- Expert Group Meeting -

Population Ageing and the Situation of Older Persons in Asia and the Pacific: Follow-up to the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing


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Conclusion – Older persons and development

• Progress reported, however, need for comprehensive and integrated policy frameworks

• Mainstreaming ageing into national development strategies and plans

• Challenges such as work in the informal sector with poor conditions, age-discrimination, stigma and abuse, and gender inequality persist

• Relatively more governments than in the past offer opportunities for participation of older persons in society

• Nevertheless, many older persons, especially women and those in rural areas, lack access to opportunities to participate more in development processes

• The promotion of digital literacy among older persons has become more urgent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Recommendations (I) – Older persons and development

- Develop, strengthen and implement comprehensive and integrated policy frameworks that address and mainstream population ageing
- Mainstream a gender and disability perspective into policies promoting societies for all ages
- Support the formation and strengthening of older persons’ associations and CSOs
- Promote the right to work of older persons by providing them access to full and productive employment and decent work under healthy, flexible and age-friendly conditions
- Recognize contributions that older persons make to their families, local communities and nations
Recommendations (II) – Older persons and development

- Ensure lifelong learning through training, retraining and skills development, for as long as people want and are able to
- Create digital training opportunities and platforms
- Mainstream ageing issues into poverty measures, women’s empowerment strategies and national development plans
- Expand the overall coverage of and access to sustainable social protection systems and pension schemes
- Promote policies and national action plans that prepare for and respond to population ageing throughout the life course and strengthen intergenerational solidarity
Conclusion – Older persons, health and well-being

- Healthy and active ageing of older persons is promoted across the region, including through national health strategies or dedicated health policies for older persons.

- However, gaps between policies and implementation remain and have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, coverage, accessibility, and affordability of certain policies directed at older persons continue to pose a challenge to their health and well-being.

- Progress towards achieving universal health coverage, however, coverage varies between countries

- Challenges remain related to the access and consideration of the specific needs of women in health care and health insurance, which calls for equity focused and gender responsive approaches to health care.

- While provisions for mental health services were reported by a growing number of countries in Asia and the Pacific, specific ageing-related mental health services remain limited. A similar situation applies to persons with disabilities and measures to support them.
Recommendations (I) - Older persons, health and well-being

- Accelerate efforts towards the achievement of universal health coverage so that all older persons,
- Promote a regional response mechanism that is people-centred, with full respect for a multidimensional, coordinated, inclusive and innovative approach,
- Foster and strengthen active and healthy ageing among all age groups by investing in strategies and activities that focus on the life course,
- Raise awareness of the health and well-being of older persons and apply community-based and inclusive approaches to health-care provision
- Develop and implement high-quality, integrated and long-term care systems with public, private and community providers, and further promote long-term care as a positive social and economic care and employment strategy
Recommendations (II) - Older persons, health and well-being

- Take, as a basis, the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on older persons, in particular older women and older persons with disabilities, including the risks that they face in accessing social protection and health services.

- Ensure effective intervention strategies to address the rising prevalence of mental health and neurodegenerative diseases among older persons, including by means of preparing health providers and societies to meet the specific needs of older persons for instance through training and other capacity development, and mental health specific health promotion for older persons.

- Strengthen data collection to enable evidence-based policy design on the health and long-term care needs of older persons, while ensuring health-system readiness through the health care sector effectively collaborating with other sectors, including housing, transport and the built environment.
Conclusion – Ensuring enabling and supportive environments

- Despite a wide range of initiatives reported, a need to translate policies into concrete action persists, in particular when it comes to the human rights of older persons.

- Good practices reported in the field of housing and the living environment, however support on affordable housing, public infrastructure and transportation is uneven across and within countries.

- Gaps remain on progress in terms of social protection and labour market policies for older migrants in informal work.

- Concerns related to emergencies and climate change.

- Rising occurrence of ageing and limited progress on neglect, abuse and violence against older persons.

- Progress on ICTs, however, need to build on its successes and learn from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Recommendations (I) - Ensuring enabling and supportive environments

- Promote and protect the right to adequate housing for older persons, ageing in place and intergenerational housing options
- Give greater priority to poverty related challenges, universal design and independent living of older persons
- Improve the living conditions and infrastructure older persons face, including in rural and remote areas
- Enhance social policies, institutional capacities and technical skills of government and non-governmental organizations, including older persons’ associations and civil society organizations
- Strengthen social protection and labour market policies that benefit older persons, including those in informal work and those who are migrants.
- Direct greater attention to the intersection of population ageing and climate change and its consequences for the region
- Protect older persons from all manner of emergencies, including disasters, armed conflict and climate change, by means of respecting and promoting their human rights, and meaningfully engaging them and their organizations in the preparedness, response and recovery stages of emergencies
- Respond to the changing care needs in the region by develop new approaches and policies for a continuum of care as well as strengthening home-based services and integrating care into the local community
Recommendations (II) - Ensuring enabling and supportive environments

- Promote skill and competency development and continuous training of health and social care workers in geriatric and home-based care

- Advocate for the quantifying of the caregiving contribution of older persons to the economy in national accounts, including recognition of unpaid care for family members, in particular women, and ensure that research on national accounts informs policymaking

- Promote strategies to support women who take on the responsibility of long-term caregivers of older persons

- Address the challenges related to rising prevalence of ageism through targeted and evidence-based policies, strategies and legislation; educational and intergenerational interventions; improving data and research to gain a better understanding of ageism and how to reduce it; and building a movement to raise awareness raising and change the narrative around age and ageing
Recommendations (III) - Ensuring enabling and supportive environments

- Combat violence, neglect, abuse and ill-treatment against older persons, in particular older women and older persons in rural and remote areas by: stronger legislation, multisectoral cooperation and public-private partnerships, with engagement of older persons; awareness raising, including through the media; data collection and analysis on elder abuse, disaggregated by sex, age, care need level and other characteristics; monitoring and reporting; and increasing the scope and variety of preventive and protective measures, and care-services, including mental health care.

- Ensure new technologies, especially ICTs, and affordable and reliable Internet connectivity are accessible to persons of all ages, especially older women and older persons with disabilities, and promote greater participation, empowerment and ability to live independently among older persons

- Promote multi-stakeholder partnerships for multidisciplinary and intergenerational research on ageing, and harness scientific expertise and research and development capacity through use of technology and building the evidence base.