



## Media Advisory

**What:** An interactive side event to discuss the inclusion of older people in Sustainable Development Goals during the **2019 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD)**

**Where:** Marrakesh, Morocco

**When:** Wednesday, 17 April 2019

**Time:** 1.00PM – 2.30PM

### Background

Africa region like the rest of the world is undergoing rapid demographic changes, increasing the proportion of older people despite the population being largely youthful. Between 2017 and 2050, the number of older persons is expected to grow faster in Africa than anywhere else in the world, with a projected 229% increase. In 2017 the total number of older persons was 69 million people, 7.1% of global total projected to 226 million in 2050 and could account for 10.9 % of older people worldwide (UNDESA, 2017). This change of African population age structure is happening in an environment devoid of appropriate policies, legal frameworks and programmes about and for older people. Thus, Africa has not been modified to cope with older people's longevity, capacity, and complex vulnerabilities associated with population ageing.

The launch of Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in 2015 offered an opportune moment to reverse the exclusion of older people in public, social, economic, cultural and political spheres. The two development frameworks promote prosperity for all ages, social and economic justice, human rights, data disaggregation, participation, partnerships, principles of universality and reaching the furthest left behind first through the "leave no one behind" ambition. Despite these promising commitments, little or very staggered actions have been reported jeopardizing the benefits such commitments would bring to the wellbeing and quality of life of older people.

However, African governments and development partners continue to experience challenges in integrating older people in sustainable development due to limited technical capacity on older people's rights, lack adequate evidence to inform legal and policy implication and limited resource allocation. Simultaneously, older people lack understanding of their rights, entitlements, and how government works, as well as a supportive structure necessary to create an effective social accountability platform to demand for action and to hold duty bearers to account. As a result, majority of older people live in poverty or extreme poverty and are denied the right to make decisions about their personal finances, property and medical care.

This side event is a collaborative venture between SGA-Africa, UNFPA Arab States Regional Office and UNDESA Programme on Ageing. This interactive session will facilitate a dialogue among Member States and their agencies, UN bodies, development partners, older persons and civil society organizations to explore and agree on interventions and approaches to galvanize political support and enhance integration of older people in the implementation, monitoring and reporting of SDGs and Agenda 2063.

### Objectives

The side event seeks to:

- Increase understanding and knowledge among policy makers on how to make SDGs and Agenda 2063 work for older people.
- Share approaches and learning on how to increase visibility and integration of older people in SDGs and Agenda 2063 implementation and reporting processes
- Galvanize political support from stakeholders on increasing investments and progress in the inclusion of older people in SDGs and Agenda 2063.
- Share experiences from Arab States Regional Office on developing a regional strategy for older people to action policy direction
- Identify key strategies and priorities to accelerate the integration of older people in SDGs and Agenda 2063.

There would opportunities to media interviews, photos and networking. With best wishes,

**For more information about the side event, please contact,** SGA-Africa Co-Chair, Roseline Kihumba (Ms.), International & Regional Policies Coordinator, HelpAge International-Africa Regional Office, Email: [roseline.kihumba@helpage.org](mailto:roseline.kihumba@helpage.org)

**For more information about UNDESA Programme on Ageing, please contact,** Amal Abou Rafeh (Ms.), Chief, Programme on Ageing Unit, Email: [rafeh@un.org](mailto:rafeh@un.org)

**For more information about UNFPA ASRO Strategy on Older People, please contact,** Hala Youssef (Ms.), Regional Population Data and Policies Adviser, Email: [youssef@unfpa.org](mailto:youssef@unfpa.org)

**More information about SGA-Africa please contact** the above SGA-Africa Co-chair or the counterpart SGA-Africa Co-chair Emem Omokaro, Executive Director, Dave Omokaro Foundation, Email: [firstdavem@yahoo.com](mailto:firstdavem@yahoo.com)

### **About Stakeholder Group on Ageing – Africa (<https://sgafrica.org>)**

During the 2018 Africa Forum for Sustainable Development – Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism, older people's organisation were able to achieve their long term campaign that begun in 2012, that of pushing for a space for older people constituency group. To date under the co-chair leadership of HelpAge International and Dave Omokaro Foundation, Stakeholder Group on Ageing (SGA) – Africa has been established. SGA-Africa is a coalition of organizations that brings together civil societies, professional bodies, private sector, human rights institutions, academia, individuals, older persons and organizations representing older persons. The coalition aims at coordinating the older people constituency groups in Africa region to constructively engage and promote understanding and inclusion of older people in SDGs and Agenda 2063 domestication, implementation, monitoring and reporting. SGA-Africa in November 2018 held its first Annual Conference in which more than 300 participants from 10 countries including United Nations Division for

Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and government representatives participated. SGA-Africa has also consolidated its governance structure composed of steering committee representing the five African regions (the Northern Africa representative is not in place) including Small Island and Portuguese speaking representatives. The SGA-Africa has attracted more than 60 organizations and offers an enabling environment to promote understanding and inclusion of older people in social, economic, cultural and political sphere in the region.