

GAP Older Persons PCG statement for 24 July 2016
Katherine Kline co-chair

Thank you for allowing me as the co-chair of the General Assembly of Partners Older Persons Partner Constituent Group to speak today.

Currently, half of older persons, some 500 million people currently live in urban areas. I am speaking to you as co-chair of the GAP Older Persons Partner Constituent Group. We are pleased that the 18 July NUA Draft document includes many concrete references to “older persons”, “all” before women, and “age” especially with disaggregation of data as the domestic household survey, the main way countries obtain data ends at age 49. Of course women older than 49 face discrimination, abuse, violence. Older men and women are living longer but die from preventable non communicable diseases and need appropriate healthcare and help in living healthier lives. Many lack even simple literacy and numeracy making it difficult, if not impossible, for them to be able to engage effectively in their communities or to make the kind of contributions that they otherwise would be able to do.

Key aspects of older persons' lives are mentioned in this draft: Adequate, affordable housing, accessible, safe, efficient, affordable and sustainable infrastructure for public transportation (para 100) well designed networks of inclusive accessible, green quality public spaces and streets (para 88) which bring people of all ages together, reducing isolation, data disaggregation includes by age (para 144) which would make us visible to policy makers.

Supporting older persons in “efficient participation in urban territorial development decision-making” (para 135) means that we will be involved in helping improve our cities. Para 54 provides a strong endorsement of harnessing “the ageing factor” “for improving the quality of life of the urban population” and para 137 endorses paying “particular attention to age and gender budgeting.”

Clearly there is growing understanding that with global urbanization, the world also faces global ageing and the two can contribute to better lives, provided we take appropriate action.