



FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY

ESID/HLM-MIPAA/1

9 October 2007

ENGLISH ONLY

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

High-level Meeting on the Regional Review of the Madrid International Plan  
of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)

9-11 October 2007

Macao, China

**Implementing the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing:  
Role of UNFPA in Asia and the Pacific\***

United Nations Population Fund

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\* This paper was prepared by Mr Ghazy Mujahid Advisor on Population Policies and Development, UNFPA Country Technical Services Team for East and South-East Asia, Bangkok and Ms Ann Pawliczko, Technical Specialist, Technical Support Division, UNFPA, New York, for the High-level Meeting on the Regional Review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), 9-11 October 2007, Macao, China. The paper has been reproduced as submitted.



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## **Implementing the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Role of UNFPA in Asia and the Pacific**

High Level Meeting on the Regional Review of the Madrid International  
Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)  
9-11, October, Macao, China

This paper has been prepared by Ghazy Mujahid, Advisor on Population Policies and Development, UNFPA Country Technical Services Team for East and South-East Asia, Bangkok and Ann Pawliczko, Technical Specialist, Technical Support Division, UNFPA, New York.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this paper do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

## **I. Introduction**

1. All countries in Asia and the Pacific are experiencing population ageing, that is, an increasing proportion of persons aged 60 and above in the total population. While the extent of ageing varies widely among the countries with older persons constituting 28 per cent of the population (highest in the world) in Japan and only 4 per cent in Papua New Guinea,<sup>2</sup> in all countries the proportion of older persons is projected to increase at unprecedented rates. The inescapable implication is that even countries with a low percentage of older persons cannot afford to be complacent about population ageing.<sup>3</sup> All countries of the Region have endorsed the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) as well as other global and regional initiatives on ageing such as the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS)<sup>4</sup>. In line with their commitment to the MIPAA, almost all the countries have made efforts towards implementing its provisions.

## **II. ICPD and the MIPAA**

2. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in line with its mandate in the area of population and development manifested in the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), has been increasingly engaged in assisting countries in their efforts towards implementing the MIPAA. The ICPD had drawn attention to the emerging issue of population ageing in developing countries. Describing the economic and social impact of population ageing as “both an opportunity and a challenge to all societies”, the ICPD-POA incorporated three objectives:<sup>5</sup>

- (a) To enhance, through appropriate mechanisms, the self-reliance of elderly people, and to create conditions that promote quality of life and enable them to work and live independently in their own communities as long as possible or as desired;
- (b) To develop systems of health care as well as systems of economic and social security in old age, where appropriate, paying special attention to the needs of women; and
- (c) To develop a social support system, both formal and informal, with a view to enhancing the ability of families to take care of elderly people with the family.

3. Given the considerable conformity between (a) (b) and (c) with MIPAA’s three priority areas: (a) Older persons and development; (b) Advancing health and well-being into old age; and (c) Ensuring enabling and supportive environments, UNFPA found itself well-

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<sup>2</sup> Out of 192 countries, Japan ranks first in terms of percentage of population aged 60 years and over, while Papua New Guinea ranks 182<sup>nd</sup>, World Population Ageing 2007, (UNDESA, New York, 2007), pp.64-65.

<sup>3</sup> As a case in point, in Papua New Guinea where 4.0 per cent of the population is currently aged 60 years or over, the population of older persons is increasing at more than 3 per cent per annum. By 2025, the number of older persons in Papua New Guinea is projected to reach 571 thousand from the current estimate of 244 thousand. With this more than doubling of the older population, the proportion will increase to 6.3 per cent. By 2050, the proportion of older persons in Papua New Guinea’s population will exceed 12 per cent. World Population Ageing 2007, op.cit, pg. 396.

<sup>4</sup> Regional Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific 1999.

<sup>5</sup> Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, (UNFPA, New York, 1994), para. 6.17

placed in extending its support to assisting countries in efforts to implement the MIPAA at the national and sub-national levels.

### **III. UNFPA's Strategic Focus in the Area of Population Ageing**

4. UNFPA's strategic focus in the area of population ageing is to influence public policy to respond to the challenges posed by the social, health and economic consequences of ageing and to meet the needs of older persons, with emphasis on the vulnerable groups, particularly the poor and women. The Fund has a pro-active approach in supporting ageing activities in inter-country and country programmes. The focus is on integrating population ageing into broader development frameworks. UNFPA programmes support a rights-based and participatory approach to policy and programme development.

5. Among the issues of particular concern to UNFPA are: poverty eradication, promoting lifelong health and active ageing, ensuring access to basic health and social services, and eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against the elderly, paying particular attention to the needs of elderly women.

#### **A. Poverty Eradication**

6. Poverty is the main threat to the well-being of the elderly. It is linked to low literacy, poor health and malnutrition. Due to the loss of income and the lack of adequate social security and social pensions coverage in most developing countries, the elderly fall into poverty once they retire.<sup>6</sup> Older women, especially widows and the childless are particularly vulnerable, both economically and socially. With the older population forming an increasing proportion of the population, development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies must also address the concerns of the elderly. This would be a *sine qua non* for attaining MDG-1, that is halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. The ICPD-PoA urges Governments to develop social security systems and provide conditions necessary to enable elderly people to make full use of their skills and abilities.

#### **B. Lifelong health**

7. A life-cycle approach to health, including reproductive health for women, should be encouraged in order to prevent disability in later life. Older persons should also have access to information regarding healthy lifestyles and healthy ageing, as well as the risks and illnesses common to their age group including information about HIV/AIDS. Given the typically limited coverage of public health services in the developing countries and virtual non-existence of medical insurance, most older persons have to depend on their limited savings, if any, or on the support of their adult children or other family members for treatment and health care. This usually results in neglect, failure to obtain treatment and a loss of dignity. Older persons, like people of younger ages, should have access to affordable, accessible and appropriate health-care information and services. Towards this end the ICPD-PoA recommends action to ensure that the elderly lead a healthy life.

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<sup>6</sup> Data from three countries – Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam – shows the proportion of older persons in poverty to be much higher than that of those below age 60 years. [An overview of social pensions in Asia](#), paper submitted by HelpAge International to the Regional Seminar on Ensuring Social Protection/Social Pensions in old age in the context of rapid ageing in Asia held in Bangkok in January 2007.

### **C. Active ageing**

8. Healthy ageing also means promoting active ageing, including lifelong education and training and the full participation of older persons in community life. Active ageing does not just mean being employed or physically active. It means continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, civic and spiritual spheres. Older persons should be given opportunities for individual development and self-fulfillment and should be encouraged to participate in the widest possible range of activities, including employment and community volunteer work. The elderly have much to offer and can continue to contribute to society socially, economically and politically. Recognising the “valuable contribution elderly people make to families and societies”, the ICPD-PoA urges Governments to facilitate their continued participation in society.

### **D. Access to services**

9. For both human rights and economic reasons, older persons should be provided with the same access to basic social and health services including preventive and curative care and rehabilitation as other groups. Elderly-friendly, dignifying and sensitive health care and services should be designed to meet the special needs of older persons and should include the necessary training of personnel and availability of appropriate facilities. As the older population ages, the numbers of very old people aged 80 and over will increase and so will the need for dependent care for the frail elderly.<sup>7</sup> The ICPD-PoA urges actions to ensure the provision of long-term support and services for the growing number of frail older people.

### **E. Elimination of discrimination, violence and abuse**

10. Full realization of all human rights of older persons, ensuring full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, and commitment to gender equality were among the central themes of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. Older persons, especially the poor and women, are more vulnerable to discrimination, abuse and violence. Many suffer from neglect. Others experience physical, psychological, emotional, or financial abuse. Policies should support gender equality, be culturally sensitive and protect the human rights of older persons. There is an urgent need for adequate policies and programmes for support services for abused elderly. There is also a need to build adequate institutional and individual capacity to detect, report and curb elderly abuse. The ICPD-PoA urges actions to promote inter-generational equity and solidarity.

## **IV. UNFPA’s Response to the Challenges Posed by Population Ageing**

11. UNFPA’s response to the challenges posed by population ageing has been at the global, regional and country levels.

12. At the global level, UNFPA facilitates policy dialogue on addressing the implications of population ageing among all stakeholders, advocates for the mainstreaming of ageing issues into national development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies and supports initiatives to improve data, research and institutional capacity for formulating, implementing,

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<sup>7</sup> Mujahid, Ghazy - “Population ageing in East and South-East Asia, 1950-2050: Implications for elderly care”, Asia-Pacific Population Journal, (Vol. 21, No. 2, 2006).

monitoring and evaluating population ageing policies and programmes. The Fund encourages Governments to implement the MIPAA to help improve the quality of life of older persons, especially in countries where population ageing is a growing concern. UNFPA works with the International Institute on Ageing (INIA) in Malta to train policymakers and build institutional capacity in the area of population ageing. In preparation for the five-year review of progress towards implementation of the MIPAA, UNFPA and the Institute designed a new training programme for senior government officials involved in policy and decision-making to strengthen capacity for policy formation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress towards reaching the goals of the MIPAA. UNFPA plays an active role at global meetings related to population ageing both within the United Nations, such as sessions of the Commission on Social Development and those held outside, such as the World Ageing and Generations Conference held in Switzerland in September 2007.<sup>8</sup>

13. At the regional level, UNFPA works with Governments, United Nations sister agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society and other stakeholders to advocate for older persons; support the collection of age and sex-disaggregated data for evidence-based policy dialogue, development planning and programme formulation; and encourage the effective implementation of the MIPAA. UNFPA has worked in close collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). UNFPA funds a project – Population, Development and Poverty: Emerging Challenges (2004-2007) – under which ESCAP has implemented a number of ageing-related activities. UNFPA has also participated or/and assisted in organizing ESCAP’s training and advocacy workshops at the regional level.<sup>9</sup> The UNFPA Country Technical Services Team in Bangkok works with Governments in the region to help countries address ageing and poverty. The UNFPA Team launched the series Papers in Population Ageing to promote and disseminate research to facilitate the review and appraisal of implementation of the MIPAA. The first issue in the series<sup>10</sup> provides an overview of population ageing at the regional level, analyses the causes and assesses the consequences of population ageing, and provides policy recommendations. The Team also provides technical assistance to UNFPA’s country offices in participating in policy dialogue, reviewing the situation of population ageing in the country and undertaking advocacy activities.

14. At the country level, UNFPA has provided direct policy, advocacy and technical support at critical legal, policy, programme and monitoring levels to ensure that population ageing is recognized as an important factor in development and that older persons are involved in the development process and their needs are reflected in national laws. UNFPA encourages its country offices to advocate for, and assist in, the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its review process. UNFPA has played a leading role in having ageing concerns reflected in the UN Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Through its own Country Programmes, the Fund’s main focus has been on policy dialogue, capacity building, data collection and research, and advocacy.

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<sup>8</sup> Organised by the World Demographic Association at St. Gallen, 6-8 September 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Of these the most recent ones have been: “Seminar on Fertility Transition in Asia: Opportunities and Challenges (Bangkok, Dec 2006); “Regional Seminar on Ensuring Social Protection/Pensions in Old Age in the context of Rapid Ageing” (Bangkok, January 2007); and “Seminar on the Social and Health Consequences of Population Ageing in the Context of Changing Families” (Bangkok, July 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Mujahid, Ghazy - Population Ageing in East and South-East Asia: current situation and emerging challenges, (Papers in Population Ageing No. 1, UNFPA Country Technical Services Team for East and South-East Asia, Bangkok, 2006).

## A. Policy dialogue

15. Policy dialogue among all stakeholders is essential to raise awareness of the pace of population ageing, and the health and social implications of ageing for individuals, families and communities. Such dialogue should seek to facilitate policy formulation and implementation to meet the needs of older persons, particularly women. Ageing issues need to be mainstreamed into national development plans and poverty reduction programmes. UNFPA's Country offices are often called upon to assist Governments in formulating policies and national plans on ageing.

16. In Bangladesh, UNFPA has been advocating with the Government through the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFFPD) for a policy on the elderly population, with emphasis on their need for reproductive health services. In China, UNFPA has supported the consultation meeting to finalize its national 11th five-year plan on ageing, and provided support for a review and participatory appraisal of the implementation of the existing Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (Law No. 73 of 29 August 1996) as well as a forum to discuss recommendations for amendments to the law. It has also funded an intervention on improving Old People's Associations which provide older persons opportunities of active ageing. In Indonesia, UNFPA provided support for developing a National Plan of Action on Family and Community Support of the Aged Population. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, UNFPA seeks to ensure provision of health-care services for older persons; strengthen family and community support systems; provide job opportunities, appropriate income and education; protect older persons from discrimination and violence; and make people aware of issues associated with ageing. The Fund supported the development and dissemination of Lao PDR's first national policy for the elderly.<sup>11</sup>

17. In Malaysia, UNFPA works to promote active and productive ageing and increased participation of older Malaysians by undertaking a number of activities in the area of policy, research, data collection, capacity-building and advocacy. The Fund is reviewing existing legal provisions in order to make recommendations to encourage increased employment of the elderly; preparing a situation analysis report to facilitate the study on productive ageing; surveying older persons to gather information on their occupational skills, expertise, attitude and readiness to join the workforce; surveying prospective employers to explore possibilities and obstacles in the hiring of older workers; identifying employment gaps where older Malaysians can be suitably engaged; reviewing the capacity of existing training facilities for the elderly; and proposing expansion of existing retraining programmes to create greater opportunities for re-entry into the labour force for older workers. The Fund is also conducting awareness campaigns among employers, older persons and other stakeholders to promote lifelong learning. In Mongolia, UNFPA provided support to the review process of the National Programme on Health and Social Welfare of Elderly (2004-2008).

18. In Thailand, UNFPA, is assisting the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in preparing a three-year strategic plan (2007-2010) for older persons. In Viet Nam, the Fund works to enhance knowledge of population ageing issues and policy responses among policymakers and government leaders and to strengthen the policy framework

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<sup>11</sup> The National Policy Towards the Elderly in the Lao PDR., (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Vientiane, 2004).

relating to care and interventions. The Fund supported the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Welfare and the National Committee for the Elderly in the development of the National Programme of Action on Ageing.

## **B. Capacity building**

19. In 2003, the United Nations General Assembly identified mainstreaming of ageing into national development agendas and national capacity-building as essential facets of the MIPAA implementation process.<sup>12</sup> Strengthening national capacity to address the challenges of population ageing and to meet the needs of older persons is essential. In line with their commitment to implementing the MIPAA, almost all countries have taken a number of steps towards national capacity-building and mainstreaming of ageing into national development plans. Policy makers and programme managers working in the area of population ageing should have adequate training to be able to implement the recommendations of the Madrid Plan and to mainstream ageing into social and economic planning to ensure that older persons are part of the development process and share in its benefits. UNFPA provides support to such actions at the country level.

20. UNFPA promotes capacity-building by supporting training institutes and by providing technical assistance to Governments and other stakeholders upon request. The Fund attaches high priority to training for developing national capacity in addressing the challenges of population ageing and has sponsored a number of government officials and UNFPA staff to attend training courses in population ageing at the INIA.

21. In Bangladesh, UNFPA supports the participation of Government and NGO officials in international meetings and seminars on issues related to ageing and sponsors participants to attend relevant training. In China, UNFPA is working with HelpAge International and the China National Committee on Ageing to implement activities in six pilot sites throughout the country. The project supports strengthening government capacity to formulate and implement evidence-based strategic plans and policies on ageing, with special emphasis on active and healthy ageing. It will contribute to improved understanding of issues related to population ageing among policymakers and increased political support at national and local levels for policies and programmes dealing with ageing. In India, UNFPA supports the training of government officials at INIA and at the international workshops on preparing for ageing societies held at Columbia University in New York. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, UNFPA assisted in the screening and selection of candidates for the south-to-south cooperation short training course on the promotion of the elderly's well-being and community participation towards healthy ageing. In Pakistan, UNFPA sponsored staff to attend the international workshop on preparing for ageing societies at Columbia University. In the Philippines, UNFPA has supported the Commission on Population (POPCOM) in providing technical assistance to local government units for the integration of ageing-related issues into local development plans. In Thailand, UNFPA has collaborated with the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA) in supporting several training courses and workshops for health professionals and programme managers in the area of ageing.

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<sup>12</sup> General Assembly Resolution 58/134 of 22 December 2003

### C. Data collection and Research

22. There is an urgent need for reliable and timely age, sex, socio-economic status and health status-disaggregated data for evidence-based policy formulation and programme planning, monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, due to wide variations in the extent of population ageing within a country, it is important to have relevant data at the sub-national levels. Since, the out-migration of younger persons from rural to urban areas is known to contribute to higher ageing in rural areas, it is important to determine the rural-urban differences in the extent of population ageing. Both qualitative and quantitative data will enhance understanding of the challenges of population ageing. Qualitative data should take into account the voices of older persons themselves.

23. Culture- and gender-sensitive research on ageing is needed to identify emerging issues, provide evidence for effective policies, and adopt recommendations. Such research would include, among others, studies on social, economic and cultural implications of population ageing; the link between ageing and development; changing family structures; the impact of HIV/AIDS on older persons; older persons in conflict situations; and elder abuse, neglect, discrimination and exploitation. The impact of policies such as those relating to health insurance and social security and social pensions schemes should be assessed. Also, cost/benefit analyses of services provided for older persons can serve as a basis for recommending the introduction or expansion of such schemes.

24. The Fund supports data collection and research on older persons for evidence-based advocacy, policy formulation and programme implementation. In Cambodia, UNFPA supported the Royal University of Phnom Penh to prepare a report providing a profile from the 2004 survey of the elderly in Cambodia.<sup>13</sup> The report is available in both Khmer and English for policymakers, planners and interested stakeholders in the country. More focused analyses to examine the impact on the elderly of the Khmer Rouge era and its aftermath and of recent deaths of adult children, including those due to AIDS, and knowledge and awareness related to AIDS are planned for inclusion in future reports, as are more detailed examinations of the health and socio-economic well-being of the elderly. In China, UNFPA has supported 14 researches from 2003 to improve understanding of population ageing issues under fast changing social, economic and demographic contexts, including research on the capacity of grassroots level ageing associations, and social support and participation of elderly women in rural and urban areas. It is currently providing assistance to the China National Committee on Ageing in undertaking a situation analysis of population ageing in the country. In Indonesia, UNFPA is assisting in the preparation of a situation analysis of population ageing in the country. In Mongolia, UNFPA supported the preparation of a monograph on the elderly based on census data.<sup>14</sup> In Myanmar, the Fund assisted the Department of Population in the preparation of a monograph on the trends and living conditions of the elderly population.<sup>15</sup>

25. In Sri Lanka, UNFPA helped fund a national survey of elders conducted by the Ministry of Social Services in 2003/2004. Also, the UNFPA Country Office, in association

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<sup>13</sup> A Profile from the 2004 Survey of the Elderly, (Royal University of Phnom Penh and UNFPA, 2005).

<sup>14</sup> The Older Population in Mongolia: Analysis based on the Population and Housing Census 2000, (Government of Mongolia, National Statistical Office and UNFPA, Ulaanbaatar, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> The Elderly Population in Myanmar: Trends, Living Conditions, Characteristics and Prospects, (Ministry of Immigration and Population, Department of Population and UNFPA, Yangon, 2005).

with the Population Association of Sri Lanka (PASL) issued a compilation of ten research papers covering various aspects of population ageing in the country<sup>16</sup>. In Thailand, the UNFPA Country Programme seeks to identify issues related to population ageing by gathering demographic, socio-economic and socio-cultural data, and information on health, services, policy, law enforcement, social security/rights and other related factors affecting older persons; strengthen capacity of relevant bodies to support older people; and improve the quality of life of older people through interventions, policy and advocacy. UNFPA commissioned a study to examine the impact of HIV/AIDS on the economic, social, health and emotional status of older persons and supports a project on HIV/AIDS and older persons that seeks to influence the national AIDS prevention and control body to include the needs and concerns of older people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS. Efforts are under way to establish a database of older persons who are affected and infected by HIV/AIDS in selected villages to provide evidence to policymakers of the magnitude of the problem. A study was undertaken to identify emerging issues arising out of population ageing in Thailand and to review the national policies, plans and services for older people and their implementation. UNFPA has provided support to a study on the impact of rural-urban migration on older persons in Thailand.<sup>17</sup> It has also provided support for Thailand's 2007 Survey of Older Persons.

#### **D. Advocacy**

26. Meeting the challenges of population ageing requires advocacy work to ensure that older persons are included in the development process. To begin with advocacy may be needed to make a government realize that population ageing needs to be addressed. This is more likely to be the case in countries where the proportion of older persons in population is still considered low. A low proportion of older persons in the population could divert attention from the fast pace at which the older population may be increasing or other special circumstances of older persons that may need to be urgently addressed.<sup>18</sup> Advocacy can be used to convince decision-makers of the benefits of measures (such as social pensions) needed to safeguard the standard of living of older persons so that appropriate policies are put in place backed by budgetary allocations. Moreover, advocacy work is an effective tool for dispelling stereotypes and negative attitudes about older people and replacing them with positive images of ageing. Society must be made aware of the contributions of older persons and of the advantages of involving them in decision-making in issues that affect them. Neglect, abuse and discrimination of the elderly must be recognized and addressed. UNFPA Country Offices have in many cases taken the lead in such advocacy efforts.

27. In Bangladesh, the UNFPA office provides grants to the Bangladesh Association for the Aged and the Institute of Geriatric Medicine for the production of posters and the convening of discussion meetings to observe the International Day of Older Persons each year. The UNFPA Country Office in Bangladesh maintains close relations with the forum for rights of the elderly - the Ageing Resource Centre. In Cambodia, UNFPA has provided

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<sup>16</sup> Ageing Population in Sri Lanka: Issues and Future Prospects, (UNFPA and Population Association of Sri Lanka, Colombo, 2004)

<sup>17</sup> The study, Impact of Migration on Older Aged Rural Parents: Evidence from Thailand is due to be published later in the year.

<sup>18</sup> In Cambodia the proportion of older persons in population is only 6 per cent. However, due to large-scale killing of adult males during the 1970s, Cambodia now has a very high proportion of widowed older women who require social protection. Population Ageing in Cambodia: Planning for Social Protection, (UNFPA Country Office, Phnom Penh and National Committee for Population and Development, 2007).

support for strengthening the National Committee for Population and Development in the Council of Ministers. The National Committee is the focal point for ageing in Cambodia and is engaged in advocacy. UNFPA has also supported the Committee in the production of an advocacy brochure on population ageing<sup>19</sup>. In China and Thailand, the UNFPA Country Offices have produced similar advocacy brochures.<sup>20</sup> In Malaysia, UNFPA has collaborated with the Institute of Gerontology of the University Putra Malaysia in producing an advocacy brochure focusing on active ageing.<sup>21</sup>

## **V. The Way Forward**

28. In most countries issues related to population ageing are expected to figure more and more prominently in the development agenda. A number of countries have as yet not come to realize the gravity of the emerging ageing situation due to a variety of reasons: the small proportion of elderly in the population, the importance of other issues such as those concerning young people, a lack of political will, insufficient funds, political turmoil or a lack of solid population data. UNFPA country offices have therefore not undertaken any activities related to population ageing and older persons in these countries. However, in a number of countries population ageing is expected to emerge as an issue in the not too distant future as a result of the rapid rate of increase in the older population. At the same time, in several countries population ageing is gaining increasing priority. As such UNFPA expects a growing demand from an increasing number of countries to assist in addressing issues related to population ageing and older persons.

29. Countries where UNFPA Country Offices are planning to include ageing issues in their country programmes in the near future are, for example Pakistan in South Asia and Tonga in the Pacific. In Pakistan, UNFPA plans to include ageing-related activities as a key factor in planning and development, as well as for social protection, especially in the areas of policy and advocacy. In Tonga, UNFPA plans to undertake a study linking ageing to poverty as soon as the latest census data become available for analysis. Countries where population ageing is expected to receive increased priority in UNFPA Country Programmes are, among others, China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. In Myanmar, for example, UNFPA plans to support operations research to strengthen the quantitative data base on the elderly and to assist Government in developing appropriate programme interventions in pilot townships. Moreover, it is expected that as countries conduct their Censuses under the 2010 Census Round and the results become available, more and more of them will be drawn into addressing issues related to population ageing.

30. UNFPA will continue to advocate for the mainstreaming of ageing issues into national development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies and provide policy, advocacy and technical support to ensure that population ageing is recognized as an important factor in development and that older persons are involved in the development process. The Fund will work with Governments to formulate policy and review existing legislation to ensure that the needs of older persons are met. UNFPA will continue to support

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<sup>19</sup> Population Ageing in Cambodia: Planning for Social Protection, (UNFPA Country Office, Phnom Penh and National Committee for Population and Development, 2007).

<sup>20</sup> Population Ageing in China: Facts and Figures, (UNFPA Country Office, Beijing 2006); and Population Ageing in Thailand: Prognosis and Policy Response, (UNFPA Country Office, Bangkok, 2006).

<sup>21</sup> Population Ageing in Malaysia: Active Ageing, Productive Living, (UNFPA Country Office, Kuala Lumpur and Institute of Gerontology, University Putra Malaysia, 2007).

the training of policy makers and programme planners to respond to the challenges of population ageing.

31. The Fund will continue to promote policy dialogue among and within Governments, the UN system, civil society, and the private sector to facilitate policy development and programme planning to develop comprehensive approaches to population ageing and to meet the needs of older persons. UNFPA will also continue to promote policies that support gender equality, are culturally sensitive and protect the human rights of older persons. Within the UN System, UNFPA will continue its efforts on behalf of older persons, especially those most vulnerable, including the poor and frail, most often women. The Fund will also continue to advocate for the inclusion of ageing-related issues in CCAs/UNDAFs.

32. UNFPA will continue to support initiatives to increase the availability, dissemination and utilization of disaggregated data and analysis for evidence-based policy dialogue, development planning and programme formulation; qualitative data collection and analysis, taking into account the voices of older persons; and enhancement of national capacity to integrate population ageing and poverty issues into national and sectoral development plans including poverty reduction strategies.

33. UNFPA will encourage Governments to implement the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing to help improve the quality of life of older persons, especially in countries where population ageing is a growing concern. The Fund will continue to encourage Governments to participate in the five-year review of progress towards the implementation of the MIPAA, including in the development of good data and indicators, and exchange of lessons learned and best practices. The Fund will continue to advocate for the involvement of all stakeholders, especially older persons, to ensure a society for all ages.