



Stakeholder Group on Ageing

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Chapeau

The Pact for the Future should pledge to accelerate and transform SDG implementation with global governance, innovations and overhauling institutions. It is time to go beyond band-aid solutions and instead apply life-saving surgery. The future affects everyone at all stages of their lives, not just the unborn or the youth of today. The future affects all of us everywhere, of all ages, in different economic and social situations. Situations do not remain static - new crises will arise and we need to be prepared. The demographic significance of older persons as a group that is expanding faster than the general population can no longer be ignored. Global ageing requires policies for the future to embrace the demographic shift and deliver on the rights of older people in all their diversity.

The Pact of the Future is the opportunity to put things back on track as well as to be ready for unforeseen circumstances. It is not a question of political will. It is a question of common human decency, morality, compassion, and respect for humankind. There is no time to waste.

The Pact for the Future must therefore fully take forward and strengthen the implementation of existing global commitments for older people including the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing, Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) as well as all other regional agreements on ageing. Human rights dimension of Agenda 2030 be included; policies should explicitly take forward rights in the Declaration of Human Rights and in the Principles of Older Persons which are: Independence, Participation, Care, Self-fulfillment, and Dignity. We expect therefore that the Pact for the Future will deliver “societies for all ages” as envisaged by the MIPAA and reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is important that older people are engaged in this process from the beginning if we are to find lasting solutions and achieve the aspirations of global development.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), by 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over, increasing the share of the population aged 60 years and over from 1 billion in 2020 to 1.4 billion. By 2050, the world’s population of people aged 60 years and older will double (2.1 billion). The number of persons aged 80 years or older is expected to triple between 2020 and 2050 to reach 426 million. These projections of population ageing indicate that the beneficiaries of the aspirations of development including the SDG and the proposed Pact of the Future will be older people. Despite this predictability of population ageing and increase in life expectancy rates, existing social, political, and economic frameworks, and structures for the realization of these achievements are not attuned to the needs of older people.

We recommend therefore: -

1. That in line with the transformative promise of Agenda 2030 to “Leave No One Behind” (LNOB), participation is specifically and deliberately facilitated so that older people today and older people in the future are effectively engaged in global development processes.
2. In the same vein, we recommend that financing for development must consider the specific needs of older people especially income security and universal health coverage as fundamental indicators for financing necessary to respond to demographics shifts, inform, and support the global development agenda.

Chapter II. International peace and security

A large and rapidly growing number of older people are affected by humanitarian crises. The proportion of the population aged 50 and over in fragile countries, where conflict and disasters are more likely to occur, is expected to rise from 12.3 per cent (219.9 million) in 2020 to 19.2 per cent (586.3 million) in 2050. Older people have borne the brunt of the severe threats and disruptions to international peace and security that have been exacerbated by the impacts of climate change around the world. From the wars in Ukraine and now in the Middle East we have seen older people having had to take on care roles that impinge on their ability to deal with the consequences of the war.

We recommend therefore: -

3. Global engagements on international peace and security must adopt an ageing lens and include older people as a significant population segment to be considered to meaningfully address global international peace and security concerns.

Chapter III. Science, technology, innovation, and digital cooperation

In a world with rapid technological advancement, older people must not only be objects of technology but must be informed, consulted and their needs fully considered in science, technology, innovation and digital cooperation. Technological advancement must consider the specific needs of older people so that the products are available, accessible, and affordable for older people. Technology must be built around the specific needs of an ageing population considering the specific needs of older people and including incorporating universal design in technological devices. Count us in – do not count us out.

We recommend therefore: -

4. That all future ICT innovations embrace the principle of intergenerational equity. This requires that there is fairness among generations and must be operationalized through equitable and just distribution of benefits, risks and costs in all sectors, including socioeconomic and science sectors, between present and future generations.
5. That all information, communication, technology (ICT) education should adopt a life course approach and adapt to the demographic changes as populations age. This means inclusion of older persons in all their diversity from product design, to production, to marketing.

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

We reiterate the framing in the Political Declaration of the MIPAA and urge that needs of both older and younger [generations] are considered, and mutually responsive relationships encouraged between generations.” We affirm the consideration of “intergenerational solidarity is widely understood as social cohesion between generations.” Of course, children and youth lack the experience of growing old and we therefore encourage mutually responsive relationships between generations.

Current children and youth may be most likely to outlive current older generations, but they will be living this possible future life as older persons themselves. What kind of life do they envisage? Intergenerational dialogue is needed more than ever. That is why older people should be included, along with other generations, in future policymaking.

We recommend therefore: -

6. That, at all times, data informing the global development agenda be disaggregated by age in addition to all other variables, to allow for effective and forecasting of, and response to, the changing social and economic needs of the global population based on realistic demographic age profiles.

Chapter V. Transforming global governance.

Population ageing is one of the biggest social transformations in the 21st century. The social contract must be at the heart of transforming global governance. Generations and peoples in all their diversity and origins must live together in peace and be supported by the framework of social civil and economic rights which are currently threatened by climate change, war, inequalities, populism, xenophobia, racism, disablism and ageism. Putting financial and technical effort into ensuring the right of all persons from the cradle to the grave to social protection and to social protection floors is key to that social contract. As is participation, recognizing and supporting contributions across the life course and the affirmation of human rights for all - including the human rights of older persons.

Most older people and children will be living in cities which must be age friendly. Adapting city and community structures to the needs of a growing older population is sound preparation to meet the challenges of demographic change.

It is therefore important that all countries adapt to the rights and needs of older persons in the formulation and development of health and social services, in the provision of social protection, and the development of cities, housing, educational opportunities and transportation.

We recommend therefore:-

7. That the diversity of the population must be reflected in the disaggregation of data in terms of age, race, ethnic belonging, physical ability, income levels, rural or urban domicile. This is important to ensure that the resources are properly allocated to the rightful population sectors

and accounted for in the monitoring processes including the reviews of the SDGs and the Voluntary National Reports (VNRs) in the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

8. That countries consider adopting the World Health Organization's Age-friendly Cities & Communities framework.

To conclude, representative participation is an aspect of human rights. It necessitates the inclusion of all generations, including older people, in determining the necessary policy steps for future generations of older persons, who will make up more than a quarter of the world in less than a century. Policies based on human rights and on intergenerational justice will deliver accountability and distributive, procedural, restorative and retributive actions to ameliorate the negative effects of inequality.

The future is ours; it is yours; it can be that of a dignified and secure old age if we choose inclusion, participation and human rights across the life course as our path to the future.