**Introductory notes on participation from SCHR.**

Top line, we have a fairly good story to tell on Participation. In a global Workstream webinar earlier this year, 93% of participants agreed that it is **doable to engage beneficiaries in project design and decision making**, with 31% saying it was ***very* feasible** in their context. Even better, 90% of webinar participants believed that beneficiary participation in project design and implementation was **already happening** in March 2020.

But I accept that this is an overwhelmingly techy and engaged crowd. We need to break down the jargon, and communicate more about how we are doing this. This overwhelmingly means reaching beyond technical folks – we need leaders – HCs, Donor Reps, CEOs, Directors - to support, believe in and talk about this stuff. Notably, I joined Mark and my colleagues on the IASC Principals call yesterday, and although the themes addressed by the GB were front and centre, only one explicitly mentioned it as a platform.

Champions of participation across the ecosystem need political support – from the Eminent Person and others - for shifting power and ways of working on national level forums, notably Humanitarian Country Teams, bearing in mind that not all are accessible to more than a token number of local actors, and none to my knowledge are accountable to affected people.

Because this is about power – the power to make decisions about aid. That’s why it’s a revolution.

The cross-workstream links are important. Flexible, multi-year and predictable funding is essential to empower both affected people and local actors. We need to talk early and often to affected people if they are to play an active role in setting the terms of the discussion in relation to humanitarian planning and prioritisation.

If we’re to avoid asking them to simply respond to an agenda set by traditional humanitarian actors, we need better transparency in our funding and decision-making processes. Covid makes this even more important.

The link to localisation is critical. Without genuine partnerships with local, front line actors, who can communicate the realities of participation to people in their own languages, they will be unwilling to commit the time and energy to really changing, and improving the aid they receive.

The Eminent Person can provide political support for challenges to elite led structures from the ground level – she, and those of us on the Facilitation Group, have a role in championing those non-elite voices

Quick note on targets and monitoring – more complex than it sounds, but steady progress, and a close working relationship with the work of IASC Results group 2 and OCHA.

To wrap up, this is overwhelmingly a conversation about power, so it chimes well with the current discussions about challenging racism and decolonising aid. This will probably make a lot of us uncomfortable, but that’s absolutely appropriate. I look forward to the discussions.