



## **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

Preparatory Meeting for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

22-24 November 2011

Beijing

# **REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE SECOND REGIONAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE MADRID INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING**

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## **I. BACKGROUND**

1. The Commission, at its sixty-seventh session, adopted resolution 67/5 of 25 May 2011 on “Full and effective implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the Asia-Pacific region”. The Commission, in its resolution 67/5, called upon all members and associate members to accelerate the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, and decided to convene the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2012.
2. To support the organization of the Intergovernmental Meeting, the Preparatory Meeting for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing was held in Beijing from 22 to 24 November 2011.
3. The Meeting was attended by 53 experts from governments, research institutions and civil society organizations as well as relevant international organizations. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to the Report.

## **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING**

4. The objectives of the Meeting were to:
  - A. Exchange national experiences related to the second review of MIPAA implementation;
  - B. Identify key priorities related to population ageing in the region;
  - C. Consider the draft Annotated Provisional Agenda for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

## **III. AGENDA**

5. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:
  1. Opening of the Meeting
  2. Election of officers
  3. Adoption of the agenda
  4. Review of the status of the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA): sharing of experiences and good practices
  5. Consideration of key regional priorities: Roundtable discussions and working groups
  6. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Meeting
  7. Closing of the Meeting
6. The Meeting elected the following officers:  

Chairperson:	Ms. Alicia Bala (Philippines)
Vice-chairperson:	Mr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas (Bangladesh)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Russell de Burgh (Australia)

#### **IV. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

7. Mr. Chuanshu Chen, President of the China National Committee on Ageing, inaugurated the Preparatory Meeting for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

8. In his opening statement, Mr. Chen noted the impact that population ageing will have on the development experience of the region. In particular Mr. Chen highlighted the social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts of population ageing. Mr Chen shared China's experience in developing policy measures to address the challenges concerning population ageing and progress made to enhance the wellbeing of older persons in China. In his address, Mr. Chen emphasized China's commitment to regional cooperation in meeting these challenges, and noted the important collaboration with ESCAP in the 10-year review of MIPAA's implementation in the Asia-Pacific region.

9. On behalf of the ESCAP secretariat, Mr. Donovan Storey, Chief of the Social Policy and Population Section, Social Development Division, conveyed the importance of the meeting in the identification of regional priorities for action. Mr. Storey noted the region's unprecedented and rapid demographic transition towards ageing societies – the number of people aged above 60 years old would represent one-quarter of the region's total population by 2050. He further noted that the recommendations of the meeting would provide a basis for the preparation of the draft outcome document to be considered by the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing in 2012.

#### **V. REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE MADRID INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING (MIPAA): SHARING OF EXPERIENCES AND GOOD PRACTICES**

10. The ESCAP secretariat presented the roadmap for the second review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, including actions at the national, regional and global level. The ESCAP secretariat then presented preliminary key findings from the Regional Survey on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific on each of the three MIPAA pillars.

11. Ms. Lan Liu, Institute of Population Research, Peking University, on behalf of the Government of China, then shared the methodology and results of the national review and appraisal of the implementation of MIPAA in China. Significant progress has been made in each of the three pillars of MIPAA over the past decade. Challenges remained in addressing poverty, infrastructure, social participation, health care and the support of productive ageing. The results of the appraisal exercise were being used to steer future policy directions on meeting the needs of ageing populations in China.

12. Mr. Cheung Ming Alfred Chan, Asia Pacific Institute of Ageing Studies, and on behalf of Macao, China, outlined the participatory appraisal system on MIPAA implementation. The experience of Macao, China, in utilizing evaluation indices on policy implementation and quality of services was discussed, as was the mainstreaming of ageing issues into government policy. In particular, Macao, China, had developed highly participatory bottom-up appraisal systems in the implementation and monitoring of MIPAA, and such approaches had provided a greater understanding of the benefits older persons derive from policy change.

13. Experts from the following countries shared experiences in MIPAA implementation and review: Armenia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Myanmar,

Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. Experts shared national experiences in developing national plans and strategies on meeting the needs of older persons and in also addressing the key pillars of MIPAA. Key initiatives highlighted by the experts included policies to encourage the economic and social participation of older persons, ensuring enabling environments for active ageing (including the care economy), the role of community-based and informal care systems, the building of partnerships inclusive of government, civil society and the private sector, giving greater attention to gender dimensions of ageing and the specific needs of women, and the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the well-being of older persons.

14. Experts also outlined some important and ongoing challenges. These included regional imbalances in the quality of life of older persons - especially those in remote and rural communities, concern over the continued efficacy of informal and family care systems, the impacts of natural disasters and environmental change on older persons, the lack of portability of social protection and pension systems, limited national resources to support MIPAA implementation and review, and the specific challenges of meeting the pension and health care needs of those working in the informal sector.

15. Representatives of civil society organizations, namely the Fiji Council of Social Services and HelpAge International, also shared their experiences. In particular evidence was presented on the value of participatory research on understanding the needs of older persons through their voices. Speakers drew on specific examples to highlight the value of civil society-government partnerships in evaluation and appraisal of MIPAA.

## **VI. CONSIDERATION OF KEY REGIONAL PRIORITIES: ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS AND WORKING GROUPS**

### **A. Overview**

16. Mr. John Beard, Director, Ageing and Life Course Department, World Health Organization provided an overview on population ageing impacts, challenges and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region. He highlighted some key challenges of population ageing, including the need for health promotion across the life course, as well as creating age-friendly environments to enable long-term social care. In addition, Mr. Beard pointed out that population ageing could present economic dividends as people lived longer and remained potentially active and productive, offering opportunities to rethink national development agendas in new and creative ways.

17. In the subsequent discussion, experts discussed possible variations of the life course approach, particularly for women, those working in the informal sector and those living in remote and rural communities. Experts also discussed the importance of informal support networks, and the need for countries to develop systems that would support older people which account for social and cultural strengths and norms. Finally, managing potential budgetary trade-offs in supporting ageing populations was also discussed.

### **B. Roundtable discussions on key regional priorities**

#### **Pillar 1: Older persons and development**

18. Mr. Russell de Burgh, Assistant Secretary, Office for an Ageing Australia, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, highlighted Australia's experience in promoting productive ageing. Information on recent initiatives to encourage continuing participation was provided, and how the need to respond to gender inequity has contributed to shaping these initiatives. Action to address age

discrimination was outlined. Mr. de Burgh made reference to a number of initiatives which engage senior citizens' skills in order to challenge stereotypes and which provide greater livelihood opportunities for older persons.

19. Mr. Eduardo Klien, Regional Representative, HelpAge International, provided an overview of the key issues concerning social protection for older persons. Mr. Klien emphasized the importance of furthering older persons' participation and the effectiveness of Older Persons' Associations (OPAs). In addition, given that only 1 in 5 persons reaching old age have pension coverage, he called for greater attention to the development of pension schemes which provided a secure and regular income into old age.

20. Mr. Peng Du, Director, Gerontology Institute, Renmin University, China, shared China's experience on older persons and development, pointing out the difficulties in providing long-term insurance and social care for older persons and problems of fragmentation in these programs. Other notable challenges include the high number of migrant communities in China and the lack of portability of pension schemes, where they existed. Mr. Du lastly noted the development of decentralized programs to address regional differences in ageing and needs of older persons.

21. In the subsequent discussion, experts discussed how most effectively to provide pensions for those who had spent their productive ages in the informal sector, and are therefore unlikely to have pension support in their old age. Experts also discussed the gaps in pension coverage for migrant populations.

### **Pillar 2: Advancing health and well-being into old age**

22. Ms. Mary Ann Tsao, President, Tsao Foundation, Singapore, presented on advancing health and well-being into old age with examples from Singapore. Ms. Tsao pointed out that accessible and appropriate health services for older people - including primary care, long term care and other community based health and social support services - are still insufficient in many countries. Mechanisms to better coordinate and integrate health and social services across the spectrum are also necessary to effectively address the care of older people with multiple and complex health and social needs.

### **Pillar 3: Ensuring enabling and supportive environments**

23. Ms. Grace M. Y. Chan, Chief Officer, Elderly Service, Hong Kong Council of Social Services highlighted a number of actions taken in Hong Kong, China, in creating a barrier-free and age-friendly social and physical environment. A number of initiatives discussed involved partnership inclusive of civil society, government and the private sector. The Government of Hong Kong, China, has also strongly pursued an "ageing in place" programme with encouragement for home-based caregivers. Finally, Ms. Chan shared examples of recent participatory approaches in which older persons were able to provide accessibility evaluations of their immediate environment, often with the support of peer-to-peer networks.

24. In the subsequent discussion, experts noted the potential for a stronger role of the private sector in supporting barrier free physical environments for older persons. The importance of participatory approaches, in hearing and responding to the voices of older persons, was also noted as providing an important basis for partnership between government and older persons.

## **C. Working group discussions**

25. Three working groups were conducted as follows:

- (a) Older persons and development  
Co-chairs: Mr. Xiao Caiwei and Mr. Russell de Burgh
- (b) Advancing health and well-being into old age  
Chair: Mr. Makmur Sunusi
- (c) Ensuring enabling and supportive environments  
Chair: Ms. Jebarajes Krishnamoorthy

26. The working groups provided the opportunity to develop recommendations on key regional priorities under each thematic focus.

27. Input presentations were made by Ms. Wendy Holmes and Ms. Aabha Chaudhary to support the work of Working Group (b) on “Advancing health and well-being into old age” and Working Group (c) on “Ensuring enabling and supportive environments” respectively.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

28. The Meeting considered the draft Annotated Provisional Agenda for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. The participants endorsed the proposed Annotated Provisional Agenda\*.

29. The Meeting considered the recommendations on key regional priorities from the working groups. The following tables reflect the result of those working group deliberations.

MIPAA priority direction I: Older persons and development		
Issues	Objectives	Actions
<b>Issue 1: Active participation in society and development</b>	Objective 1: Recognition of the social, cultural, economic and political contribution of older persons.	Encourage the establishment of OPAs or their equivalents in rural and urban areas to provide a strong voice and create other opportunities for older persons.
	Objective 2: Participation of older persons in decision-making processes at all levels.	Empower older persons and their organizations to participate in policy development processes and decision-making at all levels.  Ensure older persons have equal access to advocacy and redress mechanisms.

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\* Following the Meeting and upon further consultation with member States, the proposed dates for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting have been revised to 10-12 September 2012.

<b>Issue 2: Work and the ageing labour force</b>	Objective 1: Employment opportunities for all older persons who want to work.	<p>Recognize and value the role of older persons in the informal sector.</p> <p>Remove barriers to participation in the labour market including the promotion of flexible work arrangements.</p> <p>Facilitate partnerships, including with the private sector, which result in greater employment and income generation opportunities for older persons.</p>
<b>Issue 3: Rural development, migration and urbanization</b>	Objective 1: Improvement of living conditions and infrastructure in rural areas.	Promote age-friendly environments in both urban and rural areas.
	Objective 2: Integration of older migrants within their communities.	Take measures to support older migrant workers returning to their place of origin.
<b>Issue 4: Access to knowledge, education and training</b>	Objective 1: Equality of opportunity throughout life with respect to continuing education, training and retraining as well as vocational guidance and placement services.	<p>Promote opportunities for lifelong learning for older persons and use of appropriate teaching techniques.</p> <p>Encourage transfer of knowledge, skills and experiences of older persons to younger generations.</p>
	Objective 2: Full utilization of the potential and expertise of persons of all ages, recognizing the benefits of increased experience with age.	Promote access of older persons to ICT, especially in rural and remote areas.
<b>Issue 5: Intergenerational solidarity</b>	Objective 1: Strengthening of solidarity through equity and reciprocity between generations.	<p>Promote solidarity between generations by encouraging people of all ages to have an understanding of ageing.</p> <p>Encourage and facilitate intergenerational interactions for economic productive activities at</p>

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