

Follow up and review Intergovernmental meeting

Fostering inclusion and participation of people of all ages and abilities in the review process

Life expectancy everywhere is on the rise. The ageing population is increasing, and the older population is itself ageing. 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. By 2030 this figure will have increased to 1.375 billion, or about 16 per cent of the global population. Two thirds of older people live in developing countries; this will increase to three quarters by 2030. 44.6% of people over 65 are likely to have disabilities, which compounds the social and economic impact of ageing and increases the probability of older persons living in poverty and social isolation (1).

Older women and men across the globe are calling for a follow up, implementation, review and appraisal process which is accountable to people of all ages and in which they are active contributors and respondents.

Recommendations for follow up and review:

1. Transparency and full representation and participation of all stakeholder groups made visible by the SDG framework, including older persons and persons with disabilities. This must include:
 - a. Specific measurable approaches to reach out to and include older people and other marginalised groups in policy making, planning, budgets, capacity building.
 - b. Formal recognition and participation of older persons in national reporting, regional responses and global SDG review mechanisms, including systematic inclusion of ageing issues in the thematic review programme of work of the High Level Political Forum.
 - c. Strengthened cross-sector accountability within the review process to maintain a broad assessment of the extent to which each goal and target is being achieved for older persons and other social groups.
2. Visible, substantial and sustainable increase in funding for older people and programmes, for example for universal social protection, universal access to health, to end violence and discrimination and give support to social inclusion, necessary to fulfil the commitment to "leave no one behind".
3. Substantive investment in and adaptation of global and national statistical and reporting capacity and systems, to disaggregate data not only by gender but also by age and disability across the lifecourse.

In 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will conclude in a very different world from the one into which they will be born into in September 2015. Ongoing demographic change requires the follow-up to the SDG framework to be transparent and accountable to people of all ages across the full lifecourse.

1 Professor Nora Groce, Disability and ageing, in Facing the Facts, Age International 2015

Participation

Sustainable development will not be achieved by 2030 without the conscious and intentional inclusion of the ever increasing number of older persons, who are living longer and not only experiencing and adjusting to the impacts of climate change, urbanization, inadequate health services, humanitarian crises, but also struggling against ageism.

It must be recognised that older persons and people with disabilities are also vibrant and productive members of society, participating in all walks of life and contributing to the economic and social health of their communities and to alleviation of poverty as entrepreneurs, unpaid carers, educators, mentors, farmers, and breadwinners. Older persons and people with disabilities should not be viewed primarily as vulnerable and dependent, or be considered victims or passive recipients of services, care and protection.

While the SDG intergovernmental process has provided an important and strategic platform to address ageing issues at the global level, the opportunities and challenges of population ageing have yet to be fully explored, understood and incorporated in national development programmes and at the regional levels. Furthermore, the structure of civil society engagement in the process does not reflect the breadth and diversity of older stakeholders that must be reached by the SDG framework.

Investment to “leave no one behind”

Achieving the SDGs means eradicating extreme poverty for all and leaving no one behind. Poverty is endemic amongst older age groups, with disability being a compounding factor. Current societal responses to ageing and disability too often result in lower rates of labour force participation, social inclusion and discrimination which in turn exacerbate chronic poverty, passing it on through generations.

Income security, access to health services, opportunities for employment and learning, safe transport and housing and freedom from discrimination and violence are fundamental to a secure and dignified old age. Financial investment in the implementation of the SDGs must prioritise policy approaches and programmes, including social protection floors, to ensure these are delivered.

Measurement

It is not possible to measure impact without data. Leaving no one behind means that special attention must be given to measuring the outreach to and impact of the commitments made on marginalised and vulnerable people, including older people and people with disabilities. Data are not yet fit for purpose to measure impact on populations as they age.

Improved disaggregated data, by age across the lifecycle as well as by other variables, from official statistical bodies and non-traditional sources, are required.

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