

Video Statement Submitted by the International Federation on Ageing (IFA)
7th Session of the Committee on Social Development
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As an international non-governmental organization whose membership base comprises government, civil society, industry, academia and individuals, the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) appreciates the opportunity to provide a statement at the 7th Session of the Committee on Social Development towards the agenda item: Follow-up to the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reflecting on the outcomes of the recent review of MIPAA, there is a clear overlap in priorities and a high degree of alignment can be seen between these priorities and the key action areas of the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing. As such, a real opportunity exists to leverage the momentum and strategic approach of the Decade towards the shared success of both of these important initiatives.

The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing is a timely and unprecedented global collaboration that brings together governments, civil society, international agencies, professionals, academia, the media, and the private sector to improve the lives of older people, their families, and the communities in which they live. Foundational to the successful implementation of the Decade, which is not only aligned with MIPAA but also builds upon and responds to other global commitments and calls for action, is the need for strong multisectoral and multistakeholder collaboration. As Dr Tedros, Director General of the World Health Organization has stated “to foster healthy ageing, we need to work together. This must be our new normal.”

Ageing connects with a wide range of technical issues addressed by the WHO and the UN and while there are a number of mechanisms currently underway to help facilitate collaboration across diverse stakeholders, there is currently no real mechanism to help support and facilitate the collaborative efforts of civil society. We have collectively, as a result, struggled to make the necessary connections with the specific technical units to both inform WHO and UN programs and also facilitate work at a country level.

Connecting stakeholders, hearing their voices and being authentically engaged are the foundations required to drive agendas to improve the quality of life of older people around the world. Policies impacting the lives of older people cut across many governmental portfolios, however common cross-cutting policy agendas that draw on evidence from all levels of government rarely make the necessary connections and linkages for a comprehensive plan of action. Accelerating impact and actions associated with these plans ultimately requires policy coherence throughout. CSOs can play an important role towards fostering policy coherence by ensuring that the real-life experience of current and future generations of older people is evident in not only in the policies themselves but also in the way progress is measured.

Civil society organizations working together represent a defining force that can help influence and shape policy. Together we play a pivotal role in reinforcing the need for strategic action across sectors, disciplines and government ministries, with a common goal of improving the health (in the broadest sense) and wellbeing of older people. Strong leadership, that includes civil society, is essential in realizing the potential of both the Madrid International Plan of Action of Ageing and the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing for current and future generations of older people.