

STAKEHOLDER GROUP ON AGEING

Operationalising The Promise To Leave No One Behind

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Life expectancy is on the rise. Our ageing world means that today's youth are tomorrow's older persons - today there are over 830 million women and men aged 60 and over worldwide, representing 12 per cent of the global population, and by 2030 this figure will have increased to 1.375 billion, or about 16 per cent of the global population. Today two thirds of older people live in developing countries; this will increase to three quarters by 2030.[1] 44.6% of people over 65 will also have disabilities, which compounds the social and economic impact of ageing and increases the likelihood of older persons lives lived in poverty and social isolation.[2]

The current reality of missed opportunities, marginalisation and discrimination experienced by millions due to age and disability must end in the post 2015 era. Older persons and persons with disabilities must be seen as a valuable asset, rather than a burden on resources. The implementation and financing process is critical to creating an equitable framework for development for people of all ages and abilities.

Recommendations

- A visible, substantial and sustainable increase in funding for older people must be included in the outcomes of the financing for development and SDG negotiations, in order to fulfil the commitment to "leave no one behind".
- Provide global support to effective, efficient and coherent funding modalities for the design, implementation and extension of social protection floors. To include the possibility of global funds, building on the experiences of existing mechanisms and based on country-led practices.
- Specifically include and support contributions from older people and people with disabilities in budgets, plans, training and response mechanisms for humanitarian, national disaster management and climate policies.
- Ensure transparency and accountability of member states to their older citizens to guarantee the equitable environment for people of all ages and abilities to be active contributors and participants in development.
- Substantially and visibly increase investment and capacity to strengthen global and national statistical and reporting systems to disaggregate data by age, gender and disability.

Rationale

Eradicating extreme poverty and recognising and supporting the potential of people as they age has profound implications for sustainable development. Poverty is endemic amongst older age groups, with disability being a compounding factor in the chronic poverty experienced by millions of older persons. Current societal responses to ageing and disability results in lower rates of labour force participation and discrimination which exacerbates chronic poverty and passes it on through generations. They also fail to recognise and give support to the valuable contribution older people and people with disabilities make to their communities and societies.

[1] Global AgeWatch Index 2014

[2] Professor Nora Groce, Disability and ageing, in Facing the Facts, Age International 2015

The outcome of the financing for development and SDG negotiations must signal that there is determined **political will** to make visible and concrete the promise to leave no one behind. Financing commitments to deliver on the rights and needs of people of all ages and abilities **must underpin** the new agenda. Financial investment in the SDGs must also prioritise the means to measure progress transparently and accountably within a framework which provides equity for older people and that recognises their vast contribution to sustainable development.

Social protection floors are essential. They are direct and fast-acting poverty relief mechanisms that reach the poorest of all ages and abilities regardless of gender and can ensure equitable development for all. The outcome of the post-2015 implementation and financing process must operationalise the commitment made by the 184 members of the International Labour Organisation through the adoption of the ILO recommendation No. 202 on National Floors of Social Protection. Options include a dedicated global social protection financing facility that will enable the global community of nations to systematically, consistently and sustainably support national efforts to reduce poverty, insecurity and inequality.

Besides regular income, access to health systems that can respond to chronic illness and NCDs, improved food security, access to water, sanitation and modern energy services, accessible transport, community services, infrastructure and housing and life-long learning are fundamental to build sustainable communities and societies.

As the recently agreed Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction makes clear, the situation of older people and people with disabilities in moments of conflict and humanitarian crisis must also be addressed in order to strengthen resilience and reduce risk. Sendai also makes clear that disaster risk reduction requires the collection, use and open exchange and dissemination of disaggregated data by sex, age and disability.

Data systems are not fit for purpose in our ageing world. Investment is essential to strengthen the statistical and reporting systems to disaggregate data by age, gender and disability. Current understanding of what disaggregating data by age means is inconsistent and insufficient. As the Stakeholder Group on Ageing has noted previously,[3] critical data is missing to measure progress on a range of issues of fundamental importance to those who are ageing, many of whom have disabilities. Progress requires improved data collection and analysis on age and disability that includes separate age cohorts from 60 years and above.

The implications and opportunities of our ageing world must be taken into account in the post-2015 implementation and financing process. There is a “longevity dividend” to be reaped by Governments and the international community.

People must be at the centre of sustainable development. The commitment to “leave no one behind” must be met to provide an equitable framework for development that recognises the inherent value of older people and people with disabilities, as well as their contribution.

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[3] Stakeholder Group on Ageing March 2015 statement on indicators