

Stakeholder Group on Ageing

Statement for Open Working Group 11th Session: Means of implementation – Capacity building 8 May 2014

Our comments in Focus Area 15 are addressed specifically to amending target [15r)] under **Capacity building**.

To further the ambition that all people of all ages can count on a post 2015 framework that is truly universal in nature, applicable to all persons everywhere, with no one left behind, a monitoring framework and its reporting guidelines must include the disaggregation of data by age and sex at a minimum.

Our reasoning is as follows

1. Universal achievement of goals and targets can be verified only if the indicators used to measure progress are inclusive of people of all ages with appropriate disaggregation of data.
2. Improved data on ageing with associated partnerships and investment in capacity building is a specific recommendation of the Madrid International Plan of Action which was adopted by consensus by Member States at the General Assembly of September 2002.
3. Good data is essential for the success of the new framework.

Our suggested amendments (highlighted in bold) to FA 15 (r) are as follows:

“Substantially and progressively strengthen national, regional and international capacities for sustainable development data collection, analysis, reporting and utilization with a focus on generating timely and high quality data, disaggregated by age and gender at a minimum.”

Rationale:

Current data systems are not fit for purpose in today’s ageing world¹. Data on older women and men is often not collected. Many population based surveys that provide the source of data for much national and global progress monitoring, focus on the 15-49 age group leading to a lack of data on people below 15 and those aged 50 and over. Where data is collected on people in older age, it is rarely disaggregated by age (or gender).

¹ HelpAge International 2014 Older people count: Making data fit for purpose

The implications of these data challenges are far reaching. Data on violence against women is rarely collected for women aged 50 and over². This information gap makes it impossible for States to monitor progress on their human rights obligations towards women of all ages on freedom from violence. There is no consensus on the assumptions that should be used to measure old age poverty³ and as a result there are numerous examples where analysis has drawn conclusions about older people being less poor than the rest of the population without assessing the assumptions used. These assumptions have influenced social protection policy at national level, including deprioritizing social protection for people in older age, despite these results being later disproved.

Global coordinated action is needed at all levels of the data system from collection to utilisation, and from all stakeholders, to improve the quality and range of data on people in older age.

Our call is for:

- Member State commitment to include older women and men in surveys, to fully analyse and report on data by age and sex, and to utilise this data to inform policy changes and interventions to meet the needs of ageing populations.
- Increased coordination at national level between government ministries for better utilisation and management of data.
- Increased commitment from the UN to the analysis, reporting and utilisation of data on older women and men in international datasets with disaggregation and analysis that enables comparison between regions and countries.
- The amendment of internationally held and managed survey templates and data collection mechanisms, including DHS and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), to collect data on people aged 50 and over.
- Improved partnerships with all relevant stakeholders including the private sector and academia, to improve analysis of, and access to existing datasets.
- Investment in analysis and presentation to ensure data is accessible, transparent and socially accountable to people of all ages.
- Support for efforts to enable older women and men to utilise existing data.

² World Health Organisation, Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, World Health Organisation, 2013

³ For discussion of this issue see Haque Khondker B, Knox-Vydmanov C and Vilela A (2013), Old age social protection options for Bangladesh, Volume 1, Bureau of Economic Research of the University of Dhaka and HelpAge International