

Commission for Social Development

62nd Session, 5-14 February 2024

Oral Statement – Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups including youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and family”

The International Federation on Ageing (IFA), an international non-governmental organization with general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, applauds the review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of actions related to the situation of social groups, particularly older persons and family.

The priority theme for this Commission calls for fostering social development and social justice through relevant policies for poverty eradication, which is followed by the message that no one should be left behind. Nevertheless, older persons are often excluded in these discussions, despite being disproportionately affected by social and political environments leading them towards poverty. Environments where inequity flourish are the result of absent or inadequate social policies supporting older persons with employment, education, and healthcare, presenting barriers towards overcoming financial instability. When reviewing UN plans and programmes of actions affecting older persons, there is value in recognizing interconnected global and societal issues such as an increasingly ageing society, gender, climate change, and polarizing economic, political, and societal movements, which all impact the likelihood of poverty. Gender in poverty is a notable issue amongst older persons particularly as older women are further impacted by poverty due to the multidimensional discrimination encountered across their lifecourse.

Recognizing the International Year of the Family, serves as a reminder that older persons are part of families and growing multigenerational households. Family-oriented policies related to poverty and intergenerational issues, such as poverty transmittance and widening cultural and digital literacy gaps are greatly needed. A lifecourse approach to social policy needs acknowledgement to prevent generational poverty.

The emerging issue of digital transformation to achieve social justice provides a unique pathway for intergenerational issues to help prevent and eradicate poverty. Digital platforms and infrastructure support economic activity, job creation, enhances social connections, and enables developing skills and life-long learning.

The IFA calls on Member States, civil society, and industry to collectively address the inclusion of older persons in the policies and programmes to eradicate poverty and by doing so, acknowledge the urgent need for drafting a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons for the protection of older persons.

Thank you.