

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**REPORT ON THE
REGIONAL SURVEY ON AGEING
(2005)**

conducted by the
United Nations Economic and Social Commission
for Asia and the Pacific

Written by Dr. Chan Cheung Ming, Alfred, Professor and Director, Asia Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies, and Dr. David R. Phillips, Chair Professor, Department of Politics and Sociology, Lingnan University.

Edited by Osama Rajkhan, Social Affairs Officer, Population and Social Integration Section, Emerging Social Issues Division, UNESCAP <rajkhan.unescap@un.org>

Contents

SUMMARY	2
I . BACKGROUND	3
II . POPULATION AGEING IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION ...	4
III . NATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES ON AGEING	6
A. National Mechanism on Ageing	6
B. Areas of Concern and Priorities	11
<i>1. Older Persons and Development</i>	11
<i>2. Advancing Health and Well-being into Old Age</i>	18
<i>3. Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environments</i>	22
C. Implementation and Follow-up	25
D. Regional and International Co-operation	34
IV . FUTURE PRIORITIES	36
V . CONCLUSION	38

Summary

The 2005 regional survey on ageing has three objectives. These include reviewing the current situation of older persons in Asia and the Pacific Region, updating the 2002 regional survey on ageing, and analyzing future directions to derive a regional strategy for the implementation of international, regional and national commitments on ageing. A questionnaire was sent out in June 2005 to 56 members and associate members of ESCAP that are situated in Asia and the Pacific. The findings and analysis contained in the report are based on information available from 20 countries and areas. The sources of data being used for this survey analysis include responses to the survey questionnaire; data from national studies, reports and governmental statements at the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Madrid, April 2002); the notions and context of the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) for the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific adopted at the Seminar on Regional Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Shanghai, September 2002).

Responses from the countries and areas reveal the priorities attached and actions undertaken by governments to meet the challenges of ageing, improve the quality of life of older persons and ensure their continued participation and development in society. These include emphasis on building positive images of ageing, promoting active ageing and life-long preparation for ageing, strengthening traditional support systems for the elderly, providing assistance to older persons who are vulnerable and without family support, review of social security systems, establishing standards of care, developing integrated health and social services, providing quality long-term care and community services, alleviating poverty in older persons as well as intensify the regional and international cooperation for the elderly issues.

In accordance with specific national circumstances, governments in the region have undertaken measures and set up mechanisms, to implement their commitments under the 1999 Macao Plan of Action in Ageing for Asia and the Pacific, the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the 2004 Regional seminar on the Follow-up to the Shanghai Implementation Strategy. In view of the difficulties encountered during the implementation process, such as lack of funds, knowledge, and training, continued regional and international cooperation is essential to facilitate the exchange of experiences and expertise among countries and areas.

The report concludes by discussing future priorities in the coming decades. These include old age pension and social security systems, health care coverage and public care concerns, formal/informal care provision, protection of the rights of older persons, and prevention of gender discrimination of older persons.

I. Background

The populations are ageing in most countries in Asia and the Pacific Region and the continued effect is felt through the decline in fertility rates and increases in life expectancies. It is projected that Asia and the Pacific will have the world's largest proportion of older persons in the next 30 years. It is thus crucial for policy makers to raise the public awareness and formulate and evaluate measures and programmes to cope with the demographic challenges.

This 2005 regional survey on ageing was conducted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), in conjunction with Asia-Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies (APIAS), to capture the policies and programmes on population ageing and special measures used to address the needs of older persons. It also updates the 2002 regional survey with new information on the situation of older persons, areas of concern and priority directions in national policies and programmes on ageing in the region.

The report discusses the results of the survey using data collected from 20 respondent countries and areas. Among them, 5 countries and areas (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macao, Mongolia) are from East Asia; 4 countries (Thailand, Lao, Malaysia, the Philippines) are from Southeast Asia, 6 countries (Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Iran) are from South-central Asia, 2 countries are from Southwest Asia (Georgia, Armenia) and 3 countries (Guam, New Zealand and Fiji) are from the Pacific. The analysis of the present report is based on the questionnaires collected from the UNESCAP region.

Questions designed in the questionnaire were mainly based on the notions and context of the earlier Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) for the Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific adopted at the Seminar on Regional Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing. Following a brief review of population ageing in Asia and the Pacific Region, four areas of actions were investigated, including

- a) Older persons and development;
- b) Advancing health and well-being into old age;
- c) Ensuring enabling and supportive environment;
- d) Implementation and follow-up.

II. Population ageing in Asia and the Pacific Region

The Asia and the Pacific Region is the most rapidly ageing region of the world yet the countries in this region have diverse population compositions. Japan has the highest percentage of population aged 65+, with an elderly population of 20 per cent in mid-2005. The other more developed countries and areas in the region, such as China, Hong Kong, Macao and New Zealand, also have high percentages of the population aged 65+, ranging from 8 to 12 percent. Developing countries such as Georgia, Armenia, Sri Lanka and Thailand have high percentages of older people, ranging from 7 percent to 14 percent. By contrast, some South, South-west and South-east countries, such as the Laos PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Iran, Maldives and Nepal, have relatively lower percentages of older people, at around 4 to 7 percent. Table 1 shows the current percentage of older people aged 65+ of the selected countries and areas in the region.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Selected Countries and Areas in Asia and the Pacific Region

	Country/ Area	Mid-2005 population (thousands)	% aged 65+	Sex ratio of population aged 65+
East Asia				
1.	China	1315844	8	86
2.	Hong Kong	6889	12	87
3.	Japan	127798	20	73
4.	Macao	456	8	75
5.	Mongolia	2646	4	78
South-east Asia				
6.	Lao PDR	5924	4	86
7.	Malaysia	26045	5	86
8.	the Philippines	85237	4	82
9.	Thailand	64261	8	79
South and South-west Asia				
10.	Bangladesh	141822	4	93
11.	Iran	69515	5	101
12.	Maldives	294	4	127
13.	Nepal	25343	4	101
14.	Sri Lanka	19680	7	84
North and Central Asia				
15.	Georgia	4474	14	65
16.	Armenia	3193	10	68
17.	Uzbekistan	26593	5	72

	Country/ Area	Mid-2005 population (thousands)	% aged 65+	Sex ratio of population aged 65+
Pacific				
18.	Fiji	848	4	80
19.	Guam	170	6	87
20.	New Zealand	4091	12	80

Source: 2005 ESCAP Population data sheet

http://www.unescap.org/esid/psis/population/database/data_sheet/2005/index.asp

In addition, the sex ratio (males per 100 Females) of the population aged 65+ is relatively low in Asia and the Pacific Region. In particular, in 2005, Japan, Macao, Mongolia, Thailand, Georgia, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Fiji and New Zealand have sex ratios as low or lower than 80m per 100s. This is due to the fact that women have longer life expectancies. As these older women are often more vulnerable and are more likely to lack income security, it is thus important to call for a necessity to address the need of the older women, after referred to the two feminization of ageing.

The demographic ageing of Asia and the Pacific Region has brought about changes at the individual, the community, national and international levels. Countries within the region have to seek active measures to cope with the challenges of population ageing.

III. National Policies and Programmes on Ageing

A. National Mechanisms on Ageing

Among the 20 respondent countries and areas (See Table 2), 83.3 percent of them have set up either a focal agency or a coordinating body to oversee issues relating to ageing or older persons. These agencies or bodies are varied in both nature and structure, ranging from more permanent government structure at the ministerial level to a single-agency or inter-agency/committee on ageing, or a branch/function of the social welfare department. The wide range of coordinating body in these countries shows the different strategies used to tackle the needs of older people in specific countries. Table 2 summarizes the four main types of agency/body established by selected countries and areas.

Table 2. Types of National Focal Agency / Coordinating Body on Ageing

<i>Types of Focal Agency / Coordinating Body</i>	<i>Name of Agencies / Coordinating Body on ageing</i>	<i>Countries/ regions</i>	<i>No. of countries/ Regions</i>	<i>%</i>
Minister for Ageing/ Office for Senior Citizens	1. The Aging Society Policy Council	Japan	2	10.0
	2. The Office for Senior Citizen, Ministry of Social Development; Older People Policy Team.	New Zealand		
National Committee on Ageing / Elderly Commission	1. The Elderly Commission	Hong Kong SAR	3	15.0
	2. National Advisory Council on Ageing & Elderly (NACAE)	Fiji		
	3. National Secretariat for Elders	Sri Lanka		
Inter-agency /Inter-ministerial Committee on Ageing	1. CNWCA (consisting 26 government ministries, national NGOs)	China	2	10.0
	2. Inter-Agency Committee for the Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens	the Philippines		
Ministry /Department of Social Welfare / Social Justice/ Labour	1. Division of Senior Citizens, Department of Public health and Social Services	Guam	9	45.0
	2. Department of Social Welfare Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons	Thailand		

<i>Types of Focal Agency / Coordinating Body</i>	<i>Name of Agencies / Coordinating Body on ageing</i>	<i>Countries/ Regions</i>	<i>No. of countries/ Regions</i>	<i>%</i>	
Ministry /Department of Social Welfare / Social Justice/ Labour	3. Ministry of women, children and social welfare	Nepal			
	4. Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour, Population development policy and coordination department	Mongolia			
	5. Nuroniy Foundation, Ministry of Labour & Social Protection of Population	Uzbekistan			
	6. The Elderly Service Division of Social Welfare Division	Macao,			
	7. The national policy & programs for older persons, government department and NGOs, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development	Malaysia			
	8. Directorate of social services M/O social welfare	Bangladesh			
	9. Ministry of Social Security and Welfare	Iran			
	No information / Nil		Georgia, Lao PDR, Armenia, Maldives	4	20.0
	Total			20	100

Sources: Regional Survey on Ageing, ESCP, 2005.

More developed countries such as Japan and New Zealand have generally set up a high-level government agency at the ministerial level which takes the leadership role in directing and coordinating manpower and resource in dealing with ageing issues. Countries and areas such as Hong Kong, Fiji and Sri Lanka have established national committees or commissions on ageing to co-ordinate the planning and development of various programmes and services for the older people. Some countries have inter-agency committees to monitor and implement the policies and programmes for older people. For example, those in China and the Philippines consist of coordinating bodies which are made up of various government ministries, national NGOs. However, most countries in Asia and the Pacific Region (45.0%) have no specialized agency/body to deal with the ageing issues. In these cases, usually the Ministry/ Department of Social Welfare have taken on the role of providing welfare services to meet the needs of the older people. Only a few respondent countries/areas (20.0 percent) have no focal agency or coordinating body on ageing.

About 65 percent of the respondent countries have a national policy or plan of action on ageing and/or legislation regarding older people (See table 2). This shows most countries in Asia and the Pacific Region have recognized ageing as a development issue and addressed the needs of older people.

Well over half (58.3 percent) of the countries and areas do have a monitoring framework in place to assess the impact of efforts and activities. For example, there are national older councils, pension payments, health insurance and older housing available in Iran. New Zealand and the Philippines have set up plan of action for achieving active ageing and the China's National People's Congress has organized a nation-wide monitoring and supervision of the implementation of its law every five years. Nearly half of the governments of the surveyed countries had undertaken a comprehensive social analysis by using participatory tools such as client satisfaction surveys and focus groups. In addition, only half of the countries in the region have been undertaken an analysis of existing policies and programmes or surveys on ageing in the past five years. Most countries (41.7 percent) have showed that the SIS has been a major influence in promoting activities and programmes on ageing. The successful ageing programmes that adopted as national policies covered various aspects including volunteer-training programmes, lifelong learning, and community care service with the partnership of NGOs.

Table 3. National Policies/Plans of Action on Ageing

<i>Types of Framework</i>		<i>Countries/ Regions</i>	<i>No. of Countries/ Regions</i>	<i>%</i>
National Policy on Ageing	Article 29, the Constitution of I.R. Iran Article 192 part A section of the Executive Bylaw of the 3 rd Development Plan (1999-2003). This bylaw established the executive bodies and administrative and institutional arrangement for execution of the above	Iran	3	15.0
	Senior Citizens' policy and working policy 2002, tenth five years development plan of Nepal government 2003	Nepal		
	The National Policy for Older Persons 1995 & the National Plan of Action for Older Persons 1998	Malaysia		
National Legislation on Ageing (Law, Ordinance, Presidential Act etc.)	Basic Law on Measures for the Aging Society (Law No.128.1995); General Principles Concerning Measures for the Aged Society (2001)	Japan	7	35.0
	National programme elderly health and social protection (1998); Law on elderly social protection (1995)	Mongolia		
	New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy, enacted in 2001; Government's Overall Strategy for People over 65	New Zealand		
	Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens; Republic Act No. 7432 and Republic Act No. 9257	the Philippines		
	Protection of rights of Elders Act	Sri Lanka		

<i>Types of Framework</i>		<i>Countries/ Regions</i>	<i>No. of Countries/ Regions</i>	<i>%</i>
	No 09 of 2000 The charter of Nuroniy Foundation, the Law on State Persian Maintenance of Citizens The Law of Protecting the Rights of the Elderly of the PRC enacted in 1996. China's Five Year Development Plan on Ageing 2000-2005.	Uzbekistan China		
National Plans of Action	HKSAR Government has designated "Care for Elders" as a Strategic Policy Objective since 1997, with a view to ensuring elders enjoy a sense of security and belonging and happiness. National plans of action on ageing, national health planning and long term basic education development plans are being implemented; The 2nd National Plan for Older Persons 2002-2021, The Act on older persons B.E. 2546. State Plan (2004-2007), P.L. 14-139	Hong Kong, SAR Thailand Guam	3	15.0
None		Fiji, Maldives, Macao, Georgia, Bangladesh	5	25.0
No information		Armenia, Lao PDR	2	10.0
		Total	20	100.0

Sources: Regional Survey on Ageing, ESCP, 2005.

B. Areas of Concern and Priorities

The Second World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid in August 2002 adopted an International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA). This is a response to the opportunities and challenges of population ageing in the twenty-first century. The Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) for the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific adopted at the Seminar on Regional Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing reaffirmed the importance of the various elderly issues in Asia and the Pacific Region. In the context of the above meetings and conferences, three priority directions were emphasized. They are: (1) older persons and development, (2) advancing health and well-being into old age; and (3) ensuring an enabling and supportive environment. In addition, seven areas of concern relating to ageing and older persons were addressed, involving social position of older persons, family, health, housing, market, income security and social services. All these guide the countries in Asia and the Pacific region to develop ageing policies and programmes and allow the countries to cooperate and share their own experiences to meet the challenges of ageing.

1. Older Persons and Development

Older Persons are expected to participate fully in the development process and share in its benefit. This provides older persons with the opportunity to make a continuous contribution to society in different areas such as the market, the family and the society at large as well. In addition, this direction also involves the provision of social protection and security and the alleviation of poverty in old age.

Active Participation in Society and Development

Most of the surveyed countries have placed a great emphasis on the promotion of positive images of ageing (mean score = 3.26 on a scale of 1 to 5 points). The majority (75.0 percent) showed that they have undertaken such promotion through public education. For example, the HK's Elderly Commission's Task Group on Active Ageing in Hong Kong promoted lifelong learning for older people and well-prepared financial security on retirement and intergenerational solidarity among the young and the old. However, some countries, such as the Philippines, showed that these promotional activities were seasonal, particularly during national observance for older persons.

Well over half of the countries and areas in the region recognized the contribution of older persons through mass media campaigns (66.7 percent), publicizing the UN principle (58.3 percent) and involving persons in decision-making processes at all levels. The priority (mean score = 2.77 on a scale of 5) given to these measures are intended to enhance the participation of older people.

Table 4. Active Participation of Older Persons in Society and Development

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
		Yes	No		
1.	Public education on positive images of ageing	Yes	18	75.0	3.26
		No	2	8.3	
2.	Mass media campaigns to recognize the contribution of older persons	Yes	16	66.7	2.70
		No	5	20.8	
3.	Publicity given to the UN principles for older persons	Yes	14	58.3	2.71
		No	6	25.0	
4.	Involvement of older persons in decision-making processes at all levels	Yes	13	54.2	2.90
		No	6	25.0	

Productive Ageing

In terms of productive ageing, priorities were given to the promotion and provision of opportunities for continuing education and the provision of opportunities for older people to remain engaged in social, economic and communities' activities (with a mean score of 2.92 and 3.00 on a scale of 5 respectively). More than 70 percent of the surveyed countries have undertaken such measures.

Attention was also paid to measures such as promoting lifelong preparation for old age through public campaigns (mean score = 2.67 on a scale of 5) and removing disincentives to working beyond retirement age (mean score = 2.52 on a scale of 5). However, less importance was placed on the increase of labour force participation of older people (mean score 2.25 with a scale of 5). Well over half of the respondent countries and areas have worked out measures to increase participation of older persons who wish to remain in the labour market. Areas, such as Hong Kong provide priority employment services to assist older job seekers to find suitable employment. However, in the Philippines, opportunities for older people are limited as most of the retirees are pensioners who want to enjoy the remaining years of their lives and therefore have little incentive to work.

Table 5. Productive Ageing

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Public campaigns promoting lifelong preparation for old age	Yes No	16 6	66.7 25.0	2.67
2.	Measures to increase participation of older persons who wish to be in the labour market	Yes No	14 7	58.3 29.2	2.25
3.	Promoting and providing opportunities for continuing Education	Yes No	17 4	70.8 16.7	2.92
4.	Provision of opportunities for older persons to remain engaged in social, economic and communities activities	Yes No	18 3	75.0 12.5	3.00
5.	Removing disincentives to working beyond retirement age	Yes No	12 9	50.0 37.5	2.52

Older Persons and the Family

With regard to older persons and the family, greater emphasis was placed on the strengthening of traditional support (mean score = 3.53 on a scale of 5) and the provision of assistance to older persons without family support (mean score = 3.41 on a scale of 5). Similar to the findings in the 2002 regional survey, the family is still considered to be the main source of care and support for older persons. Well over half (62.5 percent) of the respondent countries/areas have undertaken measures to strengthen traditional support. In Sri Lanka, for example, there are Village Based Elders Committee programmes which emphasize the continuity of traditional support systems. In China, the practice of family support contact between adult children and their elderly parents was promoted in the rural areas and is strengthened the primary school curriculum.

A majority of the respondent countries and areas have taken initiatives to provide aids and home care for older persons without family support or who lived in rural area. Assistance in kind, in the form of food, clothing, housing, medical care, home care, cash and allowance, are given to older people without family support in China, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka and Thailand. To strengthen the multi-generational relationships, Hong Kong and China have provided intergenerational programmes to strengthen things such as the Chinese tradition of respecting older persons. For Hong Kong, carers were given various support including counseling, training on caring skills and all types of respite services. Tax incentives are also given to children and grand children who take care of their parents/grandparents.

Table 6. Older Persons and the Family

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Provision of support to families with older members	Yes No	18 4	75.0 16.7	3.09
2.	Training family members on home care of older persons	Yes No	17 5	70.8 20.8	2.77
3.	Provision of home nursing/home helper services for older persons	Yes No	18 4	75.0 16.7	3.27
4.	Strengthening of multi-generational relationships	Yes No	16 6	66.7 25.0	3.25
5.	Strengthening of traditional support systems	Yes No	15 5	62.5 20.8	3.53
6.	Provision of assistance to older persons without family support	Yes No	19 3	79.2 12.5	3.41
7.	Special programmes to support the older persons in rural areas	Yes No	19 3	79.2 12.5	3.00

Older Persons and the Market

Nearly half of the countries or areas have undertaken measures to promote the consumer awareness among the older people. For example, the Philippines provide senior citizens with discounts on health care and necessities, while Japan and Hong Kong have laws or organizations to protect consumers' interests and rights of all age groups.

Table 7. Older Persons and the Market

	<i>Activities/programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Promotion of consumer awareness and consumer education campaigns	Yes No	13 8	54.2 33.3	2.68
2.	Promotion of consumer groups that include older persons	Yes No	10 11	41.7 45.8	2.74
3.	Measures for protection of elderly consumers	Yes No	10 11	41.7 45.8	2.79

Income Security and Poverty Alleviation

By contrast to the above, issues of income security and social protection received greater attention among the surveyed countries and areas. In particular, the highest priority relatively is placed on the encouragement of savings by employees and workers (mean score = 3.48 on a scale of 5). Roughly 15 surveyed countries and areas have taken these initiatives. For example, Sri Lanka has implemented several social protection and security programmes, such as Public Sector Pension Scheme, Public Service Providers Fund, and pension schemes to assist older people. However, the desired and appropriate benefits for older persons in the Philippines could not be granted because of limitations in the social security system.

Table 8. Income Security, Social Protection/Social Security and Development

	<i>Activities /programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Encourage savings by employees and workers	Yes No	15 5	62.5 20.8	3.48
2.	Review the adequacy of benefits of social protection Schemes (e.g. Improving coverage and level of benefits)	Yes No	15 7	62.5 29.2	3.45
3.	Provide social security coverage to people in the informal sector	Yes No	16 4	66.7 16.7	3.30

Poverty and Old Age

With Regard to poverty and old age, greater concern have been attached to meet the needs of older persons who are especially vulnerable (mean score = 3.55 on a scale of 5), while measures aiming at facilitation of income generation schemes for older person received the least attention (mean score = 2.59 on a scale of 5). Eighteen surveyed countries and areas have taken action in meeting the needs of older persons who are especially vulnerable, and are in an emergency/disaster situations and also inclusion of older people as a target group in local poverty alleviation schemes for older people. However, the Philippines have a limited national budget to sustain the pro-poor programs to alleviate poverty.

Table 9. Poverty and Old Age

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response		<i>%</i>	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Provision of minimum income for older persons	Yes	14	58.3	3.32
		No	8	33.3	
2.	Meeting the needs of older persons who are especially vulnerable	Yes	18	75.0	3.55
		No	3	12.5	
3.	Addressing special needs of older persons in an Emergency/disaster situation e.g. Tsunami, severe drought	Yes	18	75.0	3.32
		No	3	12.5	
4.	Inclusion of older persons as a target group in local poverty alleviation programmes	Yes	18	75.0	3.36
		No	3	12.5	
5.	Facilitation of income generation schemes for older person	Yes	12	50.0	2.59
		No	9	37.5	
6.	Conduct of surveys on poverty in older persons	Yes	15	62.5	3.05
		No	6	25.0	
7.	Old Age Pension Scheme for the poor (<i>monthly allowance for poor older persons</i>)	Yes	9	37.5	3.41
		No	11	45.8	

Social Services and the Community

With regard to social services and the community, most countries and areas gave a high priority to issues of funding NGOs to provide older people with basic social services (mean score of 3.62, scales are 0-5 unless otherwise stated); improving access by older people to basic social services (mean score of 3.57) and encouragement of participation and contribution by older persons in community activities (mean score of 3.50). It appears that most countries and areas (17 countries and areas) have actively undertaken activities or programming to achieve these services. For instance, Village Level Elders Committees have been established in Sri Lanka to encourage participation and contribution in community activities.

Table 10. Social Services and the Community

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Monitoring the standards and quality of services specially targeted for older persons	Yes	17	70.8	3.09
		No	4	16.7	
2.	Improving access by older persons to basic social services	Yes	19	79.2	3.57
		No	2	8.3	
3.	Direct provision of basic social services to older people at concessionary rates or free of charge	Yes	20	83.3	3.39
		No	1	4.2	
4.	Funding NGOs to provide basic social services to older people	Yes	17	70.8	3.62
		No	3	12.5	
5.	Encouragement of participation and contribution by older persons in community activities	Yes	18	75.0	3.50
		No	5	20.8	
6.	Encouragement of associations of older persons	Yes	17	70.8	3.35
		No	5	20.8	

2. Advancing Health and Well-being into old Age

Health and Nutrition

Education on health risks from unhealthy behaviours (diets; smoking and substance abuse) received the highest attention among the surveyed countries and areas (mean score = 4.00 on a scale of 5). Other important concerns include promotion of integrated health and social services in community programmes (mean score = 3.55 on a scale of 5), provision of health care free or at concessionary rates for older persons (mean score = 3.58 on a scale of 5). In contrast, setting (age) targets, especially gender-specific targets, for mortality and morbidity reduction received less attention (mean score = 2.74 on a scale of 5).

Table 11. Health and Nutrition

	<i>Activities/programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Public education on active ageing	Yes	15	62.5	3.30
		No	5	20.8	
2.	Provision of health care free or at concessionary rates for older person	Yes	18	75.0	3.58
		No	6	25.0	
3.	Development of geriatric training	Yes	16	66.7	3.26
		No	3	12.5	
4.	Setting (age) targets, especially gender-specific targets, for mortality and morbidity reduction	Yes	13	54.2	2.74
		No	6	25.0	
5.	Education on health risks from unhealthy behaviours (diets, smoking, substance abuse)	Yes	16	66.7	4.00
		No	3	12.5	
6.	Provide training incentives for health and social care professionals on counseling older persons on healthy lifestyles and self-care	Yes	15	62.5	3.37
		No	3	12.5	
7.	Develop statistical indicators on common diseases in older persons	Yes	13	54.2	3.26
		No	6	25.0	
8.	Promotion of integrated health and social services in community programmes	Yes	18	75.0	3.55
		No	6	25.0	
9.	Educate older persons and the public about specific nutritional problems and needs of older persons	Yes	16	66.7	3.29
		No	2	8.3	

Universal Access to Health Care Services

Regarding to the accessibility of health care services, priority was most often assigned to the issues concerning the affordable access by older persons to medications and therapeutic measures (mean score = 3.60 on a scale of 5) and enhancing access of older persons to public health care and eliminating age-bias (mean score = 3.67 on a sale of 5). Fifteen of the surveyed countries and areas had enhanced the accessibility of older persons to these services, provided training for the public health carers and social workers in basic gerontology and geriatrics and supported the development of palliative care.

Table 12. Universal Access to Health Care Services

	<i>Activities /programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Affordable access by older persons to medications and Therapeutic measures	Yes No	17 2	70.8 8.3	3.60
2.	Enhance access of older persons to public health care and eliminate age-bias	Yes No	15 4	62.5 16.7	3.67
3.	Train public health care and social workers in basic Gerontology and geriatrics	Yes No	15 4	62.5 16.7	3.28
4.	Supporting the development of palliative care	Yes No	15 3	62.5 12.5	3.22

Older Persons and HIV/AIDS

Less emphasis has generally been placed on issues concerning HIV/AIDS by most of the respondent countries and areas. Fewer than 45 percent of the governments of the surveyed countries and areas have carried out measures to collect data on extent of HIV/AIDS infection among older persons and on older persons caring for people with HIV/AIDS and/or AIDS orphans. They recognize and support the needs of infected older persons, training older caregivers in HIV/AIDS care and risks and improve the assessment of the impact of HIV/AIDS on older people.

Table 13. Older Persons and HIV/AIDS

	<i>Activities /programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response		<i>%</i>	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Collection of data on extent of HIV/AIDS infection among older persons	Yes	10	41.7	3.00
		No	9	37.5	
2.	Recognizing and supporting the needs of infected older persons	Yes	11	45.8	2.88
		No	8	33.3	
3.	Collection of data on older persons caring for people with HIV/AIDS and/or AIDS orphans	Yes	6	25.0	2.50
		No	13	54.2	
4.	Training of older caregivers in HIV/AIDS care and risks	Yes	7	29.2	2.25
		No	11	45.8	
5.	Improvement of assessment of the impact of HIV/AIDS on older persons	Yes	10	41.7	2.65
		No	9	37.5	

Disability and Mental Health Needs of Older Persons

Greater concern on adequate access to drugs and medicines by poor older persons is shown by most of the respondents (mean score = 3.39 on a scale of 5). A majority of the countries and areas (66.7 percent) have taken initiatives to provide physical and mental rehabilitation services for older persons with disabilities and adequate access to drugs and medicines by poor older person. In the Philippines, for example, Neighborhood Support Services for Older Persons was undertaken to promote home care for the older persons by the participation of their family members and community volunteers. In comparison, fewer than half of the countries and areas have developed programmes to help persons with Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia and establish support networks for carers of older persons with mental illness and physical disability.

Table 14. Disability and Mental Health Needs of Older Persons

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Develop programmes to help persons with Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia	Yes No	10 10	41.7 41.7	3.17
2.	Include in relevant national agendas issues concerning older persons with disabilities	Yes No	13 5	54.2 20.8	3.17
3.	Provide physical and mental rehabilitation services for older persons with disabilities	Yes No	16 3	66.7 12.5	3.15
4.	Increase funding for training in counseling services for older persons and their carers	Yes No	12 6	50.0 25.0	2.88
5.	Establish support networks for carers of older persons with mental problems and disability	Yes No	11 7	45.8 29.2	3.24
6.	Adequate access to drugs and medicines by poor older persons	Yes No	16 3	66.7 12.5	3.39

3. Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environments

Among the various measures, most of the surveyed countries and areas placed a high priority on the promotion of “ageing in place” with due regard to individual preferences and affordable housing options (mean score = 3.18 on a scale of 5). Fewer than half of the countries and areas have taken initiatives in collecting of data about older persons residency profile and preferences, promotion of “ageing in place”, encouraging age-friendly and accessible housing design, promoting equitable allocation of public housing for older persons, ensuring new urban spaces are free from barriers to access/mobility and designing safe roads and developing new kinds of vehicles catering for the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities.

Table 15. Housing and the Living Environment

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Collection of data about older persons residency profile and preferences	Yes No	11 7	45.8 29.2	2.94
2.	Promotion of “ageing in place” with due regard to individual preferences and affordable housing options	Yes No	11 7	45.8 29.2	3.18
3.	Encourage age-friendly and accessible housing design	Yes No	10 7	41.7 29.2	2.69
4.	Promote equitable allocation of public housing for older persons	Yes No	11 6	45.8 25.0	3.00
5.	Ensure that new urban spaces are free from barriers to access/mobility	Yes No	10 7	41.7 29.2	2.71
6.	Design safe roads and develop new kinds of vehicles catering for the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities	Yes No	9 9	37.5 37.5	3.00

Care and Support for Care-givers

Ageing in place or maintaining older people in the community is widely as an important issue in Asia and the Pacific Region. Higher priority was attached to the care and support for caregivers. In particular, supporting community-based care and family care was regarded as the highest priority (mean score = 3.81 on a scale of 5).

The majority of the surveyed countries and areas (17/20 countries and areas) have taken initiatives to develop policies for a continuum of care and services for older persons, supporting community-based care and family care and establish standards to ensure quality care in formal care settings. For example, the Elders Secretariat in Sri Lanka has launched training programmes to train volunteers to provide elder care services for elders by keeping them in their homes with the assistance of the Ministry of Health & HelpAge.

Table 16. Care and Support for Care-givers

	<i>Activities/programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Develop policies for a continuum of care and services for older persons	Yes No	17 4	70.8 16.7	3.43
2.	Support community-based care and family care	Yes No	17 4	70.8 16.7	3.81
3.	Establish standards to ensure quality care in formal care settings	Yes No	17 3	70.8 12.5	3.50
4.	Improve access to and quality of long-term care (LTC) for older persons	Yes No	14 6	58.3 25.0	3.50
5.	Support caregivers through training, information, psychological, economic, social and legislative mechanisms	Yes No	15 5	62.5 20.8	3.06
6.	Provide financial or fiscal support or incentives to carers	Yes No	8 12	33.3 50.0	3.00
7.	Develop social support systems to enhance the ability of families to take care of older persons with the family	Yes No	13 6	54.2 25.0	3.22

Neglect, Abuse and Violence Involving Older Persons

Despite the fact that the measures to prevent the neglect, abuse and violence involving older people are relatively frequent (mean scores range from 2.76 – 3.19), only 37.5 percent of the surveyed countries have enacted legislation on elderly abuse. In Hong Kong, for example, legislation has been provided with the necessary legal power to prosecute those who have committed criminal offences against elders.

Table 17. Neglect, Abuse and Violence Involving Older Persons

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Sensitize the public and professionals to neglect, violence and abuse of older persons	Yes No	15 5	62.5 20.8	3.11
2.	Enact legislation on elderly abuse	Yes No	9 9	37.5 37.5	2.76
3.	Monitor elderly persons human rights violations	Yes No	13 7	54.2 29.2	3.16
4.	Establish services for victims of abuse, including rehabilitation	Yes No	12 7	50.0 29.2	3.19

C. Implementation and Follow-up

To implement the policies and programmes on ageing, 5 surveyed countries and areas (Bangkok, Guam, Macao, Malaysia and Thailand) allocated less than 2 percent of the government budget. The Philippines, Lao, Bangladesh and Georgia have allocated 2 to 4 percent of the government budget for implementing ageing programmes. Developed countries such as Hong Kong, Mongolia, Japan and New Zealand have generally allocated more than 4 percent of the government budget for the same purpose. Seventy percent of the surveyed countries and areas reported an increase in the budget allocation to ageing programmes since 2001. A majority (66.7 percent) had mainstreamed ageing concerns into national development projects and poverty eradication. However, fewer than half of the countries and areas had new structures or mechanisms set up or strengthened for implementation. Table 18 & 19 summarizes the plans of government of national, regional and international commitments on ageing.

Involvement of NGOs and the Private Sector

A vast majority of the surveyed countries and areas (70.8 percent) had NGO active representation or participation in review of policies and programmes. These organizations are the members of the national boards / committees / councils on older people and have involved in drafting policy processes.

Half of the surveyed countries and areas had involved private sectors in the implementation of national plans of action. These private sectors provided privileges in the form of medicines and prime commodities; subsidized residential care service to elders in need. For example, the New Zealand Corporation works with not-for-profit social housing providers, private sector to provide rental housing and house ownership opportunities for low income New Zealanders.

Research on Ageing

The governments of China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macao, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Guam and New Zealand sponsored ageing research or undertook the research themselves. The themes range from living standards, lifelong learning, participation in ageing programmes, elder abuse, suicide of older persons, financial security in old age, housing, transportation, long-term care needs and image of older persons.

Involvement of the Media

Half of the governments of the surveyed countries have worked in partnership with the general media. These countries include China, Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong,

Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Maldives, Macao and Malaysia.

Table 18. Implementation: Resources and Structure

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%
1.	Government budget allocated for implementation of policies and programmes on ageing	0 – 2%	5	20.8
		2 – 4%	6	25.0
		above 4%	4	16.7
		no information available	4	16.7
2.	Budget allocation has increased since 2001	Yes	18	70.5
		No	3	12.5
3.	New structure or mechanism set up or strengthened for implementation	Yes	11	45.8
		No	9	37.5
4.	Ageing concerns are mainstreamed into national development projects and poverty eradication	Yes	16	66.7
		No	4	16.7
5.	NGO representation or participation in review of policies and programmes	Yes	17	70.8
		No	4	16.7
6.	Private sector representation or participation in major projects and programmes	Yes	12	50.0
		No	8	33.3
7.	Ageing research sponsored or undertaken by government	Yes	13	54.2
		No	6	25.0
8.	Government has worked in partnership with the general media	Yes	12	50.0
		No	7	29.2

Table 19. Implementation Structures and Processes

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
1.	China	no	National Working Commission on Ageing CNCA	5 year development plan on ageing 00-05	Draft policy process	no	yes	yes
2.	Hong Kong (case 1)	no		Agenda on Poverty	Elderly Association as the working group for laws of "Elderly social welfare and social protection", Through our Council, the Government has collected views from the relevant NGOs and sometimes also invited	Through the Senior Citizens' Card Scheme, some companies or corporations have been providing privileges to elders.	Research on re-engineering community support services to elders by a University, research on elder learning by a NGO, research on elder abuse by a NGO, research on elderly suicide by universities	yes

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
					representative s of the Council and the NGOs to participate in review			
3.	Hong Kong (Case 2)	Resources mobilization	Elderly Commission	Commission on Poverty	The Health, Welfare and Food Bureau organized an annual consultation exercise with major NGOs to exchange views on how to further enhance welfare services, including elderly services. NGOs were invited to attend the consultation	The Social Welfare Department started purchasing residential care places from residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) since 1989 to provide subsidized residential care service to elders in need, and started contracting	The Central Policy Unit of the HKSAR Government has commissioned the University of HK to conduct studies on the financial security in old age. The Health, Welfare and Food Bureau is undertaking study on long-term care needs and image of elders.	yes

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
						the operation of purpose-built RCHEs to qualified operators including private operators.		
4.	Japan	no			NGO activists participated in the Advisory Body to the Government on measures for the Aged Society (1998)	Cabinet Office (CAO) & NGO co-host seminars regarding the aging society	Themes: Survey on Daily Life of Senior Citizens, Attitude Survey on Participation in local Communities by the Elderly e.g. needs	
5.	Macao	Increased budget	Social Work Committee	Old Age Allowance 2005	The Social Work Committee, the Elderly Service Committee 2005	Annual Older Persons Festival	Profile of Older Persons in Residential Care Services, HK Association of Gerontology, benchmarking the need of residential care services	yes

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
6.	Mongolia	no	National Committee on Ageing			no	yes	yes
7.	the Philippines	Resources mobilization		Government expenditure on the older persons and persons with disabilities.	National Coordination and Monitoring Board of Republic Act No. 9257 has 5 licensed and accredited NGOs as member representing the urban poor, rural poor and the veterans.	Specially the business establishment s which provides discounts on medicines and prime commodities.	Focusing on social security and health. Few researches on ageing conducted in the Philippines because of limited budget.	yes
8.	Thailand	2nd National Plan for the older persons 2002-2021	The National Board on older persons	monthly allowance	NGOs are also members of the national board on Older Persons	Every year, Thailand celebrates the National older Persons' Day on April 13th and call for	Theme(s) health and social issues, the researchers (government, NGOs, universities, international agencies, etc.),	yes

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
						participation and collaboration among GO, NGO as well as private sectors to co-ordinate, promotion and celebration some special activities on this occasion	whether the research is specific (e.g. into certain disease, needs)	
9.	Malaysia	no	Committee	8th Malaysia Plan (01-05) for building of 19 Day-Care Centres for Older persons	Malaysian Youth Council, Malaysian Association of social workers	Malaysian Airline System, Employees Provident Fund, Malaysian Railway System	yes	yes
10.	Lao	no			no			yes
11.	Bangladesh	no		"Old age allowance program"	yes	yes		no

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
12.	Nepal	no	Inter-ministries	no	CWDC	no	no	no
13.	Maldives	no			Manfa - centre on ageing		no	yes
14.	Sri Lanka	Increased budget awareness program savings strengthen the social protection system	A National Council for Elders	Sponsorship program	The national committee for elders consists of representative s from NGO who work for elders	no	no	no
15.	Iran	no						
16.	Uzbekistan	no						
17.	Georgia	no		State strategy on eradication of extreme poverty	no	no	no	no
18.	Armenia	no	?	PRSP	no			
19.	Guam	no	no	no	Guam Council on Senior Citizens	Seniors In Motion, Golds Gym and Paradise Fitness offering various	Micronesian Health & Ageing Services (MHAS)	

	Country/ Area	Implementation Plan	Structure and Mechanism	National Development Project	NGO Involvement	Private sector Involvement	Government Sponsored / undertaken research	Media involvement
						exercise classes to Senior Citizens		
20.	New Zealand	Positive Ageing Strategy	Older People's Policy Team	NZ Positive Ageing Strategy, the Health of Older People Strategy, and the Living Standards of Older New Zealanders publication	The Office for Senior Citizens, the Older People's Policy Team, & other groups within Ministry of Social Development	Housing New Zealand Corporation worked with not-for-profit social housing providers, private sector to provide rental housing & house ownership opportunities for low income New Zealanders	Theme: transport, housing, living standards of older Maori, New Zealand Institute for Research on Ageing, housing for older people	no
21.	Fiji	no	no		no	no	no	No

D. Regional and international cooperation

Population ageing is a common phenomenon that every country in the region and survey is facing albeit to different degrees. Regional and international cooperation can help to cope with the challenge. From the survey, highest priority was given to the participation in sub-regional or regional activities relating to ageing (mean score = 3.24 on a scale of 5), following is the inter-country exchanges of information and experience on ageing (mean score = 3.22 on a scale of 5). However, only half of the countries and areas had actively cooperated with other countries by facilitating the inter-country exchanges of information and experience on ageing; providing technical assistance and advisory services on ageing to other countries; initiating resource mobilization from multi-lateral donor institutions; organizing inter-country joint research and training activities; participating in sub-regional or regional activities relating to ageing and requesting for technical assistance from ESCAP and/or other international agencies.

Table 20. International Co-operation

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Inter-country exchanges of information and experience on ageing	Yes	12	50.0	3.22
		No	7	29.2	
2.	Provision of technical assistance and advisory services on ageing to other countries	Yes	7	29.2	2.56
		No	12	50.0	
3.	Initiation of resource mobilization from multi-lateral donor institutions	Yes	6	25.0	2.67
		No	13	54.2	
4.	Inter-country joint research and training activities	Yes	7	29.2	2.56
		No	12	50.0	
5.	Participation in sub-regional or regional activities relating to ageing	Yes	11	45.8	3.24
		No	8	33.3	
6.	Request for technical assistance from ESCAP and/or other international agencies	Yes	7	29.2	2.73
		No	11	45.8	

Nevertheless, there are difficulties perceived by the surveyed countries in implementing the programmes and activities on ageing. As showed in Table 21, lack of funds (mean score = 3.73 on a scale of 5) and shortage of government staff (mean score = 3.71 on a scale of 5) were regarded as the prime two difficulties. Nearly half of the surveyed countries and areas have encountered these challenges.

Table 21. Difficulties Encountered in Implementation Regional and International Plans of Action on Ageing

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of seriousness (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Lack of information	Yes No	11 6	45.8 25.0	2.94
2.	Low priority	Yes No	11 5	45.8 20.8	3.43
3.	Lack of funds	Yes No	14 3	58.3 12.5	3.73
4.	Lack of policy-making knowledge	Yes No	9 8	37.5 33.3	3.07
5.	Shortage of government staff	Yes No	12 4	50.0 16.7	3.71
6.	Lack of inter-departmental cooperation/coordination	Yes No	10 6	41.7 25.0	3.31
7.	Lack of training for implementers	Yes No	13 3	54.2 12.5	3.60

IV. Future Priorities

In the coming decade (2005-2015), raising media commitment and promoting active ageing (mean score = 4.47 on a scale of 5) and having old age pension schemes (mean score = 4.50 on a scale of 5), social security systems (mean score of 4.45 on a scale of 5) and health care coverage (mean score = 4.55 on a scale of 5) are highlighted as higher priorities by near 80 percent of the surveyed countries and areas.

Table 22. Priorities in the Coming Decade (2005-2015)

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
1.	Old age pension schemes	Yes	19	79.2	4.50
		No	1	4.2	
2.	Social security systems	Yes	19	79.2	4.45
		No	1	4.2	
3.	Health care coverage	Yes	19	79.2	4.55
		No	0	0	
4.	Geriatric services	Yes	18	75.0	4.21
		No	0	0	
5.	Formal/informal care giving	Yes	19	79.2	4.15
		No	5	0	
6.	Caregivers support guidance and support	Yes	19	79.2	4.15
		No	0	0	
7.	Public health concerns	Yes	18	75.0	3.95
		No	1	4.2	
8.	Older persons and HIV/AIDS	Yes	15	62.5	3.05
		No	4	16.7	
9.	Protection of the rights of older persons	Yes	19	79.2	4.10
		No	0	0	
10.	Research on ageing	Yes	19	79.2	4.25
		No	0	0	
11.	Intergenerational equity and solidarity	Yes	18	75.0	3.84
		No	0	0	
12.	Issues of particular concern to older women	Yes	18	75.0	3.55
		No	1	4.2	
13.	Migration and integration of newcomers	Yes	17	70.8	3.19
		No	3	12.5	
14.	Participation and contribution by older persons	Yes	20	83.3	3.90
		No	0	0	
15.	Employment and labour markets	Yes	19	79.2	3.50
		No	1	4.2	

	<i>Activities / programmes undertaken by government</i>	Response	N	%	<i>Level of importance (Scale of 5) Mean score</i>
16.	Older persons in emergency and conflict situations	Yes	19	79.2	3.45
		No	0	0	
17.	Engaging private sector	Yes	18	75.0	3.95
		No	1	4.2	
18.	Raising media commitment and promoting active ageing	Yes	19	79.2	4.47
		No	0	0	
19.	Comprehensive strategies for successful ageing	Yes	10	41.7	4.26
		No	0	0	

V. Conclusion

The above findings and analysis in this report are based on the information collected from 20 countries and areas. Most countries in Asia and the Pacific Region have some kind of focal agency or coordinating body on ageing. National policies or plans have generally been established to implement and coordinate the programmes for the older people to meet their needs. These structures aim to carry out the measures that emphasize the continuing participation and empowerment of older persons in the development process, providing quality health and long-term care to ensure the quality of life at all ages, integrating the support from the family and community to enable an elderly-friendly culture. International cooperation to enhance the exchange of information and experience on ageing through sub-regional or regional activities relating to ageing is expected to cope with the global challenge. However, inadequate funds and manpower have hindered the development of national policies and programmes on ageing in Asia and the Pacific Region. Looking forward to the coming decades, financial security for older people and raising public awareness on active ageing are the most important issues that most countries in the region have to tackle. The present survey provides the framework for addressing the future policies and programmes, the needs and expectations of older persons. Governments in the countries in Asia and the Pacific Region are expected to put these issues into their agenda and address the needs of older people and their families.