Mission Report
Prepared by: Sanju Thapa Magar
Programme Officer
Ageing Nepal
Acknowledgement

I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to Mr. Eduardo Klien, Regional Director of HelpAge International for inviting me in the conference on Family, Community and State in Ageing Societies in Tehran, I.R. Iran. I am thankful to the team of HelpAge Regional Office, Ms. Baralee Meesukh, Regional Head of Network Development; Ms. Teeraporn Sudachan, Event Coordinator and others for facilitating me to make my participation successful.

I am obliged to UNFPA Nepal for sponsoring me and the team of UNFPA Nepal, Mr. Bijay Thapa, Assistant Country Representative; Ms. Ambika S. Thapa, Programme Assistant and Ms. Valentina Subba, Admin Assistant for their continuous support and guidance to enable me to participate in the conference.

Besides, I would like to thank Mr. Naresh Shrestha, Honorary Consul, for supporting me to obtain my visa to Iran.

Lastly, I express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Krishna M. Gautam, Founder Chairperson of Ageing Nepal for nominating me and believing that I am capable for this opportunity.
Background
Declining birth rate and increasing life expectancy is bringing unprecedented growth in the number of ageing population (60+) across the globe. The ageing population accounts for 13% of global population and it is estimated that the number will be 22% by 2050. Similarly, in the context of Nepal, 9% of total population accounts for 60+ populations and the number will be more than 22% by 2050. This population transition can be experienced mostly in Asia-pacific region where ageing population is expected one fourth of the total population by 2050.

This 21st Century is also termed as the Century of Older People because the number of 60+ populations is projected to be more than the number of children below 5 years of age, and this is happening for the first time in human history.

In the context, HelpAge International in Asia-Pacific has been holding regular regional conferences on ageing for the last 20 years. Previous conferences have taken place in India (2006), Indonesia (2008), Australia (2010), Myanmar (2012), Thailand (2014) and Vietnam (2016). This year, the conference was organized in Tehran I.R. Iran.
About the Conference Theme on “Family, Community and State in Ageing Societies

Throughout history, responsibility for older persons was assumed to lie with the family. Reflecting this shared human experience, many ageing and population policies in Asia have been based on the concept of families as the fundamental source of support in old age. The community or as last resort the government was expected to interview only in cases of extreme neglect and deprivation.

This arrangement has always resulted in gaps and dilemmas, and now those gaps threaten to become wider as populations age at unprecedented speed, the shifting demographic context is affecting families and Asian governments are struggling to understand how best to respond. Fertility has declined sharply and people are living longer. Nuclear families are becoming smaller and with migration, more scattered. Women typically live longer than men and therefore form the majority of older populations, particularly in the oldest age groups. Women increasingly join the labour force, yet expectations of continued unpaid caregiving intensify the pressure on female family members.

In addition, the older individual as actor presumed to be dependent on others was largely absent from past policy discussions. The older person was viewed as the object of care by others. Now, with life expectancy extending, older people are spending more active years in relative independent and taking increased responsibility for their own care and affairs. The dynamics between older people and their families are evolving, along with consensus on how one should live the later years of life.

Families continue to be the foundation of Asia’s societies as they age. But in light of the emerging population and family dynamics throughout the region, how are responsibilities and expectations changing? How can population wide policies and national or local services best assist older people and their families? Learning from international evidence, how can government promote functional independence in old age, thus reducing and delaying the care that older people need from others? What should be the role of local communities and civil society bodies in evolving societies, and how can government nurture those roles? What are appropriate functions for the private sector as societies age?

This 2018 HelpAge Asia-Pacific Regional Conference in Tehran examined this theme of Family, Community and State in Ageing Societies from three main perspectives, learning from the rich experience of the international and Iranian participations and presenters. The first perspective was income security in old age. Material support and income from families to older household members remain strong in most of Asia, but how can we ensure that older people are not over reliant on family in light of the coming challenges posed by demographic change? The second
perspective was long-term care, which in Asia continues to be provided largely by family members, particularly females. While income can be transferred from a distance, personal care requires proximity, yet proximity of family members is no longer a given. Finally, the conference examined social inclusion, which families have always facilitated for their oldest members. Increasingly, older persons need to build stronger social ties beyond their shrinking households to avoid isolation.

Programme Book
HelpAge International Asia Pacific

Organizers
The conference was organized by HelpAge International Asia Pacific Regional office, co-hosted by State Welfare Organization, the Ministry of Cooperative, Labour and Social Welfare of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and HelpAge International and supported by Age International and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Participation of Ageing Nepal
Ageing Nepal is one of the Global Network Partner of HelpAge International. Ageing Nepal started collaborating with HelpAge International for the betterment of ageing population of Nepal since 2011.

Ageing Nepal was invited in the conference. Ageing Nepal team nominated Ms. Sanju Thapa Magar, Program Officer of Ageing Nepal for participation. This is an individual mission report prepared by her and doesn’t represent all the participants.

Ms. Sanju Thapa Magar in the conference hall
Objectives
Ms. Magar participated with the following objectives.

a) To represent the civil society organizations working for the rights of older people in Nepal.

b) To exchange good practices and information regarding theme of the conference on Family, Community and state in Ageing Societies.

c) To develop good networking with representatives and stakeholders of other countries.

Participants
More than 200 participants from at least 20 countries across Asia-Pacific and beyond representing government, ministries, academic institution, international organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector participated in the conference.

Conference Strategy
The conference was structured along plenary sessions, with key issues introduced by resource persons, followed by interactive moderated discussions.

Inauguration
The conference was inaugurated by Deputy President of I.R. Iran on 23rd October. Around 200 participants and large numbers of local high officials were present during the inauguration. She emphasized the significance of the conference objectives and stated that the conference "will bring plenty of opportunities for Iranian experts and policy makers to share their knowledge and experiences while benefiting from presentations by high level international academics and specialists."
Day 1 (23 October 2018)
In the first day of the conference, trends in population ageing and family dynamics, as well as how communities and governments across Asia have responded was assessed. The day was started with National Anthem and Cite of Quran. After that, H.E. Dr. Hassan Ghazizadeh Hashemi, Minister of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran gave a short opening speech.

After opening speech the conference was continued with a high level panel discussion on the perspective of policy makers with the following panelists.

- Ms. Farideh Oladghobad, Member of Parliament, Head of Women Faction of Parliament, I.R. Iran
- Dr. Ahmad Meidari, Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare, I.R. Iran
- Dr. Alireza Raeisi, Deputy Minister of Health, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran
- Justin Derbyshire, Chief Executive, HelpAge International
- Bjorn Anderson, Regional Director, UNFPA

The discussion was moderated by Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Member, Council of Eminent persons, Malaysia.

Similarly, sessions on Income, Care and Social Inclusion was conducted with presentation along with panel discussion throughout the day.

In the evening, two side events were organized on; event 1: Health Systems and Population ageing: the case of I.R. Iran. And Event 2: Emerging research on Women’s unpaid work. Ms. Magar participated in the event 1 as it is directly related to population ageing.
Day 2 (24 October 2018)
In the second day, the conference examined policies and services particularly in relation to (1) social inclusion, (2) income security, and (3) long-term care. The parallel sessions were divided into three groups with three rounds and the participants participated according to their interest. Ms. Magar participated in the session on social inclusion and income security where following topics were discussed.

**Income**

a) What trends in family transfers and personal income in old age will we see with population ageing?

b) How can community organisations facilitate work in later life in ageing?

c) How can ageing societies reach universal pensions coverage and reduce overreliance on other sources of income in old age?

**Social Inclusion**

a) What triggers exclusion and isolation in old age and how may these grow in the future?

b) How can age-friendly communities prevent social isolation in later life?

c) What are the most effective ways for government to reduce loneliness in later life as populations age?

Schedule of the day is given in Annex 1

*Older people of I.R. Iran doing drama in the conference hall*

*Session on Income*
Closing
H.E. Dr. Masoume Ebtekar, Vice President for Women Affairs, I.R., Iran; H.E. Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UNFPA; Mr. Seyed Mohammad Ali Afshani, Mayor of Tehran and Hon. Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, I.R. Iran formally closed the conference on 24th October.

Day 3 (25, October 2018)
Field trip was organized in the last day of conference. Participants were divided into three groups and visited in different three organizations. Ms. Magar visited Omid Cultural Center along with other 20 participants of different countries.

Omid Cultural Center is located in one of the eastern regions of Tehran, works within the scope of the department of art and culture in District 13 of I.R. Iran. The center is providing day care services by empowering and involving older people in different activities as per their interest. It is also the secretariat for Manzelat cards. The card provides free services for older people above 65 within 22 districts of Tehran.
Ms. Magar, Programme Officer of Ageing Nepal with older women of the center

Elderly doing art in the center
Learning Experience
Following are the major learning of the conference.

a) The presentation by Ms. Farideh Oladghobad, Member of Parliament, Head of Women Faction of Parliament, I.R. Iran made me aware that the insurance and health need of older persons should be addressed at first. Similarly, she presented about the practice of intergenerational approach to reduce isolation and other psychological problems among elderly.

b) Dr. Ahmad Meidari, Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare, I.R. Iran gave presentation on programmes and policies of Iran for betterment of older people that help me to identify the policies gaps in our country.

c) Mr. Justin Derbyshire, Chief Executive, HelpAge International highlighted the need of inclusive participation of older people for designing, implementing and reviewing the programmes and project. This kind of participation is lack in Nepal. Similarly, he talked about the inclusive participation of older people in Sustainable Development Agenda.

d) The concept of providing education for empowerment of older people and reducing their dependency has been already started in other Asia Pacific region. However, in Nepal older people are still taken as charity recipient.

e) Mohammad-Jalal Abbasi Shavazi, Professor, President of Population Association of Iran mentioned the following points as the crucial factors that need to be addressed in our country too:
   • Healthier and wealthier older people
   • Preparation from today for better tomorrow
   • Attitude change: old people as opportunity not burden
   • The role of government is vital for betterment of older people

f) Mr. Prakash Tyagi, Executive Director, Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti, India shared how older people of his community is playing a vital role in mitigating social and natural problems like drought. This made me aware that we are not utilizing the knowledge and skills of our older people for our societal development or mitigating social and natural problems.

g) H.E. Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UNFPA highlighted feminization of old age. She emphasized older women are more vulnerable than older male. While formulating any policies and programmes the issues of older women should be prioritized.

These are some of many learning of the conference. It has been proven as golden opportunity for me to develop good networking with other stakeholder and representatives.
Conclusion
It is great opportunity for me to participate in the regional conference of HelpAge Asia-Pacific in Tehran, I.R. Iran from 23-25 October 2018. The conference provided me a platform to share the issues of ageing population of Nepal and learn good practices of other Asian countries to confront with challenge and opportunities of demographic transition.

Some Videos of the conference:
https://youtu.be/IMzC0qdABWM
https://youtu.be/OFTQd8EsdSg
https://youtu.be/N_YWFQkuWEc
Agenda

Tuesday, 23 October 2018

Morning plenary session
07:30 – 08:15 Registration
08:20 All participants seated
08:30 – 08:35 National Anthem and Cite of Quran
08:35 – 08:40 Welcome video by the co-hosts
08:40 – 09:20 Welcome remarks by H.E. Dr Mohseni Bandpey, Acting Minister of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare, I.R. Iran
Opening Speech by H.E. Dr Hassan Ghazizadeh Hashemi, Minister of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran
Opening speech by H.E. Dr Eshaq Jahangiri, First Vice President of I.R. Iran
09:20 – 09:30 Introductions by country
09:30 – 10:30 High-level panel discussion

Panelists:
- Ms Farideh Olgadhobad, Member of Parliament, Head of Women Faction of Parliament, I.R. Iran
- Dr Ahmad Meidari, Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare, I.R. Iran
- Dr Alireza Raesi, Deputy Minister of Health, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran
- Justin Derbyshire, Chief Executive, HelpAge International
- Bjørn Andersson, Regional Director, UNFPA

Moderator: Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Member, Council of Eminent Persons, Malaysia

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee/tea break
11:00 – 11:15 Framing the conference by Eduardo Klien, Regional Director, HelpAge International

11:15 – 11:45 How is demographic change affecting older people and their families?
- Du Peng, Professor, Institute of Gerontology, Renmin University of China
- Mohammad-Jalal Abbasi Shavazi, Professor, President of Population Association of Iran

11:45 – 12:00 How can older people stay at the centre of the discussion?
- Eva Sabdono, Executive Director, Yayasan Emong Lansia, Indonesia
- Seyed Mohammad Fadaki, Former Acting Head of Retirement Foundation of Iran Air
- Video screening

12:00 – 12:10 Announcements
12:10 – 13:30 Prayer and Lunch
Afternoon plenary session
13:30 – 14:30

**Income**

*How will income sources in old age expand as societies age?*

Giang Thanh Long, Associate Professor, National Economics University, Vietnam

**Panel discussion**
- Giang Thanh Long
- Tengku Aizan Hamid, Director, Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing
- Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Member, Council of Eminent Persons, Malaysia
- Majid Kousheshi, Assistant Professor, Head of Demography Department, University of Tehran

Moderator: Michael Herrmann, Senior Adviser, Economics and Demography, UNFPA

14:30 – 14:40

**Short break**

14:40 – 15:40

**Care**

*How will the long-term care context evolve as families change?*

Reiko Hayashi, Director, Department of International Research and Cooperation, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (IPSS), Japan

**Panel discussion**
- Reiko Hayashi
- Xiaowei, Vice-President, China National Committee on Ageing
- Pungky Sumadi, Deputy for Population and Labor, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia
- Ruthe Iden, Head of Health and Care, Age UK

Moderator: Chris Roles, Managing Director, Age International, UK

15:40 – 16:00

**Coffee/tea break**

16:00 – 17:00

**Social inclusion**

*How can social connections beyond the older people’s family flourish in ageing societies?*

Asghar Zaidi, Visiting Professor at Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, London School of Economics

**Panel discussion**
- Asghar Zaidi
- Kazi Reazul Hoque, Chairman, National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh
- Meimanat Hosseini-Chavoshi, Research Fellow Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
- Wassana Im-em, Assistant Representative, UNFPA Thailand

Moderator: Vanessa Steinmeyer, Population Affairs Officer, Social Development Division, UNESCAP

17:00 – 17:10

**Announcements**

17:30 – 18:45

**Side event 1 – Health systems and population ageing: the case of I.R. Iran**

Presenters:
- Seyed Hamed Barakati, Director General, Department of Population, Family and School Health, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran
- Maryam Noroozian, Professor of Neurology, Tehran University of Medical Sciences
• M.A. Mohseni Bandpey, Prof. Physiotherapy, University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences

Discussant: Farid Barati Sedeh, General Director, Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment, State Welfare Organization, I.R. Iran

Moderator: Mohammad Taghi Joghaatäi, Advisor to the Minister, Prof. Nutrition Rehabilitation and Neuro Sciences, Iran University of Medical Science

**Side event 2 – Emerging research on women’s unpaid work**

Presenters:
- Kate Horstead, Policy Adviser, Age International, UK
- Gretchen Donehower, Academic Specialist and Researcher, Berkeley University (video presentation)

Moderator: Tengku Arzu Hamid, Director, Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing

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**Wednesday, 24 October 2018**

**Parallel sessions**
09:00 – 10:30

**Income-1**

**Round 1: Older people and their changing families**

**What trends in family transfers and personal income in old age will we see with population ageing?**

Presenters:
- Jinangsoon Rojananan, Senior Adviser, Policy and Planning, Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand
- Majid Kousheshi, University of Tehran, Head of Demography Department I.R. Iran

Discussant: Michael Herrmann, Senior Adviser, Economics and Demography, UNFPA

Moderator: Mathew Cherian, Chief Executive of HelpAge India

**Care-1**

**How will trends in family care for older people change in the future?**

Presenter:
- Farshad Sharifi, Professor of Geriatrics and epidemiology, Scientific Coordinator of Older Person’s Health Research Center, Tehran University of Medical Science

Discussants:
- Reiko Hayashi, Director, Department of International Research and Cooperation, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Japan
- Du Peng, Professor, Director of Institute of Gerontology, Renmin University of China
- Cho Hyunse, President, HelpAge Korea, Republic of Korea

Moderator: Hooman Mohammadi, Acting Head of the Secretariat of National Council of Older People, I.R. Iran
Social inclusion-1 What triggers exclusion and isolation in old age and how may these grow in the future?
Presenters:
  - Heimanat Hosseini-Chavoshi, Research Fellow, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
  - Bondan Sikoki, Researcher, SurveyMETER, Indonesia
Discussant: Paul Kowal, Expert, Myanmar
Moderator: Vappu Taipale, Board of Trustees, HelpAge International
10:30 – 11:00 Coffee/tea Break

11:00 – 12:30 Round 2: The role of communities
Income-2 How can community organisations facilitate work in later life in ageing societies?
Presenters:
  - Le Minh Giang, Head of the Office Vietnam National Committee on Ageing
  - Prakash Tyagi, Executive Director, Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti, India
Discussant: Florita Villar, Undersecretary of Policy and Plans Group, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Philippines
Moderator: Cherian Mathews, Director of Global Impact and Resourcing, HelpAge International

Care-2 What are the future drivers of expanding community-based care – civil society, market, government?
Presenters:
  - Ng Wai Chong, Medical Director for the Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, Tsao Foundation, Singapore
  - Ruthe Isden, Head of Health and Care, Age UK
Discussant:
  - Hossein Nahvinejad, Deputy for Rehabilitation Affairs, State Welfare Organization, I.R. Iran
  - Dr. Maraym Hazrati is Deputy Minister of Nursing at Ministry of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran
Moderator: Jia Guoping, Programme Specialist, Population and Development, UNFPA China

Social inclusion-2 How can age-friendly communities prevent social isolation in later life?
Presenters:
  - Reza Fadayevatan, Associate Professor, Head of Ageing Department, University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences, I.R. Iran
  - Mathew Cherian, Chief Executive, HelpAge India
Discussants:
  - Richard Makalew, Programme Specialist – Population and Development, UNFPA Indonesia
  - Mohsen Salamanezhad, Head of Secretariat of National Council of Older Persons, I.R. Iran
Moderator: Chris Roles, Managing Director, Age International, UK
12:30 – 13:45 Prayer and Lunch
13:45 – 15:00  Round 3: Government responses

**Income-3** How can ageing societies reach universal pensions coverage and reduce overreliance on household income in old age?

Presenters:
- Giang Thanh Long, Associate Professor, National Economics University, Vietnam
- Bazlul Khondker, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Discussants: Shahram Ghafari, Head of Social Security Research Institute, I.R. Iran
Moderator: Eduardo Kilen, Regional Director, HelpAge International

**Care-3** What are the most effective ways for government to support when long-term care is provided informally?

Presenter:
- Ruthe Isden, Head of Health and Care, Age UK

Discussants:
- Nguyen Ngoc Quynh, Social Protection Analyst, UNFPA Vietnam
- Malik, Director of Population Planning and Social Protection Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia
- Sayed Hamed Barakati, Director General Department for Population, Family and School Health, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, I.R. Iran
- Cho Hyunse, President, HelpAge Korea, Republic of Korea
- Ng Wei Chong, Medical Director for the Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, Tsao Foundation, Singapore

Moderator: Ann Keeling, Chair, Age International, UK

**Social inclusion-3** What are the most effective ways for government to reduce loneliness in later life as populations age?

Presenter:
- Justin Derbyshire, Chief Executive, HelpAge International

Discussant: Yadollah Abolfathi Mottaz, University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences, I.R. Iran

Moderator: Christophe Lefranç, Technical Advisor on Population and Development (Data and Census), UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office

15:00 – 15:30 Coffee/tea Break

**Afternoon plenary session**

15:30 – 16:30  Panel discussion: Drawing some conclusions

Panelists:
- H.E. Dr Mohseni Bandpey, Acting Minister of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare, I. R. Iran
- H.E. Dr Harirchi, Acting Minister, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, I. R. Iran
- H.E. Dr Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UNFPA
- Justin Derbyshire, Chief Executive, HelpAge International

Moderator: Eduardo Kilen, Regional Director, HelpAge International
16:30 – 17:15  Closing
- H.E. Dr Masoume Ebtekar, Vice President for Women Affairs, I.R. Iran
- H.E. Dr Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UNFPA
- Mr Seyed Mohammad Ali Afshari, Mayor of Tehran
- Hon Dr Masoud Pezeshkian, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, I. R. Iran

18:00 – 18:45  Press conference

Thursday, 25 October 2018
08:00 – 12:00  Field trip