

Response of the Stakeholder Group on Ageing

10th August 2015

The Stakeholder group on Ageing congratulates Member States, co facilitators Ambassadors Kamau and Donahue, colleagues and staff of the United Nations in bringing the text negotiations for the UN Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to a successful conclusion. We look forward to the full text being adopted at the General Assembly Summit in New York in September 2015.

Population ageing affects us all. It is a triumph of development, to be celebrated, not ignored. As the world ages at an unprecedented rate, the new framework must truly embrace all people, from cradle to grave. Older people world-wide are hearing, and welcoming, the promise that the current reality of missed opportunities, marginalisation and discrimination experienced by millions because of their age will come to an end in the lifetime of the new framework.

We consider the promise that Member States have made to **'leave no one behind'** to be the historic opportunity to roll back discrimination and exclusion on the grounds of age. It marks a real shift to ensure the visibility of older age along with other variables in all aspects of social, economic, and environmental policy.

Nevertheless, the Stakeholder Group on Ageing is disappointed that age was removed from paragraph 19 of the Declaration at the 11th hour, alongside culture, migration status and ethnicity. It is our hope that this does not signify a weakened resolve to ensure people of all ages and backgrounds are reached equitably by this agenda.

Challenges of implementation

Participation: Older persons look forward to full participation and a strong voice as SDG implementation takes hold. It is vital that older people are present and older age is visible in the SDG adoption and implementation process at global, regional and national level. Older persons will pay special attention to their engagement in the process going forward, and in SDG measurement, including ensuring that upper age limits are removed from proposed indicators.

Measurement: Even though there are references to older persons, age, "for all", "all" and "lifelong" in **12 of the 17 goals** and in a number of targets, and there is commitment that *'all indicators should be disaggregated by sex, age, residence (U/R) and other characteristics, as relevant and possible'* (unstats.un.org/sdg), the specifics of age disaggregation have yet to be clarified. Many of

the proposed indicators, in their current form, undermine the explicit language of the goals and targets and are implicitly or explicitly ageist.

Data gaps: Data is missing on older age in many countries. Poor data collection on older age in many countries is rendering issues of older age invisible, and effectively marginalises and excludes older people from programmes and policies.

The way forward

All people count and all people should be counted. Action to take forward the promises of the framework at national level must include older persons. This is not business as usual, it means change to how older people are consulted and engaged, how ageing is included in social and economic policy making and in how data on age is currently collected, analysed and used.

Recommendations

- Knowledge on ageing in all countries must be improved, with older people as core contributors to this process.
- Full age disaggregation for all goals and targets with progress reviewed through ongoing and open statistical dialogue.
- Investment in national statistical capacity and financing to support both improved life course statistics and innovative programmes including non-traditional sources of data.
- Regular dialogue and review at national, regional and global levels to strengthen information sharing and collaboration, bringing together Government, statistical bodies, civil society and other stakeholders including the private sector for review of progress.
- All UN agencies to incorporate ageing actively in their work, and research and publish what they know, and what they are doing.
- HLPF reviews of progress to be based on concrete evidence, based on disaggregation of data by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.
- HLPF's review of actions and challenges at the national level to be accompanied by a review of the impact of national policies and programmes on all social groups, with meaningful participation of all people, including older people.

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