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NO ONE LEFT BEHIND: INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE AND AT-RISK GROUPS IN AN ERA OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

| BACKGROUND

As global demographics shift—through aging populations, urbanization, migration, and changing family structures—vulnerable and at-risk groups often remain excluded from the benefits of development and social progress. This session explores how inclusive policy design and innovative interventions can ensure equity for vulnerable and at-risk groups, such as the older persons, people with disabilities, migrants, indigenous populations, and gender minorities. With examples from diverse global contexts, the session offers actionable insights for building socially cohesive and inclusive societies amidst demographic transitions.

| OBJECTIVES

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Understand the differentiated impacts of demographic transitions on vulnerable and at-risk groups.
- Learn from real-world examples of inclusive policy innovations.
- Be equipped with practical tools and guiding principles to apply equity-focused thinking to policy design.
- Engage with global voices and perspectives on inclusive development.



Panelist

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I have over four decades of experience in gender equality and human rights related to health in general, and sexual and reproductive health in particular. I have worked with and engaged in different capacities as a practitioner, as a researcher, as a mentor; with marginalized communities at the grassroots level, with civil society organisations and policymakers nationally. A few examples follow;

In 1984 I co-founded a community-based non-profit organization SAHAJ (Society for Health Alternatives) which began its work with the urban poor waste-picking women. Over the years SAHAJ has engaged with a range of civil and political rights issues of the urban poor, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of urban poor women and girls, adolescents and young people's rights, and transformative masculinities. More recently, SAHAJ is working on a collaborative SRHR programme with an intersectional perspective, with young people from marginalized communities (Dalit, Adivasi, trans women and "men who have sex with men" and girls living with disabilities.)

In addition to my 'practitioner' commitments, I am active in several pro-people's movements, including feminist and SRHR movements and coalitions – within India, regionally and globally. Because of my active engagements with these movements, I am well able to translate and amplify the grassroots lessons learnt into possible policy measures. Over the years, I have contributed to several UN organisations. Currently, I am a member of the Gender Advisory Panel of WHO, and a Distinguished Fellow at the George Institute, Australia, as well as a member of the Independent Advisory Committee of a global consortium 'Women of the South Speak Out'.