Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

Agenda item 3. Consideration of key regional issues within the framework of the Madrid Plan of Action, together with emerging issues

Thursday, 30 June 2022 (09:00-10:30 UTC+7)
Bangkok and online

Round table 1: Older persons and development

CONCEPT NOTE (24 May 2022)

1. Introduction

Sixty per cent of the world’s older population aged 60 or more years reside in Asia and the Pacific. The region has been experiencing rapid population ageing, and the share of the older population is projected to increase further, from 13.6 per cent in 2020 to 25.0 per cent in 2050. This rapid pace means that many countries have little time to adapt to the consequence of population ageing.

To achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in ageing societies, income security for older persons becomes crucial. Income security includes both social protection as well as access to work. Surveys have shown that the most important income sources of older persons in Asia and the Pacific are income from work and transfers from family members. Pensions only make up a relatively small proportion of income sources of older persons in the region. In Asia and the Pacific as a whole, 45.6 per cent of the female working-age population and 55.2 per cent of the male working-age population are...
covered by contributory mandatory pensions\(^1\). However, this is largely due to increases in coverage in China, while in many other countries, less than one third of the working-age population is legally covered by pensions.

When people live longer, concepts of working life and retirement require re-thinking. In order to harness the potential of older persons to contribute to economies and society barriers to employment of older persons have to be removed and their contributions through paid and unpaid work must be recognized. Social protection is another crucial factor to allow older persons to continue to contribute to economies and societies. Income security and access to employment is particularly crucial for older women who are at higher risk of poverty and face even more barriers to employment than older men. Access to social pensions is especially important for older women, since they guarantee a small income and give recognition and dignity. For older persons to continue to work, training and reskilling become very important.

In accordance with GA resolution 76/138 and ECOSOC resolution 2020/8, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), supported by regional partners, is organizing the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) from 29 June to 1 July 2022. Round-table discussions will be organized along the priority directions of the Madrid Plan of Action.

This round-table discussion will focus on priority direction I, older persons and development. The discussion is expected to result in an enhanced understanding of the progress, good practices, challenges, and emerging issues associated with the implementation of this priority direction of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, and other related commitments under the 2030 Agenda. It will specifically discuss the income situation of older persons in Asia and the Pacific, intergenerational transfers, and access to pensions in Asia and the Pacific.

### 2. Objectives
The round table will explore achievements, challenges and opportunities in implementing actions associated with priority direction I of the Madrid Plan of Action, namely:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue 1: Active participation in society and development</th>
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<td>Issue 2: Work and the ageing labour force</td>
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<td>Issue 3: Rural development, migration and urbanization</td>
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<td>Issue 4: Access to knowledge, education and training</td>
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<td>Issue 5: Intergenerational solidarity</td>
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<td>Issue 6: Eradication of poverty</td>
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<td>Issue 7: Income security, social protection/social security and poverty prevention</td>
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<td>Issue 8: Emergency situations</td>
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In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and digital transformation and their impacts on older persons will be addressed. Gender considerations will be mainstreamed.

Since this is the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action in Asia and the Pacific, the focus is on accelerating its implementation in the region and address emerging issues.

Panelists in this round-table discussion will:

- Take stock of the progress of implementation of priority direction I to date
- Identify key challenges, opportunities, gaps, and prevalent and emerging issues
- Identify established and emerging good practices and lessons learnt
- Identify resource requirements and capacity building needs
- Formulate recommendations

3. Content and format

The round-table discussion will consist of short opening statements by panelists, followed by a moderated discussion among panelists, Q&A with meeting participants and concluding remarks by the panelists. The following guiding questions will be addressed:

1. Twenty years after adopting the Madrid Plan of Action, where are we in terms of income security for older persons? Are there any good practices and lessons learned from countries in the region?
2. What do we know about older persons in rural areas, and how have they been affected by urbanization and migration?
3. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected older persons ability to contribute to economic and social life and what are other emerging issues?
4. What do member States, stakeholders and the international community have to do at the national, subregional and regional levels to accelerate the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action and ensure that older persons are not being left behind?

4. Expected outcome

The round-table discussion will allow meeting participants during the Q&A to respond to any issues raised during the discussion as they relate to priority direction I of the Madrid Plan of Action. The recording of the round-table discussion will be posted on the meeting website. A summary of the round-table discussion will be included in the Chair’s summary of the meeting.
5. Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00-09:05</td>
<td>Welcome and opening remarks, moderator</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:05-09:25</td>
<td>First round of questions, panelists</td>
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<td>09:25-09:45</td>
<td>Second round of questions, panelists</td>
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<td>09:45-10:15</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15-10:25</td>
<td>Concluding remarks, panelists</td>
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<td>10:25-10:30</td>
<td>Closing remarks, moderator</td>
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6. Organizing team

The round table is being organized by ESCAP in collaboration with UNFPA.

7. Background

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (MIPAA) was adopted by the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid from 8 to 12 April 2002, and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 57/167 of 18 December 2002. It put forth a bold new agenda of “building a society for all ages”, which is more relevant today than ever. It focuses on three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring the existence of enabling and supportive environments.

Article 17 of MIPAA recognizes and highlights the importance of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to its implementation, follow-up, review and appraisal:

“Governments have the primary responsibility for providing leadership on ageing matters and on the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, but effective collaboration between national and local Governments, international agencies, older persons themselves and their organizations, other parts of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, is essential. The implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, will require the partnership and involvement of many stakeholders: professional organizations, corporations; workers and worker organizations; cooperatives, research, academic and other educational and religious institutions; and the media.”

In 2006, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) issued Guidelines for the review and appraisal of MIPAA at the nation level, using a bottom-up participatory approach. These provide ideas and practical examples to be used by national Governments in carrying out whole-of-government and whole-of-society reviews and appraisals of MIPAA.

MIPAA has been reviewed at the global, regional and national levels three times since its adoption. The fourth regional and global reviews and appraisals are forthcoming in 2022 and 2023 (ECOSOC resolution 2020/8 and GA resolution 76/138). The General Assembly and ECOSOC have regularly followed up on
population ageing and provided a strong mandate to the regional commissions “in assisting Governments, at their request, in the implementation, follow-up and national monitoring of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 …” (Article 18 of MIPAA).

Population ageing and the situation of older persons have also been addressed in other United Nations norm-setting documents at the global and regional levels, including the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2013 Asian-Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and the Decade of Healthy Ageing. Most recently, the Secretary-General’s Our Common Agenda mentioned the urgent need for “intergenerational solidarity”.

7. **Background documents**

**Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing**

Additional information is available on the UN ESCAP dedicated [website](#).

8. **Contact person**

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