



**4th Session of the Open Working Group on the Sustainability
Development Goals
United Nations New York
19 June 2013**

**Population Dynamics
HelpAge International
Statement from the floor by Ms Silvia Stefanoni**

The world is ageing at an unprecedented rate, and it is happening fastest in developing countries. Ageing is a global megatrend, alongside climate change and migration. Already there are more people over 60 than children under 5. By 2030 people aged over 60 will outnumber children under the age of 10. Ageing well is a universal concern that is relevant for all ages and associated with cultural and social wellbeing in all societies.

Young people of today are the older centenarians of the future. Expectations around having a dignified and secure old age is just as much a concern of present day youth and future generations of younger people, as well as of older people themselves.

HelpAge International welcomes the articulation of the issue of ageing, alongside other important demographic trends, in the technical support brief for this session. But we are concerned that the sporadic and inconsistent references to ageing in the reports of the High Level Panel and the SDSN puts at risk the ambition of the post 2015 process to eliminate extreme poverty and 'leave no one behind'.

This is why we are asking for a strong and consistent narrative on ageing in the Secretary General's report and background to the next framework.

Services must respond to the facts of ageing and deliver on the rights of older people in all countries. Changing age structures in society require all stakeholders to complement the focus on access in the current MDG's with quality service provision for all.

Development gains felt by populations as a whole are under threat if policy and practices are not adapted to respond to population ageing. For example evidence from Bangladesh tells us that future achievement in poverty reduction overall will be undermined if policy and practice does not take account of the increasing older population.

We are fully behind the proposals for a 'data revolution'. We have pointed out the problems of existing data gaps, including within the Demographic Health Surveys that still only include people up to the age of 49. Data gaps give rise to serious errors of analysis, policy and programming relevant for all age groups. This year HelpAge together with the UNFPA will launch the first Global AgeWatch Index which examines the well

being of people in old age globally and will reflect on how countries across the globe are dealing with the coming demographic explosion. We have put together a dashboard of 12 separate indicators that comprehensively measure the economic, social and political elements that interact to create a secure and healthy environment for later life.

This work has exposed the limitations of current data on people over 60.

The data proposals must therefore include age as a core instrument of analysis.

We fully support the proposals on the table for human rights to inform the framework. We suggest that the next framework be fully based on the international human rights framework, with a strong commitment to monitor and deliver human rights for all across the life-course.

Additionally we propose the following concrete actions

1. Ensure that all goals take account of people at all stages of their lives – from cradle to grave. The proposal for a goal on social protection floors is a strong example of a framework that recognises how social protection systems can and do apply to all stages of the life course. The health goals can have similar application with a target on healthy life expectancy to ensure we are on track to support the health of all people across the life-course. Ageing is a key driver of non-communicable disease with three quarters of the global burden of chronic disease affecting people over 60.
2. Member States to measure progress on ageing by looking at policies, attitudes and budgets to ensure regular income, health, rights to education and decent work and a supportive and safe environment for all across the life-course. HelpAge with UN partners are developing a framework to support Member States to measure progress on ageing across these domains which we offer as a monitoring tool for future goals
3. Include Age in the target and indicator setting with monitoring tools that are old age specific.

As population structures change, laws, policies, budget allocation, social attitudes and institutional practices must celebrate and support ageing populations. The Open Working Group has a historic opportunity to ensure that ageing is fully integrated in the development framework, necessary to achieve sustainable and equitable development for all.

June 19 2013 New York

www.helpage.org