



VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE SERIES / 5 FREE EVENTS

# TAKEAWAYS

MAINSTREAMING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING

*Fifth event out five*

**“UN in the field: Empowerment and alignment in the work to strengthen the protection and participation of older persons”**



**6** December  
2022



9:30 - 11:10 (NY time)  
15:30 - 17:10 (CET)



With the support of:

*This document has been prepared by the Division for People and Social Inclusion at UNITAR, Ms. Analucía Jácome, Senior Project Leader and Human Rights Expert, Mme. Beyzanur Alada, Project Assistant, and Mr. Israel Ledesma, Graphic Designer. We hope you enjoy it!*

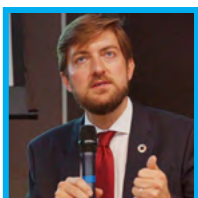
## Moderator



### Mr. Alex Mejía

Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion,  
UNITAR

## Welcome Remarks



### Mr. Jonas Haertle

Chief, Office of the Executive Director, The United Nations Institute  
for Training and Research,  
UNITAR

***“This series represented an opportunity to enhance capabilities towards a culture of learning.”***

1. The Virtual Roundtable Series on Mainstreaming Knowledge on Ageing celebrated this year were an opportunity to better understand the current scenario on the protection and inclusion of older people as a basis for good practices and challenges, standards, policies, and strategies.

2. It has been a pleasure to learn from experiences at the local, regional, and national levels and the potential of some mechanisms and initiatives to protect and include this group.

3. The age, gender, geographic, sector balance, and diversity elements were considered while inviting distinguished speakers to enrich the discussions. Their inspiring experiences, and the participation of attendees from all over the world, represent motivation to continue collaborating on upcoming initiatives and overcoming these challenges.

4. Fostering cooperation is critical to achieving the commitments made under various international instruments. In this regard, UNITAR reiterates its gratitude for this significant partnership and look forward to continuing this collaboration.

## HIGHLIGHTS

UNITAR is a United Nations autonomous body with the mission of developing the individual, institutional and organizational capacities of countries and other UN stakeholders through high quality learning solutions and related knowledge products and services to enhance decision-making and to support country-level action for overcoming global challenges. In this regard, the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing has triggered UNITAR's interest in approaching other UN entities, as well as States, academia, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector for organizing this Virtual Roundtable Series.



## Speakers

*Focus: A life-cycle approach  
“Addressing population ageing in Asia  
and the Pacific Region”*



**Mr. Rintaro Mori**

Regional Adviser for Population Ageing and Sustainable Development in the Asia, and the Pacific Regional Office, at the UN Population Fund, UNFPA

***A life-cycle approach to ageing paves the way  
for healthy, prosperous, and happy lives.***

1. Within the scope of the life cycle approach addressing population ageing in Asia and the Pacific Region, UNFPA classified the determinants of healthy ageing under five main domains: demographic (demographic characteristics); biological (physical characteristics, physical conditions, biological markers, other biological factors); behavioral (modifiable risk factors); psychological (psychological characteristics); and social (personal background, social engagement).

2. Most of the Asia-Pacific countries are ageing. In this regard, it is crucial to carry out work on population ageing issues together with developing policies and strategies at the governmental level. There are high-income countries with initiatives on ageing, such as South Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore; they have developed policies for supporting older persons while recognizing the importance of investing early in this regard.

3. In the life-cycle approach, the Fund focused on healthy ageing; for example, hypertension and diabetes are affected by lifestyle.

4. In the case of women, policies on health care, financial security, education, activeness, and happiness have a special impact on their lives; therefore, it should be envisaged to strengthen skills and knowledge about this thematic.

5. Regardless of the age, every woman should have access to rights-based family planning so that they can choose her lifelong pathway; they should be able to decide whether they want to have children or not, and when. They also need to be able to safely deliver their babies, by improving their long-term health as well as ensuring help for them without violence. They need to have access to equal opportunities for actively contributing to society and ageing with dignity.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The global population is ageing at an unprecedented rate. Furthermore, while the twentieth century was largely an era of rapid ageing for richer countries, in the current century it is increasingly an experience for middle- and lower-income countries. Some of the most rapidly ageing territories in the world can be found in the Asia Pacific Region. Responding to some of the challenges of ageing, as well as mitigating such impacts, may be challenging in settings characterized by poor infrastructure, weak governance, high levels of informal labor and so on.

As part of its core commitment to empowering women and girls within a life cycle approach, in recent years, UNFPA has adopted a model which demonstrates the trajectories by which new-born babies and then girls move through their lives into adulthood and older age. This model shows the points at which decisions and interventions can be made to shape such trajectories.







## CURIOUS FACT

China, South Korea, and Japan from Asia-Pacific Region are struggling with population ageing. While China has the highest number of older persons in the world, South Korea is the fastest ageing country and Japan is the most aged country in the world.

## DID YOU KNOW?

By 2050, 25% of the whole population will be above the age of 60, most of them will be women. You can find here interesting information on the work of UNPFA:

**Publication: Addressing Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific Region: A Life-Cycle Approach.**

<https://asiapacific.unpfa.org/en/publications/addressing-population-ageing-asia-and-pacific-region-life-cycle-approach>



# Focus: The work of ESCWA on Ageing Issues in the Arab Region



**Mrs. Sara Salman**

Regional Advisor on Population Affairs,  
UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,  
ESCWA

***It is important to consider what is required to provide adequate infrastructures to enable population to age with dignity.***

1. In the Arab Region, young persons used to constitute around 34% of the population while older persons only 5%; this context was one of the reasons why governments were not keen to prioritize ageing amongst other competing priorities considering the necessary amount of money and efforts to focus on this group. The rhetoric in this region is changing because there is very fast-paced ageing transition, from 21 million in 2020 to 72 expected in 2050; therefore, governments and other partners are becoming more aware of the importance of this issue.

2. Income insecurity for older persons represent a significant concern, among other issues. According to a study prepared by ESCWA in 10 countries, the 70% of this group do not receive pensions; one of its causes is the large informal labor market that place a lot of people outside the contributory social protection platforms. The minimum contribution of women to the labor market makes them more vulnerable to receive future income and security.

3. Poor health coverage and access to health services for older persons are significant issues in this Region. Another crucial issue is high illiteracy. In some parts, there is more than 90% illiteracy among older persons. In addition, although culturally older persons are respected and honored, there is still discrimination and negative stereotypes because some people do not consider they active enough to contribute to society; therefore, although this group can receive sympathy, they are not necessarily considered as actors of change.

4. This scenario represents a challenge to ESCWA's work focused on build knowledge, build capacity and national dialogue as their pillars of intervention around the development of policies. Their support to member countries: Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan, has included the preparation of reports, briefs, and toolkits, as well as a regional dialogue through the MIPAA-ICPD-AFSD, Annual Parliamentary and Meetings, respectively, while building knowledge on older persons, developing strategies and action plans besides of long-term care economies.

5. Five years ago, agendas on ageing and older persons were almost non-existent; now, there is a shift because more countries and UN Agencies put on the agenda policies of older persons and strategies to ensure dignified and active ageing.

## HIGHLIGHTS

**ESCWA built capacities of governments and other actors by focusing on national and regional dialogues to develop policy frameworks on older persons and ageing issues. Within the scope of their work, the Commission builds knowledge to support member States for regional dialogues towards developing long-term care economies.**



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الاستقواء  
ESCWA







## TO BEAR IN MIND

The Arab region has one of the fastest growing populations in the world, which has more than tripled over the past four decades. To date, the Arab region has been characterized by its youthful population; however, recent demographic shifts are resulting in a persisting youth bulge and a significant increase in the numbers and proportions of older persons, forcing Governments to address often competing priorities for their different age groups.

## INTERESTING FACT

Population ageing, which is projected for the near future in most Arab countries, will happen at a much faster rate in the region compared to other regions.

**Find here information on the work of ESCWA for Older Persons -Ageing with dignity in the Arab Region- from 2015 on.**

<https://www.unescwa.org/seniors>

**Find here ESCWA's online aging toolkit:**

<https://oat.unescwa.org/>



# Focus: UNHCR Response on Ageing Issues in the Americas region



**Mrs. Christina Sousa**

Protection Associate-Community based protection,  
UN High Commissioner for Refugees,  
UNHCR

***Displacement affects each individual differently, depending on a variety of factors. Through its age, gender, and diversity (AGD) policy, UNCTAD mainstreams its work considering those factors.***

1. The 60% of displaced persons, -1 of 6 globally, are in America. This scenario has no similar precedents. Likewise, there are internally displaced persons; only in Colombia, the first half of this year there were reported 84,000.

2. UNHCR works with Help Age International on regional assessments to understand the impact of this situation to older persons, towards improving their approach with this group according to their needs.

3. They have focused on regional assessments conducted in 5 countries: El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, where the results have shown:

- 11% of the older persons in move are living alone.
- 58% have not receive humanitarian aid.
- 79% reported that they have informal jobs.
- 10% of them received social pension.

4. More than half of the older persons who live alone need daily support. In terms of humanitarian aid, this group is having difficulties to receive information in this regard. In some cases, they don't know the process to request asylum. During displacement situations, older persons face challenges with documentation requests. The lack of the necessary information can make them invisible to the respective authorities or public employees in charge of a given procedure in States; therefore, they cannot receive benefits that many people have.

5. In the Americas region, it is necessary to implement mechanisms for participation, consultation, and feedback for the design, planning and implementation of humanitarian responses, so that the voices of older persons in situations of human mobility are heard and their experiences and resilience are recognized as added value to these responses.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The report “A Call for Dignity: Ageing on the move”, jointly produced by HelpAge and the UNHCR Americas Regional Office, highlights the need to strengthen communication mechanisms on access to their rights and the possibility of accessing international protection mechanisms, including asylum procedures, as well as challenges related to access to documentation, health, food, housing, livelihoods, as well as the lack of intersectorality in policies and response plans.

UNHCR will continue its work next year with the aim of replicating this process to create different cycles of training in a way that they can mainstream their response.







## REMEMBER!

The situation is critical because people in displacement don't have the possibility to create real incomes due to the lack of documentation and information exacerbating the potential risks.

## DID YOU KNOW?

7.1 million persons in displacement come from Venezuela and represent 80% of Latin America and the Caribbean. There are more than 7 million internally displaced persons from El Salvador, Honduras, and Colombia, and 7.1 million persons that have left Venezuela since 2015.

You can find the report “A Call for Dignity: Ageing on the move” by UNHCR and HelpAge here:

<https://ageingonthemove.org/>





# Focus: The Role of UNHCR on Ageing Issues in Greece



**Mrs. Aneta Ostasz**  
Protection Officer,  
UNHCR

**Meaningful engagement of displaced older persons, among other groups, in decision-making and policies that affect them should be a pillar of all humanitarian interventions.**

1. Older persons often have specific needs in general, and may have different degrees of vulnerability depending on individual profiles. Displaced older persons are at a greater disadvantage as they may have lost their homes, savings, social networks, and need to rebuild their lives in a new environment.

2. Displaced older persons have the potential to continue to contribute to society in the host country in a meaningful way. While learning a new language may be a key barrier, many persons strive to integrate and contribute to the host society. Older persons may seek employment, but may face age discrimination, even in informal work.

3. Access to employment, pension, or social allowances is a priority for displaced older persons to meet their basic needs. Pensions in their country of origin are usually much lower and inaccessible following displacement, making survival difficult in the host country. Displaced persons often lose everything, and need to rebuild their lives from scratch which is even more difficult as health issues appear in old age.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Within the UNHCR response in Greece, older persons were prioritized to access the accommodation for asylum seekers through a housing scheme that was then handed over to the State. In its annual participatory assessment, the team consulted with older persons, refugees with different profiles, using the age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach, who shared their experience. In 2022, UNHCR only targeted older refugees to understand their experiences on displacement in Greece.

The UNHCR's supports the authorities in the refugee response by advocating for refugee access to rights and services and to consult with refugees on their priorities and recommendations within the framework of accountability to affected persons.

Face to gaps in access to social and other allowances for displaced older persons in Greece, the UNHCR developed a safety net to cover basic needs, but also support older persons to link them to integration where possible, and also include older persons in refugee outreach teams in community-based protection interventions.

Many older refugees in Greece are actively looking for work to survive and maintain their lives. The biggest challenges for even finding informal jobs are language and age. They face age discrimination when trying to find work thus misrepresenting their age, saying they're younger than they are to find even informal work to survive to meet their basic needs. Yet other challenges for older displaced persons in Greece are the long waiting times in the asylum procedures, lack of information on the social allowance available to them, or how to access them.



4. Older persons prefer to receive information in-person, while some nationalities are more digitally literate and stay updated through group chats or social media. Often older persons are not aware of their rights and available services in the host country. Targeted messaging and mediums of communication need to be developed for specific groups based on their preferences.

5. Displaced older persons may meet their basic needs, depending on the social and support network in the host country. Those who have previous family links in the host country, are more likely to access services and meet basic needs easily. Others are fully reliant on displaced friends, family members, and community-based organizations or NGOs for support. Targeted support to this group by the state or humanitarian actors is recommended.

6. Greece is a country with a high number of transits of displaced persons moving onwards to other European countries. There are over 50 different nationalities that have crossed through Greece and continue to transit through Greece.



## TO BEAR IN MIND

Most older persons are heavily reliant on family, friends, community-based organizations, or non-governmental organizations to cover basic needs to receive food or non-food items.

## DID YOU KNOW?

There are older refugees in Greece trying to learn Greek while also learning to write in their own language for the first time. It has been seen that they are actively learning to be included in the society.

You can find here the Europe AGD 2021 report:

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/94181>



# Focus: Ageing in Nigeria



**Mrs. Adwoa Kufour-Owusa**  
Senior Human Rights Advisor in Nigeria,  
OHCHR

***Older persons are nations' assets, and as such we must always unleash their potential.***

1. Nigeria has conflicts and crises in the north and across the country, as well as internal displacements different parts. The OHCHR team in this country has been supporting entrepreneurship activities of older persons; they harness their skills through sharing knowledge and highlighting their personal skills.

2. OHCHR has been working in particular with older women, by trying to engage them through their active contributions based on their history and experiences in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, not only as carriers of pre-conflict narratives.

3. The Office, in the context of displacement, monitors the Human Rights of older persons at a micro level but it is equally important to consider how displacement impacts this group.

4. The Government has established the National Senior Citizen Center to identify the needs of older persons and is also collaborating with the UN. The Office's team has been working with the National Senior Citizen Center to find out, especially in communities where there is no access to information on older persons and information on their needs, with the aim of identifying ways to support them and ensuring their rights are respected.

5. The Office considers that older persons are the best advocates of their own needs because they can claim and exercise their rights by their own.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The ageing population of Nigeria will be increasing beyond 60 years old. In this regard, the OHCHR has developed a new cooperation framework to guide the work of the UN and the government of Nigeria.

From 2023 to 2027, significant components of that include the groups they have identified as being left behind, along with older persons. They have also been supporting the Nigerian government to strategically address some issues faced by older persons while focusing on their diversity.



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER







### IMPORTANT FACT

Displacement among older persons in Nigeria is not only from conflict and insecurity but also from climate change and environmentally related matters.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Nigeria had a series of flooding over the last 2 months where most of the southern parts of the country were flooded, and most of those affected, and whose needs were not reflected immediately in the response were older persons.



Find here the video of the whole event!:  
<https://youtu.be/TDK4zhvyka8>





# Decade of healthy ageing

*Thank you for joining us  
in this learning experience!*



With the support of:

