



Launch of *World Social Report 2023: Leaving No One Behind in an Ageing World.*

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United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

The *World Social Report* is a flagship publication of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs that covers major topics in the area of social development. Over the years, it has served as a background document and provided policy analysis for intergovernmental discussions of social and economic matters. It has identified emerging social trends of global concern and analyzed relationships among major development issues of national and international significance.

The 2023 edition of the *World Social Report*, *Leaving No One Behind in an Ageing World*, has been prepared to commemorate the 20-year anniversary of the adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. It shows that population ageing and policies implemented in response to this global trend can be harnessed to uphold the pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that no one will be left behind. The report is being launched in a context of multiple and intersecting crises with major and sometimes devastating impacts on societies, economies and the environment across the world.

The Report highlights how, by working together, we can ensure the benefit of future generations, managing new challenges while also capitalizing on the opportunities that an ageing society offers. At a time of declining trust in governments and in each other, policies that promote sustainability and equity in an ageing world are essential.

and communities. Building on *Our Common Agenda*, such policies can form the basis for a renewed social contract suitable for the 21st century.

For the first time, the World Social Report has been produced jointly by three divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. I am very happy that the directors of my two sister divisions have joined me this afternoon here on the podium.

Each of the three directors will offer a brief overview of the chapter or chapters whose preparation was led by their respective teams.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start with the good news, which is that people all over the world are living longer and there are now more people alive at older ages than ever before. Globally, a baby born in 2021 could expect to live 71 years on average, almost 25 years more than a newborn from 1950. While the gains in longevity have been broadly shared, there continue to be large differences across countries and regions and between social groups, including a 5-year advantage, on average, for women compared to men.

Most of the increase in life expectancy has been due to reductions in childhood deaths, as documented in the report released by UNICEF and partners earlier this week. However, in recent decades, we have also seen substantial gains in longevity at older ages. In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, at age 65 the average person globally could expect to live an additional 18 years, compared to 11 years in 1950. As a result, a 70th or even 80th birthday is becoming more and more common throughout the world.

While people are living longer, they also tend to have healthier lives. For countries that collect such data, the available evidence suggests that the number of years lived in good health has increased overall for most people. However, for both men and women, the gains in total life expectancy have been somewhat faster than the gains in healthy life expectancy. This means that the additional years of life are mostly healthy ones but also include some additional time spent in poor health or disability at older ages.

Despite the gains in healthy life expectancy, substantial gaps between populations remain. For example, although women may live longer than men on average, they are likely to experience more years with poor health or disability at older ages compared to men.

Given the health challenges faced by older persons, their living arrangements have a special importance, including for provision of their care. Data compiled by DESA reveal a general trend towards smaller families and smaller households globally. This trend has affected older persons, who are increasingly likely to live alone or with their partner only. These changes in living

I will now turn the discussion over to my colleague, **Mr. Shantanu Mukherjee**, who will offer some comments on the economic impacts of population ageing as described in the report.

The relationship between population ageing and the economy has several different aspects. In this report, we limit our attention to just a few.

Societies have come up with a range of arrangements and institutions to ensure that even though the capacity to be economically productive changes significantly from birth to death, the consumption needs of individuals can be met at all ages.

DISD/Daniela Bas

Let me go into more depth on the social implications of population ageing.

One key message from the report is that giving every person an equal chance to grow older in good health and with economic security starts

In closing, I wish to thank my two colleagues with me on the podium for their collaboration and leadership. But also, and especially, I wish to congratulate the entire writing team and to thank them for contributing the time, skill, passion and expertise that have led to the report that we are launching here today.

We would welcome any questions that you may wish to ask.

Thank you.