

Integrating Population Issues into Sustainable Development
in the post-2015 Development Agenda

48th Commission on Population and Development
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Oral Statement by Cynthia Stuen, International Federation on Ageing
and Stakeholder Group on Ageing.

Excellencies, thank you for this opportunity to speak. I am Cynthia Stuen representing the International Federation on Ageing and Stakeholder Group on Ageing, which represents the interests of 800 million older persons globally.

The important work of the Commission on Population and Development is crucial for Governments in their decision-making on policies and programmes for their populations. Having data on demographic trends and shifts, and the structure of different groups, is essential for Governments to determine funding, prioritizing and implementing programmes for their people. “Leaving no one behind” requires information and data on population to ensure inclusiveness. The Commission on Population and Development also acts as an early alert system, informing Governments to what is projected in years to come, signaling major demographic shifts, in an effort to help Governments prepare for changes in demographic structures to ensure that their policies and programmes remain relevant and effective. The United Nations has pointed out that older persons aged 60 or over, are now the **world’s fastest growing age group**. There is no longer just a youth population bulge; there is now an age bulge.

Today’s children and youth are tomorrow’s older persons. People aged 60 and over now make up nearly 12% of the global population, rising to 16% by 2030 and to 21% by 2050, with the fastest increase in the developing world. Women aged fifty and over are already 23.2% of the world’s women.

- We urge the Commission to consider a paradigm shift that does not just see ageing persons as only in need of health and social services but also as active contributors and rights holders in an ageing world. As one ages, there are concomitant increases in some impairments but the overarching goal should be that everyone born should grow old in a fair and just society that is inclusive and recognizes the contributions of all. We commend the human rights approach of your work and the recognition that **people of all ages are at the center of sustainable development**.
- The **disaggregation of population data by age, gender, and disability** is essential for the implementation and measurement of the Sustainable Development Agenda; we recommend **five-year increments beyond the age of 60 years**. Population data are based on existing data sets, however, data should also allow

for future ones yet to be developed, and be suitable, feasible and relevant for our ageing world. Population data must not fall short of disaggregation across the lifespan. We must have data collection and management tools for monitoring the achievement of targets of all SDG goals.

- We applaud the reference in OP13 that gender equality and empowerment of **all** women and girls can be advanced by promoting, respecting and fulfilling the human rights of girls and women **of all ages**. There are other reference points that we hope will carry out this reference to women of all ages or men and women of all ages so that those persons over the age of 49 are not left behind.
- We also commend the new OP21 that calls on governments to promote the continuing empowerment of older persons in all aspects, paying particular attention to older women, especially in poverty and at risk of violence and abuse. It is indeed time to give greater priority to addressing concerns of older people and maximizing their synergistic contributions to a society for all.
- When referring to mortality and morbidity differentials between population subgroups within countries, it is insufficient and it shows a lack of respect for human rights, to determine the causes by just focusing on younger ages. **Older ages must be included.**
- Governments should ensure that the necessary conditions are developed to **enable older people to lead self-determined, healthy and productive lives and to make full use of the skills and abilities** they have acquired in their lives for the benefit of society at international, regional, national and local levels.

In conclusion, leaving no one behind must mean just that....leaving no one behind. We want our young people to grow old and prosper with dignity.

Thank you.

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