Campaign Planning Session Notes

Topic: Post-Covid Recovery

What our top asks on this topic?

* Ensure the post-Covid governmental response isn't another round of austerity.
* Ensure that the government and local authorities do not take advantage of the provisions in the Coronavirus Act which last for two years.
* Disabled people must have an equal right to medical treatment and Personal Protective Equipment.
* Valuing disabled people, not seeing people as “burdens” – more broadly, questions need to be asked about how society treats Disabled and older people.
* Stop the use of the word “vulnerable”: it's been used during this Covid crisis to justify removing standards, healthcare, and deaths. We need a word to replace “vulnerable” – use “at risk” instead?
* Lobby to get rid of the Mental Capacity Act and the Amendment Bill. Ensure that any laws on the issue of mental distress, mental capacity and learning difficulty are compliant with the UNCRPD.
* End the hostile benefits regime - increases in benefits and no return to sanctions and conditionality. A social model approach to the social security system.
* Urgent strategic and long term funding for DDPOs - not charities - to provide support and voice work for our communities. Funding asks must be framed as a means to tackle structural inequalities for Disabled people, BAME communities etc. as key investment as crucial as funding NHS and transport. Also need to ensure that DPOs are inclusive of and responding to the needs of BAME Disabled people.
* All Covid responses must be co-produced with DDPOs.
* Better investment for health and social care services - pointing out the harmful cuts - focus on wider wellbeing!
* How much money has been “created” to fund the Covid measures – where is it being spent?
* Residential care - where it continues at all - needs to be clearly segregated from convalescent care staffed by nursing professionals.
* Ensure disabled people get the support they need to live independent lives – deinstitutionalization and an end to residential care for Disabled people.
* Campaign on the importance of the social model – including but not limited to a critique of how many mutual aid groups are running on a basis of charity, not solidarity.

How can campaigns on the topic be developed regionally?

* Local campaigners must challenge local LGBTQI+, women’s and BAME organisations to integrate campaigning under our leadership rather than continuing to dissociate themselves and seeing us as defective.
* We need to get disabled people to be informed of regional matters concerning disabled people's issues.
* Link with regional strategic public bodies. Use and share good examples of public bodies working with us in co-production.
* Connecting with and challenging local PA/Carer/Nurses campaigns that will spring up calling for the living wage, and ensure their work is co-produced with Disabled people, and their leg work can then support our calls.
* Local DPOs reach out to local older people's care homes to teach the elderly residents about the social model, include them in our work, and ultimately aim to help them to self-organise.
* ROFA regional networks - looking at stats to drill down on the regional failings, coproduction locally for new solutions that work on a local / regional basis. Smaller and more frequent conferences and meetings of all the DPOs in a particular region. Finding ways to disseminate information within and between regions. Could these regional networks be based on a mutual aid framework but with a social model perspective.
* Should ROFA engage with Disability Unit regional stakeholder groups? Range of views – one person used the phrase “getting into bed with the government.”

How can all of us make sure that these asks and regional development happen?

* Need to organise digitally (at least whilst Covid-19 continues) – use Zoom as a platform to meet, use campaign tools and social media like Inclusion London did during their campaign to change the Coronavirus Bill. Use of a “digital hub” on the ROFA website for organizing outside of zoom calls – hosting resources, templates etc. Including resources on how to apply for grant funding. Need to ensure digital resources are accessible for people with learning difficulties.
* Via trade unions - need to ensure that we are no longer sidelined and treated as a kind of tokenistic add on. We must insist that unions give more power to their disabled members to organise in structures of our own making. Use the many Disabled people in unions such as Unite Community to start doing this
* Use the National Union of Journalist networks to try and change the language being used from “vulnerable” to “at risk”.
* ROFA regions – nomination/election of regional reps, regional zoom meetings.
* ROFA to lobby for a zoom meeting with Minister for Disabled people and need to raise covid and National disability strategy issues at this meeting
* Co-ordinate a charter/set of demands (including on co-production) to lobby for at national and regional levels.
* A common voice and common campaigning to implement the UNCRPD for ALL disabled people, including those in mental distress, people with learning difficulties, BAME people, LGBTQI+ people, older people and young people.
* DPOs need to get into psychiatric wards/ institutions and ensure that those people’s needs are central to our campaigns.