



A joint MENARHA/IAGG Regional Symposium

EMPOWERING FUTURES

Shaping a Dignified Long-Term Care Ecosystem for Healthy Ageing and Well-being of Carers and Older Persons in the Middle East and North Africa

Date: Mon-Tue 29-30 April 2024

Location: American University in Cairo, AUC Ave, New Cairo 1, Cairo Governorate 11835, Egypt

Zoom Link: TBC

Background:

The Middle East and North Africa Research on Healthy Ageing (MENARAH) Network and the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics are delighted to be collaborating with the American University in Cairo to host a regional symposium on healthy ageing and the long-term care ecosystem in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The MENA region is undergoing unprecedented demographic changes, marked by rapid population ageing, presenting challenges that demand swift policy responses. The region faces a critical juncture in addressing the well-being of its ageing population amidst social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Population ageing in the MENA region is accelerating, necessitating proactive measures at policy and practice levels. While longevity is a cause for celebration, increased life expectancy doesn't always equate to increased healthy life expectancy. Accessible, equitable, and sustainable long-term care (LTC) services are urgently needed.

The care ecosystem refers to the intricate network of formal and informal entities, including healthcare systems, social services, families, communities, and informal caregivers, collectively supporting and assisting individuals needing long-term care, particularly older people. In the MENA region, families and informal care play a pivotal role in the care ecosystem for older individuals.

Preferences in LTC remain rooted in care at home, where the family remains a core component of the care ecosystem. Yet changing family dynamics, rapid urbanisation, and mobility patterns threaten the sustainability of the informal care sector, highlighting the urgency for strategic policy and community interventions that ensure good care while creating decent work for carers. The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) underscores the urgency of the care crisis, asking country members to take action by strengthening the LTC ecosystem, including providing access to long-term care for older people. Notably, this action states that families should not be responsible for care.

Recognising the gendered nature of caregiving is crucial. Improving the LTC market and economy in the Middle East can alleviate the care burden on women, often referred to as the 'sandwich generation,' who balance caregiving responsibilities for both older and younger family members. By bolstering the LTC sector, we can enhance opportunities for women to sustain their labour force participation, reducing their exclusion from financial wellbeing. Through regulated and adequate LTC provision, the quality of



life for older individuals and their families can significantly improve, ensuring dignified and high-quality care for older people while promoting familial and societal well-being.

Understanding People, Place, and Policy intersections is pivotal in developing sustainable LTC economies in the Middle East. Recognising the diversity among older adults and their interactions with familial, community, and policy environments is essential for ensuring well-being. Strengthening LTC markets within these contexts is an urgent step toward addressing the demands of an ageing population while fostering inclusive, dignified, and person-centred care.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of the rapid demographic shifts and the importance of developing well-structured LTC markets and supporting informal carers in the MENA region.
- Facilitate discussing policy and practice to enhance gender equity and the quality of life of older people, informal carers and paid care workers.
- Recommend policy and practice development and societal approaches to strengthen the LTC ecosystem in the region.



Day 1: 29 April 24

UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE

Cairo Time	Activity	Speaker
09:30-10:00	Arrival- coffee	
10:00-10:05	WELCOME IAGG	Jose Jauregui IAGG President
SESSION 1		
10:05-10:25	OPENING REMARKS: Ageing Populations as a Mega Trend in the Region and the MENARAH's Network efforts	Prof Shereen Hussein (MENARAH/LSHTM) In person
10:25-10:45	KEYNOTE 1: The global importance of unpaid carers in sustaining the care ecosystem	Prof Norah Keating (IAGG; Uni of Alberta) Virtual
10:45-11:00	Q&A	
SESSION 2		
11:00-11:20	KEYNOTE 2: Ageing and Long-term Care Policy Landscape in the Arab region	Dr Tarek Nabulsi League of Arab State In person
11:20-11:40	Presentation 1: Policy Response: Developing a global Long Term Care Service Package	Dr Samar Elfeky World Health Organisation, EMRO In person
11:40-12:00	Q&As	
12:00-13:00	Coffee + light lunch	
SESSION 3		
13:00-13:20	KEYNOTE 4: Overview of ageing transitions, the care ecosystem and the rising need to develop an equitable LTC markets	Dr Sara Salman (UN/ESCWA; Lebanon) Virtual
13:20-13:40	KEYNOTE 3: The World Bank efforts in developing an ageing agenda in the MENA region	Gustavo Demarco Montserrat Pallares-Miralles World Bank, Washington D.C. Virtual
13:40-14:00	Q&As	
SESSION 4		
14:00-14:40	INTERNATIONAL LEARNING Presentation 2 (policy): How Policy Can Develop a Well-Trained Cadre of Long-Term Care Workers: International Learning from the English Social Care Workforce Reforms 2023 Presentation 3 (practice): Cross-culture learning: Formulating Standards for Senior Living and Care industry of India.	Shereen Hussein In person Mansur Dalal Association of Senior Living India (ASLI) Virtual



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UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE

Cairo Time	Activity	Speaker
14:40-15:15	OPEN DISCUSSION INTERACTIVE SESSION Key takeaways, regional and international efforts	
15:15-15:30	CLOSING REMARKS - overview of Day 2 (what to expect)	Shereen Hussein
15:30-17:00	Lunch and networking	



Day 2: 30 April		
Cairo Time	Activity	Speaker
09:30-10:00	Arrival- coffee	
10:00-10:10	OPENING REMARKS (sum up of day1)	Shereen Hussein
SESSION 1		
10:10-10:30	KEYNOTE 1: Linking healthy ageing, LTC and the human rights of older people	Amal Abou Rafeh UN-DESA, New York In person
10:30-10:50	Presentation1 (research): Measurements and surveys: Al SIHA Egypt Case Study	Prof Mohamed Salama American University in Cairo In person
10:50-11:00	Q&A	
SESSION 2		
11:00-12:00	CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS I (15 minutes each; 15 mins Q&A at the end of the presentations) Presentation 2: Ageing and Films in the MENA Region: Public perception and Awareness (regional) Presentation 3: "Enjoyment" initiative: Innovative psychological services to older people (Egypt) Presentation 4: Training home care workers initiative (Egypt)	Speakers Dr Kahlid Ali Brighton & Sussex Medical School, UK (virtual) Dr Omaima Madkor, Ain Shams University, Egypt (in person) Professor Yomn Elhamaki Liberal Forum and Ethraa (in person)
12:00-13:00	Coffee + light lunch	
SESSION 3		
13:00-13:20	KEYNOTE 2: WHO efforts towards improving social connections of older people	Dr Christopher Mikton WHO, HQ, Geneva (Virtual)
13:20-13:40	Presentation 5 (study): The reality of social connections among older people in low and middle-income countries	Mohamed Ismail (Oxford University) In person
13:40-14:00	CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS II (15 minutes each; 5 mins Q&A) Presentation 6 (Study): daughters' care burden for older mothers with Alzheimer's disease.	Speakers Dr Zeinab Khadr (AUC) & Dr Omnia Mohsen Beni Suef University In person
14:00-14:20	Q&A	



Day 2: 30 April		
Cairo Time	EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS Activity	Speaker
SESSION 4		
14:20-14:40	KEYNOTE 3: Bridging healthy ageing and long-term care	Professor John Beard Columbia University, USA Virtual
14:40-15:20	OPEN DISCUSSION INTERACTIVE SESSION Practical and Sustainable Solutions (short to mid-term); paying attention to inequalities within and across the region.	
15:20-15:30	Concluding remarks and potential next steps	Shereen Hussein/ Norah Keating
15:30-17:00	Lunch and networking	