

Gender Equality in Ageing Societies in Asia

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Characteristics of older women

- ❖ Women have longer life expectancy than men (5-7 years)
- ❖ More women among older old (more frail/vulnerable)
- ❖ More likely to be widowed, single
- ❖ Living longer but more sick years - not compressed morbidity but expanded morbidity
- ❖ Changing epidemiology /disease pattern - non communicable diseases, dementia, women-related
- ❖ Deaths later in life - care needs (long term care, home –based, nursing homes, palliative care)
- ❖ Lower education, lower labour force participation, part time work, curtail career for caregiving – lower economic independence /inadequate savings for old age
- ❖ Discrimination /ageism/violence through life cycle

Situation in Asia

- ❖ Family support and filial piety still strong in Asian countries although eroding
- ❖ Intergenerational transfers e.g. Japan, Korea,
- ❖ Reciprocity /social exchange (grandparenting)
- ❖ Asian economic progress - greater propensity to save and invest
- ❖ Governments better able to provide infrastructure and social services , digital/tech savvy
- ❖ More adoption of anti-discriminatory laws and regulations and governance entities

Action needed for older women

Health Security

- ❖ Lifecourse approach :Health promotion/prevention /rehabilitative/ curative
- ❖ Community-based care (eg. Sgp “Many Helping Hands” , Philippines , Indonesia – gotong royong)
- ❖ Support/capacity building for health personnel/care givers (usually female)
- ❖ Towards universal health coverage for basic package
- ❖ Reduce male death rate (eg higher risk behaviour, smoking, occupational safety)

Action needed for Older Women

Economic Security

- ❖ Towards access to a social pension (citizens income) eg Thailand , VietNam, Sgp Silver Support
- ❖ Employability of older women , review retirement age
- ❖ Retraining/reskilling/lifelong learning eg Hong Kong Elder Academy , Sgp SkillsFutureCredit
- ❖ Review/expand formal pension system to include self-employed, payment by family members eg. Sgp CPF Top-up, spousal survivorship benefit

Action needed for Older Women

Enabling Environment

- ❖ Incentives to strengthen the family (tax incentives, housing priority/coresidence , intergenerational bonding etc eg Sgp Maintenance of Parent Act)
- ❖ Older persons as resource/contributor, not burden - mind set change (Sgp Pioneer Generation Package)
- ❖ Gender equality pervasive in society eg Nordic countries
- ❖ Global support and mandates -CEDAW reporting, ILO Social Protection Floor, post 2015 agendas, Sustainable Development Goals,

THANK YOU