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Status of implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and San José Charter in the Caribbean

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Projections regarding the ageing of the population

- The global population of older persons is expected to rise from 901 million in 2015, representing 12 % of total population, to 1.4 billion by 2030 and 2.1 billion by 2050.
- At the subregional level, from 1.1 million, which corresponded to 13 % of the population in 2015, to 2 million or the equivalent of **22 %** in **2035**.



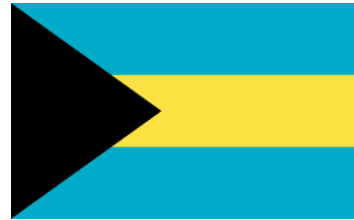
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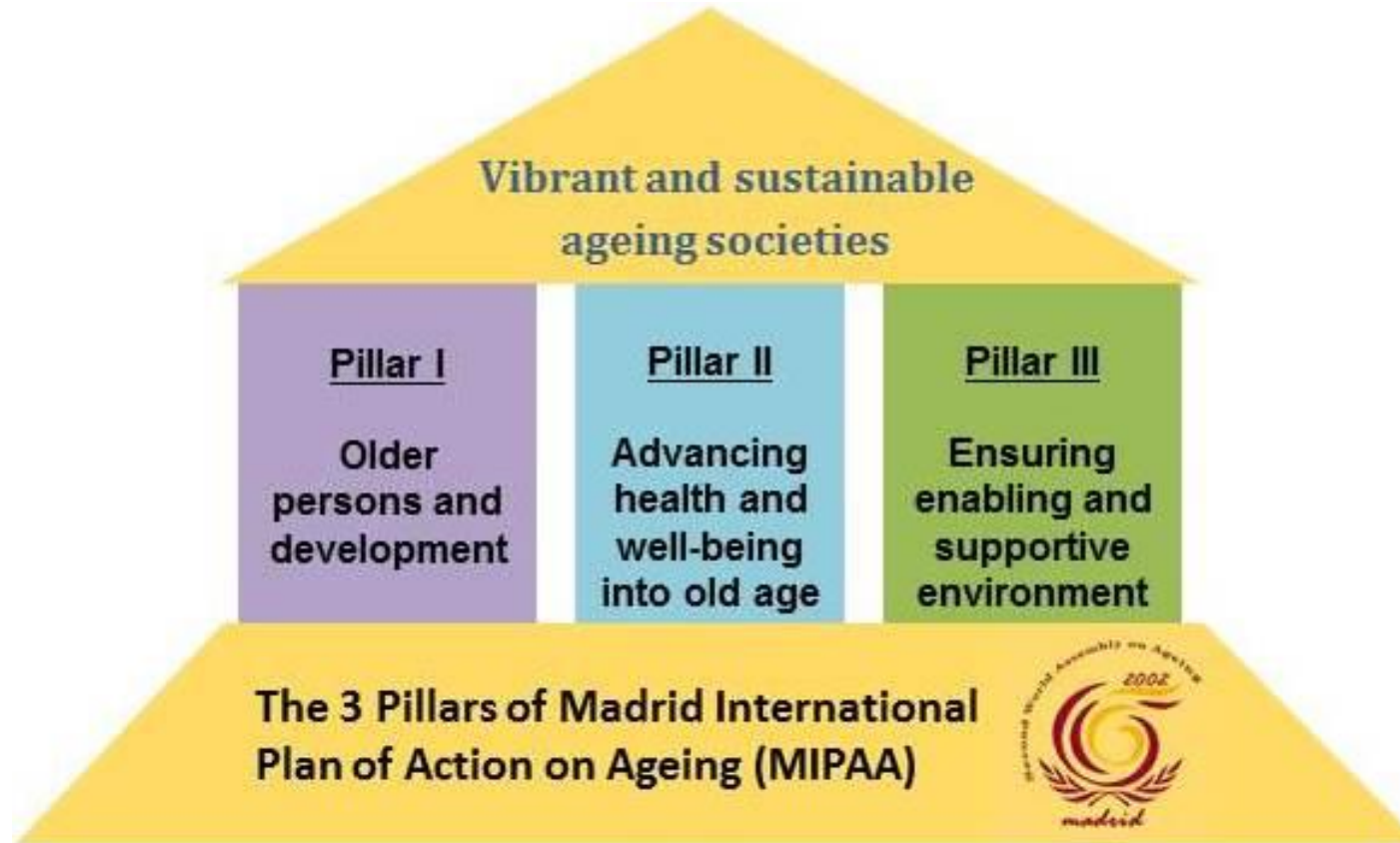
Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002



Adoption by 159 Member States, including 8 from the Caribbean



Content of Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002





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Methodology for analysis



12 replies received to the ECLAC's questionnaire :

6 from Member States: The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago

4 from Associate Members: Anguilla, Bermuda, Cayman Islands and Saint Maarten

2 from civil society organisations in Dominica and Grenada





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Areas of concern for older persons

1. Legal and policy frameworks



2. Institutional framework



3. Awareness-raising, data, survey and research



4. Care



5. Autonomy and independence



6. Adequate standard of living and social protection



7. Right to work and access to inclusive labour market





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Areas of concern for older persons

8. Equality and non-discrimination based on age



9. Accessibility, infrastructure and housing



10. Participation and contribution



11. Neglect, violence and abuse



12. Access to justice



13. Emergency and Disaster risk management



14. Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building





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1. Legal and policy frameworks: different progress

- New National policies on ageing adopted
- Previous plans/strategies/policies reviewed
- Initial policy or laws on ageing kept
- Policies on ageing still being drafted

= After 15 years of MIPAA, there are still countries without a proper framework that effectively address the situation of older persons at the national level



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2. Institutional framework

- Primary responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policies and strategies on ageing across the Caribbean rests with **ministries of social services/affairs/development or health related issues.**
- Establishment of **specific bodies** in charge of monitoring the implementation of policies and providing advice to governments.
- Establishment of a **specific section/division** at the ministerial level, with responsibilities for ageing.
 - = **Importance of incorporating a multi-stakeholder and participatory approach + Indicators for the monitoring of existing legal and policies frameworks + Information on budget allocations, resources and capacity of established bodies.**



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3. Awareness-raising, data, survey and research

- Raising awareness activities, in particular on specific international days
 - Challenges remaining regarding the collection of data, disaggregated by age and gender.
 - Conduction of studies as a means of providing up-to-date information to help policy makers and other stakeholders to find targeted solutions to the changes in the age structure and its implications
- = More sensitised societies regarding the ageing process but data and protection gaps regarding the situation of older persons in rural and remote areas.**



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4. Care

- Provision of universal health care
- Preferential access to medication, especially for those with chronic diseases or non-communicable diseases
- Progress in addressing the situation of older persons living with HIV/AIDS
- Progress in supporting older persons with physical and/or mental disabilities
- Progress in providing home care services
- Progress in establishing regulations, standards and monitoring mechanisms for the quality of care
- Progress in developing intergenerational programmes



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5. Autonomy and Independence

- No reference to the adoption of a specific law or programme to strengthen the autonomy and independence of older persons

= More needs to be done to include an assessment of the right to equal recognition before the law, legal capacity, regimes for supported decision-making for older persons with disabilities and the right to participate in all decision-making affecting their lives



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6. Adequate standard of living and social protection

- Variation of the coverage of social security systems in the region
- Extension of the coverage of non-contributory pension schemes
- Provision of additional allowances and benefits to supplement old age pensions

= Challenges remain to provide adequate income to older persons to allow them to age with dignity



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7. The right to work and access to an inclusive labour market

- Process of gradually increasing the retirement age
 - Implementation of measures to offer employment to older persons in public sector
 - Provision of services to re-enter the workforce, including career guidance, employment assistance
 - Establishment of repertoire of skills of older persons
- = To continue adopting employment policies for older persons, for those who are willing to continue working**



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8. Equality and non-discrimination based on age

- Action taken to tackle ageism

= More efforts are required to adopt legal guarantees of equality for all and combat all forms of discrimination



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9. Accessibility, infrastructure and housing

- Progress in implementing measures to improve transportation
 - Progress in adapting public building and spaces
 - Progress in providing support for housing adapted to older persons
- = More needs to be done to create accessible environments in rural areas.**



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10. Participation and contribution

- Adoption of participatory mechanisms to ensure the participation of older persons

= Participation and contribution are key to promote behaviour changes and to include older persons in all spheres of society



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11. Neglect, Violence and Abuse

- No data available
 - Adoption of specific strategies for the prevention of elder abuse
 - Establishment of integrated system to address reported cases of elder abuse
 - Development of training
 - Establishment of protective mechanisms
 - Development of awareness raising measures
- = More research, surveys, studies and data collection are required to give visibility to this issue**



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12. Access to justice

- No comprehensive policy implemented to give preferential treatment to older persons in judicial proceedings
- No information regarding the existence of measures that ensure age-friendly legal information regarding the rights of older persons and remedies available in case of violations

=More needs to be done to include the access to justice as a priority



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13. Emergency and disaster risk management

- Existence of national disaster preparedness plans that maintain a register of older persons
 - Provision of health care services support and shelters for older persons
- = Good practices in the Caribbean could inspire other regions**



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14. Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building

- No information provided on illiteracy programmes to reach older persons in rural and remote areas
 - Development of lifelong learning programmes for older persons
- = More needs to be done to provide technology readiness, computer and data literacy trainings for older persons**



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Main Conclusions

- Renewed commitment to improving the well-being of older persons
- More information is needed on safeguards for free and informed consent for medical treatment, decision-making, legal capacity, access to justice, to education, ICT and culture
- More information is needed regarding the situation of specific groups of older persons, including older women, older migrants, LGBTI older persons, those belonging to ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities, those living on the streets or those who are deprived of liberty



Recommendations in the Caribbean

ECLAC context

The new regional agreements should:

- Recognise the region's heterogeneity, the specific needs and challenges facing Small Island Developing States, middle-income countries, or highly indebted and vulnerable Caribbean countries, and the **importance of strengthening long-standing cooperation, including regional, south-south cooperation and new forms of multi-stakeholder and public/private partnerships, support provided by the international community,** including the United Nations, ECLAC, international and regional institutions, financial and multilateral development partners.
- Highlight the ageing of the population across the subregion, and **recognize explicitly that the growing numbers of older persons are not a homogeneous group;** that particular attention needs to be given to their varied and different circumstances, whilst at the same time, identifying commonalities and good practices in addressing the situation of this age group across the subregion that, if properly harnessed and encouraged, will make a positive contribution to sustainable development.



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Recommendations for legal, regulatory and policy frameworks

- Encourage Member States to **ratify international and regional human rights instruments**, including the Inter-American Convention for the protection of the rights of older persons, the American Convention on Human Rights, as well as the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants and Members of Their Families. The ratification of those instruments will **broaden the scope of protection of older persons in the Caribbean**;
- Ensure **the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by older persons**, through the amendment of existing national policies and strategies on ageing, the adoption of national policies/action plans on ageing, as well as national development planning and sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies, which include a rights-based approach;
- **Disseminate** international and regional agreements and standards on the rights of older persons throughout society as a whole, including older persons themselves. National policies should be made available to older persons in accessible and age-friendly formats, in urban and rural areas alike.



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Recommendations for institutional frameworks

- Strengthen national institutions **by establishing a specific body at the governmental level**, responsible for promoting the well-being and the rights of older persons, allocated with adequate and sufficient human, material and financial resources to achieve its objectives and to perform its tasks.
- **Mainstreaming ageing in planning and budgeting**, coordinating inputs for reporting, review and appraisals, including the MIPAA and its regional agreements, at the local and national levels.
- **Inter-institutional, inter-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach** in order promote coordination and cooperation among the different actors, including governments, civil society, academia, and older persons themselves;
- Improve and/or strengthen **the monitoring and evaluation** aspect of such bodies, including the implementation of a system with **indicators and the collection of disaggregated data** by age, gender, disability, and other any relevant variable, in order to have a comprehensive assessment of the impacts of existing policies on ageing;
- Reinforce existing **consultative and participatory mechanisms** in national councils/divisions/ministries leading on issues affecting the well-being of older persons to effectively allow participation and contribution to decision-making
- Strengthen the **establishment of networks, organisations and associations of older persons** and invite them to participate in the review process of the MIPAA and regional agreements at the national and regional levels.



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Recommendations on awareness raising, data, survey, research

- Carry out, in conjunction with national human rights institutions, academia and networks of older persons, **awareness raising campaigns** in order to **change attitudes toward ageing, promote intergenerational dialogue and interaction**, and social inclusion and cohesion. The positive contribution of older persons to sustainable societies should be highlighted, including with the active role of the media and private sector, in order to eradicate ageism, and all other forms of discrimination and abuse against them;
- **Disseminate existing policies/strategies/regulation on ageing**, at all levels of government and to those providing public services to older persons, including health and social care professionals, public transport providers, and inform older persons themselves about those policies and their rights;
- Ensure the availability, and systemic and regular collection **of disaggregated statistics and data**, and the accessibility of statistics to inform the development and implementation of policies;
- Conduct research in order to **identify up-to-date challenges faced by older persons** in each of the Caribbean countries, in partnership with academia, international and regional organisations, accompanied by the collection and analysis of disaggregated data by age, gender, disability and health status, and other relevant variables.



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Recommendations on Care

- Promote **the universalisation of the right of older persons to health**, which should be based on a comprehensive and integrated social and health care approach in order to respect and promote their autonomy, independence and dignity and provide a continuum of care, from prevention, promotion, and rehabilitation to palliative care;
- Foster the implementation of measures that provide **home-care services, respite care for informal caregivers** and additional services to help families. Particular attention should be given to older persons living alone and/or in rural and remote areas;
- Foster public policies on the **sexual and reproductive health** of older persons;
- Continue promoting **active and healthy ageing**, and improving the nutrition of older persons;
- Develop comprehensive **long-term care systems**, with specialised and sufficiently trained personnel, well versed in the human rights of older persons, as well as public day-care centres, with operational rights-based guidance and standards;
- Adopt or **reinforce monitoring and supervisory mechanisms** to verify the quality of care offered in public and private care settings, including care provided at older persons' domiciles, with adequate and sufficient trained inspectors able to report to authorities;
- **Extending training and coverage of geriatric and gerontological care** at the different levels of health care to meet the needs of older persons, including in rural and remote areas. Inclusion of geriatrics and gerontology in university and nursing training programmes;



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Recommendations on Care

- Adopt measures that **improve access to palliative care**, in order to allow all older persons with terminal illnesses to avoid unnecessary suffering and die with dignity;
- Improve existing preferential measures that facilitate **access to medicines, equipment, assistive devices and comprehensive rehabilitation services**, in particular in rural, coastal and remote areas;
- Put additional efforts into providing **human-rights training** for formal and informal caregivers, and to inform older persons about their human rights in care settings, including their right to privacy and intimacy;
- Continue implementing **specific programmes to address the situation of older persons with HIV/AIDS**, and those suffering from **communicable and non-communicable diseases**; as well as to address emerging diseases, including chikungunya, dengue, and zika; including training for care providers and health professionals, and facilitating access to prevention, treatment and rehabilitation mechanisms;
- Pay particular attention to the situation of older persons with **chronic degenerative diseases**, Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia;
- Pay particular attention to the situation of **certain groups of older persons**, including those living on the streets, in rural, coastal and remote areas, those belonging to ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities, LGBTI older persons, and those deprived of their liberty.



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Recommendations on Autonomy and Independence

- Adopt or amend current legal/regulatory/policy frameworks on ageing to include specific references and actions that **promote autonomy and the independence of older persons.**
- Issues to be addressed : the right of older persons to equal recognition before the law, legal capacity and regimes for supported decision-making, safeguards for free and informed prior consent for any medical decision, treatment, procedure, or research in the area of health, and the right to choose the place of residence, where and with whom they want to live; and the right to privacy and intimacy.



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Recommendations on adequate standard of living and social protection

- Adopt measures to gradually expand the **coverage and quality of social protection schemes**, including non-contributory pension schemes, in order to reach those who have worked, or continue to work in the informal sector or as caregivers, with particular attention to older women and older migrants. These measures will allow older persons to receive a minimum income and reduce the risk of their living in poverty and indigence;
- **Simplify administrative procedures for obtaining pensions**, especially, non-contributory pensions, in order to expand the coverage of such pension scheme arrangements and avoid waiting lists, and any form of financial/ economic abuse that could be generated by the complexity of the procedures and need of family and external assistance to complete the forms and receive the benefit.



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Recommendations on Right to work and access to an inclusive labour market

- Include age as a ground for discrimination in all legislative, administrative, policies and other measures in order to promote **inclusive labour markets and eliminate all barriers** faced by older persons in the formal labour market;
- Undertake **legal reforms to enable older persons to continue working** beyond the statutory retirement age if they are able and willing to do so, with the adoption of flexible working hours and retirement arrangements, organisation of tasks and accessible working environments and other forms of income generating activities. Particular attention should be giving to those working in the informal labour market or as informal caregivers in order to improve their income and working conditions;
- Adopt measures aimed at **promoting older persons' participation in entrepreneurship** and volunteer programmes and to remind business actors of their role in respecting and protecting the rights of older persons, in accordance with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
- **Promote training programmes, vocational training and job placement for older persons**, including in the areas of computing, communication, information and technology;
- Continue the dissemination of **information on retirement**, including the options available to keep active in society, including vocational and voluntary activities;
- Facilitate **access to credit**, and loans and eradicate all forms of discrimination based on age in the banking, insurance and other related sectors.



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Recommendations on Equality and non-discrimination based on age

- Amend current legal/administrative/regulatory and policy frameworks to **include age as a ground for discrimination**, with specific provisions prohibiting such acts in order to guarantee equal opportunity to all. Special attention should be given to multiple forms of discrimination, including those based on gender, sexual orientation, disability and health status;
- Adopt specific measures to address the **specific needs of older persons**, with particular attention to older women, regarding access to, ownership of and control over land, property, possession, natural resources and access to bank loans, credit mortgages and other forms of financial services, with the aim of empowering older women and achieving gender equality at all ages.



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Recommendations on Accessibility, Infrastructure and Housing

- Adopt measures to ensure **accessibility, the personal mobility and security of older persons**, including by adapting public transport, buildings and spaces to meet the needs of an ageing population and by removing all kinds of barriers to their physical access, and facilitating access to information, and improving urban-rural linkages. Building codes and urban planning directives should be revised accordingly, with the inclusion of universal design standards and signage in formats that are easy for older persons to read and understand;
- Continue efforts to **broaden the scope of free public transport for older persons**, including land, and other transportation;
- **Expand the coverage of existing programmes** aimed at helping older persons to rehabilitate and adapt their homes to changes of circumstances and to reflect their reduced capacities, as well as to promote alternative types of housing for those in need of care, with the facilitation of home loans or other forms of financing without discrimination;
- Amend existing laws, policies and programmes in order to **guarantee the right to decent and adequate housing**, and the right of older persons to property, including the right to freely dispose of their property, and to prevent the abuse or illegal transfer thereof;
- Promote **training on the human rights of older persons** to all professional categories involved in the adaptation and retrofitting of public buildings, services and spaces.



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Recommendations on participation and contribution

- Strengthen existing **mechanisms of participation at the governmental level** to allow the full inclusion, integration, and participation of older persons in all phases of decision-making on issues that have an impact on their lives, and promote new forms of participation, with networks of civil society organisations and associations, charity and community-based organisations;
- Adopt measures that will improve **older persons' access to social, economic, educational, political, recreational, sporting, cultural and public engagement in their communities**, and which will help them remain integrated and able to contribute to society. Particular attention should be given to older women and those belonging to ethnic, linguistic, and religious minority groups;
- Adopt measures that will ensure the **effective exercise of their right to vote**, to freedom of expression and opinion, and their right to access to information on an equal basis with other sectors of the population;
- Adopt measures that will ensure **the right to identity and to nationality** by all older persons;
- Adopt measures that preserve the **cultural identity and the transmission of traditional knowledge** and the experience of older persons to new generations.



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Recommendations on Neglect, Violence and Abuse

- **Raise awareness** on all forms of financial, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, violence, abandonment, and neglect, with particular focus on **family and long-term care in institutional settings** to sensitise civil servants, health and social care professionals, public prosecutors, judges, public transport providers, police officers, families and informal caregivers, among others, and to break taboos and negative images related to ageing. Particular attention should be given to **older women**, those with disabilities, those living alone and in need of care, those living on the streets, LGBTI older persons, and the age group of nonagenarians and centenarians, that could be at greatest risk of being abused;
- Adopt or amend existing **legal/policy/regulatory frameworks to prevent, investigate, punish and eradicate abuse**, abandonment, negligence, and all forms of violence against older persons. This should encompass practices that infantilise older persons or that jeopardize their safety and integrity;
- **Develop human rights standards/codes** in care settings, as well as training programmes for those working with older persons in public and private institutions, so as to improve the ability to detect abuse and to improve the mechanisms for administrative and legal complaints;
- Develop **coordinated and inter-sectoral monitoring and reporting mechanisms** for the registration of cases, and the provision of comprehensive assistance to those who are victims of abuse, including emergency shelters, phone lines, legal counselling, representation, health and social care services.



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Recommendations on access to justice

- Adopt measures that will improve older persons' access to justice, by giving priority and **preferential treatment** in processing, resolution, administrative and legal proceedings, legal aid and counselling;
- Promote **alternative dispute settlement mechanisms** and mediation processes;
- **Promote training** for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, personnel of the justice administration, including police and prison staff, on the rights of older persons.



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Recommendations on Emergency, Disaster Risk Reduction Management and Building Resilience

- Continue promoting the **inclusion, full and effective participation of older persons in the design, adoption and implementation of disaster management plans and climate change adaption and mitigation strategies** in order to build sustainable and resilient societies. Particular attention should be given to those living in coastal areas and remote areas.
- Promote measures that provide **specific assistance** to older persons in preparedness, prevention, response, reconstruction, and recovery activities, risk assessment and data, education and training programmes, associated with emergencies and disaster-related situations.
- **Raise awareness of, and protect older persons** from physical, psychological, sexual and financial abuse in all phases of emergency relief, evacuation and recovery measures.



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Recommendations on Education, training, lifelong learning and capacity-building

- Increase investment in education and adopt specific programmes to **reduce illiteracy among older persons**, with particular attention to older women, and those living in rural and remote areas;
- Promote **access for older persons to education and training programmes**, including the creation of third age universities and other institutional programmes, which will reinforce intergenerational interactions and dialogues, with particular focus on numeracy, information and new technology, communication, and computing skills;
- Promote the **incorporation of the issue of ageing and old age in curricula** at all levels of the education systems and promote intergenerational interactions in schools;
- Develop **accessible and age-friendly formatted information and educational programs**, and materials that consider the needs and challenges faced by older persons, in particular those with disabilities.

Thank you !

