



(In **Special Consultative Status** with the **ECOSOC** at **United Nations** since 2011)  
(In association with **UN-DPI**)

## **Agewell Foundation's exclusive study for the ECOSOC, United Nations**

The **12th Session of the Open-ended Working Group for the purpose of strengthening the protection of human rights of older persons at the United Nations** is being held from **11-14 April 2022** at UN Headquarters, **New York** this year. As its contribution, Agewell Foundation has conducted an exclusive study among 10000 older persons from across the country, titled "**Contribution of Older Persons in Sustainable Development (With a special focus on Impact of Pandemic on Old People), February 2022.**"

This has already been accepted and carried on the website of the **United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs**. *See link-*

[https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/twelfth/Contribution\\_OP\\_Sustainable\\_Dev\\_impact\\_covid19\\_on\\_OP%20-February%202022.pdf](https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/twelfth/Contribution_OP_Sustainable_Dev_impact_covid19_on_OP%20-February%202022.pdf)

The study revealed that Older persons were not only prone to the severity and fatality of Covid-19 due to age, they also had had to live under the shadow of constant fear of death/loss of family members/loss of jobs to earning family members due to Covid-19.

### ***Salient findings of the Study***

- 45.7% of respondents termed the sense of loneliness/isolation termed as the most prominent psychological issue.
- For every 5th elderly respondent (19.5% elderly) their quality of life had been compromised due to rising inflation.
- 73.6% of elderly respondents said that paralyzed healthcare system affected their life adversely.

### **Impact of Covid-19 situation on Human Rights of the Older Persons**

- Human Rights of older persons were also found violated as 47.6% of elderly realized that during the Covid-19 situation their human rights were compromised remarkably.
- 49.5% of elderly reportedly lost independence /freedom due to the Covid-19 situation.

### **Attitudinal change towards older persons during Covid-19 phenomenon**

- The covid-19 phenomenon had changed the attitude of more than 82.6% elderly. Among them, 75.1% of the respondents were not optimistic about the future
- 93.2% of the respondents admitted that their major concern was looking after the health condition of self/spouse. 66.2% elderly were also concerned for their family members.

### **Ever widening Generation Gap**

- 74.9% of elderly respondents claimed that the generation gap has widened over a couple of years.
- During the survey, 76.7% of the elderly admitted that restrictions on social interactional activities were the main reason for the ever-widening generation gap.

Speaking on the occasion, **Himanshu Rath**, founder chairman of **Agewell Foundation** said, "*Older persons must be given equal rights and opportunities in a non-discriminatory manner, so that their participation in the mainstream and contribution to sustainable development can be ensured. In our country, the majority of the older persons are not prepared for their old age, hence most of them have*"

to depend on others for their various needs and requirements, particularly related to finance, healthcare and social support. They need to be supported at all levels"

### ***Agewell Foundation's recommendations, based on survey findings and observations;***

To address the ever-growing challenges pertaining to issues concerning older people, governments at all levels, need to modify their old age-related policies and make them older persons friendly. In order to ensure equal rights & opportunities for older people, there is an urgent need to take these steps;

- Study various aspects of older persons and initiate social, economic and health policy debate about aging
- Create older persons friendly environment in the country in order to facilitate their participation in sustainable development and appreciate their contribution

To protect the human rights of older persons, the following steps need to be taken up;

- To bridge the gap between generations by promoting and conducting inter-generational bonding programs.
- To create better awareness about the Human Rights of Old People across the country.

In order to ensure older persons' economic security, the following initiatives must be adopted at a larger scale;

- Pre- and post-retirement training programs for older persons to provide the soft skills, digital literacy and other training for skill enhancement.
- Provisions for encouraging employment of retired elderly in the unorganized service sector by initiating incentives schemes.

To ensure social security for people in old age, concerned stakeholders need to focus on:

- Maximum coverage under existing and/or new income and social security schemes
- Positive environment for financial planning from the younger age, so that they can earn ensured income in old age

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