

COSP16 Side Event: Zooming in on the rights of persons with disabilities: Launch of the 2023 Disability Data Initiative's report

Date: June 16, 2023

Time: 9:45-11am EDT on Zoom

Presenter: **Valentina Vargas Ricea, Mujeres con Capacidad de Soñar a Colores, Guatemala**

Thank you very much, thank you for being here, I will speak in Spanish if you want, change your channels. Floril and myself belong to a small group of Guatemala women with disability in the rural and indigenous area of Guatemala.

What we would like to share with you today is to let you know how the data help OPDs at the grassroots level.

In the work that we do, and we use the data in three main ways.

Firstly, we use the data on prevalence. It is important for local Government administrators.

Secondly, data is important to justify our work.

There is great resistance to work with women with disabilities, because of the patriarchy in which we live and the social structures in which we develop our work. Being able to say that this is the situation of people with disabilities, but additionally this is the situation of women with disabilities helps us work on a firm ground to state that we are here for such a reason and that we're going to continue pursuing such purposes. So, for us data is of the essence.

Also, relying on local data is extremely useful to manage funds.

We work with feminist—funds are flexible they acknowledge the importance of knowledge that each one of us has.

And there are certain funds mostly the larger ones, the ones that allows us to be more sustainable in time. They request statistical information and not always do we have access to the data. Having that

data locally in our municipality and the places where we work at the department level allows us to access the funding that we need to become sustainable as organizations.

So, having the data allows us to justify our work. Also, data is useful to create awareness to communicate and share. We work through artistic methodologies: we have a place that is called the oppressed and I will show you an image of our play.

On this image, there are four actresses.

Two at the back, and one is expressing an 'I don't know' face. Right in front of them, there is a large pole with green and red flags, the red ones represent women with disability and the green ones men with disability. With this tool we share with the audience, not only that there is exclusion towards people with disabilities in general but also more exclusion against women with disabilities compared to men.

So, this is a forum by which we can share information accessibly with the communities that we work with. This is a mind opener because people become aware through the images because you can express data or a number that way.

When people see it, visualize it, in this way, through drama, many people have said well, now I understand why you are working with women with disability.

Some have said "I am a woman without a disability but after I watched the play I had access to that information and I understand the situation of women with disabilities". So it is useful to have information on a more local basis to be able to share that with our communities and generate change from that.

We think it is very important to rely on the report information and we identify areas that need further research that will be useful for the local efforts that we perform. Specifically, investigating more into gender issues, the difference between men and women.

In this situation of poverty, what women have to go through and also then indigenous peoples, if you think of a country like Guatemala, we need to continue investigating because overall we know that

according to our experience indigenous women who have disability suffer more exclusion and the gap is even greater compared to those who are not indigenous, so it is important that we continue the research locally.

On the gaps and inequalities that exist. Now I will give the floor to Floril my colleague who will share with you lived experiences that we think are important.