



AGEING, OLDER PERSONS AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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SECTION 1

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Older Persons

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out a universal plan of action to achieve sustainable development in a balanced manner and seeks to realize the human rights of all people. It calls for leaving no one behind and for ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are met for all segments of society, at all ages, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable—including older persons.¹

Preparing for an ageing population is vital to the achievement of the integrated 2030 Agenda, with ageing cutting across the goals on poverty eradication, good health, gender equality, economic growth and decent work, reduced inequalities and sustainable cities. Therefore, while it is essential to address the exclusion and vulnerability of—and intersectional discrimination against—many older persons in the implementation of the new agenda, it is even more important to go beyond treating older persons as a vulnerable group. Older persons must be recognized as the active agents of societal development in order to achieve truly transformative, inclusive and sustainable development outcomes.

The current brief acknowledges the importance of a life-course approach to ageing and calls for protecting and promoting the rights of older persons in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

SECTION 2

Population Ageing: Evidence

Population ageing is a major global trend that affects all countries, albeit at a different pace and levels (Dugarova and Gülasan 2017; World Bank Group 2016),² and reflects significant achievements of human development such as improved health, greater longevity and lower mortality (UN 2017; UNDESA 2007).

In 2015, there were 901 million people aged 60 or over, comprising 12.3 percent of the global population (UNDESA 2015a). While the Asia-Pacific region has the world's largest number of people aged 60 or over (508 million), Europe has the largest percentage of population of this age (24 percent, or 177 million). Although Africa is home to a relatively small number of older persons, it is projected to increase from 64 million to 105 million by 2030. In fact, as public health gains advance in most countries, global life expectancy will continue to increase, contributing to a rise in the number and proportion of older persons in all parts of the world. Between 2015 and 2030, the number of people aged 60 years or over is projected

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