

RI GDDF & AF Sharing session 2
Date: 25 August 2021

Deborah Wan: Hello, welcome, welcome. So, we don't want to let others wait for it, so let's start. First of all, welcome all the participants and I introduce myself. I am Deborah Wan from Hong Kong. I am one of the management committee members of the Hong Kong Joint Council for People with Disabilities. And we have another convener, Demelash. So, I will start the ball rolling, so welcome you all from all over parts of the world. This session is about women and employment. And we have the sign language interpreter, you can see there is a sign language interpreter. And also the whole session will be recorded and there will be transcript and put on the website later on after we finish all the three sessions. We welcome you all and I hope more registered participants will join in later on, but we wish you don't want to waste our time. First of all, we have a welcoming speech by Madame Zhang Haidi, and she is now in Japan for the Paralympics but she has recorded a welcoming speech, so let's ask Joseph Kwok to present the video.

Joseph Kwok: I'm Joseph Kwok, Vice Chair of Social Commission of Rehabilitation International and Vice Chair of Hong Kong Joint Council for Persons with Disabilities. I am very pleased to read the statement for Madame Zhang Haidi, President of Rehabilitation International and Chair of China Disabled Persons Federation, for the RI GDDF and AF Projects sharing sessions. Open in quote. Dear colleagues and friends, good morning, afternoon, evening, the covid-19 is still raging all over the world, please take good care of yourselves, I wish you and your loved ones all the best. I took office as RI president since 2016, I want to thank you for your support. Since then, we have set up the Global Disability Development Fund and Africa Fund supported by the Chinese Government. Over the years, we have supported and jointly released the world report on hearing together with WHO, we have worked with UNSGAB and UNFPA to conduct some pragmatic projects. We have carried out several projects in Asia, Europe, America, Africa and other areas, which make our fellow brothers and sisters with disabilities feel your warmth of RI as a family. We have donated masks and other anti-epidemic supplies to Ethiopia, Netherland, India and Nepal, all being hard hit by Covid-19, to protect the safety and health of children with disabilities. These programmes are committed to empower our fellow persons with disabilities, promote the inclusive development and expand RI's global network. These programmes have brought benefits to persons with disabilities, increased cohesion among our member organizations and the influence of RI on international disability affairs has been greatly enhanced. Every time when I recall the innocence smiling and the deaf school in Ethiopia, I feel we must do more for their growth and rehabilitation. I believe we share the same feeling, let's keep carrying out more influential programmes to provide persons with disabilities better services and bring them greater hope. Next year, we will celebrate the RI's a hundredth birthday. On the journey ahead, we will meet new opportunities and new challenges, how can RI continue to expand global influence, to provide more public projects for the international community and keep our torch shining brightly in the coming a hundred years. First, we should work with UN agencies to increase the influence of our programmes. Second, women and children with disabilities are the most deserving of love and care, we need to pay more attention to their demands and developments in our programmes.

At this particular time, we should better protect the rights and interests of our fellow persons with disabilities affected by the epidemic. Third, during the planning and the implementing process of projects, the standing commissions I expected to play a more active role by fully mobilizing our members to participate and thus enhance their sense of belonging and responsibility. I also hope that in the future we will follow more standardized application procedures of project and exercise stricter supervision to ensure that the funds can be used for the benefits of persons with disabilities. I look forward to your full exchange of views and experience in the implementation of projects and to contributing more wisdom and strength to make RI better in the future. Wish the sharing session a big success. Thank you. End in quote. Thank you.

Deborah Wan: Thank you Joseph for reading the welcoming speech by Madame Zhang Haidi. We will go to the next part. We have 25 people here, so we will take group photo, thank you very much. So, the next session is about sharing of the projects, we divided into two parts, the first part I will convene it, there will be two project presentations and then we have questions and answers. And then following that will be the other three projects. So, after the three project presentation, there will be question and answer, too. So, we start off with the first project and the second project, is from Brazil. It's called BRASA, the title is called the Women's Voices, Network of Women with Disabilities and the main objective is to promote the human rights of the disabled women and / or the caregivers of family members with disabilities through the dissemination, knowledge and awareness of individual and collective rights, seeking to promote social inclusion is the general objective. Perhaps I ask the presenter, Debora, also call Debora, from Brazil, Debora Manzano, Communication Assistant to present her report on this project, Women's Voices Network of Women with Disabilities. Debora.

Debora Manzano: Hello everyone, my name is Debora and I am the Communication Assistant of the project Women's Voices held in São Paulo, Brazil. And I am here to share some experiences within two years of project. Vozes femininas are Women's Voices, is a project focuses on empowering women with disabilities and caregivers. The profession of caregivers in Brazil is most occupied by women. And also if we are talking about people they don't have financial resource to hire a professional, almost all the work done by the family, most specifically by the mother of the person. So, we created this project in 2019. We had two specifically objectives that were to increase the knowledge of disabled women and / or caregivers of family members with disabilities. As I said a little bit earlier, women...about human rights, disability and social inclusion through the creations of seminars and workshops based on amplifying the example of important women in this area. The second objective was to train disabled female leaders and / or caregivers of families of persons with disabilities, so that they can act as inclusion and social mobilization agents. Um...when we talk leaders, we talk about inspiring and also making transformation supporting other people with disabilities.

Our achievements in 2019 were bigger than we had expected, which was to mobilize and involve 213 women with disabilities. So, we had our seminars, we had our workshops, all in-persons held in the center of São Paulo. We always try to find room and places that were accessible and functional, but we realized it was in the center of the city. Another achievement was to mobilize important and academic people within movement of people with disabilities to participate in our seminars because they had good connections. So because of that, we became a nice reference of a project in the inclusion agenda. So, that also an achievement because we had good online presents,

we had good views in our videos, also in Instagram because we had the participation of big names here in Brazil. What was the challenge? It was to involve people from the periphery areas of São Paulo because when you do a project in the center, this is also a barrier of exclusion because if people don't see themselves welcome in the place, or in the event. Also, São Paulo is a really big city with millions of habitants. So, we couldn't really involve all the periphery if we did a project in the center that was a challenge. Okay. Another challenge we saw was to engage participants to come to all the meetings. Because in the second event, we realized the participants wasn't the same as in the first event. We weren't like a formation or a course, our main goal was to actually train these people, train...um...in a continue line of themes. I guess it also something that has to do with the fact that we have a lot of people involved, a lot of people came to the events, but not always the same people. The third challenge we faced was to build a network, a united group of participants. If it is not always the same people coming to the events, we have the struggle to build the links, to build bonds between the participants and it is also very important in any social movement is to create a group, a group that see themselves partner. And how...what we did to solve this in 2019? We realized that we should develop a partnership with public institutions that receive people with disabilities and in social vulnerability. Here in Brazil, we have some projects also public developed to attend people with disabilities with no...when the family throws them out, when the situation of violence, when the situation of risk. We also have institutions to do rehabilitation. So, we tried to reach these public institution, so we can have contacts with these people with disabilities and in social vulnerability. Also, the second problem solving we did was to hold more meetings more frequently. So, but that was something we only did in 2020, that's why I put here 2020, 19 to 2020, because it was something we realized in the evaluation of the end of the project, so we decided to do a course more frequent. And our lessons learnt, it was that we should focus on a specific territory to serve more vulnerable populations. These people don't feel comfortable in the centre. They don't feel like it is a welcoming place to them. So, if we want to do a very nice social project, we have to go to them, not expect them to come to us. There is also means quality before quantity. If we do a project in the centre of the city, of course it would bring more people to our meeting, but would these people be the people we want? The people that really need to know about their rights. They don't really know about their rights and we had to take some steps back to change the course of the project in order to building power of people in poor areas. As we had second year of project, we could implement all these lessons to do our second year of project with lessons we had learnt. And it led us to the project in 2020, it was a very complicated year as you know. Before the pandemic, we had these objectives to promote the improvement of the quality of life and social inclusion by accompanying the work of social transformation of female leaders already formed in the previous years, with the female population with disabilities in neighborhoods of the city of São Paulo with high poverty and social risk. We emphasized in 2020 meeting poverty and social risks.

So, with the lessons learnt in 2019, we decided to focus on a specific area of São Paulo, which is Brasilândia. It is way here the neighborhood as you may think, almost like a district, like a city inside of the city, is a very crowded neighborhood, and the north zone of São Paulo. The population even in various. It is a very complex territory. So, we decided to work in Brasilândia mostly because we had an action fair in the centre of rehabilitations. It is called the Centre of Specializing Rehabilitation that connected us with professionals working there and also their users, people with disabilities. So, what we achieved in 2020? To us, it was a huge step because we saw the transformation in the life, specific life of specific women. It was about 80 women involved in the

virtual groups and conversation rounds. We decided to do virtually because of pandemic, we couldn't meet face-to-face. We did with the trained women, different rounds, weekly rounds of conversation about themselves, about who they were, how they see themselves. So, we were really...in the first, it was listening rounds and then we started as a confirmation, we only do with 7 women. These women really didn't know about their rights and it really changed their life. Um...in the second cycle, we trained more 7, so we had 14 women in total in our network of women with disabilities and caregivers in Brasilândia. We also considered a nice achievement for the year, it was the streaming live we had. We had 4, this agent for inclusion where they could tell, it made them empowered because they really expressed who they were, their history, and they inspired another woman that wasn't part of the project. Big challenge, I don't have to say. The pandemic was a huge challenge, I believe for all the projects here. But in Brazil, it's in very complex moment because it really increased the inequality. We had 563 thousand deaths and it's still crowding and vaccination is running really slow. And because we couldn't have face-to-face meetings, our number of participants decreased a lot because of the flu also challenged that is the exclusion by technological barriers. People in peripheries areas, they don't have good internet, sometimes they don't have internet at all, they don't have sometimes cellphones to engage the online meetings, or computers, or cameras. So, it was something we had to discriminate as well to participate in our conversations because they had to have internet, had to have phones, and also a safe place to talk. And for a lot of girls and women, this is not where they live, so it's also a challenge. So how we could solve the problem of the isolation that faced by people with disabilities. Because it's also very complicated, we don't have accessibilities in streets, or quality buses, or subways with accessibility for them to occupy the city. So, we decided to do a mapping of people with disabilities in the territory. How we did that? We built a connection with an internal support network that is called Solidary Network in Brasilândia that had a specific group to attend people with disabilities. They distributed basic aids to over 300 families of people with disabilities. So, that's what we did to spread cautionary, to really learn about them, to learn where they live, why they don't come out their home, why they don't feel welcomed. We focused our resources received from Rehabilitation International and also donors and other fundings to acquire computers, cellphones and internet to these women. The last and one of the most interesting actions we did was actually hire these women. These 14 women for being the agents of the project. And this is what the most empowering thing we did to them because most of these women they don't have formal job. They feel as part of the society when they have a job, when they have money to spend. What we learnt in the end of 2020 when we finished the project? It was important of support networks within communities facing poverty. When talking about the support networks, I am talking about in the favelas when the neighbour had to go to work or had to any something that in the pandemic, it was really important because it was a struggle that lost their job. They had to be creative to find new way to have an income, so Women's Voices became this network. And we realized the huge significance of this...of educate...to listen to their problems. Women's Voices were to create a safe space to talk about these problems, and advice where should you go, where you should go to find help aids or social aids. Also, we learnt female entrepreneurship of women with disabilities and caregivers in the favelas. They don't see as entrepreneurship, they see as something they had to do to survive, make clothes, sell clothes, sell things they do. And now, actually our network of support is going forward this fast. The backup of entrepreneurship and arts and handcrafts because it's also something they always did, they always did to survive. We are very proud to see the development of these women.

The last thing we learnt it was the relationship between family and people with disability. Because we had a lot of mothers in the group and they were starting to understand the matters of giving autonomy, giving individuality, and giving freedom to their kids, to their daughters and sons with disability because sometimes this is somethings...this is also a barrier, this is also something that provides their kids to grow, to see that they can do something by themselves. Women with disability connected with mothers of other people with disability. They helped each other to understand how to give freedom, how to say...you kid will have sexual life. She or he can have a job, but you need to teach, you can't always do things for him or her. So, this is something that a lot of women with disability came to us to say that it was important what we are doing because if their mothers and fathers could give them more time back then, a little bit of trust, they would have a different story, different relationship with their family. It was also a nice lesson we learnt in female's voices in 2020, experience, very nice for us to see some results. We received Seal of Human Rights and Diversity, São Paulo places in the media. This is a picture of us in our meeting. This is our contact of BRASA, Women's Voices. Thank you very much.

Deborah Wan: Thank you Debora for presentation the project on the Women's Voices Network of Women with Disabilities, and also the very comprehensive description of the two-year projects, so which is resulted in empowering the women with disabilities. So, now, we move on to the second presentation, is from India, is from Shanta Memorial Rehabilitation Centre. The topic of the project is called Capacity Building of Women with Disabilities: Advocating for Rights. So, the main objective of this project is support and facilitate the agencies, and empowerment and inclusion of Indian women with disabilities, taking a multi-discipline approach to capacity building. The project will leverage existing resources and provide additional training to promote the self-sufficiency of the women. Critical services such as health and protection against violence, abuse and ability to advocate their rights and inclusion. Now, we invite Ms. Reena Mohanti, Programme Coordinator to present the project.

Reena Mohanti: Good evening everyone. I'm speaking from SMRC and I am speaking about Capacity Building of Women with Disabilities: Advocating for their Rights. This project was implemented by Shanta Memorial Rehabilitation Centre, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India. And it was supported by Rehabilitation International. The project area was India and the role was to support and facilitate for the empowerment and inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in advocate for their rights. This young girl in the picture, she is the tribal girl, and she living in deprived home. She was just lying in her house, depending on her parents. But, after she came to our leadership training, came to know that there were facilities available for her, she then became independent and underwent training and now she is living independently and earning her livelihood by doing stitching clothes for others. The aim of the project was leadership building for women and girls with disabilities. Mainstreaming disabilities and through health programmes and through sensitizing and capacity building of frontline government health workers as on technical aspects of including the needs of persons with disabilities in their work, including the women with disabilities. This young girl, she is Sanali, she is a postgraduate. After undergoing the leadership training, she came to know that she can also apply to other organizations for a bank. She applied to a bank, and the bank donated her a motorized wheelchair which she was gifted, and now is moving freely from one place to another. She is now working as an accountant in her local farm. The activities which we were doing in the project, one of them was the leadership training where 407 women and girls with disabilities, and some of their family members around 158 were trained

on gender base violence, sexual reproductive health rights, and financial literacy and other aspects to exercise their rights in the community. This is a group of women at school training. Here are the women and girls are interacting with the official persons, discussing their needs and how they can progress to achieve it. Another company involved to sensitize the disabled people organizations. 92 people were made aware issues of women and girls with disabilities and they were also sensitized that they should include women with disabilities in the workplace, which some of the people have already started including them. Awareness of the implementers, 20 awareness was... 20 implementers were made aware about concerns of women and girls with disabilities and their different needs. Community awareness was done to 4503 members on issues related to women with disabilities such as gender law, how we should stop violence against women and how the group should be integrating in the community was informed. Here are some of the community awareness that we did. And the helpers were sensitized, around 289 of them were sensitized on specific needs of the women with disabilities. Our programme and activities were disseminated among the Government stakeholders, around 51 members were disseminated. And these 51 members further disseminated among their colleagues in their departments. We developed different manuals for different training programmes, like some were for women and girls with disabilities, for DPO, for the frontline workers and finance literacy, etc. And we had an advocacy campaign 'Azaadi Ki Udaan' to end violence against women was conducted to sensitize the community on the abuse faced by women with disabilities in the family as well as in public places. This programme is for 16 days starting from 25th November and ends on 10th December. A total of 6045 participants were covered in this programme. The social media and voice message system we have disseminated information through Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. We also disseminated this programme on issues of women with disabilities on the radio, which was disseminated to around 50,000 persons who were listened to this radio programme. During the 16 days campaign that is from 25th November and 10th December, we do a different number of activities like street play, and display car, and talks, awareness programmes, and recommendations to government officers, and to stop violence against women, and how it should be stopped. So, during one of the thing was that we did a puppet show which displayed the women with disabilities how they should be respected and stop violence against them.

Then, the programme faced a number of challenges but we overcome them and are completing the project. The challenges were misconceptions and orthodox attitude of the family and the community and about disability. Natural disaster which the project area faced in May 2019 that was called "FANI", all our beneficiaries were affected by Fani cyclone. The pandemic COVID-19 affected the project. These are the project area was destroyed by the "FANI" cyclone, and all our many machines were destroyed. Some of the random achievements, success stories where after the training, these women have overcome. And this young hearing disabled woman, she started to manage her florist shop near a temple that is a religious place. This young lady who was amputation had taken place and did not have the confidence to step out of the house to take a leap to take formal tailoring lesson, and now owns a tailoring unit. She is a young woman with disability who had the courage to be self-dependent, bought an auto and run it for her livelihood and supporting her family. Then, these young girls, after they undergoing the leadership training, they came to know that they can get benefits from government, as government has a lot of schemes. So, they had all applied...some of them applied for motorized three-wheelers and 14 of them received it during the pandemic period. Then, part 2 of this project is COVID 19 and physical rehabilitation. After COVID 19 issues, we changed the direction of the programme with approval of RI to provide

therapy to the participants affected by COVID 19. I do also have that as part of the leadership, if they will become village level therapists to provide basic therapy during the continuing COVID 19 and report to SMRC who will treat them further what's going on and this is a bonding session being got out, we train to become village level therapists. Thank you.

Deborah Wan: Thank you so much Reena. Now is the time for question and answer for the above 2 projects, which had been presented by Debora and also by Reena. So, if you want to ask a question, raise your hand so that we know you are asking a question. Please raise your hand. We have about 10 -15 minutes time. Any questions from the audience?

Huyen: Good evening. I am from Vietnam. Thank you for the presentation. For the project about the Network of Women with disabilities in Brazil. It's very interesting, and I would like to...you may, to share more about this. Even because in Vietnam, we have set up some networks of women with disabilities 2 years ago, but we face a lot of challenges in maintaining the network. So, from the project I would like to know the sustainability of the network. When the project ends, how you maintain, how you hold and continue the network? And at the moment, who is leading the network? Is it the implementers of this project or anyone in the network? Thank you.

Debora Manzano: Thank you for your question. Um, yes, the sustainability of the project now, we are searching for new opportunities of funding, but it's happening with no... now with no resources. So, only them who are meeting with each other with the resources we gave last year, with the equipment. But also, we have leaders, how do I say...natural leaders that roles in this opportunity, in this network. So, we have a woman that should in the video, [\(name of their project participant\)](#), she was...back...before the project, she was already a community leader. She gave these...um...distribute these foods, aids, the kits, and hygiene kits, so she knew a lot of people and she could invite a lot of people to the network and she continues by herself. We cannot provide nowadays sustainability funds, but we are still looking with to receive donations and also different types of resources like trainings, professionals who are only interested in the course.

Huyen: Yes, okay, so interesting, thank you.

Deborah Wan: Thank you for the question. Anyone? Any question? Yes.

Asha Hans: I'd just like to speak with Debora a little. One is that we also have women with disability Indian network which is started long back and we don't have funding project, but the significant issue remark is run by women with disabilities, but we have some women who acted as advisors with the network and they carry out advocacy, especially now, so problematic objecting. They do a lot of work and we providing them some support whenever we get it, but like the disability fund has now provide them support, but otherwise they are managing on their own because they have huge passion which is there. But what I want to ask Debora is Brazil has a lot of indigenous people in the network. In you work that you did, was that in the indigenous area? Or they will meet some day or on...

Debora Manzano: Thank you for your question, Asha. Yah, our goal now is to amplify, to go to different areas, but it also a challenge because it took a year to implement in one neighbourhood. And we also have a... as you were saying, we have consults, we have advisors. I am a sort of

advisor, as I am a communication professional. So, I help them, I facilitate them to create these webinars. So, I guide them through this technology. We also have therapists, professional therapists, I don't know this translation. But also she helps virtually with the matters of rehabilitation. Our experience online showed us that we can open...bigger...bigger of our experience, and that's the goal we have to go even further because in this city we have the peripheral areas all around. We have the north, the south, the east. So, this is our goal now. To amplify, to go bigger.

Asha Hans: Thank you. WhatsApp group was very good with the network. A lot of member join. We have a WhatsApp group and that helps. When you have mobile, you can set up a network, that helps.

Debora Manzano: Yah, we also did video tutorials to teach them how to use...we use a lot of WhatsApp, a lot of Google Meet. And it was very nice to see women organized. It's always beautiful to see women acting together. And we see something they wanted way before, way before. They are connected when they talk about problems and they realize something collective what they faced and they could go together to try to overcome these issues, these struggles. And that's why they continue doing without us, without the financial support we gave before, cos it was something they actually needed. They need to talk about these problems and also feel safe and want space to hear, not judge.

Deborah Wan: Thank you Debora. Thank you for the question. Is there any question for Reena? Yah, Khaya, yes, you can go ahead.

Khaya: Thank you for an inspiring project. Mine is not a question, but just a comment. It's inspiring and we just want to share because it's something that we would like to see happening globally, in terms of project and people who are doing this kind of work in their communities, to share from a network where they can share their experiences and learn from each other. So, what we find it helps with the community that we work with is that when this project, when the members that are working on...income generating projects, it's good to link them with financial institutions so that they are able to sustain themselves and to be included in the financial sector. And also it's good to make sure that we link them with well-established local businesses, so you can find mentors of those people who can help them, work with them as continue to grow in their businesses. But also, it helps that when from the beginning when you start with the project, working on the project that you look at the ways of what can you...like focus your funds to make sure that ultimately at the end, there will be something that will sustain the project even beyond the funding of the project, which is what we find it...starting to work on that and it's working very well. And it would be nice if we would able to share the experiences to work with others, like globally and to the continents. Thank you.

Deborah Wan: Thank you for the comments. Any comments from Debora or Reena?

Mandy Lau: My question to Reena. Thank you for your excellent presentation, really inspiring. I saw from the presentation that you approach the radio. So, you have a programme to have the voice for the disabilities. Is it difficult to do that? Or can you share your tips on how we can approach social media effectively so that they can help us to arouse the public awareness?

Reena Mohanty: We basically get in touch with the local radio person, and they give us a slot and one of our women go to speak on the issues. And for the last 3 years during the 16 days gap to stop politic instruments, we are having such programmes and interesting that is transmitted on radio in different areas. And last year we could do it in 2 states, we were able to do 1 state, so slowly, people are going and they are getting forward to help us to speak out on their radio.

Matsui: I have a question. You have a project fund and your own fund? How the...I mean is your project is quite comprehensive and the project fund, to what extend the project fund cover these activities? And how they can extend you get funding from other sources? These information is important for others who are planning to the project. Clear?

Reena Mohanty: Yes, involved this project from Rehabilitation International. After that, to do other programmes for women with disabilities, we are getting support from like DIFS Fund and the support of the Women in India Disability Network, and same way UNICEF has also come forward to train the women with disabilities on their different rights. And recently we are doing one programme on Article 19 of the UNCR Treaty, where we are seeing that these women with disabilities have the right to live independently in the community. So, and also people are supporting to give them entrepreneurship for them to start their own entrepreneurs and become independent.

Asha Hans: The government has been a great support also. In many livelihoods and in many routines, the government, the local government has come forward to support in vaccination. The government has been a very very big supporter.

Reena Mohanty: We are also linking them with other banks to get the finance support to expand their entrepreneurs.

Deborah Wan: That's good. That's very good because GDDF's main aim is provide some seed money, we call it, and then after the project has started you can find some other resources to continue or modify or to enhance the women with disabilities in various aspects. I think that is the main objective of the global project, and it's very good that you bring this up, thank you Matsui-san. Okay, if no more question, we can go on to the second part. So, I ask Demelash to convene the meeting.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you Deborah. Hi all, My name is Demelash Bekele. I am the Deputy Vice President, Rehabilitation Deputy Vice President for African Origin. I'll be facilitating 3 presentations from South Africa, Belgium and Vietnam. We will have a presentation of projects from three countries and at the end of the 3 presentations, we will have about 20 minutes for discussion, question and answer. Yah, the presenter... I hope that presenters from Belgium and Vietnam are with us here to give us clarification of the questions that the participants may raise. But I don't see the presenter from South Africa will be here with us today. Yah, we will start the presentation from South Africa, and we will be hearing the presentation on Inclusive Employment of People with Disabilities: Job seeking/training by the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities NCPD. I invite Therina Wentzel, the National Director of the African Fund to give us the presentation. Therina, the floor is yours.

Therina Wentzel: We as the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities in South Africa are truly grateful for the funding received from Rehabilitation International, the Africa Fund. The fund was intended for preparation of persons with disabilities for the workplace. As you all know, it's currently a very difficult time in South Africa as in many countries. Lots of persons with disabilities have lost their jobs as a result of COVID. And furthermore, we had a lot of political instability and unrest, and burning down of companies and looting. And also we have a lot of taxi violence at the moment, so therefore, more and more people are losing their jobs and persons with disabilities are much more affected than anybody else. Therefore, we appreciate this funding even more. Our country has beautiful legislation that calls for inclusion and equity of persons with disabilities especially with economic empowerment, but with the poverty scenario that we currently have, this is not so easy. So, we absolutely want the world to know that what RI has done for us does not go unnoticed and unseen. It's extremely much appreciated and we were able to support more than 50 people with disabilities to get additional skills, so they could not just be in a better position to find a job but also start their own businesses if everything else fails. And of those people that have been supported by RI fund, all of them, we are happy to say are currently in some sort of contract or full time employment as well as the others who have started their own small initiatives or job creation programmes. Thank you, RI Africa.

Demelash Bekele: For the brief presentation, but so powerful. We hear that all the participants attended the training are on the contract. That's is really great. I will move to the next presentation and this presentation will take us all the way to Belgium. I invite Francois, the Vice President on Rehabilitation and Vice President for Europe region. He will be speaking on the project. Francois, the floor is yours.

Francois Perl: Hello everybody. So, I will start my presentation now. I am presenting my self, so my name is Francois Perl. I am Vice President of Rehabilitation International for Europe Region, and in Belgium I am Director for public affairs, studies and advocacy, at Solidaris, which is one of the biggest social insurance company in Belgium. Well, I want to start the presentation of our project to think a little bit about our world to make sure that everybody understands what is happening now in the world of work and see how much things are changing, especially in Europe, but not only Europe, but I think is the...also business case in America, also parts of Asia, and also Africa, and the Arab Region. Because we are moving slowly from I would say a traditional paradigm of social disease linked to the industrial revolution, to something much more complex. It doesn't mean there is no longer industry in the world of course, a lot of industries and it caused a lot of problem in health at work, but it's not...no longer the biggest challenge because the challenge is much more complex. You cannot make and can't build barrier between private and public life, and between professional life and family life. And so, traditional paradigm of prediction of return to work, seeing the business case only focused on the professional disease is no longer possible in many countries. So, we have to think about what I call, and what we call in Belgium, the issue of Global Impairment. Based on the evidence that disease and accident are no longer the only thing to profession because a lot of people are sick because of their work or have accidents because of their work but not only. And also because the issue of being...having an accident or being sick because of work is not only causing problems in the professional life but also in the private life. So, the challenges that we are facing are now much more holistic and the reason why we choose to call this project, and to build the, to organize this project and to build a predictive

tool for return to work, is because we cannot treat people suffering from disease and accident like... I would say traditional normal unemployed people, because the issue is now bigger and more extensive because we cannot wait until people are totally and fully recovered to support them in their return to work. And then we have to organize a totally different job, which is called, in Belgium and in many other countries, the disability management. The disability management is a new way of working that integrates 3 new important items. First of all, the labour market, with the impact of the new world of work and the health. Of course the health system, it is very important to organize health system to support people getting back to work, with chronic disease, with also new healthy life expectancy because people are probably living longer and longer but not obviously healthier, and that we have to offer affordable accessible care. And this means that social security system in many countries are now building or existing from...I would say decades but they have to change and have more liquidity and more sustainability. So, we are now in the crossroads with 3 important issues, of course the traditional challenges for health, social security and work, but also the question of COVID-19 which is you know, impacting a lot of countries, especially in Europe. With the issue of the long COVID syndromes, which means that we have more and more people suffering from long term COVID. Of course, the vaccination has given us a lot of support to solve the problem, but we also know that before the vaccination, a lot of people felt sick because of COVID and now face many difficulties to recover fully and to go back to work, which means we have to build a new paradigm of rehabilitation. So, we have to organize disability management in social security, by I would say for printing with 3 important challenges of course a healthy workforce, the usual challenges and also the new challenges just like I said of COVID 19, which means that the tools of prediction, the prediction tools of return to work have to be, I would say transformed and to be also adapted to those challenges. This means, and it's very important to me that we have to look at the state of the art evidence.

There are a lot of articles and projects. The first part of our project is of course dedicated to the analysis of the existing articles and the existing reviews of literature review of a lot of studies that has been published since I would say, 20 to 30 years about disability management and return to work. But we have also to construct a new way of prediction and new tools of prediction because of, of course, COVID 19, but also challenges like mental health. It's not a static project, but it will be a very dynamic project that has to be reviewed every 2 or 3 years because of the moving...transformation of the challenges. The best way to predict and organize a prediction of return to work is to organize it around social security, because return to work of people suffering from long-term disease and from chronic disease, which means I would say a 3 arched methods. We first of all, with benefits, we have to support people during the time they are not able to work anymore with comprehensive benefits, but also with a clear material system, rehabilitation centre care, so it's not only hospitals and ..., rehabilitation centres, but also what general practitioners and doctors can provide for support. And it means also that the tools have to break barriers existing between the labour market and the health system. It leads, of course, to a very important issue of...for that, is the issue of individual support. Because individual support is the key answer to the return to work. If you don't have individual support, you don't have a strong individual support, you don't have return to work. What I mean by individual support is of course people supporting sick people. People having benefits, a worker that has been injured or a sick worker, but not like I said, like I would say traditional employed people, but with a focus approach on the health and on the compatibility of the health and the profession and the workplace. So, individual support is not only opening offices and making consultation for supporting people going back to work, but also

meeting employers, meeting the doctors and having people, disability managers well-trained in that issue. That is the...I think, the most important issue in this project is that to create guidelines for people, for disability managers, for job coaches, to provide the best individual support that they can...they can provide. That is one of my conclusions. My second conclusion is of course linked to the schedule of this project. This project will be finished and over for 31 December 2021. It means that we will have at that time a website that would be accessible in English for...the most convenient, of course, language to use. That can be used by many people, not only... ..people...workers or employers, but also employees, doctors, disability managers and having clear instruction and guidelines of the best way to provide support and have a good prediction for return to work. Thank you very much for your attention, and of course I am already can provide you my email address, I'm ready to as well, to answer the question you can have about our project lead by RI Belgium here since January. Thank you.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you Francois for the presentation and for working us through the work of Institution of Disability Insurance. Thank you once again. Now we move to the last but not least presentation. That presentation will take us to Vietnam, and the name of this project is How Public Private Partnerships on Vocational and Educational for Youth in Disability in Hanoi, Vietnam. This project is implemented by Abilis Foundation of Vietnam Country Office. So, Huyen, if I correctly call her name, she will be presenting the work of this project, she is the country representative, I believe the foundation, and Vice Chair of the Hanoi Association of Persons with Disability. The floor is yours.

Huyen: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Huyen. I am Country Representative of Abilis Foundation in Vietnam. I am also Vice Chairperson of Hanoi Association for Persons with Disabilities, in short DP Hanoi. Today, I am very happy to be here to share with you about our project funded by RI. So, the project title Public Private Partnerships on Vocational Training and Educational for Youth with Disabilities in Hanoi, Vietnam. The duration is 12 months and 3 more months for extension. So, the project aims at piloting initiative of Public Private Partnerships on providing vocational trainings and education and employment for youth with disabilities in Hanoi. This contributed to increase in employment for youth with disabilities in Hanoi. Project holders are DP Hanoi and Abilis Foundation. So, some brief information. DP Hanoi established in 2006, is a social organization of people with disabilities in Hanoi. Since its inception, DP Hanoi actively represent 48 organizational members and over 15,000 persons with disabilities. DP Hanoi operates towards an inclusive barrier free and right-based society for person with disabilities. Abilis is a Finnish NGO, aim at empowerments and contribute towards equal life and opportunity for persons with disabilities in developing countries, to human rights, independent living and commit empowerment. Abilis started to work in Vietnam since 2014 and DP Hanoi is our main local partner.

In this project funded by RI, I would like to give you some key achievements. Firstly, we successfully conducted some activities. There are 16 activities in total and 7 activities completed, 3 activities are on-going, and the rest are ready to start. Secondly, different stakeholders engaged. We got interest and attention from different stakeholders, including both local government, enterprises, vocational training centres, DPO, youth with disability, families of persons with disabilities, social media, etc. Thirdly, sustainability of DPO to promote this move for persons with disabilities. So, different stakeholders recognize those DPO in networking support and

especially building capacity for persons with disabilities, even at the grassroots level. These are called TOT, who will provide caring counselling for persons with disability even after the project end. Fourthly, awareness arising. Persons with disabilities themselves, their families, public, at last have a better understanding about the rise of persons with disabilities and their capacity, especially youth with disabilities realize that having a job is the way for them to overcome the stigma, and makes them independent. Also, social media reflects about persons with disabilities with a capacity of doing as others. Fifthly, method approach. Participatory approach makes person with disabilities participated in own project cycle and making sure the successful preparation and implementation as well. Involvement of women with disabilities is very important, also participation of different types of persons with disabilities make sure the diversity. Human right base approach able to change disabling attitudes and to create an enabling environment for all. Asset based community development is a strategy for system enabling community to driven development. Everyone has gifts and persons with disabilities to contribute when want to contribute. Lastly, about gender equality. In this project, there are more than 400 direct beneficiaries and about 77% are female. They were encouraged to take lead in group discussion, training of trainers etc.

In this project, we face different types of challenges. The biggest challenge was the outbreak of COVID 19. Firstly, happened in New York, RI could not transfer money, and then in Hanoi, Vietnam. Secondly, due to COVID situation, also a lot of enterprise fired their employees, and some even some stop their businesses and the number of unemployment increased quickly. So, job placement and counselling by TOT seriously affected. According to the result from online survey conducted by UNEP last year, on the impact of COVID 19 on persons with disabilities in Vietnam, 30% of persons with disabilities was remain unemployed, 49% had to reduce their work hour, and 59% received a pay cut, 72% got their income under 1 million đồng, just about 40 US dollars. Those challenges lead us vocational training class is very hard to set up in this lockdown situation in some places including Hanoi, Vietnam. So, some programmes funding and national face a need to devote new skill set for persons of disabilities to explore new employment opportunity in technology, skills on working from home, adapting to new online business practice. They also have an online employment and education platform for persons with disabilities with accessible format. To cope with this situation, we discuss and ask for advice and permission from RI to adjust some activities, for example, activities on holding jobs affairs at local places move to setting up and run a YouTube channel on job seeking, job counselling, soft skill sessions. So, that some main points of our project funded RI. I would like say thanks very much for RI in supporting us in this project. I would like to thank you the secretary project team who follow us, and persons who in charge of monitor and evaluation of this project. Without your support, we cannot successfully achieve some results. Yes, and finally, I would like wish you all the best. Stay safe and healthy. Thank you.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you Huyen for the very detailed presentation. Also thank you all the 3 presenters for their wonderful and well-organized presentation. Now, we have completed all the 3 presentations of the second half session. It's the time for question and answer. I believe the two of the presenters are with us here to answer the questions that would be raised by the participants. Yah, those who want to speak, please raise your hand and we will give you a chance to speak. Questions, suggestions? I see Lee raising her hand. Lee, please go ahead.

Lee Randall: I just want to comment on the project report from South Africa, which was unfortunately too brief for the audience I think to fully grasp on that project. And I want to challenge one position that might have been created from the presentation and that is that there has been enormous political instability, riot and looting and chaos going on in South Africa. That was true for the middle part of July this year. It has not been true in the general sense. We actually had a fair amount of political stability. So, as the assessor of that project, I noted obviously the huge impact of COVID, but I don't want people in the meeting to leave with the sense that South Africa has been burning throughout the period of this project cause that would not be an accurate picture.

Demelash Bekele: I think the presenter from South Africa is not with us today. Maybe we will leave this message to them.

Lee Randall: Thank you.

Demelash Debere: Yup, any questions?

Debora Manzano: I have a question for Huyen. I would like to know how was to work with the government of Hanoi? Was it easy or was it challenging? And what was the partnerships? How did they help the project?

Huyen: Thank you for your question. Yes, I think everyone knows working with government is very challenging. It's the same in Vietnam. Because in Vietnam, we have an unique party and we have the government from the central to the local and also community. It is a strong solidarity system. However, in Hanoi, like Abilis, we need to work in partner with DP Hanoi. It's a social DPO in the Hanoi area. DP Hanoi have many years of operations and they have a very good relationship with government. Every year DP Hanoi receive funds from the local government, it means from the Hanoi government. So, the collaboration with the government obviously is quite good. So, we take advantage of this relationship to start up with different stakeholders like Department of Social Affairs or some vocational training under government management. So, this is our approach.

Debora Manzano: Thank you.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you for responding the question from Brazil. I see Deborah raising her hand.

Deborah Wan: Yes, thank you. Thank you so much. I have 2 questions for 2 speakers. First of all, my question to Francois Perl. I would like to know the toolbox, the practical toolbox, is it only meant for job coaches? So, they are doing the individual support for persons with disabilities. So, is it meant for only for job coaches or whoever job counsellors and so on? Are the toolbox being put on the website or open to everybody? This is the question for Francois. The second question will go to Vietnam, Huyen. I would like to know who are the private sectors. I know the DP Hanoi working with the public sectors. Who are the private partnership? Because it is very important for providing job opportunities for persons with disabilities. Thank you.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you, Deborah. Francois, are you there?

Francois Perl: Yes, I am here. Thank you for your question, Deborah. So, the purpose of the project is to be as flexible as possible, so the toolbox is for everyone who is entitled or interested to. First of all, have some information existing on return to work of people with disabilities. So, it's not meant to be reserved for job coach, of course it is specifically for job coach, but they have their own way of training, but it is general toolbox accessible for companies, for individuals, for NGOs, so meant to be the largest possible audiences.

Huyen: Thank you Deborah for the question. So, in our project, we also set up the relationship with some enterprise. For example, one enterprise in Hanoi, it works in the tailoring sector. So, a lot of employees with disabilities were introduced to the companies and they have selected...nearly...I don't remember exactly, many persons with disabilities to work in their company. The persons with disabilities not only work in sewing, but also work at the shop to sell the products of the company. For the person work like, the storekeeper, something like that. So, depend on different types of disability, the company arrange the position suitable for different persons. And the DP Hanoi and Abilis also provide some kinds of training for the company how to work with persons with disabilities and how to create an inclusive environment for persons with disabilities in the company. That's one...that's our work with some enterprises. And we also work with some companies and small shops set up by persons with disabilities themselves. It is very effective because these types of companies and small factories they know about the abilities and how to work with persons with disabilities, but they lack of capacity to build the skills for their employees with disabilities and they want to include more persons with disabilities. But, persons with disabilities they don't know the needs of the companies, and they don't know even how to write a CV or answer the interview. So, we work mostly with the small enterprises or small factories on one side, another side to work with persons with disabilities. So, we are connected the employers and employees. Yah, so that's one kind of our work.

Matsui: I have a question to Vietnam. In Vietnam, you have a quota system?

Huyen: No, actually 10 years ago, we had the quota system for own enterprises and companies. The government forced the companies to recruit at least 2% employees with disabilities, but now is not to force anymore. So, the disability movement in Vietnam we are trying to fight for this.

Matsui: Yes, the quota system is a kind of...how to say...promote the employment opportunity for persons with disabilities. It may promote at the private and public corporations to increase the number of disabled employees. Are you going to promote that system in the private sector?

Huyen: Yes, in DP Hanoi, we also discuss about this issue. And this year in May and June, DP Hanoi provided the training for the UNDP, UNICEF and UNEAS in Vietnam. So, we also raised this issue and we received the support from UNDP and other UN agencies in Vietnam. So, the result is that it is a very good strategy to promote further work for the persons with disabilities in Vietnam, so the enterprises and companies should receive more persons with disabilities and also the Person from the National Council on Disability recommended DP Hanoi to conduct research on this issue. So, we need to collect data and have evidence base from other countries to promote this issue and to propose to the government. And the good news is that the Chair Woman of DP

Hanoi is one of the advisors of the National Council on Disability in Vietnam. So, waiting we can promote this issue.

Sheila Purves: Hello, this is Sheila in HK. I am quite interested, actually I want to refer to the first part of presentations as well because Reena in India also talked about women having work training and also tailoring, and how important it was. And then Reena you mentioned that you had to turn the project a little bit because of COVID and you started to train community village workers to do physical rehabilitation. And so it just really reminds me it's not really a question so much, but really reminds me of the importance of the fundamental community rehabilitation to build up people's abilities. It remains just as important in our world, you know that those village workers, we really still have to support them and help them and give them training and so on. I thought it's quite interesting that the physical and the work, you know, they come together and then of course that the confidence comes with that, and the abilities come with that. Anyway, thank you very much. That's all.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you. Any additional point from the Indian presenter on this?

Khaya: Just want to add what Sheila has said, reiterating that it's actually the most critical time I think that we are needed in the community to be present for the support. Thank you.

Reena Mohanty: Yes, the second part of rehabilitating women of rural areas because we found that they needed physical rehabilitation. And due to COVID, we could not access therapy and also nearby government hospitals. And by training we found that some women with disabilities who are interested and who are also educated to learn the skill of giving therapy and train them as community workers. So, this is we have just started, and we have 15 women with disabilities who are interested. And we have started training sessions for them in which they will be trained, but we have a very big challenge for us to train them and then make them community workers. And regarding the tailoring that women who are doing the tailoring training, they are doing very well because they are getting work easily and is being developed. They are happy to know that the project from Rehabilitation International distributed masks to disabled children and these women with disabilities are stitching the masks and that could be distributed to the disabled children. So, it's making income for women with disabilities under the project. They are doing well.

Demelash Bekele: Thank you. Any questions? Okay, if no further questions, I think we should we wrap up the session. Maybe before we wrap up the session, there is a quick reminder. There is a survey form about this session. We will drop the survey link in the chat box, also we will send it to you via email. So, please make sure to fill out the survey. It's very important for our future improvement. So, if there is no last minute question, thank you, we should wrap up this session. Thank you for the presentations. Thank you for participating in RI GDDF and the Africa Fund Session 2. Actually, this session was very interactive and believe we have learnt a lot from the session. Thank you Rehabilitation International, Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation, Hong Kong Joint Council for Persons with Disabilities for holding this session. Also, on behalf on the organizers, thank you all the presenters and participants for your time and good presentation and for your active participation. Thank you very much.

Deborah Wan: Thank you! Thank you all for attending. Bye!