



VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE SERIES / 5 FREE EVENTS

TAKEAWAYS

MAINSTREAMING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING

Third event

“From engagement to action for the protection and participation of older persons: Good practices and challenges in the implementation of the recommendations accepted by States in revision mechanisms”

 **13** October 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, and Mr. Israel Ledesma, Graphic Designer. We hope you enjoy it!

Moderator



Mr. Alex Mejía

Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion,
UNITAR

Speakers

Focus: Good practices from a local government



H.E. Mr. Francisco de la Torre (Video-message)

Mayor of Malaga,
Spain

Malaga has shown good practices and leadership throughout the years, in line with the province of Andalusia considered as an example in Europe.

1. The city has made several efforts to support active ageing, including in digital equity, temporary and fixed housing, subsidies, physical and mental wellbeing, accompaniment and quality of life, leisure, and free time activities. Likewise, the municipality has been working on prevention and rehabilitation, as well as on other political, social, cultural, and economic challenges present in the city.

2. There are 24 centers in the city of Malaga for the exclusive use of older persons and 421 entities in which activities are shared with other citizens and senior associations which are 107, part of it are social centers.

3. Participation, protection, and promotion of the quality of life of older persons is one of the priorities of the city, therefore, it works on a wide variety of events organized by and for older persons. Cultural activities to preserve traditions are always present, same as memory and cognitive stimulation workshops, leisure, and free time workshops.

4. Regarding education and general culture matters, the University of Malaga offers university study programs for seniors, it also hosts some of the most significant scientific research on active aging in Europe.

5. The Senior Citizens Section of the City Council of Malaga has as assigned functions the provision of information and advice on resources and prevention services, aimed at older persons, through the management of programs to promote active aging, cognitive health, support to the associative network and promotion of personal autonomy.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE APPROACH OF MALAGA

The municipality pursues to promote healthy ageing through cognitive health for avoiding social isolation.



Ayuntamiento
de Málaga





DID YOU KNOW?

Malaga hosts the European Observatory of Geronto-migrations, where a scientific team studies and proposes solutions to the most remote and less studied problems of older persons.

CURIOUS FACT!

The City Council focused on older person's issues has a consultative nature to promote the participation and approach of the community so matters of local public interest are effectively done.

Find more information on the efforts of the Municipality of Malaga [here](https://derechossociales.malaga.eu/es/mayores/). Kindly note that the information is only available in Spanish:

Ayuntamiento de Málaga. Personas Mayores:
<https://derechossociales.malaga.eu/es/mayores/>

Find here the video message from the Mayor of Málaga:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1xiqKxqYn8>



Focus: Good practices from a national government



H.E. Ambassador Shara Duncan Villalobos

Chargée d'affaires a.i. Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva

“We really need to act fast towards adopting a coherent, comprehensive, and integrated human rights framework on older persons. While further integrating other persons concerns into the work of existing mechanism.”

1. For Costa Rica older persons has been a top priority policy for decades. They permanently strive to advocate and work for those who most need attention, protection, and respect.

2. In 1999, the country enacted by law the National Council of Older Persons, CONAPAM, subscribe to the Presidency of the Republic in charge of matters of ageing and older persons at the public and private entities. It ensures the proper functioning of the programs and services for this group.

3. Costa Rica was the first country in ratifying the Interamerican Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons. This allowed for the recognition and implementation of a catalog of fundamental rights for the effective protection of the human rights of this population. This regional progress has opened the doors to a more precise understanding of what old age is.

4. The country has consolidated a network for the integral and progressive care of older persons in the framework of access to justice, with an emphasis of letting other people stay with their families and in their normal environment and having opened opportunities to share their knowledge and competences or developing and providing them with digital inclusion. For example, training on social media, such programs on digital inclusion are conducted by public universities.

5. For CR coordinated approach must also include the intersectionality and specificity of the contributions and needs of different vulnerable groups, including women, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, refugees, suffering descendants. Meaningful participation of civil society.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE APPROACH OF COSTA RICA ON AGEING

Costa Rica has a progressive and more holistic approach to ageing and the different stages of life, which although correlated with biological processes, are much more determined by social, economic, environmental, and cultural factors.



COSTA RICA - PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UN IN GVA





TO BEAR IN MIND!

The meaningful participation of civil society, with older persons at the forefront, must also be a cornerstone of any multilateral human rights process. This is a key aspect. Without direct, significant and inclusive participation by older persons, in all their diversity, the negotiating process of an international instrument to protect and promote the human rights of this group is doomed to fail.

INTERESTING FACT!

If we are to truly honour and address the true and specific needs and rights of older persons, we must include them fully in this process. It will also be a recognition of them as key and active players of society and of the international system.

Find the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons here: <https://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter-american-treaties-a-70-human-rights-older-persons.asp>

Find more information on CONAPAM here. Kindly note that the information is only available in Spanish:

Consejo Nacional de la Persona Adulta Mayor, CONAPAM: <https://www.presidencia.go.cr/comunicados/tag/consejo-nacional-de-la-persona-adulta-mayor-conapam/>



Focus: The potential of the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism towards the active, free, and meaningful participation of older persons as well as their protection



Mr. Gianni Magazzeni

Chief of the Universal Periodic Review Branch, Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

The UPR is a unique mechanism because the 193 States parties of the UN System pass through it. Recommendations on a wide variety of human rights issues, including on older persons, are presented by States to the concerned State, and these pass by a process of internal consultations to identify which can be accepted and implemented.

1. In the framework of the 3 cycles of the UPR, there has been a significant increase in the number of recommendations that specifically refers to the human rights of older persons: from 40 in the first cycle to 140 in the third one.

2. The recommendations presented have been related to the settlement of national strategies or action to improve social benefits, including health, access to locations and buildings, as well as supporting those persons affected by disabilities.

3. It is always better to continuously monitoring through the availability of information as a way to clearly track the due implementation of the accepted commitments.

4. Make sure that once a state has received a recommendation and accepted them, 95% of the recommendations are accepted. States should include in the implementation and follow up to the involved stakeholders, including parliaments, judiciary, civil society, and National Human Rights Institutions.

5. The Secretary General has endorsed this mechanism and its process due to its great value as part of his call for action towards the effective promotion and protection of Human Rights.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE UPR AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

Through the UPR's process States can canalize their concerns through comments and recommendations on the effective promotion and protection of human rights of other States.

Civil society and National Human Rights Institutions can advocate on a given topic and during the adoption of the final report, they can present statement by referring to it. The ultimate goal of this mechanism is to promote the engagement of States to move forward from theory to practice.



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER





DID YOU KNOW?

As part of the support provided by the OHCHR, as the Secretariat of the mechanism, it writes a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the concerned country with advice on the way to move forward to implement the recommendations that have been sovereignly accepted, including on those areas that require special attention. Furthermore, the Office prepares a matrix, with information on who made a given recommendation, the position of the concerned State, and its link with the Sustainable Development Goals, by including information on national action plans and implementation modalities.

You can learn here more about the UPR mechanism:

OHCHR, Universal Periodic Review:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/upr-main#:~:text=The%20UPR%20is%20a%20State,fulfil%20their%20human%20rights%20obligations>

You can find here recommendations on the Human Rights of Older Persons presented in the framework of the UPR:

<https://upr-info-database.uwazi.io/en/>



Focus: Older Persons in the framework of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), including the Age, Gender, and Diversity Inclusive Pledges initiative



Mr. Ricardo Pla Cordero

Protection Officer in the Division of International Protection at United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Hosting and protecting refugees -including older persons- is a shared responsibility. States, civil society, and other stakeholders should come together and work towards proactive outcomes.

1. As part of UNHCR's mandate, there has been settled a system of policies and mechanisms to ensure appropriate response is effectively done, including for older persons. The Policy on Older Refugees and Age, Gender and Diversity Policy are good examples in this regard.

2. In the framework of the Global Refugee Forum different stakeholders presented around 1400 pledges by the end of 2020. From those, only 1 pledge was specifically focused on older persons; it was a commitment by a member State to advance situations of statelessness. Besides that, there were 11 pledges with sensitive information related, inter alia the lack of opportunities to access employment had a particular mention on older persons.

3. UNHCR is monitoring and supporting the involved actors to share more commitments and to implement them as well as encouraging for sharing more to give an opportunity for older persons who are refugees, and those stateless to access the same rights as other citizens. Most of the pledges are shared by States while the NGO sector is second but still with very few and just asking for that need on or your support on, expanding those practices.

Among other identified challenges for this vulnerable group, the High Commissioner has been requested for guidance on the existence of global organizations through which older persons can come together and advocate about their rights, as happens in other fields such as the international disability alliance focused on helping to raise those voices and giving opportunities for ideas, projects, etc. It has been very challenging to find an equivalent stakeholder for unifying voices on ageing issues.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE WORK OF UNHCR AND OLDER PERSONS

UNHCR is committed to the inclusion and protection of displaced and stateless older persons, as highlighted in its Policy on Older Refugees and Age, Gender and Diversity Policy, and in line with the UN Principles for Older Persons. UNHCR works to support and protect older persons on the move, enabling access to basic services as they recover and rebuild after a crisis. UNHCR encourages participants to this learning event to consider the rights of displaced and stateless older persons in their respective work.



4. Likewise, data disaggregated is missing by causing invisibility. Also, the lack of documentation is a pending challenge; over half of the population of this group don't have those documents. This fact prevents access to protection and assistance for older persons on the move, so they have limited access to pension systems, internet services, and financial services. In the same vein, evidence such as separation of their families and community support networks, heightened risk of violence and abuse; usually older persons tend to be either left behind, so not having an opportunity to flee from conflict, persecution, violence etc. or once they have reached a safest space, they feel isolated.

5. A claim to ageing with dignity is on the move. When we think about refugees, we usually think of different context, mainly in humanitarian crisis during conflicts and that its impacts are ahead of us from what we are working on, or that these are only related to those who are working in developed settings or in development agencies, but not, these issues can be covered anywhere by anyone.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Global Compact for refugees is considered a participatory process to share ideas and pledges. Its Digital Platform brings together a growing community of Member States, refugees, NGOs, UN organizations, businesses, faith groups, academics, charities and community groups, all of whom are working together to find practical, long-term solutions that will allow refugees, internally displaced people, stateless people, and their generous host communities, to thrive.

IMPORTANT FACT!

From 100'000.000 people forcibly displaced until mid-2022, 4% of them are older persons. This group is one of the most at-risk populations, considering there are additional barriers this population may be facing when the seek for assistance.

TO BEAR IN MIND

The work of persons who have been fighting for their rights and supporting others should be acknowledged. We can better succeed by working as a community in a protective environment.

Here you can learn more about:

The work of the UNHCR and Older Persons:
<https://www.unhcr.org/older-persons>

The Digital Platform: Global Compact on Refugees:
<https://globalcompactrefugees.org/about-digital-platform>

The Policy on Older Refugees by UNHCR:
<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/excom/standcom/4e857c279/unhcrs-policy-older-refugees-19-april-2000-annex-ii-draft-report-seventeenth.html>

The Age, Gender and Diversity Policy:
<https://www.unhcr.org/protection/women/5aa13c0c7/policy-age-gender-diversity-accountability-2018.html>

Working with Older Persons in Forced Displacement:
<https://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/>

Global Compact for Refugees:
<https://globalcompactrefugees.org/about/global-compact-refugees>

Age, Gender, and Diversity, Inclusive Pledges:
<https://globalcompactrefugees.org/pledges-contributions/age-gender-and-diversity-inclusive-pledges>



Focus: The Age Friendly Environments initiative and how it has been helpful to move forward from theory to practice



Mr. Thiago Herick de Sa

Lead of the initiative Age-friendly environments, including the Global Network for Age-friendly cities and Communities, at the Department of Social Determinants of Health, WHO

“We are living longer but not necessarily living better.”

1. The word continues to urbanize rapidly, not necessarily in the best way. This triggers implications for urban and rural areas; in particular, to older persons, whether they migrate to urban areas or are left behind, in some cases, without their families and their communities.

In 2020 the UNGA has declared 2021-2030, the decade of healthy ageing. One of its action areas precisely is to ensure that communities post the abilities of older persons. Therefore, creating age-friendly environments is one of the top priority areas to address population ageing for improving the lives of all the people and ensuring that their rights are respected and protected.

2. Age friendly communities are those in which people can grow older well by enabling to meet their basic needs and learn how to grow, make decisions, continue being active, build and maintain relationships, as well as continuing being able to contribute to society. The 8 domains of age friendly cities are housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, community support and health services, outdoor spaces and buildings, and transportation.

3. In 2007, WHO developed and published a seminal document called “Age friendly cities guide.” This tool has already been successfully applied through the world, including through a course addressed to a global network, which is now fast approaching 1500 members.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE AGE FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS INITIATIVE

WHO's has been proactively working for years on the Age friendly-environments initiative by including governments, civil society, professionals, media, academia, private sector, and international agencies. Better understanding different contexts may be beneficial to enable healthy ageing as a guidance to remove barriers and develop policies, systems, products, and services, adapted to the capacities and circumstances of older persons. It has developed extensive guidance material on how to do it, measure it and implement it.

The Organization encourages to use the existing guidance plus other material -interalia- from many other sources on age friendly citizen communities and the case studies encourages national level networks. Likewise, it stresses on the need of supporting capacity building for improving the urban space.



The organization managed to advance a global community that is working to make citizen communities throughout the world more age friendly, including with the establishment of the global network for age friendly citizen communities. All of them share the vision that every city and community strive to become more age friendly, as a platform to help protect them and through which older persons can exercise their rights.

4. The global network has affiliated programs; these are usually run by member States or sub-national governments focused on age/friendly citizen communities, with successful experiences. WHO now is working to develop guidance on how national programs can be created and sustained, the plan is to launch guidance material by the end of this year and start the pilot tasting.

5. WHO has been collecting all these innovative practices through their global database of age friendly practices. If we want people to be inspired and inspire, we need them to exchange this type of knowledge. The database has now over 600 age friendly practices covering a wide range of topics. The mentoring programme for newcomers was recently completed; 340 participants from 55 countries enrolled; it is planned to expand it to other languages and formats by focusing on the steps of the age friendly cycle.

“We need to build capacities for everyone to embark in this journey from local, national, regional, & international...all people themselves.”



REMEMBER!

National, international, local levels, whomever is around the table centre to every step is the close engagement and the meaningful participation of older persons themselves because we need to make sure that they are at the centre and they are at the core of whatever we do. They are agents of transformation and would like to see improvements in the environments where they live.

DID YOU KNOW?

Urbanization and population ageing together with many other major global trends such as climate change are radically changing how we age and shaping the environments we live in.

TO BEAR IN MIND!

WHO has been training people to engage and understand, plan, act, measure. The organization is expanding and consolidating the activities to create age-fare environments including in response to the UN Decade of healthy ageing with the collaboration of many people from grassroots movements to friends in our UN family, national authorities. The idea is to continue advancing on the development of strategies to determine effective action to foster age firm environments to encourage citizen communities to join the global network.

Learn more about the “Age Friendly Environments Initiative: Developing communities to foster the abilities of older people”

<https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/age-friendly-environments>



Wrap-up



Mme. Silvia Neira
Vice President of The Global Initiative on Ageing (GIA)

Quoted: “It always seems impossible until it is done.”
Nelson Mandela

1. The experience of Malaga has shown us how to include at local level the voice of seniors and their needs, in line with age friendly cities.
2. Costa Rica is an example of what a country can do to reinforce human rights of older persons and how civil society can be included. Other countries can be inspired by this example.
3. Regarding the UPR, this mechanism has shown us how it envisages to promote national strategies for social benefits, locations, building for disabilities, etc. The fact that 95% of the countries accept the recommendations received is inspiring for using this mean to promote and protect the human rights of older persons.
4. Bearing in mind the refugee movements and crisis, UNHCR is a strategic partner to support States for solving the lack of documentation challenge so this vulnerable group can have access to the labor market, education, among other fields, and be fully integrated in societies.
5. It is important to remember that 70% of all the population will be living in cities by 2050. This means that we need to adapt to the upcoming reality, by supporting the services that are needed for older persons and realize how we are ageing in different ways.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE WORK OF THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON AGEING (GIA) AND OLDER PERSONS

Foundation GIA, it has an articulated strategy to address the issues of Ageing and older persons from different perspectives, including human rights, labor issues, economy, health, education, and science. It aims to improve the standard of living, participation and inclusion of the world's ageing population, through collaboration with national and local governments, international organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector.





DON'T FORGET!

We all have the responsibility to address and bring solutions to the different issues on ageing and older persons. We should educate and inspire, as appropriate, all sectors, so there are significant actions.

Find information on the Global Initiative on Ageing (GIA):

<https://ageing-foundation.org/en/>



Find here the video of the whole event!:
<https://youtu.be/yJBQwA3IfYU>





Decade of healthy ageing

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



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