

Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030

Update 2: May 2019

This is the second progress update on the process for developing the *Decade of Healthy Ageing* (2020 – 2030) aligned to *Agenda 2030* and its Sustainable Development Goals.

This update focuses on: why people think the *Decade* is important and what they want from it; changes to the process for developing the proposal for the *Decade*; and summaries of key meetings and events that have taken place or are planned.

During this Update period (March to May 2019), key political opportunities have been taken to discuss the *Decade of Healthy Ageing* and begin consulting on the action areas and partnering processes. A Zero Draft proposal document is completed and undergoing translation into the 6 official languages in preparation for the first formal consultation with Member States in July 2019.

VOICES for the *Decade*

“I want to see a world where older people can easily access affordable, quality, age-friendly health and care services ...”

“I want to see a world where older peoples’ forums are recognized by States.”



Member States are building a broad coalition for the *Decade of Healthy Ageing*

Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing side event on the Decade of Healthy Ageing

In the context of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing on **15-18 April** in New York, the Governments of Chile, Japan and Slovenia, along with the Office of the Commission of Human Rights (OHCHR), the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Department for Social and Economic Affairs (UNDESA) and the [NGO Committee on Ageing](#) hosted a side event to discuss building collaboration on the *Decade of Healthy Ageing*. <https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/tenthsession.shtml>

Speakers highlighted:

- Longer lives are one of the world's most incredible achievements. But many older adults age in poor health and without basic supports (integrated health and social care, decent housing, financial protection, freedom from abuse, etc.) to live lives of dignity.
- The right to health has no age limits.
- Political support and member state champions are essential for success. Key global and regional fora have already put the *Decade of Healthy Ageing* on the agenda – including the G20 (hosted by Japan) and APEC (hosted by Chile). Other opportunities exist, including meetings of the Commonwealth Ministers and the European Union.
- Broad multisectoral, multidisciplinary action at all levels is needed to foster *Healthy Ageing*, making links beyond health to finance, planning, labour and social protection, and involving a variety of stakeholders (e.g. urban planners/architects, industry, media).
- There is no typical older person. Mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure actions respond to this diversity, are responsive to different cultures and contexts, are equity-focused, gender sensitive and ensure that the most vulnerable older people are not left behind.
- The diverse voices of current and future generations of older people should drive the *Decade* so that it is responsive to their needs and aspirations.
- The *Decade of Healthy Ageing* should be synergistic and mutually reinforcing with work being carried out in support of the [Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, Agenda 2030](#) for sustainable development and the commitments made by Member States under existing WHA resolutions, for example the [Global action plan on dementia](#).

Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva

A “*Decade of Healthy Ageing* Information Session” for the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva was held on **6 May** at WHO Headquarters. This was attended by 21 Member States - Angola, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, Finland, France, Honduras, Israel, Libya, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Pakistan, Spain, Sweden, North Macedonia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America - as well as a representative of the European Union.

The Information Session covered: why a proposal for a *Decade of Healthy Ageing* is being developed, how the *Decade* links with existing UN commitments related to the *Madrid International Plan Action on Ageing (2002)* and *Agenda 2030*; highlights from WHO on progress made to implement the *Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health*; the process for developing the *Decade* proposal between now and its launch in 2020, with key milestones and next steps. The next session of Member States will be hosted on 5 July and will focus on discussing the draft proposal.

Any Mission that was unable to attend but would like the Summary Note, presentation or any related documents, please contact Mary Manandhar at: manandharm@who.int

Side Event at the 72nd World Health Assembly, Geneva

A DECADE OF HEALTHY AGEING (2020–2030). IDEAS AND PROPOSITIONS TO REACH PEOPLE AND BUILD HEALTHY SOCIETIES

72nd World Health Assembly SIDE-EVENT

Monday 20 May, 17:30 – 19:00 / Palais des Nations, Room XXIV

Host



Chile



Argentina



Canada



Costa Rica



Ecuador



Finland



France



Japan



Panamá



Slovenia



Singapore



Turkey

Co sponsors

In the context of the World Health Assembly, the Government of Chile hosted a side event on **20 May** that was cosponsored by 11 other Member States. The event brought together high-level government officials and civil society representatives to discuss experiences and ideas on how to ensure the *Decade of Healthy Ageing* makes an impact in people's lives.

Dr. Emilio Santelices, Minister of Health for Chile, moderated the proceedings. He was joined by panel speakers from the Governments of: Canada (*Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer*); Ecuador (*Dr. Veronica Espinosa, Minister of Health*); Finland (*Ms. Taru Koivisto, Director at Department for Wellbeing and Services, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health*); and Singapore (*Mr. Gan Kim Yong, Minister of Health*). Civil society was represented by the International Federation on Ageing (*Dr. Jane Barratt, Secretary General*) and an older person representative from the United Republic of Tanzania (*Leah Nzuamtemi Nzali, Chairperson of the Older People Forum and Active Ageing Club of Help Age International in rural Mgogoro*).

From WHO, Alana Officer (*Senior Health Adviser, WHO Geneva*) provided the background to the *Decade* and details of the process being adopted to develop the proposal. Dr. Carissa Etienne, Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) gave the closing remarks.



Panelists signaled that all countries were all on the same journey – longer lives, increased proportion of older adults as a percentage of the population and all needing to make investments to address challenges and ensure population ageing was an opportunity. Government panellist highlighted the benefits of linking global and local efforts and ensuring that public programmes can benefit diverse groups.

All panellists showcased national initiatives that have made a real difference in people's lives. Dr. Yong spoke to Singapore's substantial investments in health, long-term care and broader environments to foster active and healthy ageing and lifelong employability. Dr. Santelices highlighted their success leveraging telemedicine and digital hospitals to improve health and functioning. Dr. Tam spoke to the benefits of the Pan Canadian age-friendly communities initiative. Dr. Espinosa highlighted the importance of leveraging existing services, such as those for people with disabilities, to benefit older people. Finland underscored the importance of developing national frameworks to guide actions.

Panellists also spoke to the challenges that should be addressed during the *Decade*. These were as basic as food, housing and freedom from abuse, and for all countries, the need to reinforce health and social care systems based on the best available evidence. Singapore highlighted that a whole of society approach is needed while Dr. Tam, citing a recent [report](#), underlined the need to focus on how we build and adapt our neighbourhoods as key to fostering healthy ageing and leaving nobody behind. Finland, Singapore and Chile all stressed the opportunities that innovation and technology present and how these need to be harnessed over the next ten years.

Acknowledging the importance of Member State Champions to drive the *Decade of Healthy Ageing*, Dr. Barratt reminded us all that tackling ageism is critical for success. Counting down to the launch of the *Decade* in 499 days, Jane highlighted civil societies capacities, not just as community implementers but also as facilitators, innovators and conveners. Civil society is ready to partner and expects to play its role in the collective responsibility required to foster healthy ageing.

Leah Nzumtemi Nzali, brought a powerful personal appeal to the proceedings when she spoke about the importance of hearing the voices of older people and engaging them as partners. She highlighted the key role that older people forums can play in engaging local government leaders from municipalities to partner for change.



“We must seize this window of opportunity to redesign and re-orientate our health systems and social systems... This event marks an important moment at WHA72. The movement for healthy ageing is just starting and we are all its messengers”.

In closing, Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) thanked the panel and audience for a productive and enlightening session. She confirmed that all WHO Regional Directors are committed to the *Decade of Healthy Ageing* and that there is a clear common social and economic agenda emerging for fostering healthy ageing being driven by the discussions at the G20, APEC and other political fora. We will need sustained political leadership and commitment to maximise the opportunities that ageing healthier societies can bring.

G20

On **28-29 May** in Geneva, representatives from Ministries of Health, Development and Foreign Affairs from the G20, the world's 19 largest economies and the EU, met to start drafting the Okayama Declaration of G20 Health Ministers. This will cover their response to ageing societies including people with dementia and their families. After a period of refinement over the coming months, the Declaration will be released 18-19 October 2019 at the Health Ministerial meeting in Okayama.



Consultations among diverse stakeholders to shape the *Decade* are underway

UN and multilateral partners

Under the auspices of the informal **United Nations Inter Agency Group on Ageing (IAGA)**, a consultation by video link between **UN agency partners** based in New York and Geneva took place on **23 May**. Discussions focused on the draft proposal for the *Decade of Healthy Ageing* including the vision, guiding principles, priority action areas and opportunities for partnering. The process of formal consultation with Member States to progress the proposal through WHO Governing Bodies and the United Nations General Assembly Plenary was also discussed. Through the video consultation and in writing we have received valuable inputs and suggestions from ILO, OHCA, OHCHR, UNDESA, UNDP, UNECE, UNFPA, UNHCR and UN Women which are being used to shape the zero draft.

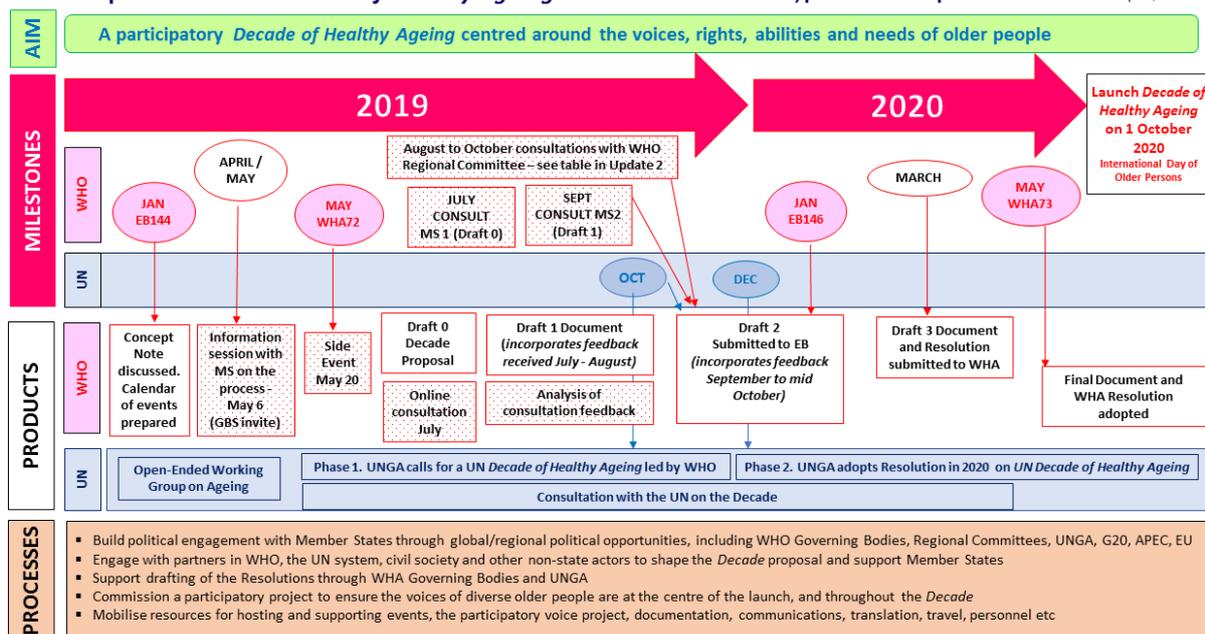
WHO and International Federation of Ageing Webinar

As part of the IFA – WHO webinar series on key trends and themes relating to age-friendly environments, Dr. Mary Manandhar (WHO Technical Officer) presented a session on **3 May**, entitled: “An Introduction: the *Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030*”. Recording and presentation slides are available at: <https://www.ifa-fiv.org/projects-age-friendly-environments-educational-webinars/>

Process for developing the *Decade*

The proposal for the *Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020 – 2030)* is being developed through a broad multistakeholder consultative and iterative process between now and the anticipated launch date of 1 October 2020. Since the first update was distributed, new opportunities for consultation have been identified. These include another Member State consultation in September and discussions in all WHO regional committee meetings - see the revised process map at <https://www.who.int/ageing/decade-process-may2019.PNG>.

Roadmap to launch the *Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030*: milestones, products and processes revised May 30, 2019



Technical spotlight

New WHO Guidelines recommend specific interventions for reducing the risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

https://www.who.int/mental_health/neurology/dementia/guidelines_risk_reduction/en/

Worldwide, around 50 million of the 1 billion older adults have dementia with the number of people with dementia set to triple by 2050. The significant social and economic impact and lack of curative treatment make it imperative for countries to focus on reducing modifiable risk factors for dementia.

The *WHO Guidelines on risk reduction of cognitive decline and dementia* provide evidence-based recommendations on lifestyle behaviours (such as getting regular exercise, not smoking, avoiding harmful use of alcohol, controlling their weight, eating a healthy diet) and interventions (such as maintaining healthy blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels) to delay or prevent cognitive decline and dementia. These WHO Guidelines are an important tool for health care providers as well as governments, policy-makers and other stakeholders to strengthen their response to the dementia challenge.

WHO Press release: <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/14-05-2019-adopting-a-healthy-lifestyle-helps-reduce-the-risk-of-dementia>

Upcoming events relevant to the *Decade* during 2019

June	6	AARP Global Conference: Disrupt Aging – the future of work for all generations	Washington D.C.
	24-28	PAHO Directive Council	Washington D.C.
	28	G20 Joint Session of Health and Finance Ministers	Tokyo
	28-29	G20 Leaders' Summit	Osaka
July	1-2	G20 3rd Health Working Group Meeting	Tokyo
	3	PAHO / JICA Regional Meeting	Mexico
	10-11	Silver Economy Forum , hosted by the Government of Finland under their Presidency of the Council of the European Union	Helsinki
August	18	Policy Dialogue on "Health Across the Life Course" - Prevention Measures to support an ageing population within APEC Economies	Puerto Varas
	19-20	Health Working Group meeting	Puerto Varas
	19-23	WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) Regional Committee	Brazzaville
	22-24	APEC 9th High Level Meeting on health and the economy. Healthy economies in an aging world	Puerto Varas
September	2-6	WHO Regional Office for South East Asia (SEARO) Regional Committee	New Delhi
	16-19	WHO Regional Office for Europe (EURO) Regional Committee	Copenhagen
	23	High Level Political Forum on Universal Health Coverage UN HLM 2019 - UHC2030	New York
	28-30	6 th Tokyo International Conference on African Development, TICAD7	Yokohama
	24-30	74th UN General Assembly	New York
	30 Sept-4 Oct	WHO Regional Office for the Americas (PAHO) Directing Council	Washington D.C.
October	1	International Day of Older Persons	<i>global</i>
	7-11	WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WPRO) Regional Committee	Manila
	14-17	WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) Regional Committee	Tehran
	18	G20 4 th Health Working Group	Okayama
	19-20	G20 Health Ministerial Meeting	Okayama
November	12-14	Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 ICPD25	Nairobi
	16-17	31 st APEC CEO Summit	Santiago

Contacts:

Alana Officer (officera@who.int) and **Mary Manandhar** (manandharm@who.int)

Ageing and Life-Course, WHO, Avenue Appia 20, 1211 Geneva 27. Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 791 2977

Website: <https://www.who.int/ageing/en/>