Friday 29th May 2021

Module 14 Seminar A

RICHARD: Good morning everyone or good afternoon or good to see you all this is our last seminar, in the series, I am Richard Rieser General Secretary and with me of the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum, is Sarah Kamau our acting chair, and also we have Thandiwe Mufulo who is are vice‑chair from South Africa and Sarah is from Kenya. We also wanted to have Sruti Mohapatra with us but unfortunately being in India her family are smitten with the virus she sends her greetings to you all and her apologies. Towards the end of this a couple of people have said already they will do this but, others might want to think about it, we will do a vox pops of you and what you thought of the course. We will use this for gaining more support for the next part of course which you might remember I said is roll out to people not on the internet with sending out all the material on a computer stick, and there's a possibility if we can get enough funding for getting those translated into dominant languages like Swahili or Hindi and so on so we can reach a much wider range of disabled people. We think it's really important this goes out. Second thing we're going to use it for we're doing a meeting at the Conference of State Parties which you will all get a leaflet about so you can join in if you want, but its showcasing it really with other people round the world. On that day the password protection will be removed from the resources, and therefore Gemma has written to all of you saying if you contributed either by saying or doing a little film and you have objection to that going out on the world‑wide web then you need to let us know we will get that out of those seminar pieces. But I assume that all of you want to share your views, so that's not a problem but do let us know if there is.

    So, we will, I will put on the screen share and we will start today's activities. Just give me a second to sort this out. Can people see the screen or not?

GEMMA: You have changed it to the, I think you need to, yeah I think you need to select the different screen.

RICHARD: Yeah ok. Thank you. Should be up now but I just got to click to the beginning.

GEMMA: That's fine.

RICHARD: Is that it? Ok. I have introduced who we are today, over to Sarah to introduce this module.

SARAH: Hello everyone, and thank you for being part of this course, up to the last module, we want to thank so a much forking here. I want to introduce the influencing Government module by saying that the world and 195 governments have committed to the Sustainable Development Goals with the slogan 'leave no‑one behind', and 182 governments are committed to implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with a slogan of 'nothing about us without us'. Yet, progress have been painfully slow towards disability inclusion. Reducing amounts of financial and material aid, increasing international debt, and ongoing impacts of financial inequalities and COVID‑19 pandemic are in danger of derailing these ideals. For disabled people, the best way of influencing Government to positively improve our position, is by building strong grass roots, democratically accountable organisations, able to support and hold to account elected representatives who are trained to have an understanding of advocacy at all levels and representing our issues nuclear and achievable way. The opportunities to achieve these goals require power to influence positive outcomes at all levels from local district through to regional levels to national and international levels. The clarity of the message and its success will depend on the empowerment of the mass of disabled people in all their diversity. How many disabled people and their diversity in terms of impairment gender, ethnic diversity, geographical localities and age reception is vital to winning unified policy objectives. The strengths and empowerment of disabled people to implement the improvements in R lives as the lined in the SDGs and the UNCRPD, depends on how much the social model or human rights approach has been generalised and forms of organisations developed to influence Government.

RICHARD: Thank you very much Sarah.

SARAH: Thank you Richard.

RICHARD: We started in Module 1 by talking about different ways of thinking we talked about the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation in the UK and their thinking and developing the model, social model of disability which is incorporated in the Convention/human rights model. This man was one of the founders of that, Vic Finklestein, a South African who had broken his back playing rugby, national sport down there, but also was politically aligned to being against apartheid and had been spent some time in prison as a wheelchair user, but eventually got to the UK. But he was also a social scientist and he developed his thinking about social model, and that went directly from UPIUS to the setting up of the setting om the British Council of Disabled People's Organisation and it was Vic who was the UK representative who went to that important conference we talked about in 1981 in Singapore which was the one that adopted the definition that we a lot at last week twin impairment and disablement. But Vic also got involved with the disability arts movement which was a flourishing movement from the late 70s onwards which was trying to challenge the way that we were seen, and other put this new way across, and perhaps the first magazine programme on mainstream television, running on the commercial channels in the late 70s and early 80s called the Link programme and he made a film called Very Cross Roads which ran on the show for a year and it was based on maybe some of his ideas about social model but also overcoming apartheid. He would write later involved turning the racist world upside down and in my story disabled people living in an apartheid like village become the dominant group, design the social and physical environment exclusively for themselves and then oppress other who deviate from this. As you watch the film bear that in mind this was an attempt to illustrate the social model may.

[video playing]

RICHARD: That gives us an idea of what he's getting at there. So this idea which sort of spread through disabled people's movement 50 years ago, well 40 years ago this year the conference, but over the previous 10 years as well, has come to really identify the core of what we call Disabled People's Organisations, or as they are more recently become called OPD, although we have explained why we in the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum prefer disabled people because it's truer to the social model. If we look at DPOs Australia which are 4 DPOs which are controlled and run by disabled people, including the one you have heard, June Reimer talking from Aborigine and Torres Strait islanders but also three other organisations, they what they say is we live in an ableist, or as we call it disablist world designed to support needs of able‑bodied people. Our housing, education system, our healthcare, our justice system, our workplaces, our shops, our communities, are all designed with the abilities and capacities of abled people in mind. Very much drawing on that idea, shown that these are socially structured things as happened in that very crossroads extract. This means that people with disabilities can experience discrimination, segregation and double standards every day in every aspect of our lives and this is simply accepted by many people as normal. It is important to remember that this doesn't have to be normal. The way our systems and our community are set up is a series of choices made by governments and policy makers. And I would say often reinforced by social attitudes, which are both made and reinforced by those people. More than that, the Australian Government is a signatory of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this means Australian governments are supposed to ensure that people with disabilities in Australia can enjoy rich and fulfilling lives equal to others and the same is true for all of your countries, that have signed up to it. Australia is committed to a specific set of standards when it comes to our inclusion and access, and these standards are not currently being met. The UN looked at Australia's compliance with the Convention in 2019, and reminded our country that it needed to get better ensuring these rights, that's really important, and why was that there have been already two cycles of reports to the UNCRPD Committee in Geneva was because the DPOs in Australia got their act together, and wrote strong Shadow Reports showing what was the problem with what was going on and also questioned what was going on. There's now been a Royal Commission set up after that, and we'll explain what that is in a minute, but just to show one of the reports, been three reports on Australia from the CRPD Committee, the last one November 19. They combined the first two and just taking one example they were critical on nearly every Article, and but on protection, abuse and violence, they said for instance, the Committee recommends that the State Party establishes a national accessible oversight complaint and redress mechanism for persons with disabilities who have experienced violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect in all settings including all those not eligible for the national disability insurance scheme, and particularly older women with disabilities.

    Ensure adequate resources and redress mechanisms for the Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of persons with disabilities, more of that in a minute.

    Implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Australian Human Rights Commission: A Future Without Violence. This, the Human Rights Commission in Australia is the national Institute of Human rights, the third point of the triangle of organisations that have to be so you have DPOs and other civil society organisations, you have governments, and then you have human rights institutes backed up by other research bases and so on. The Human Rights Commission, if there is one in your country, it's good but only 25 Commonwealth countries have got them. We need to be pressing for other governments to have them.

    Ensure the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities with disabilities international plan to redoes violence against women and children, 2010‑2022 beyond best promises. Ensure agenda and age sensitive services to address gender‑based violence that are inclusive and accessible to all women and girls with disabilities, and ensure that staff are adequately trained. And lastly, just on this one article, address the methodological restrictions in data collection instruments used to capture data on violence against women and girls. That was particularly aimed at Aborigine and Torres Strait islanders who are often left out of those things.

    Now we heard from June and we saw a film of how the Commission was trying to get the views of that particular group, the indigenous peoples and had made a particular committee, sub‑committee to do that and that's been really important. So they are, this Royal Commission, a Royal Commission is sets up under the charter that of the Government and then as we know there are 16 Commonwealth countries where the Queen is Head of State. But whether they are or not, you can still get a Commission of Enquiry, if they are not and if they are, you can get a Royal Commission. These are people appointed by the Prime Minister, of good standing, usually. This one is led by a High Court or retired High Court judge, there's another judge, there are two disabled people on it out of 6, and there's also someone who has had family experience of it. So half of the people have direct experience are on their commission. That's quite unusual. What it's doing is an investigation, independent of Government into a matter of great importance, have broad powers to hold public hearings and call witnesses under oath and compel evidence and make recommendation to Government about what should change. This is very hard if you get one of these commissions going, it's really important that the DPOs work to get the right evidence there, get the right witnesses there and help them. Position the voices experience and expertise of people with disabilities at the centre of our work this is what this particular commission is saying it will do, expose violence abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disabilities, including its cause across Australia. Increase community awareness of and change community attitudes about disability as well as violence, abuse neglect and exploitation. And identify recommend best practices to encourage reporting, effective investigations of and responses to violence. And develop clear practical evidence‑based recommendation for transformational change to Government. Demonstrating inclusive innovative safe response approach and ways of working. A Royal Commission set the benchmark and last, to achieve the above goals we will also build a collaborative, innovative, supportive, and trauma informed organisation that fosters excellence in our staff and work.

    So how is it working, this Royal Commission? There are a number of ways you people can get involved and stay up‑to‑date. They publish a fortnightly e‑newsletter, that anyone who is interested can read. They provide information about their activities via social model channels and media announcements. They conduct community forums and meetings where we can hear first‑hand from people with disabilities, and their families, friends and supporters about their experience and views, these provide valuable information. They have three experts who are disabled people who have been employed, by the Commission, to support them. And one of those is actually also the Chair, current Chair of the UNCRPD committee, so it’s a very strong link who is a disabled person and that's important. There is also other engagement forum's set up under the same basis so again with paid consultants, who are disabled people, working with them, and people on these subgroups, are also disabled people, making sure that people from the First Nations there. First people strategic advisory group and the community engagement strategy. So that's very powerful and they make sure that their meetings are all accessible, and that they are held in locations where people live, rather than people having to come to the capital Canberra which is many hours of miles for some people, they go to them. And although there are only a few people of the 6 of Commissioners on these things, they make sure that the whole Commission is made aware of the information that is coming in.

    It's been so successful and so inundated with statements from people, that they have had to ask the Prime Minister to extend their timescale. They were meant to originally report by April 2022, and instead it's been extended, to September 2023. Now we're say oh we have to wait longer but that what the Commissioners are saying we need to get all of this evidence in, and then make really strong recommendations. I think there have will be no Government in a democratic society that can withstand such a Royal Commission, in not bringing forward new empowering legislation. This a really strong way that DPOs have managed in Australia to influence by first of all getting involved with the Shadow Reporting system at the UN, sticking to asking the questions and showing up where the Australian Government is wrong, to then have the Committee being highly critical of Australia, which is you know a high income country but still has many, many problems of disability discrimination. And has set up this Royal Commission to gather all the facts. Including is looking at segregated education as well as where abuse is taking place as well. I think that's a really good example and you can find out more about it on that website.

    So our first activity today, and there's no right answer here, just interest in which of these you think would be most important, remember this about disabled people and our organisations influencing Government. So the first activity, which of the following do you think is the most important for DPOs when trying to influence Government and what's your reason? Just give one reason. So you put the number that you choose in the chat, and then give your reason. Ok that's all you have to do. These are the 5 possible things, you might say all of them which is possible too but we would like you to add discern in your situation in your country would make the most influence. 1) establishing regular meetings with a minister. 2) causing a big media impact with a demo or stunt, these are all on our issues. Publishing a well-researched document that argues for change you want. 4) Being an effective representative national umbrella DPO and 5), producing a manifesto of changes you want implemented in an election with hustings for the various candidates from different parties.

    I will read those again. Remember what you have got to do, you have got to pick at one of these, if possible if you can't then put the numbers down that you think, and why. What's the reason. We don't want an essay because you can't write an essay in chat, just a phrase or a sentence at the most. 1) establish regular meetings with a minister. 2) causing a big media impact with demo or stunt. 3) publishing a well-researched document that argues for a change you want to see. 4) being an effective representative national umbrella DPO, and 5) producing a manifesto of changes you want implemented in an election. During that election you would hold hustings, which is a meeting where you invite all the candidates and ask them questions about whether they support the manifesto. Ok give you 90 seconds on that starting from now, to actually come up with something in the chat and then we'll get that read out by Gemma and Thandiwe.

RICHARD: Just coming up to the 90 seconds, many have we got in, do we need a bit more time Gemma?

GEMMA: They are still coming in.

RICHARD: Ok we'll give it another 20 seconds then you can start reading them out. [*background noise*]

RICHARD: Ok Gemma do you want to start telling us what's been coming in then if Thandiwe wants to come in on it a well that's fine.

GEMMA: Ok we had a couple saying number 4, "Continuously advocate for that change", and "it's a stronger consolidated voice for all impairment groups". We had a number 1, 2all other activities certainly need to have a meeting with ministerial period". Somebody said number 2, "Because we're in the IoT world", I guess that's technology. "People are spending more time with gadgets online including social media. Thus if we want to hit the audience, we should get media content published on the awareness, discriminations support systems, and programmes for persons with disabilities".

RICHARD: You can have e‑bombs and things like that where everybody sends an email to the minister on the same day, or Prime Minister, if you get hold of their email. You can make an impact on the media and also on the internet. GEMMA: Got another one on number 2 saying the same thing, "Using social model as a campaign forum, getting more people involved". Got somebody saying number 5, "Because in India we usually see that political parties do not consider it something important. A political manifesto would not only compel the leaders to act, but it will also spread awareness to the other parties as well". Another 2 and 5, Joanne, "I said number 1. I favour all of them. Choosing just one, I looked at number 1, because a minister can champion a particular aspect, we might want to give priority to. Government can often change the momentum change in legislation and expectations." I can keep going, number 5 ‑

RICHARD: That depends if you have got a sympathetic Government, I think in New Zealand you probably do but not everywhere.

GEMMA: They are still coming in, number 5, "Implementation is key including monitoring and evaluation of process". Another one for number 2, "Since we're not well represented in positions to do activities like meeting with stakeholders, media can't work well with us and cause impact". Another one for number 2, number 3, "Publishing is the most effective method, everyone can access it, also quick and easier large‑scale recipients".

RICHARD: I have to say that the world is littered with well-intended research reports that have not been taken much notice of, so yes it's a good idea but unless you have a campaign round the report as well, it doesn't tend to make the change that you want.

GEMMA: Ok. Somebody said, 34 and 5, this is Ni Oluchi, "Being effective DPOs means all disability cluster groups are recognised. A well research document is quite important it, has data on disability that is verified and measurement of changes needed." Number 5 ‑

RICHARD: That's like a whole strategy there, that's good strategic thinking. Very good.

GEMMA: Number 3, "Because the Government rely their data on how to implement something dependent on research". Number 2, "Media, good for awareness". Number 1, "Important to establish meeting with minister". Oh and just one more, mentioning what you showed last week I think, "All of these have some value in some way, number 2 reminds me of how disabled people blocked buses and protested the ITV Telethon to bring about the DDA in 1995", and 4 "is so important for our community organising".

RICHARD: Good. In a way, I think it's very hard to discern one from the other. Interesting the point from India, because main political parties don't take much notice of disabled people's organisations it sounds like a manifesto would be a good strategic tactic to use there. But overall, all of these I think would count as a strategy, to influence Government and it's about how you put them altogether, and other things as well as we'll see as we go on. But some good responses there. Thandiwe, have you any views on this from the South African?

THANDIWE: I do Richard, say that the number 1 is establishing relationship or regular meetings is a good thing, but all 5 of them are correct because you need to use them to be able to reach your point what we want to say when it comes to media impact, when we're not listened to, then that's why you use the impact of a demonstration to make sure you are being listened to. Research documents they are there, but how many people do reach those, read that unless you have got a strategy to make sure that research is all over, you talk about it including the DPOs knowing that they can be able to push that and once you have got a national umbrella DPO that is there, then it's a very good thing to do because they will be able to push other issues that our falling on the side. In South Africa we have got very good we have got a constitution that includes disability, we have got some policies but you need to push to make sure that those things are happening. And there must be a very strong DPO that is there.

RICHARD: Yeah, it's all very well to raise these issues, and often that's what the NGOs, do the organisations for disabled people, will have a campaign around one particular issue. But it's about our lives and therefore the effective representative umbrella DPO representing all range of impairments is really essential to have a strong voice to Government. And it cuts through other interest groups pushing their thing. Just think about these things if you want to, if you were a private entity, a commercial entity, and you want to achieve a campaign, you would want to do all of these things not necessarily for disabled people, but for your product or whatever you're selling or what service you're settling and it would employ public relations companies, who will take thousands of and thousands of dollars from you. We don't have that, so we have to develop our own capacity, to realise what things actually work and what happened are most effective. So it's all so important after any campaign, to analyse what worked well and what didn't how you could improve the next time. Now I had an interesting conversation yesterday with Gerard Quinn, the UN Specialist Rapporteur who's now been in post on disability for 7 months. Gerard has an interesting background. He was one of the international lawyers who wrote, he's at Galway University now, seconded to Leeds as well, doing this job, he wrote several books arguing why we needed a UN Convention and then when the Convention came in, arguing how it needs to be implemented and out of his initiative, there's a summer school which is online, which some of you might be interested in, at Galway University on disability law, it runs every summer.

    So this is what he had to say.

[*video playing*]

RICHARD: We can go now, all right go ahead Gerard.

GERARD: Yeah Richard I think there were two main innovations in the UN disability treaty, the first one is what we all think about, in terms of substance, inclusion, equality and so forth but the second paradigm shift is arguably more important which is really a process based revolution really, and it's those process based innovations that create the space for new politics of disability, a completely different way of framing the issues, and a completely different way of interacting with Government on the issues, and one of the really innovative parts of the treaty is Article 33, which in a way puts in place or imagines a kind of institutional framework for change in every country. So this is not about producing elegant jurisprudence in Geneva, it's about actually triggering the domestic dynamics of change at home where it matters most, whether that's in Botswana or in Afghanistan and so forth. Basically it imagines a triangle between power, Government, getting its act together for the first time historically on disability, voices in civil society and particularly NGOs, DPOs. And then ideas which may come from institutions that have a checking value like human right commissions or other communications like law reform commissions, or University based research centres or think tanks so getting that golden triangle of change going, between Government intent on change, civil society now equip with ideas for change, and then other parties who can bring knowledge to the table, that the trick. If we get that going right, we're headed in the right direction. I think myself it calls for a step change in how civil society imagine themselves and how they interact with Government. The treaty opens up possibilities of co‑production of policy with Government and that requires a different kind of skill set to the traditional skillsets in civil society. It's no longer enough, of course it's necessary, but it's no longer enough to articulate grievance. Now civil society has to do something different which is to put blueprints for change, to work them through cost them to make sure they are not going to be disruptive in how systems perceive themselves to be under challenge and attack and so forth, and that kind of requires civil society actors to be policy entrepreneurs and not just spokespersons for wrongs and grievances in society. It's a delicate tightrope to walk, because of course the more you do it, perhaps the more distant you get from your base, but nevertheless you're not going to be able to exploit the new openings for change, unless you have this kind of dual role of articulating grievance but also putting forward blueprints for change. It's been happening very successfully, in some countries around the world, that have relatively open responsive democratic institutions, and you're very blessed in the Commonwealth to have that. But I think more in more civil society groups are beginning to do this. One I would point to in particular is civil society in Peru who interacted very constructively with Government and Parliament, to get one of the world's first assisted decision making pieces of legislation on the books. That was incredible. It was a triumph of that triangle between smart Government, voices in civil society, and lots of good ideas for change coming together.

RICHARD: That's great, I think that's probably enough actually, is there anything else you want to say or I mean that covers everything you said this morning.

GERARD: I mean the extra point you made at the tail end of the last discussion about Royal Commissions in Australia and stuff, I will say a word or two about that.

RICHARD: Ok all right, go on then.

GERARD: So Richard it's my view that you're quite fortunate in the Commonwealth of having the tradition of the rule of law and having a rich tapestry of institutions, dedicated to the public interest in their own right, from their own perspective. And animating all of that rich tapestry of institutions will be key to change, so if you can get your local law reform commission engaged if you could set up Parliamentary enquiries, if you can encourage your Parliaments to have their own committees on monitoring the implementation of the CRPD then you really well on the way. You would be, when you look round the world, you really are incredibly fortunate to have that, it would be remiss not to use every single opportunity for change and build alliance and don't fall into a bad good guy/bad guy image of the world. Everybody has something positive to contribute, you would be surprised once you knock on doors, how willing people are to contribute, it's just never been asked before.

RICHARD: Right. Thank you very much Gerard, we'll take that away and see what we can do with it.

GERARD: Do Veronica ‑

RICHARD: That was just some admin stuff we were talking about there. Some interesting points from Gerard. He's the one reporting back to the UN General Assembly on how the implementation of the conventions is going he's in a good position. He's really interested to hear from different countries what going on. If you want something to go to him you can send to it me, I will pass it on.

    So this golden triangle he's talking about, the co‑production with Government. Move from raising grievances to developing and implementing policy, being actually giving the permission to dream about what we really want, what our blueprints are, people have often argued against blueprint but let's me practical if we're in a revolution where we away from the disability model to an empowered terminology where we're partners we have to give up some of things we hold dear it's always a difficult decision and I have been putting that position several times as a leader and I thinking you have to make sure that you are mandated when you're talking to government on behalf of a democratic group, and that you report back to the people who sent you there to talk. And that you don't go on your own, I always went with several people, we take notes and we publish what's been said and it was all on the record. I have been offered to go on holidays or go to play golf or do other things from people I am negotiating with us, no I don't do that. We're here to represent a group of people you have to talk to us as that, in a democratic way. That's not to say they can't voice well if you go and push in on this one we're not going to be able to give way on that then that's in the public realm. That's important. It's also important that civil society bit is led by DPOs and that if there are family organisations and NGOs involve that they take their lead from us. We need to listen to them because often they know things about groups of disabled people that we don't know about who are not very active in our organisation, people with dementia, sometimes people with learning difficulties, children, so their parents or and others will have thing to say and are very important. So they need to be in alliance of views, but it needs to be e by disabled people's thinking. On the other side independent human rights institutes, are charged with implementing the human rights framework which exists in world through the UN, those 9 international charters that we talked about and treaties, and they are backed up by lots of researchers in universities who will start from saying well, this is what it says in international law, what needs to happen and so some really interesting research can go on. Some research going and opposite direction can go on we need to be discerning about what goes on. For instance, there are quite a few education departments in universities who try and produce research to show how inclusion can't work. What they are actually looking at usually is very poor integration, and say well there are all these problems we know there are all this problems with it, but we need to still say yes but that is not what we're saying here, that is not inclusion. That's where children have been put into schools inn unstructured situation, teachers have not been prepared and curriculums have not been altered and the building has not been altered and the social environment with a welcoming peer supported attitude is not there.

    If we have those things in place, then we can move forward. So we need to make sure that the research is that we're going to rely on is in line with our principles and our understanding. That requires developing the capacity in our DPOs for critical thinking, to be able to do this, as well as negotiating skills and the skills as Gerard hinted at of how much is this going to cost, what's the bottom line here. And so we need to be realistic in what we are asking, we can ask for everything but we say immediately we need this, this and this. Because it's not all going to be delivered by any Government, and so it's about how we mobilise society and practices, pressure to put weight on that. I was involved with the Labour Government in the 90s and early Noughties, on bringing in closure. We had there the inclusive education, we had Secretary of State David Blunkett who said we will implement the Salamanca Statement, and that was for inclusion passed by 94 governments, and the previous Government refused to sign it but the Labour Government signed it and they set up a working group which I was asked to be on. We produced a green paper and in that I said the schools that have not included the range of disabled children, we say that you need to now think about including a wider range of children. And under the weight of that, the number of children on the more significant end of disability, what we call statemented children which is about 3% of the population, rather than 15‑20% who have some form of impairment, of that group it went up to 68% in mainstream schools. Remember it was the UK that started, with Germany, special segregated education for all sorts of ideological reasons. There's still a lot of vested interest in the UK, but those were being closed, and they were, resources were being put into mainstream schools. There was a backlash from the heads of those schools particularly who put fear into practice and started a backlash and as a result the Labour Government began to change its position having been very strong on this, and by 10 years in, 2007 the Minister for Schools Lord Adonis as he is now, saying, "We don't have a policy on inclusion", whereas David Blunkett said, "We have a really clear policy of inclusion". You have to guard what you have won, against the detractors who will always try to undercut. That is still a process, so what I said last week it's not about oh we have done that, we can all take a rest. It's like pushing a boulder up the hill, you have got to keep pushing I because there will be gravitational forces, old force of reaction which will push it back down and governments by their populist if there are strong voice against what we're doing we have to have even stronger voice supporting what we're doing. We can't do this on our own so the triangle is very important Thandiwe, do you also want to say something about this. Thandiwe?

THANDIWE: Yes Richard, this triangle way of dealing with issues of disability, I saw the model when I was in Japan where each and every Government department when they speak they speak to the DPOs. It's not like the other way round. And because of that, it’s assisting a lot where people with disabilities can make impact in what needs to happen for anything that is happening in Japan. That is one of the good models. In South Africa, we nearly had the same model, the only thing is to say it depends you know on people's attitudes, but if we really it becomes not making sure that it does not only depends on people's attitude, it needs to be firm it needs to be everybody needs to compare, then this will be a very good model of dealing with people with disabilities because you speak to the DPOs trajectory, and it easier to know what is happening, it's easier to make input and once we have got this kind of model it's not difficult, can you believe that in Japan the DPOs are the one that are funding other DPOs in other countries. Through their Government. So they are able to fund us in South Africa to do certain issues through their Government, using their DPOs so this model works very well, because there's no middle person, it's direct, it's clear, things are happening very fast unlike taking a long way of happening. Thank you.

RICHARD: Thank you for that, and other DPOs around the world who our also doing that, you will find in Norway, Sweden and Finland to a lesser extent Denmark where the DPOs are given a share of the international aid budget to pass directly on to DPOs in low and middle‑income countries. That's a sort of international collaboration, two‑way collaboration we want to support and see happening more across Commonwealth. We have got some meetings coming up in June where we will look at how we can do that. Ok we'll move on.

    So what needs to be done to get to this position really. To influence governments effectively, national DPOs need to have democratic consultative mechanisms to ensure they are representing the views of their entire membership. It's no good, the person who is happens to be often is a wheelchair user, when they speak only putting the views forward of people with wheelchairs. We need people with learning difficulties, we need people with psychosocial issues, sensory impairments and so on these and invisible impairments as well, many of the metabolic conditions that have a huge effect like lupus and others which are long‑term impairment, therefore disabilities.

    Have ongoing training an awareness raising available to their member, this is an ongoing process, we need each of our DPOs, need to build capacity. It may be that some of you have been on this course will decide you have got the confidence to now go back and relay this locally, and run local course. Based on this material, to raise awareness of more disabled people, the more disabled people understand all of the things we have been talking about, the more power they will be and therefore more we hope that these views will come through their organisation. We need democratic structures to make sure that happens. There are too many organisations where the leader of it has been there for 20 or 30 years. It's about time they moved over. They can always become the figure head of it, but we need more and newer people particularly younger people coming through, and the one way to do that is to set up a youth committee in the national DPO structure, a women's committee, psychosocial, other under‑represented groups, rural committees to make sure those views of the excluded are coming into the discussions at the national umbrella and have to be taken seriously that means regularly elected representatives on to the national board of executives who represent those views. Supported by what's going on in the subgroups.

    Publicise regular bulletins on newsletters to keep their members informed of all the different accessible formats. Including Easy Read. It's too easy for us to get into jargon speak, into organisational speak which excludes many of the people we want to represent, we need to develop them as self‑advocates so they can speak more themselves. We need to make sure that our proceedings are available in a way that they can follow and understand. To fulfil 4.3 and 33.3 of the convention, governments need to be pressured by to us set up a timetable of implementation of legislation and measures to implement both the UNCRPD and the SDGs. We need we have got again a high level forum coming up July but probably do let for this year we need to be promoting our governments to volunteer to be part of that review which gets examined at the High Level Forum in New York and there are resources available for that if DPOs get involved it with that. It's a really important way of using the SDGs to hold governments to account. We need regular disaggregated data, and we need to be pushing as we heard from the data programme, the Washington Group System. It's not perfect by any means but at least it gives a uniformity of view, we're comparing like with like, we are getting them to show that is not 2, the 3% as they say in India but other 15% when we ask the questions. That mean the resources Government put in place will have to be far more. So we need to work hard on getting the data right. We need to set up regular meetings, with representative DPOs and governments. Which is one of our 5 points, ensure DPOs have sufficient funding. It's no good governments signing up to the Convention saying yeah, yeah we support this, if 4.3 and 33.3 are not being implemented. And they can't be implemented if we don't have properly funded DPOs and representatives who are trained and capable offing both accountable but also being able to put across the point we want to Government and hold them to account. Make information available to all disabled people on the progress of implementing disabled people disability rights, this part of the government’s responsibly on Article 8 awareness raising but also are responsible as DPOs, particularly if we do get Government funding and that one of the arguments we can make to governments to say well if you fund us we can produce regular newsletters and bulletins that inform the disability community so please funds. Ensure that disabled people are members of Parliament, and both and also recruited into senior jobs in the civil service. Particularly, in ministries that deal with disability issues, these can be cross‑ministry or can be a Ministry of Disability affairs. There are arguments in both direction. We would like there to be people in the Ministry of Education who understand inclusion probably so maybe a unit in the Ministry of Education, which sits on all other committees, that the Ministry of Education does, so it's not in a silo but it's saying inclusion is a principle you have signed up to, it has to come across all initiatives that you are taking in the Ministry of Education. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Social Welfare. Make sure that all disabled people for their education are under the Ministry of Education, we should not have special schools under a different ministry, Ministry of Social care, or Social Development.

GEMMA: Richard, just slow down bit please.

RICHARD: Ensure ministers are under regular scrutiny including taking account of DPOs views. Promote disability equality and inclusive development, one more page of these, I know it's a bit boring but we do have to get the essentials right. More particular etiquette issues almost. Introduce yourself to key ministers by requesting meetings. Don't wait to be summoned, be proactive. Provide written briefs to Government departments on any issues that they are considering. Make sure your organisations are on general consultation lists of civil society. Make links with members of Parliament who are disabled or have interest in disability, i.e. a family member. And there is a list of those members of Parliament available through the Commonwealth Parliamentary association, and Steven Twigg is an ex‑Labour MP the secretary there will have a meeting with him in the next few weeks, I will report back to everyone about how we can work better on that. Provide sympathetic members of Parliament with briefing and questions to ask the Prime Minister *et cetera*. Get involved, this is what Gerard Quinn was talking about the structure that UK has left in the Commonwealth is largely the British structure, and therefore we have learnt how to use it to get change. We're saying you should also use it in this way. Get involved in scrutiny of draft legislation, develop good links with prominent journalists in radio, TV, internet and print. Give them good stories that support the right you want established. If you want to go further you can give them guidance on what to put in and what not to put in. We don't want the emphasis on human rights, the 'awhh' factor, we want the emphasis on our human rights and human rights abuses. Make links with sympathetic lawyers that will the forward case that will establish legal precedents. Often human rights lawyers will do this on a pro bono basis which means free, if they win they can get their expenses back from the other side. Make links with researchers in universities interested in disability rights. So it's no good just sitting in your own little silo, you have to go out and make these things happen to be an effective DPO, and influence Government.

    Ok the next one then, as simple scenario, one we have talked about but imagine it's not in the UK, but could be in the UK, but anywhere in the world. An analysis of death from COVID show that a majority of those affected are disabled people, that's more than 50%. Although if they are only 20% or less of population in the country this a disproportionate impact on disabled people. Two things we would like you to comment on. What do you think will be the best way to influence Government on this issue, and two, do you think why do you think this is the best way. So a bit similar to the other one but a specific problem now. COVID which has not gone away we're afraid to say, a majority of those affected are disabled people, but only 20%, 15% of the population. would count as disabled. What do you think will be the best way to influence Government on this issue, and why do you think this is the best way. Again, I give you a minute and a half to get something jotted down on that thanks very much.

RICHARD: Ok are we getting some answers in Gemma?

GEMMA: Just the one so far.

RICHARD: All right will give it a few more. Maybe too difficult to do on chat this one. What we could do, well we need to press on because we have got to do other things. Read out the ones you have got now and we'll just comment on them.

GEMMA: Ok. "I think the best way to get the statistics to support my argument, then proceed to different ministries engaged in this issue, priority will then be given persons with disabilities. In New Zealand we have disabled people at the table within the Health Ministry to discuss COVID‑19 response and COVID‑19 vaccines it's a disabled person who tabled the idea of bubble. Disabled people help write factsheets [inaudible] and helped share accessible formats. Coronavirus has shown flaws within the Government structure is a way to influence change by highlighting needs via policy changes. Governments who have ratified the UNCRPD using SDG and Agenda 2030 leave no‑one behind, using disability disaggregate data to build the case. A campaign similar to where to where's the interpreter campaign, there's no BSL interpreter present at any of the England press conferences meaning that deaf people who rely on BSL had to search at information themselves, the where the interpreter campaign has been successful to taking the Government to High Court". They are coming in more. Number 1, "Be part of the Government team, either by the MP, DPOs or NGOs. Feed the real situations about the persons with disabilities including statistics and concerns. Number 2, "To reduce the discrepancy on facts which can lead for more attention given. The best way to me to influence Government is through the active advocacy of the DPOs, only DPOs would be able to provide them with the right perspective they can act effectively. Planning to include all people in all areas, particularly in emergency like COVID‑19 and getting data is very key. I still think social media move would still be the best avenue, because not only the Government would encounter this but the general community and worked as world".

RICHARD: Getting a high profile on social media will mean that the issue is then raised in Parliament by member of Parliament, that's why it's worth having the members you know will argue it briefed, and sending them e‑mails to raise the issue. But getting round the table with Government has been one of the big improvements that we have seen in quite a few Commonwealth countries during COVID, and I think we need to consolidate on that, whether it's goes away, it's not going to go away completely, but whether it diminishes in its impact we need to keep those places round the table and we need to quarter to 4.3 and 33.3 of convention they need to keep doing it they need to resource us so we can keep doing that. I think it's been an important experience, thanks for all those points. Because we want to get your views in on the course as a whole, we will move on so I just wanted to go over this point that several people have written to me and said about what about Shadow Reporting? We put a lot in both coursebook 13 and 14 about using Shadow Reporting, we have mentioned it several times, but there is a process at the UN and it's outlined in the coursebook 14, that State Parties are meant to consult. There's a cycle of reporting from an initial report then every two years, within four years of signing then every two years after that, they are meant to table the report. Of course it's longer and the UNCRPD committee is not getting through them though it's getting through quite a few with a break for COVID. So as soon the Committee says well, we're now going to, you're coming up next June or next September, that's when we need to kick in as a DPO and say right, that's when they are going to have to reform we need to work that timetable we need to talk to the Government about what they are going to be reporting on. From that it will frame the issues that they are not going to be talking on, so that's what should lead is in our Shadow Reporting that the CRPD Committee presents State Parties with a list of issues. We can submit questions when we see that list of issues and say why aren't using about this, this is an important issue, principle, as Australia did in the issue of Aborgine and Torres Strait Islanders that what got that work commission as much as anything else, it's important to be on top of this and making sure there are people briefed in your organisation with the capacity to deal with this and stay on top of it. It's all‑out there on the Office of High Commissioner of Human Rights' website and people need to monitor that in see what going on. States Parties submit written replies to the list of issues, again we can look at those and say they are not getting that quite right. That's another point that we intervene in. Constructive dialogue between the CRPD Committee and State Party delegation during the preliminary sessions. We can also request to give evidence in that dialogue, and we can usually get money the Commonwealth foundation had paid for several groups to go to Geneva to put their position. The CRPD Committee issues it's concluding observations on rep including recommendations and then again the DPOs can intervene on that. The procedures to be followed up on implementation the CRPD Committee recommendations, DPOs to be devolved be involved in disseminating those publicise them the whole thing starts all over again. This is a full‑time job for some people if we can get the money, to employ them they should be disabled people who understand our issues, to be on top of this. So we have a very strong framework for influencing Government, we have seen how it can actually lead to real change in the countries, and we have a method for doing it. So we should not be saying oh we can't change anything, we can't change anything, it's because we have not organised ourselves, we have not organised our organisations to do these things, and we need to get on with doing that. I think I'm going to skip this one now but this was something you might want to think about, what three issues do you think after the most important one in your country. We have not got time to do that now, but it’s something for you to think about, to take back into your organisations particularly and what data is there on it, and what data is lacking and then who should we approach for that data, there are plenty of people going to research in universities, PhD research, they're often looking for topics, often pick the most weird things to do research on, why shouldn't they as they are usually paid from the public purse, be doing things that are useful to society? So not saying we should tell them what to think but we are saying, why don't you gather data on this, why don't you investigate this is and come up with these issues. They should talk to us as they are doing this research, so data is important.

    Ok we're going to stop go over to Kenya for 5 minutes, only, then we're going to have to do our vox pops after that. So I will put up your first slide Sarah if you can summarise how you have got to be in this position in Kenya because many have already shared this in the presentation, how did you actually achieve this getting this organisation that the Kenyan Government listens to you.

SARAH: Thank you Richard. Having taken the participants through how United Disabled Persons of Kenya got to be able to influence Government in very serious matters of persons with disabilities, concerned policies, concerning inclusion in education and health. It has not been an easy journey because initially for the Government to be able to listen to issues of persons with disabilities, there was that confrontational approach where persons with disabilities would confront the Government because they thought their issues were not being heard. But with time we realised that that was not working and that as an umbrella body that represents all the types of disabilities and different regions represent therein, we started talking to Government lobbying people in Government, influence them and increasing awareness with them on issues of disability, especially in the ministry that is charged with responsibility of social protection and where disability issues are there to take care of. So took a lot of lobbying, and may concerning friends even with the Government now, and making them see that we have needs, yes we have issues, and for them to really be actualised and implemented. That confrontational approach would not really help but talking about what the issues are and laying it on the table where those policies are being made and where implementation can take place, the Government has with time, accepted, the United Disabled Persons of Kenya that's an umbrella pod that can represent persons with disabilities and rights in the country. There is what we call caucus, a body, information of experts on disability called the caucus on the right, caucus on disability rights advocacy which meets from time to time and its membership also includes both Government and non‑government actors, for example even including like Safaricom and many other players who have interests of persons with disabilities at heart. So this committee normally meets to thrash out issues of persons with disabilities, and also sees the Government is part of that committee, it is able now to pick up the issues and see how those implement them. The United Nations the UDPK also co‑ordinates what we called an Interagency Co‑ordinating Committee, which when matters of disabilities are being discussed, it chairs that committee together with the Government in the Ministry of Labour. So that when issues of disability are being handled like attending meetings or responding to issues of the CRPD Committee, of experts, and writing maybe reports, Government is writing the report and then the UDPK, which is a civil society organisation, helping others to come with a Shadow Report. This committee which is co‑chaired by UDPK and the Government has come about because of lobbying and advocacy and just bringing the Government people on board to accept what persons with disabilities need to put in the laws. I would to like mention before the Minister for Labour, who was very keen and during the Global Disability Summit, he was in charge of the Labour Ministry, currently now is the Minister for Finance and when we have issues of challenges of finances, it's a bit easier for us to explain issues to them, because they are able to understand having come from the labour ministry to the treasury, and then issues of finance and such things, he is able to help in a better way because of their understanding. I think I want to stop at that.

RICHARD: Thank you very much, and I think that's a really good example of how co‑production works and sometimes we as I said when if talking about it we have to give up the wish to get all of our issues and sometimes as we said, last time, politics is the art of the possible it's not getting everything that we want. But having well organised organisations getting into a good working relationship with Government is important. Sometimes it doesn't work sometimes they go a hence against to you then you have got to go back to the earth methods we can use. All right thank you for that.

    We would like to take some feedback now on the course from people who said they, I think Gemma has got list of a couple of people we want to keep these short and sweet as said before it's about promoting what we're doing here, you have got the evaluation form which is coming round to you for the second set of modules, 8 to 14, so if you want us to improve in differ ways you can put all of that in there. But what we want is your name and country, what you liked about the course, a particular module and why, and what you're going on to do with what you have absolute no more than one minute. I will put this over to Gemma to organise this.

GEMMA: Oh ma word, thank you! I had a couple of volunteers for this one, and one person Moses in this meeting, I am trying to find I am not sure he is here I also have Joanne, are you ok to go first in the. And Richard I am just thinking, oh brilliant thank you so much. Joanne if you could if you are happy to put your video on it would be great to see you but we understood if you don't want to, thank you.

RICHARD: Want to put her on speaker view do we?

GEMMA: It's ok, we have got her.

RICHARD: Go ahead Joanne, nice to see you.

NEW SPEAKER: What I have really enjoyed about this course is the chance to study not only the UNCRPD in depth, but also to learn and understand about the Sustainable Development Goals because they have not really been a direct focus here in New Zealand, and I also really enjoyed again from Module 2 the history behind the UNCRPD, the formal and informal notions, and what went on and also the fact that stakeholders for the first time, had direct input so it was very, very good to come to that. I guess the final thing I would say this course is more than just a basic course, you know it has quite a bit of intellectual rigour to it if you want to go through all the modules and do all the work but I for one really appreciated that and getting a bit of an understanding about how things are and other countries because it vastly different to here.

RICHARD: Thank you very much.

>>: Thank you for that.

GEMMA: Thank you.

RICHARD: Have we got other people?

GEMMA: Moses, are you here? Serwadda Moses we have been e‑mailing. No? Richard could you please put the slide back up.

RICHARD: Sure yeah.

GEMMA: We need, we do need everybody on view because it's important to have the signer really clear. So when somebody starts talking you could lose the slide maybe. I think we'll have to just have you in the picture unless you stop your video. Thank you Joanne so I don't have Moses I don't think, so does anybody else is anyone else happy to go now.

RICHARD: Does anyone else want to give us a view if they indicate that they want to say something in the participants box. Put up their hand.

GEMMA: Deepti you keep putting nice comments in chat, are you happy to say anything on video? Deepti from the Pacific?

RICHARD: Someone else hand raised as well.

GEMMA: Deepti if you have a think about that somebody else hand, [*name*] I can ask you to unmute and put your video on. I am sorry to people I had to just stop a video a moment ago, hey there we go thank you. Richard if you could just stop sharing the screen for a moment. Ok thank you. Nne?

>>: Good morning everyone greetings from Nigeria I am so happy to participate in this training course, it has taught me a lot of things, also civil servants, some of the things I don't know about disability I was exposed in this so I am so happy to learn about disability [inaudible] to add, fight the rights and the barriers on how to overcome it, so I am so happy. I thank Richard, and the crew, it's really, really a very, very good time to be, [inaudible] was able to get through I am so happy to pass through these course. Thank you very much.

GEMMA: Thank you. Thank you Nne. If we ask you to do your piece, please could you only put your video on then rather than somebody else is talking, because we need to present this just one person at a time with the signer if that's ok. So who else had their hand up? Thank so much for that. [*name*] in Nigeria. If I could ask you Nne to stop your video for a moment Favour, hi.

RICHARD: Go ahead.

>>: Hello, can you hear me?

GEMMA: Yes, please.

>>: Ok. I am Favour, from Nigeria and I really want to thank CDPF for coming up with this training, it's really an interesting time to learn more and also to know more about issues surrounding disability in Africa, it's actually a great opportunity. I also learnt more about disabled women, especially their rights *[distorted audio]*

RICHARD: I think it frozen.

GEMMA: Oh Favour, thank you though.

>>: A long way in helping us so thank you so much for coming up with such training and forward I will use what I learnt for it, I will go back to my organisation and advocate and then see how to liaise with federal Government to know where and when are persons with disabilities can actually function, for the system to work in an inclusive manner thank you very much.

RICHARD: Thank you.

GEMMA: Thank you, Favour.

RICHARD: Up to more.

GEMMA: Mutari, you're on screen do you want to give us something? Mutari? Mutari are you able to give us something please, do you want to talk to us? No, ok. I am going to turn your video off please and Rubel in Bangladesh if you could come on.

>>: Hello Gemma and Richard. Thank you very, today is much the last seminar in the capacity course, for disabled people, so it was nice to really hearing a lot of thing about the disabled sector and it will help our to [inaudible] develop the disability capacity in leadership around this world and in working with the Government and DPOs. And thank you very much for the nice course, I am really happy to be part of this course and thank you Commonwealth.

GEMMA: Richard, how many more shall we take?

RICHARD: We can run on a few minutes, I think we didn't started to 5 past, if that's all right with signers and captioners. Can we do 5 minutes more if we can reach more people in?

GEMMA: Patience are you there?

>>: Yes I am here.

GEMMA: Thank you could you put your video on. Thank you.

>>: Thank you Richard, thank you Gemma, thank you Sarah, thank you everyone. I am Patience Dickson, I am happy to be in the forefront of disability advocacy especially regarding women and girls with disabilities in Nigeria as a national organisation. I am also one of the people that actually registered for this course that people thought I shouldn't because I have been in the [inaudible] for 15 years, they said you should be a presenters not a participant. That for me I want to also learn because I there is no loss in learning. This course has really brought to the fore a lot of things that I had to really clarify about instruments, international treaties, DPOs, how we work how we need to work and how we should actually make our voice stronger and with our Government. All I can say is thank you, I am just wondering what will happen when my alarm starts beeping to say oh it's time for the course, so the course has actually ended. Ah what can I say thank you, thank you so much.

RICHARD: Thank you.

GEMMA: Thank you very much. Can I go to Chidambaram?

RICHARD: Put your camera off now please.

>>: Hi, many thanks to Richard and this team, it's very excellent initiative, it throws light on what developments can take place across the globe with reference to Commonwealth countries, really enlightening me and many of us the various advocacy initiatives from worldwide all grateful to you for this kind of initiative. We need to have some kind of follow up programme for having network with this national organisation for effective implementation of advocacy work in India. So I am on behalf of state congregation for differently abled, I am joined this programme, enjoy a lot for your each and every, of your interactions sessions very highly [inaudible] you, very useful to DPOs and the NGOs, closely working for the disability development. Thank you very much.

RICHARD: Can I just throw in there any DPOs who want to, can join the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum as an associate if you are regional DPO, we would be happy to have you. We have some the application form is on our website. Ok thank you.

GEMMA: Shall we just have one more.

RICHARD: One more, a woman I think just to balance it up.

GEMMA: Ok say, Ni Oluchi, hey thank you.

>>: Hello, hi everyone, so my name is Oluchi I am from Nigeria, I am really, really want to thank the entire team, Richard, Gemma, Sarah, for this wonderful opportunity. One of the things that I liked about this course was the fact that I was able to learn from other DPOs of from other disabled people from other countries, to hear what have happened in their country and what works. This will help in terms of what we're going to going to do back here in Nigeria as well. So the future I also want to see collaboration between DPOs across countries, I don't think this is something we have done before. But I would want to see collaboration across countries. People on this platform that have join this group I would be nice to collaborate to bring interventions globally for persons with disabilities and I must say the course content is rich, the course books that we have our reference points, they have very rich information that we can use in the future, so thank you to the team, and I really, really hope we will hear from you again in some other levels thank you.

RICHARD: Ok I think we better wind up. Two things then, thanks for you all doing it if you want accreditation you need to make sure the coursework is in by the ninth of June. If you want it, if you find that impossible, then I think we said that we would do a second round, 17th of September, but it means you will get your accreditation by the end of, beginning of October. We have asked people who want to become human rights advocates to join us and there was a form circulated round that we're also looking a possible of there being an ongoing chatroom which we will let you all know about when it comes up, so you will be able to stay in touch but a way are basically and organisation of organisations, so decisions about policy are taken by DPOs around the Commonwealth, of which we have 84 now members. So if you are part of a DPO that is not, they should apply. If you are part of a national DPO that doesn't make it very seriously, may raise the issue so it's on all the agendas,.

GEMMA: Richard ‑

RICHARD: Disabled people forum saying ‑

GEMMA: Richard I am sorry to interrupt you could a put your video back on. RICHARD: Anyway, so I would like to thank everybody for taking part, and I am sure we'll all work together common goal of actually seeing the implementation of disabled people's rights and your right, the last speaker to say that we can help each other that really what we're there for. If people have not been able to fit into this timescale, you send a one minute clip on an mp4 file off your mobile phone or laptop to Gemma we'll be able to fit it into the showreel of what people think about the course. We want the positive stuff on this please and the way forward. There will be a monitoring form coming to you, please fill that in and send it back as well thank you very much. A last word from Thandiwe, and Sarah please then we'll finish. Thandiwe?

THANDIWE: Thank you very much Richard I would like to they thank you very much to the participants, you made it easier for us to go on to this and it was a learning curve for everybody but I am excited because now a lot of people, especially in the Commonwealth, they know more about disability and it's easier for us to challenge Government because there's more information, we are very rich with information, and we are still going to learn from each other, still going to call each for clarity, for input, for whatever. Thank you very much and I would like to say thank you very much Gemma, chairperson Sarah, Richard, thank you very much guys, your commitment and all your effort have made this to become possible. And from me thank you so much.

RICHARD: Thank you. And Sarah, as our chair I think you should have the last word.

SARAH: Thank you Richard, I want to say that it has been a long journey and it wouldn't have been successful if all our efforts were not combined. If we called for this course and nope showed up, we would not have been able to be able to carry it through. Even the participants I want to thank you so, so much for you resilience, for being strong up to the end, and I know you have learnt a lot about disability issues, and that once there is over it's not going to be the end of you but we are going to keep interacting, we're going to keep talking and even encouraging you now to go back home and raise issues with your governments, for more DPOs, become our ambassadors out there, train others on thing that you have learnt because I am sure it had been a very rich time for even learning about rights of persons with disabilities. So thank you everybody for your resilience, thank you for your participation and we hope that this now catapults you to another level in your countries and you're going to go out there and make sure that rights of persons with disabilities are taken care of wherever you are. Thank you so much.

RICHARD: Ok. Than you and now you can all put your cameras on and say bye to each other if you have something burning to say and want to say it put it on a mp4 file at send it. Bye‑bye.

GEMMA: Thank you everybody:    Bye‑bye. [*everybody saying goodbye*].