

“Climate change induced disasters: Older persons’ preparedness and response to build forward better”

28 September 2023, 15:30-17:00 CEST, Hybrid Event, United Nations, Geneva

Moderator: Ina Voelcker, BAGSO

Panelists:

- **Tolefoa Nella Pepe Tavita Levy**, Permanent Representative / Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Samoa to the UN and Other International Organisations in Geneva
- **Javeria Afzal**, Climate Change Advisor, HelpAge International
- **Katie E. Cherry**, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Emogene Pliner Distinguished Professor of Aging Studies, Louisiana State University (article and bio <https://www.lsu.edu/hss/psychology/news/cherryclimatechange.php>)
- **Ricardo Pla Cordero**, Protection Officer – Ageing and Disability Inclusion, Division of International Protection / Community Based Protection Unit, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency
- **Noga Levy-Rapoport**, Youth Climate Activist

Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons

(by video message)



Claudia Mahler, OHCHR

Claudia Mahler (Austria) was appointed by the UN Human Rights Council as Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons in May 2020. She has been a senior researcher in the field of economic, social and cultural rights at the German Institute for Human Rights since 2010. Over the last twenty years, she has also worked as a lecturer in the field of human rights law in different academic institutions in Germany and Austria.

Moderator



Ina Voelcker, BAGSO

Ina Voelcker is the Head of the Secretariat for International Policy on Ageing at BAGSO, the German National Association of Senior Citizens’ Organisations. She coordinates BAGSO’s international work which involves representing older persons’ interests in international debates and fostering the exchange of civil society organisations from various countries. In 2022, Ina was elected Vice Chair of the Steering Group of GAROP, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People. She is also the Member at Large for the NGO Committee on Ageing Geneva. Ina holds a Bachelor’s degree in Gerontology and a Master’s degree in Public Policy and Ageing from King’s College London. Previously Ina worked with HelpAge International in London and the International Longevity Centre Brazil in Rio de Janeiro.

Panelists

Toleaofo Nella Pepe Tavita Levy, Permanent Representative / Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Samoa to the UN and Other International Organisations in Geneva



Prior to her appointment to Geneva, Ms. Tavita-Levy had been working as the Assistant Chief Executive Officer of the Trade Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Samoa since April 2016. She was a Counsellor at the Embassy of Samoa in Brussels, Belgium, from November 2012 to March 2016. From May 2002 to November 2012, she served as Principal Foreign Service Officer and Senior Foreign Service Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. She was the Senior Policy and Research Officer and Industry Development Officer at the Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry of Samoa from January 1999 to May 2002.

Javeria Afzal, HelpAge International



Javeria Afzal is the climate change advisor at HelpAge International has over 15 years of experience in areas of climate resilience and adaptation. She has a keen interest in the intersection of climate change with sectors that matter to older people. She has expertise on participatory processes, gender, age inclusive and community development approaches.

Katie E. Cherry, Professor of Psychology, Emogene Pliner Distinguished Professor of Aging Studies, Louisiana State University

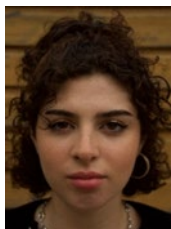


Dr. Cherry is interested in factors that impact healthy aging. Current research projects focus on disaster stress related to the historic flooding of 2016 and prior hurricane experience. Research interests include disaster stress and cognition in midlife and later adulthood and interdisciplinary studies of healthy aging.

Ricardo Pla Cordero, UNHCR



Ricardo Pla Cordero works as Protection Officer in the Division of International Protection at UNHCR, where he provides technical support on the rights of persons with disabilities and older persons under UNHCR mandate, which includes refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, internally displaced and persons in situations of statelessness. As a development and humanitarian worker, Ricardo has experience in the design, implementation and monitoring of human-rights programming and in the development of policy and guidance on the rights of persons with disabilities and older persons in situations of conflict and disasters.



Noga Levy-Rapoport, Youth Climate Activist

Noga Levy-Rapoport FRSA (they/them) is a 21 year old climate activist, organiser, and speaker. They led coordination and organisation of the school climate strikes across the UK and internationally as well as expansive involvement with demonstrations for climate and social justice, and have worked on numerous campaigns pushing for education reform, youth empowerment, communal and personal wellbeing, and a Green New Deal. They have led and been involved with queer, feminist, and sustainability community projects, embracing the creative sectors, music, theatre, and the arts as a crucial strategy for youth and social enfranchisement through politics and protest, with collaborations including the Royal Society of Arts, the Barbican, the English Touring Opera, the British Academy, and LiveNation. They've confronted corporate leaders directly at International Petroleum Week, and have spoken at, organised, and led several marches and events to demand urgent climate action, including at the International Maritime Organisation, COP26, Wembley Arena, and in Parliament.