



Arab countries and relevant organizations should make available updated, reliable and accessible data disaggregated by age, sex, and location to help inform context-appropriate policy development.



Governments should not only work towards improving the lives of current older persons but can adopt a life-course approach to policymaking.



Social protection schemes should be more inclusive and responsive to older persons.



While the family remains an important caregiver, alternative options need to be explored and expanded, including professional home care and institutional care.

4 Building forward better for older persons

A. Introduction

This chapter offers practical steps Arab Governments can take to empower and protect older persons. Previous chapters have highlighted key structural barriers to older persons' pursuit of a dignified life. Anticipating potential vulnerabilities can help inform progressive policies that prepare Arab countries to ensure as smooth a demographic transition as possible. Supporting the elderly is in line with the 2030 vision of 'leaving no one behind'. Moreover, harnessing the contributions of older persons can be invaluable in ensuring that SDG targets are met. The concrete actions in this chapter are proposed in the pursuit of operationalizing the global frameworks at national levels.

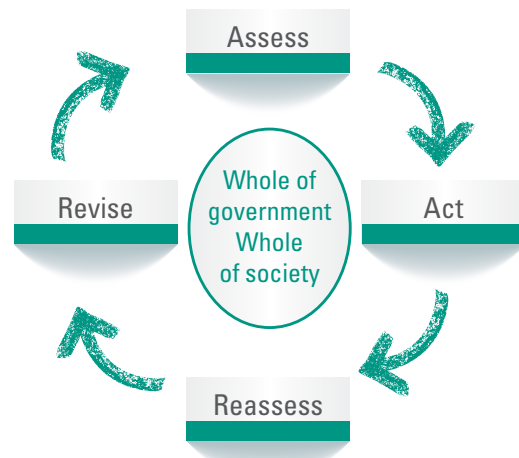
Recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the recommendations in this chapter should be taken as a roadmap to be tailored based on national priorities and contextual nuances. Any successful strategy or initiative will require careful matching of priorities with resources and capacity. It should also be noted that differences within as well as between countries should be carefully considered when building forward better.

This chapter introduces four key areas for intervention: data, life cycle approach, social protection and the LTC economy. The chapter is organized by these intervention areas, beginning with a general discussion of each before presenting specific objectives and actions in tables. To further guide policymakers, these recommendations are distributed according to time horizons of short (0-5 years), medium (5-10 years) and long (10-20 years). These time horizons signify the start phase of the recommendations, however these suggested time frames are fluid as actions that begin in the short-term, for example, may need to continue into the medium and even long term.

Figure 41 outlines the general policymaking process that underpin the detailed recommendations offered in each intervention area in this chapter.

The first step involves activities aimed at providing the evidence base to inform appropriate policy responses. These include situational analyses to identify key gaps and opportunities as well as underlying dynamics. Second, member States need to develop and implement appropriate policies in light of the situational analysis. This requires considering different policy options and implementing the most promising one(s). Third, to ensure long-term sustainability and responsiveness of policies, stakeholders must conduct assessments of implementation as well as the relevance of policies considering evolving developments. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical here. Finally, policies may need to be revised based on the findings from the reassessment stage. This cycle is then repeated to ensure continuous learning, adaptation and progress in policy formulation.

Figure 41. Schematic policymaking process



Source: Prepared by ESCWA.

Throughout all stages, a wide range of stakeholders should be engaged, including the relevant government ministries and entities, civil society organization, private sectors and older persons. Adopting a whole of government and whole of society approach at all stages of the policymaking process will help ensure that policies are inclusive and responsive.

B. Data

Arab countries and relevant organizations should make available updated, reliable and accessible data disaggregated by age, sex and location. Age-disaggregated data remains limited and where it does exist, it often only offers one age range covering all older persons, which makes it difficult to distinguish between different sub-age groups among the elderly. Each country has its own unique data collection capacity and system, which will need to be assessed and strengthened. The variety in data quality and the lack of unified data standards across the region also make it hard to compare data across the countries.

- First, efforts need to be made to develop more comprehensive data systems that capture socioeconomic indicators that are disaggregated by age, sex, location and a host of other factors including education and health. Developing capacities in this pursuit will help better understand the needs of older persons and support Governments in developing responsive policies that promote the inclusion of older persons.

- Second, the fragmentation of data systems limits the ability for the collected data to be used. Gap assessments will be needed in each country as well as capacity-building workshops to facilitate the creation of integrated data systems. There is a need to mainstream data collection on ageing. Moreover, Arab countries can work to develop better systems for data sharing between national statistical offices (NSOs) and line ministries that collect their own sector-specific data.
- Third, given the modifications in data collection efforts that the pandemic has necessitated, older persons are at risk of being further marginalized given the challenges they face in terms of digital literacy and access.¹³⁸ It is thus imperative that older persons are included in evolving data initiatives. Understanding the data needs of older persons and supporting them in accessing and understanding the available data is critical.
- Finally, indices need to be developed that capture the unique contributions that older persons make to their families, economies and societies to provide the evidence base to combat ageist misconceptions.

Taken together, these reforms will ultimately lead to the creation of comprehensive, integrated and inclusive data systems that are age sensitive. This will in turn provide the necessary data to inform evidence-based policymaking throughout the Arab region.





Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Build comprehensive data systems to capture socioeconomic data that is disaggregated by age, sex and other characteristics					
Identify key data gaps on socioeconomic indicators (health, education, living arrangements, etc.)	Conduct gap assessment of national statistical offices (NSOs) and sectoral data centres to identify what data is not being captured and understand why this is the case	Establish comprehensive regular and ad-hoc data collection practices	Include modules on older persons' socioeconomic situation into existing regular surveys	Ensure the sustainability of data systems	Devote specific budget lines to data collection for NSOs and sectoral data centres
	Hold multi-stakeholder meetings, including older persons, to identify how to address the identified data gaps		Develop specific surveys to fill data gaps as needed		Provide regular training opportunities for NSOs and sectoral data centres
Develop data capacities to fill the identified gaps	Conduct capacity building workshops for national statistical offices and sectoral data centres			Ensure the data system is responsive to current needs, especially for older persons	Review data systems responsiveness through holding multi-stakeholder meetings, including older persons
	Conduct sensitivity workshops for NSOs and sectoral data centres to promote good practices in the collection of disaggregated data				Update data systems as necessary

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Build integrated data systems					
Identify data system fragmentation	Conduct assessment of the level of integration of current data systems looking at current practices and mapping out the actions of all stakeholders involved in data processes	Create integrated data systems that make data readily accessible to the public as well as other governmental offices	Organize systems for centralized and standardized management of data		
Adopt a solutions-oriented approach to identified issues	Conduct multi-stakeholder meetings to develop proposal to address data integration issues		Facilitate interaction between different stakeholders who are responsible for data collection, management and analysis		
	Implement necessary reforms to build more integrated data systems		Conduct outreach campaigns to ensure data is accessible and clear for data users, especially older persons		
Mainstream ageing into NSOs and sectoral data centres	Conduct mainstreaming workshops for NSOs and sectoral data centres				
Goal: Include older persons in data systems					
Develop a better understanding of older persons' data needs	Conduct a baseline survey of older persons' data needs	Support older persons to better access and use data	Provide training opportunities on digital literacy for older persons	Incorporate older persons' perspectives and expertise in data systems	Facilitate interactions between national statistical offices and older persons
	Involve older persons in all multi-stakeholder meetings and trainings regarding data systems		Conduct outreach to ensure older persons can engage with evolving data systems		Update data systems to be responsive to older persons' evolving priorities
Provide the evidence base to capture older persons' contributions	Develop indices that capture the contributions of older persons				

C. Life cycle approach

Governments should not only work to improve the lives of current older persons but can adopt a life course approach to policymaking. Such an approach aims to enhance the lives of current populations from early ages to ensure decent futures for the next generations of older persons. It works on multiple fronts, addressing the short-to medium-term needs of older persons today as well as taking proactive measures to address the anticipated needs of future cohorts of older persons. Adopting such a holistic approach can help facilitate positive contributions from all citizens as they age. Addressing inequalities from an early age is critical given that disadvantages compound and reinforce one another, ultimately materializing in especially pronounced manners in old age.¹³⁹ Adopting such an approach will help Arab countries as they strive to build sustainable and resilient societies.

- First, promoting healthy lifestyles and habits from a young age can build the necessary foundation for healthy ageing. The availability, accessibility and affordability of health care services throughout the life cycle is equally important, including both mental and physical health needs.
- Second, inclusive societies help to make optimal use of the expertise and knowledge accumulated by older persons throughout their lives. An enabling environment for people of all ages to participate in society helps ensure that people remain connected and active throughout the lifecycle. This includes educational activities to promote age-sensitive attitudes from a young age as well as legal reforms to combat ageism. It also includes building age-friendly cities that have the necessary infrastructure,

transport and housing options to facilitate older persons' inclusion in society.

- Third, encouraging and supporting savings from younger ages can help guarantee the financial security of future generations of older persons. Providing knowledge about savings schemes and incentivizing longer-term financial planning can encourage more sustainable lifestyles and consumption patterns.
- Lastly, the deficiencies in education of older persons compel countries in the region to consider strengthening lifelong learning opportunities. Continuing and lifelong educational opportunities are critical to addressing adult illiteracy, including digital and financial illiteracy. Given the rapidly changing labour market and growing demand for upskilling, training opportunities can help older persons, and younger individuals, to keep their skills in line with contemporary demands.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, strengthening public education systems can help address the illiteracy issue from a young age and for the most vulnerable population groups.



Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)		
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	
Goal: Prepare generations for healthy ageing, physically and mentally						
Promote healthy habits	Promote physical activity among all (in schools, community centres, etc.) through community outreach	Incentivize healthy habits	Introduce legal measures to support healthy habits and disincentivize unhealthy habits			
	Promote healthy eating habits (nutrition and more) through community outreach		Invest in public spaces and resources that facilitate physical activity (parks, community centres, summer camps, etc.)			
	Combat negative behaviour (drinking, smoking, etc.) through media campaigns					
Diagnose the responsiveness of the current health system	Conduct a gap assessment on the availability, accessibility and affordability to all, and sensitivity to older persons, of primary, secondary and tertiary health care centres	Provide access to health	Invest in health care institutions that are age-friendly	Build reliable, inclusive and responsive health care systems	Conduct periodic assessments of the age responsiveness of health care systems	
			Increase access to information on available health resources			
			Ensure that health care institutions are affordable, including providing free primary health care			
	Conduct multi-stakeholder meetings, including older persons, to develop reform proposals to address identified gaps	Improve the quality of health services	Develop quality standards			Implement necessary reforms considering periodic assessments
			Implement quality standards			
			Enforce quality standards			
Ensure age-sensitive sectoral policies	Assess the sensitivity of the sectoral policy in terms of its inclusion of older persons and life cycle approach					
	Conduct multi-stakeholder meetings, including older persons, to develop reform proposals to promote more responsive sectoral policies					
	Implement reforms agreed upon at multi-stakeholder meetings.					

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Promote an inclusive society for all ages					
Build an enabling environment for older persons	Promote age-friendly workplaces by engaging with the private sector	Establish age-friendly cities	Establish infrastructure that supports older persons' involvement in public life		
	Encourage inter-generational volunteering by creating programmes offering opportunities for inter-generational exchanges		Improve transportation options for older persons		
	Encourage the development of community spaces (such as parks, other day centres, etc.) to facilitate increased inclusion of older persons in societies		Provide housing arrangements for older persons that support them in leading dignified and productive lives		
Promote age-sensitive attitudes	Develop an age-sensitive school curriculum	Build peaceful societies that combat ageism	Introduce legislation against all forms of violence, abuse and neglect of older persons		
	Institute community advocacy campaigns (schools, community centres, etc.) to combat ageism and promote greater recognition of the contributions of older persons				
	Implement national media campaign to combat ageism and promote greater recognition of the contributions of older persons				
Goal: Prepare future generations for financial security in old age					
Encourage investment and savings throughout the life cycle	Conduct outreach campaigns to different age groups to better understand their current investment and savings behaviour	Incentivize investment and savings	Introduce legal measures to reward saving for old age, e.g. tax breaks for investing in retirement funds		

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Promote financial literacy from a young age and throughout the life cycle	Incorporate financial literacy training in school curriculums	Promote diversified investment to manage risk and optimize returns	Conduct investment strategy trainings for adults, including older persons		
	Conduct financial literacy trainings for adults, including older persons				
Goal: Provide opportunities for learning throughout the lifecycle					
Address adult illiteracy	Conduct an assessment of the extent of adult illiteracy and the underlying dynamics	Improve access to and quality of public education	Invest more in public education, including reducing out of pocket expenses for public education		
	Scale up adult education programmes, especially in areas with the highest rates of adult illiteracy		Hold regular training sessions with teachers and educational administrators		
Provide skills development opportunities	Establish regular training sessions on modern skills for interested persons, including older persons				

D. Social protection

While there is widespread agreement on the importance of extending social protection to all older persons, it is more challenging to say how this should be done. There are three central elements that need to be considered.

- First, coverage is the best place to start. Understanding who is currently not being protected by current systems, and why this is the case, is critical before developing appropriate policies to fill the gaps. In this pursuit, Arab countries should consider implementing universal
- or semi-universal non-contributory pension schemes, bearing in mind that this would considerably reduce the degree of exclusion errors, and that providing non-contributory social protection to a larger section of society could enhance political support for social spending.
- Second, the adequacy of social protection schemes needs to be ensured. This involves ensuring that benefits provided to older persons through contributory as well as non-contributory social protection schemes are regularly adjusted in line with inflation or with wages.

- Third, the complementarity of contributory and non-contributory programmes needs to be strengthened. Arab Governments should abstain from categorically

excluding older persons covered by contributory social insurance mechanisms from non-contributory mechanisms such as cash transfer programmes.

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Extend coverage of schemes to include all older persons					
Attain a better understanding of who is excluded and the reasons behind undercoverage of contributory and non-contributory social protection schemes	Collect and analyse relevant data, both administrative and survey-based, in order to better understand the characteristics of excluded older persons	Ensure periodic monitoring of the implementation of reforms	Conduct periodic monitoring using the established mechanisms		
			Identify good practices as well as areas requiring reform		
	Undertake studies relating to undercoverage among older persons and make these available to policymakers and other stakeholders	Ensure that social protection benefits reach all older persons	Adjust eligibility criteria and targeting mechanisms to extend coverage to those who have been left behind		
Enhance coverage of social insurance	Draft new proposals for reform of social protection systems				
	Organize multi-stakeholder consultations to ensure proposed reforms are responsive and inclusive				
	Adopt proposed reforms				
	Establish a monitoring mechanism				
			Reduce the level of exclusion errors of social assistance programmes for older persons		

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Ensure adequacy of benefits for older persons					
Attain a better understanding of the adequacy of contributory and non-contributory social protection schemes	Conduct studies to understand adequacy and reasons for inadequacy	Ensure that social protection benefits continue to increase and/or remain at an adequate level	Increase the level of social protection benefits provided to older persons, particularly those who are poor or vulnerable		
	Propose options for enhancing complementarity of contributory and non-contributory mechanisms				
	Organize multi-stakeholder consultations to ensure proposed reforms are responsive and inclusive				
Ensure that social protection benefits are adequate, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable	Revise indexation mechanisms (ensuring benefits correspond to levels of inflations or wages) and propose adjustments	Monitor benefit levels to ensure they do not dwindle in face of inflation or other factors, and make necessary adjustments if needed	Undertake studies focusing on the direct and indirect effects of social protection provided to older persons, including on other members of their households		
	Review regulations (parameters and indexation mechanisms) governing contributory pension schemes				
	Reform regulations governing contributory pensions schemes				

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Ensure complementarity and responsiveness of social protection systems					
Attain a better understanding of the interactions between contributory and non-contributory mechanisms for older persons	Evaluate the interplay between contributory and non-contributory mechanisms	Ensure the sustained complementarity of social protection schemes	Review the complementarity of social protection schemes	Enhance the responsiveness of social protection systems to the needs of older persons	Conduct periodic assessments of the age-responsiveness of social protection systems
	Propose options for enhancing complementarity of contributory and non-contributory mechanisms		Make necessary adjustments, for instance by more closely integrating contributory and non-contributory social protection mechanisms for older persons as the coverage gap closes		
	Organize multi-stakeholder consultations to ensure proposed reforms are responsive and inclusive				
Ensure the integration of contributory and non-contributory mechanisms	Study how to establish an integrated system based on complementarity between contributory and non-contributory mechanisms	Ensure the sustained complementarity of social protection schemes		Enhance the responsiveness of social protection systems to the needs of older persons	Update social protection systems to be responsive to older persons' evolving priorities
	Adopt proposed reforms				
	Establish a monitoring mechanism				

E. Long-term care economy

LTC markets are crucially needed in the Arab region, especially given the fast pace of population ageing. Chapter 3 described how existing efforts in this regard are fragmented and require a more holistic approach. Building partnerships, harnessing advances in technology, raising awareness and collating accurate data on demand and preferences are critical success criteria to achieve high-quality LTC markets, based on person-centred and human rights approaches, that benefit all involved.

Figure 42 illustrates a care market framework that could apply to the Arab region. This conceptualization recognizes the interaction between the formal LTC market with a broader structure that encompasses actors at different levels from the individual to the overall national health and care systems. The specific types and design of the LTC market, and services, are influenced by the preferences and perceptions of individual older persons, their immediate environment and intergenerational support within their families. It is also governed by the country's social policy and welfare models, infrastructure, regulations and standards and levels of funding and resources. It is essential to view the evolving LTC market as an

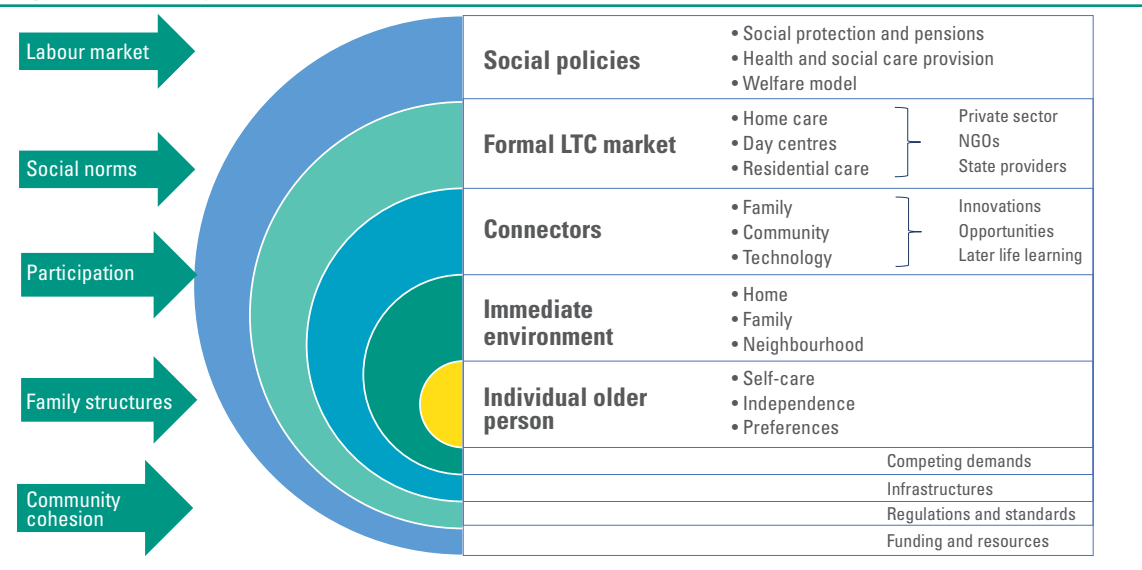
integral part of broader national strategies to support older people and their families in the region.

Governments must take the lead role and responsibility for achieving a responsive, diverse and sustainable LTC market to ensure high-quality, personalized care and support that best meets the needs of people, regardless of who pays for care. Nevertheless, families and informal caregivers will continue to have a significant role in the provision of LTC in the region. Hence, it is essential for Governments to design and adopt policies that reduce the financial burden on family caregivers and enable older people to purchase LTC services from a well-regulated market.

Below are six key elements for reform, each elaborated in the table that follows.

- First, social policy must establish a framework to govern LTC markets. This includes creating a legal framework and institutionalizing government buy-in.
- Second, formal LTC systems require culturally sensitive LTC models, quality control protocols, regulation and staff training.

Figure 42. A conceptualization of the LTC market



Source: Prepared by ESCWA.

- Third, a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach will be necessary. The LTC market should find ways to incorporate informal caregivers and promote innovation with use of technology to serve older persons’ needs.
- Fourth, an accessible and COVID-19 responsive environment is needed to facilitate older persons’ access to needed LTC services.
- Fifth, older persons should be empowered through the promotion of their self-care and independence.
- Finally, to support all the other elements it will be fundamental to secure adequate funding for LTC.

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Goal: Establish a framework to govern LTC markets					
Ensure government buy-in	Establish communication strategies with common goals across relevant governmental departments and agencies	Agree on government commitments and responsibilities	Implement governance frameworks	Integrate support across different departments	Monitor and review responsibilities to relevant government bodies
Assess legal frameworks	Assess current legislations and laws related to rights and eligibility for LTC support	Reform legal frameworks	Draft new proposals	Adopt legislative reforms	Ensure effective implementation
Propose additional legal frameworks	Identify gaps		Consult with relevant bodies and the public		Address gaps

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
System 'connectors'					
Goal 1: Ensure effective partnerships					
Develop collaborative mechanisms	Identify relevant non-governmental partners	Strengthen partnerships	Continue to foster public-private partnerships	Ensure a cross-sectoral, whole-of-government approach	Increase accessibility and inclusivity
	Consult on different collaborative mechanisms in relation to a variety of partners across different governmental bodies, non-governmental agencies, and the private sector		Build capacity of non-governmental bodies and agencies		Continue to support and expand partnerships
Goal 2: Recognize the role of informal caregivers					
Assess the suitability of different mechanisms to support informal caregivers	Evaluate the following options:	Implement a range of supporting policies	Work with employers	Expand existing mechanisms and introduce new ones	Continue working in partnership with different agencies
	Potential social protection and welfare benefits (both in-kind and cash benefits)		Coordinate activities across different governmental departments		Ensure a consultative approach
	Employment benefits such as LTC leave		Employ a consultative and evidence-based evaluative process		
Provide services to families	Assess the needs for respite care	Establish services for informal carers	Pilot services such as respite care	Expand and enhance services for family caregivers	Monitor, evaluate and improve services
	Provide training and information to facilitate informal LTC provision		Expand training programmes for informal family caregivers		Identify training needs and gaps
	Professional support with care coordination		Facilitate access to support from professionals such as social workers and care-coordinators		Regularly review needs through recurrent assessment processes

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Identify the best means to communicate with informal caregivers	Assess the needs of informal caregivers	Establish mechanisms to share information	Establish databases of services including information on cost, eligibility criteria and quality ratings	Review and improve information sharing mechanisms	Invest in knowledge translation and mobilization
			Establish helplines for informal carers		
Goal 3: Promote innovations					
Explore the potential role of technology in LTC provision	Assess the current role of digital technology in self-care and formal LTC provision	Support innovations	Work with industries and entrepreneurs to promote new designs specific for LTC service delivery	Expand the use of assistive technology for LTC delivery	Assess, expand and enhance the role of assistive technologies
	Assess gaps in accessing technology (e.g. digital literacy, infrastructure, digital divide, accessibility)		Enhance access to technology		
	Assess the preferences of older people and their informal caregivers		Work with the industry to create tools specific to the preferences of older people		
Adequate environment					
Goal 1: Mitigate the effect of the COVID-19 global pandemic					
Recognize the effect of COVID-19	Conduct studies and surveys to understand the effect of COVID 19 on older people	Respond to the medium-term effects of COVID-19	Facilitate and prioritize health care and LTC for older people	Develop strategies to address future system shocks	Identify effective responses
Respond to the immediate needs of older people due to COVID-19	Identify priorities for short-and medium-term actions to respond to the needs of older people		Design specific initiatives to facilitate unpaid family caregiving		Develop strategies and response mechanisms
Goal 2: Ensure an accessible environment					
Understand facilitators and barriers for an accessible environment for older people	Assess the suitability of infrastructure (including the built environment and transportation) for older people's needs	Modify and improve environmental infrastructure	Establish a working group to support planning departments for new building and road designs	Achieve a built environment suitable for all	Foster investments in green accessible environments

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Formal Long-Term Care Market					
Goal 1: Design a culturally sensitive LTC market model					
Tailor proposed model for LTC markets to local and national needs	Review current policy goals and strategies	Review and amend as necessary	Adopt a multi-sectoral consultative approach	Review and amend as necessary	Adopt a multi-sectoral consultative approach
	Conduct consultations to ensure a participatory approach		Ensure the input of older people and their informal caregivers		Ensure the input of older people and their informal caregivers
	Approve an action plan		Review action plan		
Goal 2: Implement LTC services and markets					
Assess the current provision of LTC services	Conduct diagnostic studies and situational analyses	Establish equality in access to and utilization of LTC services	Establish effective reporting mechanisms (including IT systems)	Ensure effective LTC services	Establish effective integration mechanisms across different services
	Achieve an in-depth understanding of older people's preferences and gaps in provision		Implement quality assurance tools		Encourage investment in research on geriatrics and long-term care
	Conduct LTC demand and supply models		Ensure that services are registered		
Goal 3: Design new LTC initiatives					
Design pilot programmes	Focus on home-care support	Pilot, implement and evaluate a diverse set of services	Employ data and models developed under the short-term goals	Scale-up and expand LTC services	Adopt a recurrent process of evaluation and improvement of LTC services
	Community care		Re-evaluate and enhance		
	Day-care services		Expand services across geographical locations and population groups		

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Design pilot programmes	Determine the demand for residential care	Introduce new services and initiatives	Improve and expand home-care services	Continue to design new services to meet emerging needs	Adopt a recurrent process of consultation, needs-assessment and piloting
	Understand the demand for new forms of supported retirement housing		Implement community-based care and day-care services		
			Introduce new forms of residential care including retirement home		
			Establish services for complex care, including advanced dementia care		
Goal 4: Regulate the LTC market					
Assess current formal provision of LTC	Conduct survey of currently available services	Implement regulatory measures	Set prices and commissioning processes for LTC services	Develop a coherent LTC market	Build infrastructure for specialized LTC services
	Design a database of services		Set quality assurance measures		
Goal 5: Ensure the supply of well-trained LTC workforce					
Design LTC training programmes	Set minimum training requirements and curriculum	Implement and expand on LTC training programmes	Ensure the diversity of the LTC workforce	Ensure training programmes meet emerging needs of older people	Work in partnership with training institutions, older people and the workforce to enhance training programmes
	Establish career pathways		Create a range of job roles and career opportunities		

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Assess current informal paid LTC staff	Conduct surveys to assess the level of care provision from informal workers e.g. domestic workers	Ensure career pathways	Set standards for approved training courses	Establish effective career pathways	Design diverse routes of career development Ensure transferability of certificates and skills
	Design short training courses for existing workers		Identify relevant professional regulatory bodies		
	Set standards for training courses		Establish connections and 'bridge' courses to the health care profession		
	Identify relevant professional regulatory bodies		Set-up and expand registration and regulatory standards		
	Agree on initial career pathways		Review and amend potential career development opportunities		
Goal: Promote self-care and independence					
Raise awareness of healthy ageing behaviours and habits	Design and pilot public awareness campaigns	Establish proactive and preventative services	Work with multi-disciplinary teams across different departments and agencies	Expand preventative and proactive services	Work in partnership with other agencies, older people and informal caregivers
	Conduct regular opinion polls		Pilot, monitor and evaluate services and campaign		
Improve public awareness	Undertake media and social campaigns	Expand public awareness	Act throughout the educational and employment life-course and every-day media	Normalize messages of healthy ageing	Establish public awareness message as a core element of communications
Empower older people and ensure their voices are heard and acted upon	Identify groups of older people at risk of exclusion from relevant debates	Support capabilities of older people	Create adequate opportunities for older persons to contribute to the wider society through paid and volunteer work	Expand opportunities for older people to participate	Create new opportunities for social, societal and economic participation
	Identify mechanisms to reach older people from different backgrounds		Set policies to reduce ageism in the workplace and facilitate re-employment of older people		

Short-term (next 5 years)		Medium-term (5-10 years)		Long-term (10-20 years)	
Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions	Objectives	Actions
Reduce literacy rates among older people (including digital and financial literacy)	Assess the level of needs among older people	Enhance and expand on services	Set up local initiatives	Expand and create new initiatives	Continue working in partnership with different agencies
	Design new initiatives in partnership with governmental and non-governmental agencies		Coordinate with educational institutions and local organizations to improve recruitment to training programmes		Modify services according to emerging needs
	Consult with older people and their families				
Enhance awareness at younger ages (40+)	Work with employers to provide at-work training on healthy ageing	Target individuals who might be at higher risk	Identify groups at higher risk through research	Expand and create new initiatives	Emphasize the life-course approach to health at the national and local levels
	Work with community-based organizations to promote independence and healthy ageing		Develop tailored and targeted initiatives		
LTC funding					
Goal 1: Identify and protect the LTC budget (current and projected)					
Estimate current and projected LTC cost	Conduct LTC cost modelling	Enhance projections of cost estimates	Conduct cost-effective analysis for different services	Develop sustainable funding models	Revise and develop mechanisms to enhance funding
	Identify gaps in data and information		Model costs based on different funding scenarios		
Goal 2: Implement funding models					
Evaluate different LTC funding models	Assess the suitability and viability of existing funding models	Propose and consult to implement a desired LTC funding model	Assess the following (and other) components: The State's role in funding The potential value of contributory LTC insurance schemes The role of charitable organizations in the provision of LTC services Incentives and contributions of the private sector	Implement LTC funding model	Undertake fiscal reforms to address budget requirements

F. Building forward better

To realize the promise of ‘leaving no one behind’, Governments need to prioritize older persons. Arab Governments are starting to make progress in this pursuit, but more is needed.

This report provides a one-of-a-kind roadmap to support member States’ efforts. Taken together, these recommendations will help Arab countries build forward better for older persons. Countries need to adopt holistic approaches and mainstream ageing and older persons’ issues across the policy sectors and processes.

Comprehensive, integrated and inclusive data systems will provide the information required to develop appropriate policy responses. A life-cycle approach is a critical element in the creation of age-inclusive societies that respond to the evolving needs and harness the unique contributions of individuals throughout the different stages of their life.

Strengthening social protection systems is an integral policy imperative to provide the necessary support needed to the most vulnerable. A robust LTC economy is also an important element of a care ecosystem that protects and empowers older persons.

An integrated and comprehensive care ecosystem for older persons is a work in progress and can take decades. The evidence presented in this report has highlighted that the time for action is now, lest current and future cohorts of older persons continue to be marginalized and at risk of vulnerability.

The present report calls upon countries to shift the narrative from one of dependency to one that recognizes the unique contributions of older persons, seize the demographic window of opportunity and reflect on the recent lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to build forward better for older persons and ensure their protection and empowerment.

