

Stakeholders Group on Ageing
Statement to the High Level Political Forum
“Implementing Rio+20 and reviewing progress: spurring action and ensuring
accountability”
2 July 2014

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

This statement is offered on behalf of the Stakeholders Group on Ageing and the International Council on Social Welfare, an international organization promoting social welfare and social justice, a member of the Group and my own NGO.

Our Group is most appreciative of the opening of the post-Rio processes to “other stakeholders”, including older persons. This welcome opening began with the Rio+20 conference and its outcome document, “The future we want”, and has continued through the 12 sessions of the Open Working Group on SDGs and the current 2nd session of the High Level Political Forum. We - 810 million older persons today, two billion by 2050 - are in the words of the WHO “a substantial, but as yet underutilized, human and social resource”¹. We have much to contribute to the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

Turning to today’s topic, we call for two principal measures:

(1) improved national reporting systems on goals, targets and indicators that will provide appropriate disaggregation of data that includes age disaggregation **plus** adequate internal and external funding for them. Only with adequate statistical systems in place, can there be any assurances that no one is being left behind.

(2) a bottom-up participatory approach to the review and appraisal process. This has been the process used in evaluating the implementation of the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) pursuant to ECOSOC Resolution 2003/14. As reported in a 2006 Secretary-General’s report, “the bottom-up approach brings monitoring, review and

¹ A67/23, “Multisectoral action for a life course approach to healthy ageing”, WHO 67th World Health Assembly, 21 March 2014

appraisal processes as close as possible to the national and even local level, where the majority of implementation efforts are taking place.”² It views older persons as active members of their societies and supports their participation in decision-making, and this participatory quality encourages them “to participate fully in all aspects of life and, most importantly, in actions that are designed specifically to influence their well-being.”³ The Department of Economic and Social Affairs produced a training manual, “Guidelines for review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing – Bottom-up Participatory Approach” to assist national governments in setting up a bottom-up review process. This manual could be, if not a model, certainly instructive for a bottom-up process involving all persons, including the elderly.

We suggest this bottom-up, participatory process, incorporating inputs from civil society, could better support accountability than the current AMR national reports.

In conclusion, we call upon the High Level Political Forum:

1. to take into account the major transformative global demographic change that is taking place,
2. to mandate robust reporting mechanisms to ensure implementation leaves no one behind, and
3. to establish a bottom-up participatory review and appraisal process to facilitate transparency and accountability.

Thank you.

² E/CN.5/2006/2, “Modalities for the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing”, Report of the Secretary-General, 11 November 2005

³ Ibid. For a full description of the process, see paragraphs 7-14.