

PRESENTATION TO 2016 HLPF ROUNDTABLE
“From inspiration to action: multi-stakeholder engagement for implementation”

15 July 2016



My name is Frances Zainoeddin, representing the Stakeholder Group on Ageing.

Let me first express our thanks to Ambassador Kamau for his role in the Sustainable Development Goals. At the first session last Monday, on the topic “Where do we stand at year one?” and also today, he reminded us that the 2030 Agenda is fundamentally about a change in mindset in our approach to eradicating poverty, in our approach to people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. Regrettably, changing a mindset is probably more difficult getting consensus at the United Nations.

The Stakeholder Group on Ageing believes this change in mindset includes a focus on strengthening people’s capabilities as well as addressing their vulnerabilities. It is about including ALL people of ALL ages, throughout their life-course, **from cradle to grave.**

The 2030 Agenda has provided impetus to much of the work carried out by our members. We have conducted a survey among them and are pleased to report that the vast majority indicated that they were aware of the SDGs, and are already engaged in activities related to the goals and targets. Our activities are aimed at ensuring that older persons:

- are safe and secure, free from all forms of discrimination, violence and abuse;
- enjoy the best possible health and care, food security, wellbeing and dignity;
- have the income they need;
- are heard and can participate in decision-making about their lives; and
- are also recognized as a resource, making valuable contributions to their families, their communities and to the national economy.

We are happy to report that a number of our members have already instituted older citizen monitoring of policies and services that affect their lives, enabling them to engage directly with decision-makers, resulting in improved service delivery. Citizen generated, participatory data can be critical for measuring the impact of government policy on the lives of all people, especially those left furthest behind.

We have a few concerns:

1. There are many existing programmes of action and outcomes of conferences and summits, including the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (known as MIPAA), with detailed commitments to change the world for the better. Many governments have not reported on action taken – it is not mandatory for them to do so. Why would the 2030 Agenda be different when national reports are voluntary?
2. Despite promises to leave no one behind, we do not see enough concrete action by Governments to reach out and consult those who have been excluded and marginalized, including older persons, those with disabilities and indigenous peoples. Are we not supposed to reach those furthest behind first?
3. In 1974 when the World Population Plan of Action was adopted, Governments had to pay attention to high fertility rates and adjust their policies accordingly. Now fertility rates are down and demographic trends show that the world is ageing. It is mind-boggling that so little attention is being given to the fact that the youth bulge is fast becoming the ageing bulge. Today, two people reach 60 every second. What can the young people and the not so young people of today look forward to in 2030 and beyond? Life does not end at 60, I can assure you. Is there an attitude problem about ageing? Ageism would appear to be as rampant as sexism and racism. Are older persons of no significance? Just a little reminder – people's rights do not change when they get older.

Member States called upon major groups and other stakeholders to report on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as to participate in national reporting. Civil society organizations, by the way, know a thing or two about leaving no one behind. We are the champions of the vulnerable and marginalized. Include us.

The Stakeholder Group on Ageing pledges to ensure that all people, of all ages live long and prosper with dignity.



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