

United Nations International Day of Older Persons (UNIDOP) 2021

#UNIDOP2021 #OlderPersonsDay #DigitalInclusion

Digital Equity for All Ages

The United Nations International Day of Older Persons 2021 theme “**Digital Equity for All Ages**¹” predicated the need for access and meaningful participation in the digital world by older persons.

The fourth industrial revolution characterized by rapid digital innovation, characterized by exponential growth has transformed all sectors of society including how we live, work and relate to one another. Technological advances offer great hope for accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, one-half of the global population is off-line, with the starkest differences reflected between most and least developed countries (87% and 19% respectively).² Recent reports by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) indicate that women and older persons experience digital inequity to a greater extent than other groups in society; they either lack access to technologies or are often not benefitting fully from the opportunities provided by technological progress.

Meanwhile, as efforts to connect more people are currently under way, new risks have become apparent. For example, cybercrimes and misinformation threaten the human rights, privacy, and security of older people. The rapid speed of adoption of digital technology has outpaced policy and governance at the national, regional, and global levels. The Secretary-General’s Roadmap³ seeks to address these challenges by recommending concrete action to harness the best of these technologies and mitigate their risks.

This year, the International Day of Older Persons 2021 will provide a platform for multistakeholder dialogue and serve as a call to action. The #UNIDOP2021 will adopt a person centered, human rights approach to ensure digital equity including adequate policies, access, digital literacy and safety for individuals of all ages.

Objectives of #UNIDOP2021:

- To address digital availability, connectivity, design, affordability, capacity building, infrastructure, and innovation in the areas of public and private interests.
- To bring awareness of the importance of digital inclusion of older persons, while tackling stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination associated with digitalization taking into account sociocultural norms and the right to autonomy.
- To highlight policies to leverage digital technologies for full achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

¹ Digital technologies refer to a wide range of new technologies ranging from the internet, mobile phones, and all the other tools to collect, store, analyze, and share information digitally, also including Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics, automation, 5G, cryptocurrencies, internet of things.

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2021/02/online-global-dialogue-on-digital-inclusion-for-all>

² <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/FactsFigures2020.pdf>

³ <https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/>



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- To explore the role of policies and legal frameworks to ensure privacy and safety of older persons in the digital world.
- To promote an intersectional person-centered human rights approach for a society for all ages taking into account existing/non-existing legal instruments in the field of digitalization.