



**Voluntary National Survey on the Implementation of the  
Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) in Asia and the Pacific**  
(to inform the Asia-Pacific Fourth Review and Appraisal of the  
Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing)

**Background**

This voluntary national survey will inform the Asia-Pacific Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing ([MIPAA](#))<sup>1</sup> to be organized by ESCAP in 2022.

MIPAA is the global guiding document on population ageing adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, in 2002. It calls for regular and systematic reviews of MIPAA implementation by Member States. After three successful reviews at national, regional and global levels, the General Assembly, through resolution 75/152, took note of ECOSOC resolution 2020/8 and decided to hold the fourth review and appraisal of MIPAA at the global level at the sixty-first session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2023.

Pursuant to ECOSOC resolution 2020/8, regional commissions were asked to facilitate the fourth review and appraisal at the regional levels by: (a) providing assistance to Member States in organizing national review and appraisal exercises; (b) organizing regional review meetings using an inclusive and coordinated approach in relation to the participation of civil society in the process; (c) assisting Member States in following up on analysis resulting from the regional reviews; (d) promoting networking and the sharing of information; (e) providing an analysis of the main findings and identifying priority areas and policy responses by 2022; and (f) assisting and providing advice to Governments in the gathering, synthesis and analysis of information, as well as in the presentation of the findings of national reviews.

The 2022 regional reviews and appraisals will feed into the 2023 global review and appraisal, including the 2023 reporting for the [United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing \(2021-2030\)](#). The Asia-Pacific voluntary national survey on the implementation of MIPAA is an integral part of the preparations for the Asia-Pacific Regional Review and Appraisal in 2022. The process consists of: (a) voluntary national surveys; (b) stakeholder consultations; (c) documentation; and (d) the intergovernmental meeting. For more information on the Asia-Pacific Regional Review and Appraisal, see: <https://www.population-trends-asiapacific.org/mipaa> (to be updated regularly).

**Suggestions for completing the Asia-Pacific voluntary national survey on MIPAA implementation**

The survey should be completed by ESCAP member States, through their national ageing focal points.<sup>2</sup> It is structured according to the MIPAA priority directions, issues and objectives.<sup>3</sup> Some objectives have been merged to facilitate reporting. As MIPAA is a multi-dimensional framework, it is recommended that the national focal points complete the survey in consultation with ministries and departments involved with implementing the various MIPAA priority directions and objectives. The following guidelines are intended to assist member States in reporting on the national follow-up to MIPAA:

---

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

<sup>2</sup> In December 2020, ESCAP requested member States to nominate ageing focal points.

<sup>3</sup> For a list of priority directions, issues and objectives of MIPAA, see the Annex.

1. A bottom-up participatory approach should be followed by inviting, inter alia, civil society, including organizations of older persons, to contribute to survey responses (ECOSOC 2020/8, OP5).
2. Gender perspectives should be mainstreamed when answering the questions.
3. Member States are encouraged to reflect on any national data collection initiatives for implementing the 2030 Agenda and related SDGs and report on the respective SDG indicator (relevant SDG indicators are listed along with the questions, when applicable).
4. Answers should focus and report on progress made during the period 2018–2022, (ECOSOC resolution 2020/8, OP3).
5. Answers may combine quantitative and participatory qualitative data and analysis, disaggregated by age, and by other relevant factors, including sex and disability, and, where appropriate, include sharing of good practices in such data collection (ECOSOC 2020/8, OP6).
6. Answers should include information on lessons learned and good practices to ensure this review and appraisal exercise contributes to South-South, North-South and triangular regional and international cooperation (GA resolution 75/152, OP39).
7. Ideally, countries should respond to all questions, but it is fully understood that, given the national context, they might not be able to do so.
8. Supporting documentation should be included, if possible.

The companion document attached to this survey provides explanations of some key terms.

The survey should be completed (and submitted/returned), together with relevant attachments by 31 October 2021, by email, to: [escap-sdd@un.org](mailto:escap-sdd@un.org) or online at: <https://icts-surveys.unog.ch/index.php/974559?newtest=Y&lang=en>

Please indicate whether the completed survey may be posted on the public website of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review and Appraisal of MIPAA

Yes:  No:

Please do not hesitate to contact [escap-sdd@un.org](mailto:escap-sdd@un.org) should you have any questions.

**A. Contact information**

**Please identify the office responsible for coordinating the responses to this survey and completing it and include its contact information.**

Country: Bhutan	
Ministry/Office/Agency Ministry of Health	
Name contact persons (First and Last) ██████████	Title/Position ██████████
Name of ageing focal point (First and Last) ██████████	
Email ████████████████████	Telephone: ████████████████████

Mailing address

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## B. Methodology

What methodology was used to complete this survey? Was a bottom-up approach used involving a variety of stakeholders? Was a whole-of-government approach used? (see also companion document) *please elaborate:*

The team lead by the focal person developed a proposal for carrying out this survey using a bottom-up participatory approach. The proposal was reviewed by Research Ethics Board for Health and waiver of review was approved by the Board. The representatives from various agencies formed the core-team, thereby using the whole-of-government approach. The representatives from the relevant agencies namely; NGOs ( Royal Society of Senior Citizens) , Corporations ( Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan Ltd), Academia ( Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Science of Bhutan) , Line Ministries/agencies ( National Statistical Bureau), Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, Department of Traditional Medicine, District Health Officers, Department of Public Health, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk National Referral Hospital, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Primary Health Care Centres; National Pension and Provident Fund); International Organizations ( World Health Organization) formed the core team.

Initially a review of documents both published and unpublished including administrative records provided by various agencies were reviewed. This was supplemented during the consultation process. The members of the representation discussed the issues and problems related to older persons, initiatives for older persons within their respective agencies and this was discussed during the one-day consultative workshop conducted by the Ministry of Health (**Annexure 1**).

The findings from the consultative workshop, focused group discussion with the older person and desk review of the documents formed the basis of the narrative in answering the MIPAA survey. The draft narratives were further reviewed, discussed within the agencies. A second consultative workshop conducted by the Ministry of Health with the focal person further reviewed and enriched the finding and agreed on the quantitative questions of the survey (**Annexure-2**).

## I. National policy and MIPAA implementation

### Coordinating body

1	Does your country have a national coordinating body/committee/agency or national multi-stakeholder forum on population ageing and/or older persons?  If “yes”, please provide information on the following:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1	Name of the coordinating body/committee/agency/national multi-stakeholder forum: <i>please elaborate:</i> National coordination body is the Ministry of Health (MoH). There is no specific agency, committee and national multi-stakeholder forum. To provide the impetus to the care for the older population, the Ministry of Health has established an Elderly Care Program (ECP) within the Department of Medical Service, Ministry of Health, Bhutan. Although there are no specific committees established for older population, various committees established within the ministry of health oversee the issues in an integrated manner e.g Gross National Happiness Commission oversee the overall		

	<p>planning process that is inclusive of the older population. The High Level Committee of the Ministry of Health is responsible for approving all National Strategic Documents including strategic documents of the Healthy Ageing (<a href="#">Annexure_3</a>). The Cabinet approves all the policies documents.</p> <p>Ms Ugyen Zangmo, Programme Analyst, Elderly Care Program, DMS, MOH manages all matter related to older population and is also appointed as the focal person for MIPAA (<a href="#">Annexure_4</a>)</p>
1.2	<p>Year of establishment: <i>please elaborate:</i> The Elderly Care Program was established in 2012.</p>
1.3	<p>Level (ministerial or other): <i>please elaborate:</i> Elderly Care Program, functions under the Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health. Although, currently it is a single manned program, the Ministry of Health Functions in an integrated manner. e.g policy and planning is taken care by the policy and planning Division and medical supplies and health care services including services to the older persons is the mandate of the Health Care and Diagnostic Division under Department of Medical Services. The Royal Civil Service Commission regularly conducts organizational development exercises and upgrades or recommends for strengthening of any programs or divisions as when required.</p>
1.4	<p>Functions: <i>please elaborate:</i> The elderly program has mandates and functions as listed below:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aligning health systems to the needs of older population</li> <li>2. Support capacity building in the care of older people</li> <li>3. Promotion of healthy ageing in context of the existing social and cultural practices</li> <li>4. Support development of age-friendly environments</li> <li>5. Developing sustainable and equitable systems for providing long-term care (home, communities, Institutions)</li> <li>6. Improving measurements, monitoring and research on healthy ageing</li> <li>7. Any other activities and initiatives concerning elderly population and healthy ageing in Bhutan</li> </ol> <p>(Ref. Draft Strategic document)</p> </p>
1.5	<p>Contact information, including mailing address, telephone/fax, email and website link: <i>please elaborate:</i> Ms. Ugyen Zangmo, Program Analyst, Department of Medical Service, Ministry of Health, P O Box 726; Kawajangsa, Thimphu, Bhutan email: uzangmo@health.gov.bt. Website: <a href="http://www.moh.gov.bt/about/who-is-who/dms-staff/">http://www.moh.gov.bt/about/who-is-who/dms-staff/</a></p>

### ***Definition of older persons***

2	<p>Please define “older persons” as used in official Government documents (e.g., legislation, census forms, etc.).</p> <p><i>please elaborate:</i> There is no legal definition of "older persons" in Bhutan. However, various documents including constitution of Bhutan implies the older person as anyone above the age of 65 years old. The Constitution of Bhutan limits the legal age of 65 for all constitutional posts and to become a member of parliament. As per the Constitution, even The King of Bhutan must resign at the age of 65 (<a href="https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/templates/images/constitution-of-bhutan-2008.pdf">https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/templates/images/constitution-of-bhutan-2008.pdf</a>).</p>
---	---

### ***National legislation, policies and action plans on older persons***

3	Does your country have a dedicated legislation, policy and/or action plan to promote and improve the well-being of older persons and protect their rights, such as a “decree or law on older persons”?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.1	<p>If “yes”, for each of the following questions, please provide information on: (a) name of legislation, policy and/or action plan and year of enactment; (b) description of legislation, policy and/or action plan; (c) main achievements; and (d) financial and human resources allocated to implement. <i>but if “no”, please elaborate also:</i></p> <p>There is no specific approved dedicated legislation and/or policy to improve the well-being of the older population. However, following Acts and policies provides an overarching policy for the overall society including older persons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Constitution of Bhutan 2008 (<a href="https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/templates/images/constitution-of-bhutan-2008.pdf">https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/templates/images/constitution-of-bhutan-2008.pdf</a>). Article 9 (Section 19) of the Constitution states “The State shall endeavor to promote those conditions that are conducive to co-operation in community life and the integrity of the extended family structure”. Similarly, article 9, section 22 and section 7 also provided broad social protection including older persons.</li> <li>2. National Health Policy and Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan provides free health care to all Bhutanese citizens.</li> <li>3. Draft strategy and plan of action for healthy ageing (2021-2026). The strategy will soon be finalized and actions plans implemented will benefit the older persons’ health and wellbeing</li> </ol>		
3.1.1	<p>Have gender and disability concerns of older persons been explicitly addressed in the legislation, policy and/or action plan?</p> <p><i>please elaborate:</i> There is no specific legislation, policy and action plans that explicitly addresses the gender and disability of older person. However, there are various policies and action plan that address gender which includes ender and disability concerns for older persons as listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Draft National Gender Equity Policy (2019) (<a href="https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/NGEP-final_28.03.2019.pdf">https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/NGEP-final_28.03.2019.pdf</a>), although does not include any special provisions for the older persons provides the addresses overall gender issues and concerns.</li> <li>2. The National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) (<a href="https://gems.ncwc.gov.bt/">https://gems.ncwc.gov.bt/</a>) provides protects the rights and concerns of Women and Children.</li> <li>3. Draft National Strategy for Healthy Ageing addresses gender and disability.</li> </ol>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.1.2	<p>Is there a monitoring framework for the implementation of the legislation, policy and/or action plan?</p> <p><i>please elaborate:</i></p> <p>There is a monitoring framework, which is not connected to legislation or policies. The draft national strategy for healthy ageing has action plan for five years (2021-2026), which includes a monitoring component within it. The success indicators for all ministries and agencies are monitored through the Annual Performance Appraisal systems. The performance systems are monitored by the Prime Minister’s Office (<a href="https://www.gpms.gov.bt/">https://www.gpms.gov.bt/</a>) . The performance of the individual programs is monitored through Individual Work Plan appraisal systems</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	monitored by the Royal Civil Service Commission. All monitoring of partners including UN organizations are coordinated and monitored by the Policy and Planning Division of the respective agencies and nationally by the Gross National Happiness Commission.		
3.1.3	<p>Are older persons and their organizations included in any monitoring activities of legislation, policy and/or action plan on older persons?</p> <p><i>please elaborate:</i> The Royal Society of Senior Citizens (<a href="http://www.rsscbhutan.com.bt/">http://www.rsscbhutan.com.bt/</a>) is the only Civil Society Organization dedicated for older persons. They are often involved by relevant agencies as a representative of older people in various discussion and decision making including monitoring activities. All activities including policies and regulations of any NGO/CSO/PBO are monitored by the Civil Society Organization Authority (<a href="http://www.csoa.org.bt/public/w">http://www.csoa.org.bt/public/w</a>). This Authority is responsible for approving all NGO/CSO/PBO articles of incorporations.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.4	<p>Does the Government foster effective consultation with, and involvement of, older persons and/or their representatives at the national, regional and local levels in designing policies? (SDG 16.7.2)</p> <p><i>please elaborate:</i></p> <p>SDG 16.7.2 target: Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive by sex, age, disability and population group.</p> <p>Royal Government of Bhutan has always included open discussion, bottoms-up participatory and inclusive planning and decision making process. At the community level, village elders are always considered the wisdom of the community and always represent the community in planning and actions that may impact the community. At the National level RSSC represents older person in all decisions and planning processes that are relevant and may impact on older persons. At the local level, all planned process is consulted with the community, screened through the Gewog (Block) Development Committee and then through the District Development committee. This was evident while developing the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (<a href="https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/TWELVE-FIVE-YEAR-WEBSITE-VERSION.pdf">https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/TWELVE-FIVE-YEAR-WEBSITE-VERSION.pdf</a>) page 27 which highlights the strategic framework. For the health sector, the Primary Health Care Centers at the community level and the District Health Office and district level are involved in the planning and development of any policies for the older persons. With their constant interaction with the village and communities, they represent the community at the grass root. e.g while developing the National Healthy Ageing strategy, they were consulted and engaged in addition to RSSC and other relevant agencies.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.1.5	<p>Does the Government foster work and volunteering of younger and older persons in intergenerational settings?</p> <p><i>please elaborate:</i></p> <p>There is no specific policies and establishment that fosters intergenerational setting by the government. However, RSSC highlights an specific mandate of "bridging the gaps between the youth and senior citizens through interactive participation" (<a href="http://www.rsscbhutan.com.bt/aboutUs.php">http://www.rsscbhutan.com.bt/aboutUs.php</a>).</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

3.1.6	Does the Government offer opportunities for intergenerational contact and exchange? <i>please elaborate:</i> There are no specific opportunities created by the government for intergenerational contacts and exchanges. However, RSSC has a specific program that promotes intergenerational initiatives ( <a href="http://www.rssc bhutan.com.bt/programme.php">http://www.rssc bhutan.com.bt/programme.php</a> ).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.1.7	Does the Government encourage the private sector and non-profit organizations to involve older persons in planning and design of goods and services? <i>please elaborate:</i> Government involves RSSC but there is no specific order or requests to involve the private and non-government organizations to involve senior citizens in planning and designing of goods and services. The program involves the senior citizens from the Royal Society for Senior Citizen (the only CSO for Senior Citizen). Recently they were involved in the drafting of the national strategy for healthy ageing and revising the care of older people in line with the WHO Integrated Care for Older people. (ICOPE).	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	If “no”, are there any efforts towards the development and adoption of such a legislation, policy and/or action plan? <i>please elaborate:</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

### Challenges to legislation/policies

4	In the development and implementation of legislation with a focus on older persons, has the Government encountered any of the following challenges? [1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = always]
---	---

Challenge	1	2	3	If answer 2 or 3, have you addressed the challenge? <i>please elaborate:</i>
4.1 Lack of human resources dedicated to population ageing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The strategic document is developed to provide impetus and importance to older people. The draft strategy document outlines development of human resources dedicated to population ageing issues.
4.2 Lack of financial resources dedicated to population ageing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The strategic document has budgeted action plans and the government is working with WHO and other agencies to obtain funds.
4.3 Lack of data on older persons and/or population ageing at the national and/or subnational levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Focal person for MOH is working towards having comprehensive data for older people.
4.4 Lack of overall political support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Although there are political commitments, prioritization have not been commensurate with commitments.
4.5 Lack of cross-ministerial coordination on population ageing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The issue of older people is coming into the main agenda only recently.

4.6 Lack of international support and cooperation on population ageing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	International agencies support government priorities. Until recently the support towards older people was not the main priority.
4.7 Lack of public awareness and understanding of population ageing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Considering the family values, social network, ageing has not been a major issue until recently.
4.8 A bottom-up approach to population ageing not followed (e.g., involvement of older persons)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.9 Misconceptions and stereotypes about population ageing and older persons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are some stereotypes about ageing. RSSC and the government is trying to create awareness through mass media.
4.10 Any other challenges (please name them) <i>please elaborate:</i> Absence of legislation and policies specific to older persons.				

### Priorities of MIPAA “issues”

5	<p>Which of the “issues” listed under the three priority directions of MIPAA has your government prioritized (for a list of “issues”, see the Annex)? <i>please elaborate:</i></p> <p>The Government has strived to address different components of the issues. However, considering the importance, the government is providing more focus on priority area 2.</p> <p><b>1. Older people and development</b></p> <p>Under this section, the Government has addressed eradication of poverty particularly through His Majesties Welfare Scheme (Kidu). Government also addressed the emergency situations particularly to address the COVID-19 pandemic through line listing of elderly and providing specialized medical, social and psychological support. The government provided door to door delivery of multivitamins, vaccination programs and essential deliveries to the older persons. The Government also initiated non-formal education whereby adults including older persons who did not get opportunity to go to formal schooling had the opportunities to study ( <a href="http://www.dahe.gov.bt/index.php/governing-boards/non-formal-and-continuing-education-division-board">http://www.dahe.gov.bt/index.php/governing-boards/non-formal-and-continuing-education-division-board</a> )</p> <p><b>2. Advancing health and wellbeing into old age</b></p> <p>The Royal Government has addressed all the six issues under this priority area. Government provides free health care services with focus on health promotion and primary health care approaches through a life course approach. The older population were provided with free vitamin supplement distribution through His Majesty's Welfare Scheme.</p> <p>Through comprehensive free health care services, government strives to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Even referral outside the country and hospital admissions are provided free to the population. The government has piloted community based elderly care in 2010 and is now in the expansion phase throughout the country so that comprehensive health care services are provided at the home where older people dwell. Recently the Government launched Service with Care and Compassion to provide a comprehensive, Coordinated and Continuum of care for NCDs which included elderly and palliative care services.</p> <p><b>3. Ensuring enabling and supportive environment</b></p> <p>Every district has His Majesty's Welfare Scheme ( Kidu Officer) to provide home, livelihood and look into the problems of the people including older person who are in desperate need of social and economic support ( <a href="https://royalkidu.bt/contacts/">https://royalkidu.bt/contacts/</a>)</p>
---	--



## II. Older persons and development

**Instruction:** For the following questions, please provide: (a) the name of the legislation, policy and/or action plan; (b) date of implementation and time frame; (c) its main elements; and (d) its main achievements. Please elaborate and please attach copies of relevant documents or provide their link.

### Active participation

6	<p>Has the Government undertaken any measures to promote the active participation of older persons in society and in decision-making processes at all levels? (<i>SDG 5.b.1; SDG 11.3.2; SDG 17.8.1</i>)</p> <p><i>Please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Although there is no specific policy or legal measures that specific to older persons active participation, the overall government’s approach has been to have a inclusive society through the principals of Gross National Happiness. This approach addresses the <i>SDG 5.b.1; SDG 11.3.2; SDG 17.8.1. Specific to Older Persons</i>, at the national level, the older persons are represented through RSSC. They were involved in the decision-making process e.g. They were consulted and engaged in the development of the National Healthy Aging Strategic document (<b>Refer Annexure 3</b>). They were also involved in MIPAA voluntary survey as the focal agency (<b>Annexure 5 and also the list of participants in both the consultative meeting</b>). However, the involvement of older persons in decision-making is lacking at the grass root level.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7	<p>Has the Government taken measures to facilitate older persons’ participation in physical activity? (<i>see also companion document</i>)</p> <p><i>Please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no specific measure to facilitate older person’s participation in physical activity. However, government through the NCD prevention actions promotes physical activity for all ages.</p> <p>The Multi-sectoral National Action plan for the prevention and control of Non-communicable diseases highlights the importance and promotion of physical activity for all ages including older persons (<a href="https://www.who.int/ncds/governance/policies/Bhutan-NCD-MAP-2015-2020.pdf?ua=1">https://www.who.int/ncds/governance/policies/Bhutan-NCD-MAP-2015-2020.pdf?ua=1</a> ). Ministry of Health through the support of WHO has received outdoor gym and these equipment are installed across the country for promotion of physical activity by all ages (<a href="http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=88246">http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=88246</a>). In addition MOH has recently launched the “Zheney” traditional Yoga practice to promote physical and mental health of all ages including older persons and persons with disability <a href="https://www.moh.gov.bt/update-zheyney-traditional-yoga/">https://www.moh.gov.bt/update-zheyney-traditional-yoga/</a></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	<p>Do older persons’ organizations exist in your country? How many are active and what types of organizations are these?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>There is only one organization (Royal Society for Senior Citizens) which is a nongovernmental organization. This organization for Senior Citizens was formed in 2011. Anyone who is aged 58 years and above can join as a member to the organization (<a href="http://www.rssc bhuntan.com.bt">www.rssc bhuntan.com.bt</a> ).</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>However, even non-member older persons can be part of any schemes and supportive initiatives. Currently there are 354 members in the RSSC.</p>		
9	<p>Does the Government provide any financial, technical or policy support to these organizations? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The Royal Government of Bhutan through CSO Act (<a href="https://www.nationalcouncil.bt/assets/uploads/docs/acts/2014/Civil_Society_Act,_2007Eng.pdf">https://www.nationalcouncil.bt/assets/uploads/docs/acts/2014/Civil_Society_Act,_2007Eng.pdf</a>) empowers any CSO to raise funds and are given tax exemptions for such organizations. Further all CSO through Civil Society Organization Authority (<a href="http://www.csoa.org.bt/">http://www.csoa.org.bt/</a>) promote and supports CSO in liasoning with government and international organizations for active fundraising and project proposals (<a href="http://csogrant.bt/cso-projects/support-to-civil-society-in-bhutan-project-2017-2021/">http://csogrant.bt/cso-projects/support-to-civil-society-in-bhutan-project-2017-2021/</a>).</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Work**

10	<p>Has the Government engaged in actions to support older persons' participation in income-generating work, as long as older persons want and are able to do so? (SDG 8.5.1; SDG 8.5.2) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> So far there is no active promotion to support older persons' participation in income generation and thereby address the SDG 8.5.1 and SDG 8.5.2 indicators. However, the trend is slowly changing with opportunities provided to older person professionals to work longer particularly in academia. The University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan Act (<a href="https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf">https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf</a>) empowers faculties to work till 65 and if desired and required can further extend for 5 more years. In private organizations, there is no legal or policy hindrances and any older person can actively participate in income generation activity as long as he/she is fit and desires so.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.1	<p>Has the Government instituted a statutory retirement age? If "yes", what is it (women/men)? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The Royal Government does not have the National retirement age. However, following sections covers some retirement age for different agencies: The Royal Civil Service Commission has three categories of retirement age. For specialist and executives, retirement age is 60 years and 58 for management and professional category and 56 years for support and supervisory category (<a href="https://www.rcsc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Chapter-20.pdf">https://www.rcsc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Chapter-20.pdf</a>). The constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan has fixed retirement age of 65 years for The King and other constitutional posts (<a href="https://publicofficialsfinancialdisclosure.worldbank.org/sites/fdl/files/assets/law-library-files/Bhutan_Constitution_2008_en.pdf">https://publicofficialsfinancialdisclosure.worldbank.org/sites/fdl/files/assets/law-library-files/Bhutan_Constitution_2008_en.pdf</a>). Labour and Employment Act 2007 does not define any retirement age for employees.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	The University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan Act ( <a href="https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf">https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf</a> ) empowers faculties to work till 65 and if desired and required can further extend for 5 more years.		
10.2	Does the Government provide incentives for longer working life opportunities and more flexible retirement choices? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> <i>At present, the government does not provide incentives for longer working life opportunities and more flexible retirement choices. However, the University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan Act ( <a href="https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf">https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf</a> ) empowers faculties to work till 65 and if desired and required can further extend for 5 more years. In the private sector, there is no defined age limit and flexi systems. It is left to the respective agencies to establish such systems.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.3	Does the Government provide work-related training and learning opportunities for older workers? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> <i>Currently there is no such up skilling and learning opportunities developed for older persons in Bhutan</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.4	Does the Government recognize the benefits of increased work experience with age in the labour market? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> <i>There is a criterion for work experience until statutory retirement.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.5	Has the Government implemented any measures to better utilize older persons' work experience? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: Although, there is no structured mechanisms that government has adopted to better utilize older persons' work experience, various agencies has are involving older person in creating awareness, advisory roles. Further, the University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan Act ( <a href="https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf">https://www.kgumsb.edu.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/University-of-Medical-Sciences-Act-of-Bhutan-2012Final1.pdf</a> ) empowers faculties to work till 65 and if desired and required can further extend for 5 more years.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.5.1	Has the Government implemented any measures to support employers to retain or rehire older persons? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: The government has hired some professionals on contract basis depending on the situation and circumstances of the country. e.g Retired medical doctors are given special contracts to work beyond their retirement age.</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
10.5.2	Has the Government promoted age-friendly workplaces through policies and training on age inclusion or unconscious bias? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> <i>Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, "Regulations on working conditions 2012 ( <a href="https://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhr/wp-">https://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhr/wp-</a></i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<a href="https://www.rcsc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Regulations-on-working-conditions-2012.pdf">content/uploads/2017/07/Regulations-on-working-conditions-2012.pdf</a> ) sets the minimal standards for working conditions. In the similar line, all agencies are mandated to set minimal conducive working conditions. However, there is no specific older person age friendly workplace policies.		
10.6	Has the Government undertaken measures to close gender pay or pension gaps? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> In Bhutan, the payments are set as per the work and profession and there is no gender disparity in terms of pension payments. The constitution of the kingdom of Bhutan protects any individual for gender discrimination in terms of payment. Further, the Government has revised the paid maternity leave to 6 months for government and corporate sectors, to promote exclusive breast feeding to the baby ( <a href="https://www.rcsc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Press-Release.pdf">https://www.rcsc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Press-Release.pdf</a> ) .	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
10.7	In addition to closing the gender pay or pension gap, has the Government accounted for the special situation of older women in work-related policies? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no such schemes instituted.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Rural and urban areas**

11	Has the Government implemented any measures to address challenges, such as isolation and marginalization, of older persons in (a) rural or remote areas, and (b) urban areas, including slums? (SDG 9.1.1; SDG 11.1.1) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Bhutan has addressed SDG 9.1.1 and SDG 11.1.1 through the inclusive development and development activities focused on poverty elevation. Bhutan development priority was to develop infrastructure and road connections to the community. As of 2020, there is 1,677.8 kms of road developed across the country ( <a href="https://www.nsb.gov.bt/bhutan-interactive-data-portal/infrastructure-and-transport/">https://www.nsb.gov.bt/bhutan-interactive-data-portal/infrastructure-and-transport/</a> ). The constitution guarantees equality under the Law in a non-discriminatory manner ( <a href="https://constitutions.unwomen.org/en/countries/asia/bhutan?provisio_ncategory=b21e8a4f9df246429cf4e8746437e5ac">https://constitutions.unwomen.org/en/countries/asia/bhutan?provisio_ncategory=b21e8a4f9df246429cf4e8746437e5ac</a> ) Though the Constitution mandates the State to secure the integrity of extended family system and community life, the situation is changing rapidly as a result of changing family sizes, rural-urban migration and erosion of the values and practices. The cultural values and respect are slowly declining. His Majesty's Goensho Tshamkhang was established to support older person to provided retreat centre for older person ( <a href="https://thebhutanese.bt/his-majestys-goensho-tshamkhang-to-accommodate-up-to-78-elderly-inhabitants/">https://thebhutanese.bt/his-majestys-goensho-tshamkhang-to-accommodate-up-to-78-elderly-inhabitants/</a> ) This centre takes any older person from any walk of the community who do not have any body to look after them.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

**Education, training**

12	<p>Has the Government supported older persons' access to knowledge, education and training? (SDG 4.3.1; SDG 4.4.1; SDG 4.6.1)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: Bhutan has provided free education to all. Article 9(16) of the Constitution states, "The State shall provide free education to all children of school going age up to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." This constitutional mandate of the government facilitates the fulfillment of the SDG 4.3.1; SDG 4.4.1; SDG 4.6.1.</i></p> <p><i>There is a non-formal education scheme established to provide an opportunity for older generations including older persons to avail basic education. However, there is no other specific educational programs for older persons</i></p> <p><i>The Tertiary Education Policy promotes lifelong learning and does not set age limits for higher education learning( <a href="http://www.dahe.gov.bt/images/pdf/Tertiary%20Education%20Policy%20of%20the%20Kingdom%20of%20Bhutan%202010.pdf">http://www.dahe.gov.bt/images/pdf/Tertiary%20Education%20Policy%20of%20the%20Kingdom%20of%20Bhutan%202010.pdf</a> )</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12.1	<p>Does the Government pursue a life-course approach to knowledge, education, training and work, such as lifelong learning opportunities?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p><i>No, although tertiary education policy supports lifelong learning as highlighted above.</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12.2	<p>Has the Government undertaken measures to promote digital literacy among older persons? Are there any programmes which encourage and support intergenerational exchange on digital literacy?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: There are no specific measures to promote digital literacy among older persons.</i></p> <p><i>The Government of Bhutan has undertaken various digital initiatives to provide people friendly services using digital technology (<a href="https://eprints.qut.edu.au/115459/1/115459_8792526_tobgye_sonam_thesis.pdf">https://eprints.qut.edu.au/115459/1/115459_8792526_tobgye_sonam_thesis.pdf</a>). Although there is no initiatives undertaken by government to promote digital literacy among older persons, Government has ensured that no one is left behind in accessing facilities due to digital gap. One such initiative is through the digital technology through G2C (Government to Citizens) <a href="https://www.citizenservices.gov.bt/">https://www.citizenservices.gov.bt/</a>. To facilitate rural communities, the government has opened community centres with computer and internet facilities with one person to facilitate the access to services. 195 such community centres were established in 2015 (<a href="https://kuenselonline.com/195-community-centres-established/">https://kuenselonline.com/195-community-centres-established/</a>)</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Income security, social protection (intergenerational)**

13	<p>Has the Government implemented any of the following measures concerning income security, social protection and social security? (SDG 1.3.1; SDG 1.a.2; SDG 2.3.2; SDG 8.3.1; SDG 8.10.2; SDG 10.2.1)</p> <p><i>If yes, please answer 13.1 – 13.8</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
----	---	------------------------------	--

	<i>If no, please proceed to 14 please elaborate with data as appropriate:</i>		
13.1	Social protection floor for the total population, including older persons (see also companion document) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: Apart from His Majesty's welfare scheme, there is no Social Protection floor for the population including older persons. His Majesty's Welfare scheme (kidu) systems covers most of the socially and economically disadvantaged people. Health and education is free in Bhutan. Workers are protected by Labour and employment Act.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.2	Old age contributory pensions schemes (universal coverage, or for specific professional groups) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: Apart from Civil Servants, there is no Universal Pension Schemes. The National Pension and Provident Fund executive order (<a href="http://www.nppf.org.bt/eng/index.php?web/sub_sub_page/112/77/112">http://www.nppf.org.bt/eng/index.php?web/sub_sub_page/112/77/112</a>) mandates mandatory pension and provident fund for civil servants, Government employees, private and corporations including voluntary pension schemes. The Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan Limited (RICB), Bhutan Insurance Limited (BIL), manages the private provident and life annuity schemes, which covers the employees of private companies and non-governmental organizations.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.3	Old-age non-contributory (or social) pension (universal coverage or targeted at some segment of older persons) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: No such systems</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.4	Specific pension schemes for the informal sector <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: The Ministry of Labour, Regulation on Provident Fund mandates employers and employee to contribute 5% of their monthly salary to the credit of an employee's provident fund account (<a href="https://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhr/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Regulations-on-working-conditions-2012.pdf">https://www.molhr.gov.bt/molhr/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Regulations-on-working-conditions-2012.pdf</a>). There is no specific pension schemes established for informal sectors</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.5	Other income-support schemes that specifically benefit older persons <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: His Majesty's welfare scheme (Kidu) extends across the country to support people in destitute, poverty and disability both socially and financially.</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
13.6	Income-support schemes focused on older women <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: There is no specific income support for older women although there are many initiatives to support women in general through various organizations (<a href="https://www.bhutanfound.org/supporting-womens-empowerment-through-employment/">https://www.bhutanfound.org/supporting-womens-empowerment-through-employment/</a>)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.7	Financial inclusion or financial literacy of older persons <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: There is no such initiative as of date.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

13.8	Any other measures (please name them)? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
------	--	------------------------------	--

### Poverty

14	Has the Government undertaken measures to eradicate poverty of older persons? (SDG 1.1.1; SDG 1.2.1; SDG 1.2.2; SDG 1.4.1; SDG 1.4.2; SDG 2.1.2) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: Although, there is no specific measures to eradicate poverty of older persons, reduction of poverty for all ages has been the main focus of the government through its five year plans. The official poverty rate declined from 23.2% in 2007 to 8.2% in 2017 (<a href="https://www.nsb.gov.bt/publications/poverty-analysis-report/">https://www.nsb.gov.bt/publications/poverty-analysis-report/</a>). The age disaggregated showed the lowest age group and older age group among the highest and second highest poor age groups respectively ( Page 29 of BLSS study 2019)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
----	---	------------------------------	--

### Resilience

15	Has the Government implemented policies to help older persons cope with emergency situations? (SDG 11.5.1; 13.2.1) <i>If yes, please answer 15.1 – 15.4</i> <i>If no, please proceed to 16</i> <i>please elaborate with data as appropriate:</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15.1	Have concrete measures been taken to protect and assist older persons affected by natural disasters, political conflict or other humanitarian emergencies? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The Disaster Management Act of Bhutan ( <a href="http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/bhu129922.pdf">http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/bhu129922.pdf</a> ) states that special care shall be taken of elderly person, among other vulnerable groups, during rescue, response and relief operations. Government has provided special attention to older people during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. Line listing of all older population and those with disability were carried out. Those who were willing were relocated from high risk to low risk and provided free accommodation, logistics , fooding and other social supports.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15.2	Are challenges faced by older persons in disaster situations addressed in national disaster response policies and strategies? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There are no reports of significant challenges faced by the older people. The government recognizes the older persons as the most vulnerable group during pandemic and following services are put in place, which was noticed during COVID-19 pandemics as well. 1. Essentials services delivered door to door 2. Tele consultation during the lockdown 3. Dedicated hotline services (6060) established at the Health Help Center during the pandemic 4. Public awareness on protection of older people. In the similar line Disaster Management Act exclusively mentions the protection of vulnerable groups which are inclusive of older persons	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	(e.g clause 108, “The National Disaster Management Authority shall direct relevant agencies to put in place early warning system as a monitoring and advisory tool to identify hazard and notify all vulnerable population and responding agencies of threatening disaster situation or disaster”		
15.3	<p>Does the Government recognize the agency of older persons in supporting response, recovery and reconstruction following natural disasters, political conflict or other humanitarian emergencies?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Yes, RSSC is the only recognized CSO in Bhutan for older persons. In addition, other sister agencies like Bhutan Red Cross Bhutan also supports the vulnerable population. Their support during Pandemic and lockdowns were significant help to older persons (<a href="https://thebhutanese.bt/bhutan-red-cross-society-supporting-the-government-response-to-covid-19-pandemic-across-bhutan/">https://thebhutanese.bt/bhutan-red-cross-society-supporting-the-government-response-to-covid-19-pandemic-across-bhutan/</a>) There is no specific data available on their service, however Bhutan Red Cross were mostly involved in managing the cremation of the death bodies which happened during the pandemic time especially during lockdown.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15.4	<p>Are older persons recognized as having a role in mitigating climate change?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The climate Change Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2020, does not have any special provisions for the older person (<a href="https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Climate-Change-Policy.pdf">https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Climate-Change-Policy.pdf</a>)</p> <p>The exemplary roles played by individuals including older persons are recognized. e.g Dasho Paljor Dorji was recognized as Natures Hero for his exemplary work in Bhutan's conservation (<a href="https://www.birdlife.org/asia/news/nature%E2%80%99s-heroes-award-bhutan%E2%80%99s-godfather-conservation">https://www.birdlife.org/asia/news/nature%E2%80%99s-heroes-award-bhutan%E2%80%99s-godfather-conservation</a> )</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

### III. Advancing health and well-being into old age

**Instruction:** For the following questions, please provide: (a) the name of the legislation, policy and/or action plan; (b) its time frame; (c) its main elements; and (d) its main achievements. Please supply details of and links to relevant documents or attach copies of them.

#### Overall health and well-being

16	<p>Has the Government developed policies or programmes to promote health and well-being throughout life, including active and healthy ageing?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Bhutan has piloted the community based elderly program in 2010 and in the process of expansion. All the health facilities are line listing all the elderly and annual screening is being carried out. To reinforce the elderly care, priority signage and health handbook for elderly was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 coinciding with the International Day for Older persons” (Executive order and press release attached_6 &amp; 7)</p> <p>All health programs are integrated to provide free health care services through a life course approach.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------



	Bhutan has drafted a National strategy for healthy ageing		
16.1	<p>Has the Government strengthened the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol among older persons? (SDG 3.5.1; SDG 3.5.2)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Alcohol use and abuse is a major problem in Bhutan. To address this, Bhutan has successfully piloted Community Actions to reduce harmful use of alcohol at all ages (<a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328768117_Community_action_to_reduce_harmful_use_of_alcohol_a_pilot_study_in_the_remote_villages_of_eastern_Bhutan">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328768117 Community action to reduce harmful use of alcohol a pilot study in the remote villages of eastern Bhutan</a>). Now the model is in its expansion phase to all other districts. However, there are no specific actions to reduce alcohol and substance abuse among the older population. The Bhutan NCD STEPS survey conducted in 2019 surveyed between the age category of 15-69 years and found that older aged people are more heavy episodic drinkers than other age groups with 53.6% were heavy episodic current drinkers.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16.2	<p>Has the Government implemented any measures to improve access to food and adequate nutrition for all older persons, if needed? (SDG 2.1.2; SDG 6.1.1)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>98 percent of Bhutanese households have food security. Even during COVID-19 disruptions, there were not much significant decline in food security (<a href="https://www.orfonline.org/research/safeguarding-food-self-sufficiency-covid19-lessons-bhutan/">https://www.orfonline.org/research/safeguarding-food-self-sufficiency-covid19-lessons-bhutan/</a>). In addition, multi-vitamins were distributed to all older persons through His Majesty's welfare scheme further ensuring that older persons are not vitamin deficient during pandemic disruptions.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

17	<p>Are issues related to older persons integrated into health policies and programmes, and, if so, how?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Current health policy states, Healthy ageing shall be promoted through social communication and community involvement (<a href="https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/nationalHpolicy.pdf">https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/nationalHpolicy.pdf</a>).</p> <p>Bhutan is in the process of revising the Health Policy. The draft policy also integrates older persons issues and needs through a life course health care delivery systems ( <b>Annexure 8</b> )</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

**Health-care and long-term care services**

18	<p>Has the Government undertaken any of the following measures related to universal and equal access to health-care services for older persons? (SDG 3.8.1; SDG 3.8.2; SDG 3.b.3)</p> <p><i>If yes, please answer 18.1 – 18.4</i></p> <p><i>If no, please proceed to 19</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

	<p><i>please elaborate with data as appropriate: Bhutan provides free health care services as an constitutional right to the citizens. Older persons are provided special care through:</i></p> <p>1. Bhutan provides free health care services including hospital admissions, medicines and referral outside as an individual right and government responsibility.</p> <p>2. Older people are given priority in availing health care services in all the health facilities (Priority signage in all the health facilities)</p> <p>3. Developed health and wellbeing handbook for older people</p> <p>4. Line listing of the older people in the catchment areas under respective health facilities</p> <p>5. Annual screening and reporting</p>		
18.1	<p>Equal and affordable access to primary and secondary health-care services, including affordable access to essential medication, therapeutic measures and medical devices for older persons</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Bhutan provides free health care services including hospital admissions, medicines and referral outside as an individual right and government responsibility.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
18.2	<p>Health coverage (universal coverage or targeted at some segment of older persons): (a) population coverage; (b) benefit coverage; and (c) financial coverage)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> As per the annual screening reporting (total population of older people 58000) as of December 2020, 26% of the older people are living with one or more than two comorbidities. All people are provided with free healthcare services including tertiary and referral services. Most of the out of pocket cost is related to transportation cost. While there is no specific UHC coverage indicators studied for older person specifically, the Bhutan overall UHC coverage index is 72% (<a href="http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/276834/sdg-profile-Bhutan-eng.pdf?sequence=8">http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/276834/sdg-profile-Bhutan-eng.pdf?sequence=8</a>) and with an SDG score of 70% which is above the regional average of 66.7 (<a href="https://dashboards.sdginde.org/static/profiles/pdfs/SDR-2021-bhutan.pdf">https://dashboards.sdginde.org/static/profiles/pdfs/SDR-2021-bhutan.pdf</a>)</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
18.3	<p>Involvement of older persons in the development and strengthening of health-care services?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> RSSC were involved and engaged in developing the National healthy Ageing Strategy. This would be the guiding document for older person health care delivery</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
18.4	<p>Digital technology to promote inclusive health-care services</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The Ministry of Health through its e-health strategy is revamping the health care delivery system (<a href="http://www.moh.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/ict-files/2020/12/National_eHealth_Strategy.pdf">http://www.moh.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/ict-files/2020/12/National_eHealth_Strategy.pdf</a>). As per this policy, the health workers were trained on the use of IT technology and DHIS2 systems are used for the generation of all health information disaggregated in various age groups. Further, the Ministry</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	of Health is in the process of developing an integrated electronic patient information system (ePIS) to transform the health care delivery model.		
19	<p>Has the Government put in place any of the following long-term care measures for older persons?</p> <p><i>If yes, please answer 19.1 – 19.7</i></p> <p><i>If no, please proceed to 20</i></p> <p><i>please elaborate with data as appropriate and proceed:</i></p> <p><i>Overall, the importance of care and support for the older person has been only recently initiated and the government is putting in many measures for long term care and support as highlighted in specific sections although there are no concrete policies.</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
19.1	<p>Long-term care services for older persons</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Palliative care services are established at the National referral hospital and are in the process of expansion. The “Service with Care and Compassion” promote NCD and palliative care services to the homebound patients and older people. Online course is already launched and the first batch of training is completed (<a href="http://www.moh.gov.bt/launched-an-online-course-for-the-health-workers-called-service-with-care-and-compassion-scc/">http://www.moh.gov.bt/launched-an-online-course-for-the-health-workers-called-service-with-care-and-compassion-scc/</a>). It is being implemented in 8 districts and is in expansion phase. Apart from the NCD services and palliative care services, there are no long-term systems in place at the current moment.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19.2	<p>Coordination of social and long-term care and health services, including in-home, residential and community services</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Apart from the Service with Care and Compassion promote NCD and palliative care services to the homebound patients and older people, there is no specific long term care and support systems for older person instituted in Bhutan. Online course is already launched and the first batch of training is completed (<a href="http://www.moh.gov.bt/launched-an-online-course-for-the-health-workers-called-service-with-care-and-compassion-scc/">http://www.moh.gov.bt/launched-an-online-course-for-the-health-workers-called-service-with-care-and-compassion-scc/</a>).</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19.3	<p>Health insurance schemes that cover long-term care costs</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Royal Insurance Corporation of Bhutan Limited (RICBL) (<a href="https://www.ricb.bt/life_insurance">https://www.ricb.bt/life_insurance</a>) and Bhutan Insurance Limited (BIL) (<a href="https://www.bhutaninsurance.com.bt/index.php?page_id=211">https://www.bhutaninsurance.com.bt/index.php?page_id=211</a>) provide various health and life insurance schemes for all age groups. The different schemes under the RICBL and BIL are life insurance, general insurance, financial security and services, reinsurance, credit and investments. Since all health care is provided free, insurance policy may not be required</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
19.4	<p>Long-term care costs covered by a separate insurance scheme</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>All health care services including long term costs are provided free by the government and are not necessary and there is no need for separate care cost through insurance systems.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

19.5	<p>Geriatric and gerontological planning and training for health and social care providers</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Currently, Geriatric services are hampered due to shortage or lack of geriatric and gerontologist. However, government is planning to boost it to provide better care to the older persons. The training needs of the Geriatric and gerontology are reflected in the draft strategic document and draft HR strategic documents. At the moment, there is no gerontologist and there is only 3 geriatric nurses in the country.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19.6	<p>Involvement of older persons in the development and strengthening of long-term care services</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>RSSC was involved during the National Healthy ageing strategy</p> <p>There is no active long term care program in place at the moment. However, the palliative care program has been recently established within the Department of Public Health, which will strengthen the long term care of the older persons in the community.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
19.7	<p>Any other measures (please name them)?</p> <p><i>Please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The Ministry of Health has done line listing of all the older people in the country. Annual screening of all the older people and treatment and appropriate interventions provided</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

### ***Integration of health and social care services***

20	<p>Has the Government undertaken measures to develop mechanisms for coordinating health and social care services for older persons?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Concerned for the health needs of the growing older person, due to increased life expectancy and good health, MOH has established elderly care program to provide a more focused approach to healthy ageing. With support from WHO, elderly program has developed, National Strategic Plan to provide comprehensive service to older persons. The strategic document strives to bring together the various stakeholders to advocate for older people's needs and also establish various systems for better coordination of various sectors. It is envisioned that through the implementation of the Healthy ageing strategy, there would be better coordination not only between health and social care but to the overall system.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

### ***Monitoring of health care services***

21	<p>Has the Government undertaken measures to establish standards and monitoring mechanisms to ensure the quality of older persons' care services?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The draft Health Service standards ensure quality care for older persons and also has a monitoring component embedded within the document. The Standard will be approved within this year and</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	--	---	-----------------------------

	implementation of the standards will improve the care and coordination for older person both living in urban and rural areas.		
--	---	--	--

***Discrimination in access to health-care services***

22	<p>Has the Government undertaken actions to record and prevent discrimination on the basis of age in access to health services including access to providers, medicines and preventive measures? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>All practicing health professionals in Bhutan must register with the Bhutan Medical and Health Council. Once registered, they are governed by code of conduct and practice (<a href="http://www.bmhc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/MHCRegulationsFINAL.pdf">http://www.bmhc.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/MHCRegulationsFINAL.pdf</a>). Further, although not required by policy, most health facilities have put in special signage to provide priority services to older person.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

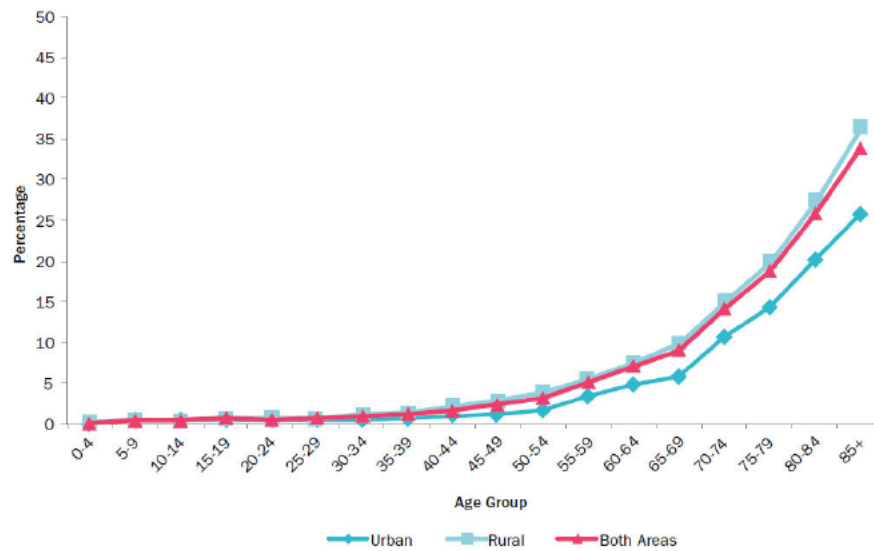
***Mental health services***

23	<p>Has the Government implemented measures to enhance mental health services for older persons related to dementia or other psychosocial disabilities? (SDG 3.4.2) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Bhutan has well established functional Primary Health Care (PHC) Systems. The PHC has trained Health workers who have received mental health first aid and can provide mental health services to the patients including older persons. In addition, Khesar Gyalpo University has started a Bsc course in clinical counsellor. Their posting to the hospital will boost mental health care to the population including older persons. All the care coordination is coordinated by mental health program at the Department of Public Health (<a href="http://www.moh.gov.bt/about/who-is-who/dept-of-public-health/ncdd/national-mental-health-program/">http://www.moh.gov.bt/about/who-is-who/dept-of-public-health/ncdd/national-mental-health-program/</a>)</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	--	---	-----------------------------

***Support to older persons with disabilities***

24	<p>Has the Government undertaken measures to support older persons with disabilities, such as the provision of rehabilitation services, appropriate care and the provision of assistive technologies and social transfers, like disability allowances? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The department of Physiotherapy has established community-based disability services. The physiotherapy services and rehabilitation services are provided at home and even assistive devices are provided free of cost to the disabled population including older persons. However, there are no disability allowances. As per the population and housing census 2017, the overall disability prevalence rate for Bhutan is 2.2% corresponding to 15,567 persons with females (2.3%) having more disability than males (2.0%). The disability prevalence rate increases with increase in age with highest disability prevalence found in the age group of 85 with 1244 people above age of 85 having lots of difficulty or completely unable to carry out activities as shown in</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	--	---	-----------------------------

following figure ( Disability prevalence rate by age group and area , Bhutan 2017 Population and Housing census.



**Decade of Healthy Ageing**

25	<p>Is the Government implementing any follow-up actions related to the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030),<sup>4</sup> such as a national action plan? (see also companion document) please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</p> <p>The draft National Strategy for Health Ageing is in line with the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing. The strategy has all the components of UN Decades of Healthy Ageing (<a href="https://www.who.int/initiatives/decade-of-healthy-ageing">https://www.who.int/initiatives/decade-of-healthy-ageing</a>) The strategy document is in a process of getting approval and expected to be approved by end of 2021.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

**IV. Ensuring enabling and supportive environments**

**Instruction:** For the following questions, please provide: (a) the name of the legislation, policy and/or action plan; (b) its time frame; (c) its main elements; and (d) its main achievements. Please elaborate and either link to or attach copies of relevant documents.

**Housing and living environment**

<sup>4</sup> General Assembly resolution 75/131 of 14 December 2020.

26	<p>Has the Government undertaken any of the following measures with regard to the housing and living environment of older persons and their families? (SDG 11.2.1; SDG 11.7.1)</p> <p><i>If yes, please answer 26.1 – 26.4</i></p> <p><i>If no, please proceed to 27</i></p> <p><i>please elaborate with data as appropriate:</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
26.1	<p>Promotion, safeguarding and ensuring the right to housing and shelter for older persons</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The National Housing Policy 2019 (<a href="https://www.mowhs.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/National_Housing_Policy.pdf">https://www.mowhs.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/National_Housing_Policy.pdf</a>) states that the " Government shall provide social and welfare housing for vulnerable groups" including older persons. In addition, the Kidu system (His Majesty's welfare scheme) and the Civil Society Organizations such as Tarayana Foundation and RSSC plays a very crucial role in assisting and uplifting the livelihood of the older people by providing basic necessities like food, clothing, shelter and also granting land as a kidu. There are currently 850 older people who receive monthly allowances of minimum Nu.1200 and also receive special health care. (<a href="https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/uploads/docs/download/2018/OLDA_GE_REPORT_SCC_ENG.pdf">https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/uploads/docs/download/2018/OLDA_GE_REPORT_SCC_ENG.pdf</a> )</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
26.2	<p>Promotion of “ageing in place”, such as the promotion of affordable public housing with age-friendly and accessible housing design or multigenerational housing options (<i>see also companion document</i>)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>There are no such schemes currently in Bhutan. However, MOH through community based rehabilitative approach is providing assistive devices and encouraging and advising family members to develop disability friendly home environment</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
26.3	<p>Improved availability of accessible and affordable transportation to improve older persons’ mobility</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: There is no</i> Improved availability of accessible and affordable transportation to improve older persons’ mobility. However,</p> <p>Road Safety and Transport Authority have also provided designated seat for elderly in public transport such as in City buses services and the Druk airline too provides seasonal subsidy for older people for pilgrimage and other religious programs (<a href="https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/uploads/docs/download/2018/OLDA_GE_REPORT_SCC_ENG.pdf">https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/uploads/docs/download/2018/OLDA_GE_REPORT_SCC_ENG.pdf</a> )</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
26.4	<p>Universal design in public buildings, areas and transportation (<i>see also companion document</i>)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The Ministry of Work and Human Settlement has developed a comprehensive guideline for differently abled friendly construction and various agencies are mandated to adopt this guideline during the</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	planning and design of any structures ( <a href="https://www.mowhs.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Differently-abled-friendly-construction-Guideline.pdf">https://www.mowhs.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Differently-abled-friendly-construction-Guideline.pdf</a> ). This guideline needs to be extended to rural construction and expedite the implementation process.		
--	---	--	--

### Caregiving

27	Has the Government undertaken measures to support formal and informal caregivers of older persons, including training programmes, accreditation and pay? (SDG 5.4.1) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There are no such programs as of date. However, draft Service Standards proposed professional care services including respite services.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
----	---	------------------------------	--

### Family support

28	Has the Government undertaken measures to support women and families who often take care of older persons? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no such support systems instituted.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
----	--	------------------------------	--

### Integration of older migrants

29	Has the Government implemented measures facilitating the integration of older migrants within their new communities, including: (SDG 10.7.2; SDG 10.7.4) (see also companion document) <i>If yes, please answer 29.1 – 29.3</i> <i>If no, please proceed to 30</i> <i>please elaborate with data as appropriate:</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
29.1	Older migrant workers returning to countries of origin after lifetimes of overseas employment <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no such systems established yet.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
29.2	Older persons returning home to rural areas after having spent their working life in urban areas <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> No such systems established yet.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
29.3	Refugees, internally displaced people or stateless persons <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> No refugees and displaced people in Bhutan.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

### Neglect, abuse and violence

30	Has the Government:		
30.1	Addressed neglect, abuse and violence against older persons? (SDG 5.2.1; SDG 5.2.2; SDG 11.7.2; SDG 16.1.3; SDG 16.1.4) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The Constitution prohibits the neglect, abuse and violence against any person including older people. The development policies guided by the Gross National Happiness serves the foundation for dignity of living and protection against neglect, abuse and violence against older person	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>



	<a href="https://delawarelaw.widener.edu/files/resources/cmclaflindignityagi.pdf">https://delawarelaw.widener.edu/files/resources/cmclaflindignityagi.pdf</a> ).		
30.2	Put in place any services for victims of elder abuse, neglect and violence, including training of care and social service professionals, family members and older persons? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Although there are no such specific systems in place, Bhutan has adopted an integrated primary health care approaches with trained health workers to provide community elderly care and mental health first aid to any victims including older persons <a href="https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255701/9789290225843-eng.pdf">https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255701/9789290225843-eng.pdf</a> )	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Public recognition and ageing with dignity**

31	Has the Government undertaken measures to enhance public recognition of older persons with regard to their authority, autonomy, self-determination, wisdom, productivity and contributions to society? (SDG 10.3.1; SDG 16.7.1; SDG 17.18.1) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The power to honour public recognitions particularly, recognition of extraordinary service to the nation is the prerogative of His Majesty. His Majesty has accorded various honorary titles to the older persons and even the establishment of the RSSC was under the command of His Majesty.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
32	Has the Government undertaken measures to protect older persons' dignity and enjoyment of all human rights, including to address and eliminate 'ageism' and age-based discrimination? (see also companion document) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Bhutan observed the First Senior Citizens day, October 1, 2016 coinciding with the UN international Day of older persons ( <a href="https://kuenselonline.com/respecting-the-elderly/">https://kuenselonline.com/respecting-the-elderly/</a> ). Since then, the day has been observed to promote healthy ageing, create awareness and protect older persons against ageism and discrimination ( <a href="https://www.moh.gov.bt/update-a-message-from-honble-sowai-lyonpo-in-commemoration-of-the-international-day-for-older-persons-2020/">https://www.moh.gov.bt/update-a-message-from-honble-sowai-lyonpo-in-commemoration-of-the-international-day-for-older-persons-2020/</a> )	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
33	Has the Government undertaken measures to recognize and support exercise of legal capacity of older persons, such as supported decision-making? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> RSSC legal Assistance Services to older persons was launched on 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 ( <a href="http://www.rssc bhutan.com.bt/service.php">http://www.rssc bhutan.com.bt/service.php</a> ) .	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Information, innovation and technology**

34	<p>Has the Government put in place mechanisms to improve the availability and accessibility of information specifically for older persons? (SDG 9.c.1)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no such specific actions put in place</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
35	<p>Has the Government fostered development of any innovative methods and services in support of older persons, such as user- and age-friendly technology and products?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no such systems in place</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## V. Data

**Instruction:** For the following questions, please provide: (a) the name of the legislation, policy and/or action plan; (b) its time frame; (c) its main elements; and (d) its main achievements. Please elaborate and either link or attach copies of relevant documents.

### *Lack of ageing-related data and research*

36	<p>Is the lack of ageing-related data and research a matter of concern for your Government? If so: (a) what data and research are needed; and (b) how are you addressing these concerns? (SDG 17.18.1; SDG 17.18.2; SDG 17.18.3; SDG 17.19.1; SDG 17.19.2)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: There is paucity of data and research on older persons. Therefore, generation of data and research is needed not limiting to following key areas:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to health and social services by older person</li> <li>2. Situational assessment of older person in Bhutan</li> <li>3. Stigma and discrimination against older persons</li> <li>5. Social economic situations of older person in Bhutan.</li> </ol>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
37	<p>Has the Government undertaken any efforts in data collection activities, including at the national and subnational levels, to disaggregate data by age and sex, with age groups disaggregated beyond 50+ or 60+(e.g., Household Social and Economic Survey, National Transfer Accounts)? (see also companion document)</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Government has taken following initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NSB disaggregated all population data by age category which serves a good denominator of any studies and indicator</li> <li>2. National Statistical Bureau ( NSB) has launched an interactive data services where we can get age disaggregated data for every district (<a href="https://www.nsb.gov.bt/bhutan-interactive-data-portal/welfare/">https://www.nsb.gov.bt/bhutan-interactive-data-portal/welfare/</a>) on various social, economic and health data</li> </ol>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

38	<p>Has there been: (a) a stand-alone national survey focusing on population ageing or older persons; or (b) inclusion of specific modules on older persons or population ageing into national surveys, such as a National Survey on Older Persons, or DHS, since 2017? If so, please provide: (a) the name of the survey; (b) its focus; (c) the name(s) of the responsible ministries, agencies and institutions; and (d) relevant links. <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> There is no specific surveys post 2017. However, following specific survey were done prior to 2017: There was two specific national publication focused on older person: 1. NSB has published a monograph on, Understanding the situations of elderly citizens in Bhutan (<a href="https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lham-Dorji-2/publication/322498758_Understanding_the_Situation_of_Elderly_Citizens_in_Bhutan/links/5a5c1d8a458515450278a86c/Understanding-the-Situation-of-Elderly-Citizens-in-Bhutan.pdf">https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lham-Dorji-2/publication/322498758_Understanding_the_Situation_of_Elderly_Citizens_in_Bhutan/links/5a5c1d8a458515450278a86c/Understanding-the-Situation-of-Elderly-Citizens-in-Bhutan.pdf</a> ) 2. RSSC with support from UNDP has conducted baseline survey in 2013 to understand the situations of older person in Bhutan (<a href="https://www.bt.undp.org/content/bhutan/en/home/library/poverty/2013BaselineSurvey.html">https://www.bt.undp.org/content/bhutan/en/home/library/poverty/2013BaselineSurvey.html</a>). This was multi-stage cluster sampling with interviews conducted in 200 senior citizens age 55 and above using Probability proportion to size sampling method.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
39	<p>Is there any longitudinal data on older persons collected with a focus on their health, and social and economic situation? <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> The above-mentioned studies in q38 covers this aspect of the data</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### ***Titchfield Group***<sup>5</sup>

40	<p>Is the Government active in the Titchfield Group on Ageing-related Statistics and Age-disaggregated Data? If so, how does the Government contribute to the group? (<i>see also companion document</i>) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> Bhutan is not actively involved in the group</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
----	---	------------------------------	--

## **VI. COVID-19 and older persons**

**Instruction:** For the following questions, please provide: (a) the name of the legislation, policy and/or action plan; (b) its time frame; (c) its main elements; and (d) its main achievements. Please elaborate and either link to or attach copies of relevant documents.

### ***Effects of COVID-19 on older persons***

<sup>5</sup> The creation of the Titchfield City Group on Ageing and Age-disaggregated statistics was mandated by United Nations Statistical Commission resolution 49/118 in 2018 to contribute to identifying gaps and establishing international standards and methods for the compilation of statistics and data on the major of dimensions related to ageing and age-disaggregated data across the life course. For further information, see <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/49th-session/documents/Report-on-the-49th-session-E.pdf>

41	<p>Were hospitalizations and death rates among older persons in 2020 and 2021 higher than for the general population, or as compared with previous long-term observations? (<i>please provide age and sex disaggregated statistics and their sources</i>) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: There were no shifts.</i> As per the annual Health Bulletin (<a href="http://www.moh.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/ict-files/2021/06/24.06.2021_Bulletin-Book-2021.pdf">http://www.moh.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/ict-files/2021/06/24.06.2021_Bulletin-Book-2021.pdf</a>), the following were the top causes of death in 2020; Alcohol Liver Disease 166; Other Cancer 89; other circulatory disease 85; Cerebro-vascular Disease 84; other respiratory and nose diseases 80; other diseases of the digestive system 65; pneumonia 60; other kidney, UTI, genital disorders 52; other sepsis, including septicemia 52; low birth weight 39; stomach/gastric cancer 39; conditions originating in perinatal periods 34; diabetes 23; tuberculosis 20; accidental falls 18; malformations 18. The Annual Health Bulletin provides age disaggregated data and there are no major shifts and increase in morbidity and mortality among 65+ years older persons. Irrespective of ages, all the positive cases are put in isolation wards and monitored regularly until tested negative and discharge (Data as of 23 October 2021) total COVID-19 positive case is 2617 with 3 deaths.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
42	<p>Have older persons been affected socially and economically? How? (<i>please provide any statistical evidence disaggregated by age and sex</i>) <i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate: Considering the number of COVID-19 cases in older persons, it is assumed that there would have been affected socially and economically. However there is no specific data on how older persons been affected socially and economically. To prevent the major impact, older person were given special care. During the pandemic, all older persons were line listed and asked if they are affected by the COVID-19 and support measures were provided. There total older persons 65years and above line listed are 42632 out of which 34% have at least one medical condition. Since older persons are a vulnerable population, relocation of older persons from high risk areas to low risk areas were exercised. However very few (10 older persons) agreed to move to the low risk area identified during the lockdown.</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Government response to COVID-19**

43	<p>Did the Government put policies or measures in place that addressed the impact of COVID-19 on older persons with regard to the following issues: (<i>SDG 3.b.1</i>) <i>If yes, please answer 43.1 – 43.5</i> <i>If no, please proceed to 44</i> <i>Please elaborate with data as appropriate:</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
43.1	<p>Access to health-care services (both usual services and COVID-19 tests) <i>please indicate when the measure was put in place and elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i> - tele-consultation during the lockdowns</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>- essentials services provided door to door (refilling of medicines for older people with chronic conditions)</p> <p>- dedicated hotline (6060) services established for the older people to respond to inquiries and issues pertaining to COVID-19 in older people</p> <p>The survey on the impact of the health facility is being carried out and findings from the survey will generate evidence on the impact of COVID 19 on health systems.</p>		
43.2	<p>Protection of older persons' higher vulnerabilities to COVID-19 (e.g., isolating nursing homes, home delivery of medicine or food, etc.)</p> <p><i>please indicate when the measure was put in place and elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>- essential medicines and other essentials items are delivered door-door during lockdown</p> <p>- COVID -19 protocols in place</p> <p>- Avoiding public places for prayers/rituals</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
43.3	<p>Economic conditions (e.g., employment, income maintenance, immediate assistance)</p> <p><i>please indicate when the measure was put in place and elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>His Majesty's Welfare Scheme provides income assistance to the direly needed population including older persons.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
43.4	<p>Social situation (e.g., loneliness, social isolation, stress)?</p> <p><i>please indicate when the measure was put in place and elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>There are dedicated hotlines established to address any mental health issues. This hotline (National COVID-19 Mental and Psychosocial Response team) is established for the general population including older persons during the pandemic. Since the establishment of the hotline in March 2020, over 1700 calls have been attend where majority of the callers were aged between 20-40 years old. (ref. from the response team report 2021)</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
43.5	<p>Prioritized access to COVID-19 vaccines</p> <p><i>please indicate when the measure was put in place and elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>Older people are considered as vulnerable populations and are considered priority for the vaccines and any other services. Homebound older people are provided vaccines at their homes. The total adult coverage (18years and above) 1<sup>st</sup> dose 96.1% and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose 92%. The allocation of the vaccines are for all the eligible population of the country. No specific information on the vaccine hesitancy for the older population. (VPDP report)</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

***Good practices/lessons learned in Government response to COVID-19***

44	<p>Are there any good practices and lessons learned from the above-mentioned policies and/or measures, including expanding participation of older persons?</p> <p><i>Please give examples:</i></p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	--	---	-----------------------------

	<p>-Line listing of all older person in their respective communities and providing of essential services including medicines, emergencies and social support systems</p> <p>-Creating a dedicated hotline for older population to contact</p> <p>-Telemedicine services to take care of immediate medical services</p>		
--	--	--	--

**Coordination of services for COVID-19 response**

45	<p>Has the Government implemented measures to improve the coordination of primary health care, long-term care, social services and community-based services for older persons in order to ensure a continuum of care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>-As mentioned above the line listing of all older population and taking care of medical, social and psychological support and services provided at the place of dwelling.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

**Long-term measures**

46	<p>Once the pandemic has subsided, do you intend to maintain any measures that were implemented to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on older persons?</p> <p><i>please elaborate with data, as appropriate:</i></p> <p>The line listing, annual community based medical screening services, homebound services will continue and shall be strengthened within the scope of the strategic document.</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
----	---	---	-----------------------------

**VII. Other issues**

47. How has the Government designed and/or implemented measures for the pre-ageing population (future older persons) in the following aspects: (a) work; (b) income security; (c) health; and (d) participation. (*open-ended question; please limit response to 750 words*).

**Work:** The Youth are considered the future generation of the country has been the national developmental slogan. Therefore, youths are given the utmost priority in terms of skills development and education. However, youth unemployment, alcohol abuse and substance use has been the major problems for the youths. About 10.3% of the youths are unemployed (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/811680/youth-unemployment-rate-in-bhutan/>). As per the National labour workforce survey ([https://www.nsb.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2021/04/2020-Labour-Force-Survey-Report.pdf](https://www.nsb.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2021/04/2020-Labour-Force-Survey-Report.pdf)). The working-age population is estimated at 488,336 persons in 2020. Of the total working-age population, 47.9% persons are males and 52.1% persons are females. In urban areas, the working-age population is 163,564, out of which 47.5% are males and 52.5% are females. The working-age population in rural area is estimated at 324,771 persons (48.1% male and 51.9% female).

**Income Security:** Apart from the NPPF schemes, there is no specific financial security systems in place as of date

**Health:** Health care is free for all population and is mandated by the constitution.

**Participation:** There is active engagement and participation of the youth in all aspects of the developmental policies and implementations. There are various youth groups both formal and informal actively engaging and empowering youths with many activities (<https://www.bhutanyouth.org/>).

48. Would you like to highlight any other issues related to the main challenges and opportunities of population ageing/older persons in your country since the adoption of MIPAA in 2002? Are

there any lessons learned or good practices you would like to share? (*open-ended question; please limit response to 750 words*).

As per the literature review and as per the consultations with the stakeholders, following are the challenges and problems faced by the older persons in Bhutan: Lost of sustainable income, abundance and neglect, disrespect and discrimination, physical and mental problems, financial insecurity, health related and disability problems, dependency on children both physically and financially and lack of older person friendly environment.

The line listing of older person and providing special care to the older person during pandemic was the key lesson learnt to protect the older person during pandemics. Community based care by the health workers and provisions of health care services at their residence was successful and is in the process of expansion. The involvement of non-governmental organization (RSSC) has been crucial in planning and developing any plans and actions for the older persons. In addition, NGO can be the advocate and raise awareness on the issues related to older persons and lobby the government of the day to have older person as the main political agenda.

49. Is the Government engaged in any regional cooperation on matters related to “population ageing”, including the sharing of experiences in the implementation of MIPAA among ESCAP member States and/or engagement with ASEAN (where applicable) on the implementation of the 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing (*open-ended question; please limit response to 750 words*).

SAARC emphasizes social issues under the broad umbrella of Health and Population Activities and promotes social agenda in the region through cooperation in Health and Population Activities, SAARC Social Charter for Children and Youth and Gender Related Issues. Under the broad umbrella, SAARC consolidates regional cooperation in engaging in population stabilization, addressing mental health and physical disabilities and health and environmental integration.

Among its 14 areas of cooperation, BIMSTEC has identified public health as a crucial area for cooperation. Under this umbrella, BIMSTEC works towards consolidating comprehensive cooperation on Public health issues to help the impoverished and to establish a network of national centers of excellence in the field of traditional medication.

THANK YOU!

**SAMPLE RESPONSE**

**I. Older persons and development**

For the following questions, please provide: (a) the name of the legislation, policy or action plan; (b) date of implementation and time frame; (c) its main elements; and (d) its main achievements. Please elaborate and attach copies of relevant documents or provide links to them.

**Education, training**

		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12	<p>Has the Government supported older persons' access to knowledge, education and training? (SDG 4.3.1; SDG 4.4.1; SDG 4.6.1)</p> <p><i>In 2012, the Government of XX adopted the Older Persons' Decree which established that older persons have a right to lifelong learning (see: www.xxx.gov). The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Plan on Older Persons (2012–2020) requested that the Ministry of Education, through public universities and schools, offers free continuing education programmes for persons, 60 years or older. Older women and persons with disabilities will be given priority if demand for such programmes is greater than supply ...</i></p> <p><i>For SDG 4.3.1, the latest data from the National Statistical Office show that as of 2020 (June), 85 per cent of youth (15-24 years) at the national level were in formal education in the previous 12 months (see: www.xxx.gov)</i></p> <p><i>For SDG 4.4.1, country XX has not collected any data; however, it has included a question on this in its 2022 population and housing census.</i></p> <p><i>As of May 2021, according to the Ministry of Education (2019–2020 Annual Report of the Ministry of Education, see: www.mineducation.gov), 5 out of 20 public universities offer tuition-free continuing education programmes (3-months during the summer and fall semesters) to older persons. About 250 persons 60 years or older are enrolled in such programmes and are taking courses in architecture, literature and business administration. About 75 per cent of the "older students" are women.</i></p> <p><i>Since 2015, the City of XX and the City of YY in Country AA, have partnered with the City of ZZ in Country BB and are offering an exchange programme for older persons studying at their local universities. Since its inception in October 2015, 66 older persons have participated in the exchange programme and older persons of both countries have praised the exchange programme highly. The City of XX is exploring to expand the exchange programme to other countries and intends to make the programme intergenerational, something participates favoured.</i></p> <p>...</p>		<p>Reference is made to legislative mandates, with links to websites.</p> <p>Policies, programmes focusing on women or persons with disabilities are highlighted.</p> <p>Make specific reference to data on SDG indicators; where data are lacking, highlight this as well and indicate what has been done to address the lack of data</p> <p>Concrete evidence is listed, including with reference to the source of the data.</p> <p>Examples of good practice and lessons learned are listed.</p> <p>Qualitative and quantitative evidence is combined.</p>
a	<p>Does the Government pursue a life-course approach to knowledge, education, training and work, such as lifelong learning opportunities?</p> <p>...</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b	<p>Has the Government undertaken measures to promote digital literacy among older persons? Are there any programmes which encourage and support intergenerational exchange on digital literacy?</p> <p>...</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>



## Annex: Priority directions, issues and objectives of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing<sup>6</sup>

Priority Direction	Issue	Objective	
Older persons and development	1. Active participation in society and development	1. Recognition of the social, cultural, economic and political contribution of older persons 2. Participation of older persons in decision-making processes at all levels	
	2. Work and the ageing labour force	1. Employment opportunities for all older persons who want to work	
	3. Rural development, migration and urbanization	1. Improvement of living conditions and infrastructure in rural areas 2. Alleviation of the marginalization of older persons in rural areas 3. Integration of older migrants within their new communities	
		4. Access to knowledge, education and training	1. Equality of opportunity throughout life with respect to continuing education, training and retraining as well as vocational guidance and placement services 2. Full utilization of the potential and expertise of persons of all ages, recognizing the benefits of increased experience with age
			5. Intergenerational solidarity
	6. Eradication of poverty	1. Reduction of poverty among older persons	
	7. Income security, social protection/social security and poverty prevention	1. Promotion of programmes to enable all workers to acquire basic social protection/social security, including, where applicable, pensions, disability insurance and health benefits 2. Sufficient minimum income for all persons, paying particular attention to socially and economically disadvantaged groups	
		8. Emergency situations	1. Equal access by older persons to food, shelter and medical care and other services during and after natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies 2. Enhanced contributions of older persons to the re-establishment and reconstruction of communities and the rebuilding of the social fabric following emergencies
Advancing health and well-being into old age	1. Health promotion and well-being throughout life		1. Reduction of the cumulative effects of factors that increase the risk of disease and consequently potential dependence in older age 2. Development of policies to prevent ill health among older persons 3. Access to food and adequate nutrition for all older persons
		2. Universal and equal access to health-care services	1. Elimination of social and economic inequalities based on old age or any other ground, including linguistic barriers, to ensure that older persons have universal and equal access to health care 2. Development and strengthening of primary health-care services to meet the needs of older persons and promote their inclusion in the process

<sup>6</sup> Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

		3. Development of a continuum of health care to meet the needs of older persons
		4. Involvement of older persons in the development and strengthening of primary and long-term care services
	3. Older persons and HIV/AIDS <sup>7</sup>	1. Improvement in the assessment of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the health of older persons, both for those who are infected and for those who are caregivers for infected or surviving family members
		2. Provision of adequate information, training in caregiving skills, treatment, medical care and social support to older persons living with HIV/AIDS and their caregivers
		3. Enhancement and recognition of the contribution of older persons to development in their role as caregivers for children with chronic diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and as surrogate parents
	4. Training of care providers and health professionals	1. Provision of improved information and training for health professionals and paraprofessionals on the needs of older persons
	5. Mental health needs of older persons	1. Development of comprehensive mental health-care services ranging from prevention to early intervention, the provision of treatment services and the management of mental health problems in older persons
	6. Older persons with disabilities	1. Maintenance of maximum functional capacity through the life course and promotion of the full participation of older persons with disabilities
Ensuring enabling and supportive environments	1. Housing and the living environment	1. Promotion of “ageing in place” in the community with due regard to individual preferences and affordable housing options for older persons
		2. Improvement in housing and environmental design to promote independent living by taking into account the needs of older persons, in particular those with disabilities
		3. Improved availability of accessible and affordable transportation for older persons
	2. Care and support for caregivers	1. Provision of a continuum of care and services for older persons from various sources and support for caregivers
		2. Support the caregiving of older persons, particularly older women
	3. Neglect, abuse and violence	1. Elimination of all forms of neglect, abuse and violence of older
		2. Creation of support services to address elder abuse
	4. Images of ageing	1. Enhancement of public recognition of the authority, wisdom, productivity and other important contributions of older persons

<sup>7</sup> This issue has not been addressed in the survey.