

Hon. Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJ&E), Govt. of India Shri Ghelot, Hon. MP Mr Dattatreya ji, Joint Secretary, MSJ&E Ms Ghazala Meenai, Dr K R Gangadharan, President, IFA, Ms Frederika Meijer, UNFPA Representative of India.

### **Major Proceedings of the Conference and Emerging Issues**

I extend my warmest wishes to all the delegates for their passionate and keen participation in the sessions of the 3 day conference and who are now here for hearing the major cumulative points that have emerged from the deliberations during key note address, plenary sessions, concurrent sessions, symposia and the side sessions.

The main theme of the conference was "Health, Security and Community". Under each of the themes there were six sub themes, and covered a range of issues related to older persons across the globe, such as, **Health-** non-communicable diseases, telemedicine, drug innovation in ageing, health care financing, palliative care, disability in ageing, quality of care standards, **Security-** Pension design and sustainability, poverty in ageing, income security through micro finance, preventing abuse, labor and workforce participation, rights of older persons, **Community-** Age friendly cities and communities, ageing in place, assistive technologies at home, meeting needs in remote and rural areas, cultural diversity care, and carer support services.

On 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 the Senior Officials meeting on '**Connecting the Dots: Formal and Informal Care**' was held. The Senior Officials Meeting raised concerns, exchanged information and deliberated on important aspects of care provision and the need for creating linkages between formal and informal care in the context of culture, costs, shifting paradigms of care, carer supports at work place (by employers, government, civil society, support groups), scope for training, migration and care requirements and the need for networking among various stakeholders.

The closing ceremony now, provides me the valuable opportunity, but a tough task of culminating various exchanges of information, questions and discussion and to read out the major emerging issues from the deliberations of the 3 day 12<sup>th</sup> IFA Global Conference on Ageing.

While, on each of the days the recapitulation of the previous day of the conference was undertaken, the detailed proceedings of all sessions of the conference recorded painstakingly by the young trained rapporteur team from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences would be released post conference as the 'Proceedings Book of the Conference' and the same will be uploaded on to the IFA Website soon.

## **Major Emerging Issues from the Deliberations of the Conference**

1. Important to ensure support systems for the vulnerable older persons and to create a network of working relationships to overcome concerns identified with respect to older persons and the younger generation.
2. Establishment of 'social businesses' in various sectors that would aid in resolving issues which arise as a result of poverty, poor health, lower social supports and prevalent gender discrimination linked to older persons. Emphasis on realigning roles by the multiple stakeholders and individuals to make others happy in order to achieve a higher order of happiness.
3. Prioritizing innovations in framing social protection and security for older persons and taking into consideration the exemplars that can be adapted by the countries in the future.

In developing countries like India, there is felt need for developing a National level knowledge base on a range of issues and dimensions related to older persons in order to bring them on to the centre stage.

4. Recognition of setting up systems that facilitate the processes of prevention, identification and treatment of elder abuse and neglect. This may be followed by provision of services/ interventions/legal frameworks so as to ensure the upkeep of rights of the older persons such as dignity, privacy, and care.
5. Non communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, depression, pulmonary disease, dementia/Alzheimer's, cataract etc. increase the financial burden among the elderly and lead to poor quality of life. Hence, provision of health care (through a robust health policy that is sensitive to needs of the elderly) and adapting the active ageing paradigm are imperative.
6. The long term health and formal care provision has been highlighted due to extended life span and the cultural/social leanings of care provision in changing times. Here, the standards and guidelines for best practices need to be devised and training of health personnel working with older persons be taken up. Efforts may be made towards bringing attitudinal changes about the health care needs and health promotion among older persons especially in the case of developing countries- to meet the crisis in care.
7. The economic and social concerns of the older persons need to be considered with utmost importance through creating opportunities for financial empowerment through self-help groups of older persons, needs assessment while framing

pensions for the vulnerable older persons and having mechanisms in place to safeguard those older persons who are facing poverty.

8. While extending the working life of the older persons beyond retirement, caution to be taken in ensuring that they are not under compulsion to work and ensure that older persons who are currently working due to various factors are not exploited. Devising alternative opportunities for them to work and engage productively in sectors such as education, volunteering, businesses and imparting wisdom. Adapting innovative strategies for encouraging employers to hire and retain older people, their skill enhancement, ensuring a multigenerational and age friendly work place are to be taken up.
9. Establishment of international and national coordination bodies to promote research in biology of ageing and development of clinical guidelines to modulate and manage the ageing process and to extend healthy lifespan through substantial funding, having legal and regulatory frameworks in place, encouraging new technologies and by ensuring the wide availability of these technologies.
10. Framing policy and ensuring practice, research and liaising/lobby with the media, civil society, government, policy makers and politicians pertaining to older persons requires a constant rethinking to realign with the various factors in demographics, economic feasibility, paradigms of thought, political willingness and for evidence based action to provide solutions.
11. Devising innovations in the area of use of technologies for assistive devices, telemedicine and developments in drugs, creating age friendly cities and communities by taking into consideration the older persons with impairments/disability and helping them to age in place.
12. Policy, interventions and future innovations are to be considered across the developed, developing and less developed regions by taking into account the cultural diversity while addressing various issues of the older persons and focus on well-being/quality of life as the ultimate goal. In this context, I am happy to mention that Govt of Mauritius and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai have signed a MoU at this venue today, for the promotion of research, training, capacity building, publications etc between the two countries in the area of population ageing.
13. Evidence based research is necessary to study the feminization of ageing in the context of comparative disadvantages in education, opportunities, health, access to

resources, property, care receiving, work promotions, individual status etc. that the older women are exposed to throughout the life course, especially in patriarchal settings. This will be resulting in understanding the extent, nature of issues and challenges faced by older women and would aid in devising multiple ways of addressing them through measures such as, provision of resources, power, psycho social interventions, ensuring policy, legal and attitudinal rethinking.

Thank You!