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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Unitar Online Catalogue

4th Year. VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE SERIES. "MAINSTREAMING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING". 2nd Event out of 5 (1 hour, 30'): "Access to health systems for older persons in conflict areas"



: 18 6 2025

📄 :	Webinar
📄 :	Web-based
📅 :	19 6 2025
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📄 email:	analucia.jacome@unitar.org
📄 :	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), , United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), , International Organization for Migration (IOM), , United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNWOMEN), , United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), , World Health Organization (WHO), , International Telecommunication Union (ITU), , United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), , CIFAL Global Network, , International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), , International Longevity Centre Global

Alliance (ILC), , NGO Committee on Ageing, Geneva, , Global Initiative Foundation on Ageing (GIA), , Group of Friends of the Human Rights of Older Persons in Gva, , International Labour Organization



General Scenario for the whole series

The Virtual Roundtable Series “Mainstreaming Knowledge on Ageing” began in 2022, bringing together partners and participants to assess the state of ageing and the human rights of older persons in its first year. The second year focused on access to justice, labor markets, political participation, healthcare, social services, and cultural and leisure activities. Last year, the series addressed the quality of life for older persons. This year's series will be the opportunity to learn on advancing the human rights of older persons in times of converging crises. We will address critical issues affecting older persons, including their right to work, healthcare, technology, legal protection, and food security in times of peace and war.

The human rights of older persons and frontier issues, such as the demographic worldwide scenario, gender, human mobility, digital divide, and climate change, will continue as the heart of our discussions.

In our series, we consider national, regional, and international standards, as well as public policies, programs, and other initiatives as key learning elements. In the same vein, we envisage that heightening awareness of ICT/digital accessibility implementation from design is relevant to better understand how older persons can benefit from digital products and services as means to actively participate in political, cultural, and socio economic activities. By involving diverse stakeholders as co-sponsors, experts, speakers, and attendees, we aim to enhance discussions and build stronger synergies towards achieving our common goal.

In this endeavour, UNITAR and its International Training Centres for Authorities and Leaders -CIFAL Global Network-, UNDESA, UNFPA, IOM, UNWOMEN, UNHCR, WHO, OHCHR, ITU and ILO; together with the Group of Friends of the Human Rights of Older Persons UN Geneva; the Global Initiative on Ageing Foundation, GIA; the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuses; the International Longevity Centre; and the NGO Committee on Ageing Geneva; and

the Harvard Law School Project on Disability, have joined efforts to put together this initiative as a contribution to inclusive learning in the framework of the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing.

Background of the 2nd event

Armed conflict continues to have a profound impact on populations worldwide, with older persons among those most acutely affected yet frequently overlooked. In many conflict settings, this group face heightened risks due to physical frailty, mobility limitations, and chronic health conditions. Some remain in areas of active conflict due to inability or unwillingness to flee, while others become displaced, often without access to family or community support. Despite their specific vulnerabilities, the health and protection needs of older persons are insufficiently addressed in humanitarian responses, and they are frequently underrepresented in emergency planning and resource allocation.

The erosion of health infrastructure in conflict-affected regions significantly impairs the delivery of essential health services. Facilities that remain functional are often stretched beyond capacity and unable to meet the specialized needs of older persons, who may require ongoing treatment for non-communicable diseases, access to mobility and assistive devices, and age-sensitive care. Humanitarian health interventions commonly prioritize acute and reproductive health services, inadvertently excluding the aging population from equitable access to care. Barriers such as insecurity, physical inaccessibility, and social stigma further impede their ability to obtain needed services.

In addition to physical health concerns, older persons in conflict zones frequently endure psychosocial distress linked to displacement, bereavement, loss of livelihoods, and social disintegration. Mental health services, where available, are often not tailored to their needs. Furthermore, older persons are rarely included in data collection and assessment tools, leading to gaps in evidence that hinder targeted interventions. The cumulative effect of these challenges contributes to the marginalization of older populations within health systems during humanitarian crises.

Ensuring equitable access to health services for older persons in conflict-affected contexts is essential for upholding their rights and dignity. It is imperative that humanitarian and development actors adopt an inclusive, age-sensitive, and rights-based approach to health system strengthening and emergency response. This event aims to raise awareness of the specific health challenges faced by older persons in conflict settings, foster dialogue among key stakeholders, and

identify strategies to ensure that health systems are responsive to the needs of all age groups, in line with the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and International Human Rights Law.

This second event, will take place on Thursday, **at 09:30 NY/ 15:30 CET, on the 19th of June, 2025.**



General objectives of the whole series

1. Fostering knowledge on the impact of including older persons in the implementation of standards and the work of diverse mechanisms.
2. Learning from some good practices and challenges, including laws, policies, and strategies on accessibility issues, from different stakeholders.
3. Identifying existing initiatives and possible ways to improve the protection and participation of older persons in times of converging crises.
4. Recognizing possible synergies for strengthening partnership to advance the human rights of older persons.

Specific objective of the second event

To understand the specific barriers older persons face in receiving adequate healthcare and to advocate for age-inclusive humanitarian responses that ensure their health needs are met during and after conflicts.



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Second event

- **Welcome remarks**
- **Speakers**
 - Access to health systems for older persons in conflict areas
- **Moderation**
- **Q&A**



Online. Due to the worldwide situation caused by the pandemic, these events will be celebrated online with spirit of inclusion to allow participants from different parts of the world to join us.



The event is open to different actors interested in Ageing and the rights of older persons, including:

- Public sector officials, policy makers and practitioners
- International Organizations
- Civil Society
- National Human Rights Institutions
- Academia
- Private sector

This event as well as the upcoming ones from the virtual roundtable series are open and free to All. Each event will have a specific focus.



IMPORTANT NOTES

1. Participants who want to receive a certificate of participation need to fulfill the following criteria: Having participated at least 75% by Zoom (To be measured by the system).
2. You're warmly welcome to send questions or suggestions in advance to sdp [at] unitar.org (sdp[at]unitar[dot]org)
3. After the celebration of each event, those participants who joined them will be receiving the respective video recording together with takeaway messages.