**Workshop on Civic Space and Participation, IDDC 2021 Annual General Assembly**

The Community Based Inclusive Development and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities Task Groups co-hosted a workshop focused on civic space during the IDDC General Assembly. Meaningful participation of civic space actors in political, economic, social, and cultural life in communities, in societies and in our world is essential for a better world for all of us. Threats to civic space are multiple and yet we persist.  Through this workshop we explored the disability movement’s engagement in civic space not only as a particular constituent group but in coalition with other civil society actors. The workshop particularly focused on engagement at the subnational and national levels. Through a facilitated discussion, diverse movement activists from low- and middle-income countries shared their experiences of coalition and reflections of engagement with local and national governments to affect the realisation of human rights and safeguarding civic space. We highlighted the diversity of this engagement, offered reflections from activists, and provided opportunity to dialogue.

The session started with a moderated discussion with four panellists who brought diverse experiences and perspectives to the discussion and each provided a wealth of experience in civic space engagement. Three panellists from the disability movement have deep experience in coalition with other movements at the national and sub-national levels. One panellist has deep experience related to other social justice movements and the civic space in general. Setareki in Fiji shared experience working with other NGOs, Pratima in Nepal linked the disability movement with indigenous peoples’ movements and Augustino in South Sudan represented a new OPD movement who are looking for spaces to interact. Following the moderated discussion, the floor was opened to workshop participants for questions to panellists.

**Main discussion points:**

* Panellists spoke to experiences at the **sub national and national levels.**
* Panellists provided examples and drew lessons from **collaboration between civic/social justice movements (**including a focus on participation of the disability movement) at these sub national and national levels.
* Panellists reflected on the **risks and opportunities inherent in building and action in coalition** with different perspectives/messages.
* Panellists focused on civic space in general and **shrinking civic space**. Deborah Leao from CIVICUS provided an overview of data collected from the CIVICUS [Monitor](https://findings2020.monitor.civicus.org/) on the implications of Covid-19 for civic space
* Panellists discussed persons with disabilities searching for their own multiple identities and connecting with groups representing other identities. It was shared that many OPDs do not realize and utilize these opportunities across identities.

**Panellists**:

**Pratima Gurung** of the Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network (IPWDGN) and NIDWAN (Nepal): has actively built/contributed to civil society coalitions in the indigenous people’s movement and the gender movement with recent events focused on GBV during COVID times as an example.

**Setareki Macanawai** of the Pacific Disability Forum (based in Fiji): has actively engaged with the Pacific NGO network and undertakes joint advocacy and strategizing in a range of areas both humanitarian assistance and development.

**Augustino Lado** Chairperson of the South Sudan union of persons with disabilities/ disability activist from South Sudan: where OPDs based on ethnic groups have come together, engaged in the civic space with others.

**Debora Leao** of CIVICUS based in South Africa: CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society throughout the world.