

And I have included a link there to the workshop. So looking at international cooperation, how we can all make a difference, sharing information on current issues with emergency alert systems including the use of CAP. There are problems. As with any system, it's not perfect. Often it has to do with the way the content is delivered. And the awareness of the responders to consider different ways of delivering the information. But let's look at promoting cooperation on various software and hardware solutions including content creation and the distribution on national level to enhance the access to systems for disaster risk management. So thank you very much for your attention.

(Applause).

>> MODERATOR: Thank you, Gunela, for those insights and information. Highlighting, now, highlighting the concept of

combating disaster management in crisis situation, I would like to request Mr. Kuo-Yu Slayer Chuang for his presentation. He is the CEO of GeoThings. GeoThings provides an integrated platform for communities and Government agencies on disaster management.

>> KUO-YU SLAYER CHUANG: I am from GeoThings and we are based in Taiwan. I have the home-court advantage here. I think I still got the one slide for this one. So I am inspired from Gunela's talk because we are building an ICT tool for early warning system or the disaster coordination platform. So I would like to start from this application called iHelp. This is back to 2013. It's a collaboration project between GeoThings and kind of like freelancers still in college. So because his parents is not able to listen or like neither to speak, so it's kind of hard for their parents to make a call to 911 or emergency call because it is not that easy to describe what is going on and what is happening there

So we came up with this idea for the application. You can quickly select the preset mess annual and send those messages to the 911 system here in Taiwan connected through the SMS. So that would be much easier for the people who are not able to speak or not able to listen and to report the emergency situation. And further, this application also combines geo location information. That means if you were in somewhere that is not easy to tell the address or the location to the responders, this application can also bring out the location information for you.

So this is kind of like a start and we put this project to the UNSIRD project for International Day for Disaster Reduction. So this is -- so ICT tool might really help for the people who use this, then we extend the idea and collaborate with Asian Development Bank to use this ICT tool in different countries from Armenia, Bangladesh, Philippines and Fiji. I will use Fiji as an example. So we are going to deploy an ICT tool which is not like IM. So in Taiwan we use app, instant messenger, but usually we will get flooded by the information and it's not easy to really trust what's going on and what kinds of tasks or action items that we need to do.

So here we use an example that is the hurricane or typhoon Winston in Fiji. So there is a lot of flooding going on at that time in April. So with this tool the citizen or the volunteer can use the new report and the selective category, take a picture like you are doing, check in with Facebook or InstaGram and quickly describe the situation, send back to the local Government, and this answer will be there on the GI system or on the map, on the open stream map.

So much easier for the humanitarian organisation or the local Government to note what is going on where and when. So this will be very good not just for like people who are disabled, but also for the citizens, even for the travelers, they can use this kind of system

to report the emergency situation. On the map it will be easy to see the code with this task-based interface of what's going on and where and you can quickly click on the event and the task, this page, those tasks for your staff around here. And we also think about during disaster, the infrastructure, the location infrastructure may be a fact. So maybe you will see there is a completely no signal at all or it's kind of like a weak signal there.

So this application or this tool you can say we consider this kind of situation. So you can report those situations off line even though there is no connection. You have temporary cache in your Smart Phone or if there is only a very weak signal, maybe you are in a remote area or someplace like that. It will just go through the SMS with the coordinates and the text that you would like to let others know. If, of course, if you have Internet access we will synchronize with pictures and so on all of the information, but it's kind of like a different stages for the synchronized and trying to deliver the latest information, emergency information to the responders, maybe the local Government or like NGOs who can really help people who is in need.

And, of course, we also extend this system to when, well, for other application. For the small farmer maybe they can use this to report the insect or the damage to their agriculture just like the same behavior. You can take a picture and describe the situation. So the local Government who is responsible for the agriculture field or these kinds of situations can really get the information in real time, and the response properly. Of course in Taiwan we have system called 1349. So now in Taiwan we make a call to a local Government or a city Government, okay, there is some like damage of the road or the tree was down or after typhoon, something like that, but with application you can take a picture and auto geo tech. that and send it back to the local Government.

So it will be much easier to report this kind of accident or emergency situation. So I would like to further echo to the extension because we also coordinate with IANA team. The workshop in Bangkok was held by that team. So we are also integrated those information to be like a kind of early warning system because there is two sides. One side is the early warning to let people know what's going on, what kind of disaster is coming.

And then it's about the response, to report the situation. So for the early warning, now we are going to connect the Thailand from Bangkok and also Philippines and Myanmar. Those areas are already providing the CAP, early warning alerting information. So we were integrated to our tool to then people can easily get those kinds of information from this tool. And also, people can still use this tool to report when they are like running to and what they encountered. So this is a two-way communication tool for disaster and emergency

response.

And we are a separate team and we are working in different area and different countries. So, yes, I think, we think these kinds of ICT tool can really achieve kind of like the capacity building especially for the disaster. That's my talk. Thank you.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you, Kuo-Yu. Do you have any questions for Gunela or Kuo-Yu? Okay. That's fair enough. Now, we have Mubashir Sargana. He is a cybersecurity professional and Internet policy researcher. He also managed the ISOC, he is managing APSOC. I heard a lot about Pakistan Government doing research in terms of disabilities and they are doing at policy level also. So do you have any experience or can you share more about what has been going on and if you know of any project that is currently going, please do elaborate. Thank you.

>> MUBASHIR SARGANA: Thank you, Shreedeept. I will start giving you overview about the disaster that my country has suffered so far. The worst disaster my country suffered was in 2005. It was an earthquake that most of the northern part of my country. The death toll was around 78,000, and more than 205 million suffered. And next was the flood that struck my country in 2010, and this flood affected my whole country, more than 20 million people suffered, and death toll wasn't identified just because you can imagine I was one of the sufferers. The water level inside my own house was more than six feet. And the area I was living in was cut off.

And we were stuck in the water. Government couldn't approach, rescue authorities couldn't approach, but it was the youth, I was among them. I met first with university that came through with the help of Pakistan Army. They send them through helicopters. They were the first responders who approached us. You can imagine how my country suffered, cyclones, floods, all kinds of disasters are there. If we talk about the north, we suffer a lot of earthquakes. If we talk about southern part, we suffer floods.

If we talk about the eastern part, we suffer cyclones over there. But being in an under developed country, we are working, but still we are working on introducing more technology to handle this such kind of disasters to more focuses on our rescue of the civil persons. We have got natural disaster management authority in our country that's currently working effectively in our country. But other than this authority, we are having so many organisations that focus especially on the rehabilitation and rescue of disabled persons.

As an example, during the floods in 2010 the organisation named Disabled Persons Foundation, they started an operation. They started working to get a good database of the disabled persons. They made announcements through radio and they made announcement through local Government and through provincial Government. Natural Disaster

Management Authority was also helping them. They collected a database and then they approached all of those disabled persons with the help of local communities.

So far if we talk about our organisation, I'm from ISOC Islamabad chapter. We are currently developing some applications that can actually as Kuo-Yu mentioned, I'm sorry, Slayer has mentioned we are working on applications there. But the dilemma is that we do not have good infrastructure over there that can survive during the disaster. So as an alternative, we are working on capacity building of local community because they are the first responder. If the disabled persons are living in their neighbors, they can help them out. They can even if they can contact us to reach out to them in case of any disaster or any kind of help they require.

That's all from my side.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you. Now, let's have questions. Anybody? If you have any questions for our speakers.

>> AUDIENCE: From Pakistan for the record. It's not actually a question. This is just a comment on the application that our friend mentioned from GeoThings. In Asia-Pacific, if you see, we have got very variation in terms of languages. Asia-Pacific is home to probably more than 50 languages that are used across the globe. So if your application is in a single language, so that's going to be a big barrier for different communities, for example, if the same application people want to use it in Nepal or Pakistan or Malaysia, so they won't actually be able if it is in English or a particular language. So this kind of, this is one of the major barriers to this kind of applications.

If I'm not wrong the geo fencing or the geoteching technology is being used by different messaging applications. So people can simply take a picture and geo tag it and send it to some authority for location or something else. The unique feature or the specialty applications, the ones that you are developing should have localization so that more and more communities in the region are able to use these applications because, I mean, that's a universal principle that is going to benefit a lot in terms of access and usage. I mean, if it doesn't have the universal feature in different languages, it is good, but if not, it is a suggestion that you should incorporate.

>> KUO-YU SLAYER CHUANG: Thank you. So, yes, we definitely need to have that. And that's the reason why we choose from Armenia, Philippines and Fiji it's a different culture, language, so on. So we do that step by step. First, we provide English version. Then we have a local consultant to help us to do the localization. But for like the area or the country that is not in this pilot area, we need to have directly collaboration with the community and so on for some of the like volunteers can do the translation for local language,

but, yes, we definitely need to do localization, because that will be much easier for people to use this kind of tool. Thank you so much.

MODERATOR: I would like to add something to that. For localization, you can use community networks. There would be people, leaders, Internet leaders who would be ready to help you especially with Internet Society or you can seek help there. Any more questions?

>> AUDIENCE: Correct me if I'm wrong, but the Sendai Framework likewise mentions about mainstreaming gender in disaster risk management. I was just wondering if the apps that are being developed as well also consider the needs, the services that may be provided to women, for instance, especially women with disabilities.

>> KUO-YU SLAYER CHUANG: Actually we did not consider about men, women and kind of like a gender difference because this is more like a citizen or the volunteer to report the situation quickly. So according to like a Sendai Framework, recently they have like a Sendai Seven campaign. I think we still need to do that just like I mentioned. First, we have this kind of option. Role two for the citizen or the people to use it, then we can do more about maybe people who is disabled and so on. So, yes, currently we haven't considered about the gender difference.

>> MUBASHIR SARGANA: Do you have any suggestion how we can incorporate such things in the applications?

>> AUDIENCE: Perhaps we can talk later. We have a lot of experiences in the Philippines as well. I'm from the Philippines, and, yes, we have a lot of disasters there. And we have to consider whenever we work with or engage with people who are working with disaster, we always consider the different specificities, the different needs of women, for instance because we cannot say that men and women have the same needs. For instance, when you talk about women would have children, for instance. They are the ones taking care of the kids, of older people as well. And when disaster strikes, it is them who are also taking care of their families and even after disaster they also look for jobs, things like that. So I think it would be good to consider that.

>> HIROSHI KAWAMURA: A comment regarding the asymmetry of disaster situations. My experience has been with the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami where we had a severe difference between men and women, the way they responded to the disaster. There is this concept of modesty which applies exclusively to women especially in south Asia which prevents them from doing things even to save their own lives. For example, when they were swept away by the tsunami waters they were more concerned about holding their clothing together than to become nude, they wouldn't think of coming out of the water. So this very deep cultural biases or, we had to work with this when you look at the whole issue of gender and disaster.

But the intersectionality aspect of gender, disability and disaster, that's even worse. When you have gender itself is kind of a setback. On top of that when you have disability, it's a bad combination, and unless we have very specific mechanisms to address the social aspects of these things, it's going to be a problem. Now, my comment is regarding something else altogether. The asymmetry of preparedness, disaster preparedness, risk reduction, the issue of disability is very much there. They have already mentioned about things like the warnings are not heard by the deaf people and not seen by the blind people and, therefore, we need this CAP of multimodal deliveries is very important.

But there is also asymmetry of the post disaster when people come for assistance. Many of the disabled do not even get access to the assistance that is there due to many constraints including mobility was the major thing. We have cyclone shelters which are built for the express purpose of protecting people, but the people who cannot walk are not able to reach the shelters in the first place. Even the very basic things. We come to the issue of technology, I think technology can do a lot, CAP is a great idea. It's not disseminated to sufficient number of countries in Asia-Pacific.

Now that everybody has a mobile phone, definitely there is a lot of potential, but still, mobile phone access itself is asymmetric. Women do not have access. There is a village in India which decided the village Council decided that women should not get mobile phones, unmarried women should not get mobile phones so these sort of things are very deep in our cultures so we have to work with them. So now we have technologies which can make a deeper impact and I'm all for dissemination of these kinds of technologies to the larger Asia-Pacific cultures. Thank you.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you. If we have any more comments or questions?

>> AUDIENCE: It was just a small comment I wanted to make with regards to the situation in Nepal. What support did the, once you set up this technology innovation, what sort of support did you get from the Government? And similarly, where do Governments feature in this in regards to support similarly with your app?

>> MODERATOR: If you talk about Nepal, after the earthquake, it literally put its hands saying we do not have resources, we do not have people. So it was like said properly in the news. The people, you know, we were like quite devastated when this thing happened. So what happened to us, the Government pulled its hand and for days there was nothing. There were people, police, you know, the security forces, people were helping. They were like headless chicken. They were just helping people, and the thing was, you know, people, the youth, they come out. That was something beautiful about the whole

experience that the youth came up and they started moving around because at that time it was very shameful that the Government was not able to reach people public, but the news TV channels were there every other person was there, every other person was uploading videos, but the Government was not there. Technology at that time was like, you know, it was like on and off.

So the Government was just waiting and watching and we could hear them, you know, saying that they are working, they are managing, they are trying to do stuff, but on practical grounds, we did not see anything that was happening. So that is the reason why my frustration was that if I as an individual could do so much, then where was the Government? So that was my thing, and that's the shame, I guess, you know, that people still take for granted these kinds of issues, especially when Nepal is already listed in earthquake prone zone, then what happened to the preparation? What about all of the NGOs or what about all of the money that is going in? So things were supposed to be there, but things were not.

So right now, after the earthquake, there has been a certain movement, you know, the ministry and the management, they are trying to work on it, but still at public policy level, no research, no surveys, no nothing. And I think without that, we cannot do anything. At individual level you have to reach the public. You have to do the surveys, take their questions and there were some of the Opening Sessions done, but I think it was not addressed to priorities. Priorities were not prioritized. So that was the thing.

>> KUO-YU SLAYER CHUANG: I would like to add one more. I'm not sure if it is well known in this response of earthquake because from technical side, we know that group of people, they launch the kind of framework to get the information from people, maybe through the telephones or SMS, so on. And they collect those information and they confirm with those people who report the situation. Once it's confirmed and then passed the information to the Nepal Army like that. So it's kind of like a coordination by a private organisation. So I think it is also a way to use technology for these kinds of information retrieval and also for the response in this case.

>> MODERATOR: After the earthquake, I think few of the private organisations were working but at the Government level there was like no initiation. And I have a small statement Hiroshi has made a statement. I live to tell the team of the international day for disaster risk reduction set out by UN for this year. Internet community must respond this international action to listen to survivors.

So he just posted in from remote participation. Any more comments, suggestions? I would like to further ask Gunela about policy research and awareness in regards to disabilities. What sort

of process should we go on about making further better policy in terms of securing, securing and safeguarding the disabilities people's right in regards to disaster management?

>> GUNELA ASTBRINK: Thank you, Shreedeept. The disability movement has a saying, "Nothing About Us Without Us." And I think that's fundamental. So if there are any meetings, I mean, we talked about the case study from Fiji where the planning and coordination of relief after the cyclone needs to include people with disabilities and disability organisations. So that's on a practical level, but when it comes to policy, there needs to be that input by disability organisations.

So, for example, at the CAP implementation workshop, again, that's practical, but it also includes a lot of policy development. There really needs to be representation there. And I believe there isn't, and I would be very happy to be corrected. So if there are any meetings, any policy documents to be developed when it comes to disaster risk management and reduction, the relevant organisations of disability should be invited to sit at the table. And that could be at the national level and regional level and certainly at an international level.

And we do have, I mean, the UN organisations which we talked about, and previously disability had not been included, but there has been lobbying by international disability organisations to insure that they have a seat at the table. And that sort of work needs to be continuing. So, for example, here at the regional IGF we really do need to have more representatives from disability organisations to be able to explain their experiences. As we have heard in that video. We heard from people with disabilities how they experienced it. So when I was saying the words about cultural barriers, that was actually spoken in the video.

And that is a very strong message which we all need to hear. Thanks.

>> MODERATOR: Thank you. I think the different angles that we made in this session was quite interesting and vast, I guess. I hope all of the leaders present here, you know, you guys would certainly lobby issues in your, from your part of your industry, and do the necessary preparation as well as raising issues and voices. I would like to thank all of my speakers for the brilliant presentations and speaking and their knowledge and information that they shared, and I would like to say that we have made it and it's exactly 1:00 and, yes, and thank you all for attending. Thank you.

(Applause).

(Concluded at 1:00).

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