

# Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge



**HelpAge  
International**

*age helps*

In collaboration with: UNDESA, FAO, ILO, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UN Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP, WHO, ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, GAA, HelpAge USA, IFA, INPEA, IOM



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# List of abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CELADE	Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre
CIESS	Inter-American Centre for Social Security Studies
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ILO	International Labour Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCDs	non-communicable diseases
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SAGE	World Health Organization Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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UNITED NATIONS



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## THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

This is a special year for ageing. The international community is observing the tenth anniversary of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, which was held in Madrid to respond to the opportunities and challenges of ageing in the twenty-first century. At that time, Member States committed themselves to pursuing policies that would enable people everywhere to age with security and dignity. A comprehensive International Plan of Action on Ageing was adopted which defined objectives and actions to be taken by Governments, the international community, and civil society to help create a “society for all ages”.

This report, a collaborative effort of the United Nations and other major international organizations working in the area of population ageing, sheds light on progress towards implementing this Plan. It utilizes both a quantitative approach analysing policies and actions, and a qualitative approach bringing the voices of older persons themselves into the heart of the discussion.

Population ageing can no longer be ignored. Globally, the proportion of older persons is growing at a faster rate than the general population. This reflects tremendous and welcome advances in health and overall quality of life in societies across the world. But the social and economic implications of this phenomenon are profound, extending far beyond the individual older person and the immediate family, touching broader society and the global community in unprecedented ways. On the positive side, population ageing has opened up new markets and brought us more experienced workers, a growing cadre of custodians of culture, and caregivers of grandchildren.

But it is also presenting major challenges, most notably ensuring the sustainability of pension funds and the ability of already overburdened health-care systems to serve much higher numbers of people. These implications, as well as the fact that new generations of older persons will be more educated, must be taken into account in policies and programmes that reflect changing age structures.

This timely report aims to raise awareness about the speed of population ageing and, more generally, about the experience of being old in our changing world. It recommends moving urgently to incorporate ageing issues into national development plans and poverty-reduction strategies. It also shows that abuse, neglect and violence against older persons are much more prevalent than currently acknowledged, and points the way towards more effective prevention strategies and stronger legislation that can protect their human rights.

The Second World Assembly on Ageing provided a framework for our response to the opportunities and challenges of ageing in the twenty-first century. We have achieved solid progress, but there are many challenges still to be addressed. And as the international community now embarks on an effort to articulate the post-2015 development agenda, it is clear that the issue of population ageing should be fully addressed as part of this process.

I thank the United Nations Population Fund for spearheading this ambitious project. Special thanks also go to the many United Nations entities and international organizations, in particular HelpAge International, that contributed to this publication. I recommend this report to a wide global audience to gain more insight into a topic which affects us all.

Ban Ki-moon





# Foreword

## Population ageing is a major trend with global implications.

With one in nine persons in the world aged 60 years or over, projected to increase to one in five by 2050, population ageing is a phenomenon that we can no longer ignore. Increasing longevity is one of humanity's greatest achievements. Indeed, population ageing is cause for celebration. The opportunities that this presents are as endless as the contributions that a socially and economically active, secure and healthy ageing population can bring to society.

Opportunities come with challenges, however. Population ageing presents social, economic and cultural challenges to individuals, families, societies and the global community. It is how we choose to address the challenges and maximize the opportunities of a growing older population that will determine the future of humankind.

This report, our contribution to the Madrid+10 review and appraisal process, takes stock of progress since the adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2002.

*Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge* is based on an assessment of progress since the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002 in the three priority areas identified in Madrid: development, health and well-being, and enabling and supportive environments. It reviews progress in policies and actions taken by governments and other stakeholders in response to Madrid's call for creating a society for all ages. Its unique feature is a focus on the voices of older persons themselves, captured through group discussions with older men and women in 36 countries around the world. The first-hand accounts and testimonies of older persons help to ensure that the perspectives of the older population are better understood and acted upon.

The report identifies gaps and proposes the way forward with recommendations to ensure an age-friendly world in which everyone, including older persons, is given the opportunity to contribute to development and share in its benefits, the voices of all age groups are heard, and all persons are included in decision-making that affects them. Ageing is a lifelong process that does not start at age 60. Today's young people will be part of the 2 billion-strong population of older persons in 2050. A better world for younger people today will mean a better world for older persons in 2050.

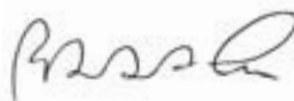
The report shows that there has been some important progress since Madrid. A number of countries have approved national policies, plans, programmes or strategies on ageing and older persons and some have approved age-specific legislation since 2002. But we know that policies and legislation alone are not sufficient to make a real change in the quality of life of older persons. Policies and legislation must be enforced so that older persons can enjoy their human rights, and programmes must be implemented and monitored to ensure that they reach those most in need.

We need all data to be disaggregated by age and sex, and we need more research on the situation of older persons to inform policy.

The report is the culmination of three years of work which the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) began with the United Nations Regional Commissions and HelpAge International by preparing an overview of available policies and legislation, data and research, and institutional arrangements relating to older persons.

This report is the product of a collaboration of over twenty United Nations entities and major international organizations working in the area of population ageing. We wish to thank the following United Nations agencies and organizations that collaborated with UNFPA in the preparation of this report: the Division for Social Policy and Development, and the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs (UNDESA), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the five United Nations Regional Commissions – the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). We also wish to thank Global Action on Aging, HelpAge USA, the International Federation on Ageing, the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and the International Organization for Migration for their inputs. And we thank the national organizations for making the consultations with older persons possible and the many teams that made the voices of older persons come alive.

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**Babatunde Osotimehin**  
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# Executive summary

## Population ageing is one of the most significant trends of the 21st century.

It has important and far-reaching implications for all aspects of society. Around the world, two persons celebrate their sixtieth birthday every second – an annual total of almost 58 million sixtieth birthdays. With one in nine persons in the world aged 60 years or over, projected to increase to one in five by 2050, population ageing is a phenomenon that can no longer be ignored.

*Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge* analyses the current situation of older persons and reviews progress in policies and actions taken by governments and other stakeholders since the Second World Assembly on Ageing in implementing the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing to respond to the opportunities and challenges of an ageing world. It provides many inspiring examples of innovative programmes that successfully address ageing issues and the concerns of older persons.

The report identifies gaps and provides recommendations for the way forward to ensure a society for all ages in which both young and old are given the opportunity to contribute to development and share in its benefits. A unique feature of the report is a focus on the voices of older persons themselves, captured through consultations with older men and women around the world.

The report, which is the product of a collaboration of over twenty United Nations entities and major international organizations working in the area of population ageing, shows that important progress has been made by many countries in adopting new policies, strategies, plans and laws on ageing, but that much more needs to be done to fully implement the Madrid Plan and fulfil the potential of our ageing world.

## Population ageing

Population ageing is happening in all regions and in countries at various levels of development. It is progressing fastest in developing countries, including in those that also have a large population of young people. Of the current 15 countries with more than 10 million older persons, seven of these are developing countries.

Ageing is a triumph of development. Increasing longevity is one of humanity's greatest achievements. People live longer because of improved nutrition, sanitation, medical advances, health care, education and economic well-being. Life expectancy at birth is over 80 now in 33 countries; just five years ago, only 19 countries had reached this. Many of those reading this report will live into their 80s, 90s, and even 100s. At present, only Japan has an older population of more than 30 per cent; by 2050, 64 countries are expected to join Japan with an older population of more than 30 per cent. The opportunities that this demographic shift presents are as endless as the contributions that a socially and economically active, secure and healthy ageing population can bring to society.

Population ageing also presents social, economic and cultural challenges to individuals, families, societies and the global community. As United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon points out in the Preface to the report, "the social and economic implications of this phenomenon are profound, extending far beyond the individual older person and the immediate family, touching broader society and the global community in unprecedented ways". It is how we choose to address the challenges and maximize the opportunities of a growing older population that will determine whether society will reap the benefits of the "longevity dividend".

With the number and proportion of older persons growing faster than any other age group, and in an increasing range of countries, there are concerns about the capacities of societies to address the challenges associated with this demographic shift.

To face the challenges and also take advantage of the opportunities resulting from population ageing, this report calls for new approaches to the way that societies, workforces, and social and intergenerational relations are structured. These must be sustained by a strong political commitment and a solid data and knowledge base that ensure an effective integration of global ageing within the larger processes of development. People everywhere must age with dignity and security, enjoying life through the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Looking at both challenges and opportunities is the best recipe for success in an ageing world.

## The ageing transformation

A population is classified as ageing when older people become a proportionately larger share of the total population. Declining fertility rates and increasing survival at older ages have led to population ageing. Life expectancy at birth has risen substantially across the world. In 2010-2015, life expectancy is 78 years in developed countries and 68 years in developing regions. By 2045-2050, newborns can expect to live to 83 years in developed regions and 74 years in developing regions.

In 1950, there were 205 million persons aged 60 years or over in the world. By 2012, the number of older persons increased to almost 810 million. It is projected to reach 1 billion in less than ten years and double by 2050, reaching 2 billion. There are marked differences between regions. For example, in 2012, 6 per cent of the population in Africa was 60 years and over, compared with 10 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 11 per cent in Asia, 15 per cent in Oceania, 19 per cent in Northern America, and 22 per cent in Europe. By 2050, it is expected that 10 per cent of the population in Africa will be 60 years and over, compared with 24 per cent in Asia, 24 per cent in Oceania, 25 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 27 per cent in Northern America, and 34 per cent in Europe.

Globally, women form the majority of older persons. Today, for every 100 women aged 60 or over worldwide, there are just 84 men. For every 100 women aged 80 or over, there are only 61 men. Men and women experience old age differently. Gender relations structure the entire lifecourse, influencing access to resources and opportunities, with an impact that is both ongoing and cumulative.

In many situations, older women are usually more vulnerable to discrimination, including poor access to jobs and healthcare, subjection to abuse, denial of the right to own and inherit property, and lack of basic minimum income and social security. But older men, particularly after retirement, may also become vulnerable due to their weaker social support networks and can also be subject to abuse, particularly financial abuse. These differences have important implications for public policy and programme planning.

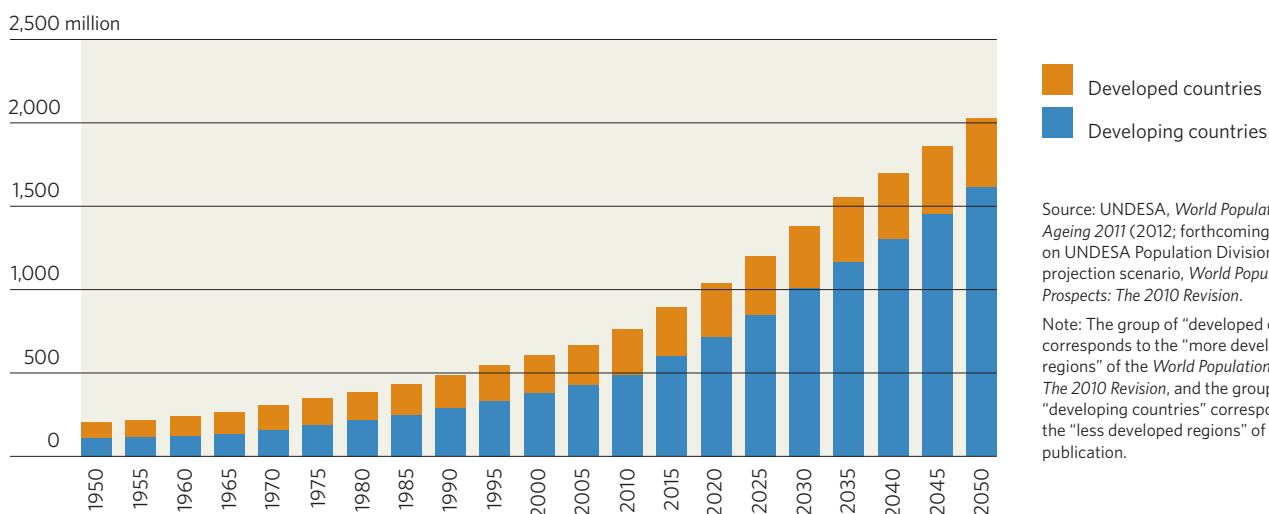
The older generation is not a homogenous group for which one-size-fits-all policies are sufficient. It is important not to standardize older people as a single category but to recognize that the older population is just as diverse as any other age group, in terms of, for example, age, sex, ethnicity, education, income and health. Each group of older persons, such as those who are poor, women, men, oldest old, indigenous, illiterate, urban or rural, has particular needs and interests that must be addressed specifically through tailored programmes and intervention models.

## The Second World Assembly on Ageing

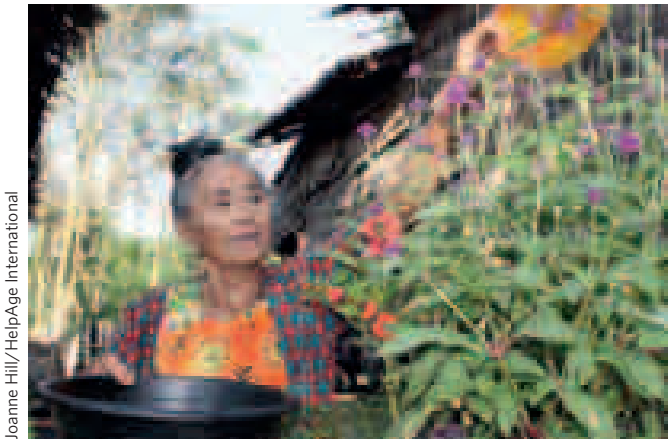
The Second World Assembly on Ageing, convened in Madrid, Spain in 2002, to address the challenges of rapid population ageing, adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing which focused on mainstreaming older persons in development, advancing health and well-being into old age, and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

The Madrid Plan calls for changes in attitudes, policies and practices to ensure that older persons are not viewed simply as welfare beneficiaries but as active participants in the development process whose rights must be respected. *Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge* is a contribution to the ten-year review and appraisal of progress towards implementation of the Madrid Plan.

## Number of people aged 60 or over: World, developed and developing countries, 1950-2050



Growing flowers for sale in Myanmar.



Joanne Hill/HelpAge International

A key finding of this report is the incredible productivity and contributions of those aged 60 and over, as caregivers, voters, volunteers, entrepreneurs and more. The report shows that, with the right measures in place to secure health care, regular income, social networks and legal protection, there is a longevity dividend to be reaped worldwide by current and future generations.

The report makes the case for national and local governments, international organizations, communities, and civil society to fully commit to a concerted global effort to realign 21st century society to fit the realities of 21st century demographics. It points out that concrete, cost-effective advances will come from ensuring that age investment begins at birth.

## Income security

Among the most urgent concerns of older persons worldwide is income security. This, together with health, is most frequently mentioned by older persons themselves. These issues are also among the greatest challenges for governments faced with ageing populations. The global economic crisis has exacerbated the financial pressure to ensure both economic security and access to health care in old age.

Investments in pension systems are seen as one of the most important ways to ensure economic independence and reduce poverty in old age. Sustainability of these systems is of particular concern, particularly in developed countries, while social protection and old-age pension coverage remain a challenge for developing countries, where a large proportion of the labour force is found in the informal sector.

Social protection floors must be implemented in order to guarantee income security and access to essential health and social services for all older persons and provide a safety net that contributes to the postponement of disability and prevention of impoverishment in old age. There is no solid evidence that population ageing per se has undermined economic development or that countries do not have

sufficient resources to ensure pensions and health care for an older population. Nevertheless, globally, only one third of countries have comprehensive social protection schemes, most of which only cover those in formal employment, or less than half of the economically active population worldwide.

While pensions, and particularly social pensions, are an important end in themselves, since they make a big difference in the well-being of older persons, they have also been shown to benefit entire families. In times of crisis, pensions can constitute the main source of household income, and often enable young people and their families to cope with the shortage or loss of employment.

## Access to quality health care

In order to realize their right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, older persons must have access to age-friendly and affordable health-care information and services that meet their needs. This includes preventive, curative and long-term care. A lifecourse perspective should include health promotion and disease prevention activities that focus on maintaining independence, preventing and delaying disease and disability, and providing treatment. Policies are needed to promote healthy lifestyles, assistive technology, medical research and rehabilitative care.

Training of caregivers and health professionals is essential to ensure that those who work with older persons have access to information and basic training in the care of older people. Better support must be provided to all caregivers, including family members, community-based carers, particularly for long-term care for frail older persons, and older people who care for others.

The report points out that good health must lie at the core of society's response to population ageing. Ensuring that people, while living longer lives, live healthier lives will result in greater opportunities and lower costs to older persons, their families and society.

## Enabling environments

An age-friendly physical environment that promotes the development and use of innovative technologies that encourage active ageing is especially important as people grow older and experience diminished mobility and visual and hearing impairments. Affordable housing and easily accessible transportation that encourage ageing in place are essential to maintain independence, facilitate social contacts and permit older persons to remain active members of society.

More must be done to expose, investigate and prevent discrimination, abuse and violence against older persons, especially women who are more vulnerable. There has been some progress in promoting the human rights of older persons, notably discussions centring on the development of international human rights instruments that specifically address older persons.

## The way forward

In many parts of the world, families have the main responsibility for the care and financial support of older dependants. The resulting costs can be extreme for working-age generations, often affecting their savings capacity, employability and productivity. However, private transfers from family can no longer automatically be considered as the only source of income for older family members.

The report shows how living arrangements of older people are changing in tune with changes in societies. Family sizes are decreasing and intergenerational support systems will continue to be exposed to important changes, particularly in the years to come. There are significant numbers of “skipped-generation” households consisting of children and older people, especially in rural areas, as a result of rural-to-urban migration of “middle-generation” adults. Consultations with older persons around the world point to many cases in which older persons provide assistance to adult children and grandchildren, not only with childcare and housework, but also with substantial financial contributions to the family.

The report stresses the need to address current societal inequalities by ensuring equal access of all segments of the population to education, employment, health care and basic social services that will enable people to live decently in the present and save for the future. It calls for strong investments in human capital by improving the education and employment prospects of the current generation of young people.

Population ageing presents challenges for governments and society, but need not be seen as a crisis. It can and should be planned for in order to transform these challenges into opportunities. This report lays out a compelling rationale for investments that ensure a good quality of life when people age and suggests positive solutions, which are feasible even for poorer countries.

The voices of older persons who took part in consultations for this report reiterate a need for income security, flexible employment opportunities, access to affordable health care and medicines, age-friendly housing and transportation, and elimination of discrimination, violence and abuse targeted at older people. Again and again, older persons point out that they want to remain active and respected members of society.

The report challenges the international community to do much more on ageing in the development sphere. There is a clear rationale for explicit development goals on ageing underpinned by capacity development, budgets and policies along with improved research and analysis on ageing based on timely and good quality data. As countries prepare to chart a course beyond 2015, population ageing and policy responses to the concerns of older people must be at the heart of the process. In a rapidly ageing world, explicit development goals related to the older population, notably absent in the current Millennium Development Goals framework, must be considered.

## Ten priority actions to maximize the opportunity of ageing populations

1. Recognize the inevitability of population ageing and the need to adequately prepare all stakeholders (governments, civil society, private sector, communities, and families) for the growing numbers of older persons. This should be done by enhancing understanding, strengthening national and local capacities, and developing the political, economic and social reforms needed to adapt societies to an ageing world.
2. Ensure that all older persons can live with dignity and security, enjoying access to essential health and social services and a minimum income through the implementation of national social protection floors and other social investments that extend the autonomy and independence of older people, prevent impoverishment in old age and contribute to a more healthy ageing. These actions should be based on a long-term vision, and supported by a strong political commitment and a secured budget that prevents negative impacts in time of crisis or governmental changes.
3. Support communities and families to develop support systems which ensure that frail older persons receive the long-term care they need and promote active and healthy ageing at the local level to facilitate ageing in place.
4. Invest in young people today by promoting healthy habits, and ensuring education and employment opportunities, access to health services, and social security coverage for all workers as the best investment to improve the lives of future generations of older persons. Flexible employment, lifelong learning and retraining opportunities should be promoted to facilitate the integration in the labour market of current generations of older persons.
5. Support international and national efforts to develop comparative research on ageing, and ensure that gender- and culture-sensitive data and evidence from this research are available to inform policymaking.
6. Mainstream ageing into all gender policies and gender into ageing policies, taking into account the specific requirements of older women and men.
7. Ensure inclusion of ageing and the needs of older persons in all national development policies and programmes.
8. Ensure inclusion of ageing and the needs of older persons in national humanitarian response, climate change mitigation and adaptation plans, and disaster management and preparedness programmes.
9. Ensure that ageing issues are adequately reflected in the post-2015 development agenda, including through the development of specific goals and indicators.
10. Develop a new rights-based culture of ageing and a change of mindset and societal attitudes towards ageing and older persons, from welfare recipients to active, contributing members of society. This requires, among others, working towards the development of international human rights instruments and their translation into national laws and regulations and affirmative measures that challenge age discrimination and recognize older people as autonomous subjects.



# Introduction

## Population ageing is a major global trend that is transforming economies and societies around the world.

It is one of the most important demographic megatrends with implications for all aspects of our societies.

Ageing is already having a far-reaching impact on living arrangements and the way that societies and economies work. The process of change towards more aged societies is inevitable. Ageing is happening in different regions and in countries at various levels of development.

It is proceeding at a faster pace in developing countries, where social protection systems are weak and institutional development is still work in progress.

Ageing is a triumph of development. People can now live longer because of improved nutrition, sanitation, medical advances, health care, education and economic well-being. Being able to lead fulfilled and active lives in our later years has benefits not only for individuals but for society as a whole. But as the number and proportion of older persons are growing faster than any other age group, and in an increasing range of countries, there are concerns regarding the capacities of societies to address the challenges associated with these demographic shifts.

In order to face these challenges and also take advantage of the opportunities resulting from population ageing, this report calls for new approaches to the way that we structure our societies, our workforces, and our social and intergenerational relations. These need to be sustained by a strong political commitment and a solid data and knowledge base that ensure an effective integration of global ageing within the larger processes of development. People everywhere must age with dignity and security, enjoying life through the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Looking at both challenges and opportunities is the best recipe for success in an ageing world.

Ten years ago, the General Assembly of the United Nations made a breakthrough by adopting by consensus the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing which put population ageing at the centre of the development agenda. The Madrid Plan and its Political Declaration set out a comprehensive agenda with core recommendations grouped under the priority directions of older persons and development, advancing health and well-being into old age, and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

Its purpose was to guide governments, the United Nations and civil society to face the challenges and fulfil the enormous potential of population ageing in the 21st century. Critical to the success of the Madrid Plan and its Political Declaration was to promote the human rights of older persons as an essential foundation to ensure the delivery of “a society for all ages”.

Article 5 of the Madrid Plan’s Political Declaration states: “We reaffirm the commitment to spare no effort to promote democracy, strengthen the rule of law and promote gender equality, as well as to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development. We commit ourselves to eliminating all forms of discrimination, including age discrimination. We also recognize that persons, as they age, should enjoy a life of fulfilment, health, security and active participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of their societies. We are determined to enhance the recognition of the dignity of older persons and to eliminate all forms of neglect, abuse and violence.”

Ten years later, what has changed? This landmark report, with contributions from United Nations agencies, United Nations Regional Commissions, international non-governmental organizations and 1,300 older people from 36 countries, provides an insight into the changing situation of older persons across the world. It offers policy guidance based on up-to-date evidence to support the need to shift to more age-inclusive development.

A key message from the report is that, despite significant progress in the development and implementation of policies and programmes focusing on older persons in many countries of the world, there is still work to be done in mainstreaming ageing into relevant policy domains. Age discrimination, limited access to health care, poverty and lack of income security in old age persist. One of the more important conclusions of the report is that national legislation and international instruments are needed to promote the inclusion of older persons in the development process, to protect their human rights, including rights to health and to income security, and to promote their contributions to society.



Chapter 1 of the report provides an overview of population ageing and its economic and social implications. It describes the aims of the Madrid Plan and discusses the lack of protection afforded to older persons, due to the absence of comprehensive human rights instruments.

Chapter 2 analyses the changing situation and role of older persons over the past ten years. It looks at the challenges of providing income security in old age and how employers are recognizing the benefits of an ageing workforce. It describes emerging health and long-term care challenges, particularly the global increase in non-communicable diseases, highlighting the need for sustainable systems of care as well as healthier behaviours throughout life. It looks at enabling and supportive environments, especially the elimination of discrimination, abuse and violence. It points out that as people age, the physical environment, including adequate housing and transportation, becomes increasingly important. The report also analyses the particular vulnerabilities of older persons in humanitarian situations.

Chapter 3 reviews progress in policies, legislation, data and research, as well as institutional arrangements on ageing. There is a section for each United Nations Regional Commission providing data on ageing, highlighting the key issues in the region, describing regional processes for implementing and reviewing the Madrid Plan and setting out recommendations.

Chapter 4, the voices of older people, is a key component of this report. It summarizes findings from consultations with 1,300 older men and women in 36 countries from all regions of the world and from a survey completed by the participants. Older persons themselves share their experiences and describe how their lives have changed and what they expect from policymakers.

Chapter 5 summarizes the main findings, including the results of consultations with older people. It outlines key recommendations and follow-up actions with an agenda for action to secure “a society for all ages”.

Finally, the Appendices provide detailed statistics on population ageing and set out a proposed list of minimum indicators for tracking progress in implementing the Madrid Plan.

Older people in Bangladesh discuss how to monitor implementation of the Madrid Plan.



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